

Make Way for Lord Kitchener!
The Loss of His Majesty's Ship Hampshire
5 June 1916.
Part Two – Walter Charles Farnden,
a Survivor's Story



Stoker 1st Class Walter Charles Farnden (K18337 Po.)
From The Great War, I Was There, Part 15, p604
Photo Sport & General

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Introduction

Part Two is about one man, Walter Farnden, the only survivor the Author can link to Sussex. Walter's career in the Navy, based on his Service Record is related first, then a brief Family History. The Farnden Family tree appears to be rooted in West Sussex for many generations, with a trait of producing tall men suited to the Police and Armed Services. Walter certainly followed in that tradition.

Service Record¹

Walter Charles Farnden (K18337 Po.) signed a 12 year engagement with the Navy on 18 March 1913. His record states that he was born on 5 April 1892 at Bognor, Sussex, and that he was a Gardener by profession. Walter was, therefore, nearly 21 years old when he joined. A tall young man, at 5 foot 11 ½ inches, his chest measured 36 ½ inches; he had a fresh complexion with light hair and grey eyes.

Commencing his service at Portsmouth Naval Base (Victory II) he joined the Stoker Branch and was rated Stoker 2nd Class. Following his basic training Walter was transferred to HMS Dryad, a Portsmouth based torpedo gun-boat, on which he served between 3 September and 31 October 1913. The Dryad was designated a Navigation School Ship and, in company with HMS Harrier, undertook an instructional cruise in the waters around Ireland, Scotland and the Channel Islands between 13 and 25 October 1913.² Although this was an instructional voyage Walter's main concern would have been his duties as a stoker, however, he may have received some navigational training. Returning to Victory II for a short period between 1 November and 15 December 1913, on the next day he joined the cruiser HMS Europa, for the voyage from Portsmouth to Colombo, Ceylon, on the shores of the Indian Ocean. Walter was part of the relief crew for HMS Hampshire, another cruiser, being re-commissioned for service on the East Indies Station. Arriving at Colombo he joined the Hampshire on 27 January 1914. Soon after commissioning the Hampshire was transferred to the China Station. Walter was serving in Chinese waters when he received his promotion to Stoker 1st Class on 18 March 1914. In the months leading up to the outbreak of the Great War, the strange and exotic Far East, would have been both exciting and character forming for Walter. Amidst the arduous sessions of stoking and coaling, and the round of ship routines, there would be periods of shore leave when he and his mates could sample the fleshpots of Hong Kong, Singapore and Penang.

At the start of the war HMS Hampshire was still on the China Station and ordered to act as escort to the convoy of the first contingent of Australian

and New Zealand troops to leave for Europe.³ However, she became involved in the pursuit of the German cruiser Emden among the islands of the South China Sea and around the Indian Ocean. Although it was another cruiser, His Majesty's Australian Ship Sydney, that damaged the Emden sufficiently to force the Germans to surrender on 9 November 1914.⁴ Some of the service that Walter saw with HMS Hampshire, during this time, can be traced from the ship's log for the period 1 October 1914 to 28 February 1915.⁵ Although attached to the China Station, the Hampshire was operating from Colombo when the German cruiser Emden was creating havoc in the Indian Ocean.⁶ Between 2 and 12 October Hampshire sailed to the Maldiv Islands meeting HMS Empress of Asia, a civilian liner converted to a lightly armoured cruiser that was part of the force hunting the Emden.⁷ Returning to Colombo, Hampshire set out again on 13 October to cruise in the Chagos Archipelago, where the German ship had been spotted. After returning to Colombo, Hampshire left again on 19 October and rendezvoused with the cruiser HMS Yarmouth, another ship that had been taken from the Australian and New Zealand troop convoy escort to look for the Emden. By now the convoy, originally scheduled to leave Australia on 22 September, had been held back until it could be assured a safe passage.⁸ Hampshire continued patrolling the Indian Ocean, being supplied with fresh provisions by the Empress of Asia. On the way back to Colombo she stopped and searched a Dutch steamer, the Artemis, on 26 October.⁹ In order to allow the Hampshire to stay at sea longer she was often accompanied by a collier, the steamship Ark. Sometimes Hampshire towed Ark, at other times the two vessels would meet at prearranged locations to keep the cruiser supplied with coal.¹⁰ On 12 November Hampshire met the convoy, communicating with HMAS Melbourne, and on the next day with the Japanese cruiser, Ibuki, both part of the escort, before returning to Colombo.¹¹ Setting out again, on 18 November HMS Hampshire rejoined the convoy, at first keeping in touch, then sailing ahead, she put into Aden, on 25 November. Leaving Aden, the next day, she led the convoy into the Red Sea and on 1 December entered the Suez Canal, arriving at Port Said on 3 December.¹²

