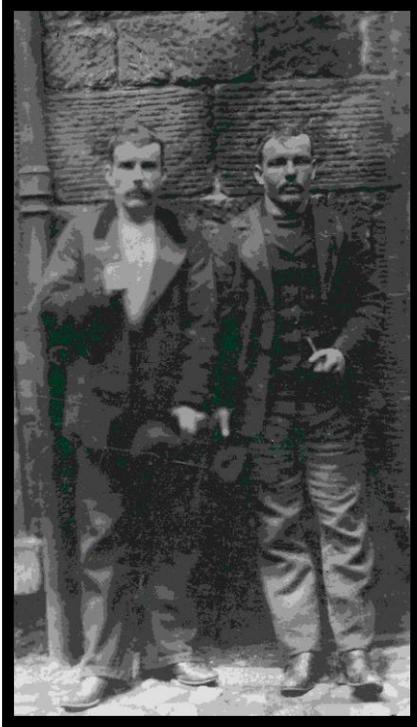


## Walter Toy British and American Citizen



**Brothers Charlie and Walter Toy**

Walter Toy was born January 2, 1863 in Budock, Cornwall, England. He was born to Walter Toy and Sally Cosier. Walter was their fifth child and third son. The fourth child was Charles who was born June 7, 1858. Both Charles and Walter joined the Royal Navy. Charles served from 1875 to 1886 and then switched to the Coastguard and served on until 1913 although he went to pension in 1904. Walter served from 1878 to 1886 then two years with the Merchant Marines until October of 1888. Growing up in Budock it would seem natural to take a sea-oriented career. This parish is bounded on the east by Falmouth Bay and the English Channel.

Budock, named after Saint Budocus, is a parish in the hundred of Kerrier, but including part of the town of Falmouth. Budock comprises 3,589 acres of land 13 acres of tidal water and 67 acres of foreshore Falmouth has its own separate jurisdiction with the center of each being about two miles apart. They are all in the county of Cornwall. The words here are a little misleading.

According to the World Foreign Gazetteer, Cornwall is a primary administration division such as a state in the United States. A hundred is an old English Saxon land division. It is smaller than a county or shire and larger than a tithing. It comprised ten tithings of ten freeholder families each or one hundred families.

Falmouth is also a parish in the hundred of Kerrier, County of Cornwall. In the parish the principal town is the seaport and market town of Falmouth. The name is from its placement at the mouth of the river Fal. Falmouth as a town can be dated to at least 1600. The bay however was well known long before that as a safe haven. It was considered the most secure and spacious. The first record with the name Falmouth would be the incorporation charter from 1661. It became a separate parish from Budock in 1664.

Falmouth became one of the principal ports in the West of England. It had for many years carried on extensive foreign trade. A market-house was built in 1813. Markets were held on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, for butchers' meat, fish, and other provisions and there were two fairs, on August 7<sup>th</sup> and October 10<sup>th</sup>, for cattle. Walter and Charles' father, also named Walter worked in agricultural endeavors. The 1871 Census for Cornwall lists his trade. There was some employment in services, shipbuilding and rope-making in Falmouth as well. The town was known for importing and exporting. Imports came from America, Spain, Portugal, Holland, Russia and the

north of Europe, from the Mediterranean, from France and from Ireland. It had formerly exported fish to West Indies and Italy but chiefly the exports were products from the tin and copper mines and from manufacturing. A quantity of mining apparatus and hardware had been exported to the Brazilian and Mexican mines. Other exports were wine, brandy and other liquors as well as fruit and cider to Jersey.

