



**Able Seaman HARRY HIGHFIELD** - Age 21  
Service Number D/SSX 32198  
Royal Navy - H.M.S. Galatea  
Killed in Action - 15 December 1941

Son of Charles Henry and Edith Highfield, Fir Vale, Harthill

Remembered on [Plymouth Naval Memorial](#), Panel 47, Column 2.,  
and Harthill War Memorial

Harry Highfield was a twin along with Ethel born to Charles Henry, a tailor and draper, and Edith Highfield of Firvale, Harthill.

Harry was an Able Seaman on board HMS Galatea an Arethusa Class Light Cruiser built in 1935. The Galatea was part of the Mediterranean Fleet and in December 1941, she was tasked, with other ships, to attack German convoys operating from Italy to North Africa. However, the Galatea was ordered to return to Egypt because the German convoys had retreated to port.

During her voyage, the Galatea was subject to repeated air attacks, however, just after midnight, on 15 December 1941, whilst entering the swept channel 30 miles North West of Alexandria, the Galatea was hit by a salvo of torpedoes launched by the German submarine U-557. Following the fatal blow the Galatea listed heavily then suddenly rolled over on her portside and sank in just 3 minutes.

150 survivors were picked up by the destroyers HMS Griffin and HMS Hotspur. The Galatea's Captain, 22 officers and 447 ratings were killed. Able Seaman Harry Highfield, aged 21, was amongst those lost.

The Galatea's [Casualty List](#) published on 12th January 1943.



H.M.S. Galatea