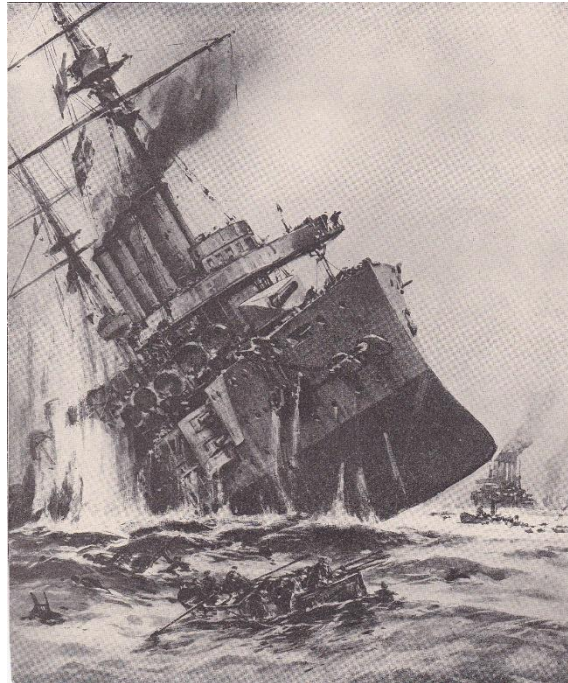


# The Live Bait Squadron Bulletin



Bulletin-19      22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022

## **INTRODUCTION, BY YOUR VIRTUAL CHAIRMAN**

Dear all,

This Bulletin-19 is dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022, the 108<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the disaster just off my Dutch coast. And already 8 years ago a lot of our Members, about 1,000, gathered in Chatham, at the Dockyard for the Centennial, the one and till now the only Remembrance Ceremony to honour these men.

In two years' time it will be 10 years ago. Time to celebrate again? In Chatham, at the Dockyard? What do you think? Any ideas?

Please let me know!

I'll be most happy to be (again) the initiator.

I have the story of a life for you, of William Ernest Fester, but no photo of him. Who can help me out? My best wishes for you all.

Henk H.M. van der Linden  
Chairman

## About William Ernest Fester

Some time ago my Dutch friend Marnix Versteegh gave me a present, a small, wooden box, with draughts (American English: checkers). He bought it in England. If those draughts could speak....

Here it is:



Once upon a time it belonged to William Ernest Fester:



It says: HMS *Inflexible*, Chatham, but his very last assignment was the *Aboukir*, well known to us all. He was from Australia and died at the age of 27.

### **William Ernest FESTER**

William Ernest Fester was born on 9th October, 1886 in Sydney, Australia to parents John Matthias Fester and Mary Jane Fester (nee Cole). His birth was registered in 1887 in Sydney, NSW.

William Ernest Fester was listed as an admission to St. Mark's School, Westminster, London, England on 22nd May, 1894. His date of birth was listed as 9th August, 1887 in Sydney, NSW & his address was 23 Elgin Terrace.

The 1901 England Census recorded William Fester as a 13 year old, living with his widowed mother – Mary J. Fester (Tailoress, aged 50, born Cornwall) & his sister – Flora Fester (aged 18, born London) in a 2 roomed dwelling at 225 Shirland Rd, Paddington. London. Four households were listed at the address.

William Ernest Fester joined the Royal Navy on 23rd January, 1903, aged 16 years. He was a Labourer & was given a service number of 224906 (Chatham).

William Ernest Fester was assigned to H.M.S. *Ganges* (Training Ship) on 23rd January, 1903 as Boy 2nd Class. He was rated as Boy 1st Class on 23rd October, 1903 while still with H.M.S. *Ganges*.

William Ernest Fester signed on with the Royal Navy on 9th October, 1904 for a period of 12 years, having attained the age of 18. He was 5ft 4 ½ in with brown hair, brown eyes & a fair complexion. He had a bracelet tattoo on his right wrist & a star on his right forearm.

Boy 1st Class William Ernest Fester was transferred to H.M.S. *Minotaur* on \_\_\_\_ November, 1903 then transferred to

H.M.S. *Boscawen II* on 1st January, 1904. Boy 1st Class Fester was transferred to H.M.S. *Boscawen III* on 25th June, 1904 & rated as Ordinary Seaman on 9th October, 1904 while still serving on H.M.S. *Boscawen III*.

Ordinary Seaman William Ernest Fester was transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke* on 15th October, 1904 then transferred to H.M.S. *Fisgard* (Shore Establishment) on 26th October, 1904. He was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke* on 15th March, 1905 then transferred to H.M.S. *Bedford* on 1st April, 1905. Ordinary Seaman Fester was transferred to

H.M.S. Black Prince on 27th March, 1906 then back to H.M.S. *Pembroke* on 15th November, 1906 where he was rated as Able Seaman.

Able Seaman William Ernest Fester was transferred to H.M.S. *Actaeon* on 31st March, 1908 then transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke I* on 16th May, 1908. He was transferred to H.M.S. *Inflexible* on 27th September, 1908 before being transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke I* on 19th October, 1910. Able Seaman Fester was transferred back to H.M.S. *Actaeon* on 23rd November, 1910 then transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke I* on 2nd February, 1911 till 3rd February, 1911.

William Ernest Fester joined the R.F.R. (Royal Fleet Reserve) at Chatham on 4th February, 1911. He was given a service number of B. 7345.

The 1911 England Census recorded William Fester as a 24 year old worker employed by the London Fire Salvage Corps, Walling Street.

William Ernest Fester married Florence A. Crawley in the June quarter, 1913 in the district of West Ham, Essex, London, England.

Able Seaman William Ernest Fester joined H.M.S. *Aboukir* on 9th (?) August, 1914.