

In Memory Of
Leading Seaman

WILLIAM HAROLD BINNS

Service Number: D/SSX21350

H.M.S. Exeter, Royal Navy who died on 01 March 1942 Age 31

Son of Harold and Gladys Mabel Binns, of Colwell Green, Herefordshire.

Remembered with Honour

PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL

Panel 63, Column 3.



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

Name: BINNS, William Harold

Date of Birth: 1911

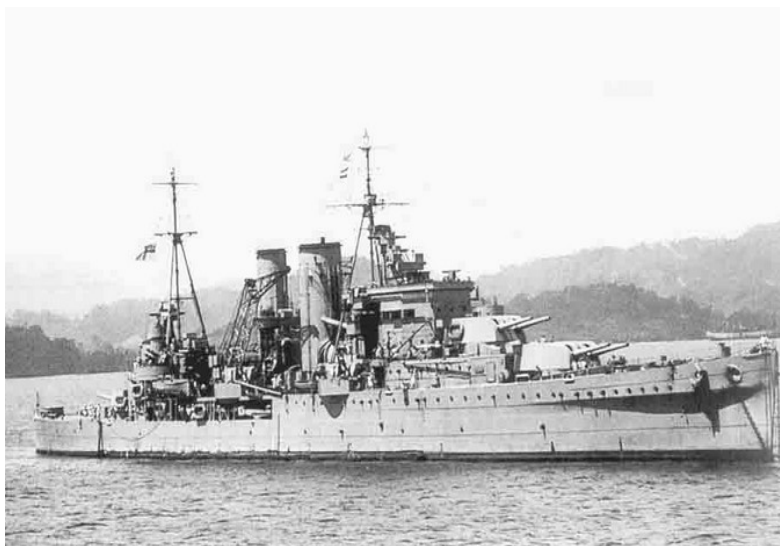
Date of Death: 01st March 1942

Age at Death: 31

Service Number: D/SSX 21350

Rank: Leading Seaman

Unit: H.M.S. Exeter



Military Service

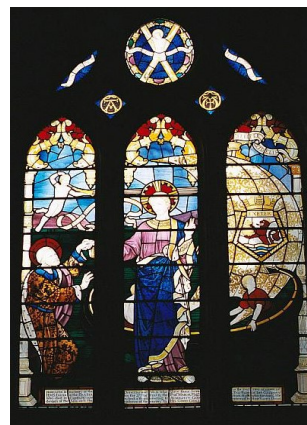
H.M.S. Exeter took part in the second battle of the Java Sea. On 28th Feb it was ordered to Australia with HMS Encounter and US Destroyer USS Pope. The destination was changed to Colombo because the ship's draught was too great to allow passage via Bali Channel and threat of air attacks from newly established airfields. Damage to its boilers restricted speed to 23 knots. It was sighted by Japanese aircraft soon after leaving harbour.

On 1st March at about 0800 hours it was ambushed by Japanese cruisers Haguro and Nachi escorted by four destroyers which were engaged in a running fight. The first hit on the Exeter was in the forward boiler room and as a consequence all power and direct control for main armament was lost. Despite smoke screens laid by destroyers it received more hits. Fires broke out and all electrical power supplies failed. The ship was abandoned after 3 hours in action. In order to avoid the ship falling into Japanese hands the Captain scuttled the ship, and it was finally sunk by torpedo. 54 of the ship's company were killed in this action and 651 were rescued by Japanese ships and became POW.

Commemorated/Memorial

Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 63, Column 3.

There is a stained glass window in the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter in Exeter which is dedicated to the officers and crew of HMS Exeter.



Colwall Connection

William was the son of Harold and Gladys Mabel Binns, who according to the 1939 register lived at 2 Camp View, Crescent Road, Colwall. Harold worked at the mineral water plant and Gladys was a parlour maid. William had been serving in the Royal Navy for nearly five years and had last been home on leave 18 months before he was reported missing. He was a member of the "Loyal Perseverance" lodge of Oddfellows.