

Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent



Lest We Forget

World War 1



296947 PETTY OFFICER STOKER

R. CLINTON

H.M.S. "ABOUKIR "

ROYAL NAVY

22ND SEPTEMBER, 1914 Age 33

Richard CLINTON

Richmond Henry C. Clinton was born in 1880 in New South Wales, Australia to parents Richard Henry & Elizabeth Anne Clinton (nee Cullip). His birth was registered in 1880 in the district of Narrabri, NSW. According to Royal Navy records Richard Henry Clinton was born on 22nd November, 1880, at Newcastle, NSW, Australia, however several family trees on Ancestry have his date of birth as 6th October, 1880 (and only have his death as the year of 1914).

Richard Henry Clinton, father of Richmond Henry C. Clinton, died on 6th May, 1887 in Hinton, NSW.

Elizabeth Anne Clinton remarried in 1891 in the district of Morpeth, NSW to Louis F. Corr.

Richard Clinton joined the Royal Navy on 6th March, 1901 for 12 years. He was 5ft 6 ½ in with black hair, dark grey eyes & a dark complexion. His previous occupation was listed as Steward. Richard Clinton was given a service number of 296947 (Chatham).

Richard Clinton joined H.M.S. *Pembroke II* as Stoker 2nd Class on 6th March, 1901.

The 1901 England Census recorded Richard Hy. Clinton, aged 20, born Australia, as crew on H.M.S. *Pembroke*. He was listed as Stoker 2nd Class.

Stoker 2nd Class Richard Clinton was rated as Stoker on 23rd August, 1901 while still on H.M.S. *Pembroke II*.

Stoker Richard Clinton was transferred to H.M.S. *Furious* on 11th December, 1901. He was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke* on 25th February, 1903 then transferred to H.M.S. *Hermes* on 23rd April, 1903. Stoker Clinton was transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 28th February, 1905 then transferred to H.M.S. *Roxburgh* on 5th September, 1905.

Stoker Richard Clinton was rated as Leading Stoker on 1st June, 1906 while still serving on H.M.S. *Roxburgh*. Leading Stoker Clinton was sentenced "by C.M. of 4 .9.07 to 6 months H.L. for desertion and for using his own benefit money with which he had been entrusted."

Leading Stoker Clinton was transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* as Stoker 1st Class on 22nd February, 1908. He was transferred to H.M.S. *Shannon* on 10th March, 1908 and rated as Leading Stoker on 29th July, 1910 while still serving on H.M.S. *Shannon*. Leading Stoker Richard Clinton was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 10th February, 1913. He was rated as Stoker Petty Officer on 25th February, 1913.

Petty Officer Stoker Richard Clinton was transferred to H.M.S. *Aboukir* on 15th April, 1913 then transferred to H.M.S. *Cornwallis* on 1st June, 1914. He was then transferred to H.M.S. *Cressy* on 10th June, 1914 and back to H.M.S. *Aboukir* on 26th July, 1914.

Richard H. C. Clinton married Alexandra M. Burke in June quarter, 1914 in the district of Medway, Kent, England.

H.M.S. *Aboukir*

HMS *Aboukir* was a Cressy-class armoured cruiser built for the Royal Navy around 1900. Upon completion she was assigned to the Mediterranean Fleet and spent most of her career there. Upon returning home in 1912, she was placed in reserve. Recommissioned at the start of the First World War, she played a minor role in the Battle of Heligoland Bight a few weeks after the beginning of the war.

On the morning of 22 September, *Aboukir* and her sisters, *Cressy* and *Hogue*, were on patrol without any escorting destroyers as they had been forced to seek shelter from bad weather. The three sisters in line abreast, about 2,000 yards (1,800 m) apart, at a speed of 10 knots (19 km/h; 12 mph). They were not expecting submarine attack, but they had lookouts posted and had one gun manned on each side to attack any submarines sighted. The weather had moderated earlier that morning and Tyrwhitt was en route to reinforce the cruisers with eight destroyers.

