



remembrance ni

Northern Irish Submariners in WW2

The Northern Ireland contribution to HM submarines in World War II is most remarkable. It includes bravery to the utmost – a Victoria Cross awarded to James Magennis – the tactical experience and analysis of submarine warfare by Arthur Hezlett, the youngest admiral appointed – as well as at least 27 men who died in service in HM submarines during the war.



Submarine heroes: Leading Seaman James Magennis and Lieutenant Ian Fraser outside Buckingham Palace having been invested with the Victoria Cross by King George VI at Buckingham Palace on the 11th December 1945

The submarine war

In World War 2, as they did in World War 1, submarines were widely used by both sides as the ultimate weapon of naval blockade, sinking large numbers of both merchant ships and warships, resulting in either paralyzing the enemy's military industry and war effort by causing severe shortages of war materials and products and preventing maritime troop transfers, or forcing the enemy to dedicate enormous resources to anti submarine warfare in order to prevent that from happening, resources which could otherwise be used in the enemy's main war effort.

The submarine is the classic weapon of the war of attrition, where victory is achieved by the side which inflicts significantly more losses in men and material to the enemy than it suffers, and monthly ship tonnage loss counts reflect success or failure better than battle maps. The submarine's ability to attack almost anywhere and anytime, in total surprise and with devastating results, makes it a highly efficient weapon, in which a small crew of about 40 to 80 sailors can do more damage than 1000 sailors in a battleship, and for a fraction of the cost, and a much larger anti-submarine force is required in order to efficiently fight the submarine.

The same features of the submarine also make it the perfect blockade runner, capable of quietly smuggling secret agents and commandos, or small amounts of high importance cargo, to and from almost any enemy beach or a blockaded harbour, making the submarine one of the main vehicles of intelligence and special forces warfare.

Unlike the post war nuclear submarines, World War 2 submarines had quite limited underwater speed, range, and endurance. They usually sailed on the surface, especially at night, and submerged only when they had to, to avoid being detected and attacked. In the first years of the war, German submarines even made group night attacks while surfaced, as if they were surface torpedo boats. As radar and aircraft were more widely used to detect and attack

submarines, they were forced to remain submerged most of the time, and new technical and electronic improvements were invented, mostly by the Germans, to significantly improve the submarine's underwater performance, and to enhance its awareness to nearby danger.

The Allies primary maritime tasks at the outbreak of the war were based on the assumption that Britain and France would engage the European Axis powers of Germany and Italy. The Royal Navy would be responsible for the North Sea and most of the Atlantic, although the French would contribute some forces. In the Mediterranean, defence would be shared between both Navies.

The Royal Navy, still the largest in the world in September 1939, included 60 mainly modern submarines, with nine building. They were reasonably well-equipped with effective guns, torpedoes and fire control. Approximately 21 were based in Home waters and four in the Atlantic. The main defined role for the Home Fleet submarines appears to be patrolling off southwest Norway and the German North Sea bases for surface raiders and U-boats on passage.

As the war progressed, the Royal Navy and its few Allied-manned submarines neither had the target opportunities of the German U-boats in the Atlantic Ocean nor the US submarines in the Pacific, and certainly in the early years suffered heavy losses for comparatively few gains at least in Axis warships.

However account has to be taken of such vital activities as (i) the heavy sinking of merchant ships in the Mediterranean enabling the battle for North Africa, (ii) the many dangerous cloak-and-dagger operations so vital to Churchill's command to "set Europe alight", (iii) helping to cut supply routes to Germany from Norway and Japanese supply routes to Burma, and (iv) the role played in clearing the seas of Axis shipping. The figures for merchant shipping sunk by British submarines are not complete but give some idea of their successes.

Perhaps one example would suffice to illustrate these otherwise cold statistics - HMS Storm, the first British submarine commanded by a RNVR officer, Commander Edward Young DSO, DSC RNV(S)R. After twelve months from January 1944 to January 1945 on patrol in the SE Asia area, his "Jolly Roger" recorded three torpedo sinkings, seven gunnery sinkings, one cloak-and-dagger special operation, and "the little schooner surmounting a row of dots ... indicating the results of the Celebes patrol". He prefaces these comments by writing that "Storm's Jolly Roger boasted a small bag compared with those of many other, more famous submarines". ("One of Our Submarines" by Edward Young, 1953)

The German navy commenced World War II with fifty-six submarines, of which only twenty four were suitable for operations in the Atlantic. In the five and a half years of the war, German shipyards built 1,156 U-boats, of which 784 were lost from enemy action or other causes.

Their toll of enemy shipping was 2,603 merchant ships of over 13½ million tons, and 175 naval vessels of all types.

In terms of human lives, 28,000 German U-boat crew of the total 40,900 men recruited into the service lost their lives and 5,000 were taken prisoners of war. Some 30,000 men of the allied merchant service died, in addition to an unknown number of Allied naval personnel.

When the war ended, 156 U-boats surrendered, 221 were scuttled by their own crews and two escaped to Argentina.

German U-boats in World War II operated in all oceans of the world and were responsible for sinking enemy ships in areas as far distant as the Dutch East Indies and the Arctic Ocean.

Royal Navy submarine losses in World War II were 79. These were conventional vessels and do not include seven X craft, 18 chariots and 5 Welman craft. The first RN loss was HMS Oxley (formerly HMAS Oxley), which was accidentally sunk in a collision with the

submarine Triton off Stavanger on 10th September 1939. The last vessel lost was HMS Porpoise, based at Fremantle, which was sunk by Japanese aircraft in the Malacca Straits on 16th January 1945.

Only one British submarine was captured by the enemy in World War II. She was HMS Seal which was heavily damaged after striking a mine in Norwegian waters. On board was Able Seaman Hugh Reynolds from Ballymena. Four submarines were sunk by our own forces and seven were lost by unknown causes.

Belfast submariner, James Joseph Magennis VC, MiD

Submarine heroes: Leading Seaman James Magennis and Lieutenant Ian Fraser outside Buckingham Palace having been invested with the Victoria Cross by King George VI at Buckingham Palace on the 11th December 1945

James Joseph Magennis was born on 27 October 1919 at 4 Majorca Street, Belfast. He attended St Finian's School, Falls Road, Belfast until 1935, when he enlisted in the Royal Navy. He served on several warships before being posted to HMS Kandahar in October 1939. In May 1940 he saw action in the North Sea and later served in the Mediterranean. In December 1941, when his ship was sunk by a mine off Tripoli, he had to swim to safety.

