



Ministry
of Defence

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[REDACTED]

6 February 2019

[REDACTED]

Release of Information

Thank you for your correspondence of 23 January 2019 in which you requested the following information:

'I would like, please, to make a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act.

I would like to know whether 'Summary of Service' histories were prepared for the following Royal Navy 'Town' class cruisers of the Second World War era:

HMS Southampton
HMS Newcastle
HMS Sheffield
HMS Glasgow
HMS Birmingham
HMS Manchester
HMS Liverpool
HMS Gloucester
HMS Edinburgh
HMS Belfast

In each case where a 'Summary of Service' history exists, I would like to see a copy of the contents of this summary.'

Your enquiry has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

A search for the information has now been completed by the Ministry of Defence and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held. The Summary of Service

histories for HMS SOUTHAMPTON, HMS NEWCASTLE, HMS SHEFFIELD, HMS BIRMINGHAM, HMS MANCHESTER, HMS LIVERPOOL, HMS GLOUCESTER, HMS EDINBURGH and HMS BELFAST are attached to this letter. Please be advised that no Summary of Service is available for HMS GLASGOW.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Navy Command Secretariat - FOI Section

HMS BELFAST

SUMMARY OF SERVICE

HMS BELFAST, the first ship of that name in the Royal Navy, was a cruiser of the improved Southampton type, with a displacement of 10,000 tons, and a maximum speed of 32½ knots. She was built at BELFAST by Messrs Harland and Wolff, and was laid down on 10 December 1936, launched by Mrs Neville Chamberlain on 17 March 1938 and completed on 3 August 1939 joining the 18th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet, based on Scapa. From mid-November 1939, she was transferred to the 2nd Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet.

Her main armament consisted of twelve 6 inch guns, twelve 4 inch guns, four 3 pound and four 2 pound guns in addition to a number of smaller weapons.

On 21 November 1939 she was extensively damaged by a mine in the Firth of Forth and was out of action for three years. Her back was broken, engines dislodged, and she needed almost complete reconstruction, but eventually left Devonport for Scapa on 10 December 1942 virtually a new ship. By this time some of her smaller armament had been removed.

During 1943 she served with the 10th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet, in various operations, including the escort of convoys to and from North Russia. On 26 December 1943, when serving as flagship of Vice-Admiral Robert Burnett, it was her radar which detected the German battle-cruiser SCHARNHORST south-east of Bear Island, and she played an outstanding part in the action which resulted in the sinking of that ship.

The BELFAST took part in further operations with the 10th Cruiser Squadron in 1944, including Russian convoys and support of Fleet Air Arm attacks on the TIRPITZ in Kaa Fiord.

She was among the Home Fleet ships lent for the landings in Normandy, Operation "Neptune", on 6 June 1944, when she flew the flag of Rear-Admiral F H G Dalrymple-Hamilton, Commanding the 10th Cruiser Squadron. Allocated to bombardment Force 'E', in support of the Eastern Task Force under Rear-Admiral Sir Philip Vian, she took part in several shoots until 8 July. She afterwards went to the Tyne for a long refit, until April, 1945. On VE Day, 8 May, she was at Rosyth. A meeting with German delegates in connection with minefield clearance was held on board her on 14 May.

Allocated for service in the Far East, she left Scapa for her new station on 17 June 1945, but did not arrive until after Japan had surrendered. On 19 September, she was with the first Allied Force to arrive at Shanghai, flying the flag of Rear-Admiral R M Servaes, Commanding the 2nd Cruiser Squadron.

During the next two years, until her return to Portsmouth in October, 1947, the BELFAST visited all parts of the station – China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Malaya.

On 21 October 1948, a ceremony deferred for over nine years took place when the BELFAST visited her name port to receive a silver bell from the BELFAST Corporation. She afterwards returned to the Far East to relieve HMS SUSSEX.

HMS BELFAST's involvement in the Korean war began on 29 July 1950, when she arrived in the area and became flagship for Flag Officer Second-in-Command Far Eastern Station (Rear Admiral W G Andrewes): HMS BELFAST was initially assigned to Task Force

96 under the command of Commander US Naval Forces Far East. On 5 August 1950, in company with other HM Ships, HMS BELFAST steamed up the hazardous approach to Inchon where she bombarded oil storage areas, factories, warehouses and gun positions. Bombardment in support of land forces and to a lesser extent blockade were to be her major tasks during the Korean War. She returned to Chatham, where she recommissioned on 19 October 1950, worked up at Malta and returned to Sasebo on 31 January 1951.

In February 1951, HMS BELFAST in company with Australian and US ships carried out a successful inshore bombardment at Wonsan, after having navigated some 37 Km of channel through minefields.

In March 1951 HMS BELFAST took part in concentrated bombardment of the west of Korea; in one such, BELFAST hit her target with the first salvo and dropped three succeeding salvos on the same spot. The BELFAST steamed through miles of pack ice during these operations and encountered ice floes up to 20 feet across and several feet thick. On 1 June 1951 she docked at Singapore for her annual refit, and returned to her patrol area on 31 August. On 20 November 1951, BELFAST was flagship of Task Group 95.8 (Rear Admiral A K Scott Moncrieff), and with Dutch and Australian ships made a co-ordinated strike against the industrial centre of Hungnam on the East Coast of Korea.

Although short ranges were necessary for shore bombardments it was not until 29 July 1952 that the BELFAST was hit by return fire, when she was struck by a 76 mm shell, one Chinese rating was killed and four injured.

In September 1952 HMS BELFAST took part in the Cigarette Channel operation, an attempt to disrupt the enemy supply lines.

HMS BELFAST left the Korean theatre in September 1952. Since her arrival on 29 July 1950 she had steamed some 82,500 miles, fired well over 8,000 6-inch shells and spent 404 days at sea. She had been described by the US Naval Command as a 'fast firing ship' and had been much complimented on the effectiveness of her bombardments – a task for which her armament was admirably suited. She returned to Chatham on 4 November 1952, and was afterwards reduced to reserve at Devonport.

In March 1955 approval was given for HMS BELFAST to be modernised; this took place at Devonport during an extended refit from 6 January 1956 to 12 May 1959 during which time major alterations to structure and armament were made. After recommissioning she was allocated to the Far East station and on 28 April 1960 took part in the SEATO exercise SEALION. Between May 1960 and September 1961 she visited ports in Korea, Japan and Australia and on 3 November 1961 sailed from Hong Kong for the Tanganyika independence celebrations. In April/May 1962 she visited San Francisco and returned to Portsmouth on 19 June 1962 after nearly three years on the FES. On 2 July 1962 she was recommissioned for Home Sea Service and became the flagship of Flag Officer Flotillas, Home Fleet. On 2-8 November, wearing his flag, she visited Amsterdam with ships of the Home Fleet.

In August 1963, at which time she was wearing the flag of the Admiral Commanding Reserves, in Company with ships of the 10th (RNR) Minesweeping Squadron, she made the round trip to Gibraltar and back with Cadets of the CCF and SCC on board (Exercise ROCK HAUL).

In 1965 she was ordered to be retained in reserve at Plymouth and in August of that year she was at Plymouth for Navy Days.

In 1966 she was brought forward from reserve and reclassified as a harbour accommodation ship at Portsmouth, and on 17 May the offices of Captain Reserve Ships and Senior Officer Reserve Ships Portsmouth transferred to HMS BELFAST from the SHEFFIELD.

In 1967 a joint Imperial War Museum/National Maritime Museum/Ministry of Defence Committee was set up to consider the possibility of preserving HMS BELFAST as an example of the dying breed of 'big-gun' ships which had for so long borne the brunt of the defence of these Islands and civilisation throughout the world. It reported in 1968 that the scheme was a practical one but early in 1971 the Government decided not to preserve the ship as a national museum.

However, a private Trust was set up in an attempt to preserve BELFAST and in July 1971 the Government agreed to hand the ship over to the Trust.

On 15 November 1971 HMS BELFAST was towed to her final mooring place just above Tower Bridge and officially handed over to the BELFAST Trust. In the person of Rear Admiral Morgan Giles, Chairman of the Trust and a former captain of the Ship). She is open to the public to serve as a constant reminder to future generations of the importance of maritime power in the Country's past history and for her future prosperity. Although the BELFAST is no longer in commission, by special permission she continues to wear the White Ensign and is still regarded as a ship of the Royal Navy. At the time of her transfer to the Trust her tonnage was stated as 11,550, making her the largest cruiser ever to be constructed for the Royal Navy.

Battle Honours awarded to the BELFAST are as follows:-

Arctic	1943
North Cape	1943
Normandy	1944
Korea	1950-1952

Naval Historical Branch
Retyped 2009
June 1976

BS/96

HMS BIRMINGHAM, 1937 TO 1960

HMS BIRMINGHAM, a cruiser of 9,000 tons and twelve 6-in guns, was built at Devonport Dockyard with engines by John Brown and Co, Clydebank, being completed on 18th November 1937.

At the outbreak of the Second World War she was serving in the 5th Cruiser Squadron, China Station, but in January 1940, she was recalled to Malta, where she was refitted, and in February transferred to home waters. She joined the 18th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet, in March.

During the campaign in Norway she escorted the first troop convoy, NP 1, and other convoys, took part in other operations, and sank a German minelaying trawler.

Early in May, in view of the enemy threat to Holland and Belgium, the BIRMINGHAM was ordered to Rosyth to be available for operations on the East Coast. On the night of 9th May, she was among the ships which covered the flotilla leader KELLY, Captain Lord Louis Mountbatten, when she was torpedoed by an E-boat, but was brought into port.

On receipt of the news of the invasion of Holland on 10th May, the BIRMINGHAM was ordered to Terschelling to render assistance to the Dutch. In June she took part in an unsuccessful Home Fleet operation designed to intercept the SCHARNHORST, and in July was brought to the Nore in view of the invasion threat to the United Kingdom. Between September and December 1940, she was refitted at Liverpool, rejoining the Home Fleet at Scapa on 27th December.

In January 1941 she covered the passage of five Norwegian merchant ships from Gothenburg, Sweden, to Kirkwall. A month later she was among the escorts to the troop convoy WS 6 on the first stages of its journey to the Middle East via the Cape. Leaving Capetown on 24th March, she escorted a Sierra Leone convoy during her return passage to home waters.

When the German battleship BISMARCK and cruiser PRINZ EUGEN broke out into the Atlantic in May 1941, the BIRMINGHAM was on patrol between Iceland and the Faroes, but was not fortunate enough to make contact with the enemy.

In June 1941, the BIRMINGHAM left the Clyde escorting another Middle East convoy, WS 9A and on her arrival at Durban in July was transferred to the South American Division in place of the NEWCASTLE. She became flagship of Rear-Admiral F H Pegram, Commanding this Division in August, and took part in searches for German raiders and supply ships, three of which were sunk by other cruisers between October and December.

In February 1942 the BIRMINGHAM was allocated to the Eastern Fleet under Admiral Sir James Somerville, but was refitting at Somonstown until mid-May.

The BIRMINGHAM was one of the cruisers of the Eastern Fleet borrowed by C-in-C Mediterranean to assist in the attempt to run an eastern convoy from Egypt to Malta (Operation Vigorous) in June. The attempt was not successful, owing to the enemy's superior forces being at sea, and the convoy had to return to Egypt on the 15th. The BIRMINGHAM was hit on that day by an aircraft torpedo and received slight damage.

She rejoined the Eastern Fleet early in July and in September took part in the complete occupation by the Allies of Madagascar. During October, November and December she was on convoy protection and anti-U-boat patrols in the Indian Ocean.

During January and February 1943 the BIRMINGHAM was escorting military convoys between Durban and Aden.

In April 1943 the BIRMINGHAM arrived in the United Kingdom for a refit at Plymouth. She left the Clyde on 16th November to return to the Eastern Fleet.

At 1222B on 28th November while on her way unescorted through the Mediterranean eastward to join the Eastern Fleet the BIRMINGHAM was torpedoed forward by a U-boat in 33° 05'N; 21° 43'E, about 50 miles north-west of Derna. Her main machinery was undamaged and she proceeded towards Alexandria at 15 knots, later reduced to ten knots, arriving on the morning of 30th November. Her casualties numbered 29 killed and 28 wounded. The BIRMINGHAM was out of action for exactly a year, as she was unable to leave the Mediterranean for permanent repair in the United States at the Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va, until June 1944, arriving in July.

Leaving Norfolk on 28th November, the BIRMINGHAM arrived at Portsmouth and was allocated to the Home Fleet. She arrived at Scapa on 14th January 1945, and joined the 10th Cruiser Squadron. During February and March she was temporarily the flagship of the Vice-Admiral Commanding this Squadron, Vice-Admiral F H G Dalrymple-Hamilton.

During April, she took part in sweeps by the Home Fleet off the coast of Norway.

Early in May 1945, when the collapse of Germany appeared imminent, the C-in-C Home Fleet assembled at Rosyth a force which included the BIRMINGHAM and which was ready to enter the Skagerrak and Kattegat at short notice, (Operation Cleaver). At 1745 on 6th May the cruisers BIRMINGHAM and DIDO with four destroyers and eight minesweepers left Rosyth on this mission, and on the night of 7th May Captain H W Williams, of the BIRMINGHAM, with the DIDO and the four destroyers, was ordered to proceed to Copenhagen, where they arrived at 0930 on 9th May, after being swept through by minesweepers. The BIRMINGHAM's paravane cut a mine on the edge of one of the minefields, but otherwise this first penetration into late enemy-held waters was uneventful. The BIRMINGHAM remained at Copenhagen until 20th May; returned to Rosyth to hoist the flag of Rear-Admiral A E M B Cunninghame-Graham, Commanding the 10th Cruiser Squadron; and left again for Bergen, arriving on the 24th. The situation there was delicate pending the repatriation of 80,000 German personnel from Norway, and the presence of British ships had a valuable steadying influence.