U-9, commanded by Kapitänleutnant Otto Weddigen, had been ordered to attack British transports at Ostend, but had been forced to dive and take shelter from the storm. On surfacing, she spotted the British ships and moved to attack. She fired one torpedo at 06:20 at *Aboukir* that struck her on the starboard side; Captain John Drummond thought he had struck a mine and ordered the other two ships to close to transfer his wounded men. *Aboukir* quickly began listing and capsized around 06:55 despite counter flooding compartments on the opposite side to right her. By the time that Drummond ordered "abandon ship" only one boat was available because the others had either been smashed or could not be lowered as no steam was available to power the winches for the boats.

As *Hogue* approached her sinking sister, the ship's captain, Wilmot Nicholson, realized that it had been a submarine attack and signalled *Cressy* to look for a periscope although his ship continued to close on *Aboukir* as her crew threw overboard anything that would float to aid the survivors in the water. Having stopped and lowered all her boats, *Hogue* was struck by two torpedoes around 06:55. The sudden weight loss of the two torpedoes caused U-9 to broach the surface and *Hogue's* gunners opened fire without effect before the submarine could submerge again. The cruiser capsized about ten minutes after being torpedoed as all of her watertight doors had been open, and she sank at 07:15.

Cressy attempted to ram the submarine, but did not hit anything and resumed her rescue efforts until she too was torpedoed at 07:20. She too took on a heavy list and then capsized, before sinking at 07:55. Several Dutch ships began rescuing survivors at 08:30 and were joined by British fishing trawlers before Tyrwhitt and his ships arrived at 10:45. The combined total from all three ships was 837 men rescued and 62 officers and 1,397 enlisted men lost. Of these, *Aboukir* lost a total of 527 men.

(Extract of information on H.M.S. Aboukir & photo from Wikipedia)



H.M.S. *Aboukir*

Petty Officer Stoker Richard Clinton was killed in action in the North Sea on 22nd September, 1914, due to enemy action. His body was not recovered for burial.

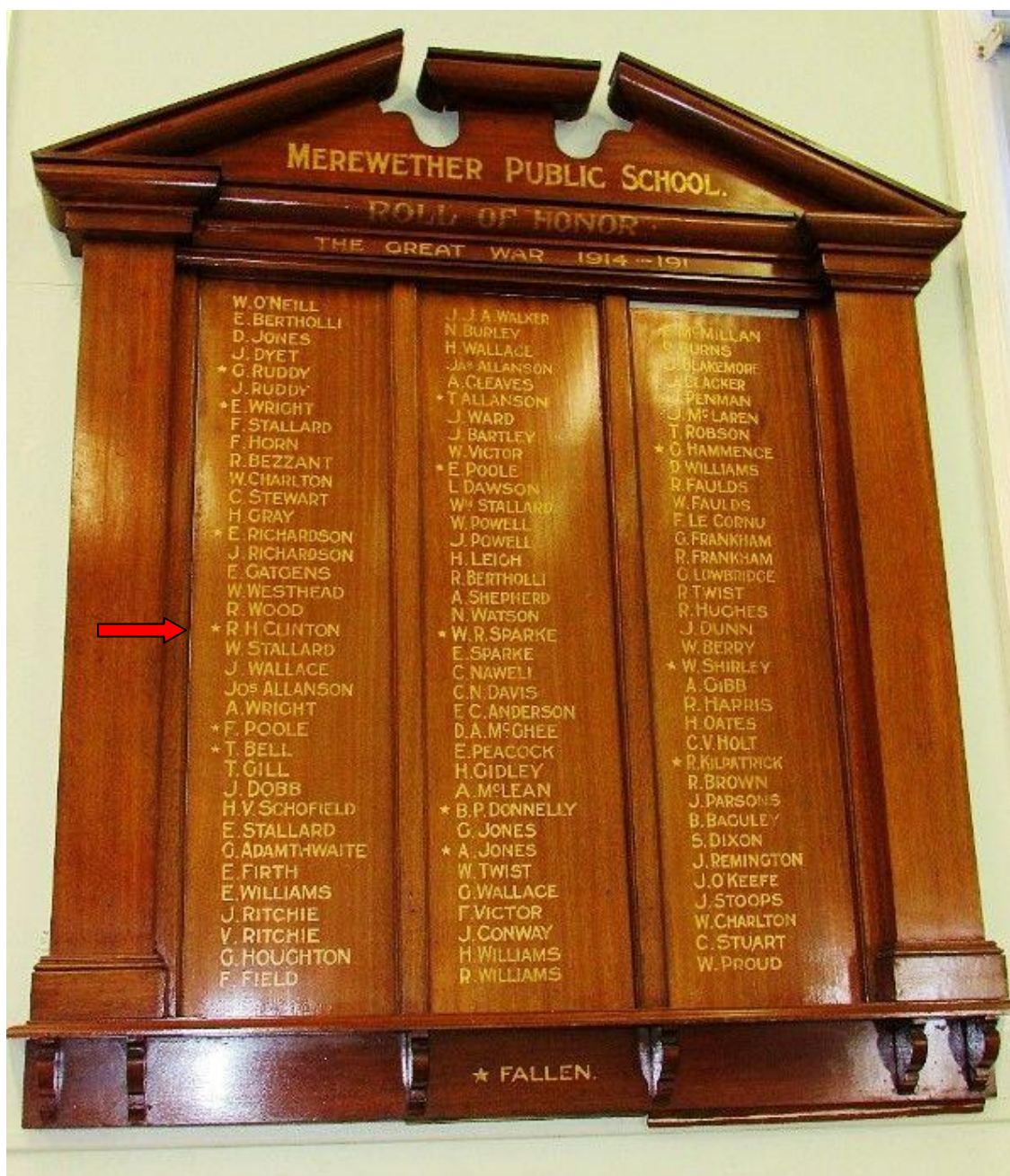
Petty Officer Stoker Richard Clinton was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal.

De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour:

Clinton, Richard, Stoker, Petty Officer, 296947, H.M.S. Aboukir; lost in action in the North Sea, 22 Sept. 1914.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission records Petty Officer Stoker Richard Clinton – service number 296947, aged 33, of H.M.S. "Aboukir", Royal Navy. He was the husband of Mrs A. M. Blackman (formerly Clinton) of 95 Imperial Rd, Gillingham, Kent. Native of Australia. (Alexandra M. Clinton, widow of Petty Officer Stoker Richard Clinton remarried in December quarter of 1915 to Thomas H. Blackman).

R. H. Clinton is remembered on the Merewether Public School Roll of Honour, 6 Henry Street, Merewether, NSW.



Merewether Public School Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)

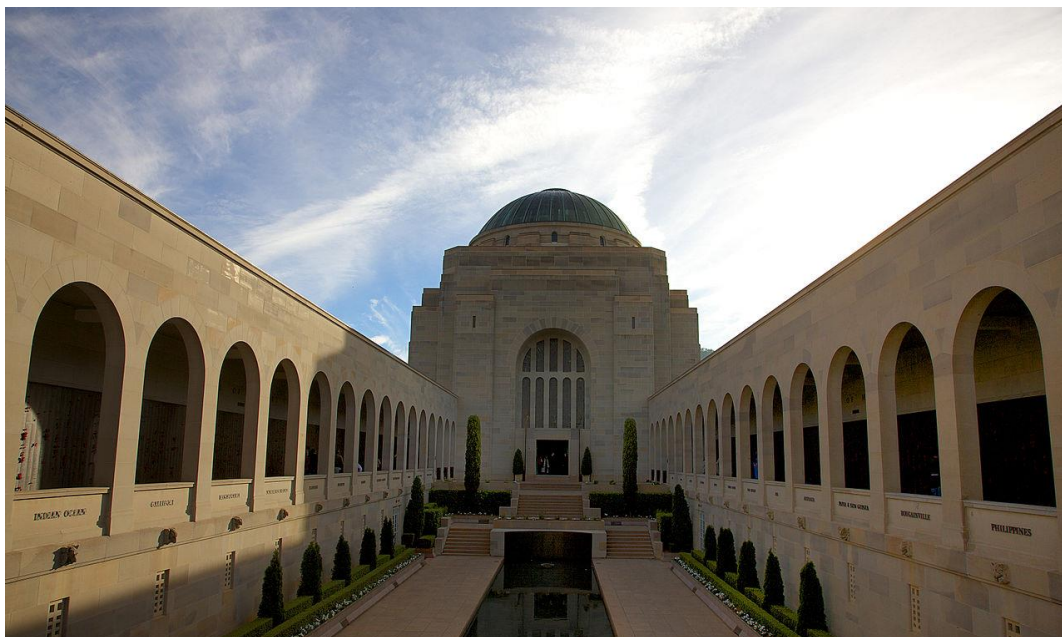
R. H. Clinton is remembered on the Merewether Memorial Gates, at Mitchell Park, Mitchell Street, Merewether, NSW.



