

Page 47 - Procedure Report of Bodies Brought to Port-aux-Basques from the III-Fated Vessel S.S. Caribou ISSUE : <u>Issue 46</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1987/8/1

cident. As all the vessels had returned, plans were made to return and continue the search on the following day. Gas and Oil were given out, and at dawn the boats went out again. Thursday, 15th October 1942. With the vessels out again the four bodies that had been found were pre? pared for burial. As there is no Funeral Parlor or other facilities at Port Aux Basques, speed was es? sential. All four bodies were removed to the Or? ange HalT. Carpenters started to build caskets, and women were brought in to wash the bodies and dress them. When they were prepared for placing in their caskets I went in to view the bodies, and it was then I recognized the body of N/S A.W. Wilkie. But while the women were washing her they had found a Gold Identification Bracelet, which had been loose-fitting and had slipped up to her elbow, and had been overlooked the previous evening. Re? ceiving the news, Sgt. Woodley immediately wired G.O.C. Canadians full particulars. 1735 hrs October 15, 1942. Boats returned from the search with 13 bodies aboard one; 7 aboard another; 6 aboard another; 3 aboard another and 1 aboard an- FOOD FOR THOUGHT Agriculture is extremely important to the economy of Nova Scotia. Agricultural exhibitions give Nova Scotians and others the opportunity to view the vast array of produce and hvestock grown in the province and a chance to appreciate the value of the industry and the quality of life in the agricultural community. The Agricultural industry in Nova Scotia employs over 7000 workers on 5000 farms. The total capital value of these farms is \$850 million and agricultural production has a farm gate value of S27,3 million Our food processing industry is equally impressive Over 7500 individuals are employed in the manufacturing and processing of food and beverages in 180 Nova Scotia establishments. For further information contact your local agricultural office. Other • making a total of 30 altogether. Of the 30 bodies, 8 of these were Military Personnel, 1 Army, 3 R.C.A.F., 2 Navy and one American, also one civ? ilian who had been an Inspector of Naval Stores whom we classed as Military. No time was lost in stripping these bodies and searching for identification--this completed, full details were wired to G.O.C. Canadians, requesting that instructions be wired back. Friday, October 16th 1942. No instructions re-Agriculture and Marketing ceived. But meanwhile Rigor Mortis was setting in? to the bodies. Bodies had to be cleaned up and washed. Mr. George asked us to look after the bod? ies of Military Personnel, as the people of Port Aux Basques had their hands full looking after their next-of-kin and the remaining civilians. The next question was would the Army Police feel like handling the bodies; when asked they said they would render any aid possible. Sqt. Woodley had wired for permission to hold the Train Patrol and one other who had been proceeding on Furlough. Ar? my Police concerned were: McQueen, Poirier, Schaf- fer, Williams and Mackie. The assistance rendered by these men is to be praised by myself and the citizens for a long time. Taking the responsi? bility upon myself, I went to the local mer? chants and bought the necessary implements to work with. This done, we then asked Mr. Hanson of the Cape Construction Co. if he could make us nine rough coffins to place



the bodies in, which he agreed to do. Then came the gruesome task of cleaning up the bodies. L/Cpl. Poir? ier and myself washed the bodies with soap and water using Lysol in the water as a dis? infectant; this done we dried the bodies, pow? dered the face and chest, combed the hair, closed the eyes and then folded their hands and arms across their chests. Then the bod? ies were placed in sheeting and sewn up, just leaving enough open so that the bodies could be identified. As we were doing this the oth? er men were carrying the next body to be dressed and placing the dressed bodies in their caskets. Sgt. Woodley was standing by marking down the identification marks and listing their personal effects. About 1500 hrs Major Cassidy, Captain Adder, a Doctor, and the American Base Embalmer arrived by plane from Fort Pepperel, for the purpose of embalming an American Major and one American Base Worker. When it was learned what they had come for, Sgt. Woodley told him about N/S Wilkie, and the Major stated that if there was enough embalming fluid they would also embalm the Nursing Sister. There was suffi? cient fluid and Mr. Ball took particular care to do a good job. Once again we were called upon, this time to be Embalmers' assistants. The major part of this duty was handled by L/Cpl. Poirier. After N/S Wilkie was com? pleted, we decided to go to bed, as it was past midnight and the men were nearly ex? hausted, as little or no sleep had been had since Wednesday morning. CONTINUED DINO'S fresh baked goods * souvenirs magazines * film * charcoal gifts * novels * camp fuel * ice Ingonish STAY AT DINO'S Trailer Park Laundromat close to the National Park One Stop Store & Restaurant Ingonish (47: