

Smith, Alvin William Rusk

Birth: 9 March 1925
Place: Park Head, Bruce, Ontario, Canada
(born at the home farmstead)
Marriage: 9 April 1949
Spouse: Gertrude Fredericka VanRooyen –
“Trudy”
Death: 11 June 1991
Place: McMaster University Hospital,
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
Burial: Pleasantview Memorial Gardens,
Fonthill, Ontario, Canada



Alvin William Rusk Smith - 1945

Service – Royal Canadian Navy

Ships served in (as supplied)

HMCS YORK - Enlisted 24 Apr 1944. Commenced Active Service 04 May 1944 as an OS, RCNVR

HMCS STADACONA - Drafted to STADACONA 11 Jun 1944 as an OS, RCNVR

HMCS PEREGRINE - Drafted to PEREGRINE 01 Oct 1944 as an OS, RCNVR

HMCS CORNWALLIS - Drafted to CORNWALLIS 02 Dec 1944 as an OS, RCNVR

HMCS ACADIA - Served in ACADIA for training 10 Mar 1945 - 16 Mar 1945 while at HMCS CORNWALLIS

HMCS SHELBURNE - Drafted to SHELBURNE 06 Apr 1945 as an OS, RCNVR

* Rated A/AB 04 May 1945

HMCS JOLIETTE - Drafted to JOLIETTE 11 Sep 1945 as an A/AB, RCNVR

HMCS SCOTIAN - Drafted to SCOTIAN 03 Nov 1945 as an A/AB, RCNVR

HMCS PEREGRINE - Drafted to PEREGRINE 25 Mar 1946 as an A/AB, RCNVR

HMCS YORK - Drafted to YORK 28 Mar 1946 as an A/AB, RCNVR

* Demobilized 11 Apr 1946

Birth

Alvin was the 5th child born to Albert Gladstone Smith and Emily May Rusk “Emma”. All were born at home on the farm: Beatrice, Evelyn Helen, Cecil, Alvin, Verna, Kay, Vidal and Bruce. Whenever a baby was ready for delivery, a neighbouring farmer’s wife would be there to assist.



Service Medals
(left to right)

Atlantic Star: awarded for six months of service afloat or two months for air-crew service and was not awarded unless the recipient was qualified for the 1939-1945 Star by six months of operational service afloat or by two months of airborne service. Therefore, the total requirement was twelve months of service afloat or four months of airborne service.

Description:

The six-pointed star is yellow copper zinc alloy. The obverse has a central design of the Royal and Imperial cypher, surmounted by a crown. The cypher is surrounded by a circlet containing the words 'The Atlantic Star'.

Stars issued to Australian personnel have recipient names engraved on the plain reverse.

The shaded and watered ribbon consists of three equal stripes; blue, white, and sea-green, to represent the Atlantic Ocean.

Canadian Volunteer Service Medal:

(established 22 October 1943) granted to persons of any rank in the Naval, Military or Air Forces of Canada who voluntarily served on Active Service and honourably completed eighteen months total voluntary service from 3 September 1939 to 1 March 1947.

Description

A circular, silver medal, 1.42 inches in diameter. The medal is linked to a straight suspender by a small ring passing through a small fixed ring at the top of the medal.

On the obverse of the medal, seven marching figures are depicted, representing men and women of the Army, Air Force, Navy and Nursing

A silver bar (often called a clasp), a maple leaf at its centre, was awarded for 60 days service outside Canada. A silver maple leaf is worn on the ribbon in undress.

The War Medal 1939-1945: was awarded to all full-time personnel of the Armed Forces and Merchant Marines for serving for 28 days between 03 September 1939 and 02 September 1945. In the Merchant Navy, the 28 days must have been served at sea.

Description:

