FATE AT IT'S MOST TRAGIC

This sombre memorial maintains a lonely guard over the spar that marks the hidden rocks upon which over two hundred young men who had served through WW1 in the Royal Navy lost their lives, in many cases just yards from their homes

The sinking of the Admiralty yacht LOLAIRE at 2.30am on New Year's Day 1919 was one of the worst maritime disasters in British waters The vessel was carrying nearly 300 passengers, many returning from fighting in the First World War, to Stornoway on the Island of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides.

The story of the Iolaire, Gaelic for Eagle, is one of the most tragic in the history of the Western Isles. Early on the morning of the 1st January 1919, two months after the end of the First World War, the Admiralty Yacht Iolaire was approaching Stornoway harbour in the Island of Lewis carrying Naval Ratings returning home for New Year's leave when she foundered on rocks. 205 men died within 20 yards of the shore just a short distance from the pier at Stornoway where local people were waiting to welcome home their men folk.

Although hostile operations were still taking place in the Baltic and Northern Russia, the First World War was over and home leave was granted to thousands of Naval Ratings over the Christmas and New Year period. Priority for Christmas leave was given to English ratings and priority for New Year's leave was given to Scottish ratings.

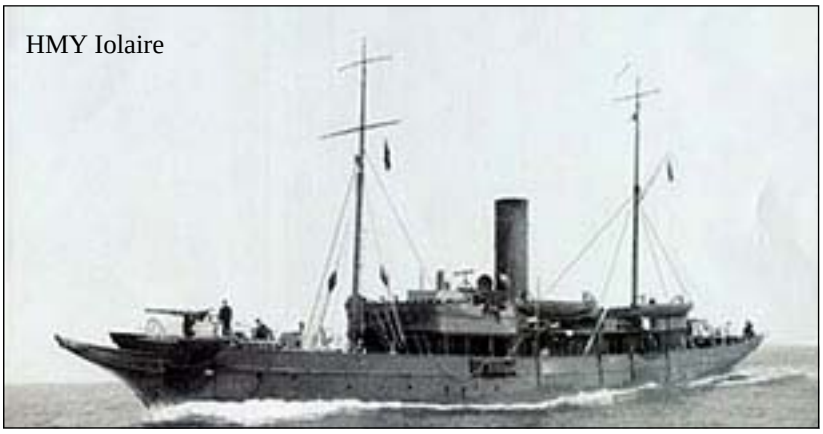
For the men of the North and the Western Isles getting home involved a long journey by train from the South West, the South and the South East coasts of England.

Special trains left London for Glasgow, Stirling and Perth and onwards from Perth to Inverness. At Inverness the Highland Railway took the men bound for Lewis, Harris and Skye to the railhead at Kyle of Lochalsh where the Movement Officer, Lieutenant Commander Walsh, awaited their arrival with two ships, the MacBrayne Mail Steamer SS Sheila and HM Yacht Iolaire.

By this time expectations ran high and the men simply wanted to get home. At Kyle they were paraded and divided into Lewis men bound for Stornoway, Harris men bound for Tarbert and Skye men bound for Portree. Unwilling to wait, some of the Harris men joined the ranks of the Lewis men knowing that when they reached the Long Island they could make their way home relatively easily. With spare capacity available sixty men were ordered aboard the Mail Boat SS Sheila, the rest boarded the Iolaire.

The Iolaire, Captained by Commander Richard G W Mason RD had two officers, First Officer Lieutenant Leonard E Cotter and Chief Engineer Sub Lieutenant C Rankin and a crew of twenty one. Although she had a capacity for 80 people on board with 80 life jackets and places in the boats for 100 Iolaire now had 284 men aboard as she set out for Stormoway in typical winter Minch weather, squalls and drizzle. It may well have been desperation just to get home and concerns over discipline and drinking that led such risks to be taken in these dangerous waters.

Iolaire cast off from Kyle at 7.30pm on Old Year's Night. At half past midnight she was twelve miles from Stornoway where the armed drifter Budding Rose was waiting to escort her into harbour. At 1am the Captain and the lookout went below leaving Lieutenant Cotter on the bridge. Perhaps confused by the lights and apparently with no experience of entering Stornoway Harbour at night, the Iolaire was sailing too far east and just before 2am on New Year's morning she struck the rocks at the entrance to Stornoway called the Beasts of Holm.


