

# **•H•M•C•S. WARRIOR**









THE  
COMMISSIONING BOOK  
OF

**H.M.C.S.  
WARRIOR**

January 24th  
1946



1767 - 1945

*Two hundred years ago the Oak was born,  
From which the heart of this proud vessel springs.  
From sail she grew through ironclad to steam,  
And now . . . the WARRIOR is sprouting wings!*

## **BATTLE HONOURS**

The Saintes and Dominica, 1782.

Blockade of Europe, 1797-1813.

Ferrol, 1805.

Jutland, 1916.



## **COMMISSIONING MESSAGES:**

**Message from the Minister of National Defence  
for Naval Services,**

**The Honourable Douglas C. Abbott, P.C., K.C.,  
B.C.L.**

" It is with pride that I send this message of good wishes to the newest and largest ship of the Royal Canadian Navy and to the officers and ratings who are to sail in her. The commissioning of His Majesty's Canadian Ship "WARRIOR" is indeed a matter in which all Canadians may take pride, for her coming into the Canadian Fleet is significant of the great progress that this country has made in matters maritime within the past few years. A great welcome awaits the ship, and it is my firm hope and belief that a great future awaits her too. She is symbolic of a new era in Canadian Naval affairs. To her Commanding Officer, the Officers and Ratings I send my warmest greetings and sincere good wishes for their wellbeing and for a long and successful career to their ship."



## **COMMISSIONING MESSAGES:**

### **Message from the Chief of the Naval Staff of Canada,**

**Vice-Admiral George C. Jones, C.B., R.C.N.**

"On the occasion of the commissioning of the first Aircraft Carrier of the Royal Canadian Navy, I send my best wishes to the ship's company. We have in the past few years passed many milestones in the development of our Navy and have during the war laid firmly the foundations of a splendid tradition. In the addition of this splendid ship to our fleet, we pass what may be the most significant milestone of them all. I know that "WARRIOR's" ship's company will carry on the traditions we have already established and which have followed so well in those of the great seamen of the past. To the ship and all who sail in her or who fly from her decks I wish all good fortune, fair sailing, happy landings and, should the need arise, good hunting."

### **Message from the High Commissioner for Canada, The Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey, P.C.**

"I welcome this opportunity to send warm greetings to the officers and men of H.M.C.S. "WARRIOR". Wherever she goes, H.M.C.S. "WARRIOR" will be Canada—charged with representing and maintaining the good name of the Canadian people. I know your job will be well done.

Your motto, I am told, is "Haul Together"—a particularly happy one for an aircraft carrier whose duties are in so real a sense a combined operation of warriors of the sea and air.

To all the ship's Company I send good wishes and God Speed."



## **COMMISSIONING MESSAGES:**

**Message from the First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff,**

**Admiral of the Fleet Lord Cunningham of Hyndhope, K.T., G.C.B., D.S.O.**

"Six years of war have once again emphasised the predominant influence of sea power in a conflict between Nations. The same period has clearly demonstrated that a Navy cannot today perform its duty of protecting the sea lines of communication or of assisting in active operations against the enemy save by the use of aircraft operating, not as an independent force, but as an integral part of the Navy and conforming to the requirements of naval tactics and strategy.

A former "WARRIOR" made history as the Royal Navy's first Ironclad. The newest ship bearing this name equally makes history by providing the essential component of naval air power to the Royal Canadian Navy, thus enabling that splendid Service properly to perform its duty of protecting the sea communications of the great Dominion.

**Mrs. Richard Bevan, wife of Rear Admiral R. H. Bevan, C.B., D.S.O., M.V.O.**

Mrs. Bevan launched "WARRIOR" on May 20th, 1944, and has written as follows :

"I shall always follow with the greatest interest and affection the future career of H.M.C.S. "WARRIOR." I am sure that her first commission will be one of the happiest, and would wish that all her consecutive ones could be the same."

A Silver Bugle suitably engraved is being presented to the ship by Mrs. Bevan.



**The Address at the Commissioning Ceremony  
by the Commanding Officer,  
Captain F. L. Houghton, C.B.E., R.C.N.**

" This afternoon, we have assembled here on the flight deck of this great ship to hoist the White Ensign for the first time and to commission her as His Majesty's Canadian Ship "WARRIOR", Canada's first Capital Ship, and the first Aircraft Carrier to take her place in the Sea Service of the Dominion.

To those of us who are fortunate in having been chosen as members of her first Company, this must be a great moment, for it is to be our privilege to begin a new chapter in the history of the Royal Canadian Navy. Many gallant chapters have been added during six years of war, and indeed we had hoped at one time that we too might be taking our place in the battle-line of the United Nations, not perhaps in the European Theatre, but certainly in the Far East. But Victory was granted to our arms, and now our future lies in a world at peace. But because of this, our duty and our responsibilities are in no way lessened, for it still remains our job to make "WARRIOR" an efficient fighting unit, worthy of the famous name she bears—a name that has figured in the glorious annals of British Naval history for almost two hundred years.

For many of you, service in a man-of-war of this size will be a new experience, and you will have much to learn. But great or small, carrier or corvette, there is one thing common to all His Majesty's Fighting Ships—there is a job for every man in the crew; and each and every one of us is a vital and important part of the vast and complicated piece of machinery that is a modern aircraft carrier.

Above all, it is imperative that we bear in mind at all times that our primary armament, for both offensive and defensive purposes, is our aircraft. We are the aircraft's floating home—they are our first line of defence and our main offensive power. Neither of us can do our job without the other. Remember the "WARRIOR" motto—"HAUL TOGETHER". Let it serve us as a constant reminder that we must all—seaman and airman, upper deck and engineroom, officer and man—work and strive together with cheerfulness, enthusiasm and singleness of purpose toward our common goal—a smart, clean and efficient fighting ship."



## **" HAUL TOGETHER ! "**

It is related that on many occasions, just before going into action, that grand sea-warrior SIR FRANCIS DRAKE would exhort his men to " Haul Together ".

