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## Memorial Day Dedication of the Bangor Book of Honor, Part 1

WLBZ Radio

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**University of Maine Raymond H. Fogler Library Special Collections Department**

Transcript of a sound recording in MS 608, WLBZ Radio Station Records, Bangor, Maine, 1931-1973

Title: Memorial Day Dedication of the Bangor Book of Honor, part 1

Date: May 30, 1947

Recording number: Tape 16, part 2

Length of recording: 20:45

This tape includes the first 20 minutes of the broadcast. The program is continued on Tape 17.

[transcript begins]

[Music]

IRVING HUNTER: Good evening, everyone. The WLBZ microphones have been set up at the Municipal Auditorium in Bangor to broadcast the dedication ceremony of the Book of Honor, the city's memorial to the 110 Bangor men who died for victory in World War II. The memorial exercises which are about to begin were preceded by a concert by the Bangor Band conducted by a Adelbert W. Sprague, and as we went on the air, you heard the conclusion of one of the selections. Now, the Bangor Band.

[Music]

HUNTER: We're broadcasting directly from Municipal Auditorium in Bangor tonight, the scene of the dedication ceremony of the Book of Honor. The dignitaries and speakers have just come into the hall and are now seated on the stage and we think that all is in readiness to proceed. The program will open with the singing of the National Anthem. It will be followed by the invocation and then the announcement of the occasion by City Manager, Horace Estey.

[Music, instrumental with the audience singing the National Anthem]

HUNTER: Now the invocation by the Reverend Leonard A. LeClair, Chaplain at the United States Veterans Administration Center in Togas.

LeCLAIR: Let us bear in mind, the reason, the purpose why we're gathered here. It is not to praise the individual feats of our soldiers. It is not to sing out the number of battles that we've won. But it is to pay homage, to pay our respects, to a handful of citizens from this city who were prompted by their unselfishness to join their fellow citizens. To join their fellow countrymen in going out for the welfare, to fight for the ideals that we all have at heart. They left home, loved ones, their comfort, their material interests. They did not fear the sacrifices that they had to undergo. As a matter of fact, if necessary, they were willing to face the supreme sacrifice for the welfare of our nation. We are gathered here to pay our respects to those who did make that final sacrifice, the extreme and the supreme sacrifice. But it is only fair and fitting that we pledge ourselves this evening, in their presence, as well as in the presence of Almighty God, to do everything in our power so as to bring to an end the injustices and the

misunderstanding that breed war. Let us pledge ourselves so that we bring into our lives, our everyday life, that same unselfishness in the way we do things, so that those same principles that those men willingly died for, that those same principles represented by our stars and stripes, will not only live forever in this fair land of ours, but will also be a shining light in this disturbed world of ours.

AUDIENCE: Amen.

HUNTER: City Manager, Horace S. Estey, now steps to the center of the stage to make the first announcement to the audience here assembled.

ESTEY: We are assembled here tonight for the purpose of honoring the memory of 110 men from the city of Bangor who died in World War II, and to perpetuate their memory through the dedication of a memorial book. The city of Bangor is indeed proud to have completed such a memorial so soon after the conclusion of the fighting. The memorial book which we call the Book of Honor has been prepared through the cooperation of the relatives of those men who died. It contains the names, photographs, and their biographies. It will be shortly shown to you. Meanwhile, I wish all present to know that the relatives and close friends of the men whose names appear in the Book of Honor are our special guests this evening. They are seated together, some 500 of them, directly before me in the front half of the hall. Invited relatives of the men who died, after given as a gift to the city, individual copies of the pages that concern them in the Book of Honor. At the conclusion of the ceremony this evening those who have been so invited proceed to the side of the hall where the pages are ready for distribution. Our speakers and guests on the platform are here to honor those men and their relatives who are with us tonight. I shall not introduce those who are here with me. You will find their names on the program that is in your hand.

HUNTER: Now the unveiling of the Book of Honor by Vice Admiral Carleton F. Bryant, United States Navy.

CARLETON: It is my privilege to uncover the city of Bangor Memorial Book of Honor. May the leader of our nation so guide us that further volumes of this book will not be necessary.