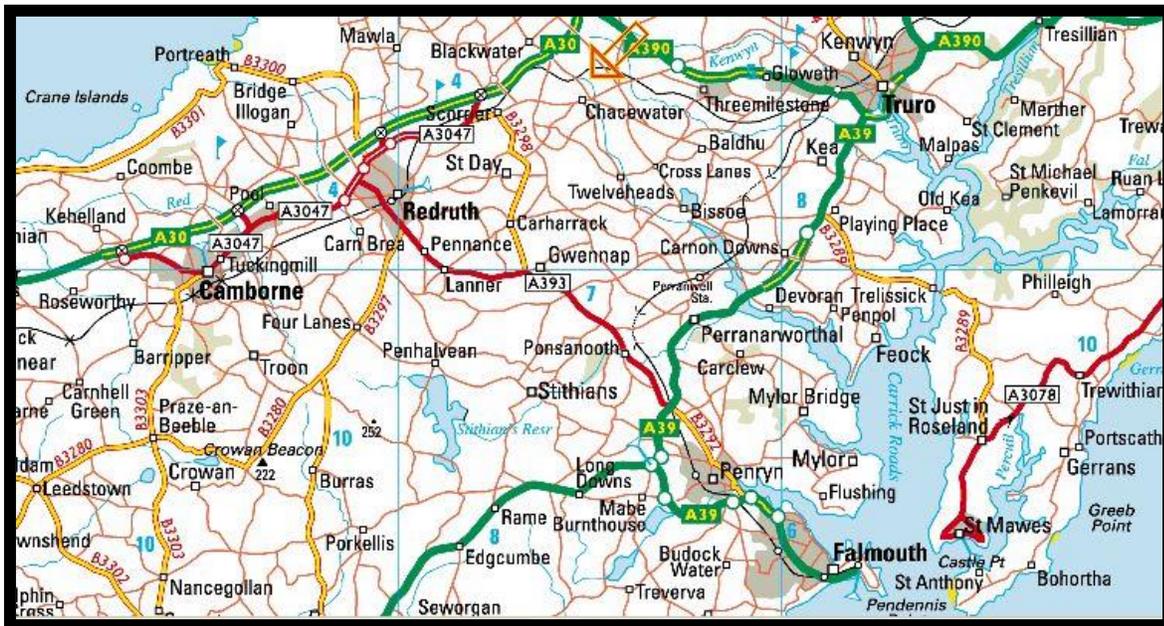
Entry into the British Navy had age limits of twelve to fourteen years old. This had been in effect since 1849. There was a short period at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when an age limit of fourteen to fifteen was in force. Walter began his engagement September 21, 1878 at the age of 15. His personal description when he joined was 5 foot 5 inches and 2 tenths. Hair was brown and eyes were blue gray. His complexion was fresh and he had no wounds, scars or marks.

On his first ship, H.M.S. Ganges he was rated as a Boy 2<sup>nd</sup> Class. December 31, 1878 his character was rated as "Very Good". By December 14, 1879 he was promoted to Boy, 1<sup>st</sup> Class. Walter received a character comment of "Excellent" on March 31, 1880. He trained on the Ganges until May 29, 1880.



The H.M.S. Ganges was a three-masted ship of 2,284 tons, with 3,594 tons displacement. She was built of teak, 196 feet in length on the gun-deck and pierced for 84 guns. H.M.S. Ganges was one of six ships built of teak for the Crown by the East India Company early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Building of the Ganges commenced in May 1819 and she was launched into the waters of the Indian Ocean from the Dockyard at Bombay on the November 9, 1821. She arrived in Portsmouth in 1822 to complete her fitting-out and was finally

commissioned on May 31, 1823. Captain Edward Brace took her out to the Jamaica Station for the first 18 months. She had several commissions out in the Mediterranean and then became the last sailing battleship to round Cape Horn without the aid of steam on October 17, 1857. She was also the last sailing ship to become a Flagship, being that for the Commander in Chief, Pacific. During this commission she sailed the length of the west coasts of South and North America. She spent time surveying in the vicinity of Vancouver, British Columbia where many of the headlands and other geographical features were given the names of some of the ship's officers.



In 1852 improved conditions and pay allowed for continuous service to be offered to men in the Royal Navy as well as a pension after a fixed number of years. With the need to maintain the numbers of seamen it was decided to set aside five of the laid up wooden ships, convert them for training purposes and position them in various harbors around the country. Boys between 15 and 17 years were then asked to volunteer for a career in the Royal Navy, spending at least a year onboard one of these training ships prior to joining the Fleet. They were expected to be fit and to be able to read and write, so very few were accepted that were 'volunteered' by magistrates 'to make a man of you'. Three thousand, five hundred boys were required each year nationwide.

On March 20, 1866 the H.M.S. Ganges, now converted to accommodate 500 boys, arrived at Mylor to commence her new role and enter into the history of the Royal Navy. The ship was moored in St. Just Pool, a short distance off a small Naval Dockyard, about two miles above Falmouth. It was here, a tradition that was to last for 110 years of training young boys for a service career in the Royal Navy, first started.

