

Sailors' Comforts

For the Navy and
Mercantile Marine



PROVIDED BY THE WOMEN OF CANADA

REPORT OF WORK

FROM 1ST APRIL, 1917 TO 31ST MARCH, 1918

HALIFAX, N. S. CANADA

ROYAL
NAVY CANADA

SAILORS' COMFORTS

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FROM 1st APRIL, 1917, TO 31st MARCH, 1918

Convener:

MRS. W. J. ARMITAGE, "The Hermitage,"
HALIFAX, N. S.

Wareroom:

PIER No. 2, HALIFAX, N. S.

Correspondence should be addressed, and Donations of Money
forwarded to Mrs. W. J. Armitage, "The Hermitage,"
Halifax, N. S.

Donations of Comforts should be forwarded to
MRS. ARMITAGE, SAILORS' COMFORTS,
RED CROSS WAREROOM, PIER 2,
HALIFAX, N. S.

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OUR SAILORS AND THE WAR.

We must endeavor to realise as we never did before, the vastness of our debt to our sailors, who so bravely man the vessels of our Fleet and Merchandise, and then it will be quite superfluous to plead that their needs should not be forgotten. They have saved the Mother-land from starvation, and have prevented the landing of a hostile army upon her shores. It is therefore our privilege to do all we can to minister to their comfort, and to prove by our deeds our gratitude to them. If we laboured every day from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, we could never pay the debt we owe them for their magnificent services to our Empire and our brave Allies.

Is it not true that in fair weather or foul, these heroes of the deep carry out their onerous duties? For us they are ready to face the perils of the deep, and the dangers which lurk unseen beneath its raging waters. For us they sweep daily the seas in search of the deadly mines which would bring destruction upon our ships. For us they man the vessels that carry the food supplies to our vast Canadian Army, and meet also the needs, not only of our people at home, but of our Allies as well. For us they man the great battleships that guard so faithfully and well the liberties of the world.

THE ROYAL NAVY.

The magnificent service rendered by the British Navy is known to all. It has proved itself again as ever, to be the bulwark of freedom in the world. It has saved the situation in the Great War, and has made it possible to hold the enemy in check until all preparations are made for his final overthrow and complete defeat. Its personnel is made up of one of the finest bodies of men, this world knows. Our debt to the navy can never be repaid. But it is given to us to minister to the comfort of the men in their arduous tasks, and difficult undertakings. We could have no greater privilege, and the duty should be everywhere taken up, in order that we may lighten their burden by providing against the cold and the storm. One instance, by the way of illustration must suffice. We recently provided comforts for the Sick Bay of a war-ship, which had just made 52 consecutive voyages between the Shetlands and Iceland, in the ceaseless watch the Navy keeps for the enemy in northern waters.

THE MERCANTILE MARINE.

The sailors of the Merchant Service have won for themselves undying fame, in this Great war. No body of men in the Empire has faced greater dangers, or made nobler sacri-

fices for the great cause for which the British Empire is at war. It was Germany's fond hope to frighten the British Mercantile marine from all seas. This was the origin of the campaign of frightfulness, and it has most signally failed. The Germans by the adoption of piratical methods, more cruel and hateful than the worst ever known before, succeeded in multiplying the dangers of the sea a thousandfold, but without destroying in the least the brave spirit of our British sailors who have defied the worst that the Pirate can either threaten or perform. Our noble hearted men have boldly faced the German U-boats, and have never deserted ships in distress, at whatever cost to limb or life.

"All honor be to merchantmen,
And ships of all degree
In warlike dangers manifold,
Who sail and keep the sea;
In peril of unlitten coast
And death-besprinkled foam,
Who daily dare a hundred deaths
To bring their cargoes home.

Admiral Lord Jellicoe said recently: "The officers and men of the British Mercantile Marine..... have founded a new and glorious tradition in the teeth of new and undreamed peril, and have born the full brunt of the enemy's illegal submarine warfare."

The *Spectator* in a leading article has paid handsome tribute to this arm of the service. "But for the Merchant Navy our magnificent armies on the Western Front would not be able to fight at all. The Germans had made up their mind that if they could not win the war by fair means they would try to win by foul..... They said to themselves 'But if we respect these laws and customs we shall be beaten.' So they disregarded all laws and all customs. The blow fell even more heavily, if that were possible, upon our merchant seamen than upon the Royal Navy. The Germans hoped that when our merchant seamen understood that they would be murdered by their thousands on the high seas they would refuse to man our ships. But the answer of the seamen was never in doubt. Their temper was a perfect revelation of that spirit which Emerson has described:

"So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, 'Thou Must!'
The youth replies, 'I can!'"