In December 1942 Magennis entered the Submarine Service and volunteered for special service in X-class 'midget' submarines, training as a diver. In September 1943 he took part in the first major use of the X-craft when two submarines penetrated Kaafjord, north Norway, and disabled the German battleship Tirpitz. For his part Magennis was mentioned in dispatches. In 1944 Magennis was promoted to leading seaman and trained on a new class of XE submarines designed for use in tropical waters. Early in 1945 his unit was sent out to Australia. In July 1945 they attacked two

Japanese cruisers, Myoko and Takao, moored in the Johore Strait. Magennis's submarine, XE3, was given the Takao as target.

For their part in the operation Magennis and the commander of the submarine, Lieutenant Ian Fraser, were each awarded the Victoria Cross.

The formal citation reads - The King has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the Victoria Cross for valour to Temporary Acting Leading Seaman James Joseph Magennis, D/KX144907. Leading Seaman Magennis served as diver in His Majesty's Midget Submarine XE3 for her attack on 31 July 1945 on a Japanese cruiser of the Atago class. Because XE3 was tightly jammed under the target the diver's hatch could not be fully opened, and Magennis had to squeeze himself through the narrow space available. He experienced great difficulty in placing the limpets on the bottom of the cruiser owing both to the foul state of the cruisers bottom and to the prominent slope upon which the limpets would not hold. Before a limpet could be placed therefore Magennis had thoroughly to scrape the area clean of barnacles, and in order to secure the limpets he had to tie them in pairs by a line passing under the cruisers keel. This was very tiring work for a diver, and he was moreover handicapped by a steady leakage of oxygen which was ascending in bubbles to the surface. A lesser man would have been content to place a few limpets and then to return to the craft. Magennis, however, persisted until he had placed his full outfit before returning to the craft in an exhausted condition. Shortly after withdrawing Lt. Fraser endeavoured to jettison his limpet carriers, but one of these would not release itself and fall clear of the craft. Despite his exhaustion, his oxygen leak and the fact that there was every probability of his being sighted, Magennis at once volunteered to leave the craft and free the carrier rather than allow a less experienced diver to undertake the job. After seven minutes of nerve racking work he succeeded in releasing the mine carrier. Magennis displayed very great courage and devotion to duty and complete disregard for his own safety.

Magennis's award led to a period of great celebrity just after the war. He was given a civic reception in December 1945 and the £3000 proceeds of a public subscription. However, the Belfast city fathers refused to grant him the freedom of the city.

In 1946 Magennis married Edna Skidmore. He left the navy in 1949 and returned to Belfast, where he found it hard to make a living and in 1952 sold his medal for £100. Magennis left Belfast after his son David, six, was killed by a trolley bus, settling in his wife Edna's home town, Bradford, west Yorkshire in 1955. He died of cancer in 1986, aged 66.

Magennis is commemorated by a memorial in his adopted home of Bradford. In October 1999, following a lengthy local campaign, a six foot-high Portland stone and bronze memorial to him was unveiled in the grounds of Belfast city hall. There is also a mural to him in Tullycarnet Estate in East Belfast.

The VC awarded to James Magennis was the first purchased by Lord Ashcroft for the collection which he has donated to the Imperial War Museum. There is a portrait of James Magennis commissioned by the Northern Ireland War Memorial museum and displayed there.

Superb submarine commander and tactician - Admiral Sir Arthur Hezlet

Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur Hezlet was a Second World War submarine ace later appointed the Royal Navy's youngest captain at 36 and its youngest admiral at 45.

In 1941 he was sent as relief commanding officer in the "Fighting" 10th Submarine Flotilla based at Malta, where he took over command of Upholder from Lieutenant David Wanklyn, VC, for what was to be his only uneventful patrol.



**Vice-
Admiral
Sir
Arthur
Hezlet**

Hezlet then took temporary command of Unique, the sole survivor of three submarines sent to patrol the shallow waters off Tunisia which attacked a convoy bound for North Africa. He sank the 11,400-ton troopship *Esperia*, but was counter-attacked and, not knowing that Unique was leaking fuel from an external tank which gave away his position, he was bombed repeatedly by an Italian flying boat. Nevertheless, he survived and after only nine days in command was awarded the DSC for his courage and skill.

Next Hezlet stood in for "Black" Mackenzie, in command of *Ursula*, and was again successful against a convoy. Later, while attempting to destroy a railway bridge by gunfire, he exchanged shots with the Italian army before finally diving when attacked by aircraft.

Hezlet sailed for home in September 1941. Such was the shortage of ammunition on Malta that he was only allowed to take two



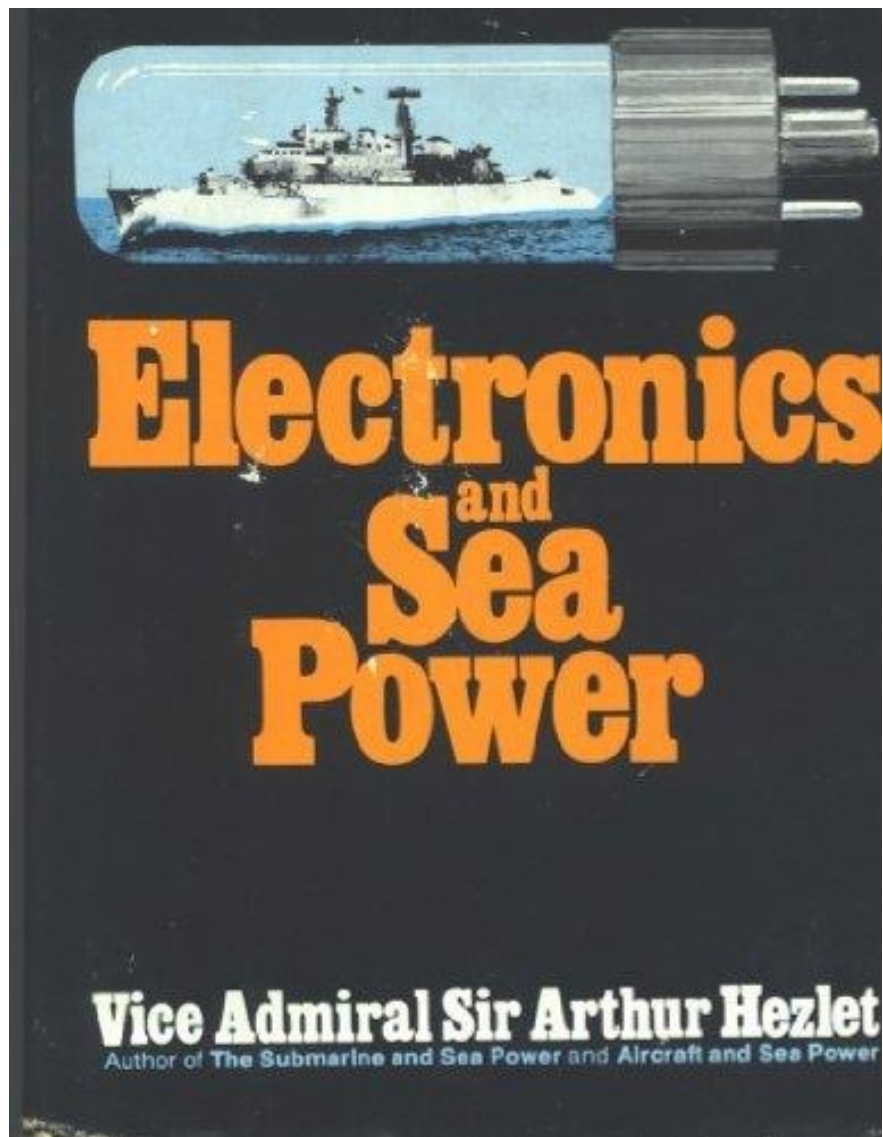
torpedoes with him, but en route he was ordered on patrols off the Azores and the west coast of occupied France.

