

WILLIAM CHRISTOPHER

W.W. I

William was born in Port de Grave on July 24th, 1896. His parents were Samuel and Rebecca.

He re-enlisted on May 19th, 1917, in the Royal Naval Reserve Newfoundland as an able seaman having had previous training on the training vessel Calypso.

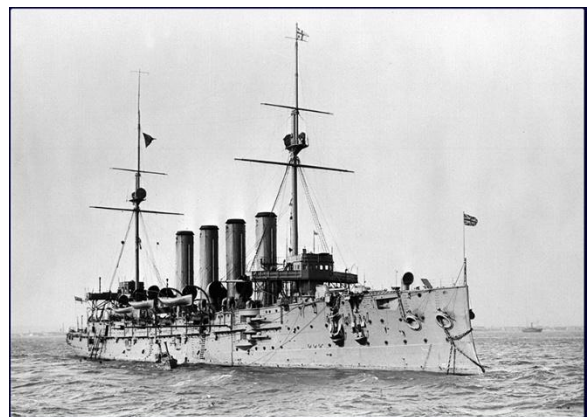
His official enlistment papers show his age as being almost 21 whereas his ledger paper has him at 19.5. The reality was he was almost 21 and single when he joined up. By 1921 (according to the 1921 census) He was now married to Bertha of Barened.

William's RNR Ledger account shows the ships he served on and the dates he served on each vessel. It reads as follows:

- 1) Briton 19 May 1917 to 9 July 1917. HMS Briton was replacement name for the Calypso training vessel.

- 2) Unknown: 10 July 1917 to 22 Nov 1917.
- 3) Niobe: 23 Nov 1917 to 30 Feb 1917 and 1 Oct 1918 to 20 Dec 1918. These postings on the HMCS Niobe poses a unique situation because the Niobe was a ship of the Royal Canadian Navy (See the information below on the HMCS Niobe) and as such, it appears that William was transferred to the Canadian Navy for a period of time. That notion appears to be confirmed with his final posting to the training vessel Briton in St. John's Newfoundland.
- 4) Briton 21 Dec 1918 to 19 March 1919. This posting as the notation on his ledger page as "Repatriated to the Briton", a clear indication that he was serving with Canada and then moved back to the Royal Naval Reserve base in St. John's, Newfoundland

HMCS *Niobe* (1st of name) / Diadem-class Protected Cruiser



HMCS *Niobe*

HMS *Niobe*, a Diadem-class protected cruiser, was transferred from the Royal Navy as one of the first ships of the newly-

created Royal Canadian Navy. As HMS *Niobe*, she had had a distinguished record during the Boer War, earning her crew the Queen's South Africa medal. During RN service she visited Halifax, most notably as escort to the Prince of Wales embarked in the Royal Yacht Ophir in October 1901.

Commissioned for service in the RCN on 16 September 1910, HMCS *Niobe* did not legally become an HMC Ship until arrival in Halifax on 21 October 1910. *Niobe* was almost lost during the night of 30-31 July 1911 when she went aground off Cape Sable, necessitating repairs that were not completed until the end of 1912 and that permanently reduced her maximum speed. In the fall of 1914, after the ravages of two years' disuse had been made good, she joined the RN's 4th Cruiser Squadron on contraband patrol off New York.

Worn out, she returned to Halifax on 17 July 1915, never to put to sea again. After being paid off, she became a depot ship. Her upperworks were wrecked in the [Halifax explosion](#) of 6 December 1917, but she continued to serve as a depot ship until 1920, when she was sold for scrap. *Niobe* was broken up at Philadelphia two years later.

- **Builder:** Vickers, Barrow-in-Furness
- **Date launched:** 20 February 1910
- **Date commissioned in RCN:** 16 September 1910
- **Date paid off:** 17 August 1915
- **Displacement:** 11 176.5 tonnes
- **Dimensions:** 142 m x 21 m x 8 m

- **Speed:** 15 knots
- **Crew:** 677
- **Armament:** sixteen 6-inch, twelve 12-pdrs, five 3-pdrs., two 18-inch TT

William was demobilized in early 1919 and returned home to Port de Grave.

The Newfoundland census of 1921 shows him at 25 and now married to Bertha from neighbouring community of Bareneed. The subsequent 1935 census shows his family now includes a wife (Bertha) and 5 children, all girls. William's younger sister Hattie is also listed as part of the household since she is living with them.

William was a long-time member of Branch 32 of the Royal Canadian Legion, Bay Roberts.

William Passed away in 1990 and is buried in St. Luke's Anglican Cemetery, Port de Grave.