**Why Was the Royal Canadian Navy Created?**

**Europe Heads Toward War**

* Threat of war in Europe grew in early 1900s;
* Secret alliances began to form in 1880s;
* Triple Alliance (1882) consisted of Germany, Italy, and Austria-Hungary;
* Triple Entente (1907) included Britain, France, and Russia;
* It meant that if one country went to war they would all go to war.

**The Dreadnoughts and Asking Dominions for Help**

* If war broke out between Germany and Britain, everyone expected that it would be a naval war;
* Believed huge naval battles would take place;
* When war broke out in 1914, the reality was quite different;
* Program of building warships began with much heavier armour than earlier vessels;
* These vessels were called Dreadnoughts after the first ship named HMS Dreadnought (1906);
* Dominions were asked to:
	+ Build naval ships and find crews for them;
	+ Place ships under British command;
	+ Pay for maintenance of these vessels.

**Canada’s Response**

* Laurier proposed the following for Britain:
	+ Canada would create its own Royal Canadian Navy;
	+ Build warships for defence of Canada;
	+ Turn ships over to Britain for duration of war;
	+ Only volunteers would crew vessels.
* English Canadians felt they should help Britain with no strings attached;
* French Canadians wanted Canada to be more independent.

**The Royal Canadian Navy**

* The Naval Service Act of 1910 authorized Canadian government to build warships;
* First ones were to be bought from Britain;
* New ones would be built in Canadian shipyards;
* Royal Naval College of Canada was established in Halifax;
* HMCS *Rainbow* and *Niobe* were first two ships in RCN.

**Conclusion**

* The Royal Canadian Navy was not really an effective force at this time;
* It only had two ships, one on each coast;
* Contrary to predictions, the First World War never really developed into a full naval war;
* It would be the Canadian Army Forces that made the most impact in Europe.