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SASKATCHEWAN ON THE HIGH SEAS

Seven corvettes named after Saskatchewan towns and cities protected convoys during the deadly Battle of the Atlantic

By Terry Pugh
tpugh@ccgazette.ca

They were the smallest ships in the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) during the Second World War, but they punched far above their weight.

Flower-class Corvettes were small, lightly-armed Canadian-built ships used for anti-submarine warfare. According to the Canadian Encyclopedia, they played a pivotal role in the Battle of the Atlantic - a campaign that lasted the entire length of the war from 1939 to 1945.

They also comprised the largest component of the RCN's fleet. Of Canada's 400 warships that saw active service in World War II, 111 were Corvettes.

A little over 200 feet in length from stern to stern and with a beam of only about 30 feet, each of these tiny vessels carried a crew of about 80 sailors. On the stormy North Atlantic, they rolled and pitched like corks, making life cold, wet and miserable for their closely-packed crew.

But while large battleships, cruisers and destroyers were beyond the capacity of Canadian shipyards of that era, the Corvette could be manufactured in Canada. It was also relatively cheap and could be turned out quickly and reliably.

Modelled on the British Navy's 'Flower Class' Corvette, the RCN vessels each carried a four-inch foredeck gun, a two-pound 'pom-pom' gun, and a couple deck-mounted machine guns; but their most formidable weapons were the 70 depth charges that rolled off their sterns - underwater bombs that spelled doom for any U-boat caught in the explosion.

Corvettes were most effective when they worked as a team, with two ships tracking a submarine and closing in for the kill. While depth charges were effective, corvettes also used their speed to ram U-boats when they surfaced.

Continued on page 8

(above) HMCS Rosthern K169 took part in three major convoy battles during World War II



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HMCS Battleford

The HMCS Battleford K165 was built at Collingwood, Ontario, with construction beginning in September, 1940. Launched on April 15, 1941, she was commissioned at Montreal on July 31, 1941, and arrived at Halifax on August 4, 1941.

She remained in Halifax for six weeks while undergoing repairs, radar installation, and sea-training for her crew.

HMCS Battleford was briefly a member of Sydney Force, but was transferred to the Newfoundland Escort Force (NEF) and left Sydney on November 28, 1941 to escort convoy SC.57 to Iceland. She returned to Halifax on January 7, 1942, and underwent a refit in Liverpool, Nova Scotia that kept her idle until the end of March, 1942. She escorted a convoy that arrived in Great Britain in early May, 1942, and underwent further repairs in Cardiff, Wales in mid-June, 1942. Following those repairs she carried out workups at Tobermory, Scotland.

From July, 1942 to May, 1943, she was a member of Escort Group C-1. In December, 1942, she was escort to convoy ONS.154, which was badly mauled, losing 14 ships.

During that battle, on December 27, 1942, she participated with other Royal Canadian Navy escort warships (HMCS St. Laurent H83, HMCS Chilliwick K131, and HMCS Napanee K118) in the destruction of the German U-boat, U356. The following day, on December 28, 1942, while investigating a radar contact, HMCS Battleford found four German U-boats on the surface preparing a concentrated attack on Convoy ONS.154. Assisted by HMCS Chilliwick, the



HMCS Battleford K165 in the North Atlantic

two corvettes attacked with gunfire, forcing two of the enemy U-boats, U-664 and U-662, to lose contact with the convoy.

Arriving in Halifax on April 23, 1943, with her last ocean convoy, ONS.2, she commenced a two-month refit at Liverpool, Nova Scotia. She joined the Western Local Escort Force (WLEF) in mid-June, 1943. Early in April, 1944, she commenced a long refit at Sydney, Nova Scotia, that lengthened her forecastle. Following the refit, she proceeded to Bermuda to work up. On her return to Halifax, she was employed for the rest of the war as a local escort with EG W-3 and was paid off at Sorel, Quebec on July 18, 1945.

Unlike many other corvettes, she was not broken up for scrap steel after the war. She was sold to the Venezuelan Navy in 1946 and was renamed Libertad. She met an untimely end when she was wrecked on April 12, 1949.

(Source: www.forposteritysake.ca)



HMCS Saskatoon K158

HMCS Saskatoon

The HMCS Saskatoon K158 was built in the fall of 1940 and commissioned in Montreal in June, 1941. She arrived in Halifax in June, 1941 and joined the Halifax Force after working up and completing a trip to the Bahamas. She remained on local escort duty until March, 1942 when she joined the newly-formed Western Local Escort Force. She served with this force on the 'triangle run' between New York, Boston and Halifax until the end of the war, becoming a member of Escort Group W-8 when it was established in June, 1943 and transferring to W-6 in April, 1944.