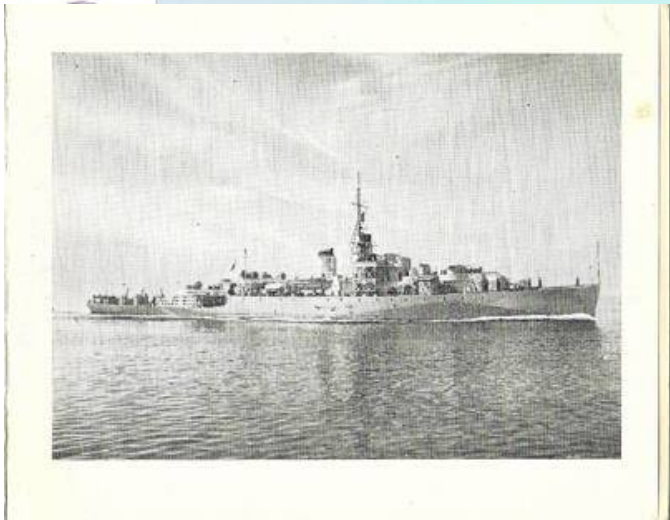
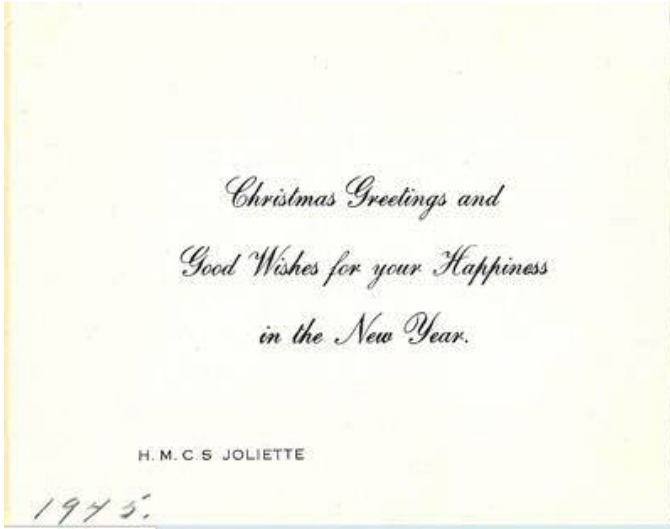
A circular, silver medal, 1.42 inches in diameter. The British issue medals were made of cupro-nickel. A plain, straight non-swiveling suspender with a single-toed claw. The award was established on 16 August 1945.

The ribbon is 1.25 inches wide and consists of seven coloured stripes: red, dark blue, white, narrow red, white, dark blue, and red.

The obverse shows the crowned coinage effigy of King George VI, facing left, and the legend GEORGIVS VI D : BR : OMN : REX ET INDIAE IMP :

The reverse shows a lion standing on the body of a double-headed dragon. The dragon's heads are those of an eagle and a dragon to signify the principal occidental and oriental enemies. At the top, right of centre are the dates 1939/1945 in two lines.

Below: Christmas Greeting card and photo of Alvin received – 1945



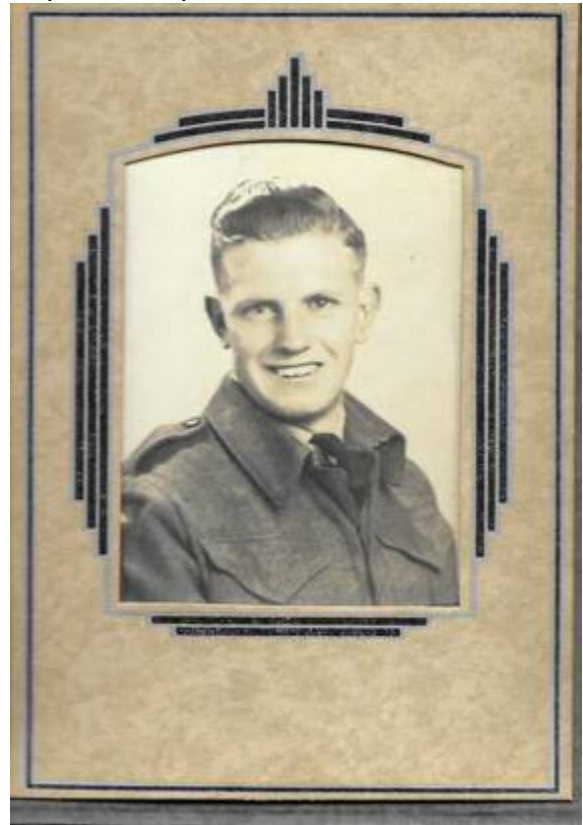
Family

His sister, Corp. Bea served 4 years in the Air Force as a nurse assistant during the second world war stationed in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.



Cora Beatrice Smith - 1945

His brother, Cecil, served in the Canadian Army. He enlisted 1 June 1943 with the 6th Field Unit, WWII Royal Artillery.



