

# **Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent**



*Lest We Forget*

## **World War 1**



**STOKER 1ST CLASS 298111**

**A. STONE**

**H.M.S. NATAL**

**ROYAL NAVY**

**30TH DECEMBER, 1915 Age 31**

## Archibald STONE

Archibald Alfred Stone was born in Woollahra, Sydney, NSW on 30th November, 1882 (according to details provided when joining the Royal Navy, however, his birth was registered in the district of Paddington, NSW in 1884) to parents Joseph and Jane Stone (nee Stuckbury).

Archibald Stone joined the Royal Navy & was given a service number of 298111 (Chatham). His occupation was listed as Labourer.

Stoker 2nd Class Archibald Stone served on H.M.S. *Mildura* from 15th July, 1901 until 22nd January, 1902. He was then attached to a Shore establishment & on 29th August, 1902 engaged for 12 years while on H.M.S. *Katoomba*. Stoker 2nd Class Stone was transferred to H.M.S. *Penguin* on 11th September, 1902 & promoted to Stoker on 1st April, 1903 while on H.M.S. *Penguin*.

Stoker Archibald Stone was transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 25th March, 1905 then transferred to H.M.S. *Endymion* on 17th July, 1905. He was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 29th August, 1905 then transferred to H.M.S. *Pioneer* on 5th September, 1905. Stoker Archibald Stone was transferred to H.M.S. *Powerful* on 1st January, 1906 then to H.M.S. *Sydney Yard* (?) on 6th February, 1906. He was transferred to H.M.S. *Pyramus* on 27th April, 1907 & promoted to Leading Stoker on 27th April, 1907.

Leading Stoker Archibald Stone was transferred to H.M.S. *Psyche* on 12th July, 1907 then to H.M.S. *Crescent* on 23rd August, 1907. He was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 6th October, 1907 then to H.M.S. *Shannon* on 10th March, 1908. Leading Stoker Archibald Stone was transferred to H.M.S. *Tenedos* on 2nd April, 1908 then transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 12th September, 1908. He was then transferred to H.M.S. *Inflexible* on 20th October, 1908 then back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 19th December, 1908. Leading Stoker Archibald Stone was transferred to H.M.S. *Sappho* on 19th January, 1909 then transferred to H.M.S. *Pegasus* on 3rd March, 1909. He was Stoker 1st Class from 24th April, 1909 on H.M.S. *Pegasus* until 25th August, 1909 when he spent 14 days in cells. Stoker 1st Class Stone was reinstated on 9th September, 1909 until 8th January, 1911 when he spent 10 days in cells. Stoker 1st Class Stone was reinstated on H.M.S. *Pegasus* on 19th January, 1911.

The 1911 England Census recorded Archibald Stone, aged 28, Stoker 1st Class on H.M.S. *Pegasus*, a 3rd Class Cruiser of the Royal Navy positioned at Hobart, Tasmania on the night of Sunday 2nd April, 1911.

Stoker 1st Class Archibald Stone was transferred from H.M.S. *Pegasus* on 3rd May, 1911 to H.M.S. *Edgar* then transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 23rd July, 1911. He was transferred to H.M.S. *Lord Nelson* on 7th September, 1911 until 13th May, 1912 when he spent 14 days in cells. Stoker 1st Class Stone was reinstated to H.M.S. *Lord Nelson* on 28th May, 1912. Stoker 1st Class Archibald Stone was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 1st July, 1913 then transferred to H.M.S. *Forward* on 16th July, 1913. He was given 26 days detention for absence from 22nd July, 1913. Stoker 1st Class Archibald Stone was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* from 17th August to 18th August, 1913 then back to H.M.S. *Forward* on 19th August, 1913 to 10th November, 1914 when he was given 90 days detention.

Stoker 1st Class Archibald Stone was transferred to H.M.S. *Natal* on 12th January, 1914.

Archibald Stone married Ettie Camellia Long on 28th November, 1915 in Christ Church, Southwark, London, England. Archibald Stone was listed as a 31 year old, Stoker in Royal Navy – H.M.S. *Natal* & his father was listed as William Joseph Stone, Carpenter. Ettie Camellia Long was listed as a 30 year old, from 12 Hatfield Place. Her father was listed as Henry Winchester Long (deceased), Carpenter.

