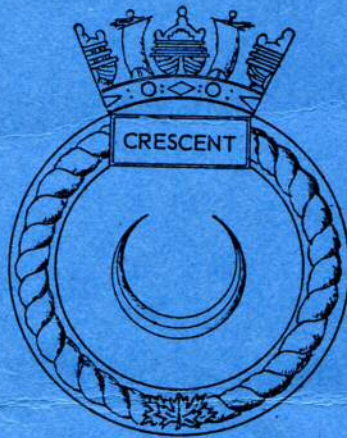


H.M.C.S. CRESCENT



COMMISSIONING BOOKLET

L110

SEASIDE MUSEUM
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

FOREWORD

This booklet has been prepared to commemorate the commissioning of H.M.C.S. Crescent at H.M.C. Dockyard, Esquimalt, B. C., on the 31st October, 1955.

The commissioning of H.M.C.S. Crescent is the culmination of two years of reconstruction, during which time the external and internal features of the ship have been modernized to provide the Royal Canadian Navy with an entirely new Destroyer Escort unit. This major alteration in ship design and construction was achieved in H.M.C. Dockyard, Esquimalt, B. C., and is evidence of the fine workmanship accredited to Canadian artisans.

It is also noteworthy and fitting that H.M.C.S. Crescent will be the senior ship of the "Second Canadian Escort Squadron".

THE SHIP'S NAME

The first known usage of "Crescent" as a name was its use as a symbol of Byzantium or Constantinople.

The Turkish Empire then adopted the crescent as their emblem. After capturing Constantinople in 1453, and in commemoration of this conquest the Sultan proclaimed the "Order of the Crescent".

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

Ship's Complement.....	253 Officers and Men
Armament.....	One 4-inch HA/LA gun One 3-inch 50 gun Two 40-mm guns Anti-submarine mortar MK 10
Power.....	40,000 SHP
Speed.....	33 knots
Displacement.....	2,688 tons
Length over all.....	362 feet, 9 inches
Beam.....	35 feet, 8 inches



HISTORICAL NOTES

The first Crescent was a ship of 140 tons with a complement of 75 men. She was built in 1588 and based on Dartmouth with with the Lord High Admiral's Squadron (Lord Howard of Effingham). She assisted in the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Her Captain at that time was John Wilson; her sailing master, Mr. Christopher Weymouth. The Mayor of Dartmouth's regalia commemorates the departure of "Crescent" and "Hart" from Dartmouth to intercept the Armada in 1588.

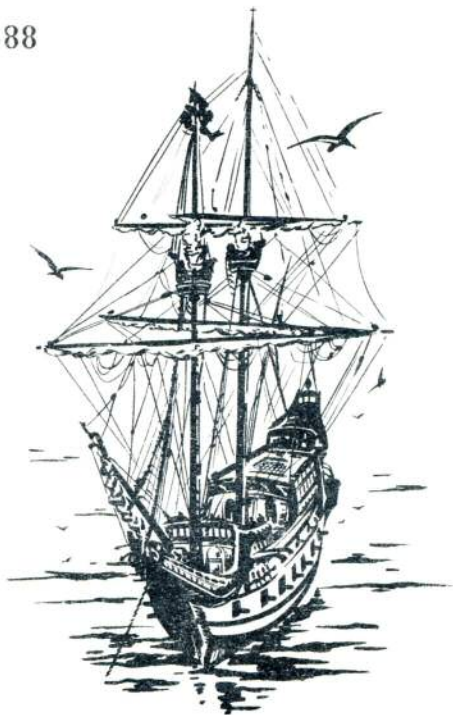
The second Crescent was purchased for use in the Fleet in 1642. She was 150 tons with 14 guns. During the Civil War in England she refused to obey the dictator Cromwell and was one of the eleven ships under Sir William Batten which remained loyal to the Crown and joined the Royalist Fleet under the Prince of Wales in Holland in June 1648. She was captured by the Parliamentarians off Scilly in November 1648 and was lost off Guernsey, Channel Islands in 1649.

The third Crescent was of 326 tons and 28 guns. She was hired from the Levant Company in 1651 for the Dutch War. In 1652 she saw service under Ayscue in his action against the Dutch off Plymouth and on 18th February 1653 she saw action with Blake against the Dutch off Portsmouth. In June of 1653 she was in the battle of Gabbard and was returned to the Levant Company in September. In 1653 her Captain was Commander Thomas Thorougood.

