



MUMFORD, JOHN ROBERT

Nationality: United Kingdom

Petty Officer Telegraphist Service No: C/J 94600

Royal Navy *H.M.S. Walney*

Age: 40

Date of Death: 08/11/1942

Son of Mr. and Mrs. P. F. Mumford, of Fingringhoe, Essex.



His medal entitlement is not known but should have included :- The 1939-45 Star, the Atlantic Medal the Africa Star, with clasp "*North Africa 1942-4*" & the 1939-45 War Medal

HMS Walney was sunk by gunfire within Oran Harbour after first ramming both the outer and inner booms during "Operation Reservist".

Walney was accompanied by her sister ship *HMS Hartland* in their attempt to capture the harbour.

On board the *Walney* when she was sunk were 200 men of the 6th US Armored Infantry Division and a 35-strong US Naval contingent under the command of Lieutenant Commander G. D. Dickey U. S.N. aboard, and 6 US Marines.

The French sloop *La Surprise* shelled her until the blazing hull capsized and sank. There were only 14 survivors from the crew of the *Walney* itself, one officer (Lt. Wallace Mosely R.N.) and 13 ratings. The commanding officer of the operation (see also further below) A/Captain Frederick Thornton Peters DSO, DSC. R.N. also survived. 81 of *Walney's* crew went down with the ship along with all but a few of the troops carried aboard.

The ships captain, Lieutenant Commander Peter Capel Meyrick R.N. was blown to bits on the bridge by a shell from a broadside, which also killed fifteen other officers and ratings gathered there. The only one to survive on the bridge was A/Captain Frederick Thornton Peters DSO, DSC. R.N. who was the Group Commander of the

whole operation, who was in overall charge of both Cutters, the two ML's smoke-layers before breaching the booms, the various boarding parties and the landing of the troops. A/Captain Thornton Peters who although blinded in one eye survived the assault. (He was killed when returning to the UK from the operation in a plane crash). He was awarded a 'Victoria Cross' for his part in the operation.

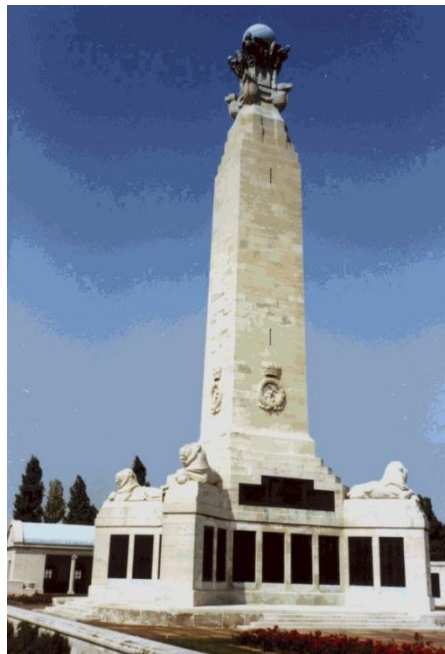


The HMS Walney (USCG Sebago)

Ex- Coastguard Pennant Number Y04 - Displacement 1700 tons - Armament 5 inch guns 8 0.5" machine guns (4x2) Depth charge throwers. Max speed 16 knots. Prior to "Operation Torch", the landings at Oran, HMS Walney had operated in the South Atlantic monitoring wireless communications between German U-boats and their supply vessels plus their Bases in Occupied Europe

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead Grave/Memorial Reference: 59, 2.

Cemetery: CHATHAM NAVAL MEMORIAL



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