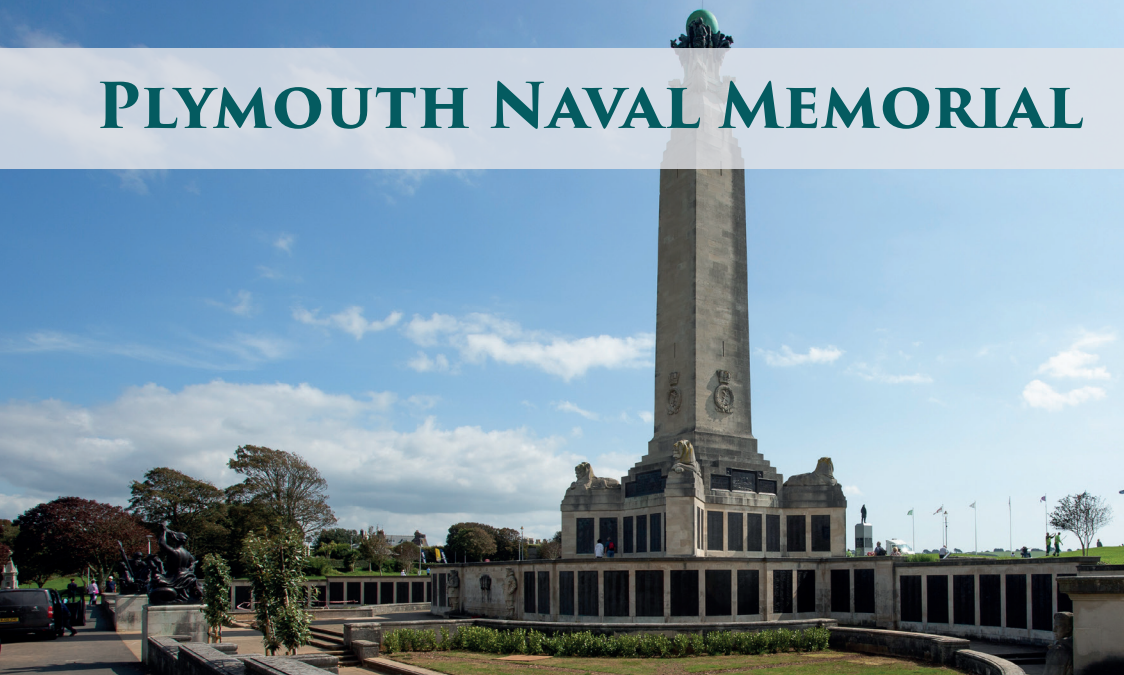# Plymouth Naval Memorial

After the First World War, the Admiralty recommended that the three manning ports of Chatham, Plymouth and Portsmouth should each have an identical memorial for the commemoration of the 45,000 missing from the Royal Navy. The memorials were designed by Sir Robert Lorimer, with sculpture by Henry Poole. The Plymouth Naval Memorial was unveiled by HRH Prince George on 29 July 1924.

After the Second World War it was decided that the naval memorials should be extended to commemorate the naval dead without graves of that war. The architect for the Extension at Plymouth was Sir Edward Maufe, with sculpture was by Charles Wheeler and William McMillan. The Extension was unveiled by HRH Princess Margaret on 20 May 1954 with a further extension (Panels 101 to 103) added in 1956 for those who had died on shore.

In addition to commemorating seamen of the Royal Navy who sailed from Plymouth, the First World War panels also bear the names of sailors from Australia and South Africa. The governments of the other Commonwealth nations chose to commemorate their dead elsewhere, for the most part on memorials in their home ports. After the Second World War, Canada and New Zealand again chose commemoration at home, but the memorial at Plymouth commemorates sailors from all other parts of the Commonwealth.

Key CWGC features to look out for:

A distinct addition to the memorial after the Second World War were the addition of the bronze sculptures created by Charles Wheeler and William McMillan. These sculptures dominate the approach to the memorial from the north. Also by the Second World War panels are a number of striking stone statues of sailors and marines.

Points of interest...

Commemorations: **23,225**
First World War: **7,251**
Second World War: **15,933**

Casualties from the following nations;

Australia	Newfoundland
Barbados	Nigeria
Burma	Sierra Leone
China	Sicily
Fiji	Singapore
Hong Kong	South Africa
India	South Rhodesia
Ireland	UK
Malaya	USA
Malta	

Things to look out for...

The youngest – 14 year old **John E. McPherson** (Panel 31) one of 442 'boy' sailors on the memorial

The oldest – 65 year old **Lieutenant John Phillips** (Panel 103, Column 2)

The most senior officer is **Admiral Sir Tom Phillips KCB** who was lost aboard HMS *Prince of Wales* in 1941 (Panel 44)

Sporting stars including Bolton Wanderers F.C. player **Walter Sidebottom** (Panel 80) and Scottish Rugby International **Cecil Abercrombie** (Panel 10)

Discovering CWGC graves at Plymouth Naval Memorial

The Memorial is situated centrally on The Hoe which looks directly towards Plymouth Sound. It is accessible at all times. 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 lower walls of the memorial. The names are arranged according to year of death, then by service, rank and surname.

Brothers in Arms

There are at least 44 pairs of brothers commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial. On Panel 1 of the First World War Memorial, you will find **Charles Hender** from Torpoint. On Panel 3 is his brother **William Pascoe Hender** (pictured) who died while serving on HMS *Monmouth*, which was sunk at the Battle of Coronel in November 1914. Also on Panel 1 you will find **Alfred and David Wright** from Birkenhead. The brothers, aged 17 and 19 died together when HMS *Vicknor* was sunk in January 1915. On Panels 15 and 16 there are a number of brothers, all of whom served and died together at the Battle of Jutland in 1916; **James and John Earl** from Callington, Cornwall and **David and John Landicombe** from Plymouth all died aboard HMS *Defence*, while **Edward and Frederick Meyers** from Teignmouth, Devon died aboard HMS *Indefatigable*. From the Second World war, you will find **Edward and Joseph Wood** who died on 9 July 1944 on panel 87.

William Pascoe Hender

Awards for bravery

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 Plymouth Naval Memorial, there are two sailors who were awarded the Victoria Cross. **Lieutenant Commander W.E. Sanders** is on Panel 23. Sanders (pictured) was from New Zealand and was awarded the Victoria Cross in 1917 for his bravery while commanding HMS *Prize*. In August 2020 the Australian Governor General announced that HM Queen Elizabeth II had approved a posthumous award of the 'Victoria Cross for Australia' to **Ordinary Seaman Edward 'Teddy' Sheean** for his 'selfless actions' aboard HMAS *Armidale* in December 1942. As a result, the letters V.C. have now been added after Teddy's name on Panel 76.

On the Second World War panels (Panel 77, column 2) is the name of **Sick Berth Attendant James William Thorpe**. He has the letters A.M. after his name – Albert Medal. Thorpe was serving on HMS *Broke* in the Mediterranean in November 1942. The following is taken from the citation published in the *London Gazette; 'Thorpe showed great courage in tending the wounded and getting them to places of greater safety. He himself was then badly hit, but he spent his last strength in the care of others, working till he could no longer stand. He died of his wounds.'*

Lieutenant Commander W.E. Sanders VC

Josephine Carr

Women at War

Among the more than 23,000 people commemorated on the memorial, there are just eight women. **Josephine Carr** (pictured), from Cork in Ireland is the only female casualty recorded on the memorial from the First World War (Panel 31). She was the first 'Wren' (member of the Women's Royal Naval Service) to be killed by enemy action, when SS *Leinster* was sunk by a German submarine in October 1918.

From the Second World War, six of the female casualties are 'Wrens'. All lost their lives in the sinking of transport ships while on their way to postings overseas. You can find their names on the Second World War panels 62 and 93. Lastly, there is one nurse, Nursing Sister **Eliza Mehaffey**, Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service (Panel 84, column 3). Based at the RN Air Station hospital at Gibraltar, she died when the Sunderland Flying Boat she was travelling in was shot down over the Bay of Biscay in July 1943.

COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES