The Story of "Charm"

A sequel to "The Home-Coming of Charm"

Written by H.C. Gordon McCormick and Published in Yachting Month September 1940

The Group Captain was amazed at the extent of the wreckage as he tramped along the south eastern coast of the Inner Hebridean island of Tiree, from Scarinish into Hynish Bay on a damp Monday morning,the 17th September 1945. It stretched for nearly five miles and consisted of parts of a hull, deck,sticks of furniture,flag pole,deckhouse,two gallon petrol tin (full), red saloon cushion and a charred rail board with the name "Charm" written in bronze lettering.

As Senior Air Staff officer he had initiated a coast and sea search the previous Thursday for some personnel who had not returned from leave following a sailing trip from Rosses Point, Co. Sligo. The four people missing were the Commanding Officer of RAF Aldegrove (now Belfast Airport), his wife, a WAAF flight officer and a Flying Officer. He learnt that "Charm", a 46ft Bermudan ketch had been bought by the C O and sailed with his wife and the two friends from Rosses Point on Saturday 8th September with Bangor, Co Down as their planned destination. The search was thorough as befits the sevices looking for their own. Coastguards, lighthouse keepers, lifeboats, Caledonian-McBride ferries were all recruited to join in and the war having ended there were a large number of aircraft and flying personnel available to be deployed. A variety of aircraft took part in the search including a Sea Otter, Ansons,Warwicks,Wellingtons, Seafires and even a Liberator from Coastal Command.

Despite a report that a boat resembling Charm had been seen standing off and on near the Kintyre coast early the previous week the search proved fruitless and was called off when the wreckage was found on Tiree.

In his report, the Group Captain said " From an examination of the wreckage, I gained the impression that the vessel may have been blown up by a mine.My reasons for believing this are that the main deck had been blown away intact from the hull, that the nails holding the main stringers had either pulled cleanly out of the wood or failed in tension. This to my mind is not consistent with the damage to be expected from heavy seas or striking rocks." He went on to say " On the morning of Tuesday 18th September, I was informed of a report from A/S.R Boisdale to the effect that about a dozen mines had been washed up in that area during the past few days. This information,in my opinion, lends colour to the theory that the vessel may have struck a mine"

Thousands of mines were sown around the coasts by both sides in the conflict both to protect them and waylay the other sides' shipping. Subjected to frequent storms and strong tides, these mines would part company with their moorings and float to the surface. The Navy would try to destroy them by gunfire or blow them up. On calm days, their black casings and iron horns could be seen, but in rough weather or at night, they were a menace.

There were no survivors of Charm and only one identified body was picked up nearly a month later off North West Islay. This was the Flying Officer, who is buried in Kilarrow Churchyard, Bowmore, Islay. On a tour of churchyards on Tiree and Islay and no doubt other West Coast villages, you will find gravestones inscribed "An Unknown Sailor of the Second World War" so who knows if the others are there.

A passage around the exposed North Coast of Ireland is not for the faint hearted as their are many hazards and strong tidal streams, particularly as Charms' engine had been dismantled during the war owing to emergency regulations. She was a well found yacht however, built in the classic style of oak and pitch pine with very strong timbers and iron on the ribs.She carried a tall bermudan ketch rig with a two ton iron keel plus inside ballast.She had been very well maintained by her then owner Mr H C Gordon McCormick who had bought her in Essex in 1939. His entertaining account of her voyage to her new home in Ballysodare Bay, Sligo was published in the September 1940 Yachting Monthly.

The C O had sailed in all types of boats for many years and before joining the RAF had been a deck officer on the Clan Line steamships, so would have been well up on navigation skills. His wife had sailed off Anglesey and the WAAF officer had sailed a lot out of Torquay with her uncle. They took a full set of charts, sailing directions and tide tables, leaving Rosses Point early on Saturday 8th September in light airs which increased throughout the day. By nightfall it had become a southerly gale and they were quite possibly pushed further north involving a change of destination to Oban or the Clyde which is where Charm might very probably eventually have been kept. As Mr McCormick later told the owners' brother "Had Charm foundered off North Ireland, the tides set East and West, not directly towards the Hebrides so that wreckage could hardly drift to Tiree. I feel sure that Charm could weather out a bad gale, and so I think it must have been a mine"

Tiree has an edge of the world feel about it but to many RAF people who served there during the war it felt like the end of the world, unlike Islay which seems to be a happier place,possibly on account of the whisky. The beautiful long sandy beaches which have become meccas for windsurfers and the friendliness of its' resilient inhabitants are its' attraction. The prevailing Altantic winds and set of tides around the sounds have made Hynish Bay the resting place for all sorts of wreckage and driftwood. A catamaran, abandoned by its' crew in mid Altantic turned up there a few years ago, so it seems that Charm met her mine somewhere between Islay and Tiree and probably at night as one story suggests that the body recovered was clad in pyjamas and was badly burnt.