The fourth Crescent was captured from the French by H.M.S. Dover on 11th February, 1692. She was a fireship of 234 tons and boasted 8 guns. She took part in the War of the League of Augsburg and saw action at La Haque on 19th May 1692. She was sold in 1698.

The fifth Crescent was originally a French corsair with the name of "Rostan". She was captured by H.M.S. Torbay under Captain the Honourable Augustus Keppel and H.M.S. Chichester in February 1758, renamed "Crescent" and added to the Fleet.

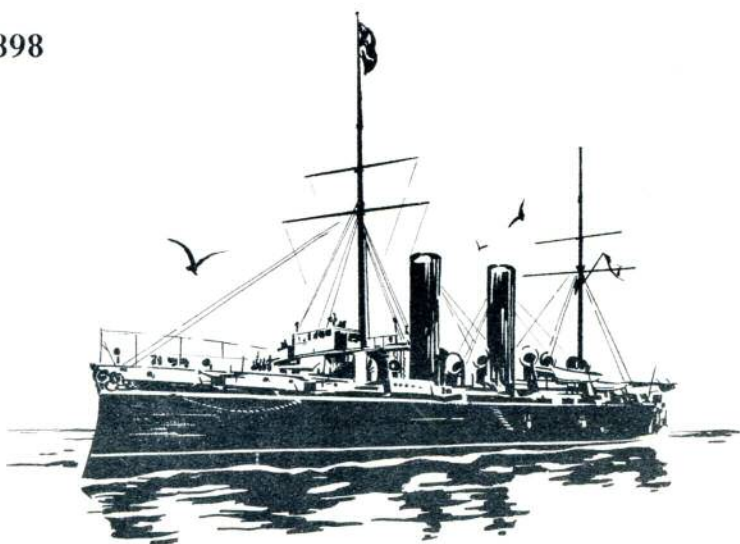
1588



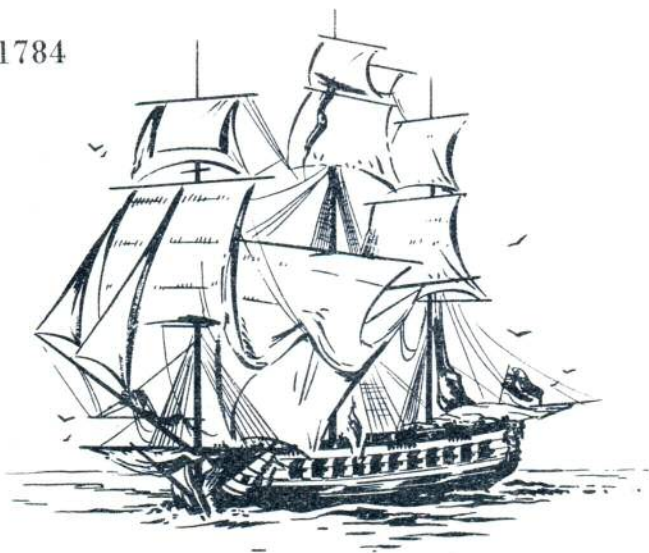
1651



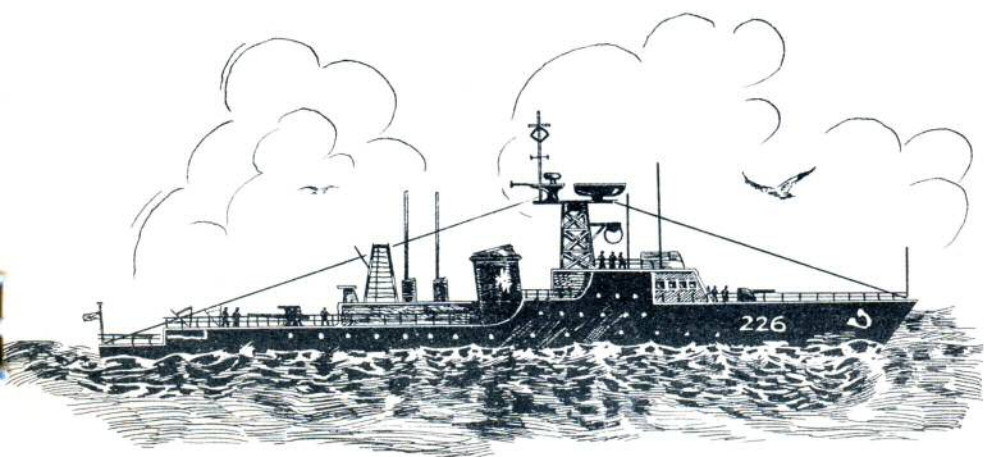
1898



1784



1955



She was classified as a fifth rate of 32 guns; her tonnage 731; gundeck length 130'5; keel 107'6½; beam 35'9 and draft 11'2.