Between March and May 1942 he commanded the submarine Trident in the Arctic, where he was ordered to wait in ambush for German capital ships to emerge from hiding in the Norwegian fjords; to his chagrin he had to let two U-boats pass when he thought bigger game was afoot. For his part in the protection of convoy PQ16 he was mentioned in dispatches.

In September 1942 Hezlet began to work with midget submarines, for which he devised the "Hezlet Rail", a bar and strap fitted to stop men being washed off casings. He commanded Thresher, one of six towing submarines which took part in Operation Source, the attack by midget submarines on German ships in Altenfjord; he was mentioned in dispatches a second time for outstanding courage and devotion to duty.

Then, in 1944-45, Hezlet made the submarine Trenchant famous, and synonymous with himself. His skilful personal memoir "HMS Trenchant at War: from Chatham to the Banka Strait" was published in 2001 to coincide with the centenary of the British Submarine Service.

On September 23 1944, off Penang in the Straits of Malacca, he intercepted the long-range German submarine U-859, which was one hour from the end of a six-month voyage from Kiel with a secret cargo destined for the Japanese munitions industry. In difficult conditions with a heavy swell running and a second U-boat lurking, Hezlet conducted a snap attack using his stern tubes, and hit U-859 amidships.



He took 10 prisoners from the water before diving to avoid a counter-attack. As he was closing the hatch a frightened face appeared, and an eleventh German, who preferred British imprisonment to Japanese hospitality, politely said: "Wait for me, please."

In gratitude the prisoners got Trenchant's German-designed water distillation plant to work for the first time during the commission. Hezlet was awarded his first DSO for outstanding courage, skill and undaunted devotion to duty.

He also conducted the last two-man submarine, or chariot, attack of the war. When this was launched at the Japanese-held harbour of Phuket, Thailand, it was thought to be tantamount to suicide.

But Hezlet carried two chariots there and, after careful reconnaissance, recovered the crews, in time for them to watch their targets blowing up.

On June 8 1945 he dived through a minefield to attack the Japanese heavy cruiser Ashigara, which had embarked some 1,600 troops and matériel in Batavia (modern Jakarta); he had last seen Ashigara in 1937 at King George VI's coronation review. Alerted by signal intelligence the American submarines Blueback and Chub had sighted a group of warships but were unable to reach a firing position. The American radio messages were intercepted by Hezlet, accompanied by Guy Clarabut in Stygian.

As the senior officer, Hezlet set up an ambush in the Banka Strait between the south-eastern coast of Sumatra and Banka Island, through which he was sure the cruiser would pass when she returned to Singapore. Twice detected and attacked by the escorting Japanese destroyer Kamikaze, he sighted Ashigara hugging the Sumatran coast. First Clarabut attacked the destroyer but missed, then Hezlet fired eight torpedoes from his bow tubes at 4,800 yards range at Ashigara, which tried to comb the tracks but was trapped between the shore and a minefield. As Ashigara disappeared behind a pall of smoke, Hezlet summoned more than 30 of his crew to witness their handiwork through the periscope, before being reattacked by Kamikaze and making for the open sea. Hezlet was awarded a Bar to the DSO and the US Legion of Merit.

Arthur Richard Hezlet was born in Pretoria on April 7 1914, the son of Major-General RK Hezlet, CB, CBE, DSO, and educated at the Royal Naval Colleges of Dartmouth and Greenwich. He joined "the trade" in 1935, and served in Regulus on the China Station before passing his submarine commander's "Perisher" exam in 1940.

After the war he commanded the destroyer Scorpion, was captain of the 6th Destroyer Squadron from 1955 to 1956 and captain of the cruiser Newfoundland, serving as part of the covering force sent to the Gulf in August 1958 during the coup d'etat in Iraq in which King Faisal was assassinated.

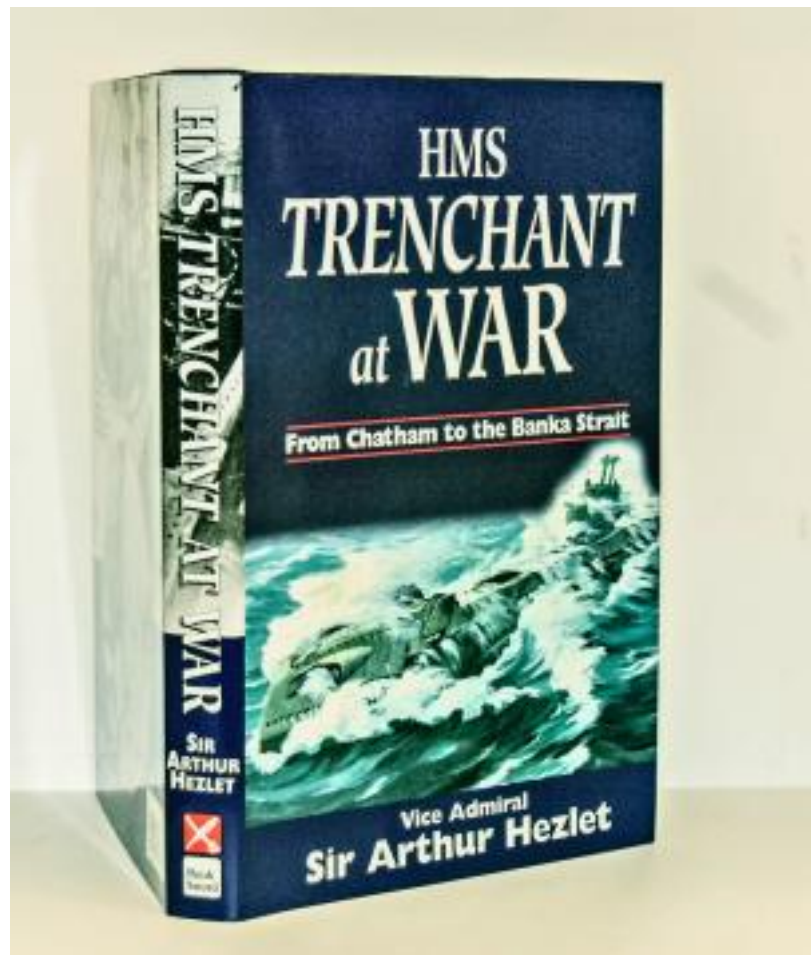
He was Flag Officer Submarines from 1959 to 1961, when he was awarded the CB. He became Flag Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland and was promoted vice-admiral in 1964 when he was appointed KBE, but their Lordships were increasingly dubious about his strategic views, and he unexpectedly retired.