During her career she had major refits at Halifax in the fall of 1942, and at Pictou, Nova Scotia during the winter of 1943-44, when her forecastle was extended.

She was paid off on June 25, 1945 at Sorel, Quebec, and soon afterward sold for conversion to a merchant vessel. She began her new career as Rio Norte, then the Egyptian-registered Mabruk, and was later taken up by the Egyptian Navy as Misr. She was sunk by collision at Suez, Egypt, on May 17, 1953.

(Sources: www.forposteritysake.ca; www.canada.ca/en/navy/services/history/ships-histories/saskatoon.html)

HMCS Regina

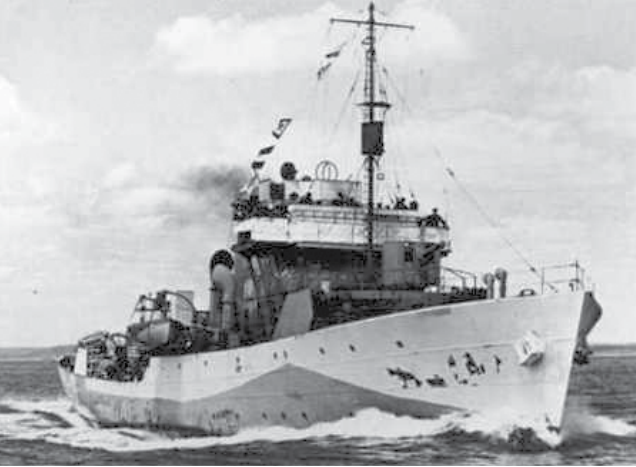
The HMCS Regina K234 was built at Sorel, Quebec beginning in March, 1941, and launched on October 14, 1941. She arrived in Halifax on January 6, 1942 and was commissioned on January 22, 1942. She served with the Western Local Escort Force from mid-March, 1942 till September 1942. In July, 1942, she rescued 25 survivors from the Alexander Macomb, a merchant ship which had been sunk by a German U-boat.

Crossing as escort to convoy SC.108, she arrived at Belfast on November 22, 1942 for refit, following which she was employed as escort to convoys travelling between Great Britain and the Mediterranean Sea, north of Philipville, Algeria. In November, 1942, she was reassigned to 'Operation Torch', which involved the Allied landings in North Africa.

On February 9, 1943, the HMCS Regina attacked the Italian submarine Avorio while escorting two stragglers from a convoy to Bone, Algeria and forced her to surface. The badly-damaged submarine was towed partway to Bone, but it foundered and sunk. The HMCS Regina is credited with the submarine's destruction.

Returning to Canada late in March, 1943, she briefly rejoined WLEF before commencing a refit at Sydney, Nova Scotia in June, 1943. The work was completed at Pictou, Nova Scotia in mid-December, 1943, and workups were carried out there, followed by further repairs at Halifax and Shelburne, Nova Scotia.

The HMCS Regina joined the Mid-Ocean Escort Force in February, 1944, and at the beginning of March, 1944 left Argentia, Newfoundland to escort convoy SC.154 to the United Kingdom, but was detached in mid-ocean with the Canadian frigate HMCS Valleyfield to escort a Royal Navy tug towing the convoy rescue ship HMS Dundee toward Horta. She left Horta on March 14, 1944, this time escorting the damaged HMCS Mulgrave under tow for the Clyde. Arriving at Londonderry toward the end of March, 1944, HMCS Regina was assigned to the Western Approaches Command



on the west coast of England to guard against invasion by Axis forces. In June 1944, the corvette took part in Operation Neptune, the naval part of the Invasion in the Normandy. On June 6, her first duty was to escort the convoy EBM-2 from Milford Haven, Wales to Normandy and served thereafter as escort for several convoys or individual ships and was also assigned to anti-submarine patrols.

HMCS Regina was employed as an escort in the English Channel and on coastal convoys. On the fateful night of August 8, 1944, at about 9:30 p.m., she was escorting a convoy when a merchant ship, the Ezra Weston, was hit by a torpedo fired by a German U-boat (U667). The HMCS Regina turned and slowed down to pick up survivors, thinking that the merchant vessel had struck an underwater mine. The U-boat then fired a torpedo at the HMCS Regina. The corvette blew up as it was hit and sank within 30 seconds. One officer and 27 crew members died in the explosion and sinking. The commander and 65 crew members were picked up by British and American ships; however, two of the men who were rescued died shortly afterward.

