

Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent



Lest We Forget

World War 1



226692 LEADING STOKER

T. BROWN

H.M.S. "SWIFTSURE"

ROYAL NAVY

12TH AUGUST, 1915 Age 27

Thomas BROWN

Thomas Brown was born on 20th April, 1888 at Bromley-by-bow, London, England to parents Thomas and Sarah Ann Brown. He was baptised on 20th May, 1888 in St. Luke's Mile End Old Town, Middlesex, England. Thomas Brown (Snr) was listed as a Stoker & the family lived at 12 Whitethorn Street. (A note in the Baptism Book has "born April 18, 1888).

The 1891 England Census recorded Thomas Brown as a 2 year old, living with his family at 78 Whitethorn Street, Bromley, London, England. His parents were listed as Thomas Brown (Gas Stoker, aged 21, born Bow, London) & Sarah Brown (Charwoman, aged 24, born Bow, London). Thomas (jnr) was the eldest of three children listed on this Census (all born Bow, London) – Thomas, William Brown (aged 1) & Rose Brown (aged 3 weeks).

The 1901 England Census recorded Thomas Brown as a 12 year old living with his family at 37 Gale Street, Bromley, London, England. His parents were listed as Thomas Brown (Gas Works Labourer, aged 33, born Barking, Essex) & Sarah A. Brown (aged 34, born Bromley, London). Thomas (jnr) was the eldest of seven children listed on this Census (all born Bromley, London) – Thomas then William Brown (aged 11), Joseph Brown (aged 8), John Brown (aged 6), Alfred Brown (aged 4), Frederick Brown (aged 3) & James Brown (aged 1).

Thomas Brown joined the Royal Navy on 24th June, 1903 at the age of 15 years. He was given a service number of 226692 (Chatham).

Thomas Brown joined H.M.S. *Impregnable* on 24th June, 1903 as Boy 2nd Class. He was rated Boy 1st Class on 11th February, 1904. Boy 1st Class was transferred to H.M.S. *Boscawen III* on 28th October, 1904 then transferred to H.M.S. *Scylla* on 1st April, 1905.

On the 20th April, 1906, at the age of 18 years, Thomas Brown signed up with the Royal Navy for 12 years. He was 5ft 5 in with dark brown hair, hazel eyes & a ruddy complexion. He has an anchor & 4 dots tattooed on his left forearm & 4 dots on his right forearm. Thomas Brown was rated Ordinary Seaman on 20th April, 1906 while serving on H.M.S. *Scylla*. On 24th May, 1906 Ordinary Seaman Brown was transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke I* then transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 1st June, 1906 as Stoker 2nd Class. Stoker 2nd Class Brown was transferred to H.M.S. *Sapphire II* on 28th November, 1906 then transferred to H.M.S. *Blenheim* on 1st May, 1907. He was rated as Stoker on 23rd July, 1907 while still serving on H.M.S. *Blenheim*. Stoker Brown was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 19th May, 1908 then transferred to H.M.S. *Dwarf* on 2nd January, 1909. He was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 3rd February, 1910 then transferred to H.M.S. St. George on 15th March, 1910.

[The 1911 England Census recorded the Brown family living at 93 Whitwell Road, Plaistow, West Ham, Essex, England. The family of nine were living in a 4 roomed dwelling. Thomas Brown (Gas Stoker, aged 42) & Sarah Ann Brown (aged 44) had been married for 24 years & had a total of eleven children, three having died. Seven children were listed on this Census (but not Thomas Brown) – William Brown (Navy Stoker, aged 21), Joseph Brown (Boiler Cover Labourer, aged 18), John Brown (Layer on Printers, aged 16), Alfred Brown (Out of work, aged 14), Frederick Brown (At school, aged 13), James Brown (At School, aged 11) & Harry Brown (At School, aged 7, born Plaistow, Essex.)]

Stoker Thomas Brown was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 22nd October, 1911 then served on H.M.S. *Cressy* from 6th February, 1912. Stoker Brown was transferred to H.M.S. *Glory* on 2nd September, 1912 then transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 11th February, 1913.

Stoker Thomas Brown was transferred to H.M.S. *Swiftsure* on 20th March, 1913 then rated as Acting Leading Stoker from 18th February, 1915.

H.M.S. *Swiftsure*

H.M.S. *Swiftsure*, originally known as *Constitución*, was the lead ship of the Swiftsure-class pre-dreadnought battleships. The ship was ordered by the Chilean Navy, but she was purchased by the United Kingdom as part of ending the Argentine–Chilean naval arms race. In British service, *Swiftsure* was initially assigned to the Home Fleet and Channel Fleets before being transferred to the Mediterranean Fleet in 1909. She rejoined Home Fleet in 1912 and was transferred to the East Indies Station in 1913, to act as its flagship.

