



ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

1910 - 1960

A BRIEF HISTORY

The Royal Canadian Navy officially came into being with the signing of the Naval Service Act on May 4, 1910.

It was a natural step in the evolution, "from colony to nation," of a country whose history, from its beginning, had been inextricably linked with and profoundly influenced by seapower.

The founders and first settlers of New France came by sea, and it was by sea that they were sustained. Seapower tipped the scales in the struggles for the new land. For nearly 300 years, trade and communications were carried out almost entirely by sea and on inland waterways.

The first stirrings of a Canadian Navy began with the establishment of His Majesty's Provincial Marine on the Great Lakes in 1755.

The Provincial Marine was created under the direction of the Royal Navy to police Lake George, Lake Champlain and Lake Ontario. This small force fought in the Seven Years' War and the Indian Wars; stood guard during the War of Independence and won a victory against the United States in the War of 1812.

With the Rush-Bagot Agreement in 1817, Canada and the United States agreed to eliminate naval forces in the Great Lakes.

In 1887, 20 years after Confederation, the Canadian delegation to a London conference on colonial and Dominion contributions to Imperial defence insisted that Canada, as a new nation, was in no position to undertake expenditures for naval defence.

In this and similar conferences until 1909, the Canadian government maintained that when it could afford money for naval defences, Canada would like to have a navy of its own.

By 1909, the international situation had become serious and in Ottawa the government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier successfully piloted through parliament the Naval Service Bill which resulted in the formation of the Royal Canadian Navy the following year.

The Naval Service Act provided for a permanent force, a reserve and a volunteer reserve. In the same year, two old cruisers, the Niobe and Rainbow, were purchased from Britain.

The Hon Louis P. Brodeur became Minister of the Department of Naval Service and Rear-Admiral (later Admiral Sir) Charles E. Kingsmill, RN (Retired) a native of Guelph, Ont., became Director of the Naval Service. Admiral Kingsmill had retired from the Royal Navy in 1908 and subsequently came to Canada to direct the Marine Service of the Department of Marine and Fisheries.

In January, 1911, the Royal Naval College of Canada was opened at Halifax for the training of naval officers.

The Conservatives came to power in 1911 and immediately faced a serious German naval threat which Prime Minister Borden considered could best be answered by providing \$35,000,000 to build three battleships for the Royal Navy. A bill to provide the money was defeated in the Senate and Canada's small Navy continued to function.

With the outbreak of war, the Niobe and Rainbow were assigned to patrols on both coasts. Converted yachts, motor launches, tugs and fishing craft were pressed into service. On the west coast, two submarines purchased by the government of B.C. were manned largely by RNCVR personnel.

More than 1,700 volunteer reservists went to serve with the Royal Navy, including 43 surgeon-lieutenants. Another 580 Canadians joined the Royal Naval Air Service. The strength of the RCN and Reserve reached a total of nearly 9,000 officers and men, most of them attached to the Royal Navy.

Following the war, the RCN acquired as gifts from the Admiralty the submarines CH14 and CH15, the cruiser Aurora and the destroyers Patrician and Patriot.

In line with post-war economy measures, however, all but the Patrician and Patriot were disposed of. By 1922, the RCN had been cut to 366 officers and men, the Naval College closed and the fleet reduced to two destroyers and four trawler-type minesweepers.

In 1923, the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve and the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve were formed. These branches of the Naval Service were to prove of immeasurable value in building the fighting strength of the Navy during the Second World War.

In 1928, the destroyers Champlain and Vancouver replaced the Patrician and Patriot. In 1931 the Saguenay and Skeena were commissioned. They were the first warships, other than auxiliary vessels, to be built for the RCN.

It was an omen for the future for a navy which then consisted of four destroyers and three minesweepers.

In 1937, the Fraser and St. Laurent replaced the Vancouver and Champlain. In 1938, the Ottawa and Restigouche joined the fleet.

When war was declared in September, 1939, the navy numbered 1,770 officers and men, while the Reserves totalled 1,800. Six destroyers, five minesweepers and two training vessels made up the fleet.

Ten days before the declaration, Naval Headquarters signalled all ships to prepare for war. In Vancouver at the time, the Fraser and St. Laurent were ordered to proceed to Halifax without delay. The arrival of the signal produced an embarrassing moment. There was to be absolutely no evidence of preparation, but the two ships were swarming with visitors in connection with a civic reception. It took considerable diplomacy to conduct the visitors ashore and sail without arousing suspicion. But it was done and for ten days nobody was any the wiser.

Six days after Canada went to war, the first convoy sailed from Halifax for the United Kingdom. A mobilization plan formulated earlier was thrown into gear and worked with remarkable smoothness.

Canada's shipbuilding industry, dormant for years, began to produce fighting ships. Corvettes were laid down in Canadian shipyards. Later, minesweepers, frigates, motor launches, landing craft and auxiliary vessels were built.

The Royal Canadian Navy grew from 11 to almost 400 ships, and from a handful of officers and men to 95,705 officers, men and wrens – the third largest Allied navy.

Under Canadian escort, 25,343 merchant ship voyages carried 181,643,180 tons of cargo from North American ports to the United Kingdom. From the spring of 1944, North Atlantic convoys (excepting troop convoys) were escorted mainly by Canadian ships. Canadian warships fought in the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, on the perilous northern route to Murmansk, in the English Channel, the North and Irish Seas, and the Pacific Ocean. Canadian ships, by themselves or in company with other allied ships or planes, sank 27 U-boats, and sank, destroyed or captured 42 enemy surface ships.

A total of 1,797 Canadian naval personnel were killed, 319 wounded and 95 taken prisoner. Twenty-four ships and seven motor torpedo boats were lost. Decorations and mentions in despatches were awarded to 1,748 officers and men.

When the Second World War ended, demobilization brought about a reduction in strength. In February, 1947, the RCN consisted of ten ships in service and by the end of the year the personnel strength had dropped to 6,776. But the 10 ships included an aircraft carrier and two light cruisers, and a vigorous young air arm was in being.

In the years that followed, the RCN was again built up for the defence of Canada and to meet the country's international commitments.

In 1949 it was announced that a program would be undertaken for the construction in Canadian shipyards of anti-submarine destroyer escorts for the RCN. The first of these ships, HMCS St. Laurent, was commissioned in October, 1955, and 13 others have since entered service. Armed with powerful anti-submarine mortars and homing torpedoes, these Canadian-designed ships are the finest of their type in the world.

During the United Nations operations in Korea, from 1950 until 1953, the RCN provided a flotilla of three destroyers to serve under UN Command. All told, eight ships and more than 3,500 officers and men saw service in Korean waters.

On the basis of experience, the Royal Canadian Navy decided after the Second World War to produce a force that would be primarily anti-submarine in composition and capability. There were several reasons for this decision, of which the most important was the conviction that the submarine would prove even more dangerous in the future than it had been in the past.

This conviction was sustained when, with the formation of NATO's Allied Command Atlantic in 1952, the RCN was asked to assume a specialized anti-submarine role. This was in keeping with the principle that there should be a balanced international force to which member nations would contribute the kind of forces they were best able to produce and equip.

In 1954 the Arctic patrol vessel HMCS Labrador was commissioned and became the first naval ship and the first large ship to negotiate the Northwest Passage and circumnavigate North America.

