



The Battle of the Atlantic

The RCN lost 1,965 men and 24 ships during the War, most of them in the Atlantic.

The following is a list of HMC ships that were lost.

We salute those ships and all who sailed in them...

We will remember them...

HMCS Alberni - Corvette

At 11.40 hours on 21 August 1944, U-480 fired a Gnat at an unknown convoy and thought that she had sunk a frigate. In fact, the corvette HMCS Alberni (A/Lt.Cdr. Ian Hunter Bell, RCNVR) was hit and sunk in the English Channel about 25 nautical miles south-east of St Catherine's Point, Isle of Wight in position 50°18'N, 00°51'W.

The survivors (three officers and 28 men) were rescued by the British motor torpedo boats HMS MTB-469 and HMS MTB-470 and taken to Portsmouth where the two injured men were treated.

59 of her crew went down with the ship.

HMCS Athabaskan - Destroyer

HMCS Athabaskan (Lt.Cdr. John Hamilton Stubbs, DSO, DSC, RCN) was sunk in the English Channel north-east of Ouessant by two torpedoes from the German torpedo boats T-24 and T-27. The magazine and a boiler blew up in an explosion that was seen 20 miles away. 129 of the crew went down with the ship. 83 men were picked up from the water by the torpedo boats and taken prisoner. Another 44 of the crew were picked up by HMCS Haida.

The wreck lies in position 48°42.940N, 004°31.485W.

HMCS Bras D'or - Minesweeper

HMCS Bras d'Or (T/A/Lt. Charles Avery Hornsby, RCNR) foundered in the Gulf of St. Lawrence on 19 October 1940.

5 officers and 25 ratings perished.

HMCS Charlottetown - Corvette

HMCS Charlottetown (T/Lt.Cdr. John Willard Bonner, RCNR) had just escorted the convoy SQ-35 to Rimouski and was returning to Gaspé when she was torpedoed and sunk in the St. Lawrence, near Cap Chat Quebec in position 49°10'N, 66°50'W by U-517 at 12.58 hours on 11 September 1942, nine of the crew went down with the ship.

HMCS Chedabucto - Minesweeper

Lost in a collision with the cable vessel Lord Kelvin on the St. Lawrence River, Canada in position 48°14'N, 69°16'W.

One officer was lost with the ship.

HMCS Clayoquot - Minesweeper

At 14.37 hours on 24 December 1944, U-806 fired a Gnat at HMCS Clayoquot (T/A/Lt.Cdr. A.C. Campbell, RCNVR) which was escorting the convoy XB-139 and hit her after 1 minute 9 seconds. At 14.46 hours, another Gnat was fired at a freighter in the convoy, but this Gnat detonated after 3 minutes in the cat gear of the Canadian minesweeper HMCS Transcona (J 271). The wreck of the Clayoquot has been located outside the approaches to Halifax harbour in position 44°25'N, 63°20'W.

There were 8 casualties amongst the crew of HMCS Clayoquot.

HMCS Esquimault - Minesweeper

HMCS Esquimault (Lt. Robert Cunningham MacMillan, DSC and Bar, RCNVR) was torpedoed and sunk on 16 April 1945 by U-190, five miles off Chebucto Head, near Halifax, Canada in position 44°28'N, 63°10'W.

44 of the crew were lost with the ship and 26 of the crew survived the sinking.

HMCS Fraser - Destroyer

At 10.30 PM on the 25th of June 1940 HMCS Fraser (Cdr. Wallace Bouchier Creery, RCN) was given orders to proceed to Bordeaux, France to help in the rescue of an estimated four thousand refugees trapped in the area by the German military forces. Accompanying the Fraser was the Canadian destroyer HMCS Restigouche and the British cruiser HMS Calcutta. In rough seas and poor visibility, the captain of the Fraser decided that the three ships should move closer together and ordered a turn to port in order to bring his ship behind HMS Calcutta. In doing so the two ships collided, the bow of the heavier Calcutta sliced into the side of the Fraser with such force that the lighter vessel was cut into three pieces. Forty-five crewmembers were killed and nineteen men from the Calcutta lost their lives. Many survivors from the Fraser were later lost on October 22, 1940, after being transferred to the destroyer HMCS Margaree which sank after a collision with the freighter Port Fairy.

HMCS Guysborough - Minesweeper

At 18.50 hours on 17 March 1945, HMCS Guysborough (T/Lt. Benjamin Thomas Robert Russell, RCNR) was hit by a Gnat from U-868, while escorting a convoy in the Biscay Bay. She was sunk by a coup de grâce at 19.35 hours in position 46°43'N, 09°30'W.

There were 51 casualties among her crew.

HMCS Levis - Corvette

On 19 September 1941 HMCS Levis (K 115) (T/Lt. Charles Walter Gilding, RCNR) was hit by one torpedo from U-74 east of Cape Farewell in position 60.07N, 38.37W while escorting the convoy SC-44 as part of the 19th Escort Group. The ship was taken in tow by HMCS Mayflower (Lt.Cdr. G.Stephen, RCNR), but foundered later that day.

18 crew members went down with the ship. 40 survivors were picked up by HMCS Mayflower and HMCS Agassiz (Lt. B.D.L. Johnson, RCNR).

