

Paul Brown

WW II

Royal Navy Rescue Tug Service

My father Paul Brown was born August 8, 1926 in Chelsea, Massachusetts, USA. His father was William John Brown and his mother was Elsie M. (nee Mercer) Brown. Both of them were born in Newfoundland but had moved to the United States where my grandfather was employed as a Carpenter working to support his rapidly growing family. Dad was about 8 yrs. old when his parents decided to move back home to the Island of Newfoundland. There they settled in Bay Roberts. I was told that they lived very comfortably in the US but that changed quite a bit when they returned home! These were the years of the Great Depression and times were very hard! My dad eventually became one of eight children consisting of 4 sisters and 4 brothers. At the tender age of 14 he was already employed as a truck driver in Gander. By age 17 he had decided to enlist in the Royal Navy to sail overseas to fight in the Second World War. Previous to that he had met my mother Margaret Joan Greenslade and they

became engaged to be married. They exchanged many love letters while my dad was overseas. To this day she still remembers how she would address her letters to him. They were addressed this way: Signalman: Paul Brown T124T/RTPLR319189 HMRT GROWLER. The envelopes were blue in colour and designed specifically for wartime correspondence. He was also on another wartime ship by the name of HMS Nimrod. After spending 2 years overseas, and approximately 2 weeks after returning home dad married his childhood sweetheart at a little Salvation Army Church on Duckworth St. in St. John's. The ceremony was performed by Major Wallace Pike on Nov. 14, 1945. In October of 1946 my sister Barbara Jean was born, and in December of 1948 I (Sharon Joan) was born. Dad later went on to work as a Taxi driver for a company known as Radio Cabs, and after that as a Bus driver with the Capital Coach-line Bus Company, both located in St. John's. His greatest working achievement was when he became a civilian member of the RCMP on March 26, 1956 where he later worked in the Criminal Investigation Division. After 29 years of faithful service dad retired in 1985. One year after his retirement he was stricken with Rheumatoid Arthritis. My mother lovingly cared for him for the next 9 1/2 years until after severe complications he moved to the Caribou Memorial Veteran's Pavilion in St. John's. He received excellent care by the staff. Dad passed away there on March 24, 1995 at the age of 68 after only a brief six-month stay.

My father very seldom wanted to talk about his experiences during the war years. A few times he did relate some of them. One of them was about when a ship he was on was torpedoed. He was wounded during that event and along with his fellow soldiers had to be rescued from the ocean waters. Another time he said he was

on an airplane that was shot down. Thank God he survived! However, thereafter he would never again fly in an airplane! He once told my sister that if she ever moved away and wanted to see him she would have to fly home! He had no intentions of tempting fate a second time!

My favourite war story was one my father told my then-to-be future son-in-law sometime in the 1990's. He said that he and his fellow soldiers raided a German Communications Station. We believe this may have been on a German occupied island ... exactly where, we don't know. Dad said that during the raid the German Commander refused to submit to handing over his gun. He simply stood to attention with his hands behind his back refusing to co-operate. Dad had to remove the Commander's belt with the Luger (gun) in the holster and get the gun himself. He intended to bring the gun home with him if he should survive the war. Later he was told that he couldn't bring the gun into Canada unless he de-activated it first. He then decided to sell it instead to an American before coming home. Hanging on the wall of that same German Commander's office was a large German Nazi flag with the Swastika symbol on it. Dad removed the flag and brought it home with him after the war was over. That flag is in my possession today.

In Feb. of 1967 my father Paul Brown was notified that by virtue of his service in the Royal Navy he qualified for 4 medals. They are:

1. The 1939-1945 Star (service in Africa or on sea around)
2. The Pacific Star Medal 1942-1945
3. The France & Germany Star (June 1944-May 1945)
4. British War Medal (service medal) 1939-1945

My mother who is now 90 yrs. old still recalls one evening, many years after the war, when she and my dad were watching a television documentary about the Second World War and how he suddenly stood up and left the room saying, "Damn the memories!"

I can only imagine what must have been going through his mind! How many men and women who survived the great wars of this world were changed forever! I know without a doubt my father suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder! My father once told my daughter (his only granddaughter) "The older men on board our ship could hardly get a wink of sleep many nights because they knew that at any time we could be torpedoed!

We younger men were so innocent that even while lying next to the noisy engine room we could go to sleep!" How soon they would learn what War was all about! So many of them paid the Ultimate Sacrifice! None of us will ever live long enough to repay them!

I know there were many more experiences my father could have told me about his time serving in the Second World War but I truly feel he couldn't bear to talk about them!

Thank God for the countless number of brave soldiers who died for our freedom! Also, thank God for those who were fortunate enough to have survived to come home to their families once again! We will NEVER forget them!

If only this world would LISTEN and VOW to NEVER GO TO WAR AGAIN!

Recollections by the daughter of Paul Brown ... Signalman who served on the ships HMRT Growler and HMS Nimrod during World War II.

Sharon Joan (nee Brown) Taylor



Dad's Medals with description (left) of each



Dad's Web Belt with his writings inside



Service Number "RTP/R 319189"



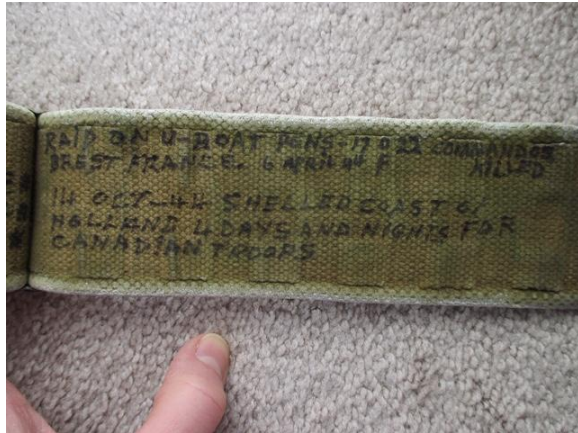
Mom & Dad's Wedding Day (Nov 14th 1945)



"Paul Brown - 4th Royal Navy - Commando Squadron - Oct 1944"



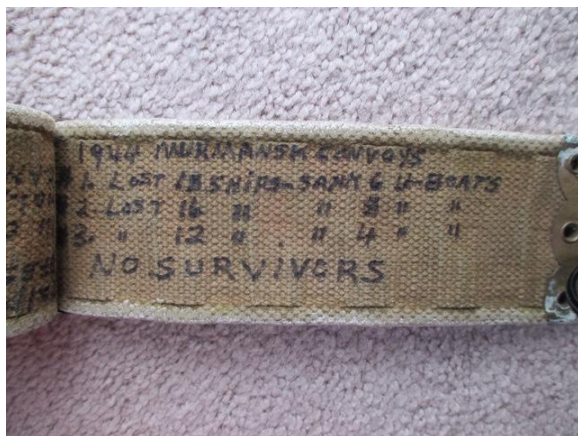
"Courting Days"



"Raid on U-Boat Pens-17 0 22 Commandos Killed"
 "Brest France. 6 April 44 F"
 "14 Oct-44 Shelled Coast Of"
 "Holland 4 Days and Nights For Canadian Troops"



"Coast of Holland - of 26 4 returned"
 "4th Oct 1944"
 "Raid on V-2 Rocket Labs and Launch Pads"



"1944 MURMANSK Convoys"
 "1. Lost 18 (15?) Ships - Sank 6 U-Boats"
 "2. Lost 16 Ships - Sank 8 (?) U-Boats"
 "3. Lost 12 Ships - Sank 4 U-Boats"
 "NO SURVIVORS"

