

Able Seaman Edwin George Marsh, Royal Navy of Church Stretton

died 28 May 1940, Norway, aged 28



Newspaper report of the death of Edwin [wrongly described as Edward] George Marsh, 7 June 1940

Edwin George Marsh was born on 16 October 1912 in Church Stretton. Edwin was the eldest son of Edwin Joseph Marsh, a surveyor working for Church Stretton Urban District Council, and his wife Jane Ellen nee Matthew who were married in 1907 in Eaton Constantine. Edwin had two elder sisters, one of whom died as a child, and a younger sister and brother.

Edwin senior was born in Church Stretton; his father ran the Red Lion pub in High Street. He worked for Church Stretton Urban District Council for over 40 years. After their marriage he and Jane lived in Church Street before moving to Ashlett House on the High Street. Jane was born in Llanerfyl in Montgomeryshire, where her father was a farm bailiff. He was from Shropshire, and the family seemed to have moved back to the Eaton Constantine area before Edwin and Jane's marriage in 1907 when she was described as of Longwood, Cressage. After her marriage Jane worked as a dressmaker.

Edwin was educated at Ludlow Grammar School. According to his obituary he worked with his father and achieved his articles as a surveyor before moving on to work for Woolwich Borough Council.

Edwin joined in RNVR in 1938 and was called up on the outbreak of war. At the time of his death he was serving on HMS Cairo, an anti-aircraft light cruiser which had been built in 1918. In May 1940 HMS Cairo was deployed to Norway to support the Allied Campaign to prevent the Germans taking control of the country and especially the port of Narvik essential for the production of iron ore.

Despite some initial success, events in Belgium and France meant that the Allies decided to withdraw from Norway. On the 28 May HMS Cairo was attacked by German aircraft off Narvik and ten sailors including Edwin were killed. According to his obituary Edwin was serving at one of the forward guns when he was injured by a bomb splinter and died a few hours later. He was buried at sea. HMS Cairo was badly damaged and was out of action for

two months. By early June all Allied troops had been evacuated from Narvik and Norway surrendered on 10 June 1940.



HMS Cairo

Edwin is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial which lists over 10,000 sailors who have no known grave. He is also commemorated on the Church Stretton War Memorial, the Ludlow Grammar School roll of honour, and the Woolwich Borough Council Staff War Memorial.

Edwin's will was proved on 9 September 1940 and probate was granted to his father. His effects were valued at £374 19s 3d. Edwin's parents moved to the Wellington area where their eldest daughter Elizabeth lived with her husband. Jane died in 1954 and Edwin in 1962.