Among the crew who perished that night were four young men from Saskatchewan, including Douglas Peter Robertson and Donald McIntosh, both of Saskatoon, John Thompson of Prince Albert, and John Charles Henry Rathbone of Regina. Another crew member from Saskatchewan, Kenneth William Dillabaugh, was rescued after he survived the explosion because he was on an upper deck of the corvette and was blown overboard.

(Sources: www.forposteritysake.ca; www.canada.ca/en/navy/services/history/ships-histories/rosthern.html; www.uboa.net)

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HMCS Weyburn

The HMCS Weyburn K173 was built beginning in December, 1940 and launched July 26, 1941. She was commissioned in Montreal on November 26, 1941, and arrived in Halifax on December 6, 1941.

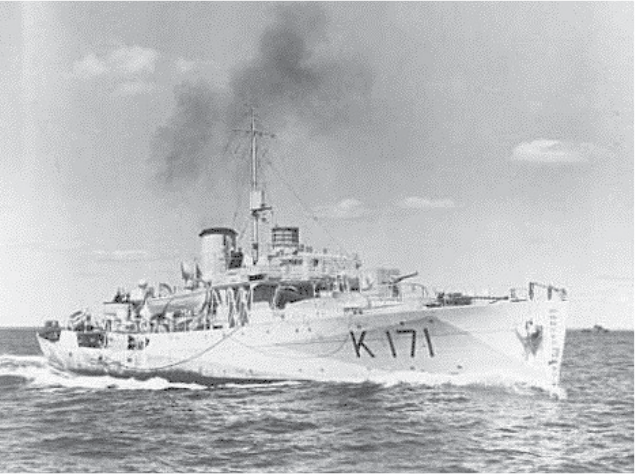
She joined the Halifax Force for local escort work, but was soon in need of repairs. These were carried out at Halifax during March and April, 1942, following which she joined the Western Local Escort Force. In July, 1942 she transferred to Gulf Escort Force for Quebec City-Sydney convoys but in September, 1942 was allocated to duties in connection with Operation Torch, the landing of Allied forces in North Africa. She arrived at Londonderry on September 27, 1942 from convoy SC.100, and at Liverpool on October 2, 1942 for fitting of Oerlikon anti-aircraft guns. The work was completed on October 21, 1942 and in November, 1942, HMCS Weyburn began four months' employment as escort to U.K.-Mediterranean convoys. On February 22, 1943, at 11:23 a.m., HMCS Weyburn struck a mine four miles west of Cape Espartel east of Gibraltar. Twelve members of her crew, including her commanding officer, were lost with the ship. The mine had been laid by a German U-boat, U118, on February 1. 1943.

One of the crew members on board the HMCS Weyburn, Ordinary Seaman Daniel Tanzey, volunteered to stay on the sinking ship to deactivate the many depth charges so they would not explode when the ship went underwater. He successfully deactivated all except two, both of which exploded and quickly sent Weyburn sinking down to the bottom of the ocean. Tanzey died in the explosion.



Fortunately for the survivors of the Weyburn, the British destroyer HMS Wivern was nearby and was able to rescue most of the Weyburn's crew from their sinking ship and the surrounding water moments before the Weyburn's two remaining depth charges exploded. The HMS Wivern was seriously damaged in the explosion and several of her crew were injured, including Dr. Philip Evans, a Welsh doctor who had both his legs broken. Despite his injury, Dr. Evans courageously insisted he be carried around so he could attend to all the wounded men from both ships. If it wasn't for the Wivern, the situation would have been much worse for Weyburn's crew.

(Sources: Greg Nikkel, Weyburn Review, February 21, 2024; www.forposterity-sake.ca)



uary 18, 1943. The second, in the course of which her forecandle was extended, was carried out at Baltimore, Maryland, between late December 1943 and mid-March, 1944.

HMCS Kamsac was paid off on July 22, 1945 at Sorel, Quebec. On December 24, 1945, the HMCS Kamsack arrived in New York City where it was sold to the Venezuelan Navy and renamed the Federacion. She served in the Venezuelan Navy until it was broken up in 1956.

HMCS Kamsack

The HMCS Kamsack K171 was built in Port Arthur (now Thunder Bay), Ontario over the winter of 1940-41. She was launched in May, 1941 and commissioned at Montreal on October 4, 1941.