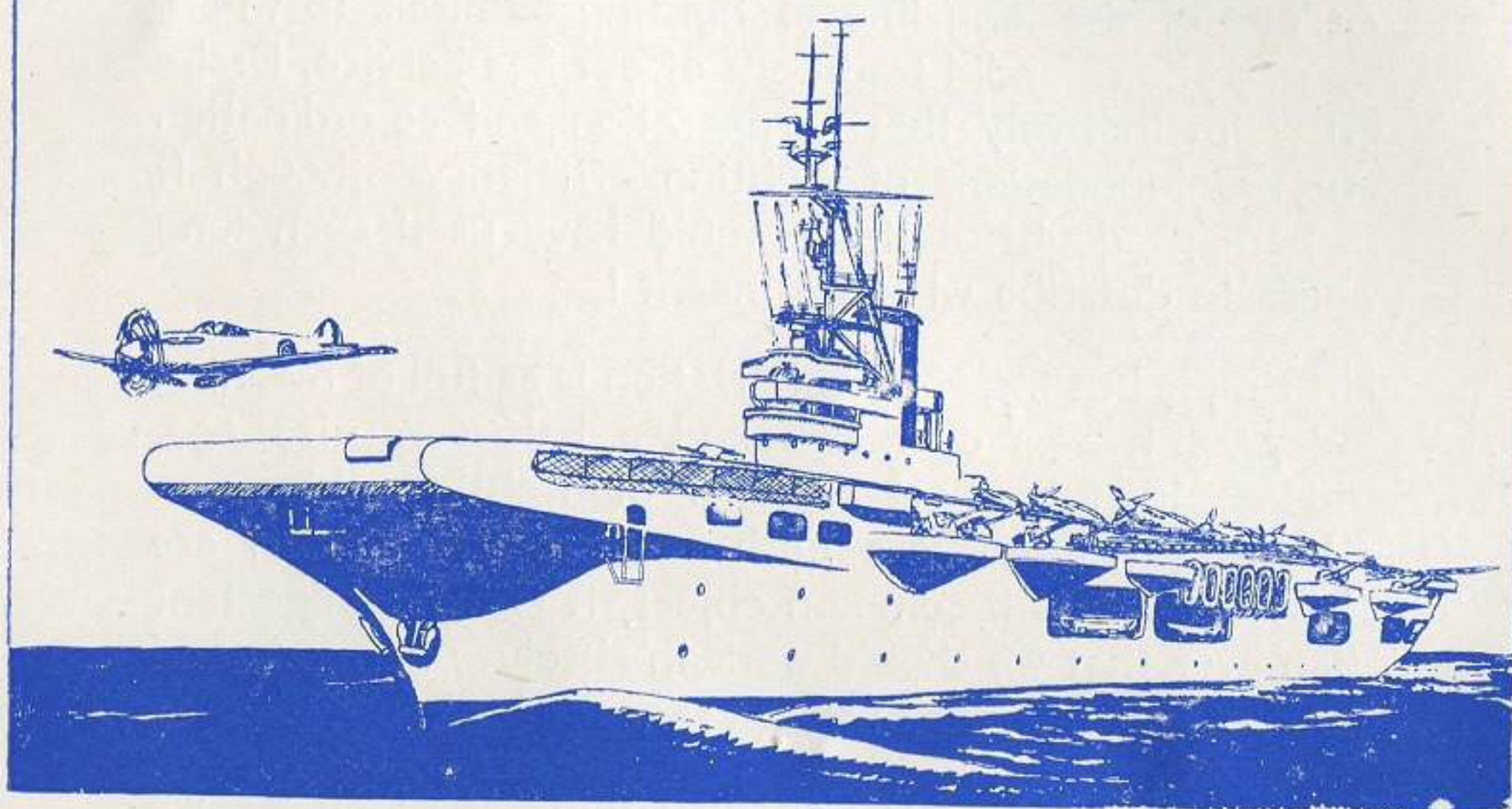
As one of the long line of fighting admirals to whom we owe the splendid traditions of our Sea Service, Drake knew instinctively that co-operation and co-ordination are the foundations of fighting efficiency—though it is perhaps doubtful if he would have used such long words to describe what he meant !

His simple but inspiring exhortation is as full of meaning today as it was over two and a half centuries ago. Indeed, in this most modern of fighting ships—an aircraft carrier—where both seamen and airmen are striving towards a common object, it is more important than ever that we should work in absolute harmony and complete singleness of purpose.

And so in His Majesty's Canadian Ship " WARRIOR " we have chosen Drake's motto as our own, in order that we may remember at all times and in all circumstances, the secret of success is to

**' HAUL TOGETHER ! '**





H.M.C.S. "WARRIOR", 24th January, 1946.

## **SOMETHING ABOUT THE SHIP**

The Commanding Officer of the ship is Captain Frank Houghton, C.B.E., R.C.N., whose home is at present in Ottawa.

Before the war, Captain Houghton commanded the destroyers "VANCOUVER" and "SAGUENAY" and during the war the Auxiliary Cruisers, "PRINCE ROBERT" and "PRINCE HENRY". For the past two years he has been Head of the Canadian Naval Mission Overseas in London.

## **FACTS AND FIGURES**

To those who would like some idea of the size of the ship and some idea of what is involved in building a ship of these dimensions, a condensed list of her "vital" statistics is given.



Her length overall is 690 ft.  $2\frac{3}{4}$  in. and to show the considerable overhang of the Flight Deck she is 650 ft. long on the water-line. This can be seen again in her beam which is 112 ft. 6 in. overall, and 80 ft. on the water-line (maximum). From keel to Flight Deck she is 62 ft. 6 in., about the same as a five storey building. 826,523 rivets were used to fasten her hull together in addition to extensive welding. She has been building for three years and as many as twelve hundred workmen have worked aboard at one time.

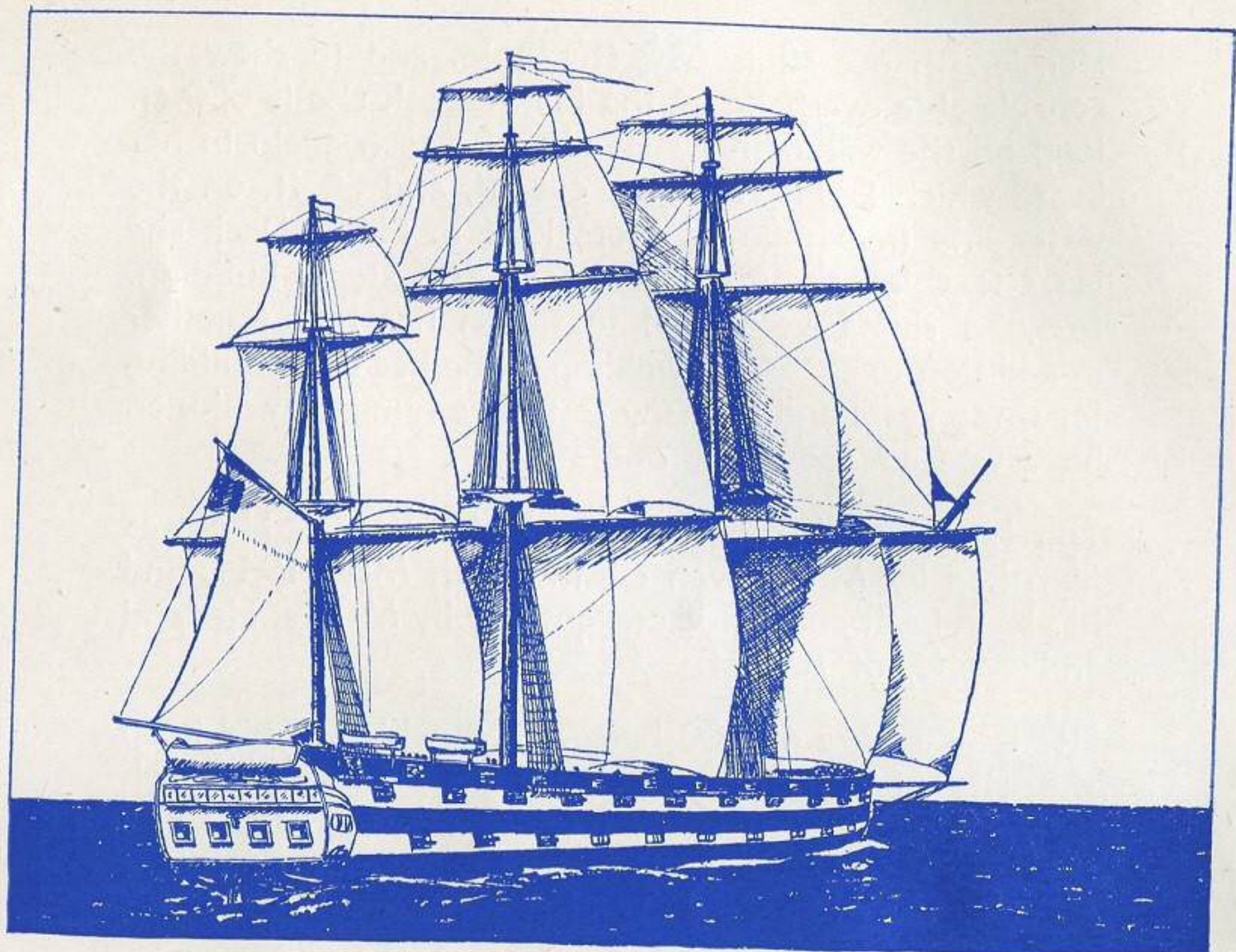
The keel was laid December 12th, 1942. She was launched by Mrs. Bevan on the 20th May, 1944, and has been built and fitted out entirely by Messrs. Harland and Wolff, of Belfast.