HMY Iolaire

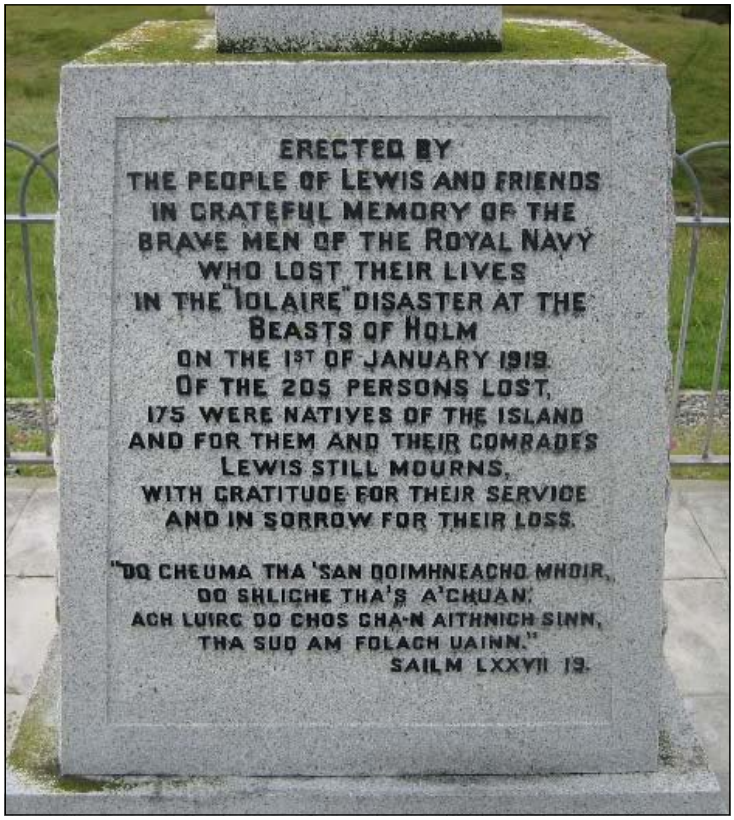
There she foundered twenty yards from shore, broke her back and sank. 205 died, including the three ships officers.
Probably due to New Year celebrations on the Island response from the shore was slow. One Naval rating from the Iolaire managed to get ashore to the rocks with a line attached to a hawser which he wrapped around himself and brought forty men to safety. Thirty nine others survived the freezing water and reached the shore, the remainder perished. The findings of the subsequent inquiry were inconclusive.

The yacht Iolaire (634 tons) was built in 1881 by Fergusons of Leith as the 'Iolanthe'. The vessel's owner was a Mr Duff-Assheton Smith (later, Sir Michael Duff), who had earlier purchased her from the Duke of Westminster. In 1915 the yacht was quickly converted and armed for anti-submarine warfare and patrol work. Many examples of her pre-war luxury remained intact, although much of her luxurious polished panelling had been boarded up for protection. Since being built in 1881, the vessel had undergone a succession of name changes. The latest occurred when she became the Navy's base ship in its northern frontier port of Stornoway; and the vessel was given the name of the Naval Base there - Iolaire.
Many Lewis families would have been celebrating the dawning of a New Year in the early hours of 1 January 1919. The celebrations would have been particularly sweet as the families were also awaiting the imminent arrival home on leave of their men folk, following the ending of hostilities.
No one could have predicted that so many veterans - having survived the brutality of the Great War - would have their lives tragically plucked from them within a stone's throw of their island home.
The exact number of men who were aboard the Iolaire that morning is not known with certainty; a proper passenger list had not been recorded prior to her departure from Kyle. However, subsequent evidence suggested that there were 284 servicemen and crew aboard. Of these, 205 men were to lose their lives - of whom 181 were islanders.
The total population of Lewis, between 1914-18, approximated 30,000. Incredibly, from these numbers, Lewis contributed about 6,200 servicemen (including returning emigrants) to the war effort. Consequently, about 20% of the entire Lewis population was on active service in some capacity during WWI - with approximately half of them serving in the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR).

At 9.30pm on 31 December 1918 the Iolaire left Kyle for its homeward journey to Lewis. The Sheila would cast-off 30 minutes later. With the expectations of a new year and the armistice which followed four years of war, the young servicemen aboard HMS Iolaire would have undoubtedly been full of merriment and Gaelic song as they looked forward to being reunited with their families and loved ones back on Lewis. Although dark, the night was initially clear with a 'fresh' southerly wind. However, shortly after 12.30am (when the vessel would have been a few miles South East of Milaid Light, and about 12 miles from Stornoway harbour) the wind began to rise, with an accompanying heavy drizzle.

At about 1am Commander Mason left the bridge, leaving the Iolaire under the command of her First Officer, Lieutenant Cotter. The crew of the fishing boat, Spider, would subsequently testify to a Public Inquiry that, on their return to Stornoway, they were overtaken by the Iolaire whilst still several miles from harbour. As the fishing boat neared the Arnish Light, its crew became concerned as the vessel ahead of them failed to alter course at the appropriate time - and appeared to be on a collision course with the cliffs at Holm. Many of the RNR passengers aboard the Iolaire were themselves experienced local fishermen and consequently, some would probably have been aware that the yacht was not following the prescribed course for Stornoway Harbour. Shortly afterwards, the fears of the Spider's crew would be realised as they began hearing cries of distress in the darkness on their starboard side.

At 1.55am, less than two hours into the New Year, HMS Iolaire suddenly shuddered to a halt as it struck the rocks at Holm. The boat listed heavily to starboard as a large wave crashed into her and lifted the stricken vessel further onto the rocks.



