BROUGHTON Edward (Ted) Christopher



Private, S/133970
Royal Army Service Corps
Place of Birth: Kent
Date of Death: Sunday, 27th April 1941
Died at Sea near Greece
Commemorated: The Athens Memorial
Aged 28 years

Edward (Ted) Christopher Broughton was born in Kent on 19th June 1916 the son of Alfred Edward and Margaret Broughton. His father, Alfred Edward, was born in Colchester in 1872. As a young man he joined the Royal Navy reaching the rank of Petty Officer, Stoker, serving on HMS Pioneer and HMS Hyacinth. In 1908, Alfred Broughton married Margaret Edith Deering in West Ham.

Alfred and Margaret eventually moved to Haverhill and were living at 18 Duddery Road when Alfred died on 25th April 1934. Ted was just 17 years old when his father died.

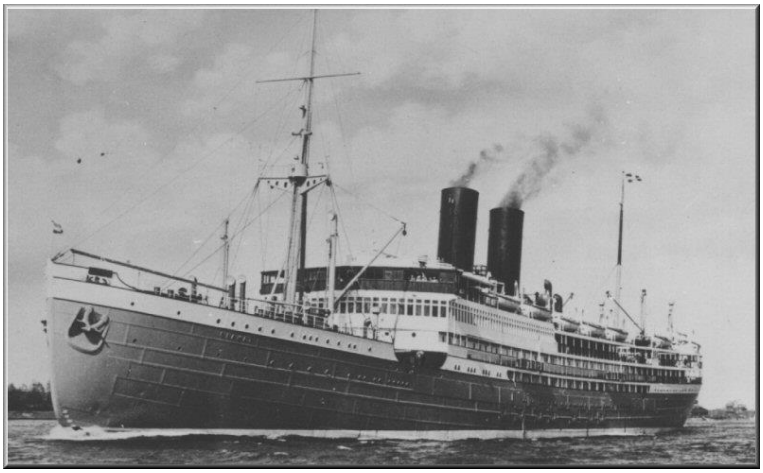
According to a news report published in the Echo on 12 September 1941, Ted's best friend was Horace James (Jim) Willis. They had attended school together and worked together at the International Stores in the town. They both later worked for the company in a store in London. The extract from the 1939 Register shows both Ted and Jim living at an address in Tokyngton Avenue, Wembley and their occupations were recorded as shop assistant (provisions).

1	Dudley	Ernest H	—	M	23 Apl	58	M	Riveters Labourer
2	Dudley	Mary L	—	F	15 May	89	M	Canvasser (Drapery)
3	Dudley	Hilda R	—	F	27 Feb	21	S	Assembly Engineer (Mus
4	Willis	Horace J	—	M	3 May	16	S	Shop Assistant (Provisio
5	Broughton	Edward C	—	M	19 Jun	16	S	Shop Assistant (Provisio
6	Manning	Walter J	—	M	23 Mch	17	S	Capstan Seller Operator

In January 1940 they enlisted together in the RASC and being on the continent at the time of the collapse of France, they were amongst those evacuated from Le Havre as part of Operation Cycle. The evacuation of Allied troops from Le Havre, in Upper Normandy, took place from 10–13 June 1940, just after Dunkirk.

The friends were sent to the Middle East in November 1940 and were working with troops in Northern Greece.

In April 1941 Allied soldiers were evacuated from Greece in order to escape from German troops. At 4am on 27th April 1941, the Dutch liner SS Slamat, with 211 crew and 500 Allied troops, which included Horace, Edward and other soldiers of the Royal Army Service Corps, left Nauplia Harbour. They were too late to escape an attack by German JG-77 (Stukas) aircraft from the Luftwaffe.



The Slamat sank with the loss of 193 men. Of the troops on board, around 700 were rescued by the destroyers HMS Diamond and HMS Wryneck, both of which were later bombed and sunk, drowning most of the survivors of the Slamat. In all, there was just one officer, 41 seamen and 8 soldiers saved from this triple disaster, leaving a total death toll of 843 men.

Both Edward Christopher Broughton and his best friend Horace James Willis were reported as being lost at sea.

They are commemorated on the Athens Memorial.



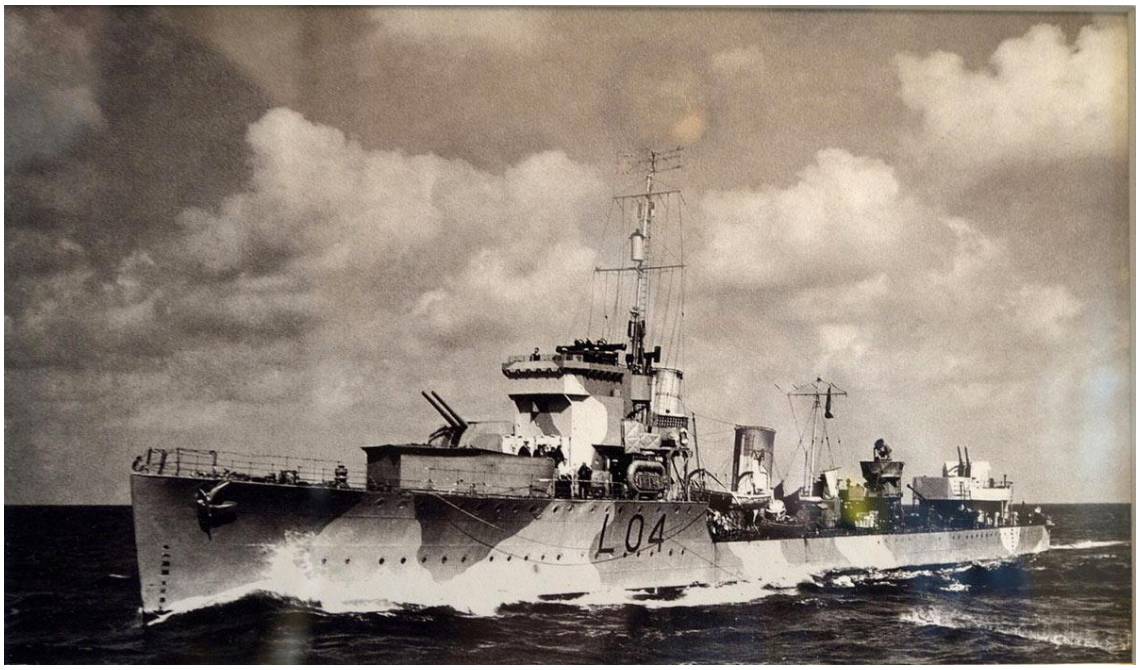


The Athens Memorial



On 12th September 1942, over a year after the sinking of SS Slamat, the Echo reported that

'Official intimation has been received this week that Edward (Ted) Christopher Broughton, only son of the late Mr Alfred Broughton of 25 Duddery Road, Haverhill, and Horace James (Jim), second son of Mr and Mrs W E Willis of 49 Recreation Road, Haverhill, must be "presumed killed in action at sea between 26th - 27th April 1941." They had previously been reported missing…. In a letter to Mr Willis, the Commanding Officer wrote that the two vessels assisting in the evacuation of Allied Troops were sunk by enemy bombing and added "The unit had come safely through some very exciting experiences on its journey down from the North of Greece, and it was only that part of the unit aboard the Wryneck (36 Officers and men) which was lost"



HMS Wryneck

In Memoriam
BROUGHTON In proud and loving memory of dear Ted, killed in action at sea.
27 April 1941
Mum and Margaret 18 Duddery Road, Haverhill.

(Published in the Echo 24th April 1943)