

# Lieutenant Walter Augustus Phillimore R.N.



Born 7<sup>th</sup> September 1915

Died 21<sup>st</sup> June 1942 Aged 27

We thank God for his happy life and the happiness he gave.

Quam Dilectus

The deck it was their field And Ocean was their grave

# Career

Educated at Durlston, Langton Matravers, Swanage, Dorset. WAP entered the British Royal Naval College 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1929 summer term as a Blake first term. He was allocated to Hardy Dormitory and his tutor was Harold W Hodges MA Fr Hist. In January 1930 WAP was relocated to Collingwood Dorm. During autumn term 1930 he came first in Maths exams and collected a prize book—Scotts Last Expedition. Christmas 1932 WAP completed his eleventh term with a First Class Pass, being placed second in the 'alpha watch' of his year. He gained distinctions in his final maths, history and English exams and was duly awarded three prizes of books of plays by Galsworthy and Shakespeare.



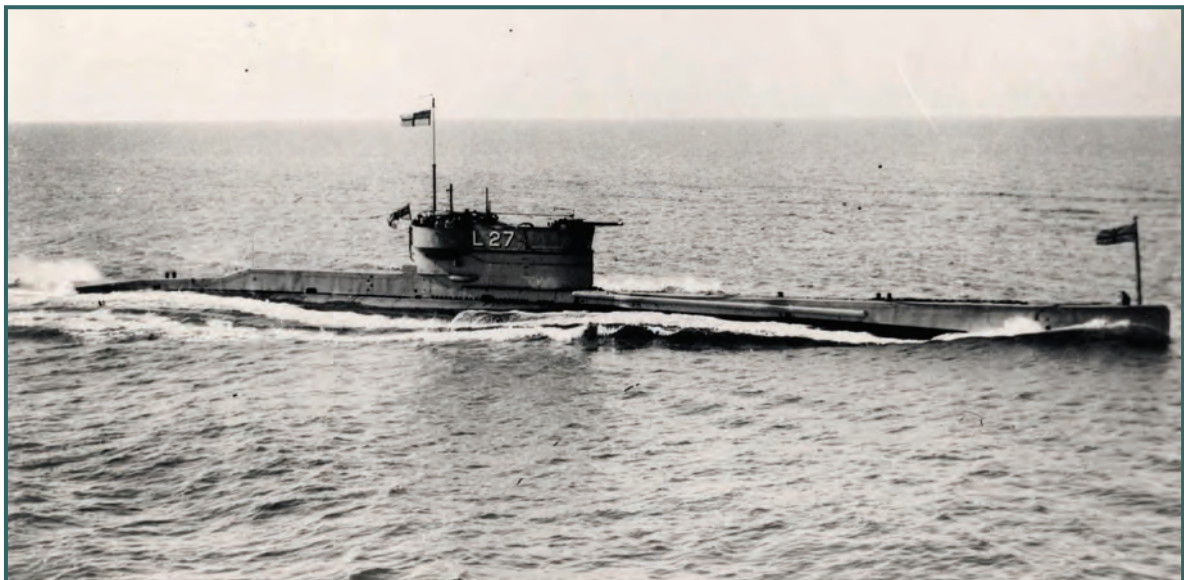
In January 1933 Cadet Phillimore joined the Frobisher. He was promoted to Midshipman on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1933. During the next five years he continued his training, including time at the Hill Camp in Ceylon where young officers and men were sent during the refit of the Emerald. On the 16<sup>th</sup> May 1936 WAP became a Sub. Lieutenant. He completed his sub-lieutenant's course and was promoted to Lieutenant on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 1937. The submarine training course at Dolphin received WAP on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1937. By December he completed and became an additional officer on HMS Medway in China (4<sup>th</sup> submarine Flotilla). He joined HMS/m Phoenix (submarine) on 28<sup>th</sup> March 1938. Two years later in April 1940 he moved to HMS/m Proteus still in China working from Medway.

Taken from WAP's Personal Tribute. A friend writes:-

“From his earliest youth he was always determined to go into the Navy, thus following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Admiral Sir Augustus Phillimore, K.C.B.; his uncle and godfather, Admiral Sir Richard Phillimore, G.C.B.; and his uncle, Captain V.E.B. Phillimore, C.B.E., D.S.O. He was the thirteenth member of the family to serve in the Navy.”

