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H.M.C.S. "HURON" COMMISSIONING.

A British Port, August 18 -

Canada has sent her newest and best equipped warship into service. She is the Tribal destroyer H.M.C.S. "HURON", the third of her line in the Canadian Navy.

"HURON", like her Sister ships, H.M.C.S. "IROQUOIS" and H.M.C.S. "ATHABASKAN", is now engaged with a striking force of the Royal Navy. She is a powerful warship and will give a good account of herself in whatever sphere of action she might be employed.

There was little ceremony when this greyhound of the seas was commissioned. Everything was letter perfect and the examining commander even lost the customary penny bets that examining officers usually make with the shipbuilding officials. He failed to find a single door locked or any other defect and, after he had declared the ship okay, there was the shrill note of a boatswain's call and the white ensign was broken out on the jackstaff. The Tribal that heretofore had been known merely by a number officially had become H.M.C.S. "HURON".

It is significant that the ship bearing the name "HURON" should be commanded by a native of Huron County, Ontario. His name is Lieutenant Commander H.R. Rayner, D.S.C., R.C.N., and he was born in Clinton, Huron County 32 years ago.

Another interesting angle is the fact that the lady who performed the launching ceremony several months ago is a Canadian, the Countess of Minto, the former Marion Cook, of Montreal. A few days after the commissioning the Earl and Countess of Minto, along with their son, Viscount Melgund, were the guests of Lieutenant Commander Rayner at a luncheon in the Commanding Officer's cabin. Prior to the luncheon Lady Minto visited the wardroom where she presented to the Commanding Officer an engraved piece of silver plate as a token of her having officiated at the launching ceremony.

"I know this will be a lucky ship" she told the officers in a neat little presentation speech. "I will follow your fortunes with intense interest and I will always be proud in the knowledge that my name is associated with H.M.C.S. "HURON"."

Following the luncheon the party toured the ship displayed keen interest in the various gadgets that give a ship of "HURON's" type fighting efficiency.

In the afternoon following the commissioning the ship's company, most of them newly arrived from the Canadian naval manning establishment in Scotland assembled around the torpedo tubes where they heard the commanding officer address words of caution to them and of praise for this fine warship.

"Security is something that I cannot stress too greatly", he told them. "Do not discuss with outsiders the part your ship is playing or will play in the scheme of things. Remember that a ship's efficiency depends on the efficiency of the men who sail in her. We may all see lots of action before this show is over. I want you to remember that you are all Canadians and, since we will be sailing with ships of the Royal Navy, the eyes of the Royal Navy will be upon you. That will be all. Carry on and good luck."

/Built

Built in the same shipyard that spawned her two sister ships, "HURON" carries even greater armament than either of these two ships. She benefits by the fact of her having been the third in line, since she boasts all the latest secret devices that will make things rather uncomfortable for the enemy both on the surface and beneath it. The fourth Canadian Tribal, now under construction, is H.M.C.S. "HAIDA".

Her displacement is about 2000 tons. Her gunpower is more than double that of the River Class destroyers in the Canadian Navy. She carries twin 4.7 mountings reinforced by numerous anti-aircraft weapons. Added to this are torpedo tubes and depth charges. She carries fourteen officers and about 250 men.

Veterans in experience, the officers in "HURON" are a young lot. The oldest is the first lieutenant, Lieutenant P.D. Budge, R.C.N., who is 38, and the youngest is Sub-Lieutenant W.H. Howe, R.C.N., who is only 20. Sub-Lieutenant Howe, who is a son of the Hon. C.D. Howe, Minister of Transport and Supply, has probably had the most gruelling experience of any man in the ship. He served in the Dorsetshire when she was sunk in the Indian Ocean last year and he spent thirty hours in the water clinging to wreckage before being picked up. In that he has something in common with his father who spent several hours in an open boat after the ship in which he was crossing the Atlantic was torpedoed early in the war. Young Howe joined the R.C.N. in May of 1940. At that time he was a midshipman and with him were three other Canadian midshipmen, two R.C.N.V.R. Lieutenants and one R.C.N.V.R. Sub-Lieutenant. He also served in H.M.S. "KING GEORGE V" and H.M.S. "DURBAN". Sub-Lieutenant Howe was studying law at Dalhousie when he joined up.

