

Able Seaman

MARWOOD HOARE

225753, HMS *Triumph*, Royal Navy

(6 September 1886 - 25 May 1915)

Died aged 28

Commemorated on Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 5

Marwood was born at Elscombe Farm, Yarcombe, on the 6 September 1886, the sixth of James and Sarah Hoare's ten children – five boys and five girls. He was christened at Buckland St Mary on 3 October 1886. These Blackdown Hills parishes are so closely linked – a few hundred yards down the road you are in Otterford; cross the River Yarty and you are in Buckland St Mary. Travel south a short way and you are in Combe St Nicholas. Almost all the family were in farming or related occupations – in the 1881 census his father James was described as a 'Dairyman', and his mother Sarah (née Locke) a Dairyman's wife; in 1891 the description has shifted slightly to 'Farmer', an employer. James and Sarah had married at Staple Fitzpaine on 31 May 1877.

By 1901 the Hoares have moved from Elscombe back to Higher Beetham where they had been farming in 1881. Marwood is still living at home; his older brother Samuel is working as a farm carter, but Marwood's occupation is not specified – at 14 he would probably have left school. School for his younger brothers seems to have been Buckland St Mary, but neither Marwood nor his older siblings are mentioned in the School Register – they may have gone to school in Yarcombe, or at Combe St Nicholas.

Since Marwood served in the Navy we are lucky enough to have his Record of Seamen's Service so are able to trace his career in some detail. He joined on 20 April 1903 at the age of 17, based at Devonport; he had been working before that as a Butcher's boy. He was 5ft 4½ in. with dark brown hair, hazel eyes and a fair complexion. When he signed up as an Ordinary Seaman for 12 years' service at the age of 18 he had grown two inches.

He was assigned to the training ship *HMS Vivid* (now *HMS Drake*) at Devonport.



*James Hoare (centre), Hubert & Martin (Australian Army),
Marwood (seated) killed at sea.*

Just over a year later he put to sea aboard *HMS Hogue*, a Cressy Class Cruiser with a crew of 720 serving in the North America & West Indies Station. She was a ship designed to defend merchant shipping against raids and to operate with the battle fleet. By now Marwood had been promoted to Able Seaman.

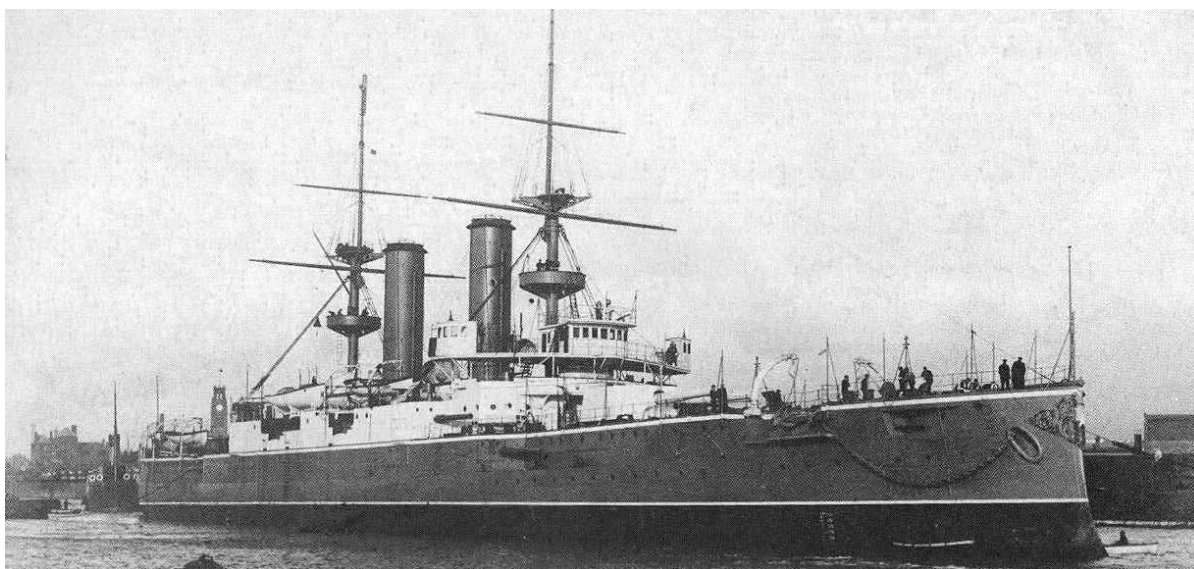
After 9 months' sea service he was back at *HMS Devonport* before being reassigned to *HMS Cambridge*, a triple deck, 102 gun first rate ship of the line which had been known at sea as *HMS Windsor Castle*. She was seeing out her days as the RN gunnery training ship moored off Plymouth.

Training over, Marwood was assigned to *HMS Aeolus*, an Apollo Class cruiser with a crew of 273; during his time aboard she was working alongside HM Submarines patrolling the Dover Straits. After seven months, on 1 July 1907, he was transferred to *HMS Europa*, a Diadem Class ship with a crew of 677, the last of the British First Class Protected Cruisers; she formed part of the Royal Navy's Special Reserve, based out of Devonport.

Until April 1911 Marwood's home port remained Devonport; from there he had served with the Home Fleet, formed in 1907. He served on a number of ships in the fleet: from 23 June 1908, on *HMS Mars*, a Majestic Class battleship with a crew of 672 (the last British battleship to have side-by-side funnels and the first RN battleship to be converted to oil) and from 25 May 1909 on *HMS Commonwealth*, a King Edward VII Class ship with a crew of 755; he was there for the 1911 Census - an Able Seaman of 24 years of age.

