

LIEUTENANT HORACE G. STONE MEMORIAL – West Vancouver Memorial Library



Horace G. Stone, Lieutenant, RNVR (Royal Naval Voluntary Reserve) is commemorated in the bold, stained-glass window in the main foyer of the West Vancouver Memorial Public Library, 1950 Marine Drive West Vancouver. This magnificent stained glass window titled "Harmony" was created by John Henry Dearle in 1931.

It is a reproduction of Sir Frank Dicksee's painting of the same name currently housed at the Tate Gallery in London. Dearle, a master craftsman for Morris & Co. in England, designed the nine feet tall window as a commission piece for Henry Athelstan Stone as a memorial to his son. "Harmony" was presented to the West Vancouver Memorial Library in 1950 by the officer's sister. The inscription reads *"To the Memory of Lieut. Horace Gordon Stone, only son of Henry A. and Beatrice H. Stone of the city, who died in Active Service December 15, 1918."*

Horace was born in Toronto in 1891 to Henry and Beatrice Stone (nee Hetty) and had two sisters, Francis (Mathews) and Elsie (Gentles). In 1899 Horace move with his family to Vancouver when his father became the Managing Director of Gault Bros. Ltd., a Canadian cloth wholesale and distribution company based in Toronto.

He was a bright and active youth. At the age of 17 he built an 18 foot sailboat, the *Adamac*, and successfully raced his boat in many of the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club events. In 1912, when he was 21, he won the keenly contested Graveley Cup for yachts under twenty feet. Horace won this cup for three consecutive years and it has never been challenged since.

Horace Stone attended McGill University Vancouver campus in 1911 and 1912 before moving to Montreal to complete his degree in Applied in Science. He is listed as a member of the McGill 1915 graduating class.



Lt. H.G. Stone RNVR
(Photo courtesy: Lafayette Ltd
London, July 1916).

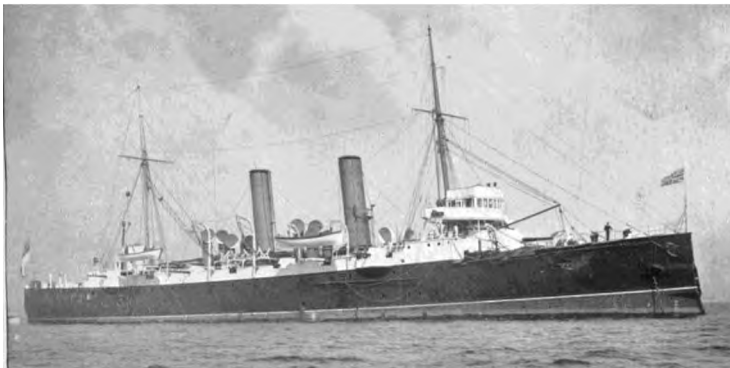
Horace Stones' Naval Career

Many young English/Canadian men had a strong sense of obligation to serve in the Great War and Horace Stone was likely no exception. After leaving McGill Horace joined the Royal Naval Volunteer (RNVR) in Canada. This organization had established operating divisions in several cities across Canada to recruit for its own needs as well as assist in training enlistees in the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer reserve (RCNVR). While in still Canada, Horace began his naval officer training. Undoubtedly Horace Stone's prowess in sailing and a degree in Applied Science made him excellent officer material.

Lt. Stone's Service Records, in the Admiralty Ledger, (available from the Kew Archives in London)ⁱ record that he enlisted in the Royal Navy Voluntary Reserve in Canada and was appointed Temporary Sub-Lieutenant on May 22, 1916 before arriving by boat in Liverpool on June 5, 1916. Prior to being posted to *HMS Hermione*, Stone was sent a short-course at the Royal Naval College at Greenwich.

Shortly after joining the *Hermione* from Greenwich, Lt. Stone was assigned as second-officer to Motor Launch (M.L.) 328 effective September 1916, and in November to M.L. 427. He was appointed Temporary Lieutenant on June 22, 1917 and moved August 20, 1917 to the Patrol vessel

HMS Hermione



Osiris II, an old P&O ship pressed into wartime service as a depot ship for motor launches in support of the *Hermione*. While serving on the *Osiris II*, Lt. Stone was assigned to M.L. 222. He would have been the second or first officer on these boats as the crew complement was two officersⁱⁱ.