The boys were to be trained in seamanship and gunnery, which in those days meant sail, mast and yard drill as well as the usual knots and splices and boat handling. Gunnery included handling muzzle-loaded guns, field guns, rifle drill and hand-to-hand weapons such as the cutlass and boarding spikes. Schooling was not forgotten either and some sea going experience was included when the boys were embarked in sailing brigs for a short period.



Little is known about the life of the boys aboard the ship during her 33 year stay at Mylor, only one account of a boy joining H.M.S. Ganges is available to us today written by H. J. Austin who joined the ship in 1898. He wrote of a harsh regime, poor food and severe punishment for all the time he spent on board, yet he finished his service as a Yeoman of Signals. The routine he described has a familiar ring to it, called at 0600, lash up and stow your hammock, a mug of ki without milk or sugar and wash in cold water on the upper deck. Scrub decks until 0800 then a breakfast of tea with a little sugar and a slice of dry bread. On two mornings of the week a piece of well-boiled fat pork would be issued that could be spread on the bread. At 0830 it would be 'Clear up Decks' and at 0845 muster on the quarterdeck for Divisions and Prayers. Instructions followed, with a 'stand easy' at 1030 and a

half slice of bread, until dinner at 1200. The boys had to prepare their own food but being little more than meat and potatoes this would not have been much of a chore, apart from being carried out under the eye and guidance of a badge boy. After dinner back to instructions until 1600 and tea, followed by evening quarters at 1700 being dismissed about 1800. Their evenings were then their own.



The weekly routine included sail drill every Monday morning, kit or hammock inspection on Thursday morning followed by a 'make and mend', Saturday 'clean ship', watch on deck doing the holy-stoning, watch below cleaning the mess decks all ready for Rounds. Austin wrote nothing about Sunday's apart from not having to scrub decks, but no doubt there were Divisions in their best uniforms and a Church Service. The boys bathed when it

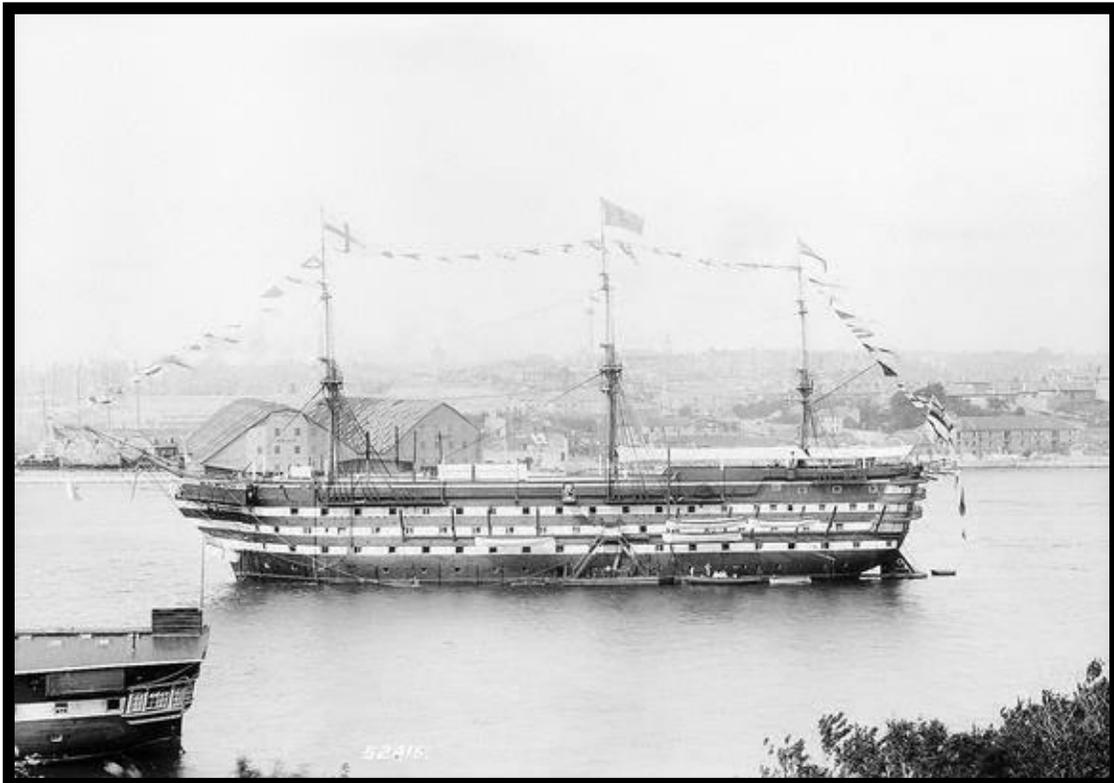
was their part of ship's turn, wooden tubs filled with cold water on deck at 0630, winter and summer with only a small canvas wind screen for protection and a small coarse towel to dry with. The boys were paid the princely sum of sixpence once a week, unless of course they had money stopped for losing something of their eating utensils. A bumboat came alongside every Thursday afternoon, weather permitting, selling packets of sweets or pieces of bread pudding at a penny a time to the ever-hungry boys. They used to send home for postage stamps as the bumboatman accepted them as legal tender.

