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William Ralph Mercer
World War I
Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland)
Service No. 844X

Born: 27 October 1889

Place of Birth: Bay Roberts

Parents: William and Rachel Mercer

William enlisted in the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland) in the summer of 1914. Since Newfoundland was part of the British Empire at that time, he would see service in the Royal Navy.

What follows below in numbered form are actual handwritten entries from his service record. These entries provide a timeline of when and where he served during his almost five (5) years in the navy.

1. 24 Aug 14 – 18 Nov 18: Basic training aboard the HMS Calypso in St. John's Harbour

2. 19 Nov 14 – 04 Mar 15: HMS Vivid
3. 05 Mar 15 – 31 Mar 15: HMS Halcyon
4. 01 Apr 15 – 23 Dec 15: HMS Colleen
5. 24 Dec 15 – 22 Feb 16: HMS Vivid 1
6. 23 Feb 16 – 08 Mar 16: HMS Stephen Furness
7. 09 Mar 16 – 18 Feb 17: HMS Thalia



HMS Thalia
A Base ship

8. 19 Feb 17 – 23 Oct 17: HMS Triton
9. 24 Oct 17 – 25 Feb 18: HMS Vivid 111
10. 26 Feb 18 – 24 Apr 18: HMS Briton
11. 25 Apr 188 – 24 May 19: HMS Briton. Shore demobilized and discharged from service.

William returned to civilian life after his service and is found in the 1921 Newfoundland general census living in Bay Roberts with his father William, who is now a widower, having lost his wife several years prior. His younger brother is also living at

home with them, and he has a wife named Freda.

The 1935 census shows William married with a family and still in Bay Roberts. The census entry gives his name as "Ralph," his second name but it is him as the record shows him married to Dorothy (this is correct for his wife). They were married in 1922 and now have six (6) children

The 1945 census has him again as Ralph (and not William), he is now 51 and Dorothy 41. Their family has increased to nine (9) children in all.

William Ralph Mercer passed away in November 1967 and Dorothy in 1989. They are buried in the Central United Church Cemetery in Bay Roberts.