

Lieutenant Walter Crocker Poole R.N.V.R
687873 Private William Crawford Poole 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion



Walter Crocker Poole was born in Waterford, Ireland in 1853 the son of William Crawford Poole M.D., J.P of Glendysart House, Ardmore Co. Waterford. He first went to sea at the age of 14 and eventually, according to the *Birkenhead News* “commanded some of the finest Mail Steamers sailing out of Liverpool under the flag of the Pacific Steam Navigation Co.”

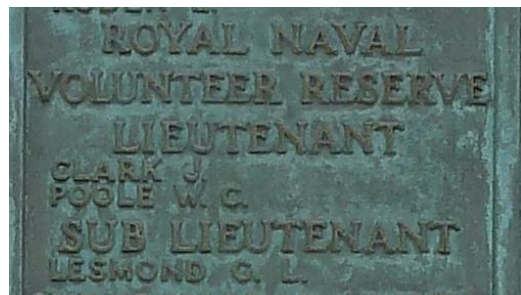
By 1891 Walter had settled with his wife, Arabella and three sons William Crawford Poole (born 1886 in Wiltshire), Walter Henry Poole (born 1887 in Wiltshire, served with the Royal Naval Reserve) and Simon Bernard Poole (born 1889 in Birkenhead, served with 1st/7th Bn. King’s (Liverpool) Regiment).

At the beginning of the Great War two of the Mersey Pilot boats were taken over by the War Office to be used as Examination ships. The *Alfred H Read* was designated as Mersey Examination Vessel No.1. and her duties included examining incoming neutral vessels for contraband cargo.



At 07.00 a.m. on 28th December 1917, the *Alfred H Read* struck a mine at the Bar Station at the entrance to Liverpool Bay, which had been laid by the UC75 two days earlier, she sank almost immediately with the loss of 23 crew members and 16 Pilots and Apprentices (one of whom was Lieutenant Walter Poole), only two crew members were saved.

He is commemorated on Panel 28 Portsmouth Naval Memorial.



William Crawford Poole was born on 8th August 1886 in Wiltshire. According to the 1911 Canadian census, he went to Canada in 1909 and at the time of the census was living in the area around Kamloops, British Columbia and was employed as a “domestic.”

On 3rd March 1916 William Poole presented himself for enlistment into the Canadian Army. He stated that he was Fruit Rancher and had been serving with the 31st Regiment British Columbia Horse for three years. He was sent over to the Western Front later that year where he joined the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles Bn. which was a dismounted cavalry unit which fought as infantry. It had been raised on 15th March 1915 and formed part of 8th Brigade, 3rd Division.

On 6th November 1918 the 2nd C.M.R. Bn. was ordered to advance through Quievrechain, Belgium and secure two bridgeheads across the rivers Aunnel and La Grande Honelle, two support platoons were left to mop up the town. The rapid advance of the battalion took the enemy by surprise and prevented them from blowing up the bridgeheads which had already been mined. However, the rapid advance left the flanks exposed and ‘A’ Company on the left was held up by machine gun fire from Crespin and the western edge of the wood on the south. As a result 3 officers and 29 other ranks were killed, one of whom was Private William Crawford Poole. He was buried in Grave A.19, Quievrain Communal Cemetery, Belgium.



He is commemorated on the War Memorial in Salmon Arm, British Columbia, Canada and both father and son are commemorated on Birkenhead War Memorial, Hamilton Square.

Mrs Arabella Poole lost not only her husband and eldest son during the Great War but also two of her nephews. 446314 Private Edward Henry Brien served with the 27th Bn. Canadian Infantry and died on 20th December 1915. He is buried in Plot I, Row G, Grave 7, Lindenhoek Chalet Military Cemetery, Belgium.

Second Lieutenant Desmond Cecil Bagge Brien served with 3rd Bn. (attd 2nd Bn.) Cheshire Regiment and died on 2nd October 1915. He is commemorated on panels 49 and

50, Loos Memorial, France. Both men are also commemorated on the Birkenhead War Memorial.