

# “Lest We Forget”

## HMS Princess Victoria and war graves in North Norfolk Churchyards

*by Richard Jefferson*

*Synopsis: The chance discovery of the graves of three World War II Royal Navy seamen in Cley churchyard, all from a minelayer (converted from a pre-war car ferry), started a search for more information. H.M.S. Princess Victoria struck a mine near the mouth of the River Humber close to midnight on 18th May 1940 and sank within minutes with the loss of 37 lives. Only 9 of the casualties have known graves, and 7 of those are in Norfolk, the bodies being washed up on our North Norfolk coast a month later.*

### Introduction

On an overcast afternoon in early January 2004 I set out with a friend from Bath on a gentle perambulation through Cley. After looking around St Margaret's Church, we found ourselves across the road in the new churchyard. Round to the left near the hedge three graves were visible in an area that had recently been cleared of alexanders, brambles and young saplings (Photograph 2). They were of Royal Navy seaman who had all died on 18th May 1940 and two of the headstones mentioned H.M.S. Princess Victoria.

My friend, who is an expert on 20th century naval matters, said that he was certain HMS *Princess Victoria* was a very early roll-on roll-off car ferry that had been completed in 1939, but at the outbreak of war in September 1939 had been requisitioned by the Royal Navy and converted into a minelayer. Indeed he even had a 1/1200 model of it – all three inches long!

A few days later the following note from my friend arrived through the post: "*PRINCESS VICTORIA (111) B(uilt) 1939 Wm Denny & Bros., Dumbarton T(ons) 2197g.....1939 Apr. 21: Launched for the Stranraer-Larne route....A pioneer car carrier with stern shore ramp loading.... Cattle could be carried on lower deck forward..... July 5: delivered to Stranraer (photograph 1)..... Sept: the ship was ideal for minelaying and was taken over as soon as war broke out. Carried 244 mines via two stern chutes. Crew 120. She joined the First Minelaying Squadron based at port ZA = Scapa Flow, Scotland. She was then detached to Hull for mining in the Heligo(land) Bight.*"

1940 May 19 (May 18 is the correct date!): "At the entrance to the River Humber she struck a mine which opened four compartments. Sank with the loss of 36 (the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) database in 2004 stated 37 casualties). 85 survived." <sup>2</sup>

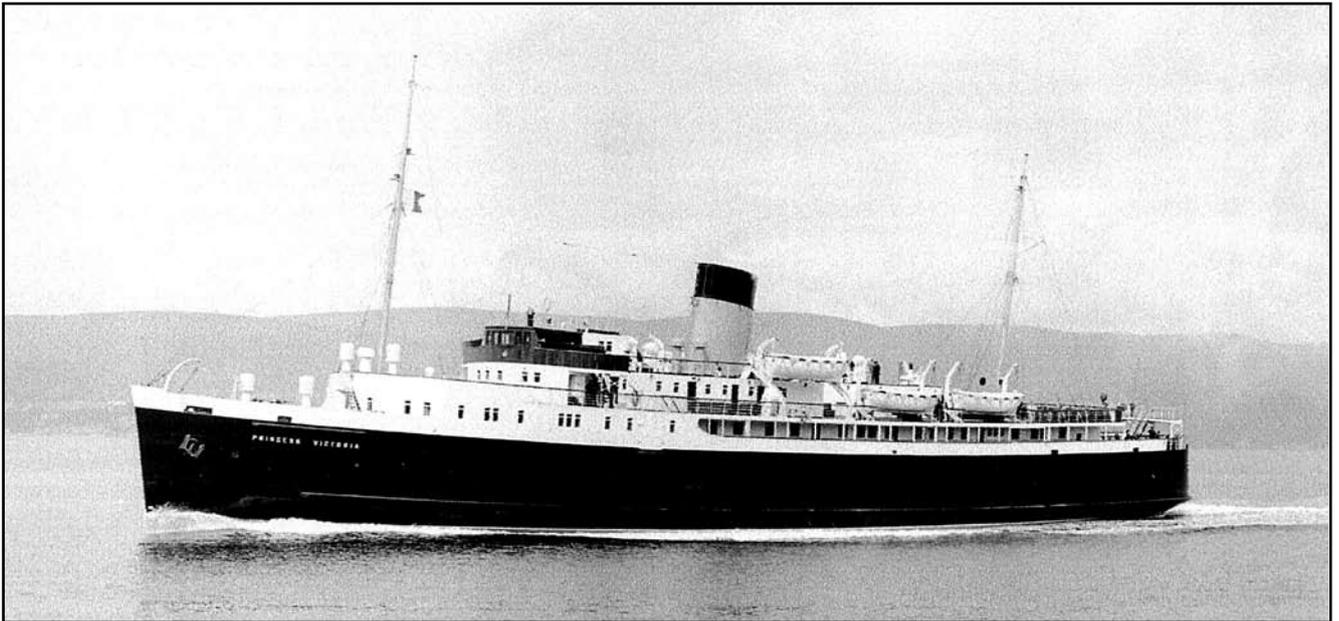
This *Princess Victoria* was the third out of a