After the beginning of World War I in August 1914, *Swiftsure* escorted troop convoys in the Indian Ocean until she was transferred to the Suez Canal Patrol in December. After defending the Canal in early 1915 from Ottoman attacks, the ship was then transferred to the Dardanelles in February. She joined the Dardanelles Squadron on 28 February 1915 and took part in the attack on Fort Dardanos on 2 March 1915. She and *Triumph* were detached from the Dardanelles on 5 March 1915 for operations against forts at Smyrna and returned to the Dardanelles on 9 March 1915. She participated in the main attack on the Narrows forts on 18 March 1915 and supported the main landings at West Beach at Cape Helles on 25 April and subsequent landings, including the attack on Achi Baba on 4 June. On 18 September, a German submarine unsuccessfully attacked her while she was on a voyage from Mudros to Suvla Bay.

(Extract of information on H.M.S. *Swiftsure* from Wikipedia)



H.M.S. *Swiftsure*

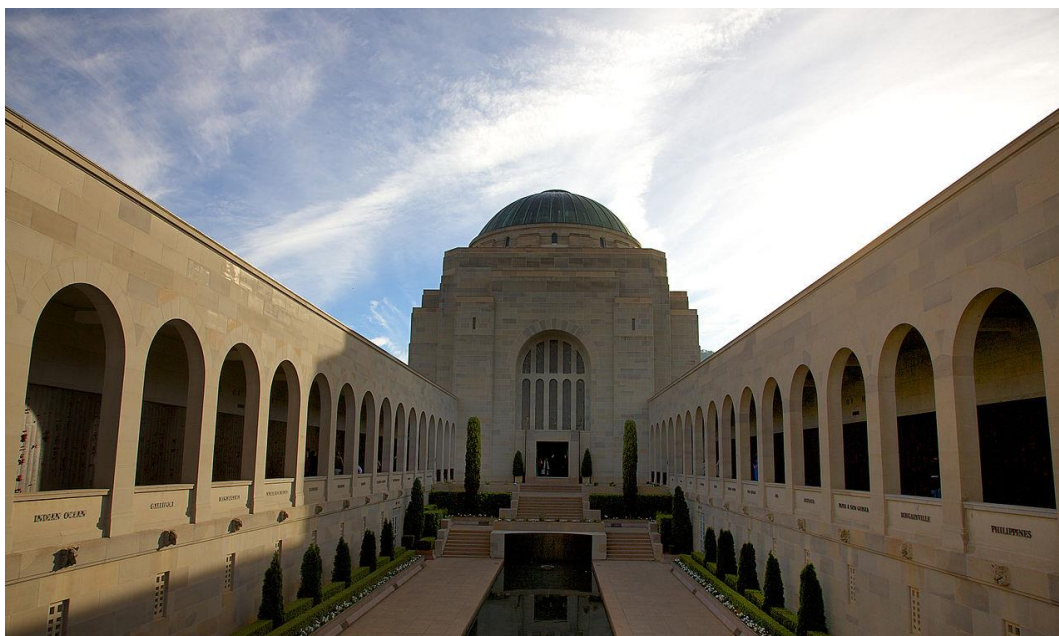
On Thursday 12th August, 1915 H.M.S. *Swiftsure* & H.M.S. *Grafton* were providing gunfire support off Suvla beaches. H.M.S. *Swiftsure* was hit by a 12 pounder field gun with 5 ratings lost, 10 wounded, one of whom later died on 18th August, 1915. H.M.S. *Grafton* off C-Beach was also damaged by Turkish shell fire & lost 9 ratings who were killed & 10 wounded.

Leading Stoker Thomas Brown was killed in action on 12th August, 1915 as a direct result of enemy action during operations in the Dardanelles. He was buried at Sea. His mother – Sarah A. Brown, of 14 Francis Street, Tarraville, Melbourne, Australia was notified. Leading Stoker Thomas Brown was one of five men from H.M.S. *Swiftsure* who lost their lives on 12th August: Hubert Hardiman, 2nd Cook's Mate, M 10915 (Ch); William J. Jarvis, Chief Petty Officer, 166311 (Ch); Herbert Pert, Able Seaman, 199210 (Ch) & Frederick C. Turner, Stoker 1c, 278831 (Ch).

Leading Stoker Thomas Brown was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission records Leading Stoker Thomas Brown – service number 226692, aged 27, of H.M.S. “Swiftsure”, Royal Navy. He was the son of Thomas and Sarah Brown, of 1197 Hoddle Street, East Melbourne, Australia. Native of England.

Leading Stoker Thomas Brown is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.



Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial (*Capital Photographer*)

A shield for H.M.S. *Swiftsure* is located in St. George’s Centre, Gillingham, Medway, Kent.



Memorial windows to H.M.S. *Swiftsure* are located in St. George’s Centre, Pembroke Road, Chatham, Kent, England.



