

### **The bombing of Plymouth 1940 – 1944.**

The dockyards at Devonport were the main target of the German air force during World War Two, but often their bombs fell on the city. The first bombs fell on Plymouth in July 1940 killing three people. In early 1941 five raids reduced much of the city to rubble. Attacks continued as late as May 1944.

During the war the two main shopping centres of Plymouth and nearly every civic building were destroyed. 26 schools, eight cinemas and 41 churches were also destroyed. In total, 3,754 houses were destroyed with a further 18,398 seriously damaged.



During the bombing attacks, 1,172 civilians were killed and 4,448 injured. On the evening of 22 April 1941 during an attack on the central area, the communal air-raid shelter at Portland Square took a direct hit which killed 72 people. Charles Church was destroyed by fire bombs and has been preserved in its ruined state as a memorial to civilian victims of the bombings.

Content created by Tony Rea and From the Grassroots team (2014). Image credit: Ref: 1418 /2032  
Photograph showing an American Bofors Anti-Aircraft Gun in the Charles Church area, Plymouth, 1944. c1941  
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