

# Canada Navy Escorted 25,343 Merchant Ships To Britain During War

Ottawa, June 7 (CP).—Canadian warships escorted 25,343 merchant ships carrying 181,643,180 tons of cargo from North American ports to Great Britain during the course of the war, naval service headquarters announced tonight.

The statement, issued in conjunction with a joint Anglo-American statement on submarine and anti-submarine operations, said Canadian ships were involved in about 165 actions with known U-boats, definitely sinking 23 and probably sinking eight.

"In addition, there were a great number of promising attacks in which the evidence was not sufficient to confirm a kill," the statement added.

The figure of 25,343 ships escorted from North America does not include "the many thousands" of ships escorted on the return trip to North American ports and in local movements along the North American coast and in the Caribbean Sea.

For nine months prior to discontinuance of trade convoys in the North Atlantic all trade convoys between North American ports and the vicinity of Newfoundland were escorted by Canadian warships and three out of four of all convoys proceeding across to the United Kingdom were protected by ships of the RCN.

The first convoy to sail from Halifax, on Sept. 16, 1939, was escorted part way across the Atlantic by two of the six destroyers owned by the RCN at the beginning of the war. By the spring of 1941 the first corvettes began to make their appearance. Many more destroyers, frigates, corvettes and minesweepers

followed, until at the end of the battle the RCN had a total of 254 sea-going escort ships engaged.

Because of the nature of its task the RCN's part in the Battle of the Atlantic was primarily defensive. The object was to ward off U-boat attacks on convoys so that merchant ships could reach their destination and most of the successes against U-boats came in the latter part of the war when sufficient ships could be spared from convoy groups to form offensive groups to hunt out and destroy submarines.

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Washington, June 7.—More than 700 German U-boats were destroyed by the Allies during the "long and relentless" struggle to keep open the Atlantic lifelines, President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill revealed tonight in officially writing finis to the Battle of the Atlantic.

In their final joint statement on the U-boat war, the President and Prime Minister reported that "the Allies have finished the job" and that "German U-boats have ceased to operate and are now proceeding under Allied orders."

They hailed Allied courage and scientific skill which enabled us to keep ahead in the U-boat war, which several times gravely menaced the lifelines to England. Naval authorities since VE-Day have acknowledged that the Nazis came perilously close to victory in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Naval sources have indicated that, though the Battle of the Atlantic is ended and the sea lanes over which our returning soldiers must travel are safe again, there still may be some "bookkeeping" to balance. There are a few U-boats which still have not been listed as sunk, scuttled or captured. It is quite possible, however, that these few may have been among the U-boats which were sent to the bottom without definite proof of sinking.

One thing is certain: If any U-boats not on the surface and not displaying the surrender flag are encountered by remaining Allied patrols, they will be sunk on sight. Also, in the extremely unlikely possibility than any "pirate" U-boats should attempt to operate in vengeance against Allied shipping, their crews will face the penalty for piracy—death—if captured.

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