When the troop convoy was safely delivered to Egypt, the Hampshire, with Walter Farnden aboard, immediately sailed for Gibraltar. Calling at Malta, on 6 December, and arriving at The Rock three days later. Walter spent Christmas at Gibraltar, where the Hampshire undertook an extensive re-fit. Leaving on 7 January 1915, she arrived at Plymouth on 11 January.¹³ Between 12 and 20 January HMS Hampshire was in Devonport Dockyard being prepared for service with the Seventh Cruiser Squadron, of the Grand Fleet, in the North Sea.¹⁴ She was in the Cromarty Firth, on the north eastern coast of Scotland, by the 25 January, and headed north again to arrive at Scapa Flow on 14 February. By the last entry of the log, on 28 February 1915, the Hampshire appears to be patrolling the Pentland Firth from the Grand Fleet's Orkney base at Scapa Flow.¹⁵ Without the benefit of the log the next period of Walter's service cannot be told in great detail, but from the records of other members of the crew, it can be safely stated that the Hampshire was back in Portsmouth in March 1915. The following November she was in North Russian waters in the White Sea, protecting shipping, and by February

1916 at Portsmouth, where some more of the crew joined her.¹⁶ Walter received his first Good Conduct badge on 18 March 1916.

HMS Hampshire's part in the Battle of Jutland on 31 May 1916 has already been told. (See Engineer-Commander Cossey's letter in Appendix Three, of Part One). One week later she was at Scapa Flow awaiting the arrival of Lord Kitchener, and his party, to take them on the mission to Russia. The Hampshire was probably chosen for the voyage because she had come through the Jutland action unscathed and had been operating in Russian waters just over six months before. Walter Farnden, 22 years later, wrote of his experiences during the next three days (4 to 6 June) in an article in the part-work, *The Great War, I Was There*.¹⁷ This article bears many traces of being ghost-written, with a number of historical facts quoted that Farnden could not possibly have known at the time. However, it is a useful account that sheds some different light on the last hours of the Hampshire and the plight of the survivors.

Farnden's account follows the contemporary reports in *The Times*¹⁸ describing Kitchener's railway journey from London to Thurso and the principal members of his party. However 2nd Lieutenant Macpherson is included, who was not mentioned until a later issue of *The Times*.¹⁹ His account also says that a clerk, a detective and three servants were travelling in another coach. Archangel is given as the destination of the Hampshire, it being reasonably guessed that this was the only port in Russia open to the Royal Navy. At Thurso the account says there was a destroyer waiting to take Kitchener to HMS Hampshire, but it goes on to say that he arrived on a pinnacle from HMS Iron Duke. The solution to this quandary appears in the caption to a photograph showing him coming aboard HMS Iron Duke from the torpedo boat destroyer HMS Oak. Farnden uses the post-war term destroyer to mean a "tbd". The Oak was a tender to Iron Duke, and was waiting at Thurso to take the party to the luncheon date with Jellicoe aboard his Flagship anchored in Scapa Flow. After lunch the party was conveyed to the Hampshire in the Iron Duke's pinnacle.²⁰ Admiral Jellicoe again appears in Farnden's account, as the person suggesting that the Hampshire should take the more sheltered western passage around the Island of Hoy, as opposed to the shorter, eastern route on account of the stormy weather.²¹ This proved to be a bad decision as the Hampshire found herself running into a fierce gale that forced the Captain to send back the two escort ships, because they could not keep up in the high rolling seas. Farnden names the escorts as the torpedo boat destroyers, HMS Unity and HMS Victor. The Hampshire had been steaming for about 1 ½ hours when Farnden heard a reverberating explosion above the roar of the storm, after which the ship listed to starboard and began to sink. He confirms that the boat derricks failed to work due to the electric power failure. One boat, cut away from its derricks, was hit by a tremendous wave that smashed it against the side of the ship, throwing between 50 and 60 men into the water.²² According to Farnden he helped to launch Carley rafts numbered 1 and 2, and got away himself on raft number 3. There were four survivors on his raft, one of whom was his friend and fellow Stoker Frederick Sims, although Farnden does not mention him in his account. Sims states, in his version of the events, he was clinging to his raft when it was thrown ashore and