Mr Gordon McCormick was a retired solicitor who lived near Ballysodare Bay, south of Sligo city. He sailed Charm home from the Heybridge Basin in June 1939 with some companions. Their passage took them up the east coast in fairly fickle winds so that they had to work the tides as the engine gave trouble and was soon out of action. He noted that in the early stages it was continuous tacking without making much ground until the tide turned and that whenever the sun struggled through the eastern haze and lit up a patch of sea, making the dirty water look yellow and sandy, fresh bearings were taken, as the confused sea and light on the water made it look like a sandbank. By the time they reached the Humber after a wet and uncomfortable passage across the Wash it was blowing a moderate gale and they were pleased to put into Bridlington. He was very complimentary about their reception at the Royal Yorkshire Y C saying that while we Irish pride ourselves on our hospitality, the welcome "Bangs Banagher" and we were hardly alongside before being invited to make use of the club, spending several days "memorable for being of the happiest kind ".

Having called at Blyth and enjoyed more hospitality at the Royal Northumberland Y C which was then on a concrete barge with a real fire blazing in the grate, they tracked on towards the Forth of Clyde calling at Berwick. The Forth and Clyde canal is 35 miles long with 39 locks and 38 bridges and by the time they reached the Clyde at Glasgow at ten pm on a Saturday night they were pretty tired and were not sorry that the Scots did not work on Sunday so they could lie in undisturbed. Short on provisions, they took a bus into town only to find all the shops closed except those in the Jewish quarter. Leaving on the Monday after paying the canal dues of £1- 5s- 7d, they made their way down the Clyde with the tide and had a glorious beat to windward, thrashing out to Hunters' Quay.

From Cambletown they sailed to Portrush and from there had a hard sail through Inishtrahull Sound under all sail, the gunwhale under, and were given cheery waves by the many small fishing boats they raced past. Reefing the main and taking in the jib got them wet to the waist as northerly swell rolled in across the tidal steam and with the wind increasing they lowered the mizen in Tory sound. Off Bloody Foreland the staysail carried away and had to be lowered as they staggered on under reefed main seeking shelter in Aran sound which proved to be too exposed so they made for Burtonport.

It had been a good test and gave them great confidence in the new boat.

The wind increased during the night and the next day and it was not until 6pm the day following that they were able to leave. Failing to make their tide at Rathlin O' Birne, it was very dark when they looked for the entrance to Teelin harbour on the north shore of Donegal Bay. McCormick says "There were no lights except St Johns' Point, seven miles farther on, the entrance to the land locked bay is so narrow, the cliffs so steep with mountains behind, that I fear poor Tom thought we were coming to the end when I steered straight for the blackness on which the Atlantic swell was breaking. Having got inside, it was only after great difficulty that we found the harbour. To add to our troubles, the salmon boats were moored off with bow ropes to the quay and anchors out astern which had to be moved before we could lie alongside at 1.15 am" . They were awakened at daybreak by the fishermen talking and wondering how they had got in and where they were from. On being asked to get on with their fishing to allow Charms' people to sleep, they pointed to a small boat just visible in the half light and said "Sure, it's no good, them's the bailiffs watching us"

Eventually the salmon fishers set their nets outside the harbour which although legal was not nearly as productive as within the estuary. By now sleep was impossible and thoughts turned to breakfast the only snag being that there was nothing left except tea and tinned grapefruit. The kindly fishermen sent a lad to the only shop, returning with bacon, eggs and bread. Later on a glorious but windless summer day they sailed on to Ballysodare. Donegal Bay was never so smooth and they sang "The Hills of Donegal" as they glided past Innishmurray and across Sligo Bay to Charms' new home at the dock at Tanrago, Mr McCormicks' home.

During the war, Mr McCormick sailed Charm extensively off the Irish West Coast in his capacity as an undercover agent for British Intelligence, keeping watch on several German spies who were suspected of signalling to U - Boats offshore. He must have been an excellent seaman to work a fairly big sailing boat out of those bays and along that very exposed coast, particular without an auxiliary engine and none of the modern navigation aids that we take for granted today.

It is worth quoting the opening lines of his Y M article to appreciate how attached he was to that area.

"The West Coast of Ireland is seldom selected by yachtsmen for their cruises. But what they miss ! Deep clear water, the intense blue of a summer day making more wonderful the white crests of the Atlantic swell as it breaks on the rock-bound coast. The islands - not those already found by tourists but some of those off Donegal or Innishmurray, with its' hereditary King and an excellent brew of poteen - the islands of Clew Bay made famous by the writer of *Spanish Gold*, and the islands of the West Galway Coast. The Bays of Connemara, when the sun is setting, her last slanting rays glorifying the Twelve Bens. Sleiys League rising 2,000ft sheer out of Donegal Bay. There is something too about the Irish folk who live on these shores. Amongst them true hospitality is to be found. They welcome all those who go down to the sea in ships - be they little or great ships. Their battle is a never ending one, their ceaseless struggle against the elements to drag a living from the sea has strengthened their fibres, like the desolate thorn on their wild, windswept shores, they are bent oft-times, but unbroken. Unspoiled, the world seems far away from them, it was once more to revisit the old haunts that Charm was bought."