Early in 1957, the new aircraft carrier Bonaventure joined the RCN's growing anti-submarine fleet. The angled-deck carrier is equipped with Canadian-built Tracker anti-submarine

aircraft, sonar equipped anti-submarine helicopters and Banshee jet fighters armed with guided missiles.

As the RCN began its jubilee year its seagoing strength had reached a peacetime high, with 62 ships in commission, including the Bonaventure, 25 destroyer escorts, 18 frigates, ten minesweepers, two mobile repair ships and six smaller craft.

There were also Royal Navy submarines on loan to the RCN and based at Halifax for anti-submarine training purposes.

The personnel strength of the RCN had reached approximately 20,000, of whom 49 per cent were serving at sea, one of the highest sea/shore ratios of any Navy in the world.

Backing up the regular force were more than 3,500 officers, cadets, men and women of the RCN (Reserve), attached to 21 naval divisions across the country.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY, 1910-1960

1910

- 4 May – The Royal Canadian Navy came into being with the Royal Assent given to the Naval Service Act on this day.
- 3 June – The Honourable L.P. Brodeur appointed first Minister of the Naval Service.
- 10 June – Rear-Admiral Charles E. Kingsmill RN (Retired), a native of Guelph, Ont., appointed Director of the Naval Service (effective 5 May, 1910).
- 4 August – HMCS RAINBOW commissioned at Portsmouth, the first ship to commission in the Royal Canadian Navy.
- 6 September – HMCS NIOBE commissioned at Devonport.
- 1 October – The Atlantic Command was established, with headquarters at Halifax.
- 13 October – HM Dockyard and Admiralty House, Halifax, transferred to Canadian ownership by British Order-in-Council.
- 21 October – HMCS NIOBE arrived in Halifax, first Canadian warship to arrive at her base in Canada.
- 8 November – HMCS RAINBOW arrived in Esquimalt, B.C.
- 9 November – The Pacific Command was established, with headquarters at Esquimalt.

1911

- 19 January – Royal Naval College of Canada opened at Halifax.
- 1 February – The first recruiting posters for the RCN were issued to Post Offices throughout Canada.
- 4 May – HM Dockyard, Esquimalt, by British Order-in-Council, formally transferred to the Canadian Government.

1914

- 18 May – Royal Naval Canadian Volunteer Reserve established by Order-in-Council.
- 4 August – War declared. HMC ships placed under Admiralty operational control. HMCS RAINBOW sailed to seek SMS LEIPZIG, and to protect HM Ships ALGERINE and SHEARWATER.
- 5 August – Two submarines, built at Seattle for Chile, and purchased by the Premier of British Columbia, delivered to the RCN off Trial Island. They were called CC-1 and CC-2.
- 2 September – HMCS NIOBE sailed from Halifax to complete her complement at St. John's Newfoundland.
- 1 November – At the Battle of Coronel, the RCN suffered its first fatal battle casualties: four Midshipmen in HMS GOOD HOPE.

1917

- 6 December – Great explosion destroyed naval facilities and much of the city of Halifax.

1918

- 30 October – HMCS GALIANO lost with all hands in Barkley Sound, Vancouver Island.

1920

- 15 June – Naval demobilization was complete by this date; RNCVR disbanded.
- 1 November – HMC Ships AURORA (cruiser) PATRIOT and PATRICIAN (destroyers) commissioned.

1921

- 3 March – HMC Submarines CH-14 and CH-15 commissioned.
- 16 June – Royal Naval College of Canada closed.
- 30 June – HMC Submarines CH-14 and CH-15 paid off.
- 1 July – HMCS AURORA paid off.
- 3 September – HMCS NADEN, RCN Barracks Esquimalt, commissioned.

1923

- 31 January – Royal Canadian Naval Reserve and Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve established.
- 1 July – HMCS STADACONA, RCN Barracks Halifax, commissioned

1928

- 1 March – HMC Ships CHAMPLAIN and VANCOUVER (destroyers) commissioned to replace HMC Ships PATRIOT and PATRICIAN, previously paid off.

1930

- 27 February – HMCS THIEPVAL lost in Barkley Sound, B.C.

1931

- 22 May – HMCS SAGUENAY commissioned, followed by HMCS SKEENA on 10 June. These were the first warships built to Canadian specifications.

1932

- 24 January – HMC Ships SKEENA and VANCOUVER landed armed parties at Acajutla, El Salvador, to protect British subjects threatened in a revolution.

1934

- 1 July – Commodore P.W. Nelles became Chief of Naval Staff, the first Canadian-trained officer to receive this appointment.

1936

- 26 July – Royal Guard from HMCS SAGUENAY paraded at Vimy Ridge for the unveiling of the Canadian Memorial by King Edward VIII – first Royal Guard provided by the RCN for the person of the monarch.

1939

- 31 May – King George VI presented his Colour to the RCN in Beacon Hill Park, Victoria, B.C.
- 31 August – HMC Ships FRASER and ST. LAURENT sailed from Vancouver for Halifax.
- 1 September – RCN, RCNR and RCNVR placed on active service.
- 10 September – Canada declared war on Germany.
- 15 September – HMC Ships FRASER and ST. LAURENT arrived in Halifax.
- 16 September – Convoy HX-1 sailed from Halifax for UK, local escort: HMC Ships ST. LAURENT and SAGUENAY.
- 10 December – First Canadian Troop Convoy sailed for Britain escorted out of Halifax by HMC Ships OTTAWA, RESTIGOUCHE, FRASER and ST. LAURENT.

1940

- 24 May – HMC Ships ST. LAURENT, RESTIGOUCHE and SKEENA sailed to reinforce the naval defences of the British Isles.
- 6 June – Canadian warships came under fire for the first time – ST. LAURENT and RESTIGOUCHE at St. Valery en Caux, France.
- 25 June – HMCS FRASER lost in collision with HMS CALCUTTA in the Bay of Biscay.
- 31 July – HMCS PRINCE ROBERT commissioned as an Armed Merchant Cruiser.
- 24 September – HMC Ships ANNAPOLIS, COLUMBIA, NIAGARA, ST. CLAIR, ST. CROIX and ST. FRANCIS, ex-USN destroyers of the 50 given to Britain in exchange for bases, commissioned in the RCN.
- 20 October – HMS WINDFLOWER, first corvette built in Canada, commissioned in the Royal Navy with a Canadian crew. She was turned over to the RCN the following year.
- 22 October – HMCS MARGAREE lost in collision with SS PORT FAIRY in the North Atlantic.

- 25 October – HMCS BRAS D'OR foundered in the St. Lawrence.
- 9 November – HMCS COLLINGWOOD, first corvette built in Canada for the RCN, commissioned.
- 4 December – HMCS PRINCE HENRY commissioned as an Armed Merchant Cruiser, followed by PRINCE DAVID on 28 December.
- 13 December – HMCS ROYAL ROADS was commissioned as a training establishment for Probationary Sub-lieutenants.