# Career

The end of 1940 and WAP returned home to Swinbrook on foreign service leave, bringing home with him souvenirs from China. By 10<sup>th</sup> January 1941 WAP had joined HMS/m Oberon as 1st-Lieutenant working from HMS Cyclops at Rothesay (7<sup>th</sup> Submarine Flotilla). Six months later on the 12<sup>th</sup> July he began the COQC (Commanding Officers Qualifying Course) at Dolphin.



HMS/m L27 built at Chatham Dockyard, commissioned 25<sup>th</sup> March 1926.  
June 1941-Sept 1943 Anti-Submarine Training Vessel. Crew of 39.  
Displacement: surface: 891 tons submerged: 1080 tons

Just over a month later the course was completed and on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1941 he became a spare commanding officer at HMS Ambrose, Dundee (9<sup>th</sup> Submarine Flotilla). Next month on the 15<sup>th</sup> September he took command of HMS/m H34 at Rothesay working from HMS Cyclops. In January 1942 WAP took passage out to America and became a spare CO at SAKAR II before taking command of HMS/m L27.

# HMS/m P514

On the 9<sup>th</sup> March 1942 Submarine R19 entered the service of His Majesty King George VI under the Lend Lease Agreement of 1941. Built in 1918 at the Union Iron Works America, R19 had been at Pearl Harbour training submariners and testing equipment. She was re-named HMS/m P514 and joined the Royal Canadian Navy as a training vessel. The end of May 1942 and P514 had made her way to Argentia, a fishing village on Canada's eastern seaboard. It was here back in August 1941 that the Atlantic Charter was signed by Roosevelt and Churchill aboard ships offshore. By the beginning of June WAP had transferred to Canada in preparation for the arrival of HMS/m L27 due to arrive in July. He shared command of P514 with Lt.-Cmdr. RME Pain.



HMS/m P514 commissioned 28<sup>th</sup> January 1918.

Dimensions: 186ft long 18ft beam Propulsion: 2x sets Diesel 880 BHP 2x sets Electric Motors 934 HP

Displacement: surface: 569 tons submerged: 680 tons Armament: 4x 21-inch Bow Torpedo Tubes

Max Speed: 13.5 knots surfaced 10.5 knots submerged Crew: 33

## The Sinking of HMS/m P514.

The afternoon of 20<sup>th</sup> June 1942 and P514 along with the Royal Naval corvette HMS Primrose leave Argentia heading to St. Johns, Newfoundland on a routine mission to join an escort convoy sailing from St. Johns to Sydney, Nova Scotia. Aboard P514 both Lt.-Cmdr. Pain and Lt. Phillimore. It is thought that Lt.-Cmdr. Pain was in command being the superior officer however Naval records indicate that Lt. Phillimore was in command and Lt.-Cmdr. Pain may have been "in transit" to another vessel. Once underway they followed the safest in-shore route. Sailing orders having been given after the minesweeper HMCS Georgian and a small group of merchant vessels had left St. Johns. Visibility was poor to fair, the lookouts sometimes being unable to see through the fog for more than two cables (one-fifth of a nautical mile). One of the merchant vessels developed engine trouble and started to slow and thus reduced the speed of the convoy. This meant that as night fell they were some 10miles (1 1/2hrs) out of position as HMS Primrose and P514 reached the rendezvous spot. Since HMCS Georgian had sailed before P514 they were unaware of their presence, in fact the only other ship to know that P514 was under way was Primrose.

The Georgian, whilst listening for hydrophone effect (HE) of his convoy, pick up the unmistakable diesel HE of a submarine. The time, 0303. Captain Stanley closes in on the signal. Primrose, hemmed in by two frigates signals frantically to P514 but gets no reply. At 0305 action stations called aboard the Georgian. Full steam ahead, 0310 submarine rammed amidships on the port side, broadside on. Her navigation lights were seen to flick on. The submarine then disappears. The Georgian begins a search for survivors, joined by the Primrose. By mid afternoon HMS Dianthus joins the search. After a three day search involving the Primrose, Dianthus, two Canadian warships, two United States warships, a fighting French vessel and Royal Canadian Airforce planes no wreckage or survivors were found, only the body of a man dressed in British submariners clothing was sighted but disappeared before a recovery was possible. Months later the body of a seaman was found washed up on the rocky coast of southern Newfoundland.