In the summer of 1945 he moved Charm to an anchorage at Rosses Point, west of Sligo City. It was there that she was seen by the Aldegrove C O who apparently fell for her on the spot. After some enjoyable trial sailing off the coast, the C O managed to persuade a rather unwilling Mc Cormick to sell her to him subject to survey which would be carried out in Belfast after they had reached Bangor. Mr McCormick offered to sail with them but this was declined as there was already a crew lined up. The Rosses point pilot took them out past the Metal Man and set them off, coming ashore in the dinghy, which is still in the possession of Mr McCormicks' daughter, and that was the last anyone saw of them. The only piece of Charm that survives is the nameplate with its' bronze letters that was retrieved by the postmaster on Tiree who sent it to Mr McCormick.

The C O, Charms' new owner, who had apparently only paid half the purchase price as a deposit until the survey was completed, left a three year old son and had a brother in Scotland to whom Mr McCormick later wrote "Everyone here who met your brother and his wife are most distressed at the tragedy, they were much liked by everyone who met them, and I have letters from all over the country saying how sorry my friends are to have read about the matter". He went on to ask if the child would be properly cared for.

I was that child and I can safely say that I have been very well cared for indeed and inevitably, sailing is my first love. It is a pity that a career in farming has left me too little time to really partake, but now that things are a little easier, there is more time to enjoy our recently acquired Hallberg-Rassy 36 which we sail out of Brixham. There are lots of hazards around the Devon coasts for me to run into, but hopefully no floating mines.

There are a couple of twists to this story that should be told. There was a farewell dinner held at the Golf Links Hotel, Rosses Point on the night before they sailed. One person was delayed and thirteen sat down. Was this significant ? Then there was the story about my Uncle (the C Os' brother in Scotland) who was born deaf and dumb. His mother taught him to lip read and such people are often credited with having a sixth sense. Although he had no idea that my father was sailing, he woke up his housekeeper in Bearsden to get her to alert the authorities as he had seen his brother in a dream in the water off Tiree seemingly in trouble and calling to him. Although I have heard this story from several sane people, I have never managed to have it confirmed as all the officials had long gone by the time we got to Tiree only a few years ago. I do sometimes set off on a passage on Friday and have owned a green boat - am I tempting providence ?

I have avoided quoting the names of many of the people involved in this saga, but would be pleased to hear from anyone who recognizes any of the principle players. It all happened a long time ago and it is only as a result of a recent meeting with Mr McCormicks' daughter and the marvellous welcome and extra information she gave me that I am able to write this sequel.

I feel a great sympathy for Gordon McCormick who reluctantly parted with his beautiful "Charm", only to have it taken off and wrecked by comparative strangers. I just hope the money matter was sorted out !

Alastair Warrington. November 2009

Tamrago,

Beltra,

Co. Sligo.

26th Sept., 1945.

Dear Mr. Warrington,

I received your letter this morning. I offer you my most sincere sympathy on the tragic loss of your brother, his wife, and their friends. I fear there can be no hope for them now. I am happy to heat your nephew is in good hands for the present, as the paper re-:ports were most unsatisfactory. As requested I will give you all the details, from the beginning, and if there is anything further arising out of what I write, on which I can be of assistance, please let me know.

I sold my practise as a solicitor in 1939, and in May of that year, went over to Heybridge Basin, in Essex, to sail "Charm" home. I came up the E. Coast of England, crossed by the Forth and Clyde Canal, round N. and N.W. Ireland, to my home on Ballysovare Bay. Since then I cruised on the W. Coast to Galway, on the S. of Donegal County to the N. and from my home to Sligo and Donegal Bays. I found Charm a most seaworthy ship. She was 19 tons T.M. (Not 9 as in the press) 46' L.O.A. 10'8" beam and 5'6" draught with an iron keel of about 2 tons, and one ton of pig iron ballast inside Bermudan ketch rigged with Jib, staysail, main and rigger, and big Genova, which I also used a Spinnaker at times. She had an Ailsa Craig engine, which owing to emergency regulations here, I had dismantled during the war, and propellor and shaft were out but carried aboard. She was in excell-:ent order as I lookdd after her entirely myself. This