1941

- 24 March – The Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817, limiting naval power on the Great Lakes, was modified to allow naval ships of both the United States and Canada to operate there in larger numbers.
- 25 March – HMCS OTTER burned and sank in the approaches to Halifax.
- 25 May – The first Canadian corvettes arrived in St. John's to establish the Newfoundland Escort Force.
- 14 June – The first group of ships of the Newfoundland Escort Force sailed to protect a convoy.
- 10 September – HMC Ships CHAMBLY and MOOSE JAW sank U-501 off the Greenland coast. This was the RCN's first U-boat kill.
- 19 September – HMCS LEVIS (corvette) torpedoed and sunk in the North Atlantic.
- 16 November – HMCS PRINCE ROBERT arrived in Hong Kong escorting units of the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles of Canada in TS AWATEA.
- 7 December – Canada declared war on Japan. HMCS WINDFLOWER lost in collision with SS ZYPENBURG on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland.
- 8 December – The United States, Great Britain and other countries declared war on Japan.

1942

- 22 January – The Canadian Naval Board was established.
- 11 February – HMCS SPIKENARD torpedoed and sunk in the North Atlantic.
- 1 May – HMCS CORNWALLIS was commissioned at Halifax as a New Entry training establishment.
- 24 July – HMCS ST. CROIX sank U-90 in the North Atlantic.
- 31 July – The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service was established.
- 6 August – HMC Ships WETASKIWIN and SKEENA sank U-588 in the North Atlantic.
- 20 August – HMCS ASSINIBOINE sank U-210 in the North Atlantic.
- 28 August – HMC Ships PRINCE ROBERT, PRINCE HENRY, PRINCE DAVID, DAWSON and VANCOUVER sailed from Esquimalt for operations in the Aleutians.
- 28 August – HMCS OAKVILLE, in co-operation with a US aircraft, sank U-94 in the Caribbean Sea.
- 7 September – HMCS RACCOON (armed yacht) torpedoed and sunk with all hands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.
- 11 September – HMCS CHARLOTTETOWN (corvette) torpedoed and sunk in the St. Lawrence.
- 14 September – HMCS OTTAWA torpedoed and sunk in the North Atlantic.
- 16 September – The first of 16 RCN corvettes sailed for the Mediterranean to take part in the North African landings-Operation "Torch".
- 21 October – HMCS ROYAL ROADS became the Royal Canadian Naval College, and commenced training Cadets.
- 29 December – HMC Ships ST. LAURENT, CHILLIWACK, BATTLEFORD and NAPANEE sank U-356 in mid-Atlantic.

1943

- 13 January – HMCS VILLE DE QUEBEC sank U-224 in the western Mediterranean.
- 19 January – HMCS PORT ARTHUR sank the Italian Submarine TRITONE in the Mediterranean.
- 6 February – HMCS LOUISBURG torpedoed and sunk by enemy aircraft in an attack on a convoy in the Mediterranean Sea.
- 8 February – HMCS REGINA sank the Italian submarine AVORIO in the Mediterranean Sea.
- 22 February – HMCS WEYBURN struck a mine and sank off Tangier.
- 4 March – HMC Ships SHEDIAC and ST. CROIX sank U-87 in the North Atlantic.
- 14 April – HMCS CORNWALLIS was officially transferred to Deep Brook, Nova Scotia. The actual move began in January and was finished in June.

- 30 April – Flag Officer Atlantic Coast took over control of all shipping movements in the western North Atlantic with the title of Commander-in-Chief Canadian North West Atlantic.
- 13 May – HMCS DRUMHELLER, HMS LAGAN and a Sunderland of No. 423 Squadron, RAF, sank U-456 in the North Atlantic.
- 1 June – The WRCNS training establishment at Galt, Ont., was commissioned as HMCS CONESTOGA, the only ship in any of the navies of the Commonwealth commanded by a woman: Lt.-Cdr. Isabel Macneill.
- 1 June – The first German mines were swept in the approaches to Halifax.
- 6 June – HMCS PRINCE ROBERT recommissioned as an anti-aircraft cruiser.
- 10 July – Canadian flotillas of landing craft were engaged in Operation Husky, the landings in Sicily.
- 3 September – Canadian flotillas of landing craft engaged in the crossing of the Strait of Messina – the invasion of Italy.
- 7 September – HMS NABOB (aircraft carrier) commissioned in the RN with a Canadian ship's company; the air complement was British.
- 20 September – HMCS ST. CROIX became the first victim of an acoustic torpedo, and sank south of Iceland.
- 21 October – HMCS CHEDABUCTO was in collision with the cable ship LORD KELVIN in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. She was later beached and became a total loss.
- 20 November – HMC Ships SNOWBERRY and CALGARY and HMCS NENE sank U-536 in the North Atlantic.
- 20 December – HMCS PRINCE DAVID recommissioned as a Landing Ship Infantry (Medium) followed by PRINCE HENRY on 4 January.

- 1944
- 8 January – HMCS CAMROSE and HMS BAYNTUN sank U-757 in the North Atlantic.
- 5 February – HMS PUNCHER (aircraft carrier) commissioned in the RN at Vancouver with a Canadian ship's company; her air complement was British.
- 18–21 February – Sixteen minesweepers, in four divisions of four, left St. John's for U.K. waters to take part in the invasion of Normandy.
- 19 February–31 March – Motor Torpedo boats of the 29th and 65th (Canadian) Flotillas commissioned.
- 24 February – HMCS WASKESIU sank U-257 in the North Atlantic.
- 6 March – HMC Ships ST. CATHARINES, CHILLIWACK, GATINEAU, FENNEL and CHAUDIERE and HM Ships ICARUS and KENILWORTH CASTLE sank U-744 in the North Atlantic.
- 10 March – HMC Ships ST. LAURENT, OWEN SOUND and SWANSEA and HMS FORESTER sank U-845 in the North Atlantic.
- 14 April – HMCS SWANSEA and HMS PELICAN sank U-448 in the North Atlantic.
- 29 April – HMC Ships ATHABASKAN and HAIDA engaged two German destroyers off Ile de Bas, Brittany, destroying one. ATHABASKAN was torpedoed and blew up.
- 7 May – HMCS VALLEYFIELD was torpedoed and sunk off St. John's Newfoundland.
- 5 June – Sixteen Canadian minesweepers were engaged in sweeping operations in the English Channel in preparation for D-Day.
- 6 June – About 110 of HMC ships and vessels manned by 10,000 Canadians took part in the landings on the Normandy coast.
- 24 June – HMCS HAIDA, HMS ESKIMO and a Czech-manned aircraft of the RAF sank U-971 in the English Channel.
- 6 July – HMC Ships OTTAWA and KOOTENAY and HMS STATICE sank U-678 in the English Channel.
- 8 August – HMCS REGINA torpedoed and sunk off Trevoise Head, England.
- 15 August – HMC Ships PRINCE DAVID and PRINCE HENRY (landing ships infantry) took part in Operation Dragoon, the landings in the south of France.
- 18 August – HMC Ships OTTAWA, KOOTENAY and CHAUDIERE sank U-621 in the Bay of Biscay.
- 20 August – HMC Ships OTTAWA, KOOTENAY and CHAUDIERE sank U-984 in the English Channel.
- 21 August – HMCS ALBERNI was torpedoed and sunk by a U-boat in the English Channel.
- 1 September – HMC Ships SAINT JOHN and SWANSEA sank U-247 off Land's End, England.

