



Thame Remembers



Boy 1st Class Frank Tickner

Frank Tickner was born in Thame on 23rd September 1900, son of Harry Henry and Edith Elizabeth Tickner (nee Johnson) living at 42 North Street and was baptised at St Mary's on 10th October. In 1911 the family were living in Barking where Frank and his brothers and sister were at school. His father was a builder's labourer moving where the work was.

Frank was a messenger boy in 1916, when he signed on with the Royal Navy, two days after his 16th birthday, becoming Boy 2nd Class J/59090 Frank Tickner. He was posted to the training ship HMS Impregnable at Devonport. On 31st May 1917, by now a "Boy, 1st Class", he was given his first, and only, sea posting on the St Vincent class dreadnought battleship HMS Vanguard.

Frank served on Vanguard, part of the Royal Navy's grand fleet, based in the vast natural harbour of Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands. Just before midnight on 9th July 1917 "Vanguard" suffered an explosion and sank almost instantly, killing an estimated 804 men; there were only two survivors. Frank Tickner was not one of them. The explosion was probably caused by an unnoticed stokehold fire heating cordite stored against an adjacent bulkhead in one of the two magazines which served the amidships gun turrets 'P' and 'Q'.

The wreck site is now a protected war grave and marked by a buoy in the centre of Scapa Flow. Frank Tickner is remembered on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial, but his name is yet to be commemorated in Thame.



**The
Thame Remembers Cross
was delivered to
Portsmouth Naval Memorial
on 14 June 2017
by
Cllr Tom Wyse
Mayor of Thame**