Cecil Gordon Smith – 1945

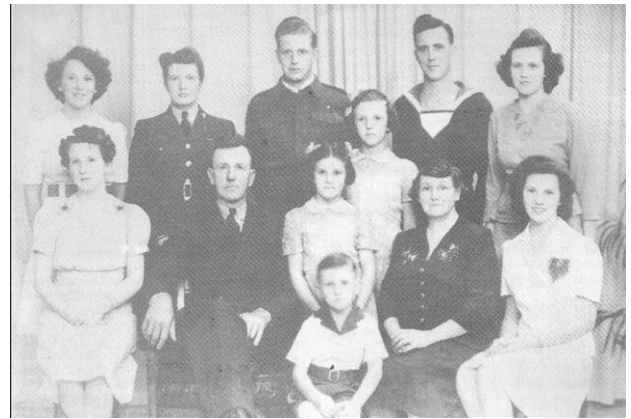
With three children from one family serving their country in WWII there was frequent mention of their names printed in the local newspapers (Sun Times, Owen Sound or The Echo, Warton, Ontario)



Left to Right: Alvin Smith, Beatrice Smith and Cecil Smith (brothers and sister 1945)



Left to Right: Keith Philip and Alvin Smith (both from Park Head and in Royal Canadian Navy)



Smith Family

Front Seated: Bruce

Center Row: Evelyn, Albert (father), Isobel, Emma (mother), Verna

Back Row: Kay, Bea, Cecil, Vidal, Alvin, Helen



Alvin William Rusk Smith – Home Dec 1944

Marriage

Married: 9 April 1949

Alvin William Rusk Smith of Park Head, Ontario & Gertrude Frederica VanRooyen of Park Head Ontario, formerly of Utrecht, Holland

Alvin and Trudy were married in Park Head. Together they had five children, Bill, Susan, Anne, Audrey and Debbie (today, only Susan, myself, and Debbie are living) and six grandchildren.



Alvin with his brother Bruce (youngest of 10 children) and parents, Albert and Emma Smith at Park Head farmstead - 1945



Alvin and Trudy – Wedding 9 April 1949



Wedding Party of Alvin & Trudy Smith
Left to Right: Elly VanRooyen, sister and Maid of Honour; Trudy and Alvin, newlyweds; Gordon Smith, brother and Best Man



Alvin and Trudy's kids abt 1959,
Left to Right:
Catherine "Anne" 1953-2005
Susan Frances 1950-
William "Bill" Albert 1949-1987
Audrey Louise 1954-2000
Deborah Lee 1956-



Family of the Newlyweds.
Left to Right: Albert and Emma Smith (Alvin's parents), Cecil Smith (Alvin's brother), Alvin and Trudy, Elly VanRooyen (Trudy's sister), Gertrude and Henk VanRooyen (Trudy's parents)



Alvin and Trudy Smith with first born, Oct 1949.
Son named William "Bill" Albert Smith

Occupation

After living in Niagara-on-the-Lake for a few years, Alvin and Trudy moved to St. Catharines, Ontario abt 1952. Alvin secured a job with the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, Welland Canal, Lock 1 as Lockmaster of Lock 1 (near Port Weller Dry Docks). He retired 1986 after 35 years.

Alvin was also a profession scuba diver and had his own business apart from working for the St. Lawrence Seaway.

He instructed Scuba Diving for some years at Prudhommes Hotel indoor swimming pool, Vineland, Ontario as well as handling numerous diving jobs locating bodies, lost equipment, underwater repairs, including repairs for the St. Lawrence Seaway in the canal.

On one particular diving job in Lake Erie, Ontario, he located an anchor. It was retrieved and brought onboard the ship he was working for at the time and arranged for it to be brought to his home by tow truck. The smell was unbearable and created a number of complaints. After researching, it was determined the anchor belonged to ????? Shipping Company of Buffalo, New York. (Guessing age of the anchor at the time was 40-50 years old – built abt 1930)

The anchor was mounted on the front boulevard at home in St. Catharines with chain surrounding the area. Dad hired a man to weld the remaining chain to create a railing at the front of the house. That railing still exists although the home was sold after mom passed away in 2015.

