

BIRMINGHAM				1920			
No.	Name	Age	Sex	No.	Name	Age	Sex
1011	Richard Hutchings	32	M	1011	Richard Hutchings	32	M
1012	...	...	...	1012	...	...	...
1013	...	...	...	1013	...	...	...
1014	...	...	...	1014	...	...	...
1015	...	...	...	1015	...	...	...
1016	...	...	...	1016	...	...	...
1017	...	...	...	1017	...	...	...
1018	...	...	...	1018	...	...	...
1019	...	...	...	1019	...	...	...
1020	...	...	...	1020	...	...	...

Telegrams:—"Navy Accounts, London."  
In reply please quote

No. 98. H.P. (2) 861/23.  
The Accountant General of the Navy,  
Admiralty, London, S.W.1.

Admiralty,

18 April 1923.

Madam,

With reference to the letter from this Department of the 18th ultimo, relative to the late Richard Hopwood Hutchings, Chief Stoker, Official Number 302680, of H.M.S. "BIRMINGHAM". I have to inform you that a detailed report has now been received from which it appears that your husband was last seen at about 4.30 a.m. on the 10th ultimo in the Stoker Petty Officers' bath-room, after coming off the middle watch. His hammock, which was slung on the upper deck, was not occupied up to 6.30 that morning and another Chief Stoker lashed it up, presuming your husband had gone elsewhere to sleep; but as he did not put in an appearance at breakfast time his messmates went in search of him. He could not be found, however, and about 8.30 it was reported that he was missing. After a thorough search had proved unavailing the ship's course was altered and, at full speed, she retraced her course as far as the position she was in at 4.30 a.m. Extra lookouts were placed and when the ship reached the position speed was reduced to "slow". No trace of your husband could be found however, and it was regretfully concluded that he must have been drowned. The burial-service was accordingly read with full Naval honours.

Your husband's disappearance was the subject of careful enquiry and it was found that he was lost overboard probably between 4.30 and 5.15 on the morning of the 10th ultimo. There was no evidence to suggest foul play or which pointed to the likelihood of an accident.

I have to add that the Commanding Officer of H.M.S. "BIRMINGHAM", in transmitting the report, expressed his very deep regret at the loss of a Chief Stoker who had served his country well both in peace and war.

I am, Madam,  
Your obedient servant,

Accountant General of the Navy.

Mrs R.A. Hutchings,  
East Prawle,  
Kingsbridge,  
South Devon.

Copy

GROVE PLACE  
NURSING  
HANTS.

20<sup>th</sup> Sept 1923

Dear Mrs Hutchings

I have written to the Admiralty and asked them to take action so that you will receive the private effects of your late husband, and the money realized on the sale of his kit.

I can't understand why you have not received it before.

I have also asked them to ask the Minister of Pensions to expedite the granting of a pension. I hope you have now become resigned to the loss of your husband and are enjoying good health.

Yours truly

E.C. Boyley  
Captain Royal Navy.

