

## **HERBERT HENRY TURNER – Ser No 9417**

### **Founder of the Bristol Royal Navy and Royal Marines Old Comrades Association**

#### **Background:**

Herbert Henry Turner - DOB 2 Sep 1880, born in Weston-super-Mare, enlisted in the Royal Marine Light Infantry (RMLI) on 19 Sep 1898.

His occupation was listed as a Clerk.

NOK: Mother – Lilly Turner, 49 Islington Road, Southville, Bristol.

Father – H Turner, 3 Brighton Road, Redland, Bristol.

#### **Service:**

18 Sep 98 – 19 Jul 99	Private. C Company Rec Depot Walmer.
20 Jul 99 – 31 Dec 99	Private. D Company Plymouth Division.
1 Jan 00 – 13 Feb 00	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. Embarked.
14 Feb 00 – 31 Dec 00	Private. D Company HMS Cambridge.
1 Jan 01 – 26 Feb 01	Private. D Company HMS Cambridge. Headquarters.
27 Feb 01 – 10 Jul 01	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. Embarked.
11 Jul 01	Promoted to Corporal 1 <sup>st</sup> Class.
11 Jul 01 – 15 Jul 01	Corporal. D Company Plymouth Division. Embarked.
16 Jul 01 – 21 Aug 01	Corporal. D Company HMS Rainbow.
22 Aug 01 – 5 Sep 01	Corporal. D Company Plymouth Division. Embarked.
6 Sep 01 – 8 Sep 04	Corporal. D Company HMS Implacable.
9 Sep 04 – 21 Sep 04	Corporal. D Company Plymouth Division.
21 Sep 04	Discharge by purchase.
20 Sep 06	Enrolled in Royal Fleet Reserve.
23 Sep 06 – 29 Sep 06	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. Under training.
23 Feb 08 – 29 Feb 08	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. Under training.
21 Feb 09 – 27 Feb 09	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. Under training.
23 Oct 10 – 29 Oct 10	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. At Chatham under training.

4 Dec 10 – 10 Dec 10	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. At Chatham under training.
16 Jul 11 – 22 Jul 11	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. Under training.
24 Mar 12 – 30 Mar 12	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. Under training.
3 Aug 14 – 28 Nov 14	Private. D Company. HMS Theseus.
29 Nov 14 – 4 Dec 14	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. Embarked.
5 Dec 14 – 2 Mar 17	Private. D Company. HMS Hildebrand.
3 Mar 17	Hurt Certificate. Broken right fibula.
3 Mar 17 - 21 Jun 17	Private. D Company Plymouth Division. Embarked and demobilised. (Period covers the Raid on Zeebrugge).
22 Jun 17 – 12 Dec 18	Private. D Company HMS President III D.A.M.S. **
13 Dec 18 – 18 Feb 19	Private. D Company Plymouth Division.
18 Feb 19	Demobilised.
16 Sep 20	Discharged RFR.

\*\* President III was an accounting base, initially in Bristol and then Windsor, and it was the HQ for the personnel on Defensively Armed Merchant Ships. It does not mean he served there, but that his pay was worked out there.