The vessel arrived at Halifax on October 13, 1941, where she served briefly in the Sydney Force before being transferred to the Newfoundland Escort Force. On January 1942, she left St. John's to pick up convoy SC.65 for Londonderry. In June, 1942, after three round trips, she was reassigned to the newly-formed Western Local Escort Force (WLEF), which was responsible for escorting convoys from North America to the mid-ocean rendezvous with escort vessels based in Great Britain. HMCS Kamsack served in WLEF for the rest of the war. From June, 1943, she was a member of EG W-4, and from April, 1944, a member of EG W-3. During this period she had two extensive refits: the first, begun at Liverpool, Nova Scotia, on November 12, 1942, was completed at Halifax on January 18, 1943.

HMCS Moose Jaw

The HMCS Moose Jaw K164 was built in Collingwood, Ontario and commissioned at Montreal on June 19, 1941. She arrived at Halifax in June 1941 for final fitting-out. After working up, she arrived at St. John's, Newfoundland in August, 1941 to join Newfoundland Command. In September, 1941, she and sister corvette HMCS Chambly fought their way through a severe storm on their way to reinforce the beleaguered convoy SC.42, which had lost 18 ships, 40,000 tons of cargo, and 160 sailors.

The two corvettes successfully teamed up to destroy one of the German U-boats that had wreaked such havoc on the convoy.

After sinking the U-boat, HMCS Moose Jaw served on convoy duty between St. John's and Iceland. In January, 1942, she arrived at Londonderry from Convoy SC.64, the inaugural 'Newfie-Derry' convoy. On February 19, 1942, she ran aground on the south entrance of St. John's harbour enroute to join convoy HX 176, and although re-floated soon afterward, proved to be holed and leaking in several places. She was repaired and assigned briefly to WLEF. She was detached in September, 1942 for duties in connection with Operation Torch, the landing of Allied forces in North Africa, and from there escorted Convoy SC.107, which lost 15 ships to U-boats. During the next five months, HMCS Moose Jaw escorted UK-Mediterranean convoys, returning to Halifax in April, 1943 with convoy ONS.2. Refitted there, she joined Quebec Force at the end of May, 1943 for escort duties in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, later transferring



to Gaspé Force. She underwent a major refit, including forecandle extension, at Liverpool, Nova Scotia during the winter of 1943-44. She joined the Western Approaches Command in May, 1944 to guard against the possible invasion of England. She served in the English Channel until September, 1944, when she escorted coastal convoys from her base in England until the end of the war. She left for home in May, 1945 and was paid off at Sorel, Quebec on July 8, 1944. The ship was broken up for scrap at Hamilton, Ontario in 1949.

(Sources: www.forposterity-sake.ca; www.junobeach.org)

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HMCS Rosthern

The HMCS Rosthern K169 was built in the fall of 1940 by the Port Arthur Shipbuilding Company and commissioned in Montreal in June, 1941. She arrived in Halifax on June 26, 1941, and from there went on to join Newfoundland Command.

She sailed from St. John's for Iceland in October, 1941 on escort duty with Convoy SC-48. At the conclusion of that voyage she proceeded on to the Clyde River in Scotland, where mechanical defects kept her for two months, and then arrived back in Halifax on December 28, 1941 for further repairs.

She did not resume service until February, 1942, when she left Argentina, Newfoundland on February 27, 1942 with convoy HX.177 for Londonderry, Northern Ireland, and was thereafter employed almost continuously on North Atlantic convoys until June 1944.

HMCS Rosthern took part in three major convoy battles in September 1942, February, 1943 and March, 1943.

In October 1942, while on convoy escort duty, she and sister ship HMCS Summerside picked up survivors from an American oil tanker that had been torpedoed and damaged by a German U-boat.

In the spring of 1944, HMCS Rosthern left Londonderry for the last time and on her return to Canada was assigned to protecting coastal waters on North America's east coast. She also became a training ship at Halifax for navigation and ship-handling. She carried out workups at Bermuda in December, 1944, escorting HMCS Provider on the homeward trip.

HMCS Rosthern had no long refits during the war, and unlike other corvettes, never did have her forecandle lengthened. Her crew was paid off on July 19, 1945 at Sorel, Quebec. In June, 1946, she was broken up for scrap steel in Hamilton, Ontario.

