

Harry Taylor

Ordinary Able Seaman, Z/12276, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

Harry Taylor was born on the 26th January 1901 in the town of Oldbury, Worcestershire (now West Midlands), the second son of Harry and Millicent Ann Taylor. They were living at 24, Nelson Street, Oldbury at the time and Harry (Senior) worked as a Carter in a brickworks. He and his wife were both born in the rural setting of Warwickshire and returned there, to the Hamlet of Walton, prior to the birth of their fifth child, Charlie, in 1908. They lived at Mount Pleasant on the Walton Hall Estate and Harry (Senior) worked there, also as a Carter.

When son Harry left school he worked as a labourer and then, with the War going into its fourth year, he applied, on the 2nd September 1918, to join the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (Bristol Division). On the 30th September Ordinary Able Seaman No., Z12276 Harry Taylor began his training at the Royal Naval Training Establishment, Crystal Palace, London, officially known as HMS Victory VI but unofficially, H.M.S. Crystal Palace.

The year 1918 was the worst for deaths from the influenza pandemic that spread throughout the world. Unlike previous epidemics this attacked predominantly healthy young adults as opposed to the elderly and young. The majority of deaths in the 1918–1919 influenza pandemic very likely resulted directly from secondary bacterial pneumonia caused by common upper respiratory-tract bacteria¹. On the 20th October with only 20 days service, Harry Taylor died. The cause was officially certified as Bronchopneumonia. He was 17 years of age. Of the names that appear on the Wellesbourne and Walton War Memorials he is the youngest. His service record indicates that he was of very good character and of satisfactory ability.

His body was returned home to Walton and he was buried in the Churchyard of St. James on the 26th October 1918. His headstone also bears the name of his younger brother Arthur, who died in 1923 aged 19 years of age and who shares his grave. Harry Taylor is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, St. James's Church, Walton and on the War Memorial, Walton.



Researched by Grev Hudson (March 2014)(grev.hudson@tinyworld.co.uk)

¹ The Journal of Infectious Diseases Volume 198, Issue 7 and Hastings House Source: (National Archives ADM337/18/225 - Service Record - Harry Taylor.)