



**Walter Maxwell Farrell**  
**Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland)**  
**Royal Navy**  
**Service No. P/188834**  
**World War II**

**Born:** 03 August 1918

**Died:** 20 November 1999

**Place of Birth:** North River, Conception Bay, Newfoundland

**Parents:** William and Rebecca “Becky” (Lidstone) Farrell

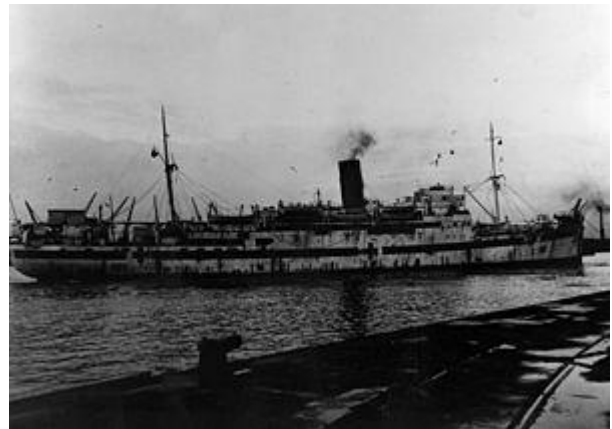
Walter was the second child born to William and “Becky” Farrell of North River, Conception Bay and according to the 1935 Newfoundland general census, he was seventeen (17) at that time. His other siblings included Marion (21), Victoria (15), Elfreda (13) and Malcolm (9).

The 1945 general census lists the Farrell family as living in North River. The father, William is 60 and Rebecca is 54. They have Malcolm at age nine (9) at home, along with Victoria 23, Elfreda 23 and Marion 31 who is married to William Blagdon 32, and they have a 2 year old son Terrance. Walter is

also listed at 27 and married, although there is no entry for his wife.

In February of the previous year, 1944, Walter had married Muriel Geneva Small of Grand Manan, New Brunswick at Woodmans Point in New Brunswick.

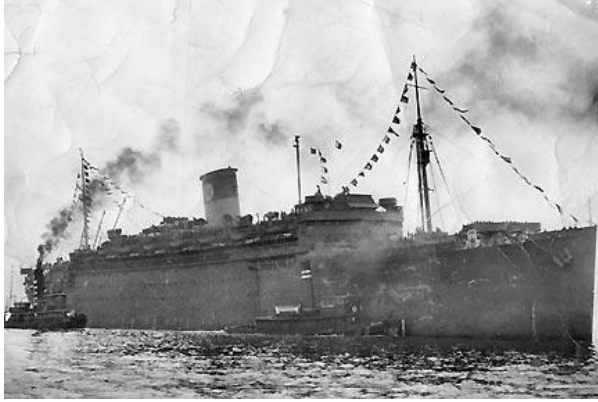
Walter’s service in the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland) and then into the Royal Navy began in early 1940. This is confirmed by the fact that he was a member of the 5<sup>th</sup> Naval Contingent sent overseas from Newfoundland. This contingent departed St. John’s, NL on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 1940 and by way of Halifax, then Boston arrived in Liverpool on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 1940. The vessel was the SS Newfoundland.



**RMS Newfoundland**

*“HMHS Newfoundland was a British Royal Mail Ship that was requisitioned as a hospital ship in the World War II. She was sunk in 1943 in a Luftwaffe attack off southern Italy.”*

There is another piece of information located dated 22 Jul 1942 that places Walter on a vessel, the SS Argentina, arriving in New York having departed Buenos Aires, Argentina. He is 22 and single at the time.



Troopship SS Argentina

*"FROM THE PERSONAL ARCHIVES OF U.S. ARMY WWII VETERAN ROBERT H. SEARL, 56TH SIGNAL BATTALION"*

During his time in the Royal Navy, Walter served on a minesweeper based out of Scapperflow, Scotland.



### **Scapa Flow in April 1942**

*"Primarily because of its great distance from German airfields, Scapa Flow was again selected as the main British naval base during the Second World War.*

*The strong defences built during the First World War had fallen into disrepair. Defence against air attack was inadequate and blockships sunk to stop U-boats from penetrating had largely collapsed. While there were anti-submarine nets in place over the three main entrances, they were made only of single-stranded looped wire; there was also a severe lack of the*

*patrolling destroyers and other anti-submarine craft that had previously been available. Efforts began belatedly to repair peacetime neglect, but were not completed in time to prevent a successful penetration by enemy forces"*

He commissioned the minesweeper, HMS Magdalen, constructed in Ontario and transported to St. John, New Brunswick.



### **HMCS MAGDALEN**

#### *The History of HMCS MAGDALEN*

*Originally built for the RN, she was loaned to the RCN, though never commissioned into the RCN; and was manned by RN personnel. After the war she was returned to the RN. Sold to civilian use 2 July 1946.*

He captained and owned his own fishing vessel. He spent a number of years as captain of the M.V. Hudson Handler in the Gulf of Mexico for the Hyco Subsea company.

Walter was Anglican by faith and a longtime member of the Royal Canadian Legion branch 20, Digby, Nova Scotia.

Walter passed away in November 1999 and is buried in the Forest Hill Anglican Cemetery at Digby, Nova Scotia. He was 81 years old. Muriel died in 2015 and is buried in the same cemetery.