



Seaman Rendell Anthony Pike, Number 1725x of the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland), lies in Gillingham Woodlands Cemetery in the United Kingdom: Grave reference R.C.8.387.

(continued)

Having decided to *answer the call* of the naval authorities for volunteers, Rendell Anthony Pike, relinquished his occupation of the time and travelled from the Burin Peninsula community of Lamaline to St. John's*, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland where, on March 15 of 1915, he reported...*to duty*...on the Naval Reserve training ship, HMS *Calypso*, moored in the harbour (see below).

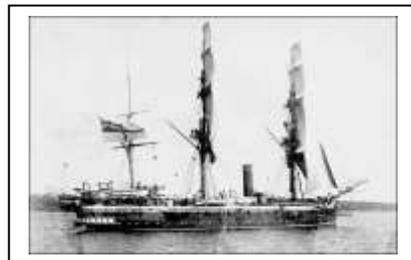
**Apparently the mother, by then a widow, was at some time to move to St. John's with at least her youngest son.*

On that same March 15 he enlisted for the first time into the Reserve (see further below), was signed on to serve for a single year* and underwent a satisfactory medical assessment. He also likely attested at this time, pledging his allegiance to the King-Emperor, George V.

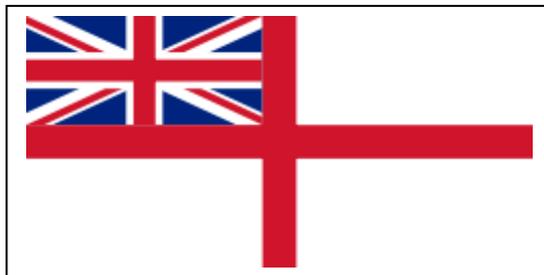
(Right: *George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India: as a boy and young man he had served in the Royal Navy from 1877 until 1891 and always retained a fondness for the Senior 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' 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.***



(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)

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.

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.

An elderly vessel, HMS '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.



(Right: HMS 'Calypso' in full sail. She was to be re-named 'Briton' in 1916 when a new 'Calypso', a modern cruiser, was launched by the Royal Navy. – Royal Navy photograph of 1898 by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum)

Only a meagre five days* after having first reported in St. John's but by then elevated from the rank of *Seaman Recruit*, Seaman Pike, one of a draft of seventy naval reservists, departed Newfoundland on March 20 on the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Stephano* for passage to Halifax. From there the sailors were to traverse the Atlantic on board the ocean-liner *Orduña*.

**It appears that in many cases, even if the recruit in question had not already previously been with the Royal Naval Reserve, the required twenty-eight day training period, all or partially, was waived by 'Royal Proclamation'.*

They were not to travel alone from St. John's: 'D' Company of the Newfoundland Regiment was also to make the voyage on its way to Scotland to join the Newfoundland contingent already serving there at Edinburgh Castle.

(Right above: *The photograph of 'Stephano' sailing through the Narrows of St. John's Harbour is by courtesy of the Provincial Archives.*)



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

(Right: *The recently-built Orduña – the vessel constructed in 1913-1914 - was requisitioned during the Great War for use as an armed merchant cruiser and also as a troop transport.*

Twenty years afterwards to be Involved with the unfortunate Jewish refugees in the 'Voyage of the Damned' affair, the vessel was later again to be used as a troopship and an evacuation transport during the conflict of 1939-1945 before being finally laid up in 1950. – photograph from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site)



Once having disembarked from *Orduña* in the port-city of Liverpool it appears that several of the men were thereupon posted directly to a ship. Others were ordered to undergo further training at various Royal Navy establishments and thus, likely having journeyed by train, reported to these bases on or about March 30.

In the case of Seaman Pike, the destination was to be *Pembroke I*.

HMS *Pembroke** was the Royal Navy establishment at Chatham on the River Medway, itself a tributary of the better-known River Thames, in the county of Kent. Not only was it a barracks – it operated from 1878 until 1983 – but it was the name given to a number of training establishments, mostly not far-removed from Chatham, which were numbered according to the purpose of the training – or otherwise - involved.

