

# **ARGONAUTA**

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# ARGONAUTA

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# Editorial

by Erika Behrisch



The boats of Kingston are slowly disappearing, withdrawing silently from their urban slips and hunkering down under tarps in dusty, fenced-in lots. There were three sailboats moored out in the ice all last winter, and they look just as committed to their anchors for the upcoming season; once the lake freezes, I'll ski out again to visit them and see how, slowly—inexorably—they are being welcomed into the element they were designed to resist. I have some sympathy with those hulks, who seem destined to face the winter alone but who still must carry some remnant of their owners' lives aboard—an old pair of sunglasses, a coffee cup, a paperback novel. At some point, they were loved and lingered over, sites of laughter, excitement, contentment. They're called "pleasure craft" for a reason—though, with the amount of repairs necessary to make these three workable again, that designation no longer applies.

The articles in this issue's *Argonauta* bring these boats to mind: both are about the fates of vessels whose original purpose has passed them by. Not all, but some boats have the lucky chance at second lives. Harry Holman's article, for instance, tells the surprising tale of the temporary second careers many Civil War-era blockade runners enjoyed in the Maritime ferry routes. The article traces the unlikely histories of ships built for war doing yeoman service north of the border: boats once attached to armies and navies were given new names, new colours, and new purpose, and they transported people from port to port in peacetime. Though undoubtedly the daily milk runs lacked the thrill of wartime chases and evasion tactics, the boats thus brought into the service fleet earned their keep creating and maintaining communities: a happy conclusion for any ship whose very construction was the result of or response to conflict. The ships in Derek Waller's article weren't so lucky, and their destruction was as swift as it was necessary. Waller's piece—another compelling chapter in his saga of WW II's captured U-boats—documents the Allied decision to scuttle 116 U-boats within a strict timeframe, with the Royal Navy fielding terrible weather, meddling press, and suspicious Soviets to get the job done. The mind boggles at the loss of materiel during this operation, but its symbolism remains unmistakable: never again.

As the weather and water get colder, and the dusks get earlier and greyer, the boats I've enjoyed watching toing and froing in Kingston's harbour are entering their season of rest. They're out of their element, up on blocks, and largely hidden from view. With luck, loving and capable hands will reach under their tarps, turn on an electric bulb to keep the air circulating within their holds, and give the hull a clean scrape. In the company of those that love and care for them, their evenings in the tranquil sunsets might not seem so far away. For them, there's a promise of more. And for those three whose task it is to wait and watch, once the lake freezes over, I'll see to it that they get some company, too.

WMP,  
Erika

# President's Corner

by Michael Moir

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My work as an archivist and my interest in maritime history frequently intersect. The strongest connection is my obsession with context, the need to understand how the contemporary world is shaped by the effects of past decisions. My involvement with the Society has often led to questions about how we got to where we are in order to plan the course ahead. A major project undertaken by Dr. Paul Adamthwaite, the Society's webmaster and Executive Director of the Naval Marine Archive: The Canadian Collection (<http://navalmarinearchive.com/>), provides the sources to answer many of these queries.

At the request of Council, Dr. Adamthwaite scanned the early issues of *Argonauta* that were not available on the Internet, created PDF files with optical character recognition to enable searching, and loaded the files onto the Society's website at [https://www.cnsr-scrn.org/argonauta/index\\_e.html](https://www.cnsr-scrn.org/argonauta/index_e.html). These publications provide a fascinating glimpse into how the burgeoning interest in Canadian maritime history in the early 1980s led to the Society's formation, and how some challenges have been around since the dawn of the Society's recorded time.

The first issue was published in September 1984 as *The Canadian*, not long after the Canadian Society for the Promotion of Nautical Research met at the Royal Military College in Kingston. It opens with a memorial to Dr. Keith Matthews, who passed away earlier that year. The meeting approved a proposal to create the Matthews Awards to commemorate his significant contributions to our discipline, and discussed the need to launch a maritime history journal to coincide with Expo '86 in Vancouver, a world's fair devoted to transportation and communications. In December, the second issue appeared under its new name, *Argonauta*, as the periodical of the newly-incorporated Canadian Nautical Research Society.

Subsequent issues contain a wealth of research by and information about many members who are still active in the Society, and commemorate the work of colleagues who have passed. These issues also speak to the challenges of regionalism and financial sustainability that have faced the Society since its outset; in the third number issued in March 1985, the lead article is titled "Survival." As we approach the Society's 40th anniversary, I strongly encourage members to engage with these early publications to explore the context of our formative years. On behalf of Council, I express our deep appreciation to Dr. Adamthwaite for making these discoveries possible.

The back issues of *Argonauta* stress the importance of the Society's annual conference in order to share research and build networks among members broadly distributed across continents and oceans. We will be returning to an in-person conference in Halifax in 2022, but with a hybrid format to support the virtual participation of presenters and members who may be unable or reluctant to travel. A call for papers will be issued in the coming weeks through the Society's website and social media. I wish all members an enjoyable holiday season as they draft their proposals and plan their journeys to the East Coast. May all our waves in 2022 involve maritime interests and not riding out the storm of the pandemic.

# “Operation Deadlight”

by Air Commodore Derek Waller, RAF (Ret'd)

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*Plans are almost complete, I understand, for the greatest wholesale scuttling of war vessels since the Grand Fleet went down in Scapa Flow after the 1914-18 war—sunk by the German crews who had been left aboard. These plans, which are likely to be fulfilled within the next two or three weeks, concern the final disposal of the remains of Germany’s U-boat fleet. There remain more than 100 U-boats which have been collected at Loch Ryan, on the west coast of Scotland, and at Lisahally, in Northern Ireland. These are to be towed into the Atlantic and sunk outside the 300 fathom line.*  
(1)

## Introduction

The above report, which was a blatant breach of national security, was published in both the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Scotsman* newspapers on 15 November 1945, the day after the secret “Deadlight” Operation Order for the U-boat sinkings was issued. The report was written by Commander Kenneth Edwards, the *Daily Telegraph*’s and the *Scotsman*’s Naval Correspondent, who was a retired pre-war Royal Navy submarine commander and a life member of the Wardroom Mess at Fort Blockhouse (HMS *Dolphin*) in Gosport—the home of the UK submarine fleet. It was followed by a similar report in the *Daily Express* on 17 November, under the headline “Destruction of 120 Surrendered German U-Boats.”

The decision to sink the majority of the U-boats that had surrendered at the end of the war in Europe was made at the Potsdam Heads of State Conference (codenamed “Terminal”), which had taken place in Berlin between 17 July and 2 August 1945. In respect of the surviving U-boats, the Conference’s Proceedings (Minutes) said that the UK, the USA and the USSR had concluded that

*The larger part of the German submarine fleet shall be sunk. Not more than thirty submarines shall be preserved and divided equally between the USSR, UK and USA for experimental and technical purposes.* (2)

At the same time, the three Governments agreed to set up a Tripartite Naval Commission (TNC), one task of which was to agree which U-boats should be retained and allocated to the three nations, as well as the date by which the remainder should be sunk in accordance with the Potsdam decision. The result was the recommendation from the TNC that all the remaining unallocated U-boats should be sunk no later than 15 February 1946.

Of the 156 U-boats that had surrendered, the UK, USA, and USSR had each been allocated 10 U-boats by the TNC, one had been returned to Holland (*UD-5*), eight remained in continental ports (one in France and seven in Norway) after they were found to be unseaworthy, and two others (*U-805* and *U-1228*) were due to be sunk off the west coast of the USA in early February 1946, thus leaving 115 (plus *U-760*, which had been interned in Spain since September 1943) to be sunk in UK waters.

The Royal Navy’s “Operation Deadlight” was the executive action to implement the TNC’s recommendation, and it led to the sinking of 116 U-boats in deep water to the north-west of Northern Ireland between 27 November 1945 and 12 February 1946. It was the culmination of a long-held determination of both the British Government and the Royal Navy to ensure the total elimination of the German Navy’s submarine fleet after the end of WW2.

## The Surrender of the U-Boats

On 4 May 1945, Admiral Dönitz had ordered all U-boats at sea to cease operations and return to Norwegian ports. Then, on 5 May, all German armed forces in Holland, Denmark, and north-west Germany—including the Frisian Islands, Heligoland, and all the islands in Schleswig-Holstein—surrendered to Field Marshal Montgomery's 21st Army Group. This surrender document had been signed on the evening of 4 May, and the agreed conditions came into effect at 08:00 on 5 May. It required all German forces in these areas to lay down their arms and to surrender unconditionally and, in the Field Marshal's own hand-writing, it specifically included all naval ships in the area.

The limited surrender in North Germany to the 21st Army Group was superseded on 8 May when, as part of the final German capitulation, all remaining U-boats were ordered to surrender. As a result, 156 U-boats surrendered to the Allies either at sea, from sea, or in ports on both sides of the Atlantic. Only nine put into ports in the western Atlantic: five in the USA, two in Canada, and two in Argentina. Not a single U-boat surrendered in any Soviet-controlled port, and the majority of those that surrendered in the eastern Atlantic area did so in Norwegian and German ports.

By this time, the Royal Navy's First Sea Lord, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, and the other members of the Combined (UK/US) Chiefs of Staff (CCS) had become very suspicious of the Russians, and one of the principles adopted by the CCS was that no advanced technology should be allowed to go to the Soviet Union. Thus, the First Sea Lord initiated action to ensure that, as much as possible, all naval-related technology should remain firmly in British and American hands. Almost the first example of the application of this principle occurred in mid-May 1945, when plans were formulated to transfer to the UK all the surrendered U-boats that remained in the mainland European ports.

