Henry Hughes



Rank: - Ordinary Seaman

Service: - Merchant Navy, M.V. Empire Spring (Greenock)

Died: - Killed in Action 15/02/1942 Age: 28 years

Memorial: - Tower Hill Memorial, London Panel 45.

Henry was born on 29 Oct 1913, the son of Thomas and Bridget Hughes (nee Cadden, m. 1907, registered Dewsbury). Anthony was born in 1908, Elizabeth 1909 -1926 and Winifred 1916. Hi father died in 1923. When the 1939 Register was taken Bridget, Henry and Winifred were living at 7, Fairview Crescent, Batley and Henry was employed as a foreman at a woollen mill.

Henry married Ellen Buckley who came from North Street, Batley in 1941. Henry joined the Merchant Navy and in February 1942 was on board the Empire Spring.

They left Liverpool on 2 February in convoy. The convoy broke up on the 14 February and the Empire Spring went missing.

At 03.37 hours on 14 February 1942 the unescorted Empire Spring (Master Alexander McKechan), the ship of convoy commodore from the dispersed convoy On-63, was hit on the starboard side by one of two G7e torpedoes from U-576 about 50 miles southeast of Sable Island. The Germans observed a small fire aboard and how the vessel sagged in the middle after two boiler explosions. However, the ship only broke in two and sank after being hit on the starboard side by a G7e torpedo fired from the stern torpedo tube as coup de grâce at 03.53 hours. The master, the commodore (Capt. A.D.H. Dibben, OBE, RNR), 42 crew members, five gunners and six naval staff members were lost.

Henry is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial and Tower Hill Memorial, London. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group