

Legend Boats


**Early Bird 2023**

## Allied Warships

# HMS Carthage (F 99)

## Armed Merchant Cruiser

<b>Navy</b>	The <u>Royal Navy</u>
<b>Type</b>	<u>Armed Merchant Cruiser</u>
<b>Class</b>	<u>[No specific class]</u>
<b>Pennant</b>	F 99
<b>Built by</b>	A. Stephen & Sons Ltd. (Glasgow, Scotland)
<b>Ordered</b>	
<b>Laid down</b>	
<b>Launched</b>	18 Aug 1931
<b>Commissioned</b>	26 Dec 1939
<b>End service</b>	30 Dec 1943

**History** laid down as **Canton**, completed as **Carthage**.  
 On 7 September 1939 the passenger ship **Carthage** of the P. & O. Steam Navigation Co Ltd, London was requisitioned by the Admiralty and converted to an armed merchant cruiser. Conversion was completed on 26 December 1939.

Displacement: 14182 BRT

Armament: 8x 152mm, 2x 76mm

Speed: 17 knots

Career:

January 40 - February 42: East Indies Station

March 42 - April 42: Eastern Fleet (Indian Ocean)

June 42 - August 42: Eastern Fleet (Indian Ocean)

September 42 - November 42: South Atlantic Station

December 42 - February 43: Eastern Fleet (Indian Ocean)

March 43 - April 43: South Atlantic Station

May 43 - November 43: Eastern Fleet (Indian Ocean)

On 30 December 1943 returned and used as troopship by the Ministry of War Transport (MoWT). 1948 returned to owner.

## Commands listed for HMS Carthage (F 99)

Please note that we're still working on this section and that we only list Commanding Officers for the duration of the Second World War.

Commander	From	To
1 Capt. (retired) <b><u>Basil Owen Bell-Salter</u></b> , RN	28 Aug 1939	Dec 1940
2 Capt. (retired) <b><u>Henry Leonard Ivers Kirkpatrick</u></b> , OBE, RN	Dec 1940	19 Feb 1942
3 Capt. (retired) <b><u>Basil Owen Bell-Salter</u></b> , RN	19 Feb 1942	1 May 1942
4 A/Capt. <b><u>Cyril William Archie Gooding Hamley</u></b> , RN	1 May 1942	10 Jun 1942
5 A/Cdr. <b><u>John Wyndham Cookson</u></b> , RN	10 Jun 1942	23 Jun 1942
6 A/Capt. (retired) <b><u>William Vesey Hamilton Harris</u></b> , DSC, RN	23 Jun 1942	28 Jul 1943
7 A/Capt. <b><u>Ughtred Henry Ramsden James</u></b> , RN	28 Jul 1943	

**You can help improve our commands section**

Click here to [Submit events/comments/updates for this vessel.](#)

Please use this if you spot mistakes or want to improve this ships page.

## Notable events involving Carthage include:

**12 Jan 1940**

**HMS Durban** (Capt. A.C. Collinson, RN) departed Singapore to escort the troopship *Talma* (British, 10000 GRT, built 1923) part of the way to Colombo.

The troopships was turned over to the armed merchant cruiser **HMS Carthage** (Capt.(Retd.) B.O. Bell-Salter, RN) at 0715G/15. (1)

**24 Jul 1940**

## Convoy RS 5.

This convoy departed Liverpool on 24 July 1940 for Suez.

It was made up of the troopship *Reina del Pacifico* (17702 GRT, built 1931) and the transport *Clan Ferguson* (7347 GRT, built 1938).

On departure from Liverpool the convoy was escorted by the destroyers *HMS Encounter* (Lt.Cdr. E.V.St.J. Morgan, RN) and *HMS Hotspur* (Cdr. H.F.H Layman, DSO, RN).

Also on the 24th the aircraft carrier *HMS Argus* (Capt. H.C. Bovell, RN), armed merchant cruiser *HMS Maloja* (A/Capt. V. Hammersley-Heenan, RN) and the destroyers *HMS Greyhound* (Cdr. W.R. Marshall A'Deane, DSC, RN) and *HMS Gallant* (Lt.Cdr. C.P.F. Brown, RN) departed Greenock. They made rendezvous with the ships coming from Liverpool around 0600A/25.

At 1000A/26, *HMS Argus* and the destroyers parted company to proceed direct to Gibraltar. They arrived at Gibraltar around 0700A/30.

The convoy, escorted by *HMS Maloja*, continued on towards Freetown where it arrived on 4 August 1940.

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The then convoy departed Freetown on 5 August 1940 for Capetown.

On departure from Freetown the convoy was now escorted by the aircraft carrier *HMS Hermes* (Capt. R.F.J. Onslow, DSC, MVO, RN).

Around 1200Z/11, the light cruiser *HMS Dragon* (Capt. R.G. Bowes-Lyon, MVO, RN) joined the convoy. *HMS Hermes* then parted company to proceed independently on patrol and then on to Simonstown.

