

**OLDEST  
WW1 COMBAT VETERAN**

**DIES**

**by**

**Unknown**

Yahoo news

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The last known combat veteran of the First World War, Claude Stanley Choules, has died at the age of 110, in a nursing home in Perth, Australia, his family have confirmed.

The father-of-three was born in Pershore, Worcestershire, on March 3 1901, six weeks after the death of Queen Victoria, and was one of seven children.

Known as "Chuckles" to his comrades, he joined the Royal Navy aged just 14 in 1915 and witnessed the scuttling of the German fleet at Scapa Flow in 1919.

He emigrated to Australia in the 1920s and served in the military for 41 years before retiring and publishing his first book at the age of 108.

At 16 he joined the battleship HMS Revenge - part of the British Grand Fleet based at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands.

While serving on Revenge he witnessed the surrender of the German fleet at the Firth of Forth, on Scotland's east coast, on November 21, 1918.

Mr Choules, who claimed the secret to a long life was simply to "keep breathing", was also present at Scapa Flow on June 21, 1919 when the Germans scuttled all their warships so they would not fall into British hands.

He remained with the Royal Navy after the war and in 1926 was posted as an instructor to Flinders Naval Depot, near Melbourne, Australia.

While on board the passenger liner that took him to Australia, he met his future wife Ethel.

They were married on December 3, 1926 and later settled in Western Australia.

Mr Choules decided to transfer permanently to the Royal Australian Navy and during the Second World War he was appointed chief demolition officer for the western half of Australia.

He later transferred to the Naval Dockyard Police and remained in the Australian navy until his retirement at the age of 55, before going on to publish his autobiography, The Last of the Last, in 2009.

His wife died in 2003 at the age of 98 after they had been married for 76 years, and he spent his final years in a nursing home.

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