

A HISTORY OF GARRISON CALGARY and The MILITARY MUSEUMS of CALGARY

by Terry Thompson

1932-2016

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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

In 2010, the Royal Canadian Navy celebrated its 100th anniversary. Since 1910, men and women in Canada's navy have served with distinction in two World Wars, the Korean conflict, the Gulf Wars, Afghanistan and Libyan war and numerous peace keeping operations since the 1960s.

Prior to the 20th Century, the dominions of the British Empire enjoyed naval protection from the Royal Navy, the world's finest sea power. Canadians devoted to the service of their country served with the RN from England to India, and Canada to Australia. British ships patrolled the oceans, protecting commerce and the interests of the British Empire around the globe. In the early 1900s, however, Germany was threatening Great Britain's dominance of the seas, and with the First World War brewing, the ships of the Royal Navy would be required closer to home.

The dominions of Great Britain were now being given the option of either providing funding or manpower to the Royal Navy, or forming a naval force of their own. Canada chose the second option and the first vessel commissioned for Canada was built in 1904. Constructed in England, she was christened CGS (Canadian Government Ship) *Canada*, and placed under the Fishery Protection Service of Canada, operating along the Nova Scotia coastline and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

That same year, the British relinquished control of their two naval bases in Canada, Halifax on the Atlantic coast, and Esquimalt on the Pacific. The Royal Navy left a steam torpedo boat and three smaller auxiliary craft in Halifax, and HMS *Shearwater*, a Condor-class sloop, on the west coast. Canada's naval protection would now be her own responsibility.

Although Canada now needed to create a navy of her own, six years of political debate followed. Finally, in 1910, the Government of Canada passed the Naval Services Act. The Department of Naval Service, under the control of the Ministry of Marine and Fisheries, was established on May 4, 1910. Officially named the Naval Service of Canada, Rear Admiral Charles Kingsmill, a retired British officer, was appointed its first Director. Although he had spent his naval career in the Royal Navy, Admiral Kingsmill was born in Guelph, Ontario, giving

the new navy a Canadian touch. He had enlisted in Britain's navy at age fifteen, as a mid-shipman, and worked his way through the ranks, eventually commanding several of Her Majesty's ships, and winning several medals including the France's Legion of Honour in 1906. Under the direction of Rear Admiral Kingsmill and Louis Brodeur, the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Canada's young navy had a modest beginning. Two coal fired cruisers, *Niobe* and *Rainbow*, were purchased from Britain, and one was deployed to each coast as training vessels. Commander Walter Hose, a Royal Navy officer, was appointed Captain of the *Rainbow*.

The government also established a training school, the Royal Naval College of Canada, in Halifax in 1910, where officer cadets were trained in seamanship, navigation and engineering. In addition to a permanent naval force, a Naval Reserve was also recruited, which could be called upon to supplement the permanent force navy in an emergency situation. The seamen of the new Canadian Navy would wear uniforms identical to those of their Royal Navy counterparts, with the exception of the cap tallies, which would read HMCS.... His or Her Majesty's Canadian Ship. On August 29, 1911, with the blessing of King George V, the Naval Service of Canada was re-named the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN).

Newfoundland, which was not yet a Canadian province, but rather a separate British dominion, raised her own naval force. The Newfoundland Royal Naval Reserve was opened to all men between the ages of 18 and 30 who were experienced sailors or fishermen and paid a rate of approximately fifty dollars per month. With a strength of five hundred men, the NRNR received the British vessel HMS *Calypso*, which was utilized as a training and drill ship.

In its first few years, the new Royal Canadian Navy saw more desertions than enlistments and the *Niobe* suffered extensive damage during a training exercise. For more than a year, she sat in dry-dock on the east coast while the government parties argued over the cost of repairs to make her seaworthy again. On the west coast, the two naval vessels, *Shearwater* and *Rainbow*, conducted training cruises and patrolled coastal waters in search of fishing poachers.