The boys learned to swim in a bathing tray that was secured alongside the ship. It was 3 feet 6 inches deep at the shallow end and 7 feet at the other, and of course, covered in barnacles. The instructors supported the boys in a canvas harness with a rope to each

side and with their usual method of tuition, eased the ropes away once the boy was out of his depth. Austin said he learned to swim in three lessons!

During the summer months they played cricket and football against local teams, entered all the Regattas in the vicinity and played on sports days that were well supported by the local population. A band was formed onboard and many concerts and entertainments were given in nearby towns comprising not only music but also singing and short one or two act plays. In short, the ship and her company became part of the community in work, play and also tragedy, helping out many times when ships were in distress in Carrick Roads and fighting fires ashore which seemed to occur quite regularly. The ship had become not only part of Falmouth but also very much part of West Cornwall. One can imagine then the concern in 1899 when the Admiralty decided to remove her from Mylor, and after refit, send her to Harwich. She remained there until 1906 while a training establishment was built ashore at Shotley, which in time was also called H.M.S. Ganges. About 14,000 boys were trained on the old ship and a further 136,000 at Shotley. It all was finally closed on June 7, 1976.

Walter moved on to his second ship the H.M.S. Impregnable. The H.M.S. Impregnable was classed as 2<sup>nd</sup> rate meaning it had between 90 and 100 guns. The ship was built in 1810. He served from May 30, 1880 until August 11, 1880. His character was rated as excellent.



**This shows the HMS *Impregnable* at the South End of Devonport Dockyard, Plymouth. The south end of Devonport Dockyard was the oldest. In 1853, the Keyham Steamyard was added. This was further up the Hamoaze and became known as Devonport North Yard.**

*Artist: Unknown Date: c. 1904 Item No: Neg No: G3091 Courtesy of the National Maritime Museum <<http://www.nmn.ac.uk>>*

August 12, 1880 he was transferred to the H.M.S. Wye. Aboard this ship he had "Lonely" written as describing his character. He served here until September 17, 1880. Still a Boy 1<sup>st</sup> Class he transferred to the H.M.S. Garnet and began service here September 18, 1880. While serving on the H.M.S. Garnet he was classified as an Ordinary Seaman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class on January 1, 1881. By November 29, 1881 he became an Ordinary Seaman. His character was rated as "Good". The H.M.S. Garnet was a transport sailing vessel. The H.M.S. Garnet was a screw driven ship of some 2,100 tons, 220 ft long, 72 ft beam and a draught of 18 feet. She had 3 masts and a full set of square sails. Her armament was twelve, 64-pounder muzzle loaded guns, 5 on each beam and 2 each side of the forecastle. She was constructed of iron frames but with wooden planked hull. She was launched in 1877 so when Walter was on her she was a comparatively new ship. He finished his tour on the H.M.S. Garnet September 6, 1882.

The following day he reported to the H.M.S. Royal Adelaide. The old wooden ships of the British Navy were classified into rates. This was classified as a 1<sup>st</sup> rate fighting vessel meaning it had over 100 guns. She was built in 1828. His character was "Good" throughout the almost four months Walter served on her. He was then on the H.M.S. Thalia starting December 30, 1882. During this tour of duty Walter became an Able Bodied Seaman February 1, 1883. At this date he was also characterized as "Very Good". The H.M.S. Thalia was a steam vessel dating from 1869. Walter served on her until March 16, 1883.

