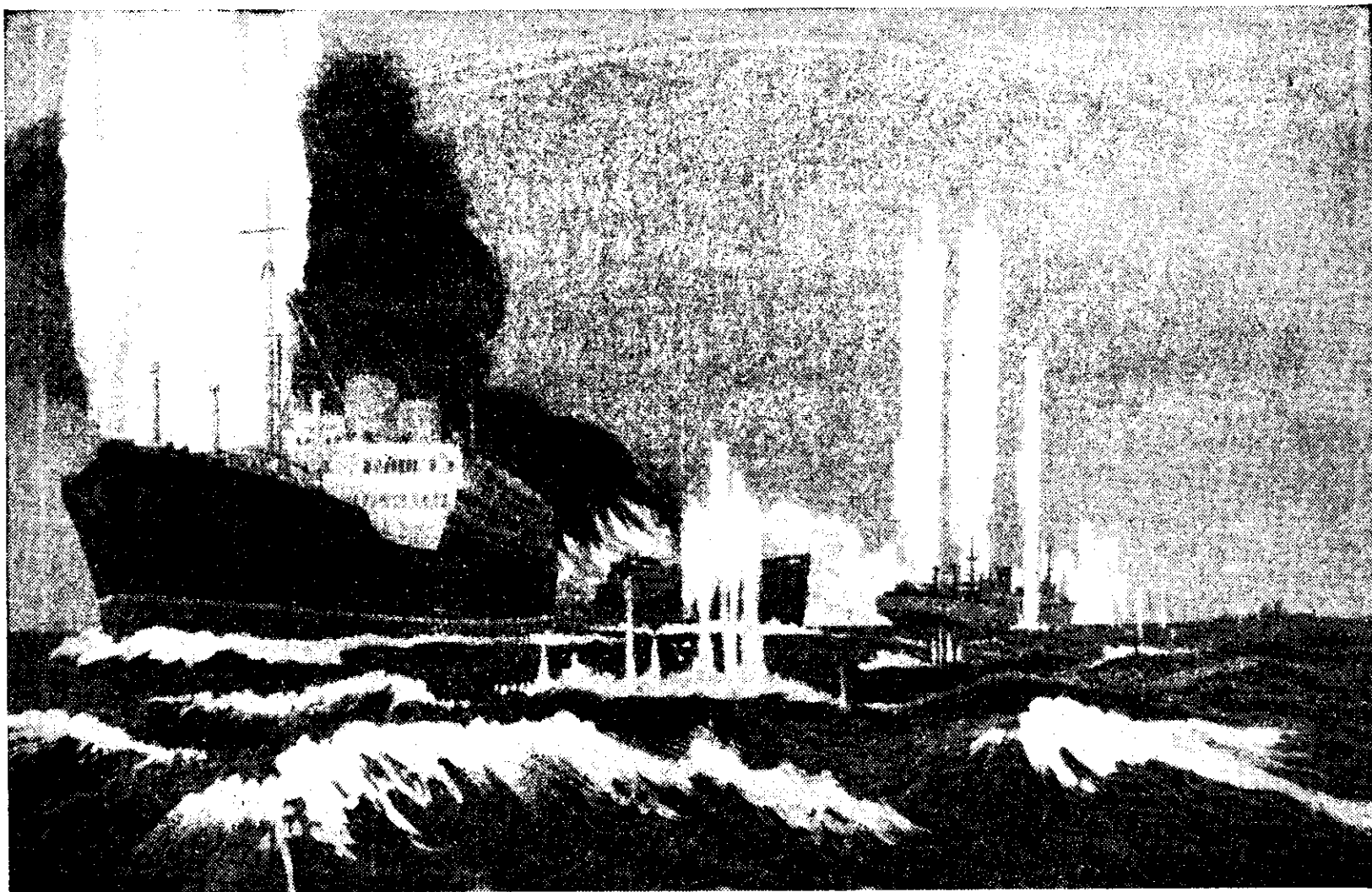




From a painting depicting "the M.V. 'Rangitiki' of the New Zealand Shipping Co. Ltd., and the famous 'Jervis Bay' in the well-known action of 5th November, 1940.

The link they could not break

With all the strength that was in them, they tried. Every weapon they had, they used: aircraft, bombs, torpedoes, surface raiders, mines - some of them off New Zealand itself. And some success they achieved; but never once did they wholly break the link which joins New Zealand to the rest of the world. Always, some ships got through.

This is not the place (and neither is there the need) to extol the men who sailed the ships of the British Merchant Navy during the War. But behind that epic of the sea, another drama was taking place in the boardrooms of the Companies, a drama less spectacular, but no less vital to New Zealand. Take the experience of one New Zealand company, not because it differs from that of others, but rather because it does *not* differ: the story of one is the story of all . . .

Between August and December 1940, the New Zealand Shipping Company (and its associate, the Federal Steam Navigation Company - lost by enemy action seven ships, totalling 78,862 tons - almost one-fifth of its total fleet. And, it was painfully clear, that was not to be the end of the story.

What, then, ought the Companies to do? There was, of course, the shipping 'pool' through which vessels became available from the Ministry of War Transport. But what of their own ships? Should they build them - and face the considerable risk of losing the money thus invested; or should they wait?

The Lines never forgot that New Zealand depends on them as they depend on New Zealand. In time of peace the need for organised shipping is essential; in war that need is paramount, to New Zealand and to the whole British Commonwealth of Nations.

And so the Companies decided to rebuild - then, while the War still raged. The decision was both rare and courageous - how courageous is shown by the fact that at least one of the war-time launchings (the motor-ship 'Nottingham', 8,532 tons) never lived to enter a New Zealand port. She was torpedoed in the North Atlantic seven days out on her maiden voyage. But the Companies were not deterred. So far as rebuilding was possible in those strenuous days, it was continued. And, although more than half the original fleets had been lost by the time the War ended, a steady succession of new vessels was coming from the shipyards.

The continuance of New Zealand's shipping service was thus assured. But it was not done without cost. The British Government War Risks Insurance Scheme met part of the price - but only part. Upon the Lines individually fell the responsibility of providing millions in order to restore New Zealand's shipping link to its former strength. That was the cost of keeping faith with New Zealand . . .

and with you.

Issued in the interests of mutual understanding by

NEW ZEALAND OVERSEAS SHIPPING LINES

SHAW SAVILL & ALBION CO. LTD • THE NEW ZEALAND SHIPPING CO. LTD • PORT LINE LIMITED • BLUE STAR LINE LIMITED