- 9 September – HMC Ships DUNVER and HESPELER sank U-484 in Hebridean waters.
- 8 October – HMCS MULGRAVE struck a mine off Le Havre, was beached and became a total loss.
- 16 October – HMCS ANNAN sank U-1006 south of the Faroes.
- 17–18 October – HMC Ships PRINCE HENRY and PRINCE DAVID were engaged in landing liberation forces in Greece.
- 21 October – HMCS UGANDA commissioned. She was Canada's first cruiser since the AURORA was paid off in 1922.
- 25 October – HMCS SKEENA dragged her anchor in a storm and was stranded on Videy near Reykjavik, Iceland, becoming a total loss.
- 25 November – HMCS SHAWINIGAN was torpedoed by a U-boat and sunk in Cabot Strait with all hands.
- 24 December – HMCS CLAYOQUOT torpedoed by a U-boat and sunk in Halifax approaches.
- 27 December – HMCS ST. THOMAS sank U-877 in the North Atlantic.

1945

- 14 February – Five Motor Torpedo Boats of the 29th Flotilla burned in Ostende harbour.
- 16 February – HMCS SAINT JOHN sank U-309 off the northeast coast of Scotland.
- 22 February – HMCS TRENTONIAN torpedoed by a U-boat in the English Channel and sunk.
- 7 March – HMC Ships LA HULLOISE, STRATHADAM and THETFORD MINES sank U-1302 in St. George's Channel.
- 9 March – HMCS UGANDA arrived in Sydney, NSW, to join the British Pacific Fleet.
- 17 March – HMCS GUYSBOROUGH was torpedoed and sunk by a U-boat off Ushant.
- 20 March – HMCS NEW GLASGOW sank U-1003 off Lough Foyle, Northern Ireland.
- 31 March – HMCS CONESTOGA, WRCNS training establishment paid off.
- 16 April – HMCS ESQUIMALT was torpedoed and sunk in the approaches to Halifax.
- 26 April – HMCS ONTARIO, cruiser, commissioned.
- 4 May – HMCS UGANDA sailed for her first operation, the bombardment of Sukuma air field on Miyako Jima in the Okinawa campaign.
- 8 May – VE-Day. At 2201 the German High Command broadcast, at allied dictation, an order for all U-boats at sea to surrender. The official end of the sea war with Germany.
- 9 August – Lieutenant Robert Hampton Gray, DSC, RCNVR, a pilot in HMS FORMIDABLE, sank a Japanese destroyer. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross – the only Canadian Naval V.C. of the Second World War.
- 14 August – VJ-Day.
- 18 Sept. – HMCS Micmac (Tribal class destroyer) launched at Halifax Shipyards. Micmac was largest warship constructed in a Canadian Shipyard up to this time.

1946

- 1 January – The Royal Canadian Naval Reserve and the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve together became the Royal Canadian Navy (Reserve). From this date officers of the Regular Force and Reserve wore the same sleeve lace.
- 24 January – HMCS WARRIOR, Canada's first aircraft carrier, was commissioned, and Nos. 803, 825, 826 and 883 Squadrons were transferred from the Royal Navy thus establishing Naval Aviation in the RCN. The squadrons were already manned by Canadians.
- 28 February – HMCS CORNWALLIS was paid off, and new entry training was conducted at Halifax and Esquimalt.
- 31 August – The WRCNS was disbanded.
- 2 December – HMCS MIDDLESEX went aground on Shut-in-Island near Halifax, N.S., and became a total loss. This was the second peace-time loss to the RCN. The first was HMCS THIEPVAL on 27 February, 1930.

1948

- April 7 – HMCS Magnificent (aircraft carrier) commissioned in England for service with the RCN.

- 29 July – HMCS ROYAL ROADS (along with Royal Military College) became a Canadian Services College and began training Naval and Air Force Cadets.
- 1 December – HMCS SHEARWATER, RCN Air Station, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, was commissioned.
- 1949**
- 1 May – HMCS CORNWALLIS was recommissioned and resumed New Entry training.
- 24 October – A program for the construction in Canadian Shipyards of anti-submarine destroyer escorts for the RCN was announced by the Minister of National Defence in Parliament.
- 1950**
- 25 June – Republic of Korea invaded by Communist forces.
- 5 July – HMC Ships CAYUGA, SIOUX and ATHABASKAN sailed from Esquimalt with instructions to place themselves under the orders of the United Nations Supreme Commander for operations in Korean waters.
- 4 December – A UN task force under Canadian command and consisting of HMC Ships CAYUGA, ATHABASKAN and SIOUX, HMA Ships WARRAMUNGA and BATAAN and the USS FOREST ROYAL covered the seaborne withdrawal of civilians and rear echelon troops from Pyongyang through the port of Chinnampo.
- 1951**
- 23 July – Recruiting of Wrens in the RCN (Reserve) commenced.
- 1952**
- 14 January – HMCS UGANDA renamed QUEBEC.
- 2 October – HMCS IROQUOIS hit in action with shore batteries; two killed, one died of wounds and ten wounded – the only battle casualties suffered by the RCN in the Korean operations.
- 1953**
- 27 July – Cease fire in Korea
- 8 July – HMCS LABRADOR, arctic patrol vessel, commissioned.
- 11 August – HMCS VENTURE was commissioned as a junior officer training establishment in HMC Dockyard, Esquimalt.
- 27 Sept. – HMCS LABRADOR arrived at Esquimalt via the Arctic. She was the first naval ship and the first deep draught vessel of any kind to traverse the Northwest Passage.
- 21 Nov. – HMCS LABRADOR arrived in Halifax, having circumnavigated the North American continent.
- 28 Nov. – First group of 48 RCN volunteers left Montreal by air for submarine training with the Royal Navy.
- 1955**
- 26 January – The Cabinet approved the entry of wrens as members of the RCN Regular Force.
- 24 September – HMCS SIOUX returned to Esquimalt; the last ship of the RCN to return from the Korean operations.
- 28 October – HMCS ST. LAURENT, the first warship of all-Canadian design and construction, was commissioned.
- 12 December – First Banshee jet fighters arrived at the Naval Air Station, Shearwater, N.S. for operational use with the RCN.
- 1956**
- 13 June – HMCS QUEBEC paid off at Halifax.
- 1957**
- 11 January – HMCS MAGNIFICENT arrived in Port Said with the main body of the Canadian contribution in troops and material to the United Nations Emergency Force controlling the Israeli-Egyptian border.
- 17 January – HMCS BONAVENTURE commissioned at Belfast, Northern Ireland. She was the first aircraft carrier to be owned outright by Canada and incorporates the post war technical developments: angled deck, mirror landing aid and steam catapult. HMCS MAGNIFICENT was later returned to the Royal Navy.

- 22-24 August – Tracker anti-submarine Aircraft accepted for operational use with RCN.
- 20 November – HMCS LABRADOR, paid off, to be transferred to the Department of Transport.

1958

- 7 June – HMCS RESTIGOUCHE commissioned. She was the first of her class of destroyer escorts improved from the "St. Laurent" Class.
- 15 July – HRH the Princess Margaret reviewed the fleet in Royal Roads, off the coast of Vancouver Island. This was the first fleet review ever held in Canadian waters.
- 15 October – HMCS ONTARIO paid off at Esquimalt.
- 10 December – Banshee jet fighters equipped with Sidewinder air-to-air missile.

