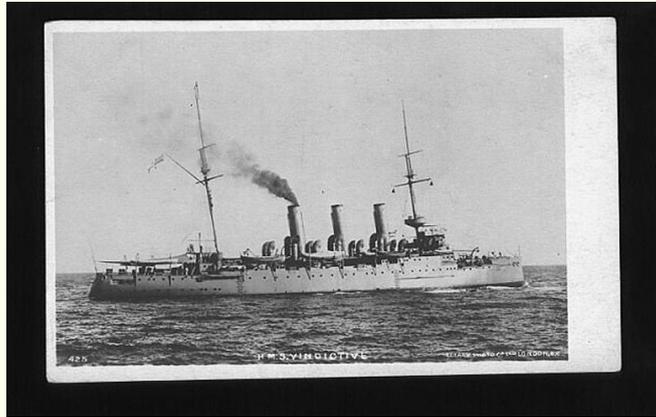


ST JAMES CHURCH TAUNTON

WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL PROJECT

Thomas George Stone



HMS Vindictive, the ship which Thomas Stone was on when he was killed during the Zeebrugge Raid of 23rd April 1918

Name: Thomas George Stone

Rank: Able Seaman

Service Number: J/26466

Regiment: Royal Navy

Battalion/Unit number: HMS Vindictive (initially HMS Conqueror)

Date/year of Birth: 6th May 1898

Place of Birth: Taunton, Somerset

Place of Residence: 14 Cleveland Street, Taunton

Date of Death: 23rd April 1918

Place of Death: Zeebrugge

Burial/Memorial: St James Cemetery, Copt Hill, Dover

Thomas was a Taunton lad, born on 6 May 1898. His father, also called Thomas, worked as a collar cutter in one of the shirt factories in Taunton and his mother was

called Louisa. Thomas married Louisa Ellen Gill in the first part of 1898, just a few months before Thomas George was born! The couple also had a daughter called Mabel who was 10 years younger than Thomas.

Thomas George joined the Royal Navy and was serving as an Able Seaman on the HMS Vindictive on the night of 22/23rd April 1918 during the raid on Zeebrugge. The raid was intended to disable a major U-boat base by sinking three obsolete warships in the entrance of the port (HMS Thetis, Iphigenia and Intrepid).

The plan for HMS Vindictive was to storm the mile-long mole and disarm the defences. However, the operation did not go as hoped – a prepared smokescreen was dispersed by an untimely wind shift, the ship was not able to moor at the intended location on the mole & there was massive defensive fire against the attacking forces. Casualties were high with 214 killed and 383 wounded.

Though badly damaged Vindictive returned to Dover and just seventeen days later was back in action at Ostend to be sunk in her turn as a blockship. The ship was raised in August 1920 and the bows preserved as a memorial to the men who died in the raid.



The bows of HMS Vindictive, now a memorial at Ostend to those who died in the Zeebrugge Raid.