Merewether Memorial Gates (Photos from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)



Petty Officer Stoker R. Clinton 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*)



Newspaper Notices

Sunk With Aboukir

NEWCASTLE NAVAL OFFICER

News has just been received through the Red Cross Society that Petty Officer Richard Henry Clinton, eldest son of Mrs F. Corr, of Railway Street, Merewether, was lost in the North Sea when the H.M.S. Aboukir was sunk on September 22, 1914. Petty Officer Clinton left Newcastle and joined the Imperial Navy on March 6, 1901. He served on H.M. ship Furious, Hermes (since sunk in the Channel), Roxburg and Shannon. He completed 12 years' service just before war broke out, and rejoined for another period. He was a native of the Newcastle district, and a grandson of the late Jacob Cullip, of Hinton, Hunter River.

(*Northern Times*, Newcastle, NSW – 17 April, 1917) & (*The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, NSW – 24 April, 1917)

In Memoriam

CLINTON – In loving memory of Petty-officer Richard Henry Clinton, eldest son of Mr and Mrs F. Corr, of Railway-street, Merewether, who lost his life on September 22, 1914, when the H.M.S. Aboukir was sunk in the North Sea; aged 35 years.

He gave his life for his country,
For honour, faith, and right,
With us his memory ever lives,
He fought a noble fight.

Inserted by his loving parents, brothers and sisters.

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 21 April, 1917)

Roll of Honour

CLINTON – In loving memory of Petty-officer Richard Henry Clinton, eldest son of Mr and Mrs F. Corr, of Railway-street, Merewether, who lost his life on September 22, 1914, when the H.M.S. Aboukir was sunk in the North Sea; aged 35 years.

He gave his life for his country,
For honour, faith, and right,
With us his memory ever lives,
He fought a noble fight.

Inserted by his loving parents, brothers and sisters.

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 22 September, 1917)

Roll of Honour

CLINTON – In loving memory of Petty-officer Richard Henry Clinton, son of Mrs F. Corr, of Railway-street, Merewether, who lost his life in the North Sea when the H.M.S. Aboukir sank on the 22nd September, 1914.

He sleeps along with his comrades,
In a hallowed grave unknown,
But his name is written in letters of love
On the hearts he has left at home.

Inserted by his loving father, mother, and brothers and sisters.

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 24 September, 1918)

Roll of Honour

CLINTON – In loving remembrance of Petty-officer Richard Henry Clinton, eldest son of Mr and Mrs F. Corr, of Railway-street, Merewether, who was killed in action in the North Sea, when the H.M.S. Aboukir was sunk, on September 22, 1914.

No sound from the church's passing bell,
As his messmates o'er his body bent,
But the Hand of Death was there,
And the ocean is now his monument.

Inserted by his loving parents, brothers and sisters.