The convoy arrived at Capetown on 15 August 1940.

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The convoy, still in the same composition and still escorted by *HMS Dragon* departed Capetown for Durban on 16 August 1940.

The convoy arrived at Durban on 19 August 1940.

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The convoy departed Durban for Aden on 21 August 1940 now escorted by the armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (Capt.(Retd.) B.O. Bell-Salter, RN).

The convoy arrived at Aden on 31 August 1940.

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The convoy departed Aden for Suez on 31 August 1940 now escorted by the light cruiser *HMAS Hobart* (Capt. H.L. Howden, RAN) and the destroyer *HMS Kandahar* (Cdr. W.G.A. Robson, RN). The armed boarding vessel *HMS Chakdina* (Lt.Cdr. W.R. Hickey, RNR) was also with the convoy for a while.

At 1830C/2, the *Reina del Pacifico* parted company with the convoy to proceed ahead to Suez where she arrived on 4 September 1940.

At 1920C/2, *HMS Kandahar* parted company with the convoy to proceed to Port Sudan to fuel.

At 0910C/3, the sloop **HMS Grimsby** (Cdr. K.J. D'Arcy, RN) took over the escort of the *Clan Ferguson* from **HMAS Hobart** which in turn took over *HMS Grimsby's* southbound convoy.

*HMS Grimsby* and the *Clan Ferguson* arrived at Suez on 5 September 1940. (2)

### 31 Aug 1940

Around 1700C/31, the light cruiser **HMAS Hobart** (Capt. H.L. Howden, RAN) and the destroyer **HMS Kandahar** (Cdr. W.G.A. Robson, RN) departed Aden to rendezvous at sea with Convoy RS 5.

[For more info on this convoy see the event ' Convoy RS 5 ' for 24 July 1940.]

At 0900/3, rendezvous was made in position 23°20'N, 37°42'E with convoy BS 3A which came down from Suez. Escorts were then exchanged and both convoy's proceeded to their destinations.

[For more info on this convoy see the event ' Convoy BS 3A ' for 1 September 1940.] (3)

### 10 Sep 1940

## Convoy AP 3.

This convoy departed Liverpool on 10 September 1940 for Suez where it arrived on 22 October 1940.

The convoy was made up of the following merchant vessels; ***Athlone Castle*** (British, 25564 GRT, built 1936), ***Brisbane Star*** (British, 12791 GRT, built 1937), ***Brittanic*** (British, 26943 GRT, built 1930), ***Clan Campbell*** (British, 7255 GRT, built 1937), ***Clan MacArthur*** (British, 10528 GRT, built 1936), ***Dominion Monarch*** (British, 27155 GRT, built 1939), ***Durban Castle*** (British, 17388 GRT, built 1938), ***Glaucus*** (British, 7596 GRT, built 1921), ***Imperial Star*** (British, 12427 GRT, built 1935) and ***Ulster Prince*** (British, 3791 GRT, built 1930).

On departure from the U.K. the convoy was escorted by the destroyers **HMS Havelock** (Capt. E.B.K. Stevens, DSC, RN), **HMS Harvester** (Lt.Cdr. M. Thornton, RN), **HMS Highlander** (Cdr. W.A. Dallmeyer, RN) and **HMS Hurricane** (Lt.Cdr. H.C. Simms, RN), **HMS Volunteer** (Lt.Cdr. N. Lanyon, RN) and **HMS Wolverine** (Cdr. R.H. Craske, RN). They remained with the convoy until 12 September.

In the morning of 11 September the light cruiser **HMS Sheffield** (Capt. C.A.A. Larcom, RN) joined the convoy until 0745/12 when she returned to the Clyde after having been ordered to do so.

Ocean escort joined around the time the destroyers left and was made up of the armed merchant cruisers **HMS Cicilia** (Capt.(Retd.) V.B. Cardwell, OBE, RN) and **HMS Wolfe** (A/Capt.(Retd.) W.G.A. Shuttleworth, RN). They remained with the convoy until it arrived at Freetown on 23 September 1940.

From 25 September 1940 to 4 October 1940, when the convoy arrived at Capetown, it was escorted by the armed merchant cruisers **HMS Canton** (Capt. G.D. Belben, DSC, AM, RN) and **HMS Carnarvon Castle** (Capt.(Retd.) H.N.M. Hardy, DSO, RN).

On departure from Capetown on 6 October, the convoy was escorted by *HMS Canton* until 9 October when she was relieved by **HMS Carthage** (Capt.(Retd.) B.O. Bell-Salter, RN). This armed merchant cruiser remained with the convoy until 1220C on 15 October when she was relieved by the heavy cruiser **HMS Shropshire** (Capt. J.H. Edelsten, RN) which remained with the convoy until 20 October.