Hezlet was certainly one of the Navy's more thoughtful officers, but if his ideas had been implemented it would have meant the end of the Admiralty's cherished concept of a balanced fleet.

His first book after retirement, "The Submarine and Sea Power" (1967), reviewed the history of the submarine; it suggested that carrier-based aviation would be the arbiter of war at sea only until the submarine became the dominating weapon of sea power.

In "Aircraft and Sea Power" (1970) he developed the idea that land-based aircraft and submarines would defend and hold the Atlantic in any future war. It won the approval of Enoch Powell in The Sunday Telegraph.

In "The Electron and Sea Power" (1976), he surveyed the application of electricity to naval warfare from the 19th-century onwards and argued that the application of electronics would affect not just the technology but the very nature of warfare. In this he



anticipated the American concept of "network-centric warfare" (in which computers would talk to each other) by two decades.

His last book, "History of British and Allied Submarine Operations" (2002), was a two-volume encyclopaedia of British submarine operations during the Second World War which recorded every patrol and torpedo attack, with copious footnotes and detailed charts.

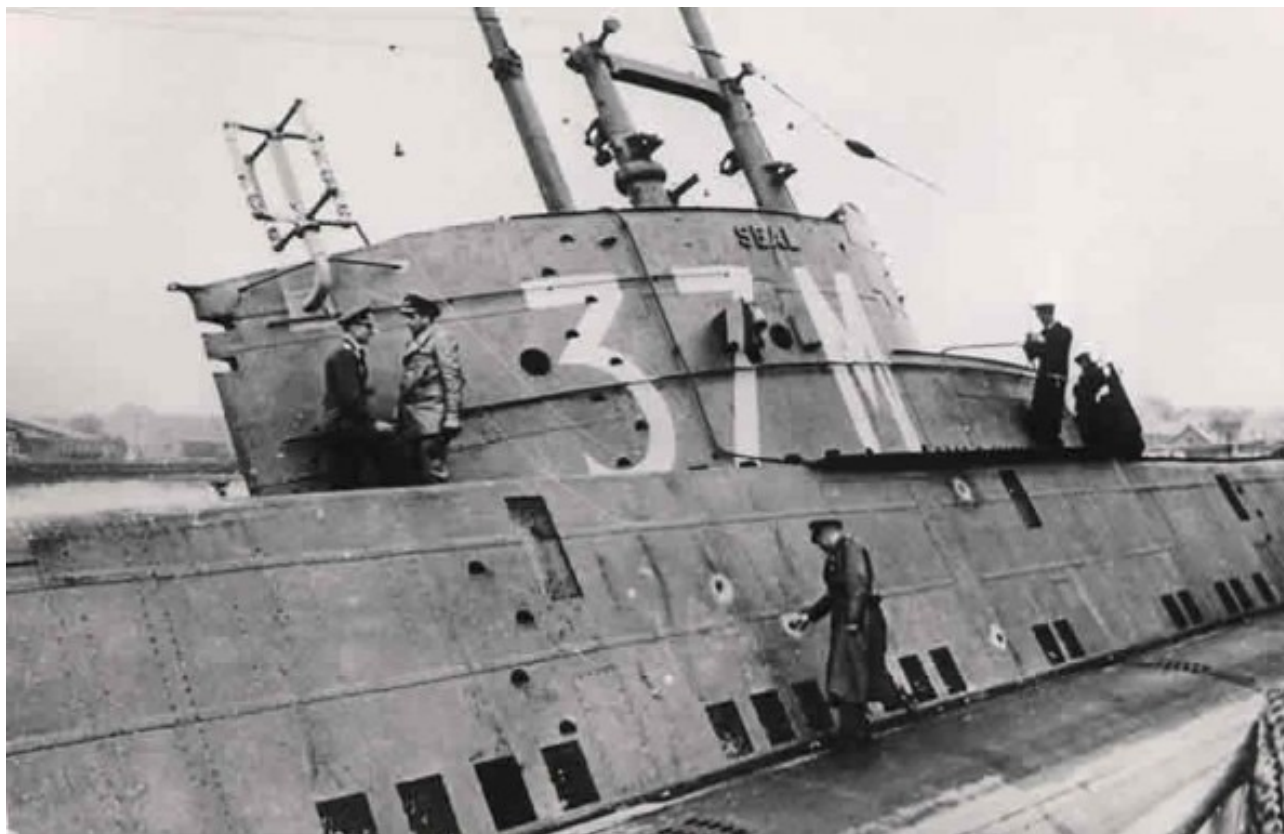
"Baldy" Hezlet is remembered as an officer who, throughout his service, displayed balanced judgment and a resolution which made him an outstanding submarine commander. He was also a yachtsman, whose motor-sailer "Agivey" based at Coleraine Yacht Club was a familiar sight on the coast of Ireland and Scotland, and crossed France by canal for cruises in the Mediterranean. Hezlet married Anne Joan Patricia Clark in 1948 and settled in the family home, Bovagh House, Aghadowey. He served as President of the RBL in Northern Ireland for twenty-five years.

Ballymena seaman in the only submarine captured by Germany

Able Seaman Hugh Reynolds was in HMS Seal, the only submarine to be captured by the Germans in World War. The large minelaying submarine HMS Seal was sent to the Kattegat to lay mines between Sweden and Germany. In the early hours of 4th May she was spotted by aircraft and forced to dive. Unable to surface again until nightfall, at around 7pm she was shaken by a huge explosion, having hit a mine. Two ratings just managed to escape from the flooded rear compartments before the watertight doors were sealed. The seriously damaged submarine now lay with her aft end wedged in the mud unable to surface, despite frantic efforts from the crew.

