

CAPTAIN HENRY DE BEAUVOIR TUPPER AM (1895-97)

The following is mainly taken from the 1968 Register.

He was born on 7 April 1883 and joined the Royal Navy after leaving the College.

He served in WW1, rising to the rank of Commander and was in command of HMS Scourge during the Gallipoli Landing. The following is apparently a picture of HMS Scourge towing boats ashore during the landing at Anzac Cove, 25 April 1915. The infantry transferred to the boats when 200 yards from shore.



While later serving on HMS Comet during WW1, he was awarded on 21 February 1919, the Albert Medal for gallantry in saving life at sea (later replaced by the George Cross). He was awarded it jointly with Able Seaman ET Spalding "On 4 August 1918, HMS Comet, under the command of Commander Tupper, was seriously damaged in collision. The ship was badly holed on the starboard side, the deck and all compartments eventually filled with water as far as the engine room bulkhead and the stern was at any time liable to fall off. On being informed that the hydraulic release depth charge was set to "fire", Commander Tupper sent away a man in a whaler to remove the primer. It was only possible to remove the primer from one of the charges, leaving the other depth charge about fifteen feet under water, still at "fire". Commander Tupper then went away in a dingy himself and by repeated diving operations tried to render it safe. After a rest he returned to complete the operation, in which Able Seaman Spalding, who was a passenger on the ship at the time and was a good swimmer, volunteered to assist. Commander Tupper at first refused to allow Able Seaman Spalding to assist him, as the later had no knowledge of depth charges and Commander Tupper did not consider it safe for him to go down. Ultimately Commander Tupper and Able Seaman Spalding swam to the spot beneath which the depth charge was submerged and alternately gave a turn to the iron bar which Commander Tupper had placed in the handle, until the primer was eventually unscrewed and taken out of the depth charge, thus rendering it safe. This operation was of the most dangerous nature, as at any moment the stern of the ship might have dropped off before the depth charge was removed and would have carried down both the Officer and the man, who would have inevitably lost their lives. The explosion would also have destroyed the remaining portion of the ship, with loss of life to those of the crew who were on board"

We believe he died in Q4 1952 in Surrey, England.

The College Chapel contains this framed tribute to his being awarded the Albert Medal.



COMMANDER HENRY de BEAUVOIR TUPPER

A.M.

Framlingham College 1895-1897

Royal Navy

Albert Medal - 21st February 1919

On the 4th August 1918 H.M.S. Comet, under the command of Commander Tupper, was seriously damaged in a collision in the North Sea. The ship was badly holed on her starboard side, her deck and all her compartments eventually filled with water as far as the engine bulkhead, and she was in imminent danger of sinking. On being informed that the hydraulic release depth-charge was set to fire, Commander Tupper sent away a crew member in a whaler to remove the primer. It was only possible to remove the primer from one of the charges, leaving the other depth-charge about 15 feet under water, still at 'fire'. Commander Tupper then went away in a dinghy himself and by repeated diving operations tried to make it safe. Commander Tupper, with the support of Able Seaman Spalding, repeatedly dived under water until the primer was eventually unscrewed and removed, thus making it safe. This operation was of the most dangerous nature, as the stern of the ship was seriously damaged and was in danger of breaking away from the remainder of the hull with potentially catastrophic results. If the depth charge had exploded the ship would have been destroyed, with further loss of life to those members of the crew on board. For his gallant action, Commander Tupper was awarded the Albert Medal. In 1921 living recipients of the Albert Medal were invited to exchange the Medal for the award of the George Cross, the highest gallantry award which can be presented for civilian actions.