

GRAY FAMILY OF KIRKABISTER

Magnus Gray, Seaman, R.N.R., H.M. Armed Liner *Marmora*. Kirkabister, North Nesting.

Thomas P Gray, R.N.R., *HMT River Fisher*. Kirkabister, North Nesting.

Their father was Magnus Gray; Mary Leask was young Magnus' mother and also mother to three girls (one of which died of bronchitis at less than a year old) but she died aged 46 in 1889, so Magnus senior married again to Barbara Pole and had Thomas plus another two girls.



HMS *Marmora* was a 10,000 ton passenger ship owned by Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company, but on Aug. 3, 1914 the Admiralty requisitioned her and converted the ship into an Armed Merchant Cruiser. Most of her time was spent in the South Atlantic escorting convoys and searching for the famed raider SMS *Möwe*. On July 23, 1918 she was south of Ireland when SMS *UB-64* slammed a torpedo into her side. Distress signals went out and several destroyers responded to her location, all but ten men were rescued from the sinking ship.

A few days before sinking HMS *Marmora*, Kapitänleutnant Otto von Schrader and his *UB-64* had fired the torpedo which damaged the *Justicia* and on the same day he sank the sailing vessel *Ranger*; *Marmora* was the last ship he sank as commander of *UB-64*, he was placed in command of SMS *U-53* in Aug. 1918. In the Second World War von Schrader was promoted to Admiral and was even awarded the Ritterkreuz (Knight's Cross). He was taken prisoner in Norway after the war and committed suicide there on July 19, 1945.

© 2011 Michael W. Pocock

MaritimeQuest.com

HUGHSON FAMILY OF KIRKABISTER

Alexander Hughson, Chief Officer, *SS War Setter*. Kirkabister, North Nesting. Torpedoed in English Channel, 1918.

Alexander went on to become a master mariner, and was master of the motor merchant ship *Lady Glanley* which was sunk at 05.07 hours on 2 Dec 1940 while in convoy, torpedoed by U-101 about 410 miles west of Bloody Foreland. He was 58 years old at the time, 32 crew members and one gunner were also lost.

His son Kenneth Arthur Hughson was lost in the sinking of *Zurichmoor* on 23 May 1942.

Robert Bailey Strong Hughson, Private, Gordon Highlanders. Kirkabister, North Nesting.

Their parents were Hugh Hughson and Helen Watson Anderson. They had two other brothers and three sisters. Their oldest brother Arthur was lost at sea aged 16 in 1888.