On 18 October the convoy was near Aden and the AA cruiser *HMS Carlisle* (Capt. G.M.B. Langley, OBE, RN), destroyers *HMS Kandahar* (Cdr. W.G.A. Robson, RN), *HMS Kingston* (Lt.Cdr. P. Somerville, DSO, RN) and sloop *HMS Flamingo* (Cdr. J.H. Huntley, RN) joined.

The escort parted company with the convoy on 20 October except *HMS Kandahar* which remained with the convoy until its arrival at Suez two days later. On arrival at Suez two more ships were escorting the convoy, these were the sloop *HMS Clive* (Cdr. H.R. Inigo-Jones, RN) and the minesweeper *HMS Stoke* (Cdr.(Retd.) C.J.P. Hill, RN). Presumably these had joined on 20 October.

**3 Oct 1940**

## **Convoy WS 3A (Slow).**

This convoy departed Liverpool on 3 October 1940.

This convoy was made up of the following transport vessels; *Clan Cameron* (British, 7243 GRT, built 1937), *Dorset* (British, 10624 GRT, built 1934), *Highland Brigade* (British, 14134 GRT, built 1929), *Oropesa* (British, 14118 GRT, built 1920), *Perthshire* (British, 10496 GRT, built 1936) and *Port Chalmers* (British, 8535 GRT, built 1933).

Also the destroyer tender *HMS Woolwich* (Capt.(Retd.) J. Fawcett, RN) was with the convoy.

On departure from Liverpool the convoy was escorted by the destroyers *HMS Harvester* (Lt.Cdr. C.M. Thornton, RN), *HMS Havelock* (Lt.Cdr. E.H. Thomas, RN), *HMS Highlander* (Cdr. W.A. Dallmeyer, RN) and *HMS Hurricane* (Lt.Cdr. H.C. Simms, RN).

At 1315A/3, the destroyers *HMS Witherington* (Lt.Cdr. J.B. Palmer, RN), *HMS Viscount* (Lt.Cdr. M.S. Townsend, OBE, DSC, RN) and *HMS Versatile* (Cdr.(Retd.) J.H. Jauncey, RN) joined coming from the Clyde.

Cover for the convoy was provided by the light cruiser *HMS Sheffield* (Capt. C.A.A. Lacom, RN) which had also departed the Clyde on the 3rd.

[For the moment we have no details regarding the exact movements of the destroyers. *HMS Witherington*, *HMS Viscount* and *HMS Versatile* arrived at Londonderry on 6 October. *HMS Harvester*, *HMS Havelock* and *HMS Highlander* arrived at Plymouth on 8 October. *HMS Hurricane* arrived at Greenock on the same day].

Around 1645N/9, *HMS Sheffield* parted company with the convoy to patrol off the Azores due to fear of a German invasion. She parted company after having been relieved by the heavy cruiser *HMS Cumberland* (Capt. G.H.E. Russell, RN).

The convoy arrived at Freetown on 16 October 1940.

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The convoy departed Freetown for South Africa on 17 October 1940.

Composition of the convoy was the same. Escort was still *HMS Cumberland*.

The convoy arrived at Capetown on 27 October 1940. *HMS Cumberland* then went on to Simonstown but she returned to Capetown the following day.

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The convoy departed Capetown on 29 October 1940 still made up of the same transports with two additions; *Erinpura* (British, 5143 GRT, built 1911) and *Khedive Ismail* (British, 7290 GRT, built 1922).

*HMS Woolwich* did not sail with the convoy.

Escort was still provided by the heavy cruiser *HMS Cumberland* until she was relieved around 0700A/1 by the armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (Capt.(Retd.) B.O. Bell-Salter, RN).

The convoy merged in the morning of 3 November 1940 with convoy WS 3B (Fast). (4)

**7 Oct 1940**

## **Convoy WS 3 (Fast).**

This convoy departed Liverpool and the Clyde on 7 October 1940. The convoy arrived at Suez on 16 November 1940.

The Liverpool section was made up of the troop transports; *Duchess of York* (British, 20021 GRT, built 1929), *Monarch of Bermuda* (British, 22424 GRT, built 1931) and *Orontes* (British, 20097 GRT, built 1929).

It was escorted by the destroyers *HMS Douglas* (Cdr.(Retd.) J.G. Crossley, RN) and *HMCS St. Laurent* (Lt. H.S. Rayner, RCN). *HMCS St. Laurent* however collided with a small merchant vessel very early on the 8th and had to return to Liverpool for repairs.

The Clyde section was made up of the transports; *Capetown Castle* (British, 27000 GRT, built 1938), *Georgic* (British, 27759 GRT, built 1932), *Oronsay* (British, 20043 GRT, built 1925) and *Winchester Castle* (British, 20012 GRT, built 1930).

It was escorted by the destroyers *HMCS Ottawa* (Cdr. E.R. Mainguy, RCN) and *HMS Active* (Lt.Cdr. E.C.L. Turner, RN).

