

Historical Record of Captain C.H. Walcott's Maintenance of the MV Barima

1. The Administrative Context under Alexander MacDougall

During the tenure of Alexander MacDougall, General Manager of the Transport and Harbours Department (T&HD) who retired in **1940**, the colony underwent a significant upgrade to its fleet. The centerpiece of this modernization was the **MV Barima**, built in 1939 by Ferguson Brothers. To safeguard this massive capital investment, MacDougall utilized his most capable technical assets, specifically tasking Captain C.H. Walcott with the mechanical and structural oversight of the new vessel.

2. Specialized Marine Maintenance of the MV Barima

Captain Walcott's dual qualifications as a maritime commander and a skilled marine engineer made him uniquely suited for this T&HD assignment. While telecommunications engineers like A.E. Gagan were confined to the airwaves, Walcott was hands-on in the shipyard and on the water. His specific maintenance responsibilities for the MV Barima included:

- **Post-Delivery Commissioning:** Upon the ferry's arrival from Scotland in 1939, Walcott supervised the initial local hull inspections, structural upkeep, and engine calibration trials to prepare the ship for service.
- **Muck and Shallow-Water Retrofitting:** The MV Barima was destined for the grueling, muddy coastal runs of the North West District. Walcott engineered specific retrofits and scheduled rigorous cleanings to prevent the heavy silt of British Guiana's river mouths from fouling the vessel's propulsion systems.
- **Enforcing Mechanical Longevity:** Walcott's maintenance logs and strict engineering schedules laid the technical foundation that allowed the vessel to withstand decades of punishing daily passenger and cargo hauls.

3. The Diligence of Captain C.H. Walcott

Captain Walcott executed his maintenance assignment on the MV Barima with exemplary **diligence**, establishing an uncompromising standard of operational readiness within the T&HD:

- **Meticulous Technical Oversight:** He treated the phys