line of four with the same name, all of which served as ferries on the Stranraer/Larne route. *Princess Victoria I* was built in 1890 and was sold in 1912. *Princess Victoria II* was built in 1912, saw service as a cross-channel troopship in World War I and was scrapped in 1934. *Princess Victoria IV* was built in 1946 as an almost identical rebuild of *III*. She sank in the Irish Sea during the terrible storm that caused massive devastation on 31st January 1953. There were 136 lives lost, some of whom had been rescued from the previous boat lost in the North Sea and had returned to work on the new ferry.<sup>2</sup>

### The Sinking of HMS *Princess Victoria*

A letter from the Ministry of Defence states that on the night of 18th May 1940 HMS *Princess Victoria* was returning to Immingham (Hull) after "laying mines in the East Coast barrier, some 40 miles east of Cromer"<sup>3</sup>, although in the report of the official enquiry into the loss of the ship it stated that the mines had been laid off the Dutch coast.<sup>4</sup> She was being escorted by two minelaying destroyers HMS *Ivanhoe* and HMS *Express*, after three other escort destroyers had been "dropped off at Harwich"<sup>5</sup> "At 23.15 there was a terrific explosion which appeared to come from below the ship and to the starboard side of the centre line, forward of the bridge. The ship had hit a magnetic mine, probably dropped by a German aircraft. After 20 to 30 seconds the ship was listing 45 degrees, and 70 degrees within about 2 minutes. She touched bottom and eventually sank on an approximately even keel, leaving her mast, funnel and part of the bridge structure exposed".<sup>1</sup>

The wreck lay in the main shipping lane and was, therefore, a considerable danger to other shipping. So in March 1944 it was partially dispersed with heavy explosives, leaving 8.5 metres of water clear above the wreck.<sup>6</sup> It was almost



**Photograph 1. mv Princess Victoria during sea trials in June 1939.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Reported discovery of Body</b>	<b>Date of Funeral</b>	<b>Cemetery</b>	<b>Note</b>
Lt.Cdr L A LAMBERT RN	37	First Lt	19 June: Sea off Sheringham	Jun 21	Sheringham	1
Unidentified RNVR Officer		(Possibly Naval Paymaster)	20 June: Beach, Upper Sheringham	Jun 21	Sheringham	2
Unidentified RN		Telegraphist	Beach, Weybourne	Jun 21	Salthouse	3
J W BURROWS OBE RN	21	Signalman	Beach, Salthouse	Jun 21	Salthouse	4
T DAVIDSON RN	20	Telegraphist	Washed ashore, Cley	Jun 22	Cley	1
T RICKETT RN		Ordinary Seaman	Washed ashore, Cley	Jun 22	Cley	
Unidentified Sailor			18(21) June: Beach, Blakeney	Jun 23	Blakeney	5
H F EVANS RN	43	Leading Signalman	Beach, Warham	Jun 23	Warham St Mary Magdalen	
J MITCHELL RN	19	Able Seaman	Washed ashore, Cley	Jun 24	Cley	6
Unidentified RAF			Beach, Upper Sheringham	Jun 24	Sheringham	7
D A SELF RN	19	Able Seaman	Sheringham Beach	Jun 25	Sheringham	

**Table 1.**

## Explanatory Notes for Table 1

**Note 1:** The gravestone for Lieut. Commander Lambert (Photograph 3) and that for Telegraphist Davidson in Cley (Photograph 6) were paid for by the family and may well have been erected soon after the burial. All other graves would initially have had wooden crosses that were replaced by CWGC headstones in the years after the war had ended.

