

For Toronto papers

Healy

An Eastern Canadian Port – The rescue of 54 survivors during a North Atlantic blizzard stands out today as the most exciting moment in two years of sea time for Yeoman of Signals, Graham Gibb, R.C.N.V.R., of Toronto, who was recently advanced to that rate.

His corvette went to the aid of 54 survivors from the torpedoing of an Allied merchant ship. The men were floating around helplessly in open lifeboats.

“We hauled them up the side one by one,” he recalled, “and it was a hectic job. We threw ropes over the side for them to hang onto. The waves tossed the little lifeboats up and down mercilessly and I don’t know yet how we managed to get the men aboard. But not one was lost.”

And Gibb has nothing but praise for the navy’s speedy little corvettes. “There’s nothing like them,” he says.

“I’ll take a corvette any day even though they’re about as smooth as a bucking broncho. We picked up a Chinese cook once, a survivor from a torpedoed merchant ship, who had been going to sea for 25 years, and said he had never been sea sick. But his record was sadly blemished when we hit port.”

Another time Gibb will never forget was being present at the Roosevelt-Churchill secret sea rendezvous back in 1941 which resulted in the drawing up of the famous Atlantic Charter. His corvette was one of the many Allied ships that guarded the one on which the two leaders met but, he bemoans, he did not have a chance to board their ship.

“All the available crew members board the ship for morning divisions,” he said, “but I was on duty that day. It was just a tough break. I did get a good look at them, though.”