

Of interest to veteran aircrew was the announcement that all pilot training was to be done from the start on Harvards, used during the war as advanced trainers. It was found shortly before the end of flying training during the war that more satisfactory progress was made by starting embryo pilots on Harvards from the beginning, instead of starting on light aircraft, and later changing to heavier and faster planes.

#### AUXILIARY SQUADRONS ACTIVATED

Additional Auxiliary Squadrons were activated during 1947, and the end of the year found eight in operation, 400 Squadron, Toronto; 401 and 438, Montreal; 424, Hamilton; 402, Winnipeg; 406, Saskatoon; 418, Edmonton; and 442, Vancouver. Flying took place with Harvard trainers, Mitchells and Expeditors, and the squadrons lent colour to various civic occasions, staging fly pasts on Battle of Britain Sunday and at other times. Special signals equipment installed by the Auxiliary Squadrons during the last year has allowed them to carry out interceptor exercises. Refresher courses were held during the Summer and were attended by officers and men of the Auxiliary Squadrons. Regular Summer Camp periods for the Auxiliary Squadrons will commence in 1948.

A unique course graduated 21 para-rescue jumpers. Held at Henry House field, near Jasper, Alta., the course was given to hand picked men, chosen for their bush experience, fitness, mental alertness, and general ability to cope with situations varying from succoring victims of an aircraft crash on a mountain top to delivering a baby in a region quickly accessible only by parachute. The men have since been posted to stations across Canada, ready to parachute to aid persons in distress, who cannot be given aid by normal means.

#### NEW EQUIPMENT ARRIVES

New equipment arrived for the RCAF during 1947. The Air Force took delivery of its first helicopters, to be used for Search and Rescue work, and the first of the huge North Star transports--Canadian built, four-engine aircraft--were delivered. Also arriving in the country before the end of the year were the first of the Vampire jet-fighters, to be used both by the Regular Air Force and various Squadrons of the Auxiliary.

The RCAF had a busy year operationally. The two Photographic Squadrons of No. 9 Transport Group, 413 and 414, ranged over almost the entire Dominion during the Summer, from the 49th parallel to the Far Arctic, taking pictures for the aerial photo survey of Canada. In all, 22 aircraft and more than 250 air and ground crew personnel took part in the work directly. Operations were hampered by extremely bad weather conditions in the North, but even so the photo crews ran up a gross coverage of 435,000 square miles--the greatest coverage in a single season since the work was begun in the early 20's. The first aircraft left Rockcliffe to begin the season's work in April,

and the work went on in the field until October. A prototype Lancaster, specially equipped for long-range photo work, was used during 1947, and it is intended that further aircraft of this type will be used next year.

While the photographic squadrons of No. 9 Transport Group were helping to push back the Dominion's frontiers through aerial photography, the two-transport squadrons, 426 and 435, and the communication squadron, 412 were busy carrying freight and passengers back and forth across Canada. Notable among the many flights made was that to Japan and back, to carry General Crerar to the Japanese peace talks.

#### RELOCATE MAGNETIC POLE

No. 9 Group furnished a long range amphibian Canso flying boat which took a party of Mines and Resources scientists to the North during the Summer, to relocate the Magnetic North Pole. Various magnetic observations were made by the scientists, and the expedition, termed Operation Polco, was a success. In addition, aerial reconnaissance by the crew members of the Canso revealed numerous errors in maps of the Arctic Islands.

The RCAF's Search and Rescue organization was also busy, and the smooth and complete co-operation of the three Services was made evident in this respect. Approximately 40 operations were carried out by Search and Rescue during the 12-month period, highlighted by the hazardous rescue of Canon Turner, the wounded Church of England missionary who was brought back from his isolated mission on northern Baffin Island. Aid was first given by an Army jump team which parachuted to the scene after it was found impossible because of "in-between" weather conditions to land a plane immediately. First aid was given and landing strip prepared, and the entire party was later picked up by an RCAF Dakota and brought back to civilization.

Attention was focussed on the RCAF's marine craft provided for Search and Rescue work when the 70-foot "Takuli" made a voyage of more than 7000 miles from Patricia Bay, B.C. to Dartmouth, N.S. to bring the Marine Squadron on the East Coast to required strength. Too large to ship by rail, the Takuli was taken around through the Panama Canal by an Air Force crew, and completed the voyage without mishap.

#### NAVY'S PEACETIME FRAMEWORK

The peacetime framework of the Royal Canadian Navy settled firmly into place during 1947 as the final demobilization of the wartime force was completed.

Through the greater part of the year the Navy had known definitely what it was working towards, Mr. Claxton having announced the composition and disposition of the future operational fleet on February 25th. The plan called for an almost equally balanced force on each coast, both as to ships and men. Where at all possible, men were assigned to bases in closest proximity to their homes.