After nearly 24 hours submerged the whole crew were seriously affected by lack of oxygen and some were nearly comatose. Lieut.Commander Rupert Lonsdale, a religious man, led his men in the Lords Prayer in the control room. Lieutenant Beet was later to

describe how they were all panting for breath without any exertion and that he had to fight to keep awake. With the submarine lying at



The Royal Navy minelaying submarine HMS Seal, showing battle damage, following capture

an angle of 30 degrees Lonsdale now had the idea to rig up a line so that all the men could climb to the forward end of the craft. His prayers were answered when HMS Seal suddenly rose to the surface. It was now around 1.30am on the 5th May. The entire crew were suffering severe headaches and nausea as they readjusted to normal levels of oxygen. The submarine's steering was badly damaged. An attempt was made to head for Sweden although HMS Seal was pointed in the wrong direction and would not turn.

They were virtually a sitting duck on the surface when they were attacked by German planes. The First Officer, Lieut. Commander Butler was shot in the leg and collapsed from loss of blood. Lonsdale then took to the Lewis Guns and took on the attacking planes until the guns jammed. Eventually he was persuaded to wave the white wardroom table cloth in surrender. The Germans

insisted that he swim over to a flying boat to surrender in person. Having ensured that the Asdic equipment was destroyed along with confidential documents, Lonsdale believed that HMS Seal was sinking. The crew, who were shortly afterwards taken off by boat, also believed that she was sinking. Lonsdale was mortified when he learnt otherwise:

I do not expect ever to forget the shock which I experienced a few days after my capture when out for a walk under guard at Kiel, I saw the Seal being towed into port; nor, almost worse, when on leaving Kiel for the prison camp I caught sight of her in dry dock.

It was the only British vessel to be surrendered and captured during the war. A propaganda triumph for the Germans, they were unable to make use of the Seal themselves despite their efforts to make her serviceable.

After five years in captivity Lonsdale returned to to face a Court Martial. The Admiralty decided that Kings regulations applied and that he should not be “denied the chance” of clearing himself of “the stigma of surrendering his ship to the enemy”.

After the court had heard from many of Seal’s crew, Lonsdale was honourably discharged. He was later ordained in the Church of England.

HM SUBMARINES

ROLL OF HONOUR WW

- On eternal patrol -

+ACTON, Jack

RN Stoker First Class. P/KX 150614. Died 16/11/1944. Age 25. HM Submarine *Thule*. *Thule* served in the Far East for much of her wartime career, where she sank thirteen junks, two lighters and five sampans with gunfire in the Strait of Malacca in a twelve-day period between 17/12/1944 to 29/12/1944. She also attacked a submarine, probably the Japanese submarine Ro - 113 and believed she had sunk it, but *Thule's* torpedoes exploded prematurely and the submarine escaped unharmed.



She went on to sink a further five sailing vessels and three coasters, as well as laying a number of mines. Son of Thomas and Fanny Acton Bolton, Lincs. Husband to Anna Acton, Glenwherry St., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 22/12/1944). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 85.

+AMERY, Jack

RN. ERA 3rd Class. P/MX 53237. Died 27/10/1940. HM Submarine H.49. Born at Clifton St., Belfast, his father was for 20 years in charge of the naval recruiting office in Belfast, and was afterwards clerk to the Belfast Charitable Society. Son of Councillor and Mrs Amery, Gosport Hants, formerly of Clifton St., Belfast. He left a wife and a daughter. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 09/01/1942). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 41

+ANDREWS, Thomas Victor

RN. Engine Room Artificer 2nd Class. C/MX 47587. HM Submarine Narwhal. Died 01/08/1940. Narwhal left Blyth on 22/07/1940 to lay a minefield off Norway. Narwhal was sailing on the surface when it was spotted and sunk by a Dornier flying-boat. None of the crew of 95 survived. Son of Mr. and Mrs H. Andrews, Lurgan. Husband to Annie Andrews, Gosport, Hampshire. Chatham Naval Memorial, Panel 37.
Lurgan WM

+BOYLES, Alexander

RN. Petty Officer Stoker. C/KX 80080. Died 27/10/1940. Age 29. HM Submarine H.49. 11 years service. Son of Alexander and Mary Ann Boyles Arkwright St., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 05/04/1941.). Chatham Naval Memorial, Panel 39

+CARSON, Edward Henry Sidney

RN. Telegraphist. D/JX 158782. HM Submarine Usurper. Died 12/10/1943. Age 20. On 03/10/1943 HMS Usurper, a 'U' class submarine, was believed to have been sunk by depth charges after being attacked by the German anti submarine vessel in the gulf of Genoa. Failing to return to Algiers, HMS Usurper was posted missing presumed lost with all hands on 12/10/1943. Previously served in HMS Illustrious. Brother serving with RIF. Son of William J. and Olive V.M. Carson, Ballyronan, Magherafelt. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 29/10/1943). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 81

+COLLINS, Albert E

RN. AB. C/JK 208347. DIED 08/05/1942. HM Submarine Olympus. Two year's service. Before the war was employed by WA Ross & Sons, mineral water manufacturers. Son of Robert and Alicia Collins, Frtuna St, Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 05/06/1942). Chatham Naval Memorial

+.CORRY, James

RN. Leading Stoker. D/KX 90385. HM Submarine H 31. Died 24/12/1944. Age 30. H 31 (Lt. Frank Bridger Gibbs, RN) sailed from Falmouth and left escort on the 19/12/1941 for a Bay of Biscay patrol, 250 nautical miles north of Cape Finisterre. She was reported overdue on 26/12/1941. The cause of her loss is unknown. Son of Hugh and Elizabeth Corry, Belfast. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 52. Family memorial, Milltown Cemetery, Belfast. BE52A

+CRAIG, Thomas Henry

RN. Able Seaman. D/JX 136197. HM Submarine Perseus. Died 19/12/1941. Age 26. HMS Perseus (Lt Cdr E C D Nicolay), 6th December 1941, Central Mediterranean, 7 miles north of Zante island, west coast of Greece in Ionian Sea - hit an Italian mine off the Greek island of Kefalonia. Sailed from Malta on 26th November for Alexandria with orders to patrol west of Greece on passage; 58 crew lost, one rating got to the surface and swam 5 miles ashore to Cephalonia before spending 18 months being sheltered by the Greeks (Ionian Sea patrol). Son of Henry John and Kate Craig, Culmore, Co. Londonderry. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 46

+DOUGLAS, Alexander Archer Bruce

RN. Able Seaman. C/JX 234846. HM Submarine Sceptre. Died 11/09/1944. Age: 22. Son of James MacGregor Douglas and Helen Douglas, Coleraine. Chatham Naval Memorial, Panel 40.