his friend "Lofty Farndon" shook him to his senses. According to Sims he and Farnden managed to cross a stretch of water to start climbing the cliffs to safety. Sims was not a confident swimmer.²³ The official enquiry said that there were three rafts launched and that one of them carried all the survivors ashore.²⁴ Wilfred Wesson also states that three rafts were launched but does not say how many other men on his raft got ashore.²⁵

Walter Farnden's experience ended with a final horror. He found himself thrown on the rocks as the raft beached. There was a 12 foot wide stretch of calmer water between him and the base of the cliffs. Being unable to swim he must have discovered this was a shallow pool because he managed to cross it to start the climb to the cliff top.²⁶

Farnden's account mentions a possible plot to do away with Kitchener, but does not go into details. He also comments on the idea that the Germans knew of the voyage beforehand and were able to make plans to sink the ship by getting a submarine into the area. However, Farnden observes that the seas were too rough for a submarine to operate. The idea of a mine being deliberately placed would have been thwarted by the last minute decision to change course to the western side of Hoy. In conclusion Farnden's account says that the German submarine U.175 was laying 13 mines along the western shore in the week before Jutland to catch ships of Jellicoe's Grand Fleet leaving Scapa Flow between Hoy and Mainland Orkney. In the best tradition of unlucky 13 the British mine sweepers found the first 12 mines, but not the last one. This mine was later hit by the Hampshire on 5 June 1916.

After the survivors were given hot drinks and food by the Islanders, and allowed to rest, they were gathered together and sent to a hospital ship in Scapa Flow for medical care. All, like Walter, had cuts and bruises from being thrown about in the sea and clambering up the rugged cliffs. His service record shows that Walter was posted back to Victory II, at Portsmouth, on 11 June, presumably to give evidence to the Navy enquiry into the sinking. More information emerges about Walter at this time from an article in his local paper.²⁷ He is described as being a resident of Barnham, his mother living at Vine Cottage. His nickname of Lofty, used by Frederick Sims, is attributed to his stature. Walter was now over 6 foot tall. A story is related that Mrs Farnden had a presentiment that her son had survived the sinking of the Hampshire before the news was confirmed. Following much morale boosting publicity in the national newspapers, which the Navy definitely encouraged, the survivors went back to their duties and were reassigned to different ships. Walter remained at Victory II until the New Year.²⁸ Then on 1 January 1917 he was posted to HMS Pansy, a mine sweeping sloop. Promoted to Acting Leading Stoker, on 1 February 1918, he was still serving on the Pansy at the Armistice. However, for Walter the War was not over. With effect from 1 January 1919 HMS Pansy was operating from HMS Gunner, the naval base for minesweepers at Granton, near Edinburgh, on the Firth of Forth. The role of the ships at the Granton base was clearing the Allied and German mines that had been laid along the east coast of Scotland.²⁹ In the period 1 April to 9 June Walter was posted to HMS Sunflower, another

sweeper on mine clearance service. The next ship he served on was also a mine sweeper, HMS *Gentian*, from 10 June to 25 July. *Gentian* was part of the Allied Intervention forces operating in the Baltic Sea against the Russian Bolshevik regime. The Bolsheviks had toppled Britain's ally Imperial Russia in the 1917 Revolution. In company with another mine sweeper, HMS *Myrtle*, the *Gentian* was clearing mines in the Gulf of Finland, along the Estonian coastline. The following short article from *The Times* newspaper of Friday, 22 August 1919, entitled "Sunken Minesweeper's Crew Acquitted",³⁰ tells what happened next;