The *HMS Hermione* was an *Astraea*-class cruiser. In August 1914 she became a guard ship off Southampton from December 1916 until the war's end in November/December 1919¹. She served as the head-quarters ship, or mother ship, for motor launches (M.L.s) and coastal motor boats protecting the English Channel.

The M.L.s² served several tasks including patrols for enemy shipping, mine sweeping and mine destruction. Anti-submarine search and destroy was the primary task especially after 1917 when the German navy strategy became unrestricted submarine warfare.

¹ *The Hermione* was a twin-screw cruiser of 4360 tons, 9,000 horsepower (6,700 kW) launched at Devonport in 1893. She was coal-fired and powered with two triple-expansion steam engines and capable of 19 knots (35 km/h; 22 mph).. *The Hermione* had 2 x 6 inch guns, 8 x 4.5 inch guns, 1 x 3 inch gun as well as three 18 inch torpedo tubes. She had a crew 328.

² Most of the Royal Navy's motor launches were partially built in the USA by Elco and came in 75 and 80 foot versions. They were well regarded as reliable, sturdy and tough. The British Navy's ordered some 500 anti-submarine motor launches from Elco in 1915; all were delivered by July 1916. As the US was not in the war, the



Elco manufactured motor launch (M.L. 123)
east the North Sea.

The M.L.'s were wood-hulled and powered by two 440 hp gasoline engines enabling a top speed of 19 knots. Armament was a 13 pounder gun (soon replaced with a 3 pounder) forward and stern-mounted two depth charges. The M.L.'s, located off Southampton, would have covered wide sections of the English Channel as they had a range of up to 500, to 1,000 miles depending upon the speed and hence fuel consumption. The patrol areas could extend from the entrance to the Channel off Land's End, Cornwall, to past Dover-Calais as far

There are many stories of adventures and listings of these small boats accomplishments^{iii,iv,v}. The most famous of these and the finest hour for M.L.'s came when 62 motor launches accompanied the block ships under Admiral Sir Roger Keyes' famous Zeebrugge and Ostend raids.^{3, 4}

vessels could not be sent directly to England but were shipped to Canada for final assembly by Canadian Vickers²; they were sometimes referred to "Canadian motor launches".

³ The Zeebrugge and Ostend raids. In this action of April, 1918, several obsolete cruisers attempted to block, by scuttling, the canal entrances at the two Belgian ports that served as major outlets for German subs and destroyers. The M.L.s were responsible for diverting enemy attention and most important to remove the skeleton-crews from the scuttled cruisers. The commando-style raids were a tremendous morale booster in England and resulted in the award of eight Victoria Crosses.

⁴ Additional historical records of life aboard M.L.'s can be found in the memoir; "The Motor Launch Patrol", by Gordon Maxwell, Lieut., RNVR. The author recounts his life in the Motor Launch Patrol during the First World War (commanding ML 314). He includes numerous humorous and horrifying anecdotes, provides insights into the details of life aboard these small vessels. The book provides a vivid portrait of the life of an RNVR officer during the Great War. There are additional accounts of; *The "Movies" – The Ship and Men of the Royal Navy Motor Launch Patrol 1914 – 1919*. Note that the term "Movies" referred to the motor launches

Lt. Horace Stone's Death



Following the armistice on November 11, 1918, Lt Stone travelled to Paris where he contracted Spanish influenza that was rampant at this time.

The casualty lists of the Royal Navy and Dominion Navies reported that: “*MS Hermione*, Officer, STONE, Horace G, Temporary/Lieutenant, RNVR; telephone message from officer 13.12.18. Seriously ill at Station Hospital, Paris. Influenza”.

He died 15 December 1918. Lt. Stone's death is reported in his Service Record referenced in the appendix of this summary. Lt. Stone was buried at Pantin Cimenterie, Department de Seine de St. Denis, Isle de France.

Lt. H.G. Stone RNVR, Pantin Cimenterie, Paris

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- ⁱ See attached Service Record, Sub. Lt. H.G. Stone
 - ⁱⁱ www.motorlaunchpatrol.net/construction/design_and_construction.php
 - ⁱⁱⁱ www.elcomotoryachts.com/history-of-elco.shtml
 - ^{iv} www.elcomotoryachts.com/history-of-elco.shtml
 - ^v www.motorlaunchpatrol.net/written_accounts

SERVICE RECORD – Horace Gordon Stone, RNVR