On 13th August, 1759, she captured the French "Berkeley" of 20 guns, and in early 1762, she took part under Rodney in the capture of Martinique. Her Captain in 1762 was Thomas Collingwood. When Keppel captured "Rostan", later "Crescent", he discovered 90 men hidden in the hold in the nick of time to prevent a "wooden horse" effort.

The sixth Crescent was launched in 1779, built by J.M. Hillhouse of Bristol. She was a sixth rate of 611 tons and 28 guns and saw action in the Mautine War of 1778-1781. In October 1779 with H.M.S. Jupiter and H.M.S. Opollo she captured the French 14-gun cutters Mutine and Pilote in the Channel.

In May 1781, under Captain the Honourable Thomas Pakenham she tangled with the Dutch frigate Briel of 36 guns off Ceuta. Crescent had her quarterdeck guns and 4 maindeck guns disabled; leadyards and sails shot away, mainmast, mizzenmast and booms all fell wrecked into the waist and disabled all guns before the main mast. She could not board the Briel, since Briel was to windward. Briel came round under her stern and raked her; she had no guns to bear, no sails standing and no steering. At least fifty per cent of her men were killed and wounded. Although her flag was lowered by accident in the heat of battle, she held out until H.M.S. Flora arrived and chased off the Briel.

The Captain considered that he deserved a court martial and ordered Lieutenant John Bligh (Bligh of Bounty fame, 1785) to assume command, but on the way home under jury rig, with only five men to each available gun and only nine marines, she ran into the French Glorie and Friponne (32 guns) and after a most gallant fight against overwhelming odds, was captured. Captain Pakenham was later court martialled at his own request and acquitted of any stigma.

The seventh Crescent, a fifth rate of 888 tons, 36 guns, 257 men and 315 lb broadside, was built at Bursleden by Calhoun and Newland. She was launched on 28 October, 1784 and took part in the Wars of the French Revolution (1793-1800). At the outbreak of war in 1793 Captain James Saumarez was appointed in command and scored an immediate and resounding success on 20 October, 1793 against the French Reunion of 951 tons, 40 guns and 320 men. Crescent gunners aimed at the wheel which they shot away at the rudder and steering gear; then by an adroit manoeuvre, Crescent wore round on her heel. The fight lasted 2½ hours off Cherbourg, the enemy being captured and taken into Spithead. While Reunion sustained casualties consisting of 33 killed and 48 wounded, there were no losses in Crescent. Saumarez was knighted for this action and given a handsome set of silver by London merchants. Some three years after the Reunion fight in 1796, with Captain Edward Buller in command, Crescent was present at the surrender of a Dutch squadron of nine ships at Saldanha Bay. In December, 1797, with Captain William Spranger in command, together with H.M.S. Braeve and H.M.S. Sphynx, she destroyed the French settlement at Foul Point, Madagascar, and captured five French ships. (The painting of Saumarez' victory over Reunion hangs in Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, England).

In November, 1799, in command of Captain William Granville Lobb, Crescent captured the Spanish "Galga" off Cuba and the French "Diligente" off San Domingo in June 1800. The victory was a timely fillip to public morale. Upon returning to sea in company with one other ship, she was suddenly attacked by five Frenchmen. Capture appeared certain, but she stood in to the shore by Guernsey to avoid pursuit and a Guernsey pilot took her through the rocks by a never-before-used channel and Crescent escaped. Asked by Saumarez whether she would make it and whether he knew where he was, the pilot quipped, "Quite sure Sir! there is your house and there is mine".

Sir William Hotham described Saumarez when he was Senior Captain at the Battle of the Nile as — “in his person tall, and having the remains of a handsome man; rather formal and ceremonious in his manner, but without the least tincture of affectation or pride; more than ordinarily attentive to his duty to God; but with the weakness of Christianity having the boldness of a lion whenever a sense of duty brings it into action”. A portrait of him hangs in the United Services Club, London, and a 90-foot high obelisk in his memory is on DeLancy Hill, Guernsey. With Captain John Temple in command, this very active and magnificent ship came to an unfortunate end, being wrecked off Jutland in 1808.

The eighth Crescent, a fifth rate of 1,084 tons and 46 guns was commissioned in Woolwich Dockyard in 1810. She saw service in the Napoleonic Wars, being fitted out as a Receiving Ship in Rio Janeiro in 1839. She was sold in 1854.

