

Two members of the Snape family were involved in World War Two

Lawrence James Snape (known as Jim) was a trawler skipper from Fleetwood. He was in a reserved occupation and as he had also had TB, was exempt from service. However, he volunteered to join a group of trawlers from Fleetwood to go to Dunkirk and help with the evacuation. It sounds as if it was a harrowing experience with men all around the boats in the sea, trying to escape. His trawler was hit by a large shell which he actually managed to bring back with him and made into a poker stand (we had it in the house, it was large and made of brass). There was a write-up in the Fleetwood Chronicle (31st October 1941) about his family's service. A lot of the article focuses on the First World War but there is mention of Jim going to Dunkirk and the loss of his brother, Harry Snape, on the HMS Glorious.

William Henry (Harry) Snape. Harry was just 24 when he was killed in the sinking of HMS Glorious. He was a Shipwright and had joined the Navy a few years before. He was killed just before the start of his leave. I remember my Nana (his niece) telling me that the family went into shock when he died. She was devastated as she really loved him and I think looked up to him as a big brother as she was only 13 when he died. She never forgot him. Harry's name is included on the War Memorial to HMS Glorious and I've included two newspaper cuttings about his death from the Fleetwood Chronicle (dated Friday, 14th June 1940 and Friday, 24th October 1941) and one from the Lancashire Daily Post (dated Tuesday, 11th June 1940).

Fleetwood Chronicle, Friday, 31st October 1941. (pg 12)

The Fighting Snapes: This War Record is Hard to Beat

The Snapes of Fleetwood have a war record that will take some beating. Two brothers, Mr. William Henry Snape and Mr. John Snape have each five sons serving. Mr. John Snape's sixth son would have been but he is a boiler-maker and the authorities would not release him from his reserved occupation. During the last war, Mr. William Henry Snape was taken prisoner by the Germans when they sank his trawler whilst fishing. At that time, brother John was mine-sweeping. Later he went on patrol duties. A fortnight ago, we gave details of the son of Mr. W.H.Snape, now retired chief engineer. This week, it is the turn of Mr. John Snape's family. Mr. John Snape himself, who lives with his wife in Albert-Street, Fleetwood, was Chief Engineer in a trawler at the outbreak of the last war and when the Government commandeered the trawler for mine-sweeping, he sailed in her. He remained with the ship until the end of the war. When he was released from naval duties, he became sewerage engineer for Thornton Cleveleys Urban District Council, a position he still holds. Mr. Snape's wife was Miss Alice Coulson, a native of Hull. In 1913, Mr. Snape lost his brother Jonathan who, with another member of his crew, was washed overboard from the trawler New Crown, in a gale off the north of Ireland and drowned. The skipper was killed on the bridge. Another brother, Richard, who went out to France with Fleetwood Territorials was killed in action in 1915. Mr. Snape's only daughter, Amelia Coulson Snape, married QMS Ernest White R.A.S.C. and has three children, Alice Eveline, Norah Lily and Patricia Coulson.

There has been one break in the family circle. Last week, Mr. Snape received official confirmation from the Admiralty that his fifth son, William Henry (Harry) who was a naval shipwright aged 25, and had been reported missing when HMS Glorious was sunk off Norway in the summer of 1940 must now be presumed dead. He was educated at Fleetwood Central School and, after serving his apprenticeship at an engineering works, he joined the Navy about two years before war broke out. The eldest son, Lawrence James Snape, is 38, married and lives in Warren-street, Fleetwood. He has three children, Audrey (14), Mildred (10) and Jena (4), and

his wife was Theader Allen, daughter of the late Mr. Robert Allen, a Fleetwood postman. When war started, he was chief engineer in a trawler, and his requisitioned during the evacuation from Dunkirk. It was knocked about in the rescue process and ultimately, Mr. Snape was drafted to another ship. At present he is in hospital. He does not say why. Although the second son, John, is not in the fighting service, he is playing a very important part as a carpenter in the mercantile marine, being attached to the LMS fleet. After being at Lord-street with his brother James (Laurence James, known as Jim), he served his apprenticeship with the railway company, with whom he has been ever since. He was very fond of sport. He kept goal for a number of Fleetwood junior clubs and also for Thornton I.C.I. He was a member of Fleetwood Gymnasium and as a 12-stone boxer, he was popular. He married Miss Nellie Willacy, daughter of Mr and Mrs Willacy of Custon-House Lane, around 12 years ago, and now lives in Morecambe. he has a daughter, Doreen, aged 10. Thomas Snape, aged 33, is the third son-the boiler maker referred to. He has two children, Joan (10) and Thomas (7), his wife being Miss Clarice Colclough, who was a dressmaker at the Co-operative Stores and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A Colclough, now of Crewe but formerly of Fleetwood. Mr and Mrs. T. Snape live in Poulton-street. Before joining the Royal Air Force, the fourth son, Richard Coulson Snape, who is unmarried, was in the Electricity Office at Copse-road, Fleetwood. He was educated at Fleetwood Central School, of which he was captain and joined up last November. He played football with local junior teams, including Mount Rovers, as an outside right. He also played cricket for Fleetwood. He created two personal records in 1939, both against Blackpool II. In the first matched he scored 102 not out and in the second he took eight wickets for eight runs. He won the club cup for the best batting averages in 1940, a cup when the club won the Palace Shield competition in 1939, and another cup in a club competition in 1940. The sixth son is Edgar, aged 20, also in the RAF.