At 0700/8, the Clyde section was joined by the destroyers *HMS Arrow* (Cdr. H.W. Williams, RN), *HMS Achates* (Lt.Cdr. Viscount Jocelyn, RN) and *HMS Whitehall* (Lt.Cdr. A.B. Russell, RN) which came from Londonderry.

At 1012/8, a large enemy bomber was seen to approach the *Capetown Castle* off the Clyde section and dropped a bomb which missed.

At 1050/8, *HMCS Ottawa* and *HMS Active* were ordered to close the *Oronsay* which had been damaged by air attack and needed assistance. *HMS Active* however misunderstood the order and remained with the convoy. Meanwhile the *Oronsay* had dropped out of the convoy.

At 1152/8, *HMS Arrow* joined the damaged *Oronsay* as well.

Around 1400/8, the armed merchant cruisers *HMS Cheshire* (Capt.(Retd.) M.R. Bernard, RN) and *HMS Salopian* (Capt.(Retd.) J.M. Alleyne, DSO, DSC, RN) also arrived on the scene. *HMS Salopian* later departed to continue her patrol. *HMS Cheshire* remained with *Oronsay* and the two destroyers.

At 1440/8, *Oronsay* got underway at slow speed and was able to increase speed to 9 knots.

At 1520/8, the ships that were with the *Oronsay* sighted the Liverpool section of the convoy which apparently had been delayed by bad weather conditions and therefore unable to have joined up with the Clyde section as had been

intended. *HMS Douglas*, one of the escorting destroyers of the Liverpool section had been unable to keep up with it due to the weather conditions now joined the *Oronsay* group.

At 1900/8, the destroyers *HMS Verity* (Cdr. R.H. Mills, RN) and *HMS Sabre* (Cdr.(Retd.) B. Dean, RN) joined.

The destroyer *HMS Viscount* (Lt.Cdr. M.S. Townsend, OBE, DSC, RN) also joined but it is unknown when.

At 2115/8, the AA cruiser *HMS Cairo* (Capt. P.V. McLaughlin, RN) joined.

At 0205/9, *HMS Arrow* and *HMCS Ottawa* parted company with *Oronsay* and the other escorts to proceed to Londonderry.

Around 1030/9, the damaged *Oronsay* escorted by *HMS Cairo*, *HMS Cheshire*, *HMS Douglas*, *HMS Verity*, *HMS Viscount* and *HMS Sabre* arrived at Greenock.

Meanwhile the Clyde section had continued on escorted by *HMS Whitehall*, *HMS Achates* and *HMS Active*. As did the Liverpool section but apparently unescorted. They had failed to make rendezvous with each other in the heavy weather.

Around 1215/9, the Clyde section was joined by the light cruiser *HMS Kenya* (Capt. M.M. Denny, CB, RN). It seems that at this time the destroyers were no longer present.

At noon on the 12th the Clyde section, with *HMS Kenya* was finally joined by the Liverpool section of the convoy.

The convoy arrived at Freetown in the afternoon of October 18th.

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The convoy departed Freetown on 20 October 1940 and was made up of the *Capetown Castle*, *Duchess of York*, *Georgic*, *Monarch of Bermuda*, *Orontes* and *Winchester Castle*.

The convoy was escorted by the heavy cruiser *HMS Dorsetshire* (Capt. B.C.S. Martin, RN).

The convoy arrived at Capetown on 28 October 1940. *HMS Dorsetshire* then proceeded to Simonstown where she arrived also on the same day.

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On 30 October the convoy, now made up of the *Duchess of York*, *Georgic*, *Monarch of Bermuda* and *Orontes* departed Capetown for Suez. They were escorted by *HMS Dorsetshire*.

In the morning of 3 November the convoy overtook and then merged with the slow section of convoy WS 3 which was made up of the transports *Dorset* (British, 10624 GRT, built 1934), *Erinpura* (British, 5143 GRT, built 1911), *Highland Brigade* (British, 14134 GRT, built 1929), *Khedive Ismael* (British, 7290 GRT, built 1922), *Oropesa* (British, 14118 GRT, built 1920), *Perthshire* (British, 10496 GRT, built 1936) and *Port Chalmers* (British, 8535 GRT, built 1933) and their escort the armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (Capt.(Retd.) B.O. Bell-Salter, RN).

Shortly before noon the *Erinpura* and *Khedive Ismael* split off from the convoy and set course for Mombasa escorted by *HMS Carthage*. *HMS Dorsetshire* continued on with the remainder of the convoy towards Suez.

In the morning of November 11th, the light cruiser *HMS Caledon* (Capt. C.P. Clarke, RN) joined the convoy at the entrance to the Gulf of Aden.

