



Walter H. Russell was born at Indian Harbour, Labrador on Aug 5, 1912. The youngest of 4 boys and 5 girls to Isaac and Sarah Jane Russell of Bay Roberts. My father volunteered to join the Royal Navy in early 1940 and entered the navy on Apr 19, 1940. He served overseas from June 1940 up until March 17, 1946. Early on in the war with his ship was docked at the naval base in Portsmouth, England; his English buddy invited him to his home. They went by train to the city of Stoke-on-Trent where he was to meet his future wife, Edith Edwards. They would get married after the war and go on to have three children, Walter j, Edward, and Edith. My future mom at the time worked at a munitions factory where they made ammunition and explosives for the military. She was to suffer serious hearing loss years later as a result of an explosion at this factory. Daughter Edith would one day take a trip to my mother's home in England, meet someone, get married in the same church as her parents

and has been living in the UK ever since. After the war, my dad returned to Newfoundland with his war bride. He eventually found work on the construction of the Gander airport. Later on, he worked at the American Naval base at Argentia. His first job here was as a civilian police officer. Due to his experience operating ship engines, steam turbines, etc., he eventually came to work at the Argentia north side power plant. He continued to work here until the base started to phase out and eventually closed down. There was an interval of a year or so when my parents went back to Britain in hopes of making a go of it over there. However, this did not work out.

On his arrival in England at the beginning of the war, he was sent to the navy training centre at HMS GANGES. This was one of several training centres that he was associated with during his time in the navy. Basic training did not last too long. Sailors were needed in as soon as possible. My dad soon found himself on active duty and over the next several years serving on a variety of navy ships and serving in different oceans. His discharge papers say he was a Stoker First Class. As such he would certainly have to spend quite a bit of time in the engine rooms. He served on a number of different war ships, corvettes, mine sweepers, frigates, various types of assault craft, motor torpedo boats, etc. At some point during the war, he became a member of Combined operations. Hence the insignia of the Eagle wings, Thomson Machine gun and the Anchor. In short, he was now a

member of the Navy Commando units. My dad served on three oceans: The Atlantic, Mediterranean, and the Indian Oceans. He took part in the Invasion of Madagascar, Sicily and D-DAY. He served in North Africa and saw service in Mombasa, Kenya. As a Commando, he was on several raids along the Nordic coasts.

Written by FAMILY



MEDALS (1939-1945) War medal: Atlantic medal; Africa medal: King George VI medal; Defense medal: Volunteer medal.