Returning to home waters in June, the BIRMINGHAM continued as flagship of the 10th Cruiser Squadron, which in 1946 was renumbered the 2nd Cruiser Squadron. In September 1946, she was taken in hand for repairs at Portsmouth, and on their completion in June 1947, was allocated to the East Indies Station, where she arrived in October.

From 30th December 1947 she was present at Rangoon for the New Year ceremony of the transfer of power to the Government of Burma.

On 22nd October 1949 the BIRMINGHAM arrived at Mogadishu, Italian Somaliland, to support the Military and Civil Authorities during unrest there. She left on the 29th November.

On 29th January 1950 the BIRMINGHAM embarked Mr Bevin, Foreign Secretary, at Alexandria for passage to Naples. She returned from East Indies to the United Kingdom arriving at Portsmouth on the 9th February.

During the rest of 1950 until 1952 she undertook repairs and modernisation at Portsmouth and in July 1952 left there for the Far East.

The BIRMINGHAM relieved the cruiser BELFAST on the West Coast of Korea at the end of September 1952 and on the 10th October in the BIRMINGHAM, the 1st Sea Lord, Admiral Sir R McGrigor, visited all Task Units on the West Coast.

The BIRMINGHAM served in Korea until after the end of the War in July, 1953. She came home to Chatham in June, 1954, was recommissioned, and returned to the Far East until May, 1955, when she returned home via the East Coast of Africa and Simonstown, arriving at Sheerness on 11th July.

She was recommissioned for general service, and left first for the Mediterranean until early in 1958, and then to the Home Fleet. In June 1958, she visited Quebec for the celebration of the 350th anniversary of that city.

The BIRMINGHAM returned to the Mediterranean in 1959, and returned to Devonport on 3rd December, 1959. There she was accepted into extended reserve, and approval to scrap her was given in April, 1960. She left Plymouth on 2nd September under tow for Inverkeithing, where she arrived on 7th September, 1960 to be broken up.

Battle Honours awarded to the BIRMINGHAM were:-

Heligoland 1914	Norway	1940
Doggerbank 1915	Korea	1952-53
Jutland 1916		

Her Commanding Officers during the Second World War were:-

	<u>Appointed</u>
Captain E J P Brind	3. 1. 1938
Captain A C G Madden	4. 3. 1940
Captain H B Crane	15. 12. 1941
Captain H W Williams	6. 9. 1943

HMS BIRMINGHAM (continued)

	<u>DATE</u>
Ordered	1934
Laid down	18. 7. 35
Launched	1. 9. 36
Completed	18. 11. 37
Displacement	9,100 (max)
Length	591' 6"
Beam	61' 8"
Draught	21' 6" (mean)
Machinery	Turbine geared – 4 screws
Max Speed	31.62 (mean on trial)
Endurance	a. at 12 Kts: 12,400 miles b. at full speed: 2,800 miles
Armament:	12 x 6" guns 8 x 4" HA 2 x 2 pdr pom poms (4 barrels) 8 x 20 mm Oerlikons (twin) 2 x triple mounting torpedo tubes (21") 7 torpedoes 1 D/C rail and 15 D/Cs

NAVAL HISTORICAL BRANCH
Retyped 2009
October 1976

MTD/96

HMS BIRMINGHAM (1913-1931)

Summary of Service

HMS BIRMINGHAM was a light cruiser of 5,440 tons, armed with nine 6-in guns, and was built by Messrs Armstrong Whitworth and Co Limited being launched on 7 May 1913.

During the First World War she served in the Grand Fleet.

On 9 August, 1914, she rammed and sank the German submarine U15 the first action of its kind. On 28 August, 1914, she took part in the action in the Heligoland Bight, when the German cruisers MAINZ, KOLN and ARIADNE, as well as some torpedo craft, were destroyed. On 15 and 16 December, she took part in the operations against enemy ships which raided Hartlepool, Scarborough and Whitby.

On 24 January, 1915, she was present in the action off the Dogger Bank, when the German battle cruiser BLUCHER was sunk. On 19 June, 1915, the BIRMINGHAM was attacked unsuccessfully by a U-boat. On 8 and 9 August, 1915, she took part in the hunt for the German minelayer METEOR which resulted in the scuttling of the latter by her CO off Horn Reefs.

On 31 May, 1916, the BIRMINGHAM was present at the Battle of Jutland as a unit of the Second Light Cruiser Squadron under Commodore W E Goodenough in the SOUTHAMPTON. From about 4.35 pm GMT she came under heavy fire from 11-in or 12-in guns of the enemy's battle fleet, and on one or two other occasions later in the evening. "The fact that the ship was not actually hit appeared extraordinary", said Captain A A M Duff in his report, and he attributed it in great measure to the fact that on each occasion when fire was opened the ship at once steered away at full speed, and on each salvo falling near the ship, course was at once altered 2 points one way or another. He added: "But there was also a large element of good fortune in it, as when there was more than one ship firing at us it was impossible to avoid them all and many fell all round the ship".

After the War, the BIRMINGHAM became the flagship of the Commander-in-Chief on the Africa Station.

She was sold to Messrs T W Ward and Co on 5 February 1931.

Naval Historical Branch
Retyped 2009
October 1976

H.M.S. BIRMINGHAM (1913-1931)
Summary of War Service

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She was sold to Messrs. T. W. Ward and Co. on 5th February, 1931.

H.M.S. BIRMINGHAM was awarded the following Battle Honours:-

Heligoland	1914
Dogger Bank	1915
Jutland	1916

Historical Section
Retyped 2009
Revised S.3247
September, 1962.

HMS ENDINBURGH

5th Rate
364 Tons
32 Guns

Was the ROYAL WILLIAM, of the Scots Navy: taken over at the Union, 1707. (Captain Thomas Gordon – subsequently a Vice-Admiral in the Russian Navy).

Sunk as a Breakwater at Harwich in 1709.

3rd Rate
398 Tons
70 Guns

Built, as WARSPIGHT, at Blackwall in 1666. Name changed to "EDINBURGH", 2nd January 1715.

1702	Rebuilt at Rotherhithe (952 Tons).
1721	Rebuilt at Chatham (1119 Tons).
1726	With Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Wager's fleet in the Baltic.
1727	Again in the Baltic, with Admiral Sir John Norris's fleet.
1744	Rebuilt at Chatham (1285 Tons: 64 Guns).
1746	Captured French privateer DUC DE CHARTRES in the Channel.
1747	Hawke's action with De l'Etenruere off Ushant (Captain Thomas Cotes).
1747	Assisted in capture of French BELLONE (36)
1748	Assisted in capture of Spanish convoy off Cape Canton.
1757	In company with DREADNOUGHT and AUGUSTA, and after what has been described as the shortest council of war on record, attacked French squadron of seven ships under Commodore de Kersaint, off Cape Francois. The French made off after losing over 500 killed and wounded. "Edinburgh" lost 5 killed, 30 wounded. Taken to pieces at Plymouth in 1771.

3rd Rate
1772 Tons
72 Guns

1813 Oct

Built on the Thames in 1811.

Blockade and operations at Anzio. EDINBURGH, Captain George H L Dundas, was senior officer's ship in a squadron of six which brought out a French convoy of 29 sail protected batteries. Mole head captured and works blown up without loss of British life.

1814 March

One of squadron under Rear-Admiral Sir J Row which assisted to drive the French out of Spezzia.

1840

Blockade of the Syrian coast (Captain William W Henderson). Bombardment of St Jean d'Acre.

In October 1845, ordered to be fitted for a Screw (450 HP) reduced to 60 Guns.

1845-55

Baltic Expeditions (Captain Richard S Hewlett).

1854 August

Flag of Rear-Admiral Henry D Chad ... ? Capture of Bomarsund.

1855

Blockade of the Coast of Courland. Bombardment of Sveaborg.

Sold in 1865 for £6,100.

Steel Armour-plated Turret Ship (Battleship).
9150 Tons
7520 IHP
Speed 15½ kts.
Guns:
4 - 43 ton BLR
5 - 6 inch
4 - QF

Launched at Pembroke, as MAJESTIC in 1882. Name changed to EDINBURGH in same year. Completed in 1886.

Commissioned at Portsmouth (Captain H St L B Palliser) for service in Mediterranean, August 1887.

Recommissioned at Malta (Captain J W Brackenbury CB CMG), October 1890.

Subsequently Coastguard ship at Queensferry, and in her later year attached to Sheerness-Chatham Gunnery School.

Sold at Devonport in October 1910,
for £19,300.

Armoured
Cruiser
13,550 Tons
23,685 HP
Speed, 23 kts
Guns:
6 – 9.2 inch
10 - 6 inch
20 - 3 pdr

1914-18

DUKE OF EDINBURGH launched at
Pembroke in 1904; completed, 1906.

The Great War.

In Mediterranean on outbreak of War
(Captain Henry Blackett).
Proceeded to Red Sea for troop
convoy. Captured German SS
ALTAIR, August 1914. Covered
troops at taking of Sheikh Syed,
November 1914. Returned to
England in December 1914, to join
the Grand Fleet.

1916

31 May

Battle of Jutland.

(Captain Richard Hyde MVO,
temporarily detached to Halifax in
December, 1916; and permanently
added to North America Squadron in
September 1917.

1918

3 August

Paid off at Portsmouth.

1920

April

Sold.

Armed Merchant
Cruiser

1914

September

EDINBURGH CASTLE hired from
the Union-Castle SS Co.

Commissioned at Tilbury (Captain
William R Napier).

Service on SE Coast of America
from September 1914 until spring of
1918, when returned to England for
refit.

(Captain H J T Marshall, 14 March
1915).

(Captain Rupert S Gwatkin-Williams
April 1918).

On North Atlantic detached service,
August 1918 till end of war.

Returned to Liverpool, 22 December 1918. Reconditioned at Belfast and returned to owners.

Cruiser
10,000 Tons
12 – 6 inch
12 – 4 inch AA
6 – 21 inch
Aircraft - 4

1938 31 March

1939

1940-1

1941

1941

1941

1941-2

Built by Swan Hunter.

Launched.

Completed.

Norway

Bismarck action

Atlantic

Malta Convoys

Arctic

Sunk, 2 May, 1942, by destroyer, torpedoes, after U-boat damage (30 April, 1942) Barents Sea, Arctic.

BATTLE HONOURS

USHANT	1747
CAPE FRANCOIS	1757
SYRIA	1840
BALTIC	1854-55
NORWAY	1940-41
'BISMARCK'	1941
ATLANTIC	1941
MALTA CONVOYS	1941
ARCTIC	1941-42

HMS EDINBURGH

Summary of Service 1939-42

HMS EDINBURGH was a cruiser of 10,000 tons, armed with twelve 6 inch guns, and a designed speed of 32½ knots. She was built under the 1936 programme by Swan Hunter and Wigham Richardson, Newcastle-on-Tyne, with machinery by the Wallsend Slipway Company, and was laid down on 30 December 1936; launched on 31 March 1938; and completed on 6 July 1939.

On the outbreak of the Second world War she was in the 18th Cruiser Squadron in the Home fleet at Scapa. After patrolling between Iceland and the Faeroes during September 1939, she was transferred from the 18th to the 2nd Cruiser Squadron on 1 October, for duty with the Humber Force. She was, however, still in the Firth of Forth when German aircraft made a raid on 16 October. Only minor damage from near miss bombs was sustained.

The EDINBURGH left Rosyth on 23 October for escort duties with Narvik convoys. When reports of the attack on the armed merchant cruiser RAWALPINDI were received on 23 November, she was among the ships which searched unsuccessfully for her assailant, the battle cruiser SCHARNHORST. She afterwards resumed escort duties with the Narvik convoys.

On 17 March 1940, the EDINBURGH arrived in the Tyne for a long refit which lasted until 28 October, after she rejoined the 18th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet. On 18 November she left the Clyde escorting a troop convoy, WS4B, as far as Freetown, returning to Scapa on 12 December. During the winter months she took part in various Home Fleet patrols and minor operations. She helped to cover the raid on the Lofoten Islands on 4 March 1941.

Later in March 1941, she accompanied the troop convoy WS7 on the first stage of its journey to the Middle East, afterwards fuelling at Gibraltar and returning to Scapa on 15 April. Later that month she covered a minelaying operation in the Denmark Strait.

In the operations which led to the sinking of the German battleship BISMARCK, in May 1941, the EDINBURGH, which had been on the Biscay Patrol, during which she intercepted the German SS LECH on 22 May, was ordered to make for the enemy's position and take over as stand-by shadower. She did not, however, have the good fortune to sight the enemy.

On 1 June she left Scapa to relieve the HERMIONE on the Denmark Strait Patrol. At the end of the month she was detached from the Home Fleet for ocean escort duty. She assisted to cover yet another Middle East convoy, WS9B, from the Clyde, and in July went to Gibraltar for docking. Later in July she took part in the Malta convoy Operation "Substance", arriving and leaving Malta on the 24th. Next day she was missed by an aircraft torpedo.

In August 1941, the EDINBURGH took part in the escort of convoy WS10 from the Clyde to Simonstown. At the end of September she took part in another Malta convoy, Operation "Halberd", arriving and leaving Malta on the 28th. On 1 October she left Gibraltar for the Clyde with prisoners of war and after repairs there rejoined the Home Fleet at Scapa. During November she was employed on the Iceland-Faeroes patrol.

On December 1941, she was one of the escorts for the Russian Convoys PQ6 and QP4, both of which arrived safely. On 14 January 1942, she left Scapa to refit in the Tyne until 4 March, when she left to return to Scapa. During March she was again on the Iceland-Faeroes patrol.