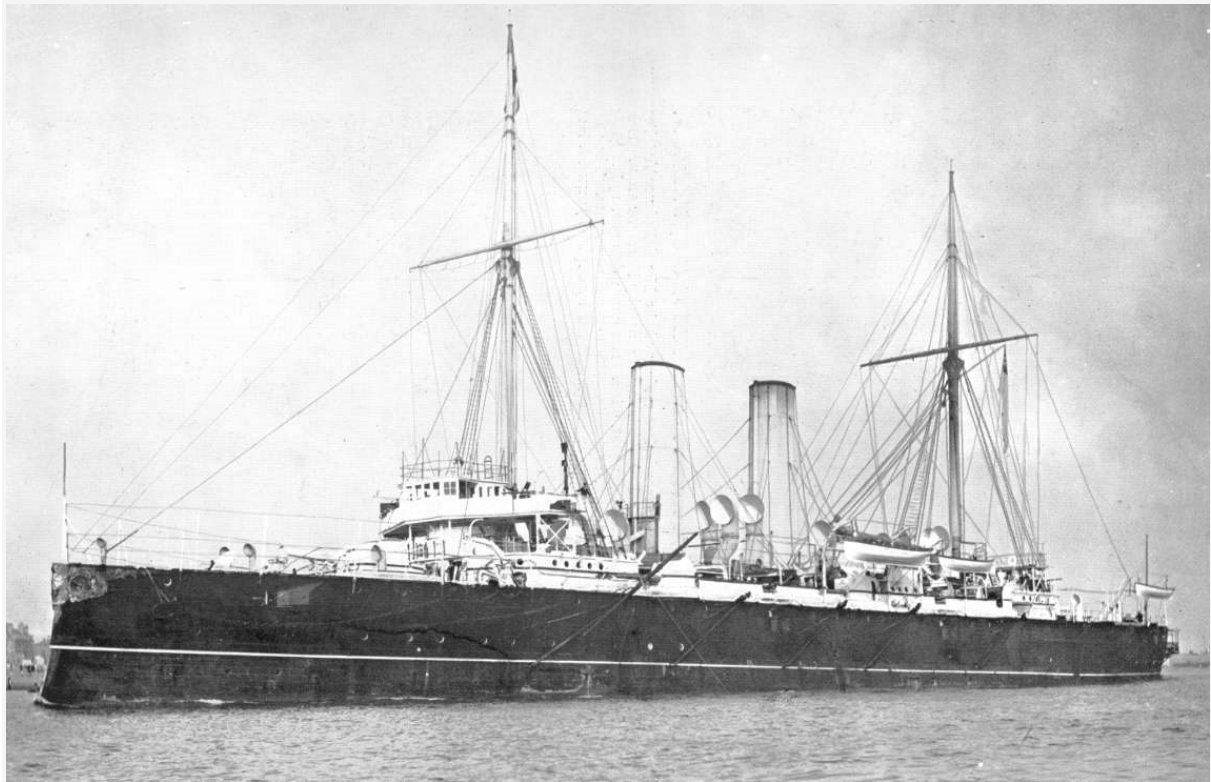
### **Decorations:**

Not confirmed but probably entitled to the 1914 – 15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.



On his return to Bristol, Mr H H Turner founded the Bristol Royal Navy & Royal Marines Old Comrades Association in 1919.

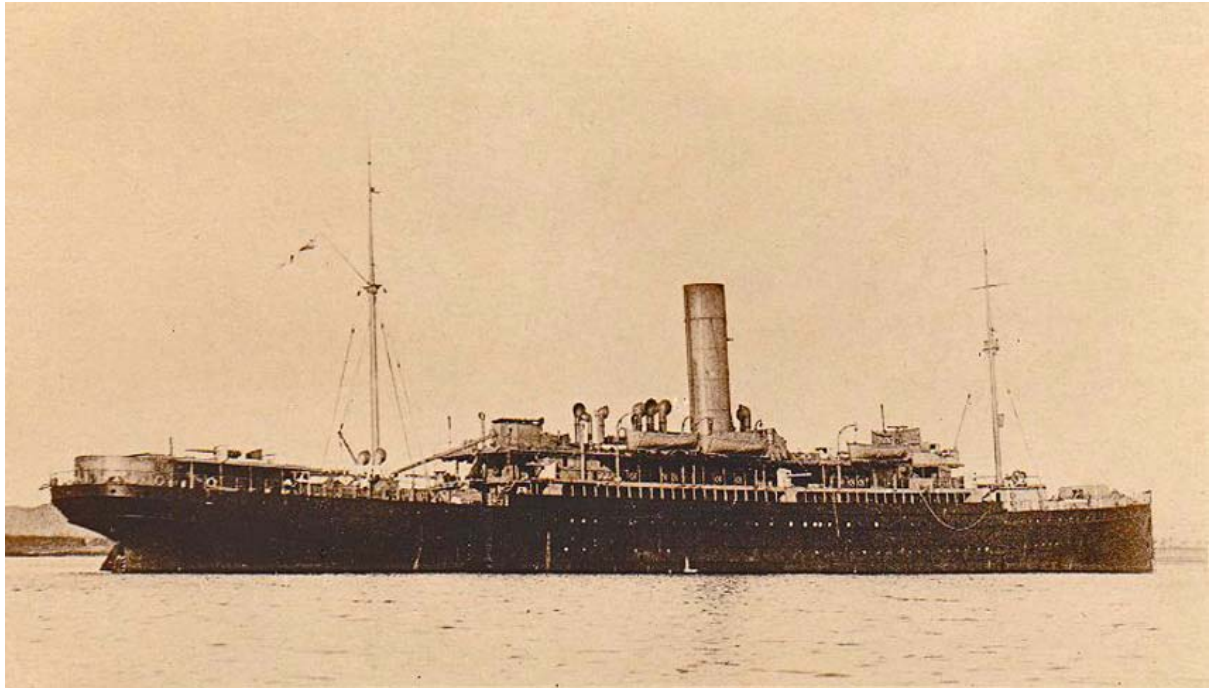
## HMS THESEUS



When war broke out in 1914, HMS Theseus joined the 10th Cruiser Squadron. In late August Russian forces in the Baltic captured copies of the German Navy codebook and Theseus was dispatched from Scapa Flow to Alexandrovsk in order to collect the copies offered to the British. Although she arrived on 7 September, due to mix-ups she did not depart until 30 September and returned to Scapa with two Russian couriers and the documents on 10 October. The books were formally handed over to the First Lord, Winston Churchill, on 13 October and subsequently exploited by the cryptanalysts of Room 40.