HUNTER: Vice Admiral Carleton F. Bryant now proceeds to unveil the Book of Honor which lies on top of the special case which will house it at the Bangor Public Library. Now the presentation of the book of honor to the city by City Manager Estey.

ESTEY: Dr. Knowlton, would you please come forward? This Book of Honor which has just been uncovered for us by Admiral Bryant was commissioned by the City Council in October 1944, while World War II was yet in progress. Work on it has continued ever since, until now, on this Memorial Day, it is ready to begin its assigned tasks of continuously reminding not only this generation but succeeding generations of the Bangor men who laid down their lives in the World War so recently ended. I believe that you will find that this book, with the photographs and biographies that it contains, will readily accomplish this purpose.

KNOWLTON: Mr. Estey, on behalf the city of Bangor, I receive this book with reverent appreciation of the lives it represents. I read you the title page. Bangor remembers her sons who died for victory, 1941-1945. I asked all of our citizens to see this book not merely once, but often, and to cherish it, always.

HUNTER: Following the acceptance of the Book of Honor by Dr. Henry C. Knowlton, Chairman of the City Council, we are to hear an address by United States Senator Owen Brewster.

BREWSTER: The city of Bangor has done well to select this form of a memorial for those who were not privileged to return. There is no greater gift that one can give for his country than that of life itself. And yet with that faith in God, that has inspired all the generations of Americans who have made us what we are today, we know that America has the profound faith in life eternal into which they have been privileged to enter. And there to associate with all those who in the history of this country and of the world have given their lives that liberty might endure, and that our lives might be free. And we know as we assemble upon this memorial occasion, there's more and more millions of Americans gather to pay reverence to these men who have given all, as all around this globe today there are those assembling in spots scattered in many places where their sacrifice has been made. That we shall rededicate ourselves to the great ideal for which they gave their all. And as we go on in the daily life which will daily see a page of this book turn, in order eternally to remind us of those who have made this sacrifice, so we shall be constantly reminded of our debt to those who died that our nation might endure. And as one has seen, these cemeteries scattered now around the world, one realizes with new fullness, the significance of occasions such as this. As those who are now considering the action which they shall take with regard to the last remains of those who are gone, I can speak with profound emotion of those cemeteries it has been my privilege to see all around this world. The one I recall most poignantly on Guadalcanal where the tremendous strike went on in the early days of this great war. And there, the natives of that little Isle, in recognition of the liberation that had come to them, had built one of the most beautiful memorial chapels it has ever been my privilege to see, out of the lumber and the grasses that were peculiar to that Isle. And they are in that still cemetery where services were then being carried on by the missionaries would gone out there, year after year. One came to realize the intimacy of the union that had been formed between these untutored Islanders and the boys who came there for their last resting place, on Guam, on New Guinea, where flying over the [ ? ] when the Battle of the [?] was going on, I found there Colonel LeClair from whom we heard tonight, carrying on with the parachute troops and having seen him last at Blanding in Florida, I realized how our boys were moving steadily on in that great journey that carried them to final triumph, leaving behind the milestones in the crosses that marked the way of sacrifice. We may not ask that they come back. We may only rededicate ourselves to the great ideals for which they sacrificed their all. And a grateful nation desires, above all else, to do that which shall be the desire of those in the family circle who have been obliged to bear this loss. Either in bringing home the remains of those, or of arranging that their parents shall go out to whatever portion of the world their last remains are buried to see there the conditions which have been prepared by a grateful government. After seeing the conditions under which some of the countries have carried on, I have been more and more proud of the action which has been taken by our government. Only this last month, I flew over Solerno, the Anzio beachhead, and saw there the great rows of crosses marking

the last resting places of the boys who laid down their lives there. And everywhere one goes around the world, one may now see these reminders of an America that has given so great a sacrifice upon the order of the ideals for which America was born.

[First portion of the audio ends. Continued on Tape 17]

[transcript ends]

For more information about this transcript, audio recording, or other materials in Special Collections at the University of Maine, contact:

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