Her engines are 40,000 horse-power which would keep the City of Belfast in electric light. Carries enough fuel to steam at full speed from Belfast to Sambro and back without stopping ; (after all, who would want to stop at Sambro anyway). She can also distill 240 tons of fresh water a day for the use of the ship.

#### WINDSOR AND ESSEX COUNTY MUNICIPAL CHAPTER I.O.D.E., WINDSOR, ONTARIO.

Just as this book went to press the very pleasant news has come in that the "WARRIOR" has been adopted by the Windsor and Essex County Municipal Chapter I.O.D.E. Windsor, Ontario. The National Chapter of the I.O.D.E. have already been most generous in supplying many cigarettes, magazines and other comforts to the ship. We look forward to a very happy association with this patriotic and hard-working organization. We hope that we shall see some members of the Windsor Chapter visiting the ship before 1946 is out.





## THE FIRST "WARRIOR" 1781 — 1857

### THE "WARRIOR" TRADITION

In 1781 the first "Warrior" in His Majesty's Navy was launched. A ponderous, hard-hitting, ship-of-the-line; a vessel of heavy oak timbers; tiers of gun ports; bluff round bows, low and heavy, and a high galleoned stern. She drove into battle with a pyramid of sails that were rigged to a tall, graceful, tracery of yards, masts, and rigging. A striking contrast to that most modern of warships—our Aircraft Carrier. Her history, abbreviated, can be read further on—one of wars and battles; that altered the history of the world. It was by those battles, and a ceaseless blockade that lasted years, that the downfall of Napoleon, another would-be dictator of the world, was brought about.

There were two other "Warriors", for we are the fourth. From 1781 to 1916 there were three ships, in immediate succession bearing the name. At the Battle of Jutland the third "Warrior", fighting hard against enormous odds, was so badly crippled that she sank some hours later. However, from 1781 to 1916 there was always



a "Warrior" in commission. This was a remarkable span of life that spoke well for the stoutness and honesty of their construction.

If the first and third "Warriors" were renowned for their brilliant and courageous battles, the second "Warrior" was equally famous, but in another way. She was, perhaps, when launched, the most important ship of her day; for she was the first iron-clad, line-of-battle ship in the world; the direct ancestor of all battleships. But she took part in no battles, for her years were years of peace. Perhaps her strength, and the strength of her sisters that followed, were the reason that she marked such an era. Perhaps it is coincidence, but the fourth "Warrior" also marks an era, also of peace. This may prove to be even a more important era than the second "Warrior's". For we are not only the first capital ship of the Royal Canadian Navy, but also we inaugurate our Navy taking to the Air. May she too be a forerunner of the greater and more lasting peace and tranquility that we pray for; just as she is symbolic of Canada's determination that we shall have the strength to ensure that peace.

The historical tradition of these great ships gives us something fine and honourable to follow. A great deal of it cannot be described in so many words, but if one knows a little about these ships and what they were like, it is possible to understand something of what their tradition means. It is for this reason that the histories of these ships, perforce abbreviated, has been assembled. We were fortunate in obtaining a personal account of the last gallant fight of H.M. Cruiser "Warrior" of the Battle of Jutland. We are indebted to Mr. J. Thorniley, Warrant M.A.A., R.C.N., who served in the ship as a Boy Seaman a few months short of thirty years ago.

## THE FIRST "WARRIOR"

This ship, launched at Portsmouth in October, 1781, was a ship-of-the-line, the equivalent in those days of a battleship. Her armament was numerous; twenty-eight 32 pounders on her lower gun-deck (fourteen a-side), twenty-eight 18 pounders on the upper gun-deck, fourteen 9 pounders on the quarter-deck and four on the fo'c'sle. These were long muzzle-loading cannons mounted on four-wheeled gun-carriages. They were run out to poke their muzzles through the square ports along the ship's sides before they were fired; the recoil of the shot drove them in again to be sponged-out and



reloaded inside the ship. By the number of her guns the "WARRIOR" and her sisters were known as "Seventy-Fours". In 1794 carronades were added, short guns throwing a large shot and the ancestor of the modern howitzer. These numbered eight but in spite of this additional armament the name of "Seventy-Fours" still stuck to her class.

Her dimensions are a striking contrast to modern ship-building: 138 feet long at the keel; gun-deck 169 feet long; breadth 46 feet 11 inches; draught 20 feet. That is 30 feet shorter than a "Flower Class Corvette" and as broad and deep as a 5,000 ton cruiser. She had three masts, square rigged. Her wooden sides of British Oak were about two feet thick and in this confined space she carried a crew of no less than seven hundred men, the equivalent complement of a modern cruiser.

The "WARRIOR" was not long in commission before she 'smote the King's enemies'. In 1782, commanded by Captain Sir James Wallace, she joined the fleet under Admiral Sir George Rodney at St. Lucia in the West Indies. At this time a strong French Fleet was menacing the British islands there. By April the French Admiral, DeGrasse, in Martinique with a fleet of 36 ships-of-the-line was planning to cover a strong invasion force to capture Jamaica. Rodney had 34 ships-of-the-line to prevent this dangerous blow.

On April 8th, the French set sail and the British fleet gave chase. H.M.S. "WARRIOR" was one of the eight ships in Vice-Admiral Sir Samuel Hood's Division which succeeded in coming up with the French Fleet on the 9th near the Saintes Islands between Dominica and Guadeloupe. In the cannonade which followed one French ship was severely damaged and two of Hood's Division slightly damaged. "WARRIOR", who had taken a very active part in the proceedings had her main topmast damaged and lost it two days later.

