



John Harris Mercer

Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland)

Royal Navy

Service No. LT/JX 195265

World War II

Born: 08 October 1921

Died: 02 November 1940

Place of Birth: Beachy Cove, Bay Roberts, Conception Bay, Newfoundland

Parents: John Hayward and Fanny Violet Mercer

John enlisted in the Royal Naval Reserve of Newfoundland as soon as he was of age to do so at eighteen (18).

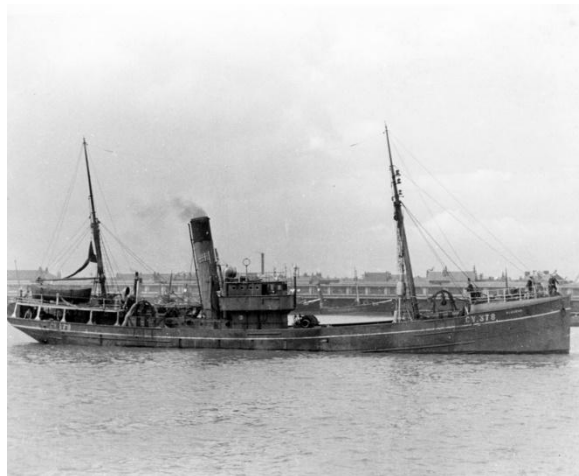
He came from a family of four (4) children according to the 1935 Newfoundland

census. He had two (2) sisters and one brother, but he was the oldest.

John embarked St. John's, Newfoundland with the men of the 6th naval contingent on April 26, 1940. Just six (6) months later he would be lost with the sinking of the HMT Rinovia.

Built as the BLAKKUR (GY378) for Rinovia Steam Fishing, Grimsby, by Cook, Welton & Gemmell, Beverley; Yard No 566; Launched 27/08/1937; In 1938 vessel renamed RINOVIA; On 10th December 1938, the trawler ran aground in the Orkneys, becoming stranded on the island of Rusholme in the Westray Firth. All the crew were rescued; On 31/08/1939 the vessel was requisitioned by the Royal navy as a minesweeper; In September 1940 vessel grounded at Dartmouth and re-floated.

On 02/11/1940 the H.M.T. RINOVIA sunk by mine off Falmouth Bay, 2.9 miles off St. Anthony Light. 14 Men were lost that day, Ordinary Seaman, John Harris Mercer was one of them. He had just turned 19 years old.



HMT Rinovia

John is commemorated on the Lowestoft Naval Memorial, panel 4 column 2 in the United Kingdom. He is also commemorated

on page 181 of the Newfoundland Book of Remembrance in Ottawa.

In Memoriam

In loving memory of Seaman John Harris Mercer, aged 19, who sacrificed his young life for his King and Country on H.M.T. "Rinovia," Nov. 2, 1940.

Just a while ago he left us
To answer Britain's call,
And fight for home and loved ones,
And his comrades, one and all.

He longed to join the Navy,
And wear the suit of blue;
But tonight he's gently sleeping
Beneath the waters, deep and blue.

He was the pride of home and mother,
No one else can fill his place;
But in heaven some day we'll meet him
And behold him, face to face.

Often we've watched him homeward coming;
Listened for his footsteps at the door,
But his bright young face, so happy,
We will see on earth no more.

He was young and gay and happy,
And a hero, brave and bold,
And he sacrificed his young life
As the heroes did of old.

Oh, if we knew where he is resting,
Or could we look upon his lonely grave;
But he's sleeping beneath the water,
With many a hero brave.

Now our home is sad and lonely
Since our hero boy is gone;
But he freely gave his young life
For his King and Country's call.

Tonight our hearts are broken,
For our boy we'll see no more,
Until that great eternal morning
When we'll meet to part no more.

—Inserted by his parents,
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Mercer,
Bay Roberts East.

**From The Bay Roberts
Guardian
07 December 1940**

PRICE: TWO CENTS.

Bay Roberts Guardian 01 Jan 1941

**Memorial Service
For Men Who Paid
Supreme Sacrifice**

A Memorial Service for three young men of Bay Roberts,—Harris Mercer, Sutherland Snow and Roy McLeod—who laid down their lives in the present war, will be held in Central United Church on Sunday, Jan. 12th, at 2.45 p.m. and will be conducted by Rev. J. L. Reynolds, M.A.