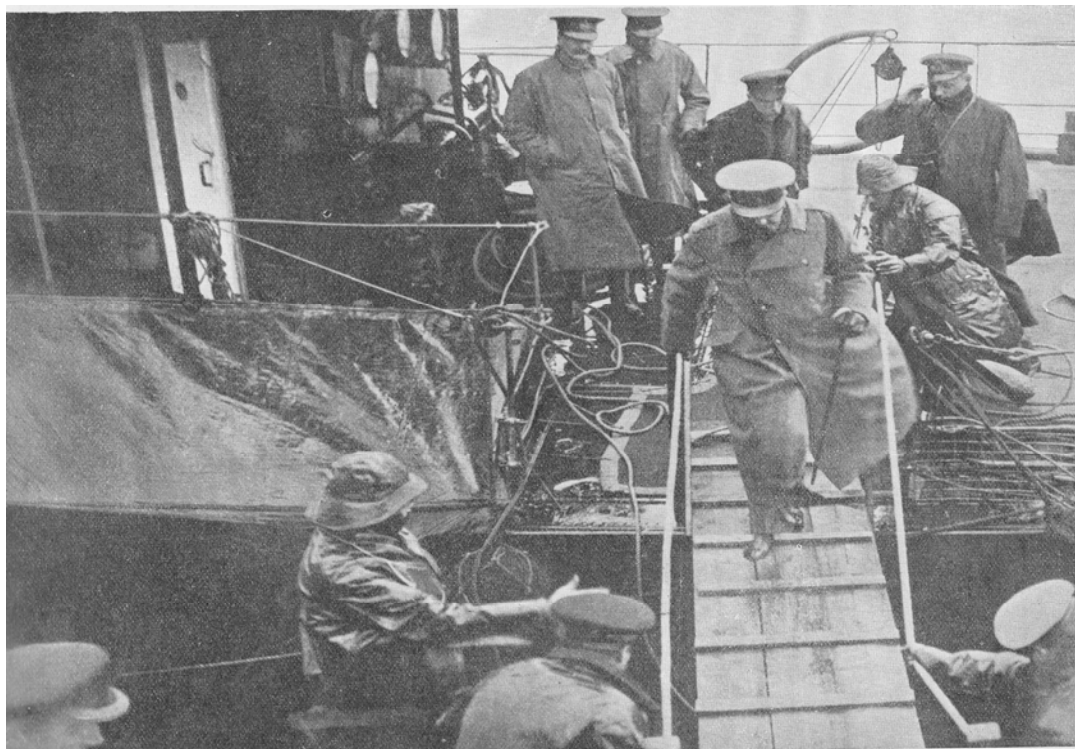
"A Naval Court-martial was held at Chatham on Wednesday to inquire into the sinking of the mine-sweeper *Gentian*, which, together with the mine-sweeper *Myth*, [*Myrtle*] was lost in the Baltic in July. It was stated that the ships were struck by a sub-merged mine when engaged in sweeping operations, and casualties occurred in both vessels."

"The Court concurred in the report that the ship was properly navigated, that all possible steps were taken to save it, and that the abandonment was satisfactorily carried out. They therefore acquitted the crew of all blame."³¹

