



Naval History Study Package

- Part 1** **THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY**
- Part 2** **THE HISTORY OF CAPTAIN REGINALD JACKSON**
- Part 3** **BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NAVY LEAGUE OF CANADA**

- This package contains a brief history of the Canadian Navy, Captain Jackson and the NLC.
- You need to study this material to be successful for the upcoming Naval History exam.
- There will be only one chance to write the exam.
- The Cadet with the highest mark on the exam will be awarded the F.R. FERGUSON award

NLCC CAPTAIN JACKSON
Naval History Information Package

PART 1

THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

The history of Canada has always been closely tied to the sea, even when it was named New France, most of all exploration was done by ships. When General Wolf won the battle at The Plains of Abraham, it was in fact the navy made it possible. The Redcoats were transported and put ashore by the British Navy.

As early as **1775**, during the American Revolution and again in the War of 1812, the Great Lakes were patrolled by the navy. During this time, several battles were fought by ships manned by British seamen. The ships were built in Canada by Canadians.

1878 An international crisis arose between Britain and Imperial Russia. The Canadian Government felt it needed protection on the Atlantic Coast, but the British said no because it would cost too much. The British felt Canada should arm some of her own vessels. Britain agreed to supply guns and training.

1880 The Governor General of Canada asked Europe for a ship so that Canada could start its own coastal defence force. The Admiralty agreed and made an old wooden frigate available. HMS Charybdis was an old steam vessel built in the days when warships were being built as fully rigged ships with a coal fired engine for use when they did not have wind to propel themselves by sail. These were the days when one order that could be heard was “down funnel, make sail”.

The first of many troubles with the Charybdis was its worn-out boilers. These were replaced at Canada’s expense. Eventually, limping across the Atlantic, the ship tied up alongside in St. John, N.B. When a storm blew up, the Charybdis broke adrift and damaged several ships in the harbour. A little later, tied up again, two people fell through the rotten wood of the brow and were drowned. That was enough! The British were asked to take the ship back and Canada was back to square one. There has never been another Charybdis in the Canadian Navy.

1887 Conferences began in England that would last 12 years. The British were trying to persuade their colonies to start their own navy. Canada could not afford this expense. Opponents just had to mention “Charybdis” and again the Royal Navy was left in control of Naval strategy.

1908 Training for a Canadian Navy began this year.

1909 People realized that Canada’s coastline was one of the longest in the world and that it was edged by three oceans.

May 4 1910 The Naval Service Act came into force under Prime Minister Laurier’s government. Now Canada had its own Navy. The dockyards in Halifax and Esquimalt were turned over to Canada from Britain and a Naval College was founded in Halifax. Two old cruisers, HMS Niobe (east coast) and Rainbow (west coast), were bought from the Royal Navy and operated by officers and men who were on loan from the Royal Navy. Rear Admiral Charles Kingsmill, a Canadian who served in the Royal Navy, was appointed to form the new Navy and select other British Officers to take on the task of starting a Canadian naval force.

1911 The Canadian Navy became the Royal Canadian Navy by order of the King of England. Commander Walter Hose (who was the father of the modern Canadian Navy) transferred from the Royal Navy to the Royal Navy Canadian Navy.

Sir Wilfred Laurier's government was defeated in elections and Sir Robert Borden became Prime Minister. He believed money should be paid to England and that the Royal Navy should continue protecting Canadian Maritime affairs. This was hotly debated, and the argument carried on right up to the beginning of World War 1. The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) was neglected, the British crews went home, and not enough Canadians were left to fully man the two ships. The Niobe was damaged and almost lost. 149 men were recruited and there were 149 desertions. The RCN had hit an all time low.

1914 On August 4 Germany invaded Belgium and World War 1 began. Canada's two neglected ships were immediately placed at the disposal of the Royal Navy. In the meantime, Premier Richard McBride of British Columbia purchased two rejected Chilean Navy submarines (CC-1 and CC-2) through the United States. The Premier heard about these submarines in a business meeting and quickly purchased them without Federal consultation or consent. It was now a fact the Province of British Columbia had its own Navy. These subs were sailed secretly into Canadian waters on the very day that war was declared and presented to the RCN a few days later where they served for the first three years of the war.

The war effort of Canada was concentrated on the Army, while the Navy was confined to coastal patrols and saw very little action. The total naval losses from 1914 to 1918 were only about 150 out of 1,000 officers and 8,000 men. However, the number of Canadians who joined the Royal Navy or how many were killed during their service is not known. We do know four Canadian Midshipmen were killed at the Battle of Cornwall.