According to the glossary of terms listed on the National Maritime Museum's web page, once a sailor reached the Able Bodied Seaman classification his amount of "Grog" is increased to full measure. Walter became an Able Bodied Seaman at the same time he turned 20 years old. Becoming of age and the amount of grog allowed seems to coincide with character problems Walter would begin to have. Grog by then was the ration mixture of one gill or one-eighth of a pint of rum and twice that amount water (i.e., 1 part rum, 2 parts water). It is issued as a daily ration to all ratings below Petty Officer of and over the age of 20 years who desire it.

In the 1650's the ration then was half a pint of rum twice daily - half that quantity for Boys. By 1740 Admiral Vernon introduced the watering-down of the sailors' rum. Admiral Vernon was commonly known, as "Old Grog" because of the cloak he habitually wore, made of a coarse kind of taffeta called Grogram. The watered rum accordingly soon achieved the name of Grog. In his original mixture he approved the adding of one quart of water to each half-pint of rum for the daily ration. The ration reduced to one gill in 1850. The mixing of the two liquids were performed in one scuttled butt kept for that purpose, and to be done upon deck, in the presence of the Lieutenant of the Watch, who saw to it that no man was cheated of his proper allowance. A scuttled butt is a barrel with one end removed. The Royal Navy sadly ended the daily ration of rum and its tradition was discontinued in 1976.

The next vessel Walter served on was the H.M.S. Curacoa. This was a fighting vessel dating from 1809 and classified as fifth rate. Fifth rate means the vessel carried 32-40 guns. He served from March 17, 1883 until July 31, 1883. At that point he had a two-week sentence in the "Cells" of the ship. The cells on most Navy ships are right forward

and on the cable deck, which is where the anchor cables are stowed when the ship is at sea. Apart from being kept in the "Cells", Walter would also have been expected to pick oakum. Oakum is unraveled tarred rope. A prisoner in the ship's cells is required to pick two pounds of tarred hemp or 6 pounds of tarred sisal into oakum daily, except on Sundays. The material had to be weighed in his presence morning and evening. The shipwrights then used this reduction of a length of old rope down to the fibers to caulk and seal the seams between the deck planks. He was released on August 15, 1883 to join his crewmates.

However, by October 8, 1883 his character remark was "Bad" and he was sentenced to 12 months hard labor and discharged to Gaol. Gaol is an Old English term meaning jail. All time spent in ship's cells or in prison on land was added on to the end of a seaman's service, so the longer he spent in confinement, the longer he was expected to spend in the Navy. While on the H.M.S. Garnet, Walter spent two years on the east coast of South America. He spent one year in China serving on the H.M.S. Thalia and Curacoa.

The engagement sheet for Walter Toy indicates he was "sentenced to 12 months H.L." (hard labor). Then under this notation is "A. G. 637/1884" On the next line there is a capital "D" which references a discharge. It shows "D to Gaol (Victor Emanuel) from Audacious L 18/3 on December 11 '83". Between October 8 and December 11 Walter was probably on the H.M.S. Kestrel, a gun ship, whereby he was transferred from the H.M.S. Curacoa to the land based Gaol. The next notation reads he had "3 weeks remitted A.L. 16 July 1884". By September 17, 1884 he was back in England serving aboard the H.M.S. Duke of Wellington three weeks short of the one-year sentence handed down October 8, 1883.

The H.M.S. Duke of Wellington was at one point the flagship of the Baltic Fleet. She had 131 guns so was considered a first rate fighting vessel. She was a sail assisted screw steam ship launched in 1852. She normally carried 1,100 men. By the 1880's she was being used as an accommodation ship in Portsmouth, England.



Two obsolete first-rates of the 1850s, Duke of Wellington (right) and Marlborough (left) spending their last years as depot ships at Portsmouth Dockyard. It is on record that to build HMS Duke of Wellington- 250 feet long with a 60-foot beam - an oak forest of 76 acres was cleared of trees. In this photograph, taken about 1898, a drum and fife band leads ratings ashore from the two hulks.

With his behavior being characterized as “Very Good” in a month’s time he transferred to the H.M.S. Sultan. This battleship was launched in 1870 and it weighed 9,540 tons. This fighting vessel like the H.M.S. Duke of Wellington was also a sail assisted screw steam ship. When launched the H.M.S. Sultan was armed with eight 10-inch and four 9-inch guns. By the time Walter served in the 1880’s the armament had been increased by the addition of four torpedo carriages and seven 4-inch guns. This ship was most likely in the Channel Squadron during Walter’s time on board.