There is every reason to believe that Walter was involved in this incident because his service record states that he returned to the Naval Barracks at Chatham (Pembroke II) on 26 July, which would be in time for recovery and preparation for the Court-martial on 20 August. The similarities between the sinking of the *Hampshire* and the *Gentian* are strikingly obvious. What Walter must have thought, when his ship hit a mine for the second time, is not hard to imagine. Both instances involved casualties and, for the survivors, a period in the water. They most probably left a lasting impression on him, and it is strange that he made no mention of the *Gentian* in his article about HMS *Hampshire*. After this second disaster the Navy had not yet finished with him. He was promoted again, to Leading Stoker, on 28 September 1919, and served at Chatham until 6 October. The next day he was posted back to Portsmouth and continued there until 13 January 1920 when he was discharged to shore. At this time he was paid his War Gratuity, but was not able to leave the Navy because this would have broken his 12 year engagement, signed on 18 March 1913. His service would have to be completed to 1925. However, he obtained a free exchange, without any penalty for not completing his time, by taking up the option of serving the rest of his term in the Royal Fleet Reserve, which he joined on 14 January 1920. This allowed Walter to obtain civilian employment but be ready to return to the Service when he was required. He would also have to undertake annual training to maintain his qualification to serve. His rating in the RFR was reduced to Stoker 1st Class, with 6 years experience. Walter was recalled under the terms of the RFR, the following year, and served at Portsmouth (*Victory II*) from 9 April to 2 June 1921, when he was demobilised as a result of the post-war reduction of the forces. Details were passed to the Ministry of Labour so that he could be paid, if needed, Unemployment Benefit.

Walter's character was always Very Good, and his ability judged as Satisfactory to Superior throughout his career in the Royal Navy and Royal

Fleet Reserve. There is an ominous note at the end of his service schedule that his record has been added to a card dated 9 December 1940, indicating he may have been liable to return to the Navy in the Second World War.³¹



Said to be the last photograph taken of Kitchener showing him coming aboard HMS Iron Duke from the cruiser HMS Oak. Entertained by Admiral Jellicoe on the Iron Duke, Kitchener and his party were later transferred to HMS Hampshire in the Iron Duke's pinnace. The two military officers following Kitchener are possibly Ellershaw and FitzGerald. This picture evokes the wet and windy conditions that would develop into the fierce gale the Hampshire ran into as she left Scapa Flow.

From *The Great War, I Was There*, Part 15, p605

Photo Uncredited

Family History³²

Walter's father was Edward Farnden, who was born at Broad Reed, near Compton, Sussex in 1866. The 1881 Census shows Edward, age 15, an agricultural labourer, at home with his younger sister, Sarah, and father and mother, Charles and Mary Farnden. Edward's father is a Police Constable, age 53. The family are living at Whitestone Farm, Birdham, where it seems Charles was the village policeman. In 1888 Edward married Rose Bennett, and three years later the couple were living at Nursery Cottages, Barnham. By now Edward was working as a nursery gardener, his home a tied cottage provided by his employer. Life was probably good for the young married couple, for besides Edward's pay, they had two boarders, Frank Woollard, age 19, another nursery gardener, and Albert Poulter, age 21, a groom, both of whom would have

contributed to the household expenses. Walter was born, at Barnham, on 5 April 1892, the eldest of Edward and Rose's children. He was christened, Walter Charles, probably after his grandfather, at Barnham Parish Church, on the 16 May 1892.³³ Two more children were born at Barnham, a girl, Edith Mary, in 1893, and a boy, Edward Thomas, in 1895, a younger sister and brother for Walter. Then in late 1896, or early 1897, Edward and Rose moved their young family to Emsworth, Hampshire. In the 1901 Census they are living at 2 Sultan Road, a terraced house, near the railway station. Edward is now employed as a gardener domestic and in addition to Walter, Edith and Edward, he has a third son, Robert Cyril, age 3, who was born in Emsworth. The nature of Edward's employment had changed from that of a nurseryman, raising large quantities of plants in glasshouses, to a domestic servant working on the garden of a large house. He may have been a head gardener or part of a team, the Census does not make this clear, nor does it say where he worked.³⁴ A strange fact about the family's entry in the 1901 Census is that all the Christian names are only given as initials. Perhaps Edward and Rose were not contemplating staying in Emsworth for a long time and did not want to give away too much to their new neighbours? About 1904 the family moved back to Barnham. Edward returned to market gardening and in 1905 Rose gave birth to Lydia Mary Ann, the Farnden's second daughter.