During World War 1 the RCN had become accepted by the public and was further established during the 1930's depression although the RCN was reduced to two destroyers.

1921-39 The RCN consisted of one cruiser (Aurora), two submarines and two destroyers (the Patriot and Patrician). This was actually a very wise decision in view of the shallow coastal waters and the anti-submarine role which the RCN was to assume.

1923 The Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserves was established along with the Royal Canadian Naval Reserves (like HMCS Tecumseh). These two reserves were the reason why the Navy grew so large during World War II.

1928 Admiral Walter Hose became the Chief of Naval Staff.

1934 Commodore Nelles relieved Walter Hose as Chief of Naval Staff. People were concerned with the growing power of Japanese and Germany military that year. This allowed the RCN to grow slowly.

1938 The RCN had six destroyers and five minesweepers with one more destroyer on order.

1939 World War II was declared resulting in the RCN having 64 corvettes and 28 minesweepers built. By the end of the war nearly 100,000 Canadians were in the Navy. For the invasion of Normandy the RCN supplied over 100 ships.

- 1943** The HMCS Haida was built in England and sailed with her sister ships the Iroquois, Huron and Athabaskan. The Haida was employed on convoy duties to Murmansk and was part of the force that decoyed the Germany battle cruiser Scharnhorst out of hiding.
- 1944** The HMCS Haida operated out of Plymouth, England with the 10th Destroyer Flotilla. Their purpose was to destroy the German surface craft before D-Day. In one day, HMCS Haida sank one destroyer, damaged another and then rescued survivors from the HMCS Athabaskan that had been sank earlier.
- During this period, HMCS Haida was in action practically every time she left harbour. In the spring the HMCS Haida was involved in the sinking of fourteen enemy ships including four destroyers and one U-boat.
- When Canada entered World War II it had a navy consisting of 13 ships and a lot of spirit. When the war was finished the RCN had a reputation of getting things done and had fleet of almost 500 ships, making the RCN the third largest Navy in the world with over 100,000 Canadians in naval uniforms.
- 1952** During the Korean War the RCN was in action again. Eight destroyers were under the command of the United Nations and again the HMCS Haida distinguished herself by sinking a train this time. The RCN was famous for “Train Busting” because we were able to catch a train between tunnels and blow it up.
- 1968** The RCN was abolished and became part of the Canadian Armed Forces - now known as Maritime Command with a new flag and a new general service green uniform.
- 1990** Three services became Army, Navy and Air Force again with their own distinctive uniforms and their own traditions return to them.
- 1995** HMCS Calgary was commissioned as one of Canada’s newest Halifax Class frigates known world-wide as a state-of-the-art warship.
- 2010** The Royal Canadian Navy celebrated its 100th anniversary with many events happening across Canada and in the City of Calgary.
- 2012** Naval officers were given back the Royal curl on their uniform’s sleeves and rank insignia and the Canadian Navy was given back the word “Royal” to become the Royal Canadian Navy once again.

PART 2**THE HISTORY OF CAPTAIN (N) REGINALD JACKSON OBE VRD RCNVR**

We have the honour of being called Navy League Cadet Corps, Captain Jackson #21, after a man who gave his life to the Naval service in Canada. He served in the Royal Canadian Navy during World War II and continued to support the Naval Reserves, Sea Cadets, and the Navy League Cadets for the remainder of his life. **REMEMBER HIM WITH PRIDE!**

- 1906** Reginald Jackson was born in Wales.
- 1909** Reginald Jackson came to Calgary with his parents.
- 1923** Reginald Jackson joined the Navy as a telegraphist being an original recruit of the First Half Company Naval Reserves. His official regimental number was 13024 and he was the 24th recruit.
- 1931** Reginald Jackson was commissioned as a Sub-Lieutenant.
- 1933** Lt Jackson received his first command as Commanding Officer of the H.M.C.S Tecumseh.
- 1939** Lt Jackson served as Commanding Officer on a number of ships including the H.M.C.S Sault Ste. Marie and the H.M.C.S. Star.
- 1945** He became senior officer of a Naval escort group that took part in the Battle of Atlantic and received the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) for his services.
- 1946** After World War II he was again appointed Commanding Officer of the H.M.C.S. Tecumseh and was responsible for the reorganization of HMCS Tecumseh and the Naval Reserves back to a peace-time basis.
- 1951** Promoted to Commander.
- 1955** The Navy League Cadet Corps in Calgary was named Captain Jackson on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserves (R.C.N.V.R.). Captain Jackson's service is commemorated by a bronze plaque which is mounted on Tecumseh's quarterdeck.
- 1965** Captain Jackson received the Navy League Award of Service.
- 1978** Captain Jackson passed away.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Captain Jackson served four times as President of the Southern Alberta Division of the Navy League of Canada.
- He served as President and Past President of the Calgary Branch of Naval Officers Association of Canada (NOAC).
- He was the first Naval President of the Calgary United Services Institute (now the Royal Alberta United Services).
- His nickname was “Cowboy” because he was a prairie sailor.
- The awards he received were numerous with the most important award being the Order of the British Empire (OBE) an award bestowed upon him in 1945 for his distinguished service.
- Reginald Jackson had a long and distinguished career in the Navy. He was a dedicated sailor all his life.
- VRD stands for Volunteer Reserve Decoration.

