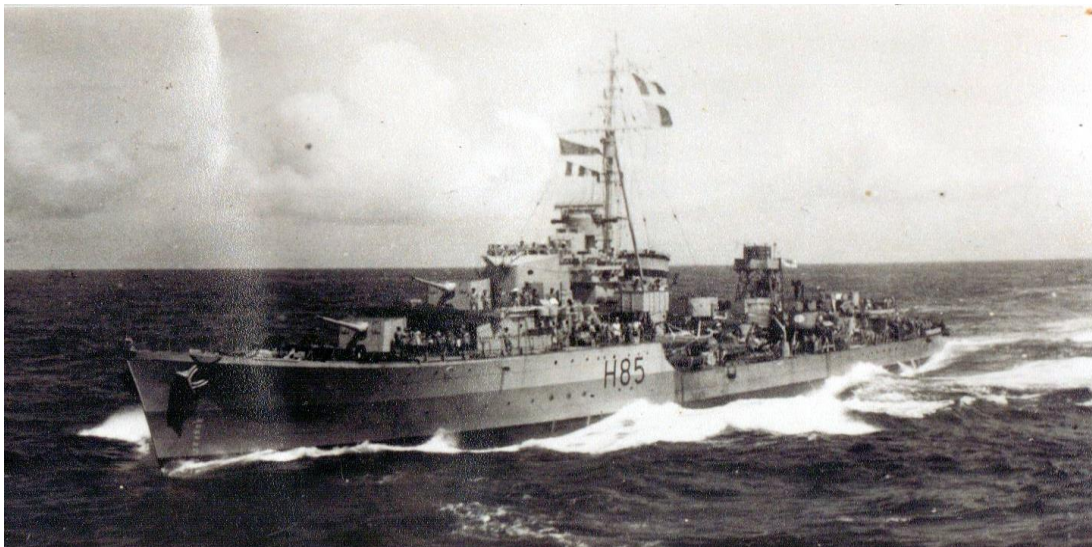


HMS RELENTLESS

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INTRODUCTION

Last Updated 2nd December 2020



'R' Class Destroyer



South Atlantic & East Indies 1943-44

Far East Fleet 1944-45

Battle Honours – *SABANG 1944, EAST INDIES 1945*

Surrender of Singapore 1945

Reserve Fleet 1947-49

HMS RELENTLESS – 1940-1949

A Rotherham-Class ('R' Class) destroyer initially ordered as part of the 4th Emergency Flotilla from Fairfield Shipbuilders in Govan in May 1940, HMS RELENTLESS was the second ship to bear the name.

Shortly after ordering, work was transferred to John Brown of Clydebank, but construction work was delayed because of higher priority being given to the repair of ships damaged in operations in Norway and from the Dunkirk evacuation.

Laid down on 21st June 1941 and launched by Mrs Hatfield - the wife of Dr W H Hatfield, a Director of Thomas Firth – John Brown Ltd of Sheffield - on 15th July 1942, RELENTLESS was completed and commissioned on 30th November, 1942 bearing pennant number H85.

RELENTLESS was assigned to the 11th Destroyer Flotilla and after Work Up at Scapa was nominated for Convoy escort duties in the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean throughout 1943. As part of the Eastern Fleet during 1944 and 1945, RELENTLESS was involved in a number of East Indies or Far East fleet operations, notably the bombardment of Sabang and the Surrender of Singapore and eventually left the Far East in October 1945 to return to the UK.

RELENTLESS was paid off into Reserve at Chatham on arrival in UK in November 1945 and was laid up in the Chatham Reserve Fleet until 1947 when she was transferred to Harwich.

R Class Destroyer General Statistics

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Displacement | 1,705 tons standard, 2,425 tons full load |
| Length | 358ft overall |
| Beam | 35ft 9in |
| Draught | 9ft 6in |
| Propulsion | 2 x Admiralty 3-drum water-tube boilers, Parsons steam turbines 40,000 shp (30,000 kW) on 2 shafts, 36 knots |
| Range | Approx. 4,675nm @ 20 knots |
| Complement | 176 |
| Armament | 4 x 4.7" Mk IX single guns 4 x 2 pdr Mk VIII (40mm L/39) quad mount Mk VII 6 x QF 20mm Oerlikon, single mount P Mk III 4 throwers & 2 racks, 70 depth charges |
| Radar | Type 290 air warning Type 272 ranging and bearing |



As built by John Brown of Clydebank - 1942

Throughout the war years, RELENTLESS served with the Home Fleet, in the South Atlantic, Indian Ocean and the Far East. Primarily deployed in a Convoy Escort role and latterly as Destroyer Screen for capital ships, RELENTLESS returned to the UK in November 1945.

