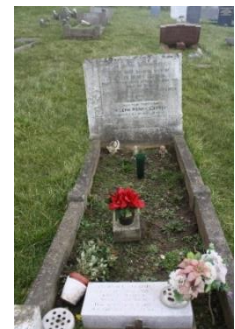


10 Civilian dead in the 'Barrow Blitz': Marsh, Goude; Hudson; Barker; Tamblyn; Gerrish

John Enoch Marsh 14 April 1941 (Left); Nellie & Mabel Goude 15 April 1941 (Middle); William Allison & Mary Hudson 4 May 1941 (Right); Kathleen Barker 5 May 1941 (Lower left); Alice Tamblyn (Lower middle); Edith Gerrish (Lower right)



The 'Barrow Blitz' has been ably explored by Bryn Trescatheric in *The Barrow Blitz* (2009) published by the Dock Museum.

John Marsh (aged 72) died with his daughter in law Ethel (Aged 26) (Wife of W. Marsh) at 38 Vernon Street. Her husband, Fusilier Walter Marsh (3460131) 10th Bn. Lancashire Fusiliers, died on 05/12/1942 aged 32, and is buried in Chittagong War Cemetery.

The Goude family home at 4 Union Street was one of several destroyed by enemy action on the night of the 15th/16th April 1941. Trescatheric reports that this was due to a land mine. Nellie Goude, a widow, was aged 69, and her unmarried daughter Mabel, was 44. About seventeen people died in Union Street (figures vary) including six at no. 8 and three at No. 10.¹ News reports during WW2 omitted most details, thinking that it could be of use to enemy agents. Thus, while the *North Western Daily Mail* published pictures of the destruction, they were not identified by street, or even by town: simply as 'Bomb damage in a North West town'. Barrovians, of course, knew what had been done, and where. Death notices in the *NWDM* listed couples to be buried together, a sign of common tragedy befalling the household.

William Allison Hudson, B.A., (aged 47) and Mary Stobart McLoughton Hudson (aged 45) died at 26 Hill Road, Hawcoat. CWGC reports that she was the daughter of Mrs. Binnie, of 28 St. Paul's Road, Ardmore, Philadelphia, USA. He was a schoolmaster at Barrow Grammar School. (See overleaf)

Kathleen Barker (21yrs) of 91 Hawcoat Lane, was injured in the same raid, and died at North Lonsdale Hospital the following day. She was the wife of Gordon Milton Barker. Gordon M Barker had married Kathleen Thompson at St Paul's, Newbarns in 1939 (Cumbria BMD)

Alice Tamblyn was a widow who lived at the Goude's house, 4 Union Street. Was she a relative, or simply a paying lodger?

Many of the news accounts of the funerals made no mention of the cause of death. Due to censorship, headlines in the local paper simply mentioned 'Bomb Damage in North-West Town'. This would certainly not fool local readers, and probably no-one else either.

¹ Trescatheric *The Barrow Blitz* (2009) p12.

A typical funeral account from *Barrow News* 26 April 1941 reads:

WARDENS ACT AS BEARERS AT BARROW

The funeral of Mrs. Edith M. Gerrish took place on Monday afternoon from 33. Adelaide-street, Barrow. The first portion of the service was conducted at St. Mark's Church by the Rev. G. E. Woodmansey, who also officiated at the graveside.

The mourners were: Mr. J. Gerrish, husband; Mr. Harry Gerrish and Miss D. Fisher, son and fiancée; Mr. John Gerrish, son; Mr. and Mrs. A. Hoggarth, brother and sister-in-law; Mr. W. Gerrish, sister and brother-in-law (*sic*); Mr. and Mrs. G. Tomlin; Mr. S. Lockley; Mr. E. Lockley; Mr. and Mrs. G. Dickson, Miss Bloomer, Miss Foster, Mrs. F.P. Gerrish, Mr. W. Gerrish, Mr. J. Gerrish, Mr. and Mrs. J. Padley, Mr. and Mrs. A. Robinson, Mr. and Mrs. Brown, Mr. and Miss Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. Townson, and Mrs. Grant, Wardens Govan, Fenton, Bell, Cowan, Wilkinson, and Kirkby acted as bearers, and a large number of Wardens from D3 Post attended the funeral.

The arrangements were carried out by Mr. W. J. Fox, of Rawlinson-street, Barrow.

On the same day:

LATE MR. ERIC DAVIS FUNERAL AT BARROW CEMETERY

The funeral of a popular young Barrow man, Mr. Eric Davis, of 36, Dundas-street, Barrow, took place at Barrow Cemetery on Saturday, following a service at the Emmanuel Congregational Church. The Rev. Walter Etchells, minister of the church, and the Rev. C. E. Youngman, vicar of St. James's, conducted the service, and the latter officiated at the graveside.

Aged 21 years, Mr. Davis worked at Barrow Shipyard and took a lively interest in the Home Guard, being a member of "C" Company.

Among the large number of mourners were sixteen members of "C" Company, under the commanding officer, Mr. C. B. Waterhouse. Other members of the Company, under Sergt. Whalley, acted as bearers.

The mourners were: Mr. and Mrs. C. Davis, father and mother; Miss Davis, sister; Mrs. Holdsworth, grandmother; Mrs. A. Pinnington (Manchester), aunt; Miss M. Pettifer, fiancée; Mr. and Mrs. Brazier, and many friends from the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, of which Mr. Davis was a member.