**Note 2:** In this case Upper Sheringham probably means west of Sheringham. Looking at the list of RN/RNVR/RNR unidentified casualties and accepting what is written on the headstone, it is highly likely that this is the grave of Acting Sub-Lieutenant Harry Proudfoot RNR.<sup>9</sup>

**Note 3:** The CWGC headstone says "A Sailor of the Second World War A Telegraphist". The Rev. Charles Swainson in the Burial Register refers to "An unknown man, presumed to be a wireless operator, Naval Air Arm".<sup>11</sup> Looking at the CWGC casualty list it is highly likely that this is the grave of Leading Telegraphist F A Theobald.<sup>9</sup>

**Note 4:** There is some confusion about the spelling of the surname, whether it should be Burrows or Burroughs, but it must be recognised that this type of error occurs quite frequently in different types of records (Photograph 4). The award of an OBE to a 20 or 21 year old in 1940 must have been for something exceptional and thus can be considered a distinguishing feature that allows the surname issue to be resolved. It is recorded in the Supplement to the London Gazette<sup>12</sup> for 1st January 1940 under the heading 'Medal of the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for Meritorious Service' 'James W. Burroughs, Signalman, HMS *Vanquisher*'. The August and September 1939 Log Books for the destroyer HMS *Vanquisher* are missing, but the October Log Book stated that on 11th September the ship was in collision with another destroyer HMS *Walker*.<sup>13</sup> The latter's Log Book for September 14 showed that at 21.55hrs on 11 September the two ships collided in the Irish Sea. The ship's company of *Vanquisher* were transferred to *Walker* and the following morning the destroyer HMS *Ardent* took *Vanquisher* in tow to Devonport. A few days later *Walker*'s Log Book recorded the funerals of four crew members from *Vanquisher*. It seems highly likely that Burroughs 'meritorious service' was associated with this collision. Moreover, the citation in the London Gazette was published when he was alive and consequently the spelling of the surname is likely to have been correct. Consequently it would seem extremely likely the

correct spelling is Burroughs, but the CWGC will only alter their records if a copy of his birth certificate can be produced with the spelling 'Burroughs' and confirmation that this is the man buried in the grave, this might be quite a tortuous task.

**Note 5:** On Sunday 23rd June a funeral at St Nicholas Church, Blakeney, for an unidentified sailor was recorded in a local newspaper.<sup>15</sup> However, there is no record of this burial in the Church Burial Register, nor on the plans of the churchyard held by the churchwardens, nor surprisingly in the records of the CWGC. The death certificate (Photograph 7) states that a body was found on the beach at Blakeney on Tuesday 18th June,<sup>16</sup> but the newspaper report stated the body was washed up on Friday 21st June. In these accounts the references to Captain G F Weld Blundell RN enable some sense to be made of this confusion for he represented the Admiralty at the Sunday funeral in Blakeney and later registered the death on 11th October. So it would appear there was only one body, that of a Royal Navy sailor and almost certainly from HMS *Princess Victoria*.

**Note 6:** Poignantly on the gravestone of Able Seaman Jack Mitchell it is recorded that his youngest brother also died on active service in World War II (Photograph 8); he was a telegraphist on the cruiser HMS *Penelope* sunk on 18th February 1944 west of Naples (off Anzio) by U410, with the loss of 415 lives; there were 206 survivors.<sup>17</sup>

**Note 7:** The Eastern Evening News reported the funeral of an unknown seaman on Monday 24th June at Sheringham with the Royal Navy being represented by a Naval Captain.<sup>18</sup> However the Sheringham Urban District Council Notice of Interment tells a different story as it records that a body found on the beach at Upper Sheringham (west of Sheringham) was presumed to be a member of the RAF One needs to keep an open mind on all this. There is a CWGC headstone but this would not have been erected until five years after the end of the war, at the earliest. If it was a Naval person then it is highly likely to be another unidentified body from HMS *Princess Victoria*.



**Photograph 2. It was the discovery of these graves that started the search for the sinking of the Princess Victoria.**

totally dispersed in 1948 and now no more than 1.04 metres stands above the seabed giving a depth of water of about 12 metres.<sup>7</sup>

At the time of the explosion there were 17 officers and ratings either on the bridge, in the Chart House or in the Wireless/Telegraph Office. 12 of that number died.<sup>1</sup> The force of the explosion probably blew them off the ship into the sea where they drowned if they were not already dead. At least, some of their bodies were swept south down the North Sea by the tides and currents, to be washed up on the beaches of North Norfolk a month or so later. All these individuals were RN/RNVR/RNR.<sup>8\*</sup>

The 20 Naval Auxiliary Personnel (Merchant Navy) who died all worked below deck and were probably entombed when the ship sank. These were men who had been transferred to naval command and placed under King's Regulations when the Royal Navy requisitioned their merchant ship in 1939, so it included engine room officers together with crew, cooks and stewards. In this case 8 of the engine room crew were lost – the 5th Engineer Officer, 6 greasers and an engine room storekeeper, while 6 stewards and 3 cooks who were off duty and in their bunks on the lower deck would have been trapped. The remaining three were a boatswain, a carpenter and a donkeyman.<sup>9\*\*</sup>

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\* Footnote: RN = Royal Navy RNVR = Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve RNR = Royal Naval Reserve, who were serving members of the Merchant Navy who gave some of their time each year to train with the Royal Navy, and on the declaration of war were called up for service in the Royal Naval Reserve.

