



Name **ROGER SHARPLEY**

DOB September 1907

Place of birth North Shields

Education Rydal School, Colwyn Bay

Lived at Hayne, Whitestone, Exeter, Devon

Occupation Solicitor and Deputy Town Clerk of Exeter

Family His father Edward Burgess [b1876] was Town Clerk of Stoke on Trent. He married Annie Beatrice Stephenson (b 28/9/1877) in 1905. Roger had three siblings – His twin sister Joyce (b1907), his brother Hugh (b1910) and sister Norah [b1912]

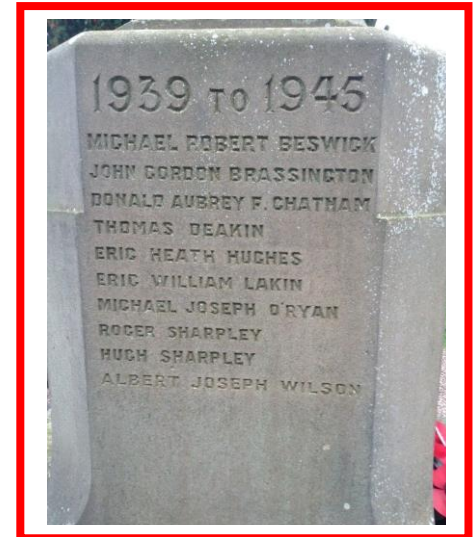
Marital Status Single

Service Territorial Army and Royal Devonshire Yeomanry due to fine horsemanship At the outbreak of war he was granted a commission in the Royal Artillery serving for 12 months in India before being transferred to the South African forces in Egypt with the rank of Captain. In August 1943 he was promoted Major and posted to the East African Force.

War Service Royal Artillery attached to 301 Field Regt., East African Artillery

Reg number Service Number 92224

Rank Major



Date of death Died Saturday 12/02/1944

Age at death 37

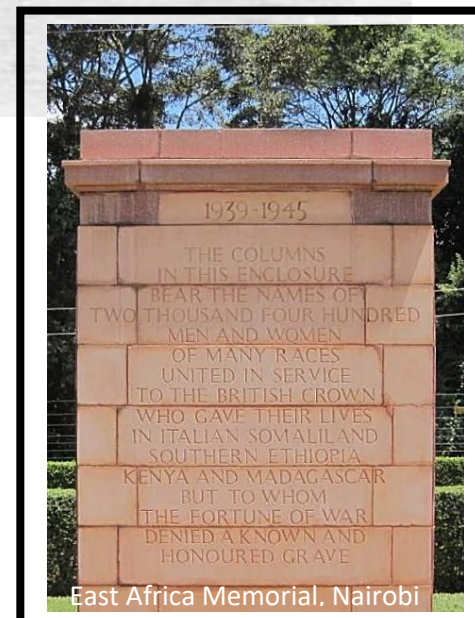
Place of death He sailed on 6 February 1944 from Kilindini Harbour at Mombasa, Kenya, to Columbo, Ceylon, in Convoy KR-8. The troop ship he was on, the SS Khedive Ismail was attacked by a B1 type of Japanese submarine and hit by two torpedoes. It sank SW of the Maldives and 1297 perished. [See next page]

Cause of death Drowned

Grave or Memorial Commemorated on the EAST AFRICA MEMORIAL Column 1 Location: Nairobi Kenya

Other information Staffordshire Advertiser of 4 Mar 1944 reported: MAJOR ROGER SHARPLEY - E. B. Sharpley and Mrs Sharpley of The Toft Hanchurch have received news that their elder son, Major Roger Sharpley. R.A., has been reported missing at sea.

Probate: To Harry Taylor and Jack Mee Solicitors £3,749 14s 5d





The Sinking of the SS Khedive Ismail

The SS KHEDIVE ISMAIL was a steamship sunk with great loss of life in 1944. The 7,513 ton steamship was launched as the Aconcagua by Scotts of Greenock in 1922. The Aconcagua passed into Egyptian ownership and was renamed after KHEDIVE ISMAIL, the ruler of Egypt from 1863 until 1879. In 1940 the KHEDIVE ISMAIL was requisitioned as a British troopship.

On 6 February 1944 Convoy KR-8 sailed from Kilindini Harbour at Mombasa, Kenya to Colombo, Ceylon. The convoy consisted of five troop transports (KHEDIVE ISMAIL, City of Paris, Varsova, Ekma & Ellenga), escorted by the heavy cruiser HMS Hawkins and the destroyers HMS Petard and HMS Paladin.

In the early afternoon of Saturday 12 February 1944, the Japanese B1 type submarine I-27, commanded by Lt-Cdr Toshiaki Fukumura, attacked the convoy in the One and a Half Degree Channel, south-west of the Maldives near coordinates 01°25'N 72°22'E. The submarine sank the KHEDIVE ISMAIL with two torpedoes.

The ship was carrying 1,511 personnel including 178 crew, 996 officers and men of the East African Artillery's 301st Field Regiment, 271 Royal Navy personnel, and a detachment of 19 Wrens. Also on board were 53 nursing sisters accompanied by one matron, and 9 members of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry.

As survivors floundered in the sea, the I-27 submerged and hid beneath them. While HMS Paladin lowered boats over her side to begin rescuing survivors, HMS Petard raced in to release depth charges. The destruction of an enemy submarine that might sink more ships took precedence over the lives of the survivors, and the I-27 under Commander Fukumura had a history of machine-gunning survivors of ships she had sunk, including the Liberty ship SS Sambridge and the Fort Mumford.

On Petard's third run, her depth charges forced I-27 to the surface. Paladin rammed the submarine, in the process self-inflicting considerable damage. Finally a torpedo from Petard destroyed the I-27.

No fewer than 1,297 people, including 77 women, lost their lives in the two minutes it took for the KHEDIVE ISMAIL to sink. Only 208 men and 6 women survived. The sinking was the third worst Allied shipping disaster of World War II and the single worst loss of female service personnel in the history of the Commonwealth of Nations.