On the east coast, the senior ship sailing out of Halifax was the aircraft carrier "Warrior", whose captain, Commodore H.G. DeWolf, is also Senior Canadian Naval Officer Afloat. Three Tribal class destroyers were also assigned to Halifax, two Halifax-built vessels, "Nootka" and "Micmac" and the war-seasoned "Haida". In addition the Algerine escort vessels "New Liskeard" and "Portage" were maintained, confining themselves to the training of Reserves. "Warrior", is destined to go into reserve some time in 1948, when her place will be taken by H.M.C.S. "Magnificent", a carrier of approximately the same tonnage but more modernly equipped, which is near completion in a Belfast shipyard.

At the time the makeup of the peacetime fleet was announced, the far-travelled cruiser "Uganda" was senior vessel on the West coast. On July 28th, however, her more modern sister, "Ontario" returned to full commission after two years of extensive alterations and "Uganda" went into reserve. Destroyers assigned to the Pacific squadron were the modern "Crescent", already in operation in that area, and the two newest Canadian-built Tribals, "Cayuga" and "Athabaskan", completed during the latter part of the year in Halifax. The frigate "Antigonish", also operating out of Esquimalt, was primarily concerned with the training of Reserves.

Another frigate that became operational during the year was "St. Stephen", though with somewhat different duties. Extensively recon-verted, with her armament removed and a large amount of special gear in its place, she put to sea from Halifax on November 22nd to play her part in the North Atlantic weather reporting service, her complement swelled by the addition of several Department of Transport meteorologists. "St. Stephen" took her position in station "Baker", midway between the southern tip of Greenland and Labrador.

#### EXERCISES OVER WIDE AREAS

A variety of smaller craft were also in commission during the year.

Training cruises and tactical exercises carried the ships over wide areas. "Warrior", for instance, found herself on the West coast when the year opened. Before it was over she had swung back into the Atlantic via the Panama Canal, had exercised with the Royal Navy's America and West Indies squadron off Bermuda, had transferred her flying personnel to the Old Country (carrying contingents of Canadian Navy League cadets and Boy Scouts in the process) and had made several training cruises, one of which carried her as far north as Labrador.

Cruises that carried them as far down the south Pacific coast as Panama and as far north as Alaska were undertaken by the cruiser "Uganda" and the destroyer "Crescent", while on the Atlantic side, in addition to "Warrior", the destroyers "Nootka", "Micmac" and "Haida" ranged widely between the Caribbean, Bermuda and the St. Lawrence. For "Haida" it was a

return to operational service after a considerable period out of commission following her exceptionally fine war career. Smaller vessels such as "Antigonish", "New Liskeard" and "Portage" also steamed many thousands of miles in the training of reserves.

An estimate of the spirit and efficiency of the Canadian ships was obtainable in a message sent to Naval Service Headquarters by the Commander in Chief of the British America and West Indies squadron after R.C.N. vessels had exercised under his command. From his flagship, H.M.S. "Sheffield", Vice Admiral Sir William George Tomnant, signalled:

I want to thank you most warmly for allowing "Warrior" and "Nootka" to join up in the exercises with my squadron. Under their able commanding officers they have taken part most efficiently and whole heartedly, and given us the experience of working with aircraft, of which we have been so greatly in need. I hope that your ships have obtained some benefit and I should be grateful if my appreciation may be passed to the vessels concerned.

On October 21st, Trafalgar Day, a most satisfying exercise was carried out when R.C.N. ships and aircraft combined in the sinking of the ex-German submarine U-190. The U-190 had torpedoed H.M.C.S. "Esquimalt" off Halifax in April, 1945 and, in the same waters, rocket projectiles from R.C.N. planes and shells from the guns of H.M.C.S. "Nootka" made short work of the captured submarine when it became the target for the 1947 operation.

#### FLYING SIDE DEVELOPED

The flying side of the Navy continued to develop steadily. Both on board "Warrior" and at the Naval Air Section at Dartmouth, the new squadrons of the 18th Carrier Air Group, 883 (fighter) and 826 (fighter-reconnaissance), kept their Seafires and Firefly I's aloft to good effect. Overseas, preparing to join the "Magnificent", the seasoned airmen of "Warrior's" original squadrons, 803 and 825, were acustoming themselves to the new and powerful Sea Fury and Firefly IV aircraft they would bring to their newest vessel. During the year 27 pilots were trained to "wings", standard and 19 new entries completed refresher courses to increase the addition to 46.

A radical change in the accessibility of commissions to young Canadians came with the institution of short service commissions for R.C.N. pilots and observers. Senior matriculation became sufficient scholastic standing for a limited group between the ages of 18 and 20-1/2 who were able to pass stiff physical and aptitude examinations.

The fountainhead of young officers in the executive and other branches, H.M.C.S. "Royal Roads" near Victoria, B.C., graduated 44 candidates to swell the ranks of both permanent and reserve forces. Royal Navy ships and establishments advanced the intensive training of 77 Canadian midshipmen, while at "Royal Roads", beginning its new role as a combined