When the First World War began in 1914, both of Canada's coasts were virtually undefended. Only the *Rainbow* and *Niobe* could be considered warships, and naval strength numbered approximately 350 men of all ranks. CGS *Canada* was transferred from the Fisheries service to the RCN at the beginning of the war and re-named HMCS *Canada*. The aging *Rainbow* patrolled the Pacific as far south as California in search of German warships but would have been ineffective at defending the coast in the event of hostilities. Canada's allies, Australia and Japan, were asked by the British to assist in providing defence for the west coast. In the Atlantic, the Royal Navy agreed to provide protection for Canada's eastern provinces and Newfoundland. Also stationed on the east coast, HMCS *Niobe* spent the war years on coastal patrol duty, as well as protecting shipping lanes near New York City and limited convoy escort duty in the Atlantic. In 1917, Commander Walter Hose, Commanding Officer of the *Rainbow*, transferred to Halifax where he headed the East Coast Patrol.

The Newfoundland Royal Naval Reserve had grown to a wartime strength of more than 1,000 men and renamed their training vessel HMS *Briton*. The NRNR was assigned harbour defence duties, including the protection of a wireless station and manning the artillery at Fort Waldegrave, a fort previously abandoned by the British which guarded St. John's

harbour. Despite Prime Minister Robert Borden's offer of naval assistance, the British instead requested Canada focus on an army contribution to the war in Europe. The small Canadian naval fleet would instead focus on assisting our allies with coastal protection.

Despite Britain's refusal of the offer of Canadian naval assistance, the maritime force continued to grow during the war years. The United States was still officially neutral, and prohibited by international law from exporting vessels which could be used as warships. To circumvent these regulations, Canadians purchased suitable craft from American sellers as "yachts", which were then gifted by their Canadian owner to the navy. Converted to military vessels, the fleet grew to nearly 100 small craft. An example of this resourcefulness was the former U.S. yacht *Winchester*, which was converted to a torpedo boat, and rechristened HMCS *Grilse*.

At the outbreak of the war, British Columbia's Premier, Sir Richard McBride, was concerned about German attacks on the west coast province. Reports of German warships harassing traffic and commerce near Mexico led to fears of assaults against British Columbia's fishing fleets, as well as the cities of Vancouver and Victoria becoming potential targets. Not waiting for Ottawa to take action, McBride's government took the initiative of providing their own maritime security.

A Seattle shipbuilding company had constructed two submarines for the Chilean navy, but a dispute over payment arose, and the vessels were not delivered to South America. The builder indicated a willingness to sell the submarines, but the asking price was \$1.1 million, more than double the operating budget of the entire Canadian navy. In addition, the builder demanded that payment be received, in full, upon delivery. Telegrams between McBride's government and Ottawa went back and forth, with much debate, until the B.C. premier finally grew tired of waiting for action from the capital. Using provincial funds, rather than money from the federal government, the submarines were purchased. Both the Chilean and German governments protested the sale, citing U.S. neutrality laws being violated. A day after the transaction, the U.S. Navy dispatched the warship USS *Milwaukee* to patrol the area, but the submarines had safely sailed to Canadian waters. The transaction had been conducted with such secrecy that even the army batteries defending Esquimalt's harbour were not informed, and almost opened fire on the two new submarines as they arrived.

On August 4, 1913, the two submarines were delivered to Canada, the builder compensated, and the white naval ensign was raised. Ottawa eventually reimbursed the British Columbia government for the boats, and they were commissioned into the Royal Canadian Navy as *CC1* and *CC2*. HMCS *Shearwater*, the ancient ship left by the British when they abandoned the base at Esquimalt, was converted into a tender for the two submarines, and they remained on the west coast for the duration of the war, seeing no action.

Despite Canada's minimal naval contribution in the war, a number of Canadians did serve with the Royal Navy. It was in this service to Britain that Canada suffered her first naval casualties, four young midshipmen who were stationed on board the cruiser HMS *Good Hope*. In October, 1914, a fleet of modern German cruisers under the command of Vice Admiral Graf Maximilian von Spee was harassing British and French shipping in the Pacific. A Royal Navy squadron, under Rear Admiral Christopher Cradock, was dispatched to the west coast of South America to stop von Spee. The two fleets met on November 1st, off the coast of the Chilean city of

Coronel, where the older and slower British vessels found themselves outmatched. HMS *Good Hope*, Cradock's flagship, was lost with all hands, including the four Canadian midshipmen. A second British cruiser, HMS *Monmouth*, was also lost, but the cruiser HMS *Glasgow* and the converted liner HMS *Otranto* managed to escape. It was the Royal Navy's first defeat in over one hundred years, with the 1,654 men. Von Spee's casualties numbered only three wounded. Midshipmen Malcolm Cann, John Hatheway, William Palmer and Arthur Silver became the first casualties of the four year old Royal Canadian Navy.

