

Surgeon-Commander Francis Joseph Scully O-65800



Surgeon-Commander Frank Scully
Photo credit: McGill University Archives,
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- **Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve**
- **Born: Saint John NB, 7 March 1893**
- **Enlisted: Montreal Division RCNVR, 18 December 1940**
- **Civilian Occupation: Physician**
- **Died while serving in HMCS *Donnacona* on 18 December 1943**
- **Buried: Saint John (Holy Cross) Cemetery, Saint John County, Lot 248. Sec. D. Grave 3**
- **Commemorated: McGill University Book of Remembrance and the Second World War Book of Remembrance, page 211 at the Centre Block Houses of Parliament, Ottawa**

Francis Joseph Scully, known as Frank, was born at Saint John, NB on 7 March 1893. Frank's parents were the late Honourable William E. and Mary Scully. He had one brother, who predeceased Frank, and three sisters. The family were members of the Roman Catholic Church. He received his undergraduate education at St. Francis Xavier College in NS where he won the gold medal in Arts. He then attended McGill University where he obtained his medical degree. While attending McGill, Scully joined the Canadian Officers' Training Corps in 1916. Upon graduation from McGill, Scully enlisted for Active Service with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He joined the Canadian Army Medical Corps as a Lieutenant on 22 March 1917 and was sent to the Army Medical Corps (AMC) Training Depot #4 for further training. Upon completion of training, Captain Scully was posted to Siberia in Russia.



Canadian hospital in Vladivostok, c. 1919.
Photo: Eric Elkington Collection, Ladysmith, British
Columbia <http://www.siberianexpedition.ca/>

He married his sweetheart Camille on 28 September 1918 in Quebec City, and 20 days later, on 18 October 1918, he embarked in RMS *Empress of Japan* as part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force travelling from Vancouver to Siberia. Upon arrival, now Captain Scully was attached to #11 Stationary Hospital in Vladivostok. While on active duty in Siberia, Captain Scully briefly commanded the Second River (Vtoraya Ryeckka) Hospital, north of Vladivostok from 6 March 1919 until he embarked in the SS *Monteagle* to return to Canada on 21 April 1919. Back in Canada, Captain Scully worked at Ste. Anne's Military Hospital in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, QC until he was officially demobilized on 10 February 1920. For his service in the Great War, he was awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal.

Dr. Scully was also on staff at St. Mary's Hospital while setting up his medical practice in Montreal. Frank and Camille raised a family including one son and one daughter. He became well-known in athletic circles and was a member of the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association and was for a time the club's physician for the Montreal Maroons of the National Hockey League.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, Dr. Scully (age 47) along with his son Bill enlisted together at the Montreal Division of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve (later known as HMCS *Montreal* and then HMCS *Donnacona*) on 18 December 1940.

Dr. Scully entered the Navy as a Probationary Surgeon-Sub-Lieutenant (Temporary) and was promoted to Surgeon-Lieutenant the next day. He was 5' 6½" tall with dark brown hair with brown



HMCS Prince David.
Photo: Roger Litwiller Collection, Allen E. Singleton photo, courtesy of Bruce Keir, RCNVR.

eyes. He had a medium complexion. Within a day of his enlistment, Surgeon-Lieutenant Scully was travelling east to Halifax, NS for his first appointment at the Royal Canadian Naval Barracks (RCNB) hospital at HMCS *Stadacona*. In May 1941, he was dispatched to Kingston, ON where he applied his medical skills at Division Headquarters Kingston until mid-September 1941 when he returned to Halifax. He worked at RCNB until he was drafted to HMCS *Prince David* on 6 November 1941. It should be mentioned that the Royal Canadian Navy Medical

Service deliberately rotated their personnel approximately every six months. The rationale was that nobody be forgotten in less-desirable postings, and everyone served a period at sea so that they could fully appreciate the demands of sea service.

Surgeon-Lieutenant Scully served in *Prince David* during an interesting period. HMCS *Prince David* was an Armed Merchant Cruiser that had belonged to the Canadian National Steamship Company before the war. Because of its design it was not a very effective warship, and it was better suited as a troop movement or depot ship. However, in 1941 she had been tasked with patrols to intercept enemy raiders and supply ships in the Caribbean and West Indies. Dr. Scully joined *Prince David* while she was in refit in Halifax. The ship was rushed out of refit on 4 December 1941, and after the attack on Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941, HMCS *Prince David* was transferred to the west coast for operations in the Pacific. As such, Surgeon-Lieutenant Scully left Halifax harbour on a damp December day, sailed south and transited the Panama Canal, and arrived in Esquimalt, BC on 30 December 1941.

Surgeon-Lieutenant Scully remained in *Prince David* until he was drafted back to HMCS *Stadacona* on 27 July 1942 where he returned to RCN Barracks Hospital, Halifax.

In January 1943, Dr Scully was drafted back to Montreal where he served at local military hospitals



**Mumps ward, RCN Hospital Halifax.
Photo: Library and Archives Canada**

and the RCNVR Division where he had enlisted two years earlier. The Division had been renamed HMCS *Montreal* in 1941 and before the year's-end it would be renamed HMCS *Donnacona* to avoid confusion when the RCN launched a new River-class frigate with the name HMCS *Montreal*.

Scully was promoted to Acting Surgeon-Lieutenant-Commander (Temporary) on 1 July 1943, and he was appointed Surgeon-

Commander on 17 December 1943. The next day, the Doctor collapsed while attending to administrative matters at the Western Division General Hospital in Montreal. Surgeon-Commander Scully died in the evening of 18 December 1943. Records show he had been suffering from influenza and pneumonia. Surgeon-Commander Francis Joseph Scully was 50 years old when he died.

Surgeon-Commander Scully's funeral service included an armed naval force of 50 men. Surgeon-Captain Archie McCallum led the officers attending the service.

For his service, Surgeon-Commander Francis Joseph Scully was awarded: the 1939-45 Star, the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp, and the War Medal. His wife, Camille, was awarded the Memorial Cross.

Surgeon-Commander Scully was buried in Saint John (Holy Cross) Cemetery, Saint John County, Lot 248. Sec. D. Grave 3. He is remembered in the McGill University Book of Remembrance; and the Second World War Book of Remembrance, page 211 at the Centre Block Houses of Parliament, Ottawa

Prepared By:

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Sources:

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