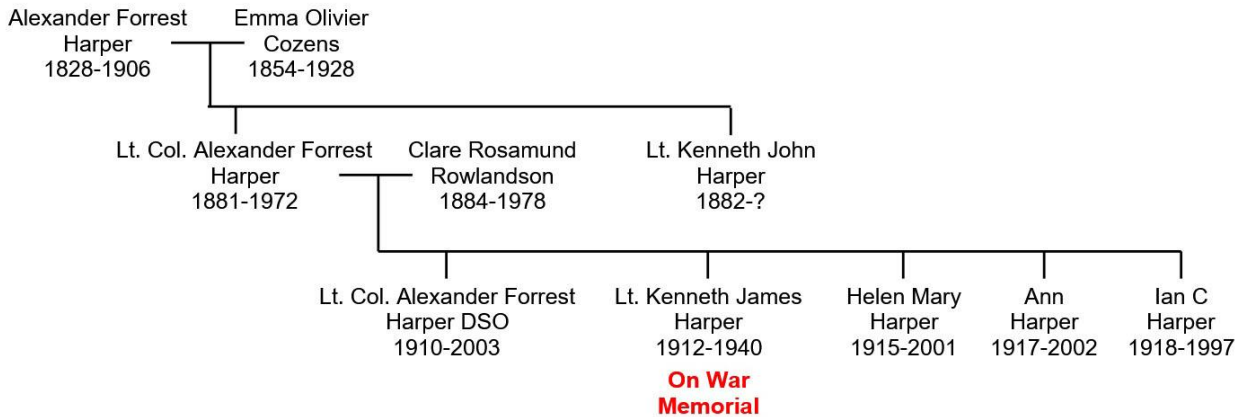


Kenneth James Harper – Family History

Kenneth James Harper was born in 1912, the son of Lt. Colonel Forrest and Mrs C R Harper of Litton Cheney. They lived at Harpers Farm, Chilcombe.

The 2nd bell in the church tower contains the inscription "To the Glory of God and in memory of Lt Kenneth James Harper RN. HMS Thistle lost with all hands off Norway April 1940"



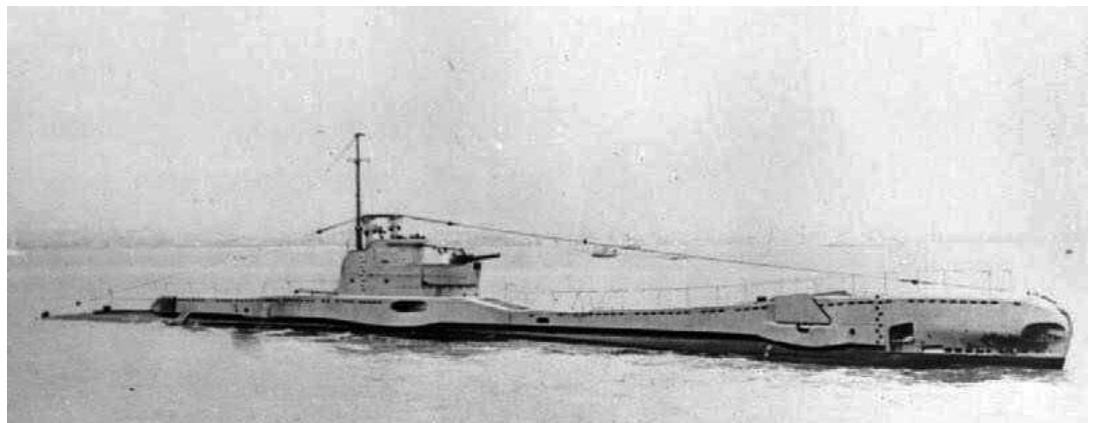
Kenneth James Harper Family Tree

| Name | Relationship | Age | Occupation | Where Born |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-----|---------------------|--------------------|
| Jane James | Head | 63 | Living on Own Means | Polsham, Somerset |
| Sylvia J Cozens | Daughter | 39 | | Pilton, Somerset |
| Emma Olivier Harper | Daughter | 37 | | Pilton, Somerset |
| Alexander Forrest Harper | Son-in-Law | 63 | Living on Own Means | Melrose, Scotland |
| Alexander Forrest Harper jnr. | Grandson | 10 | Scholar | Bruton, Somerset |
| Kenneth John Harper | Grandson | 8 | Scholar | Bruton, Somerset |
| Jane Haggett | Servant | 80 | Cook | Old Charlton, Kent |
| Eva Burston | Servant | 24 | Housemaid | Mark, Somerset |
| Annie Plumley | Servant | 14 | Kitchenmaid | Pilton, Somerset |

1891 Census – at Pilton, Somerset

Kenneth James Harper

During the war Kenneth James Harper was a Lieutenant on HM Submarine Thistle when it was torpedoed by the German submarine U-4 off Skudenes, Norway and sank with all hands. His body was not recovered for burial.



Thistle, under the command of Lt. Wilfrid Frederick Haselfoot, was ordered to patrol off Stavanger, and to sink any enemy vessel that she might spot in the harbour, since British authorities believed that a German invasion of Norway was imminent. On the 10th of April 1940 *Thistle* signaled her intention to comply with this order and that she had two torpedoes remaining after an unsuccessful attack on a U-boat. With this in mind the Admiralty changed her orders to patrol off Skudenes. No further contact was made with her.

It was later discovered that *U-4*, the U-boat *Thistle* had previously attacked, had sighted the submarine on the surface and sunk her with torpedoes. The action began when HMS *Thistle* spotted *U-4* cruising on the surface. At 16.04 hours on 9 April 1940 HMS *Thistle* fired a spread of six torpedoes, all of which missed. HMS *Thistle* later reported the unsuccessful engagement via radio, and that the submarine had only two torpedoes left.

U-4 observed one torpedo passing ten meters ahead and evaded further underwater attacks by crash diving. The U-boat crew later heard three explosions of the off-track torpedoes at the end of their run. Afterwards *U-4* found HMS *Thistle* on the surface recharging her batteries.

At 02.13 hours on the morning of the 10th of April 1940, *U-4* fired a spread of two torpedoes at its attacker. The first, a G7a torpedo, missed. The second, a G7es torpedo, found its mark, sinking *Thistle* with all hands near Skudenes.

In Memory of
Lieutenant

Kenneth James Harper

H.M. Submarine *Thistle*, Royal Navy who died on 10 April 1940 Age 28

Son of Lt.-Col. A. Forrest Harper and Mrs. C. R. Harper, of Lilton Cheney, Dorsetshire.

Remembered with Honour
Portsmouth Naval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission