

- 3) Destruction or capture of enemy merchant and fighting ships
- 4) Blockade

CONVOY

In this war, it was obvious from the outset that Canada would have to play the role of convoy protector, and when upon the declaration of war the British Admiralty asked by wireless when the Canadian convoy system could go into operation, the answer flashed back: "Immediately".

Six days after war began, the first Canadian convoy, numbering 18 ships, was escorted into the open Atlantic. It reached its destination safely. Canadian escort ships have been on constant duty since.

Convoy duty is in charge of senior officers of escorts. Naval officers in charge of various ports report directly to men in charge of three of Canada's naval commands: Rear-Admiral Leonard W. Murray, C.B. C.B.E., Commander-in-Chief, Canadian North West Atlantic; Commodore Cuthbert R. Taylor, C.B.E., Flag Officer, Newfoundland; and Rear - Admiral Victor G. Brodeur, C.B.E., Commanding Officer, Pacific Coast.

All convoy protection on the North Atlantic route is the responsibility of the Royal Navy and the Royal Canadian Navy, assisted by escort vessels of the United States Navy and the air forces of Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The first job of ships on close escort duty is to see that convoys arrive safely at their destination. As the Canadian navy has been predominantly occupied in close escort work, destruction of enemy submarines has been of secondary importance. In a joint report issued by Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt in August, 1944, it was revealed that more than 500 submarines had been sunk by the allies since the war began. In this destruction Canadian ships participated. But a more accurate way of estimating the success of the Canadian navy's convoy efforts is to consider the number of merchant ships that have been safely escorted across the Atlantic. In 1941 one ship was lost out of every 181 that sailed; in 1942, one out of every 233.

In 1943 the tide turned and only one out of every 344 ships was lost. Before that year the enemy was able to sink more merchant ships than could be replaced. In 1943 the United Nations' losses of merchant ships were only about one-half what they had been in 1942. In 1944 merchant shipping losses were about one-third of what they were in 1943. These figures indicate that allied warship strength was growing and that greater protection could be given to allied convoys.

From the beginning of the war to the end of March, 1945, the Canadian navy assisted in escorting nearly 222,000,000 deadweight tons of cargo from North America to Europe. In addition to the ships convoyed from American shores to Europe, the R.C.N. has also assisted in conveying ships from United Kingdom ports to ports on this continent, and in addition a great number of ships have sailed in Canadian coastal convoys from some point on the North American continent to another point in the same area. Ships of the Royal Canadian Navy have also seen service with convoys to north Russia through dangerous Norwegian waters.

Canadian ships now provide more than 80% of all close escort for trade convoys between North America and the United Kingdom. At one stage, during the summer of 1944, Canadian ships did 100% of this type of convoy work. From 1942 to the spring of 1944 Canadian trans-Atlantic convoy escort never fell below 40% and was often as high as 48%. The largest convoy ever to sail the Atlantic, a convoy of 167