As she began to sink, waves swept over the deck as between 50 and 60 men immediately opted to jump overboard and swim the 20 or 30 yards to shore. Unfortunately, this decision proved to be disastrous as none of them would succeed in this initial attempt at escape. Apart from hostile sea conditions, the night was as black as the tragedy itself. Some distress flares were fired into the night skies and a number of passengers suddenly realised that the vessel's stem was within a few yards of a rocky ledge which extended to the shore. Some of those on board attempted to use this potential escape route but, unfortunately, many were drowned or perished as they were dashed onto the rocks by the uncompromising waves. Shortly after 2am, Lieut. Robert Ainsdale, the Officer of the Watch at Battery Point, reported to Admiral Boyle the initial sighting of a red distress flare from the direction of Holm.

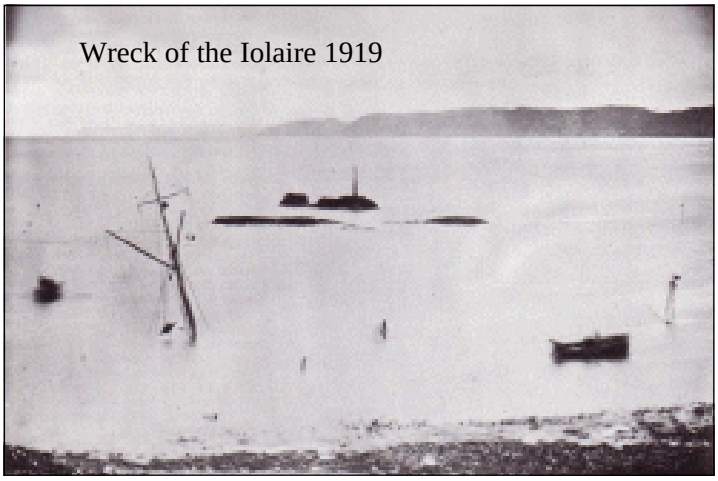
As the disaster unfolded, the Spider and HM Drifter Budding Rose (the pilot boat which had been assigned to guide the Iolaire into port) were unable to render assistance. The heavy seas and frenzied waters betrayed the presence of submerged rocks which prevented them from effecting a rescue from the sea.

Many of those who survived would owe their lives to the courage and determination of John F. Macleod - a Ness boatbuilder returning home from active service in the RNR. Having tied a heaving-line around his body, MacLeod would eventually manage to scramble and swim his way to the shore. Four or five men managed to drag themselves ashore by means of this line. Later, a hawser was attached to the line and hauled ashore. This then enabled a further 35 men to escape the carnage. In 1921, Seaman MacLeod would receive the Carnegie Hero Fund Medal and Certificate "in recognition of heroic endeavour to save human life".

At 3.20am, F. Boxall, the Coastguard's Divisional Chief Officer, was roused from his bed on receipt of an emergency message from Admiral Boyle. He immediately made his way to the Lifeboat Secretary's home, where he discovered the man to be unwell. However, he was given appropriate keys and directions to the Coxswain's home. Having roused the Coxswain, he then rushed back to the Lifeboat shed to light the lamps and prepare the lifeboat for launch. Twenty minutes later he was joined there by the Lifeboat Secretary, Coxswain, and 3 soldiers - a full complement to man the Lifeboat could not be obtained. At 4.30am Murray then left the lifeboat shed in order to waken the Surgeon. Shortly afterwards, at about 4.45am, Murray went in search of transport to carry the First Aid crew to Holm. Knocking desperately at the door of a local car hirer's house, he failed to gain any response. Finally, at 6.30am (four and a half hours after the Iolaire struck), he finally managed to obtain the use of a car belonging to the Post Office.

Some of those who had survived the ordeal managed to make their way to Stoneyfield Farm and nearby houses. There, they were comforted as the full extent of the tragedy was rapidly being revealed. Other survivors opted to walk the short distance to the town of Stornoway where relatives - still unaware of the catastrophe which had occurred - would have been waiting expectantly at the quay for the yacht to dock. When news of events finally reached Stornoway, many of those in the town that morning made their way to where the stricken Iolaire lay. As rescuers approached the scene, they encountered bodies and wreckage along the foreshore. The vessel itself was found semi-submerged between the shore and the appropriately named Beasts of Holm. One of her masts had been broken in the melee. The other rose defiantly out of the sea at about a 45 degree angle. Unbeknown to the shocked witnesses on the shore, one of the survivors (Donald "Patch" Morrison, from Knockaird, Ness) was, at that time, clinging for his life up on the mast. He would remain there until 10am - when Lieutenant Wenlock, of the Budding Rose, would finally manage to manoeuvre a small naval boat within reach of the stranded sailor.

Admiral Boyle (the Naval officer in charge at Stornoway) possibly suspected some degree of negligence on the part of the officers and crew of the Iolaire. On 3 January, he sent a telegram to the Admiralty in London, requesting instructions on whether he should instigate a Court Martial. His superiors decided instead to opt for a Court of Inquiry (possibly, the Navy feared that a Court Martial might imply the acceptance of blame for the loss). The first of two subsequent investigations was a private Naval Inquiry, held on January 8, 1919. With the customary penchant for secrecy regarding issues of security, the findings of the Naval Court of Inquiry would not be released into the public domain until 1970. The Inquiry had ruled that there was no evidence to properly explain the reasons for the accident - as none of the duty officers had survived the sinking. Consequently, the Admiralty concluded that, "No opinion can be given as to whether blame is attributable to anyone in the matter."