Another remark on December 31, 1884 shows his character as very good as well. Although by February 27, 1885 he was back in the “Cells” through the first week of March. Then a month later he was in the “Cells” from April 6 to April 19 and again September 9 to September 22, 1885. He served on the H.M.S. Sultan until January 22, 1886.

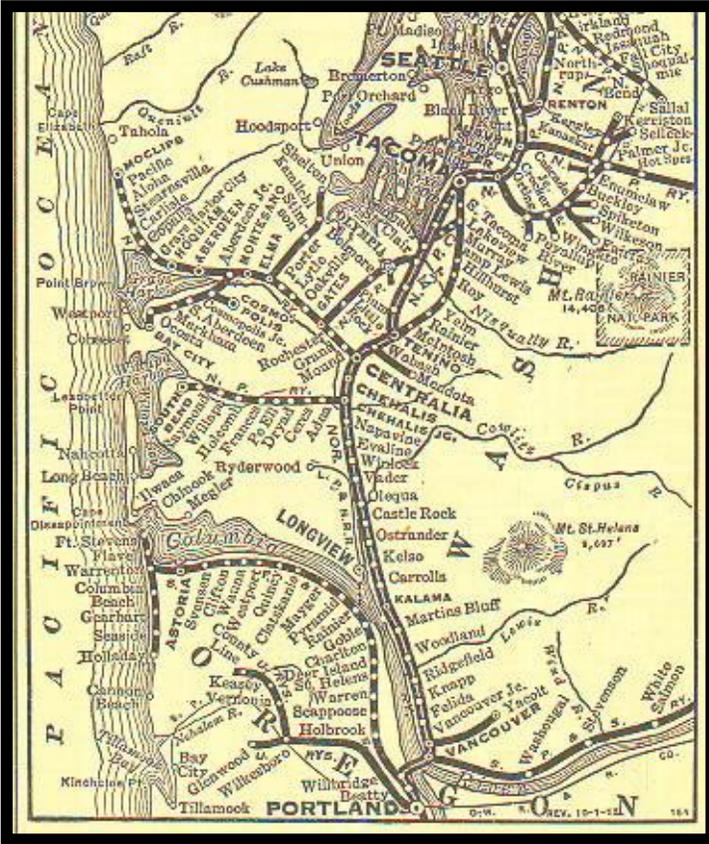


The next day he boarded the H.M.S. *Duke of Wellington* again. He was on this depot ship until February 14, 1886. The notations are difficult to read on his engagement sheet but again there is a “D” indicating a discharge. This discharge would be from the Royal Navy February 18, 1886. The notation of “D to Lewes Gaol” is followed by “from D. of Wellington List 18/472 on 29.2.85”. He was again sent to Gaol for 90 days hard labor. Lewes Gaol located in Lewes, England.

The Lewes Gaol was a Naval Prison. Lewes Gaol was built in 1793 as the Lewes house of correction. It was sold to the admiralty in 1853, becoming Lewes Naval Prison, until its demolition in 1963. One piece of wall still remains, on Lancaster Street, opposite Lewes Little Theatre. There is a plaque on the remaining piece of wall, to identify the site. This wall is also by North Street car park.

Walter was released presumably in late May or early June 1886. He then began service with the Merchant Marines. He sailed to many ports, including South America, New York, India, East Indies, Mediterranean, China and Japan.

In October of 1888 he left an English sailing vessel at Astoria, Oregon. Coincidentally near the area of Vancouver where the H.M.S. *Ganges* had left place names of its ships officers some thirty years earlier.



Walter moved inland and north a short distance to an area called Ainslie near Winlock, Lewis County, Washington. According to “Historical Sketches of Winlock Washington and Vicinity” Tom Toy, Doc Carns and Mr. Henderson were early settlers of Ainslie District in 1888. Family stories indicate that Walter was known as Tom by name but used Walter Toy on all written documents. In Ainsley he met and married Sarah Emmaline Snow on November 12, 1889. One day after Washington Territory became a state. Sarah was the daughter of Joseph and Margaret Snow, sister to Doc Carns and Mr. Henderson’s wives.