Newspaper Notice – *The West Australian*, Perth, Western Australia – 16 May, 1916:

### **MARRIAGES**

STONE-LONG- On November 28, 1915, at Christ Church, Southwark, London, by the Rev. Edgar J. Baker, Archibald Alfred Stone, only son of Mrs H. Clarke, W.A., to Ettie Long, of Lambeth, London.

[Jane Clarke, mother of Archibald Stone, had married Henry Resistance Clarke, in Fremantle, Western Australia in 1903.]

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Stoker 1st Class Archibald Stone, of H.M.S. *Natal*, Royal Navy, was originally listed as “supposed drowned, missing” on 30th December, 1915 when an internal explosion occurred on H.M.S. *Natal* while at Cromarty Firth, Scotland. His death was by means other than disease, accident or enemy. His body was not recovered for burial.



**The upturned hull of H.M.S. *Natal* in Cromarty Firth**

### **H.M.S. *Natal***

H.M.S. *Natal* was a Warrior-class armoured cruiser built for the Royal Navy in the first decade of the 20th century. She escorted the royal yacht in 1911–1912 for the newly crowned King George V's trip to India to attend the Delhi Durbar. During World War I the ship was assigned to the 2nd Cruiser Squadron of the Grand Fleet, but did not participate in any battles.

*Natal* was ordered as part of the 1903–04 naval construction programme as the second of four armoured cruisers. She was laid down on 6 January 1904 at Barrow-in-Furness by Vickers, Sons & Maxim. She was christened on 30 September 1905 by Louisa Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire and completed on 5 March 1907 at the cost of £1,218,244.

At the outbreak of war, she joined the Grand Fleet and in January 1915 was refitted at Cromarty. *Natal* spent much of 1915 uneventfully patrolling the North Sea until she began a brief refit at the Birkenhead shipyard of Cammell

Laird on 22 November. On 5 December the ship rejoined the 2nd Cruiser Squadron at Scapa Flow. Twelve days later the squadron sailed to Cromarty Firth.

On 30 December 1915, *Natal* was lying in the Cromarty Firth with her squadron, under the command of Captain Eric Back. The captain was hosting a film party aboard and had invited the wives and children of his officers, one civilian friend and his family, and nurses from the nearby hospital ship *Drina* to attend. A total of seven women, one civilian male, and three children were in attendance that afternoon.

Shortly after 15:25, and without warning, a series of violent explosions tore through the rear part of the ship. She capsized five minutes later. Some thought that she had been torpedoed by a German U-boat or detonated a submarine-laid mine, but examination of the wreckage revealed that the explosions were internal. The divers sent to investigate the ship reported that the explosions began in either the rear 9.2-inch shellroom or the 3-pounder and small arms magazine. The Admiralty court-martial into the causes of her loss concluded that it was caused by an internal ammunition explosion, possibly due to faulty cordite. The Admiralty issued a revised list of the dead and missing that totalled 390 in January 1916, but did not list the women and children on board that day. Losses are listed from 390 to 421.

With her hull still visible at low water, it was Royal Navy practice on entering and leaving Cromarty right up to World War II for every warship to sound "Still", and for officers and men to come to attention as they passed the wreck. After numerous attempts, much of the ship was salvaged. The remainder was blown up in the 1970s to level the wreck so that it would not be a hazard to navigation.

The remains of her wreck are designated as a protected place under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 as a war grave. *(information from Wikipedia)*

Stoker 1st Class Archibald Stone was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Stoker 1st Class Archibald Stone – service number 298111, aged 31, of H.M.S. "Natal", Royal Navy. He was the son of Joseph and Jean Stone, of Perth, Western Australia; husband of Ettie C. Stone, of 24 Commercial Rd., Lambeth, London.

A memorial to H.M.S. *Natal* was erected in Durban in 1927.



**Memorial to deceased of H.M.S. *Natal* – Durban** (Photo by JMK)

A garden called Natal Gardens was opened on Saturday 15 July 2000, at Invergordon, Scotland which contains a commemorative plaque remembering *Natal*. It has a strong maritime theme, including a water feature and a wooden walkway & is tended by volunteers.



**Natal Gardens – Invergordon, Scotland**

Stoker 1st Class Archibald Stone is remembered on the Online London WW Memorial 1914-1918.



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **H.M.S. NATAL**

#### **OFFICIAL CORRECTIONS IN CASUALTY LIST**

The Secretary of the Admiralty announces the following casualties and corrections in connection with the loss of H.M.S. Natal:-

#### **MISSING**

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Stone, Archibald, stoker.....

*(Newcastle Journal, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, England - 5 January, 1916)*

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#### **DEATHS**

STONE – On December 30, 1915 Archibald Alfred, who went down with his ship the late H.M.S. Natal, only dearly loved son of Mrs H. Clarke, and brother of Mesdames S. Deans, T. Penberthy and S. Atkins, of W.A.; aged 30 years. Farewell, son and brother, dear, until the breaking of the dawn.

*(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 16 May, 1916) & (Western Mail, Perth, Western Australia – 19 May, 1916)*

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#### **HMS Natal World War One disaster remembered**



*HMS Natal was launched in Barrow-in-Furness in 1905*

The loss of 421 people including sailors, women and children when a warship sank during WW1 is being marked by a series of events.

HMS Natal capsized in the Cromarty Firth in the Highlands minutes after ammunition on board exploded.

© Cathy Sedgwick 2018

Natal's captain was hosting a film show for officers, their wives and a local family. About 400 of the crew survived because they were on shore leave.

A church service and a wreath laying are among the commemorative events.

A buoy marks the site of the sinking today. Much of the steel from the warship was salvaged after the incident.



*A wreath has been laid at the Natal marker buoy*

Communities along the Cromarty Firth have come together to remember both the 110th anniversary of the Natal's launch at Barrow-in-Furness on 30 September 1905, and 100 years since it sank on 30 December 1915.

Valerie Campbell-Smith, a trustee of Invergordon Museum, said the "heart-rending disaster" was covered up at the time.

She said: "This came early on in the war and I don't think they (the government and Admiralty) wanted to admit more than 400 died in their own land."

There were rumours at the time that the explosion was caused by sabotage, she added.

The commemorative events have begun with a memorial church service at Invergordon Parish Church.

It was followed by a wreath-laying ceremony at the Natal buoy involving Rosalind Cahill, grand-daughter of the ship's Capt Eric Back.

Cromarty school pupils will pay their own tribute with a ceremony at 15 Natal graves in the village cemetery.

Pipers will introduce and close the event, which will include a bugler from the band of the Royal Marines playing the Last Post.

Later, the full marching band of the Royal Marines will perform Beating the Retreat at Cromarty Harbour where a memorial panel telling the story of the disaster will be unveiled.



*The Cromarty Firth was an important anchorage for the Royal Navy before, during and after World War One.*

HMS Natal was part of a squadron of naval vessels at anchor in the firth, a key anchorage for the Royal Navy before, during and after WW1.

Capt Back had invited officers, their families and also nurses from Drina, a nearby hospital ship, on to the cruiser for a Christmas film party.

The guests included a local husband and wife and their three children.

Hundreds of members of Natal's crew were on shore leave. Some were playing football when the series of powerful explosion tore through the ship.

Natal capsized within five minutes.

Faulty cordite was blamed for causing ammunition to explode.

*(BBC News, Scotland – 30 September, 2015)*

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## **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)