We have never heard of a single British seaman who refused to sign on for another voyage, even though he might already have been torpedoed twice or three times.....

Enough to say that unspeakable horrors have been voluntarily and gladly endured, and that the debt of the nation to a profession which builds up true nobility of character and action, but which has been scurvily treated in the past, can never be repaid."

The movement to provide "*Comforts*" for the sailors of our Navy, and for the Mercantile Marine, was inaugurated by the late Mrs. E. H. Martin, wife of Captain Martin, in command of the H. M. S. Naval Yard, Halifax, N. S. On the demise of Mrs. Martin, which took place early in the War, Captain Martin made a brave attempt to carry on the work himself in addition to the enormous burdens he was called upon to bear in connection with the administration of the Halifax Dockyard, but he found the work could not be kept up to the standard he desired. At his request the work was undertaken by a Committee of the Halifax Local Council of Women with Mrs. W. J. Armitage as Convener. This Committee became later a Committee of the Canadian War Contingent Association and its Convener was appointed on the Executive of that body. Valuable assistance at the beginning in organizing this work was rendered by Mrs. Dennis President of the Halifax Local Council of Women.

We have received from the Naval authorities every consideration and kindness. They have rendered the most valuable assistance to us in our work. We wish especially to place on record, the great help given to us by Captain Martin, Captain Newcombe and Captain Hose, while Commander Holloway has placed us under a debt of gratitude which we can never repay. Captain Kneale of the Y. M. C. A., and his staff, have rendered most valuable aid by their untiring efforts to visit in our behalf the ships in port, carrying with them comforts for the men. It was only through the kindness thus shown by those in authority, that we were able to reach so many ships of every class.

The following statements bearing testimony to the value of the work, are printed for information.

Commander G. C. Holloway, R. D., R. N. R., writing from H. M. Naval Yard, Halifax, says: "The Captains of the various Merchant Ships to whose crews you and your Committee have supplied sailors' comforts have asked me to express their great appreciation of your kindness and more especially the thought of supplying the men of the Merchant Service. This is the first occasion on which men of the Merchant Service have been recognized in the same manner as the men of the Sister Service of the Navy. May I ask you to

express this to the members of your Committee and also to the workers. The crews of the Hopper Barges and tugs of which I am in charge also ask me to express their thanks."

The Journal of Commerce and Shipping Telegraph of Liverpool in their issue 22nd February, 1918, made the following reference to a letter from Commander Holloway, to the Imperial Merchant Service Guild: "We feel sure that this kindly action on their part will be very greatly appreciated by merchant seaman, as up to the present, so far as we are aware, they have not participated in the various schemes for supplying comforts to our seamen, the activities of these working parties being devoted more to the requirements in this way of men serving in the Navy." "This excellent record speaks for itself, and is a tribute to the fore-thought and energy of the ladies of Canada, which will command the appreciation of our merchant seamen."

The following letter from the Secretary of the *Imperial Merchants' Service Guild*, is of special interest: "On behalf of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild, which is the great representative body of the Captains and Officers of the Merchant Service, I beg that you will convey to the ladies the expression of our most sincere gratitude and obligations. We can assure them that their kind efforts are of a very great source of help and encouragement to the officers and men of the Merchant Service, who in these days, in protection of the British Empire, are called upon to face such extraordinary responsibilities and personal hazards."

Captain Walter Hose, Captain of Patrols, Halifax, writes: "Your gift of mufflers, socks, etc., for the crews of the Canadian Drifters, has been received, and these articles have been distributed to the men. I beg to offer the sincere thanks of myself and of the recipients for your kindness."

The Captain of a ship which suffered much from a disastrous fire on board, by which the men lost practically everything wrote a letter of thanks for a complete outfit of under-clothing, socks, shirts, mufflers and sweaters for every man on board, which saved the men from untold suffering.

The British sailors who suffered from the Disaster in Halifax on 6th Dec. 1917, in many cases injured and in hospital were supplied with outfits for the winter weather, and with many "comforts" for the home voyage, or when they rejoined their ship. They were most grateful for the supplies.