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 22 September, 1922)

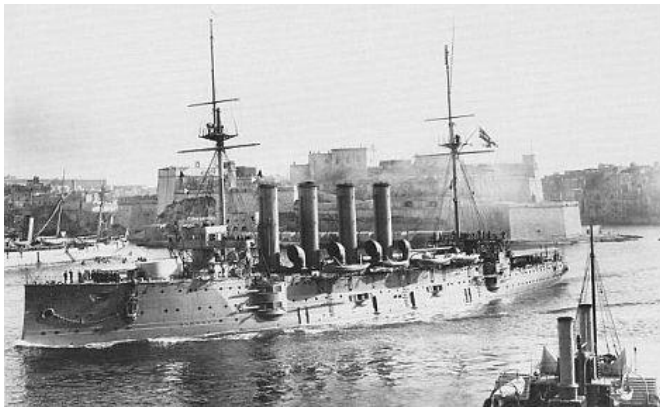
An insult to our war dead:

Dutch vessels ransack sunken British warships containing the bodies of 1,500 sailors for scrap metal

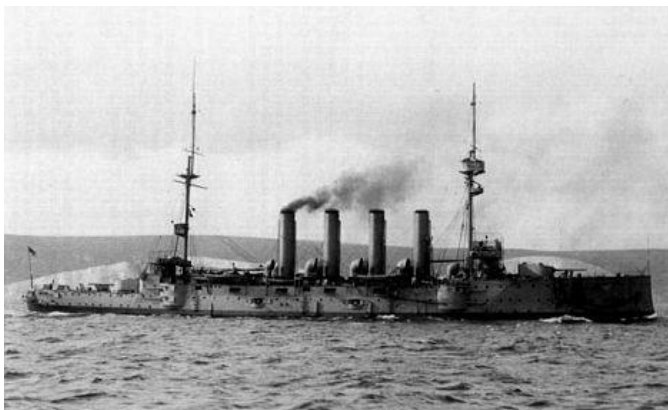
Dutch salvage vessels are illegally ransacking three sunken British cruisers in an attempt to find valuable scrap metal, it has emerged.

Looters have enraged the British naval community by scouring through the remains of the three warships sunk in the First World War and which are the final resting place of 1,500 sailors.

Netherlands police are now attempting to end the looters' activity, which has seen them use heavy-duty claws on cranes to tear through the shipwrecks 22 miles off the Dutch coast.



HMS Aboukir, above, HMS Hogue, below, and HMS Cressy, bottom, which were sunk off the Dutch coast by a German torpedo in 1914. They are the last resting places of 1,500 British seamen.



According to The Times, the Ministry of Defence and the Dutch Cultural Agency have condemned the disturbance of the war grave.

Vice-Admiral John McAnally, president of the Royal Naval Association, urged the metal hunt to stop in telling the paper: 'Leave our sailors alone. Let them rest in peace.'

The three ships were sunk off the Dutch coast on September 22, 1914, after being hit by torpedos from a German submarine.

HMS Aboukir was struck at 6.20am, while its fellow British warships Hogue and Cressy were also unable to avoid the German torpedos.

An estimated 1459 British soldiers aboard the armoured Royal Navy cruisers perished during the attack by the German U-9 sub.

The Times reported that local dive operators raised the alarm about the illegal salvage after seeing the damage to one of the North Sea's most popular diving sites.



Netherlands coastguard officials confirmed that salvage vessels were on the site and that they had been found with pieces of wreckage, but the destruction has not been stopped.

Marine conservationists and maritime historians have now warned Britain of the scavenging in a letter to the Ambassador to the Netherlands.

It has been alleged that two ships in the port of Scheveningen, the MS Bernica and MS Bela, are the ones responsible for the raids.

A spokesperson for the Ministry of Defence said: 'We do not condone the unauthorised disturbance of any wreck containing human remains.'

(Daily Mail - 28 September, 2011)

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.