1959

- 28 Jan – HMCS Cape Scott, maintenance vessel, commissioned at Halifax as a mobile repair ship.
- 6 June – Engagement term for men recruited into RCN lowered to 3 years from 5, and a system of common entry introduced.
- 26 June – RCN ships took part in formal opening of St. Lawrence Seaway by Her Majesty The Queen.
- 1 August – Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth presented her colour to the Royal Canadian Navy at Halifax.
- 14 November – HMCS CHAUDIERE commissioned at Halifax, the last of the Restigouche class destroyer escorts built for the RCN.

THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY COMPOSITION OF THE FLEET

The Royal Canadian Navy began 1960 with 62 warships in commission. This was the largest peacetime fleet in the history of the RCN.

It included an aircraft carrier, seven Restigouche and seven St. Laurent class destroyer escorts, 11 other destroyer escorts, 18 frigates, ten minesweepers, two mobile repair ships and six smaller craft.

There were also two Royal Navy submarines under the operational control of the RCN.

Six naval vessels were in reserve and three were on loan to other Federal Government departments.

There were three first-line air squadrons, one operating Tracker anti-submarine aircraft, one composed of anti-submarine helicopters and one armed with Banshee jet fighters. Four other squadrons were engaged in training, evaluation and other duties.

The fleet is to be augmented in the future by six destroyer escorts similar to the Restigouche class. Work has begun on three of the ships and construction of the other three is scheduled to start in 1960.

Plans are also well advanced for the construction in Canada of a 22,000 ton tanker-supply ship for the Navy.

The following list shows the composition of the fleet:

ATLANTIC COMMAND Ships in Commission based at Halifax, N. S.

TYPE	NUMBER	CLASS
Aircraft Carrier	1	Light Fleet
Destroyer Escorts	7	Restigouche
Destroyer Escorts	7	Tribal
Destroyer Escorts	2	Algonquin
Destroyer Escorts	2	other classes
Frigates	11	Prestonian
Minesweepers	6	Bay
Mobile Repair	1	Cape
Diving Depot Ship	1	Bangor
Gate Vessel	1	Porte
Patrol Craft	3	Bird
Submarines	2	"A" (Royal Navy)
Total	44	

Ships in Reserve at Halifax, N. S.

TYPE	NUMBER	CLASS
Coastal Escort	1	Bangor
Gate Vessel	1	Porte

General: Destroyer Escorts, Frigates, Minesweepers and Submarines are assigned to squadrons. In the Atlantic Command there are three destroyer escort squadrons, two escort squadrons composed of frigates, one minesweeping squadron, and one submarine squadron.

* These submarines are under RCN operational control.

PACIFIC COMMAND

Ships in Commission based at Esquimalt, B.C.

TYPE	NUMBER	CLASS
Destroyer Escorts	7	St. Laurent
Frigates	7	Prestonian
Minesweepers	4	Bay
Mobile Repair	1	Cape
Yacht	1	Ketch *
Total <u>20</u>		

Ships in Reserve at Esquimalt, B. C.

TYPE	NUMBER	CLASS
Coastal Escort	1	Bangor
Gate Vessels	2	Porte
Minesweeper	1	Coastal

General: Destroyer escorts, frigates, and minesweepers are assigned to squadrons. In the Pacific Command there is one destroyer escort squadron, one escort/training squadron composed of frigates, and one minesweeping squadron.

* For officer-cadet training

AIR SQUADRONS OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

ATLANTIC COMMAND

SQUADRON DESIGNATION	TYPES OF AIRCRAFT	FUNCTION OF SQUADRON
VS 880	CS2F-1 Trackers	Anti-submarine
VF 870	F2H3 Banshees	Fleet air Defence
HS 50	HO4S3 Helicopters	Anti-submarine
VU 32	AS 3 Avengers CS2F-1 Trackers T-33 Silver Stars C-45 Expedito	Aircrew training, general duties, fleet requirements
HU 21	HO4S3 Helicopters HTL Helicopters	Aircrew training, fleet requirements, search and rescue
VX 10	Various	Evaluation of aircraft and equipment

PACIFIC COMMAND

VU 33	AS 3 Avengers HUP Helicopters C-45 Expedito	Aircrew training, fleet requirements.
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AIR SQUADRONS OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY (RESERVE)

VC 920	AS 3 Avengers C-45 Expeditor	Training
VC 922	Harvards C-45 Expeditor	Training

General: Aircraft in the Atlantic Command operate from the aircraft carrier Bonaventure and from HMCS Shearwater, the Naval Air Station near Dartmouth, N.S.

Aircraft in the Pacific Command are stationed at Patricia Bay, B.C.

Of the reserve squadrons, VC 920 is based at RCAF Station Downsview, Toronto, Ont., and VC 922 at Patricia Bay, B.C.

HISTORY OF CANADIAN NAVAL AVIATION

In the same year in which the Royal Canadian Navy is observing its fiftieth anniversary, one of its major components — naval aviation — will be celebrating its fifteenth.

Naval aviation was officially constituted in the RCN in December, 1945. Since then it has become firmly established as an integral part of Canada's Navy, with an essential and increasingly important role in anti-submarine operations, the RCN's specialty.

Focal point of the naval aviation effort is the 19,000-ton aircraft carrier, HMCS Bonaventure, now in her fourth year in commission. From the Bonaventure's deck fly twin-engine anti-submarine Trackers, Banshee all-weather jet fighters and anti-submarine helicopters.

Shore base of naval air is HMCS Shearwater, near Dartmouth, N.S. Shearwater occupies 1,300 acres, is manned by 2,100 naval and 700 civilian personnel, and is a training establishment, logistic support base and operational station, all in one.

The first traces of naval aviation in Canada date back to 1918, when the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service was formed on the East Coast to carry out anti-submarine operations. An air station was established on the shores of Eastern Passage, Halifax Harbour, but the end of hostilities brought an end also to these first stirrings of the Navy's air arm.

In the Second World War, the successes achieved against submarines by combinations of carrier-borne aircraft and surface ships led to recognition of a need for the RCN to have an air capability.

As early as April, 1943, a senior RCN officer was authorized to visit British and American ships and air establishments to report on the feasibility of forming a Canadian naval air service.

The first fruit of the survey was the manning by Canadians of two Royal Navy escort carriers, HM Ships Nabob and Puncher.

These carriers saw action in the European theatre and provided the Canadians with valuable experience. However, aircrews of both carriers were mostly British.

Late in 1943, officers with air experience were appointed to Naval Headquarters and given the task of planning the organization for Canadian naval aviation. Since naval aviation was not officially sanctioned, their work had to be done in addition to normal staff duties.

Early in 1944, the results of a semi-official survey of Canadians already flying with the Royal Navy showed that many would be interested in transferring to a Canadian air arm. Meanwhile, volunteers from serving Canadian officers were being selected to commence flying training. The numbers available were boosted when the Fleet Air Arm opened its lists to RAF and RCAF aircrew in order to meet the prospects of a prolonged Pacific war. The RCAF response was considerable, and led to a large pool of aviators with which RN squadrons could be "Canadianized" in anticipation of their subsequent transfer to the RCN.

Other problems also were being overcome. Air engineers and air mechanics, fighter direction officers, air radio mechanics, air electricians and other highly specialized personnel essential to carrier operations were being trained in the United Kingdom. Arrangements were made for two light fleet carriers to be loaned to Canada for operation with the British fleet in the Pacific theatre. Four first-line squadrons, manned to a considerable extent by Canadians, were earmarked for these carriers.