She was put into Reserve in Chatham until 1947 before being laid up in Harwich.



Laid up 1949

Type 15 Frigate



Home Fleet 1951-55

Reserve Fleet 1955-64

Home Fleet & West Indies 1964-1965

Home Fleet & Far East 1966-68

Reserve Fleet 1968-70

Scrapped 1971

HMS RELENTLESS – 1949-1971

Due to advances in submarine technology and the delay in producing Type 12 and Type 14 destroyers it was decided to convert a number of wartime utility destroyers into fast anti-submarine frigates. RELENTLESS was the first of such conversions and emerged from HM Dockyard Portsmouth in 1951 as a Type 15 Frigate with a new pennant number, F185. The First of Class Type 15 however, was HMS ROCKET. RELENTLESS was classified as a Prototype and underwent many modifications for trials purposes.

Type 15 Frigate General Statistics

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Displacement | 2,300 tons standard, 2,700 tons full load |
| Length | 358ft overall |
| Beam | 37ft 9in |
| Draught | 14ft 6in |
| Propulsion | 2 x Admiralty three drum boilers, steam turbines 2 shafts 40,000shp giving 31 knots fully loaded |
| Range | Approx. 2,800nm |
| Complement | 174 |
| Armament | 2 x 3-barrel Limbo Mortar |
| | 1 x twin 40mm Bofors Mk V |
| | 1 x twin 4" Mk XIX |
| Radar | Type 293Q target Indication (later 993) |
| | Type 277Q surface search |
| | Type 974 |
| Navigation | Type 262 fire control on CRBDF |
| | Type 1010 Cossor IFF |
| Sonar | Type 174 search |
| | Type 162 bottom search |
| | Type 170 Limbo |

23 of the 47 or so R, T, U, V, W and Z class 'emergency' destroyers built during the Second World War were converted into Type 15 frigates.

They were stripped down to deck level and beyond, all superstructure, weaponry, masts and equipment was removed, the machinery overhauled, and fuel capacity increased to improve range.

The foc'sl was extended backwards to leave only a small quarterdeck, providing much improved accommodation. The hull was increased in height to form a new single-level superstructure and incorporated a fully enclosed bridge. A sonar room and an operations

room were added spanning the full width of the hull in front of the funnel. The new superstructure layout allowed the crew to fight the ship without having to expose themselves to the elements.



As converted at HM Dockyard Portsmouth - 1951

A completely new suite of armaments and electronics was added, and new lattice masts were provided to carry the updated range of radars and communications equipment.



VIEW FROM FOC'SL LOOKING AFT

The armament was centred around a pair of three-barreled Mk 10 LIMBO A/S mortars which were mounted on the quarterdeck. They had their own dedicated Type 170 attack sonar, had a 360° field of fire and were automatic.



PERISCOPE IN OPERATIONS ROOM

For ship defence, a twin 4" gun on a Mk XIX mounting was carried midships and controlled by an MRS1 Close Range Blind-Fire director (CRBF). Fitted above and behind the bridge was a twin 40mm Bofors on a Mk V mounting.



4" GUN DRILL (note the stylish sea-boots)

After re-commissioning on 10th July 1951, RELENTLESS served in the 3rd Training Flotilla based in Londonderry, and attended the Coronation Review in June 1953.

RELENTLESS was involved in a collision with another Type 15, HMS VIGILANT, off the west coast of Scotland on 27th October 1954 in which both ships were badly damaged.

She was repaired by Scotts at Greenock and was then placed in Reserve at Chatham, and although RELENTLESS remained in Reserve, she was refitted to maintain her availability.



Updated Radar and Communications fit – 1966

In 1963 RELENTLESS, together with a number of other 'mothballed' Type 15s, was again taken out of Reserve as a stop-gap measure and following a technology upgrade and trials, she was re-admitted to the Fleet.

Re-commissioned on 27th June 1964 as 2nd Leader of the 29th Escort Squadron, RELENTLESS saw service in the Home Fleet and the West Indies. Upon transfer to the 26th Escort Squadron in 1966, she saw service in the Home Fleet, the Mediterranean and the Far East, including a number of Beira Patrols.



Shipping a gopher – 1967

However, the lifespan of the Type 15s was limited and in 1968, RELENTLESS was paid off. She was once again held in Reserve and laid up in Portsmouth until 1970 when she was placed on the Disposal List.

RELENTLESS was subsequently sold to T W Ward on 29th April 1971, towed to Inverkeithing in June 1971 and broken up for scrap.



Heraldic Data

Badge

On a Field Blue a trident Gold and a sword inflamed proper in saltire.

Motto

inrevocabilis



In actual fact, RELENTLESS did not have a motto so I have taken a liberty and shown the Latin for 'relentless'.