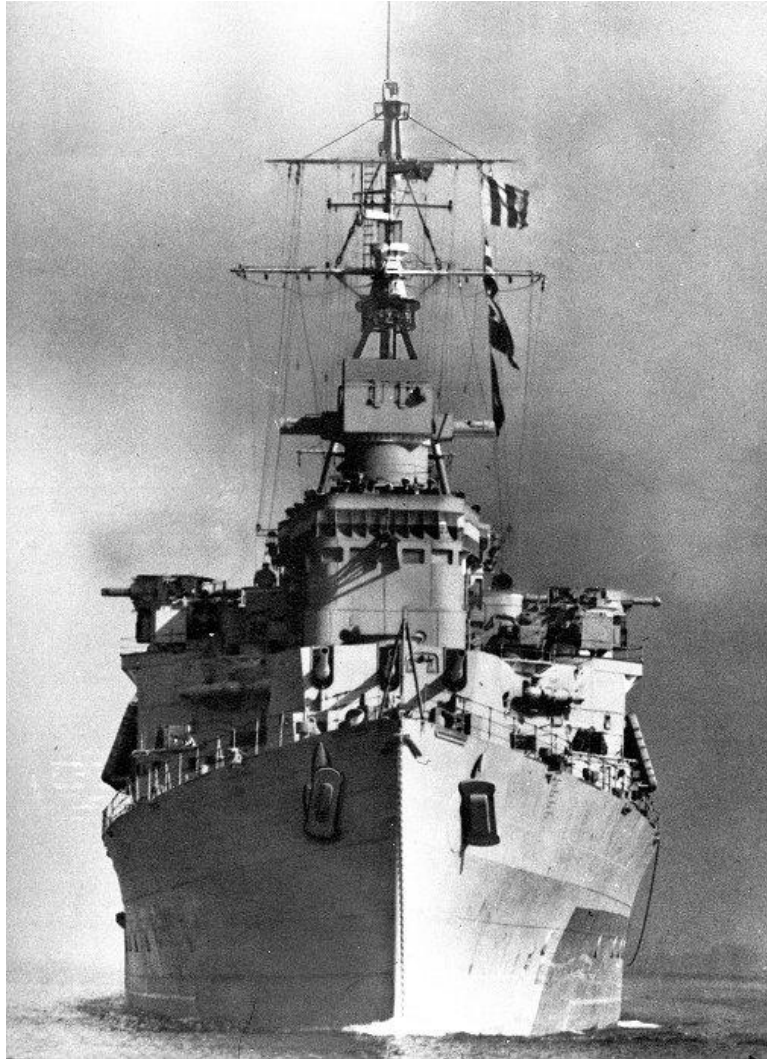


HMCS UGANDA: 'VOLUNTEERS ONLY'

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HMCS UGANDA: ‘VOLUNTEERS ONLY’

“It caused a fine ship to be withdrawn from the line for other than operational reasons.”

- Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser
Commanding Officer, British Pacific Fleet

From September 1939 until August 1945, Canada faced many dark and terrible days. The Dominion of Canada had answered the ‘call to arms’ and did her utmost to defend not only her own shores, but ultimately to take the battle to the coastal waters of her enemies. At the beginning of the war, as in the First World War, the Dominion was lacking both naval assets and trained personnel. However, by the end of the war, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) had become the third largest navy in the world with 373 warships and over 110,000 personnel.¹ In reflecting upon the history of the RCN and the Second World War, Canadians instinctively think of the *Battle of the Atlantic* and how the RCN stayed the course through those early dark days. It was not just within the Atlantic, however, that the RCN made its presence known. The RCN also made a small, but, no less important contribution to the Pacific Theatre. *His Majesty’s Canadian Ship* (HMCS) *Uganda*, a Colony Class cruiser, served with the British Pacific Fleet (BPF) and fulfilled an extremely important role. At sea almost continuously from 24 March till 10 August 1945, HMCS *Uganda* provided vital radar capabilities along with highly valued anti-aircraft and shore bombardment services.

HMCS *Uganda*’s role in the Pacific Theatre, however, also highlights Canada’s quiet ambivalence towards the Pacific War and the impact that the issue of conscription had upon Canada’s contribution towards the Pacific Theatre. Confronting the Dominion Government in 1944, conscription created a multitude of difficult decisions and troubling

¹ Minister of Veterans Affairs. *The Battle of the Atlantic*. (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 2000), p. 17.

political moves for the Cabinet War Committee. Ultimately, it resulted in the formulation by Prime Minister Mackenzie King, of the 'Volunteers Only' policy in April 1945. This policy, although quite controversial, was enacted for the Pacific Theatre of War following the Allied victory in Europe.

The impact of the 'Volunteers Only' policy upon the crew of *Uganda* was considerable and quite different than onboard any other RCN warship. Although already engaged in the Pacific, the crew was forced to 'vote' on whether or not they would continue to serve in the Pacific Theatre. As a result of this 'vote', *Uganda* was ultimately detached from the BPF and returned home.

Very little has been written about HMCS *Uganda* in the history books. A quick perusal of various studies such as Marc Milner's *Canada's Navy: The First Century*² and Commander Tony German's *The Sea Is At Our Gates: The History Of The Canadian Navy*³ openly and honestly speak to the reader about Canada's failings and successes in the North Atlantic and elsewhere during the Second World War. Not surprisingly, however, very little has been offered to the reader about HMCS *Uganda* and her involvement with the BPF in the Pacific Theatre. A brief description of her actions at Sakishima Gunto and her participation in support of the American invasion of Okinawa is usually as detailed as any book delves into her operational history. This is then usually followed by one or two pages discussing the formulation of the 'Volunteers Only' policy and then a paragraph or two explaining why her crew decided not to re-attempt their oaths

² Marc Milner. *Canada's Navy: The First Century*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

³ Commander Tony German. *The Sea Is At Our Gates The History Of The Canadian Navy*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1990.

and instead return home to Canada.⁴ It is no wonder then that most Canadians think of the *Battle of the Atlantic* as being our naval contribution during World War II.

More recently, however, an emerging awareness of HMCS *Uganda* and her service in the Pacific is beginning to take shape as more records become available and as former members of the ship's company step forward to speak about the events of 1945 in the Pacific. Three histories of *Uganda* have surfaced which have been written by former crewmembers.

Mr. Stephen Geneja, former Able Seaman anti-aircraft gunner, wrote *The Cruiser Uganda: One War-Many Conflicts*; another book entitled "*Mutiny*": *The Odyssey of H.M.C.S. Uganda* was written by Chief Petty Officer James Essex of *Uganda*'s radar branch. Both authors were serving onboard *Uganda* during the period in question. Meanwhile, *The Big 'U' A History of HMCS UGANDA / QUEBEC* has been written by Captain (N) J.M. Thornton, a former Able Seaman, (trade unknown) who had been posted to *Uganda* following the war. All three of these books offer invaluable insights into the events onboard HMCS *Uganda* as they began to unfold throughout the spring of 1945. Along with these three publications, Dr. William Rawling of the Naval History team at the Directorate of History and Heritage for the Canadian Armed Forces has also written two articles, "Paved with Good Intentions HMCS *Uganda*, the Pacific War, and the Volunteer Issue"⁵ and "A Lonely Ambassador: HMCS *Uganda* and the War in the Pacific"⁶ about *Uganda*'s service with the BPF. These articles consider the lessons

⁴ See Marc Milner's *Canada's Navy: The First Century*. p. 154. - p. 156. and Commander Tony German's *The Sea Is At Our Gates The History Of The Canadian Navy*. p. 200. – p. 203.

⁵ Bill Rawling. "Paved with Good Intentions HMCS *Uganda*, the Pacific War, and the Volunteer Issue." *Canadian Military History* Vol. 4, No. 2. 1995.

⁶ Bill Rawling. "A Lonely Ambassador: HMCS *Uganda* and the War in the Pacific." *The Northern Mariner* Vol. 8, No. 1. 1998.

learned from the operational experience of *Uganda* in the Pacific and the issue of ‘Volunteers Only’ for Pacific service and how it affected the ship and her crew.

All of the aforementioned studies have been invaluable in providing information for this paper. They have been augmented by a close examination of the ship’s newspaper, *The Uganda Tar Paper* which were generously provided by Mr. Darrell Bedford. Much of this study of the prevailing attitudes and emotions onboard *Uganda* as she was forced to confront the government’s Pacific manning policy, is drawn from information provided directly by former crewmembers through a questionnaire presented at the *HMCS Uganda Association* reunion in September 2002 along with follow up interviews.⁷

Using these sources as a basis, this paper examines the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of *HMCS Uganda* by the RCN and how the issue of conscription affected her service with the BPF. Briefly discussing her operational experience, I will then examine in detail the living conditions onboard *Uganda* and how the majority of her crew were forced to adapt to the situation they faced. Understanding the situation onboard *Uganda*, this study then examines the reasons behind the results of the ‘vote’.

There appears to be no single reason for the actions of the ship’s company. Instead, there were a litany of reasons and experiences onboard and at home in Canada, which were manifested in the result of the ‘vote’. Additionally, Canadian wartime politics and, in particular, the issue of conscription adversely affected the ability of the RCN to continue to effectively contribute to the Pacific Theatre. The policy had become more than merely an issue to those onboard *Uganda*. It had in fact, become an issue of grave contention throughout the entire Royal Canadian Navy.

⁷ See Annex C for a copy of the questionnaire presented to *HMCS Uganda Association* reunion held in Kingston, Ontario during 20 – 22 September 2002.

The story of HMCS *Uganda* is not merely the story of a single ship serving in the hostile waters of the Pacific Ocean. It is the story of the growth and development of the RCN in conjunction with the RN, while constantly living with the changing circumstances of war. The story of *Uganda* also tells us about the ambivalent attitude of the Canadian Government towards those in uniform and how the issue of conscription had once again played politics within Canadian society.

The RCN at the outbreak of WWII was quite small and limited for a nation such as Canada, which has not only the longest coastline in the world, but had inherited the fine traditions and rich histories of both the British and French navies. On 10 September 1939, at the outbreak of war, the RCN consisted of 13 vessels of varying stature and composition. The East Coast Fleet, which was stationed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, was comprised of 2 destroyers, 2 minesweepers and 1 training vessel. Despite the understanding of many today about the RCN, the majority of the RCN fleet was initially based out of Esquimalt, British Columbia with four destroyers, three minesweepers and one motor vessel.⁸ From this small core of vessels, the RCN finished the war as the third largest navy in the world with just under four hundred various warships. In fact, the RCN ceased hostilities against Germany being equal to the size of the RN prior to the commencement of hostilities in 1939.⁹ The number of personnel at the commencement of the war was also quite small with a mere 1800 all ranks ‘professional’ sailors.¹⁰ Professional sailors were those who were members of the Permanent Force, or what is

⁸ Gilbert Norman Tucker. *The Naval Service of Canada Its Official History Volume II Activities On Shore During The Second World War*. (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1952), p. 7.

⁹ Milner, *Canada’s Navy*: p. 157.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 156.

currently called the Regular Force. By the end of the war, the RCN had over 100,000 personnel: professional and volunteer. This increase represented an expansion of unprecedented proportions of approximately fifty-fold.¹¹ As could be reasonably expected, this enormous increase in both warships and personnel placed great strains upon the RCN in terms of shipbuilding, procurement of supplies and the training of personnel. Indeed by the end of hostilities, the RCN was an extremely different navy and its sailors had extremely different attitudes than in 1939.

In order to understand the situation confronting the RCN in September 1939, one must first consider that the RCN had only existed since 4 May 1910. As noted by C.P. Stacey, one of Canada's foremost military historians:

It is worth recalling here that the building of ships is a slow business, the training of sailors even slower. Armies are improvised much more rapidly than Navies, and a coast which is undefended in peacetime will be undefended in war.¹²

Over the course of the next 29 years, the Royal Canadian Navy was challenged by politics both at home and abroad. The development of Canada's naval policy was governed by two specific objectives: to defend the maritime areas of interest to Canada, and to prepare her naval forces to be able to assist any Imperial nation in time of armed insurrection or war.¹³ In essence, the focus of Canada's naval forces would be upon the Atlantic Ocean and Great Britain. The RCN, however, was expected to accomplish these tasks on an ever-decreasing budget.

On 6 February 1922, the Washington Naval Treaty was signed by the various naval powers of the world: Great Britain, Japan and the United States of America. Reflecting

¹¹ Ibid. p. 156.

¹² Ibid. p. 37.

¹³ Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada Volume II*: p. 330.

the changing attitudes of the world and her citizens, this treaty imposed strict limits upon the tonnage and quantity of capital ships and their replacement. In particular, the limitations placed upon the Royal Navy encompassed all navies of the British Empire; as the RCN was considered an extension of the RN, it immediately fell under the same treaty limitations.¹⁴ The Washington Naval Treaty directly affected the Canadian Government's attitude towards all future development of the RCN and the desire of the RCN for a balanced fleet.

In May 1922, the Right Honourable George Graham, Minister of the Naval Service rose in the House of Commons and presented the government's vision of the RCN. The Minister recommended that a naval reserve force of 1500 officers and men should be created and that all five of the RCN's warships be paid off and that the members of the permanent force be reduced in number as much as possible.¹⁵ The Minister concluded by stating that the government's proposal

...would be more in keeping with the protection of our coasts than it would be in harmony with high-sea fighting, because the fleet as now constituted is for action on the sea, and not for protection of our harbours and coasts as we understand that protection.¹⁶

In reality, however, the Minister's remarks also epitomized the attitude of indifference that would come to haunt the RCN and its leadership in their battles to develop a policy for not merely a capable navy, but ultimately a 'big ship' navy.

