

Archive H-215



PATERSON SAILORS MEMORIAL
SAILORS PARK - FORT WILLIAM - ONTARIO



Paterson Sailors Memorial

SAILORS PARK, FORT WILLIAM

30th AUGUST, 1946



OFFICE OF
THE MINISTER OF RECONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLY
OTTAWA, CANADA

Among the many records of heroic action during the last war, the service of merchant seamen sailing into combat areas deserves a high place. These men carried out their daily tasks under constant threat from enemy submarines and surface vessels. Those who lost their lives in the merchant service deserve the same measure of recognition as those who lost their lives in active combat.

Had our merchant ships not been equipped with crews willing to face the dangers of enemy action, many parts of the United Kingdom would have faced starvation and the war might very well have been lost on that account. Canada's merchant seamen willingly faced the situation and in doing so played a dominant part in the winning of the war.

I am glad that a permanent memorial, in the form of a monument in Sailors' Memorial Park at Fort William, is being erected to a number of men of the merchant navy who lost their lives in this gallant service.

Le. D. Howe



THE PREMIER
HALIFAX

I am delighted to know that arrangements are in hand to commemorate by suitable memorial in the Sailors' Memorial Park, Fort William, the services of fifty-eight Merchant Seamen of Paterson Steamships Limited who lost their lives in the last great war. No men serving in the other three Services endured greater hardships or dangers than the men of the Merchant Marine, and it is only proper that those who gave their lives in the years of war should have their service and their sacrifice remembered by their fellow citizens.

From mid-summer, 1940, to the end of the war, I was in a position to see and to understand the nature of the risks that all Merchant Seamen had to run and the hardships which they had to experience. I can say with assurance that were it not for the gallantry of the Merchant and service navies of Canada, Great Britain and the United States, the war might well have been lost, with all that such an eventuality would mean to the free countries of the world.

All honour to the Merchant Seamen of the Allied Nations. May their heroic sacrifices and gallant service never be forgotten by our people.

Angus L. Macdonald

The Right Honourable Angus L. Macdonald, present Prime Minister of Nova Scotia, served as Minister of National Defence for Naval Services from 1940 to the end of the War.



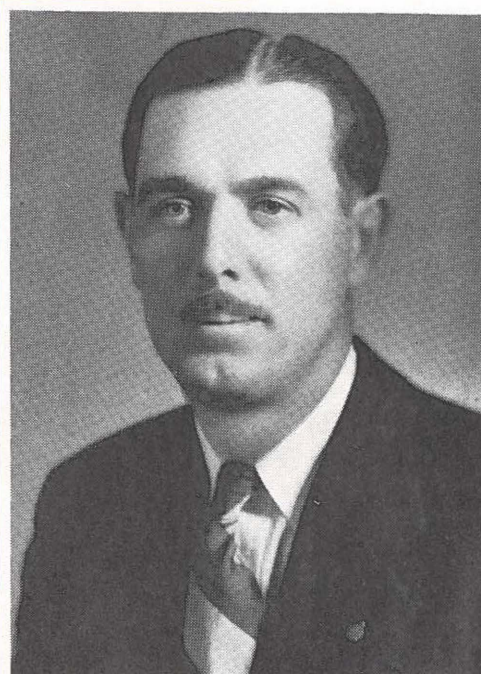
Captain
Allan J. Vallis

O.B.E.



AWARDED the O.B.E. for Meritorious Service in command of vessels engaged continuously in dangerous areas, also for valiant conduct when as marine Superintendent he personally took charge of the salvage of another of his company's vessels. The vessel had broken adrift from the tow and was lying helpless in submarine-infested waters. He then brought his ship to safe harbour.





Captain
Rene Legendre

O.B.E.



AWARDED the O.B.E. for continuous services while operating in dangerous waters and remaining in that service until the loss of his ship by enemy action in January, 1943.



Chief Engineer
Joseph Williams

O.B.E.



AWARDED the O.B.E. for unfailing duty aboard his ship in the submarine-infested Caribbean seas, during the entire time ships of the Paterson fleet operated in that area in 1941 and 1942.





