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THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 1944
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THE ROYAL NAVY IN GALILEE

For the first time in history the White Ensign of the Royal Navy is flying on the Sea of Galilee.

Around the quiet shores of the lake chugs daily a neat little motor vessel with the Ensign fluttering from her stern.

Her name is the Eagle and she was taken there by land, over the hills of Northern Palestine and through Nazareth to Tiberias where she was launched as part of the patrolling flotilla of the Port and Marine Division of the Palestine Police, which is responsible for law and order round all the coasts of the Holy Land.

Her main duties consist of anti-smuggling patrol and fishery protection, but during the Syrian campaign she was armed with machine guns, and lay in wait for possible action against the enemy. Nothing happened, but today she still forms part of the Royal Navy and her crew have the distinction of being both policemen and naval ratings.

In command of the "Galilee Flotilla" is Petty Officer J. Skinner, of East Ham, a former Grenadier Guardsman, who has been in the Palestine Police for over six years. Under him are two British constables plus Able Seamen, Robert A. Jardine, of Liverpool, and Bernard Holland, from the Isle of Man, with five Palestinian ratings enrolled for hostilities only.

When Italy came into the war, it was found that the means of enforcing security along the Palestine coasts were insufficient. Captain Lyddeker, R.N., N.O.I.C. Palestine Ports, therefore approached the Police Force and obtained their co-operation in placing the flotilla under his operational orders. Officers and constables of the Division were enrolled in the R.N.V.R. and given appropriate ranks and ratings, and the boats were allowed to fly the White Ensign.

Six Officers and 60 men, with 20 Palestinian ratings, form the strength of the Division today.

"Our work hasn't been all patrolling," said Lieut. Colenutt, M.B.E., R.N.V.R., of Sandown, I.O.W. "Sometimes we have been lent to the Commandos. I acted as beachmaster for a landing just north of Tyre during the Syrian campaign. With a Commando Officer we went ashore and reconnoitred on a bright moonlight night. We had a good look round the countryside, which I knew pretty well. Then on the next night the landing came off, with us doing the guiding in of one of the landing craft. The only opposition came from a few patrolcraft, but it was not serious.

"Apart from coastal patrols," said Lieut. Colenutt, "the Division helps the Navy in other ways, such as in towing targets for firing practice, mine watching for mines and destroying them, spotting aircraft and many other routine jobs." NAVAL AFFAIRS