

OUR WAR GRAVES YOUR HISTORY

CHATHAM NAVAL MEMORIAL

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

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. The Extension was unveiled by the Duke of Edinburgh on 15 October 1952.

Key CWGC features to look out for:

Located by the Second World War panels are a number of striking stone statues of sailors and marines.



Points of interest...

Commemorations: **18,654**
First World War: **8,517**
Second World War: **10,098**

Casualties from the following nations;

Australia
Canada
Ireland
New Zealand
Rhodesia
South Africa
USA

Things to look out for...

Three sailors who were awarded the **Victoria Cross** – you will see the letters V.C. by their name

16 members of the **Women's Royal Naval Service** (Wrens)

The oldest - 67 year old **Captain The Hon. L.J.O. Lambert DSO** (Panel 31, column 1)

Nursing Sister L.C. Chambers ARRC who was killed in the sinking of a hospital ship in 1918 (Panel 31)

Discovering CWGC graves at Chatham Naval Memorial

The Naval Memorial has separate sections for the First and Second World War. The First World War panels are around the base of the obelisk. The Second World War panels are on the surrounding curved walls of the memorial. The names are arranged according to year of death, then by service, rank and surname.



The Victoria Cross

As would be expected on a such a large memorial, there are a lot of sailors who were awarded gallantry medals for their brave actions. You will often spot these by the use of letters recorded after their names, such as V.C. (Victoria Cross) or D.S.M. (Distinguished Service Medal).

On the Chatham Naval Memorial, there are three sailors who were awarded the Victoria Cross – the highest award for gallantry. On Panel 18, you will find the name of **Major Francis J.W. Harvey**, Royal Marine Light Infantry. He was awarded the VC while serving on HMS *Lion* at the Battle of Jutland in 1916, for 'Whilst mortally wounded and almost the only survivor after the explosion of an enemy shell in "Q" gunhouse, with great presence of mind and devotion to duty ordered the magazine to be flooded, thereby saving the ship.' A second VC from the First World War is on Panel 25 – **Skipper Thomas Crisp** (pictured), who commanded a fishing smack, renamed HMS *Nelson*. In August 1917, Crisp was killed when his fishing boat engaged a German submarine.

On the Second World War panels, you will locate the third VC - **Captain E.S.F. Fegan** (Panel 34, column 1) who commanded HMS *Jervis Bay*. In November 1940, Fegan used his lightly armed merchant vessel to engage a German battleship *Admiral Sheer*, sacrificing his own ship to save the convoy he was escorting. Other members of his crew are commemorated on the Liverpool Naval Memorial.



Skipper Thomas Crisp

The Royal Marines

The Chatham Naval Memorial commemorates 639 Royal Marines, many of whom served aboard the ships of the Royal Navy in the First and Second World Wars. The youngest marine commemorated on the memorial is 15-year-old **Edward Percy Cook** (Panel 7). He was a bugler in the Royal Marine Light Infantry and was killed aboard HMS *Cressy* in September 1914. The oldest marine is Marine Ernest William Hood (Panel 49, column 2) a long-serving marine who died in May 1941, aged 57.

A number of the Second World War marines served with Commando units. One of those is **Major David Lovat Barclay**. He had joined the Royal Marines in 1938 and had served on ships in the early years of the war before volunteering for the Commandos. He took part in the Dieppe Raid and the landing in Sicily and Italy. He was killed on Sword Beach on D Day, 6 June 1944. His body was never recovered and therefore he is commemorated here on Panel 70, column 1. Lastly, on Panel 84 is **Sergeant Donald C Bullock** who was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) during the Salerno landings in Italy, days before he was reported 'missing presumed killed'.



*Major David Lovat Barclay
(Courtesy of Dix, Noonan and Webb)*

Family connections

Commemorated on the Chatham Memorial are at least 20 sets of brothers. Amongst those recorded are **Frederick George Brown** and **George Frederick Brown** from Hanwell in London. Frederick and George were twins, born on 27 December 1893. They had joined up together in 1912 and were serving together aboard HMS *Pathfinder* when the ship was sunk by a German submarine on 5 September 1914. They are both commemorated on Panel 4.

On the Second World War panels are another set of brothers, **Alan and Alexander Machin**. They were serving together on HMS *Grove*, which was escorting a convoy in the Mediterranean when it was attacked and sunk by a German submarine on 12 June 1942. Both died in the sinking. Alex Machin is named on Panel 62, his younger brother Alan is on Panel 63.



Frederick George Brown



George Frederick Brown