

Page 40 - A Visit with Art Langley Sr.

ISSUE: Issue 22

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1979/6/1

I'm doing this to prove to you that it can be done, and that I can do it. And they gave me just about double my price. No guestions asked, the cheque came. I should have had about '20,000 for it, at least, instead of what I had. That would be the smallest I should have had. They couldn't get drydocks at that time to put the ship on. They'd have to have got another ship to come to take her cargo, and then take that ship to a drydock in Montreal or Bos? ton or Halifax. That was it. See what I saved them? After that there was never a wreck around this coast, but I was con? sulted and made the survey, and whatever I said, went, and whatever I recommended, that was carried out. That's the kind of recommendation I had from the underwrit? ers • Salvage Association of London. And during the war, those salvage jobs were all 10,000-ton ships. And I was look? ing after them. I worked in Sydney, Hali? fax, Lunenburg, and Shelburne • I had men in all these places. We took care of every ship that had underwater damage that came into Sydney Harbour, every one. Nobody else would do anything there, only me, for the Second World War. There were no dry-docks here to take those kind of ships. We'd take care of them with our divers, just the same as I took care of that one in Canso (the Ulva). I had the men, I had the experience, I had the pumps, the un? derwater cutting torches • and I knew how to use them. I introduced that stuff here. As soon as something came out for welding underwater, I grabbed that right away. All the work would be done underwater, that's to be sure. There was one down there came into Sydney, she was in colli? sion with another ship. She was rammed at No. k hatch, right in the middle, and she was almost cut into the hatch. They said she was loaded with steel and army trucks and what-have-you, all kinds of war mater? ial for over there. That day we had exam? ined 5 ships before we came to this one. Some had a little damage, some didn't have any, but there was a reason to make a sur? vey. We got over to this one about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and our men were getting pretty tired. But we went aboard and I met the captain. The first thing he says, we've got to get at this job right away. I said, "Now look, captain, it's 3 o'clock, and our men had no dinner. I think we'll come out early in the morning and do this." "There's a lot to eat in this ship," he says, "lots of food here." He pressed the button and he got some steward or something to come along. He says, "Will your men do the work?" So I asked them. "Yes, if they give us our din? ner, we'll do it." It wasn't long, my son, when they sat down to a famous dinner. It wasn't like in England, coming over, they had nothing there, they had to take every? thing from this side. So we saw the damage, and I said to the captain, just joking, I said, "I'm going to have a lot of fun repairing that dam? age." He said, "You're going to have a lot of fun," he said, "you're going to get at it right away. They're waiting for this in England." I said, "I can't do that job. I haven't got the men or the equipment • she's almost cut in two. That's a tremen? dous job • we'd never get her tight • if we ever got her pumped out." He said, "There's no drydocks to put this ship on, and you're going to make an effort." He said • "I've heard about you" • he talked like that. "Well," I said, "we'll go and we'll see what the Minister of War Trans? port has to



say, see the underwriters." And my god, they were all for me. I had done that job with the Ulva in Canso, you see, that was ahead of me. My record was good with the underwriters. I'd have done the Ulva for nothing, you see, that put my name on the map. This ship was the Empire Bunting. I didn't think we could do it • I thought that was beyond me • I hadn't gall enough for that one. I said, if we'd get her tight. But I couldn't see how we could do it. Once I got her tight, I wasn't scared • get her into the pier and get that a ittle bit of Paris" for reservations 539-4671 2 to 10 sed Sunday) 233 Esplanade Sydney Nova Scotia FuU Wine Cellar Tourist Brochures & Colour Printing A Specialty PRINTERS LIMITED 180 TOWNSENO STREET, SYDNEy; N.S. TELEPHONE (902: 56M24S AIR CANADA Ladies and Children's Wear Se? SERVING CANADA COAST TO COAST CARRIBEAN THE UNITED STATES • UNITED KINGDOM • EUROPE Finr mformation c??ff your Travel Agent or ikID f'A9iiAr??k SYONCY. NOVA SCOTIA MIK V##IM/UM TCLEFHONC S394CM 31' Charlotte Street Sydney CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF SERVICE