

William Henry ROSEVEAR



Born: 12th June 1868, Padstow, Cornwall
Occupation: Naval Instructor
Enlisted: Plymouth: 2nd August 1914 (Royal Fleet Reserve)
Unit: Vivid 1, Royal Navy Barracks, Plymouth
Rank/number: Chief Petty Officer: No.126623
Death: Died, 23rd August 1914
Detail: William never lived long enough to fight in the Great War. Though he had served 22 years in the Royal Navy and a further eight years as a naval instructor, he died of malaria less than three weeks after the conflict started. This lethal and recurring disease, which he no doubt picked up during his naval service in the tropics, claimed his life at Plymouth Hospital

Age at death: 46

Military info: William, a labourer, joined the Royal Navy as a Boy Seaman in 1884 and served in a variety of ships and shore establishments for the next 22 years. During that time he rose to the rank of chief petty officer. In 1906 William, then 38 years of age, left the navy and joined the Royal Fleet Reserve, which required him to serve in time of war. The family moved to Merlin Street in Liverpool where William took up a post as an instructor on a maritime training ship. There were a number of educational ships moored in the Mersey: *Conway* trained future Merchant Navy officers, *Akbar* and *Clarence* were reformatory institutions, *Indefatigable* gave sea training to poor boys, and *Eaglet* was the divisional HQ of the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve. William is most likely to have worked in *Indefatigable*. At the outbreak of war William, as a member of the RFR, immediately returned to service. He was 46 years old. But his war was not to be a long one. As Britain geared itself up for the struggle ahead, William was taken ill with an old affliction - malaria. On 23rd August 1914, less than three weeks after the conflict began, William died at Plymouth Hospital. Though William never lived long enough to take part in the war his family may well have drawn comfort from the fact that he had trained many of the sailors who did. Without such men Britain would not have emerged, four years later, as victors.

Grave/memorial: William is buried at Ford Park Cemetery (Formerly Plymouth Old Cemetery). He is also honoured at St Petroc's Church, Padstow and Padstow War Memorial.

Family info: Father: Richard Thomas Rosevear, born St Austell, Cornwall in 1836. Mother: Mary Hellyar, born Padstow, Cornwall in 1835. Richard died in 1872, four years after William was born. Wife: Eliza Ann Pethick, born Penzance, Cornwall in 1885. The couple married in 1890 and had three children, Thomas, Mary and Edith.



This information was researched by Peter Smith, who is currently writing a book about Padstow's part in the Great War. Anyone wishing to correct errors or supply additional information can write to him at 24 Mallard Drive, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5PW. Also phone 01825 762226 or email smithpeter24@gmail.com

+Lest we forget+