After dad's passing in June 1991, the anchor was donated by my mother, to the Niagara Falls Sea Cadets where restoration was done and it was mounted at Drummond Road, Niagara Falls, Ontario. I have since been advised the cost of facilities was no longer feasible so the Sea Cadets secured another location and the anchor was donated to the St. Lawrence Seaway before the Sea Cadets relocated. (The Seaway is unaware of the anchor's whereabouts as of today)



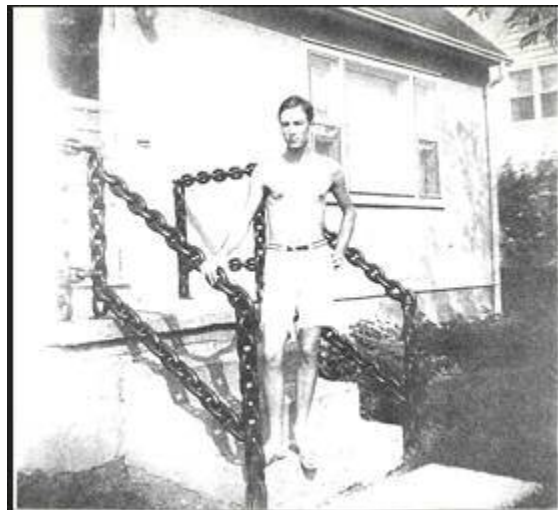
Anchor mounted on grass boulevard at home, Frederick Street, St. Catharines, Ontario



Susan, daughter of Alvin and Trudy Smith in front of anchor – 1969



Bill, son of Alvin and Trudy Smith in front of anchor – 1967 (showing chain skirting boulevard)



Railing created by welder using chain from found anchor (pictured with son Bill)



Some chain attached to the anchor was used to create stair railing at front of home.

Alvin was an Active Duplicate Bridge player. His name is mounted on many trophies in Ontario and New York State.

He was a member of the Royal Canadian Legion Talbot Trail, Branch 613 Fonthill, Ontario.

Character

Alvin was well liked, at his work, in his Scuba Diving business and by many family and friends.

He came to know Captains of ships that came through the canal. When Alvin was off duty and the Captain had a Pilot on board to guide the ship through the locks, he and Trudy would accept an invite to board and sail through a few locks enjoying the Captain's hospitality. A taxi took them back to their car at the end of the evening. Getting on and off the ship meant climbing a rope ladder!

Reading books of WWII and ships (Naval and commercial) captivated his attention throughout his life. There was quite a collection of these books at the time of his passing. They were shared as treasures to grandsons.

Alvin was so intrigued with the history of WWII and his Navy service experience that he wanted to visit and tour Germany and Holland. He arranged with one particular Captain to take him aboard, allowing him to work for his passage on the ship to Germany (abt 1971).

He said he walked leaning forward for a week before straightening up after sailing ocean to Germany.

This was a lifelong wish of Alvin's to travel as he did working on a ship; to see the bunker where Hitler was last alive as well as the many historic sites he read about for so many years in East and West Germany. He also wanted to see Holland.

Trudy emigrated from Holland to Canada with her mother, father, sister and two brothers in 1948. Left behind was one brother and his wife as well as many other family and friends. So, after Alvin toured East/West Germany and spent time visiting family in Holland, he returned home. The end of his journey was flying by jet plane home to Canada.

In Memory Of

Alvin W.R. Smith

*Born
Park Head, Ontario
March 9, 1926*

*Died
Hamilton, Ontario
June 11, 1991*

*Funeral Service
Hulse and English Funeral Chapel
June 14, 1991 @ 1 p.m.*

*Officiating Clergy
The Rev. Cynthia Chenard*

*Final Resting Place
Pleasantview Memorial Gardens*

SMITH, Alvin, W. R. — It is with deep regret we announce the passing of our beloved husband, father, grandfather and brother at the McMaster University Medical Centre Hamilton on Tuesday, June 11, 1991, in his 66th year, beloved husband of Gertrude F. (Trudy) Van Rooyen, dear father of Susan and her husband Clarke Pepp of Dundas; Anne and her husband Derry Loff, Audrey and her husband Brian Cooper, Debbie and her husband John Balanowski, all of St. Catharines; grandfather of Carrie and Jim Loff, Tyler and Leah Balanowski, Andrew and Amanda Cooper, brother of Bruce and his wife Lois of St. Catharines; Cecil and his wife June, Isabel and her husband Bob O'Leary, Helen and her husband Jiggs Webber, Verna and her husband Orville Stewart, all of Owen Sound; Kay Alexander of Toronto; Vidal Cheboff of Allentown; Evelyn and her husband Allen Soaman of Southampton. Predeceased by a son Bill (1987), his parents Albert and Emma Smith of Park Head and a sister Beatrice. Mr. Smith was employed with the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority for 35 years, retiring in 1986. A veteran of WWII, he served with the Royal Canadian Navy. A member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 613, Fonthill and an active duplicate bridge player.