In the major action which followed on April 12th off Dominica, when the whole of the British fleet had overtaken the enemy and forced them to action, "WARRIOR" was again present. In the opening phase of the action Hood's division was in the rear of the British line. However, they did not remain long in a minor role, for the great turning point in the battle came when Rodney made history by breaking through the French line in the "Formidable", thereby throwing the French into confusion and preventing their drawing away to avoid a decisive battle; the "WARRIOR" and



the ships in Hood's division played an important part in this, the most brilliant and hardest fought phase of the battle. No less than five French ships were captured including the French Flagship "Ville de Paris" of 106 guns.

There followed a lull, taken up by extensive refits and routine duties until 1797. Then she began years of what was some of the most arduous and monotonous service that naval vessels have ever undertaken, the Great Blockade of Europe. Cruising endlessly off Lisbon and the English Channel to keep the French and Spanish fleets locked up in their ports away from British shipping and away from the Straits of Dover. Meanwhile, thousands of the best troops of Europe camped for months and years, waiting, like the Germans in 1940, for the force to beat down the British fleet and coastal defences that they might cross and invade.

The hard and exacting routine of blockade is worthy of description. Ships remained at sea for years at a time, engaged in continual battle with the weather, in confined quarters, pitiful food, their crews getting no more sight of land than a remote view of the French or Spanish coast for two or even three and four years.

Repairs to rigging and spars were commoner than practice gun firing and storms a more formidable enemy than the French. But it was the dogged determination of this blockade that Napoleon never could believe possible, which culminated finally in the great Battle of Trafalgar where an enemy demoralized by long lack of sea training or ever being able to use the seas was so completely defeated that Napoleon's now useless armies melted away with invasion a faded ambition.

"WARRIOR" was, during this period, present at the famous Battle of Copenhagen. She did not, however, take an active part in the battle, being among the forces that remained out at sea.

Towards the end of the blockade "WARRIOR" met the enemy in action again. In 1805 she was sent, Captain Linzee in command, to join Sir Robert Calder's Squadron, Sir Robert was ordered to intercept the French and Spanish Squadrons which had escaped from Toulon, Cadiz and Rochfort, to the West Indies and were now steering for Ferrol to raise the Blockade of that port.

With the Squadrons there and at Brest, it was planned to achieve the great plan for the invasion of Britain. Calder, with only 15 ships, met the 20 French and

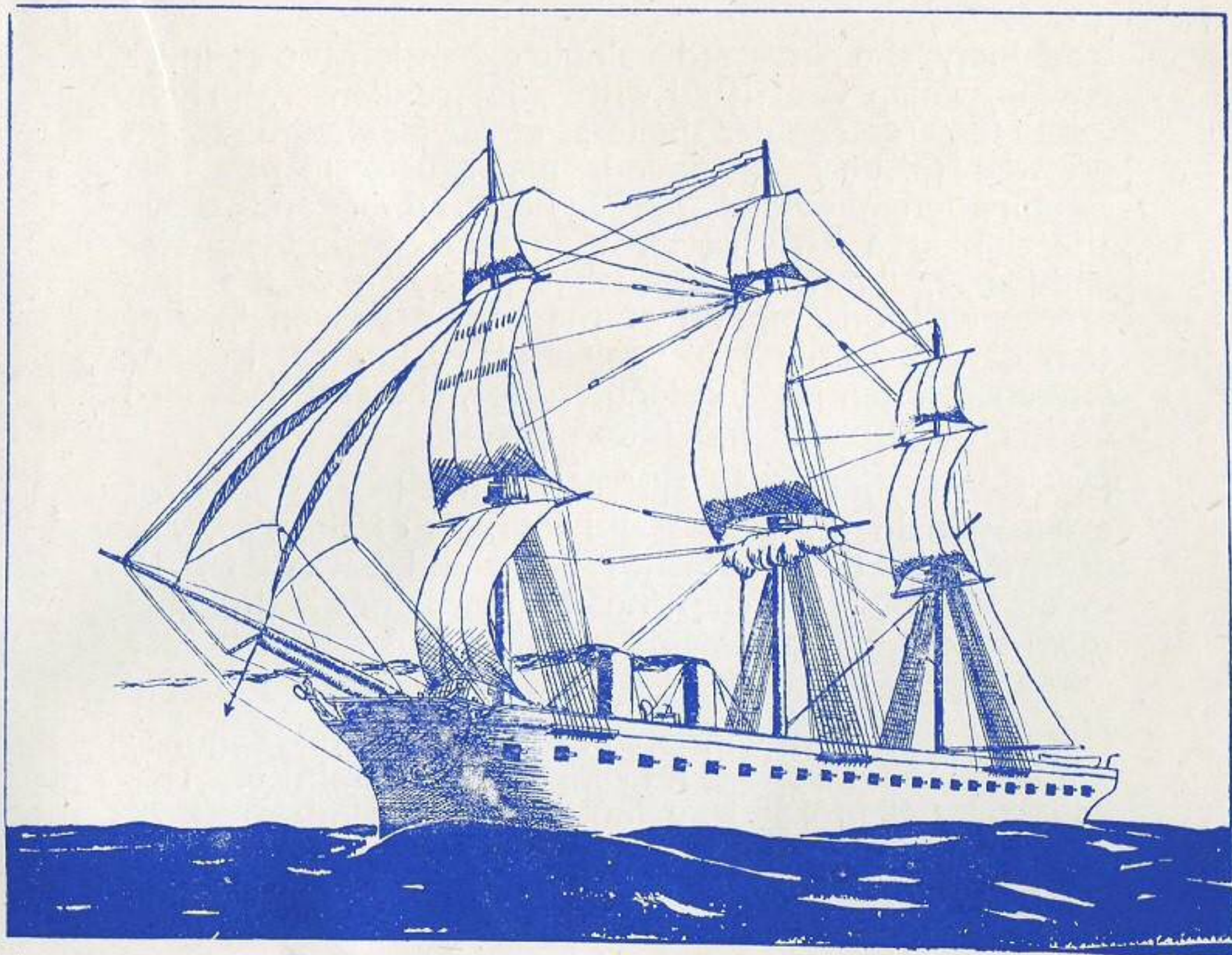


Spanish some 120 miles W.N.W. of Cape Finistere on the 22nd July and in the first brief action fought magnificiently, overcame the heavy odds, and captured two of the enemy ships. Unfortunately, Calder was over-anxious to keep the prizes. This prevented him from following up his victory and continuing vigorous action the next day. So "WARRIOR" was unable to give a further demonstration of her fighting qualities. The remainder of the French Fleet was out of sight by the 24th.

The last important action of the first "WARRIOR" was that of the 25th and 26th June, 1909, when, commanded by Captain Spranger, with H.M. Ships "Spartiate" (74 guns), H.M. Frigate "Cyane" and H.M. Sloop "Espoir" with several gun-boats, they captured the Islands of Procida and Ischia near Naples by gun-fire and landing parties. Another example of history repeating itself!