As Sutherland Snow was a member of Victoria L.O.L. No. 3, and Harris Mercer a member of Victoria Band, the Orange Association will attend this service in a body. Bethern from other neighbouring lodges are also invited to attend.

It is also expected that representatives of the G.W.V.A., and the Nfld. Patriotic Assn., will also be present.

Order of Service

The order of Service at Central Church, which will include the favourite hymns of the three young men, is as follows:

Organ Prelude.
Choir: Anthem.
Hymn: 541—"At even when the sun was set."
Prayer.
Choir: Anthem — "The Old Rugged Cross."
Scripture.
Hymn: 497—"O Safe is the Rock".
Sermon—Rev. J. L. Reynolds.
Hymn: 525—"O valiant hearts."
Benediction.
National Anthem.

1940 STOKER

NEWTON J.
NICHOLSON J.
O'BRIEN T.
PAGET F. G.
PATERSON J.
PEARSON E. A.
PECK R.
PENISTONE H.
PLUMMER G. W.
PRYCE S. N.
REID G.
RITCHIE G. A.
SAVAGE J. D.
SLEEMAN J. P.
STOCKS J. B.
SWANN J.
TAYLOR R.
TAYLOR W.
TICKNER J. H. G.
WAINWRIGHT J. H.
WALKER A.
WALTERS W.
WARD G. C.
WATSON A.
WEBSTER P. J. T.
WHITESIDE T. E.
WILLSON F.
WORLEDGE C. W. J.
WRIGHT G. F.

STOKER 2ND CLASS

ASHTON R. G.
BAIRD J.
CARTWRIGHT W. C. M.
DONOVAN J.
DRAYTON W. F. A.
EMMETT H.
GEORGE W.
HALE A. J.
HARDMAN J. A.
HURNE F. H.
INWOOD A.
JENKINSON H.
LINTON T.
MCQUILLAN J.
MARSHALL W. D.
MURRAY G. G. G.
NEEDHAM J.
NEWBY E. M.
OLSEN J.
PARKER A. D.
PEARCE J. W. T.
READY B. A.
SANKY J. E.

1940 STOKER 2ND CLASS

SCHILFY J. J.
SMITH J.
SMURTHWAITE J.
TIPPING A.
WAITE P.

COOK

ACTON R.
ACTON P. H.
ADAMSON E.
BREWER J. R. G.
BROWN B. F.
CHIDWORTH S.
FADE H. L.
FORD A. E.
HILLIERS C.
KELLY E.
MOLLARD C. C. M.
POBRIETT J.
RANDLE P. R.
REID J. A.
RUSHMORE F. W.
SADLER R. C.
SWANN T. A.
SYKES S. J.
VENTRY V.
WATT C.
WEIR P.

STEWARD

ASHBY E. W.
BAILEY A. C.
BOND H. A.
COOK W. J.
DENNANT A. G.
EKE G. W.
FARROW S.
MEWSE J. W. C.
MONTAGUE C. N.
NOBLE J.
POTTER J. E.
RIX A. E.
SHARPIN B.
SHILLINGS E. G.
SKEDGE R. A.
WEEDON G. A.

OF NEWFOUNDLAND ORDINARY SEAMAN

LEWIS J.
MERCER J. H.

1941 CAPTAIN

BLOMFIELD M. A. G. R.

COMMANDER

NOEL M. W.

LIEUTENANT

BROWNE J. G.
CHISHOLM V. B.
CLINE L. H.
FINDLAY H. S.
HARDINGE-EATON P. A. H.
MERICK E. S.
MERFIELD G. J. R.
NEATE J. A.
PEGG E. E.
PYLLE E. G.
WILLIAMS G. H.
WILSON T. A. D.

SUB LIEUTENANT

BEARD P. G.
FRENCH F. E. D. & G.
MADDERS R. G.
NICKLIN E. J.
OATES C. E.
OWENS D. H.
SMITH C.
SWINDELLS G. S.
WEDDERBURN-OGILVY D. S.
WHITEHEAD C. S.

MIDSHIPMAN

BLOXHAM J. F.

LIEUTENANT (E)

MCDONAGALL A.

SUB LIEUTENANT (E)

ARMSTRONG J. E.

CHIEF SKIPPER

GALE G. R.
SETTERFIELD W. R.

SKIPPER

ALEXANDER R. H.
ALLEN W. T.
BALL G. F.
CHARLTON W. T. M.
COULL W. T.
CUTTER J. C.
JACKSON P. D.
JARVIS H. H.
JOHNSON A. E.