Following the First World War, the Royal Canadian Navy was overhauled. The submarines *CC1* and *CC2*, accompanied by their tender HMCS *Shearwater*, completed a gruelling 8,000 mile journey from the west coast to Halifax, via the Panama Canal, in 1917. The plan was to transfer the submarines to the Mediterranean, but following their lengthy voyage, both boats were suffering from mechanical breakdown and engine problems. They were de-commissioned in 1918, and spent the next two years docked in Halifax before being sold for scrap. *Shearwater* was purchased by a civilian operator in 1919, and re-named *Vedas*.

HMCS *Canada* was also de-commissioned in 1919, and returned to her pre-war duties as a fisheries patrol vessel. She continued in government service for another year, before being offered for public sale. She was finally purchased by an American businessman in 1924, re-named *Queen of Nassau*, and spent the next two years ferrying passengers between Florida and the Bahamas, before sinking in 1926. *Niobe*, still damaged from the Halifax explosion on December 6, 1917, was laid up in port until 1920 when she was sold for scrap to a Philadelphia company. The cruiser *Rainbow* met a similar fate at the hands of scrappers that same year. With most of its ships sold or scrapped, the RCN began a major rebuilding. Two submarines, constructed in Massachusetts for the Royal Navy, were transferred to the RCN in 1919 when the First World War ended. Named HMCS *CH14* and *CH15*, the two vessels were commissioned at Halifax, where they saw little service. In 1920, Captain Walter Hose was appointed Acting Director of the Naval Service, replacing Kingsmill as head of Canada's navy. Hose immediately contacted the British Admiralty, and began negotiations to obtain modern vessels for Canada. He successfully acquired a modern cruiser, HMCS *Aurora*, as well as two torpedo boats, HMCS *Patriot* and *Patrician*. On Christmas Day, 1920, the three vessels arrived in Halifax, and the small squadron looked to be a promising start to the reorganization of the navy. However, in 1921, a Liberal government under Prime Minister Mackenzie King was elected, and cut the naval budget in half. After a forced down-sizing, Hose's navy was left with only two operational destroyers, the naval college in Halifax, and roughly 500 officers and men. Hose decided to retain only the destroyers *Patrician* and *Patriot*, and in 1922 HMCS *Aurora* had been disarmed and left alongside a jetty in Halifax, awaiting the scrap yard. The submarines *CH14* and *CH15* met a similar fate the same year. With politicians calling for its disbandment, and the navy virtually ignored by civilians, Hose believed that in order to save the navy, he would have to bring it to the cities of Canada. He created a two-tiered reserve system. The Royal Canadian Naval Reserve was formed from experienced merchant seamen who would occasionally serve in uniform.

The Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve (RCNVR) was established in several large cities across the country, where civilian volunteers with little or no experience could enlist on a part time basis. In 1923, approval was given to form the RCNVR, with the first company being established in Montreal. By the end of that year, a dozen Canadian cities had a unit. A member

of the RCNVR would be required to attend thirty, unpaid training nights at his unit during the winter, in order to be rated "efficient". Following this, the member would then qualify for two weeks of paid training at one of the coasts. Officers in the RCNVR were expected to provide their own uniforms, and training facilities and equipment were nearly non-existent. However, the RCNVR continued to grow, and by the time the Second World War began in 1939, units had been established in sixteen Canadian cities.

Hose was finally appointed Chief of Naval Staff in 1928. The long serving destroyers *Patriot* and *Patrician* were replaced by HMCS *Vancouver* (ex HMS *Toreador*) and HMCS *Champlain* (ex HMS *Torbay*), a pair of British built S-class destroyers, which joined the Canadian fleet in March of that year. His long-range plan was the building of a small fleet which would satisfy Canada's defensive requirements, but the Great Depression forced more cutbacks in defence spending. Major-General Andrew McNaughton, an army veteran of the First World War and Chief of the General Staff, suggested to the Treasury Board that a navy was no longer needed. He believed that maintaining three military services was far too expensive and that any threat to Canada's security could be handled by the army and the air force.