By 1927, the two sole remaining destroyers, HMCS *Patrician* and HMCS *Patriot* were worn out and the government decided to commission two new destroyers to replace

¹⁴ Emails Between Dr. W. Rawling (DHH) & NCdt M. Butler dated 7 & 8 November 2002.

¹⁵ Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada Volume II*: p. 327.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 327.

them.¹⁷ It was quickly determined, however, that no Canadian shipyard had the experience or knowledge to properly and adequately build destroyers. The contract was eventually let in January 1929 to the British firm, Thornycroft, in Southampton, England.¹⁸ It would not be until 1931 that the two ships were formally commissioned as HMCS *Saguenay* and HMCS *Skeena*.¹⁹ In tendering the contract to a British firm instead of assisting Canadian shipyards in modernizing or expanding their facilities, the Canadian Government again demonstrated their attitude of indifference towards the Royal Canadian Navy. Eight years later and Canada would start the war still being unable to build destroyers or frigates. From 1935 until October 1939, Canada purchased an additional five destroyers from the Royal Navy. Clearly, the Canadian naval policy was ‘hit and miss.’ Whereas, the Canadian Government had expressed a willingness to assist Great Britain in future conflicts, it was still not willing to expand or develop the RCN into a balanced fleet.

In essence, the concept of the balanced fleet and that of the ‘big ship’ navy were instinctively intertwined. To most effectively work with the RN, many believed that Canada should develop a ‘big ship’ navy. This meant that the RCN and Canada would acquire a fleet of capital ships, comprised of cruisers and aircraft carriers. Most importantly, was the acquisition of cruisers, as they were considered the more valuable type of ship due to their versatility, endurance, firepower and speed.²⁰ The RCN would also be in a better position to be prepared in the future to assist the RN in the larger picture of naval commitments within the Empire. It is within this context and frame of

¹⁷ Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada Volume II*: p. 333.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 334. & 335.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 334. & 335.

²⁰ Directorate of History. *HISTORY OF HMCS QUEBEC*. (Ottawa: Department of National Defence), p. 3. & 4.

mind, that the RCN would acquire HMCS *Uganda* from the RN in October 1944. The coming of war had changed the situation and make up of the RN dramatically.

With both a balanced fleet and a 'big ship' navy, Vice-Admiral Nelles as Chief of the Naval Staff for the RCN could station two cruisers on both coasts and therefore provide adequate protection to Canada's coastline while also assisting the RN in times of hostility. In doing so, the RCN would also have successfully returned to its long held desire of being a 'big ship' navy like the RN. In order to do this though, the RCN would have to be able to convince the Canadian Government that in doing so the government would be assisting the war effort and Canadian industry. With the above in mind, it appeared that the RCN had indeed finally received a lucky break.

The first Commanding Officer of HMCS *Saguenay* was P.W. Nelles. In being involved as the first Commanding Officer of HMCS *Saguenay*, the author believes that Nelles developed a knowledge and appreciation for the situation of the RN.

Nelles had enrolled in the Fisheries Protection Service in 1908 as a cadet; he was transferred to the Canadian Navy in 1910. In 1911, Nelles and his colleagues were then posted aboard HMCS *Niobe*, the second ship to be commissioned into the Canadian Navy. Following a short tenure onboard, Nelles served in a variety of postings aboard ship and ashore with the Royal Navy, which encompassed primarily cruisers and battleships, such as HMS



Fig. 1. Vice-Admiral P.W. Nelles
Chief of Naval Staff 1933 – 1943
Royal Canadian Navy
DND Photo O - 1979

Dreadnought, HMS *Suffolk* and HMS *Antrim*.²¹ Undoubtedly this accumulation of experiences would ultimately benefit the RCN. Nelles never forgot the value of cruisers nor lost sight of the need for a balanced fleet. He was a more than qualified man to lead the RCN through the commencement of hostilities and well into the *Battle of the Atlantic*.

Nelles assumed command of the RCN in December 1933. One of his first undertakings was to promote shipbuilding within Canada's shipyards.²² Two years later, Mackenzie King's Liberals were once again elected as the government. As a string of international crises emerged, Mackenzie King and the Liberal Party began a rearmament program for Canada's Armed Forces, based upon the idea of homeland defence, with priority for the RCN and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF).²³

In July 1938, Nelles formally declared that Canada could no longer avoid the procurement of two cruisers for each coast. Given the financial restraints at the time, Nelles knew that his call for cruisers would be disregarded. Realising the state of affairs confronting the RCN, the Mackenzie King Government did reluctantly admit that anything but close co-operation with the RN was nearly impossible.²⁴ Simply stated, the government had come to recognise that due to the inadequate state of the navy, the RCN would be forced to work closely alongside the RN.

Although, the Canadian Government had resisted the navy's efforts to expand and modernize, in the summer of 1940, a year after entering WWII, Mackenzie King appointed an avid supporter of the RCN's pursuit of capital ships, the former premier of Nova Scotia, Angus L MacDonal to the post of Minister of National Defence for Naval

²¹ Roger Sarty. *Admiral Percy Walker Nelles: Diligent Guardian of the Vision*, 1934-43. (Halifax: Unpublished Paper Maritime Command Historical Conference, 25-27 September 2002), p. 5.

²² *Ibid.* p. 10.

²³ *Ibid.* p. 11.

²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 15.

Services.²⁵ In November of that year, MacDonald addressed the House of Commons, and expressed his belief regarding Canada's need for a big ship navy.

The dignity of Canada demands that we should have a navy worthy of our importance in the world of nations, adequate to the needs of the great trading nation which Canada now is, and which she is bound to become in greater measure after the war; a navy sufficient to meet the obligations which rest upon us as members of the British Commonwealth, and as a country in close association with the United States in the matter of joint defence of this continent.²⁶

Capitalising upon this newfound support, Admiral Nelles continued to pursue the development of the Royal Canadian Navy and a truly balanced fleet. Circumstances three years later further provided support to Nelles' plans for a balanced fleet.

On 11 August 1943, Admiral Nelles and Captain H.G. DeWolf, Director of Plans for the RCN met secretly with the First Sea Lord of the Royal Navy, Sir Dudley Pound and Vice-Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Chief of Combined Operations. Aside from discussing preparations for the upcoming invasion of Normandy and the manning shortage now confronting the Royal Navy, discussions were also conducted regarding Canada's post war navy and the quest of the RCN to acquire amongst other ships, a minimum of five cruisers and two light fleet aircraft carriers. It was within these discussions that Sir Dudley Pound stated that he could assist the RCN in its quest for cruisers.²⁷

Nelles and Pound agreed that when cruisers became available, they would be transferred forthwith to the RCN. In the meantime, various personnel of the RCN would

²⁵ Roger Sarty, "The Ghosts of Fisher and Jellicoe: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Quebec Conferences" in David B. Woolner, ed. *The Second Quebec Conference Revisited: Waging War, Formulating Peace: Canada, Great Britain and the United States in 1944 – 1945*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), p. 147.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 147.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 151. & 152.

be loaned to the RN for use aboard RN cruisers. In doing so, this would guarantee that a large number of RCN personnel would receive training aboard cruisers and thus, could be used to form the nucleus of the future cruiser's crew. However, for the immediate future, the loaned personnel would help alleviate the RN's pressing concerns over their manning shortages.²⁸ Nelles then spoke to Sir Dudley Pound about how to best broach the manning issue and the transfer of cruisers to the RCN with Mackenzie King.



Fig. 2. HMCS *Uganda* - November 1944
National Archives of Canada (NAC) - PA 107875
Original photo taken by United States Navy

Nelles informed the Admiralty that the transfer of personnel and the eventual acquisition of cruisers for the RCN must be requested of Mackenzie King, by Churchill, himself. Nelles was only too well aware of Mackenzie King and the government's continued hesitance and reluctance to acquire warships larger than destroyers. Sensing war-weariness amongst the people of Canada and witnessing a continuing rise in the popular support for the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation party, with a relative

²⁸ Ibid. p. 152.

decline in the popularity of the Liberal party, Mackenzie King desperately wanted to cut Canada's overall expenditure and provide some tax relief to the population.²⁹ Although not definitive, it is possible that at this point, Mackenzie King was beginning to demonstrate a higher concern: his political future.

Nelles believed however, that if the request were presented to Mackenzie King directly by Churchill, then Mackenzie King would support the proposal.³⁰ As always, the RCN was once again subject to the politics of the day. This time, though, the RCN was more aware of the surrounding politics and better prepared on how to deal with it. Regardless of the government's reluctance, the RCN was determined to not only assist the RN, but to ultimately acquire a balanced fleet.

From 17 – 24 August 1943, the Quebec Conference, otherwise known as *QUADRANT*, was held in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada.³¹ It was here that Prime Minister Mackenzie King, Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Great Britain and President Roosevelt of the United States of America met to discuss assorted aspects of both the European and Pacific wars and their progression. In particular, Churchill strongly advocated and insisted upon British participation in the defeat of Japan in the Pacific Theatre.³² Was this a matter of seeking vengeance for the garrisons which had been stationed in Hong Kong and Singapore, and then subsequently captured by the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces, or was there an even larger concern at the heart of Churchill's insistence? Peter C. Smith states in *Task Force 57: The British Pacific Fleet in 1944-45*, that Churchill was adamant that the United States of America have no cause

²⁹ Ibid. p. 152. & 153.

³⁰ Ibid. p. 152.

³¹ Stephen Conrad Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda One War – Many Conflicts*. (Corbyville: Tyendinaga Publishers, 1994), p. 61.

³² Bill Rawling, "A Lonely Ambassador": p. 46.

to claim that Great Britain had not contributed their fair share during the conflict with Japan. Smith further asserts that Churchill was already foreseeing the future of the Pacific region following WWII and could not help but envision a drastically different power base within the region: American.³³

Unofficially, Churchill's concerns were also expressed in 1944 to the newly appointed Senior Canadian Flag Officer Overseas, Vice-Admiral Nelles, by various RN Staff Officers.

England could not and would not give up her rights and could never agree to the USA achieving 'predominance' or dictating Pacific Policy." Adding that "Canada was also a 'Pacific Power'" they further stated that "neither could Canada afford to see the USA 'dictating policy' in the Pacific any more than could Australia or New Zealand."³⁴

Combined together, these two factors of national prestige and power politics led to the formation of the British Pacific Fleet. It was also made quite apparent by the RN and the British Government that they fully expected Canadian involvement and support in the Pacific Theatre. However, aside from the discussion of the eventual British contribution to the Pacific Theatre, another issue arose, which surprised Prime Minister Mackenzie King: the Royal Canadian Navy and the concept of a balanced fleet.

Following the deliberations at Quebec, the First Sea Lord and Churchill addressed the Canadian Cabinet War Committee on 31 August 1943.³⁵ Having presented their requests for manpower assistance, Churchill then personally approached Mackenzie King about expanding the size of the RCN. It was proposed that the RCN could take possession of the Fiji Class cruisers HMS *Minotaur* and HMS *Superb* and the Fleet

³³ Peter C Smith, *Task Force 57 The British Pacific Fleet, 1944-45* (Manchester: Crecy Publishing Limited, 2001), p. 51.

³⁴ Rawling, "A Lonely Ambassador": p. 45.

³⁵ Sarty, "The Ghosts of Fisher and Jellicoe": p. 153.

Destroyers HMS *Vixen* and HMS *Valentine* as a gift from the British Government. The British Government and the Admiralty believed that this gift would allow the RCN to form a nucleus from which to build a balanced post war naval fleet.³⁶

The Cabinet War Committee met on 8 September 1943 to discuss the British proposals and requests. Although supportive of providing the much needed manning for the Royal Navy, the Prime Minister and various other cabinet members were opposed to the idea of acquiring cruisers and aircraft carriers. They were also beginning to consider offensive operations against Japan with considerable caution and concern.³⁷ Mackenzie King viewed Canada's military priorities as being the *Battle of the Atlantic*, the safety and security of Great Britain and the eventual liberation of Western Europe.³⁸ Although supportive of building a balanced fleet of warships, Mackenzie King did not want to promote the Imperial connection between the RCN and the RN anymore than was absolutely required. He became increasingly suspicious of the relations between the Admiralty of both the RCN and the RN.³⁹ The Cabinet War Committee approved the Admiralty's request with regard to manning various warships and also agreed to accept the two cruisers and two destroyers put forth by Churchill.⁴⁰ A few months later, Churchill proposed the formation of the British Pacific Fleet.⁴¹

Back in Canada, on 17 January 1944, Minister of National Defence for Naval Services, Angus L. Macdonald announced that arrangements had been completed for a

³⁶ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 61.

³⁷ Sarty, "The Ghosts of Fisher and Jellicoe": p. 154.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 154.

³⁹ Milner, *Canada's Navy*: p. 160.

⁴⁰ Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada Volume II*: p. 94.

