

George Frederick Kelly M.N. lost at sea 5 April 1943 on SS Vaalaren



The Kellys' origins were in the Isle of Man. Following the family history is a little difficult, since there are many Robert Kelly's of a similar age with similar origins, I hope that I've got it right!

Waiter George Frederick Kelly was serving on the Swedish merchant vessel SS Vaalaren when it was torpedoed on 5 April 1943. Its position is thought to have been south-east of Greenland and south-west of Iceland. Wikipedia states that the Vaalaren was in a convoy *en route* from New York to Liverpool.

According to the CWGC website he was 25 years old, but the headstone definitely says 23. He is commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London.

In Loving Memory of
OUR DEAR PARENTS
**ROBERT FREDERICK
KELLY**

DIED 27TH OCT 1942,
AGED 75 YEARS.

MARY ANN KELLY

DIED 25TH DEC 1956
AGED 73 YEARS

ALSO DEAR SONS OF THE ABOVE

SIDNEY

DIED 4TH OCT. 1962,
AGED 39 YEARS.

GEORGE FREDERICK,
LOST AT SEA 5TH APRIL 1943,
AGED 23 YEARS.

According to the excellent U-boat website the Vaalaren was sunk by U-229 with the loss of all 45 people on board, including seven passengers. The ship had left its convoy HX-231 and was sunk at 05.09 hrs. <https://uboot.net/allies/merchants/ship/2845.html>

From *Ancestry* we can find that Robert Frederick Kelly (father John Kelly, mother Elizabeth Kelly) was baptised on 6 December 1868 at St. Barnabas, Douglas, Isle of Man.

In the **1871 Isle of Man Census** the Kellys were living at 16 North Quay, Douglas, Isle of Man. John Kelly (33) Tailor, born Patrick, Isle of Man, lives with his family: wife Elizabeth Kelly (30), born Douglas, Isle of Man; and children, all born in Douglas: William H. Kelly (7) Scholar; Clara A. Kelly (5) Scholar; Robert F. Kelly (2) and John W. (3 mo). A second family, the Myles, all born in Rushen, Isle of Man, share the same address, and there is a lodger, William Moore (28) fireman (*This could mean a stoker on a ship, or firing a steam engine or locomotive*), born Rushen. There is also another resident with an interesting occupation: Christian Wickell? (47) Moulding and Looking-glass Manufacturer, born Holstein, Germany.

The **1881 Isle of Man Census** sees the family at 21 Barrack Street, Onchan, Isle of Man. The household is James Moore (72) Widower, born XXXton, Isle of Man; Mary A. Oaten (30) Daughter, Widow, no occupation recorded, born Douglas, Isle of Man; George Moore (23) Unmarried, Railway Porter, born Douglas; John J. Moore (16) Cabman, born Douglas; John Kelly (43) Son-in-law, Tailor, born Patrick, Isle of Man; Elizabeth Kelly (41) Daughter, no occupation recorded, born Patrick; William H. Kelly (17) Grandson, Grocer, born Douglas; Robert F. Kelly (12) Grandson, Scholar, born Douglas; and James W. Kelly (8) Scholar, born Douglas. *Possibly the John W. Kelly, 3 months old in the previous census, had died.*

I didn't find a definite match for Robert Kelly in the **1891 or 1901 Censuses**.

Robert Frederick Kelly married Mary Ann Dobie on 26 December 1906 in the parish church of Onchan, Isle of Man.

In a 1910 crew list for SS Jarnac (Harrison Line) and living at 93 Warwick Street Liverpool, are R. Kelly (43), Fireman, of Douglas, Isle of Man, and William Kelly (22) Seaman, of Liverpool.

In the **1911 Isle of Man Census** the younger Kelly family was living at Baldrine, Lonan, Isle of Man. The household contained Robert F. Kelly (42) Steward (Ship), born Douglas, Isle of Man; Mary Kelly (28) born Plumberland (*sic – probably Plumbland*) Cumberland;

Evelyn Kelly (2) born Liverpool; Florence Kelly (1) born Liverpool; and Brother-in-law Isaac F. Dobie (33) Single, Feeble-minded, born Plumberland (sic).

It is possible, but not certain, that in the **1921 England Census** of ships moored at Birkenhead Docks, the Robert T. (sic) Kelly (52yrs 7mnths) of Douglas, IoM, Steward on the S.S. Mona's Queen, Isle of Man Steam Packet Co., is our Robert Frederick Kelly. The Mona's Queen was a paddle steamer built in Barrow in 1885, which lasted in service until 1929.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS_Mona%27s_Queen_\(1885\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS_Mona%27s_Queen_(1885))

Meanwhile, in the **1921 Isle of Man Census**, Robert's wife and children were living with her brother at 7 Victoria Avenue, Douglas. The full household is George Dobie (36) Barman, Unemployed, last employer Mr. Quentin Smith, Sheffield Hotel, Douglas, born Parish of Maryport, Cumberland; Lily Dobie (30) Wife, Home, Duties, born Lonan, IoM; George H. Dobie (6) Scholar (Whole time), born Douglas, IoM; James C. Dobie (2) born Douglas; Leonard F. Dobie (2 mo) born Douglas; Mary Kelly (39) Sister, Home Duties, born Parish of Maryport, Cumberland; Evelyn Kelly (12) Niece, Scholar, born Walton, Liverpool; Florence J. Kelly (11) Niece, Scholar, born Walton, Liverpool; Corona ? M. Kelly (10) Niece, Scholar (Whole Time), born Lonan IoM; Clara Kelly (4) Niece, Scholar, (Whole time), born St. John's, IoM; George F. Kelly (3) Nephew, born St. John's, IoM.

In the **1939 Register** the Kellys were living at 2 Hastings Street (Walney). Robert F. Kelly (DoB 17 November 1868) is a Ship's Steward; Mary A. Kelly (DoB 10 April 1882) has Unpaid Domestic Duties; Clara Kelly (*crossed out* Jevons on *marriage*) (DoB 24 Sept 1916) is a Barmaid and George F. Kelly (DoB 12 June 1918) is Assistant Pantryman SS Mona's Queen, with discharge papers (date unreadable). Two further entries are redacted, but there is a lodger, Alexander Robertson (DoB 8 July 1887) Single, Ship's Fitter.