## Norfolk Burials

The relevant burial register for Cley still resides in the vestry of St Margaret's Church. It shows that two of the sailors, Thomas Davidson from Belfast and Thomas Rickett, from Rotherham, were buried on Saturday June 22nd and Jack Mitchell from Blackpool on the following Monday 24th June. There was also a note in the handwriting of Charles Toft, Rector: "These bodies were washed ashore at Cley from HMS *Princess Victoria*, a minelayer, which was mined at the mouth of the Humber on May 18th".<sup>10</sup>

What had started as a study of burials at Cley now uncovered much more. In the Local Studies Library in the Millennium Library at the Forum, Norwich an examination of the micro-films of local newspapers for June 1940 showed that other bodies from the same ship had been washed up along the North Norfolk coast and one had been found floating in the sea. This and other information gleaned from the Sheringham Urban District Council Notices of Interment and Register of Burials, church burial registers, and, in one case, a death certificate is summarised in the following tables and accompanying notes. However, this search has revealed that there is no record in the parish documents of a seaman being buried in Blakeney churchyard (see Note 5) and hence no CWGC gravestone marking his resting place.

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\*\*Footnote: donkeyman = crew member whose job was to operate steam engines, winches etc, not in the engine room.



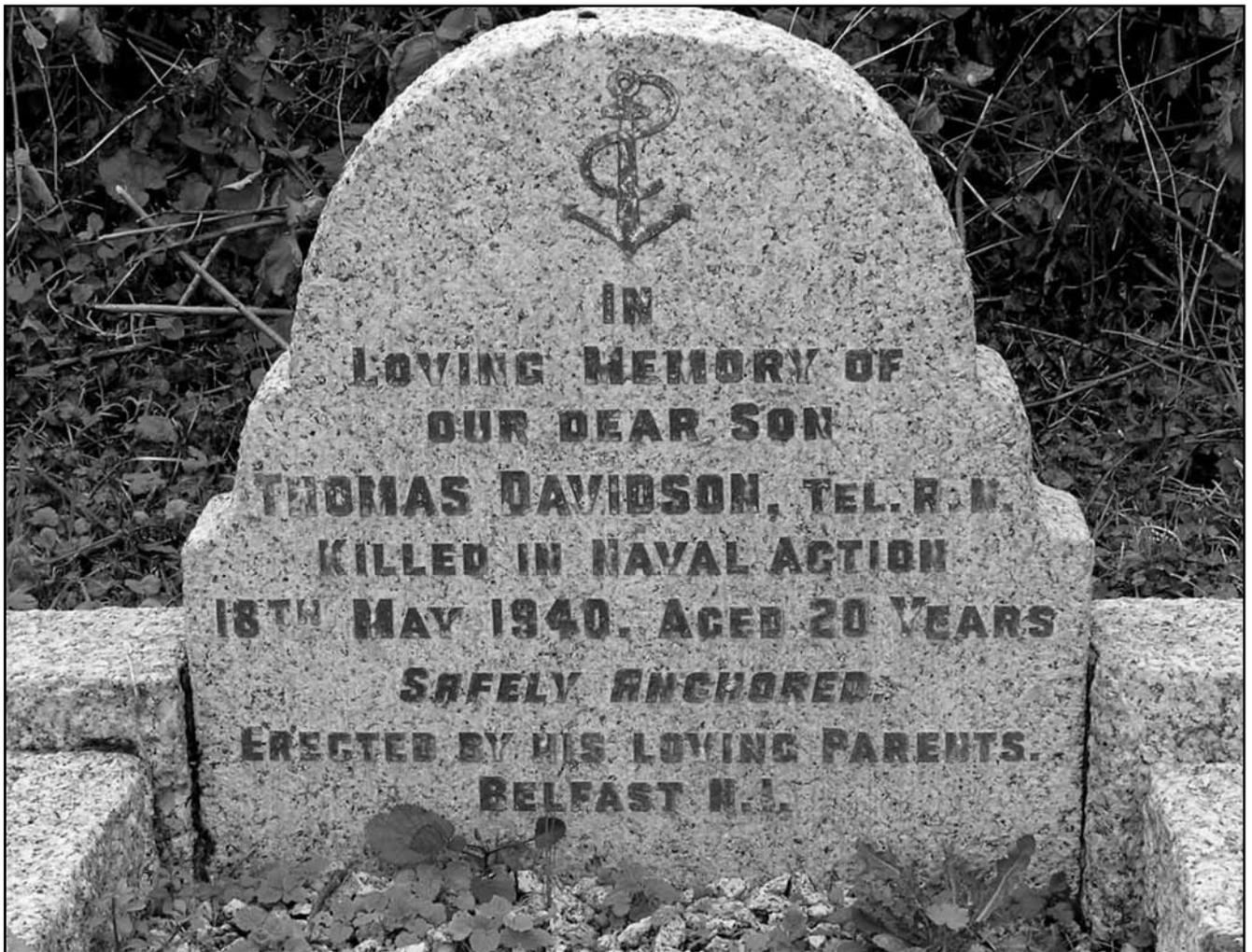
**Photograph 3. The grave of Lt Cmr Lambert in Sheringham cemetery.**