Hose persevered, making a case before the Treasury Board that a naval force must be retained, pointing out that war was inevitable between Japan and the United States and Canada's west coast would be vulnerable. He also reminded them that aircraft were unable to fly at night or in inclement weather. In the end, he was successful and the navy had been saved. Around this same time, the government had also placed an order with a British shipbuilder for two destroyers. These vessels, HMCS *Skeena* and *Saguenay*, were delivered in 1931 and one was posted on each coast. Although copies of the Royal Navy's *Acasta* class destroyers, *Skeena* and *Saguenay* were custom built for the Canadian government and included such features as steam heated crew spaces, strengthened hulls to withstand ice, and superior ventilation systems, earning them the nickname "Rolls Royce Destroyers".

Hose was promoted to Rear Admiral but retired in 1934, recommending Commander Percy Nelles be appointed his successor as Chief of the Naval Staff. Months prior to his retirement, Hose had saved the naval budget from being slashed by \$2 million in yet another round of cuts. The RCN continued to grow throughout the 1930s, and in 1937-38, four additional destroyers were acquired from Britain. HMCS *Fraser*, *St. Laurent*, *Ottawa* and *Restigouche* joined *Skeena* and *Saguenay*, bringing the strength of the RCN to six destroyers.

Four Fundy-class minesweepers, the training schooner HMCS *Venture* and a few smaller auxiliary vessels brought the navy's total to thirteen ships when war was declared. With the addition of the new destroyers, *Vancouver* and *Champlain* were decommissioned and scrapped in 1937. Scattered across the country, the RCN consisted of only 312 officers and 3,292 other ranks, serving in the regular navy, and the naval reserves. As war seemed inevitable, the 1939 defence budget allocated \$30 million to the air force, \$21 million to the army, and a mere \$8 million to the navy.

With the world on the brink of war, Britain and Germany were in a race to build up their armed forces, including naval power. Plans had been drawn up to develop small escort vessels, for use in coastal waters, but British shipyards were filled to capacity completing orders for larger warships. Plans had been drawn up by William Reed of Smith's Dock Company of South Bank-

on-Tees for an escort based on the plans of a whaling ship called Southern Pride. Smith and his company had experience building patrol vessels during the First World War, as well as constructing whaling ships and a modification of his plans were accepted by the British Admiralty in January, 1939. Contracts to begin building the vessels were signed in February, but the world's situation was rapidly deteriorating.

In Canada, it had been proposed that the shipyards could build destroyers, but the idea was discarded when it was learned none of them had ever constructed anything larger than a minesweeper. Despite the lack of shipbuilding experience, the Admiralty took a gamble that Canadian yards could construct the new escort vessels. Initially, it was envisioned that the small warships would be used in only coastal waters, protecting the western terminal of the convoy route, as well as defending the St. Lawrence River and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Shortening the name from 'patrol vessel, whaling type', to 'corvette', Canada was soon committed to building them. Shipyards on both coasts, along the St. Lawrence River, and the Great Lakes were all awarded contracts to build the boats, with a construction cost of between \$500-600,000. The corvette would soon become Canada's signature ship and 113 of them were named after cities, towns and villages across the country.

Canada was soon caught up in an industrial revolution, committed to build sixty-four corvettes, along with ten minesweepers in a two year period. In addition to a shortage of raw materials, Canada suffered from a lack of shipyards, a lack of workers, and a lack of knowledge. Also, the new design was un-tested, and should the vessels fail, materials, manpower and a year's worth of work would be lost. Despite the odds, the Canadian shipbuilding industry began building. Yards were rapidly constructed or expanded, workers hired and trained, and production moved forward. By the end of 1940, the first batch of fourteen corvettes had been completed and sailed for England in January, 1941.

Manned with a skeleton crew, many of the first corvettes crossed the Atlantic armed with wooden guns, due to a shortage of real 4-inch guns. These fourteen were the forerunner of an eventual 122 corvettes eventually constructed in Canada. One of these original fourteen, HMCS *Collingwood*, was the first Canadian-built corvette to enter service with the Royal Navy. Over time, modifications were made, crews expanded and weapons improved. The small Canadian ships, intended only for coastal defence, would end up going head to head with the German's powerful submarine fleet and helping to win the war for the Allies.