⁴¹ Rawling, "A Lonely Ambassador": p. 46. (While attending the Tehran Conference in Cairo, Egypt, Churchill would offer President Roosevelt and the United States Navy (USN) a British Pacific Ocean Force. However, the continuing requirements of the Murmansk Convoys and the East Indies Fleet in the Indian Ocean would delay the formation of the force.)

system of reverse mutual aid, in that a transfer of two new cruisers and two fleet class destroyers from the RN to the RCN was underway. Macdonald, in speaking about the abilities of the RCN stated that these four ships would “contribute greatly to its strength and balance, and will enable it to play a still greater part in the defeat of our enemies.”⁴² Of these four ships, one of the two cruisers was HMS *Minotaur*, later commissioned into the RCN as HMCS *Ontario*. The two destroyers, HMS *Valentine* and HMS *Vixen* were commissioned as HMCS *Algonquin* and HMCS *Sioux*.⁴³ (*Ontario* following in *Uganda*’s wake arrived in the Pacific Theatre after the cessation of hostilities against Japan, while *Algonquin* and *Sioux* participated in various Atlantic operations, including *Operation Neptune*, the naval component of D-Day.⁴⁴) The second cruiser mentioned by MacDonald was *His Majesty’s Ship Uganda*.

HMS *Uganda* had been severely damaged by a Fritz-X radio controlled bomb while providing naval gunfire support to *Operation Avalanche* and the landings at Salerno, Italy on 13 September 1943.⁴⁵ Arriving with a convoy from Gibraltar at the end of November, *Uganda* immediately went into an extensive refit and repair routine in drydock at the USN shipyard in Charleston, South Carolina.⁴⁶ Following the completion of repairs and refit, HMS *Uganda* was transferred forthwith to the RCN and re-commissioned as HMCS *Uganda* on 21 October 1944.⁴⁷ The vast majority of *Uganda*’s crew had already arrived in Charleston to ‘pick up’ the ship and following the ceremony, *Uganda* departed from Charleston for Halifax on 24 October 1944 and arrived on 26 October only to once again

⁴² The Evening Telegram. “Canada Gets 2 Destroyers As Well As New Cruisers.” 17 January 1944, p.1.

⁴³ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 63. & 64.

⁴⁴ Joseph Schull. *Far Distant Ships: An Official Account of Canadian Naval Operations in World War II*. (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Company Limited, 1989), p. 275. & p. 413.

⁴⁵ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 21.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p. 28. & p. 29.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* p. 71.

set sail. This time *Uganda* darted across the Atlantic Ocean for HMS *Orkney*, a Royal Navy Dockyard situated at Scapa Flow, Scotland and arrived on 4 November 1944.⁴⁸

Two months later, *Uganda* steamed for Gibraltar, leaving behind the ‘luxuries’ experienced thus far, and then onto Fremantle, Australia on 4 March 1945. Before arriving *Uganda* conducted various shipboard emergency drills, action stations and gunnery exercises.⁴⁹

As *Uganda* slowly made her way to the Pacific Theatre, further discussions regarding British participation in the conflict against Japan continued. Following the invasion of Fortress Europe, the Royal Navy had once again turned its attention to the Pacific Theatre and on 18 August 1944, the Royal Navy had approached the Americans with their offer of a fleet.⁵⁰ Immediately, however, Admiral King, Commander-in-Chief of the United States Navy expressed his concerns over the ability of the Royal Navy to support itself and the type of strains that this would place upon his own resources and capabilities.⁵¹ Nonetheless, while attending the Second Quebec Conference, otherwise known as *OCTAGON*, in September 1944, Prime Minister Churchill stated, “the time had come for the liberation of Asia.”⁵² Having reached an agreement with President Roosevelt, it was decided that the Royal Navy would participate in the Pacific Theatre.⁵³ Under the direct command of Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser and following the cessation of hostilities in the Atlantic Ocean, the British Pacific Fleet sailed for the Pacific Ocean and

⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 73. & p. 97.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 99. & p. 101. – p. 104.

⁵⁰ Rawling, “A Lonely Ambassador”: p. 46.

⁵¹ Smith, *Task Force 57*: p. 52.

⁵² Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 121.

⁵³ Dan van der Vat, *Standard of Power - The Royal Navy in the Twentieth Century*. (London: Hutchinson Publishing, 2000), p. 311.

arrived at Manus in the Admiralty Islands, just north of Australia on 7 March 1945.⁵⁴ On the morning of 23 March 1945, the BPF rendezvoused with the United States Navy's Fifth Fleet under the command of Admiral Raymond Spruance, USN as Task Force 57.⁵⁵

HMCS *Uganda* joined the BPF on 8 April 1945, at the island of Manus, *Uganda's* service with the BPF continued through till 27 July 1945.⁵⁶ The combination of both armament and technology onboard HMCS *Uganda* placed her in a pivotal role within the BPF.⁵⁷ A Colony Class cruiser of 8,800 tons, *Uganda* was heavily fortified with an armoured hull below her waterline as additional protection from both enemy fire and torpedoes or mines and armaments.⁵⁸ Her naval gunnery consisted of nine 6" guns built within three turrets, two at the fore end and one at the after end of the ship. With each shell weighing 100 pounds, *Uganda* could fire upon targets up to 16.5 nautical miles away, guided by information from her Transmitting Station and her fore and after Director Control Towers. *Uganda's* naval gunnery also consisted of eight 4" guns mounted within four turrets with two on each of the port and starboard sides of the ship. Additionally, *Uganda* carried an impressive array of anti-aircraft (AA) gunnery. Consisting of eight 40mm Bofors AA guns, 2 pounder AA guns and a considerable number of 20 mm AA guns, *Uganda* easily deterred most aggressive aircraft. If necessary, *Uganda* also had two mountings of triple fitted torpedo tubes on each side of her upper decks.⁵⁹ In addition to the ship's Transmitting Station, *Uganda* was equipped with a variety of radar systems, such as the Type 281 and the Type 293, giving her the

⁵⁴ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 123.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 123.

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 115. & 133. & p. 206. & 207. (See Annexes A & B)

⁵⁷ See Annex D

⁵⁸ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 75.

⁵⁹ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 75.



Fig. 3. Units of the British Pacific Fleet
HMS Indomitable, HMS Howe, HMS Formidable
Personal Collection of Naval Airman Frederick Gillman (ret'd)

ability to detect and direct gunfire against both air and surface targets, in both an automatic and manual mode.⁶⁰ As a cruiser, *Uganda's* abilities to conduct shore bombardment, air defence operations and also provide advanced radar detection as a picket ship in order to warn the aircraft carriers of incoming enemy aircraft was extremely important to the BPF.

Upon joining Task Force 57, *Uganda* was attached to the Fourth Cruiser Squadron of the BPF.⁶¹ With the last offensive surface operation undertaken by the Imperial Japanese Navy on 7 April 1945,⁶² HMCS *Uganda* would never participate in a 'big ship' naval engagement against Japanese warships. *Uganda* did, however, participate in operations which tested her mettle in radar picket duties, anti-aircraft and shore bombardment operations.

⁶⁰ Chief Petty Officer James W. Essex, "*Mutiny*"- *The Odyssey of H.M.C.S. UGANDA*. (Cobalt: Highway Book Shop, 2000), p. 28.

⁶¹ Directorate of History. HMCS *QUEBEC*. (Ottawa: Department of National Defence), p. 10.

⁶² Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 125.

With her advanced radar systems, *Uganda* was detailed to act as radar picket for the British aircraft carriers. *Uganda* was one of a number of warships that would regularly form a ‘circle’ around the fleet of carriers along a 12-mile wide radius measured from the center of the fleet. Their primary task was to detect and maintain contact with enemy aircraft as they approached the BPF.⁶³ In order to support the American invasion of Okinawa, aircraft carriers of the BPF conducted sorties and attacked the Japanese airfields at both the Sakishima Gunto and Formosa. For days, *Uganda* might see no action, which led to the duty becoming both automated in its routine and monotonous in its lack of action. Nonetheless, it was essential work for defending the BPF from enemy air attacks and also for the success of the air strikes being carried out by the BPF. It was also a duty which *Uganda* carried out with increasing efficiency.

During the afternoon of 9 May 1945, the ship’s company of HMCS *Uganda* found themselves in the ‘thick of things’ as a large concentration of Japanese aircraft dove on the fleet and attacked the aircraft carriers, HMS *Victorious* and HMS *Formidable* as well as the battleship, HMS *Howe*.⁶⁴ Able Seaman A. Murray Rogerson, onboard HMCS *Uganda*, recorded in his diary that:

At 1615 radar picks up six enemy aircraft at sixteen miles. First thing we know they are diving in at Fleet and are these suicide bastards. Two passed down our starboard side – opened fire with everything we had. She crashed on the bow of *Victorious* destroying aircraft on deck. Another crashed on her stern. ... At the same time two more attacked *Formidable* – one of which was shot down and the other crashed on deck among planes with great explosion and upper deck spread with flames.⁶⁵

⁶³ J.M. Thornton, *The Big ‘U’ A History of HMCS UGANDA / QUEBEC*. (Canada: Thornton Publishing, 1983), p. 20.

⁶⁴ J.M. Thornton, *The Big ‘U’*: p. 23.

⁶⁵ Rawling, “A Lonely Ambassador”: p. 55.



Fig. 4. Anti-Aircraft Gunfire
4-Inch Guns
HMCS *Uganda* – Portside
NAC – PA 136073

It seemed at last that *Uganda* had received her true baptism of fire. Although she had engaged Japanese aircraft and witnessed an aircraft crashing into the sea between herself and HMS *Victorious* on 13 April, she was a considerable distance from any danger or immediate threat to herself.⁶⁶

Then on 27 May, the command of the Fifth Fleet changed hands, Admiral Halsey assumed command, the Third Fleet commenced operations and Task Force 57

became Task Force 37.⁶⁷ On 30 May, Task Force 37 sailed for the island of Manus.

Then on 5 June, the fleet set sail for Sydney, Australia leaving *Uganda* along with the destroyers HMS *Swiftsure* and HMNZS *Achilles* and the battleship HMS *Howe* alongside the island of Manus.⁶⁸

HMCS *Uganda*'s last significant operation was *OPERATION INMATE*. The operation was slated to last two full days commencing on 14 June 1945.⁶⁹ It was specifically designed to “neutralize air installations in Truk Atoll in order to decrease the threat of air attack on own forces and to provide battle experience for newly reporting

⁶⁶ J.M. Thornton, *The Big 'U'*: p. 20.

⁶⁷ Peter C Smith, *Task Force 57*: p. 16. (Command of the USN Fleet was established so that as one admiral commanded the fleet in an operation, another admiral was planning the next operation. As command of the fleet was transferred between admirals, the identification of the fleet also changed. Henceforth, the BPF would be originally identified as Task Force 57 under command of Admiral Spruance, USN, Fifth Fleet, and then be re-identified as Task Force 37 under the command of Admiral Halsey, USN, Third Fleet.)

⁶⁸ J.M. Thornton, *The Big 'U'*: p. 23.

⁶⁹ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 188.

units.”⁷⁰ Nicknamed the “Gibraltar of the Pacific” by the American Forces, it had been bypassed in the American method of leapfrogging across the Pacific. Under equipped

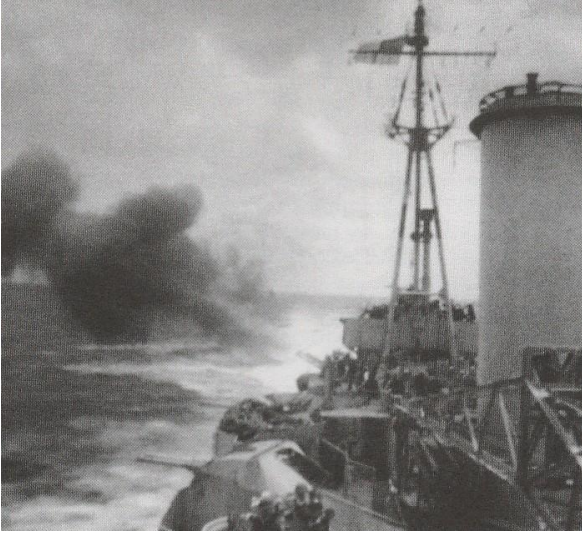


Fig. 5. Bombardment of Truk Atoll
HMCS *Uganda* – Starboard side
NAC – Number Unknown

and ill supported as a result of the USN, it had now become the responsibility of the BPF to destroy her while also acquiring some valuable shore bombardment practice.⁷¹

On 15 June Rear-Admiral Brind, Commanding Officer of 3rd Cruiser Squadron, had his flag transferred to HMCS *Uganda* and for the duration of *OPERATION INMATE*, *Uganda* acted as

his Flagship for the bombarding force of four cruisers and three destroyers and a small carrier force.⁷² *Uganda*, in conjunction with *His Majesty's New Zealand Ship* (HMNZS) *Achilles*, bombarded the sea plane base on Dublon Island. Stationed 1500 yards apart from each other, and working with an air spotter to confirm success of targeting, *Uganda* and *Achilles* commenced firing 20,000 yards out and targeted within a six-mile radius.⁷³

Despite communication problems with the air spotters, *Uganda* and *Achilles* carried out the gun shoots and received no opposition or return fire from the Japanese shore batteries located on the islands. Lieutenant Ernest Chadwick later reported, “We closed

⁷⁰ Rawling, “A Lonely Ambassador”: p. 58.

⁷¹ Ibid. p. 58.

⁷² Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 189. & 191.

⁷³ Ibid. p. 193.

right up to Truk. We had no opposition at all. That was sort of a Sunday picnic.”⁷⁴

Summarising the crew’s attitude about Truk, Lieutenant Hugh Makovski stated, “That was a huge joke,”⁷⁵ while quickly adding that the gunnery shoot had been a success.⁷⁶

For the remainder of her time with the BPF, *Uganda* continued to act as radar picket ship along with other cruisers and destroyers, while the Fleet Air Arm continued to attack Japanese fortresses and installations.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, as the *Uganda* was engaged in the Pacific, the Canadian government was grappling with the issue of conscription and how it would affect Canadian military participation in the Pacific Theatre.