The First Sea Lord's proposal was considered by the UK Chiefs of Staff (COS) at their meeting on 16 May, and it was agreed that, subject to the approval of the Prime Minister, the suggestion should be forwarded for consideration by the US Navy with the following justification:

*The orders given to the German Navy instruct shipping in harbour to remain there and shipping at sea to proceed to the nearest German or Allied port. These orders were agreed with the Russians and require shipping once in harbour to remain there pending further direction from the Allied representatives.*

*The 100 U-boats in the Norwegian bases present a difficult problem requiring immediate decision. They are concentrated in five main Norwegian ports, but guarding and maintenance constitutes a considerable manpower commitment. This could be better undertaken in United Kingdom ports.*

*If the Russians are not consulted about the movement they may make a complaint. If, however, they are consulted, they will almost certainly cause delay and will probably ask for a large number to be sailed to North Russia, which would not suit our book. We therefore propose that the U-boats should be sailed from Norway without prior reference to the Russians, and that this action should, if necessary, be justified on the practical grounds of maintenance and security.*

*The sailing of the U-boats in Norwegian waters to the United Kingdom will strengthen the position of the United Kingdom and the USA in future discussions [with the Russians] concerning their ultimate disposal. (3)*

The proposed action was approved by Mr Churchill on 17 May but, after it was agreed by the American authorities—and fearing that a diplomatic row was possible—Mr A. V. Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty, wrote to the Prime Minister on 25 May:

*The Foreign Secretary has suggested that in view of the possible Russian objections to this move, the Cabinet should be informed. If you agree, I suggest that the attached memorandum should be circulated. (4)*

The memorandum explained the situation and emphasized that the action had been initiated without either the agreement or knowledge of the Russians:

*All important surviving German naval units undamaged, including the U-boat fleet, are believed to be under the control of the British and United States Navies. None appear to have fallen intact into Russian hands.*

*The orders given to the German Navy in pursuance of the act of unconditional surrender instruct ships in harbour to remain there, and ships at sea to proceed to the nearest German or Allied port. These orders were agreed with the Russians and require ships once in harbour to remain there pending further instructions from the Allied Representatives.*

*The U-boats in Norway having fallen into our hands under the general surrender, their disposal is subject to decisions by the Allied Representatives. Meanwhile, however, the guarding and maintenance of the U-boats constitutes a considerable undertaking which could be more easily managed in United Kingdom ports.*

*The obvious course was therefore to sail the U-boats as soon as possible to the United Kingdom for laying up pending a decision at the Peace Table concerning their disposal. This has the additional advantage of strengthening our hand in the eventual negotiations.*

*It was considered that to consult the Russians could only lead to delay, and that in all probability they would ask for a large share of the U-boats to be sailed to North Russian ports. The Chiefs of Staff accordingly, with my approval, invited the Combined Chiefs of Staff to agree to the sailing of the U-boats to the United Kingdom without reference to the Russians.*

*I think it right to inform my colleagues of what is being done in view of the possible Russian objections to the move. (4)*

Thus it was that the U-boats that had surrendered from sea in and around the UK, as well as the majority of those that had surrendered in ports in Norway, Denmark, and Germany, were transferred to Lisahally in Lough Foyle in Northern Ireland and to Loch Ryan in south-west Scotland in May and June 1945 to await joint Allied (UK, USA, and USSR) decisions about their final disposal.

### **The Tripartite Naval Commission's Recommendations**

In order to select the 30 U-boats that were to be retained by the three Allies, the TNC was required to review all the U-boats that had surrendered. This included those moored in Loch Ryan and at Lisahally as well as, by then, 11 U-boats in the USA: the five that had surrendered in America, the two that had surrendered in Canada, the two that had surrendered in Argentina, and two others that had been moved secretly to the USA from Europe after hostilities had ceased.



On 10 October 1945, at its 13th Meeting, the TNC agreed upon the initial lists of the 10 U-boats each to be allocated to the UK, the USA, and the USSR, but it deferred a decision about the fate of the unallocated U-boats. That decision was taken at its 18th Meeting, on 29 October, when it was agreed that

*All unallocated submarines were to be sunk by not later than 15 February 1946. (5)*

The objective, which stemmed directly from the political decision taken at Potsdam, was that all the remaining U-boats should be sunk in the open sea in a depth of not less than one hundred metres, thus destroying them in such a manner that the possibility of salvage and full or even partial use for future naval purposes was precluded.

Of the U-boats held in the UK at the beginning of November 1945 awaiting decisions about their futures, 10 were allocated to the UK, 10 to the USSR, and one to the USA. This left 116 U-boats at Lisahally and Loch Ryan awaiting final disposal by the Royal Navy, and it was this that led directly to "Operation Deadlight."

### **"Operation Deadlight": Preliminary Arrangements**

With the remaining 116 U-boats to be sunk at sea, the Admiralty decided that the necessary disposal action needed to be initiated without delay. Thus, arrangements for what was to be designated as "Operation Deadlight" were begun immediately after the TNC's 13th Meeting on 10 October. This was because—even though the deadline of 15 February 1946 had not yet been formally tabled by the TNC—it was realised that the imminent onset of winter and its associated rough seas in the area to the north and west of Loch Ryan and Lough Foyle would make the sinking of the U-boats a hazardous task.

On 18 October, and in anticipation of the TNC's recommendation concerning the date by which the sinkings should be completed, the Royal Navy's Flag Officer (Submarines) (FOS/M) sought advice from the Admiralty as to where exactly the sinkings should take place, viz:

*In anticipation of approval being given to scuttle about 100 U-boats not required by Allies at Lisahally and Loch Ryan an area may be allocated for this purpose.*

*The deep patch to the north of Ratlin Island, alternatively that west of Galloway, would seem to be suitable as they are close to both bases and would save towage to an area west of 10 degrees W. (6)*

Despite both of these areas being close to Loch Ryan and Lisahally, which would minimize the towing task, the Admiralty's response on 23 October indicated a different location:

*Owing to the presence of telegraph cables and the intended use of both the areas proposed for fishing, it will be necessary to scuttle the U-boats west of 10 degrees West. Exact position will be NW of Ireland, will be signalled. (6)*

This exchange was then followed-up by FOS/M, who set out his preliminary proposals in a message to the Admiralty on 25 October:

*The number of U-boats to be scuttled will be 110 [but see below], of which 24 are at Lisahally and 86 at Loch Ryan.*

*The British crews are only sufficient for steaming a very small number of U-boats to the scuttling area, and the majority will have to be towed unless German crews are employed.*

*The towing gear in all U-boats is at present either non-existent or very poor, and the cables, where fitted, are of poor quality. Good weather for towing is therefore essential.*

*As the U-boats have been specially lightened to enable them to berth in their present shallow water berths, they will probably have to be sunk with demolition charges or by gunfire instead of opening the vents and hatches.*

*A round trip for each tow would be three days from Loch Ryan and two days from Lisahally.*

*As all the U-boats are to be sunk by 15 February 1946 it is requested that an early start be made. Towing and scuttling will have to take place in the now infrequent good weather, and it is considered that unless a large number of tugs and scuttling parties are made available it will take at least two months to sink them all.*

*Bad weather has already caused the stranding of four U-boats at Loch Ryan. (6)*

Time and the weather were recognized as major problems, as was the poor towing gear and the lack of sufficient submarine crews. Equally, it was obvious that this was likely to be a major undertaking, one which would require the support of a considerable number of Royal Navy warships and tugs.

The next step in the process came on 31 October, when the Admiralty instructed the RN Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) at Rosyth to begin making the detailed arrangements for the disposal of the unallocated U-boats:

*It is intended to scuttle 86 U-boats from Loch Ryan and 24 from Lisahally in position 56.00 degrees N, 10.05 degrees W.*

*A large proportion of these will require towing and therefore as many destroyers, escort vessels and tugs as can be spared from other Commands will be sent to assist.*

*Approval to commence the operation is expected shortly. (6)*

A further message from the Admiralty on the same day emphasized that

*It is essential that scuttling should be completed in shortest possible time taking every advantage of favourable weather. (6)*

With the aim of completing the exercise as soon as possible, a formal planning meeting to discuss the details was held at Pitraevie, in Fife, on 5 November under the Chairmanship of the Chief of Staff to C-in-C Rosyth, Commodore J. W. Farquhar. The principal business of the meeting concerned the arrangements for towing the U-boats, for some of them to be used as the targets for air and submarine attacks, and for the remainder to be scuttled. The main points agreed were the following:

*All U-boats will have to be towed to the scuttling area.*

*It was decided to clear Loch Ryan first.*

*All U-boats shall be towed by double bridles.*

*Should an escort part her tow whilst on passage to the scuttling area and conditions do not permit the recovery of the tow, the escort vessel is to sink the U-boat where she is, provided that she is not in a position to become a danger to navigation.*

*The method of scuttling if weather is suitable for boarding is by the Safety Fuse Method.*

*The method of scuttling if weather is unsuitable for boarding is by the Electric Method.*

*It was decided to allocate 3 U-boats each day for air practices as mutually arranged between RAF Coastal Command and Admiral (Air), and that the aircraft carrier HMS Nairana, with No.816 Sqn FAA embarked, would be made available to co-ordinate and supervise the practices.*

*A number of U-boats would be made available as torpedo targets for the Third Submarine Flotilla. (7)*

### **“Operation Deadlight”: The Plan**

The formal order for “Operation Deadlight” was issued by the C-in-C Rosyth on 14 November; it was briefly and succinctly defined as a plan for scuttling 110 U-boats from Loch Ryan (86) and Lisahally (24) in deep water off the north-west coast of Ireland, starting on 25 November.

The omission of six U-boats from the scuttling list set out in Annex A of the “Deadlight” Operation Order has caused considerable confusion ever since, despite the UK’s 1946 Naval Estimates (Cmd 7054) giving the correct figure of 116. All six of these U-boats were moored at Lisahally: *U-975, U-1023, U-2351, U-2356, U-2502, and U-3514*. However, in each case, their future was unclear at the time that the Operation Order was written; there were still ongoing discussions about their possible inclusion in the lists of those U-boats to be allocated to one or other of the Allies.

Indeed, it had been agreed by the TNC that there should be a degree of flexibility in respect of the allocations. Thus, bilateral exchanges of individual ships and craft between the Allies could be made as desired. This therefore accounts for the number of differences between the original lists of the U-boats allocated to each of the three Allies published on 10 October 1945 and those that were finally published in December 1945. Because these six U-boats were all included in the initial allocation lists, they were therefore omitted from the “Deadlight” Operation Order’s Annex A. Ultimately, they did not feature in the final allocations, and they were therefore added to the original list of the 110 unallocated U-boats after the “Deadlight” Operation Order had been published.

The datum point for the disposal of the U-boats, designated as “Point XX,” was at 56.00N, 10.05W; the air target position “Point ZZ” was at 55.50N, 10.05W; and the main scuttling position “Point YY” was at 56.10N, 10.05W.

The aim of “Deadlight,” as set out in the Operation Order published on 14 November, was that all the U-boats should be towed (unmanned) to the designated area, which was 130 miles to the north west of Lough Foyle and 180 miles from Loch Ryan. There, they would be scuttled or sunk in the vicinity of positions YY or ZZ, completing the operation in the shortest possible time and taking every advantage of any favourable weather.

The prime disposal method was to be by the use of demolition charges; however, if the weather conditions allowed, 36 of the U-boats from Loch Ryan were to be sunk by aircraft

from the RAF (18) and the RN Fleet Air Arm (18), and a small but undefined number of U-boats were to be made available as targets for trials of non-contact torpedoes fired by RN submarines.