The family will receive friends at the HULSE & ENGLISH FUNERAL HOME, 75 Church St. on Thursday 2-4 and 7-9 pm. Service in the chapel on Friday, June 14 at 1 pm. Interment in Pleasantview Memorial Gardens. Donations to the Canadian Cancer Society or West St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Memorial Fund would be appreciated by the family.

The Sun Times
31 Dec 1942, Thu · Page 2

their guests.

Corporal Beatrice Smith, Brantford, Cecil Smith of St. Catharines and Alvin Smith of Toronto were holiday visitors with their parents Mr. and Mrs. Albert Smith.

The Sun Times
29 Apr 1943, Thu · Page 8

Easter week-end guests of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Smith were Alvin Smith of Toronto, Cecil Smith

The Sun Times
14 Oct 1943, Thu · Page 2

Alvin Smith of Toronto was a holiday visitor at his home here. Miss Ruby Livingstone spent the Thanksgiving week-end at her home in Mount Forest.

The Sun Times
15 Jun 1944, Thu · Page 8

Owen Sound.

Is Park Head Visitor

Ordinary Seaman Alvin Smith of Toronto was a visitor with his parents at Park Head.

The Sun Times
03 Jul 1944, Mon · Page 8

Are Serving at Halifax

Corp. Beatrice Smith has completed a short course at Trenton and spent a few days' leave with her parents before going to Halifax. Ordinary Seaman Alvin Smith is also stationed at Halifax. They are both from Park Head.

ON LEAVE: L.-Cpl. Maurice Hunsperger, wounded in France and returned to Canada, is spending a week's furlough at Hanover after receiving treatment in Christie St. Hospital. . . . Rflmn. Bruce Alderton, a patient at Christie St. Hospital, at home for week-end. . . . O.S. Alvin Smith, R.C.N., on 2 weeks' furlough at Park Head. . . . P.O. Jack Jordison at Chatsworth before being transferred from Guelph to Camp Borden. . . .

The Sun Times
03 Jul 1944, Mon · Page 8

Are Serving at Halifax

Corp. Beatrice Smith has completed a short course at Trenton and spent a few days' leave with her parents before going to Halifax. Ordinary Seaman Alvin Smith is also stationed at Halifax. They are both from Park Head.

The Sun Times
22 Dec 1944, Fri · Page

Sailor Is Honored

Ordinary Seaman Alvin Smith of Park Head, stationed at the east coast, who is home on a two weeks' furlough with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Smith, was honored in the Park Head community hall on Wednesday night, when friends and neighbors gathered to spend the evening with him. T. F. Evans was chairman for the program. Choral Verna and Kathleen Smith and Noreen Rusk accompanied on the piano by Miss Livingstone. sang "The Navy Is Here." Mrs. Norman Smith, accompanied by her daughter, Shirley, sang "A White Christmas." Beverley Smith, accompanied by Choral Smith, gave a mouth organ selection. Evelyn Pringle gave an instrumental number. Miss Livingstone was at the piano for community singing. Mrs. W. A. Smith gave a reading. Ivan Matches and Cameron Philto accompanied Alvin Smith to the platform, when Norman Smith read an address. On behalf of the community, Tom Pringle presented him with a pen and pencil set and a billfold. Lunch was served by the ladies.



FOR POSTERITY'S SAKE

A Royal Canadian Navy Historical Project



HMCS JOLIETTE K418

River Class Frigate



HMCS JOLIETTE K418 with German U-boat U-889
Source: Flickr photo collection of Brian Westhouse

The Sun Times
27 Jun 1945, Wed - Page 7

PARK HEAD

A large crowd assembled in the community Hall Saturday night to officially welcome Corp. Wray Hamilton to his home after five years duty overseas, also to honor Rifleman Cecil Smith, who was invalided home from overseas a while back and O.S. Alvin Smith of the Canadian Navy. After a musical program with Mr. T. E. Evans, as chairman, three guests were called to the platform, where Mrs. Harry Gates read a congratulatory address to Corp Hamilton and Carmen Rourke made the presentation. Mrs. Stanley Smith read an address to Rifleman Cecil Smith and Howard Matches made the presentations. Mrs. J. L. Matches read the address and George Gray made the presentation to Alvin Smith each had received a handsome engraved wrist watch from the community.