**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 Beaumont 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.

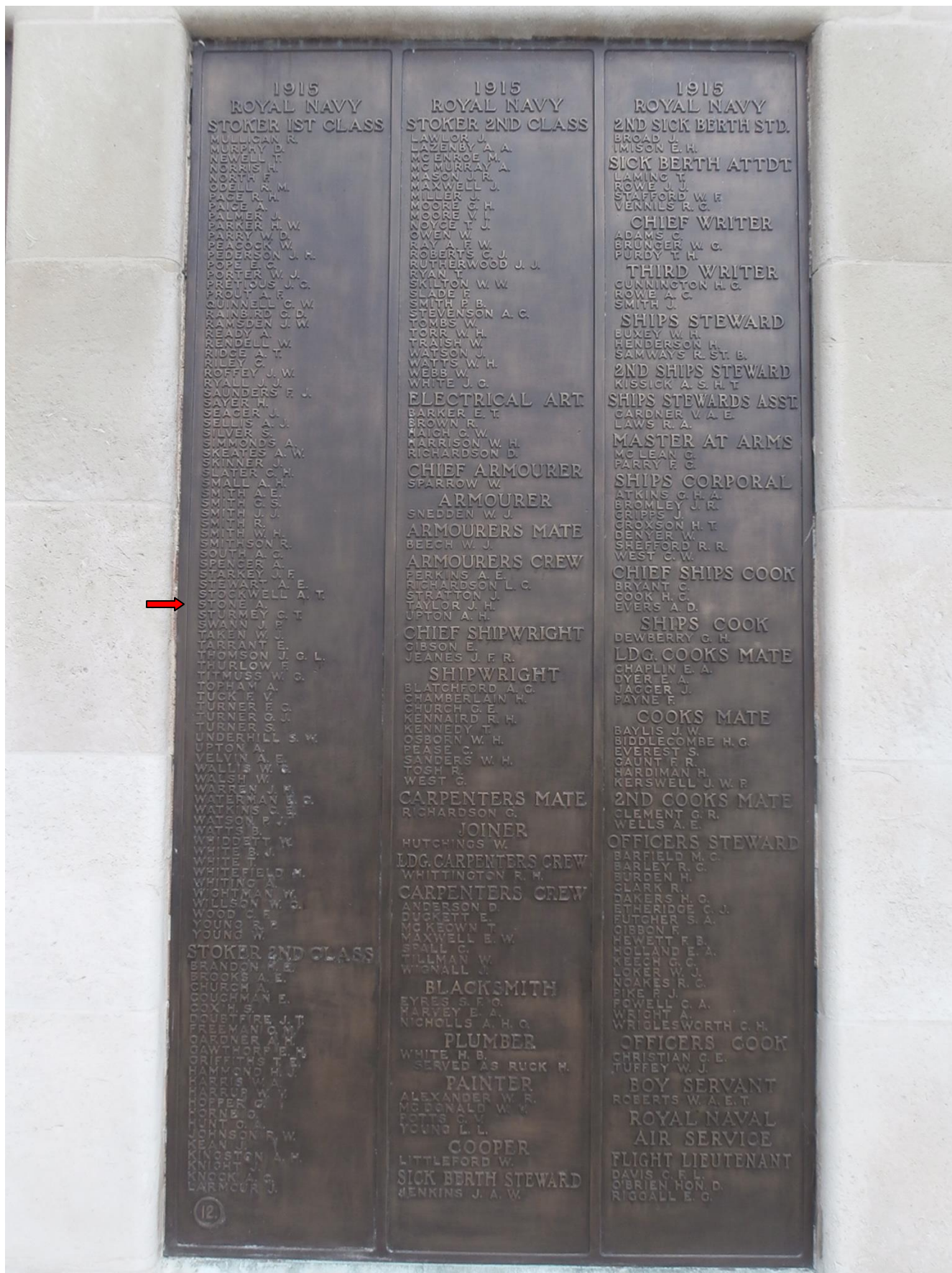
THIS MEMORIAL WAS BUILT AND IS MAINTAINED BY  
THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

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)

Photo of Stoker 1<sup>st</sup> Class A. Stone is remembered on the Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent, England as he has no known grave - Memorial reference 12.



(Photo by Brad Evans)

1915  
ROYAL NAVY  
STOKER 1ST CLASS

MULLIGAN R.  
MURPHY D.  
NEWELL T.  
NORRIS H.  
NORTA F.  
ODELL R. M.  
PACE R. W.  
PALCE A.  
PALMER J.  
PARKER A. W.  
PARRY W. B.  
PEACOCK W.  
PEDERSON J. R.  
POPE E. C.  
PORTER W. J.  
PRETIOUS A. G.  
PROUT A. R.  
QUINNELL G. W.  
RAMSRO C. D.  
RAMSDEN J. W.  
READY A.  
RENDELL W.  
RIDGE A. T.  
RILEY C.  
ROFFEY J. W.  
RYALL J. J.  
SAUNDERS R. J.  
SAYER H.  
SEACER J.  
SELLIS A. J.  
SILVER S.  
SIMMONS A.  
SKEATES A. W.  
SKINNER J.  
SLATER C. H.  
SMALL A. F.  
SMITH A. E.  
SMITH G. S.  
SMITH J. J.  
SMITH R. J.  
SMITH W. H.  
SMITHSON R.  
SOUTH A. C.  
SPENCER A.  
STARKY J. F.  
STEWART A. E.  
STOCKWELL A. T.  
STONE A.  
STURMEY C. T.  
SWANN J. P.