On 1 September 1939, Germany invaded Poland in total disregard of the protestations and warnings previously issued by both Great Britain and France. Two days later, the world awoke to find Great Britain once again at war with Germany in a little over twenty years. On 7 September, as the Government of Canada debated Canada’s own independent declaration of war against Germany, Mackenzie King, obviously concerned over a potential repeat of the disastrous consequences of conscription in 1917, declared that the best way for Canada to help Great Britain was to remain “strong, secure and united.”⁷⁸ Stressing the cultural inheritances Canada had received from both Britain and France, Mackenzie King declared once again that there would be no conscription in Canada.⁷⁹ Then on 10 September 1939 with the official pronouncement having been granted Royal Assent, Parliament declared that a state of war now existed between Canada and Germany as of precisely 12:40pm.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Rawling, “A Lonely Ambassador”: p. 58.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 58.

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 58.

⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 59.

⁷⁸ Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada Volume II*: p. 4.

⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 4.

⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 4.

A year before as debates had continued within Canada's Parliament regarding the possibility of Canadian neutrality or participation in another European war, Prime Minister Mackenzie King had stated that he did not believe that Canada would be required to dispatch an Expeditionary Force to Europe. Mackenzie King had also further reiterated an earlier pledge that regardless of the course charted by Canada, there would be no conscription in Canada.⁸¹ Unfortunately for Mackenzie King and the Dominion of Canada, another European war did indeed commence.

For the remainder of 1939 and well into the spring of 1940, a false sense of security seemed to prevail across both the Western Front in Europe, and across Canada. Dubbed the 'Phoney War' by American Senator William Borah,⁸² it was a time of relative calm with little military action being undertaken by Germany. Although, all may have been quiet across Europe, this was not the case in Canada. The mobilization of Canadian industry had begun in earnest. By the end of 1940, disagreements between Great Britain and Canada over the pricing of various goods were finally resolved and as a result, C.D. Howe, Minister of Munitions and Supply reported that production had reached a total of \$310, 000, 000.⁸³

However, in May 1940, the German Army had again begun its move across Europe and had quickly devastated the ability of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and the French Army to stem their advance towards the coast. Pushing the BEF into the Atlantic Ocean, the RN commenced an evacuation from the beaches of Dunkirk, France on 26 May. By 4 June, the evacuation was completed and France fell to Germany on 24 June

⁸¹ Ibid. p. 2.

⁸² Lieutenant Colonel Eddy Bauer. *The History of World War II*. (Etobicoke: Prospero Books, 2000), p. 18.

⁸³ J.L. Granatstein. *Mackenzie King His Life and World*. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1977), p. 149.

1940.⁸⁴ Canada now found herself alone and across the Atlantic Ocean, supporting Great Britain. Essentially, the Dominion, which had been so poorly prepared for war, now found herself thrust into the position of acting as Great Britain's main ally.

Recognising the evolving situation in France and accepting Canada's newfound responsibility, the government quickly enacted the *National Resources Mobilization Act* (NRMA) on 21 June 1940, three days before the fall of France. In essence, the NRMA authorized "special emergency powers to permit the mobilization of all

DOMINION OF CANADA
NATIONAL REGISTRATION REGULATIONS, 1940
REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

This certificate must always be carried upon the person of the registrant.

Electoral District No.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YALE (Name)
Polling Division No.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Name if any)

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

residing at George S. Balmakoff
West Grand Forks,
B.C. was duly registered under the above-mentioned Regulations this 14th day of August, 1940.

Alex J. Verigin
Deputy Registrar.

Signature of Registrant

Fig. 6. NRMA Registration Card
Original Source Unknown

effective resources of the nation, both human and material, for the purpose of the defence and security of Canada.”⁸⁵ Essentially, this allowed for the government to conscript or ‘register’ men for military service within “Canada and the territorial waters thereof.”⁸⁶ Over the course of the following 22 months, however, the situation changed dramatically throughout Canada and Parliament.

Voluntary enlistments climbed following the fall of France, and by the end of 1941, the Canadian Army had a total of 260,000 volunteer soldiers willing to serve anywhere in the world they were needed. The RCN had a volunteer strength of over 20,000 sailors and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) had a total strength of almost 100,000 airmen.

⁸⁴ Lieutenant Colonel Eddy Bauer. *World War II*: p. 1002.

⁸⁵ J.L. Granatstein. *Conscription in the Second World War 1939 – 1945: A Study in Political Management*. (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969), p. 28.

⁸⁶ Daniel Byers. “Mobilising Canada: The National Resources Mobilization Act, the Department of National Defence, and Compulsory Military Service in Canada, 1940 – 1945,” *Journal Of The Canadian Historical Association*. Volume 7, 1996. p. 175.

For a nation of 11,500,000 people, the three services now boasted a total of approximately 380,000 soldiers, sailors and airmen.⁸⁷ Unfortunately, Mackenzie King's concerns regarding the issue of conscription and its divisive effects upon Canada began to surface. Opinion across Canada had once again begun to take shape as it had in 1917, that Quebec was not pulling her fair share of enlistments towards the war effort.

By the spring of 1941, scores of Canadians began to press for conscription. As feelings of frustration increased, taxes rose, luxuries became scarce and the military situation steadily deteriorated throughout Europe and North Africa, Canadians began asking if Canada was truly doing her share. One politician was quoted as asking "How many Germans have been killed by Canadian Forces?"⁸⁸ Clearly, people were expressing their desire that some kind of action be undertaken by the Canadian Armed Forces. In May 1941, and possibly building upon these emotions, Dr. Bruce, Member of Parliament for the Toronto-Parkdale riding addressed the House of Commons regarding conscription.

I am only speaking for myself when I call upon the government to take the immediate steps to meet the present urgent situation and make available by a national selective process the men necessary to bring our forces up to the strength that represents the fighting might of Canada.⁸⁹

Strong forces were building throughout Canada for the introduction of conscription.

Following these events, on 9 January 1942, Arthur Meighen began his pursuit of re-election as the leader of the Federal Conservative Party by making a radio broadcast. Meighen heartily pursued a policy of introducing conscription for Canada's Armed Services.⁹⁰ Shortly afterwards, *The Committee for Total War* was created at a meeting of

⁸⁷ J.L. Granatstein. *Conscription in the Second World War*: p. 31.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 33.

⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 33.

roughly 200 prominent citizens from all parts of society in Toronto. Quickly becoming known as the *Toronto 200*, they vigorously supported conscription and Meighen's election campaign.⁹¹ Trying to appease both the sides of the conscription debate, while also taking the wind out of Meighen's campaign sails, the Prime Minister decided to hold a national plebiscite on the issue of conscription. Although Meighen was ultimately defeated in his attempt for re-election to office, this campaign had forced Mackenzie King to confront the issue of conscription.

On the 27 April 1942, Mackenzie King's Government conducted a plebiscite that asked Canadians from coast to coast "Are you in favour of releasing the Government from any obligation arising out of any past commitments restricting the methods of raising men for military service?"⁹² Throughout Canada 64% of the people voted 'yes', while within Quebec specifically, a resounding 76% voted 'no'.⁹³ The nation appeared divided and as a result, the issue of conscription began to once again apply pressure on the Canadian Government as it had during the Great War.

By April 1943, the First Canadian Army was a considerable size and although deployed to Great Britain, had experienced very little combat first hand. Aside from lessons learned at the expense of the failed defence of Hong Kong and the disastrous raid on Dieppe, the Canadian Army had next to no combat experience; however, this quickly changed as planning began for *OPERATION HUSKY* - the invasion of Sicily. On 23 April 1943, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Sir Alan Brooke requested that Lieutenant General Andrew G.L. McNaughton Commander, First Canadian Army

⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 38.

⁹¹ Ibid. p. 39.

⁹² Nolan, Brian. *King's War: Mackenzie King and the Politics of War 1939 - 1945*. (Toronto: Random House of Canada Limited, 1988), p. 85.

⁹³ Ibid. p. 85.

provide one infantry division and one tank brigade for the upcoming operation.

Recognizing that Canadian soldiers were tired of training and had a very real desire to participate in operations and also noting that morale was in decline, the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable J.L. Ralston advised the Cabinet War Committee that he was absolutely one hundred percent in support of fulfilling this request. Ralston argued that “it would give battle experience without which it was questionable whether the morale of the Army could be maintained.”⁹⁴ Although it cannot be proven, one must also consider the additional factors of national prestige, self-respect and pride and how they must have weighed on Ralston’s mind as he reflected upon the army’s involvement in Hong Kong and Dieppe.

Having conferred with NDHQ, McNaughton accepted the British offer and the First Canadian Army immediately became involved in the operation. Although the First Canadian Army proved itself worthy by the end of the operation, it paid a heavy price. Almost one third of the total manpower of the army had been either killed or wounded.⁹⁵ By the summer of 1944 and following the First Canadian Army’s involvement in *OPERATION HUSKY*, a new manpower shortage developed. Soon this manpower shortage precipitated a new conscription crisis which confronted the Canadian Government from October through November 1944.⁹⁶

Attempting one final appeal to the people of Canada, Mackenzie King made a radio broadcast on 8 November 1944.

⁹⁴ Granatstein, J.L. & Morton, Desmond. *A Nation Forged In Fire: Canadians and the Second World War 1939-1945*. (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys Limited, 1989), p. 131.

⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 150. (A total of 92,757 Canadian soldiers served in the Sicily campaign, with a total of 26,254 officers and men being killed or wounded. Specific details as follows: 408 officers and 4,991 killed, 1,218 officers and 18,268 men wounded, 62 officers and 942 men became prisoners of war, 365 personnel died of other causes.)

⁹⁶ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 226.

The glory of Canada's fight for freedom is the imperishable fact that every Canadian in uniform at sea, in the air, and on every fighting front is there by his own choice. In this world conflict Canada has produced a race of noble warriors. The light in their eyes is the light of liberty and the fire in their hearts is the fire of spirits dedicated to the service of their fellow men.⁹⁷

Mackenzie King also further appealed to the NRMA soldiers to volunteer in earnest for overseas duty. Unfortunately, all his efforts were to no avail; the requisite numbers continued to fail to materialize. This lack of volunteers initiated the need for conscription, which in turn due its unpopularity and an upcoming general election precipitated the formulation of the 'Volunteers Only' policy by Mackenzie King.

On 22 November 1944, the Prime Minister finally succumbed to the pressure for more men for overseas duty. Personnel Order PC 8891 was formally approved by the Governor-General and this in turn established the new policy of extending the service of NRMA soldiers to overseas theatres. In total, approximately 16,000 NRMA soldiers were dispatched overseas to European battlefields.⁹⁸ The Pacific Theatre was to be another issue.

Following the invasion of Sicily and being all too aware of the casualties along with the 2nd Quebec Conference in early September 1944, the Cabinet War Committee had begun to discuss the issue of Canada's involvement in the fight against the Japanese. The Prime Minister had expressed his concerns that Canada would become involved in the "re-establishment of British Imperial power in Southeast Asia."⁹⁹ On 14 September 1944, Cabinet had decided that "at the end of war in Europe, Canadian military forces should participate in the war against Japan in operational theatres of direct interest to

⁹⁷ Ibid. p. 227.

⁹⁸ Ibid. p. 227. & 228.

⁹⁹ Ibid. p. 159.

Canada as a North American nation, for example, in the north and central Pacific.”¹⁰⁰

The Cabinet War Committee further discussed Canada’s participation in the Pacific Theatre on 20 September 1944. Mackenzie King spoke frankly on the issue, “... I thought our duty was to save lives. That we were trustees of the people of Canada in the matter of saving lives of our young men and also the money of the people...”¹⁰¹ It appears that the Prime Minister while remaining concerned about the soldiers, sailors and airmen he had dispatched overseas, had also begun to be concerned about the amount of money being spent during the war. Unfortunately, this newly emerging concern would not benefit the RCN. It seems that this was the point at which Prime Minister Mackenzie King had personally decided to deter any grandiose contributions of military force from Canada to the Pacific Theatre.

As discussions proceeded regarding Canada’s contribution to the Pacific Theatre, the Cabinet War Committee decided on 11 October 1944 that the RCN involvement in the Pacific would be limited to approximately 13,400 officers and ratings; ships would be limited to 2 light fleet carriers, 2 cruisers, 10 fleet destroyers, and approximately 40 frigates and corvettes. This was half of what had originally been envisioned by the RCN and the Royal Navy’s Admiralty.¹⁰² Naturally, the Admiralty expressed its disappointment that the contribution to the Pacific Theatre by the RCN would “not be as understood at Quebec.”¹⁰³ In the end, HMCS *Uganda* would be the only Canadian representation in the Pacific Theatre.

On 3 April 1945, the Cabinet War Committee again met to discuss Canada’s

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. p. 159.

¹⁰¹ Forster, D.F. & Pickersgill, J.W. *The Mackenzie King Record: Volume II 1944 – 1945*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), p. 112.

¹⁰² Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada Volume II*: p. 101. & 102.