Programme

UNVEILING CEREMONY

O CANADA

Fort William City Band

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	- -	The Hon. Senator N. M. Paterson
HYMN	- - - -	Eternal Father
DEDICATORY ADDRESS	- - -	The Rev. Agnew H. Johnston
UNVEILING CEREMONY	- - -	Mrs. Norman M. Paterson
DIPPING OF UNION JACK	- -	Naval Cadets (Bugle and Drums)
NATIONAL ANTHEM	- - - -	Fort William City Band
DEAD MARCH FROM "SAUL"	- - -	Fort William City Band
BENEDICTION	- - - -	Right Rev. Msgr. P. J. McGuire

GUESTS ON UNVEILING PLATFORM

Lt. Cmdr. C. W. King (RCN) R	(5)	O/C R.C.N.V.R., Port Arthur
Geo. A. Ferguson, M.M.	(4)	Pres., Army and Navy Veterans
His Worship Chas. W. Cox	(3)	Mayor, City of Port Arthur
E. B. Sutherland	(2)	Vice-Pres., Paterson Steamships
Rev. Agnew H. Johnston	(1)	Pastor, Presbyterian Church, Fort William
Hon. Senator N. M. Paterson	(Centre)	Pres., Paterson Steamships Ltd.
Mrs. Norman M. Paterson	(1)	Guest of Honour
Right Rev. Msgr. P. J. McGuire	(2)	St. Patricks R.C. Diocese
His Worship Garfield Anderson	(3)	Mayor, City of Fort William
Stanley Clayton	(4)	Pres., B.E.S.L.
Major L. A. Spencer	(5)	O/C Lake Superior Regiment (R)

O CANADA

O Canada, our home and native land
True patriot-love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free,
And stand on guard, O Canada,
We stand on guard for thee.

O Canada, glorious and free,
We stand on guard, we stand on guard for thee,
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

ETERNAL FATHER

Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm doth bind the restless
wave,
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep,
O hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea.

O Saviour, whose almighty word
The winds and waves submissive
heard,
Who walkedst on the foaming deep
And calm amidst its rage didst
sleep,
O hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea.

O Sacred Spirit, who didst brood
Upon the chaos dark and rude,
Who bad'st its angry tumult cease,
And gavest light, and life, and
peace;
O hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea.

O Trinity of love and power,
Our brethren shield in danger's
hour;
From rock and tempest, fire and foe,
Protect them wheresoe'er they go;
And ever let there rise to thee
Glad hymns of praise from land
and sea. Amen.

GOD SAVE THE KING

God save our gracious king,
Long live our noble king,
God save the king:
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us:
God save the king.

BLEEDING but unbroken, Britain stood alone against massed Nazi might in the black days of 1941—a brave bastion of freedom.

Her cities and ports battered by enemy bomber fleets, her ocean lifelines held only at a terrible toll to undersea U-boat wolves, she fought grimly on—for liberty and humanity.

It was the time of "blood, sweat and tears" when she needed as never before the sinews of war from the New World to stem and turn the savage onslaught of Hitler's legions.

In the global struggle that engulfed the forces of Good and Evil, myriad gallant ships went down and many brave men died to marshal the materials that brought ultimate victory to Allied arms.

This is the short and simple saga of 16 vessels of Paterson Steamships, Limited, that played an unsung but paramount role during the most critical period of the war, their mission—and their losses—necessarily shrouded in secrecy until Victory was assured.

To feed the mighty war industries coming into production, bauxite, the vital raw ore base of aluminum, was needed in gigantic quantities from South American mines; and from Greenland, the essential fluxing agent, cryolite. The cry was for ships, ships, ships!

Called into the service of the nation by the Minister of Munitions and Supply was the bulk of the canal fleet of the Paterson Line to help transport this ore, Canadian crews on Canadian ships, whose peacetime pursuit was the transfer of multifarious cargoes along the fresh water highways of the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes.

The first ships left Canada in June, 1941, and the last in December, 1941, but before all were in the bauxite service by March, 1942, they had delivered essential supplies to Greenland and other northern bases, to Halifax, New York, Baltimore, Norfolk, Jacksonville, Havana, Haiti, Porto Rico, St. Thomas, Port of Spain.