Wedding picture of Walter and Sarah Toy

Walter and Sarah lived in Winlock and had a successful business as a blacksmith. They



lived in Winlock throughout their married life and had nine children, eight surviving to adulthood. On July 2nd 1900 Walter Toy became a citizen of the United States. In 1911 he was certified to be a Camp Organizer for the Woodsmen of the World.

The United States entered the Great War against Germany on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1917 and although he was then 54 years old, managed to convince the recruiting officers, after five attempts that he was young enough to serve. He enlisted on the 13<sup>th</sup> December and was assigned to the 20<sup>th</sup> Engineers, 16<sup>th</sup> Company of the United States Army. Training must have been the minimum because on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 1918 he is on a British troopship *S.S. Tuscania* with 2,300 other soldiers sailing from Hoboken, New Jersey for Le Havre in France. The *S.S. Tuscania* was a luxury liner of the Cunard subsidiary Anchor Line, named after a town in Italy.

The ship was to travel in convoy via Halifax with two destroyers as escort and after 12 days at sea were met by a further 8 British destroyers West of Ireland. The convoy's course was to the North of Ireland and to pass between Rathlin Island, 3 miles off the North Irish coast and the Mull of Kintyre, the North Channel at this point being approximately twelve and a half miles wide, into the Irish Sea. As the *S.S. Tuscania* passed by Rathlin Island about 7 miles off, she was struck by one of the two torpedoes fired by U-Boat 77, commanded by Lt. Cmdr. W. Meyer, at 1741 on the 5<sup>th</sup> February.

The ship carried sufficient lifesaving capacity but with only 250 crew members the soldiers had to do the best they could; some managed to get boats away and landed on Rathlin, others were broken up against the high cliffs on Kintyre. 163 bodies were



found by the Scottish residents. Some boats were found on the Isle of Islay. The majority however, were picked up by the destroyers coming alongside the ship and embarking them straight inboard. Of the 2,550 souls onboard the ship, only 116 people were lost, mainly because she took just over 5 hours to sink.

The *Tuscania* was the first ship carrying American troops to be sunk, and public opinion in the USA regarded its loss as an outrage.

In 1920, the American Red Cross erected a monument on the Isle of Islay, where many of the victims had been buried before their repatriation or transfer that year to the American War Cemetery at Brookwood. Brookwood is the only American Military Cemetery of World War I in the British Isles. Located approximately 28 miles southwest of London,

It is not known how Walter escaped, but no doubt he used his early training as a Ganges Boy to assist himself and others to survive as his granddaughter remembers him describing how he "helped many a boy to safety". In his Company D there were 39 dead and 5 missing men. Accounted for in Winchester, England were 5 officers and 196 enlisted men.



After the rescue, he went on to serve in France as a cook. He served in Company D (later called 18<sup>th</sup> Company) of the 20<sup>th</sup> Engineers. A French researcher born in Captieux in SW France, Christian Tauziède, sent this photo of Walter in his apron with the rest of the Company. This photo is displayed in the town hall of Captieux. Some referred to the area as the Burned Area. Walter served in France until 14<sup>th</sup> May 1919 when he sailed for home on the S.S. *Santa Paula* and his subsequent discharge from the Army on the 12<sup>th</sup> June.