On 22 March she left Scapa to cover the Russian convoys PQ13 and QP9, returning on the 28th.

On 6 April she again left to escort the Russian convoy PQ14. Of its 24 ships, 16 had to return to Iceland owing to ice and bad weather, and one was sunk by U-boat. The EDINBURGH with the remainder of the convoy arrived in the Kola Inlet on 19 April. On 28 April she left to cover the return convoy QP11.

ON 30 April 1942, the EDINBURGH was struck by two torpedoes from the German submarine U456 and seriously damaged. She was taken in tow, but later was able to proceed at slow speed under her own steam. On 2 May, however, after driving off an attack by torpedo aircraft she was attacked off Bear Island by German destroyers. Unable to steer, she circled slowly at about eight knots engaging the destroyers, but was again torpedoed, and an hour later had to be abandoned, being finally sunk by torpedo from the destroyer FORESIGHT. Two officers and 56 ratings were lost.

BATTLE HONOURS

USHANT	1747
CAPE FRANCOIS	1757
SYRIA	1840
BALTIC	1854-55
NORWAY	1940-41
'BISMARCK'	1941
ATLANTIC	1941
MALTA CONVOYS	1941
ARCTIC	1941-42

Reprint of S5261
Historical Section
29 March 1962
Retyped 2009.

HMS EDINBURGH - Narrative

QP11 left Kola Inlet on 28 April at 1500. HMS EDINBURGH left Vaenga at 2130, and joined the convoy at 0720/29 in 70 degrees 05 N 36 degrees 52 E. The visibility was variable and EDINBURGH took station in the centre,, but when the visibility improved she zigzagged independently at high speed astern and to port.

At 0750/29 an aircraft, possibly a Ju88 was seen to westward.

At 1800/29 the Senior Officer of the 5th minesweeping flotilla in HARRIER with HUSSAR, GOSSAMER and NIGER was detached to return to Kola Inlet.

At 2018 HMS BULLDOG reported ice ahead and course was altered to westward, EDINBURGH going ahead to investigate. Headwind reduced the convoy speed to 4 knots and EDINBURGH kept clear 15 to 20 miles ahead.

At 1613/30 EDINBURGH was hit by two torpedoes. She continued to steam, circling to starboard; there was no communication between the bridge and the lower steering position, damage control Headquarters, after damage control party in Y cabin flat, or the engine room. The ship developed a list of 7 degrees, which was reduced by firing the starboard torpedoes.

Telephone communication was established to type 279 RDF office, CCO and the engine room which reported all four shafts rotating and steam being maintained. Shortly after, it was reported that the stern abaft Y turret was breaking up; it broke off finally two hours later (at 1830) from the armoured bulkhead 238.

With the rudder gone and the port inner shaft not serviceable for long it was impossible to steer an easterly course by varying revolutions on the remaining two shafts, so the ship continued NNE at 10 knots.

At 1730 HMS FORESIGHT arrived to screen EDINBURGH and at 1800 FORESTER arrived, followed by two Russian destroyers at 1832. FORESIGHT went to investigate a submarine, sighted at 4 miles away to the NE, and returned at 1920. At 1905 EDINBURGH was taken in tow by FORESTER but she came into the wind at once and the tow parted. FORESTER then went to attack a S/M.

When FORESTER returned FORESIGHT was taken in tow aft for steering purposes and course was set for Kola Inlet. A speed of advance of 3 knots was maintained between 2330/30 and 1600/1, when she was 240 miles from Kola Inlet.

The SBNO reported that a tug with escort of minesweepers was being sent. At the same time the 2 Russian destroyers had to return to harbour, being short of fuel. The tow was therefore cast off so that an efficient screen could be maintained.

Thereafter EDINBURGH advanced by first gathering sternway, swinging her on to her course and then going ahead. In this way she made a good 2 knots, "tacking" every 5 to 15 minutes by going astern whenever she went too far off. In one watch 64 engine orders were executed on/one/shaft alone; but she continued to progress thus for 2 hours.

Submarines were frequently detected in the vicinity. FORESIGHT and FORESTER tried to drive them off and succeeded in saving EDINBURGH from further attack. Reports from the SBNO warned that enemy submarines were taking up station on the route and enemy destroyers were out. At 1800 a vessel was sighted which was thought to be an enemy, but it proved to be the Russian destroyer RUBIN.

At 2345/1 HUSSAR in company with a tug and later HARRIER, GOSSAMER and NIGER joined EDINBURGH.

On 30 April HARRIER had proceeded at full speed in company with NIGER, GOSSAMER and HUSSAR from Kola Inlet to escort the Russian tug, HARRIER going ahead. At 1300/1 HARRIER sighted GOSSAMER 2 miles on the port beam and NIGER was reported on the port beam. These two vessels are two knots faster than HARRIER. At 1455/1 a broadcast message was received reporting 3 German destroyers 140 miles to the west. At 1801 OXLIP's report of an attack on QP11 was received.

The ships ran into thick pack ice and had to alter course to the southward. At 1130/2 HUSSAR was sighted on the port bow with the tug, and reported that she had contact with EDINBURGH. Visibility was then 4 miles but varied from 1 to 5, with frequent snowstorms. When the minesweepers joined EDINBURGH she was accompanied by FORESIGHT and FORESTER and the Russian destroyer RUBIN. NIGER, GOSSAMER and RUBIN circled EDINBURGH at 2,000 yards clockwise and FORESIGHT, FORESTER, HARRIER and HUSSAR circled at 6,000 yards anti-clockwise.

The tug was found not powerful enough to keep the ship's head off the wind and GOSSAMER was taken in tow astern as a drogue when EDINBURGH went ahead slowly on both engines. At 0217/2 NIGER was detached to intercept two Russian destroyers proceeding from Kola Inlet to assist. At 0356 FORESTER dropped one depth charge on a doubtful contact. At 0627 HARRIER sighted a ship, bearing 045 degrees and HUSSAR sighted 3 enemy destroyers, bearing 010 degrees at 8,000 yards, one of which engaged her. HUSSAR was straddled and retired to clear the range for FORESTER to attack. At 0635 HARRIER sighted a destroyer in a snowstorm and turned to engage and open fire. She was herself fired upon, engaging two destroyers which were now visible.

FORESTER increased to 30 knots when the attack began in order to join FORESIGHT which turned to engage the enemy and keep them away from EDINBURGH. FORESTER closed the enemy to a range of 1,200 yards and opened fire, but A and B guns were not in action on account of icing up. Cold weather routine had proved insufficient and de-icing by steam jet in a temperature of -10 degrees C failed, as the de-iced parts froze again whenever the steam jet was removed. Ice formed on the projectiles, in the ready use racks and also on the lading[sic] tray. The spray on the tray immediately froze into ice particles which were picked up by projectiles, causing a jam in the breach. Ice on the shells caused a jam between the charge and the breach mechanism as the charge could not be rammed home. The striker mechanism was also liable to ice up. At 1636 FORESIGHT observed the first enemy ship emerging from a snow squall at 10,000 yards and sailing straight towards. She turned away to port and at 0640 closed to 8,000 yards. The enemy made frequent use of smoke, his tactics being to dart forward, fire a few rounds and retire at speed. Smoke and snow squalls were frequently used with great skill for cover so that our ships had never more than two minutes sighting of any enemy ship, and had constantly to shift target. 0648 FORESTER turned away to close EDINBURGH, then turned to starboard and fired torpedoes but, at the moment of firing, she was hit in No 1 boiler on the port side and stopped heading west. B gun was then hit and the Commanding Officer killed and X gun was also hit. FORESIGHT approached immediately to draw the enemy's fire. At 0653 FORESTER's First Lieutenant took command.

One enemy destroyer was seen stopped on an opposite course about 3 miles away, occasionally firing.

Two torpedoes passed under FORESTER and one of these may have hit EDINBURGH who was assisting the destroyers with her main and high angle armaments.

Visibility was very bad and never more than one enemy destroyer was seen at a time from EDINBURGH on account of smoke screens and snow flurries. The enemy made three determined attacks which were driven off before torpedoes could be fired, but finally the enemy appeared in sight suddenly for such a brief period that an attack was carried out, torpedoes being fired as soon as the target was sighted. At 0652 torpedoes were seen breaking the surface 5,000 yards on the starboard beam, and were expected to pass well astern, but the ship swung more rapidly and the tracks were again sighted, now to port. Two torpedoes passed well astern and one ahead, but the fourth, which was running deep, struck EDINBURGH.

This was at 0702. A mast high column of smoke was thrown up by the explosion and the ship listed rapidly 12 degrees to port and steam failed. The list gradually increased, "A" boiler room flooded and the main engines stopped.

The torpedo struck exactly opposite where the second torpedo had struck so that the ship was open from side to side and held together only by the outer strakes of the upper deck and by the weakened keel.

HUSSAR promptly laid a smoke screen to cover EDINBURGH, on board of which the rapid list had reduced the effectiveness of her armament.

HARRIER immediately disengaged and closed EDINBURGH at full speed, going alongside on the port side, while GOSSAMER went alongside on the starboard side. "A" turret was still engaging but the list was now 17 degrees. All personnel were summoned on deck and about 50 sick and wounded were embarked in HARRIER. All but the crews required to man the guns were then taken off, but shortly after it was found necessary to abandon ship.

All deck hatches were opened, and the Rear Admiral, CS18, the Captain, most of the officers and crew, amounting to 350, including the sick, were embarked. Their bearing was calm and cheerful, and the entire ship's company was steady. HARRIER then lay off to wait until the ship sank, and, to expedite this, she fired 20 rounds of 4 inch SAP into her, without result. Two patterns of depth charges dropped alongside also failed to produce the required effect.

HUSSAR meantime had reported 2 enemy destroyers approaching and engaged them, laying a smoke screen between them and EDINBURGH. FORESIGHT and FORESTER had repeatedly engaged the enemy. At 0704 FORESIGHT went to the assistance of FORESTER, who was still stopped and now heavily engaged again. FORESTER's Y gun kept up a hot fire and scored three hits, but visibility was bad and the enemy destroyers screening the damaged destroyer made efficient use of smoke.

At 0710 the enemy obtained FORESTER's range and she was heavily straddled, although not actually hit again. FORESIGHT steamed at 28 knots in between and again drew the enemy's fire lodging the salvoes successfully.

At 0718 FORESIGHT fired a salvo of torpedoes at the stopped enemy destroyer, one torpedo missing fire on account of freezing of the firing mechanism. She was then immediately heavily engaged by the other two enemy destroyers at a range of 4,000 to 5,000 yards, and turned away and made smoke.

At 0724 FORESIGHT was hit in No 3 boiler and stopped, but the enemy retired again without taking advantage of the situation. FORESTER continued to fight with her Y gun whenever a target presented itself. FORESIGHT was repeatedly straddled, but at 0735

FORESTER succeeded in getting under way at slow speed, turned end on to the enemy while endeavouring to screen FORESIGHT, and drove him off with Y gun.

FORESIGHT's X gun scored a hit on the stopped enemy destroyer and caused a tremendous explosion. When the smoke had cleared only 2 enemy destroyers were visible, moving away. At this point FORESTER laid a smoke screen to protect both FORESIGHT and EDINBURGH.

At 0805 there was a heavy explosion at the after end of one enemy destroyer, which FORESIGHT considered was not the stopped destroyer. The magazine is thought to have blown up.

At 0815 FORESIGHT also got under way again and 5 minutes later the enemy finally disappeared. FORESIGHT was then ordered by the Rear Admiral to sink EDINBURGH and fired her remaining torpedo at 1500 yards. The cruiser rolled over and sank within 3 minutes, at 0855.

HARRIER, GOSSAMER and HUSSAR were then ordered to proceed to Kola Inlet at their best speed, RUBIN was detailed to escort the tug, and FORESIGHT and FORESTER were also given orders to proceed. NIGER, which had not made contact with the two Russian destroyers, joined company at 1020.

HARRIER, NIGER, GOSSAMER and HUSSAR reached port at 2040/2.

Retyped 2009.

HMS GLOUCESTER

Summary of Service 1939-41

HMS GLOUCESTER was a "Southampton" Class cruiser, built in Devonport dockyard and engined by Scotts. Laid down in September 1936, she was launched on the 19th October 1937, and completed in January 1939. Overall length was 591 feet 6 inches, breadth 62 feet 4 inches and displacement 9,600 tons. Armament was 12 x 6in guns, 8 x 4in guns, 2 x 4 barrel 2pdr pompoms, 2 triple torpedo tubes, with 6 torpedoes. The GLOUCESTER also carried 2 Walrus aircraft.

The outbreak of World War II found GLOUCESTER in the Red Sea as Flagship of the 4th Cruiser Squadron attached to the East Indies Command, having joined that Squadron in the previous April. During her time with the Command, GLOUCESTER carried out patrols off the east coast of Africa and in the Indian Ocean. Part of her duties was escorting convoys up the coast.

In December 1939, GLOUCESTER was transferred to Force I operating from Simonstown, from where she carried out various patrols. A proposal was made shortly afterwards that she should form part of the Cruiser Forces in Home Waters, operating from Scapa Flow, but this did not happen and she remained with Force I at Simonstown.

In May 1940, GLOUCESTER left Force I to join the 7th Cruiser Squadron in the Mediterranean Fleet, operating from Alexandria. In July 1940, the Mediterranean Fleet, operating from Alexandria. In July 1940, the 7th CS took part in Operation MA5. This was an extensive sweep into the central Mediterranean (supported by Force H cruising eastwards from Gibraltar) with a dual purpose – firstly to ensure the safe passage of two convoys from Malta to Alexandria and secondly to engage the Italian Fleet if it should be at sea.