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summer I went to Rosses Point, Sligo for six weeks sailing and fishing, it being an easier Bay to get out of than Ballysodare, though there is a six knot tide out of each. I met, with the Chief Superin-:tendent of the Guards, Liddy (Police Force) one Squadron Leader Currie, R.A.F. and they asked me could I sail them to the Island ofInnishmurray off the coast here, as they would be interested in seeing it. It is a difficult Island to land on, except in settled weather, it is of interest, as there are ancient ruins. It also has its own hereditary King etc. I said I would, provided the Chief Super. would go unoficially, as the guards sometimes raid th Island, where the chief industry is the making of Poteen (illicit whisky). They arranged a day a fort-:night hence, and said they would bring some R.A.F. friends. Eventually on 11th August Liddy, Currie, your brother and another Flight Lieut. Fred Cravon and a friend of mine, Dr. Dunne, left the Point witl a strong favourable wind, and reached the Island aft a quick sail of three hours. It was too rough to land in my punt so I lowered the mainsail and doged around in front of the village on staysail and riggi and the King who know me, and my boat well, sent off a Greencastle yawl in which we landed. We had a good sail home, but as the wind was ahead it took much longer. I spotted at once that your brother h sailed before, so I asked him to take the wheel, and he practically sailed her, both ways, all the time,

and/

and we had a long chat about her. I explained that I had not burnt off the paint this year, which was due to be done, as I could not get good marine paint etc., and hoped to have her looking very posh every year. Also that I could not get flexible steel wire for jib halyards running part, and had no rope in temporarily, so that it could not be bowsed up properly though it worked all right. I heard from one of the others afterwards, that he thoroughly examined every-:thing below, as I had seen him do on deck. We all had dinner together in the Golf Links Hotel that night, and your brother asked me would I consider selling Charm and what my price was. I said I had thought of it, as she was too big for me, as I have to work the tides in my bay, which is shallow, but that I had been offered and refused £1,000 for her, He said no more then.

I had a letter from him dated 14th Aug., in whihh he thanked me for the delightful sail out to Innishmurray last Saturday. It was the high note of an exceedingly pleasant week-end. "I would like to buy (Charm(from you if you still wish to sell her at £1,000 or thereabouts, I enclose cheque for £100 as deposit, and we can fix details for sale later. In the meantime would you be good enough to let me have the exact figure, leaving particulars, inventory, and surveyors report." "I wrote back and said I was expecting £1,500, but that I would let him have her for £1,250 and that he could with part of the diff-:erence get her properly painted, varnished and

overhauled, and engine put right. He replied he would buy at £1,250 subject to satisfactory survey and full oinventory. He said he would accept 'Free-:man and Watts survey (which I had got on buying Charm) provided it was of recent date, otherwise he would have her surveyed as soon as possible. also owing to difficulty in getting things, he wanted her complete domestically and navigationally. That he would come down on 6th and sail her to Belfast, he only had a weeks leave, which did not give much time. He also said he was swlling some land, and if he was not paid in time would I mind waiting a week or two for payment of balance. I agreed and sent on Freeman and Watts report. He then phoned me, and said, as the report was six years ago, he would rather have another survey, and wished to get that done at Bangor Belfast Lough, and had I enough confidence in the boat to let him sail her there to get it done. This really rather took me on the hop, but as I know she was all right I agreed. It was only afterwards that I began to think of the complications which might ari However as he was coming down, I thought he might agree to have surveyed by a marine engineer whom I knew in Sligo. I had my last sail on 5th ~~Aug.~~ September and heard that Mr. amd Mrs. Warrington were arriving in Sligo that night.

On the 6th Currie, who drove them down brought them to Rosses Point. We all went up to Golf/

Golf Links Hotel in the morning, when I put every obstacle in the way of the she, as I was very loth to part with Charm, and I objected to survey in Belfast. He said she could be turned down up there. They would have a good sail and I would be left with my boat there etc. However Currie hawsed out an agreement which we put in writing. I had cheque for £1CO. Currie was given one to hold for £350, and as I had Charm underinsured, we calculated, on the proportion, that I could only get £200 from the Insurance Company and in the event of the survey not being satisfactory Charm was to be delivered back to me at Rosses Point. He went to Sligo had lunch in the Grand Hotel, and later that evening a friend of minebrought us all to dinner in the Rly Hotel.
I went in next dy to Sligo and brought out the Warrington who had brought a lot of food etc., and left them aboard with their kit etc., and they stowed their stuff. That evening my wife, daughter on leave from W.AA.F. and neice, also W.A.A.F., my married daghter and husband and some friends all dined with me in the Golf Links Hotel, to meet Mr. and Mrs Warrington. We were fourteen until later on we were joined by Flying Officer Ellis W.A.A.F. and FlyingOfficer McGregor, R.A.F. I understand that your brotherand his wife had not met them before. My wife tells me that Miss Ellis has sailed a lot out of Torquay with her uncle, and that Mrs. Warrington sailed in a big yacht in Wales. My wife also suggested that he should take me, as I knew the coast well, but he said he had got acrew.