Amongst the numerous floral tributes were wreaths from "C" Company of the Home Guard, workmates from Vickers-Armstrongs, Ltd., and members of the church.

Arrangements were carried out by Messrs. Tickle and Son, William-street, Barrow.

On 17 May 1941 the *News* reported:

LATE MR. W.A. HUDSON 21 YEARS BARROW GRAMMAR SCHOOL MASTER NOBILITY OF SPIRIT WILL BE TREASURED MEMORY.

War could hardly have dealt the Barrow Grammar School a crueller blow than the taking of Mr. William Allison Hudson. He joined the staff of the school in January, 1920, as modern languages master, and having served under every headmaster the school has known, could rightly be regarded as an indispensable part of the place. On the death of Mr. J. H. Childs, the second master, in 1936, Mr. Hudson was entrusted with the senior modern languages post, a promotion which was not only a fitting reward for his sound work over many years, but also a confidence amply justified in the years, unhappily few, which followed. But the school's record of modern language scholarships to the Universities was due as much to the solid foundation which Mr. Hudson laid in the middle school as to his work with the sixth form. He had the gift of inspiring the boys and bringing out the best that was in them.

By many old boys, however, he will be remembered more for his untiring interest in Association football, of which he was in charge. He had coached the school eleven, and right up to the time of his death could often be seen changed to play with his form. He was also responsible for the school music, and the interest which boys took in music was largely due to his patient endeavour. The musical programme on speech day, together with concerts in the happier pre-war days, were entirely in his hands.

But Mr. Hudson's work did not end when these things were done. He always gave most generously of his time and energy to all the best things in the life of the school. And while the illness of his wife over many years restricted his social activities in the town, it gave to him a nobility of spirit which will always be a treasured memory in the minds of those whose good fortune it was to work with him.

¹ Trescatheric *The Barrow Blitz* (2009) p12.



The school magazine, *The Barrovian*, had a lengthy eulogy to Mr. Hudson:

IN MEMORIAM — W. A. HUDSON.

THE dull, grey dawn of Sunday, May 4th, 1941, was the saddest and longest I have ever experienced. The home where I had spent many happy years was ruined; the friends I had made were wandering up and down or trying to see what they could save from their broken houses; cars, ambulances, rescue squads, demolition squads, soldiers, police—all the services called forth by the stupidity of modern warfare, seemed to be congregating in my own locality. But I did not realise what was happening, was not aware that I was part of this sorry business; I did not know that for a short time my life was changed and I should have to start again. I stood in the debris-strewn roadway with little thought of what was going on around me.

For twenty years I had gone to and from School with the first friend I made after the last war. We had accepted each other as part of our lives; we discussed our pleasures and little troubles as if soliloquising, we met and parted as if sure of meeting again. Now, as the light was growing stronger, I knew that we should not see each other again—but realisation will not, even as I write, crystallise into certainty. It is difficult still to accept that he has gone, so many memories remain of him who was as constant and staunch a friend as the School has ever produced.

The memories are of little things—insignificant compared with the might of the catastrophe that has come upon us these last two years—but life was made up of little things for most of us in those happy days.

I remember his eager enquiry in the morning of his games day regarding the weather—he always knew it would be fine that afternoon. It made no difference if the rain poured down; he would return long after four o'clock, wet and shivering, blue with cold and weary of limb, but with an eager smile and a keen light in his blue eyes. "A grand game!" He did not demand keenness for football from the boys; he played and enjoyed the game for over thirty years, and no one could be indifferent to soccer with him on the field; his Form played football well because he played and loved the game.

The week before he died I watched him playing gramophone records to one of our forms; an aria by Handel or a movement by Mozart made his eyes shine with delight. He grumbled at the poor re-

production—he always grumbled to improve what was not perfect—but his love of the old composers was in every word he said, and his delight in music kept his class listening to what normally they would have ignored. And how he loved preparing those School productions of Gilbert and Sullivan! His utmost energy, seemingly tireless, was spent at long rehearsals, but his happiness at success was itself his reward. I have just seen the collection of photographs he made of those shows. He must have enjoyed every minute he spent at the piano.

I remember him complaining once or twice during those twenty years. On one occasion he was not satisfied that the Modern Sixth could appreciate poetry, and on another that he could not find time to read modern authors. I used to wonder how he maintained his consistent calm, until I learnt what a good actor he was. He simulated anger in the classroom, but he rarely carried his temper outside it. He forgave easily, except laziness and indifference. Conscientious to a degree, his thoroughness was always evident. He insisted on boys working hard because he worked hard himself; he made them energetic because he was so brimful of life himself.

His life outside School was devoted to his wife, as his energy inside was to the boys. Only those of us who knew them intimately appreciate what this meant. All his time was spent entertaining, comforting and nursing one who had known nothing but illness for sixteen years. His skill in mimicry gave him the power to recreate for his wife the personalities of the School; his memory for detail caused conversations to live again; and his enthusiasm, tempered by a keen sense of fairness, made pictures of classroom, staff-room and playing-fields live vividly for her who long before had joined in those happy meetings at Croft Park and Duke Street—now only memories, alas! Such devotion is rarely found, and makes all the more bitter the apparent consolation that the two were killed together. It is too painful almost to remember that even his last thought was for her—he was holding the chair in which he was struggling to place her when the blow fell on them, and took from me the one whom I had admired as a colleague and loved as a friend, and whose memory I shall cherish for ever.