

Eric Stansfield



Rank: - Able Seaman

Number: - P/JX 214649

Service: - Royal Navy Gunner H.M.S. President III. (SS Greyfriars) Then transferred to a merchant ship as a Gunner.

Died: - 11 January 1941 at sea.

Cemetery: - Grimsby (Scartho Road) Cemetery, Lincolnshire Sec. 116. Row I. Grave 4.

Batley News, 18 Jan 1941 (photo); 8 Feb 1941 (photo)

Eric was born on 29 Jan 1916, the son of Leonard and Frances Harriett Stansfield nee Barrow who had married on 23 May 1908 at St. Peters Church, Birstall, when they both lived in Heckmondwike. Robert Freeman Stansfield was born in 1911 followed by Donald Greenwood Stansfield 1914, Kathleen Greenwood Stansfield

1915, Eric 1916 and Kenneth 1923. In 1939 the family was living at Stonefield Street, Dewsbury.

Eric attended Dewsbury Moor Council School and Dewsbury Junior Technical College. He worked for Walfox Ltd., manufacturing chemists, Batley and later Messrs. H. Walker (Dyers) Ltd., Victoria Dyeworks, Watergate, Dewsbury. As a boy he sang in the choir at Dewsbury Moor Parish Church.

At Whitsuntide 1940 he married Olive Moss who lived at Monk Ings Avenue, Birstall. Since that time, he was a member of the Scotland Inn Bowling Club, Gomersal. The couple had one son.

Eric joined the Navy and was serving on a warship but was transferred to a ship in a convoy. After receiving news of his death from the Admiralty eventually the ship's owners wrote to her:

"The facts as we know them at present are that he was on the gun platform when a bomb (from an enemy aircraft) fell and he was hit by a piece of shrapnel. After great difficulty he was transferred to the rescue trawler and died before the ship reached a northern port. We understand your husband bore his injury with conspicuous courage."

Three other members of the crew lost their lives because of the attack. It was only after many fruitless attempts that his wife was able to obtain this information and the owners offered her their deepest sympathy.

Eric was awarded the 1939-45 Star; 1939-1945 War Medal. He is remembered with Honour at Batley and Birstall War Memorials Addenda.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group