

MARINE DIVISION...

... ANSWERS DISTRESS CALL

On Mar. 2, 1948, word was received that the U.S. fishing trawler *Bonnie* was disabled about 55 miles from Sambro Light Vessel, N.S. R.C.M.P.S. *MacBrien* immediately sailed from Halifax harbour to lend aid, and long before sighting her objective had established contact by radio telegraph, receiving information that *Bonnie*, her propellor fouled by fishing tackle, was proceeding under difficulty at about five knots toward Sambro Light Vessel. The captain didn't know how long they could keep going.

Contact was maintained at intervals which enabled *MacBrien* to draw nearer to the location of the other ship, and then when they were about seven miles apart radar did the rest. Approaching with caution through wind and thick snow which had persisted all night and was now, as dawn came, lashing about with gale-like ferocity, *MacBrien* with the aid of her powerful searchlight spotted the limping trawler.

From a distance of 300 yards, the towing hawser was passed over, but it gave way aboard *Bonnie* when *MacBrien* started pulling. The retrieving of the



Bonnie receives the line.

hawser occasioned great difficulty in the biting cold. Wet and frozen the huge rope was hard to handle on the small nigger-head of the forward winch, while on the after deck the footing in slush and ice was dangerous. Sand helped temporarily but was soon washed away by heavy seas that swept across the deck. All the ship's company who could be spared from other duties bent to the task of hauling the ice-weighted messenger, which was attached to the hawser, but slipping and sliding precariously, they were unable to raise it.

Finally, two hours later, by manoeuvring the rescue vessel toward the life-line as it came up on the crest of the sea, the feat was accomplished and the tow was continued. Off Millcove the work was handed over to a regular towing tug and *MacBrien* proceeded to H.M.C. Dockyard, another assignment successfully concluded. On the inward run a driving snow and south-east wind which reached a velocity of 40 miles an hour with gusts close to 50 miles an hour reduced visibility to near zero and radar proved a godsend while entering the harbour.

Icy decks and rolling seas.