Lunch was served by the ladies.

The music for the Sunday morning church service was supplied by the school children from Grade 1 to 8, under the direction of their teacher, Miss R. B. Livingstone.

Mrs. Jack Murray has returned to her home in Toronto, after a visit with her mother, Mrs. David Mustard and sister Mrs. Frank Schibl and Mr. Schibl.

Mr. Albert Smith and T. B. Rourke were business visitors in Toronto Monday and Tuesday.

Keith and Doris Rourke of Montreal are spending this mid-summer vacation with their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Rourke and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gates.

1945 – HMCS Joliette River Class Frigate Emblem



The Sun Times
20 Jun 1945, Wed - Page 9

Visits at Park Head

Ordinary Seaman Alvin Smith, is spending a few days' leave with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. Smith, of Park Head. Alvin was a member of the crew of a corvette, which captured a German submarine off the coast of Newfoundland, since V.-E. Day.

Signed for Pacific



A.B. SEAMAN ALVIN SMITH
Son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Smith is home on a 68 day leave after which he will report for duty in the Pacific. At the present time he is stationed at Shelburne.

Roll of Honour
FOR KING AND EMPIRE

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| MOORE, Harry | PRESZ, James |
| MOORE, Jim | PRESTON, Ralph |
| MOORE, Stuart A. | PRESTON, Verma |
| MORLEY, Joseph | PRINGLE, Bob |
| MOTT, James | PRINGLE, Roy |
| MOWAT, Mira | PRUDER, Harvey |
| MOYER, Bert | PRUDER, Minnie |
| MOYER, Douglas | RADKOURNE, Earl |
| MOYER, Fred | RICKIN, Earl |
| MOYER, Garfield | REIVE, William Walker |
| MOYER, George | REID, Neom |
| MOYER, Harold | RENOUF, H. |
| MURRAY, Vera (Soper) | RITCHIE, Edward S. |
| MUSTARD, Russell | RITCHIE, Spencer |
| NEGUS, Chas | ROBINSON, Delmer |
| NEGUS, Fred | ROBINSON, Kelly |
| NEIL, Leta | ROURKE, D. L. |
| NEIL, Millard | SAMELIS, Bert |
| NOBLE, Bert | SALINDERS, Russell |
| NOBLE, Blake | SCHROEDER, Lerne |
| NOBLE, Dave | SCHULTZ, Charles |
| NOBLE, Ernie | SHAW, Arnold |
| NOBLE, Lorne | SHAW, Cliff |
| NOBLE, Tom | SHAW, Harold |
| NOBLE, William | SHAW, Jim |
| PARKER, H. | SHERK, Preston |
| PARTRIDGE, George | SHER, Kenneth |
| PATTERSON, Finest | SHIPLEY, Bev |
| PATTERSON, Blair | SHIPLEY, Ernest S. |
| PATTERSON, Robert | SHOULDICE, Victor |
| PATTERSON, Ryerson | SHOULDICE, W. Bev |
| PEPPER, Stewart | SEGRIST, Alford |
| PEPPER, William | SEGRIST, Charles |
| PINCH, Alfred | SEGRIST, Oliver |
| PINDER, Lenore (Monahan) | SIMMIE, Robert |
| PLAYFORD, Bert | SKENE, Stewart |
| PLAYFORD, Ernie | SKINNER, Joseph |
| PLAYFORD, George | SKINNER, Mabel |
| PLAYFORD, Norman | SKINNER, Otto |
| PORTER, Albert | SMITH, Alvin |
| PORTER, Bev | SMITH, Beatrice |
| PORTER, Cameron | SMITH, Bill |
| PORTER, Charles | SMITH, Cecil |
| PORTER, Cliff | SMITH, Charles |
| PORTER, David | SMITH, Dan |
| PORTER, Earl | SMITH, Earl |
| PORTER, Marshall | SPEARS, Howard |
| PORTER, Raymond | SPENCER, Gerald |

GOD SAVE THE KING

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Smith had all the members of their family with them on New Year's day, including Miss Beatrice of London, Mr. and Mrs. J. Weber and family, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Smith of Owen Sound, Mr. and Mrs. Alan Seaman and three children of Southampton, Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Smith and four children of St. Catharines, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Chebott and Barry, Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Alexander and baby of Allenford, Mr. and Mrs. O. Stewart and two girls and Bruce Smith of Park Head and Miss Isabel Smith of Owen Sound.