

## **Ernest Charles Hiscock**

**Isle of Wight Country Press – 9 November 1940**

### **NEWPORT WOMAN'S JOYFUL EXPERIENCE.**

#### **Hears From Husband Reported Killed Two Months Ago.**

A Newport woman who had mourned as a widow for two months had the great joy on Friday week receiving a postcard from her “late” husband saying that he was alive and well in Germany. She is Mrs. Hiscock, of 33 Barton-road, Newport, the mother of eight children. Her husband, First-class Stoker Ernest Charles Hiscock, aged 39, who before being called up as a Reservist was employed as a steam roller attendant by the Corporation for 11 years, was officially reported to have “died as the result of enemy action” when the destroyer H.M.S. Express was badly damaged by a mine in the North Sea on September 1<sup>st</sup>. It was assumed that the men who were missing when the destroyer was brought into port had been killed by the explosion, but Hiscock must have escaped in some miraculous way. The postcard was dated September 6<sup>th</sup> and was sent from a prisoners’ of war dispersal camp in Germany. It read: “I am quite well. Not wounded. I am being well treated. I shall be evacuated from here in a few days time to another camp, and shall be able to write to you from there. Heartiest greetings. – Ern.”

Mrs. Hiscock called at the “County Press” office with her good news on Saturday, after she had had the card translated, and said: “I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw the familiar signature ‘Ern.’ I have been kept busy ever since answering the door to people who wished to tender their congratulations. Some of them have been Ern’s workmates. He made seven trips to Dunkirk during the evacuation of the Army, and he told me afterwards that he was lucky to be alive, but from what I heard of the damage to the Express I did not think it was possible for him to have been lucky again. He was a very good swimmer, and perhaps that saved his life. All I am worrying about now is that I have drawn the insurance money and have spent most of it on clothes for the children. What they will do about that I don’t know.”

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**Isle of Wight Country Press – 15 May 1981**

### **MAN REPORTED ‘KILLED’ IN 1940 DIES AGED 79.**

**A NEWPORT man who was at one time thought to have been killed in action during the last war has died at the age of 79.**

Mr. Ernest Charles (Herbie) Hiscock, of School Lane, was reported to have died in 1940 when his ship, the minesweeper Express, was torpedoed off Norway.

His wife, Elsie, was given the news by the man believed to be the only survivor of the 30-strong crew, and was sent a death certificate.

A few months later, however, she received a card from her husband who was in a German prison camp, and then discovered that his name had been mixed up with that of another man on the ship.

Mr. Hiscock was born in Newport and joined the Royal Navy as a regular in 1919.

In the last war his ship was one of the first to arrive at Dunkirk to take off the British

Expeditionary Force, and made several trips to the beaches during the evacuation.

After six years in a prisoner-of-war camp and leaving the navy he worked for Newport corporation as a steam-roller driver.

A keen darts player Mr. Hiscock was for many years a regular at the former Princess Royal public house, Newport.

A funeral service at St. Paul's Church, Barton, was conducted by the Rev. W. Boardman.

Mourners included Mrs. Hiscock (widow), Mr. W. Hiscock, Mr. and Mrs. W. Hiscock, Mr. and Mrs. E. Hiscock, Mrs. P. Hiscock, Mrs. J. Hiscock (sons and daughters-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. K. Debenham, Mrs. J. Pickett (son-in-law and daughters), Mr. W. Hiscock (brother), and many of the 22 grandchildren.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Shilton (son-in-law and daughter) were unable to attend as they live in Australia.

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Details of HMS Express from [Wikipedia](#):

- an E-class Minelaying Destroyer built for the Royal Navy in the early 1930s.
- She was one of five British destroyers that inadvertently entered a German minefield off the Dutch coast September 1940, leading to the sinking of two destroyers and Express having her bow blown off, incapacitating her for over a year of repairs.
- 1943 converted to Escort Destroyer and transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN)

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