

First of all the big infantry landing ships to push up to the fringe of the mineswept waters in its area off the enemy coast was H.M.C.S. Prince Henry, whose captain was senior officer of a group of LSI's (landing ships infantry, large) engaged in the invasion. The Prince Henry and its sister ship, the Prince David, were originally luxury liners. They were reconstructed to serve as auxiliary cruisers, and finally LSI's. Specially equipped with subsidiary landing craft, they pushed in as close to shore as possible before disgorging their small craft, laden with Allied troops. After the initial landings, these two ships furnished troop-carrying ferry service to the front.

One of the Canadian navy's most valuable contributions to the invasion was its protection of the seaward flanks of convoy routes against attack by enemy surface craft. Two Canadian flotillas of motor boats were continually on the job helping make the channel safe for reinforcements and supplies.

At the time of the invasion and for some time before, four Tribal class destroyers, the Iroquois, Athabaskan, Huron and Haida, were engaged with four similar ships of the Royal Navy in assault work in the British channel and Bay of Biscay. These ships were all grouped as the tenth destroyer flotilla. From April to September, 1944, this flotilla compiled a most remarkable record: 36 German ships sunk and 15 others damaged.

The R.C.N. warships took part in the second French invasion, along the southern coast of the country. Once again the two big infantry landing ships, the Prince Henry and the Prince David, were used. Their third invasion activity was made in the landing of British troops on Greece and the Aegean Islands during the early part of October, 1944.

#### SHIPS OF THE R.C.N.

The Royal Canadian Navy at the end of March, 1945, operated 939 vessels including; cruisers, aircraft carriers, destroyers, corvettes, frigates, minesweepers, patrol vessels and small craft fitted for the many duties of modern sea warfare. Three hundred and seventy-three of the 939 are fighting ships. The remainder are auxiliary vessels such as tugs and harbor craft.

Although primarily a navy of small ships designed for convoy protection, the R.C.N. has built up a destroyer fleet which has made no small contribution to the offensive power of the United Nations.

#### Cruisers

On October 21, 1944, the Royal Navy medium cruiser Uganda was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy. It is the first of two cruisers which will be given to Canada by the United Kingdom as "mutual aid in reverse". The second one is the Ontario which is expected to be in service very shortly. For a considerable time Canadian naval officers and ratings have been in training with the Royal Navy for cruiser operation. The Uganda has now joined the British Pacific Fleet, the first Canadian naval unit to enter the war against Japan.

#### Aircraft Carriers

Two Royal Navy escort aircraft carriers, H.M.S. Nabob and Puncher, have been manned by Canadian officers and seamen, although the aircraft and their crews are provided by the United Kingdom. It is hoped that two fleet aircraft carriers will be added to the R.C.N. for duty in the Pacific.