

With the arrival of D-Day, ships of the Royal Canadian Navy to the number of 109 were off the coast of Normandy, manned by about 10,000 officers and ratings. Canadian minesweeping flotillas moved into the coast to clear the coastal waters or the landings, Canadian motor torpedo boats helped to drive off enemy warships, Canadian destroyers hurled shells ashore to knock out enemy gun positions, and Canadian landing ships and smaller craft brought troops to the beaches.

It was significant of the growth of the Royal Canadian Navy that, despite its large commitments to direct participation in the invasion of Europe, it was able to undertake even a greater share of the protection of North Atlantic convoys than it had ever undertaken before.

Trade convoys were not discontinued until after V-E Day, when it was certain that U-boats would no longer take offensive action. In the preceding nine months, all trade convoys between North American ports and waters near Newfoundland were escorted by Canadian warships and three-quarters of all convoys going across the North Atlantic to the United Kingdom were protected by ships of the Royal Canadian Navy. In addition, the Canadian Navy provided about 30 p.c. of mid-ocean striking forces.

During the period from April, 1944, until the middle of September, 1944, the Royal Canadian Navy undertook to escort all trade convoys between North America and the United Kingdom, although 60 Canadian escort ships had been sent to assist in invasion operations. In July, 1944, the largest trade convoy in history, made up of 167 ships carrying more than 1,000,000 tons of cargo, crossed the Atlantic escorted entirely by Canadian warships. Not a single merchant ship was lost.

Figures compiled at the close of hostilities with Germany showed that Canadian warships escorted 25,343 merchant ships, carrying 181,643,180 tons of cargo from North American ports to the United Kingdom during the course of the War. This was apart from the thousands of ships escorted on the return trip to North America and in coastal convoys along the shores of Canada and the United States and in the Caribbean Sea.

The Royal Canadian Navy had only 17 vessels ready for active service when Canada entered the War, of which but six were effective fighting ships. By March, 1945, the Canadian Navy had grown to a force of 939 ships, of which 373 were warships and the remainder auxiliary craft carrying out the various duties of supply and maintenance. Shortly after V-E Day there began the process of decommissioning ships not required for the War against Japan and by early August, 1945, almost all the corvettes which had played such an outstanding part in the Battle of the Atlantic were out of service.

The peak enrolment of personnel had been reached by Jan. 1, 1945. At that date the strength of the Royal Canadian Navy included male personnel of 8,920 officers and 78,221 ratings, while the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service included 371 officers and 5,368 ratings, a total of 92,880 men and women. After that date discharges began to exceed intake and by midsummer of 1945 discharges were proceeding apace as the Royal Canadian Navy continued to bring its numbers down to the estimated 37,000 required to prosecute the War in the Pacific.

The first ship to represent the Canadian naval forces in the Pacific war, apart from the Aleutians campaign and early Pacific Ocean patrols, was the cruiser H.M.C.S. *Uganda*, which went into action with the British Pacific Fleet early in April and remained on station until she returned to Canada more than four months