On the 8th July the Force was attacked five times by enemy aircraft. During the last attack GLOUCESTER, which seemed to be singled out as a special target, was hit by a bomb, sustaining damage to the bridge structure and forward DCT. However, she continued with the Fleet although, due to damage, she had to be steered from aft and use her after gun control.

During the action with the Italian Fleet off Calabria which followed, GLOUCESTER, which had been detached from the line of battle, escorted HMS EAGLE. After the action, the GLOUCESTER joined up again with the Fleet, coming under air attack again on the 11th July but with no further hits or damage.

When the damage had been repaired, GLOUCESTER rejoined the 7th CS as Flagship for Rear Admiral Renouf, Second-in-Command of the Squadron. In August 1940, in company with HMS LIVERPOOL, the GLOUCESTER carried out sweeps in the Aegean and Gulf of Athens to cover movements of shipping. Later that month, with the reorganisation of naval forces in the Mediterranean, GLOUCESTER became the Flagship of the 3rd Cruiser Squadron. Towards the end of the month, in company with HMS KENT and HMS HEReward, she carried out further sweeps to cover the movement of shipping in the Eastern Mediterranean. On the 27th August, the ships were attacked by aircraft who dropped torpedoes but none of the Force sustained damage.

At the end of August and beginning of September, the 3rd CS (with Flag in HMS KENT) took part in Operation "Hats". This was a complicated operation to cover the movement of convoy MF2 to Malta with stores, convoy AS3 to Alexandria and the movement of reinforcements to the naval forces in the eastern Mediterranean. During the operation the Malta convoy came under air attack and the 3rd CS was ordered to cover. In spite of bomb damage to the SS CORNWALL, the convoy reached Malta.

On the 29th September, GLOUCESTER took part in Operation "MA5" which had the dual purpose of passing troops and stores to Malta and engaging the enemy fleet if it could be found. The troops and stores were carried on board the GLOUCESTER and HMS LIVERPOOL. In spite of air attacks, the two ships reached Malta safely.

At the beginning of November 1940, GLOUCESTER was once again at sea carrying out sweeps in support of various convoys and, in particular, in support of convoy MW3 from Alexandria to Malta. The convoy reached port safely. In the meantime, the GLOUCESTER had rejoined the Fleet which was attacked by bombers on 10 November – without any success. Next day HMS ILLUSTRIOUS with GLOUCESTER as part of her escort, left the Fleet to undertake the successful raid on Taranto harbour. The force rejoined the Fleet on the 12th November.

At the end of October, Greece had been drawn into the war as a result of the attack by Italy. To support the Greeks, convoys of personnel and stores were run to Greece and Crete. On the 15th November, GLOUCESTER in company with the rest of the 3rd CS, HMS SYDNEY and three merchant ships left Alexandria with troops and stores for Piraeus. The convoy arrived safely.

On the 3rd December, the GLOUCESTER escorted HMS GLASGOW to Alexandria after that ship had been hit by torpedoes while at anchor in Suda Bay, Crete. On 10 December, GLOUCESTER was once again part of the escort for HMS ILLUSTRIOUS whose aircraft were to provide air protection and spotting for bombardment of Halfayan and Sollum in support of land operations.

Early in January 1941, GLOUCESTER took part in operation "Excess". This was to cover the movement of a convoy of four ships from Gibraltar – one to Malta and three to Piraeus with stores. Also under cover of this operation, it was intended to move three subsidiary convoys. HMS GLOUCESTER (with Admiral Renouf aboard) left Alexandria on the 6th January with troops to be disembarked at Malta, arriving there without incident on the 8th. She then proceeded West to join convoy "Excess". Shortly after meeting the convoy, it came under air attack but although bombs fell round the GLOUCESTER she was not damaged. The main part of the escort left the convoy before the Sicilian Narrows leaving it covered by Admiral Renouf's force of three cruisers and five destroyers for the actual passage.

During the passage of the Narrows, the convoy was attacked by two Italian torpedo aircraft. However, in spite of these attacks, the four transports were not damaged.

In the meantime the subsidiary convoys had been proceeding. Due to the actions which had been taking place, one, (convoy ME6) was thought to be inadequately covered and while the Commander-in-Chief continued with convoy "Excess", Admiral Renouf was ordered to take GLOUCESTER and two other ships to reinforce the escort. Whilst about thirty miles astern of the convoy, the three ships were attacked by German dive bombers. HMS SOUTHAMPTON was badly hit and had to be sunk later, while GLOUCESTER was hit by a bomb which penetrated five decks but fortunately did not explode. She was also damaged by splinters from two near misses.

In mid-February, GLOUCESTER, together with two other warships, once again made the run from Alexandria to Malta with two battalions of troops for the defence of the island. On the 24th February, the GLOUCESTER was engaged in the unsuccessful attempt to capture the island of Casteloriso.

Towards the end of March, information had been received of the movements of the Italian fleet. GLOUCESTER was one of the ships which sailed to investigate reports and took part in the ensuing Battle of Matapan when several ships of the Italian Fleet were damaged or sunk with no loss to the Royal Navy.

Meanwhile, events had moved rapidly in North Africa where the enemy land forces had attacked and advanced. In April 1941, GLOUCESTER was giving help to the hard-pressed allied land forces by carrying out bombardments of enemy concentrations, including on one occasion a concentration of about 450 motor transport vehicles at Bardia.

Towards the end of April, GLOUCESTER arrived at Malta to reinforce the 14th Destroyer Flotilla and on the 30th April came under air attack whilst in harbour, though fortunately without damage.

At the beginning of May 1941, GLOUCESTER left Malta for Gibraltar, in company with HMSs KIPLING and KASHMIR, to join the 15th Cruiser Squadron. Whilst on passage, the ships were attacked by aircraft, GLOUCESTER once again sustaining damage, this time by a bomb which passed right through the ship without exploding.

Temporary repairs were immediately carried out and on the 6th May, GLOUCESTER sailed from Gibraltar for operation "Tiger", the transit of a convoy from Gibraltar to Alexandria carrying much needed tanks for the army in North Africa and some Hurricanes for the RAF. In spite of bombing and torpedo attacks, the convoy reached Alexandria with only the loss of one merchant ship which had struck a mine.

In the meantime, events had been moving rapidly in the Aegean Theatre. Under the German onslaught, Greece had been overrun and Allied troops evacuated, but Crete was still held and endeavour was to be made to continue to hold it. On the 15th/16th May, GLOUCESTER landed troops brought from Alexandria. She refuelled at Suva Bay and left for sweeping the Kithira Channel against possible invasion craft.

On the 22nd May, GLOUCESTER, with HMS FIJI, was sent to cover two destroyers which had gone to rescue survivors from HMS GREYHOUND. Whilst on this mission, the ships came under heavy aircraft attack. GLOUCESTER, which sustained at least 4 hits and three near misses, was brought to a standstill, badly on fire, and later sank.

It is believed that as a result of the numerous air attacks to which the ships had been subjected previously, GLOUCESTER was very short of anti-aircraft ammunition and that in the last attacks she had probably fired the last of her outfit. The survivors, 2 officers and 80 ratings, were picked up by the Germans and became prisoners of war.

The following Battle Honours have been awarded to the ships:

LOWESTOFT 1665
FOUR DAYS' BATTLE 1666
ORFORDNESS 1666
SOLE BAY 1672
SCHOONEVELD 1673
TEXEL 1673
USHANT 1747

JUTLAND 1916
CALABRIA 1940
MATAPAN 1941
CRETE 1941
MEDITERRANEAN 1941
MALTA CONVOYS 1941

Naval Historical Branch, November 1972

HMS GLOUCESTER

3rd Rate
755 Tons
52 Guns

		Built at Limehouse in 1654.
1655		Captain Benjamin Blake. Penn's expedition to the West Indies – capture of Jamaica.
1665	3rd Jun	Lowestoft.
1666	15th May	Captain Robert Clark. Capture of 7 Dutch ships off the Texel.
1666	1st-4th Jun	The Four Days' Battle. The GLOUCESTER (Captain Robert Clark) totally disabled in the battle.
1666	25th July	Orfordness.
1672	Mar	Sir Robert Holme's attack on the Dutch Smyrna Fleet. KLEIN HOLLANDIA (44) taken and sunk by the GLOUCESTER.
1672	28th May	Solebay.
1673	28th May	Schooneveld.
1673	11th Aug	Texel II.
1682		Captain Sir John Berry. Wrecked off Yarmouth whilst conveying HRH The Duke of York to Leith.

4th Rate
869 Tons
60 Guns

Built at Bristol in 1694 by Mr Clements.

Made into a hulk at Deptford in 1706 and broken up in 1731.

4th Rate
923 Tons
60 Guns

		Built at Rotherhithe by Mr John Burchett. Launched 25 July 1709.
1709	26th Oct	Captain John Balchen: Captured by the French ACHILLE.

4th Rate 714 Tons 50 Guns			Built at Deptford by Mr Joseph Allin.
	1711	4th Oct	Launched.
	1717		Byng's Expedition to the Baltic.
	1725		Broken up at Sheerness.

4th Rate 866 Tons 50 guns			Built at Sheerness by Jeremy Rosewell.
	1737	22nd Mar	Launched.
	1740-44		Anson's Voyage round the World: Captains Richard Norris and Matthew Michell.
	1742	15th Aug	Destroyed off the Ladrone Islands by order of Commodore Anson.

4th Rate 986 Tons 50 Guns			Built at Rotherhithe by Grevill & Whetstone.
	1745	23rd Mar	Launched.
	1747	14th Oct	Captain Phillip Durrell: Hawke's action with Letendure.
	1758		Used as Military Hospital Ship at Chatham.
	1759		Used as overflow ship at Sheerness.
	1764		Broken up at Sheerness in 1764.

3rd Rate 1770 tons 74 Guns			Built at North fleet by Mr Pitcher.
	1808	March	Commenced.
	1812	27th Feb	Launched.
	1826		Conveyed Duke of Devonshire to St Petersburg as Ambassador Extraordinary for Coronation of Czar Nicholas.
	1832		Cut down to a 4th Rate of 50 Guns.

1858	Made into a receiving hulk at Chatham.
1884	Sold to Messrs Castle & Co.

Light Cruiser 4,800 Tons 22,000 HP Guns: 2 x 6in 10 x 4in			Built by Beardsmore's at Dalmuir.
	1909	28th Oct	Launched.
	1910	4th Oct	Commissioned.
	1913	30th Jan	Recommissioned Devonport for Mediterranean.
	1914	August	Shadowing GOEBEN and BRESLAU.
		7th Aug	Engaged BRESLAU.
		Sept	Joined the squadron under Admiral Carden blockading the Dardanelles.
		2nd Nov	Left Mediterranean for the East Indies to assist in search for the EMDEN.
		16th Nov	Left Bombay for Devonport: arrived 30 November.
		16th Dec	Joined 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron, Grand Fleet at Scapa.
	1915	Feb	Transferred to 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron, Grand Fleet.
		Mar	Detached from Grand Fleet to search for German Armed Merchant Cruiser KRONPRINZ WILHELM.
	1915	28th Mar	Chased and captured the German AMC MACEDONIA, East Coast of South America.
		May	Rejoined Grand Fleet.
	1916	Apr	Temporarily detached to reinforce Admiral Bayley at Queenstown on outbreak of Irish Rebellion.
		May	Rejoined Grand Fleet.
31st May		Battle of Jutland.	
Aug		Left Grand Fleet for the Adriatic.	

1917	April	Temporarily detached to the East Indies Station.
	June	Returned to Adriatic.
1919	June	Returned to Devonport.
1920	31st Mar	Paid off at Devonport.
1921	May	Sold to Messrs T W Ward.

Cruiser
9,100 Tons
12 x 6in
8 x 4in AA
6 x 21in TT
Aircraft x 2

		Built at Devonport.
1937	19th Oct	Launched.
	Early 1939.	Completed.
1940		Calabria.
1941		Matapan.
1941		Crete.
1941		Malta Convoys.
1941	22nd Apr	Sunk by air attack off Crete.

HMS LIVERPOOL

Summary of Service 1938-1958

HMS LIVERPOOL was a SOUTHAMPTON class cruiser, built and engined by the Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Co Ltd, Govan, Glasgow. Ordered under the 1935 programme on the 11th November of that year, she was laid down on the 17th February 1936, launched on the 24th March 1937, by Mrs Montagu Norman, wife of the Governor of the Bank of England, and completed on the 2nd November 1938. She was the seventh of the class to complete, at a cost of £1,851,968.

During a visit to the city after which she was named, at the beginning of January 1939, the LIVERPOOL was presented with three pairs of silver candlesticks, a silver cup, and two bugles, all suitably inscribed. She left Liverpool on the 10th January, en-route to join the 4th Cruiser Squadron on the East Indies Station but was delayed at Malta undergoing repairs until mid-April 1939. The LIVERPOOL eventually arrived at Colombo on the 14th May, to begin a summer cruise of the East Indies Station.

On the outbreak of war, in September 1939, the LIVERPOOL was initially employed on trade protection duties in the Indian Ocean before being transferred to the 5th CS on the China Station in mid-November. In December 1939 she left Singapore for Hong Kong flying the flag of the Commander-in-Chief, China, and later carried out a number of patrols off Japan. During one of these patrols, on the 21st January 1940, the LIVERPOOL intercepted the Japanese liner ASAMA MARU in position 34° 35' N, 142° 32' E (35 miles off the coast of Japan), and took aboard 21 German officers and men, survivors from the SS COLUMBUS (intercepted by the destroyer HMS HYPERION off the coast of Florida on the 19th December 1939, and subsequently scuttled by her crew) who were on their way back to Germany.

Following docking and repairs at Hong Kong the LIVERPOOL proceeded to Aden in April 1940, where she became temporary flagship of the Red Sea Force until her transfer to the 7th CS, Mediterranean Fleet at the beginning of June 1940.

On the night of 11th-12th June 1940, the LIVERPOOL, with her sister ship GLOUCESTER, engaged six Italian minesweepers off Tobruk and sank one of them. Both cruisers were under fire from shore batteries for 11 minutes without being hit, and had cut mines adrift with their paravanes.

On the evening of the 28th June 1940, the LIVERPOOL, together with the cruisers GLOUCESTER, NEPTUNE, ORION and SYDNEY engaged the Italian destroyers ESPERO, OSTRO and ZEFFIRO 60 miles south west of Cape Matapan, sinking the ESPERO; the other two destroyers escaped to Benghazi where they arrived the following morning. In this action the LIVERPOOL was hit by a 4.7in shell which struck the side armour belt at number 180 frame on the starboard side three feet above the waterline, causing minor damage to the armour and cutting the degaussing cable.

On the 9th July 1940, with other units of the Mediterranean Fleet, the LIVERPOOL took part in an action off Calabria with an Italian Force consisting of two battleships, ten cruisers and 23 destroyers. At the end of July whilst acting as escort for the Aegean convoy AS2, the LIVERPOOL was attacked by aircraft and hit by a 250lb delayed action bomb which struck the bridge front a glancing blow, penetrated 'B' gun deck and the forecastle

deck and came to rest on the upper deck without exploding. Minor damage was sustained to the bridge instruments and one rating was killed.

Whilst covering a Fleet Air Arm attack on Leros on the 14th October 1940, the LIVERPOOL was attacked by aircraft south-east of Crete, and sustained a torpedo hit forward. Severe structural damage was caused; the aviation petrol tank was also damaged, the petrol vapour permeating the fore end where it was ignited by a spark from an electrical short circuit. The resulting explosion severely damaged the fore end and blew the roof off 'A' turret. She was taken in tow stern first by HMS ORION; the damaged bows caused some difficulty in steering but the situation was later eased when the bows broke off. She was eventually brought safely into Alexandria at noon on the 16th October.

The LIVERPOOL underwent temporary action damage repairs at Alexandria until May 1941, when she proceeded to the USA for permanent repairs at the Mare Island Navy Yard, San Francisco, between 16th June and 15th November 1941. She then returned to the UK, arriving at the Clyde on 5th December 1941, to undergo final repairs, completing on the 27th January 1942.

After work up the LIVERPOOL joined the 18th CS Home Fleet at the end of March 1942. During April and May 1942 she formed part of the escort for the Russian convoys QP10, PQ16 and QP16.

On the 12th June 1942, the LIVERPOOL left Gibraltar as part of the covering force for the Malta convoy operation codenamed 'Harpoon'. At about 1120hrs on the 14th June, when the convoy was approximately 70 miles north of Bone, a determined attack by about 30 Italian Savoia torpedo bombers, escorted by 20 fighters, was launched in two waves. The first wave passed through the convoy screen on the port beam at a height of 500 feet, rounded the rear of the convoy and attacked from the starboard side, splitting into two groups before releasing their torpedoes. The LIVERPOOL was hit on the starboard side abreast the after engine room by a torpedo. A large hole was blown in the outer bottom and the lower deck was blown up three feet. The after boiler room and engine rooms, the starboard oil fuel tanks and compartments up to the lower deck flooded immediately, with controlled flooding in then engine room. The ship took on an immediate 7 degree list to starboard, which was corrected a little by flooding 'A' and 'B' magazines and shell rooms. The starboard outer, and both the inner-propeller shafts were put out of action. The steering gear jammed and 'X' and 'Y' turrets were unable to train due to loss of power. The LIVERPOOL was taken in tow by the destroyer HMS ANTELOPE and later the same day was again attacked by aircraft which near missed with two 100 kg delayed action bombs that exploded on the starboard side within 15 feet of the ship. More flooding of compartments immediately occurred; the list increased to 9½ degrees and she settled by the stern. She eventually reached Gibraltar on the 17th June where she was taken in hand for temporary action damage repairs.

In July 1942 the LIVERPOOL proceeded to Rosyth for permanent repairs and refit which lasted until the 22nd July 1945. She re-commissioned for trials on the 24th June 1945, and subsequently proceeded to Portland to await a full foreign service complement. She completed to full complement on the 10th October 1945, and left the UK on that date to relieve HMS ARETHUSA in the 15th CS Mediterranean Fleet. She was for a time flagship of the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean. On the 10th October 1951, she left Malta for Egypt during the strike trouble in the Suez Canal, and on the 24th October moved the Grenadier Guards from Tripoli to Tobruk. The LIVERPOOL sailed to Malta from the Canal area on the 12th February 1952, and returned to the United Kingdom on the 24th April 1952.

The LIVERPOOL was subsequently reduced to reserve at Portsmouth in May 1952. Approval to scrap was given in March 1958 and on the 27th June 1958, she was handed over to the British Iron and Steel Corporation and left Portsmouth under tow of the tug WELSHMAN, arriving at Bo'ness to be broken up by P and W MacLellan Ltd on the 2nd July 1958.

BATTLE HONOURS:

Heligoland	1914
Mediterranean	1940
Calabria	1940
Arctic	1942
Malta Convoys	1942

Particulars

	<u>1940</u>	<u>1946</u>
Displacement – standard	9,400 tons	9,400 tons (12,330 tons full load)
Length – extreme	591ft 6in	591ft 6in
Beam – extreme	62ft 4in	62ft 4in
Draught – forward	20 t 6 in	21ft 5in
Draught – aft	21ft 1in	21ft 1in
Machinery	4 shaft geared steam turbines	
Power	74,000 shp	74,000 shp
Speed	31.5 knots	30.2 knots
Endurance	12,000 miles at 12 knots 2,600 miles at full speed	12,000 miles at 12 knots 7,100 miles at 20 knots; 2,650 miles at full speed
Oil fuel	2,100 tons	1,950 tons
Armament:		
Guns	12 x 6in 8 x 4in HA 2 x 2pdr multiple pompom (4 barrel) 2 x 5in multiple machine guns	9 x 6in 8 x 4in HA 4 x 3pdr saluting 24 x 2pdr pompom (4 barrel) 4 x 2pdr single 4 x 40mm Bofors single 4 x 20mm Oerlikon twin
Torpedo tubes	6 x 21in	6 x 21in
A/S weapons	1 depth charge rail 6 depth charges	1 depth charge rail 15 depth charges
Aircraft	2 Walrus	Nil

Naval Historical Branch
October 1980
(Revised S 6221)

HMS LIVERPOOL

Brief History of Ships of the Name

There have been seven ships in the Royal Navy to bear the name LIVERPOOL. The first, a 5th Rate of 40 guns, was built by John Okill at Liverpool and was launched in July 1741. She saw service off the Spanish coast and in the Mediterranean between 1741 and 1749 during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48), was paid off in 1749 and sold out of service in 1756. The second vessel, a 6th rate of 28 guns, was built by Gorill and Pownell, also at Liverpool, and was launched on the 19th February 1758. Between 1759 and 1777 she served in the Channel and North Sea, on the Newfoundland Station, and in the Mediterranean. She joined the fleet in North America under Lord Howe in 1777 during the American War of Independence and was wrecked off Long Island on the 11th February 1778.

The next LIVERPOOL was a 4th Rate of 50 guns, built by Wigram and Green at Blackwall on the Thames. She was launched on the 21st February 1814, and served on the Ape of Good Hope and East Indies Stations. In 1819 she took part in a successful expedition against the headquarters of the Persian gulf pirates at Ras al Khaima, but was sold out of service at Bombay in 1822. A 4th Rate of 58 guns was ordered to be built at HM Dockyard Plymouth in 1826, but the order was cancelled in 1829, and the next ship to see service was a wooden screw frigate of 51 guns built by HM Dockyard Devonport and launched in 1860. She served on the North America and West Indies Station and in the Channel Squadron, and from 1869 to 1870 took part in a voyage round the world as part of Rear Admiral Phipps-Hornby's Flying Squadron. She was sold to be broken up in 1875, and was followed in 1909 by a Second Class Protected Cruiser armed with two 6 inch and ten 4 inch guns. She served in home waters from 1909 to 1914 when she joined the Grand Fleet and took part in the Heligoland Bight action. From 1915 to 1918 she served in the Adriatic and was sold for breaking up in 1921.

The penultimate LIVERPOOL was a 4,800 ton Southampton class cruiser built by Fairfields of Glasgow and launched in 1937. On the 21st January 1940, she intercepted the Japanese liner ASAMA MARU 35 miles from the coast of Japan and removed 21 German officers and men, survivors from then German SS COLUMBUS en-route to Germany. The LIVERPOOL was next transferred to the 7th Cruiser Squadron and on the 12th June 1940, she and HMS GLOUCESTER were engaged with enemy small craft off Tobruk. Later in the same month, on 28th, the 7th Cruiser Squadron engaged three Italian destroyers south-west of Cape Matapan at long range; the Italian destroyer VESPERO was sunk. In July, together with other units of the Mediterranean Fleet, the LIVERPOOL took part in an action off Calabria with an Italian force comprising two battleships, ten cruisers and 32 destroyers. In October 1940, the LIVERPOOL was damaged by aerial torpedo south east of Crete, and was repaired in the USA. On completion of repairs she took part in a number of Russian convoy operations. In June 1942, whilst escorting a Malta convoy, she was again damaged by aerial torpedo, and was under repair at Rosyth until 1944, when she reduced to care and maintenance. She re-commissioned to reserve in May 1952. She was finally broken up for scrap in 1958.

The present HMS LIVERPOOL is a Batch h 2 Type 42 guided missile destroyer, built by Cammell Laird at Birkenhead. She was laid down in July 1978, launched in September 1980 and entered service in July 1982. Her principal weapons systems are the Sea Dart air to surface missile, the Lynx helicopter which can carry either the Stingray torpedo in the anti-submarine role or the Sea Skua missile in the anti-surface role, and a 114 mm Mk 8 DP gun. In addition, for close range warfare, she is armed with the Phalanx Mk 15 Close In Weapons System and four Oerlikon 20mm guns. She is propelled by COGOG Tyne/Olympus gas turbines, giving a maximum speed in the region of 29 knots, has an overall length of

412ft, displaces 3,500 tons standard load and carried a complement of some 24 officers and 230 ratings.

After commissioning and work-up HMS LIVERPOOL deployed to the South Atlantic late in 1982 as part of the Naval Task Group maintained in the Falkland Islands to deter any further Argentine aggression following the 1982 invasion and subsequent defeat. After a spell in home waters another South Atlantic deployment was conducted in 1984, followed by a period as West Indies Guardship in 1984-85. A further South Atlantic deployment followed in 1986, and another period as West Indies Guardship in 1987. However, by this time the emphasis had changed from the South Atlantic to the Persian Gulf during and after the 1980-88 Iran Iraq War, and in 1989 and 1990 she carried out two Armilla Patrols east of Suez.

Between 1990 and 1992 HMS LIVERPOOL carried out a major refit, and in 1993 returned to the Persian Gulf to conduct operations, principally maritime interdiction operations in support of United Nations Security Council Operations, in the wake of the 1990/1991 Gulf War. A period in home waters followed her return to Portsmouth in December 1993, but she returned east of Suez and carried out a further Amilla Patrol in 1994/1995.

In 1997 HMS LIVERPOOL returned to the West Indies, and was involved in relief operations in Montserrat following major volcanic eruptions on the island, and from August to December 1999 formed part of NATO's Standing Naval Force Mediterranean. She returned to the Mediterranean in September for a series of exercises and port visits, and, on leaving then Mediterranean in October she visited the Canaries, Sierra Leone, the Cape Verde Islands, and Dakar before returning to Portsmouth in December. She started a maintenance period in January 2001.

Ships bearing the name LIVERPOOL have been awarded the following Battle Honours:

BATTLE HONOURS:

Heligoland	1914
Mediterranean	1940
Calabria	1940
Arctic	1942
Malta Convoys	1942

Naval Historical Branch
29 January 2001

HMS LIVERPOOL

5th Rate 681 bm 40 guns			Built as ENTERPRISE by John Okill at Liverpool.
	1741	20th Feb	Renamed LIVERPOOL.
		19th July	Launched.
	1741-49		Service on Spanish Coast and Mediterranean Station.
	1749		Paid off
	1756	14th Sept	Sold at Woolwich
<hr/>			
6th Rate 590 bm 28 guns			Built by Gorill and Pownell, Liverpool.
	1758	10th Feb	Launched.
	1759-64		Channel and North Sea service
	1767-69		Newfoundland Station.
	1770-72		Mediterranean
	1775-77		Mediterranean
	1777		Joined Fleet in North America under Lord Howe
	1778	11 February	Wrecked of Long Island.
<hr/>			
4th Rate 1,240 bm 50 guns			Built by Wigram and Green, Blackwall.
	1814	21st Feb	Launched.
	1814-16		Cape of Good Hope Station.
	1818		East Indies Station.
	1819		Expedition against headquarters of Persian Gulf pirates at Ras-el-Kyma
	1822	16th Apr	Sold at Bombay.

4th Rate 1,487 bm 58 guns			Built by HM Dockyard, Plymouth.
	1826	th7 Jan	Ordered.
	1829		Cancelled

Wooden screw frigate 2,656 bm 51 guns			Built by HM Dockyard Devonport.
	1860	30th Oct	Launched.
	1863-64		North America and West Indies Station.
	1864-67		Channel Squadron
	1869-70		Voyage round the world with the Flying Squadron (Flagship of Rear-Admiral G T Phipps-Hornby)
	1870		Paid off into Reserve
	1875	26th June	Sold to Messrs Castle, Charlton for breaking up.

