



HARVEY B. M.



It should be noted that Lieutenant Commander Bernard Matheson Harvey was a career officer of the Royal Navy.

Lieutenant Commander Bernard Matheson Harvey was a serving officer on HMS Cressy, a cruiser which was to be sunk by U-9 off the Dutch coast as were also the cruisers HMS *Aboukir* and HMS *Hoguy* on September 22 of 1914.

(continued)

A report cited by the *Canadian Virtual War Memorial* – also found in the *Index to the Chatham Memorial* - states that he ‘...was last seen helping to keep his men afloat’ –

He has no known grave and, as such, is commemorated as seen on the preceding page on the Naval Memorial at Chatham in the English County of Kent. He was reportedly thirty-two years of age.



(Right: After those shown on the preceding page, this is a further image of the Chatham Naval Memorial. – photograph circa 1911)

His early education having been undertaken at Bishop Field College in St. John’s, Newfoundland, his family home, on July 15 of 1896, having taken passage to England at the age of fourteen, he enrolled* at HMS *Britannia*, the training establishment for the Royal Navy at that time.

HARVEY, BERNARD MATHESON, Lieut.-Commander, R.N., s. of the late Hon. Augustus William Harvey, of St. John’s, Newfoundland, by his wife, Elizabeth Gertrude ; b. St. John’s, Newfoundland, 4 July, 1882 ; entered H.M.S. *Britannia* and obtained his naval cadetship in Jan. 1908, became Midshipman April following, sub-Lieut. Oct. 1901, Lieut. 31 Dec. 1903, and Lieut.-Commander, 1912 ; held various Torpedo Boat Commands, including T.B. No. 6, 1908-10 and the Destroyer *Foyle*, May, 1910-11 ; joined H.M.S. *Cressy*, 27 Jan. 1912, and was lost on 22 Sept. 1914, when that ship was torpedoed in the North Sea. He m. 4 Aug. 1910, Hester, dau. of His Honour Josiah Wood, Lieut.-Governor of New Brunswick, and had issue a son : Maurice, b. 11 Oct. 1911.

**Joining the Navy at such a young age was not at all unusual at the time. In fact, Jack Cornwell, aged sixteen, earned a posthumous Victoria Cross at the Battle of Jutland. He is the medal’s youngest recipient.*

(Right above: On page 175 of De Ruvigny’s ‘Roll of Honour’ is to be found the following summary of Lieutenant Commander Harvey’s naval career. – from *Ancestry.ca* files: it will be noted that there is an important discrepancy in one of the dates.)

(Right: *The White Ensign has been flown by the Royal Navy in its present form since about the year 1800 although other naval ensigns had existed for at least two centuries. It consists of a red St. George’s Cross – the national flag of England - on a white field with the Union Flag* in the upper canton.*)



**The Union Flag is commonly referred to as the ‘Union Jack’; this is, in fact, a misnomer since a flag is referred to as a ‘Jack’ only when flown from the bow of a ship.*

The original HMS *Britannia*, in use as a cadet training-ship, had been replaced by HMS *Prince of Wales* (re-named as *Britannia*) in 1869 and it was on her – or on board HMS *Hisdostan* which had supplemented the original *Britannia* in 1865 - that Cadet Harvey underwent his training.

A brick and stone replacement for *Britannia* and *Hindostan* was opened only in 1905 by which time the then-Lieutenant Harvey was already serving at sea.

(Right below: *The photograph shown here is that of Torpedo-Boat 034, an elderly craft – built in 1886 - although apparently still in service by the end of the Great War. – photograph from the naval-history.net web-site*)

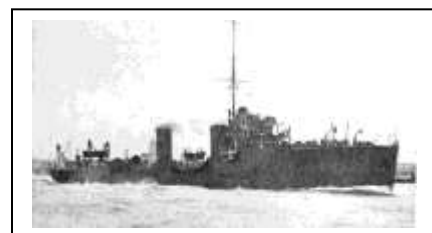
It was apparently in January of 1898 that Cadet Harvey completed his apprenticeship before returning to Newfoundland for several months that spring and summer. In mid-August he is documented as having traversed the Cabot Strait on the SS *Bruce* on his way back to England where he was to be posted to service on some of His Majesty's smaller ships and boats such as the vessel shown at right. Midshipman in April of 1899, he was promoted to the rank of sub-lieutenant in 1901 and to that of lieutenant two years later, in 1903.



Lt. Harvey's ship following his experience with torpedo-boats was to be HMS *Foyle*, a River-Class destroyer built in 1903, a type of ship which marked the transition of the destroyer, from an enlarged torpedo boat to that of a useful fleet escort vessel. He served on her during some of the period of 1910 to 1911.

(Right below: *The destroyer HMS 'Foyle', shown here, was to strike a mine and to sink in the Dover Straits on March 15 of 1917 with a loss of thirty of her personnel. - from the naval-history.net web-site*)

HMS *Cressy* was to be Lieutenant Commander Harvey's next – and final – posting*. The ship, having been assigned to serve with the Seventh Cruiser Squadron in the waters between the Continent and Great Britain, in September of 1914, some six weeks following the outbreak of hostilities, was patrolling the North Sea off the Dutch and Belgian coasts in concert with her four sister-ships.



**His promotion to the rank of Lieutenant Commander had come in 1912, possibly when he joined 'Cressy'.*

Two of the cruisers, *Aboukir* first then followed by *Hogue*, were hit by torpedoes from the German submarine U-9. *Cressy*, perhaps naively, then attempted to rescue the survivors of these two attacks but was thus in her turn to be struck. Almost one-thousand five-hundred men were to perish from the three ships, five-hundred sixty of which were from the crew of HMS *Cressy* which sank within a half-hour.



(Preceding page: *The photograph of HMS 'Cressy' in pre-War times is from the Wikipedia web-site. Even though launched as late as 1899, she was already obsolescent.*)

(Right: *Two photographs of Lieutenant Commander Bernard Matheson Harvey: the first is from the 'Geneanet' web-site; that underneath is from page 190 of the 'War Illustrated', the caption making no mention of his Newfoundland heritage.*)

The son of the Honourable Augustus William Harvey of *Harvey & Company*, deceased of heart disease on February 7 of 1903, and of Elizabeth Gertrude Harvey (née *Walker**), of St. John's, he was also husband of Hester Victoria Wood**, and father of Maurice Edward Matheson Harvey, born in 1911. He was brother to six siblings: to Adolphus-John, George-Walker, Eugenius, Edward-Field, Viola-Gertrude and to Raymond-Leslie.

**The couple had been married in St. Mary's Church, St. John's, on October 19, 1864.*

***The daughter of Josiah and Laura Sophia Wood, a prominent couple of Sackville, New Brunswick - he to become the Lieutenant Governor of that province in 1912 - she was married to Lieutenant Bernard Matheson Harvey in the summer of 1910 in London. In 1916 she was re-married, to Henry Millican Cleminson – the couple was to parent two sons – and was to thereafter reside in the small village of Writtle in the English county of Essex.*

Born at the family home, 'Omrac', on King's Bridge Road in St. John's, Newfoundland, on July 4 of 1882 and baptized in St. Thomas' Church on August 27 of the same year (both dates from the aforementioned *Geneaner* web-site), Lieutenant Bernard Matheson Harvey was to die on September 22 of 1914 at thirty-two years of age.

Lieutenant Commander Bernard Matheson Harvey was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star*, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).

**Because of the date of his death, the star would also likely have comprised a bar attached to the ribbon.*



The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to *criceadam@yahoo.ca*. Last updated – January 21, 2023.