¹⁰³ Ibid. p. 101.

participation in the Pacific Theatre. Mackenzie King reminded the Cabinet that "... in reference to the Japanese war at the time of the Quebec Conference, it had been agreed in the Cabinet that there should be no conscription for the army to go to Japan."¹⁰⁴ This statement with the fact that 16,000 NRMA soldiers had been authorized for overseas duty clearly shows that conscription was of no direct consequence for the RCN. Instead, it was a matter of acquiring replacements for the ever-increasing casualties within the ranks of the Canadian Army. The issue of conscription did affect the RCN, however. Conscription would ultimately defeat the plans and ambitions of the RCN for a 'big ship' navy and a substantial contribution of men and ships to the Pacific Theatre.

On 4 April 1945, rising in the House of Commons, Prime Minister Mackenzie King spoke of the guiding principles on which Canada's contribution to the Pacific Theatre would be formulated, once hostilities in the European Theatres had ceased. Mackenzie King stated that the government had no intention of deploying men to the Pacific Theatre. Instead, he explained that all personnel returning from Europe would have to volunteer specifically for the Pacific Theatre before they would be dispatched to fight against the Japanese Forces. Additionally, he added that all personnel doing so would be granted thirty days embarkation leave in addition to any other leave to which they were entitled. As can be expected, this began to cause an immense amount of problems in planning for all three services. The problems, which quickly developed for the RCN, however, were altogether different from those of the army or air force.¹⁰⁵ Although the Canadian Army had been previously deployed with the American Army to capture the Kiska Islands,¹⁰⁶ it would fall

¹⁰⁴ D.F. Forster. & J.W. Pickersgill. *The Mackenzie King Record: Volume II 1944 – 1945*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), p. 348.

¹⁰⁵ RCAF Squadrons 435 and 436 were formed in September 1944 and commenced operations in November 1944 in Burma in support of General Slim of the British Army and his advance against Japanese

upon HMCS *Uganda* to enforce this new policy, and, at the same time maintain operational efficiency in combat with the USN and the British Pacific Fleet. Undoubtedly, this created frustration, stress and mixed emotions amongst a cohesive fighting warship of the RCN. Four days after the Prime Minister's speech, HMCS *Uganda* on 8 April 1945, joined Task Force 57 in the refuelling area.¹⁰⁷

On 11 April 1945, at another Cabinet War Committee meeting, the Naval Minister requested that the Prime Minister further explain the government's 'Volunteers Only' policy. In particular, the Minister asked how this policy would affect those ships, such as HMCS *Prince Robert*, HMCS *Ontario*, and an assortment of *Crescent*, *V*, and *Tribal* Class destroyers and frigates already earmarked for service in the Pacific Theatre. Prime Minister Mackenzie King replied that "government policy in this respect was now settled and no commitments in respect of manning Canadian ships should be undertaken beyond the voluntary method."¹⁰⁸ With these few words, and remembering the Prime Minister's earlier statement about being the "trustees of the people of Canada", it is apparent that he had decided to severely limit Canada's contribution in the Pacific. Later writing in his personal diary, the Prime Minister revealed another desire of his controversial 'Volunteers Only' policy.

I think our statements will be warmly welcomed by the overseas men. I doubt if any of them want conscription against Japan. By making it clear that they may re-elect we are considering how they can get home in the largest numbers and at the earliest time. It is altogether probable that there will be a big swing toward ourselves on the part of our troops now serving abroad. There was one

forces. No evidence has been located by author regarding the impact of the 'Volunteers Only' policy upon RCAF Squadrons 435 and 436 or their personnel.

¹⁰⁶ J.W. Pickersgill. *The Mackenzie King Record: Volume I 1939 – 1944*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), p. 685.

¹⁰⁷ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 133.

¹⁰⁸ Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada Volume II*: p. 101. & 102.

reference to the Navy about leave of naval men which I thought superfluous. I asked MacDonald if he wanted it. He thought it would be as well out, so I took it out.¹⁰⁹

Mackenzie King correctly assumed that personnel from all three branches of the service and the RCN, in particular, would rather return to their families and homes than to continue to fight against the Axis Forces. In referring to "...a big swing towards ourselves..." the Prime Minister seemed to be looking towards the upcoming federal election and wished desperately to avoid an election over the issue of conscription for the Pacific Theatre. "I took strongly the position that to create a conscription issue over Japan before a general election would be just suicidal and absolutely wrong."¹¹⁰ By initiating the 'Volunteers Only' policy Mackenzie King believed that in allowing the common soldier, sailor and airman to decide his future military service, the Liberal Party would garner more votes. It has also been made readily apparent that Mackenzie King had no concept of the conditions of life at sea. It further appears that he was not at all concerned about how this policy would affect the ship's company of HMCS *Uganda*. However, appearances can be deceiving and, as such, the author has been unable to clarify if any attempt by either the Naval Minister or the CNS was made to explain living conditions at sea. Nevertheless, the Armed Forces of Canada would take a back seat to politics, once again.

On 13 April, the Prime Minister dissolved Parliament and called a General Election for 11 June 1945. Then on 1 May 1945 with the end of hostilities against Germany in sight, the Cabinet War Committee decided to temporarily suspend the calling up of men under the auspices of the NRMA. It would be another full year before the legislation,

¹⁰⁹ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 228.

¹¹⁰ D.F. Forster. & J.W. Pickersgill. *The Mackenzie King Record: Volume II 1944 – 1945*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), p. 346.

which had enabled the calling up of men for NRMA service, was rescinded.¹¹¹ Along with various issues on his post war social agenda, Mackenzie King's volunteer policy and suspension of calling up NRMA soldiers had worked. On 11 June 1945, Mackenzie King and the Liberal Party were re-elected, with not surprisingly, the largest percentage of the Armed Forces vote.¹¹²

Due to operations with the BPF, voting for the general election was conducted onboard HMCS *Uganda* on 2 June, nine days before the rest of Canada. At this time, the crew were also required to make known their intentions regarding service in the Pacific Theatre. Although not a secret ballot like the general election, no crew member was ever forced to publicly discuss his decision to either re-attest or not. It is plausible, however, to suggest that by having the ship's company 'vote' on the upper decks in plain view of the remainder of the ship's company that some may have felt pressure to re-attest their oaths and therefore vote in the affirmative.

NAVAL SERVICE			
ARNOLD LYALL STEED	LEADING WRITER,	R.C.N.	40888
NAME	RATING	NOV SUB	OFFICER
SERVING IN H.M.C.S. "UGANDA"			
I HEREBY VOLUNTEER FOR SERVICE IN THE WAR AGAINST JAPAN AND AGREE TO SERVE			
IN THE PACIFIC THEATRE AND/OR ANY OTHER THEATRE FOR THE DURATION OF			
HOSTILITIES SHOULD MY SERVICES BE SO REQUIRED.			
4th June, 1945.	<i>[Signature]</i>	<i>[Signature]</i>	
DATE	WITNESS	SIGNATURE	SOLDIER

Fig. 7. Copy of Volunteer's re-attestation for Pacific Theatre
 Provided by LCdr Arnold Steed (ret'd)
 Former Leading Writer of HMCS *Uganda*

¹¹¹ Byers. *Mobilising Canada*: p. 202-203.

¹¹² Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 229.

At the end of this tally, a total of 344 members of the ship's company had re-attested their oaths and voted 'yes' to continue serving in the Pacific Theatre, while 556 personnel had declined to re-attest their oaths and hence, voted 'no'.¹¹³

The BPF was now faced with a severe problem. If *Uganda* followed the volunteer policy, she would be required to sail home as soon as she could be freed from operations. This would undoubtedly weaken the ability of the BPF to conduct air operations. Similarly, Vice-Admiral Jones, who had replaced Nelles as Chief of Naval Staff for the RCN, was now forced to confront the embarrassment of having to withdraw not only the lone Canadian naval representation, but also the sole Canadian representation taking part in offensive operations against Japan. Nonetheless, on 27 July 1945, *Uganda* refuelled and then charted a new course for HMCD *Esquimalt* and the history books. HMCS *Uganda* would not only become the single RCN ship to participate in hostilities against Japan, but she also became the only ship ever known to have literally 'voted' herself out of a war. *Uganda* was indeed homeward bound.

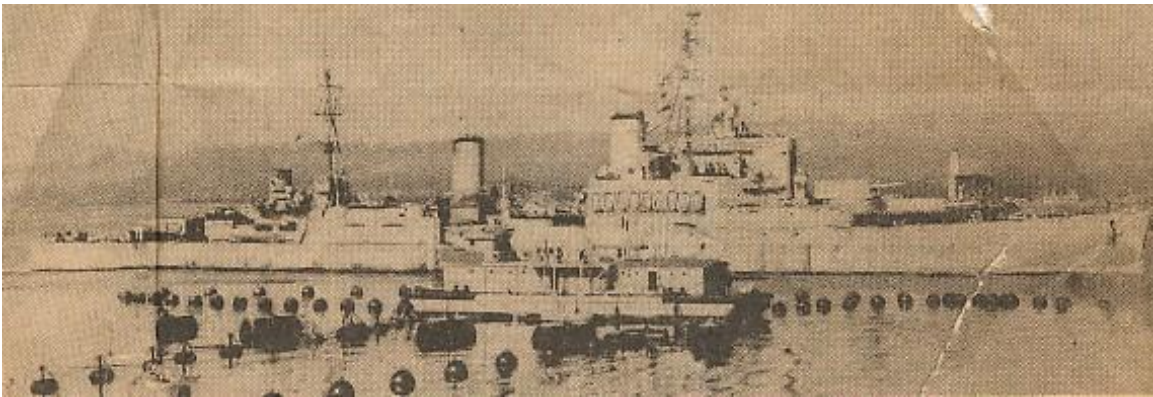


Fig 8. HMCS *Uganda* - Entering Esquimalt Harbour - 10 August 1945
Daily Province Newspaper – Vancouver, British Columbia

¹¹³ Ibid. p. 229. (As shown on page 37, the 'vote' was actually a signed declaration by the crewmember vice a secret voting ballot, similar to the general election.)

In reviewing the events of July 1945 onboard HMCS *Uganda*, one cannot be anything but intrigued by the departure of a warship from an operational theatre of war due to the decision of two thirds of her crew that they no longer desired to serve in that theatre. It is that intrigue which leads us to ask “why”? In discussing this event with a variety of former members of the ship’s company, reviewing the questionnaires submitted and the ship’s newspaper, the author was presented with a multitude of differing opinions, concerns, and reasons why the majority of the ship’s company ultimately decided not to re-attest their oath and instead return to HMCD *Esquimalt*.¹¹⁴

Explanations and reasons for their decisions varied from the lack of a national identity within the BPF, to the ‘big ship’ routine, to the strict discipline enforced, to the quality of food and living conditions aboard to the amount of time spent at sea in operations. Other possible explanations include the use of the Armed Forces for Mackenzie King’s political expediency, psychological impact, and personal insult. One factor, however, which must be considered before examining any of these reasons is the composition of the ship’s company at the time when HMCS *Uganda* joined the British Pacific Fleet and participated in operations against Japan.

The ship’s newspaper, *The Uganda Tar Paper*, cited the average age of a sailor onboard as being 23.6 years with a higher number of 20 year olds (130 in total) onboard *Uganda* than on any other ship in the Royal Canadian Navy.¹¹⁵ *Uganda*’s total complement onboard for her tour of duty in the Pacific Theatre was 900 personnel.¹¹⁶ The shipboard newspaper further noted that only 33.3 % of the crew had any previous

¹¹⁴ The Association’s General Meeting and Reunion was held in Kingston, Ontario from 20 - 22 Sept 02. See Annex C for a copy of the questionnaire.

¹¹⁵ *The Uganda Tar Paper*. Volume 1, Number 24. 09 March 1945. p.1.

¹¹⁶ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 229.

experience onboard a cruiser and 28.6 % of the ship's company were married men. The most startling fact, however, is that a mere 7 % of the ship's company were permanent force members of the RCN.¹¹⁷ Clearly, the majority of the ship's company were reservists and in turn, had not previously been exposed or trained in the methods of the RN as had the permanent force members and reservists who had been assigned to RN cruisers. In addition, Stephen Geneja has noted in *The Cruiser Uganda: One War – Many Conflicts* that the ship's company was comprised of personnel from every province of Canada, including Newfoundland.¹¹⁸ The personnel onboard HMCS *Uganda*, comprised a significant representation of differing opinions and attitudes towards both the war, in general and the Pacific Theatre, more specifically.

As *Uganda* was not only a cruiser, but, was also the largest warship in active service in the RCN at this point (HMCS *Ontario* was still being worked up) it logically follows that the ship would also have a shipboard routine quite unfamiliar to a large percentage of her crew. In "A Lonely Ambassador: HMCS *Uganda* and the War in the Pacific" William Rawling noted that the small cadre of experienced personnel aboard further created some distinct and obvious divisions throughout the ship's company. The 33.3% of the ship's company with former experience onboard RN cruisers had been specialists acquiring the highly sought after experience of the engineering, gunnery or torpedo branches aboard a cruiser. They were somewhat used to the more disciplined approach to their trade and life aboard a 'big ship'. Meanwhile, the remaining 66.7% of the ship's company were seamen who had been reassigned to *Uganda* from corvettes and other escort vessels in the North

¹¹⁷ *The Uganda Tar Paper*. Volume 1, Number 24. 09 March 1945. p. 1.

¹¹⁸ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 77.

Atlantic.¹¹⁹ Seamanship may indeed be seamanship onboard any warship, but life aboard a corvette was not life aboard a cruiser.

