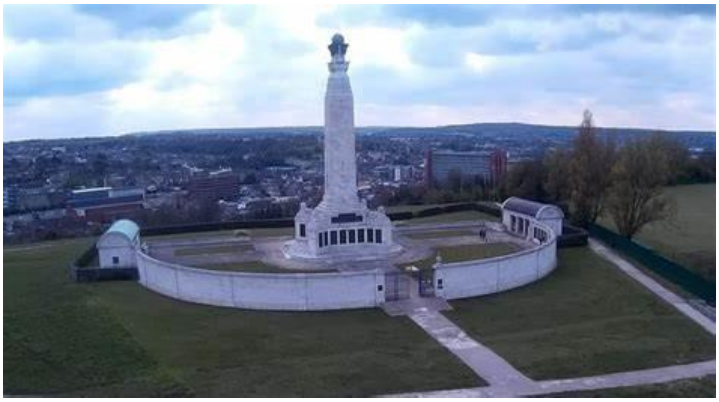
Eric Faulding





Rank: - Able Seaman

Number: - C/SSX 32905

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

Died: - Lost with his ship owing to enemy action 31 December 1942 Age: 22 years

Memorial: - Chatham Naval Memorial 54,1

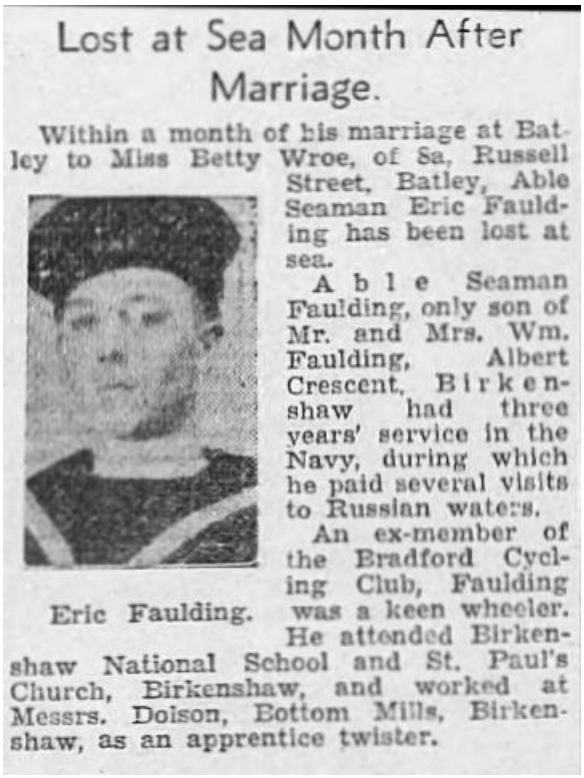
Batley News, 16 Jan 1943 (photo)

Eric was born in 1920, the only son of William Taylor and Alice Annie Faulding nee Moore who had married at St. Peter's Church, Birstall on 15 April 1911.He attended Birkenshaw National School and St. Paul's Church, Birkenshaw and worked at Messrs. Dobson, Bottoms Mill, Birkenshaw as an apprentice twister. He was a member of Bradford Cycling Club. Eric joined the Navy in 1939 and paid several visits to Russian waters. His parents lived at Albert Crescent, Birkenshaw.

In November 1942 he married Elizabeth Ann Roe who lived at 8a Russell Street, Batley. He returned to his ship and sailed to the Barents Sea.

On 31 December 1942, *Achates* was on escort duty protecting the convoy JW 51B en route from Loch Ewe to Murmansk when she was sunk in the Barents Sea.

The German heavy cruiser *Admiral Hipper*, pocket battleship *Lutzow* and six large destroyers had been ordered to attack and destroy the convoy. Despite being heavily outgunned the escort, under the command of Captain R. St. Vincents Sherbrooke, beat off the attack and not one merchant vessel was lost.



Lost at Sea Month After Marriage.

Within a month of his marriage at Batley to Miss Betty Wroe, of 8a, Russell Street, Batley, Able Seaman Eric Faulding has been lost at sea.

Able Seaman Faulding, only son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Faulding, Albert Crescent, Birkenshaw had three years' service in the Navy, during which he paid several visits to Russian waters.

An ex-member of the Bradford Cycling Club, Faulding was a keen wheeler. He attended Birkenshaw National School and St. Paul's Church, Birkenshaw, and worked at Messrs. Dolson, Bottom Mills, Birkenshaw, as an apprentice twister.

Eric Faulding.

At 11:15, *Achates* was laying smoke to protect the convoy when she was hit by gunfire from *Admiral Hipper*, killing the commanding officer, Lt Cdr Johns, and forty crew. The First Lieutenant, Lt L. E. Peyton-Jones, took over command and, despite having sustained severe damage in the shelling, *Achates* continued her smoke screen operation. At 13:30 she went down 135 nautical miles (250 km; 155 mi) ESE of Bear Island. 113 seamen were lost and 81 were rescued, one of whom later died on the trawler *Northern Gem* which had come to the aid of *Achates*. In response, the light cruiser Sheffield damaged *Admiral Hipper*, and subsequently sank her escort, Z16 Friedrich Eckoldt.

Eric was awarded the 1939-45 Star; 1939-1945 War Medal

He appears on Batley War Memorial twice. On the original is name is spelt Faundling and on the addenda of 1999 it is Faulding.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group