Pembroke I was the training station and holding-barracks for regular seamen and it was likely, as seen above, *Pembroke I* to which Seaman Pike was to be attached.

**There was also a series of ships named 'Pembroke', the last several of which were used as depot ships and for harbour service at Chatham. This is the 'HMS Pembroke' found on the cap-bands of the sailors who served there perhaps in their thousands - but who were never to set eyes on the actual ship in question.*

Naval discipline being distinct in some ways from the laws that governed other parties such as the Army and civilians, sailors had to be on the books of a serving naval vessel to be legally subject to naval law and order, even when these sailors were serving on land.

Thus the elderly and obsolescent vessels that plied the waters adjacent to the many naval land establishments – and known as stone frigates – were in theory the home ships of the tens, hundreds, thousands of men who laboured ashore.

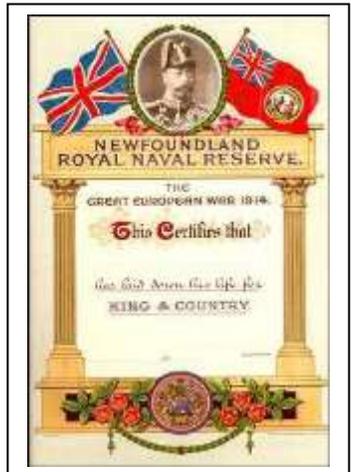
Which is why Seaman Pike would have worn an HMS 'Pembroke' cap-band.

(Right above: Some of the impressive buildings of the large Royal Navy complex which was a part of the HMS 'Pembroke' naval establishment at Chatham for just over one hundred years. Today it has been transformed into a university campus. – photograph from 2010)



According to his Service Record, Seaman Pike was on strength at 'Pembroke' from March 21 (immediately having left *Calypso* in St. John's) until August 29 of that same year, a period which would have included the days spent at sea traversing the Atlantic and those of hospitalization at Gillingham prior to his passing.

The son of Lewis (also found as *Louis*) Kirby Pike, former fisherman drowned in the sinking of his vessel off St-Pierre on September 15, 1900, and of Mary Louisa (apparently also known as *Minnie*) Pike (née *Fitzpatrick**), of St. Lawrence (then later of 28, Dick's Square and of 220, Theatre Hill in the City of St. John's) he was brother to Florence-Gertrude, Bertha, Archibald, Eva-Susannah, Rita-Elsie, Frederick-William, Leonard, Reginald-Sinclair** and to Emmanuel-Edward (see *** further below).



Apparently, according to his enlistment papers, Rendell Anthony Pike was also the adopted son of James Lockyer, fisherman, of Lamaline.

(Right above: A Memorial Scroll, a copy of which was distributed to the families of those who had sacrificed their life while serving in the Newfoundland Royal Naval Reserve)

**The couple had been married in the Parish of Burin on November 27 of 1882 (from the Family Search web-site and from copies of Church of England Parish Records).*



(Preceding page: *The War Memorial in the Burin Peninsula community of Lamaline honours the sacrifice of Rendell A. Pike.* – photograph from 2015)

*****It appears that Reginald Sinclair Pike and Rendell Anthony Pike may have been either a twin or were the same person. It may well be the latter as in different sources they both share not only the same birth-date but apparently also the same date of death.***

Seaman Rendell (found also as *Rendal, Rendall and Rendle*) Anthony Pike was reported as having died, likely in the Royal Naval Hospital in the town of Gillingham where he was to be buried, on August 29 of 1915 from measles, bronchitis and pneumonia.



Seaman Rendell Anthony Pike was entitled to the British War Medal - seen to the right - for his overseas service.

******Private Emmanuel Edward Pike, Number 2666 of the Newfoundland Regiment, had enlisted in April of 1916, sailed for the United Kingdom in July of the same year and had joined the 1st Battalion of the Regiment on 'active service' on the Continent of Europe on October 22.***

He was to be recorded as having been 'killed in action' while serving with 'A' Company during the fighting at Monchy-le-Preux on April 14 of 1917. His body never having been found, his sacrifice is honoured on the bronze beneath the Caribou which stands on the old battle-field at Beaumont-Hamel.



His story is to be found elsewhere in these files.

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.