

In Memory Of

Chief Stoker

CHARLES GILBERT ARROWSMITH

Service Number: D/KX 75102

H.M.S. Lapwing, Royal Navy who died on 20 March 1945 Age 38

Son of Leonard and Mary Ann Arrowsmith, of Colwall, Herefordshire.

Remembered with Honour

PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL

Panel 94, Column 2.



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COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES
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COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

Name: ARROWSMITH, Charles Gilbert

Date of Birth: 23rd October 1906

Date of Death: 20th March 1945

Age at Death: 38

Service Number: D/KX 75102

Rank: Chief Petty Officer

Unit: HMS Lapwing



Photo from Imperial War Museum (IWM), FL-9971

Military Service

Charles Arrowsmith enlisted in the Royal Navy on 22nd October 1925 and served on a number of different ships. By 1945 he was part of the HMS Lapwing crew.

Charles Arrowsmith was awarded the Long Service & Good Conduct medal in September 1940.

HMS Lapwing was a modified Black Swan-class sloop of the Royal Navy. It was named after the bird of the same name, and built by Scotts Shipbuilding and Engineering Company, Greenock, on the banks of the River Clyde. HMS Lapwing was launched on 16th July 1943, and was an "I" class destroyer.

On 20th March 1945 HMS Lapwing was part of the 7th Escort Group escorting the Russian Convoy JW 65 to Murmansk, when it was torpedoed by the German submarine U-968 (Westphalen). It was sunk at position 69.26N, 33.44E off Russia, north of Murmansk. It was hit amidships, and sank within 20 minutes with the loss of 158 lives. 61 men were rescued. Charles was officially reported missing, feared to have been killed. He was within a few months of completing his full term of service in the Royal Navy.

Commemorated/Memorial

Charles Arrowsmith is commemorated on Panel 94, Column 2 of the Plymouth Naval Memorial.

There is also a memorial to HMS Lapwing in Saffron Walden, Essex, where it is located in a small garden of rest near to St. Mary's Church.



Local Connection

Charles was born in Mansel Lacey, Herefordshire and went to school in Mansel Lacey. In 1929 Charles married Dorothy N Wakeman from Chipping Norton. The Ledbury Reporter of 1945 which contained an article on Charles missing, believed killed, notes he and Dorothy lived at The Roost Bungalow, Church Road, Colwall. The CWGC identified his parents, Leonard and Mary Ann, also living in Colwall.