Additionally, the remainder of *Uganda's* crew had not only to gain an immense amount of training and experience aboard their new ship, but upon reporting aboard *Uganda* were also forced to change their procedures and personal mindset about how to conduct themselves and carry out their respective duties. Commander Hugh Pullen, Executive Officer onboard *Uganda*, was a disciplinarian, who believed in strict adherence to the proper shipboard routines and traditions of the Royal Navy. As mentioned previously, however, the RCN of 1945, in which he found himself as the second in command of *Uganda*, was vastly different from the RCN of 1939 when the war had begun. With such an influx of hastily trained and inexperienced reservists from across Canada contrasting the Royal Navy trained and highly experienced members of the Permanent Force, attitudes and opinions were bound to collide. Seaman "N" recalled the Executive Officer as being "... very 'Pusser', a disciplinarian referred to as Von Pullen."¹²⁰ This moniker, while making reference to Germany and the Nazi party, undoubtedly, refers to the heavy handed discipline onboard HMCS *Uganda*.

As known from general experience, very few people ever like massive change within their lives on either a personal or professional level. The learning curve and immense amount of change undoubtedly led to at least some disdain for life aboard a cruiser and its 'big ship' routine when compared to the relatively 'relaxed' routine one found aboard a corvette, minesweeper or other type of escort vessel. Whether experienced aboard cruisers or not, every member of *Uganda* was also forced to adapt to a new and highly dangerous

¹¹⁹ Rawling, "A Lonely Ambassador": p. 47.

¹²⁰ Questionnaire received in mail on 9 January 2003 from Seaman "N".

form of warfare: the kamikaze pilot. In December 1944, several months prior to *Uganda's* arrival in the Far East, Surgeon Commander R.D.C. Thompson, Principal Medical Officer, had already reported, "Several have been seen who show evidence of instability, which is apt to become more marked under difficult conditions which may exist in the Pacific."¹²¹ With this report in mind, the comment made by Seaman "N" in his questionnaire that "Some just wanted to get away from the suicide bomber attacks"¹²² takes on a deeper significance. Entirely different from the submarine warfare one had experienced in escorting convoys, and set piece naval engagements experienced onboard cruisers, this suicidal approach to both naval and aerial combat by the pilots of the Japanese Navy was a tactic which was totally unexpected, and, for which the crew was not prepared. One cannot discount the psychological effects that this new form of warfare must have had upon the ship's company and the influence it may have had upon their decision to return to Esquimalt.

Another reason that some of the crew may have decided to return to Esquimalt was the lack of identifying Canadian insignia. It had become practice for all Canadian warships to fly the Canadian Red Ensign from their ensign staff as a sign of Canadian nationality and distinction from other Royal Navy warships. Sadly, at the time of the commissioning of HMCS *Uganda* into the RCN, both Naval Staff Headquarters (NSHQ) and the Dominion Government had failed to dispatch an ensign to HMCS *Uganda*. This resulted in a signalman onboard named Toschak having to make one from some old British Ensigns found left onboard in the flag locker.¹²³ One must ask, though, how did a national government and its naval headquarters simply forget to dispatch an ensign to proudly fly

¹²¹ Rawling, "A Lonely Ambassador": p. 49.

¹²² Questionnaire received in mail on 9 January 2003 from Seaman "N".

¹²³ Essex, "*Mutiny*": p. 34. & 38.

from her newest ship? As noted by Chief Petty Officer Essex, the first question asked by many of the ship's company as they reported onboard *Uganda* was where was the Canadian Red Ensign and the maple leaf that should have been displayed on the funnel.¹²⁴ Chief Petty Officer Essex further notes that this lack of attention to recognizing the identity of her sailors was taken as an insult by some members of the ship's company.¹²⁵

On 24 May 1945, while addressing an assembled crowd of Liberal supporters at a campaign stop over in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Prime Minister Mackenzie King spoke about the importance of the Canadian Government designing and authorizing a distinct National Flag for the Dominion of Canada. In particular, Mackenzie King stated

The need for a distinctive flag is all the greater when we reflect that the Canadian troops who are to serve against Japan are to serve with the forces of the United States. They will wish to carry into battle in the Orient the flag they have fought under in Europe.¹²⁶

This statement succinctly shows Mackenzie King's understanding of the importance servicemen place upon their national flag, be it the former Canadian Red Ensign or the Canadian National Ensign that Canadian warships fly today. Although not the work of the Prime Minister directly, this oversight by both the Dominion Government and the RCN Admiralty demonstrated a general acceptance of British protocol and ceremony. This leaves the reader asking whether or not Mackenzie King's speech about a distinctive flag was merely more rhetoric designed to create within the populace an overwhelming surge of national pride, which it was hoped would furnish the Liberal party with increased national support as they had painted themselves the national party, having led the Dominion of

¹²⁴ Ibid. p. 34.

¹²⁵ Ibid. p. 33. & 37. & 102.

¹²⁶ Mackenzie King, William Lyon. *Canada And The War; Victory, Reconstruction And Peace: Mackenzie King to the People of Canada 1945*. No publication information available. p. 78 & 79.

Canada through the fight against Germany or was it a truly heartfelt conviction? There is no easy and definite answer to the question, except that our distinctive flag was not officially authorized until 1965.

Another, perhaps even more recognizable emblem of Canadian identity is that of the maple leaf. Since the early days of Canada, maple leaves have been considered an emblem of Canadian identity. During the First World War and afterwards, it had become customary for RCN ships to display a maple leaf on their funnel, as a sign of distinction from foreign warships with which they worked.¹²⁷ Yet, once again, neither NSHQ nor the government saw fit to make arrangements for a maple leaf to be either painted or made and fitted onto *Uganda*'s funnel. Although, this may seem an insufficient reason to those of us today, it was, however, a large enough concern and displeasure of the crew for Captain Mainguy to specifically address the issue.



Fig. 9. Captain E.R. Mainguy
Commanding Officer
HMCS *Uganda*: 1944 – 1946
Photo dated 1938

In an issue dated 22 July 1945, *The Uganda Tar Paper* reported the main points discussed by Captain Mainguy in a briefing delivered earlier that afternoon to the ship's company in the portside hangar. In point number two, Captain Mainguy stated, "The maple leaf will probably be put up on the funnel on our return to Canada."¹²⁸ It was too little too late to make a difference, as *Uganda* departed for Esquimalt on 27 July 1945.

¹²⁷ Crownsnest Magazine. "Whence The Funnel's Maple Leaf?" Volume 9, Number 8. June 1957. As cited at http://history.cc.ukans.edu/~kansite/ww_one/naval/cdnmaple.html

¹²⁸ *The Uganda Tar Paper*. Volume 2, Number 43. 22 July 1945. p.1.

Clearly, the desire for an individual Canadian identity within the British Pacific Fleet was a forerunner of what was to confront the RCN in the years following the Second World War. Proud of their overall part within the Empire, the sailors of the RCN were yearning for further recognition and autonomy. Whereas historians have cited Vimy Ridge as the true birthplace of Canada, the author believes that the accomplishments of the RCN during World War Two acted as the birthplace of an emerging desire within the ranks of the Royal Canadian Navy to be perhaps more Canadian than Royal.

As mentioned previously, one of the main concerns raised by Admiral King of the USN had been the ability of the RN to maintain a capable and efficient Fleet Train to support the BPF independently of the USN Fleet Train. Whereas the USN had developed an efficient system of supply and repair facilities based in part upon auxiliary vessels, in 1945 the Royal Navy found itself so preoccupied with maintaining their Atlantic lifelines that when the requirement arose regarding the need to establish a fleet train to support the BPF, it was nearly impossible. The Admiralty's historical section would later write "the whole venture was therefore necessarily a scramble."¹²⁹ This 'scramble' had unfortunate consequences upon not only the ability of the BPF to refuel and acquire spares and supplies, but it also impaired the quantity and quality of food issued to all ships within the fleet.

Throughout questionnaires submitted to the author, respondents often cited as a source of complaint and discontent both the quantity and quality of food. Seaman "A" stated in his questionnaire that ... "food was dull and often in short supply."¹³⁰ Along a similar line, another sailor onboard responded that the "Food wasn't even fit for dogs!"¹³¹

¹²⁹ Rawling, "A Lonely Ambassador": p. 52.

¹³⁰ Questionnaire received in mail on 10 October 2002 from Seaman "A".

then added that a “Short time in port a blessing – canteen stocked up [and we] could buy a coke and chocolate bar to keep from starving.”¹³² Seaman “A” further added that he lost 30 pounds during his time onboard *Uganda*.¹³³

In an effort to improve morale, but, more a sign of how bad the food had become onboard *Uganda*, it was announced within *The Uganda Tar Paper* on 28 June 1945, that in the future, the cleanest and “most tiddley” mess as judged by Captain Mainguy and Commander Pullen during weekly rounds of the ship would be awarded an eight ounce fruit cup to every member of the mess.¹³⁴ Had the food onboard *Uganda* not been sub-standard, would the rewarding of the “most tiddley” mess been done with a tin of fruit? The issue of food had become a serious irritant to the crew and definitely acted as a contributing factor in the decision to return by the majority of the personnel.¹³⁵

Another potential reason was the issue of pay and allowances. Although not cited in any of the questionnaires submitted to the author, in “*Mutiny*” – *The Odyssey of HMCS Uganda*, Chief Petty Officer James W. Essex discussed the issue of pay and how in accordance with Naval Order 3313, all RCN personnel while on loan to the RN were to be paid RCN rates of pay and any applicable RN allowances.¹³⁶ With this regulation in mind, *The Uganda Tar Paper* on 1 June 1945 announced that an official signal had been received from NSHQ that ‘Pacific Pay’ had now been established for the theatre. The newspaper stated that the pay was to be retroactive for *Uganda*, possibly as far back as 1 January 1945 and that the rates of pay for ratings ranged from 25¢ to 60¢ per day, but that the specifics

¹³¹ Questionnaire received in mail on 28 November 2002 from Seaman “E”.

¹³² Questionnaire received in mail on 28 November 2002 from Seaman “E”.

¹³³ Questionnaire received in mail on 10 October 2002 from Seaman “A”.

¹³⁴ *The Uganda Tar Paper*. Volume 2, Number 19. 28 June 1945. p. 1.

¹³⁵ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 111.

¹³⁶ Essex, “*Mutiny*”: p. 108.

could not be determined at this time.¹³⁷ With the volunteer's vote being conducted the following day on 2 June 1945, along with the coincidence of the 'announcement', it seems to the author as if it were more a bribe than an incentive from NSHQ and the Government of Canada to induce the ship's company to volunteer for the Pacific. Of note, however, is that regardless of *Uganda* being loaned to the BPF and, hence, the RN, no personnel onboard *Uganda* ever received their RN allowance for Far Eastern Service.¹³⁸

Unfortunately, the author cannot conclusively state the issue of pay as a probable reason for the crew's decision to return.

Aside from the concerns raised about the food and pay, the living conditions onboard HMCS *Uganda* were neither the most comfortable nor hospitable, not even by the standards of a warship. Repeatedly throughout the questionnaires submitted, the living conditions aboard ship were cited as an ongoing area of discomfort. Having been built for service with the Royal Navy, *Uganda* had been built to serve in the waters of the more northern hemisphere. Although, in refit and repair for 10 months, *Uganda* was never acclimatized for tropical service and as a result, was sorely lacking in its ability to provide a somewhat comfortable living accommodation for the ship's company.¹³⁹ When asked about living conditions onboard *Uganda* by Captain Tom Hasset of Canadian Forces Base *Esquimalt* in a 1972 interview, Mainguy stated that living conditions were "Like Hades down below."¹⁴⁰ *Uganda* had neither exhaust fans onboard for air circulation nor was her distillation plant capable of supporting the crew. The distillation plant had been designed to support a crew of 600 personnel; HMCS *Uganda* had sailed to the Pacific with 900

¹³⁷ *The Uganda Tar Paper*. Volume 1, Number 97. 1 June 1945. p. 1.

¹³⁸ Essex, "Mutiny": p. 108.

¹³⁹ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 70. & 111.

¹⁴⁰ Interview of Vice-Admiral E.R. Mainguy, OBE, CD (ret'd) by CFB Esquimalt's Base Information Officer Captain Tom Hasset in 1972.

personnel onboard.¹⁴¹

Seaman “M” stated that what he specifically “... disliked was the fact of not having proper air conditioning the heat was so unbearable...”¹⁴² Along similar lines, Seaman “K” stated “Life aboard *Uganda* was certainly not the best. Living conditions were terrible with unbearable mess deck heat and cramped conditions.”¹⁴³ Having entered the tropical area of the Indian Ocean, several members of *Uganda*’s crew began to suffer from a variety of respiratory problems. In particular, several engineers who had never suffered any problems previously in the Atlantic or Arctic Oceans fell ill in the indescribably oppressive heat of the boiler and engine rooms below decks.¹⁴⁴ Additionally, as the crew became exposed to various tropical fungi, viruses and bacteria, the number of personnel suffering from athlete’s foot substantially increased. Able Seaman A. Murray Rogerson stated that:

Athlete’s foot ran rampant throughout the ship. It was impossible to control and we would cut everything possible away from our shoes to let the air circulate around our feet, and ankles. Some had it so bad they would spend half an hour at times in the Sick Bay with the Sick Bay “tiffy” pulling dead skin away.¹⁴⁵

Although considerably different and exceedingly uncomfortable from their previous experiences, was it reason enough to choose to return to HMCD *Esquimalt*? Seaman “K” added “Why would anyone volunteer to stay in the conditions we were living in? It was a chance to go home.”¹⁴⁶ If Seaman “K” is a fair representation of the crew’s feelings, then undoubtedly, the living conditions onboard played a part in the crew’s decision.