Wreck of the Iolaire 1919

The Great Silence 1918-1920, By Juliet Nicolson
Picking up the pieces of a broken society
Reviewed by Sarah Burton

This review of a book about the sinking of the 'Iolaire' also sheds light on the woes and the feelings of the people following the end of the war to end all wars. Ed.

On the last day of 1918 most of the population of the island of Lewis in the Scottish Hebrides gathered at the little port of Stornoway, waiting to greet 500 returning soldiers and sailors.

"Over six thousand men from Lewis had volunteered to serve in the war, a fifth of the island,'s total population. More than a thousand had been killed."

Juliet Nicolson, in her book about "living in the shadow of the Great War", goes on the describe how the Iolaire overshot the entrance to the harbour, and sank: 200 of the returning men were drowned. The sinking of the Iolaire was only the most sudden of many cruel fates awaiting the returning heroes.

Those who had lost limbs or been blinded by gas faced being a burden to their families, whom they could barely keep on their meagre pensions; those who received injuries above the neck (other than losing an eye) received no pension, but were often equally unemployable, as people generally preferred not to look at a man who had had half his face shot away.

The able-bodied often fared no better, returning to a nation where both jobs and housing were scarce.

The war left a deadlier legacy. The epidemic of Spanish flu which killed 200,000 in Britain alone in 1918 was a direct consequence of demobilisation, as soldiers dispersed all over the world, carrying the virus picked up in the fatal incubating grounds of the trenches.

The most vulnerable were the men themselves, exhausted by war, and for whom infection often proved terminal.

Always at the front of a man's mind was the knowledge that his family could starve without his wage. James Shaw, recognising the flu symptoms in himself, took his two-and-a-half year old daughter's life and then his own rather than leave her without a provider. Not many non-fiction books can make one weep: this one can.

However, Nicolson's story of the immediate postwar years is also one of regeneration, of a society largely determined not to return to the status quo.

Not only had the intimacy of the trenches broken down many class barriers, but men who had fought for their country were not prepared to return to a society which had seemed largely heedless of their suffering in peacetime.

The comradeship that had developed under fire had made them a force to be reckoned.

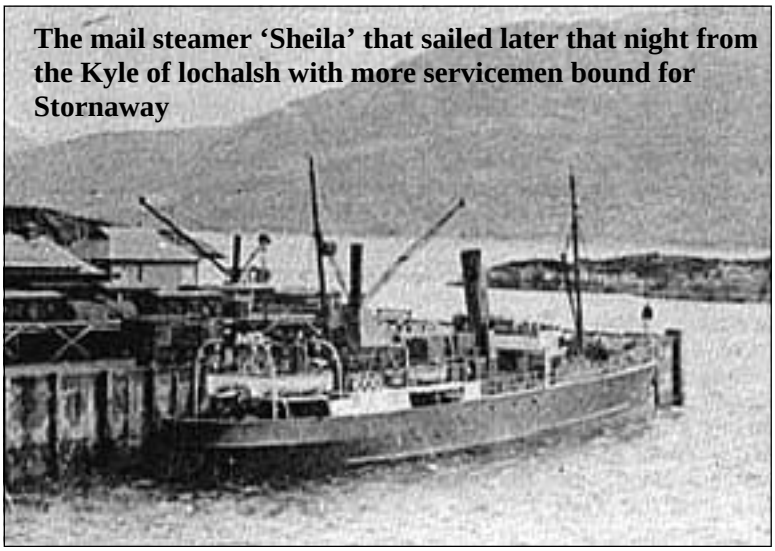
For example, 10,000 soldiers held at Folkestone expecting to be demobbed were instead ordered to embark on ships to take them to swell the numbers of British troops supporting the White Army in Russia. They not only refused, but marched to the town hall and demanded the immediate issue of release papers.

This new-found solidarity brought long overdue change to industry. It is difficult for us to imagine a world in which the deaths of 1300 miners and injury of a further 160,000 in one year would be unremarkable, as it was in 1918.

Nicolson charts diverse indexes of social change, such as the sharp fall in church attendance, the rise of Spiritualism, jazz, women's rights, recreational drug use and sexual promiscuity, taking in en route the idolisation of Lawrence of Arabia, and concern over women smoking in public and wearing make-up. Social change is as much about perception as statistics, and Nicolson mobilises both empirical evidence and personal testimony to enlarge on her themes to profound effect.

The two minutes' silence on the anniversary of Armistice Day is only one of many silences Nicolson's book addresses and investigates, and is as ambiguous as any. Right up until a few days before the first anniversary, in 1919, no plans had been announced to mark the day. Any formulation of words seemed unequal to the task.

