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H.M.C.S. Oakville

A most striking example of Canadian-U.S. co-operation is found in the incident of H.M.C.S. Oakville. This Canadian corvette was in convoy in the Caribbean with ships of the Royal Netherland and U.S. Navies.

An American flying boat, also protecting the convoy, sighted and bombed a submarine and signalled its position to the ships. Oakville sped to the scene, shot away the submarine's main deck gun, and dropped depth charges. The German craft attempted to escape but the corvette followed her in the tropical moonlight, rammed her three times. On the third contact with the submarine, two of the Oakville's crew leaped to the U-boat deck, searched the ship, took the crew prisoner, and ordered them overboard. The Germans were picked up by a U.S. destroyer. The submarine was sunk.

W.R.C.N.S.

The women's division of the Royal Canadian Navy was organized in June 1942. Shortly after the organization was launched 3,000 applications were received and a Naval class of 70 completed training within a few months. Graduates are chiefly officers, petty officers, clerical and domestic personnel. By November 26, 1943 there were more than 4,450 officers and "Wrens", the majority taking basic training at Galt, Ontario, and others replacing various categories of Naval personnel in shore establishments at Ottawa and Halifax. Accommodations have been made to recruit 100 each week.

A first draft of W.R.C.N.S. has been posted to Naval College and another to Givenchy, both in British Columbia. The first W.R.C.N.S. plotter's course was recently established.

"WRENS" must be British subjects, 18-45 years of age without young children or other dependents and willing to serve for the duration.

Officers are commissioned from the ranks and must be 21 years of age or more, while executive officers must be 25 years of age. "WRENS" will eventually handle messing for all shore establishments.

Sea Cadets

Sea Cadets of Canada were organized in 1917. At May, 1941, there were 23 groups in this organization with a total membership of 2,220. Up to that time this organization was supported by the Navy League of Canada but at that date the Naval Services began to foster it.

There are now fifty fully organized corps in all parts of Canada with a membership of more than 7,500 boys between the ages of 15 and 17½. Thirty more corps are in the process of organization. By next June it is expected that membership will have grown to 10,000. By next summer it will be 15,000. Some of the Navy's best officers and ratings have received training in this organization. Cadet experience has shortened the time necessary to train Navy recruits. More than 4,000 former Sea Cadets have joined either the Navy or Merchant Marine since the outbreak of the war. His Majesty the King has recently consented to become Admiral of the Sea Cadets.

1907 - 1914

The Canadian Navy came into being in 1910, with the transfer of two antiquated cruisers from the Royal Navy. During the years after Confederation, the attitude of the newly-formed country toward the whole question of naval defence had been negative. Canada was concerned with other things - with building railroads across her great expanse of country, with opening up the prairies, developing her infant industries.

British sea-power was supreme. The British Navy protected the trade routes of the world, for most of the trade routes led to British Colonies.

HISTORY