

A *Starshell* Book Review by Jan Drent

IN PERIL ON THE SEA: THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY AND THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

By Donald E. Graves, Robin Brass Studio Inc., Toronto, Foreword by RAdm. Desmond W. Piers, RCN (Ret'd), a co-publication with the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (HMCS *Sackville*), 256 pp, about 200 photos, illustrations, maps and diagrams, endnotes, appendices, bibliography, index, 10 x 8 in. landscape, soft cover, coated paper, sewn binding. ISBN 1-896941-32-X. Suggested retail price \$34.95.

In *Peril on the Sea: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Battle of the Atlantic*, by well-known military historian Donald Graves, has just been published for the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (CNMT).

The book is part of a project which includes providing easily accessible information on an educational web site. *In Peril on the Sea* stands alone as a readable and well-produced overview of the Canadian role in the struggle at sea. It includes brief looks at the origins of the RCN and *Sackville* as a living memorial and museum. It is illustrated with excellent photographs (*some of the clearest and sharpest this editor has ever seen! GAM*), several little-known or published for the first time, as well as evocative drawings and diagrams by "Yogi" Jenson, plus very useful and clear maps.

Don Graves, an experienced member of the National Defence Directorate of History and Heritage, with several books to his credit, intersperses his narrative with accounts by participants, including a German submariner who immigrated to Toronto. These eyewitness stories add immediacy.

In keeping with the aim of explaining the Atlantic campaign, there are succinct and well-illustrated descriptions of technical subjects like anti-submarine weapons, operational intelligence, convoys and how U-boats were located.

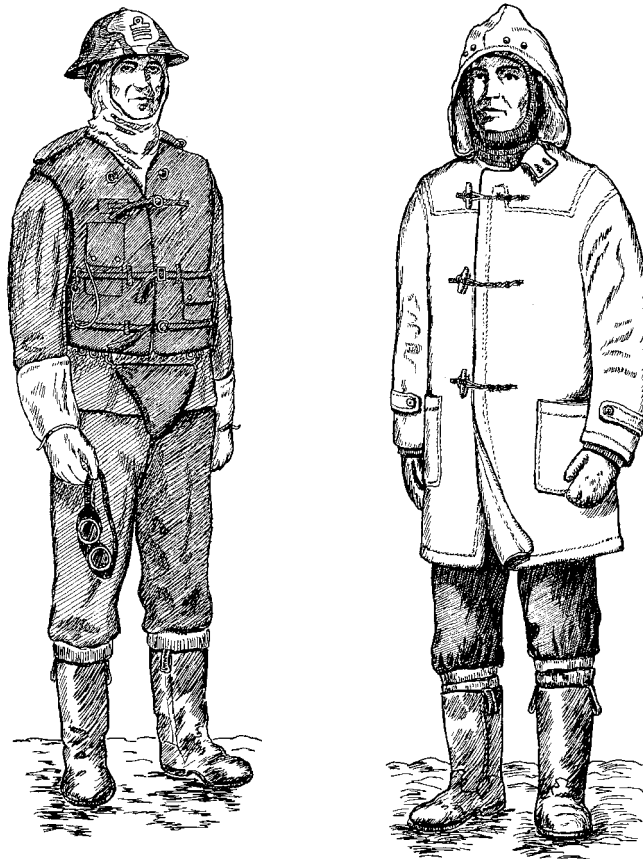
The production quality and eye-catching layout of *In Peril on the Sea* are noteworthy. It is printed on glossy paper and the soft cover makes the book easy to handle. This attractive book should have wide appeal. It is an inviting and accessible overview for those who are new to the Canadian Navy's pivotal role during the war. Even *Starshell* readers familiar with the growing

literature on the RCN, will find much that is rewarding in this fresh examination of the war years and the Navy's painful early decades.

The book is available in bookstores or direct from the CNMT, HMCS *Sackville*, PO Box 99000, Station Forces, Halifax, Nova

Scotia, B3K 5X5.

Jan Drent enjoyed a long and distinguished career with the RCN, retiring as a Commodore in 1990, after serving as Deputy SACLANT and CINCAN Representative at NATO headquarters in Brussels. He is a member of NOAVI.



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The adjacent drawing is an excellent example of the numerous sketches appearing throughout the book by Latham B. "Yogi" Jenson. It depicts two common types of working dress on the North Atlantic, the left showing an officer dressed for Arctic conditions with several layers of underclothing, a parka, life vest, anti-flash mask and gauntlets, steel helmet, sea boots and thick socks. The sailor on the right is wearing the traditional British naval duffel coat over his other garments and a balaclava, probably provided by his family. Heavy rubber sea boots were necessary on warships, but they were the first thing disposed of if a sailor had to abandon ship.

Drawings by L. B. Jenson. Courtesy of the artist.