



Reuben French
United States Navy
Service No. 001957341
World War I

Born: 27 Jul 1880

Died: 17 Sep 1957

Place of Birth: Coley's Point, Bay Roberts,
Newfoundland

Parents: Stephen and Mary Ann (nee Stevens)
French

Reuben enlisted in the United States Navy on the 28th of May 1900 and served until the 11th of June 1904. Reuben's Military record is not available online since it has not been digitized yet, and that makes it difficult to find any information other than several bits of information about his service.

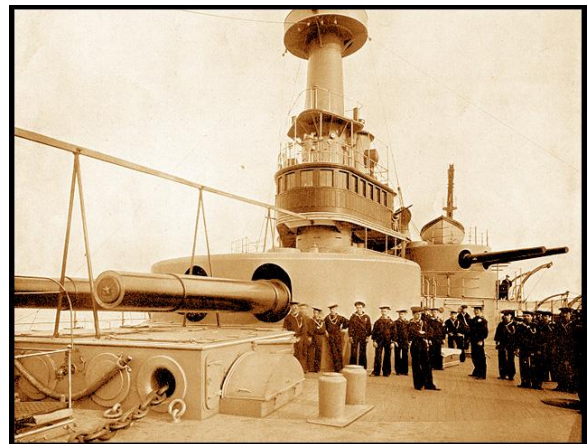
Reuben was described as 5' 5 3/4 'tall, weighing 140 lbs, of fair complexion with dark brown hair and grey eyes. He had two distinguishing marks; one was a scar in the corner of his mouth, while the other was a tattoo of a woman's head on his

forearm. What is known is his enlistment date and the fact that his gravestone notes the word "Cox"

He was appointed Coxswain of the USS Indiana in 1903 (see the appointment certificate below)



USS Indiana was the lead ship of her class and the first battleship in the United States Navy comparable to foreign battleships of the time. Authorized in 1890 and commissioned five years later, she was a small battleship, though with heavy armour and ordnance. The ship also pioneered the use of an intermediate battery. She was designed for coastal defense and as a result, her decks were not safe from high waves on the open ocean.



On the bow looking aft.



On the fantail looking forward

Reuben had an older brother, Stephen who also enlisted in the US Navy. Stephen was born in 1873 and died in 1923.

Meaning of the term “Cox”

“Rank is a term that references longevity and seniority. Rating is the term used for the type of work an individual does. While COX would typically be a rating, when it was used, it was one of the only terms that specifically identified both a rating and a specific rank. COX is the abbreviation for Coxswain. The individual would be an E-4 Boatswain's Mate. Today we would call that a Boatswain's Mate Third Class (BM3). In today's Navy the term is used to refer to any individual running a small boat or landing craft and doesn't refer to a rank or a rating.

The coxswain – pronounced "cox's'n" – is an enlisted sailor who has actual, physical control of an open boat small enough to be carried aboard

another vessel. In the U.S. Navy, coxswains play a vital role in the Navy's Special Warfare community. Elite coxswains serve as Special Warfare Boat Operators (SB), also called Special Warfare-Combatant-Craft Crewmen (SWCC). Although the coxswain is not a SEAL, the job entails delivering the Navy's special warfare operators – SEALs – to the "hot" shorelines of the world.”

It is unknown when Reuben returned to Newfoundland from his time in service in the United States but he, his wife Susie (Susanna Elizabeth nee Russell) and family appear in the 1921 Newfoundland general census. They are living in Coley's Point and have six (6) children, Dora (13) Mary Millie (12, a foster daughter), Sarah (9) Archibald and Gladys (9 and twins), Stephen (2), Amelia Russell (76, Susie's mother) living with them.

The 1935 census finds Reuben and Susie and a growing family still making their home at Coley's Point. The family has grown to include three (3) more girls, Ada 11, Eleanor, and Annie Winnifred aged 9.

The 1945 census shows Reuben at 65, now a widower, having lost his Susie that same year. He is still at Coley's Point with four of his children at home with him.

Reuben passed away on 17 September 1957 of lung cancer at the General Hospital, St. John's and is buried next the wife Susie in the Salvation Army Cemetery at Coley's Point, Newfoundland.

ENLISTMENT RECORD.

SCALE OF MARKS - 4, Best; 3, Good; 2, Fair; 1, Very Good; 0, Excellent.

Name Franklin French Rank Ord. Ser.
 Enlistment 12/25 1906 at Quincy, Ill. for 2 years;
 Previous Act of Service _____
 City of Birth Quincy, Ill. Education High School
 Native Language English
 Ratings held during enlistment _____
 Proficiency in Rifle H. 1 Shot H. 2 Ordnance 3. 1
 Marksmanship, Great Gun A Marksmanship, Small Arms B
 Signaling 3. 6 Signals H. 9 Ordnance H. 5
 Average Standing for term of enlistment 3. 9
W. H. French W. H. French U.S.N.
and Enlistment Officer

DESCRIPTIVE LIST.

(To be made up by the commanding officer of the company.)

Age 30 years. Height 5' 3" Weight 140 lbs.
 Eyes Blue Hair Black Complexion Fair
 Personal characteristics: marks, left corner of nose
Widened head & sideburns.

Percentage of time on sick list during enlistment 5. 7
 Is physically qualified for reenlistment.

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the
 original record of Franklin French who was
 enlisted on 12/25/06 at Quincy, Ill. for 2 years.
W. H. French U.S.N.
and Enlistment Officer

U. S. S. *Indiana* 1st rate
Culebra U.S.N.S.

January 1st, 1903

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter XXI, Articles 850 and 851 of the "Regulations for the Government of the Navy," approved March 28, 1900,

Stephen French is hereby appointed an acting
Coxswain in the Navy of the United States
from *January 1*, 1903

This appointment to continue in force for the period of *Three* months
from date only during present enlistment, unless reneged or revoked by the
Captain of the ship in which the said *French* may be serving.

W. A. Emory *Captain*
Commanding Officer.

DATE OF REVOCATION OR RENEWAL.	CAUSE OF REVOCATION.	SIGNATURE OF COMMANDING OFFICER.