\The suggestion of an ordinary soldier found its way to the top, and the national silence proved the most eloquent single expression of a million sorrows.


The mail steamer 'Sheila' that sailed later that night from the Kyle of lochalsh with more servicemen bound for Stornaway

From the UK Merchant Navy website –List of those who died.

Buried Crossboot Cemetery

MacLEOD, Mate, JOHN, H.M. Drifter "Cornrig.". Mercantile Marine Reserve. Drowned in the wreck of H.M. Yacht "Iolaire." 1st January 1919. Age 39. Son of William and Catherine MacLeod; husband of Maggie MacLean MacLeod, of 31, Ranish, Lochs, Stornoway.

Commemorated Greenwich Cemetry.

STANLEY, Deck Hand, WILLIAM JOSEPH JOHN, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire". Mercantile Marine Reserve. 1st January 1919. Age 19. Son of William J. and Lucy M. Stanley, of 75, Calvert Rd., East Greenwich, London. Screen Wall. 1 "C." B. 1216.

Buried Havant & Waterloo (Warblington) Cemetery

LEGGETT, Deck Hand, E, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire.". Mercantile Marine Reserve. 1st January 1919.

Buried Newcastle (Byker & Heaton) Cemetery

GEORGE, Fireman, JOSEPH, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire". Mercantile Marine Reserve. 1st January 1919. Age 43. Husband of Jane George, of 120, Headlam St., Byker, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Buried Plymouth (Weston Mill) Cemetery

MACKENZIE, Deck Hand, DONALD, 967820. H.M. Tug "Wickstead.". Mercantile Marine Reserve. Drowned in wreck of H.M. Yacht "Iolaire" at Stornoway 1st January 1919. Age 50. Son of Roderick and Catherine MacIver Mackenzie, of 22, Upper Bayble; husband of Peggie Macleod Mackenzie, of 22, Upper Bayble, Stornoway, Ross-shire.

MARINER, Deck Hand, HENRY ORLEY, 821982. H.M. Yacht "Iolaire.". Mercantile Marine Reserve. Drowned in wreck of vessel at Stornoway 1st January 1919. Age 25. Son of Charles and Minnie Mariner, of "Paradise," The Cottage, West-bourne, Emsworth, Hants. Born at Portsmouth.

McCARTHY, Carpenter, FREDRICK CHARLES, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire.". Mercantile Marine Reserve. Drowned in wreck of H.M. Yacht at Stornoway 1st January 1919. Age 34. Son of John and Jane McCarthy, of West Hartlepool, Co. Durham.

McIVER, Mate, JOHN, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire.". Mercantile Marine Reserve. Drowned in wreck of H.M. Yacht at Stornoway 1st January 1919. Age 46. Husband of Margaret McIver, of 19, Lower Bayble, Stornoway, Ross-shire.

Buried Portsmouth (Kingston) Cemetery

HARRIS, Greaser, THOMAS EDWARD HENRY, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire". Mercantile Marine Reserve. Drowned off Stor-naway 1st January 1919. Age 27.

Buried Sandwick Cemetery

DEWSBURY, Leading Deck Hand, C, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire.". Mercantile Marine Reserve. 1st January 1919.

TAYLOR, Assistant Steward, A S, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire.". Mercantile Marine Reserve. 1st January 1919.

Buried Southampton Old Cemetery

HUMPHRY, Steward, F, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire,". Mercantile Marine Reserve. 31st December 1918 - 1st January 1919

Buried Southend-on-Sea (St. John The Baptist) Churchyard

MOORE, Deck Hand, H, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire". Mercantile Marine Reserve. 1st January 1919.

Buried Sunderland (Mere Knolls) Cemetery

HERN, Second Engineer, JOHN, H.M. Yacht "Iolaire". Mercantile Marine Reserve. 1st January 1919. Age 26. Son of John and Ann Isabella Hern, of 13, Roxburgh St., Sunderland.

MMR RNR

BEATON, Alex, Able Seaman, MMR, 968068, (Rose II, O/P)
BROWN, Ernest A, Trimmer Cook, RNR, TC 902
BUCHANAN, Peter, Seaman, RNR, A 7700, (Pembroke, O/P)
CAMPBELL, Alexander, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 11999, (Venerable, O/P)
CAMPBELL, Alexander, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 13353, (Venerable, O/P)
CAMPBELL, Alexander, Leading Seaman, RNR, C 2999, (Victory, O/P)
CAMPBELL, Angus, Seaman, RNR, C 3590, (Excellent, O/P)
CAMPBELL, Donald, Leading Seaman, RNR, C 2058, (Pembroke, O/P)
CAMPBELL, Donald, Seaman, RNR, B 3356, (Victory, O/P)
CAMPBELL, Kenneth, Seaman, RNR, A 4804, (Galatea, O/P)
CAMPBELL, Murdo, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 20536, (Matthew Flynn, O/P)
COTTER, Leonard E, Lieutenant, RNR
CRICHTON, Angus, Seaman, RNR, B 2687, (Ganges II, O/P)
CRICHTON, Donald, Seaman, RNR, A 9066, (Pembroke, O/P)
DEWSBURY, Charles, Leading Deck Hand, MMR, (no service number listed)
FERGUSON, Murdo, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 258, (Morgan Jones, O/P)
GEORGE, Joseph W, Fireman, MMR, (no service number listed)
GILLIES, Angus, Seaman, RNR, A 4502, (Seahorse, O/P)
GILLIES, Donald W, Seaman, RNR, A 3309, (Pembroke, O/P)
HARRIS, Thomas E H, Greaser, MMR, (no service number listed)
HEAD, Herbert W, Private, RMLI, 11997 (Po)
HENLEY, Alfred, Cook, MMR, (no service number listed)
HUMPHREY, Frank, Steward, MMR, (no service number listed)
LEGGETT, Ernest, Deck Hand, MMR, (no service number listed)
MACARTHUR, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4443, (Implacable, O/P)
MACASKILL, John, Seaman, RNR, A 3397, (Redoubtable, O/P)
MACASKILL, John, Deck Hand, RNR, 14567, (Sir John Fitzgerald, O/P)
MACASKILL, John, Leading Deck Hand, RNR, DA 9635
MACASKILL, John A, Signaller, RNVR, Clyde Z 8453, (Vivid, O/P)
MACAULAY, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, A 2576, (Gunner, O/P)
MACAULAY, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 2658, (Max Pemberton, O/P)
MACAULAY, John, Seaman, RNR, C 1567, (Imperieuse, O/P)
MACAULAY, Murdo, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4004
MACDONALD, Alexander, 2nd Hand, RNR, DA 11708, (Pembroke, O/P)
MACDONALD, Angus, Seaman, RNR, D 1830, (Imperieuse, O/P)
MACDONALD, Angus, Seaman, RNR, A 4554, (Kent, O/P)
MACDONALD, Angus, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 2597, (Primrose, O/P)
MACDONALD, Donald, Leading Deck Hand, RNR, DA 12453, (Pembroke, O/P)
MACDONALD, Donald, Seaman, RNR, A 5296, (Vernon, O/P)
MACDONALD, Donald, Seaman, RNR, C 2373
MACDONALD, Ewen, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 19896, (John Gray, O/P)
MACDONALD, John, Leading Seaman, RNR, C 2443, (Arrogant, O/P)
MACDONALD, John, Leading Seaman, RNR, C 2554, (Arrogant, O/P)
MACDONALD, John, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 19654, (Boy George III, O/P)
MACDONALD, John, Seaman, RNR, B 3339, (Emperor of India, O/P)
MACDONALD, John, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 21078, (Genia, O/P)
MACDONALD, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, C 1874, (Victory, O/P)
MACDONALD, Murdo, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 11997, (Aspire, O/P)
MACDONALD, Murdo, Seaman, RNR, A 9534, (Pembroke, O/P)
MACDONALD, Murdo, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 20516, (Venerable, O/P)
MACDONALD, William, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 1436, (Surf, O/P)
MACINNES, David, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 19531, (Daniel Henry, O/P)
MACIVER, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, A 2778, (Victory, O/P)
MACIVER, Malcolm, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 10235
MACKAY, Angus, 2nd Hand, RNR, D 2258

MACKAY, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 12090
MACKAY, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, A 7699, (Pembroke, O/P)
MACKAY, Murdo, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 16652, (Shikari II, O/P)
MACKAY, Murdo, Seaman, RNR, B 4511
MACKAY, Norman, Seaman, RNR, A 9494, (Pembroke, O/P)
MACKAY, William, Signalman, RNVR, Clyde Z 8218, (Vivid, O/P)
MACKENZIE, Alexander, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 12080, (Mary, O/P)
MACKENZIE, Alexander, Seaman, RNR, C 3360
MACKENZIE, Donald, Deck Hand, MMR, 967820, (Wickstead, O/P)
MACKENZIE, John, Seaman, RNR, C 2038, (Victory, O/P)
MACKENZIE, John, Seaman, RNR, A 5937, (Vivid III, ex-Albemarle, O/P)
MACKENZIE, Kenneth, Seaman, RNR, A 3046
MACKENZIE, Murdo, Seaman, RNR, C 2793, (President, O/P)
MACKENZIE, Norman, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 20072, (Victory, O/P)
MACKILLOP, Norman, Seaman, RNR, A 9522, (Pembroke, O/P)
MACKINNION, Murdo, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 21209, (Eddy, O/P)
MACLEAN, Donald, Seaman, RNR, B 2820, (Colleen, O/P)
MACLEAN, Kenneth, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 20994, (Venerable, O/P)
MACLEAN, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, B 4280
MACLEAN, Murdo, Deck Hand, MMR, 947252, (Snipe, O/P)
MACLEOD, Alexander, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 17041, (Vivid, O/P)
MACLEOD, Alexander J, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 20422
MACLEOD, Allan, Seaman, RNR, A 4661, (President III, O/P)
MACLEOD, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4125, (Beatrice, O/P)
MACLEOD, Donald, Ordinary Seaman, RNVR, Clyde Z 9964, (Crystal Palace, O/P)
MACLEOD, Donald, Seaman, RNR, A 3329, (Victory, O/P)
MACLEOD, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 3968, (Victory, O/P)
MACLEOD, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 4944
MACLEOD, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 6665
MACLEOD, John, Mate, MMR, (no service number listed), (Cornrig, O/P)
MACLEOD, John, Seaman, RNR, B 2736, (Excellent, O/P)
MACLEOD, John, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 19890, (Implacable, O/P)
MACLEOD, John, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4435, (ML.502, O/P)
MACLEOD, M. (Initial only), Leading Seaman, RNR, A 5478
MACLEOD, Malcolm, Able Seaman, MMR, 973832, (Agnes Nutten, O/P)
MACLEOD, Malcolm, Ordinary Seaman, J 65506 (Dev), (Maidstone, O/P)
MACLEOD, Malcolm, Leading Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4793, (ML.485, O/P)
MACLEOD, Malcolm, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 20774, (Sabreur, O/P)
MACLEOD, Murdo, Able Seaman, J 76479 (Dev), (Revenge, O/P)
MACLEOD, Norman, Trimmer Cook, RNR, TC 1186, (Venerable, O/P)
MACLEOD, Norman, Leading Seaman, RNR, A 4803
MACLEOD, Norman, Seaman, RNR, C 3343
MACLEOD, William, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 14603, (Dreel Castle, O/P)
MACPHAIL, Kenneth, Seaman, RNR, A 3320, (Pembroke, O/P)
MACPHAIL, Norman, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 14663, (Venerable, O/P)
MACRITCHIE, Donald, Cooper 4c, M 23885 (Ch), (Pembroke, O/P)
MACRITCHIE, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 13258, (Scarboro, O/P)
MARINER, Henry O, Deck Hand, MMR, 821982
MARTIN, Malcolm, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 12067, (Pembroke, O/P)
MARTIN, Norman, Seaman, RNR, C 3397, (Victory, O/P)
MASON, Reginald G W, Commander, RNR
MATHESON, Angus, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 18694, (Winner, O/P)
MATHESON, Malcolm, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 11907, drowned in Iceland, (O/P)
MATTHEWS, Albert R, Leading Victualling Assistant, M 15986
MCASKILL, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 21143, (Gunner, O/P)
MCASKILL, Donald, Seaman, RNR, A 7041, (Sigismund, O/P)
MCAULAY, Donald, Seaman, RNR, C 2065, (Emperor of India, O/P)
MCAULAY, Donald M, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4363, (ML.372, O/P)

MCCARTHY, Fred C, Carpenter, MMR, (no service number listed)
MCDONALD, Alexander, Leading Seaman, C 2046, (Nairn, O/P)
MCDONALD, David, Signal Boy, RNR, SB 1265
MCDONALD, Donald, Leading Deck Hand, RNR, SD 3516, (Dreel Castle, O/P)
MCDONALD, Donald, Leading Seaman, RNR, B 2688, (Ganges, O/P)
MCDONALD, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 17809, (Santora, O/P)
MCDONALD, Donald, Seaman, RNR, A 5351, (SS Mandala, O/P)
MCDONALD, John, Seaman, RNR, A 3074, (Emperor of India, O/P)
MCDONALD, John, Seaman, RNR, A 4490, (Seahorse, O/P)
MCDONALD, John, Seaman, RNR, A 2558, (Venerable, O/P)
MCDONALD, Roderick J, Seaman, RNR, A 2966, (Wallington, O/P)
MCINNES, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, A 8896, (Dublin, O/P)
MCIVER, Alexander, Leading Seaman, C 1691
MCIVER, Angus, Seaman, RNR, C 1855
MCIVER, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 18720
MCIVER, John, Seaman, RNR, A 2496, (Letterflourie, O/P)
MCIVER, John, Seaman, RNR, C 2619, (Victory, O/P)
MCIVER, John, Mate, MMR, (no service number listed)
MCIVER, Murdo, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 775, (Zena Dare, O/P)
MCKAY, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, C 2613
MCKENZIE, Alexander, Seaman, RNR, C 1663, (Roman Empire, O/P)
MCKENZIE, Alexander, Seaman, RNR, B 3892
MCKENZIE, John, Seaman, RNR, A 3274, (Emperor of India, O/P)
MCKENZIE, Murdo, Seaman, RNR, B 3122, (Pembroke, O/P)
MCKENZIE, Roderick, 2nd Hand, RNR, DA 7246, (Romilly, O/P)
MCKINNON, Angus, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 2615, (Attentive III, O/P)
MCLEAN, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, C 2679, (Vernon, O/P)
MCLEAN, Murdo, Deck Hand, MMR, 974252, (Snipe, O/P)
MCLEAN, Murdo, Seaman, RNR, D 1903, (Victory, O/P)
MCLEAY, Angus, Seaman, RNR, B 3689, (Emperor of India, O/P)
MCLENNAN, Finlay, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 18771
MCLEOD, Alexander, Seaman, RNR, A 2745, (Imperieuse, O/P)
MCLEOD, Alexander A, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 3455, (Idaho, O/P)
MCLEOD, Angus, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4548, (Pembroke, O/P)
MCLEOD, Angus, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 19972, (Resmilo, O/P)
MCLEOD, Angus, Deck Hand, MMR, 973997, (Snipe, O/P)
MCLEOD, Angus, Seaman, RNR, D 1920, (Vernon, O/P)
MCLEOD, Angus, Seaman, RNR, C 2808
MCLEOD, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 1427, (Dreel Castle, O/P)
MCLEOD, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 10941, (Quercia, O/P)
MCLEOD, Donald, Seaman, RNR, B 3553, (SS Saxonia, O/P)
MCLEOD, John, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 15739, (Attentive III, O/P)
MCLEOD, John, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 3607, (ML.411, O/P)
MCLEOD, John, Able Seaman, MMR, 974908, (Rose, O/P)
MCLEOD, John, Deck Hand, MMR, 968097, (Victor, O/P)
MCLEOD, Malcolm, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 14384, (Idaho, O/P)
MCLEOD, Malcolm, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 12081, (Wallington, O/P)
MCLEOD, Murdo, Seaman, RNR, B 4219
MCMILLAN, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, D 1848, (Imperieuse, O/P)
MCPHAIL, Donald, Seaman, RNR, D 2222, (Pembroke, O/P)
MCRITCHIE, Angus, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 16522, (Hero, O/P)
MONTGOMERY, Angus, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 1445, (Unity, O/P)
MONTGOMERY, Norman, Seaman, RNR, C 3391, (Ariel II, O/P)
MOORE, Harold, Deck Hand, MMR, (no service number listed)