The great war against Napoleon ended in 1817. No doubt the ship's life in the period that followed had many incidents but she had left the pages of history. Nevertheless, stout old warrior that she was, she served her country faithfully for another forty years, remaining on the Navy List until 1857. In that year, her long and honourable career ended for she was broken up to make way for what was to be the wonder of her day the first armoured ship-of-the-line, the second "WARRIOR".





H.M.S. "WARRIOR", 1860-1900.

This ship, famous as the first British ironclad and the first ironclad ship-of-the-line, never saw action against an enemy in spite of an exceedingly long career.

Conservatism and the Treasury's desire to keep down expense had resisted for many years the idea of having metal armour instead of wooden walls. But the experience gained during the Crimean War proved the value of iron plating, after which, the French experimented with iron armour over the vitals of their wooden vessel the "Gloire". The Admiralty, not to be outdone, designed the "WARRIOR" which was duly launched in 1860 to revolutionise Naval warfare and at the same time rendering all other warships in the world obsolete.

This second "WARRIOR" had a displacement of 9,219 tons. Her dimensions were; 380 ft. long, with a beam of 58 feet and a draught of 26 feet 7 inches; about the same length as our largest destroyers, nearly as broad as "ONTARIO" or "UGANDA," and 6 feet more in draught. For those that are interested in her



machinery, she possessed a single expansion two cylinder engine, which was fitted with a jet condenser. There were ten rectangular boilers at a maximum steam pressure of only 22 pounds per square inch. This combination provided 5,469 horse-power and drove the ship at a little better than fourteen knots. Her endurance, limited by fuel capacity and the uneconomical consumption of the boilers and engines of that day, was only 1,200 miles at 10 knots. In consequence, when making long cruises, she still depended on her three masts and towering sails.

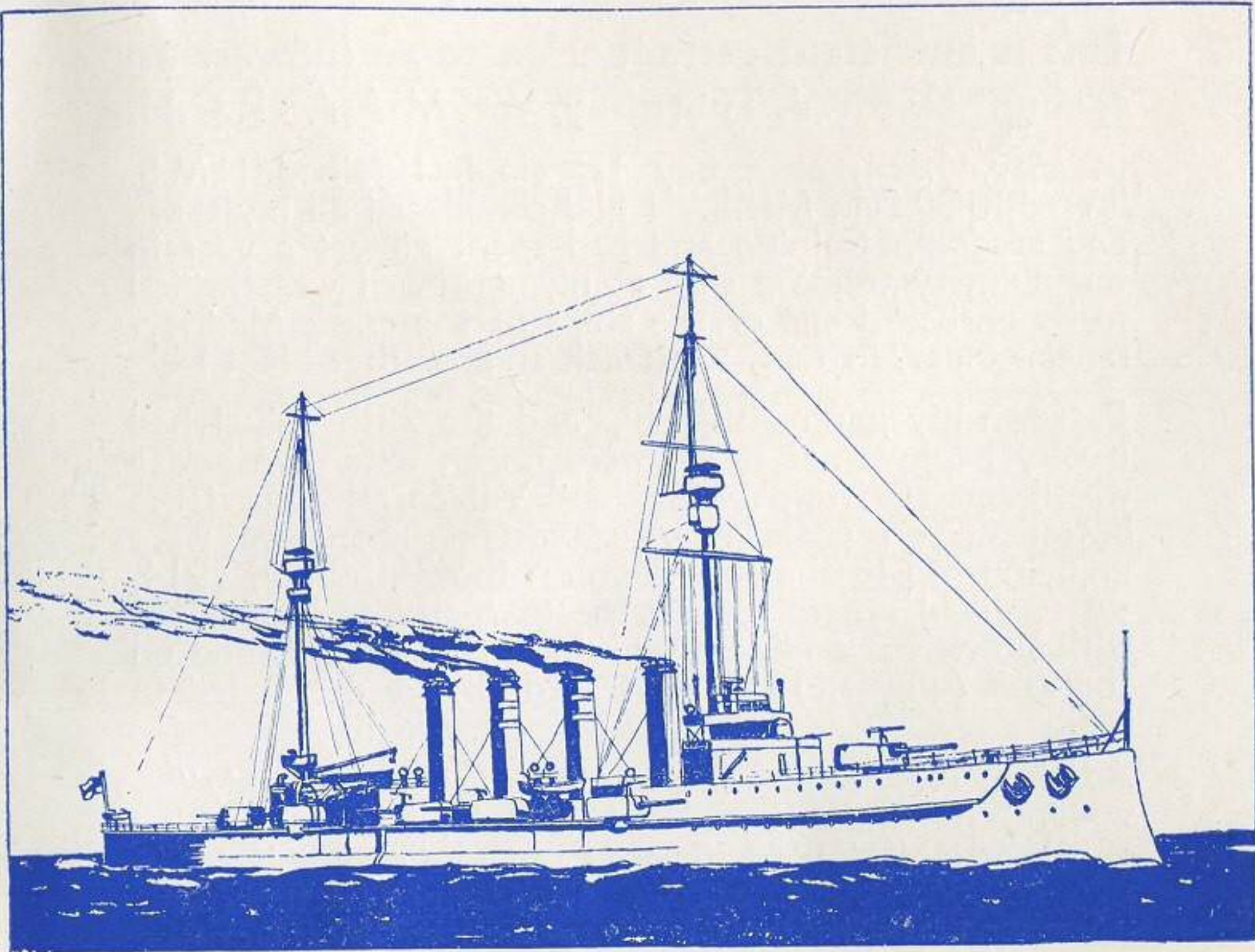
Her armour, discussed and illustrated to the point of exhaustion in the papers and journals of the day, was of wrought iron,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick and backed by 18 inches of solid teak covering the magazines and engine room spaces. The remainder of her hull was of lighter iron plating.

Her first armament consisted of forty 68-pounder guns; the largest muzzle-loading cannon in general use. This was replaced in 1865 by four 8" and twenty-eight 7" muzzle loading rifled guns; short, and of built-up construction. They replaced the first breech-loading guns which had been tried out in the Navy between 1858 and 1865, but judged unreliable.

Her figure-head was an imposing figure representing a mediæval warrior clad in scale armour. Her complement was 635 men.

In 1900, after four years in the Reserve, she was taken off the Navy List and reduced to a hulk, having spent nearly forty years as one of H.M. Ships. She had seen many big changes since her own so important appearance in the fleet. But, amazingly enough, her own usefulness was by no means over, though in a far humbler capacity, for she became a floating workshop and W/T instructional school at Portsmouth when Wireless was in its infancy. These useful duties lasted until 1923, when the school was transferred ashore. In March, 1929, still of use, but now to more menial duties, she was towed to Pembroke Dockyard where she was used as a hulk for mooring oilers. As far as can be traced she is still afloat, eighty-five years old, an ancient, shabby, battered hulk, anonymous to most that see her but still strong and stout for all her age.





H.M.S. "WARRIOR", 1903-1916

This ship was laid down shortly after her predecessor "retired" from the Navy. She, too, was very different in appearance as are all the "WARRIORS". This ship's career was shorter, but as far as action with the enemy went, at least spectacular.