**Photograph 4. Grave of Signalman J W Burrows (Salhouse)**



**Photograph 5. Grave of Ordinary Seaman T Rickett (Cley)**



HC 749955


**CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY OF DEATH**  
**Pursuant to the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953**

**Registration District** *Fakenham*

**1940 . Death in the Sub-district of** *Wells* **in the County of** *Norfolk*

Columns: -									
No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description, and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
96	<i>Dead body found on Eighteenth June 1940, on beach near Blakeney North Norfolk R.D</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>- years</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Due to war Operations</i>	<i>Certificate received from G. F. Weld Blundell, Officer Commanding</i>	<i>Eleventh October 1940</i>	<i>HC Copland Registrar.</i>

Certified to be a true copy of an entry in a register in my custody.
 

 Superintendent Registrar  
*7th May 2004* Date

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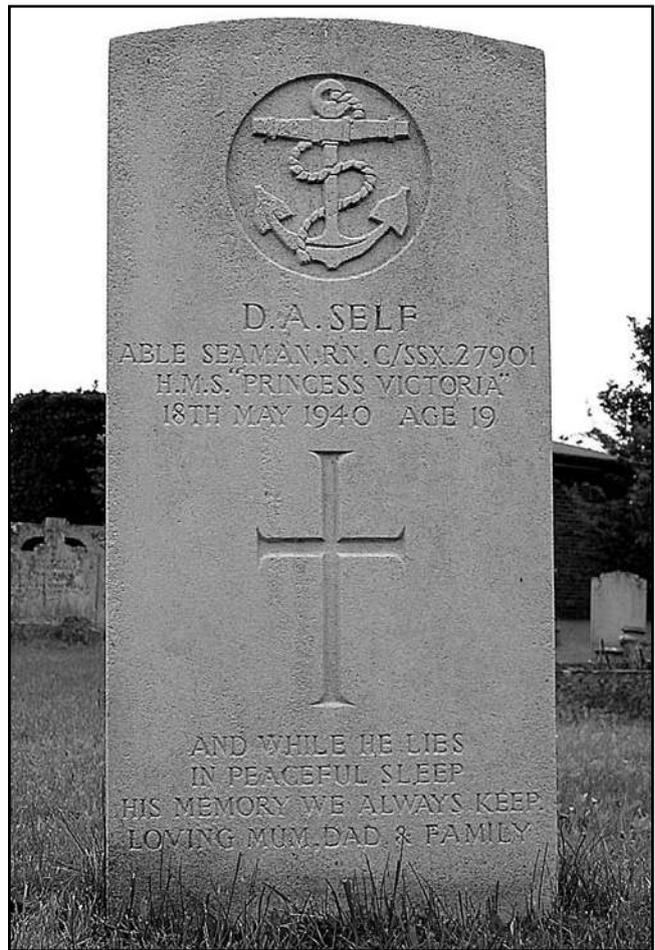
**Photograph 6 (top left). Grave of Telegraphist T Davidson RN, buried 22 June 1940 at Cley**

**Photograph 7 (lower left). Death Certificate of unknown sailor washed ashore near Blakeney**

**Photograph 8 (above left). Grave of Able Seaman J Mitchell RN, buried 25 June 1940 at Cley**

**Photograph 9 (above right). Grave of Able Seaman D A Self RN, buried 25 June 1940 at Sheringham**

**Photograph 10 (right). Grave of unknown officer of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, buried 21 June 1940 at Upper Sheringham. He is believed to have been Acting Sub-Lieutenant Harry Proudfoot, the Naval Paymaster aboard the Princess Victoria, though he is listed as RNR.**



**ROLL OF HONOUR**

**H.M. MINELAYER PRINCESS VICTORIA**

The Secretary of the Admiralty regrets to announce the following casualties, which occurred in H.M. Minelayer Princess Victoria:—

**MISSING, PRESUMED DEAD**

**OFFICERS**

Captain J. B. E. Hall, R.N.; 5th Engineer William Graham; Lieutenant-Commander L. A. Lambert, R.N.; Temporary Sub-Lieutenant (E) Harry Proudfoot, R.N.R.