The transport *City of Lille* (British, 6588 GRT, built 1928) and several more escort vessels, the AA cruiser *HMS Carlisle* (Capt. G.M.B. Langley, OBE, RN), destroyer *HMS Kimberley* (Lt.Cdr. J.S.M. Richardson, RN), sloops *HMS Auckland* (Cdr. J.G. Hewitt, DSO, RN) and *HMAS Parramatta* (Lt.Cdr. J.H. Walker, MVO, RAN) joined on 12 November 1940 for the passage through the Red Sea in which the Italian Navy was still active at this time.

The troopships *Duchess of York* and *Georgic* also re-joined the convoy after a brief visit to Aden. *HMS Caledon* also briefly left the convoy to oil at Aden before re-joining it.

Around 2130/12, the convoy entered the Perim Strait.

*HMS Dorsetshire* parted company with the convoy at 0915/14.

The convoy arrived at Suez on 16 November 1940. (5)

**8 Oct 1940**

## Convoy SW 2.

This convoy departed Suez on 8 October 1940 for Durban where it arrived on 22 October 1940.

The convoy was made up of the following merchant vessels; *Amra* (British, 8314 GRT, built 1938), *Duchess of Bedford* (British, 20123 GRT, built 1928), *Empress of Japan* (British, 26032 GRT, built 1930), *Orion* (British, 23371 GRT, built 1935), *Ormonde* (British, 14982 GRT, built 1917), *Sydney Star* (British, 12696 GRT, built 1936) and *Waiotira* (British, 11090 GRT, built 1939).

On departed from Suez the convoy was apparently not escorted.

On 9 October 1940 two more ships joined the convoy. These came from Port Sudan. They were the merchant vessels *Karoo* (British, 7009 GRT, built 1915) and *Talamba* (British, 8018 GRT, built 1924).

Around 0800C/10, the light cruiser *HMAS Hobart* (Capt. H.L. Howden, RAN), AA cruiser *HMS Carlisle* (Capt. G.M.B. Langley, OBE, RN), destroyer *HMS Kandahar* (Cdr. W.G.A. Robson, RN) and the sloop *HMS Flamingo* (Cdr. J.H. Huntley, RN) joined for onward escort until off Aden.

These ships parted company around 0900C/12 when the convoy was joined by the heavy cruiser *HMS Shropshire* (Capt. J.H. Edelsten, RN).

This heavy cruiser escorted the convoy until 04°50'N, 30°00'E where the armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (Capt.(Retd.) B.O. Bell-Salter, RN) took over around 1220C/15.

The convoy arrived at Durban on 22 October 1940 minus three merchant vessels which had proceeded to other destinations; *Amra* and *Waiotira* proceeded to Bombay and Colombo respectively while *Ormonde* arrived at Mombasa on 18 October. (3)

**25 Mar 1941**

## Convoy WS 7.

This convoy was assembled off Oversay on 25 March 1941 for several destinations in the Middle and Far East.



This convoy was made up of the following troopships / transports; *Andes* (British, 25689 GRT, built 1939), *Dempo* (Dutch, 17024 GRT, built 1931), *Denbighshire* (British, 8983 GRT, built 1938), *Duchess of Atholl* (British, 20119 GRT, built 1928), *Duchess of York* (British, 20021 GRT, built 1929), *Empress of Canada* (British, 21517 GRT, built 1922), *Georgic* (British, 27759 GRT, built 1932), *Glenorchy* (British, 8982 GRT, built 1939), *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt* (Dutch, 19429 GRT, built 1930), *Orcades* (British, 23456 GRT, built 1937), *Orion* (British, 23371 GRT, built 1935), *Otranto* (British, 20026 GRT, built 1925), *Pasteur* (British, 29253 GRT, built 1938), *Stirling Castle* (British, 25550 GRT, built 1936), *Strathaird* (British, 22281 GRT, built 1932), *Strathallan* (British, 23722 GRT, built 1938), *Stratheden* (British, 23722 GRT, built 1937), *Strathmore* (British, 23428 GRT, built 1935), *Strathnaver* (British, 22283 GRT, built 1931), *Viceroy of India* (British, 19627 GRT, built 1929) and *Warwick Castle* (British, 20107 GRT, built 1930).

These ships had come from Liverpool and from the Clyde. While proceeding to the Oversay rendezvous (from the Clyde) the *Strathaird* collided with the *Stirling Castle* and was forced to return due to the damage sustained. The *Stirling Castle* also had damage but was able to continue.