At the end of the Battle of the Atlantic, Canadian ships (either alone or in conjunction with other ships and planes) sank a total of 27 U-boats, and either sank or captured 42 Axis surface ships. But the real victory was not so much in the statistics of battle, as in the successful completion of 25,343 merchant ship crossings, carrying 181,643,180 tons of cargo and a significant proportion of the Canadian and US forces for the eventual victory in Europe.

Canada lost 24 ships in five different theatres: first was the *Fraser* sunk in a collision while evacuating refugees from France in 1940; *Athabaskan*, *Regina*, *Alberni* and *Trentonian* were lost in 1944 during Operation Neptune and cross-Channel escort duty; *Louisburg* and *Weyburn* sank in the Mediterranean during the North African invasions of Operation Torch; eight ships were sunk protecting Canadian coastal waters *Bras D'Or*, *Chedabucto*, *Clayoquot* and *Esquimalt* (minesweepers), *Otter* and *Raccoon* (armed yachts),

and *Charlottetown* and *Shawinigan* (corvettes); and nine ships were lost on Atlantic escort duty *Margaree*, *Levis*, *Windflower*, *Spikenard*, *Ottawa*, *St.*

Croix, *Valleyfield*, *Skeena* and *Guysborough* (on loan to the RCN from the RN). Altogether the RCN lost 1,797 seamen and 95 became prisoners of war.

As the end of the war against Germany approached, attention focused on Japan. At the end of 1944, some RCN ships were deployed with the British Pacific Fleet, joining the many Canadian personnel already serving with the Royal Navy in the Pacific War. Ottawa was also laying plans to expand the RCN's capabilities beyond its anti-submarine orientation. The war in the Pacific was expected to culminate with a massive invasion of Japan itself and this would need a different navy than that required in the Atlantic.

Britain was nearly bankrupt after five and a half years of war and was looking to shrink its military somewhat, especially since the United States was now the dominant power in the Pacific. With this in mind, the RCN and the Royal Australian Navy were to receive many ships considered surplus to the RN's needs, with the end goal being a powerful Commonwealth fleet of Australian, British, Canadian, and New Zealand ships alongside the United States Navy. As in the First World War, the war ended before these plans came to fruition. With the dropping of two nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan's will to fight evaporated.

With the end of the war, the RCN stopped expanding. A planned transfer of two light aircraft carriers from the Royal Navy, HMCS *Warrior* and HMCS *Magnificent* was slowed, and when *Warrior* was found to be unsuitable for a North Atlantic winter, she was sent to the west coast and the next year was replaced by *Magnificent*, with *Warrior* being returned to the RN. Canada still had two light cruisers, HMCS *Ontario* and HMCS *Uganda* (later HMCS *Quebec*), a number of Tribal class and other destroyers and a mass of frigates, corvettes, and other ships, the majority of which were mothballed by 1947.

In the late winter of 1949, the RCN was shaken by three almost simultaneous cases of mass insubordination variously described as "Incidents" or "Mutinies". On February 26, when the destroyer HMCS *Athabaskan* was on a fuelling stop at Manzanillo, Colima, Mexico, ninety Leading Seamen and below — constituting more than half the ship's company — locked themselves in their messdecks, and refused to come out until getting the captain to hear their grievances. On March 15, in another destroyer, the HMCS *Crescent*, at Nanjing, China, eighty-three junior ratings held a similar protest. On March 20, thirty-two aircraft handlers on the carrier HMCS *Magnificent*, which was on fleet manoeuvres in the Caribbean, briefly refused an order to turn to morning cleaning stations.

As noted by Dr Richard Gimblett, researcher and himself a retired naval officer, the respective captains in all three cases acted with great sensitivity, entering the messes for an informal discussion of the sailors' grievances and carefully avoided using the term "mutiny," which could have had severe legal consequences for the sailors involved. Specifically, the captain of the *Athabaskan*, while talking with the disgruntled crew members, is known to have placed his cap over a written list of demands, which could have been used as legal evidence of a mutiny, and pretended not to notice it.

