

War Memorial – The Green, Castle Bromwich

World War II 1939-1945

Civilian Eric Davis (1903-1942) Air Raid Warden ARP (Air Raid Precautions) died aged 38



Eric was born on 16th October 1903 in Birmingham and he married Jessie Elizabeth Mapp in October 1929 in Birmingham.

He was recorded as living at 252 Stechford Road, Ward End in 1936 and still at that address when he died. In 1939 at that address he was registered as an Elementary School Teacher and during the war effort acting as an Air Raid Warden.

The Raid Wardens' Service set up in 1937 to report on bombing incidents. Every local council was responsible for organising ARP wardens, messengers, ambulance drivers, rescue parties, and liaison with police and fire brigades. From 1 September 1939, ARP wardens enforced the "blackout". Heavy curtains and shutters were required on all private residences, commercial premises, and factories to prevent light escaping and so making them a possible target for enemy bombers to locate their targets. With increased enemy bombing during the Blitz, the ARP services were central in reporting and dealing with bombing incidents. They managed the air raid sirens and ensured people were directed to shelters.

From 1941 the ARP officially changed its title to Civil Defence Service to reflect the wider range of roles it then encompassed. During the war almost 7,000 Civil Defence workers were killed. In all some 1.5 million men and women served within the organisation during the war.

Eric passed away on 30th July 1942 at No 7 Canadian General Hospital, Marston Green, Coleshill, Warwickshire. The hospital was erected as a hatted building in 1938 and functioned as a 700 bedded hospital during the war. When Marston Green first opened it was No1 Canadian General Hospital, but the unit was relieved by the No 7 Canadian General Hospital in 1941.

In the Birmingham Mail on 10th August 1942, his wife, Jessie - *"Thanks to relatives, friends, neighbours, wardens, fire guards, W.V.S., housewives, colleagues and friends in scholastic profession for help, sympathy and beautiful floral tributes in her tragic loss"*. Clearly Eric was a good friend and well-respected person of the community.

Probate on 28th November 1942 records his widow as Jessie Davis.

He is commemorated in the Civilian War Dead Roll of Honour, located near St George's Chapel in Westminster Abbey, London and also commemorated at the war memorial at The Green, Castle Bromwich.



ARP Appeal Birmingham Town Hall