The 6 June 1911 saw Marwood return to *HMS Vivid* for further training before being assigned, on 12 February 1912, back to the Home Service Fleet aboard *HMS Royal Arthur*. In 1913 his ship moved to Queenstown, Cork. However, Marwood was detailed to head east: on 14 April 1913 he was assigned to *HMS Snipe*, a small gunboat which was part of a series of sister ships built in 1897, the smallest Royal Navy gunboats in China. *HMS Snipe* served on the Yangtze River protecting British interests in the area.

Following the outbreak of war in 1914 six of the river gunboats were decommissioned and their crews re-assigned to *HMS Triumph* in Hong Kong. *HMS Triumph* was a Swiftsure Battleclass pre-Dreadnought battleship with a crew of 729. She took part in the hunt for the German East Asian Squadron of Admiral Maximilian Graf von Spee. On 23 August 1914, she was attached to the Imperial Japanese Navy's Second Fleet to participate in the campaign against the German colony at Tsingtao (now Qingdao), China, and assisted in its capture. When the ship reached Weihaiwei (now Weihai) she disembarked her volunteers from the Army. With Tsingtao in Japanese hands, *HMS Triumph* returned to Hong Kong for a refit in November 1914 and in January 1915 she was transferred to the Dardanelles Squadron for service in that Campaign. The ship left Hong Kong on 12 January and stopped at Suez in early February before moving on to join the Squadron.



HMS Triumph

HMS Triumph took part in the opening attack on the entrance forts on 18 and 19 February, and joined the pre-Dreadnoughts *HMS Albion* and *HMS Cornwallis* in using her secondary battery to silence the fort at Sedd el Bahr (now Seddülbahir) on 25 February. She, *HMS Albion* and *HMS Majestic* were the first Allied battleships to enter the Turkish Straits during the campaign, when they carried out the initial attack on the inner forts on 26 February. She also took part in the attack on Fort Dardanos on 2 March. She and *HMS Swiftsure* were detached

from the Dardanelles on 5 March for operations against the forts at Smyrna, returning to the Dardanelles on the 9th.

HMS Triumph was part of the main attack on the Narrows Forts on 18 March, and fired on Ottoman trenches at Achi Baba on 15 April. On 18 April, one of her picket boats and one from *HMS Majestic* torpedoed and sank the British submarine E15, which had run aground near Fort Dardanos and was in danger of being captured by Ottoman forces.

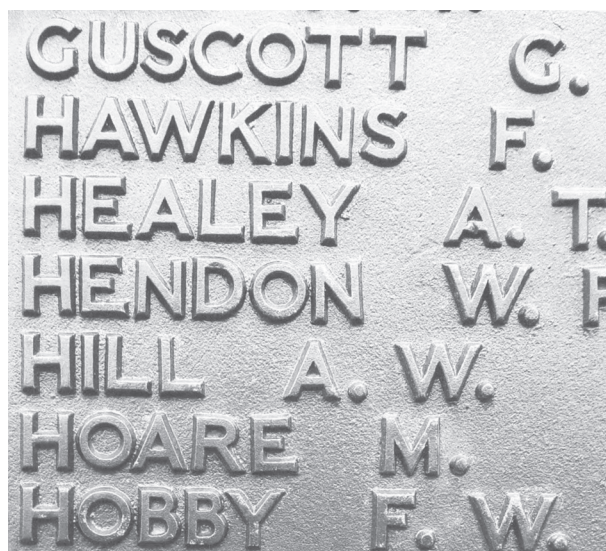
HMS Triumph supported the main landing by the Anzac forces at Gaba Tepe on 25 April and throughout May. On 25 May, the ship was underway off Gaba Tepe, firing on Ottoman positions, with torpedo nets out and most watertight doors shut, when she sighted a submarine periscope 300 to 400 yards off her starboard beam at about 12.30 hours. It belonged to the U-boat U-21. *HMS Triumph* opened fire on the periscope, but was almost immediately struck by a torpedo, which easily cut through her torpedo net, on her starboard side. A tremendous explosion resulted, and *HMS Triumph* took on a list 10° to starboard. She held that list for about five minutes, then it increased to 30°. The destroyer *HMS Chelmer* evacuated most of her crew before she capsized ten minutes later. She remained afloat upside down for about 30 minutes, then began to sink slowly in about 180 feet of water. Three officers and 75 enlisted men died in her sinking, including Marwood Hoare; he was 28 years old. His Naval Record notes 'D.D. [Discharged Dead] 25 May 1915. Lost when Triumph was sunk.' His body was never recovered, and he is remembered at his home port of Plymouth on Panel 5 of the Plymouth Naval Memorial.

Back at home the Hoare family, as viewed through the 1911 Census, had grown up and scattered. Parents James and Sarah were still farming at Beetham, their oldest son Samuel still working with them on the farm, and 20 year old Raymond, classified in the somewhat brutal terms of the age as an 'imbecile', living at home. 16-year-old Hubert was working for the Quick family at Hill Farm, Staple Fitzpaine; he later emigrated to Australia. Other brothers and sisters were working elsewhere or had married.

Marwood had left a Will, naming his father, which was proved in August 1915. After the end of the War it is his mother, her address given as Ballen Farm, Bathpool, who is mentioned on his Naval Death Record. James had died in 1920. When Sarah (or possibly her representatives) received Marwood's medals and Memorial scroll she too was living at Hill Farm, suggesting a possible family link with the place. She died in 1926.



Plymouth Naval Memorial - CWGC



Panel 5