(Sources: www.forposterity-sake.ca; www.canada.ca/en/navy/services/history/ships-histories/rosterhn.html)

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Continued from pg. 5

SASKATCHEWAN ON THE HIGH SEAS

The first ten Corvettes built in Canada in 1940 followed the British tradition of naming them after flowers. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill is credited with the original idea, joking that having one of Hitler's sea wolves (U-boats) destroyed by a vessel named for a flower, like HMS Buttercup, would be seen as an embarrassment for the Nazis and a public relations victory for the British.

But, the RCN brass, reasoning that 'flowers don't knit mittens', and looking to generate patriotic support at home, soon began naming the vessels after towns and cities in Canada.

Seven of the 111 RCN Corvettes were named after Saskatchewan communities: Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw, Weyburn, Kam-sack, Rosthern and Battleford.

All seven ships were involved in battles during the war, primarily in the North Atlantic, according to the informative 'For Posterity Sake' website (www.forposteritysake.ca). Three ships, the HMCS Moose Jaw, the HMCS Regina, and the HMCS Rosthern, were credited with sinking U-boats.

While five survived the war, two did not.

The HMCS Weyburn was sunk in February, 1943, when it struck an underwater mine in the Mediterranean - 12 members of her crew died.

The HMCS Regina went down almost immediately after being torpedoed off the southern coast of England in August, 1944. Thirty sailors, including one from Regina, two from Saskatoon and one from Prince Albert, lost their lives.

Thousands of sailors from across Canada served in the RCN during the war, with the prairie provinces contributed a sizeable portion of the 100,000-strong Canadian navy. Many of those sailors ended up as Corvette crew members who began their training at land-based stations such as the HMCS Unicorn in Saskatoon.

BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

On September 3, 1939, the very day that Great Britain and France declared war, the German submarine U-30 sank a British ocean

liner, the Athenia, which was headed to Montreal with 1,103 passengers and 115 crew on board. The attack killed 128 people, including four Canadians, and provided a tragic illustration of how vulnerable single ships were on the open ocean.

To counter the U-boat threat, Great Britain and Canada, with considerable assistance from the United States, organized merchant ship convoys to transport essential war materials, food, petroleum and other vital supplies from North America to Britain. The merchant ships were protected by Destroyers, Cruisers, Corvettes and other warships. The first convoy sailed from Halifax on September 16, 1939, and reached its destination safely. Canadian warships escorted the convoy to a point midway across the Atlantic, where British warships took over.

In the fall of 1940, German U-boats prowled the North Atlantic like wolves, hunting for Allied merchant navy convoys. Between October 15 and October 19, 1940, seven German U-boats attacked Convoy SC-7 and sank 22 of its 34 ships.

That was just a taste of what was to come. The convoys lost 200 ships during the first nine months of the war. That number increased to 350 during the second half of 1940. Throughout 1941, the under-equipped and out-gunned Canadian navy relied heavily on its fleet of Corvettes to even the odds.

In 1942, armed escort protection for convoys was beefed up with the establishment of the Newfoundland Escort Force (NEF) and the construction of a new naval base at St. John's. (At the time, Newfoundland was a separate British colony. It became part of Canada in 1949.) The NEF benefited from US-made destroyers, which were obtained by Canada in exchange for allowing the United States to use Canadian ground bases and some of the first Canadian-made corvettes.

In addition to providing armed protection for merchant vessels, corvettes also served as rescue craft, plucking oil-soaked survivors from the icy ocean.

DIDYOUKNOW?...

Remembrance Day has a lengthy history in Canada. Armistice Day was first commemorated in Canada in 1919, when King George V urged all countries in the British Commonwealth, including Canada, to observe the day.



A page from a World War I-era book features Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae's immortal poem, 'In Flanders' Fields' (Canadian War Museum: www.warmuseum.ca)

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The HMCS Moose Jaw sinks a U-boat and captures its crew

On September 10, 1941, the HMCS Moose Jaw and HMCS Chambly came up astern of Allied Convoy SC.42 in the North Atlantic. They surprised a U-boat that was following the ships. The Moose Jaw's commanding officer, Royal Canadian Navy Lieutenant F.E. Grubb, explained what happened in his official report of the incident:

"At about 21:00 on September 10, flares and star shell were sighted ahead on either bow. Hands went to action stations at 21:30. At about 22:00 Chambly signalled that he was about to blow a depth charge, and altered course to port. At the time the two ships were in line abreast, Moose Jaw disposed to starboard. I altered course to port in a wide sweep in order to keep clear of Chambly, and to place myself in an advantageous position to carry out a depth charge attack. A few minutes later I saw a submarine surface between Chambly and ourselves, which appeared to be stopped. The submarine got under weigh at this point, and I gave chase, opening fire with the 4-inch gun as soon as it was clear of Chambly. Only one round was fired.