Fifty thousand tons of needed supplies were transported to the West Indies and elsewhere; flour, canned goods, clothing, dry stores,



oils, coal, cement, lumber, sheet iron, steel, even beer—a massive home front operation that released sorely needed shipping for pressing war duties elsewhere.

From the semi-jungle bauxite mines of British and Dutch Guiana, the Paterson canalers carried their precious cargoes to West Indies bases where larger, faster ships took over and sped the ore to hungry furnaces in Canada and the United States.

In their service role the little ships had one great advantage, The South American coast from Dutch Guiana to Trinidad is flanked by a huge mud bank extending 25 miles out to sea, and in these shallow waters the vessels were able to navigate in comparative safety from U-boats while larger, deeper draft ships, unable to use these five-fathom waters, suffered grievous casualties outside.

The Paterson vessels also were able to navigate the twisting Demerara River in British Guiana for 60 miles inland to the bauxite mines and return fully loaded with 3,100 gross-tons. Larger ships experienced extreme difficulty reaching the mines and seldom carried bigger cargoes than the canalers. A similar condition obtained at Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana, where the little ships penetrated 120 miles inland up the Surinam River to Moengo. Bauxite also was loaded from Everton, British Guiana, on the Berbice River where larger ships could not navigate at all.

Bitter, relentless war came to the Caribbean as the enemy sought to destroy the cargoes and halt the flow of bauxite. Throughout late 1941 and all of 1942, the West Indies waters were infested by undersea marauders determined at all costs to impede the gathering avalanche of war material destined to shatter his power on far-off D-Day.

If they had some safety in coastal waters, the little Paterson Canalers were at the mercy of the U-boat killers in the open sea

run to the West Indies. For many months protective convoys were wholly unknown in this operation, and at no time did armed escort strength compare with that in the North Atlantic.

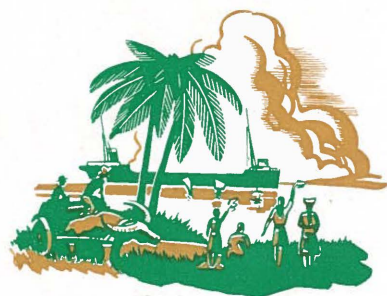
The little ships, slow and unarmed, carried on in the open ocean and three-knot Gulf Stream against gun and torpedo, against every devilish device in 20-knot submarines to locate, overtake and destroy, in unequal struggle.

The climate, the tropical diseases, the lack of proper food and medical attention in those strange waters, inevitably took toll of Canadian fresh water sailors after months of nerve-wracking struggle at sea. But their thinning ranks were filled by native seamen of the British West Indies who worked and fought and died side by side with their Canadian comrades in common cause and sacrifice.

Grievous was the price paid. The Sarniadoc and Torondoc were lost with all hands. Only five of the crew survived the sinking of the Prescodoc. The Troisdoc was sunk by shellfire from a sub without loss of life, while the Mondoc and Hamildoc were indirect casualties in dangerous waters—six gallant ships and 58 men.

By early 1943, relief came to the hard-pressed little fleet from the ever-growing armadas of the Allies. New and better-equipped ships took over. Four vessels, Cartierdoc, Kingdoc, Lawrendoc and Newbrundoc, were permitted to return to Canada, refit and re-enter inland service, while six others, Ganandoc, Soreldoc, Lachindoc, Farrandoc, Coteaudoc and Wellandoc later proceeded overseas to perform great service in D-Day operations. There the Soreldoc was lost.

A warm welcome awaits the remaining five ships when they return from post-war duty to their home waters—and to the transport tasks of peacetime.





ERECTED JUNE 1946 BY
SENATOR THE HONOURABLE
NORMAN MCLEOD PATERSON K.S.T.J.

IN MEMORIAM
TO THE 58 MEN WHO PAID THE SUPREME
SACRIFICE IN WORLD WAR II 1939-1945
SERVING THE PATERSON STEAMSHIPS LTD.



"LORD GOD OF HOSTS, BE WITH US YET,
LEST WE FORGET - LEST WE FORGET"
"SO HE BRINGETH THEM UNTO THEIR DESIRED HAVEN"

