

ONTARIO STORY

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HEALY

An Eastern Canadian Port – Back in Canada on survivors' leave after his ship – H.M.C.S. "Louisburg" – was sent to the bottom of the Mediterranean by an aerial torpedo, Leading Sick Berth Attendant James Cornell, R.C.N.V.R., of Fort William, Ont., told today how he saved his life by flinging to a shrapnel mat until picked up by a destroyer.

"When planes came over I went below to the mess deck to get my helmet," he said. "Then the explosion came and the lights went out. There were about eight men in the mess and they all got up top ahead of me.

"When I reached the deck, the Captain asked me if there was anyone else still below," Cornell continued. "I told him there wasn't but he started down to make sure. I was the last man to see him, because he never came up again.

"By this time nearly everyone except me was in the water so I ran to the starboard side, away from the list, and plunged in. A few seconds later the ship went down and I found myself being sucked down with it. I seemed to go down, down, indefinitely. Suddenly the boiler exploded and I went shooting to the surface.

"I took a few good deep breaths of air and looked about for something afloat. I saw a shrapnel mat, and clung to it until the destroyer picked me up. I was so tired it took two of the destroyer crew to get me aboard."