Lancashire Daily Post. Tuesday, 11th June 1940.

Fleetwood Men Missing from HMS Glorious.

Telegrams brought anxious news to Fleetwood homes today informing relatives that men serving aboard the aircraft carrier, Glorious, were missing and adding "possibly prisoners of war". They referred to Shipwright

William Henry Snape (23) fifth son of Mr and Mrs. J. Snape of Albert Street; Air Mechanic Joseph Ball (19) son of Mr and Mrs. J. Ball of Mount Street; Stoker Matthew Lewtas Whiteside (24) son of Mr and Mrs J Whiteside of North Street, and AB Stanley William Eaves (19) eldest son of Mr and Mrs William Eaves of Duncan Place. In each case parents have received letters stating that their sons, all of whom are single, were expecting to be home on leave shortly. All except Ball have been away for three years. Shipwright Snape served his time at a local engineering firm. He is a brother of R.C. Snape a well-known Fleetwood cricketer. He attended Bailey Senior School. In his last letter home he told his mother to keep her chin up, that he would be home soon. Stoker Whiteside who has a brother in the Navy is also a native of the town and went to sea in trawlers before joining the Army. Only last week his brother-in-law Mr. J.S. Butterworth of King Street was reported to have died from wounds. He was in the Army. Air Mechanic Ball worked on the dock before joining the Navy last April. He attended St Mary's RC school. AB Eaves had made a few trips in trawlers before joining the Navy four years ago.

Fleetwood Chronicle: Friday, 14th June 1940 Four Fleetwood Men are missing from lost HMS Glorious Four Fleetwood men are missing from the aircraft carrier HMS Glorious, sunk off Norway. They are: Shipwright Harry Snape, aged 23 of Albert-street Stoker M.L. Whiteside, aged 24, of North-street Able Seaman S.W.Eaves, aged 19, of Duncan-place Air Mechanic Joseph

Ball, aged 19 of Mount-street. Shipwright Snape, fifth son of Mr and Mrs John Snape, has been in the Navy for three years. He is brother of Mr. R.C. Snape, the Fleetwood cricketer. After leaving Bailey School, Fleetwood, he worked as a shipwright for Messers. Robertsons of Fleetwood, until he joined the Navy three years ago. He served throughout the Norwegian campaign and a letter received from him a week ago said he hoped to be home for seven days' leave starting tomorrow. He has not been home for two years. Mr. Matthew Lewtas Whiteside is a stoker in HMS Glorius. His mother has received a telegram saying that he was "reported missing, presumably prisoner of war". Mr Whiteside, a son of the late Mr. William Whiteside and Mrs Whiteside, was born in Fleetwood and until three years ago, went to sea in Fleetwood trawlers. Three years ago, he joined the Navy, and has always served in HMS Glorious. He had been expected home on leave shortly. He is one of five brother, one of whom is also in the Navy. Only last week word reached Fleetwood that his brother-in-law, Pte. John Strickland Butterworth, had died of wounds. Able-Seaman Stanley William Eaves, of the Glorious, son of Mr and Mrs William Eaves, of Duncan-place, Fleetwood has not been home on leave for three years. Some time ago, in a letter he sent home, he enclosed some words he said he had written for his mother. he asked that when she thought of him away on the seas, she should have the lines in mind. Mrs. Eaves had the words inscribed and they are framed on the wall of her kitchen. Headed "To my Dear mother" they are: "Grant me O God the courage and strength to face life enabled to dare to do the thing that is right and to stand ever for it to the end." Able-Shipman Eaves has been in the Navy for four years. Joseph Ball, also of the Glorius, is the son of Mr and Mrs J. Ball, of Mount Street, Fleetwood. He joined the Navy a few months ago and is an air mechanic. He is a former pupil of St. Mary's School, Fleetwood, and at one time worked at Wyre Dock.

Fleetwood Chronicle: Friday, 24th October 1941

Shipwright W.H. Snape Mr and Mrs. John Snape, of Albert-street, Fleetwood received official notice yesterday that their son, Shipwright William Henry Snape, lost his life when HMS Glorious was sunk off Norway. Mr. Snape would have been 25 yesterday. He joined the Navy about two years before the war. He was once of five sons serving and a sixth would also have joined up but his release from a reserved occupation was refused. Two of the Snape boys are in the Air Force, a third is a Chief Engineer in a minesweeper and a fourth is a carpenter in the Merchant Navy.