Still, the Canadian government during the early years of the Cold War felt apprehensive of "The Red Menace," especially since the naval sailors' discontent coincided with a Communist-inspired strike in the Canadian merchant marine (also, one of the incidents occurred in China where the local Communists were in the final stages of winning a civil war and gaining power).

Defence Minister Brooke Claxton appointed Rear-Admiral Rollo Mainguy, Flag Officer Atlantic Coast, to head a commission of inquiry. The Mainguy Report described by Dr Gimblett as a watershed in the Navy's history, whose findings, recommendations and conclusions remain a potent legacy concluded that no evidence was found of Communist influence or of collusion between the three crews.

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, Canada, like many other countries, dramatically reduced its military expenditures. For the RCN, this meant large cuts to its personnel strength and number of commissioned ships. The emergence of the Cold War and the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), followed by the outbreak of the Korean War, prompted the Canadian government to dramatically increase its military spending.

For the RCN, this resulted in increased numbers of personnel, the re-commissioning and modification of some Second World War ships held in reserve, the design and construction of new classes of ships, and the upgrading of its recently created aviation capabilities. RCN destroyers formed part of Canada's initial response to the United Nations' call for assistance during the Korean War, and were sent to Korean waters to join other UN naval forces. The Canadian ships' duties included awe-inspiring but dangerous shore bombardments and the destruction of North Korean trains and railway lines. Initially dispatched in 1950, Canadian destroyers maintained a presence off the Korean peninsula until 1955.

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At much the same time, the growing Soviet submarine threat led the RCN to update and convert existing ships to improve their anti-submarine capabilities. Most notably, 21 wartime River class frigates were extensively converted to *Prestonian* class frigates during the mid-to-late 1950s. The RCN also acquired several new classes of anti-submarine destroyer escorts (DDEs) to augment its fleet. Built in Canada, these ships pioneered innovative design features, including a distinctive rounded upper part of the hull which helped seawater drain from the deck during the extremely rough weather and also helped minimize winter-time ice build-up. The first of these new ships were the seven *St. Laurent* class DDEs, which were soon followed by the *Restigouche*, *Mackenzie*, and *Annapolis* classes with seven, four, and two vessels

respectively. Following the construction of these new ships throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, the RCN was able to retire most of its remaining vessels dating from the Second World War.

Seeking to improve its ships' anti-submarine capabilities, the RCN pioneered the use of large ship-borne helicopters on small surface ships like destroyers in the rough waters of the North Atlantic and Pacific. The recovery of helicopters to a wildly pitching flight deck was made possible by the invention of the "Bear Trap", a cable and winch system which hauled a helicopter, hovering at full power, to the flight deck in all manner of conditions. Using this technology, the *St. Laurent* class DDEs were upgraded to destroyer-helicopter (DDH) vessels during the early to mid-1960s to accommodate recently acquired CH-124 Sea King anti-submarine helicopters. Other ships also received upgrades to increase their anti-submarine capabilities. The RCN was also actively involved in the development of various forms of ship-borne sonar, most notably the variable depth sonar (VDS), which significantly increased the ranges at which submarines could be detected. The improved capabilities conferred by these innovations contributed to Canada's NATO allies giving the RCN an expanded anti-submarine role in the North Atlantic. Much of the RCN's experimental work in these fields was conducted in conjunction with the Defence Research Board and it would later include experiments leading to the development of the fastest warship ever built, the 60-knot (110 km/h) HMCS *Bras d'Or*.

The RCN also expanded and improved its aviation capabilities during much of this period. While it had provided crews for the British aircraft carriers HMS *Nabob* and HMS *Puncher* during the Second World War, and Canadians had served in the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm, Canada had no carriers of its own until HMCS *Warrior* entered Canadian service in 1946. *Warrior* proved unsuitable for North Atlantic winters, however, and was replaced by HMCS *Magnificent* in 1948. By the mid-1950s, *Magnificent* was no longer used as an active aircraft carrier, but was used as a vehicle transport during Canada's peacekeeping response to the 1956 Suez Crisis, before being paid off.