If any of these planned methods of disposal failed, the U-boats were to be sunk either by gunfire or by use of the then-still secret anti-submarine weapon "Squid." The most important details of the exercise, many of which were taken from FOS/M's earlier advice, were the following:

*Loch Ryan is to be cleared of U-boats first and escort vessels and tugs will be sailed to Loch Ryan on commencing the operation. When Loch Ryan has been cleared of U-boats, escort vessels and tugs are to be sailed to Moville [at the mouth of Lough Foyle].*

*Tows are to be sailed to the scuttling area in groups, as convenient, to suit conditions of light and tide. Tug tows are always to be accompanied by an escort vessel tow.*

*U-boats are to be towed with double bridles. During passage, conning tower hatches are to be closed in Type 23 U-boats and are to be left open in all other U-boats.*

*If the weather is suitable for boarding, the method of scuttling will be by safety fuse, charges being placed so as to collapse the bow and stern torpedo tubes and also to blow certain hatches. If the weather is unsuitable for boarding, the scuttling charges will be fired electrically. Should both these methods fail the towing vessel is to sink the U-boat.*

*From each group of U-boats sailing, three U-boats are to be detailed as targets for air practices. If the aircraft taking part in the practice fail to sink a U-boat, the accompanying vessels are to sink her by gunfire and/or by 'Squid'.*

*On certain days, U-boats will be allocated to the Flag Officer (Submarines) for non-contact pistol trials using submarines of the Third Submarine Flotilla for this purpose.*  
(8)

An appreciation of the scale of this Royal Navy operation can be gained from how many ships were involved: one aircraft carrier, 14 destroyers, five frigates, two submarines, and at least half a dozen tugs.

Of the 116 U-boats, 86 were moored in small groups (trots) in Loch Ryan and 30 were tied up to pontoons at Lisahally, and they comprised four Type IIDs, 73 Type VIICs, one Type VIID, one Type VIIF, 11 Type IXCs, four Type IXDs, four Type XXIs, and 18 Type XXIIIs.

"Operation Deadlight" was to sink the following U-boats:

#### Ex-Loch Ryan (86)

*U-143, U-145, U-149, U-150, U-155, U-170, U-218, U-245, U-249, U-255, U-281, U-291, U-293, U-295, U-298, U-299, U-312, U-313, U-318, U-328, U-368, U-369, U-427, U-481, U-483, U-485, U-532, U-539, U-637, U-680, U-716, U-720, U-739, U-760, U-773, U-775, U-776, U-778, U-779, U-806, U-826, U-868, U-907, U-928, U-956, U-968, U-978, U-991, U-992, U-994, U-997, U-1002, U-1004, U-1005, U-1009, U-1019, U-1052, U-1061, U-1102, U-1103, U-1104, U-1110, U-1163, U-1194, U-1198, U-1203, U-1230, U-1233, U-1271, U-1272, U-1301, U-1307, U-2321, U-2322, U-2324, U-2325, U-2328, U-2329, U-2334, U-2335, U-2337, U-2345, U-2350, U-2354, U-2361, and U-2363.*

## Ex-Lisahally (30)

*U-244, U-278, U-294, U-363, U-516, U-541, U-668, U-764, U-802, U-825, U-861, U-874, U-875, U-883, U-901, U-930, U-975, U-1010, U-1022, U-1023, U-1109, U-1165, U-2336, U-2341, U-2351, U-2356, U-2502, U-2506, U-2511, and U-3514.*

The U-boats from Loch Ryan were to be sunk first, and it would take two days for the towed U-boats to reach the designated scuttling area. So, although the first sailing from Loch Ryan took place on 25 November, the sinkings of the first five U-boats (*U-2322, U-2324, U-2328, U-2345, and U-2361*) actually took place on 27 November 1945.

## Publicity

The decision to scuttle most of the U-boats remaining in Loch Ryan and Lisahally was supposed to be kept secret until after the allocated U-boats and the German Navy's remaining surface ships had been moved either to the USA, the UK, or the USSR. However, whilst the final decisions about the U-boats that were to be transferred from the UK to the USSR and those which were to be sunk were not made by the TNC until November 1945, UK press and public interest in the U-boats and their fate had been building ever since the first two had arrived at Loch Eriboll and Weymouth on 10 May, after their earlier surrenders at sea. Newspapers in Scotland and Northern Ireland had carried details of the surrenders throughout May, and interest had heightened in June and July as more and more U-boats were transferred to the UK from Norway and Germany.

By that time, wartime press censorship no longer applied, and there were a number of "leaks" to the Press, with the London *Times* and the Manchester *Guardian* publishing stories under the headline "Disposal of U-Boats." The report in the *Times* had been filed in Hamburg on 9 October by its Special Correspondent, and both came out on 10 October, the very day that the TNC decided (in secret) the initial allocations to each of the three Allies:

*Provisional agreement, subject to the ratification of the Powers concerned, had been reached on the disposal of the former German U-boat fleet, it is understood here. Under the terms of the decisions taken by the naval representatives of Great Britain, Russia and the United States, each one of these three Powers will receive six [it should have said 10] boats for experimental purposes. The remainder of the fleet, totalling approximately 150 submarines, will be scrapped. (9)*

A similar story was published in the *Daily Express* a week later. So much for security, even though the Minutes of the TNC Meetings were classified as top secret. At the same time, the TNC was aware of the British plans and, on behalf of the Admiralty, the UK representative requested his colleagues on 16 November to agree that, as the destruction of the unallocated U-boats in "Operation Deadlight" obviously could not be kept secret, the TNC should issue a joint communiqué from Berlin on 20 November which would include the words:

*It has been agreed between the Three Powers that U-boats not required for Allied purposes should now be sunk or destroyed. (10)*

In his reply the same day, however, the US representative did not support such action; the original decision had been taken by the Allied leaders at Potsdam and he believed that any announcement should be made jointly by the three Governments in their respective national capitals. This US line was also strongly supported by the Soviet representative, who stated unequivocally on 17 November,

*In connection with the release of the announcement, the TNC is not authorised to do so.*

*Independent of the official announcement, the transfer of submarines to the USSR should not be delayed.*

*The sinking of submarines should be considered independently and has no relation to the transfer of submarines to the USSR. (10)*

The Admiralty therefore had a problem. Ten U-boats were to be transferred to the USSR in "Operation Cabal" starting on 24 November, and 116 U-boats were to be sunk off Northern Ireland in "Operation Deadlight" starting on 25 November. However, there was no Allied authorization to announce either of these two security-classified activities. The press clearly already knew all about "Operation Deadlight," and the expected arrival of Russian naval officers at Lisahally prior to the transfer of the 10 U-boats to Russia would be difficult to keep secret. Thus, the ongoing reports in the papers were not well received in Whitehall by a UK Government precluded from making any affirmative comments.

Of the two Operations, the one that really concerned the Admiralty was "Cabal," and it was therefore proposed on 16 November that the joint "Admiralty, War Office, Air Ministry and Press Committee" should issue a "D Notice" that would prevent any mention in the papers of the proposed transfer. However, despite the Admiralty saying that any disclosure would render the UK liable to a charge of bad faith, the press members of the Committee refused the request on the basis that defence security was not involved. This was despite genuine fears that disclosure could possibly initiate sabotage by the German naval crews, especially those manning the remaining surface vessels in Wilhelmshaven.

As a result, the Admiralty sought a compromise with the press, whilst still pursuing the official line that it was unable to make any detailed comments due to the restrictions of the Potsdam Agreement. Specifically, the First Lord himself held a meeting with a large number of newspaper editors, news agencies, and representatives of the BBC on 19 November under the heading "Transfer of U-Boats to Russia." At this meeting, the Admiralty put its cards on the table and discussed both "Cabal" and "Deadlight," making an especially strong point about the very real danger of any publicity whatsoever concerning "Cabal."

The Admiralty's briefing note for the meeting records the proposed way forward:

*The Admiralty are nevertheless anxious that the Press should have full opportunities of witnessing and publishing the operations for sinking surplus U-boats. Invitations are therefore being issued to the Press to witness the operations, though the agreement of our Allies to publicity has not yet been obtained. (11)*

The meeting ended with two requests from the Admiralty. The first was unmistakably clear:

*To meet our request for the preservation of complete secrecy concerning the allocation of U-boats to any of the Three Powers. (11)*

The second was a little more vague:

*To refrain from publicity concerning the sinking of surplus U-boats until the permission of our two Allies has been obtained to publication. (11)*

Whilst the implicit but unwritten agreement concerning "Operation Cabal" held firm, the requested restraint about "Operation Deadlight" did not last for long. On 25 November, both

the *Daily Express* and the *Evening Standard* published full details. However, even then, because of the lack of Allied agreement, the Admiralty was forced to hide behind a cloak of sham secrecy, issuing a message on 29 November to the naval forces involved:

*In spite of breach of faith by Daily Express and Evening Standard, Operation Deadlight is still to be treated as secret. (12)*

In addition, several Members of Parliament—including the MP for the Loch Ryan area in south-west Scotland—businessmen, and individuals raised questions concerning the perceived advantages of scrapping rather than sinking the U-boats, some of them directly with the First Lord of the Admiralty and some of them in Parliament. They were all met with the standardized bland UK Government response:

*The arrangements for the use and disposal of the surrendered German fleet had been agreed in principle at the Potsdam Conference, and a joint statement by the three Governments setting out the details would be issued in due course. (13)*

Despite considerable diplomatic pressure throughout November and December 1945, the Soviet Government declined to accede to the UK appeal for an early announcement, and “due course” eventually turned out to be 22 January 1946, by which time almost all of the unallocated U-boats had already been sunk.

In the meantime, and despite this, there had been a great deal of detailed publicity about “Operation Deadlight” in a whole variety of publications, written by reporters who (by invitation) were aboard some of the RN naval vessels and RAF aircraft involved in the operation. For instance, on 12 December 1945, the Aeronautical Correspondent of the *London Times* reported that he had been a passenger in a flight of RAF Mosquito aircraft of 248 Sqn based at RAF Ballykelly in N. Ireland that had attacked three of the U-boats in rocket attacks. (14) In a similar vein, on 4 January 1946 the magazine *The War Illustrated* published an account describing the scuttling of a number of the U-boats from Loch Ryan as seen from on board the Polish Navy’s destroyer *Blyskawica*, which was one of the towing / escort vessels. (15)

### **“Operation Deadlight”: The Execution**

There were three separate phases to “Operation Deadlight.” First, the 86 U-boats from Loch Ryan were sunk between 27 November and 30 December 1945. Second, 28 of the 30 U-boats from Lisahally were sunk between 29 December 1945 and 8 January 1946. Third, the remaining two U-boats from Lisahally were sunk on 10 and 12 February 1946, respectively.