HMS Theseus rejoined 10th Cruiser Squadron which on 15 October was on patrol off Aberdeen deployed in line abreast at intervals of about 10 miles. HMS Theseus was unsuccessfully attacked by the German submarine U-17. The flotilla was ordered to proceed at full speed to the northwest in response to this attack but no response to the order was heard from HMNS Theseus's sister ship HMS Hawke. HMS Hawke had been torpedoed by the German submarine U-9 several hours earlier and had quickly capsized and sank out of sight of the rest of the flotilla. Just 70 of HMS Hawke's 594 crew survived.

## HMS HILDEBRAND



HMS HILDEBRAND (1911) was a cargo and passenger liner launched on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1911 by Scott's Shipbuilding & Engineering Co., Greenock for the Booth Line. She was the company's largest ship: gross tonnage 6,995, length 440.3ft x beam 54.1ft, one funnel, two masts, twin screw, speed 12.5 knots, accommodation for 218 1st and 406 3rd class passengers.

On 5<sup>th</sup> December 1914 she was commissioned as an Armed Merchant Cruiser and was assigned to the 10<sup>th</sup> Cruiser Squadron detailed to Area D (NW of St Kilda).

From February 3<sup>rd</sup> to February 5<sup>th</sup> 1915 HMS Hildebrand took part together with HMS Patuca in the search for HMS Clan MacNaughton. The last signal received from HMS Clan MacNaughton referred to a Leading Seaman lost overboard. The weather was very bad at that time.

When last communicated with by W/T, HMS Clan MacNaughton appeared to be carrying out patrol duties.

The ships working on D patrol searching for HMS Clan MacNaughton reported sighting several small pieces of wreckage such as a hatchway cover, griping sparS, battens, life belts, etc. The paint on wreckage observed suggested that the fragments belonged to an Armed Merchant Cruiser. Rear Admiral de Chair directed HMS Hildebrand to abandon the search and resume patrol. HMS Clan MacNaughton probably foundered on the night of February 2<sup>nd</sup> to the westward of the Hebrides possibly striking a mine of which there were many drifting north. All 281 crew on board died.

In June 1916, HMS Hildebrand joined HMS Otway on E patrol North-East of Iceland.

BRISTOL  
R.N. & R.M. O.C.A.



On the eve of St George's Day 1918, with a simple battle signal 'St George for England', Vice Admiral Roger Keyes launched a raid on Zeebrugge bordering on the suicidal. Captain Carpenter aboard the Vindictive replied, 'May we give the dragon's tail a damned good twist'. Off they went. A motley collection of elderly ships packed with a strange mixed cargo of daring men, explosives and cement. Before them lay a heavily fortified port, protecting the mouth of the Bruges Canal, a haven for U-Boats and German coastal forces.

The plan was simple – block the canal to deny its use to the enemy. HMS VINDICTIVE carrying Naval and Marine assault parties was to attack the granite mole. Converted Mersey ferries HMS IRIS II and DAFFODIL IV were to hold the VINDICTIVE against the mole and land their assault parties. Under cover of this action, blockships HMS IPHIGENIA, INTREPID and THETIS were to be sunk in the channel and two C-class submarines filled with explosives were to blow up the viaduct serving the mole.

The raid lasted only an hour. 1500 men were involved on 43 ships. 8 VCs were won (including two to Royal Marines). 21 DSOs, 29 DSCs, 16 CGMs, 143 DSMs, and 283 Mentions in Dispatches.

The Bristol Royal Navy and Royal Marines Old Comrades Association was formed in 1919 by a Royal Marine survivor of the raid, **Herbert Henry Turner**, to provide a meeting place for former members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines in the Bristol area. A place where members could relive their wartime experiences, remember and re-ignite the comradeship of serving in the forces and receive welfare and other support for those that needed it. The Association is the guardian of the Battle Ensign flown during the raid by HMS IRIS.

The Association was recognised by the Admiralty in 1927 and is arguably one of the oldest of its kind in the country. It was strongly supported by the Royal Navy from its outset, the first two Presidents being Admiral Sir John Jellicoe and Admiral Sir David Beatty. The Association still meets on the first Friday of each month at HMS FLYING FOX in Bristol, and remains autonomous, ready to embrace anyone who has served under the White Ensign.