On departure from the U.K. waters the convoy was escorted by the battleships *HMS Nelson* (Capt. G.J.A. Miles, RN) (came from Scapa Flow), *HMS Revenge* (Capt. E.R. Archer, RN) (came from the Clyde), light cruiser *HMS Edinburgh* (Commodore C.M. Blackman, DSO, RN) (came from the Clyde), AA cruiser *HMS Cairo* (A/Capt. I.R.H. Black, RN) (came from Moelfre Bay) and the destroyers *HMS Somali* (Capt. C. Caslon, RN), *HMS Bedouin* (Cdr. J.A. McCoy, DSO, RN), *HMS Mashona* (Cdr. W.H. Selby, RN), *HMS Matabele* (Cdr. R.St.V. Sherbrooke, DSO, RN), *HMS Legion* (Cdr. R.F. Jessel, RN), *ORP Piorun* (Cdr. E.J.S. Plawski), *HMS Broadwater* (Lt.Cdr. W.M.L. Astwood, RN) (these destroyers came with the Clyde section of the convoy), *HMS Whitehall* (Lt.Cdr. A.B. Russell, RN), *HMS Winchelsea* (Lt.Cdr. W.A.F. Hawkins, DSC, RN) (came with the Liverpool section of the convoy), *HMS Viceroy* (Lt.Cdr. D.P. Trentham, RN), *HMS Rockingham* (Lt. A.H.T. Johns, RN), *Léopard* (Lt.Cdr. J. Evenou) (came from Londonderry), *HMS Arrow* (Cdr. R.E. Hyde-Smith, RN), *HMS Eclipse* (Lt.Cdr. I.T. Clark, RN), *HMS Eskimo* (Lt.Cdr. E.G. Le Geyt, RN) (had come from Scapa Flow with *HMS Nelson*) and *HMCS St. Clair* (Lt.Cdr. D.C. Wallace, RCNR) (came from Tobermory).

Around 2150A/26, *HMS Cairo* parted company with the convoy.

In the morning of the 27th part of the destroyer escort parted company.

Around 1200A/28, the remaining destroyers parted company with the convoy.

Around 1230A/28, *HMS Revenge* parted company taking *Georgic* with her to escort her to Halifax.

Around 2200A/29, *HMS Edinburgh* parted company with the convoy to proceed to Gibraltar.

Around 1000A/1, the destroyers *HMS Duncan* (Lt.Cdr. A.N. Rowell, RN) and *HMS Foxhound* (Cdr. G.H. Peters, DSC, RN) joined the convoy coming from Bathurst.

Around 1350A/2, the destroyers *HMS Wishart* (Cdr. E.T. Cooper, RN) and *HMS Vidette* (Lt. E.N. Walmsley, RN) joined the convoy also coming from Bathurst.

The convoy arrived at Freetown on 4 April 1941.

The convoy departed Freetown for South Africa (Capetown and Durban) on 7 April 1941. The composition of the convoy was the same in which it had arrived at Freetown.

Escort on departure was also the same as on the convoy's arrival, battleship *HMS Nelson*, *HMS Foxhound*, *HMS Duncan*, *HMS Wishart* and *HMS Vidette*.

In the evening of April 7th, *HMS Foxhound*, picked up three crewmembers from the merchant vessel *Umona* that had been torpedoed and sunk on 30 March 1941 by the German submarine *U-124*.

At 0830Z/8 *HMS Foxhound* parted company with the convoy to return to Freetown due to defects.

The remaining three destroyers parted company at 1800Z/9 to return to Freetown.

Around 1430B/15, the light cruiser *HMS Newcastle* (Capt. E.A. Aylmer, DSC, RN) joined the convoy in position 30°30'S, 14°23'E and took over the escort. *HMS Nelson* then parted company to proceed to Capetown to fuel and then on to Simonstown for repairs to her leaking hull.

At 0900B/16, the convoy split up in position 33°53'S, 17°47'E in a Capetown portion and a Durban portion.

The Durban position was made up of the *Denbighshire*, *Glenorchy*, *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, *Orontes*, *Otranto*, *Stirling Castle*, *Strathnaver*, *Viceroy of India* and *Warwick Castle*. *HMS Newcastle* remained with this section until its arrival at Durban on 19 April 1941.

The remaining ships made up the Capetown section and arrived there on 16 April 1941. *Dempo* later went on independently to Durban arriving there on 20 April 1941.

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On 20 April 1941 the Capetown portion of the convoy departed. It was made up of the *Andes*, *Duchess of Athol*, *Duchess of York*, *Empress of Canada*, *Orcades*, *Orion*, *Pasteur*, *Strathallan*, *Stratheden*, and *Strathmore*. They were escorted by the cruiser *HMS Hawkins* (Capt. H.P.K. Oram, RN).

On 23 April 1941 the Durban portion of the convoy departed. It was made up of the *Dempo*, *Denbighshire*, *Empress of Australia*, *Glenorchy*, *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, *Orontes*, *Otranto*, *Strathnaver*, *Viceroy of India* and *Warwick Castle*. They were escorted by the armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (Capt. (retired) H.L.I. Kirkpatrick, OBE, RN). The *Stirling Castle* which had arrived with the Durban section sailed on 26 April independently to Melbourne, Australia where she arrived on 10 May 1941.