HMCS Louisburg - Corvette

In the afternoon of 6 February 1943 near Cape Tenes, Algeria convoy KMF-8 (Gibraltar to Bone) was attacked by 2 separate formations of German planes from FK II: the first consisted of 7 Ju-88 bombers, the other of 7 torpedo planes, He.111 of the 4th Staffel from II/KG.26, lead by Hauptmann Rudolf Schmidt. HMCS Louisburg (Lt.Cdr. William Franklin Campbell, RCNVR) was hit by bombs and torpedoes and sank in position 36°15'N, 00°15'E.

From a crew of 109, rescue craft were able to recover 50.

On the German side, 2 He.111s were lost, but one crew was rescued by a Spanish trawler. In the same attack, the British freighter Fort Babine was torpedoed and damaged by the He.111s of 4/KG.26.

Subsequently, at 0200 hrs of 7 February the German submarine U-77 attacked the convoy 80 nautical miles west Algiers, torpedoing and sinking the British freighters Empire Banner and Empire Webster. Finally, the following day one of the convoy escorts, the Canadian corvette Regina (Lt.Cdr H. Freeland, RCNR) sank the Italian submarine Avorio (Lt. Leone Fiorentini) off Philippeville.

HMCS Margaree - Destroyer

Transferred from the Royal Navy on 6 September 1940, was former HMS Diana. She was transferred to replace HMCS Fraser but was herself sunk soon after transfer.

HMCS Margaree (Cdr. Joseph Wilton Rouer, RCN) was sunk in the North Atlantic while escorting convoy OL-8, in position (approx.) 53°24'N, 22°50'W after a collision with the freighter Port Fairy.

142 of her crew were lost with the ship.

HMCS Ottawa - Destroyer

At 02.05 hours on 14 September 1942 the German submarine U-91 fired a spread of two torpedoes at a destroyer and observed a hit. Then they saw another destroyer, made a full circle and fired at 02.15 hours one torpedo, which hit amidships and caused the ship to blow up and sink immediately. Walkerling thought that they had sunk two destroyers, but in fact HMCS Ottawa (A/Lt.Cdr. Clark Anderson Rutherford, RCN), escorting convoy ON-127, was hit twice and sank in position 47°55'N, 43°27'W (German naval grid BC 6191) with the loss of 114 crew. There were 67 survivors.

HMCS Otter - Armed Yacht

Caught fire and sank off Halifax on 26 March 1941.

2 officers and 17 ratings perished.

HMCS Raccoon - Armed Yacht

HMCS Raccoon (Lt.Cdr. John Norman Smith, RCNR) was torpedoed and sunk in position 49°01'N, 67°17'W by the German submarine U-165 while QS-33 in the St. Lawrence river.

37 of the crew went down with the ship, there were no survivors.

HMCS Regina - Corvette

HMCS Regina (T/Lt. Jack Wiles Radford, RCNR) was torpedoed and sunk by U-667, off Trevoze Head, Cornwall, England in position 50°42'N, 05°03'W.

Thirty of her ship's company were lost.

HMCS St. Croix - Destroyer

HMCS St. Croix (A/Lt.Cdr. Andrew Hedley Dobson, DSC, RCNR) was torpedoed and sunk south of Iceland in position 57°30'N, 31°10'W by U-305 while escorting convoy ON.202.

The ship was one of the first victims of the new developed acoustic torpedo Gnat.

Of the 5 officers and 76 men picked up by the British frigate HMS Itchen (sunk by German U-boat U-666), only one, Leading Stoker William Allen Fisher, survived the sinking of the Itchen a few days later.

HMCS Shawinigan - Corvette

HMCS Shawinigan (Lt. William James Jones, RCNR) was on an independent anti-submarine patrol in the Cabot Strait, when she was torpedoed and sunk with all hands by the German submarine U-1228 in position 47°34'N, 59°11'W.

HMCS Skeena - Destroyer

HMCS Skeena (A/Lt.Cdr. Patrick Francis Xavier Russell, RCN) was wrecked during a storm at Videy, Iceland.

This location is right off Reykjavík, the capital.

HMCS Spikenard - Corvette

HMCS Spikenard (Lt.Cdr. Hubert George Shadforth, RCNR) was torpedoed and sunk by U-136, about 465 nautical miles west of Malin Head, Ireland in position 56°10'N, 21°07'W, while escorting convoy SC-67.

There were only eight survivors.

HMCS Trentonian - Corvette

HMCS Trentonian (T/Lt. Colin Stinson Glassco, RCNVR) was torpedoed and sunk by the German submarine U-1004 near Falmouth, England in position 50°06'N, 04°50'W.

Six of her ship's company were lost.

HMCS Valleyfield - Frigate

HMCS Valleyfield (T/A/Lt.Cdr. Dermot Thomas English, RCNR) was torpedoed and sunk by U-548 on 7 May 1944 about 50 nautical miles south of Cape Race, Newfoundland in position 46°03'N, 52°24'W. 43 survivors were picked up by HMCS Giffard. 5 of the survivors died of exposure so in total 125 of her crew including her Commanding Officer went down with the ship.

HMCS Weyburn - Corvette

On 22 February 1943 HMCS Weyburn (A/Lt.Cdr. Thomas Maitland Wake Golby, RCNR) was mined off Cape Espartel east of Gibraltar in position 36°46'N, 06°02'W. Seven members of her crew including her commanding officer were lost with the ship. The mine was laid by U-118 on 1 February 1943.

HMCS Windflower - Corvette

HMCS Windflower (Lt. John Price, RCNR) was rammed and sunk by the Dutch freighter Zypenberg in dense fog off the Grand Banks. She was escorting convoy SC-58 at the time of her loss.

23 of the ships crew were lost.