+DOUGLAS, Woodrow Craig

RN. Leading Steward. D/LX 24527. MiD. Died: 10/04/1943. Age 25. HM Submarine Tigris. Mentioned in Despatches for bravery and devotion to duty whilst HM Submarine Tigris was on her first Mediterranean patrol in December 1942 when she destroyed an Italian submarine Woodrow was in charge of passing on torpedo orders from the control room to the tubes and the citation states, "he carried out this duty with zeal and efficiency. At all times his unfailing cheerfulness even in the most adverse conditions set a very fine example to his shipmates". HM Submarine Tigris (Lt.Cdr. George Robson Colvin, DSC, RN) left Malta on 18/02/1943 to patrol SW of Naples. She failed to return to Algiers on 10/03/1943 and was declared overdue on that date. Tigris was most likely sunk on 27/02/1943 by the German submarine chaser UJ-2210, six nautical miles south-east of Isola di Capri, Italy. Son of Harold and Nina Douglas, Belfast; husband to Margaret Y. Douglas, Tower St., Belfast.. They had married in October the previous year, he being 22 and she 20, and three days after the wedding he left to rejoin his ship. He had not been home since. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 09/04/1943, 05/11/1943). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 83

+EDGAR, Stanley Martin

RN. Stoker 1st Class. D/SKX 315. Died 23/10/1942. Age 19. HM Submarine Unique (Lt R E Boddington), possibly around 10th October 1942, eastern area of North Atlantic - 'overdue, presumed lost'. Carrying out Bay of Biscay patrol while on passage from Britain to Gibraltar. Reported off Lands End on the 9th, last contact was probably on the 10th, due to arrive at Gibraltar on the 22nd, but not heard from again. Cause of loss unknown, possibly drifting mine. Germans made no claims for attacks on a submarine at the times of her passage; all 34 crew lost. Son of William James Edgar and May Stanley Edgar, Londonderry. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 70. St. Columb's Cathedral, Londonderry

+FOX, George

RN. Stoker 1st Class. D/KX 87377. Died 27/04/1940. Age 29. HM Submarine Sterlet. Joined up in 1936. He was home on Easter leave in 1940 before re-joining Sterlet a small diesel-electric S class submarine armed with twelve torpedoes. It had a crew of 39 under the command of Lt. Gerard Haward who at 30 years of age was one of the younger submarine commanders in the Royal Navy. Sterlet sailed on 8th April for Skagerrak patrol during German invasion of Norway. The details regarding the loss of the vessel are still uncertain. On the 12th Sterlet attacked a convoy unsuccessfully, and on the 14th torpedoed German gunnery training ship 'Brummer' off Jutland, where she sank next day. Sterlet may have been sunk in the counter-attack by the escort. Other possibilities include depth-charged by minesweeper 'M.75' on the 17th or 18th, by anti-submarine trawlers 'UJ.125', 'UJ.126' and 'UJ.128' on the 18th, or mined in a field laid on the 8th. All 41 crew were lost. George had served four and half years in the RN, three and a half years in Chinese waters. He had a brother serving in the BEF in France and two elder brothers who served throughout WW1. He was an enthusiastic member of Mullavilly Boy Scouts and Laurelvale Football Club. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 29/06/1940). Son of William and Elizabeth Fox, Turtle's Row, Mullavilly, Tandragee. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 41

+GIBSON, Wesley

RN. Able Seaman. D/JX 149209. HM Submarine Parthian. Died 11/08/1943. Age 23. In May 1943 HMS Parthian (Lt. M.B. St. John, RN) sank several Italian sailing vessels while operating in the Aegean. HMS Parthian (Lt. Cyril Astell Pardoe, RNR) is presumed mined in Adriatic late July/early August 1943. Having sailed from Malta on 22/07/1943 for patrol west of Greece in the southern Adriatic. She was ordered to patrol off Otranto on 26/07/1943. She was again given a new area to patrol on the 28th. She was reported overdue at Beirut on 11/08/1943. Most likely she was mined off Brindisi. The date given as lost (11/08/1943) is the date she was reported missing. Son of Robert James Gibson and Margaret Gibson, Lurgan. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 79. Lurgan WM

+GUNN, Robert Reginald

RN. Stoker 1st Class. D/KX 133727. HM Submarine P 48. Died 05/01/1943. Age 18. HMS P 48 (Lt. Michael Elliot Faber, RN) sailed from

Malta on 23/12/1942. She was sunk on 25/12/1942 in the Gulf of Tunis in position 37°15'N, 10°30'E by depth charges of Italian torpedo boats Ardente and Ardito north-west of Zembra Island. She was attacking an Italian convoy making for Tunis. HMS P 48 was declared overdue on 05/01/1943. Robert joined the RN three years' previously aged 16. Son of Robert R. and Margaret D. Gunn, Ligoniel. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 13/08/1943). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 82

+HEAL, Hubert Victor

RN. Stoker 1st Class. P/K 58480. HM Submarine Undaunted. Died 13/05/1941. Age 39. HMS Undaunted (Lt. James Lees Livesey, RN) sailed from Malta on 29/04/1941 for a patrol near Tripoli, Libya. She was due to return to Malta on 11 May but she failed to do so and was declared overdue on 13 May. Husband to Martha Heal, Portrush. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 55

+HOUSTON, William John

RN. Stoker 1st Class. C/KX 83859. Died 20/07/1941. Age 29. HM Submarine Umpire. HMS Umpire (N82) was a U-class submarine built at Chatham Dockyard and sunk in an accident nine days after commissioning with the loss of 22 men. The submarine was sunk while en route from Chatham to join the 3rd Submarine Flotilla at Dunoon, under the command of Lieutenant Mervyn Wingfield. An armed escort trawler, Peter Hendriks, in the southbound convoy accidentally struck Umpire sinking her in 18 metres of water. Four crew members were on the bridge when the submarine sank. William had eight years service, four in submarines. William's brother James had 7 years service in RN. A founder of Queen Mary Accordion Band. Son of Hugh and Louisa Houston, Bryanstang Cottage, Ballynure, formerly of Mountcollyer Rd., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 16/08/1941). Chatham Naval Memorial, Panel 47

+KELLY, Colman

RN. Leading Stoker. P/KX 91522. Died 20/01/1942. Age 24. HM Submarine Triumph. He joined the submarine service after serving two years in HMS Repulse. His brother James, a Petty Officer, also served. Son of Thomas and Bridget Kelly, Camlough, Newry, formerly of Abyssinia St., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 22/02/1942 and 23/10/1942). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 68, Column 1

+McALISTER, James

RN. Petty Officer. P/SSX 15157. HM Submarine P 514. Died 21/06/1942. Age 28. Lost with all hands when it was rammed by minesweeper Georgian which believed it to be a U-boat. Son of James and Kathleen McAlister. Husband to Ina McAlister, Bushmills. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 62