How did the ‘Volunteers Only’ policy affect the attitude of the ship’s company

¹⁴¹ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 111.

¹⁴² Questionnaire received in mail on 30 October 2002 from Seaman “M”.

¹⁴³ Questionnaire received in mail on 10 October 2002 from Seaman “K”.

¹⁴⁴ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 232.

¹⁴⁵ Rawling, “A Lonely Ambassador”: p. 49.

¹⁴⁶ Questionnaire received in mail on 10 October 2002 from Seaman “K”.

though? As discussed previously, Prime Minister Mackenzie King had expressed his concerns about raising the issue of conscription prior to the upcoming June federal election. In understanding the formulation of his policy, the reader is left wondering whether the policy had in itself, acted as a reason for the outcome of the ‘vote’? In understanding the attitude of *Uganda* to the policy, let us first take a quick look at the how RCN personnel back in Canadian and European waters had accepted the policy.

The Commanding Officer of HMCS *Kootenay*, Acting Lieutenant Commander W. H. Wilson quickly expressed his displeasure with the government’s policy when on 30 April 1945, he became one its more vocal opponents. Acting Lieutenant Commander Wilson sent the following statement along with a request for transfer to the Pacific Theatre in lieu of making a re-attestation to NSHQ.

I have the honour to submit, that the following complaint against instructions received from a superior authority may be considered... The instructions that Permanent Force Officers are to sign undertakings for service in the Far East appear irregular and detrimental to the dignity of a Naval Officer... I do not feel that as an officer of the Royal Canadian Navy I should be called upon to sign a contract binding me to do the work which I have joined the Service to do... The demand that Officers of the Royal Canadian Navy sign this statement insinuates that there is some doubt as to whether officers holding His Majesty’s Commission can be relied upon to do the duty for which, in years of peace, they are constantly preparing themselves... It is requested to know whether my superior officers consider me so lacking in sense of responsibility as to deem it necessary to solicit my services and require a contract signed before a witness to hold me to my duty.¹⁴⁷

It had appeared that it was not just the crew of the *Uganda* who were having difficulties with this new government policy. Charting a similar course, Rear-Admiral Welland, DSC and Bar, CD, former Commanding Officer of HMCS *Haida* in April 1945, stated in an interview in

¹⁴⁷ Rawling, Bill. “Paved with Good Intentions HMCS *Uganda*, the Pacific War, and the Volunteer Issue.” *Canadian Military History* Volume 4, Number 2, 1995. p. 29.

June 2001 that

... we were asked by the Liberal government, MacKenzie King and his henchmen, to volunteer for the Pacific. We had to fill out a form. That was, in my view, about the most disgraceful thing that government had done. They had done some others but I think that one would win out in a contest. Here they were asking people who had sworn to serve to volunteer to continue their service. What made it difficult for people like me, the Captain of the ship, it put us in an immediate conflict of interest with our job and with our families and with our shipmates.¹⁴⁸

Perhaps though, displeasure with the new policy, throughout the RCN, was most clearly demonstrated by the second cruiser acquired from the RN, HMCS *Ontario*.

While preparing for service in the Far East in May 1945, the ship's company of *Ontario* had been polled as to their decision. Although, not yet serving in the Pacific, 388 personnel still declined to re-attest their oaths for service in the Pacific, which left 512 volunteering.¹⁴⁹ As expected, this immediately caused problems for NSHQ, as they now had to find an additional 388 sailors to man *Ontario* properly. The question remaining, however, is why did 388 ratings decline to re-attest their oaths?

Reasons expressed varied from a fear of losing the opportunity to benefit from established programs for demobilization to family commitments to a sense of uneasiness about re-attesting their service oath to a concern that all of the non-volunteering personnel would benefit more by being the first personnel to acquire the numerous post-war jobs, which were opening up.¹⁵⁰ Approximately 37,000 personnel or 38% of the RCN would ultimately 'volunteer' for Pacific service.¹⁵¹

Onboard *Uganda*, a total of 344 members of the ship's company re-attested their

¹⁴⁸ Interview of Rear-Admiral Welland, DSC and Bar, CD by Captain(N) Lund, OMM, CD, PhD. 21-22 June 2001.

¹⁴⁹ Rawling, Bill. "Paved with Good Intentions": p. 29.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 29.

¹⁵¹ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*: p. 215.

oaths, while the remaining 556 personnel declined to re-attest their oaths.¹⁵² Although the author is unable to conclusively prove the following, he puts forth the idea that regardless of an individual member's decision to either re-attest or not, the entire ship's company of HMCS *Uganda* felt that the Pacific Volunteers policy was insulting, ridiculous and ultimately, a political ploy initiated by Prime Minister Mackenzie King.

Seaman "B" submitted that he "Thought it was a silly idea. Wondered what the political angle on it was [?]"¹⁵³ Similarly, Seaman "K" in responding to the questionnaire stated, "This was a joke. All of the VR's [RCNVR personnel] had volunteered for service until the cessation of hostilities – Why volunteer again [?] We were in the Pacific Theatre – why should we volunteer to go there [?]"¹⁵⁴ Seaman "M" further added that it was "Utter foolishness as we had already volunteered and as we were already there where we had to volunteer for."¹⁵⁵ Officer "B" stated the reaction onboard *Uganda* to the policy was "Mixed. RCN personnel aghast – unable to understand."¹⁵⁶ Aside from utter disbelief, other members of the ship's company expressed stronger sentiments.

Seaman "A" declared that "... many years later I still feel that we were bitterly betrayed by our feeble government leaders and this brought shame on the whole country."¹⁵⁷ Likewise, Seaman "N" stated "The whole problem was due to Mackenzie King playing politics and attempting to gain support and win votes in Quebec."¹⁵⁸ Seaman "B" also stated "... We did all we could. We did our job. But for Mackenzie

¹⁵² Ibid. p. 229.

¹⁵³ Questionnaire received in mail on 15 October 2002 from Seaman "B".

¹⁵⁴ Questionnaire received in mail on 10 October 2002 from Seaman "K".

¹⁵⁵ Questionnaire received in mail on 30 October 2002 from Seaman "M".

¹⁵⁶ Questionnaire received in mail on 22 October 2002 from Officer "B".

¹⁵⁷ Questionnaire received in mail on 10 October 2002 from Seaman "A".

¹⁵⁸ Questionnaire received in mail on 9 January 2003 from Seaman "N".

King and his zest for re-election we would have stayed to finish the job.”¹⁵⁹ As shown earlier in this report, Mackenzie King was indeed concerned about his political future and that of the upcoming federal election. Apparently, this had not escaped the attention of *Uganda’s* crew. Nor had it escaped the attention of their Commanding Officer, Captain Edmond Rollo Mainguy.

As can be ascertained from the previous comments made by Acting Lieutenant Commander Wilson and Rear-Admiral Welland, Captain Mainguy was in a most awkward situation as the Captain of HMCS *Uganda*. The *Uganda* was already heavily engaged in hostile operations in Japanese waters and therefore was working as an integral part of the BPF in immediate co-operation with the USN. As noted by William Rawling, should a large portion of *Uganda’s* crew decide not to volunteer, there were no immediate replacements available and at the same time those who did volunteer were still eligible for their thirty days leave.¹⁶⁰ Close to forty years afterwards, Mainguy described the atmosphere onboard *Uganda* as follows:

We were busy shooting the Japanese islands and we got a signal saying that the war was over in Europe and we were to splice the mainbrace. We couldn't do that in the war zone so we saved it up. The next signal we got fairly shortly was: "Do you volunteer to fight against the Japanese?" It seemed pretty stupid. Anyway we got this signal. We couldn't understand what it meant. And after great exchange of signals, we were given orders finally that we had to vote. Everybody on board votes secretly as to whether or not they volunteered to fight against the Japanese. If they said yes, they'd get 30 days leave. Well, that sounded a bit improbable as we were already fighting. So the way this signal and exchange of the signal was received annoyed everybody, every single soul on board. The permanent force were insulted because they'd spent all their lives getting ready for a war and then, when in the middle of the war, we

¹⁵⁹ Questionnaire received in mail on 15 October 2002 from Seaman “B”. (Opinions collected from the questionnaires have now been reflected upon by former crew members for the last 58 years. As such it must be considered that their recollections of the events in question may have altered.)

¹⁶⁰ Rawling, “Paved with Good Intentions”: p. 29.

were asked whether we wanted to go on and finish it. All the Reserves and everybody else had volunteered for the duration of hostilities, and if we were fighting against Japan, of course we'd go on. So from one point of view, there were those two main incentives just to be annoyed and say, "Well, if we're not wanted, of course, we don't want to fight the Japs if it's not necessary." Then there were those who thought if they said yes and their wives heard about this, that they'd volunteered to go on fighting Japan when they could have gone home, there would be trouble there. The single men on board all thought a lot of people are going to say no and if we don't go home, we're going to miss out on a lot of civilian jobs, so we'll say no.¹⁶¹

Although not totally encompassing of all factors, which led to the result of the vote Mainguy has succinctly captured the atmosphere onboard HMCS *Uganda*. Clearly, the ship's company was not impressed by the turn of events in April 1945. Unfortunately for some of the crew, neither were their families.

Undoubtedly, some of the crew were rightfully concerned about the reaction that they would receive from their families and, more specifically, their wives, if they had volunteered for the Pacific Theatre and hadn't actually been deployed and ordered to participate in hostilities against the Japanese. The government's policy of volunteers for the Pacific Theatre had been made public information and, therefore, wives and families knew immediately that it was up to their sons and husbands to decide whether or not they would re-volunteer. In a follow up letter to his questionnaire, Officer "B" recalled that while acting in the capacity of a Divisional Officer, he had interviewed every subordinate in his division, in order to ascertain their intentions regarding remaining in the service. "Pressure, if any, came to my men from home – Moms, girlfriends, wives, etc. who wanted 'my boy' at home. In some of my cases a 'Dear John' letter type of pressure."¹⁶² As can be appreciated, this added immense stress and discomfort upon ship's personnel as they were now faced with

¹⁶¹ Ibid. p. 29.

¹⁶² Letter received in mail from Officer "B" on 13 January 2003.

having to choose between their families and a sense of duty, which had compelled most of them to enlist originally. With individual ratings having to confront pressure from back home, one found himself asking whether or not there was any pressure tactics used throughout the mess decks or from higher authority to coerce the ship's company to volunteer.

In reviewing the questionnaires and in additional correspondence and discussions with crew members after the 2002 reunion, the author has come to conclude that while some very mild pressure may have been used throughout the mess decks, it was generally 'agreed' upon that each person had the right to choose as he saw fit. Seaman "C" stated that

The reaction was mixed and caused some to disagree with those that did not want to re-volunteer, but generally speaking, the discussions amongst the members was not that volatile... for instance, I sat with my shipmate, and he voted not to volunteer, whilst I voted to re-volunteer.¹⁶³

Along similar lines, Seaman "A" said that within his mess

...There were a couple who were quite vocal about their feelings of opposition to stay. They were not expressed in a form to pressure others into feeling the same way, but more to let others know how they felt about it. Among those of us who felt differently, some were equally vocal and made views known about the whole matter of having volunteered for the duration of hostilities.¹⁶⁴

At first glance, it would appear as if there was no use of pressure tactics at all within the mess decks onboard *Uganda*. However, Seaman "N" commented that "Mess deck lawyers suggested that a No vote would force the ship home and then they could volunteer, get 30 days leave for volunteering and then come back."¹⁶⁵ This comment is suggestive of what

¹⁶³ Questionnaire received in mail on 4 November 2002 from Seaman "C".

¹⁶⁴ Personal email dated 20 December 2002 between NCdt M.A.P. Butler and Seaman "A" following an interview conducted 18 December 2002.

¹⁶⁵ Questionnaire received in mail on 9 January 2003 from Seaman "N".

was happening within the mess decks and between messmates. But, what of the leadership and its use of pressure tactics onboard HMCS *Uganda*?

The ship's newspaper was definitely written to entertain, inform and brief all onboard *Uganda* about operations and shipboard activities and news. This was witnessed in particular when on 9 April 1945, a joke was printed about the foolishness of the 'volunteers only' policy. It simply stated "If the war against Japan packs up before the war in Germany, will we be given a chance to re-volunteer for the Western Front?"¹⁶⁶ It was an obvious expression of the ship's company's feeling towards the newly announced policy.

Unfortunately, the newspaper was not at all free from resorting to attempting to pressure the ship's company to re-volunteer for the Pacific. Under the direction and editing of a Public Relations Officer,¹⁶⁷ the ship's newspaper had editorial articles which although not forceful in tone were undoubtedly trying to persuade the crew to re-volunteer for the Pacific.

On 6 May 1945, *The Uganda Tar Paper*, reprinted Captain Mainguy's earlier address to the ship's company as it dealt with the issue of volunteering. In it, Mainguy outlined his intentions for handling the requisite volunteering process. However, at the end, he added a signal which had been earlier received from Vice-Admiral Sir Bernard Rawlings to all officers and ratings of the Royal Navy.

With the end of the war in the north coming very close, I know that all of us must be wishing that our wives, our families and our friends could feel that we, too, were out of the war. I suggest that the best thing we can do to help them in our letters home is to say that together with many thousands from all over the Empire, we with our Allies are going to finish the job off properly, so that peace, when it comes, shall be world wide and so have a better chance of lasting. The best news of all we can give them is to tell them that we are in good heart.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ *The Uganda Tar Paper*. Volume 1, Number 54. 9 April 1945. p. 1.