Lieutenant Commander Rayner, the Commanding Officer, is the youngest of the three officers commanding Canadian Tribals. The others are Commander J.C. Hibbard, D.S.C., R.C.N., of "IROQUOIS" and Commander G.R. Miles, O.B.E., R.C.N., of "ATHABASKAN". Lieutenant-Commander Rayner joined the R.C.N. in 1928. He won his D.S.C. while in command of H.M.C.S. "ST. LAURENT". The award was for action against U-boats, one of which "ST. LAURENT" depth charged for five hours. He was second in command of H.M.C.S. "SKEENA" when war broke out and after relinquishing his command of "ST. LAURENT" was appointed in charge of operations at Halifax. He is married and his wife and three children live in Halifax. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Rayner, live in Grimsby, Ontario, where his father is connected with the Wartime Prices and Trade Board.

Lieutenant Budge, who is a native of Toronto, is the first lower deck rating to become first lieutenant of a Canadian destroyer. He joined the R.C.N. as an able seaman in 1927. He served in "SAQUENAY", "ASSINIBOINE" and "OTTAWA", three of Canada's best known destroyers and was commanding officer of "SOREL", a corvette when he was appointed to "HURON". He is a torpedo specialist and was awarded a Mention in Despatches for anti-submarine work while serving in H.M.C.S. "OTTAWA". His wife and one daughter, Wendy, live in Toronto.

The chief engineer, Lieutenant (E) G. Phillips, R.C.N., is one of three brothers serving in the Canadian Navy. A native of Ottawa, he was serving in H.M.C.S. "ASSINIBOINE" when that destroyer rammed and sank a U-Boat in the North Atlantic last summer. He was also attached to the Royal Navy for a considerable time.

Another officer who served in a Canadian ship when she sank a U-Boat while on convoy escort work is Lieutenant D.M. Chenoweth, R.C.N.V.R., of Montreal. He was a sub-lieutenant in the corvette, "CHAMBLY", the first Canadian corvette to be credited with a U-Boat kill. He also has two other brothers serving as executive officers in the R.C.N.V.R.

The navigator is Lieutenant F.E. Scoates, R.C.N.R., of Victoria, B.C. He was formerly commanding officer of H.M.C.S. "UNGAVA", a Bangor minesweeper. Prior to the outbreak of war he was first lieutenant of R.C.M.P. examination vessel on the Pacific Coast. His wife and son, David, now reside in Halifax.

Mr. C.S. Snedley, R.C.N., Gunner (T) is another officer who has seen considerable service. He joined the R.C.N. fifteen years ago and served in H.M.C.S. "SAQUENAY" when she was hit by a torpedo. He also served in "RESTIGOUCHE", "SKEENA" and "ST. LAURENT", all of them destroyers. His home is at White Rock, B.C.

/The other

The other officers are: Lieutenant V.S. Oppé, R.C.N.V.R., of Montreal; Lieutenant W.R. McCutcheon, R.C.N.V.R., of Vancouver; Lieutenant A.G. Watson, R.C.N.V.R., of Hamilton, Ontario; Lieutenant D.F. Kerr, R.C.N.V.R., of Montreal; Paymaster Lieutenant R.M. Henderson, R.C.N.V.R., of Winnipeg; Surgeon-Lieutenant J.M. Grisdale, R.C.N.V.R., of Kirkland Lake, Ontario; and Sub-Lieutenant F.S. Burbidge, R.C.N.V.R., of Winnipeg.

The chief petty officers of whom there are eight, are: C.P. Burch, R.C.N., torpedo coxswain, of London, England, the only last war veteran among them; G.J. Corp, R.C.N., Gunner's Mate, of Hamilton, Ontario; J. Boyle, R.C.N., Torpedo Gunner's Mate, of Mount Pleasant, Nova Scotia; A. McQueen, R.C.N., Writer, of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia; J. Fisher, R.C.N., Supply, of Esquimalt, B.C.; J.M. Haywood, R.C.N., O.A. of Halifax; G.E. Speck, R.C.N., stoker, of Halifax; and L.S. Stone, R.C.N., Chief Telegraphist, of Esquimalt, B.C.

CANADIAN NAVAL HEADQUARTERS.