+ McATEER, Robert

RN. Petty Officer Cook (S). D/MX 48386. Age 29. HM Submarine Regulus. 10 years service. Only three days married when he returned to service. Son of Son of Thomas and Agnes Jane McAteer, Christopher St., Belfast. Husband to Margaret Joyce McAteer, of Belfast (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 19/04/1941.). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 42

+MILLIKEN, Thomas Eric Sub Thorne

RN. Petty Officer Steward. D/LX 21430. HM Submarine Thorn. Died 11/08/1942. Age 29. Thorn (Lt Cdr R G Norfolk+), 7th August 1942, Eastern Mediterranean, 30 miles from Gavdos Island off SW Crete - by depth charges of Italian destroyer escort 'Pegaso'. Attacking steamer 'Istria' sailing from Benghazi, spotted by escorting Ju.88 aircraft, depth-charged and believed sunk by 'Pegaso'; all 60 crew lost (SW Crete patrol). Son of John and Georgina Milliken, Newtownbreda. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 72

+MORRISON, John

RN. Stoker First Class. D/KX 80906. Died 23/02/1942. HM Submarine Tempest. Son of Mrs Annie Morrison, Kingswood St., Belfast. Another son, Robert, served at the Battle of Jutland. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 12/06/1942). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 70

+MURRAY, Robert

RN. Stoker 2nd Class. D/KX 134458. Died 21/06/1942. Age 19. HM Submarine P 514. Son of Robert and Sarah Murray, Ballymena. Plymouth Naval Memorial. Panel 71

+O'NEILL, Joseph Patrick

RN. Stoker 1st Class. D/KX 84929. HM Submarine Swordfish. Died 16/11/1940. Age 29. Swordship (Lt M A Langley), 7th November 1940, Western Europe, English Channel off the Isle of Wight, southern England -

probably German mines. Sailed from Portsmouth on 7th November for Brest patrol. Failed to signal back on 15th and 16th, and not heard from again. At the time she was declared 'overdue, presumed lost' and believed sunk in the Bay of Biscay either on mines or at the hands of German destroyers near Brest. Her wreck was discovered in 1983 a few miles south of St Catherine's Point off the Isle of Wight. She had been mined a few hours after leaving Portsmouth, with the loss of all 41 crew (Brest patrol). Son of Phelix and Ellen O'Neill, Lurgan. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 41

+PATTERSON, Hugh

RN. Telegraphist. D/JX 156607. HM Submarine P 514. Died 21/06/1942. Age 20. Son of Archibald and Isabella Patterson, Greencastle. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 49

+PLANT, Samuel

ERA Third Class. Service Number D/MX 56532. Died 08/05/1942. HM Submarine Olympus. Four years service. Pre-war he was a coppersmith in Vicker's Barrow - in Furnace. Husband to Ellen Plant (nee Wilton), Linfield Rd., Belfast. They were married 16 months previously on 25/01/1941 at Fisherwick Presbyterian Church, Belfast. After a four day honeymoon the bridegroom had to return to active service. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 29/05/1942). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 68

+PROUDFOOT, Abraham Patterson

HMS Caroline. RNVR. Leading Seaman. P/UD/X 1324. BEM. Died 16/01/1945. Age 25. HM Submarine Porpoise. He had seen service in various parts of the world since being called. He was awarded the BEM for bravery and resource when his ship was attacked by enemy aircraft. He had six years' service. Brother serving in RAF. Son of Abraham and Margaret Proudfoot, Gawn St., Newtownards Rd., Belfast; husband to Annie Proudfoot, Shap, Westmorland. He had been married two years. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 12/06/1942 and 28/12/1945). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 90

+WALMISLEY, Henry check with second entry in WW2 Roll

RNVR. Lieutenant. MiD. Died on HM Submarine Tetrarch off Sicily. Age 27. After a period of intense action, Lt. Walmsley was hitching a lift from

Malta to the UK on the submarine Tetrarch. Mentioned in Despatches (posthumously), London Gazette 07/04/1942, he had completed seventeen Central Mediterranean War Patrols with HM Ships Unbeaten, Upholder and Ursula. Torpedoed three large escorted Italian transports off Tripoli 18/09/1941. Sank the Italian Torpedo Boat Albatross off Cape Rascolmo, north Sicily on 27/09/1941. Tetrarch sailed from Alexandria on 17/10/1941 for Malta to adjust complement before proceeding to refit in USA. The submarine arrived at Malta on 24/10/1941, and left again on 26/10/1941 at 1700. Routing instructions were communicated from Gibraltar by the Flag Officer Commanding North Atlantic on the afternoon of 25th and also requested that she report her position, course and speed. Tetrarch did not respond and was never seen again. The loss cannot be ascribed to any known enemy anti-submarine attacks, and it was assumed that mining was the most likely cause of her loss beyond the Sicilian Channel off Cavioli island. Son of James Charles and Margaret Walmsley, Kilkeel. Valetta WM.

HM SUBMARINES

THEY SERVED

ATKINSON, Edward William

RN. Leading Torpedo Operator. In HMS Prince of Wales when it was sunk. Prior to joining Prince of Wales in December 1941, he had served as a machine gunner at a FAA aerodrome. He was picked up by a destroyer an hour after the sinking. He and another Derry sailor, Leading Seaman Kilgore, were part of the guard at the naval base in Singapore before it was captured. He received head and leg injuries and whilst aboard the ship taking him away from Singapore he had an attack of appendicitis and a consequent stay in a Columbo hospital. After recovering he served three months in an Australian naval ship before volunteering for submarine service. Third son of Mr. And Mrs. F Atkinson, Foyle Rd., Londonderry. Educated at Bennett St., Carlisle Rd., and First Derry PE schools. Prior to enrolling he was employed by Messrs. Bigges, Foyle St. His two elder brothers served in the Royal Artillery and the Irish Fusiliers. (Derry Standard 31/03/1944).

BOYD, Robert

RN. Captain. DSO, DSC, MiD. Served as an ordinary seaman on Head Line ships from November 1918 until early 1921. He later joined the Royal Navy, and commanded submarines during World War Two. MiD May 1942. He was awarded the DSO in 1942 followed by the DSC in 1944. Between Nov 1942 and July 1945 he commanded four different submarines. Commanded HMS Untiring from Feb 1943 - December 1944 when she sank ten German craft. He was promoted Captain in 1956 and retired from the Royal Navy in 1959. Born Islandmagee, 02/07/1903. Son of Robert Boyd, RNR, who served in World War 1. Resided at Wingrove Gds., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 26/01/1945).