Before the RCN was ready to take to the air, the war ended. The embryo survived the subsequent cut-backs, however, and naval aviation officially became a part of the Royal Canadian Navy in December, 1945.

In January, 1946, HMCS Warrior, on loan from the Royal Navy, was commissioned. On March 31, 1946, the Warrior arrived at Halifax and flew off her aircraft to land at the RCAF Station at Eastern Passage. Thus, 28 years later, naval air returned to the site of its First World War predecessor.

In February, 1948, the Warrior was returned to the United Kingdom, to be replaced by her more modern sister, the Magnificent. Later that year the RCAF Station at Eastern Passage was turned over to the Navy and commissioned as HMCS Shearwater.

In 1951, the RCN acquired its first helicopters and in 1955 received its first jet aircraft, the all-weather Banshees. Designed especially for anti-submarine operations, Trackers began to come into service in 1957, coincident with the replacement of the Magnificent by HMCS Bonaventure, the first carrier to be owned outright by Canada.

This year the Navy has begun to take delivery of the CS2F-2, a modified Tracker containing new and more effective anti-submarine equipment as well as other instruments.

The unique capabilities of the helicopter have been turned to advantage in the anti-submarine sphere, and considerable progress has been made by the RCN in developing the tactical use of helicopters in both the search and attack roles.

Completing the family of first-line operational aircraft is the twin-jet all-weather Banshee, armed with the deadly Sidewinder air-to-air guided missile. Primary task of the Banshee is to provide fighter defence for the fleet, but the Navy's jets are also employed, when ashore, as part of the North American air defence system on the east coast.

Altogether, the RCN has more than 135 operational and support aircraft in service. Aircrew and those engaged in maintenance and support duties total approximately 2,050. This is without counting non-air personnel manning the Bonaventure and the naval air station.

The fledgling of 1945 has become a large and powerful bird, armed, equipped and trained to provide the Navy — of which it is an indivisible part — with the aerial element essential in modern operations at sea.

THE ROLE OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

The role of the Royal Canadian Navy is to defend Canada and to contribute to the collective defence of the NATO area against attack from the sea. In addition, the RCN may be required to assist in the support of the United Nations, as directed by the Canadian Government.

To meet its role, the RCN maintains, in a state of readiness, an effective force of anti-submarine ships and aircraft with up-to-date equipment and logistic support.

Both the specialized task and over-all role of the RCN are made necessary by the present existence of a submarine threat which, in terms of numbers and destructive potential, is far greater than any the world has ever known.

As its part in countering this threat, the RCN has achieved a position where it has more ships and men at sea than ever before in peacetime. Continual, concentrated training programmes have raised efficiency to a high level.

While the emphasis has been on the creation of forces in being, in accordance with its assigned duties, the Navy is also giving careful attention to the future, in the form of study, research, development and planning, and of programmes of re-equipment and new construction that will give added strength and flexibility to a fleet that in size is small but in quality is determined to be second to none.

STRENGTH OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

The total personnel strength of the regular force of the Royal Canadian Navy on January 1, 1960, was 19,926 officers, men, and wrens. Of this number, 9,849 officers and men, or 49 percent of the RCN total, were serving at sea. This is one of the highest sea-shore ratios of any Navy.

Manning the fleet in the Atlantic Command were 6,988 officers and men. In the Pacific Command, 2,861 officers and men were serving at sea. In HMC Dockyard, Halifax, and in the Navy's other shore establishments on the east coast, there were 7,973 personnel. On the west coast, 2,114 officers and men were serving ashore.

At the beginning of January, 1960, there were 2,572 officers, 17,205 men and 159 Wrens in the RCN. In addition, there were 419 officer cadets, 211 technical apprentices and 38 bandsmen apprentices under training.

The ship with the largest complement in the RCN is the aircraft carrier, HMCS Bonaventure, with more than 1,000 officers and men, including air personnel. At the other end of the scale are the Bird class patrol craft, each of which is manned by one chief petty officer and 17 men.

HMCS Shearwater, the naval air station near Dartmouth, N.S. has the largest complement of any shore establishment in the RCN. On January 1, 1960, there were 1,901 naval personnel serving on the air station. The establishment with the smallest complement is HMCS Avalon, at St. John's, Newfoundland, with three officers and five men.

At January 1, 1960, there were 3,516 officers, officer cadets, men and wrens on the active list of the Royal Canadian Navy (Reserve).

There were 13,000 civilians employed with the Navy at the beginning of the year.



ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

1910 - 1960

THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY (RESERVE)

*Roll along Wavy Navy, roll along,
Roll along Wavy Navy, roll along,
If they ask us who we are,
We're the RCNVR,
Roll along Wavy Navy, roll along.*

Words of a song heard in ports around the world, they were a rallying point for 80,000 young Canadians who made their country's navy the third largest in the free world.

The achievements of the RCNVR—Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve—and of the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve during the Second World War more than justified a decision taken in 1923 to set aside a sizeable portion of a limited naval budget to create reserve forces.

That decision enabled Canadian naval authorities in 1939 to call up 1,800 trained reserves immediately, and provided for an organization that was to prove invaluable in the recruitment and training of the thousands of young men who sought to serve their country in the Navy.

Similarly today, the Royal Canadian Navy (Reserve), successor to the RCNVR and the RCNR, is designed to produce officers and men trained and ready for any emergency.

The story of Canada's naval reserves really began more than 100 years ago, when a militia act was passed authorizing the formation of a provincial naval corps on the Great Lakes.

The concept of a body of Canadian citizen-sailors made its appearance in June, 1846, when most of the previous military regulations, passed prior to the union of Upper and Lower Canada, were either repealed or consolidated by a new act bringing control of the militia into line with conditions resulting from the creation of the Province of Canada.

The act authorized the Governor to form a "Provincial Naval Corps" and to appoint a commodore who would rank with lieutenant-colonels of the militia.

In 1855, a new militia act was passed authorizing formation of "Volunteer Marine Companies" at Kingston, Cobourg, Toronto, Hamilton, Port Stanley, Dunnville and Oakville. Each company was to consist of a captain, a lieutenant and 50 men, and provision was made for appointment of a commodore to command the whole.

In 1862, provision was made for the formation of "Marine and Naval Companies." While the name had changed, the locations of the seven companies remained the same.

The Volunteer Militia Act of 1863 substituted the phrase "Naval Companies" and provided that "Each Naval Company shall consist of one Captain and such other officers and such number of seamen not exceeding 75 as may be appointed by the Commander-in-Chief." That same year, the Garden Island Naval Company was formed, bringing the number of Naval Companies to eight.

By 1866, five Naval Companies were still in existence. They were located at Garden Island, Toronto, Hamilton, Dunnville and Port Stanley. In March of that year, the Garden Island company was replaced by a newly-formed infantry company, No. 5 Company, 4th "Frontenac" Battalion.

Under the threat of Fenian raids in that same year, the remaining four Naval Companies were called out. They were placed on active service on March 8, 1866, and were relieved from duty on the 26th of the same month. In June, 1866, they were called out again.