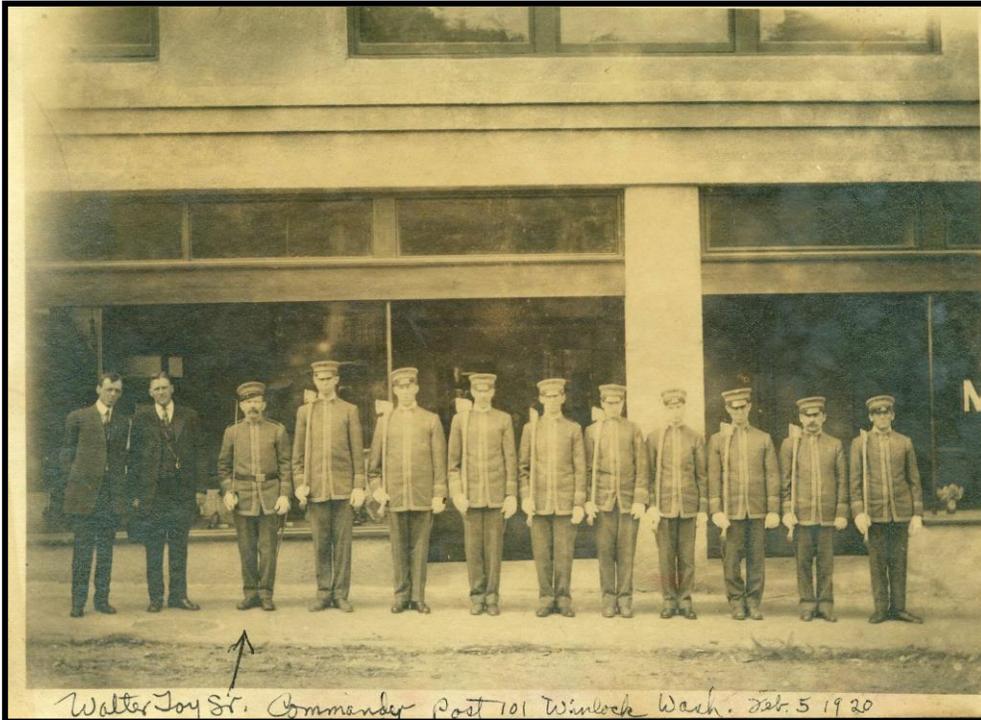
He returned to Winlock. He took one more trip aboard the S.S. West Jappa. When Walter first came to the Ainsley area he was also known as Tommy. It is unknown if he used it as an alias after jumping ship from British Merchant Marine duty or if it was used as a colloquial term for British people. The following article was in the "Winlock News" in August of 1921.

## TOMMY TOY HOME AGAIN

Tommy Toy is home again after a sixty-day cruise on the government transport West Jappa, which took him to Manila, Cebu, Yokahama, Hongkong, and other oriental ports. Sailing the high seas is not a new sport for Tommy, and the landmarks in the ancient cities of Hongkong and Yokahoma, so familiar to him thirty years ago are all gone now, he said, and he hardly knew the old places. It was in 1887 that Tommy first came to this country, making his entry via boat across the Pacific and into the port of Astoria. He has been on numerous excursions since, the most harrowing of all, he says, being when the United States transport Tuscania was torpedoed off the Irish coast, during the Great War. But never again for Tommy. "Never again will I heed the beckoning call of the wild waves, I'm going to settle down here in Winlock and never venture forth again," he said.

AFTER AUGUST 19, 1921

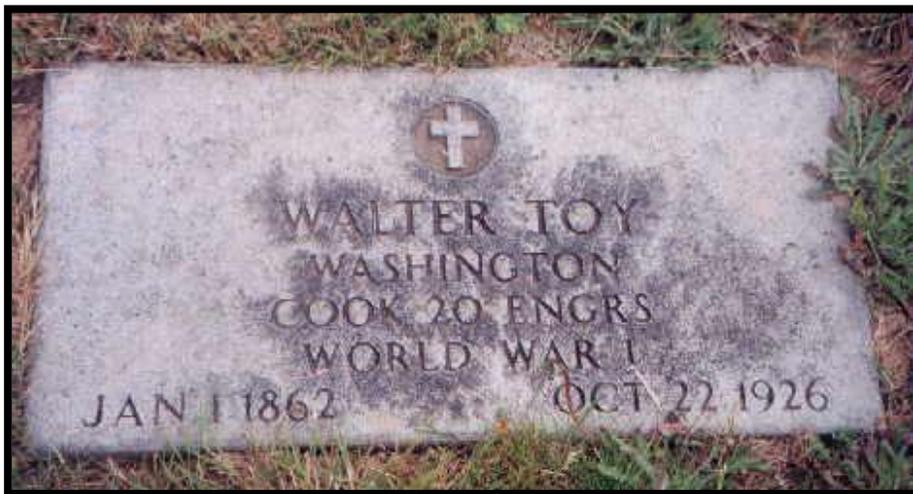
WINLOCK NEWS



By February 1921 Walter was voted in as the Commander of the American Legion Buford Rockafellow Post 101.

Walter died of a cerebral hemorrhage on 22nd October 1926, aged 64, and he was buried with full military honors and with a firing party and a last salute of Taps by

a bugler. Here was a British Ganges Boy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, being honored in the 20<sup>th</sup> century for his services to the United States of America.



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