Newspaper Notices

DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL

During last week, Mr and Mrs Brown, Francis street Yarraville, received the Distinguished Conduct Medal awarded their son, Thomas who was killed at Sulva Bay on August 11, 1915. The recipient who was leading stoker on the H.M.S. Swiftsure, joined the Navy at the age of 15 years and had seen 12 years active service.

The medal was accompanied by a letter of sympathy from Hon. A. J. Balfour, on behalf of the King and Queen.

Stoker Brown held a number of efficiency certificates including one of highest order for first aid.

(Weekly News, Yarraville, Victoria – 19 August, 1916)

Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent, England

Chatham Naval Memorial overlooks the town of Chatham, Kent, England. It commemorates more than 8,500 Royal Navy personnel from World War 1 & over 10,000 Navy personnel from World War 2 who were lost or buried at sea.

After the Armistice, the Naval Authorities and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission were determined to find an appropriate way to commemorate naval personnel who had no grave.

An Admiralty committee recommended that the three manning ports in Great Britain - Chatham, Plymouth and Portsmouth - should each have an identical memorial of unmistakable naval form, an obelisk, which would serve as a leading mark for shipping.

The Chatham Naval Memorial was unveiled by The Prince of Wales, the future Edward VIII, on 26 April 1924.



Chatham Naval Memorial *(Photo above by Clem Rutter)*



Chatham Naval Memorial (Photos from CWGC)



THE CHATHAM NAVAL MEMORIAL

This memorial commemorates officers, ranks and ratings of this Port who died at sea during the wars of 1914 to 1918 and 1939 to 1945. Actions in which they fought are recorded in the registers and on the memorial itself.

Similar memorials at Portsmouth and Plymouth commemorate men and women of those manning ports, while merchant seamen who died from enemy action and have no grave but the sea are commemorated in Liverpool and at Tower Hill in London. The names of those who died during the Second World War whilst serving in the Royal Naval Patrol Service or the Fleet Air Arm and whose graves are unknown are respectively on memorials at Lowestoft and at Lee-on-the-Solent.

Other memorials, at Halifax and Victoria in Canada, at Auckland in New Zealand, at Bombay in India, at Chittagong in Bangladesh and at Hong Kong, commemorate sailors who came from those parts of the Commonwealth, while the Newfoundland memorial at Besumont Hamel in France bears the names of Newfoundland sailors lost at sea during the First World War.

The names of over 18,500 men and women are recorded on this memorial; of these some 8,500 died during the First World War and 10,000 during the Second World War. All were buried or lost at sea or were otherwise denied, by the fortunes of war, a known and honoured grave.

THIS MEMORIAL WAS BUILT AND IS MAINTAINED BY
THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

1914-1918 MEMORIAL
ARCHITECT — SIR ROBERT LORIMER, SCULPTOR — HENRY POOLE.

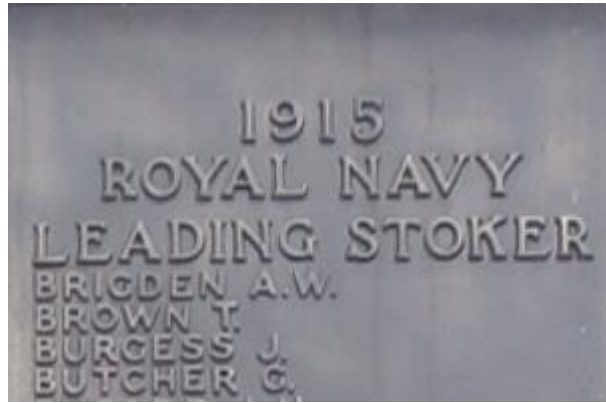
1939-1945 EXTENSION
ARCHITECT — SIR EDWARD MAUFE, SCULPTOR — SIR CHARLES WHEELER.

(Photo by Geoffrey Gillon)

Leading Stoker T. Brown is remembered on the Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent, England as he has no known grave - Memorial reference 11.



(Photo by Brad Evans)



Research on the Australians (or those connected to Australia) remembered on the Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent, England was completed as part of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's "For Those In Peril" project.

'For Those in Peril' is an initiative to encourage people to research, remember and share local stories of those who left their homes to join the war at sea, whose names are engraved on the Commission's three naval memorials at Portsmouth, Plymouth and Chatham.

The project has been launched to coincide with the opening of the Poppies: Wave at the CWGC Plymouth Naval Memorial, presented by 14-18 NOW: WW1 Centenary Art Commissions, to mark the centenary of the First World War.



Poppies: Wave By Paul Cummins, Artist and Tom Piper, Designer

at CWGC Plymouth Naval Memorial

23 August - 19 November, 2017

(Photos from 1418 NOW)

Poppies: Wave, a sweeping arch of bright red poppy heads suspended on towering stalks, was originally seen at the Tower of London as part of the installation Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red. It can currently be seen at the CWGC Plymouth Naval Memorial.