The C-in-C Rosyth reported the completion of “Operation Deadlight” in two signals to the Admiralty. The sinking of 114 U-boats was confirmed in his message on 8 January 1946, and the sinking of the final two U-boats was confirmed in his message on 12 February 1946. (7)

As expected, the weather was particularly bad in November 1945, December 1945, and January 1946, and the planned disposal arrangements did not work on the majority of occasions, especially the plan for sinking the U-boats by the use of demolition charges. There were also major problems with towing the unmanned, unmaintained and, in many cases, almost unseaworthy U-boats.

A comparison of the planned disposal arrangements with what actually happened shows the scale of disruption wrought by the weather. Ultimately, only two U-boats were sunk by

demolition charges, only 10 by submarines and only 12 by aircraft. Of the remainder, nearly 50% sank before they even reached the designated target area; these either foundered under tow and sank directly, or had to be sunk by gunfire, some of them in positions close to the entrances to Loch Ryan and Lough Foyle. The remaining U-boats were sunk by gunfire in the target area, when it became obvious that it was far too dangerous to follow the pre-planned demolition procedure.

A numeric summary (see also Annex A) of the actual disposal methods illustrates the situation:

- a. U-boat sunk by demolition charges en-route to the target area – 1
- b. U-boats foundered under tow en-route to the target area – 20
- c. U-boats sunk by gunfire en-route to the target area – 37
- d. U-boat sunk by demolition charges in the target area – 1
- e. U-boats sunk by submarines in the target area – 10
- f. U-boats sunk by RAF aircraft in the target area – 7
- g. U-boats sunk by RN Fleet Air Arm aircraft in the target area – 5
- h. U-boats sunk by gunfire in the target area – 33
- i. U-boats sunk by anti-submarine weapons in the target area – 2

### **“Operation Deadlight” Phase 1: Loch Ryan**

The majority (86) of the U-boats to be sunk in “Operation Deadlight” were moored in Loch Ryan. Thus, Loch Ryan was involved in the major part of the Royal Navy’s U-boat disposal activity, with this element of the Operation being completed before that at Lisahally commenced.

Before “Operation Deadlight” could begin, a large number of towing and escort vessels were needed at Loch Ryan, and these began arriving on 24 November. The plan was that the U-boats should leave their moorings (trots) under power and move north to link up with their towing vessels towards the mouth of Loch Ryan, where the crews would be disembarked. The unmanned U-boats were then to be towed to “Position XX,” which was some 180 miles to the north-west of Ireland—or 2 days’ towing distance from Loch Ryan—where most of the U-boats would be sunk in deep water by scuttling charges, with some to be sunk by aircraft and a few by torpedoes from a submarine.

Things did not go according to plan. Many of the towing vessels were not properly equipped or even designed for the task; many of the U-boats flooded due to either unserviceability or the fact that the conning tower hatches had been deliberately left open (except for the small Type XXIII U-boats); and the increasingly bad weather made the task doubly difficult. Thus, many of the scuttling plans did not prove feasible.

Of the 86 U-boats from Loch Ryan, only 50 even reached the designated scuttling area. Of these, one was sunk by demolition charges, nine were sunk by torpedoes fired by HM S/M *Tantivy*, 12 were sunk by aircraft (five by the Royal Navy’s Fleet Air Arm, and seven by the Royal Air Force), and 28 were sunk by gunfire. The remaining 36 were lost en route. Of these, one was sunk by demolition charges, 18 were sunk by gunfire (including two after their tows were deliberately slipped when crew members from the towing vessels needed to be taken ashore for urgent medical treatment), and 17 foundered and sunk of their own accord.

Despite the bad weather and the various operational challenges, the Loch Ryan contribution to “Operation Deadlight” was completed in 33 days, which was less than the two months that had been anticipated. Moreover, whilst all the hard work to fit demolition charges was largely



wasted, the charges themselves ultimately contributed to the process in several cases when they were hit by the gunfire and exploded, aiding the rapid disintegration of the U-boat.

A number of extracts from the Report of Proceedings submitted by Captain (Submarines) Loch Ryan on 3 January 1946 summarize the difficulties encountered:

*Sinking by gunfire proved in many cases a difficult and lengthy procedure, except when the demolition charges were exploded by hitting the initiating charges, in which case the result was sudden and spectacular.*

*Of the seventeen U-boats which foundered, practically all went down during exceptionally bad spells of weather.*

*The causes of parting tows are not clear, since recovery of the tow was seldom practicable and evidence was not forthcoming. But here again practically every parting can be attributed to a great extent to heavy weather.*

*It was disappointing that only two U-boats were deliberately scuttled by demolition charges as a great deal of work was put in by the Vernon party. The scuttling of U-2345 by demolition charges was a most impressive explosion, fragments falling on and around the firing ship at a range of a thousand feet.*

*In no case was boarding the U-boat to initiate the time fuses the primary method of firing considered practical. Weather in the North Atlantic in mid-winter not being conducive to boat work.*

*The decision reached at Rosyth on 5 November that it was essential for U-boats to be towed to the scuttling area as it would not be possible to remove the crews on arrival was clearly justified.*

*To begin with, the U-boats sailed with their bow and stern caps and their coning tower hatches open in order to ensure certain sinking, when the demolition charges were exploded, but this state of affairs was soon altered and all bow and stern caps were shut, as a considerable number of U-boats sank prematurely and it was thought that flooding might have somehow occurred through the firing gear and tube fittings.*

*As the U-boats had been at Loch Ryan for some six months and had been jumping about in all sorts of weather there is no doubt that the main ballast tanks had been punctured, which with the working of the submarine in a seaway, would have opened up again causing external flooding and possibly flooding elsewhere.*

*A large number of the U-boats which sank went to their watery graves between Innistrahull and the meridian of 8 degrees W. Here they began to experience the force of the open Atlantic and any faults, either in themselves or the towing gear, became apparent. This area might well be called "Nature's Graveyard" i.e. Nature versus the Admiralty.*

*If this operation was to be repeated again, there are no suggestions which can be put forward to make it work better except that as found out early in the proceedings, it was necessary to make the U-boats as watertight as possible. (7)*

## **“Operation Deadlight” Phase 2: Lisahally (1st Tranche)**

The first tranche of the Lisahally element of “Operation Deadlight”—involving 28 of the 30 U-boats which were moored there—started on 29 December 1945. However, despite the relatively small number of U-boats at Lisahally (less than one-third of the total scheduled to be sunk), it was still a major exercise involving almost as many Royal Navy and other vessels as the number of U-boats themselves. The surface fleet, which included 19 destroyers and frigates (of which three belonged to the Polish Navy), was moored at Moville, near the mouth of Lough Foyle.

The formal objective was very simple:

*To tow six U-boats from Moville each day and sink them on the following day in the Scuttling Area, providing submarine targets as necessary. (16)*

The plan was that, each day during the operation and after the demolition charges had been installed at Lisahally, the small groups of U-boats would be sailed down the river to Moville by skeleton German crews, who would hand over each U-boat to one of the surface vessels, disembark, and then be ferried back to Lisahally. The unmanned U-boats would then be towed to the designated position 130 miles to the north-west of Lough Foyle and sunk.

Despite the earlier disappointing experience with the U-boats from Loch Ryan, the prime disposal method for the U-boats from Lisahally was still expected to be by the use of demolition charges. On arrival in the scuttling area, the groups were to heave to, and the towing vessels were to keep the U-boats head-to-wind. The demolition officer from the RN Mine and Torpedo School (HMS *Vernon*) at Gosport was then to board each U-boat and set the fuses. If that proved impossible, the charges were to be fired electrically. Additionally, if weather conditions allowed, two U-boats were to be sunk by torpedoes from the submarine HMS/M *Templar*. If either of these methods of disposal failed, the U-boats were to be sunk “as ordered by the Senior Officer present”—which was normally by gunfire.

As expected, the weather was particularly bad in late December 1945 and early January 1946, and there were major problems with the towing of the unmanned U-boats by vessels unsuited to the task. The disposal arrangements therefore failed on the vast majority of occasions, especially the plan for sinking the U-boats with demolition charges. Not a single one of the 28 U-boats from Lisahally was sunk by demolition charges.

A similar deviation from plan occurred with those U-boats selected for destruction by torpedo. Of these, *U-764* and *U-2502* departed Moville on 2 January 1946 as designated targets for HMS/M *Templar*, but the sea was so rough on 3 January that they both had to be sunk by gunfire. On 5 January, *U-2506* was the designated target for the submarine. However, the U-boat’s tow parted en route to the designated sinking area and it, too, was sunk by gunfire. As an alternate, one of the other U-boats that had departed Moville on 5 January, *U-1109*, was allocated as a target for HMS/M *Templar*, and it was successfully sunk by the submarine on the morning of 6 January. The Lisahally ROP recorded that

*Templar fired a salvo of three torpedoes, one of which detonated under the stern of the target. The U-boat sank stern first in two minutes. (16)*

Once again, the poor weather made it far too dangerous to follow the pre-planned demolition procedure, and a comparison of the planned disposal arrangements for the 28 U-boats with what actually happened shows the scale of disruption. 22 of the U-boats never reached the designated scuttling area. Of these, 19 had to be sunk by gunfire whilst en route, while the other three foundered under tow. Of the six U-boats that reached the scuttling area, five had

to be sunk by gunfire, leaving just one to be despatched to the bottom as planned by HMS/M *Templar*. Thus, although all the U-boats were sent to the bottom in one way or another, the carefully prepared plan was defeated by a combination of bad weather and unsatisfactory towing arrangements.

The Report of Proceedings submitted by Captain (Submarines) Lisahally was much more succinct than that of his opposite number in Loch Ryan, though it just as neatly summarized the main difficulties encountered:

*The method of towing proved satisfactory except that in the case of the Types VIIC, IXC and IXD2 the single bridle had to be replaced by a double bridle, owing to the weakness of the German cable.*

*There was a succession of gales throughout the operation, which made conditions both at Moville and at sea extremely difficult and this is considered to be one of the reasons why so many of the tows parted before the scuttling area was reached. (16)*

An equally succinct report was included in Captain (Submarines) Lisahally January 1946 Monthly General Letter to Admiral (Submarines):

*The first week of the month was a very busy one, and saw the completion of 'Operation Deadlight'. On 7 January the last lift of three submarines U-2511, U-1023 and U-1010 was sailed to Moville, towed away and sunk. In all 114 U-boats went to the bottom, accompanied by few tears, even from the German prisoners. U-3514 was the only unallocated submarine not scuttled [as also was U-975], but at the time of writing it seems that her days are numbered. (17)*

### **"Operation Deadlight" Phase 2: Lisahally (2nd Tranche)**

The final part of Lisahally's contribution to "Operation Deadlight" occurred in February 1946 with the sinking of two of the U-boats (*U-975* and *U-3514*) that had been involved in the very last-minute changes to the TNC allocations.

*U-3514* had been part of the Russian allocation until 23 November, but it had been damaged the day before it was due to be towed to Libau (in Latvia) as part of "Operation Cabal." *U-3515* was substituted for it, and the Royal Navy therefore held the damaged *U-3514* in reserve until *U-3515* successfully arrived in Libau, which did not occur until 2 February 1946.

*U-975* had originally been part of the TNC's allocation to the UK, but the latter was keen to ensure that one of the unallocated U-boats that had surrendered from sea in Canada should be made available on loan for use by the Royal Canadian Navy. However, after a debate between the Senior TNC Representatives in November 1945, it was not until 23 January 1946 that the formal UK request was made to the TNC, and this was not finally agreed until 31 January. This necessarily delayed the scuttling of *U-975*.

The Lisahally Operation Order dated 7 February covering the scuttling of these two U-boats was code named "Deadlight 2," and involved towing the two U-boats to the scuttling position and then sinking them by either gunfire or anti-submarine (a/s) weapons. It involved two frigates, HMS *Loch Arkaig* and HMS *Loch Shin*, the ocean-going tug *Prosperous*, and two harbour tugs, *Exploiter* and *Sparkler*. The operation was planned to begin on 9 February, with HMS *Loch Shin* towing *U-975* and *Prosperous* towing *U-3514*. HMS *Loch Arkaig* was to undertake the sinkings. (16)

Both U-boats were moored at Lisahally, and *U-975* was to sail downriver to Moville under its

own power, while *U-3514* was to be towed by the three tugs. However, whereas the plan worked for *U-975*, *U-3514* encountered difficulties. On 9 February, the ocean tug *Prosperous* went aground during the transit from Lisahally to Moville, and by the time it was re-floated it was too late in the day to proceed further. *U-3514* was therefore towed back to Lisahally by the two harbour tugs. The process was repeated the following day, but this time *U-3514* went aground, and it was not until 18:00 that *Prosperous* was able to tow it out to sea.

In the meantime, *U-975* had left Moville on the afternoon of 9 February, and by 15:00 on 10 February was at the scuttling position. First, it was unsuccessfully attacked by gunfire from HMS *Loch Arkaig*, but a second attack using the “Squid” a/s weapon was successful. *U-975* was sunk at 16:10.

The tug *Prosperous* and *U-3514*, which had eventually left Moville at 18:00 on 10 February, were only able to proceed to the scuttling area slowly, and so did not arrive there until 09:00 on 12 February. This time, HMS *Loch Arkaig* attacked with both gunfire and the “Shark” a/s weapon. The gunfire began at 09:36, and at 09:58 “Shark” was fired. Two hits were registered, and at 10:04 *U-3514* sank in over 600 feet of water, thus bringing “Operation Deadlight” to an end.

In typical Royal Navy style, which included a bit of artistic license, this was summed up in Captain (Submarines) Lisahally’s Monthly General Letter to Admiral (Submarines) in February 1946 in just a few perceptive words:

*On 9 February the last two German U-boats to be scuttled were sailed for Operation Deadlight. U-975 got clear away without any trouble but the Type XXI (U-3514) lived up to the revolting reputation this class of submarine has achieved in ten months at Lisahally, by running aground when towed by three tugs, and had to be brought back to Lisahally. On the following day she was sailed again with the same three tugs and, after nearly seven hours of billiards, cannoning from mudbank to mudbank and side to side of the Channel, she finally cleared Lough Foyle Buoy and Operation Deadlight was completed. It is interesting to note that both these U-boats joined the very select few which were sunk in approximately the right position. This was unquestionably due to the fact that the towing ships were in no hurry and did not try to force the pace. (17)*

### **The Royal Navy’s View on “Operation Deadlight” as a Whole**

A short but direct commentary on “Operation Deadlight” as a whole was included in the Report of Proceedings of Captain (D) of the 17th Destroyer Flotilla based on HMS *Onslow*, which had been involved in both the Loch Ryan and Lisahally elements of the operation. In it, Captain St J. A. Micklethwait succinctly summarized the results and lessons:

*At Stranraer the U-boats lay in a very exposed berth and in my opinion the bumping affected their seaworthiness and the foundering rate was greater than those from the comparatively sheltered berths at Lisahally.*

*The U-boat towing bridles (cable) were the weak link in the tow throughout.*

*With the exception of the tugs, the ships detailed to tow were totally unsuitable.*

*The strong wind in Loch Ryan and the sluicing tide off Moville made “taking into tow” a most hazardous operation and frequently ships found themselves within a few yards of running aground with a large U-boat preventing them from steering and the towing wire preventing them going astern.*

*Lt Cdr Weston and Lt Cdr Murray were in charge of connecting up U-boat tows at Loch Ryan and Moville respectively. Absolutely nothing deterred these officers and their capacity for competing with the apparently impossible was beyond praise. (16)*

## **Conclusion**

The destruction of these 116 U-boats, which culminated on 12 February 1946 with the sinking of the Type XXI U-boat *U-3514*, marked the end of the majority of the Kriegsmarine's 156 U-boats that had surrendered at the end of the war in Europe in May 1945. Of the remaining 40 U-boats, 10 had been allocated to the Soviet Union, 10 had been allocated to the USA, 10 had been allocated to the UK, two had been sunk by the US Navy in early February, seven were unserviceable and located in Norwegian ports, and one was unserviceable and located in a French port.

“Operation Deadlight” was not the easiest or most successful operation carried out by the Royal Navy. It took place under political pressure for quick completion during a period of very bad weather to the west of Scotland and the north of Northern Ireland. Although being carefully planned, in many aspects it proved to be impossible to achieve the sinkings in the desired fashion, though in the end all 116 U-boats were disposed of by one means or another prior to the TNC's agreed target date of 15 February 1946. The Royal Navy had done its duty in difficult circumstances and delivered the result required by the politicians. Thus, the long-held determination of the British Government to ensure the elimination of the German submarine fleet was achieved.

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*February 2021*

## **Annex A U-Boats Sunk in “Operation Deadlight”**

### **Loch Ryan (86)**

U-boats foundered en route to the target area – 17

*U-218, U-245, U-281, U-299, U-312, U-313, U-539, U-637, U-776, U-778, U-868, U-907, U-968, U-994, U-1005, U-1271, and U-2328*

U-boats sunk by gunfire en route to the target area – 18

*U-143, U-145, U-149, U-155, U-170, U-291, U-298, U-318, U-369, U-481, U-680, U-775, U-806, U-1009, U-1019, U-1110, U-1194, and U-1233*

U-boat sunk by demolition charges en route to the target area – 1

*U-1104*

U-boats sunk by submarine in the target area – 9

*U-249, U-485, U-532, U-739, U-773, U-978, U-991, U-992, and U-1002*

U-boats sunk by RAF aircraft in the target area – 7

*U-255, U-483, U-716, U-760, U-997, U-1163, and U-1301*

U-boats sunk by RN Fleet Air Arm aircraft in the target area – 5

*U-328, U-1052, U-1203, U-1272, and U-1307*

U-boat sunk by demolition charges in the target area – 1

*U-2345*

U-boats sunk by gunfire in the target area – 28

*U-150, U-293, U-295, U-368, U-427, U-720, U-779, U-826, U-928, U-956,  
U-1004, U-1061, U-1102, U-1103, U-1198, U-1230, U-2321, U-2322, U-2324,  
U-2325, U-2329, U-2334, U-2335, U-2337, U-2350, U-2354, U-2361, and U-2363*

### **Lisahally (30)**

U-boats foundered en-route to the target area – 3

*U-516, U-802, and U-1023*

U-boats sunk by gunfire en-route to the target area – 19

*U-244, U-278, U-294, U-363, U-541, U-764, U-825, U-861, U-874, U-875,  
U-883, U-930, U-1010, U-1022, U-1165, U-2341, U-2502, U-2506, and U-2511*

U-boat sunk by submarine in the target area – 1

*U-1109*

U-boats sunk by gunfire in the target area – 5

*U-668, U-901, U-2336, U-2351, and U-2356*

U-boats sunk by anti-submarine weapons in the target area – 2

*U-975 and U-3514*

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## Material Fit for a Naval Museum: Civil War Ships in Northern Waters

by H.T. Holman



In 1875, a Baedeker-style guidebook for the Canada's Maritime Provinces was published. Included in the text was an overview of transportation in the region. In reviewing the options for travellers, the author ironically observed, "The steamships which ply along these coasts afford material for a naval museum."<sup>1</sup> The author specifically cited three: the *M.A. Starr*, which had been built as a Crimean War-era gunboat; the *Edgar Stuart*, seized for smuggling arms to Cuban revolutionaries in 1872; and the Nova Scotia coastal steamer *Virgo*, which was reputedly built for the US Navy in 1865. The book also noted vessels of the Quebec and Gulf Ports Steamship Company, which were captured American Civil War blockade-runners. The author noted that the region had become the workplace (if not the home port) of many vessels whose stories had begun elsewhere, and some time ago.