She was laid down at Pembroke in 1903, launched in 1905 and commissioned in the First Cruiser Squadron in 1907. An armoured cruiser of 13,550 tons; 480 feet long; 73½ feet beam and drawing 27½ feet. She compares as shorter, broader and deeper than our modern cruisers. She had six 9.2 inch, four 7.5 inch guns, all in single turrets. In addition, as secondary armament and presumably to destroy the steam torpedo boats that were then becoming fashionable, she carried twenty-four 3 pounders.

She was twin-screw, had reciprocating engines supplied by 19 large tube boilers and 16 cylindrical boilers and provided steam sufficient for a maximum of 23 knots.



**This is sufficient introduction to an interesting account by Mr. J. Thorniley, Wt. M.A.A., R.C.N.**

In May, 1914, as a Boy 1st class, I joined H.M.S. "WARRIOR" in Malta. I had completed all my shore and seagoing training and had spent almost a year in the gunnery training ship at Plymouth. I was thrilled to be on board one of the ships of the crack Mediterranean Fleet, in fact, the crack ship of that Fleet!

Between my joining the ship and the 28th July I had a very happy time as we were on an extensive cruise which took us from Naples and Venice all around the better known ports to Alexandria. There we were enjoying life to the full when on the 28th July, 1914, we received orders to proceed to Malta and complete with provisions and ammunition. This we did, and on the 2nd August, 1914, just at dusk, we proceeded to sea.

Admiral Troubridge—known to us all as "Daddy"—was in command of the First Cruiser Squadron consisting of "Warrior", "Black Prince", "Duke of Edinburgh", and the flagship "Defence". The German battle cruiser "Goeben" and the light cruiser "Breslau" were on the prowl and had shelled Bona and Oran and we were supposed to get in a favourable position for the commencement of hostilities which were soon to come. The German ships got to Messina and obtained coal but unfortunately when hostilities were declared we were at the wrong end of the Straits. The result was a futile chase of 27-knot ships by four old 19-knotters which took us to the Dardanelles. The light cruiser "Bristol" managed to get a couple of long-range shots in just as the two ships disappeared, but it was something in the nature of a terrier chasing a rabbit into its burrow, only this rabbit did not come out again.

From this time on the Squadron did a certain amount of convoy work escorting Australian and Indian troops from Port Said to France and also captured a number of enemy prizes. This was just routine work as also was the time spent from January, 1915, to May, 1916, during which time we had joined the Grand Fleet. Exercises, known in those days as P.Z.'s were carried out with the Fleet, escort duties round the North of Scotland and to Norway and the thousand and one operations necessary to keep a waiting fleet active were our lot. Admiral Troubridge had been left in the Balkans with a landing party and Admiral Sir Robert (Bobby) Arbuthnot had hoisted his flag. Details of the eighteen



months with the fleet are not very interesting so I will come directly to my purpose in writing this article on the last "Warrior" prior to H.M.C.S. "Warrior".

On the 30th May, 1916, we, with the Squadron, were in Cromarty and orders were received to proceed to sea. This we did at about 1800 not thinking that it was anything but "routine". On Wednesday, 31st May, we were to find out differently. It should be remembered that radios as we have them today were non-existent, P.A. systems were a dream and our news consisted of a sheet of signal pad daily. The result of this was that we would sometimes be a couple of weeks before we got news of an advance or reverse, or any other important occurrence. This fact plus the reluctance at any time to give any information to the troops kept us very much in the dark. At the time of our departure from Cromarty it was known to the higher-ups that there was activity amongst the German High Seas Fleet. Little did we—the fighting element—know where we were bound for. At about 3 p.m. on Wednesday, the 31st May, Captain Molteno in "Warrior" cleared lower deck and very solemnly warned us that the battle cruisers ahead had contacted the enemy and that we were expecting to do the same thing within an hour.

We were to change into clean underclothing and as many as possible into whites. This, of course, was to reduce the possibility of dye and dirt getting into wounds. It became obvious to us then that something was expected and excitement began to grow. At about 4 p.m. ships were sighted and as we approached it was found to be the "Galatea," and she was being chased by two or three German ships. We immediately went to action stations and several different claims were made of the ships sunk. However, I believe we can justifiably claim one destroyer. That for the "Warrior" was the opening of the "Battle of Jutland".

We remained in "action stations", the squadron steaming five abreast in the following positions: "Defence"; and to port of her "Warrior", "Black Prince" and "Duke of Edinburgh". At about 5 p.m. we approached the main action between the battle cruisers under Sir David Beatty and the High Seas Fleet. The battle-cruisers were badly out-numbered, and I believe with the addition of our squadron there were present at this time only thirteen British ships. The number was very soon reduced by the loss of the "Queen Mary" and "Invincible". The "Invincible" was under the com-



mand of Admiral Horace Hood, reputed to be the original of the famous picture "Bubbles" widely used as an advertisement for Pears' soap. The first cruiser squadron attempted to form line-ahead with "Defence" in the van followed by "Warrior". The rate of approach was so rapid that there was not time to complete the movement with the result that only "Defence" and "Warrior" could get into position. At this time the two ships opened fire at a range of 15,000 yards and gradually they got into a bad position. The range began to decrease rapidly and it was practically suicide because four German battleships and five battle cruisers began to concentrate their fire. At the second or third salvo the "Defence" blew up leaving the "Warrior" alone between these two lines of enemy ships with the range finally reduced to 3,900 yards. The gods were with us for although about 300 hits were registered on "Warrior" she was able to stand up and fight back. I was in the submerged torpedo flat and cannot give an eye-witness account of the action but I could certainly "feel" the shocks of the shells hitting the ship and hear our own guns firing. Within about twenty minutes we were reduced to an inert mass of steel filled with human beings waiting to be blown out of the water.

At this point the miracle happened. The Fifth Battle Squadron, one of which was the famous "Warspite," came up to our aid. The "Warspite" was hit in her stern and this caused her steering gear to jamb in such a way that she steamed in a complete circle around the "Warrior." Her guns were firing all the time and they had the effect of driving off the enemy ships. We then had time to take stock of our damage.

I came up from the submerged flat to find that of our 700 or so crew about half were casualties. The main steam pipe had been shot away by one of the some 300 shells which had penetrated. There were holes in the deck through which a car could be dropped. The whole of the starboard messdeck was on fire, and all the first aid parties with the exception of the P.M.O. were killed, many by gas. The ship was taking in water very fast and we were about 250 miles from home. Otherwise everything was fine. We could even keep the galley fire in and make "ki." Half the survivors were put to work on the hand pumps. One set of pumps was to bring water into the ship to put out the fire and the others to pump the water out again. The water was gradually winning and we began to list very badly.

The Battle of Jutland by this time was "somewhere in



the North Sea" and we personally had lost interest in it for the time being. We worked and sweated, not to get into harbour, but to keep ourselves from being either roasted to death in the ship or frozen to death in the water.

We did manage to strike a happy medium and about 7 p.m. a ship was sighted coming up astern. Our after turret was immediately "closed up" and though there was nothing but practice ammunition left a reception was planned. It was a relief, however, to find that it was Britain's first aircraft carrier, the "Engadine." She had been a cross-channel ship and converted to carry, I believe, five seaplanes. These were hoisted and lowered by a crane in her stern and it was actually one of her planes which had first sighted the High Seas Fleet.