Group/

Grop Capt. Warrington had a very complete set of charts, which he got from the Admiralty, Sailing directions, tide tables etc. hand bearing compass ad the compass fitted on Charm. I gave him alog and lead line, door etc. He asked me to go through the charts with him, which I did, and advised him how he should go, and pointed out the numerous harbours where he could go for shelter if necessary. He then said he would go outside everything, even Tory Island. I told him there was plenty of room inside, the steamers went that way, and he would be under the shelterof the land, if the equinoctial gales came on, which I expected early, as we had such a long fine spell. The only place I told him to keep outside of was Rathlin, but that he could keep inside the Shamrock Pinnacle, but he said he would keep outside ofothat too. He intended sailing at night. On the 8th they sailed at 8am.. I went down the the Deadmans Point, which is the outrance to Rosses Point anchorage and saw them leave under all sail with a fair wind, and the tide just starting to ebb. John F. Gillen, Pilot, Rosses Point, always sailed with me when I remained at the Point, so he know all about Charm. He is a most reliable man, and I used to leave Charm in charge of him, if I had to go away. He brought off fresh milk in the morning, helped them to set the sails,, weigh anchor etc. and took them down past the metal man, where the tide is tricky and pointing out the buoys ahead, left them in the dinghy. He told me that he too advise them to keep in round the coast. Though the wind was

light/

light they sailed quickly out of the bay, and would have had a quick reach to Rathlin O'Birne Island 23 miles p off, and have their wind for Arran Island light, another 23 miles, from that to Tory is 19 miles, and on to Inistrahull 36 miles. All that day was fair, and a nice breeze on Saturday morning, which increased in the afternoon, as I know, as I was sailing in the bay in my 18' boat that day. It blew very hard that night, and I thought they should have passed Inistrahull, if they hadn't kept out too far. It reached gale force then, and I feel that they could hardly beat up to windward against it, as the sea must have been well up then, and there are bad overfalls round Rathlin when the wind is against the tide.

Had Charm foundered of N. of Ireland, the tides set E. and not W./directly towards the Hebrides so that wreckage could hardly drift to Tiree. I feel sure that Charm could weather out a bad gale, and I think that it must have been a mine. She was very strongly built of oak and pitch pine, with very strong timbers and iron on the ribs. Her topsides and cabin top were teak. If you say that the wreckage was in a splintered state, I doubt if it were a rock. But like everyone else, after I saw the last of her in Sligo Bay, I can only surmise what happened. I did not know of the ketch being seen off the Mull on the 11th, Charm could quite well have been there at that time. Your brother said that if he got into the North Channel in good time/

time, he might go to the Isle of Man or Stranraer for the balance of his leave.

Charm was well equipped, I gave her over just as I cruised in her myself. Anchors, Chain, warps, navigation lights etc. She had bunks for 5 with pillows, blankets, mattresses. The galley was fitted out with everything for 6, as I often had that number out day sailing. She had a Simpson Laurence Finch. There was roller reefing on main-sail and a Wickham Martin reefing on jib, though it wasn't actually fitted when she left. They had no punt. I told your brother, and hoped he might have borrowed an R.A.F. collapsible one. He told me he had arranged with the R.A.F. rescue service to keep a look out for him, but as far as I know he did not send word to them, or anyone that he had left.

Everyone round here who met your brother and his wife are most distressed at the tragedy, they were much liked by everyone who met them, and I have had letters from all over the Country and England saying how sorry my friends are to have read about the matter.

I had a letter from Mrs. Landon to which I replied - I don't know whether her husband is Major Genl. Landon, who got me my commission in the Great War and whose son Major Landon (then) I knew I met them with friends. - The Adamsons of 36, Portland Place. A daughter of mine now lives with them/

them (theAdamsons) in Linden, Northumberland.

About the wreckage I am at a loss to under-:rtand how this was identified as being Charm. The name Charm I.C.C. (Irish Cruising Club) was on one lifebelt. Her name was in cmmium letters screwed on to either bow - apart from this I don't really know how a stranger could have so definitely identi-:fied her. However as one has heard of no other wreck at the time, it is most probable that it was Charm.

I have been expecting Squadron Leader Currie, who phoned to say he would be down at the end of last week, and I hoped he would have had some definite news for me, buthe has not turned up yet. He sent me on the cheque for £950, which with the £100 I lodged to my account last Saturday. I don't know how the Insurance Company will view the matter, or whether Bank will pay on cheques, now that the drawer is presumed deceased.

I understand from Currie that Group Captain Harrington was well off, but I wish you would tell me in confidence if that was so, and if the child will be properly provided for, if not, prehaps I might be permitted to remit some of the purchase price of Charm. I feel this all very much, and would like to do anything I can to help you in your sad loss.

I think I have told you everything. There

ar e/ McFarlane
Parker Found!

H.C. Gordon
N. Cornish

DAILY RECORD 19/9/45

CHILDREN MAY BE DROWNED

Tiree Wreck Fears

By A "Daily Record" Staff Reporter

Island of Tiree, Tuesday.

TWO children may be among those who are believed to have lost their lives in a small Bermuda-rigged ketch off the rocky coast of Tiree.

Leaving county Sligo for Belfast ten days ago, the vessel, the Charm, was making for Belfast bay when it was driven off its course. It is now believed to have struck a mine somewhere south-west of Tiree, after encountering the heavy storm which arose a few days later.