The Naval Companies at Hamilton and Port Stanley performed shore duty during this period and did it well. In his 1910 history of the Fenian raids, Captain John A. Macdonald wrote: "Danger hovered everywhere, and the utmost vigilance was necessary to guard every point. The country was overrun with Fenian spies and emissaries, and the arrests of suspicious characters were numerous. Even at home there were traitors who needed watching, as there were some who were ready to give countenance and support to the enemy. Thus the companies who remained at their local headquarters, and the Home Guards who were enrolled for home protection, did remarkably good service along those lines."

In August, 1866, the Toronto Naval Company was disbanded, and the Dunnville Naval Company suffered the same fate in January, 1867. During 1867, the Port Stanley Naval Company was replaced by an infantry company, but this new company was disbanded in September, 1868.

The first Militia and Defence Act of the Dominion was passed in 1868. All authorized volunteer corps existing on October 1, 1868, the effective date of the new act, were permitted to continue in the militia provided they signified their intention to do so by February, 1869.

It appears that the Hamilton Naval Company failed to take advantage of this offer and was accordingly dropped. Thus the last Naval Company of the militia disappeared.

Two Marine Companies were organized in Bonaventure County, P.Q., in February, 1869, but were removed from the active militia list in June, 1874, by a militia general order reducing the strength of the active militia.

A third Marine Company was later organized in Bonaventure County but was disbanded in March, 1874, "having become non-effective."

A Naval Brigade, formed at Halifax during 1868, remained in existence until it became the 2nd Halifax Brigade of Garrison Artillery on December 9, 1870.

Ten years later came the unfortunate incident of HMS Charybdis, the first Canadian-owned warship. An old-type steam corvette which had just finished seven years on the China Station, the Charybdis was turned over to the Canadian government by the British, who did not consider her worth the expense of refit for another commission.

Intended for use in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and for training naval volunteers and boys, she was repaired at the expense of the Canadian Government and sailed to Saint John, N.B., early in 1881. While there she broke loose in a gale and damaged harbour shipping. On another occasion, two Saint John citizens were drowned when a rotten gang plank broke as they were walking on board.

The Government was severely criticized over the Charybdis affair and the British Admiralty was asked to take back its gift. The Minister of Marine and Fisheries said that, during the Atlantic voyage, the ship had proved heavy to handle and would require a larger crew, meaning a greater annual expenditure than had been contemplated. A heavy outlay also would be necessary in order to prepare for training purposes. The Admiralty agreed to take the Charybdis back and, in August, 1882, she was towed to Halifax where she was delivered to the naval authorities there.

From the point of view of Canadian naval development, the Charybdis incident was unfortunate, for it was often afterwards referred to in Canada as a warning to those who advocated any Canadian naval undertaking.

The first really effective naval reserve force in what is now Canada, was the Royal Newfoundland Naval Reserve. Manned by young fishermen from St. John's and the numerous out-ports, this force, an integral part of the Royal Naval Reserve, was raised at the turn of the century. Their drill-ship, HMS Calypso (later renamed HMS Briton), was a familiar sight for many years. Some 1500 R. Nfld. N.R. men served with distinction in HM Ships during the First World War and, in fact, more than 100 of them joined HMCS Niobe when she sailed for war service with the Fourth Cruiser Squadron in 1914. The Royal Newfoundland Naval Reserve, a culmination of the traditional Newfoundland "nursery of seamen" of the days of Queen Elizabeth I, was disbanded in 1920.

In 1909, a memorandum on "Naval Defence considered in connection with the constitution of the Naval Militia of Canada," was prepared by Brigadier-General W.D. Otter, then Chief of the Canadian General Staff.

After tracing the history of naval affairs in Canada, he warned: "Canada can no longer afford to neglect her naval resources. On the one hand, the naval and military power of the United States goes on increasing; on the other, a great portion of the British Fleet lies manacled in home waters. In other words, in the event of war with the United States, Canada will remain without assistance from other parts of the Empire for a period longer than has hitherto been reckoned."

It was not, however, the threat of United States naval might, but that of Germany which turned the tide. Realizing she could not forever rest securely inactive behind the protective power of the Royal Navy, Canada brought the Royal Canadian Navy into being with the Naval Service Act of May 4, 1910.

Provision also was made for a Naval Reserve Force and a Naval Volunteer Force, but it was to be several years before steps were taken to implement this portion of the act.

In 1913, a group of enthusiasts came forward in Victoria, B.C., with the proposal that they form a naval reserve. The group was composed mainly of young men who had seen previous reserve service with the Royal Navy. They wanted to establish a force similar to the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, which had been formed in 1903.

In this the group was encouraged by Commander Walter Hose, RCN, Senior Naval Officer at Esquimalt, who was to have much to do with citizen-sailors in future years and may well be called the "father" of today's naval reserve.

In addition, the enthusiasts had the support of a number of professional and business men in Victoria.

Finally given permission to use the facilities at Esquimalt, the volunteers drilled periodically at the dockyard and several regular force officers and petty officers volunteered to act as instructors.

This small body, which had no official status, no meeting place of its own and no pay-days, blazed the trail for all the official Canadian naval reserve organizations that were to follow.

In May, 1914, the government established a Naval Volunteer Force under the provisions of the Naval Service Act. The force was to consist of officers and men enrolled as volunteers, but engaging to serve in time of war.

With an authorized strength of 1,200 men, the force was to be organized into 100-man companies within three sub-divisions – the Atlantic sub-division including the area from the Atlantic Coast inland to a line just west of Quebec City; the Lake sub-division extending from there to beyond Brandon, Man., and the Pacific sub-division taking in the whole area farther to the west. The companies were to be located in the larger cities at first and in a few smaller cities later.

When hostilities began, however, the only naval reserve force actually in existence was the volunteer unit at Victoria. Its members took an important part in the manning of HMCS Rainbow, the submarines CC 1 and CC 2 and their parent ship, the sloop Shearwater, and other vessels at Esquimalt. They also provided some men for the British cruiser Newcastle after her arrival in B.C. waters.

Otherwise, only preliminary steps had been taken towards establishing the reserve on a country-wide basis. In fact, no serious attempt was made during the first year-and-a-half of war to enlist any considerable number of men for naval service.

In February, 1916, the Minister of Naval Service offered to obtain recruits in Canada for service in the RN. The Admiralty accepted and the Canadian Government authorized enrolment of 5,000 men in the Overseas Division of the Royal Naval Canadian Volunteer Reserve.

Approximately 1,700 men were enrolled under this scheme and the number probably would have been larger had not the East Coast Patrols later in the war become the primary naval need as far as manning was concerned.

These volunteers served in a number of areas, largely manning trawlers and drifters on anti-submarine patrols. The latter years of the war saw them serving in British home waters, based on HMS Cormorant at Gibraltar and at Sierra Leone, British West Africa.

Canadian warships today wear a maple leaf device on their funnels, but it was on British naval vessels serving out of British West Africa that the device was first seen – placed there by the Canadian volunteers, anxious that all should know the origin of the ships' companies.

The contribution by naval reservists to the huge expansion of Canada's naval force during the Second World War was foreshadowed by the RNCVR contribution of the First World War.

In round numbers, the total strength of the RCN at the end of July, 1914, did not exceed 350 officers and men, while the RNCVR was composed of about 250 officers and men, all of them in the Victoria company. By the end of the war, there had been a total enrolment of 9,600 as follows:

RCN	– 1,000
RN and RNR	– 600
RNCVR – Atlantic Sub-division	4,300
Pacific Sub-division	2,000
Overseas Division	1,700
Total	– 9,600

Deaths from all causes totalled 150.