These groups made rendezvous at 0900C/24 after which *HMS Carthage* parted company while *HMS Hawkins* continued on with the convoy.

Around 1600C/28, *HMS Hawkins* was relieved by the light cruisers *HMS Glasgow* (Capt. H. Hickling, RN) and *HMS Colombo* (Capt. C.A.E. Stanfield, RN) which both had departed Mombasa earlier that day.

On 1 May the Bombay section of the convoy split off. it was made up of the *Duchess of York*, *Johan van Oldebarnevelt*, *Strathmore* and *Warwick Castle*. *HMS Colombo* went with them as escort. They arrived at Bombay on 5 May 1941.

The remainder of the convoy continued on, escorted by *HMS Glasgow* until it was dispersed on 3 May after which the ships proceeded independently to Suez. (6)

## 19 Apr 1941

In the morning, near East London, South Africa, **HMS Dorsetshire** (Capt. B.C.S. Martin, RN), made rendez-vous with **HMS Illustrious** (Cdr. G.S. Tuck, RN) and took over the escort of the damaged aircraft carrier from the armed merchant cruiser **HMS Carthage** (Capt. (retired) H.L.I. Kirkpatrick, OBE, RN). Course was then set for Capetown. (7)

2 Nov 1941

## Operation Bellringer.

### Interception of a Vichy-French convoy off South Africa.

Around 1800B/1, a Vichy French convoy of 5 ships and one escort was sighted in position 36°04'S, 34°44'E by the South African minesweeping whaler *HMSAS Southern Barrier* (T/Lt.Cdr. R.L.V. Shannon, SDF).

The Vichy French convoy, en route from Madagascar to Dakar, was then intercepted in the afternoon of the 2nd in position 37°43'S, 30°16'E by the heavy cruiser **HMS Devonshire** (Capt. R.D. Oliver, DSC, RN), light cruiser **HMS Colombo** (Capt. C.C.A. Allen, RN), armed merchant cruisers **HMS Carnarvon Castle** (Capt.(Retd.) H.N.M. Hardy, DSO, RN) and **HMS Carthage** (Capt.(Retd.) H.L.I. Kirkpatrick, OBE, RN). The convoy was made up of the merchant vessels *Bangkok* (8056 GRT, built 1919), *Cap Padaran* (8009 GRT, built 1922), *Cap Touraine* (8009 GRT, built 1924), *Commandant Dorise* (5529 GRT, built 1917) and *Compiègne* (9986 GRT, built 1923). They were escorted by the sloop **D'Iberville**.

Five more South African minesweeping whalers were also on the scene, these were the *HMSAS Florida* (T/Lt. J.V. Ingram, RNVR(SA)), *HMSAS Nigel* (T/Lt. W.D. de la Bat van Alphen, SDF), *HMSAS Steenberg* (T/Lt. S.B. Petzer, SDF), *HMSAS Stellenberg* (T/Lt. W. Taylor, SDF) and *HMSAS Terje* (T/Lt. H.G. Amor, SDF).

The Vichy French escort vessel refused to divert the convoy to South Africa so the merchant vessels were boarded the following morning. The Vichy French sloop then made off being unable against the more powerful British ships to prevent the seizure of the convoy.

The crew of the *Bangkok* set the ship on fire and then abandoned the ship. They were picked up by *HMS Colombo* and *HMSAS Nigel*.

The *Cap Padaran* was immobilised by her crew which sabotaged the ships engines. She was taken in tow by *HMS Carthage* which took her to Port Elizabeth with *HMSAS Stellenberg*. They arrived there on 7 November. *HMS Carthage* did not enter the port though, she went on to Durban arriving there on 8 November.

The *Cap Touraine* was escorted by *HMS Devonshire* and *HMSAS Steenberg* to Port Elizabeth where they arrived on 6 December. *HMS Devonshire* did not enter the port though, she went on to Durban arriving there on 7 November.

The *Commandant Dorise* was escorted to East London by *HMS Carnarvon Castle* and *HMSAS Florida*. The *Compiègne* was escorted by *HMS Colombo* and *HMSAS Nigel* also to East London where they arrived on 5 November and 6 November respectively. (8)

29 Aug 1942

## Convoy WS 22.

This convoy was assembled off Oversay on 29 August 1942.

It was made up of the following (troop) transports; *Almanzora* (British, 15551 GRT, built 1914), *Andes* (British, 25689 GRT, built 1939), *Boissevain* (Dutch, 14134 GRT, built 1937), *California* (British, 16792 GRT, built 1923), *Canara* (British, 7024 GRT, built 1942), *Dominion Monarch* (British, 27155 GRT, built 1939), *Franconia* (British, 20175 GRT, built 1923), *Highland Brigade* (British, 14134 GRT, built 1929), *Highland Chieftain* (British, 14135 GRT, built 1929), *Highland Princess* (British, 14133 GRT, built 1930), *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt* (Dutch, 19429 GRT, built 1930), *Leinster* (British, 4303 GRT, built 1937), *Mataroa* (British, 12390 GRT, built 1922), *Nea Hellas* (British, 16991 GRT, built 1922), *Nieuw Holland* (British, 11066 GRT, built 1927), *Orcades* (British, 23456 GRT, built 1937), *Orduna* (British, 15507 GRT, built 1914), *Rangitata* (British, 16737 GRT, built 1929), *Ruys* (Dutch, 14155 GRT, built 1937) and *Suffolk* (British, 11145 GRT, built 1939).