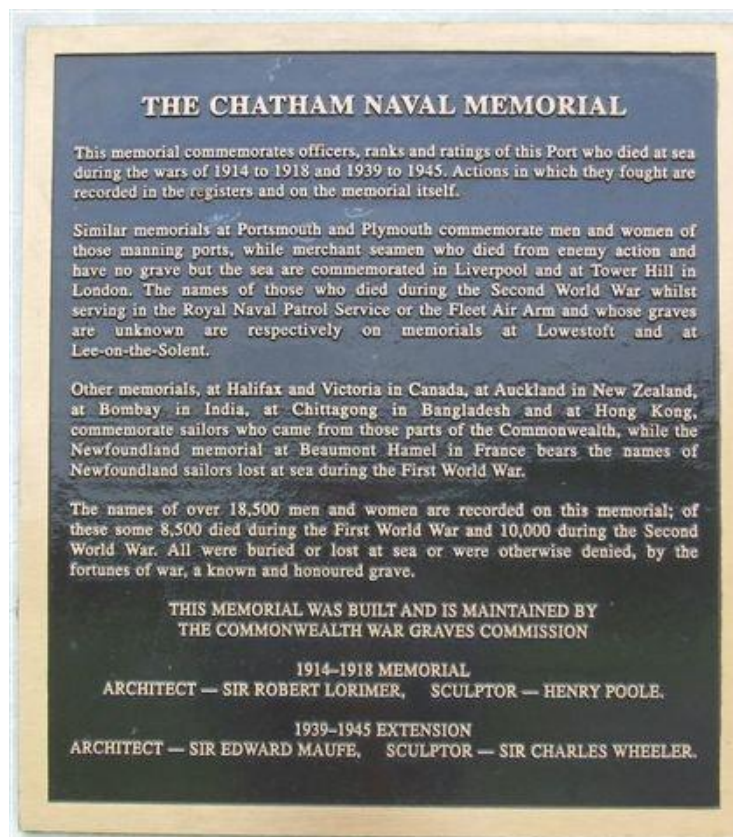
The Chatham Naval Memorial was unveiled by The Prince of Wales, the future Edward VIII, on 26 April 1924.



Chatham Naval Memorial (Photo by Clem Rutter)



Chatham Naval Memorial (Photos from CWGC)

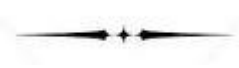
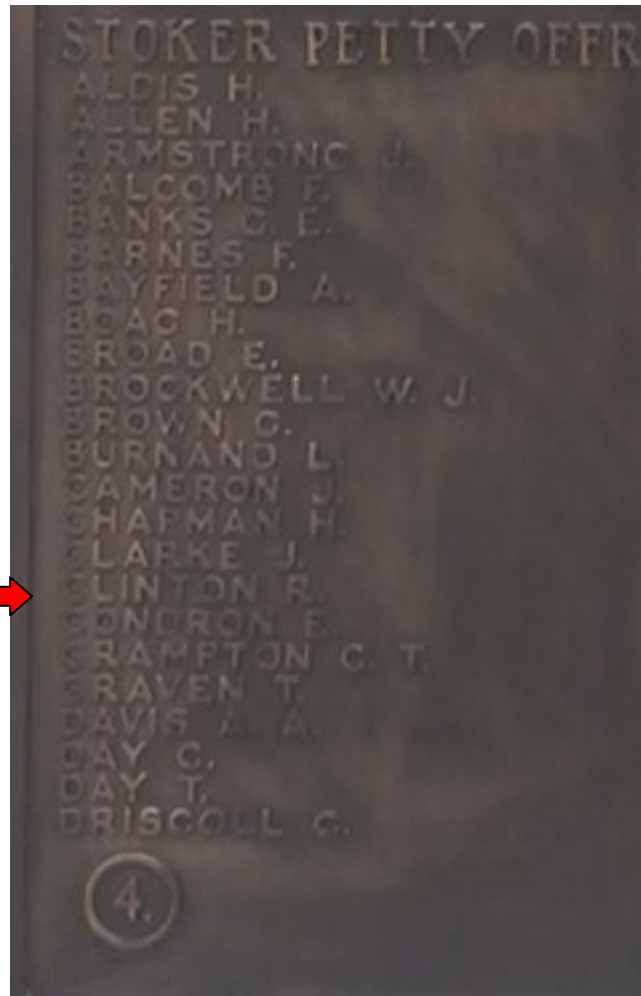


(Photo by Geoffrey Gillon)

Petty Officer Stoker R. Clinton is remembered on the Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent, England as he has no known grave - Memorial reference 4.



(Photo by Brad Evans)



Research on the Australians 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.