In addition to the above enrolment, a large but unknown number of Canadians enlisted and served in the RN.

In line with post-war demobilization, the RNCVR was disbanded on June 15, 1920.

The naval reserve of today had its beginning in the 1920's. The funds made available to the RCN in 1923 were scarcely sufficient to keep one warship in operation and Walter Hose (then Director of Naval Service, with the rank of Commodore) decided the money could be better used in organizing the naval reserve.

The Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve was officially established on January 31, 1923, with an authorized complement of 70 officers and 930 men. The prefix "Royal" was soon afterwards added to the title.

At about the same time the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve was established, with an authorized complement of 70 officers and 430 men.

The RCNVR enlisted civilians who did not follow a sea-faring career; the RCNR consisted of men who possessed a professional knowledge of ships and the sea.

The quarters for the first RCNVR divisions could hardly be called ideal. One division was located in an old firehall, another in rooms over a laundry and others in workshops, basements and warehouses.

The RCNVR was originally organized into companies or half-companies, in each of the following cities: Calgary, Charlottetown, Edmonton, Halifax, Hamilton, Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec, Regina, Saint John, Saskatoon, Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg. Montreal had two companies, one French-speaking and the other English-speaking. By September, 1939, units were also in existence in Kingston, London, Port Arthur and Prince Rupert.

During the later 1930's, as additional warships were acquired, the complements of both the RCN and RCNVR were increased.

During this period personnel of the RCNVR and the RCNR were earmarked for various duties which they would be required to assume at the outbreak of war.

In 1937, two more types of reserves came into being. One was the Supplementary Reserve, a part of the RCNVR. The other was the Fishermen's Reserve, which was established as a separate section of the RCNR. The Supplementary Reserve consisted largely of yachtsmen. The Fishermen's Reserve, as its name implies, was made up of fishermen and was confined to the West Coast.

On September 1, 1939, the reserves were placed on active service and, on September 10, Canada declared war. There were at this time approximately 2,000 officers and men in the regular force and another 2,000 in the two reserves. Thereafter, most of these who enlisted in the navy were enrolled as "VRs". The estimate of September, 1939, for a strength of 5,000 was periodically raised until, by July, 1940, an overall figure of more than 15,000 was laid down.

February of that year saw the strength of the RCNVR exceed that of the regular force for the first time and in January, 1941, when the navy consisted of roughly 15,000 persons, about 8,000 of them were volunteer reservists.

In all, approximately 100,000 Canadians were enrolled in the Canadian navy during the Second World War. The greatest number borne at any one time was on January, 1945, when more than 87,000 officers and men were serving. Of this total, approximately 78,000 belonged to the RCNVR, 5,300 to the RCNR and 4,384 to the RCN.

This number did not include 5,300 women in the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service, an auxiliary force which in later years was to become an integral part of both the regular force and the reserve. The WRCNS was officially established on July 31, 1942.

The special roles of the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets and of the University Naval Training Divisions deserve mention. The sea cadets, sponsored by the Navy League of Canada, had been in existence since 1917, but the navy did not begin assisting their training and administration with the Navy League until 1941. The RCSC had 23 corps in June, 1941, and by the end of the war there were 92 with a total enrolment of about 15,000. Sea Cadets provided a large pool of young men well started on their naval training.

The UNTD's were organized in 1943 at 15 universities and five hundred and fifty-four officers and men of the UNTD went on active service during the remainder of hostilities.

The large numbers of naval volunteers took care of the growth of the Canadian naval fleet. From six destroyers in 1939, the navy expanded to a fleet of approximately 400 fighting ships. In the North Atlantic alone Canadian ships escorted more than 25,000 (cargo-laden) merchant ships from North American to United Kingdom ports.

By 1944, Canadian warships were carrying the major burden of North Atlantic convoy duty and most of the officers and men who manned these ships were members of the reserves.

Officers and men of the reserves also served in the Mediterranean, on the Murmansk convoy routes, in the English Channel, the Caribbean and in the Pacific.

The only Canadian naval Victoria Cross of the war was won by a naval reservist. He was Lieutenant Robert Hampton Gray, DSC, RCNVR, serving in the RN aircraft carrier *Formidable*. At the cost of his own life, he sank a Japanese destroyer by crashing his damaged aircraft into the ship.

When the war ended, a number of reservists continued their naval service. Some transferred to the regular force, others served in the interim force. But the large majority returned to "civvy street", taking up where they left off when they joined the navy. On January 1, 1946, the RCNR and RCNVR were combined to become the Royal Canadian Navy (Reserve).

The divisions were re-established on a peacetime basis and many war veterans resumed their association with the Navy as members of the RCN(R).

In 1949, the training program underwent considerable change. Besides providing general training, specified divisions were made responsible for specialized training in such subjects as gunnery, communications, torpedo anti-submarine and navigation direction.

The increasing world tension that followed the brief respite of the early postwar years brought an expansion of the Armed Forces, and again the call went out to the reserves. Officers and men were enrolled for limited lengths of full-time service with the opportunity of transferring to the regular force. Many stayed in the service.

In the midst of this rebuilding and transition period, the United Nations took action in Korea against North Korean aggression and again reservists were sailing in RCN ships in a theatre of war.

As the Korean situation gradually eased from an all-out war to a police action, the strength of the regular force began to near its authorized ceiling. The complement had been filled by a mixture of new entries through direct recruiting and by transfers from the reserve.

In April, 1953, a major step was taken toward building the RCN(R) into an organization which could produce officers and men who would be trained and ready if another emergency arose.

That step was the establishment of a new command known as Commanding Officer Naval Divisions, with headquarters at Hamilton, Ont. Prior to this, the reserve force had been administered from Naval Headquarters in Ottawa by the Director of Naval Reserves.

A training centre for new entry reserves was established at the new headquarters, to provide training ashore and afloat during the summer months. The headquarters and Great Lakes Training Centre are located on Hamilton Bay, with excellent berthing facilities under the ship name of HMCS Patriot.

Ships up to the size of anti-submarine frigates are now assigned to the command during the summer and carry out training cruises on the Great Lakes.

The WRCNS returned to the scene in 1951, this time as an integral part of the RCN(R), its members receiving the same rates of pay and governed by the same rules and regulations as the men. On January 26, 1955, the Cabinet approved the entry of Wrens as members of the RCN regular force.

In 1958, the complement of the RCN(R) was set at 900 officers and 3,700 men and wrens.

Today there are 21 naval divisions located in major population centres from the Atlantic to the Pacific. All provinces are represented. Regular force staffs maintain the divisions' buildings and provide the necessary daily administration.

The Commanding Officer Naval Divisions at the Hamilton headquarters is Commodore E.W. Finch-Noyes, CD, RCN. At COND, a staff of regular force officers and men co-ordinates the training of reserve personnel and the maintenance of all naval reserve establishments. The command is responsible to Naval Headquarters in Ottawa for carrying out policies and orders affecting Canada's naval reserves.

Today, as in the past, the officers and men of the Royal Canadian Navy (Reserve) stand ready to serve Canada when and where they are needed.