



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
ROBERT
BELOVED HUSBAND OF **ANNIE HUTCHINSON**
DIED OCT. 24TH 1933, AGED 65 YEARS.
ALSO THE ABOVE **ANNIE HUTCHINSON**
DIED FEB 24TH 1957, AGED 83 YEARS
ALSO **CHARLES FREDERICK HUTCHINSON**, THEIR SON,
KILLED IN ACTION MAY 25TH 1940, AGED 40 YEARS

The *Barrow News* 1 June 1940 (from which the photograph comes) reported:

BARROW SEAMAN KILLED IN ACTION

Mrs. Hutchinson, of 26 Vernon Street, Barrow, has been officially informed that her husband, Able Seaman Charles Frederick Hutchinson, has been killed in action.

Mr. Hutchinson, who was 40 years of age. Joined the Navy as a boy in the last war, and was in the Dardanelles action in 1917. He had served aboard many ships, including the Warspite.

Leaving the Navy in 1931 he was employed in the Health Department of the Barrow Corporation. For the last three years he had been a postman. He was a Naval Reservist and was called up in August last.



Contrary to the gravestone inscription, CWGC and <https://www.naval-history.net/xDKCas1940-05MAY.htm> tells us that he died on 23rd May 1940, along with eight of his shipmates, when HMS Venetia came under shore gunfire on 23rd May 1940. Able Seaman Hutchinson is commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial.

Hutchinson's ship was taking part in the evacuation of Allied troops from Dunkirk. The Naval History website provides more detail: Deployed with HM Destroyers WILD SWAN and VENOMOUS for evacuation of British troops from Boulogne. On entry came under fire from French shore battery which had been taken over during German advance into port. Hit seven times and set on fire aft with additional casualties, including fatalities in forward part of ship. Ship grounded temporarily but able to come clear. Passage to Dover with HM Destroyers WILD SWAN and VENOMOUS that had silenced fire from the shore battery. (Note: No troops were embarked.) https://www.naval-history.net/xGM-Chrono-10DD-09VW-HMS_Venetia.htm

From Wikipedia regarding the evacuation at Dunkirk:

Venomous and *Wild Swan* entered the harbour next, at 20:35 hours, followed by *Venetia* at 20:40 hours. The Germans opened fire on *Venetia* with heavier guns as she entered the harbour, apparently in an attempt to sink her in the harbour entrance to trap *Venomous* and *Wild Swan* and bring the evacuation operation to an end. A German shell, probably from a tank, hit *Venetia*, starting a fire aft and prompting her crew to jettison her torpedoes and burning Carley floats. Another shell hit her "B" gun turret, blowing overboard and killing some of the men there, and German gunfire also inflicted casualties among the men on her bridge, causing her to go out of control and briefly run aground. Gunners aboard *Venomous*, seeing that *Venetia* was in danger of being sunk, realized that the Germans had captured Fort de la Crèche on a hill overlooking the entrance and were using its coastal artillery to fire on *Venetia*. *Venomous* opened fire on the fort; her first salvo went over it, but her second salvo blew off one side of the fort and much of the hillside it was on, causing artillery pieces to roll down the hill and silencing the fort. *Venomous* also detected a German light field gun in the garden of a house and fired on it; her first salvo flattened all of the trees in the garden, set the house on fire, and caused German troops in the vicinity to flee. All heavy German guns fell silent after this and, given a reprieve, *Venetia*, which had taken seven hits and been unable to embark any troops, quickly refloated herself and backed out of the harbour at full speed at 20:48 hours. *Venomous* and *Wild Swan* followed *Venetia* out of the harbour, also in reverse, carrying about

400 evacuees each, along the way knocking out a German tank and shooting up two German troop columns, then escorted the damaged *Venetia* to Dover, England. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Venetia_\(D53\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Venetia_(D53))

From *Ancestry* we learn that Charles Frederick Hutchinson was born 12 December 1899 in Barrow. He married Edith M. Curphey in Barrow in Q3 1924. *Cumbria BMD* tells us that this was at St. Mark's Church. Lawrence Hutchinson was born in 1927, and Barbara Hutchinson in 1931.

His naval record indicates that he joined the RFR 12 December 1929. He was demobbed 4 October 1938, but called up again 25 August 1939. His character is described as Very Good, and his efficiency as Super. Strangely, his occupation is identified as "flour packer".

In the **1901 Census** living at 16 Argyle Place, Barrow, were the Hutinchinson (sic – the enumerator had a problem with the name) family. Robert Hutinchinson (31) Boilermaker, born Barrow, was the Head, living with Annie Hutinchinson (27) born Barrow; and children Charles F. Hutinchinson (1) and Emily Hutinchinson (2 months), both born Barrow. A Boarder, William Clucas (22) Baker Journeyman (Breads), born Douglas, Isle of Man, was also present.

The enumerator for the **1911 Census** had less trouble, where 16 Argyle Place was home to the following, all born in Barrow: Robert Hutchinson (40) Boilermaker Furness Railway; Annie Hutchinson (36), married 15 years, six children, four surviving; Fredy (sic) Hutchinson (11) School; Emily Hutchinson (11) School; Hilda Hutchinson (4); John Hutchinson (3); and Frank Hutchinson (39) Boarder, Married, Plater's Helper, Shipbuilding.

Charles F. Hutchinson was appointed a postman in Barrow in Furness on 6 November 1937, according to the Postal Service Appointment Books.

The **National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1940** has:

HUTCHINSON Charles Frederick of 26 Vernon-street Barrow-in-Furness **Lancashire** died 23 May 1940 on war service Administration **Lancaster** 6 December to Edith Margaret Hutchinson widow. Effects £107 19s 7d.

Vernon Street was badly damaged in the "Barrow Blitz" of 14 April 1941, destroying nos 38-48. (Bryn Trescatheric "The Barrow Blitz" Dock Museum, Barrow Borough Council 2009)

26 Vernon Street was Edith Hutchinson's family home. In the **1911 Census** she was living there, the household being William Curphey (47) Ship Rigger, born Peel, Isle of Man – as were all the rest of the household except the last); Isabella Curphey (46); Catherine Curphey (16) Shifter, Jute Factory; William H. Curphey (14) Grocer's Errand Boy; Thomas F. Curphey (10) School; Edith M. Curphey (9) School; and Edward L. Curphey (5) School, born Barrow.

In the **1939 Register** living at 26 Vernon Street, Barrow were Edith M. Hutchinson (DoB 23 January 1902) Unpaid Domestic Duties; and Lawrence Hutchinson (Dob 20 April 1927) at School. A further record is redacted, but is likely to be Barbara Hutchinson.

The **National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1951** has:

Hutchinson Edith Margaret of 37 Curzon-road St. Annes-on-the Sea **Lancashire** widow died 21 November 1950 Administration **Lancaster** 31 January to Lawrence Hutchinson engineer and Sarah Annie Curphey (wife of Edward Lawrence Curphey). Effects £366 16s 7d.