As she approached, Captain Molteno decided he would try to get the "Warrior" back home by towing so enough men were taken from the pumps to get a hawser laid out. After superhuman efforts which don't need description the tow started at about three knots. Weather conditions got gradually worse, it was dark, we were cold and hungry, and German destroyers were about. However, we stayed afloat all night until at daybreak it was seen that we were trying the impossible. During the night the P.M.O. had performed some twenty amputations, as many of the dead as possible had been buried at sea, and we had all had the opportunity to make an attempt at salvaging some of our more prized possessions. It was no surprise then when the Captain had the pipe made "prepare to abandon ship."

There was by this time a very bad list to starboard. The wounded were brought on deck in transport cots and the remainder of us were lined up along the rail in four ranks. The "Engadine" slipped her tow and came as close as possible alongside. With quite a struggle we got the wounded over safely except for one man who suddenly sat up in his cot and fell between the two ships. The Captain on the bridge gave orders that no one was to go after him but a Flight Lieutenant from the "Engadine" disobeyed the order and made a try to get the man but was too late. The two ships were grinding together one minute and twenty feet apart the next but as each rank received the order they stepped over the rail and jumped—not one man failing to make it. I think I jumped about ninety feet. I'll never know how I did it. I had only a pair of trousers and a shirt on and my shirt was loaded with some photographs (which I still have), chocolate and cigarettes. We had raided the canteen



at the last minute. Everyone got safely over and then Captain Molteno came. As he landed on board the "Engadine" he turned and gave "Warrior" a final salute. It is a terrible feeling to leave a ship which had been my home for two years and a very happy home which really cannot be described. As the "Engadine" pulled away we could see the "Warrior" begin to go down and knew she would not last much longer. As she went out of sight in the misty morning we made ourselves as comfortable as possible, I being lucky enough to spend a good bit of time in the comparatively comfortable cockpit of a seaplane.

We were landed at Rosyth on the following Saturday morning and there were some very interesting scenes as most of us boarded the "Warspite" which we considered our saviour. She had got in with her stern almost awash. After a clean up and rest we proceeded to Plymouth and were granted thirteen (read that and weep) days leave.

One thing I forgot to mention is a signal reputed to have been made by Sir Robert Arbuthnot. If true, I think it is almost as much entitled to fame as Nelson's signal. When he realized the position we were in, "Bobby" is supposed to have said: "Pardon me, 'Warrior,' fight like Hell." Whether that signal was made or not I can assure you that "Warrior" did "fight like Hell" and I am sure that if ever H.M.C.S. "Warrior" has occasion she too will put up as good a fight as H.M.S. "Warrior" of thirty years ago. I wish you the very best of luck in all your undertakings and I know that if your commission is as happy as was mine in your predecessor it will leave you with no regrets.



## **" 803 AND 825 SQUADRONS "**

In "WARRIOR'S" Squadrons we are fortunate in having two of the most renowned in His Majesty's Navies. Between them they have covered every phase of Naval warfare in the air and in so doing, have distinguished themselves by the utmost gallantry.

Both Squadrons are among the oldest in the service; were disbanded early in 1945 and have since been re-formed with a high percentage of Canadian personnel. They have both been re-armed; 803 Squadron with Sea-fires; 825 with Fireflies. With these, the most modern of carrier aircraft, the Squadrons have maintained their reputation of high efficiency. That this record of "WARRIOR'S" Commissioning may be truly complete, we are more than proud to include their histories.

The recent news of the first award of the Victoria Cross to a member of the Canadian Navy reveals the fact that the late Lieutenant Robert H. Gray, V.C., D.S.C., R.C.N.V.R. also served at one period of his career in 803 Squadron. We feel that the very gallant deeds of this officer will have an even closer interest to the Squadron and the Ship.





## **" 803 NAVAL AIR SQUADRON "**

803 was one of the old original Naval Air Arm Squadrons and at the outbreak of hostilities in 1939 was embarked in "ARK ROYAL" with a fighter component of Skuas. In October the Squadron was disembarked to Wick and until April 1940 was engaged in fighter defence of the Scapa area. Its first major operational success was secured on April 10th, 1940, when in company with 800 Squadron, it sank the German Cruiser "KONIGSBERG" alongside the Mole at Bergen.

On April 21st, the Squadron re-embarked in "ARK ROYAL" to take part in the Norwegian Campaign. Dive bombing attacks on enemy shipping and bases were carried out, and during May fighter protection afforded to our troop convoys and fighter patrols flown to cover the landing of 263 (Gladiator) Squadron from H.M.S. "FURIOUS". In June the nature of the campaign altered and 803's role was then to patrol over ships embarking our stores and troops and to hinder the advance of the enemy, by bombing and strafing his armoured columns, motor transport and troops.



The Norwegian Campaign finished, the Squadron sailed in "ARK ROYAL" for the Mediterranean to participate in the operations at Dakar and Oran against Vichy France. Skuas escorted bombing strikes on heavy ships at Mers-El-Kebir, provided fighting cover for attacks on enemy aerodromes, carried out photographic reconnaissance of the Dakar area and also undertook the fighter protection of our Forces at Sea.

On completion of these operations, the Squadron returned to the United Kingdom, reformed with Fulmars, and was allocated to the "FORMIDABLE," embarking after she commissioned at the end of 1940. The Squadron then returned to the Mediterranean in time to take part in the battle of Cape Matapan in March. This battle was considered at that time the classic example of the operation of Naval aircraft in a Fleet engagement, as all duties except spotting were undertaken by our aircraft. Further operations against Italian-held objectives were carried out, and then in May "FORMIDABLE" was damaged in the Crete operations and forced to withdraw for repair. 803 was disembarked, re-formed with Hurricanes and stationed at Ramat David, Palestine (near Haifa), and joined in the Syrian Campaign.

In early August, the Squadron left Palestine for Dekheila and there worked up until they moved to Sidi Heneish to begin operating in the Western Desert. At first their duties were purely Naval, namely, routine shipping patrols but as the big push commenced, they advanced to the frontier until in November they were finally stationed at Fort Maddalena. Their duties now consisted of working in co-operation with the R.A.F. and the Eighth Army. They made Fighter sweeps and patrols over enemy territory, escorted R.A.F. bomber strikes, located German armoured columns for attack and strafed enemy tanks and motor transport. About December 12th the Squadron was actually operating from Tobruk itself, having reverted to shipping protection. When the retreat began at the end of January, the Squadron also withdrew, first to Sidi Heneish and then, finally, back to Dekheila.

There the Squadron re-formed with 12 Fulmars and then in mid-March made its epic flight to Ceylon to commence operations in yet another theatre of war. The last of the Squadron personnel and equipment arrived at Ratmalana, near Colombo, on April 4th, 1942 and on April 5th, Easter Sunday, the Japanese raided Colombo. All available aircraft of 803 and 806 Squadrons were



flown off to the attack and as a result of the engagement, a combined total of four aircraft and three pilots were lost. A regular routine of fighter patrols then began, when on April 9th 803 and 806 were sent out to defend the "HERMES" from Japanese attack. They arrived too late, just as she was sinking, and in the ensuing combat lost another two aircraft.

