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This paper presents results from the first excavations on the Saintes Bay's wreck, Guadeloupe, French West Indies. The wreck may be linked to the loss of Anemone*, a French schooner built in 1823 in Bayonne and used as a custom ship in Guadeloupe. The July 2015 archaeological project surveyed the site. Discrete trenches were excavated to identify both ship-wreck material culture and ship structure, and compare this to archival records; and facilitate archaeological interpretation of the site, with regard to accounts of its loss, design plans, construction details, etc.*

Introduction

> *"Nowhere else the hurricane had been more violent than in those islands (…) It was impossible to raise the king schooner* Anémone *sunk on her anchors during the tempest. Her masts were snatched from their foot taking of all sails and rigging (…) Mr Guillotin's body has been found few days after the wreck and successively 18 men of his crew" (ANOM SG/GUA/CORR/68 25/3/1825).*

This extract from Governor Jacob's report was the first hint to identify the site of the Saintes Bay's wreck found in 1995 and first described in 2001. The site known as Baie des Saintes wreck was discovered by Claude Edouard in 1995. It was excavated in the 1990s by local divers, without archaeological oversight. The hypothesis that this is the wreck site of the French schooner Anémone, proposed in 2013 (Guibert 2013), is confirmed by this first excavation.

The first archaeological assessment, conducted by Michel L'Hour and Jean-Luc Massy during a DRASSM project in 2001, dated the site from before 1840 from the presence of 'Creil and Montereau' stamps on two