Among the aging vessels, it was perhaps the Civil War steamers that made the greatest impact on both visitors and Maritime residents. For more than two decades following the end of the American conflict, veteran vessels from both the North and South were frequently seen in ports along the Atlantic shoreline of the Maritimes and in the Gulf and River of the St Lawrence.<sup>2</sup> During the war itself, the ports of Saint John and Halifax had been of great interest to the American Naval department, and Greg Marquis notes the presence of as many as 50 blockade-runners in those ports over the course of the war—though many simply stopped there after Atlantic crossings. In addition, both the North and South looked to the Maritimes in their search for ships to aid in their respective war efforts.<sup>3</sup>

There are several recent volumes documenting the blockade-runners that include lists of ships engaged in the efforts to continue the trade of cotton for munitions and supplies.<sup>4</sup> While these lists are useful for documenting the largely British-built vessels in the trade, they are often short on details of the continued service done by these vessels after the end of the conflict. In fact, most captured southern ships were either drafted into naval or transport service by the North or sold on the open market, in a few cases passing through several hands before being returned to blockade running. By the end of the war, the Union naval fleet had also been greatly enlarged by purchase and new builds, and hundreds of ships surplus to American naval and civil requirements were released onto the market. This raises the question of the impact these surplus ships had on the shipbuilding industry and shipping in Atlantic Canada. Although the decline of shipbuilding and shipping in the Maritime region has been generally examined, and especially the failure during the period to convert shipbuilding capacity from sail to steam, the effects of the surplus American ships does not appear to have been the subject of sustained study.<sup>5</sup>

In the absence of a detailed study, this paper offers an account of the presence of vessels with Civil War connections in one tiny corner of the shipping trade—the steamship services connecting Prince Edward Island with nearby provinces as well as Quebec and New England. The full extent to which the PEI experience reflects the whole region is unknown, but there were certainly more instances of American-built steamers on routes in Canadian waters than those specifically noted here.<sup>6</sup>



Before the Civil War, the only regular steamship connections with Prince Edward Island were routes established between the colony and its immediate neighbours, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Dating back to the 1830s, these steamship services were mostly single ship operations relying on the mail subsidies of the three colonies as much as on their passenger and freight revenue.<sup>7</sup> The motley collection of short-lived companies with a variety of operators and vessels came to an end with the creation of the Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company, which commenced operations in 1864. The end of the war also saw the development of regular steamer service between the Island and the “Boston States,” as well as increased steamer services linking the province and Montréal and Quebec. All of these routes benefitted from the availability of surplus ships with the end of hostilities.

### **Fast Ships from Foreign Ports**

The establishment of a northern naval blockade of Confederate ports resulted in the development of a large fleet of blockade-runners designed both to bring in supplies for the war effort and to export cotton with which to pay for those supplies. Fast steamers that would operate between ports such as Nassau and Havana and southern coastal towns were purchased wherever they could be found, and others were ordered, mostly from British yards. At war’s end, much of this fleet was still afloat and was on the open market at low price. For Prince Edward Island, this meant that both domestic and foreign steamship companies could increase their fleets with satisfyingly little capital investment.

### **General Whiting / St. Lawrence**

The Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company had grown since its founding in 1864 and by 1868, with increasing traffic, the company decided to acquire an additional steamer. A former Confederate vessel, the *General Whiting*, had been for sale for some time in Saint John when it was acquired by the company, renamed the *St. Lawrence*, and put on the route across Northumberland Strait between Shediac, New Brunswick, and Summerside and Charlottetown.<sup>8</sup> This paddle wheeler, built in Mystic, Connecticut in 1863, was used as a blockade-runner during the American Civil War with the name *General Whiting*. The *General Whiting* made at least four successful passages between Nassau and the Southern States. Between 1866 and 1868, the steamer lay in Saint John, and probably was re-built there to increase its accommodation. At 201 feet in length and 33 feet in width and with a nominal 250 horsepower, it was claimed that the paddle steamer could achieve an average speed of 10 knots but also be “light on fuel.” The *St. Lawrence* continued to operate as part of the cross-Strait service until 1896.

### **Pet / Commerce**

The end of the Civil War also saw the establishment of new steamer services between Prince Edward Island and Boston, a route that built on decades of trade and cultural connections using sailing ships. The companies involved were, for the most part, based in New England, and the route to the Island was part of a larger network of Maritime-New England services.<sup>9</sup>

The Boston and Colonial Steamship Company was incorporated in Massachusetts in 1865, and began the service of direct connection between the Island and New England that lasted for more than half a century. Their first steamer, the *Commerce*, was built in England on the River Tees by the firm of Backhouse and Dixon and was launched, carrying the name *Pet*, in October 1862. Designed in all probability specifically for blockade running, it was a relatively small vessel: 141 feet long and 20 wide, with engines that gave a top speed of 11 1/2 knots. Although not the name on its ownership papers, the ship was the property of the Manchester firm of Alexander Collie & Co., which owned more than 15 blockade-runners, many of which would be eventually seized by the Union forces.

The *Pet* arrived in Nassau, Bahamas—the main port for blockade-runners—in early 1863, and was one of 28 new vessels noted by the US Consul that season. It was a very successful commercial blockade-runner and made between 15 and 20 trips to Nassau over the next year. However, in February 1864, the ship was intercepted on its way from Nassau to Wilmington, Delaware by the USS *Montgomery*. As a prize of war, the *Pet* was sent to Boston to be auctioned off, and in April 1864, it was purchased by Franklin Snow of Boston for \$35,500. The *Pet* arrived in Charlottetown in late May and began a regular service to Boston. The *Pet / Commerce* was the first of a long list of Boston boats that had a Civil War connection.

### **Greyhound**

The almost-new steamer *Greyhound* was placed by the Boston and Colonial company on the Boston-to-Charlottetown run in 1865. It had been built at Port Glasgow on the Clyde in Scotland only two years before. The sleek 201-foot, 460-ton vessel, built by Kilpatrick. McIntyre & Co., carried a full set of sails, but was an iron screw steamer with compound engines by Caird and Company. Like the *Pet*, the *Greyhound* was also probably built specifically as a blockade-runner. Launched late in 1863, its Liverpool owners quickly sold the ship and, by early January 1864, it was headed across the Atlantic for the contested waters off the Confederate States of America. The *Greyhound* made one trip into Wilmington, North Carolina, but its luck ran out on 10 May 1864 as it was leaving Wilmington with 800 bales of government cotton, 35 tons of tobacco, and a number of passengers including Confederate spy Belle Boyd, who later capitalized on her fame and had a theatrical career. Intercepted by the USS *Connecticut*, the *Greyhound* was seized and sent to Boston to be sold to help meet war costs. Assessed at an astonishing \$484,000, this was the highest valuation of a seized vessel ever reached at Boston. By this time, the South was well in retreat. When the northern army entered Charleston, they found near starvation conditions, and on learning of the city's plight, the citizens of Boston raised \$30,000 for food relief in four days. The supplies were sent to the southern city using a chartered vessel—the former blockade-runner, *Greyhound*.

The following year found the *Greyhound* along with the steamer *Commerce* on the Boston-to-PEI route, but the handsome vessel was not destined to have long service. On what was to be its last trip of the year to Charlottetown for 1865, it struck the treacherous Bird Rock Ledges off Nova Scotia and was lost in 11 fathoms of water. The vessel was reportedly insured for \$100,000. The company was able to place its successor, the *Oriental* (another ex-blockade runner), on the PEI run the following spring.

### **Minna / Oriental**

One of the finest of the hundreds of captured blockade-runners was the screw steamer *Minna*. The ship had been built in the Palmer Brothers' yard at Jarrow on the Tyne in 1856. Registered at 774 tons, the 212-foot iron ship had a 264 hp engine driving a screw propeller that gave it an impressive speed. Its first owners were Malcolmson Brothers in Waterford, Ireland, a firm of cotton manufacturers with business links to the American south. Late in 1864, the *Minna* found itself—probably not for the first time—in Nassau loading cargo to be shipped to the waiting Confederates. The USS *Circassian*, which itself had been a former blockade-runner, intercepted the ship off Charleston, near the Carolina coast. It was found to be carrying \$300,000 worth of goods that included quinine, rifles, and powder, as well as a marine engine believed to be intended for a rebel ironclad. Also on board was a consignment of bibles and prayer books, which were in short supply in the south. When the cargo sold in Boston, the Massachusetts Bible Society bought a part of that shipment, but was later refused permission to ship the bibles to the south.

The ship itself was sold early in 1865 to Boston interests for about \$70,000, and was subsequently added to the Boston and Colonial Steamship Company fleet carrying the name *Oriental*. The vessel replaced the *Commerce* in 1866. The *Oriental* continued to be a visitor in Charlottetown Harbour for a number of years, but the vessel is recorded in the Record of American and Foreign Shipping as having been wrecked near Boston in June 1876.

### **Caledonia / Island City**

The Boston and Colonial Steamship Company was not the only line to use Confederate blockade-runners. The short-lived North Shore Steamship Line, for one, provided service to northern New Brunswick ports in the late 1860s using the former blockade-runner *Caledonia*, an iron paddle steamer built on the Clyde by Tod & MacGregor of Glasgow in 1856. Unlike many later vessels, the *Caledonia* was not built especially for use as a blockade-runner, but had operated in British waters for several years by the Glasgow and Stranraer Steam Packet Company. By 1862, however, after a series of sales masking changes of ownership and operations, it was pressed into service running through the Union blockade into the Southern States. The *Caledonia* made one successful voyage, but its luck ran out on the second.

It was captured on 30 May 1864, south of Cape Fear, after a two-hour chase by the USS *Keystone State*, itself a previously captured blockade-runner. The *Caledonia* was sent to Boston and was taken over by the US Quartermaster-General for transport duties. The following year, the vessel was sold, apparently to the Boston firm of Franklin Snow & Co. The firm also had interests in the already-mentioned Boston and Colonial Steamship line, which ran from Boston to Charlottetown via Halifax. The company negotiated with the Government of New Brunswick for a subsidy and established a feeder line serving northern New Brunswick. By mid-September 1865, the *Caledonia* had been renamed the *Island City*, and weekly return trips from Charlottetown to Shediac, Richibucto, Chatham, Newcastle, Caraquet, and Dalhousie were advertised under the banner of the North Shore Steamship Line. The Northumberland Strait service connected at Charlottetown with Snow's Boston and Colonial steamers—the *Commerce* and the *Greyhound*—giving a single transfer access to the “Boston Boats” from northern New Brunswick. However, the North Shore line does not appear to have been a success, because the *Island City* was on a coastal route from Halifax to Yarmouth the following year, and the ship also made voyages to Boston. There were additional changes of ownership and, by 1870, the *Island City*'s registration had been transferred to Boston.

