Clifford Farrar





Rank: - Marine

Number: - PO/X 3163

Regiment: - Royal Marines

Died: - Killed in Action. HMS Hood sunk in the Battle of the Denmark Strait 24/05/1941 Age: 21

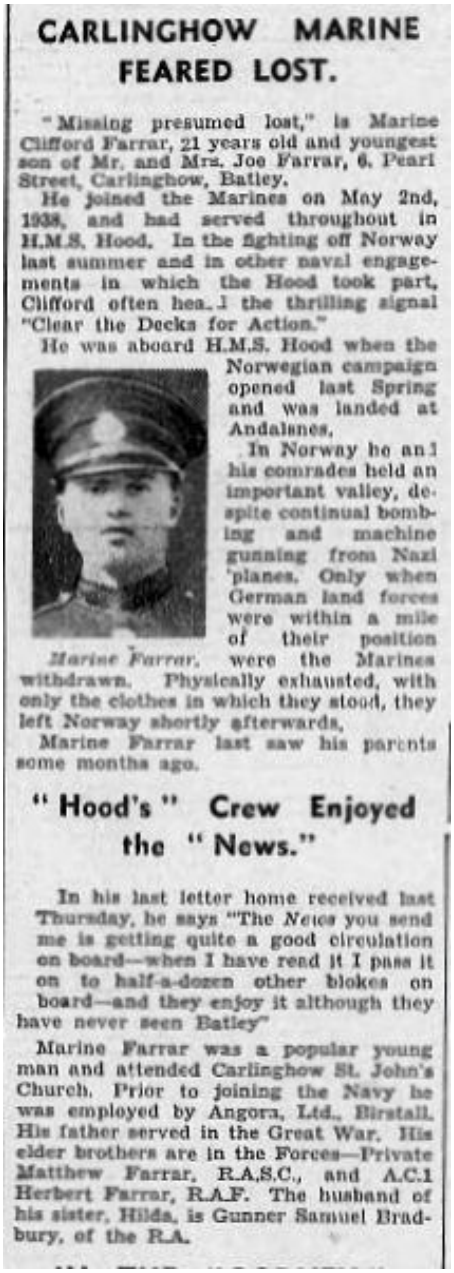
Memorial: - Portsmouth Naval Memorial Panel 58, Column 33.

Batley News, 31 May 1941 (photo)

Clifford was born on 13 Dec 1919 the youngest son of Joseph and Hilda Farrar nee Hinchliffe who had married on 11 Apr 1914 at St. Saviour's Church, Brownhill. Herbert was born in 1916, Matthew 1918 and Hilda 1921. The family lived at 6 Pearl Street, Batley.

Clifford attended Carlinghow Council School and St. John's Church, Carlinghow and was employed by Angora Ltd., Birstall before he joined the Marines.

Clifford joined the Marines on 2 May 1938 and served throughout on *HMS Hood.* In the fighting off Norway in the summer of 1940 and in other naval engagements in which the Hood took part Clifford often heard the thrilling signal "*Clear the decks for Action."* In the spring of 1940, he was aboard the Hood when the Norwegian Campaign opened and was landed at Aandalenes. In Norway he and his comrades held an important valley despite continuous bombing and machine gunning from German planes. Only when German land forces were within a mile of their position were the Marines withdrawn. Physically exhausted with only the clothes in which they stood they left Norway shortly afterwards.



CARLINGHOW MARINE FEARED LOST.

"Missing presumed lost," is Marine Clifford Farrar, 21 years old and youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Farrar, 6, Pearl Street, Carlinghow, Batley.

He joined the Marines on May 2nd, 1938, and had served throughout in H.M.S. Hood. In the fighting off Norway last summer and in other naval engagements in which the Hood took part, Clifford often hea..l the thrilling signal "Clear the Decks for Action."

He was aboard H.M.S. Hood when the Norwegian campaign opened last Spring and was landed at Andalanes.

Marine Farrar.

In Norway he and his comrades held an important valley, despite continual bombing and machine gunning from Nazi 'planes. Only when German land forces were within a mile of their position were the Marines withdrawn. Physically exhausted, with only the clothes in which they stood, they left Norway shortly afterwards.

Marine Farrar last saw his parents some months ago.

"Hood's" Crew Enjoyed the "News."

In his last letter home received last Thursday, he says "The *News* you send me is getting quite a good circulation on board—when I have read it I pass it on to half-a-dozen other blokes on board—and they enjoy it although they have never seen Batley"

Marine Farrar was a popular young man and attended Carlinghow St. John's Church. Prior to joining the Navy he was employed by Angora, Ltd., Birstall. His father served in the Great War. His elder brothers are in the Forces—Private Matthew Farrar, R.A.S.C., and A.C.1 Herbert Farrar, R.A.F. The husband of his sister, Hilda, is Gunner Samuel Bradbury, of the R.A.

His last letter home he said" *The 'News' you send me is getting quite a good circulation on board— when I have read it I pass it on to half a dozen other blokes on board- and they enjoy it although they have never seen Batley."*

On the evening of 21 May 1941, battle cruisers HMS *Hood* and HMS *Prince of Wales* were ordered to leave Scapa Flow immediately and head for Iceland, from where they could intercept the German battleships *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen*, which were attempting to break out into the Atlantic through the Denmark Straits. The *Hood*, an un-modernised ship commanded by Vice Admiral Lancelot Holland, lead with the new and untried *Prince of Wales* following. Both groups of ships were steaming directly towards one another, although due to damage to the radar system on the *Bismarck*, the German commander Admiral Lutjens was unaware of the approaching enemy. Just after midnight on 24 May, contact with the *Bismarck* was temporarily lost and only regained again at 3am, causing Holland to alter his course to meet the enemy. At around 6am, visual contact was made with the German ships, and Holland again changed course to meet

the opposing battleships head-on, opening fire on the lead German ship which he erroneously believed to be the *Bismarck*.

The *Prinz Eugen* and *Bismarck* concentrated their fire on HMS *Hood*, which continued to steam towards them, at the same time attempting to turn sideways on to bring all her guns to bear and to absorb salvos on her thick side armour. In so doing, HMS *Hood* was hit first by an eight-inch shell from the *Prinz Eugen* which ignited ammunition stored on her deck, and then by a 15-inch shell from the *Bismarck* which hit her magazine amidships, causing a massive explosion and breaking the *Hood* in two.

The *Hood* sank almost instantly, taking with her 1,416 men, among them Vice Admiral Holland. Only three men survived.

Clifford was awarded the 1939-45 Star; 1939-1945 War Medal

He is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial.

Thanks to BBC History.



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