2nd Class Protected Cruiser 4,800 tons 2 6in 10 x 4in guns			Built by Vickers Sons and Maxim, Barrow.
	1909	30th Oct	Launched.
	1910-14		Home Fleet.
	1914		Joined Grand Fleet
		28th Aug	Heligoland Bight action
	1915	Feb	Search off African coast for German armed merchant cruiser KRONPRINZ WILHELM
	1915-18		Adriatic.
	1921	8th Nov	Sold for breaking up.

Cruiser – Southampton class			Built by Fairfield, Glasgow.
9,400 tons	1936	Feb	Laid down.
12 x 6in	1937	24th Mar	Launched.
8 x 4in AA guns	1938	Nov	Completed.
6 x 21 in TT	1940	21st Jan	Intercepted Japanese liner ASAMA MARU and removed 21 German officers and men.
		12th Jun	Action off Tobruk.
		28th Jun	With rest of 7th Cruiser Squadron sank Italian destroyer ESPERO.
		14th Oct	Damaged by aerial torpedo, SE of Crete. Repaired in USA.
	1914	14th Jun	Damaged by aerial torpedo 70 miles NE of Philippeville.
	1942	July	Arrived Rosyth.
	1944	May	Reduced to Care and Maintenance.
	1945	Oct	15th CS Mediterranean.
	1952	24th Apr	Returned UK.
		May	Reserve Fleet Portsmouth.
	1958	2nd July	Sold for breaking up.

BATTLE HONOURS:

Heligoland	1914
Mediterranean	1940
Calabria	1940
Arctic	1942
Malta Convoys	1942

1778

11 February 1778
590 tons

LIVERPOOL 6th Rate
Liverpool

28 guns
1758
Capt Henry Bellew

Approaching the anchorage at Sandy Hook, New Jersey, land was seen just before nightfall and the vessel continued along the coast, sounding regularly. At about three o'clock in the morning the water was noted to be shallowing, and two hours later she struck the ground. All sails were thrown aback, but this had no effect. She commenced beating in the heavy surf and this soon knocked the rudder off. The main- and mizzen-masts were cut away to ease her, but she could not be freed and was abandoned as a wreck. Strong currents were blamed for taking her further inland than calculated, stranding her in Jamaica Bay, about thirty-two miles south of Sandy Hook.

"BRITISH WARSHIP LOSSES IN THE AGE OF SAIL"

HMS MANCHESTER

Summary of Service 1938-1942

HMS MANCHESTER, a Southampton class cruiser, was built and engined by Hawthorn Leslie and Co at Hebburn-on-Tyne. Laid down on 28 March 1936, she was launched on 12 April 1937 by Mrs Toole, the Lady Mayoress of the City of Manchester and completed on 4 August 1938.

She was allocated to the East Indies Station, and left Portsmouth on 26 September, arriving at Bombay on 18 October 1938. She served in the East Indies during the first two months of the Second World War leaving Bombay on 10 November 1939 for the United Kingdom. Arriving at Malta on 18 November, she hoisted the flag of Vice-Admiral Geoffrey Layton on 20 November and left that day for England, arriving at Portsmouth on 25 November.

Vice-Admiral Layton assumed command of the 18th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet, and the post of Second-in-Command, Home Fleet. After repairs at Portsmouth, HMS MANCHESTER arrived at Scapa on 24 December 1939.

On 21 February 1940, she intercepted the German merchant ship WAHEHE on the Northern Patrol.

During the campaign in Norway which began on 8 April 1940, HMS MANCHESTER took part in the expedition to Namsos, the landing at Aandalsnes, and the evacuation in the first week of May. She was afterwards ordered to work from Rosyth. On 26 May, after the German advance through the Low Countries she was sailed for the Humber and arrived there next day. She went up to Rosyth again in June and took part in Home Fleet operations to intercept the SCHARNHORST but returned south in July to Sheerness and Portsmouth, where she was docked in August.

On rejoining the Home Fleet she was based on the Humber during the period of an expected German invasion in September, and left there on 3 October for Scapa.

On 15 November HMS MANCHESTER, flying the flag of Vice-Admiral L E Holland, 18th Cruiser Squadron, left Scapa to take part in a convoy of troops and reinforcements to the Mediterranean (Operation "Collar"). The convoy left Gibraltar on 25 November and two days later encountered units of the Italian Fleet in an action off Cape Spartivento.

The MANCHESTER left Alexandria on 2 December for Scapa, arriving there on 13 December. She was refitted on the Tyne between January and April 1941.

When the German battleship BISMARCK broke out into the Atlantic on May 1941, HMS MANCHESTER was on patrol between Iceland and Faeroes, and she took part in the operations which resulted in the destruction of that ship on 27 May. To watch for any attempt by the enemy to break back, HM Ships MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM and ARETHUSA were on 24 May ordered to patrol north of Langanaes, the north-eastern part of Iceland.

During June 1941 the MANCHESTER was on the Denmark Strait patrol. She left Iceland on 2 July for the Clyde, and was detached with three other Home Fleet ships (the NELSON, EDINBURGH and ARETHUSA) to escort an important convoy to Malta (Operation "Substance"). In the course of this on 23 July she was attacked when south of Sardinia torpedo aircraft and high level bombers. A torpedo hit on the port side aft did considerable damage, and she returned to Gibraltar on 26 July. There temporary repairs were carried out

to enable her to go to the USA for permanent repairs. She arrived at Philadelphia on 23 September, and was there until March 1942.

Leaving on 8 March 1942 she arrived at Portsmouth via Bermuda on the 17 March and proceeded to Scapa in the first week of May.

In late June and early July 1942, HMS MANCHESTER took part in the cover provided for the ill-fated Russian Convoy PQ 17, combining this with an expedition for the relief and reinforcement of the Norwegian force in Spitsbergen.

In the first week of August 1942, HMS MANCHESTER and other Home Fleet ships left the Clyde to escort another important convoy to Malta (Operation "Pedestal"). Early on 10 August the convoy passed through the Straits of Gibraltar. About midnight on the night of 12-13 August the MANCHESTER was torpedoed by two Italian motor torpedo boats, Ms 16 and Ms 26, of Cape Bon, Tunisia, and sank at 0400 on 13th about 4 miles of Kelibia. Most of her crew got ashore in Tunisia or were picked up by destroyers, but 1 officer and 12 ratings were lost.

Battle Honours

Norway	1940
Spartivento	1940
Arctic	1942
Malta Convoys	1941-42

Particulars (1942)

Displacement (standard)	9,400 tons
Length (extreme)	591ft 6in
Beam (extreme)	62ft 4in
Draught (forward)	21ft 5in
Draught (aft)	21ft 6in
Machinery	4 shaft geared steam turbines
Power	74,000 shp
Speed	31.5 knots
Endurance	12,000 miles at 10 knots 2,600 miles at full speed
Oil fuel	2,100 tons
Armament:	
Guns	12 x 6in 8 x 4in AA 2 x 2 pdr 4 barrel pompoms 2 x .5in multiple machine guns 5 x 20mm Oerlikon
Torpedo tubes	6 x 21in
A/S weapons	1 depth charge rail; 6 DCs
Aircraft	2 Walrus

Naval Historical Branch
July 1980
(Revised S 6348)
Retped 2009.

HMS NEWCASTLE

Summary of Service 1937-1958

HMS NEWCASTLE was a cruiser of the "Southampton" class, with a displacement of 9,100 tons (standard), designed speed of 32 knots, and main armament of twelve 6 inch guns (reduced after the Second World War to nine 6 inch). She was built by Vickers-Armstrongs at Walker-on-Tyne, and was laid down on 4 October 1934; launched on 23 January 1936; and completed 5 March 1937, for service in the 2nd Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet.

When the Second World War broke out on 3 September 1939, she was under refit at Plymouth, but left on the 12th to rejoin the Fleet at Scapa, in the 18th Cruiser Squadron. On 11 October she was detached to cover convoys in the Western Approaches, and was away until early November.

On 23 November, she was on patrol in the Atlantic to the north-westward of the armed merchant cruiser RAWALPINDI when that ship was sunk by the SCHARNHORST. She proceeded to the position reported and actually sighted a darkened ship 6½ miles away and another large ship signalling to her by lamp. These were the SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU, and the NEWCASTLE endeavoured to shadow them, but bad visibility intervened, and she had no radar, so that touch was lost.

Up to 31 December 1939, in 120 days of war, the NEWCASTLE was at sea on 88 days. She arrived in the Tyne on 26 March, 1940, and was under refit until the end of May. She therefore missed taking part in the campaign in Norway, not returning to Scapa until 3 June.

From 7 July, the NEWCASTLE was stationed at Plymouth in anticipation of enemy activity in the western part of the English Channel during the period of possible invasion of Britain. On 11 October she was present at a bombardment of Cherbourg by the REVENGE.

On 17 October, the NEWCASTLE and EMERALD, accompanied by five destroyers, gave chase to four enemy destroyers which had left Brest, but although doing 32½ knots with paravanes streamed, could not get nearer than 25,000 yards.

On 13 November, the NEWCASTLE left Plymouth for Gibraltar to join Force H. Four days later she left Gibraltar with the forces engaged in passing a convoy and reinforcements to Malta and Alexandria (Operation "Collar"). This led to the indecisive engagement with the Italian Fleet off Spartivento on 27 November.

On 1 December, the NEWCASTLE left Gibraltar for Freetown to join the South American Division, South Atlantic Command, and took up patrols in the Plate Area. In April 1941, she was ordered to St Helena to assist in the escort of troop convoy WS7 to the Cape. A month later, she returned to the Plate Area and took over the flag of the Rear-Admiral, South American Division, Rear-Admiral F H Pegram, from the CUMBERLAND. Relieved by the BIRMINGHAM as flagship, on 15 August, she went to Freetown, and left there on the 28th for Boston, USA, where she arrived on 20 September after escort duty to and from Trinidad. She was refitted at Boston until December, leaving there on the 13th for Norfolk, Virginia and Bermuda. She left Bermuda on the 17th and arrived at Plymouth on 29 December.

On 29 January 1942, she arrived at Scapa to work up, and early in February was ordered to join the Eastern Fleet. On 15 February Rear-Admiral W G Tennant hoisted his

flag in her as FO Commanding China Force, and she left on the 18th escorting the troop convoy WS16. On 1 March she arrived at Freetown, and in view of the threat to Ceylon her allocation to the Abda Area was cancelled she was placed at the disposal of the C-in-C, Eastern Float. She accompanied WS16 to Capetown and Durban, and then went to Bombay, Colombo, Seychelles and Mombasa, arriving at the latter on 10 May. Rear-Admiral Tennant took up the appointment of FO Commanding 4th Cruiser Squadron, Eastern Fleet.

In June she was among the ships lent to the Mediterranean to enable a convoy to be run to Malta from the east, Operation "Vigorous". She arrived at Suez on 5 June, and a week later the convoy left Haifa and Port Said, the NEWCASTLE being one of the eight cruisers in the escort. Air attacks were heavy throughout, and the Italian Fleet, including two battleships, put to sea from Taranto to intercept. As a result, the convoy and escort spent so much time in diversions to avoid action with superior forces in daylight that they could not reach Malta and had to return.

Early on the morning of 15 June, the NEWCASTLE was hit forward by torpedo from an E-boat, about 90 miles north-west of Derna. She fortunately sustained no casualties, but her speed was reduced and forward turret put out of action. It was not possible to repair her at Alexandria in the prevailing conditions, and she therefore made a second voyage to the USA for the purpose, after temporary repairs at Bombay. She arrived at New York on 10 October via Capetown, Pernambuco and Bermuda, and was in dockyard hands until December. She arrived at Plymouth on 18 December, and underwent further repairs there until March 1943.

After working up at Scapa, she left on 15 April for the East Indies to rejoin the 4th Cruiser Squadron, Eastern fleet. On the way she assisted in the escort of troops convoy WS29 as far as Durban, and then went on to Kilindini, arriving on 27 May. She remained in the Eastern Fleet for two years, until the spring of 1945. During 1944 she took part in various operations of the Fleet against blockade runners, in the carrier-borne air strike on Sabang on 19 April, and in a similar strike on Belawan Deli on 20 December.

On 3 January 1945, she was present at the capture of Akyab, and on 26 January at the landing in Cheduba Island.

Leaving the East Indies Station in April 1945, the NEWCASTLE arrived at Plymouth on 23 May. She underwent a refit in the Tyne, and on 3 November left Plymouth for a trooping voyage to Freetown and Simonstown. She returned to Portsmouth in December, and made a further trooping trip to Malta, Port Said, Aden and Colombo in January 1946, returning in February.

The NEWCASTLE underwent a long refit at Devonport in 1946-47, and from December 1947, served in the 1st Cruiser Squadron in the Mediterranean, until December 1949.

In 1950-52 she underwent large repairs and modernisation at Devonport. Leaving in mid-May, she worked up for a month in the Mediterranean, and in July 1952, relieved the CEYLON in Korea, where the war had then been in progress for two years. In May 1954, she visited the United States Fleet in Pearl Harbour, on her way home to re-commission at Portsmouth in June.

She arrived at Singapore on 24 August 1954, on her return to the Far East. On 15 January 1955, she took part in a bombardment of terrorists at Kuala Lumpur; and on 18 May carried out a further bombardment in South-East Johore. At the end of August, she left Singapore for a cruise to Australia and New Zealand. A new crew for her was flown out from England to Singapore in November 1955.

In July 1956, the NEWCASTLE was flagship of the Flag Officer Second-in-Command, Far East, on a cruise to Korea and Japan. In November 1956, she accompanied the RN Squadron which visited Australia for the Olympic Games.

