



Thomas George Mercer

Royal Navy

Service No. 195269

World War II

Thomas George Mercer was born on January 11th, 1920, to parents Alexander and Alfreda (nee Brown) of Bay Roberts.

George not Thomas would be the name he would go by his entire life and everyone in the town of Bay Roberts knew him simply as George.

George would enlist in the Newfoundland Navy early in WW II. Although the exact date is not readily available, the fact that he was part of the 6th Naval Contingent to be sent from Newfoundland, provides a time guideline. The 6th Contingent left Newfoundland on April 26th, 1940, so it is

safe to assume that George enlisted in the first months of 1940.

His wartime service in the Royal Navy is quite notable.

George was a crewmember onboard the HMS Rodney, a Royal Navy battleship, during the famous battle that included the sinking of the vaunted German ship, Bismarck, in the spring of 1941.

Earlier in the battle, the Bismarck had sunk the HMS Hood, the pride of the British navy, killing all but three of her more than 1,400 crewmembers.

During an interview with The Compass in November 2011, George recalled seeing the Bismarck, far on the horizon, and the sense of shock that everyone felt at the loss of the Hood.

"We were very lucky," he said at the time.

George was a long-time businessman, having owned and operated a service station for many years, and was well known for his many volunteer pursuits with organizations like the Royal Canadian Legion and the Bay Roberts Lions Club. He leaves a legacy of community service that he was quite proud of.

He served as mayor of Bay Roberts from 1973 to 1981.

He met Phyllis (French) after his wartime service, and they were married on March 8, 1944. They raised five children — Shirley, Calvin, Neil, Sandra and Philip.

The clipping below shows Thomas (George) and his brother Harry together in 1941.

*From The Observer's Weekly
18 February 1941*

Brothers Serving Overseas



Seaman Thos. G. Mercer

Driver Harry Mercer

Sons of Mr. and Mrs. Alec. Mercer (of Thos.), Bay Roberts. They are following in the footsteps of their father who served in the great war of 1914-18 and who had a brother lost in H.M. S. Vicknor. Mrs. Mercer had a brother killed in that memorable July drive of the last war.