War Memorial – The Green, Castle Bromwich

World War II 1939-1945

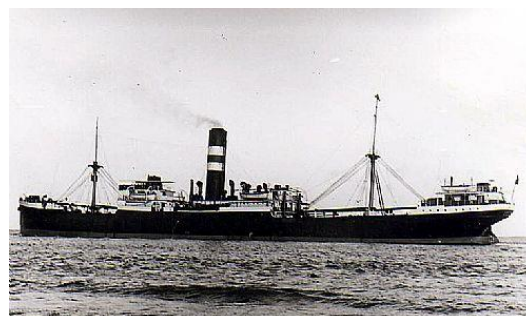## Edward Jones (1904-1942) Merchant Navy died aged 38

Edward was born on 13th December 1904 the fourth of six children to parents Thomas Edward and Mary Elizabeth Jones (née Worrall) who had married in Aston, Warwickshire in July 1896. Edwards siblings were Elizabeth b1898, Thomas Howard b1900, Jessie b1903, Herbert b1907 and Arthur b1909. By 1911 the family were living at 82 Chester Road, Erdington, Birmingham.

It appears Edward joined the merchant navy early on in his adult life as records show he was discharged on 19th June 1930 aged 26. Nine years later, the 1939 Electoral Register shows Edward living with his wife Alice Aileen Jones at 27 Stechford Road, Castle Bromwich. His occupation is recorded as an Inspection Tester of Electric Motor Control Gear.

Following the outbreak of war, Edward enrolled again with the Merchant Navy. He was assigned to Steam Ship Observer, a 5,881ton vessel operating out of Liverpool. The Observer was carrying 3,000 tons of chrome ore on a route from Mersin, Turkey via Cape Town, Trinidad onto New York. The ship left Cape Town on 29th November 1942. At 21.27 hours on 16th December the unescorted Observer (Master John Davidson) was hit by two G7a torpedoes from U-176 Kriegsmarine (submarine) and sank within 30 seconds about 350 miles east of Cabo Sao Roque, Brazil. The Germans had chased the zigzagging ship for nine hours before attacking and questioned the survivors afterwards. The master, 57 crew members, including First Radio Officer Edward Jones, and eight gunners were lost. 14 crew members and one gunner landed at Fortaleza.

Edward is commemorated at the Tower Hill Memorial, London, which commemorates the men of the Merchant Navy. It records Edward as the son of Thomas and Mary Jones and husband of Alice Aileen Jones of Stoneleigh, Ewell, Surrey. He is also commemorated at the war memorial at The Green, Castle Bromwich.

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