

Thomas Stables (C/JX 148893) killed in action Dec 1941 & Fred Stables D.S.M. d July 1951



In Loving Memory of
CLARA ALICE
BELOVED WIFE OF **WILLIAM STABLES**
WHO DIED JAN. 10TH 1953, AGED 71 YEARS.
AND OF THE ABOVE **WILLIAM STABLES**
WHO DIED MAY 13TH 1966 AGED 81 YEARS.
ALSO OF THEIR SONS
THOMAS STABLES, L.TEL. R.N.
WHO DIED IN ACTION DEC. 24TH 1941, AGED 22 YEARS
FRED STABLES C.P.O., R.N., D.S.M.
WHO DIED JULY 31ST 1951, AGED 35 YEARS.
ALSO OF THEIR DAUGHTER **EVELYN HAYWARD**
WHO DIED APRIL 11TH 1970 AGED 70 YEARS

Thomas Stables

CWGC tells us that Leading Telegraphist Thomas Stables was serving on HMS Salvia when he died. He is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial.

According to *Wikipedia*: HMS Salvia (K97) was a Flower-class corvette of the Royal Navy. She was ordered on the eve of the Second World War and entered service in September 1940. She the prison ship SS Shuntien

rescued many survivors from

when it was sunk on 23 December 1941. A few hours later, on Christmas Eve 1941, Salvia too was torpedoed. The corvette sank with all hands, and all of the survivors that she had rescued from Shuntien were also lost.

At about 1902 hrs on the evening of 23 December off the coast of Cyrenaica, eastern Libya, the German submarine U-559 torpedoed and sank Shuntien: a prison ship in the convoy that was carrying between 800 and 1,000 Italian and German prisoners of war, guarded by more than 40 soldiers of the Durham Light Infantry. Shuntien sank within five minutes without having been able to launch any of her lifeboats.

Salvia then made for Alexandria. A few hours later, at about 0135 hrs on 24 December, she was off the Egyptian coast about 100 nautical miles (190 km) west of Alexandria when the Type VIIC German submarine U-568 fired four torpedoes at her. One of the torpedoes hit Salvia, breaking her in two and spilling her heavy black bunker oil onto the surface of the sea. The fuel caught fire and her stern section rapidly sank, followed by her bow section a few minutes later. HMS Peony came to look for survivors. She sighted a patch of oil on the surface of the sea but found no people.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Salvia_\(K97\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Salvia_(K97))

Fred Stables

Fred Stables (C/KX 84191) was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal while a Leading Stoker on HMS Grenade, during the withdrawal from Dunkirk in 1940. <http://www.lmcca.co.uk/stuff/JohnGreerGrahamDSM.pdf>

She made one trip to Dunkirk during the night of 28/29 May and was caught in Dunkirk harbour by German Stukas during the following day. Grenade was hit by two bombs which set her afire and killed 14 sailors and mortally wounded another four men. The ship was cast off from her berth, in case she sank there, and then drifted into the harbour channel. The trawler John Cattling towed Grenade over to the west side of the outer harbour where her magazines exploded later that evening.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Grenade_\(H86\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Grenade_(H86))

The Stables Family

From Ancestry we learn the following:

William Stables, son of James and Ellen Stables, born 12 October 1884, christened 9 November 1884, in Ulverston. NB the 1939 Register below has his birthdate as 1885.

1891 Census living at 53 Quebec Street were Eleanor Stables (40) Widow, Fish Dealer, born Ulverston; Agnes J? Kitchen (14) Daughter, Scholar, born Ulverston; Mary E. Stables (8) Scholar, born Ulverston; William Stables (6) Son, Scholar, born Ulverston; Thomas Stables (24?) Brother-in-law, Single, Gardener, born Ulverston.

1901 Census living at Lishman's Yard, Ulverston (in the Census return it is between 26 and 28 Quebec Street) were Ellen Stables (52) Widow, Fish Dealer, Own Account; born Ulverston; Mary Ellen Stables (18) Daughter, Domestic Servant (At home), born Ulverston; and William Stables (16) Son, Waller's Labourer, born Ulverston.

