

FOR RELEASE: FRIDAY, APRIL 23

A United Kingdom Port – Fresh from leave in Canada, Lieut. John O'Rourke, R.C.N.V.R., of Calgary, Alta., has arrived back here safely to resume combined operations duties with the Royal Navy. His mother, Mrs. Ethel O'Rourke, lives at 524 Elbow Dr., Calgary.

A former Packing House employee and insurance salesman, but now a veteran naval officer who has seen plenty of action, O'Rourke joined the navy in July 1940 as an ordinary seaman and was promoted to commissioned rank five months later while in training overseas with the Royal Navy.

Dodging the shells of enemy shore batteries is just a routine job for O'Rourke, who has taken part in two now-famous Canadian raids – St. Nazaire and Dieppe.

In both raids he was attached to an R. N. Motor Gun Boat Flotilla landing soldiers on the beach.

“We actually didn't do much dodging in those raids,” he said. “We just skimmed through the water with shells flying everywhere. How some of them missed us we don't know.”

Two naval ratings on his M.G.B. were killed during the St. Nazaire raid, and were decorated for heroism. On the way back, the ship was shot so full of holes they had to sink her and be rescued by a nearby destroyer.

During the Dieppe raid last August, his flotilla landed most of a large Canadian regiment on the beach and they had a “hot time” of it with “blood everywhere”.

But this time they were more fortunate in getting back to England. The small gun boat bore many battle scars but not enough to sink her.

Twenty-four years of age, O'Rourke is a graduate of St. Mary's Boys' High School, Calgary, and was well known in Calgary High School football circles before the war.