WRECKAGE FOUND

Wreckage found off the coast of Tiree has now given rise to strong fears that all five occupants of the ketch have lost their lives.

An hotel-keeper on the island was first to notice wreckage on the shore, one piece bearing the word "Charm." He promptly informed the nearby R.A.F. station, who sent out a crew to look for any possible survivors.

A Belfast message states that four adults on board the wrecked ketch were Group Captain G. N. Warrington, attached to R.A.F. headquarters, Belfast; his wife, a native of Australia; and two companions, Flying Officer D. A. M'Gregor and Flight Officer C. S. Ellis, W.A.A.F.

DAILY MAIL 19/9/45

Yacht wreck mystery: baby is orphaned

By Daily Mail Reporter

A TWO-YEAR-OLD baby boy is a lonely child today, for it is feared that his parents, Group-Captain J. N. Warrington, attached to R.A.F. Headquarters, Belfast, and Mrs. Warrington, Rosses Point, County Sligo, on September 8 and is believed to have foundered off the North Irish Coast.

Flying-Officer D. A. McGregor, and Flight-Officer C. S. Ellis, of the W.A.A.F., who were on board the yacht, are also believed to have perished.

Group-Captain Warrington bought the Charm from Mr. A. C. Gordon McCormick, a solicitor, of Beltra, County Sligo. He arrived early this month with his wife, whose father is a Londoner, to take over the boat.

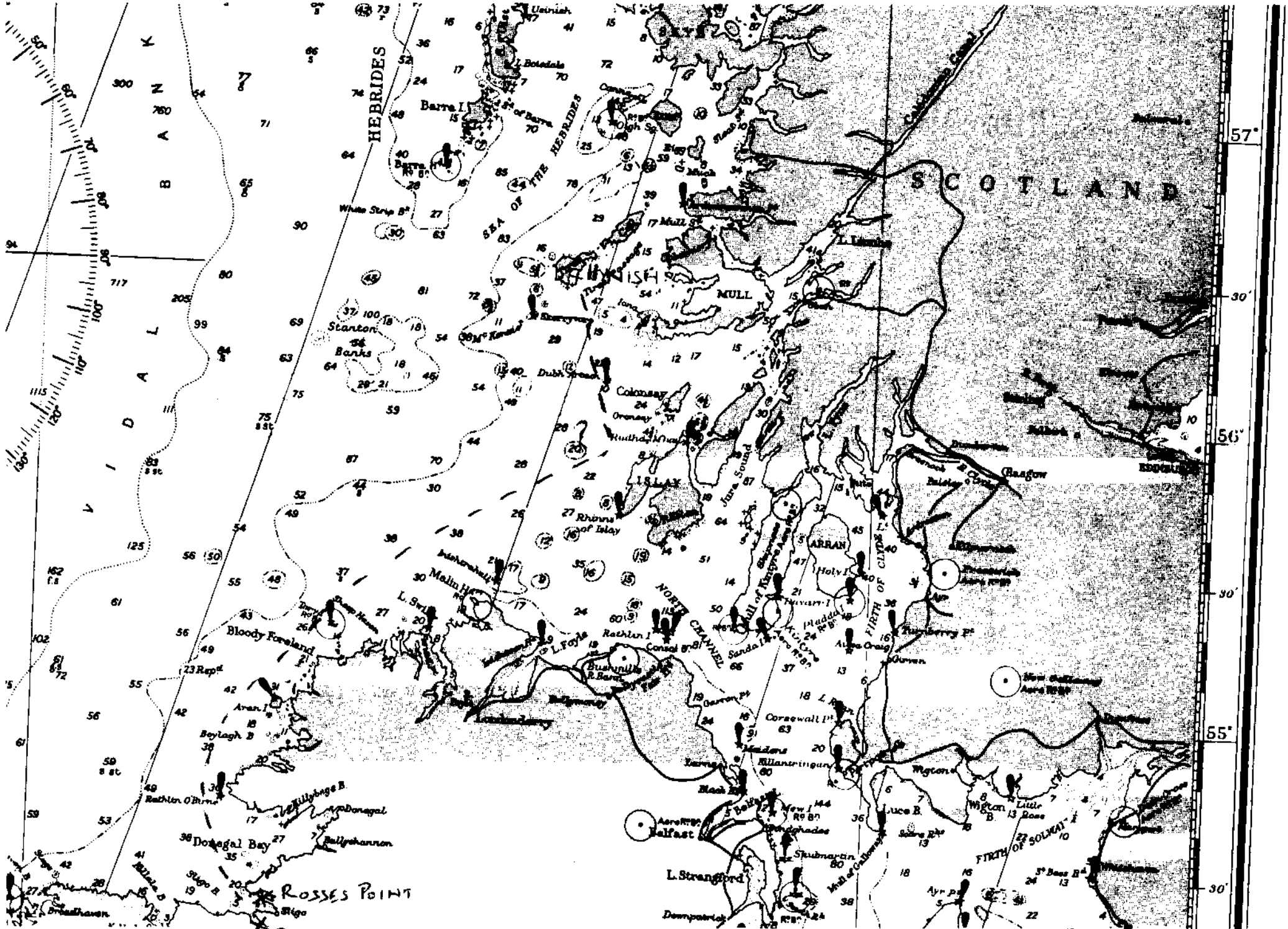
He was joined by a number of friends in the R.A.F., including the other two occupants of the ketch, and finally set out for Belfast on September 8.