There are many instances of help rendered and of "Comforts" provided, which in the public interest and for private reasons in some cases, cannot be placed in a report, but which were of the very greatest help to our naval people.

H. M. S.
Nov. 8th, 1917.

"The contents are of a very practical character and we all appreciate your kind efforts on behalf of the ship's company. The expense and trouble involved in doing the work must be very great. The articles have been carefully laid ready in the Sick Bay and will be most useful during our cold and wet voyage. The Captain and officers join in thanking you and the other ladies of this philanthropic work which I can assure you is much appreciated by all on board."

(Signed)..... Fleet Surgeon."

"H. M. S. 27-2-'18.

"I beg to thank you..... for the very welcome gift of socks and games. They are most acceptable, and are always in demand."

..... (Captain).

"Office of the Food Controller,
Fish Committee."
Ottawa, October 27th, 1917.

"Let me take the opportunity of thanking you directly for the splendid work you are doing for the seamen of the Fleets. It is much appreciated, and speaking for my own crew, the clothes were a God-send."

"H. M. C. Dockyard, &c.

"I will be much obliged if you could let me have 50 pairs of socks size about 10½ and 50 Trench caps, as we are sending some boys to sea in patrol ships for their first voyage and I would like to supply them with these articles."

"H. M. T. &c.

"I can assure you that they were greatly appreciated by a great many of the crew as we had it fairly cold on our voyage home, and as you know a good many sailors are not too well found in good clothing."

..... Chief Officer...

"H. M. C. S. &c.

"I wish to extend..... our heartfelt thanks for the very nice presents we received..... Christmas Day. While it was not expected by us to receive any presents, I wish to assure you that they were much appreciated."

..... Commanding Officer...

H. M. S.&c.
London, Eng., 28th Dec. 17.

"I wish to thank you sincerely for the very kind and acceptable presents given by the Ladies of Canada. These were distributed on Christmas morning to the great surprise and gratification of the men."

..... Captain R. N.

"Officers' Mess, A. P. S.&c.

"On behalf of the sailors of this ship I take great pleasure in thanking you for the box of socks and Xmas presents. There were plenty to go around and all were highly pleased."

"H. M. T.&c.
Dec. 25th, 1917.

"These gifts so kindly sent by you, as an appreciation of services rendered by the Merchant Service, is an encouragement for us to persevere until the end."

"U. S. S.
10th March, 1918.

"We are in receipt of one hundred and ten pairs of socks and thirty-six comfort bags. Such givings are very highly appreciated by the men in the U. S. Navy, and will be put to good use while on our present duties in the North Atlantic. One of our Vice-Admirals recently stated, "the base of efficiency commences with the comfort of the officers and men," which is quite true."

.....
Commander, U. S. Navy, Executive Officer.

"We the surviving Officers and Crew of the wrecked S. S. wish to thank you and the other ladies for the very good gifts of clothing you have sent to this vessel for our use. We understand that this is the first ladies' organization to recognize the men of the Mercantile Marine."

.....
1st Officer (Senior surviving Officer).

S. S.&c.

"I wish to thank you on behalf of the members of my vessel, for the kind donation of warm clothing, sent aboard for their use in this cold climate when the ship left her home port, it was not expected that she would be placed on the Atlantic service, so the men were not properly equipped for the cold weather, so the gift of mufflers and socks, is warmly appreciated by all on board."

S. S. Port of Halifax, N. S.
April 26th, 1918.

"Will you kindly thank the Women of Canada.
for the most useful presents which they sent the Crew of the
above ship. I can honestly say that the men were more than
pleased and proud to receive the gifts from the Women of
Canada. Also will you please thank them from me for
remembering the Ship which I command I feel it a great
honour to think that the Women of H. M. King George's
greatest and best Dominion have remembered the Boys from
under the grand old Red Ensign."

..... Lieut. R. N. R.,
Commanding Officer.

Names of places who have sent Comforts, such as socks,
wristlets, gloves, mitts, mine sweeping mitts, mine sweeping
stockings, scarves, pyjamas, day sheets, sheets, pillows, wash-
cloths, soap, sardines, wafers, condensed cocoa, condensed
coffee, chocolate, short-bread, cake, note-paper, envelopes,
etc., jam, bread, cake, gum, cigarettes, tobacco, etc.