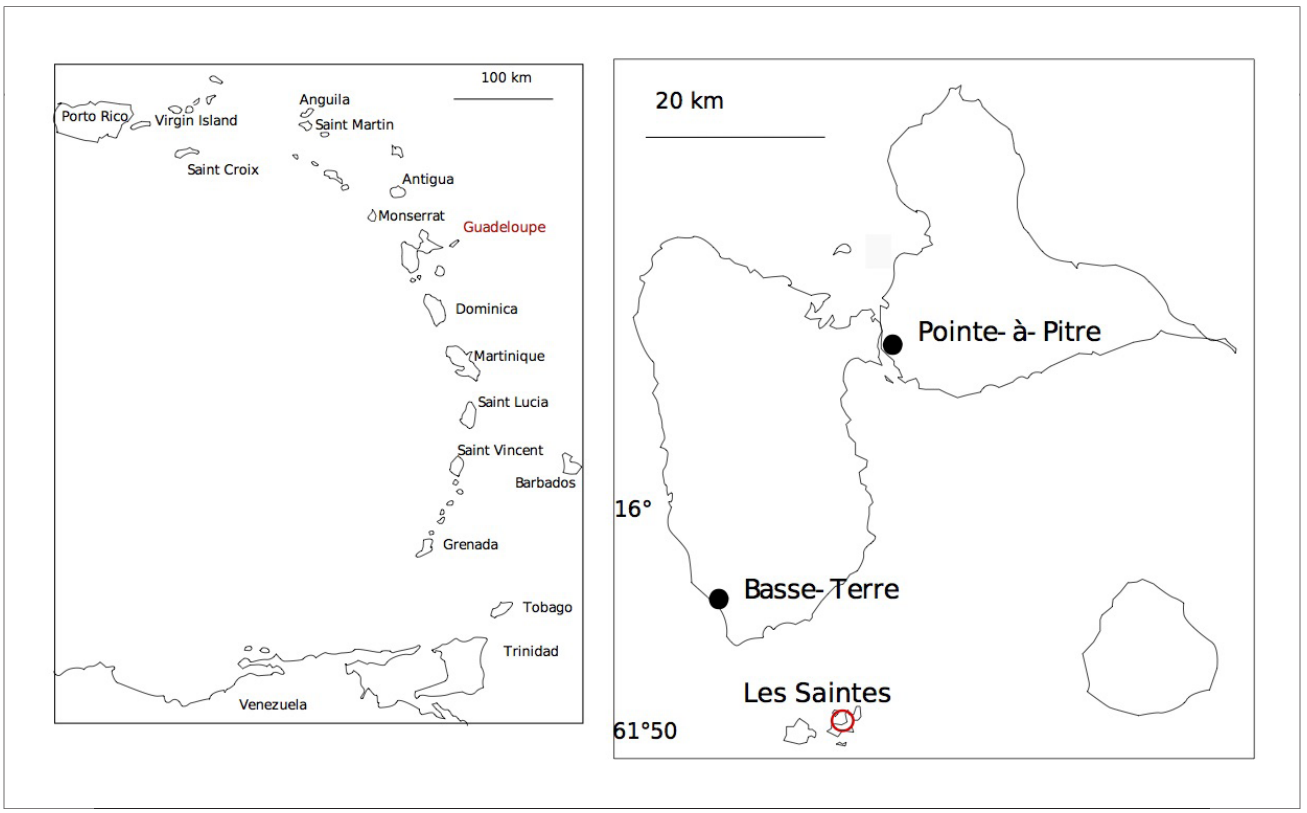

Figure 1. Site localization (Map by author, 2014).

ceramic artifacts (L'Hour and Massy 2002). In addition, copper sheathing and cast iron ballast were observed on the site. Based on the little information existing to date, the wreck may be associated with the French schooner *Anémone*. This vessel was built at Bayonne, France in 1823 and was sent to the West Indies after its involvement in the Spanish War. In Guadeloupe, the vessel was used as a tender ship, actively engaged in the struggle against the slave trade. Though the slave trade had been officially forbidden in the French colonies from 1817, the illegal trade continued until the 1830s. *Anémone* sank during the 1824 hurricane just after being sent to Saintes Bay for protection (Lacour 1855 [4]:355). All of the crew and officers were lost.

This article presents the first archaeological and historical evidence that identifies this wreck as the *Anémone*. The information was gathered in July 2015, as part of a French West Indies University research program. It lasted one week and involved nine professional and scientific divers for nearly 60 hours of diving.

Site Description and Methodology

The wreck is located in 25 m of water in the middle of the Saintes Bay by the entrance of Terre-de-Haut mooring (Figure 1). The exposed wreck site is about 30 m. long, appearing as a mound or sand tumulus orientated south north. Some metal and some elements are visible in elevation, but the actual nature of this is unclear. Copper hull sheathing is scattered around the site, and apparent pig iron is located in the south area. A cannon muzzle was visible at first dive, and the tube is identified as a carronade. A broken anchor is located 45 m. from the site, but it is unclear if it is associated with the shipwreck.

In order to locate and document accurately the remains, a base line was installed from which four trench tests were excavated. The most interesting is trench test 1, undertaken around the carronade (Figures 2-3). This trench test revealed (a) the carronade, clearly in a secondary position (not a ballast cannon); (b) faunal remains identified as salt meat underneath the carronade; and (c) hull structure (ceiling planks, frames). Trench test 4 extending to trench test 1 confirms the end of structural remains and the potential for artifact scatter. Trenches test 2 and 3 were not relevant.

In the vicinity of trench test 1 and 4, the hypothesis of a central position of below the waterline needs verification during the next campaign.

Figure 2. Divers excavating trench test 1, carronade at first plan (Photo by author, 2015).

Ordnance

One of the two presumed carronades has been studied (Figures 2-3). It is heavily concreted, but its size corresponds to the 1818 type of 12-pounders according to Boudriot's typology (Boudriot 1992: 112). Its in situ length is 128 cm; caliber 12 cm; and muzzle 20 cm. This information can be used for site identification. *Anémone* had two carronades of that type. It may indicate the central area of the hull structure, even if the ordnance was initially on deck. It is in a secondary position because a layer with faunal remains was trapped underneath (Figure 3). Its position indicates clearly it is not a ballast cannon. At least it gives a terminus post quem, and adds weight to this being a French naval wreck. The carronade has not been recovered.

Hull Structure

The analysis of hull structure near the carronade is ongoing (Figure 3). It appears to be a lightly built ship because its double frames are 24 cm wide, 1 m. apart. The frames are 11 cm wide. Locking pieces (scarfs) are 17 cm wide. One of the latter has been analyzed and is oak. Their construction alternates in the following pattern of double frame / locking piece / simple frame / locking piece / simple frame / locking piece / double frame. Those measurements have to be fully confirmed with more recording, but they match with a ship that has a lightly-built hull. A keelson is expected under the carronade but has not yet been found. However, the structural elements discovered look to be the lower part of the hull below the waterline. The hull is copper sheathed, confirming that this wreck dates from the mid or late 18th to the early 19th century. Several nails have been found in the trench test 1. They match with 19th century construction (McCarty 2005). Most nails are badly preserved. Electrolysis or poor brass alloy may explain this condition.