In January 1957, she was detached to the East Indies Station until April, during which time she visited Karachi and Bombay and cruised in the Persian Gulf. On 6 December 1957, she carried out another bombardment of terrorists in South-East Johore.

On 9 February 1958, she was present at Rangoon for the unveiling of the Commonwealth Land Forces War Memorial at Taukkyan, Burma, flying the flag of the FO Second-in-Command, Far East.

She left the Far East Station in June 1958, returning via Pearl Harbour, Vancouver, San Francisco and the Panama Canal. On 15 July, she was present at the first full dress Naval Review of the Royal Canadian Navy by Princess Margaret at Esquimalt.

She arrived at Portsmouth on 25 August, and a month later it was approved for her to be scrapped. Presentation silver given to her and her predecessor of the same name was returned to the city of Newcastle-on-Tyne at a ceremony on 14 October 1958.

Battle Honours awarded to the ship were:

Spartivento	1940
Burma	1944-45
Korea	1952-53

Historical Section
15 October 1958
(Reprint January 1961)
Retyped 2009.

HMS NEWCASTLE

4th Rate
641 Tons
54 Guns

Built at Ratcliffe in 1653.

- 1654 Sailed from Plymouth for the Mediterranean with the Fleet under Blake, on 29 October.
- 1655 On 4 April, led in the frigates in Blake's attack on the Tunisian fleet and forts in Porto Farina. (Captain Nathaniel Cobham).
- 1657 Took part in Blak's attack on Santa Cruz, Tenerife. (Captain Nathaniel Cobham.)
- 1693 Was one of the Anglo-Dutch fleet of 22 sail under Sir George Rooke which, acting as escort to the Smyrna Convoy of 400 merchant ships, endeavoured successfully to beat off an attack by a French fleet of 80 sail, on 17 June. (Captain John Baker). Of the convoy, 92 were captured, burnt or sunk.
- 1695 Was one of a small squadron under Commodore James Killigrew which, on 18 and 19 January, engaged and captured between Pantellaria and Sicily the French TRIDENT (42) and CONTENT (54) (Captain Charled Wager).
- NEWCASTLE was not engaged (she sailed very heavily), but she took the CONTENT in tow after that ship had struck to the CARLISLE.
- 1703 On 27 November, the NEWCASTLE was one of 12 British men-of-war which were lost during "The Great Storm" of that year – one of the most violent on record. She was at the time lying at Spithead, and foundered on the Dean Sand. Out of a complement of 233, she lost 193, including her Captain William Carter.

4th Rate
676 Tons
50 Guns

Built at Sheerness in 1704.

- 1704 First commissioned on 29 March, and sailed for service in the Mediterranean. In December, escorted safely into Gibraltar a convoy of transports with troops and stores. (Captain Vincent Cutter).
- 1705 On 8 March, was one of the combined fleet, under Vice-Admiral Sir John Leake which defeated a French attempt to retake Gibraltar; the whole of the enemy force of [..... ?] sail of the line was captured or driven ashore off Marbella. (Captain Vincent Cutter).
- 1711 On 3 June, the NEWCASTLE engaged off St Pierre Martinique, a French flotilla comprising a 36-gun ship and 12 smaller vessels, with 2,000 men on board, which was organised for an attack on Antigue. After a three hour action

the French force was shattered and driven back to St Pierre, with the loss of 64 killed and a great number wounded. The NEWCASTLE had only 1 killed and 8 wounded. (Captain Sampson Bourne).

- 1714 Returned to England and paid off. Re-commissioned for service 1717-18 and 1719-20. (Captains William Passenger, John Nicholl and Edward Falkingham.)
- 1726 Re-commissioned and placed in Ordinary.
- 1732 Rebuilt at Woolwich and commissioned for service, 18 December 1733. (Captain Ellis Brand.)

Paid off, 2 August 1736.
- 1738 Re-commissioned for Home service (cruising). (Captain Edward Baker.)
- 1742-3 Mediterranean Station. (Captain Thomas Fox.)
- 1745 Paid off.
- 1746 Broken up at Portsmouth.

4th Rate
1,052 Tons
50 Guns
350 Men

Built at Portsmouth.

Launched, 4 December 1750.

- 1755 First commissioned, 11 March, and employed during 1755-56 cruising off Brest and in the Bay. (Captain John Lloyd.)
- 1753 Proceeded to the East Indies, and on 29 April took part in Pocock's action with the French off Sauras. After the action her Captain, George Legge, was brought to a Court-Martial as a consequence of his not giving sufficient support to the Admiral in the action, and was sentenced to be cashiered.

On 3 August, THE NEWCASTLE was present at Pocock's action with the French squadron under Comte d'Ache off Negapatam. (Captain the Hon James Colville.)
- 1759 Took part in Pocock's action with the French off Pondicherry, 10 September, in which her Captain, Colin Michie, was killed.
- 1761 Whilst engaged in the siege of Pondicherry, a violent cyclone burst on the Fleet, 1 January, and the NEWCASTLE (amongst others) was driven ashore and became a total wreck; her people were all saved. (Captain Richard Collins.)

4th Rate
1,556 Tons
50 Guns

Built at Blackwell.

Launched 10 November 1813.

1814 First commissioned, 31 January, for service on the North American Station. Although rated as a 4th Rate of 50 guns, then NEWCASTLE was larger than the normal ship of her rate and actually carried 60 guns. She was specially built for the purpose of coping with the large American frigates, such as the CONSTITUTION and PRESIDENT.

On 28 December, the NEWCASTLE, in company with the LEANDER (50) and ACASTA (40), captured the American privateer PRINCE DE NEUFCHATEL. (Captain Lord George Stuart.)

1815 Returned to England and paid off at Woolwich, 27 September.

1816 In June, the NEWCASTLE (Captain Henry Meynell) arrived at St Helens, wearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Sir Pulteney Malcolm, who was specially appointed as Commander-in-Chief to enforce a rigid blockade of the island and to keep a close guard on Napoleon. The NEWCASTLE also brought out the Commissioners appointed by Austria, Russia and France to reside at St Helena during Napoleon's captivity. Both Sir Pulteney Malcolm and Captain Meynoll have left on record accounts of their many conversations with Bonaparte during the period the NEWCASTLE was stationed at St Helena.

1817 Returned to England and paid off at Chatham.

1818 Halifax Station. Flagship of the Commander-in-Chief, Rear-Admiral Edward Griffith.
1822 (Captain Arthur Fanshawe).

1824 Fitted at Portsmouth for service as a Lazaretto at Milford.

1827 Removed from Milford to Liverpool.

1850 Sold at Liverpool for Breaking up.

Screw Frigate
4,020 Tons
2,354 hp
31 Guns

Built at Deptford.

Launched, 16 October 1860

1874 First commissioned at Sheerness, 21 September, for service in the Detached Squadron for Particular Service ("Flying Squadron") and left England, 22 October.

Admiral of the Fleet Earl Jellicoe commenced his sea service

in he as a Midshipman. The Flying Squadron attended HRH The Prince of Wales (King Edward VII) upon his visit to India in 1875, and afterwards the Squadron visited Japan.

- 1877 Paid off at Sheerness.
- 1879 Re-commissioned at Sheerness, 22 July, and paid off at Devonport, 7 September 1880.
- 1889 Loaned to the War Department for service as a Powder Hulk at Devonport.
- 1929 Sold for breaking up to the Plymouth and Devonport Shipbreaking Co, 19 February.

2nd Class
Protected Cruiser
4,800 Tons
2,400 ihp
Guns:
2 – 6in
10 – 4in

Built by Armstrongs on the Tyne.

Launched, 25 November 1909.

- 1910 Commissioned at Chatham, 20 September, for service on the China Station.
- 1914 On 11 August, ordered to proceed to Esquimalt. On the 12th, bombarded Yap. In December, cruised to Valparaiso, assisting in the search for the German armed merchant cruiser PRINZ EITEL FRIEDRICH.
- 1916 Joined the Mediterranean Fleet.
- 1917 Allocated to the Colombo Patrol. In May, joined the 8th Light Cruiser Squadron in the Adriatic, remaining there until towards the end of the year, when she became Senior Naval Officer's Ship on the East coast of South America. The NEWCASTLE continued to be so employed until the end of the War.
- 1919 Returned to England.
- 1921 Sold to Messrs T W Ward and Co for breaking up.

HMS SHEFFIELD

Summary of Service 1937-1964

The SHEFFIELD, a "Southampton" Class cruiser of 9100 tons standard displacement with a main armament of twelve six inch guns, was built and engined by Vickers Armstrong Ltd, at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Laid down on 31 March 1935, and launched on 23 July 1936, she was completed on 25 August 1937 and joined the 2nd Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet. In August 1938 she had the first experimental Radar set fitted in a ship.

When the 2nd World War broke out in September 1939 the SHEFFIELD was with the 18 Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet. She was present when the Home Fleet was first attacked by German aircraft off Norway, on 26 September. The SHEFFIELD sustained no damage. Until the end of 1939 the SHEFFIELD patrolled in the Denmark Strait against enemy shipping trying to reach Germany.

For the first three months of 1940 the SHEFFIELD continued patrols in the Denmark Strait and helped escort convoys between Norway and the United Kingdom. She also carried out patrols off the Norwegian coast during the first half of April and on the 14th with the GLASGOW and SOMALI she landed an advance force of seamen and marines at Namsos, Norway, to assist the Norwegian defence against the German invasion. The SHEFFIELD landed further troops and stores in Norway during April, and assisted with the evacuation of Andalsnes on 30 April.

The SHEFFIELD carried out anti-invasion patrols in the Nore Command during the next few months and on 22 August she left Scapa with the ILLUSTRIOUS and other ships to join Force H at Gibraltar and to convey aircraft reinforcements to Malta – Operation 'Hats'.

On the evening of 10 September the SHEFFIELD and 8 destroyers left Liverpool escorting convoy A.P.3 – reinforcements for the Middle East – through the North-West Approaches. During last part of September and October the SHEFFIELD carried out patrols off the Azores. She returned to Gibraltar and with Force H took part in a fleet Air Attack on Cagliari, Sardinia, Operation 'Coat' on 9 November.

On 25 November again with Force H the SHEFFIELD assisted in escorting a convoy to Malta through the Mediterranean – Operation 'Collar'. This movement led to an action with the Italian Battle Fleet off Cape Spartivento, Sardinia, on the 27th, in which both sides sustained damage by gunfire but no ships were sunk. The main purpose of the operation, the passage of an important convoy to Malta and Alexandria, was achieved.

The SHEFFIELD returned to patrols from Gibraltar off the Azores until the end of 1940.

On 9 February 1941 with units of the Force H the SHEFFIELD bombarded Genoa – Operation 'Result'.

The SHEFFIELD proceeded from Gibraltar on 12 February 1941, to assist convoy SLS64 which had been attacked by the German heavy cruiser ADMIRAL HIPPER about 200 miles east of the Azores; the SHEFFIELD then covered Convoy HG63 (Gibraltar-UK) which was in the neighbourhood.

On 30th March the SHEFFIELD with 4 destroyers tried to intercept an eastbound French convoy off Nemours. The convoy refused to stop and retired into Nemours. Shore batteries opened fire on the British warships which replied.

On 2 April the SHEFFIELD assisted in escorting the ARK ROYAL with aircraft from Malta through the Mediterranean. Again on the 24th the SHEFFIELD provided escort for the ARGUS conveying aircraft to Malta. On 19th May further aircraft reinforcements were taken to Malta in the FURIOUS and the ARK ROYAL, the SHEFFIELD with Force H escorted them through the Mediterranean.

The SHEFFIELD took part in shadowing and the operations which led to the sinking of the German Battleship BISMARCK on 27 May, and on 12 June, sank the FRIEDRICH BREME, 10,397 tons, one of the tankers supplying the BISMARCK in position 49° 48' N; 24° W.

In September 1941 the SHEFFIELD again assisted in fighting through the Mediterranean an important convoy to Malta – Operation 'Halberd'.

Whilst on passage to the United Kingdom the SHEFFIELD, with the KENYA from Gibraltar, sank the German U-boat supply ship KOTA PINANG on 3rd October about 750 miles west of Cape Ortegale. For the remainder of 1941 and until early March 1942 the SHEFFIELD was employed with the ocean escorts of Arctic convoys. On 4 March whilst escorting one of these convoys she struck what was thought to be a mine. On return to the UK she was laid up for repairs and refit until July.

The SHEFFIELD returned to escorting North Russian Convoys in September, and during one of these voyages landed supplies for the garrison at Barentsburg, Spitzbergen – Operation 'Gearbox II' – on 17th September.

In November 1942, the SHEFFIELD took part in the first major Allied landing of the war in North Africa – Operation 'Torch'.

Less than a month later she was with Arctic convoys. At the end of December the SHEFFIELD, with other units of the Home Fleet, helped to get a convoy through to North Russia despite a carefully planned attack by the heavy cruisers LUTZOW and HIPPER with six destroyers. In the course of the action the SHEFFIELD sank the destroyer FRIEDRICH ECKHOLDT: we lost the ACHATES and the BRAMBLE.

During January and February 1943 the SHEFFIELD continued with the North Russian convoys and during one of these was damaged by gales and between March and June was under repair at Glasgow. During July and August the SHEFFIELD operated in the Bay of Biscay on anti-submarine and blockade breaker duties.

In September she went to the Mediterranean and carried out the final bombardment at Salerno of this campaign on the 28th, remaining in the Mediterranean until she returned to Plymouth on 24 November.

