



Stanley Holt

42 Wheeldon Avenue

Stanley Holt was one of a handful of men from Six Streets to serve in the Royal Navy. Born in 1893 he would have been eligible for conscription in March 1916, but he may have volunteered before that date.

We knew nothing about his military service until we sent off for his marriage certificate. In July 1918 Stanley married Frances Piggin at Bourne Chapel (Kedleston Street) and on the certificate his occupation is listed as **“Artificer, Royal Navy with HMS Roxburgh”**. We are not sure how long Stanley served with this vessel but the certificate gives us an insight into his war service.

Trained in the working of marine engines and boilers and supervised by an Engineering Officer, “Artificers” were the senior maintainers and operators of all warship mechanical plant. In civilian life Stanley was an engineering draughtsman with the Midland Railway.

HMS Roxburgh, a convoy escort ship, saw active service throughout the war – in June 1915 she was hit by torpedoes from a German U-boat and narrowly avoided sinking. After repair she was sent to Norwegian waters – these voyages were known as the “Narvik” run amongst the sailors – when the ice was so thick on the ship’s superstructure that it had to be knocked off to stop the ship capsizing.

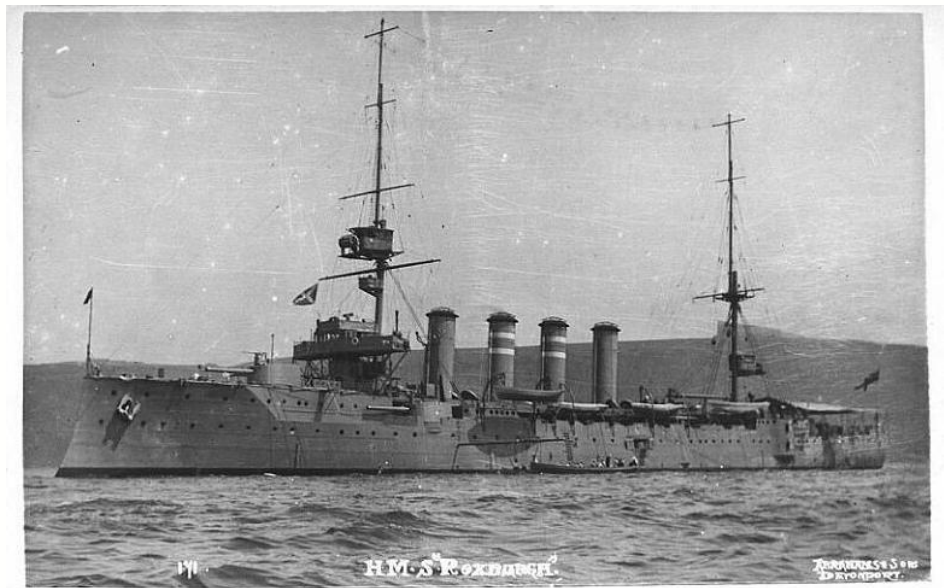


Photo HMS Roxburgh, courtesy of www.naval-history.net

These convoys carried supplies to soldiers on the eastern front, and after Russia dropped out of the war in 1917, they were transferred to Atlantic convoys bringing equipment and men from America. In February 1918 HMS Roxburgh rammed and sank a German U-boat just north of Ireland.

On returning to civilian life, Stanley resumed working with the Midland Railway, and at the end of his career was a Leading Technical Assistant with the Chief Mechanical Engineers’ Department in Derby. He and Frances moved to Duffield Road and we know they had a son, Ian, born in 1924. Stanley died aged 65 in 1958, spending his last days at the Queen Victoria Memorial Home of Rest (now the site of Wheeldon Manor apartments).