Her replacement, HMCS *Bonaventure*, was a more modern aircraft carrier which had been substantially rebuilt to accommodate an angled flight deck and other improvements. During this time, the RCN also used stations at HMCS *Shearwater* and HMCS *Patricia Bay* to operate carrier-based fighter and anti-submarine aircraft, including the British Supermarine Seafire and Hawker Sea Fury, and the American F2H Banshee, the RCN's only jet fighter. Anti-submarine aircraft included variants of the Fairey Firefly, the Grumman Avenger and a version of the Grumman Tracker built by de Havilland Canada.

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vessel was originally built from 1960 to 1967 for the Royal Canadian Navy as a project for the testing of anti-submarine warfare technology on an ocean-going hydrofoil. The RCN was replaced on 1 February 1968 by the unified Canadian Armed Forces, and HMCS *Bras d'Or* was commissioned into that service several months later. Changes in priorities and cost overruns later led to the project's cancellation.

Strength peaked at about 100 ships and over 20,000 personnel. Thermonuclear weapons and skyrocketing costs brought conventional forces into question by the early 1960s and forced the Canadian government to economize. The result was armed forces integration, announced in 1964. Under this scheme, which was bitterly contested by senior naval officers, the RCN ceased to exist as an institution on 1 February 1968, when the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) came into being.

The navy survived integration as Maritime Command (MARCOM), which for a while included the maritime squadrons of the former Royal Canadian Air Force. In 1970 the navy was also forced to adopt the standard CF green uniform, a major blow to traditional naval identity and morale. Through the 1970s MARCOM was starved of resources, and the fleet and its equipment deteriorated rapidly. Concern about a decline in conventional deterrence prompted a rebuilding in the 1980s and early 1990s. The rebuilding plan permitted diversion of modern equipment to the old fleet, which has maintained a presence in the Arabian Gulf since 1990.

Since then 12 'Canadian Patrol Frigates' and 12 small Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels have been built, four Tribal-class destroyers modernized, and four ex-RN submarines acquired. The new fleet and its 9,000 personnel have deployed around the world from the Balkan crisis, to Somalia, East Timor and the war on terrorism.

By the end of the 20th century the Canadian Navy was modern and was a highly capable operational force. In 1985 it reverted to blue uniforms and in 2011 MARCOM became once again the RCN. Entering the 21st Century Canada's Navy had excelled in all its undertakings in the defence of Canada and in her international commitments. Much of this could be attributed to the dedication of small numbers of naval reservists in various naval divisions scattered across the country.

Over 1000 kilometres from the Pacific Ocean, Calgary's Naval Reserve division was established on March 31, 1923. However, it was not commissioned "HMCS *Tecumseh*" until November 1, 1941. It is named after the Shawnee chief who served with the British and Canadian military forces in the War of 1812. Two years after its christening, the division moved to its present location on 17th Avenue S.W.

During the Second World War, over 4,500 personnel enlisted at *Tecumseh*. Of those 52 were killed in action. Among them was Lt(N) Robert Hampton Gray, the only person in the Canadian Navy to be awarded the Victoria Cross.

HMCS *Tecumseh* survived post-war defence cuts and has since survived other challenges including a major fire in 1981 and armed forces unification. Rebuilt since the fire, *Tecumseh* is a fully modern training facility. In addition to the Naval Reserves, *Tecumseh* houses 746

Communications Squadron (an Army Reserve unit), Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps *Undaunted*, Navy League Cadet Corps *Captain Jackson* and 2509 (RC) Signal Cadet Corp.

Subsequent to rebuilding, *Tecumseh* in 1989 became the headquarters of the first female flag officer in the history of the Canadian Navy, Commodore Laraine Orthleib. Then in 1992, *Tecumseh* felt the pull of war again, this time in the Persian Gulf. At this juncture, several members of the unit volunteered for duty of which two were selected to serve on board HMCS *Huron*.

Numerous members of the HMCS *Tecumseh* compliment have been deployed in various operations such as the G8 Summit, Op APOLLO, Manitoba's 1997 Flood of the Century, the 1998 APEC meeting in Vancouver, and assisted in the recovery mission following the Swiss Air crash off Halifax as members of Maritime Coastal Defence Vessel crews assigned to the operation.

HMCS *Tecumseh* helped mark the centennial of the Canadian Navy in 2010, a significant year in Calgary's military history, with three army reserve units also celebrating 100-year anniversaries.