Amherst W. C. T. U., Annapolis Royal, Alvinston, Sec. Red Cross,
Aylesford, Bridgen, Ont., Bedford, N. S., Juniors R. C., Blubber Bay, B. C.,
Boston Mass., Brighton Ont., Buckingham, Quebec, Chatham, Sec. M. G.,
S. C., Cartersville, P. Q., Cacouna, Quebec, Laurentic Club, I. O. D. E.,
Coboconk, Ont., Dartmouth, Field Comfort Society, Dartmouth, Dart-
mouth, Digby, (4 different societies), Patriotic Association, Denfield,
Red Cross Circle, Dockyard, Halifax, Eastend, Sask., Galt, Sec. Alexander
Society, Grand Island, B. C., I. O. D. E., Gladstone, Man., Treas. Red Cross,
Grand Lake, Grand Valley, Treas. Womens Institute, Hamilton, (2 societies-
send from Hamilton), Halifax, N. S., Kitchener, Ont., Kenlis Willing Work-
ers, Sask., Lethbridge, Alberta, Sec. Alexander Galt, I. O. D. E., Lethbridge,
London, (3 different societies send from London; The War Contingent Associa-
tion, Ladies' Committee is one), Lunenburg, Lorne Park, Ont., Lakeville,
Lomond, Alberta, Meran, Manitoba, Montreal, (8 societies send to me from
Montreal), Madawaska, Ont., Musquedoboit, Montzambert, Mulgrave,
Red Cross, New Glasgow, Napanee, Ont., I. O. D. E., Napanee, U. E. Loya st,
Niagara Falls, Ont., (2 societies), North Gower, Ont., (2 societies), Ottawa,
Oakfield, N. S., Plumas, Manitoba, (3 send from here), Point Joli, Penhold,
Alberta, Preston Soldiers Comforts, Quebec, (2 societies), Ridgewood, New
Jersey, U. S., Redpath, Sask., St. Thomas, Ont., Sydney, C. B., (2 societies),
Strathroy, Ont., Stewiacke, N. S., St. Stephens, Soldiers Comfort Society,
St. Stephens, Girls' Club of Christ Church, St. Stephens, R. C., St. John,
(3 societies), St. Catharines, (2 societies), St. Thomas, Elgin Branch, Cana-
dian War Association, St. Thomas, Ont., Erie Chapter, I. O. D. E., St.
Thomas, Ont., London, Ont., C. W. C. A., St. John, P. Q., Toronto, (9 societies),
Truro, (2 societies), Trenton, N. S., Victoria, B. C., Field Comforts,
Victoria, B. C., Connaught Seamans Institute, Victoria, B. C., Ladies' Guild
& F. Society, Victoria, B. C., Vernon Red Cross, Vernon, I. O. D. E.)
Vernon, (they sent a case of jam which was a great treat to a great many sailors.
Upper Stewiacke, Seven Linkers Club, Winnipeg, Navy League, Winnipeg,
(3 other societies send comforts), Windsor, N. S., West LaHave, (2 societies),
Walkerville, Ont., Walkerton, Wapella, Sask., Wolfville, Woodstock, Ont.,
Yarmouth.

Report Cash and Expenses from 1st April, 1917 to 31st March, 1918.