Material Culture

Material culture removed from trench tests are ceramics (16 elements), bottles (8 elements), faunal remains (20 elements), and metals.

Material Culture: Ceramics and Glass

The ceramic artifacts are in bad condition, excepting a Westerwald ware fragment pot found in trench test 4 from Eastern France or Western Germany. It dates from the late 18th or early 19th centuries (Figure 4). GR is for Georges Rex III from England and Hanover king from 1760-1820. This common ceramic has been found in colonial contexts; its aspect and details indicate a late fabrication (Gusset 1980, Plourde Lapointe 1996). Most of the others ceramics and glass bottles found in trench tests 1 and 2 are French and date from the same period: one is part of an ink bottle similar as the one found on France's wreck in Guadeloupe or Kejouano's wreck in

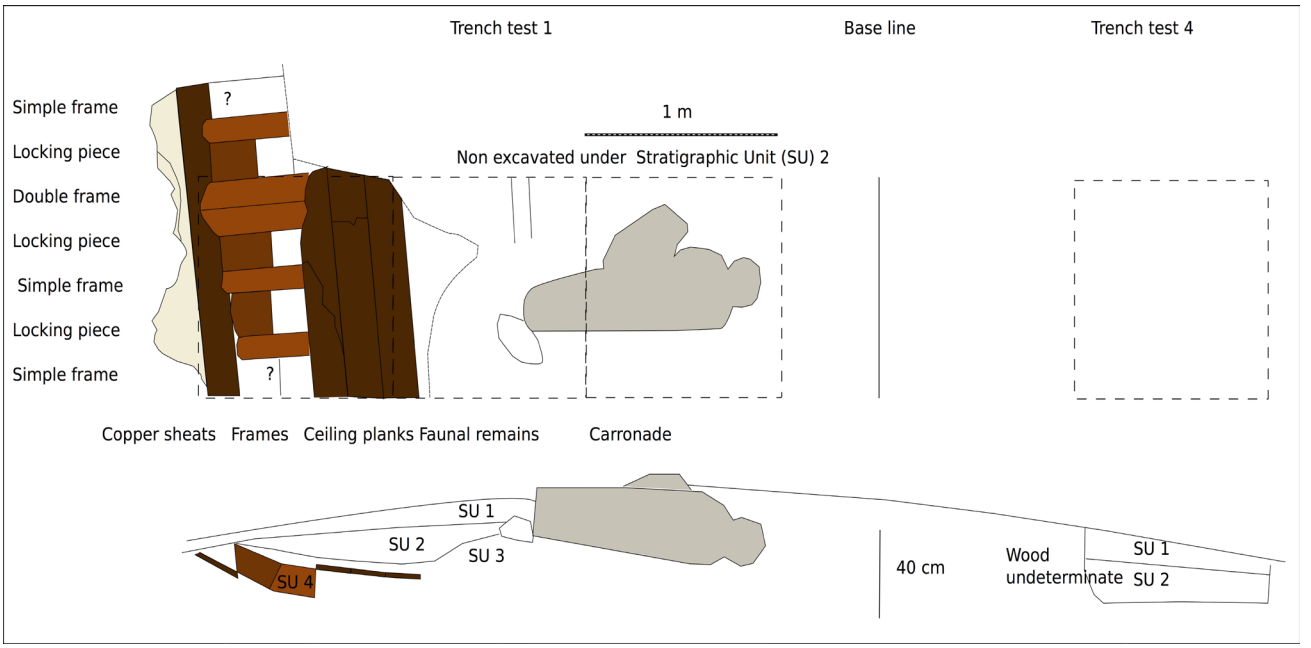

Figure 3. Drawing of trench tests 1 and 4 (Plan by author, 2015).

Britany, both are early 19th century shipwreck contexts (Guibert 2014, L'Hour Veyrat 2005). Some sherds are from Saintonge, and others from Biot.

Material Culture: Faunal Remains

Faunal remains are common in wreck contexts (Migaud 2011). This assemblage has been studied by Noémie Tomadini from the Paris Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle. Twenty elements were recovered– part of a larger group inaccessible because of their location under the carronade. Twelve are identified as vertebra and ribs of cattle (*Bos taurus*). They form a coherent stratigraphical layer trapped under the carronade (Figure 3). It is interpreted as remnants of a barrel of salted meat, because the bone was saw cut. But it is not possible to determine its origin yet.