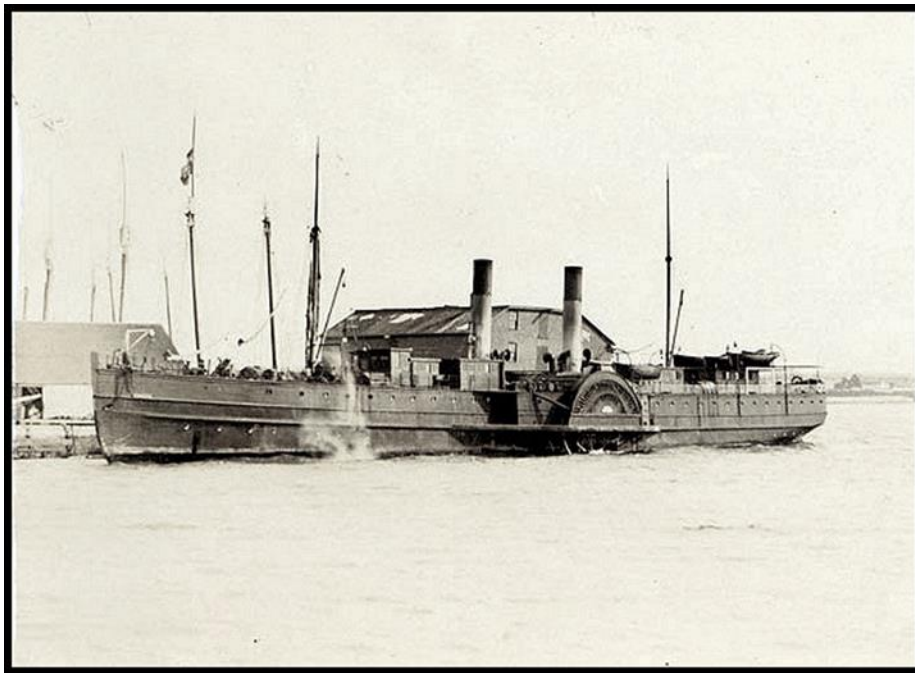
### **Bat /Teazer / Miramichi**

It was not only the Boston steamers and vessels serving Northumberland Strait ports that gave Prince Edward Islanders continuing exposure to Civil War-era ships. The Quebec and Gulf Ports Steamship Company had the Royal Mail contract for voyages between Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and ran several iron paddle-wheel steamers. Passengers and freight connected at Shediac and Pictou for Prince Edward Island, although after Confederation, the line—renamed the Quebec Steamship Company in 1880—often made regular stops at Charlottetown. Beginning in 1872, one of their regular steamers, the *Miramichi*, was placed on the route.<sup>10</sup>

The Liverpool shipbuilding firm of Jones, Quiggins & Co. had built a large number of blockade-runners for both private owners and the government of the Confederacy. In 1864, four identical sister-ships—*Bat*, *Deer*, *Owl*, and *Stag*—were launched from their yards between June and August. Built of steel, they were each 230 feet overall, 26 feet wide, and of relatively shallow draft, drawing only 6 feet 6 inches when fully loaded. Although schooner rigged, their primary propulsion was from 180 horse-power twin vertical oscillating Watt

engines fired by two boilers driving side-paddle wheels. The fine straight lines of the ships were surmounted by two funnels. One of the outstanding features of this class of blockade-runners was their speed. Indeed, the *Bat* reached 14 knots in trials but was capable of higher speeds when loaded, because the paddles were then deeper in the water. These ships were each designed to carry from 800 to 850 bales of cotton through the Union blockade to provide revenue for the beleaguered south. On return trips, they would carry necessary supplies and materials for the war effort.

The *Bat* was launched on 1 August 1864, and within a few days was pressed into service. On its first trip for the Confederacy, it carried a cargo of shoe-making machinery across the Atlantic. Stopping for coal at Halifax, the ship headed south to try and sneak into the port of Wilmington, North Carolina. The steamer evaded several of the blockade ships, but was spotted by the patrol vessel USS *Montgomery*. The *Bat* was unable to get up to speed before it was fired on. A single shot hit the *Bat*'s deckhouse, fatally wounding a crew member, and the ship surrendered immediately. The *Bat* was then sent to Boston, where it was condemned as a war prize and purchased in November 1864 by the US Navy for \$150,000. As the USS *Bat*, the ship saw out the rest of the war without incident. Auctioned in New York following the end of the war, the steamer was sold for less than



**Fig. 1. Quebec and Gulf Ports Steamship Company's *Miramichi* (ex-*Bat*, ex-*Teaser*) at Charlottetown, 1893. PEI Public Archives and Records Office Accession 3218/70. Public domain.**

\$30,000 and renamed the SS *Teazer*. It may have operated between Boston or New York and New Orleans, but in 1872 it came to Quebec, having been purchased by the Quebec & Gulf Ports Steamship Company. It was again renamed, this time as the SS *Miramichi*. For the next twenty years the *Miramichi* was a frequent visitor to Charlottetown as well as Summerside. In 1895, however, it was replaced by a newer ship, and the thirty-year-old *Miramichi* (ex-*Teazer*, ex-*Bat*) was limited to routes on the St. Lawrence. In 1902, it became the property of the Richelieu & Ontario Navigation Company, but appears to have been scrapped shortly after.

## **Secret**

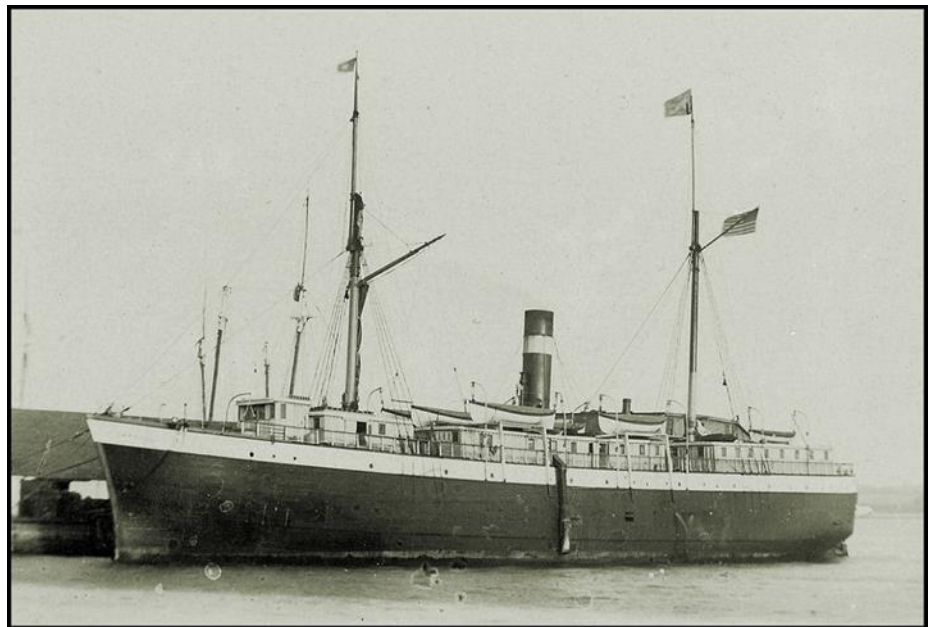
In addition to the *Miramichi*, the Quebec and Gulf Ports fleet also included the former blockade-runner *Secret*, which the Company had purchased in 1867 and substantially re-modeled for the Gulf service. The 231-foot *Secret* had been built in Seacombe, England in 1864. Although it did not call at Prince Edward Island ports on a regular schedule, it was well known to Island shippers and passengers because it often supplemented other services, especially during the fall shipping of produce from the Island. The *Secret* was sold to a New England company in 1881 for service between St. John, Halifax, and Boston, and two years later was in the hands of the Nova Scotia Steamship company for their run between Annapolis and Boston. The ship does not appear to have operated after 1889.

## **Freighters and Fighters; Some Northern Ships in Island Waters**

Blockade-runners may have been the most storied of the Civil War ships in the St. Lawrence waterways, but they were not the only survivors of the conflict to have a second life in northern waters. Surplus steamships of the Union Navy and its associated fleet of support vessels were also offered on the market at the conclusion of the war, and several of these were frequent visitors to the region.

## **Proteus / Carroll, Nereus / Somerset, Glaucus / Worcester**

In 1863, industrialist William P. Williams of New York commissioned a quintet of wooden steamships from the Van Deusen Shipyards in the belief that, as long as the Civil War continued, it would create a market for new steamers for either civil or naval purposes. The five commissioned boats were almost identical: 209 feet long, 34 or 35 feet wide, drawing from 17 to 20 feet, and displacing over 1000 tons. Henry Esler & Co. provided the machinery. They were fired by horizontal tube boilers powering two-cylinder direct action engines at right angles to the shaft. The cast iron propellers were twelve feet in diameter. The boats were awkward looking, being high-sided with just a hint of a clipper bow and looking as if the bowsprit had been forgotten. The most striking element in the design was the placement of the wheel house: well forward, and leaving an unusually short fore-deck.



**Fig. 2. Boston and Colonial Steamship Company's steamer *Carroll* (ex-*Proteus*) at Charlottetown ca.1890. PEI Public Archives and Record Office Accession 3218/69. Public domain.**

Williams' gamble paid off: even before the launch of the first boat, all five were purchased by the US Navy for \$160,000 each. The steamers *Galatea*, *Glaucus*, *Nereus*, *Neptune*, and *Proteus* were all named for sea gods in Greek mythology, and all were elevated by their military prefix: USS. All of the vessels were engaged in enforcing the blockade of the

southern ports, but only the USS *Nereus* saw active duty; in December 1864 and January 1865, it was one of the ships involved in the attacks on Fort Fisher, which protected the port of Wilmington, North Carolina.

On 12 July 1865, four of the vessels were acquired by agents for the Baltimore and Ohio Railway. The B&O Railway had decided to establish a direct first-class steamship service between Baltimore and Liverpool, which began in 1865. The *Proteus* was renamed the *Carroll*, the *Nereus* was renamed *Somerset*; the *Glaucus* became the *Worcester*, and the *Neptune* became the *Allegany*. The steamship service continued on a monthly basis using three of the ships: the *Carroll*, the *Somerset*, and the *Worcester*. (The *Allegany* was lost on Long Island in 1865.) By 1868, though, it was clear that the vessels were too small and slow to provide a first-class service across the Atlantic, and the experiment was brought to a close.

In 1870-71, the three remaining vessels were sold to F. Nickerson and Company of Boston who, with Franklin Snow, were already operating the Boston – Halifax – Charlottetown service. The “very superior” *Somerset* joined another Boston and Colonial steamer, the *Alhambra*, on the Charlottetown – Boston run in 1873. When the *Alhambra* was wrecked early in 1875 at Cape Sable, Nova Scotia, the vessel was replaced on the Charlottetown run by the *Worcester*. Later, both the *Carroll* and the *Worcester* became fixtures in the harbour, while the *Somerset* made occasional appearances. Although both ill-suited to the cross-Atlantic run, the vessels were ideal for the shorter Maritime – New England route. For more than two decades, the two boats—which were almost impossible to tell apart—were jointly known to Islanders as the Boston Boats.