In the 1911 Census Edward and Rose Farnden and their family are living at Vine Cottage, Barnham. At home is Walter, age 18, and his brother Edward, age 15, both nursery gardeners, Edith, age 17, and the two youngsters, Robert, age 13, attending school, and Lydia, age 5. This would seem to be a happy and prosperous family, living in the country, with three wage earners. The local newspaper article reporting Walter as a survivor from HMS Hampshire also gives family details that throw some more light on his life before he joined the Navy.³⁵ Walter attended Eastergate School, the newspaper does not say in which years, and he later went to work for Mr H.R. Marshall.³⁶ Although market gardening was in Walter's blood, an entry in the Eastergate School Log Book for 10 March 1902 says that "The Gardening for Boys has started today...", "The Lessons will be every Monday morning from 10 to 12 o'clock. 12 Boys attend this class." It would be interesting to know if Walter joined the class after he moved back to Barnham from Emsworth.³⁷ Following school it seems that life as a gardener was not what he wanted for himself. There is no clue to why this was so. However, he stuck to it and was in his 21st year before he joined the Navy. This says something about his character. Unlike other lads in their teens he did not deliberately go against his parents' wishes but waited until his decision would have to be accepted by them. In 1916 Walter had a brother who had been discharged from the Coldstream Guards, wounded by an exploding shell, this must have been Edward Thomas Farnden. Walter's youngest brother, Robert Cyril, had joined the Royal Navy in 1916, as a Stoker, maybe hoping to follow in his illustrious brother's footsteps?³⁸

After his demobilisation in 1921, Walter's life is not very easy to trace. When he wrote his *I Was There* article, in 1938 or 1939, he was employed as a railway yard shunter at Bognor Regis Station. Whether he went from the Navy to the railways, or had other work remains to be discovered. The

possibility of further Naval service in the Second World War cannot be dismissed. However, if he was a railway employee in his late 40s, when war broke out in 1939, he could have been in a reserved occupation. Alternatively, he may have wished to stay on to qualify for a pension.³⁹

Conclusion

Walter “Lofty” Farnden appeared to be a lucky individual as one of only 12 survivors from the sinking of HMS Hampshire. But there were many other sailors who survived when their ships went down during the Great War. The loss of the Hampshire, linked to the death of Lord Kitchener made the survivors into a band of immortals. Both Farnden and Sims wrote of the parts they played in this famous historical event, but they either trivialised or omitted to mention other events, in which they were involved, that were equally notable. They were responding to the post-war rush for closure on Kitchener’s death and providing answers for the many questions raised about his loss; that still intrigue historians today. Finding out about Walter Farnden’s second, similar experience, with HMS Gentian, proves that he rose to the ideals that Kitchener inspired in Britain and the Empire. Like those who experienced the horrors of the Great War he was a hero, numbered among a generation of heroes.

Endnotes for Part Two

1. The National Archives ADM188/903/337
2. *The Times* Tuesday 07 Oct 1913, p10 Issue 40336
3. Bennett, *Coronel and the Falklands* (Pan, 1962), p70
4. Bennett, *Coronel and the Falklands*, p72
5. <http://www.naval-history.net/OWShips-WW1-05Hampshire.htm> Viewed 27 Nov 2013
6. See Note 5.
7. See Note 5. 2 to 12 October 1914
8. Bennett, *Coronel and the Falklands*, p71 (The convoy finally left on 1 November)
9. See Note 5. 26 October 1914
10. See Note 5. 3 and 9 November 1914
11. See Note 5. 12 to 15 November 1914
12. See Note 5. 25 November to 3 December 1914
13. See Note 5. 3 December 1914 to 11 January 1915
14. See Note 5. Introductory paragraphs to Ship’s Log
15. See Note 5. 25 January to 28 February 1915
16. See Note 5. Introductory paragraphs to Ship’s Log
17. Hammerton, Sir John, (Ed.) *The Great War, I Was There*, Part 15, I Was in The Hampshire, A Stoker’s Story of Kitchener’s Death, by W.C.Farnden. (Amalgamated Press Ltd. 10 Jan. 1939), pp604-607
18. *Times* Wednesday 07 Jun 1916, p10, Issue 41187
19. *Times* Friday 09 Jun 1916, p01, Issue 41189
20. Hammerton, Sir John, (Ed.) *The Great War, I Was There*, Part 15,

