

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch
of
The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Private Henry Walter William Turner (PO/16512)
Royal Marine Light Infantry (Portsmouth Division)

Henry Walter William Turner, also known as 'Harry' or 'Tiny' was born in Wotton-under-Edge on 22 February 1895. Before joining the Royal Marines he had worked in a butcher's shop in the town and as a carter. He enlisted into the Royal Marine Light Infantry in Bristol on 23 September 1912, when aged 17, and trained at their depot in Deal, Kent between September 1912 and July 1913. After completing training Harry joined C Company of Portsmouth Division and on 21 April 1914 he joined the ship's company of *HMS Black Prince*, an armoured cruiser.

On 31 May 1916 the *Black Prince* was part of the First Cruiser Squadron that was acting as screen several miles ahead of the main force of the Grand Fleet, as it and the German High Seas fleet converged in the North Sea to fight the only major fleet action of the Great War, the Battle of Jutland.

The Squadron came into contact with the German fleet at about 17:45 and at once found itself under heavy fire from German battleships and battle cruisers. A sister ship of the *Black Prince*, *HMS Defence* was hit by seven heavy shells, blew up and sank within forty minutes, whilst another, *HMS Warrior* took fifteen hits and limped out of the action and eventually sank, in rising seas, being towed back to port. *Black Prince* also sustained fifteen hits and, badly damaged, became separated from the rest of the fleet. Quite what happened to her subsequently is not fully understood.

Having recognised that he was up against superior forces, the German admiral had manoeuvred his fleet in an about-turn and headed back towards the German coast. Darkness had descended and it is thought that somehow

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Black Prince, now on fire, had found its way into the tail end of the German column. According to German accounts she was fixed in the searchlights of the battleship *Thuringen* and fired on by five other large German ships at point blank range. With fires now raging she exploded and sank within fifteen minutes.

Harry Turner, aged 21, was one of a ship's company of about 850 who lost their lives and he is commemorated on the Portsmouth Division, Royal Naval War Memorial on the seafront at Southsea and on the Wotton-under-Edge War Memorial.



Royal Naval War Memorial