1911 Census living at 5 Bailey Street, Ulverston, were Ellen Stables (60) Widow, Hawker of Fish, born Ulverston, Lancs; and her son William Stables (26) Single, Bricklayer and Waller, born Ulverston.

William Stables married Clara A. Lytton in Ulverston in Q2 1912.

1921 Census living at 15 Bailey Street, Ulverston, were William Stables (36) Waller, Ulverston Iron Works (Out of work), born Ulverston (as were the whole family); Clara Alice Stables (40) Home Duties; Evelyn Lytton (12) Step-child, Whole time school; Melina F. Stables (8) Whole time school; William Stables (6) Whole time school; Fred Stables (5) Whole time school; Alice Stables (3) and Thomas Stables (1).

The **1939 Register** has, living at 73 Devonshire Road, William Stables (DoB 12 October 1885) Builder, Ulverston Urban District Council; Clara A. Stables (DoB 16 May 1881) Unpaid Domestic Duties; Evelyn Lytton (crossed out Anderson, then Hayward) (DoB 30 April 1909, Laundress; and Alice Stables (DoB 6 December 1917) Assistant Nurse. *The next entry is redacted.*

Navy Records give Thomas Stables' date of birth as 22 November 1919.

A Fred Stables entry for the *Electoral Register 1934-1935* has 42-44 Market Street (Shop – abode 1 Swan Street), but this may not be the right person. In the *1939 Electoral Register* the subject of this sheet is living with his parents at 73 Devonshire Road, Ulverston.

The *Barrow News 19 October 1940* published news of Fred Stables:



ULVERSTON SAILOR ON THE AJAX LEADING STOKERS CHARMED LIFE

An Ulverston sailor who was on the Ajax in her recent battle with the Italians is Leading Stoker Fred Stables, one of the two sailor-sons of Mr. and Mrs. W. Stables, of Devonshire-road, Ulverston. His mother told the "News" she had received a letter from Fred only yesterday morning, written on 31 August, and he was then in good health.

Leading Stoker Stables, who is 25, has been in the Navy seven years, but in that time has seen enough adventure to last many a man a lifetime. Three ships have been sunk under him during many thrilling exploits, yet he is still smiling. He served in the Norway and Dunkirk operations, and joined the Ajax about three months ago. Fred is well-known in Ulverston and attended the Dale-street Schools as a boy. His younger brother Tom, who is 21, has also had some narrow escapes, but is still carrying on as a telegraphist, his ship being "somewhere in the Mediterranean". The last letter received from him was dated 22 August.

Fred Stables married Annie A. Hewitt (née Morritt) in Chatham, Kent in Q3 1948. (Family tree on *Ancestry*, supported below.)

Fred Stables has an unusual entry in the **National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1951:**

STABLES Fred of 73 Devonshire-road Ulverston **Lancashire** who was last seen alive on 30 July 1951 and whose dead body was found on 31 July 1951 in shed at Old Kiln Canal Foot Ulverston Administration **Manchester** 14 September to Annie Agnes Stables widow. Effects £248 0s 4d.

Sadly, the tragedy is confirmed by the report of the inquest in the *Barrow News* 4 August 1951:

Workless man's suicide at Ulverston

The Coroner for Furness, Mr. J. Poole, at the inquest at Ulverston on Wednesday, on Fred Stables (35) of 73, Devonshire Road, Ulverston, an unemployed man, who was found hanging on Tuesday, said that the man had left a letter which clearly indicated his intention of taking his life.

The Coroner said he did not propose to read the letter and recorded a verdict that Stables "hanged himself and at the time the balance of his mind was temporarily disturbed".

Evidence of identification was given by Mrs. Annie A. Stables, the widow, and Wilfred Woodburn, of 32, Stanley Street, Ulverston.

Woodburn said that when passing the old malt kiln walking along the foreshore at Canal Foot on his way to work, he thought he saw a man standing inside the shed. Investigating, he found Stables hanging by the neck from a wooden beam. He cut him down and found him dead. He reported the matter to the police.

It was stated that Stables had been in indifferent health for some time and had not progressed through worry.