"The submarine appeared to be moving at about 13 knots. It attempted to place me dead astern, altering course to do so each time I tried to alter out of its wake. I ordered the 10-inch signal projector trained on it. This disclosed the crew on the upper deck. They appeared to be so demoralized that I did not believe them to be German and remarked to the navigating officer that they msut be Italian. Considering this state of panic, I thought there might be some chance of capturing the submarine. The next few minutes was spent in chase, the submarine attempting to get directly ahead of me, and I trying to keep on his quarter in case he fired torpedoes. At one time four of the submarine's crew made a determined move to the after gun. As our own gun was still jammed, no action could be taken except to increase speed and try to ram before they could fire. This I did, although

the chance was small, but, fortunately, someone on the conning tower ordered them back. The .5 inch machine guns were bearing at the time, but when the trigger was pressed, they failed to fire. A subsequent check showed no defects, so I assume that in the excitement the crew failed to cock them.

"I managed to go alongside the submarine, starboard side to, and called on her to surrender. To my surprise, I saw a man make a magnificent leap from the submarine's deck into our waist, and the remainder of her crew move to do likewise. Not being prepared to repel boarders at that moment, I sheered off. The submarine altered across my bows and I rammed her, increasing to 185 revolutions to do so, and altering course in order to hit her forward diving rudders, so as to prevent her submerging. After the impact she moved across my bows at reduced speed. The gun being cleared by that time I opened fire again. The crew jumped into the sea as soon as the first round went, and I ordered fire to be stopped. I subsequently learned that the shell had passed low enough over the conning tower to knock down the men who were standing thereon. The man who I had seen jump on board turned out to be the submarine's commanding officer. He was badly shaken and when he was brought to me on the bridge appeared to be worried at the amount of light we were showing in order to pick up survivors. As soon as I considered the water clear enough of men to allow the boats to be lowered without danger of swamping I dropped both skiffs. I made one circle and then picked up the boats, after which I was ordered to take station ahead of the convoy. I could still hear men calling for help on the starboard quarter but left them and closed the convoy. The three German officers rescued, (the Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, and Second Lieutenant) were placed in my cabin under guard. The remainder of the prisoners were placed in the after cabin flat." (Source: www.junobeach.org)

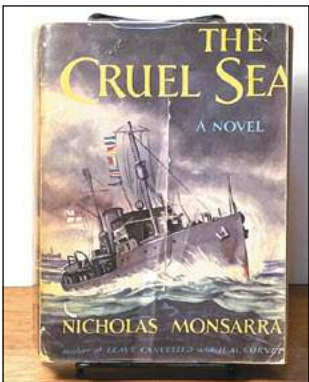
Drenched, cramped and cold: life aboard a corvette in the stormy North Atlantic

In the classic novel, 'The Cruel Sea,' published in 1951, author Nicholas Monsarrat describes what it was like for the officers and crew members aboard the smallest warship in the navy in one of the world's most hostile and forbidding oceans. Monsarrat, a veteran of the Battle of the Atlantic and a decorated officer who served in British corvettes, conveys the stark reality of the conflict at sea.

In this excerpt from the book, (an edition published in 1953 by the Reprint Society of London by arrangement with Cassell & Company Ltd publishers), Monsarrat describes how the crew adjusted to life aboard the ship in the opening months of the war:

At this stage - still un-warlike, still a tame apprenticeship - they found hardest to bear the monotony of rolling, with, as an occasional variant, the shuddering crunch with which Compass Rose greeted a head sea. The rolling affected every single thing they did, on watch or off. often they had to cling to the bridge-rail for hours at a stretch, drenched and cold, while the ship disgraced herself with a tireless forty-degree roll; and then, off-watch and supposedly resting, they had to eat their meals with the food continually slipping into their laps, and the wardroom furniture creaking and sliding and occasionally breaking adrift altogether and hurtling across the room. They were always being hurt, in spite of a continual watchfulness: doorways hit them as they were leaving their cabins; they were thrown out of their bunks as soon as sleep relaxed their tense care, and all round them on the floor would be books and papers and boots and clothes, which some especially violent roll had released from control.

