



Seaman Walter William Morey, Number 2543x, is buried in Torbay (Holy Trinity) Cemetery in the District of St. John's East.

In mid-July of 1918, Walter William Morey travelled from the adjacent District of St. John's East to the capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland where, on the thirteenth day of that month he reported...*to duty*...on the Naval Reserve training ship, HMS *Briton* (formerly HMS *Calypso*) moored in the harbour (see further below)*.

****A year prior to this time, on June 2 of 1917, he had been recorded as working as a woodsman in the United States, in the area of Woodstock, Maine. This information was***

found upon a Registration Card which he, classified as an alien, was submitting to the local Draft Board in Maine. The passenger list of April 14-15, 1913, of the SS Lintrose records a Walter Morey, twenty years of age, on his way with brother(?) James Morey, to Bangor, Maine to work as a blacksmith, crossing from Port aux Basques to North Sydney at that time.

On that July 13, 1918, he enlisted into the Reserve (see further below), was signed on to serve for a single year's* war-time service and also on that day underwent the required medical assessment. Walter William Morey also likely attested at this time, pledging his allegiance to the King-Emperor, George V.



(Right: George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India: as a boy and young man he had served in the Royal Navy from 1877 until 1891 and always retained a fondness for the Senior Service. – The photograph of the King attired in the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet is from the Royal Collection Trust web-site and taken in or about 1935.)

(Right: At the outset of their career, the Calypso-Class ships were apparently considered to be superior vessels. Hybrids - powered by both steam and sail - they were able to police the outer reaches of the British Empire most efficiently and economically. The rapid progress in engine technology, however, was to mean that HMS 'Calypso' (later 'Briton') and her sister-ships would soon be out-classed by newer vessels. – This Royal Navy photograph, taken before 1902 when the drill-hall was reportedly built on her upper deck and the funnel removed, is from Wikipedia)



**In the early days of the War, perhaps because it was felt by the authorities that it would be a conflict of short duration, the recruits enlisted for only a single year. As the War progressed, however, this was obviously going to cause problems and the men were encouraged to re-enlist. Later recruits – as of or about May of 1916 - signed on for the 'Duration' at the time of their original enlistment.*



(Right above: The White Ensign has been flown by the Royal Navy in its present form since about the year 1800 although other naval ensigns had existed for at least two centuries. It consists of a red St. George's Cross – the national flag of England - on a white field with the Union Flag in the upper canton.)*

**The Union Flag is commonly referred to as the 'Union Jack'; this is, in fact, a misnomer since a flag is referred to as a 'Jack' only when flown from the bow of a ship.*

Note: During the years preceding the Great War the only military force on the Island of Newfoundland – apart from a handful of ill-fated local attempts – was to be the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland). Even so, it was to be some thirty years after the withdrawal of British troops from the Dominion in 1870 before the Reserve came into being in 1902.

Just fewer than four-hundred men were sought to enroll as seamen – apparently automatically at the rank of Able Seaman - and to present themselves annually in St. John's for five years in order to train for a period of twenty-eight days per annum. Allowed to report at a time of their own choosing, it is perhaps not surprising that these volunteers – mostly fishermen – were to opt to train during the winter months when fishing work was minimal.

(Right: Recruits of the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland) seen here in front of HMS 'Calypso'. The shed-like superstructure seen behind them had been built onto the ship in 1902 to serve as a drill-hall. Whether the vessel was still 'Calypso', or had become 'Briton' by this time (see further below) is not clear. – photograph from Newfoundland Provincial Archives via Wikipedia)



Expenses were apparently defrayed for the most part by the British (Imperial) Government and an attempt was made to ensure the number of recruits would be kept constantly at a maximum. This practice and policy was then to be continued up until the onset of hostilities some twelve years later.

Of course, the purpose of having a reserve force at any time is to provide a trained force ready at any time to serve at a time of need or crisis. Thus in August of 1914, upon the Declaration of War by the government in London, hundreds of those men of the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland) were to make their way to St. John's, from there to take passage overseas to bolster the ranks of the Royal Navy.



(Right above: Naval reservists from Newfoundland, during the early days of the Great War, before their departure for the United Kingdom - from The War Illustrated)

An elderly vessel, H.M.S. 'Calypso', having become surplus to the Admiralty's needs, had been provided to the Dominion of Newfoundland by the Royal Navy in 1902 for training purposes. After some debate it was eventually decided that she would be permanently moored in the harbour of the capital, her superstructure reduced, and a wooden shelter built on her upper deck to provide training facilities and living quarters for the prospective naval recruits.



(continued)

(Preceding page: *H.M.S. 'Calypso' in full sail. She was to be re-named Briton in 1916 when a new 'Calypso', a modern cruiser, was about to be launched by the Royal Navy. – This photograph, taken of her by the Royal Navy, taken in 1898, is by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum)*



(Right: *The C-Class cruiser 'Calypso' of 1916, seen here on an un-recorded date during the later years of the Great War, was to be sunk by an Italian submarine in 1940. – from Wikipedia)*

There appears to be no information on record as to when Seaman Morey began to exhibit the first symptoms of influenza, the malady which was to reach pandemic proportions during that year and the next. Nor does it appear to be recorded when it was that he was admitted into the General Hospital in St. John's.

The son of Patrick Morey, fisherman, and of Agnes Morey (perhaps née *Ryan**) of Torbay, Newfoundland**, he was also brother to James-Patrick, Ellen, Arthur-Joseph, Robert-J. and to Lawrence.

**This couple was married in Halifax on April 24, 1889.*

***There is apparently a fishing village of Tor Bay in Nova Scotia but then, Walter William Morey claimed to be born in Windsor, Nova Scotia – the story is not at all clear.*

Walter William Morey is recorded as having...*died of illness, influenza and also pneumonia...*on October 15 of 1918 – Newfoundland Vital Statistics cites October 17 – in the General Hospital - Vital Statistics says in the *Grenfell Institute?* - in St. John's: date of birth in Windsor, Nova Scotia, August 7, 1892, (from his enlistment records) but also 1894 (from the *Find a Grave* web-site) - his place of birth is also found as Torbay but, (as seen above) which one?

Seaman Walter William Morey served only in the Royal Navy and was not in the service of Canada as is cited in some sources, notably the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.



Seaman Walter William Morey was entitled to the British War Medal (seen here to the right above).

The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to *criceadam@yahoo.ca*. Last updated – January 21, 2023.