

Emperor

Bulk Freighter

Learn More About Diving at Isle Royale: <http://www.nps.gov/isro/planyourvisit/scuba-diving.htm>

Vessel History

Launched: December 17, 1910 in Collingwood, Ontario

Dimensions: 525 feet in length, 56.1 feet in beam, 27 feet in depth

Livelihood: When launched, it was the largest ship ever built in Canada.

The ship was of steel make and utilized the arch-and-web frame construction to create an unobstructed cargo hold under 30 hatches; the ship had 11 bulkheads. The vessel was powered by an inverted, triple-expansion steam engine and received steam at 180lbs of pressure from two Scotch boilers; its average loaded speed was 11 knots. The vessel had its share of incidents, including being grounded on Major Shoal near Mackinaw City and running over its own anchor in the Canadian canal at Sault Ste. Marie.

Loss: June 4, 1947, *Emperor* had been loaded with 10,429 tons of bulk iron ore from Port Arthur; the vessel was seaworthy and well-equipped with the charts, compasses, telephones and the latest Marconi direction-finding equipment. The weather conditions were warm, wind light, and visibility excellent, however, *Emperor* was missing a third mate. Mates were tired and compass bearings were not re-checked; within 15 minutes of a change in shifts the freighter struck Canoe Rocks and stayed afloat for 20-35 minutes. 3 officers and 9 crew members died.

Fate: There are no records of commercial salvage on *Emperor*.

Dive Notes

Missing Parts: The spar and forecastle deck, cabins, furnishings, head fixture, captain's cabins, pilot house and rigging are no longer part of the vessel. All glass is missing, though most likely blew out during the wrecking process.

Noticeable Features: The windlass and chain locker is in the bow wreckage. The starboard anchor is slipping from its anchor pocket, the port anchor has already slid down to the lakeshore. There is Steep Rock Mine Ore in the cargo holds. The hull sides are lying down with the hatch coamings on top of the ore. The hull beams are twisted. The mast is bent in conjunction to the twisted hull. The emergency wheel and throttle are still in tact at the stern section.

Mystery: There are cracked bulkheads close to the boilers. There is one account of the boilers exploding on *Emperor* as the vessel sank. Stories suggest that boilers exploded as the ship sank due to the temperature change, though there is little evidence of this being logistically plausible.



Historical Collections of the Great Lakes
Bowling Green State University

GPS Coordinates: 48°12'02"N and 88°29'30"W

Depth: 30-170ft

Skill level: Beginner—Advanced

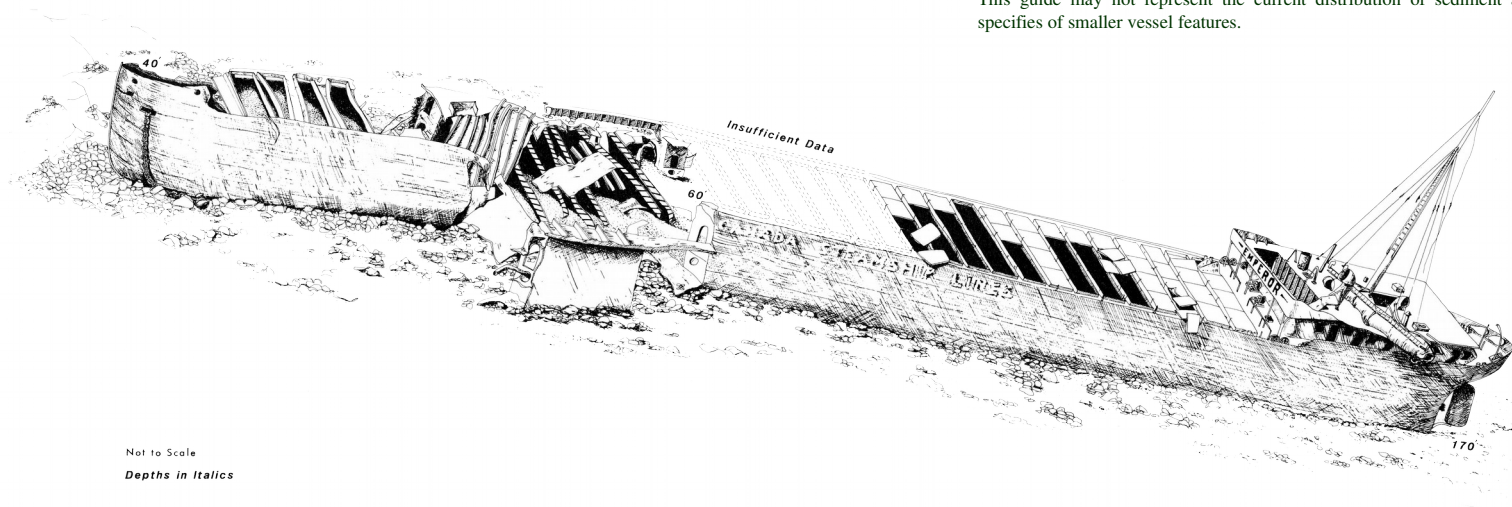
Emperor

Archaeological Sketch



Number Key

Please be aware that this site is characterized by turbulent wave action. This guide may not represent the current distribution of sediment and specifics of smaller vessel features.



Not to Scale

Depths in Italics