

Charles William Marshall

Gunner, RMA/10461, Royal Marine Artillery, HMS Lord Nelson

Charles William Marshall was born in Upper Norwood, Surrey, on 29 December 1884 to William and Maria Elizabeth Marshall. The 1891 Census shows him having three sisters, Sarah Elizabeth (8), Annette Kate (5) and Jessie Phoebe (1) and they were living at Whielden Street, Amersham. William, his father, was a plumber. In the 1901 Census the family appear to have a different address, Union Street, Amersham, but this is due to the renaming of Whielden Street. Charles was no longer with them as he was living and working as a telegraph clerk in Southall.

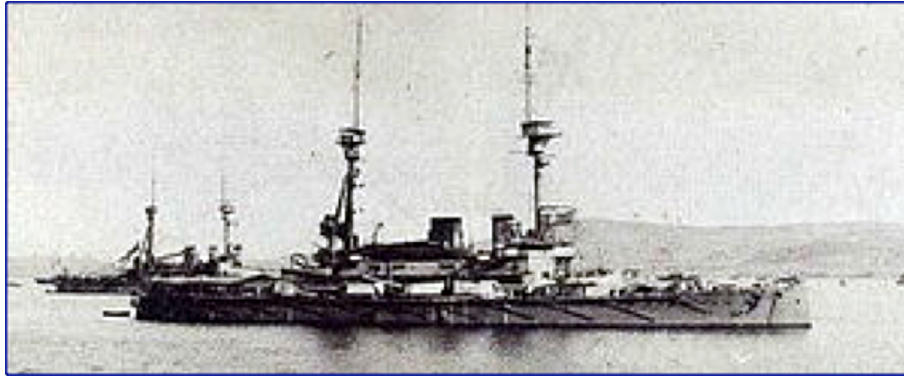
The 1911 Census shows William as a widower and his daughter Jessie living with him. Charles, aged 27, is based at Royal Marine Artillery Barracks and Infirmary, Eastney, Portsmouth. He was not married. He had enlisted on 27 April 1903. Prior to WW1 all Royal Marines were engaged for long-service, that is they signed on for a twelve year term. Youths could join at the age of 17, but their term of service would be twelve years plus the number of days it took them to reach their 18th birthday.

During WW1 Charles served on *HMS Lord Nelson* as a gunner. *HMS Lord Nelson* was launched in 1906 and was fully commissioned on 1 January 1909. The last of the pre-dreadnought battleships, she was armed with four twelve-inch guns arranged in two twin gun-turrets. Her secondary armament consisted of ten smaller guns and she also carried guns for defence against torpedo boats. She also mounted five submerged torpedo tubes for which 23 torpedoes were stowed aboard.

At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914, *Lord Nelson* became flagship of the Channel Fleet and was based at Portland. She was one of the ships that covered the safe transport of the British Expeditionary Force to France. On 14 November 1914, she transferred to Sheerness to guard the English coast against a possible German invasion. The ship returned to Portland Harbour on 30 December 1914 and patrolled the English Channel until February 1915 when she was ordered to the Dardanelles to participate in the **Dardanelles Campaign**. She departed Portland on 18 February 1915 and joined the British Dardanelles Squadron at Mudros on 26 February 1915. In early March she was involved in the bombardment of the inner forts and supported the initial landings. The Ottoman Turkish forts hit the ship several times on 7 March and she suffered damage to her superstructure and rigging and was holed by one hit below the waterline, resulting in the flooding of two coal bunkers. After repairs at Malta, the ship took part in the main attack on the Narrows forts and later bombarded Ottoman field batteries on 6 May 1915 prior to the **Second Battle of Krithia**.

HMS Lord Nelson relieved the battleship *Queen Elizabeth* as flagship of the Dardanelles Squadron on 12 May 1915. The Dardanelles campaign ended in January 1916, during which *Lord Nelson* suffered no casualties. Following the reorganization of British naval forces in the area, she became the flagship of the Eastern Mediterranean Squadron, which later was named the Aegean Squadron. The ship's role was to protect Allied-held islands, support the British Army at Salonika and to protect against any attempted breakout from the Dardanelles by the German battle cruiser *Goeben* and the light cruiser *Breslau*. For the remainder of the war *Lord Nelson* alternated between the two bases of Salonika and Mudros. It was at the latter that Charles Marshall became ill and died of a disease on 22 September 1917. Administration of his estate was granted to his father, William Marshall, on 30 January 1918. Charles's effects totalled £135 11s 1d.

He was awarded The 1914-15 Star, The Allied Victory Medal and The British War Medal, 1914-18.



HMS *Lord Nelson* anchored at the [Dardanelles](#) in 1915.



East Mudros Military Cemetery

Courtesy: Commonwealth War Graves Commission

East Mudros Military Cemetery was begun in April 1915 and used until September 1919. It contains 885 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 86 of them unidentified, and one Second World War burial. There are also seven non-war naval graves and 32 burials of other nationalities in the cemetery. Because of its position, the island of Lemnos played an important part in the campaigns against Turkey during the First World War. It was occupied by a force of Marines on 23 February 1915 in preparation for the military attack on Gallipoli, and Mudros became a considerable Allied camp. The 1st and 3rd Canadian Stationary Hospitals, the 3rd Australian General Hospital and other medical units were stationed on both sides of Mudros Bay and a considerable Egyptian Labour Corps detachment was employed. After the evacuation of Gallipoli, a garrison remained on the island and the 1st Royal Naval Brigade was on Lemnos, Imbros and Tenedos for the first few months of 1916.

Charles William Marshall is remembered with Honour
and is buried at East Mudros Military Cemetery, Lemnos, Greece,
grave ref. III.G215.

He is also named on the Memorials at the King's Church, Amersham, and the
Royal Marine Museum Roll of Honour (Panel 2), Portsmouth

Sources

Commonwealth War Graves Commission website (www.cwgc.org)

WWI Naval Casualties (www.findmypast.co.uk)

Admiralty: *Royal Marines: Registers of Service 1899-1919*, The National Archives, ref. ADM 159/81/10461

England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1858-1966, (www.ancestry.co.uk)

Wikipedia ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS Lord Nelson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Lord_Nelson) (1906)