**RATINGS**

Burrows, J. W., Sig.; Cockshutt, J. F., Ord. Sig., R.N.V.R.; Cookson, E. G. W., ord. smn.; Coupe-thwaite, J., carpenter; Darby, S. N., asst. steward; Davidson, T., teleg., R.N.V.R.; Dudley, S. W., asst. cook; Evans, H. F., leadg. sig.; Flaherty, P., greaser; Little, A., donkeyman; Little, J., greaser; Logan, A. C., greaser; Lowther, L. C., greaser; MacDonald, A. H., asst. steward; MacKenzie, J., asst. steward; MacLean, I. G., 2nd cook; McCalmont, J., bosun; McIsaac, A., greaser; McNab, A., asst. steward; Mitchell, J., A.B.; Murray, F. T., greaser; O'Kelly, M. H., leadg. supply asst.; Parker, T. R., asst. steward; Rickett, T., ord. smn.; Robinson, W. J., engine-room stores; Self, D. A., A.B.; Scutt, W., ord. smn.; Snowling, F. H., C.P.O.; Theobald, F. A., leadg. teleg.; Underwood, W., chief steward; Wear, C. W., ord. smn.; Willats, P., chief cook.

**WOUNDED**

**OFFICERS**

Paymaster-Lieutenant F. A. K. Betty, R.N.V.R.; Lieutenant-Commander P. M. S. Chavasse, R.N.; Lieutenant F. B. Fisher, R.N.; Temporary Sub-Lieutenant W. D. Gray, R.N.R.; Temporary Sub-Lieutenant (E) E. R. Jones, R.N.R.; 7th Engineer G. W. Kinloch; Lieutenant H. A. Kirby, R.N.

**RATINGS**

Ford, O., ord. smn.; McMackland, D., P.O., R.N.V.R.; Sheldon, J., ord. smn.

Photograph 11. Roll of Honour in The Times 25 May 1940.



## Bodies Washed Ashore.

### FUNERALS ON NORFOLK COAST.

The funeral of Lt.-Commander Louis Alfred Lambert, R.N., and another man, believed to have been a Paymaster R.N.V.R., whose bodies were washed ashore at Sheringham took place at Sheringham cemetery on Friday with military honours.

Officers and men of H.M. Navy, Marines and Army followed the coffins and acted as bearers, and an Army bugler sounded the "Last Post."

Rev. J. F. Gratton Guinness (Vicar of Sheringham) officiated.

Among those present were: Major F. Harman (representing the British Legion and Sheringham U.D.C.), Inspector Levick, Mr. Trevor H. Bent (Clerk, Sheringham U.D.C.), and Councillor J. Pegg (representing the Salvation Army).

#### CLEY FUNERAL.

The interment of Able Seaman J. Mitchell, whose body was washed ashore at Cley, took place at Cley cemetery on Monday.

The funeral, which was quiet but impressive was attended by relatives of the deceased man, from Blackpool, and also present were District Officer Davies (Cromer) and Coast-guard J. C. Ling (Cley), representing the Admiralty.

Among the floral tributes were those from the family mourners, the Admiralty, Coastguards, inhabitants of Cley, and a small post which was simply inscribed "Thank you."

An unknown seaman, whose body had been washed ashore, was buried at Sheringham cemetery on Monday.

The Vicar (Rev. Gratton Guinness) officiated, and a Naval Captain was present.

On the coffin, which was draped with a Union Jack, was a wreath from the officers and men of the Royal Navy.

#### FUNERALS OF UNKNOWN SEAMEN.

A large congregation attended at St. Nicholas' Church, Blakeney, on Sunday, for the funeral service for an un-identified seaman, whose body had been washed ashore on Friday.

The Rev. E. Kinloch Jones conducted the service, and the coffin, covered by the Union Jack, was followed to the graveside by representatives of the British Legion, Defence Workers, and the Police.

Capt. G. F. Weld Blundall, R.N., represented the Admiralty.

The "Last Post" was sounded at the conclusion of the service.

Flowers were deposited on the coffin by sympathisers.

Photograph 12 (above). Entry from the Norfolk Chronicle, Friday 26 June 1940.

Photograph 13 (left). Marshall Leonard Skelton in Cley cemetery, 2004.



**Photograph 14. Photograph of Able Seaman Len Skelton minelaying.**

There are seven named graves of sailors from HMS Princess Victoria in North Norfolk, with almost certainly another three, and possibly four, unidentified sailors from the same ship. The CWGC database shows that there were 37 casualties,<sup>9</sup> of whom only nine have known graves. The two outside Norfolk are at Grimsby, Lincolnshire and Thorne, Yorkshire. The latter was the home town of the casualty, while the former was probably washed ashore off Grimsby. Seven casualties, Six RN and one RNVR, are commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial in Kent (Royal Navy Memorial), while one RNR and twenty Naval Auxiliary Personnel (Merchant Navy) are commemorated on the Liverpool Naval Memorial (Merchant Navy Memorial).<sup>9</sup>

The Roll of Honour published in *The Times* on 25th May 1940 (Photograph 11) is interesting. It shows that of the survivors only three ratings were wounded, while in contrast seven officers were. The report to the Admiralty from the senior surviving officer stated: "four of those saved were blown off the bridge. One landed near the funnel, two by the after gun and one was blown clean over the funnel and landed in the water between 20 and 30 yards astern. All received severe injuries. The fifth survivor was the Navigating Officer Lieutenant F.B. Fisher RN, a wooden cupboard was blown on top of him rendering him unconscious, but saving his life".<sup>1</sup>

Lieutenant-Commander P M B Chavasse, the senior surviving officer who submitted the official report to the Admiralty and was the main witness at the board of enquiry, was off duty on top of his bunk;<sup>1</sup> 7th Engineer Officer G W Kinloch was asleep on his bunk, but was injured when he made his escape through glass panels that he had to break.<sup>6</sup> It would seem that all the Officers that were off duty were probably in their bunks on an upper deck, while those on duty were on or near the bridge.

### Conclusion

There are a considerable number of questions that remain unanswered, and trying to wade through the evidence has been a minefield in itself. What is not in question is the sacrifice of so many of the young men who died to help secure our freedom, a surprising number of whom, from all the armed services, lie together, with those they fought, in our Norfolk churchyards and cemeteries.

### Postscript

In the course of this study two of the eighty-five survivors from HMS Princess Victoria have been traced (through the internet). Marshall Leonard Skelton (Able Seaman M L Skelton RN) is still alive aged 84. A week short of

his 19th birthday at the time of the sinking, he was on duty towards the stern and was able to get into the water.<sup>19</sup> In July 2004 he, with his son and grandson (Malcolm Skelton, who is doing a detailed study of all the crew and the sinking), came to North Norfolk and visited the graves of his former shipmates (Photograph 13).

Graham Wright Kinloch (7th Engineer Officer G W Kinloch, Merchant Navy, Naval Auxiliary Personnel) died in 2003 at the age of 88. In 1994 his son recorded him talking about his experiences on the HMS *Princess Victoria* and giving a detailed account of the sinking.<sup>5</sup>

## Table 2: List of events with extracts from original sources.

### Date of Event In 1940

#### 18 June Death Certificate:

“Dead body found on Eighteenth June 1940 on beach near Blakeney – due to war operations”

#### 19 June Sheringham Urban District Council Notice of Interment Lieut. Commander L.A.Lambert’s body “found in the sea off Sheringham”

#### 20 June Sheringham Urban District Council Notice of Interment “Body, believed to be a naval paymaster, found on the beach at Upper Sheringham”

#### 21 June St Nicholas Church, Salthouse: Burial Register 21 June 1940 No. 610 Signalman J.W.Burrows RN: “body washed ashore on Salthouse Beach – Charles Swainson, Rector” No. 611 “an unknown man, presumed to be a Wireless operator Naval Air Arm - Body washed ashore on Weybourne beach – Charles Swainson, Rector” (The CWGC headstone has: ‘A Sailor of the Second World War A Telegraphist Royal Navy’)

#### 21 June Eastern Daily Press Saturday 22nd June 1940 “With naval and military honours the funerals took place in Sheringham Cemetery yesterday of Lieut. Commander Louis Alfred Lambert, and of another naval officer, believed to be a paymaster. Both bodies were washed ashore at Sheringham earlier in the week. For each cortege there were six bearers from H.M.forces – four naval ratings, four marine corporals and four Army sergeants. The Vicar of Sheringham, the Rev. J.F.Gratton Guinness conducted the service. There were two wreaths, from Royal Naval personnel and a woman placed a vase of blue cornflowers between the graves.”

#### 21 June Eastern Daily Press Saturday 22nd June 1940 “Two naval ratings who had been washed ashore on the North Norfolk coast were buried at Salthouse with naval honours yesterday. Representatives of various bodies present included Messrs E.W.Algar and J.C.Ling of Cley Coastguards.”

#### 21 June Eastern Evening News Tuesday 25th June 1940 “The funeral took place on Sunday afternoon of the unidentified seaman whose body was found on Blakeney beach on Friday.”