It was tremendously exhausting, this never being able to rest



without something going wrong, something hitting them, something coming adrift and breaking, or making a noisy clatter for hour after hour. There was damnable rhythm about the movement; they got tired of it, they got tired of always hanging on to something, they got tired of paying for a moment's forgetfulness with bruised legs and shoulders, cut lips, wrenched ankles. But they could not escape it; it was an inherent element in going to sea in corvettes. Sometimes, up on the bridge, they would watch Sorrel being chucked about like a cork, and the spray going over as she punched her way through a rough sea, and they would think how tough she looked, and what a pretty picture, handsome and determined, she made. It was a pity that the reality, in Sorrel as in Compass Rose, was so infinitely unpleasant.

One of their convoys, about this time, was a classic in this respect. After nine days on the outward trip, they had turned for home, with some hope of making a quick passage and getting back in less than a week. It did not work that way. The gale which sprang up did more than scatter the convoy; it kept every single ship in it hove-to for two days on end, waiting for the weather to moderate. In those two days, Compass Rose covered eighteen miles - sideways, and due south; she spent them in company with a small merchant-ship which had engine trouble

and asked for someone to stay with her. For all the forty-eight hours, Compass Rose circled very slowly round the derelict, taking three hours to complete each circuit, moving with agonizing slowness against the mountainous seas and rolling, rolling, rolling all the time as if she wanted to tear her mast out.

They lost one of their boats, which went clean under a huge wave and never came up again; they lost some oil-drums which

were stowed aft; they lost their patience many times, but patience had to return, and sweat it out to the end. When the storm finally blew itself away, they spent another twenty-four hours huting for the convoy and reassembling it. They were at sea for twenty-two days on that trip; at the end, Compass Rose, and her crew with her, looked as if they had all been through the same tidal wave, emerging in tatters at the end of it."

Nicholas Monsarrat

Lieutenant Commander Nicholas John Turney Monsarrat (FRSL RNVR) was born in Liverpool, England iin 1910 and went up to study law at Trinity College, Cambridge, but after a couple of years working in a solicitor's office turned to journalism instead.

Though critical of military violence, Monsarrat served during World War II, first as a member of an ambulance brigade and then as a member of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR). His life-long love of sailing made him a capable naval officer, and he served with distinction in a series of small warships (corvettes and frigates), assigned to escort convoys and protect them from enemy attack. Monsarrat ended the war as commander of a frigate, and drew on his wartime experience in his postwar sea stories.

His first novel, Think of Tomorrow, was published in 1934, but it was not until after



Nicholas Monsarrat, author of The Cruel Sea, first published in 1951

the Second World War that he became a bestselling author.

Aside from The Cruel Sea, published in 1951, his other books include 1963's Smith and Jones, a Cold War thriller based on the defection of Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean to the Soviet Union, and 1978's The Master Mariner, the first of an uncompleted two- part story about the British Navy from 1588 to 1788.

DIDYOUKNOW? ...The choice to commemorate the Remembrance Day on November 11 has symbolic meaning. According to the Government of Canada, the choice reflects the signing of the armistice agreement on November 11, 1918, which called for an end to hostilities at 11 a.m. - which happens to be the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. The armistice ended World War I, though fighting continued for hours after the agreement was reached and the Treaty of Versailles, which was the formal peace treaty that ended the war, was not signed until 1919.

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WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

NOVEMBER 11



‘At this crucial moment, Canada was ready to play a conspicuous part in the deadly struggle...’

In his six-volume history of World War II, Sir Winston Churchill acknowledged the critical role of the Royal Canadian Navy’s corvette fleet in protecting the vital shipping lifeline to Britain. The following excerpt is from Volume 3: *The Grand Alliance*, published in 1950, which documents the Battle of the Atlantic:

“With the concurrence of its people, we had occupied Iceland when Denmark was overrun (by the German army) in 1940. Now we could use it against the U-boats, and in April, 1941, we established bases there for the use of our escort groups and aircraft. Iceland became a separate command, and thence we extended the range of the surface escorts to 35 degrees longitude West. Even so there remained an ominous gap to the westward which for the time being could not be bridged. In May a Halifax convoy was heavily attacked in 41 degrees longitude West and lost nine ships before our anti-U-boat escort could join it.

Meanwhile the strength of the Royal Canadian Navy was increasing, and their new corvettes were beginning to emerge in good numbers from the building yards. At this crucial moment Canada was ready to play a conspicuous part in the deadly



Sir Winston Churchill

struggle. The losses in the Halifax convoy made it quite clear that nothing less than end-to-end escort from Canada to Britain

would suffice, and on May 23 the Admiralty invited the Governments of Canada and Newfoundland to use St. John’s, Newfoundland, as an advanced base for our joint escort forces. The response was immediate, and by the end of the month continuous escort over the whole route was at last a reality. Thereafter, the Royal Canadian Navy accepted responsibility for the protection, out of its own resources, of convoys on the Western section of the ocean route.

