



Stuart, Percy Charles

Private Royal Marine Light Infantry Chatham Division

Age 29

Date of Death: 05/09/1914

Service No: CH/14085

He enlisted 28th September 1903 at the age of 18. He had been born 5th September 1885. His father was William Goldsmith Stuart & his mother Phyllis. The 1901 census shows Percy C Stuart aged 15 born in Walthamstow living in Shoreditch working as a car maker. His mother's name is spelt Phillis aged 44 & born in Fingringhoe (also wrongly spelt in the Census). His father is listed as William G. Stuart aged 50 working as a cycle packer & porter. His place of birth is given as London, All Hallows in the City. His grandfather was James Warner born 1815 & died September 1885 & grandmother Elizabeth born 1828 died 1909. They are both buried in Fingringhoe graveyard. Their tombstone has a memorial to Percy.



HMS Pathfinder c.1912

Original press report(*) believed she had hit a mine near her magazine. Out of the crew of 264, 58 were saved, 4 were listed as killed, 13 wounded and 242 missing. The shock of the explosion was felt by a trawler 10 miles distant, and her crew saw H. M. S. Pathfinder upright in the water for a moment before she disappeared.

In practice it was subsequently learned she had been torpedoed by *U.21* off the east coast of Scotland on 5th September 1914. She was so short of coal whilst on patrol that she could only manage a speed of 5 knots making her an easy target. She was the first British warship to be sunk by a torpedo. With the first live torpedo fired by a submarine in wartime, Kpt Lt. Otto Hensing from *SM U 21* hit the British light cruiser *HMS Pathfinder* (3,000 tons) off the Firth of Forth on a calm, sunlit day. The cruiser sank within minutes with heavy loss of life. Hensing, who was to become one of Germany's leading U-boat aces, remained in command of *SM U 21* for 3 years and conducted 21 war patrols, during which he sank 36 ships, including two battleships and two cruisers.



Percy held the 1914 -1915 Star, 1914-20 War Medal & 1914-1919 Victory Medal

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead

Grave/Memorial Reference: 4.

Cemetery: CHATHAM NAVAL MEMORIAL



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After the First World War, an appropriate way had to be found of commemorating those members of the Royal Navy who had no known grave, the majority of deaths having occurred at sea where no permanent memorial could be provided. 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 memorials were designed by Sir Robert Lorimer, who had already carried out a considerable amount of work for the Commission, with sculpture by Henry Poole. After the Second World War it was decided that the naval memorials should be extended to provide space for commemorating the naval dead without graves of that war, but since the three sites were dissimilar, a different architectural treatment was required for each. The architect for the Second World War extension at Chatham was Sir Edward Maufe (who also designed the Air Forces memorial at Runnymede) and

the additional sculpture was by Charles Wheeler and William McMillan. Chatham Naval Memorial commemorates more than 8,500 sailors of the First World War and over 10,000 from the Second World War.

OTHER MEMORIALS There is a memorial in the graveyard at Saint Andrew's Fingringhoe. It is on the reverse side of his grandparents tombstone. In 2009 the inscription has become eroded but it read in 1997:-

“In loving memory

of

PERCY CHARLES STUART RMLI

son of WILLIAM GOLDSMITH & PHYLLIS STUART

grandson of J. & E. WARNER

who went down in the service of his country

in H. M. S. Pathfinder

on Sept 5th 1914

aged 29 years.

Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did He

In heaven and in earth in the sea and

All deep places

Psalm 135 verse 6



THE UNITED BENEFICE OF ABBERTON, EAST DONYPOND, FINGRINGHOE, LANGENHOE