HEZLETT, Arthur Richard

Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur Hezlet, KBE, CB, DSO and Bar, DSC, Legion of Merit (United States). A submarine ace later appointed the Royal Navy's youngest captain at 36 and its youngest admiral at 45. In 1941 he was sent as relief commanding officer in the "Fighting" 10th Submarine Flotilla based at Malta, where he took over command of Upholder from Lieutenant David Wanklyn, VC, for what was to be his only uneventful patrol. (See above)

HUMPHRIES, Michael

RN. AB. HM Submarine Tempest. On 13/02/1942 HMS Tempest (Lt.Cdr. William Alexander Keith Napier Cavaye, RN) was blown to the surface by depth charges the Italian torpedo boat **Circe**. Tempest was on patrol in the Gulf of Taranto / Ionian Sea some 30 nautical miles north-east of Crotona, Italy in position 39°15'N, 17°45'E. The Italians tried to take Tempest in tow but this failed since she suddenly started to sink. Around 0300 hours Tempest was detected by an Italian destroyer / torpedo boat that started dropping depth charges. This destroyer never lost contact and dropped depth charges throughout the morning. All depth charges were very close. In each attack minor damage was caused, resulting in it being very difficult to maintain depth control. Around 0900 hours a double pattern of depth charges was dropped causing major damage. The boat was filling with chlorine gas from the cracked battery. Lt.Cdr. Cavaye ordered to surface and abandon ship. The Italian destroyer picked up 3 officers and 20 ratings from the water. Tempest did not sink despite attempts to scuttle her. She

was eventually sunk by the Italians as she was beyond salvage. Humphries was from Belfast

MAGENNIS, James Joseph VC

VC. Temporary Acting Leading Seaman (27 October 1919 – 12 February 1986) was Belfast-born. He was the only native of Northern Ireland to receive the Victoria Cross for Second World War service. Magennis was part of several operations involving X-Craft midget submarines in attacks on Axis ships. (See above)

McCLINTON, Walter

Leading Telegraphist. HM Submarines. Five brothers in HM Forces. Son of Mr and Mrs Andrew McClinton, Santiago St., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 31/07/1942).

McCULLOUGH, Charles

RN. Submarines. Born 18/12/1923 in the Brown's Square area of the Shankill Road, Belfast, he was a member of the Life Boys and 29th Boys Brigade Company at Townsend Street Presbyterian Church. After his war service he started a confectionery and wholesale grocery business, and later became a civil servant. In 1958 he was elected to Belfast Corporation and later became an Ulster Unionist councillor. He was elected a member of the Ulster Senate (the upper house at Stormont) in 1968. In 1970 he left the UUP for the nascent DUP. When the Senate was dissolved in 1972 he stood down from politics whilst retaining his strong political convictions. He was a very active member of the Orange Order, the Apprentice Boys of Derry and the Masonic Order. He died aged 90 on 04/10/2014. He was Vice-President of the Belfast Branch of the RNA at the time of his death. Husband to Peggy and father of Shirley and Charles, his funeral from Townsend Street Church took place to Roselawn Cemetery.

MONAN, John

HM Submarine Thresher

ODDIE, Eric Roland John

RN. Commander. DSC. Served mainly in submarines 17/07/1929 - 04/1947. Commanding Officer HM Sub Narwhal, HM Sub Triad, HMS Maidstone (submarine depot ship). Senior Officer Submarines HMS Elfin.

Commanding Officer HMS Ambrose (submarine base Lerwick), Admiralty (HMS President). Exec Officer HMS Charybdis (cruiser) - torpedoed and sunk by German torpedo boats off France. HMS Nabthorep (mobile air base Schofields, New South Wales). HMS Indomitable (aircraft carrier). Commanding Officer HMS Queensferry, (Reserve Fleet, Rosyth). B Dunmurry 10/04/1903 D Australia 02/12/1980.

REYNOLDS, Hugh

RN. Able Seaman . HM Submarine Seal. In May 1940, Able Seaman Hugh Reynolds, then of High Street, Ballymena, was among the sweating, gasping crew of the ill fated HM Submarine Seal. The sub was lying on the seabed of the Kattegat with her crew being slowly poisoned and seemingly no chance of escape. After surfacing Seal was unable to steer and was attacked from the air. The crew left believing Seal was sinking. She was taken by the Germans and used as a propaganda triumph. The surviving crew were taken as prisoners of war. Father of Lawrence, Broughshane.

PATTERSON, Samuel

RN. Petty Officer. Torpedo Gunner's Mate. DSM - awarded for undaunted courage, skill, and devotion to duty in successful patrols in HM Submarines. He joined the navy 12 years previously. A brother served in RNAS and two brothers in law in the RN. Wife and little daughter resident at Emerson St., Shankill Rd, Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 25/08/1944).

REYNOLDS, Hugh

Able Seaman . HM Submarine Seal. In May 1940, Able Seaman Hugh Reynolds, then of High Street, Ballymena, was among the sweating, gasping crew of the ill fated HM Submarine Seal. The sub was lying on the seabed of the Kattegat with her crew being slowly poisoned and seemingly no chance of escape. After surfacing Seal was unable to steer and was attacked from the air. The crew left believing Seal was sinking. She was taken by the Germans and used as a propaganda triumph. The surviving crew were taken as prisoners of war. Father of Lawrence, Broughshane.

ROWE, G J

RNVR. Lieutenant. DSC. Awarded for daring enterprise and skill in successful patrols in HM submarines. Accompanied by his wife to the

investiture. Their home was at Ardmore Pk., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 29/10/1943).

STARBUCK, RG

RN. Leading Seaman. DSM. Served in HM Submarines, including HM Taurus which had a successful 18 month patrol in Eastern waters. Her Jolly Rodger showed 18 gun actions, including one with a warship, six ships sunk by torpedo and one damaged, one U - boat probably sunk, five special missions and 24 mines destroyed. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 28/07/1944).

WILSON, Leslie

RN. AB. Transferred from the RNAS to the submarine service in 1941. His father, a Petty Officer in the submarine service, was lost when the L24 was rammed by HMS Resolution during manoeuvres in 1924. Nephew of Samuel Wilson, Duncan Gds., Belfast. Grandfather resident at Railway St., Ballymena. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 29/12/1944).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Belfast Weekly Telegraph
Brett Hannam , *Mullavilly, Portrait of an Ulster Parish*
Daily Telegraph
The Times
Wikipedia

The **remembrance ni** programme is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD who served as Chaplain to 102 and 105 Regiments Royal Artillery (TA), as Hon. Chaplain to RNR and as Chaplain to the RBL NI area and the Burma Star Association NI. Dr McKelvey is a Past President of Queen's University Services Club. He may be contacted at houston.mckelvey@btinternet.com

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