

Harry Roberts



Rank: - Able Seaman

Number: - C/JX 373642

Service: - Royal Navy H.M.S. Cassandra

Died: - Attacked by U-boat U-365, 11 December 1944 Age: 21 years.

Memorial: - Chatham Naval Memorial 76.1

Harry was born in 1923 the only son of William and Sarah Ann Roberts nee Oldfield who had married in 1920. The family lived at 9 Dark Lane, Batley.

Harry attended Purlwell Sunday School and Batley Parish School, where he received a bronze medallion for life saving and in 1934 the Elsie Taylor Merit Cup. Before joining the Forces in early 1942 he managed Purlwell Co-operatives butchery branch. At 16 he joined the N.F.S. Volunteer Messenger Service,

becoming chief despatch rider for Clerk Green station. At 18 he joined the Royal Navy serving on a mine-sweeper, and later it was believed on a destroyer. He was last home on leave in July 1944.

HMS *Cassandra* was a C-class destroyer of the Royal Navy and was commissioned for war service on 28 July 1944.

After her commissioning, she served primarily in Northern waters, escorting Russian convoys and was engaged in the search for the German battleship Tirpitz. On 11 December 1944, she was hit by a torpedo from the U-boat U-365 under the command of Oberleutnant zur See Diether Todenhagen. 62 men died in the attack and she was towed, first by the frigate Bahamas and then by a Soviet Navy tugboat to Kola Inlet. U-365 was sunk with all hands two days later by a Fairey Swordfish launched from the aircraft carrier Campania.

Harry is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal.

Only Son Reported Missing,
Believed Killed

Mr and Mrs. W. Roberts, of 9, Dusk Lane, Batley, have this week received a telegram to the effect that their only son, A.H. Harry Roberts, aged 21, has been reported missing, believed killed.

He attended Parfwell Sunday School and Batley Parish Church, School, where he received a bronze medalion for life saving and in 1934 the Klato Taylor Merit Cup.

Before joining the Forces over two years ago he managed Parfwell Co-operative butchery branch. At 16 he joined the N.P.S. Volunteer Messenger Service, becoming chief despatch rider for Clerk Green station. At 18 he volunteered for and joined the Royal Navy. He served on a minesweeper, and later, it is believed, on a destroyer. He was last home on leave



Harry Roberts.

Batley News, 23 Dec 1944



Researched by members of
Batley History Group