

OUTSTANDING SEA SUCCESSES BALANCE CANADA'S REVERSES

Millions of Tons of Vital
Supplies Escorted By
Dominion Navy

SINKINGS RECALLED

Ottawa, Feb. 19.—(CP)—
The dark nights grow shorter
now over the north Atlantic
and Canadian navy men can
see the beginning of the end
of a war-time winter which
has tried their endurance and
brought honour to their name.

Plays Great Part

Royal Canadian Navy ships operate on other seas but it is the stretch of water between Nova Scotia and the English Channel which knows the Dominion's vessels best.

Millions of tons of vital supplies, thousands of troops and airmen, have been escorted safely to Britain and in this job the R.C.N. has had a big part.

On the credit side of the ledger, too, are known successes by corvettes and destroyers against raiding submarines.

But the north Atlantic has taken its toll of Canadian ships and men. Two corvettes were lost on active service before the winter was half over.

Last September the Levis was torpedoed and sank with loss of 17 Canadian ratings. In December the Windflower was sunk in a war-time collision with loss of 23 men. These were the sixth and seventh major naval disasters for Canada's navy in the present war.

Casualty Toll 465

Up to yesterday, 465 naval casualties had been officially reported. Some died performing rescue work and in accidents, but 276 died when their vessels were sunk by enemy action or mischance while on war operations.

The destroyer Fraser was the first loss of the war. Forty-five officers and men were lost when she sank in June, 1940, following a collision while evacuating troops from France.

October, 1940, was the navy's worst month of the war to date. There was the loss of the destroyer Margaree with a death toll of 142. She was sliced in two by a large merchantman she was escorting through the stormy North Atlantic night of October 22. Those on the forward section of the Margaree had virtually no chance, for that part sank rapidly, taking to the bottom crewmen who were sleeping or on duty there.

Auxiliary Is Lost

And three days before the auxiliary minesweeper Eras d'Or, sturdy

little ship which captured the Italian merchant vessel Capo Noli in the St. Lawrence just after Mussolini threw his nation into the war, disappeared on a voyage from Clark city, Que., to Sydney, N.S. Thirty officers and men aboard were lost.

Two months later 21 seamen died and 18 were wounded aboard the destroyer Saguenay, victim of an enemy torpedo during the first officially-announced clash between a Canadian ship of war and a submarine. The Saguenay herself, though badly crippled was got safely to port under the skilful handling of a skeleton crew.

Then there was the Otter, a patrol ship operating off Halifax, which caught fire and sank in heavy seas in March last year—the navy's first 1941 loss. Nineteen men died, 22 were rescued by a merchant ship in the vicinity and another warcraft.

Hidden By Secrecy

This winter's first disaster was loss of the corvette Levis, sunk by enemy action with loss of 17 Canadian naval ratings and one from the Royal Navy. Full details of this sinking—like the others—are hidden by official secrecy, but it is known she did not sink immediately. A gallant effort by another

Canadian corvette to tow her to the nearest port proved unsuccessful.

The Levis was the first Canadian-built, Canadian-manned corvette to be destroyed, but she was not the only one for long. In December the Windflower was lost in a collision, presumably on north Atlantic convoy duty. Twenty-three of her crew was listed as missing.

Scores of corvettes have been turned out by Canadian shipyards. Only 190 feet long, they have been playing a major part in keeping open the Atlantic life-line to Britain. They are fast enough to protect a convoy, tough enough to stand any storm, and require few men to handle them in comparison with destroyers and other larger craft.

Two of them have been credited officially with sinking one of the latest type German submarines on the Atlantic. Three Canadian corvettes were the Moose Jaw and the Chambly, sister-ships of the sunken Windflower.

088-003-044

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