¹⁶⁷ Geneja, *The Cruiser Uganda*, p. 82.

¹⁶⁸ *The Uganda Tar Paper*. Volume 1, Number 74. 6 May 1945. p. 1.

Clearly, Captain Mainguy hoped that by reading aloud this signal and then having it reprinted in the ship's newspaper, personnel onboard would reconsider their decision to re-volunteer so as not to let down Canada's Allies and, more personally, their comrades in arms on other Commonwealth and American vessels.

Two days later and following Mainguy's address, an editorial was printed which dealt directly with the responsibility *Uganda* shouldered on behalf of Canada, and how the crew had to see the war in the Pacific through till completion.

Most of us in HMCS *Uganda* have now seen two of the Tri-Partite Axis go down for the count. In the summer of 1943, we saw the ill-guided Italians knocked out. Today we witness a badly battered German nation toss in the towel. There remains the Japs. How long they can hold out is debatable. Soon our heavy bombers, our ships and our men will be pouring into this theatre. Perhaps they will realize that to continue would be futile. Nobody has ever accused the Japanese of stupidity. On the other hand, they may be prepared to commit national Hari-Kari rather than lose face. No inclination of any feeling one way or another has yet been detected, except for a radio broadcast in which they blame the Germans for making so many mistakes. Beyond a few scattered pilots and airmen, and naval types serving on loan to Royal Navy, we in HMCS *Uganda* today are the only Canadians actively engaged in fighting this Pacific war. The eyes of our country are on us. We carry the responsibility for the prestige of all Canadian Forces – a prestige dearly won at Dieppe, the Scheldte, Caen and the Zuyder Zee. Let us set ourselves to this new task so that, when the final reckoning is made, we can say: "Well done – we saw the job through to the end!"¹⁶⁹

With statements like this being printed in the ship's newspaper, the feeling of pressure and turmoil must have been building up throughout the ship. In particular, the author believes that some of the crew must have also felt quite angry at the 'editor' for trying to manipulate them into volunteering for the Pacific Theatre. Still, the pressure to volunteer continued to grow with Captain Mainguy adding his proverbial two cents into the debate.

¹⁶⁹ *The Uganda Tar Paper*. Volume 1, Number 75. 8 May 1945. p. 1.

The specific date and timing of his address have been lost but several different sources confirm that between 6 May and 2 June 1945, Captain Mainguy once again addressed the ship's company. This time, he was extremely harsh in his criticism of any members of *Uganda* who decided that they wouldn't re-volunteer. In "Paved with Good Intentions HMCS *Uganda*, the Pacific War, and the Volunteer Issue" William Rawling quotes Lieutenant Chadwick as stating that the Captain's speech "was a bad thing. That finished it. And the next morning the Commander's flat was just flooded with non-volunteers."¹⁷⁰ Along similar lines Seaman "K" when asked in the questionnaire about "How were the results of the "vote" announced?" responded by saying "I forget but I remember the captain speaking over the ship's address system calling us 'cowards and fourflushers.' Need I say more?"¹⁷¹ This particular recollection is further confirmed by another crew member who recorded in his diary that the "Skipper made speeches and turned the men against him more than ever. Called us foreflushers and quitters. Those who were in doubt soon made up their minds at a statement like that."¹⁷² As mentioned previously, on 2 June 1945, the ship's company of HMCS *Uganda* 'voted' on Mackenzie King's 'Volunteers Only' policy. On 27 July 1945, *Uganda* departed for HMCD *Esquimalt* and the history books. It is hoped that this paper will add a little more to those history books.

HMCS *Uganda* had been a pawn of Canada's political machinery before she had even been acquired and fully accepted into the RCN. Admiral Nelles had to 'assist' Pound in order to acquire her, while also acquiring proper cruiser training for his sailors. Nelles also had to play politics behind the Prime Minister's back in order to acquire the Canadian Government's support and decision to accept her as a gift from the RN and the

¹⁷⁰ Rawling, "Paved with Good Intentions": p. 30.

¹⁷¹ Questionnaire received in mail on 10 October 2002 from Seaman "K".

¹⁷² Rawling, "Paved with Good Intentions": p. 30.

British Government. The politics of conscription ultimately confronted and defeated the RCN's plans for a 'big ship' navy. While the Government played politics in its bid for re-election, politics were also at work onboard *Uganda*, herself, as the crew is under a constant barrage of pressure from various sources to re-volunteer. In conclusion, one can state unequivocally, that politics were constantly working against HMCS *Uganda*. This is an unfortunate way of remembering Canada's only warship which took the war to Japan.

What we should remember about HMCS *Uganda* is not merely that she is the only ship to have voted herself out of a war, but that she is the only Canadian warship to have actively participated in hostilities against Japan. Canada's war against Japan didn't end with the fall of Hong Kong, as so many people seem to think. For several years before and during *Uganda's* tour in the Pacific, various Canadian personnel were on loan to the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy. More specifically, while deployed to the Pacific, *Uganda* took the war to Japan. At one point, *Uganda* was a mere 52 miles from the Japanese coastline and, a mere 92 miles from the city of Tokyo, Japan's capital.¹⁷³

It matters not what the reasoning of her crew was specifically. Whether it was a matter of personal insult, family concerns, living conditions, pay and allowances, food, 'big ship' routine, strict discipline, political machinations of the government or merely the opportunity to go home, the issue that really matters here is how the ship's company of HMCS *Uganda* have accepted their decision and how they feel about that decision after all these years. To place such a burden upon the average sailor at sea, in operations while having been away from home for a long period of time, would create an unbelievably enormous amount of stress and inner conflict. The choice between duty and

¹⁷³ Essex, "*Mutiny*": p. 117.

family had to have been difficult. Clearly for some of the former crew, it is still an open wound, while for others it is merely a moment in time, long forgotten.

The reasons behind the decision of the majority of the crew not to re-attest their oaths and re-volunteer will never be fully understood or known for certain. The vast array of personalities, personal issues and the various factors onboard and at home jointly contributed to the result of the ‘vote.’ More importantly, however, regardless of which way a crew member had voted, all were and still are united by their common experiences while serving onboard HMCS *Uganda*. Together they knew, even if their government hadn’t, that they had done not only their job, but, they had also done their duty. Upon their return to HMCD *Esquimalt* on 10 August 1945, the ship’s company of *His Majesty’s Canadian Ship Uganda* had unequivocally shown that they were indeed “*Determined in Loyalty and War.*”

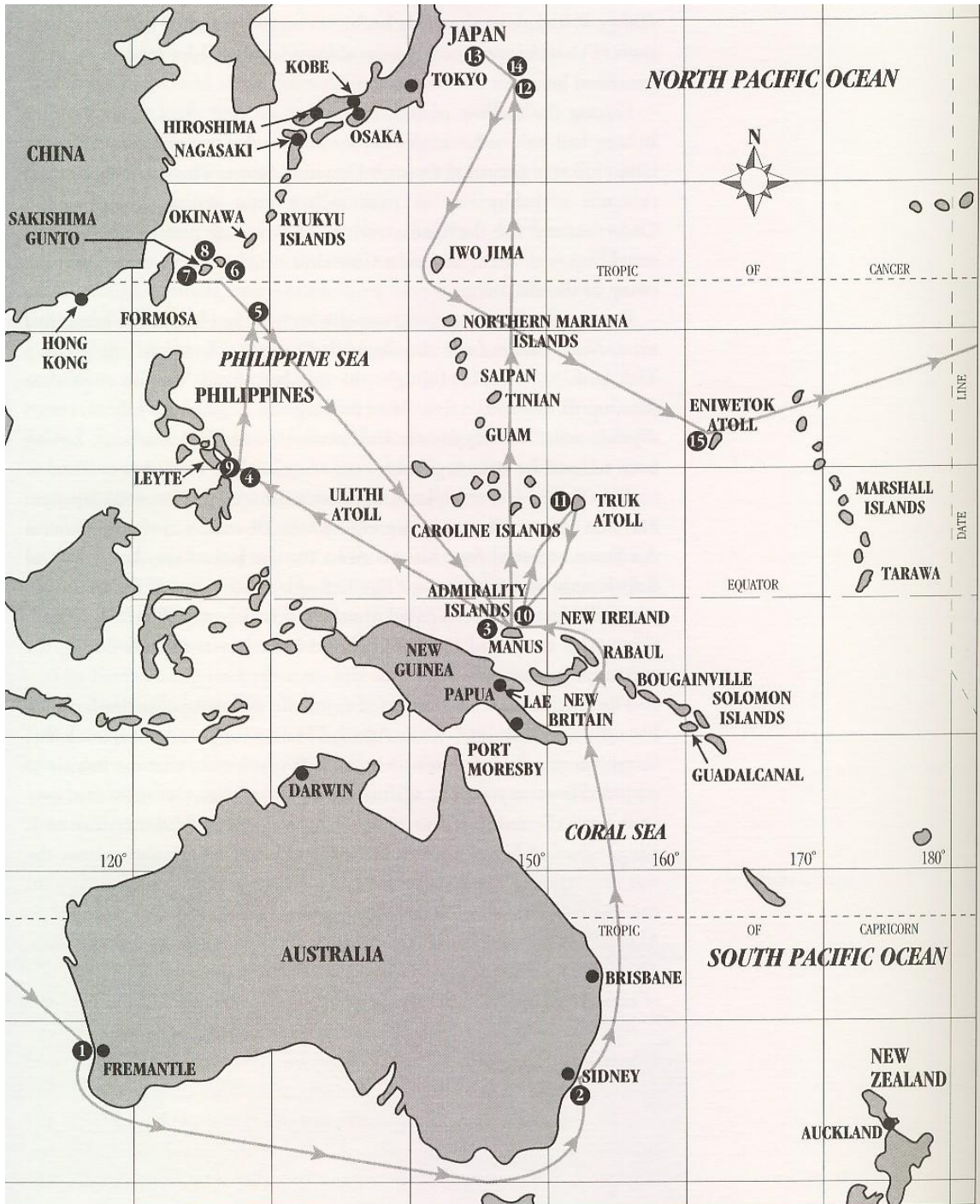


HMCS *Uganda*'s Ship's Badge

“Determined In Loyalty and War”

ANNEX A

NAUTICAL CHART OF HMCS UGANDA'S SERVICE WITH BPF



Geneja, The Cruiser Uganda: One War-Many Conflicts: p. 206 & 207.

ANNEX B

KEY TO NAUTICAL CHART OF HMCS UGANDA'S SERVICE WITH BPF

1. Arrives 4 March 1945.
2. Arrives 10 March 1945 and departs 24 March 1945.
3. Arrives Island of Manus on 30 March 1945 from Sydney, Australia.
4. Arrives 4 April 1945.
5. Fuelling positions known as *Midge*, *Ant* and *Coolie* used by the BPF.
6. The approximate flying off position for the bombing raids against the Japanese Airfields on the Sakishima Gunto Chain of Islands.
7. The approximate flying off position for the bombing raids on the harbours of Shenchiku and Kiirun.
8. Operational area of the BPF from 26 March till 20 April 1945 and again on 4 May till 25 May 1945, just south of the Sakishima Gunto Chain of Islands.
9. The BPF docked at San Pedro Bay from 21 April till 1 May 1945 between the 1st and 2nd phases of *Operation Iceberg*.
10. Arrives back at the Island of Manus on 30 May 1945 following the completion of *Operation Iceberg*.
11. The position of *Operation Inmate* on the 14 and 15 June 1945.
12. The BPF joins with the USN 3rd Fleet approximately 300 miles east of Japan on 16 July 1945.
13. The approximate flying off position for the bombing raids against both shipping and airfields northeast of Tokyo on 17 July 1945.

14. Following a refuelling underway at sea, *HMCS UGANDA* departs for Esquimalt on 27 July 1945.
15. Refuels again at this position on 31 July 1945, then continues to proceed to USN Base *Pearl Harbour* and HMCD *Esquimalt*.



Ready, Aye, Ready

ANNEX C

HMCS UGANDA QUESTIONNAIRE

Your participation in completing this questionnaire is completely voluntary. If you wish to remain anonymous, please feel free to use the name "*Bloggins*". You may answer the questionnaire in its entirety or only those questions, which you wish to answer. Please return this questionnaire to me via post in the enclosed, self addressed envelope or in person at the reunion in September. Thank you for your time.

- 1.a. Name:
- b. Date of Birth:
2. Rank:
3. Trade / Position onboard HMCS *UGANDA*:
4. Country of Origin:
5. RCN / RCNR / RCNVR / OTHER:
- 6.a. Overall Dates of Service in the Military:
- b. Dates of Service Onboard HMCS *UGANDA*:
7. Did you have any previous experience at sea prior to serving aboard HMCS *UGANDA*? If so, please list your experience.

8. Describe life onboard HMCS *UGANDA* as you experienced it:

13. What was the Ship's Company's reaction to the news of having to "volunteer" for service in the Pacific Theatre?

14: What was your personal reaction to the news of having to "volunteer" for service in the Pacific Theatre?

15. How did you cast your "vote"?

16. Why did you cast your "vote" the way you did?

17.a. Describe how the "vote" was conducted onboard:

b. How were the results of the “vote” announced?

18. What do you feel HMCS *UGANDA* achieved by her contribution to the Pacific Theatre?

18. Any Further Comments?

20.a. Would you be willing to be contacted at a later date, if requested?

b. If so, please leave a contact address or phone number below.

M0850

ANNEX D



Overhead Photograph of HMCS *Uganda*
Original Source Unknown

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