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New search for US hero's warship

A fresh search is to be made for an American warship which sank off the Yorkshire coast in 1779.

The Ocean Technology Foundation (OTD) based in Connecticut is heading the hunt for the Bonhomme Richard captained by US naval hero John Paul Jones.



The Bonhomme Richard sank in about 180ft of water

Jones engaged the British ship Serapis off Flamborough Head. He captured Serapis but had to watch his own ship sink into the North Sea.

Previous underwater searches have failed to find the wreck.

Memorable battle

Collaborating in the search next summer will be the US Naval Historical Center, the University of New Hampshire and English Heritage.

The three-and-a-half hour battle on 23 September 1779 which led to the sinking of the Bonhomme Richard is counted as one of the most memorable battles of the American Revolution.

"You cannot find a more important underwater archaeological site to the US Navy than that of John Paul Jones' Bonhomme Richard," said Dr Robert Neyland from the Historical Research Center.

"Discovery of the shipwreck will shed new light on the horrific battle between Bonhomme Richard and Serapis, what life was like on board Bonhomme Richard for the officers and crew, the ships' armament and weaponry and the construction of the ship itself."

OTD said it has created a computer model of the ship which will simulate how it may have drifted after the battle.

With the benefit of this information the project team said it has pinpointed an area where it believed the wreckage lies.

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