About the end of April, the Squadron was embarked in "FORMIDABLE" and sailed to the East of Ceylon to act as a covering force for the big attack on Diego Suarez. From then until mid-August the Squadron remained continuously embarked in "FORMIDABLE" carrying out long-range fighter reconnaissance with long-range tanks in the Indian Ocean.

Finally the Squadron was disembarked to Tanga in August to work-up. Later in the winter, 806, which had kept pace with 803 since the days of the desert, was fused into the larger Squadron. For a period of some months ending in July, the Squadron took part in large scale Army co-operation exercises at Moshi in Tanganyika. Not long after the Squadron, after operation overseas since 1940, returned home and was disbanded.





## " 825 SQUADRON "

The Squadron was formed in Malta in May, 1935 by merging 440 and 460 Flights from H.M.S. "EAGLE." The aircraft consisted of twelve Fairey 3F's. The pilots were about 50% R.A.F. but all observers and air-gunners were Naval. The flights had seen good service in China, having, among other things, given an early demonstration of Naval Air Power by rescuing several Europeans from a merchant vessel that had been pirated off the Yellow River. While in H.M.S. "GLORIOUS" the Squadron was re-equipped with Fairey Swordfish—the very latest and best aircraft—in July, 1936 and becoming the first sea-going Swordfish Squadron. A year later during the Nyon patrols, formed by the British, French and German Fleets during the Spanish Civil War, the Squadron claimed a submarine.

When war was declared the Squadron was still in "GLORIOUS" and their first operation was patrolling the Indian Ocean for many months, some of which was in



search of the "Graf Spee." How hard they worked is shown by the total leave given over a three month period, being only one half day ashore.

In the spring of 1940 the Squadron was disembarked after four and a half years in the same ship. A week later the "GLORIOUS" was lost in the Norwegian operations. The Squadron was re-assembled at Dettling near Maidstone for patrols, bombing tanks and invasion barges during Dunkirk. Five machines were lost and the C.O., Lieut. Comdr. Buckley was made prisoner-of-war. The Squadron re-formed at Worthy-Down and worked-up under Lieut. Cmdr. Esmonde.

The Squadron was embarked on H.M.S. "FURIOUS" in August and made several bombing trips to Norway, including Trondheim. In the early winter A.S.V. was fitted, the first Squadron to have this done.

In April, 1941 the Squadron was transferred to "VICTORIOUS" then newly commissioned. Four days later they were assisting the "Bismarck" chase and the first torpedo hit on the "Bismarck" was one fired by the Squadron; another probable hit was also credited. No aircraft were lost. Unfortunately two aircraft were lost the next day on reconnaissance.

Not long after the Squadron was transferred to the "ARK ROYAL" when that ship was ferrying Hurricanes to Malta. Besides covering a number of Malta Convoys, an adequate excitement in itself, dive-bombing attacks were carried out on such places as Elinos Aerodrome and Cagliari. During this time one of the aircraft on reconnaissance, intercepted a supply ship which scuttled itself when the battleship "NELSON" was brought into the scene.

The Squadron was still aboard the "ARK ROYAL" when that famous ship was sunk. All the aircraft were lost but none of the personnel. Lieut. Cmdr. Esmonde remained with the Captain until the last.

Of the re-formed Squadron, six aircraft, all that were available, were moved to Manston. This was in January, 1942 and in anticipation of the "Scharnhorst," "Gneisenau," and "Prinz Eugene" escaping up the Channel by night from Brest. Instead, at 1125 on February 12th a report was received that the German heavy ships were steaming towards the Straits of Dover, their presence in the eastern part of the English Channel having remained undetected during some four hours of daylight.

At 1230 the six Swordfish of 825 Squadron flew off to the attack, expecting the two R.A.F. Squadrons would



attack just ahead as anti-flak squadrons and that three fighter squadrons would be provided as close escort. By a major tragedy, these plans miscarried and only ten fighters effected the rendezvous with 825 over Manston. About ten miles out from Ramsgate the formation was attacked by a heavy force of enemy fighters and the R.A.F. escort involved in dog-fights. The three Swordfish of the first sub flight were badly damaged, Lieut. Cmdr. Esmonde's aircraft having the port wing torn to shreds, but the now crippled Swordfish pressed on for the attack alone. The aircraft flew over the destroyer screen and led by Esmonde altered course to close in towards the warships. It was then that Esmonde's aircraft was shot down but the other five continued their attack against overwhelming odds. All the aircraft were lost and of the eighteen men who set out on this flight only five survived, and three of these were badly wounded. For this exploit, Lieut. Cmdr. Esmonde was posthumously awarded the V.C., the first to a Naval pilot, and all the surviving members of the flying crews were decorated. It stands out as one of the most gallant episodes in the whole history of the Naval Air Arm.

The Squadron again re-formed a few weeks later ; Lieut. Cmdr. Keane succeeding Lieut. Cmdr. Esmonde. Training continued for five weeks with an escort carrier. Not long after they accompanied their first Convoy to Russia in H.M.S. "AVENGER." The convoy sustained very heavy attacks from enemy submarines and aircraft, but it was the first really large convoy to get through with acceptable losses. Seventeen submarines were sighted, but owing to the weather conditions it was often impossible to carry depth-charges. However, a large number were attacked. One was damaged and subsequently finished off by a destroyer and another was probably damaged.

In December, Lieut. Cmdr. (A) Cooper, R.N., took over the Squadron which was moved to Thorney Island. Anti-E Boat patrols and minelaying operations were carried out from here in co-operation with Coastal Command. In these operations, two aircraft were lost, the crew of one being made prisoners.

Mid-summer 1943 the Squadron was re-formed as a composite squadron adding six Hurricanes. There followed intensive training in Anti-Submarine work. By December they were moved to the new escort-carrier "VINDEX" and proceeded to sea as the first "Night Anti-U-Boat Squadron."



On the first trip in the Atlantic they flew 322 hours with only seven serviceable aircrews; 230 hours by night; and were robbed of two U-Boat kills by dud depth charges.

The Squadron had many exciting times in "VINDEX" and built up a reputation of being able to fly in the most incredible weather and for attacking U-Boats with great frequency and the utmost determination. In one Russian Convoy lasting thirteen days there were twenty-four sightings of U-Boats, seventeen attacks, four kills, two seriously damaged and two damaged. In all, the Squadron was credited with nine sinkings, and many U-Boats damaged. During the last six months, Lieut. Cmdr. (A) J. G. B. Sheffield was in Command, Lieut. Cmdr. Cooper being appointed to the Admiralty where his experience was of considerable value.

In July 1945, the Squadron was equipped with Barracudas under the command of Lieut. Cmdr. F. Stovin-Bradford, D.S.C., R.N., and has since been working up. They have now been re-equipped with the Firefly Fighter Recco. aircraft, the latest and finest strike aircraft.