From Great Britain and from Iceland we were able to give protection over the remainder of the passage. Even so, the strength available remained perilously small for the task, to be performed. Meanwhile our losses had been mounting steeply. In the three months ending with May U-boats alone sank 142 ships, of 818,000 tons. Of these, 99 ships, of about 600,000 tons, were British.

To achieve these results the Germans maintained continuously about a dozen U-boats in the North Atlantic, and in addition endeavoured to spread-eagle our defence by determined attacks in the Free-town area, where six U-boats in May alone sank thirty-two ships.

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REMEMBRANCE DAY 2025: *Lest We Forget*

Every November, we have the opportunity to honour the sacrifices and achievements of all veterans who have served our country, whether in times of peace or conflict. Let us take a moment to lay a wreath or attend a ceremony in remembrance of those who made the ultimate sacrifice to defend the freedoms we hold dear.



Hon. Terry Jenson
Warman MLA
(306) 242-2111

Darlene Rowden
Batoche MLA
(306) 256-3215

Hon. Scott Moe, Premier
Rosthern-Shellbrook MLA
1 (855) 793-3422

Hon. Jamie Martens
Martensville-Blairmore MLA
(306) 651-2024

Hon. Jim Reiter
Rosetown-Delisle MLA
1 (855) 762-2233

Report from the Legislature

Saskatchewan takes the lead once again in building construction, with new data showing a 6.9 per cent increase in investment for August 2025 compared to July. This places our province first in Canada for month-over-month growth. These numbers tell a powerful story. Saskatchewan is growing, attracting more people and investment. Whether for new homes or commercial developments, this growth reflects the confidence people have in our province as a great place to live, work and build a future.

Alongside economic growth, health care improvements continue here at home. The Physician Innovation Fund, launched last year, shows a significant investment in family physician-led, team-based health care across our province. With \$10 million annually, the fund supports innovative projects aimed

at improving patient care and enhancing team collaboration. To date, 28 projects have been approved, creating over 56 full-time positions in health care. This initiative ensures residents benefit from a more integrated and efficient health system.

Opportunities for students are also expanding in our province. To connect post-secondary students with more research internships, Saskatchewan has increased its funding for Mitacs internships by \$430,000, bringing the total investment to \$1.58 million for 2025-26. This increase will support up to 301 research and development internships for students and post-doctoral fellows, strengthening our province’s ties to innovation and local businesses. Our government is proud to work with Mitacs to expand student access to high-quality research opportunities.

Supporting young entrepreneurs is another key focus for Saskatchewan’s future. Our government recently announced the 2025-26 Young Entrepreneur Bursary recipients, awarding \$5,000 to 57 entrepreneurs from 48 communities. This funding helps kickstart small businesses, creating jobs and driving innovation in our province. It is encouraging to see Saskatchewan’s next generation of entrepreneurs contributing to the economic success of our province.

Indigenous communities are also benefiting from provincial initiatives designed to foster safer, stronger and more connected communities. Eligible organizations and community groups can apply for three provincial grants: the First Nations and Métis Community Partnership Projects, First Nations and Métis Sponsorships, and the Miss-

ing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls+ Community Response Fund. These funding opportunities support Indigenous-led healing and growth, having a positive impact across Saskatchewan. Grant applications are open until November 14, 2025, continuing our government’s commitment to reconciliation and building meaningful partnerships.

A key part of strengthening Saskatchewan’s economy is enhancing internal trade. To that end, our government introduced the Saskatchewan Internal Trade Promotion Act, which will allow mutual recognition of goods and services entering the province from other Canadian jurisdictions. This legislation reduces regulatory barriers, making it easier for Canadian businesses to operate across provinces. The Act is just one more way we are strengthening ties across the country, leading to more op-

portunities, jobs and services the people of Saskatchewan need. This reflects our commitment to fostering interprovincial collaboration and reducing red tape.

These efforts highlight our government’s commitment to building a strong, safe and secure future for everyone. As we continue to move forward with initiatives that matter most to you, we will remain focused on keeping Saskatchewan among the strongest economies and one of the most affordable places to live in Canada.

As the legislative session continues, we look forward to representing your best interests and helping our government achieve the priorities set out in the Throne Speech. If you have any questions, ideas or concerns, please feel free to contact your MLA’s office using the contact information listed above.