p605

21. Farnden asserts that the eastern route was regularly swept of mines, therefore the western route was a riskier option.
22. Perhaps the remains of this boat were those found on the sands of Thurso Bay? (See *Times* Saturday 10 Jun 1916, p08, Issue 41190)
23. <http://www.hmshampshire.co.uk/> See Part 2 of Frederick Sims. Viewed 23 Dec 2013
24. *Times* Friday 16 Jun 1916, p09, Issue 41195
25. Ibid.
26. Despite the omission of Frederick Sims from Farnden's *I Was There* account written in 1938/39 the mention of a stretch of water between the rocks and the cliffs, that was also highlighted by Sims writing in 1960, is evidence of a shared experience.
27. *Chichester Observer* 14 Jun 1916, p05 His name is spelt Farndon!
28. Following Farnden's terrible ordeal it would be surprising if he had not suffered any lasting side effects. This period of 6 months at Portsmouth ensured that he could return to duty both physically and mentally fit for service.
29. <http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/52051/details/edinburgh+granton+harbour> Viewed 23 Dec 2013
30. *Times* Friday 22 Aug 1919 p07, Issue 42185
31. Admiralty service records are closed to the Public after 1923. There is no indication in ADM188/903/337 of Farnden's date of death, therefore, it is probable that he was liable to serve in the Second World War. He would have been 48 years old in 1940.
32. 1881 Census RG11/1122/08/10
 1891 Census RG12/0843/72/14
 1901 Census RG13/0977/117/91
 1911 Census RG14PN5368 RG78PN241 RD85 SD1 ED4 SN18
33. "England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/J7R9-JMK> : accessed 30 Dec 2013), Walter Charles Farnden, 16 May 1892.
34. Edward Farnden may have been a gardener at Northlands, a large house to the north of the railway line, and very close to Sultan Road. It was demolished to make way for the present A27 dual-carriageway road)
35. *Chichester Observer* 14 Jun 1916, p05
36. Walter probably attended Eastergate National School before and after the family was in Emsworth. He must have also attended school in Emsworth. H.R. Marshall was one of the two Marshall brothers who developed market gardening in Barnham on a large scale in the late 19th Century. H.R. Marshall's fruit growing premises were at Sunnyside just over the road from Walter's home, Vine Cottage.
37. West Sussex Record Office Log book E/76/12/2 Jun 1900-Feb 1923
38. The National Archives ADM 188/937/35222
39. Since completing this article the Author has found entries in the Civil Registration records that may indicate Walter Charles Farnden married in Brighton in 1936 and died in the Chichester area in 1972.

Notes on some of the Sources used

The United Kingdom Census returns have been extensively used in a number of formats (on-line, cd-rom, roll film, and transcriptions) and found in several different places (libraries, record offices, on-line providers and the Author's collection). No attempt has been made in the End-notes to specify which format or provider was used. However, a straightforward reference to the Census Year, Place number, folio and page number, eg. RG13/0977/117/91, is used which will enable the reference to be followed up. The 1911 Census entries have been taken, largely, from www.findmypast.co.uk and include some additional numbers and letters.

Referencing the Service Records has been approached in the following way. All of the man's movements and transfers between ship and ship, and ship and shore, with the relevant dates, are included under The National Archives reference for that particular record, eg. ADM188/937/35222.

Interpreting each Service Record has been akin to learning a new language. Fortunately the Admiralty clerks who maintained the records used a system of abbreviations and acronyms that can be recognised with practice, but by no means constitute a definitive system of recording the information. The 1901 and 1911 Census revealed the concept of men serving in tenders, minor vessels operating with the main ship the sailor was posted to on his Service Record, but not mentioned on the record. Unravelling the mystery of sub-rating, or qualification badges, that were constantly changing with improvements in motive power and weaponry, has been attempted by the Author, again by comparing many records with the known circumstances during the periods of service they were awarded. Sub-ratings seem to raise the most inquiries from family historians on the numerous internet forums discussing ancestors in the Royal Navy.

Mention of an action, voyage, or other incident concerning a named ship that ties in with the Service Record dates has been given its own reference. General knowledge about the ships such as whether they were a cruiser or a battleship and contemporary events, now having passed into history, such as the Boer War, have not been referenced.

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James Turner
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