# HMS/m P514

Extract taken from Findings of the Board Of Inquiry, The Department Of National Defense Naval Service from Rear Admiral L.S. Murray, Flag Officer, to the Secretary of the Naval Board, Naval Service HQ, Ottawa, dated 24<sup>th</sup> June 1942:

16- As HMCS Georgian had been given no information as to the movements of P514 and, furthermore, did not even know of the presence of a British submarine in Newfoundland waters, he did not challenge but, naturally, assumed the submarine to be hostile.

17- In the latest summary of U-boat dispositions, two were shown in the vicinity of Cape Race.

18- No recognition signals from the submarine were seen.

21- We are of the opinion that the primary cause of the disaster was the lack of appreciation on the part of all operational staff at Argentia, St Johns and Halifax of the importance of keeping ships at sea informed of all shipping movements, particularly where allied submarines are concerned.

22- In addition HMCS Georgian should have been informed when he called at the Operations Room shortly before sailing that P514 and Primrose were expected to sail from Argentia.

23- A contributory cause was the Primroses failure to take any action when, from Commanding Officer , Atlantic Coast's situation report, he should have realized that he was liable to meet the convoy and also that he and his charge were not mentioned in the report.

24- The action he could have taken would have been to report his position , course and speed.

25- However, as he knew before leaving St John's that P514 was to sail on the 20<sup>th</sup> from Argentia, he may well have assumed that this same information would have been given to Georgian before the latter sailed.

From a letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> June 1942 from The Flag Officer, Newfoundland Force to Secretary of the Naval Board, Naval Service HQ, Ottawa:

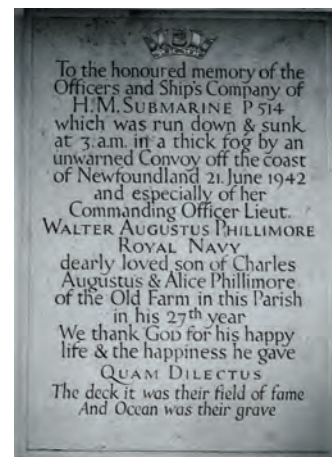
“ It is my understanding that it is incumbent upon the submarine either to avoid friendly ships, particularly convoys, or to arrange for efficient and immediate identification.” “Under the circumstances, however, I consider he (Cmdr Stanley) took the only action appropriate to the occasion, and recommend that he should be commended for his prompt and efficient measures under difficult circumstances.”



HMS/m P514 Crew Photograph.

# Crew P514 21<sup>st</sup> June 1942

Lt.-Cmdr. RME Pain, Lt.WA Phillimore, Tempy Lt.CA Bentley RNR, Tempy Lt.J Taylor RNR, Tempy Lt. Engineering JF Magil RCNVR, PO. J McAlister, PO. HH Bowden, LS. J Gillan, LS. RF Burgess RFR, AB. GR Mason, AB. AWS Chambers, AB. DR Wilson, ERA. C Tall, ERA. J Steel, ERA. NC Bennett, SPO. BJ Black, SPO. J Gray, L Sto. RS James, AB. WH Worlock, AB. Rrw Powell, AB. G Beal, AB. G Laing, AB. RW Allen, AB. LN England, AB. H Goodwin, L Sto. JL Binns, L Sto. G Dickson, L Sto. JR Mc Dowell, Sto.T Battersby, Sto. E Cuuren, AB. F Holt, O Sea. A Lidstone, PO.Tel. RH Carter, Tel. FC Ward, Tel. A Musgrave, Tel. H Patterson, L Sig. T Barron, Sto. JR Milford, Sto. AF Barnes, Sto. WJ Dawson, Sto. F Bakis, Sto. R Murray.



HMS/m P514 Crew Photographs & Plaque in St.Mary's Church, Swinbrook

Taken From W.A.Phillimore's Personal Tribute:

"In the submarines in which he served he knew all about his men, their homes and families. He had a charm of manner which gained him hosts of friends, together with a stern sense of duty which led him to insist on doing what he thought right even in the most painful of circumstances. He was devoted to and loved by small children and dogs.