

## William Courtenay HORE



- Born:** 25th August 1894, Kingswear, Dartmouth, Devon
- Occupation:** Serving sailor
- Enlisted:** Chatham: 14th February 1910
- Unit:** HMS Cressy
- Rank/number:** Ship Steward Assistant: No.M/1598
- Death:** Killed in Action: 22nd September 1914
- Detail:** William died in one of the most controversial naval actions of the war. His ship *Cressy*, an obsolete cruiser, was patrolling an area of the North Sea with sister vessels, *Aboukir* and *Hogue*, when all three were sunk by German sub U-9, with the loss of 1,397 lives. Everyone in the navy knew the ships were sitting ducks and dubbed them the “Livebait Squadron”. So it proved.
- Age at death:** 19
- Military info:** William joined the Royal Navy four years prior to the war, on 14th February 1910. He was 15 and had previously attended the Royal Hospital School in Greenwich, which trained boys for naval careers. He served as a Ship Steward Boy in a variety of ships - *Pembroke*, *Bulwark*, *Implacable*, *Wildfire*, *Pembroke*, and *Barham*. On 25th August 1912 William turned 18 and signed on for 12 years. He was 5ft 5ins tall with dark hair and a fresh complexion. His service number was M/1598 and his rank was now Ship Steward Assistant. His job was to serve officers their food and generally looked after their domestic needs. During action stewards were allocated various roles, commonly damage control parties or sick bay assistants. William served on *Barham*, *Proserpine* and *Pembroke* before finally joining *Cressy* on 14th Feb 1914. After the sinking it was revealed that two of the ships were lost because they had stopped to pick up survivors during the attack and became easy targets. The *Cressy*, the last to be hit, had rescued crew from both the other vessels onboard when she sank. One survivor recalled: “I saw the *Cressy* keel upwards - there were perhaps 50 men clinging to her.” The navy subsequently ordered ships not to stop in similar situations. The sub captain, Otto Weddigen, died six months later when U-29 was rammed by the battleship *Dreadnought*.
- Grave/memorial:** John is listed on the Chatham Naval Memorial in Kent, and is commemorated at St Petroc’s Church, Padstow, and on the Padstow War Memorial.
- Family info:** Father: Philip Hore, born Porthpean, St Austell, Cornwall in 1860. Former RN signalman and Coastguard PO. Mother: Henrietta Courtenay, born in Padstow, Cornwall in 1863. They live in Hoylake, Birkenhead, Cheshire.
- Additional info:** William’s younger brother John also died in the Great War. He was killed at Gallipoli on 8th December 1915 whilst serving with the 1/4th Cheshires.



This information was researched by Peter Smith, who is currently writing a book about Padstow’s part in the Great War. Anyone wishing to correct errors or supply additional information can write to him at 24 Mallard Drive, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5PW. Also phone 01825 762226 or email smithpeter24@gmail.com