MORRISON, Angus, Leading Deck Hand, RNR, DA 14310, (Implacable, O/P)
MORRISON, Angus, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 12126, (St Ayles, O/P)
MORRISON, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 11859, (Sir Mark Sykes, O/P)
MORRISON, Farquhar, Seaman, RNR, B 3161, (Pembroke, O/P)
MORRISON, Finlay, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4515, (ML.560, O/P)
MORRISON, George, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 3499, (ML.307, O/P)
MORRISON, John, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 21746, (David Conn, O/P)
MORRISON, John, Leading Seaman, RNR, C 3026, (SS Norwood, O/P)
MORRISON, John, Seaman, RNR, A 4645, (Venerable, O/P)
MORRISON, John, Petty Officer, A 5306, (Vivid, O/P)
MORRISON, Norman, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 12088, (Urka, O/P)
MORRISON, Roderick, Seaman, RNR, C 1750, (Ganges II, O/P)
MURRAY, Donald, Petty Officer, RNR, B 2811, (Imperiuese, O/P)
MURRAY, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 19804, (Joseph Burgen, O/P)
MURRAY, Evander, Seaman, RNR, DA 1829, (Thames, O/P)
MURRAY, John, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4689, (ML.461, O/P)
MURRAY, John, Seaman, RNR, C 2061, (Pembroke, O/P)
MURRAY, Roderick, Ordinary Seaman, J 86329, (Roxburgh, O/P)
MURRAY, William, Seaman, RNR, A 6772, (Pembroke, O/P)
MURRAY, William J, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 11925, (Pactolus, O/P)
NICHOLSON, Donald, Deck Hand, RNR, DA 8955, (Calera, O/P)
NICOLSON, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, A 5396, (Magpie, O/P)
NICOLSON, Murdo, Deck Hand, RNR, SD 4258, (ML.10, O/P)
PATERSON, Donald, Seaman, RNR, A 9521 (Pembroke, O/P)
RAMSAY, David, Seaman, RNR, D 1350
RANKIN, Charles, Engineer Sub Lieutenant, RNR
SMITH, Donald, Seaman, RNR, A 2971, (Emperor of India, O/P)
SMITH, Donald, Leading Seaman, RNR, A 4173
SMITH, John, Seaman, RNR, B 3516, (Duchess of Devonshire, O/P)
SMITH, John, Seaman, RNR, A 8055, (Pembroke, O/P)
SMITH, Kenneth, Seaman, RNR, C 1620, (Cove, O/P)
SMITH, Kenneth, Seaman, RNR, D 1958, (Pembroke, O/P)
STANLEY, William J J, Deck Hand, MMR, (no service number listed)
TAYLOR, Alfred S, Assistant Steward, MMR, (no service number listed)
THOMSON, Malcolm, Seaman, RNR, A 4557, (Redoubtable, O/P)
WILSON, William K, Engine Room Artificer 4c, M 14184 (Ch), (Mistletoe, O/P)

"On all the oceans white caps flow, you do not see crosses row on row, but those that sleep beneath the sea, rest in peace for your country is free"

LEFT: Iolaire survivors, John F MacLeod, Port of Ness, and John ('Iain Help') Murray, 6 South Dell, share a contemplative moment beside the memorial at Holm that was erected in honour of the men who perished during the disaster