Wreckage of the ketch has now been washed ashore in the Hebrides. Before Group-Captain Warrington left for the cruise he and his wife placed their baby in the care of friends. Efforts were being made yesterday to find the baby and the friends.

Mr. McCormick told me that he feared that the yacht had foundered in a gale.

"I gave a dinner party on the night before they left," he said. "I told the new owner about the tricky, treacherous weather off the Irish coast. I think he wanted to go outside Tory Island when he rounded Donegal, and I advised against it.

"Group-Captain Warrington said he might sail to the Isle of Man or Stranraer instead of calling in Belfast. He was apparently undecided."


HEBRIDES
SEA OF THE HEBRIDES
SCOTLAND
IRISH SEA
NORTH CHANNEL
FIRTH OF CLYDE
FIRTH OF SOLWAY
MULL
ARRAN
ISLAY
Barra I.
Stanton Banks
Bloody Foreland
Malin Hd
Rathlin I
Corsewall Pt
Mull of Kintyre
Sanda I
Ailsa Craig
Donegal Bay
Rosses Point
Sligo
Belfast
L. Strangford
Glasgow
Stranraer
Ayr
Wigtown
Luce B.
Colonsay
Oronsay
Skerryvore
Dubh Artach
Rhinns of Islay
Holy I.
Pladda
Aros Castle
Corran
Killantringan
Skubmartin
Ayr Pt
Rathlin O'Birne
Aran I.
Inishmurray
Inishowen Hd
Lough Foyle
Londonderry
Ballyshannon
Donegal
Killybegs
Broadhaven
Blacksod B.
Sligo B.
Ballina
Tory I.
Mew I.
Portpatrick
Dunskey
Loch Ryan
Girvan
Troon
Ardrossan
Largs
Rothesay
Campbeltown
Port Ellen
Jura Sound
Gigha
Oban
Tobermory
Ulva I.
Staffa
Iona
Treshnish
Canna
Rum
Eigg
Muck
Coll
Tiree
Barra Hd
Eriskay
Benbecula
North Uist
Harris
Lewis
Stornoway
Ullapool
Loch Broom
Gairloch
Loch Torridon
Skye
Raasay
Kyle of Lochalsh
Loch Alsh
Loch Carron
Loch Kishorn
Loch Ewe
Loch Gairloch
Loch Inver
Loch Eriboll
Cape Wrath
Kinlochbervie
Scrabster
Stroma
Pentland Skerries
Duncansby Hd
Dunnet Hd
John o' Groats
Wick
Helmsdale
Brora
Golspie
Dornoch
Tarbat Ness
Cromarty
Inverness
Fort George
Nairn
Findhorn
Lossiemouth
Buckie
Banff
Fraserburgh
Peterhead
Aberdeen
Girdle Ness
Montrose
Arbroath
Bell Rock
Inchcape Rock
Fife Ness
Isle of May
Anstruther
St Andrews
Tay Bridge
Dundee
Tay Estuary
Forth Bridge
Firth of Forth
Leith
Edinburgh
Granton
Inchkeith
Kirkcaldy
Burntisland
Rosyth
Queensferry
Bass Rock
North Berwick
Dunbar
Eyemouth
St Abbs Hd
Berwick
Holy Island
Farne Is.
Coquet I.
Amble
Blyth
Tynemouth
Sunderland
Hartlepool
Whitby
Scarborough
Flamborough Hd
Bridlington
Spurn Hd
Grimsby
Cleethorpes
Boston
Wash
Lowestoft
Yarmouth
Cromer
Sheringham
Blakeney Pt
Wells
Hunstanton
Skegness
Mablethorpe
Withernsea
Hornsea
Aberystwyth
Cardigan
Fishguard
Strumble Hd
Ramsey I.
St David's Hd
Milford Haven
Skokholm I.
Skomer I.
Tenby
Caldy I.
Worms Hd
Barry
Cardiff
Newport
Severn Bridge
Portishead
Weston-super-Mare
Minehead
Hartland Pt
Lundy I.
Bideford
Ilfracombe
Barnstaple
Clovelly
Bude
Padstow
Newquay
Godrevy I.
St Ives
Penzance
Lizard Pt
Falmouth
Dodman Pt
Eddystone
Plymouth
Rame Hd
Looe
Fowey
Polperro
Start Pt
Prawle Pt
Salcombe
Bolt Tail
Bolt Head
Dartmouth
Torbay
Berry Hd
Portland Bill
Weymouth
Lyme Bay
Chesil Beach
Isle of Wight
Needles
Hurst Castle
Yarmouth
Cowes
Ryde
Spithead
Portsmouth
Selsey Bill
Beachy Hd
Newhaven
Brighton
Shoreham
Littlehampton
Worthing
Bognor
Hayling I.
Chichester
Pagham Hr
Dungeness
Rye
Hastings
Fairlight
Beachy Hd
Eastbourne
Folkestone
Dover
South Foreland
Deal
Ramsgate
North Foreland
Margate
Herne Bay
Whitstable
Sheerness
Isle of Sheppey
Thames Estuary
Shoeburyness
Southend
Foulness I.
Maplin Sands
Harwich
Felixstowe
Orfordness
Aldeburgh
Southwold
Sole Bay
Kessingland
Gorleston
Caister
Winterton
Haisborough Sands
Cromer Knoll
Sheringham Shoal
Dudgeon Shoal
Inner Dowsing
Race Bank
Lincs
Skegness
Gibraltar Pt
Wash
Hunstanton
Wells
Blakeney Pt
Cromer
Mundesley
Happisburgh
Winterton
Caister
Gorleston
Lowestoft
Southwold
Orfordness
Aldeburgh
Felixstowe
Harwich
Walton Backwaters
Clacton
Frinton
Walton
Naze
Colne Estuary
Mersea I.
Blackwater Estuary
Maldon
Burnham
Foulness I.
Shoeburyness
Southend
Thames Estuary
Isle of Sheppey
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Strumble Hd
Fishguard
Cardigan
Aberystwyth
Ramsey I.
Bardsey I.
Aberdaron
Pwllheli
Porthmadog
Barmouth
Cardigan Bay
Aberystwyth
Aberaeron
New Quay

