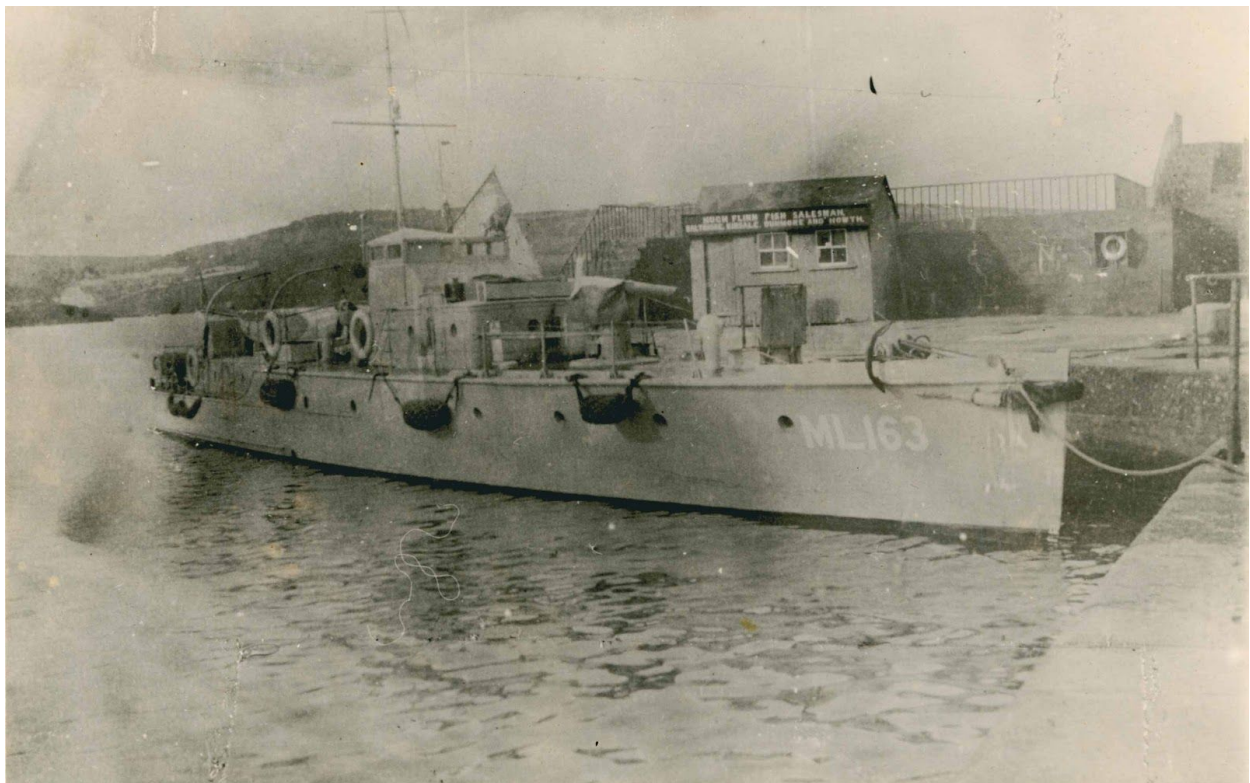




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# Kiwi Naval Reservists in WW1



World War 1 ML

This is the first in a series of pamphlets commemorating the contribution of New Zealand Naval Reservists during the First World War.

[WW100 WEBSITE](#)

## War is Declared!

At the outbreak of the First World War, there was no Naval force in New Zealand. The Naval Artillery Volunteers, a unit which could trace its origins back to 1860, had been assimilated into the Army. New Zealanders who wished to serve at sea, prior to the war, would need to travel independently to England and join the Royal Navy (RN). After the war broke out, travel to the England for enlistment in the RN became even more difficult, and officially discouraged. This was because New Zealand's official contribution to the war effort was to raise and sustain an expeditionary force.

World War 1 was very much a maritime war, and in the early years of the war, Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, considered that the RN, and the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) in particular, had far more men than there were ships available. It was for this reason that the majority of officers and men in the RNVR were assigned an infantry role and committed to the trenches at Flanders, as part of the Naval Division. Auckland naval historian John McEwan concludes that New Zealand Reservists would have met the same fate, if a unit had been formed at the time.

## Motor Boat Patrol Service

On the outbreak of war, Mr C.H.T. Palmer, president of the Ponsonby Powerboat Association, and the New Zealand Powerboat Association, and member of the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, canvassed his members and volunteered them and their vessels for service in patrolling Auckland harbours against the threat of mine-layers and saboteurs.

Palmer was appointed a Major in the New Zealand Army and placed in charge of the Motor Boat Patrol Service. The men of this service were issued with army uniforms, but gradually modified their uniform to take on a more naval fashion, and by 1916 they wore naval badges and buttons.

In 1916 the Admiralty announced plans to construct 500 additional Motor Launches (MLs). These vessels would be tasked with duties such as harbour defence, mine counter-measures and transport duties. C.H.T. Palmer was quick to write to the Admiralty to volunteer his men to crew the new vessels.

At the same time as Palmer was petitioning the Admiralty, a man by the name of W.J. Connors, who had been wounded at Gallipoli fighting with the Kiwis, started to convince his brother on the Admiralty staff, that New Zealanders would make excellent sailors. The Admiralty sent Commander Armstrong out to New Zealand to select suitable volunteers for the RNVR.



Charles Henry Tarr Palmer



Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron Officers on HMS Hermione at Southampton 1917. Officer trainees were billeted aboard HMS Hermione during their training.

Selection interviews were held at the headquarters of the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron in Queen Street. Eighty men were selected for officer training and 100 men were chosen to train as Chief Petty Officers for ML engine rooms. Both C.H.T. Palmer and W.J. Connors, who had returned to New Zealand after recovering from his wounds, were selected for officer training. Members of the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron made up 29 of those selected for Officer training.

The selectees sailed for England between October and December. 29 embarked on *Willochra* 16 Oct, 34 aboard *Maunganui*, and 36 on *Tahiti* sailed 15 Nov, 16 aboard *Athenic*, and 45 departed aboard *Manuka* in Dec 16. *Manuka* sailed first for Sydney, and the reservists transferred to the Australian transport ship A64 – Demosthenes, the ship on which the photograph of Lt Gannaway (p5) was taken..

The Chief Motor Mechanics (CMM) received training in advanced marine engineering and naval life, then posted to vacant billets on MLs and Auxiliary Patrol vessels around the coast.

The men selected as officers were commissioned as Sub-Lieutenants and sent to England for training, where they received four weeks induction training on Naval life and customs at Greenwich Naval College, and then four weeks training at Southampton on navigation, gunnery, depth charges and ship handling. They were then dispersed throughout the fleet, serving primarily on the MLs, as Executive Officers. After the war, both Palmer and Connors became founding members of the first RNVR division in Auckland. C.H.T Palmer would go on to become Captain Palmer OBE RNZNVR.



Motor Boats on patrol

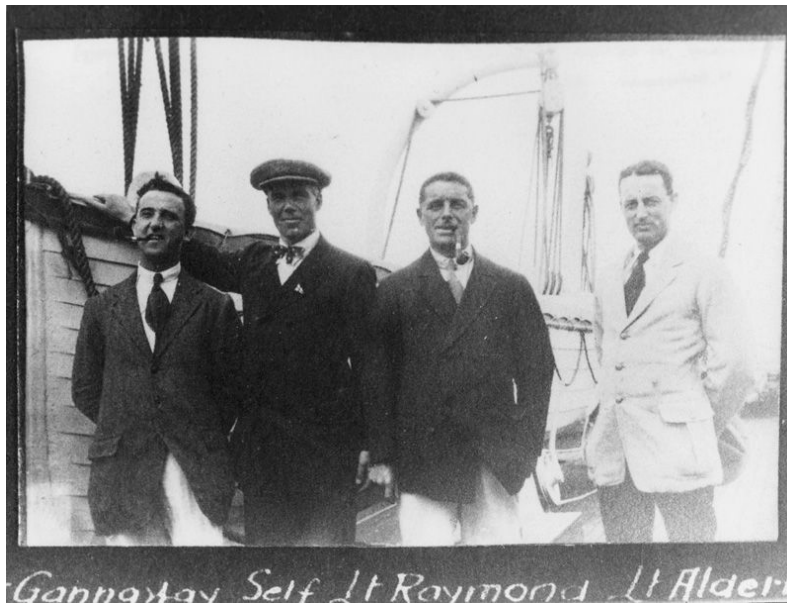
[READ MORE ON NAVY MUSEUM WEBSITE](#)

# Lieutenant Philip Gannaway, RNVR

Lt Philip Corliss Gannaway, RNVR served on ML 219, attached to the 'V' class destroyer, HMS Vanessa.

Lt Gannaway passed away, aged 32, from influenza, on 6 November 1918 - 5 days prior to the Armistice.

Lest we forget.



Group, Left to right Philip Gannaway, Unknown, Marcus Gage Raymond, Alderton on deck Demosthenes 1916, kindly provided by the Navy Museum

[READ MORE AT AUCKLAND ONLINE CENOTAPH](#)

This document is produced with the sponsorship of the Commanding Officer HMNZS NGAPONA.

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## New Zealand Naval Reservists killed during World War One.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
Alexander, Roy	Chief Petty Officer Motor Mechanic, RNVR	21 Aug 1918
Aslin, Robert	Lieutenant, RNR	06 Dec 1915
Batey, John F.H.	Chief Petty Officer Motor Mechanic, RNVR	13 Apr 1918
Bell, Laurence W.	Sub-Lieutenant, RNR	25 Jan 1917
Blackwood, Frederick	3rd Engineer, RNVR	26 Mar 1918
Cable, John G	Leading Seaman, RNVR	04 Feb 1917
Dalby, Edwin B.	Lieutenant, RNR	18 Mar 1917
Davidson, Arthur	Engineering Sub-Lieutenant, RNR	16 Jun 1916
Drummond, G.A	Lieutenant, RNR	19 Oct 1918
Freyberg, Oscar	Temporary Sub Lieutenant, RNVR	04 Jun 1915
Fry, William M.	Sub-Lieutenant, RNVR	29 Dec 1916
Gannaway, Philip	Lieutenant, RNVR	06 Nov 1918
Gully, Lewis V.	Engineering Sub-Lieutenant, RNR	11 Feb 1918
Macey, Gerald C.	Lieutenant, RNR	01 Apr 1916
Mackay, William	Engineering Sub-Lieutenant, RNR	18 Oct 1918
Martin, John A.	Sub-Lieutenant, RNR	08 Oct 1919
McBarnet, Edward J.	Lieutenant-Commander, RNR	16 Aug 1915
McKelvey, Charles	Engineering Sub-Lieutenant, RNR	03 Aug 1916
Newsham, Richmond	Engineering Lieutenant, RNR	28 Sept 1918
Rutledge, George	Lieutenant-Commander, RNR	25 Jan 1917
Sanders, William	Lieutenant-Commander, RNR	13 Aug 1917
Tisdall, Arthur W.	Sub-Lieutenant, RNVR	06 May 1915
Tylee, Errol T.	Engineering Sub-Lieutenant, RNR	26 Jan 1919
Whiteside, Reginald	Temporary Sub-Lieutenant, RNVR	20 Dec 1916
Young, Edward	Engineering Lieutenant, RNR	19 Dec 1918