## HARRY THOMAS STRAWBRIDGE, Acting Captain, Royal Navy

Harry was one of the four children of dairyman Harry Strawbridge and his wife Annie of Whatley, Winsham. Harry senior died early, aged only 31, in 1894. In 1901 Harry was living with his Grandparents George & Rhoda Farrant in Street Ash. He attended Buckland School, and is on their Roll of Honour.

In January 18 1909 Harry signed up for 12 years with the Royal Navy. He was 18, and had been working as a Baker. He had light brown hair, grey eyes and a fresh complexion; he was still growing – he went from 5ft 5<sup>1/4</sup> in 1909 to 5ft7in. He began on HMS Impregnable as a Boy, Class 2. By October 1915 he was a Petty Officer, having progressed through Ordinary Seaman, Able Seaman and Leading Seaman. By 1921 he was a Lieutenant; his Certificate of Service as Master of a Foreign-going Ship survives. By 1926 he was confirmed as Lieut Commander, retiring as Commander in 1935; he served as Acting Captain in WW2, retiring in 1945. In 1944 he was awarded an OBE in the King's Birthday Honours. He appears, as far as is apparent, to have gone through both World Wars without injury.

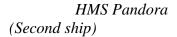
His Statement of Service (ADM/196/154) writes of him in mostly glowing terms. In June 1918 his Captain assesses him as 'Sat[isfactory]. Above Av[erage]. Specially recommended for promotion.....is both zealous and capable.' And in 1922 'Sat[isfactory]. Ab[ove] av[erage]. Has acted as the Exec[utive] Off[icer] & in that capacity has been very zealous & capable. As CO on a certain occasion, when a body of seamen refused duty, he showed commendable firmness and restraint.'

All the ships on which he served are listed, starting with training ship HMS Impregnable, in 1909.

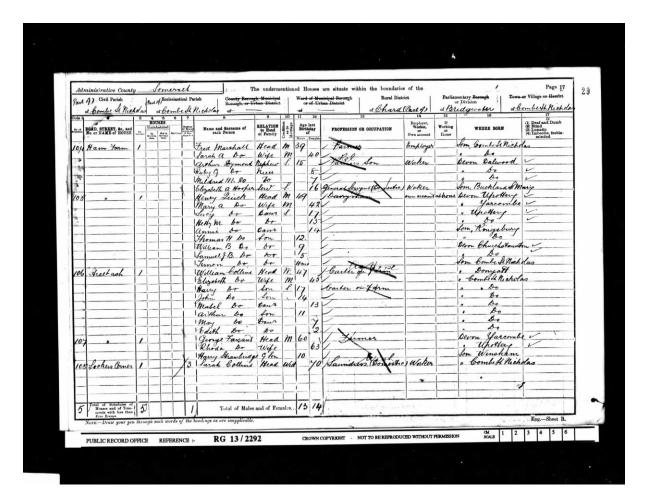


Harry married early; this marriage ended in divorce in 1933. He married Violet King in 1934. He died in December 1981 in Rhodesia, Eastern Cape, South Africa.

HMS Impregnable





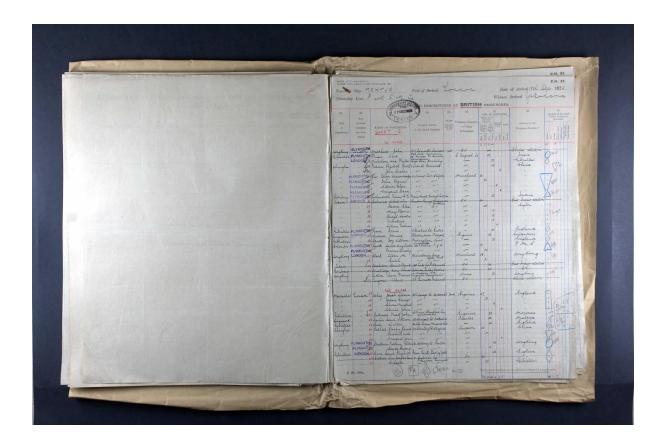


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## (OFFICE DUPLICATE.) Certificate of Service as Master of a Foreign-going Ship No. 44068 having attained the rank of Lieutenant in the Royal Navr is granted this Certificate of Service as Master of a Foreign-going Ship. By order of the BOARD OF TRADE, \* Any Person Forging, Fraudulently Altering or Using this Certificate, or Fraudulently Lending or Allowing it to be Used by any other person than the Owner, shall be guilty of a MISDEMEANOR. Any person other than the Owner thereof becoming possessed of this Certificate should transmit it forthwith to the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen, London, E.1.

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