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s. d.
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TELEGRAM

Prefix. Time handed in. Office of Origin and Service Instructions. Words.

665 6.26 PM LONDON CTO OHMS 78

From

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PRIORITY CC W N WARRINGTON ESQ C/O CARSWELL AND WYLIE 131 WEST REGENT ST GLASGOW N 13

FROM AIR MINISTRY 73 OXFORD ST LONDON W 1 REF 0X/ 385 REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR BROTHER GROUP CAPTAIN GEORGE NINIAN WARRINGTON (28101) AND HIS WIFE MRS G N WARRINGTON ARE REPORTED MISSING AT SEA SINCE 8 TH SEPTEMBER ANY FURTHER INFORMATION RECEIVED WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO YOU IMMEDIATELY SHOULD NEWS OF HIM

For free repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form, at office of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form, and, if possible, the envelope.

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23 6.28 P London OTO O.H.S.

From Air Min. for Glasgow To

REACH YOU FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE PLEASE ADVISE THIS DEPARTMENT + + + +

CC 131 N 13 73 W 1 OX/ 385 (28101) 8 TH + +

For free repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form, at office of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form, and, if possible, the e

I rang the Duty Air Staff Officer at Coastal Command Headquarters and requested that arrangements be made for these aircraft to be available if required. In view of the fact that Castle Archdale is on care and maintenance, and therefore has insufficient maintenance personnel available, I telephoned the Station Commander asking whether he would be able to accommodate and cater for these aircraft. He agreed to do so provided sufficient maintenance personnel to do D.I's came with the aircraft.

7. In view of the co-operation of Naval aircraft which assisted in this search, it was not necessary to call on these aircraft from No. 18 Group.

8. On Monday, 17th September, I flew to Tiree and inspected the wreckage of the 'CHARM' which had been washed up on a section of the coast east of the airfield at Tiree. The wreckage covered an area of approximately 5 miles and consisted of parts of the hull, deck, sticks of furniture, [illegible] pole, deck-house, two petrol tins, red saloon cushion, and rail board with the name 'CHARM'. From the description of the vessel given me by S/Ldr. Curry, I feel convinced that the wreckage which I saw was that of the 'CHARM'. From an examination of the wreckage, I gained the impression that the vessel may have been blown up by a mine. My reasons for believing this are that the main deck had been blown away intact from the hull, that the nails etc. in the main structure had either pulled cleanly out of the wood or had failed in tension. This to my mind is not consistent with the damage to be expected from heavy seas or striking rocks.

9. On the morning of Tuesday 13th September, F/L McGillivray informed me of a report which he had received from

F/L Murphy C/O 97 A/S.R. Helsdale. The message was to the effect that about a Dozen mines had been swept up in that area during the past few days. This information, in my opinion, lends colour to the theory that the vessel may have struck a mine.

10. During the course of Tuesday 18th September, 1 arranged for further A/S.R. searches by air and surface craft. These have so produced no result: I have ordered for rescue operations to be discontinued at 1700 hours on Tuesday 18th September.

BURNS.

Group Captain,
Senior Air Staff Officer.

18/IX/1945.