PART 3**BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NAVY LEAGUE OF CANADA**

From its earliest days, the Navy League has been an active organization. In October 1895, the group in Toronto, during the course of forming a Branch there, had already prepared a submission to the Canadian Government on the subject of maritime defence and the need for a Naval Reserve training program. Continued efforts in support of improved naval defence, either as an imperial or national effort, helped the government when it was formulating Canada’s naval policy and establishing the Canadian Naval Service, forerunner of the Canadian Navy.

- 1923** Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve was established and was much assisted by enrollments from the Boy’s Naval Brigade which was formed after WWI. That same year, the name of the Brigade was changed to “Navy League Sea Cadets” to permit financial assistance from the Federal Department of the Militia.
- 1941** The Royal Canadian Navy became a partner in the Sea Cadet Program.
- 1948** The Navy League of Canada recognized the need for a united youth organization hence the Navy League Cadet program was established for younger boys.
- 1950** Many girls became interested in the training program, therefore the Navy League Wrenettes was formed. These girls had to be 13 to 18 years old which was the same age as the Sea Cadets.
- 1950** Calgary Branch Navy League of Canada was issues Charter #21 to form a Navy League Cadet Corps in Calgary. This Corps was initially named NLCC 21.
- 1955** NLCC 21 was officially named #21 NLCC Captain Jackson after Capt (N) Reginald Jackson.
- 1975** The Sea Cadet program was expanded to include females when the Wrenette program was amalgamated with the Sea Cadet program.
- 1986** NLWC Jenny Wren was disbanded and amalgamated into NLCC Captain Jackson.

2020 Navy League of Canada celebrated it's 125th Anniversary during the COVID 19 pandemic.

**#21 N.L.C.C. CAPTAIN JACKSON HAS A CORP MOTTO:
“UMA CUM ALTERO” WHICH IS LATIN FOR “TOGETHER WE CONQUER”**

Part 4

Brief History of HMCS Tecumseh

HMCS *Tecumseh* is properly referred to as a ship, as it has been officially christened as Her Majesty's Canadian ship. However, since the ship is part of the reserves it does not operate on a full-time basis, except for the museum. Rather, most of the operations occur in the evening on weekdays. The primary operations of the ship include a recruitment office, three cadet corps, the Naval Museum of Alberta Society, and the *Tecumseh* Naval Reserve Band.

1923 The Naval reserve division was started. Originally called the Calgary Half Company.

1941 Calgary Half Company was officially christened as HMCS Tecumseh.

1943 HMCS Tecumseh was moved to its current location at 1820 24 Street SW

1981 One of the tow original buildings at HMCS Tecumseh referred to as “A” Deck burned down in a major fire.

1988 The grand opening of the new built building was held, and the grand opening of the Naval Museum of Alberta was held.

Important Notes

- The only person in the Royal Canadian Navy to receive the Victory Cross for valor in WWII was Lt (N) Robert Hampton Grey RCNVR, who was a member of HMCS Tecumseh.
- The first female flag officer Commodore Loraine Orthleib OMM CD was the past Commanding Officer of HMCS Tecumseh.
- The Commanding Officer of HMCS Tecumseh during the fire of 1981 was Commander Bill Evelyn who has a Navy League Corps in High River named after him.
- Members of HMCS Tecumseh have been deployed to many conflicts and relief missions such as:
 - The Gulf War in 1992
 - The Manitoba Floods in 1997
 - Swiss Air crash in 1997
 - The G8 convention security in 2002
 - The Alberta Floods in 2013