The SHEFFIELD returned to the escort of Russian convoys in December and on the 26th, with other units of the Home Fleet operating in support of the North Russian convoys, assisted in sinking the German battle cruiser SCHARNHORST in approximate position 72° 16' N; 28° 41' E, thus depriving the Germans of their only effective capital ship.

During February and March 1944 she carried out attacks on enemy shipping in the Norwegian Leads. On 3rd April she covered the aircraft carriers FURIOUS and

VICTORIOUS when they carried out an air attack on the German battleship TIRPITZ in Kaa Fiord, Norway.

During May and June she carried out further attacks on enemy shipping off Norway. In July the SHEFFIELD went to Boston, USA for a refit returning to Portsmouth in May 1945, there to continue refitting until May 1946. In September she became the flagship of C-in-C, America and West Indies at Bermuda.

On 28 February 1948 the SHEFFIELD put ashore a landing party of Royal Marines in British Honduras during unrest there. In November 1948 she returned to the United Kingdom to carry out extensive repairs during 1949-1950.

In April 1951 she returned to duty with the Home Fleet, and on 23 April was visited by Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Kent at Portsmouth.

On 31 May 1951 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth (now Her Majesty The Queen Mother) embarked in the SHEFFIELD at Liverpool and escorted by HM Ships BATTLEAXE and BROADSWORD left for a visit to Belfast.

On 1 October she left Portsmouth to join the America and West Indies Station, arriving at Bermuda on 12 October 1951.

In November the SHEFFIELD took part in the US Atlantic Fleet Exercise 'Lantflex 52' – minesweeping in the Caribbean and along the East Atlantic Coast of the USA.

In December 1952, she returned to the United Kingdom for a refit at Portsmouth completing in March 1953.

HMS SHEFFIELD left the Clyde in October 1953, for Bermuda to relieve the cruiser SUPERB.

In September 1954 HMS SHEFFIELD whilst in New York Harbour was visited by Their Royal Highnesses The Duchess of Kent and Princess Alexandra. The Duchess of Kent, who launched HMS SHEFFIELD in August 1936 saw, in the wardroom, a portrait of herself which was damaged by shell splinters in the action in which the BISMARCK was sunk in 1941. After a period of service on the America and West Indies Station, the SHEFFIELD arrived back at Portsmouth in October 1954.

In March 1955 SHEFFIELD arrived in Malta for service in the Mediterranean. She returned to the United Kingdom the following year and after extended refit, re-commissioned at Chatham in July 1957 for a general service commission in Home and Mediterranean waters.

The SHEFFIELD relieved the battleship VANGUARD as flagship of the Reserve Fleet in June 1960 and in November the same year, a party of the York and Lancaster Regiment, under Lieutenant Colonel A W Stansfield, visited the SHEFFIELD at Portsmouth to revive liaison with the ship that was established in 1940 when she conveyed the 1st Battalion from Scotland to Central Norway.

She went on to serve as flagship of the Flag Officer Flotilla, Home Fleet, until the summer of 1964 when she was paid off for the last time and placed on the Sales List. She remained at Portsmouth until she was sold to Messrs Shipbreaking Industries Ltd, in September 1967, for breaking up at Faslane.

For Her services in the Second World War, HMS SHEFFIELD was awarded the following Battle Honours:

Norway	1940
Spartivento	1940
Atlantic	1941-43
"Bismarck"	1941
Mediterranean	1941
Malta Convoys	1941
Arctic	1941-43
North Africa	1942
Barents Sea	1942
Biscay	1943
Salerno	1943
North Cape	1943

Naval Historical Branch
Revised August 1968

HMS SOUTHAMPTON

Summary of Service 1939-1941

HMS SOUTHAMPTON gave her name to a class of cruisers authorised in 1933, of 9,100 tons standard displacement, 32 knots designed speed, and a main armament of twelve 6in guns. She was built by John Brown and Co, Clydebank, laid down on 21st November, 1934, launched on 10th March, 1936, and completed on 6th March, 1937.

When war broke out in 1939 she was flagship of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron Home Fleet. She was allocated for duty with the Humber Force (two cruisers, five destroyers), the primary duty of which was to protect shipping on the East Coast of England, but also to prosecute offensive operations against the enemy as opportunity offered.

On 16 October, 1939, the SOUTHAMPTON was at anchor off Rosyth when German aircraft attacked that base. Twenty bombs were dropped around her; and one hit passed through three decks, came out just above the waterline, where it exploded, sinking the Admiral's barge. Damage was not extensive and was repaired in three days. In the last week of October the SOUTHAMPTON went on patrol in the Denmark Strait, and later supported the Northern Patrol.

She was back with the Humber Force in November, when it was expected that Germany might invade Holland by sea, but went north again later that month when the sinking of the RAWALPINDI showed that German battle cruisers were at large in the Atlantic.

In February 1940, when the cruisers were reorganised, the SOUTHAMPTON joined the 18th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet.

When Germany invaded Norway on 8th April, the SOUTHAMPTON was at sea covering and escorting Convoy ON25. She was ordered with other ships to attack enemy forces reported in Bergen. On 9th April, off the Norwegian Coast, she was slightly damaged by air attack, but remained operational.

On 25 May, still in Norwegian waters, she was slightly damaged by near misses from aircraft bombs. On 26th and 28th she was again attacked, on the latter occasion sustaining damage which needed 10 days to put right. The 28th May was the day Narvik was captured. The SOUTHAMPTON took part in the final evacuation from Norway on 8th June.

At the end of July, 1940, when the threat of a German invasion began to be apparent, the SOUTHAMPTON was brought down to Sheerness, but on 16th August, during the Battle of Britain, when the Thames area was under heavy air attack, she and the BIRMINGHAM were moved back to Rosyth. On 4th September, the SOUTHAMPTON came back to Sheerness, and remained there as part of the anti-invasion forces until 16 October, when she returned to Scapa.

On 15th November, the SOUTHAMPTON left Belfast for the Mediterranean with other reinforcements, arriving at Gibraltar on the 22nd. On her passage eastwards, she took part in the action with the Italian battle fleet off Cape Spartivento, on 27th November, but arrived safely at Alexandria on the 30th. Next day she was ordered to the East Indies to meet the troop convoy WS4B for the Middle East, as far south as possible.

On 10th December, she attacked enemy shipping in Kismayu. Her presence there illustrated the ubiquity of the Fleet, for in exactly one month she had travelled from Iceland to the Equator. On 17th December she met convoy WS4B coming up from the Cape, in 22° South, and accompanied it to Suez, arriving on 28th December.

On 1st January, 1941, the SOUTHAMPTON was ordered to form part of the 3rd Cruiser Squadron, Mediterranean Fleet. On 6th January, she left Alexandria with a convoy for Malta, landed troops there on the 8th, and went on to meet a convoy and reinforcements coming back from Gibraltar to Malta.

Units of the German Air Force had arrived in Sicily, and on 10th and 11th January they made heavy attacks on this convoy. On the 11th, the SOUTHAMPTON was hit by bombs, caught fire and had to be sunk, 81 of her officers and men being killed and 87 wounded.

Her Commanding Officers during the war were:-

Captain F W H Jeans CVO
Captain B C B Brooke (from 18th June 1940)

Battle Honours awarded the SOUTHAMPTON for the Second World War were:-

Norway	1940
Spartivento	1940
Malta Convoys	1941

Historical Section
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HMS SOUTHAMPTON

Summary of Service 1921-1926

HMS SOUTHAMPTON was built by Messrs John Brown & Co, laid down at Clydebank, 30 March 1911 and launched, 6 May 1912 by Lady Katherine Somerset. She was a light cruiser of 5,400 tons, 15,400 HP with an armament of eight 6in guns. She was the fourth ship of the Royal Navy to bear the name SOUTHAMPTON.

The SOUTHAMPTON was first commissioned at Portsmouth with a nucleus crew on 26 November 1912 by Captain A E M Chatfield CVO, who was succeeded in March 1913 by Captain A A M Duff.

On 5 July 1913 Captain W E Goodenough MVO hoisted his broad pendant in the ship as Commodore commanding 1st Light Cruiser Squadron.

Joining the Grand Fleet at the outbreak of war the SOUTHAMPTON was present at the Heligoland Bight action, 28 August 1914, and took part in the pursuit of the German squadron which carried out the raid on the Yorkshire Coast on 16 December 1914. The SOUTHAMPTON was again in action at the Dogger Bank fight 24 January 1915. In February 1915 as a consequence of a reorganisation of the battle cruiser and light cruiser squadrons, the SOUTHAMPTON became flagship of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron of the Battle Cruiser Fleet (broad pendant of Commodore Goodenough). In this capacity she took part in the battle of Jutland, 31 May 1916, in which she was heavily engaged and sustained the loss of 35 killed and 41 wounded. In the course of the battle the SOUTHAMPTON torpedoed and sank the German cruiser FRAUENLOB. (A graphic account of her experiences is given in "A Naval Lieutenant 1914-18" by "Etienne" (Cdr Stephen King Hall who was serving in her as one of her lieutenants).

A fortnight after the Battle of Jutland, Commodore Goodenough was promoted Rear-Admiral and flew his flag in the SOUTHAMPTON with Captain E A Rushton as her Commanding Officer. The SOUTHAMPTON continued as a flagship until December 1916 when Rear Admiral Goodenough gave up command of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron which was then commanded by Commodore C F Lambert, with his Broad Pennant in the SOUTHAMPTON.

Upon Commodore Lambert being promoted to Rear Admiral and hoisting his flag in HMS BIRMINGHAM as a Rear Admiral Commanding 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron, Captain B V Brooke took command of the SOUTHAMPTON.

In July 1918 the SOUTHAMPTON conveyed the First Lord, Sir Eric Geddes, to the White Sea to confer with the military authorities regarding the proposed expedition to Archangel.

In 1918 the SOUTHAMPTON was transferred to the 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron and on 21 November 1918 was present at the surrender of the German Fleet.

On 20 May 1919 she was re-commissioned as Flagship of the Commander-in-Chief, South America, Rear-Admiral A T Hunt CB CSI (Captain T Hallett OBE). After two years on this station the SOUTHAMPTON was transferred to the East Indies and flew the flags of three successive Commanders-in-Chief: Vice Admiral Sir Hugh Tothill KCMG CB, Vice Admiral Sir L Clinton-Baker KCVO CB CBE (April 1921), and Rear Admiral Richmond CB (October 1923). Her Captains during this period were successively L W Braithwaite CMG, W A Egerton CMG and N F Lawrence DSO.

The SOUTHAMPTON returned to England and paid off into Reserve, 30 August 1924. She was sold to Messrs T W Ward Ltd, for breaking up, 23 July 1926.

HMS SOUTHAMPTON

4th Rate
609 tons
48 guns

		Built at Southampton by John Winter
1693		Launched
1695	January	Assisted in capture of French CONTENT (60) and TRIDENT (50) in the Mediterranean
1699		Rebuilt at Deptford
1716		Reduced to 5th Rate, 40 guns
1728		Hulked at Jamaica
1735		Broken up

5th Rate
672 tons
32 guns

		Built at Rotherhithe by Robert Inwood
1757	5 May	Launched
	25 July	Action with two 36-gun French privateers off Portland
	21 September	Captured French EMERAUD (28) OFF Brest (added to Royal Navy as HMS EMERALD)
1759	28 March	With HMS MELAMPE (36) captured French DANAE (40) (added to Royal Navy as HMS DANAE)
1761		General Hodgson and Commodore Keppel's operations against Belle Isle
1780	29 July	One of escorts to East and West India convoys captured by Franco-Spanish Fleet
1791	28 July	Indecisive action with French FEE (32) in West Indies
1794	1 June	Glorious First of June
1795	29 September	Action with French VESTALE (56) off Genoa
1796	9 June	Capture of French UTILE (24) from under the guns of batteries in Hyeres Road

		2 December	Captured Spanish CORSO (18) off Monaco
	1797	14 February	Cape St Vincent
	1812	3 February	Captured Haitian AMETHYSTE (44)
		22 November	Captured USS VIXEN (12) in Wet Indies
		27 November	Wrecked off Conception Island, Bahamas
4th Rate 1,476 tons 50 guns			Built at Deptford
	1820	7 November	Launched
	1829-32		West Indies
	1832		Anglo-French blockade of Holland
	1842		Annexation of Natal
	1857-66		Coast Guard Ship, Harwich
	1867	18 June	Lent to Hull Training Ship Committee for use as training ship at Hull
	1912	26 June	Sold to Messrs Hughes, Bolckow and Co Ltd, Middlesbrough, for breaking up
2nd Class Cruiser 5,400 tons 8 x 6in 1 x 3in AA guns 2 x 21in torpedo tubes			Built by John Brown and Co, Clydebank
	1912	16 May	Launched by Lady Catherine Somerset, fourth daughter of the tenth Duke of St Albans
	1914	28 August	Heligoland
	1915	24 January	Dogger Bank
	1916	31 May	Jutland
	1919-21		Flagship of CinC South East Coast of America
	1921-24		Flagship of CinC West Indies
	1926	23 July	Sold for breaking up to Messrs T W Ward Ltd, Sheffield

Cruiser (Ex POLYPHEMUS) 9,100 tons			Built by John Brown and Co, Clydebank
12 x 6 in	1934	21 November	Laid down
8 x 4 in guns			
6 x 21 in torpedo tubes	1936	10 March	Launched by Lady Haddington
	1937	6 March	Completed
	1940		Spartivento
	1941	11 January	Sunk by enemy aircraft east of Malta

Battle Honours

"EMERAUDE"	1757
BELLE ISLE	1761
FIRST OF JUNE	1792
ST VINCENT	1797
HELIGOLAND	1914
DOGGER BANK	1915
JUTLAND	1916
NORWAY	1940
SPARTIVENTO	1940
MALTA CONVOYS	1941

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