### **Merrimack**

Other vessels also served the route, although they only ran for brief periods. In 1886, the *Worcester* and *Carroll* were joined by the 260-foot, 2200-ton steamer *Merrimack*. This vessel was one of the first iron vessels built in Boston, and was already 27 years old. It had seen service as a leased transport for Union forces during the Civil War. The ship had been on a route to Brazil for a number of years, and had subsequently sailed between Boston and Halifax. Its first trip to Charlottetown in July 1886, with one hundred passengers, was inauspicious: it fetched up on Rifleman Reef in Northumberland Strait, and was not able to get off until the following day. The *Merrimack*'s brief service ended in July 1887, when it was lost without loss of life on Little Hope Island, Nova Scotia.

### **Steamers with a Long Wake**

Ultimately, the preponderance of former Civil War vessels providing service in PEI waters must have had an effect on the economy of the region.<sup>11</sup> Up to the mid-1860s, PEI had a strong shipbuilding industry, but it all but disappeared in the following years. Although the primary market for Island-built wooden ships was almost exclusively the United Kingdom, after 1865, north-south trade became an increasingly significant factor in the use of vessels. However, local participation in this trade—as well as in coastal voyages—suffered from the easy availability of second-hand steamships. PEI shipbuilder James Duncan complained in 1870 that “we see no prospect of profitable employment for vessels in the local coasting trade as the steamers to Boston, Halifax and Montreal take nearly everything.”<sup>12</sup> Was a contributing cause of the depression in Maritime shipbuilding the large number of ships built for both sides of the American conflict, and which were released on the market after war's end? While more research is needed to determine the extent to which these wartime ships affected the maritime commerce of Canada's Atlantic region, this much can certainly be said: during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, in Prince Edward Island ports at least, many of the steamers to Boston, Halifax, and Montreal that commanded the bulk of the trade were survivors of the American conflict, and their numbers were such that they could very

well populate a naval museum dedicated to ships of the Civil War.

## Endnotes

1. Moses Foster Sweetser, *The Maritime Provinces: A Handbook for Travellers*. Boston: Osgoode 1875 p.5. The guidebook went into at least 11 editions extending into the mid-1890s, and the museum comment continued to appear until at least 1888.
2. At least one of the vessels survived into the twentieth century.
3. Greg Marquis, "The Ports of Halifax and Saint John and the American Civil War." *The Northern Mariner/ Le Marin du nord* VII No. 1 (January 1998) 1.
4. Stephen R. Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy: Blockade Running During the Civil War* (Columbia S.C.) 1989. Joseph McKenna, *British Blockade Runners in the American Civil War* Jefferson NC McFarland 2019.
5. Rosemary E. Ommer, "The decline of the eastern Canadian shipping industry, 1880-95." *The Journal of Transport History*; Mar 1, 1984; 5, 1; Nicolas J. deJong and Marven E. Moore, *Shipbuilding on Prince Edward Island: Enterprise in a Maritime Setting 1787-1920*. Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization 1994; Eric W. Sager and Lewis R. Fischer, "Patterns of Investment in the Shipping Industries of Atlantic Canada, 1820-1900." *Acadiensis* Vol. IX No. 1 Autumn 1979.
6. The short vessel histories noted here are based on a wide range of primary and secondary sources. Additional details can be found at the listings for Boston Boats and Coastal steamers at [Steamers of the Port of Charlottetown | Sailstrait \(wordpress.com\)](#)
7. H.T. Holman, "Altogether Unproductive of Profit": History of the First Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company." *The Northern Mariner / Le Marin du nord*, XXX, No. 1 (Spring 2020) 23-44; H.T. Holman, "Christopher Boultenhouse's *Westmorland* and the Northumberland Strait Steamer Service" *Argonauta* Volume XXXVII No. 3 (Summer 2020) 26-33.
8. This appears not to have been the only name change. Although press reports consistently refer to the *General Whiting*, when the vessel was re-registered in Charlottetown, the ledger noted that the foreign name was the *Raphael*.
9. Arthur L. Johnson, "Boston and the Maritime Provinces: A Century of Steam Navigation" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of Maine at Orono, 1971).
10. An overview of the steamer services in the Gulf of St. Lawrence can be found in Kevin Griffin: [St Lawrence Saga: The Clarke Steamship Story https://clarkesteamship.wordpress.com](#)
11. The vessel trade was not entirely one-way. In 1862, the former Northumberland Strait steamer *Lady Le Marchant* became the US Revenue Cutter *Miami*. See [Northumberland Strait Steamer Lady Le Marchant became US revenue cutter | Sailstrait \(wordpress.com\)](#). It was also rumored that the Confederacy was interested in buying the Island Steam Navigation Company's steamer *Heather Belle*, which served Prince Edward Island river and coastal ports. Boyde Beck, "Song for the Heather Belle." *The Island Magazine* No. 17 Summer 1985 12-14.
12. J. Duncan & Co. to David Anderson, 27 January 1870. PEI Public Archives and Records Office Accession 2654 item 22 p.164.



## The Life of Douglas Malcolm McLean

Excerpted from the original by Bob Hills and forwarded by Richard Gimblett

Doug McLean passed away 13 Oct 2021, following a three-year struggle with PSP—Progressive Supranuclear Palsy—an incurable degenerative disease that causes increasingly more severe problems with balance, coordination, and cognitive ability. He is survived by his wife, Rejeanne, and their children Matthew and Sarah.

Doug hailed from the North Bay, Ontario area, the son of Wilfred and Margaret McLean, and oldest brother to Brian, Carole-Ann, and Shelley. The family moved from Hearst to Callandar when he was a child. The 6th most famous person from Callandar, immediately behind the Dionne Quintuplets, Doug claimed to be actually third, ahead of three of the quintuplets. He arrived at RMC Kingston in August 1975, where he was assigned to 5 Sqn, N Flight. Doug was one of only two Artsmen among the N Flight Rooks, impressing the wanna-be engineers and applied science types with his collection of books that didn't come with crayons. Remaining in Fort Champlain, Doug moved upstairs to 6 Sqn for his next two years, and was appointed CSTO in 4th year. Doug became president of the RMC Wargames Club, and remained an active and highly competitive board and computer gamer for the rest of his life. He graduated in 1979 with a degree in Honours History, and after grad remained long-time friends with Peter Dennis and Ron Haycock, both former History professors at RMC.

Doug was a MARS officer, spending much of his operational time with the West Coast (MARPAAC) fleet. While on a port visit to Vancouver in 1981, he was on-duty during the ship's "open to the public" PR day. One of the visitors, who had been reluctantly dragged down to the port by one of her friends to "see the big boats," was Rejeanne Boissonneault. Doug and Rejeanne were wed exactly one year later (Doug claimed to only want to have to remember one Anniversary date). As a reward for his hardship tour on the West Coast, in 1984 Doug and his bride were posted to Argentia Newfoundland, where Rejeanne commented that the best part of the really deep snow that started falling in September was that it killed off a lot of the sparrow-sized mosquitoes and black flies.

A posting to Halifax Fleet School in 1986, and then to HMCS Annapolis was followed by a brief tour in NDHQ. He applied, and was accepted, for a Masters programme at RMC in 1990, earning his MA in 1992, and a posting back to the West Coast to teach History at Royal Roads from '92 until '95. This was followed by two NDHQ tours, separated by a year at CF Staff College ('98-'99) in Toronto. Dues paid, Doug was posted to NAS Whidbey Island (Washington State) from 2002-2005, moving from there to Chilliwack BC, and retiring as a LCdr out of Vancouver summer 2005.

A highly respected historian, Doug remained active in the academic world. His personal library contained dozens of books and magazine articles he had reviewed or edited. Still not a crayon in sight. In 2008/2009 he published his book "*Fighting at Sea: Naval Battles from the Ages of Sail and Steam*," a well-reviewed collection of essays describing six naval engagements taking place between 1759 and 1944.

Doug was active in his community. He ran the Chilliwack Rotary Club book sale in 2010 and 2011 as well as being a force behind the scenes for the book sale for years. He



controlled the “Special Books Department”, spending hundreds of hours researching and finding many rare and valuable books amongst the donations. From 2010-2016 he was heavily involved in the committee that ran the Rotary student exchange program. He left Rotary in 2016 and joined Kiwanis. He was a regular volunteer with the Kiwanis Super Readers program that promoted literacy in elementary/middle schools. He and members of his family participated annually in Operation Rednose, a programme designed to reduce impaired driving over the Christmas/New Years’ holiday period.



Victoria Harbour, May 1977. While on summer training, Doug and the Salty Dogs prepare to escort the Lieutenant-Governor of BC in their clinker-built cutter, clad in the old British Jack-Tar sailor outfits. From left to right, from the stern: Rich Gimblett and Marc-André Gagnon, Mark Beaulieu and Butch Bouchard, Dave Bannister, Guy Killaby, Doug McLean, Rick Bracken, Dave Marshall, Pete Avis and Marcel Ethier, Gilles Hainse and Denis Bouchard.

Doug will be missed.

# Argonauta Guidelines for Prospective Authors

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*Argonauta* aims to publish articles of interest to the wider community of maritime research enthusiasts. We are open to considering articles of any length and style, including research articles that fall outside the boundaries of conventional academic publishing (in terms of length or subject-matter), memoirs, humour, reviews of exhibits, descriptions of new archival acquisitions, and outstanding student papers. We also publish debates and discussions about changes in maritime history and its future. We encourage submissions in French and assure our authors that all French submissions will be edited for style by a well-qualified Francophone. Articles accepted for publication should be easily understood by interested non-experts.

For those producing specialized, original academic work, we direct your attention to *The Northern Mariner*, a peer-reviewed journal appropriate for longer, in-depth analytical works also managed by the Canadian Nautical Research Society.

Except with proper names or in quotations, we follow standard Canadian spelling. Thus, the Canadian Department of Defence and the American Department of Defense may both be correct in context.

For ship names, only the first letter of the names of Royal Canadian Navy ships and submarines is capitalized, and the name appears in italics. For example:

Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Protecteur*  
Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Preserver*  
Class of ship/submarine: *Victoria*-class submarines (not VICTORIA Class submarines)  
Former HMCS *Fraser* rather than Ex-*Fraser*  
Foreign ships and submarines:  
    USS *Enterprise*  
    HMS *Victory*  
    HMAS *Canberra* 3

Following current industry standard, ships are considered gender-neutral.

Although *Argonauta* is not formally peer-reviewed, the editors carefully review and edit each and every article. Authors must be receptive to working with the editors on any revisions they deem necessary before publication; the editors reserve the right to make small formatting, stylistic, and grammatical changes as they see fit once articles are accepted for publication.

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