Junior Red Cross, Bedford, Mrs. Crowell.....	\$ 25.00	Alvinston.....	6.50
Halifax Lady Friend.....	5.00	St. John, N. B.....	50.00
Miss Kimber.....	5.00	Mrs. Wilson, Plumas, Man Local Council Women, Hali- fax.....	1.00 200.00
West LaHave, Mrs. Alex. Schurman.....	10.00	Field Comfort Committee, Dartmouth.....	\$ 50.00
Miss Kenny's Class, Morris Street School, Halifax.....	2.05	Mrs. Garrison.....	1.00
Hamilton.....	5.15	Mrs. Laurie, Oakfield.....	50.00
Mrs. Tobin, Halifax.....	1.00	Miss Kimber.....	5.00
Miss Brown, Halifax.....	1.00	Mrs. and Miss MacLellan, Montreal.....	20.00
Sydney, C. B.....	25.00	Sale Wool, Mrs. Dennis.....	15.20
Laurentian, Chapter Otta- wa.....	100.00	Mrs. Holloway, Halifax.....	25.00
Mrs. Clark, Halifax.....	1.00	Miss S. Cote.....	2.00
Erie Chapter, I. O. D. E., St. Thomas.....	\$ 50.00	Chatham, Ont.....	50.00
Miss Eliza Ritchie.....	2.00	Sydney.....	15.00
Sydney.....	25.00	Miss Wright, Halifax.....	2.00
Miss Carmichael, New Glas- gow.....	10.00	Mrs. Emma Escryod, Pul- mas, Man.....	1.00
Boston, Mass.....	1.00	Exhibition Singing Birds.....	61.61
D. C. Sinclair, New Glasgow Miss C. E. Carmichael, New Glasgow.....	5.00 10.00	Winnipeg Lloyd George, Red Cross.....	300.00
Sailors Comfort Box,	5.50	Amherst, W. C. T. U.....	5.00
Mrs. Ogilvie, Cartersville, P. Q.....	100.00	Windsor, N. S.....	75.00
Madawaska, Ont.....	2.00	Victoria, B. C.....	25.00
Miss Kimber and friends, Montreal.....	12.00	Quebec.....	50.00
Rev. Dr. Hall, Toronto, Seamens Institute.....	100.00	Quebec.....	250.00
Box Sailors, Exhibition.....	24.57	Hazel Hill.....	30.00
Refund on Navy League Ship.....	6.59 100.00	St. Thomas.....	25.00
Annapolis.....	100.00	Yarmouth.....	10.00
Miss Kimber, a friend Mon- treal.....	5.00	St. Stephens, N. B.....	12.00
St. Thomas.....	25.00	Winnipeg.....	15.00
Mrs. F. H. Mathers, Hali- fax.....	1.00	Mrs. Barber, Maple Leaf, Plumas, Man.....	1.00
Refund on Hamilton cases.....	5.32	George Ward, Maple Leaf, Plumas.....	25
Kitchener, Ont.....	5.00	London.....	30.00
Mrs. Bruce, Toronto.....	25.00	Brighton, Ont.....	50.00
Montreal.....	5.00	Captain Martin, Halifax.....	25.00
Mrs. Redford, Montreal.....	50.00	Capt. Martin, Halifax.....	50.00
London.....	50.00	Mrs. Wilson.....	1.00
Proceeds Calgarian Concert, Mrs. Hay.....	96.50	Napanee, Ont.....	53.00
Mrs. Woodill, Carleton St., Halifax.....	1.00	Interest on moacy in bank.....	7.25
Mrs. Wilson, Maple Leaf Plumas.....	.50	Lomond, Alta, Grade II, III, IV, Public School.....	1.25
		North Gower, Ont.....	50.00
		Halifax, St. Paul's Church, Young People.....	30.00
		Toronto, Mrs. Boulter.....	5.15
		Trenton, N. S.....	25.00
		Redpath, Sask.....	100.00
		Buckingham, Quebec.....	100.00
			<hr/>
			\$2784.86

Expended for Soldiers' Comforts:—

Chocolate, Gum & Candy	\$380.51	Handkerchiefs, ma- terial for Kit	
Tobacco, Cigarettes and Pipes	395.54	Bags, &c	123.65
Games, &c	55.00	Christmas Cakes, &c	200.00
Printing, stationery, Postage, cart- age, bank ex- change, &c	38.94	Balance in Bank	<u>1591.22</u>
	<u>\$1193.64</u>	Total	\$2784.86

Comforts Received During Year, April 1st, 1917 to March 31st, 1918.

Socks	9,350	Mine sweeping mitts	65
Chocolate Bars	500	Gloves	175
Xmas Parcels	150	Tobacco	80
Xmas stockings	250	Sheets	198
Filled Kit Bags	175	Pyjamas	94
Tobacco, packages	675	Pillow Slips	500
Cigarette packages	250	Soap	100
Wristlets	275	Pipes	38
Sweaters	168	Boxes Sardines	50
Scarves	300	Cocoa, condensed	50
Seamans' Socks	60	Coffee, condensed	376
Handkerchiefs	1,290	Colcolate boxes	24
Shirts	125	Soap	35
Towels	100	Boxes note paper	500
Wash cloths	1,000	Gum, packages	65
Quilts	4	Biscuits, short cake, wafers ..	
Dressing gowns	47		
Bed room slippers	100	Articles	<u>17,375</u>

Halifax, N. S., 1st April, 1918.

ELINOR M. ARMITAGE, *Converter.*