Material Culture: Bullets

In addition to the carronade, about 135 lead bullets were found in trench test 1 in the vicinity of the ceiling planking. Their weights vary from 27-29 g; their diameters vary from 16.26 to 17.46 mm. They are linked to weapons pistols or guns used from 1786 to 1822, according to Boudriot's typology (Boudriot Berti 1992). This is another evidence for a naval identification.

Material Culture: Kersaint's Kitchen ?

Several copper alloy boxes were observed; one was recovered for detailed examination. It measures 210 mm (L) X 310 mm (H), X 144 mm. (W). Its capacity may be 9 liters. This copper box may be one of the containers of the galley in what was known as kitchen Kersaint, used on several ships since the end of 18th century and especially on schooners from the 1823 type. Some artifacts linked with everyday life on board were also recovered, including a knife handle, brush handle and hand made pipe tube.

Historical Evidence: A Ship from Bayonne

To date, all archaeological data indicate that these are the remains of a lightly-built French naval vessel lost between 1818 and 1840 with at least one gun. Research in the relevant historical archives yields only one candidate that matches the evidence: an 1823 French schooner built in Bayonne named *Anémone* that was lost in the September 1824 hurricane (Guibert 2013). *Anémone* is one of six schooners built in the 1820s after Ministry of Marine and Colony's decision to follow the 1823 plan type. *Rose* and *Anémone* were built in Bayonne, *Jacinthe* and *Jonquille* in Toulon, and *Émeraude* and *Topaze* in Cherbourg (Boudriot 1989: 26).

Figure 4. Westerwald ware fragment pot (1800-1820) (Drawing by Franck Bigot, Photo by author).

Archives and plans indicate the dimension of the schooners of the 1823s series: 21 m long X 5.8 m wide X 2.36 m depth-of-hold, with two carronades of the 1818 type (SHD Vincennes 8DD1 9 n°7). Several contemporary documents mention copper sheathing and pig iron ballast in the construction of these ships. In Bayonne, the schooners were built between February and July 1823. After being involved in the Spain expedition under command of Guillotin, *Anémone*, *Rose*, *Topaze* and *Émeraude* were sent in West Indies in December 1823. In spite of a demand to shorten the topmasts and equip *Anémone* with two more carronades, no change occurred to the schooner (SHD Vincennes 8DD1 5-13/11/1823).

Historical Evidence: A Custom Ship in French West Indies

The ship had just arrived in West Indies in January 1824 and was used as a customs ship, coast guarding, transport and mailing. Its mission was also to patrol for illegal slave traders in the French West Indies forbidden since 1817. For example, it took part in the May 1824 arrest in Guadeloupean waters of *Jeune Adèle,* a schooner from Bordeaux loaded with a cargo 207 slaves (ANOM SG/GUA/CORR 67 7/9/1824).

The ship under Guillotin's command was sent to Saintes Bay at the end of July 1824 for the rainy season and to prevent hurricane risk (ANOM SG/GUA/CORR/72 20/7/1824). Its mooring was considered secure from as early as the 18th century, in spite of several accidents. During the 7-8 September hurricane, the Saintes Islands were totally devastated. *Anémone* sunk at anchor in the Bay. 28 of her crew, from the captain to the Guadeloupean pilot, were lost. The location of the wreck may match the loss of the anchored ship in the bay. Considering the minimal archival information, it seems the ship sank during the tempest, and the masts that had not been reduced were snatched during the wreck. Moreover, the total loss of all the crew indicates a sudden event. One of the reports mentioned the fact that all the crewmen were fastened to the rigging and floated to the surface while decomposing (ANOM SG/GUA/CORR/68 25/3/1825).

Conclusion

The archival and archaeological evidence confirms the current identification hypothesis, that the Bay of Saintes' wreck is the French schooner *Anémone* lost in September 1824.

The site should be the focus of further excavation in 2016-2017 in order to study accurately the construction of an early 19th century schooner. To date, it is the only identified example of such a ship type and of the 1820s French series. We will also investigate the wreck's material culture (faunal and ceramic remains, etc.) in the context of a French naval ship engaged in a customs mission in the West Indies. In spite of several indications of looting, the site may have potential for good artifact preservation due to its relative water depth. A sandglass for example was removed by local divers in the 1990s (L'Hour and Veyrat 2005).

The fact that this little French schooner was policing the illegal slave trade gives this site a patrimonial element that is quite unusual and both historically and archaeologically significant.

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