The ninth Crescent was a steam paddle ship of 90 tons and fifty horsepower. She was purchased by Admiral Dundas at Constantinople 21 July, 1854 and used as a Fleet Auxiliary in the Black Sea. She was sold in the same place on 7 July, 1856.

The tenth Crescent was built at Portsmouth in 1892 and was a twin screw cruiser of 7,700 tons. She was flagship on the America and West Indies Station (Vice Admiral J.E. Erskine, K.C.B.) from 1895 to 1897 and based in Halifax and Bermuda and was one of the last flagships of the Royal Navy at Halifax associating with Canada. On June 22nd, 1898, His Royal Highness the Duke of York, later King George V, took command of H.M.S. Crescent for a special service cruise undertaken in order to secure for him the qualification, necessary under the regulations, of being in command of a fully commissioned ship as Captain before advancement to Rear Admiral. It was His Royal Highness' last spell at sea for sea-service. The work was mainly target practice and under him were his close friends, Commander

Henry Campbell and Sir Charles Cust. He took her first to Torbay, then to Dartmouth, where he inspected the cadets; and the following day entertained fifty of them on board Crescent to a tea of bread and jam and cream buns. While on this cruise, the ship proceeded to Lough Swilly, Stornaway, Outer Isles, Portland and Kirkwall, finally acting as guardship for the Cowes Regatta.

Concerning the tenth Crescent, the following appeared in the Halifax Herald on 25 May, 1895. Quote — "The arrival of the Crescent was an event to mark the day, the new flagship making a quick run up from Bermuda. She exchanged salutes with the Citadel. At noon, Royal salutes were fired from the Citadel and the Crescent, and a feu de joie was discharged from the Citadel ramparts". With reference to the Queen's Birthday Reception given by His Excellency Governor Daly at Government House, the Herald reported — "To do honour to the occasion the Admiral and Mrs. Erskine, the Captain and many of the Officers of the Crescent, although only a few hours in port, were present". On arrival of the ship in Halifax, her Captain, Graves-Paul, R.N., commented: Quote — "Crescent resembles in appearance the Blake. She has full forecastle deck forward, in which there are two guns with separate casemates, one on either side. The Crescent is minus torpedo poles. Her torpedo nets are stowed on a shelf outside the ship in line with the upper deck. She carries two signal poles or masts, with a yard on each. She is without a gaff. She has five quick firing guns in sponsors either side and a quick firing gun on either side of the bow. She is a fine looking vessel and a perfect sea going ship".

Her naval armament consisted of one 9.2-inch, twelve 6-inch and eighteen 3-pounder guns. Length and beam were 360 feet and 65 feet respectively and her speed was 19.5 knots while carrying 1,500 tons of coal. She was flagship of the 10th Cruiser Squadron (Rear Admiral Dudley de Chair) in 1914 and is believed to have escorted the First Canadian Contingent from Gaspe to

Plymouth in September of that year. As a climax to her service she was flagship of the Commander-in-Chief, Coast of Scotland from 1916 to 1920 and was sold for scrap in 1921.

The eleventh Crescent was the battleship H.M.S. Glory; renamed to replace the previous flagship. She saw service as flagship to the Commander-in-Chief, Coast of Scotland from 1920 to 1929 and was subsequently paid off and sold.

The twelfth Crescent was a destroyer of 1,375 tons with four 4.7-inch guns. Built and commissioned at Barrow during 1931, she was in service with the Royal Navy until 1937 when she was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy and renamed H.M.C.S. Fraser. She took part in the evacuation of Dunkirk only to be lost in the Channel a short time later with a heavy loss of life.

The thirteenth Crescent, a 2,500 ton destroyer, was commissioned on the 10th September, 1945 after being built by John Brown of the Clyde. She was designed as the leader of the 14th Emergency Flotilla and bears the name of this class of ship. During the Autumn of 1947, H.M.C.S. Crescent was dispatched with haste to China to evacuate the Canadian citizens who were being threatened by the Communist onslaught. She is a well-travelled ship and her sea-keeping and fighting qualities would gladden the heart of John Wilson, the first Elizabethan Captain of the Crescent. And pride and dignity would reflect in the gaze of the many doughty warriors, not the least being Saumarez, if they could but look upon the latest ship which bears that name.

Another cycle has transpired and our good ship is once more Elizabethan. May she serve her Country and Queen in the same selfless manner and great tradition as her predecessors!

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