#### 22 June St Margaret Church, Cley: Burial Register 22 June 1940 No.341 Thomas Rickett Rotherham 20 years No.342 Thomas Davidson Belfast 20 years (In the hand of Rev.Charles Toft, Rector: “These bodies were washed ashore at Cley from HMS *Princess Victoria* a minelayer which was mined at the mouth of the Humber on May 18th.”)

#### 23 June Norfolk Chronicle Friday 28th June 1940 “A large congregation attended St Nicholas’ Church, Blakeney, for the funeral service for an un-identified seaman, whose body had been washed ashore on Friday.. The Rev.E.Kinloch Jones conducted the service, and the coffin, covered by the Union Jack, was followed to the graveside by representatives of the British Legion, Defence Workers, and the Police. Capt.G.F.Weld Blundell RN represented the Admiralty. The ‘Last Post’ was sounded at the conclusion of the service. Flowers were deposited on the coffin by sympathisers.”

#### 23 June Norfolk Chronicle Friday 28th June 1940 “The funeral took place at St Mary’s Church, Warham, on Sunday of Leading Signalman Henry Francis Evans, aged 43, whose body was washed up on the beach at Warham. Deceased was a native of Poplar. He joined the Navy during the last war at the age of 16 and served 23 years. He was called up at the beginning of the present war.”

**23 June** Eastern Evening News Tuesday 25th June 1940

"The fourth body to be washed ashore at Sheringham within a week was recovered from the sea on Sunday. It is believed to be that of a Naval rating D.A.Belf A.B." ('Self' is the correct spelling of the surname. The Notice of Interment had the incorrect one, which the newspaper used for its article. The Register of Burials has the spelling 'Self', as does the CWGC headstone.)

**24 June** Eastern Evening News Tuesday 25th June 1940

"A posy bearing the inscription 'Thank you' was among the flowers at the funeral of Able Seaman J.Mitchell, aged 19 years, at Cley Cemetery yesterday. The seaman's body was washed ashore at Cley. In addition to relatives from Blackpool there were representatives of the Coastguard Service."

**24 June** Eastern Evening News Tuesday 25th June 1940

"The funeral took place at Sheringham yesterday of an unknown seaman whose body was washed ashore last week. The Royal Navy was represented by a Naval captain and there was a wreath from the officers and men of the Royal Navy. The service was conducted by the Vicar of Sheringham (the Rev.J.F.Gratton Guinness), and the coffin was covered with a Union Jack." (This is the body that the Notice of Interment 'presumed to be an airman' and the CWGC grave has as 'an Airman of the 1939-1945 War'.

**25 June** Sheringham Urban District Council Register of Burials

Presumed to be the body of D.A.Self Naval Seaman (Sheringham is a public cemetery, for merly run by the Urban District Council, now by Sheringham Town Council).

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**References:**

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- 2 Haws D *Merchant Fleets No.26: Britain's Railway Steamers Scottish and Irish Companies.* 1994
- 3 Pers. comm. from the Ministry of Defence, Naval History Branch. 18th June 2004
- 4 TNA - ADM 1/10807: Minutes of the board of enquiry held on board His Majesty's Ship "Dryad" on Friday 28th June 1940 into the circumstances attending the loss of His Majesty's Ship "Princess Victoria" on Saturday 18th May 1940
- 5 Pers. comm. from Nicolas Kinloch Graham regarding his father: Memories of Wright Kinloch (1915-2003), recorded on Saturday 7th May 1994
- 6 Pers. comm. from the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office. 3rd June 2004
- 7 Young, R *The Comprehensive Guide to Shipwrecks of the North East Coast.* 2001
- 8 Pers. comm. from Christopher Bull. November 2004
- 9 Pers. comm. from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. 24th March 2004. Extract from the CWGC Database giving 37 casualties of HMS Princess Victoria
- 10 St Margaret's Church, Cley: Cley Church Burial Register 1908-2000
- 11 NRO - PD 23/5: St Nicholas Church, Salthouse: Salthouse Church Burial Register 1813-1996
- 12 TNA - ADM 53 - microfilm 932. January 1940 page 2
- 13 TNA - ADM 53 / 110926: The October 1939 Log Book for H.M.S.Vanquisher
- 14 TNA - ADM 53 / 111055: The September 1939 Log Book for H.M.S.Walker
- 15 *Norfolk Chronicle.* Friday 28th June 1940
- 16 Pers. comm. from the Superintendent Registrar, Fakenham. 7th May 2004
- 17 [www.Uboat.allies.html](http://www.Uboat.allies.html): H.M.S.Penelope
- 18 *Eastern Evening News.* Tuesday 25th June 1940
- 19 Pers. comm. from Malcolm Skelton regarding his interviews with his grandfather Marshall Leonard Skelton in 2004