On assembly off Oversay the convoy was escorted by the light cruiser *HMS Aurora* (Capt. W.G. Agnew, CB, RN), armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (A/Capt.(Retd.) W.V.H. Harris, DSC, MVO, RN), destroyers *HMS Bulldog* (Cdr. M. Richmond, OBE, DSO, RN), *HMS Keppel* (Cdr. J.E. Broome, RN), *HMS Beverley* (Lt. R.A. Price, RN), *HMS Chesterfield* (Lt. J. Smallwood, RN), *HMS Partridge* (Lt.Cdr. W.A.F. Hawkins, DSC, OBE, RN), *HMAS Quiberon* (Cdr. H.W.S. Browning, OBE, RN), *ORP Blyskawica* (Lt.Cdr. L. Lichodziejewski, ORP) and the escort destroyers *HMS Bicester* (Lt.Cdr. S.W.F. Bennetts, RN) and *HMS Zetland* (Lt. J.V. Wilkinson, RN).

Around 1800Z/31, *ORP Blyskawica* was detached to Londonderry due to abnormal high fuel consumption.

Around 0600Z/1, *HMS Bulldog*, *HMS Keppel* and *HMS Zetland* were detached to return to the U.K.

Around 1315Z/1, *HMS Bicester* was detached to Plymouth.

Around 1520Z/1, *HMS Partridge* and *HMAS Quiberon* were detached to fuel at the Azores. They arrived there around 1600Z/2.

Around 1540Z/2, the *Leinster* parted company with the convoy to proceed to Gibraltar. The destroyers *HMS Laforey* (Capt. R.M.J. Hutton, RN) and *HMS Lookout* (Lt.Cdr. A.G. Forman, DSC, RN) had come from Gibraltar to escort her.

Around 0930Z/3, *HMS Partridge* and *HMAS Quiberon* rejoined from fuelling having departed Ponta Delgada around 0200Z/3. *HMS Beverley* and *HMS Chesterfield* were then detached to fuel at the Azores.

Around 1400Z/6, the destroyer *HMS Antelope* (Lt.Cdr. E.N. Sinclair) joined.

Around 1300Z/7, the escort destroyer *RHS Pindos* joined.

The convoy arrived at Freetown shortly after noon on 9 September 1942.

The convoy departed Freetown in the same composition around 0700Z/13. One additional vessel had joined the convoy, this was the transport *Sibajak* (Dutch, 12226 GRT, built 1927). The convoy was now escorted by the light cruiser *HMS Aurora*, armed merchant cruiser *HMS Alcantara* (A/Capt.(Retd.) J.D. Harvey, RN), destroyers *HMAS Quiberon*, *HMS Partridge*, *HMS Boreas* (Lt.Cdr. E.L. Jones, DSC, RN), *HMS Antelope* and the escort destroyers *HMS Derwent* (Cdr. R.H. Wright, DSC, RN) and *RHS Pindos*.

Around 1800Z/15, the *Highland Princess* was detached to Takoradi escorted by *HMS Boreas*. *HMS Antelope* was also detached to return to Freetown.

Around 1800A/16, *HMS Alcantara*, *HMS Derwent* and *RHS Pindos* were detached to Pointe Noire to fuel. They rejoined the convoy around 1800A/19 after which *HMS Aurora*, *HMAS Quiberon* and *HMS Partidge* parted company with the convoy to fuel at Pointe Noire. They did not rejoin the convoy.

Around 1015BC/24, the heavy cruiser **HMS Shropshire** (Capt. J.T. Borrett, OBE, RN) joined the convoy coming from Simonstown.

Around 1200BC/24, the convoy split into the Capetown section and the Durban section.

The Capetown section was made up of the *Almanzora*, *Andes*, *California*, *Canara*, *Dominion Monarch*, *Franconia*, *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, *Nea Hellas*, *Nieuw Holland*, *Orduna* and *Ruys*. They arrived at Capetown on 25 September escorted by *HMS Alcantara*, *HMS Derwent* and *RHS Pindos*.

The Durban section was made up of the *Boissevain*, *Highland Brigade*, *Highland Chieftain*, *Mataroa*, *Orcades*, *Rangitata*, *Sibajak* and *Suffolk*. They were escorted by *HMS Shropshire*.

The Durban section arrived at Durban on 29 September 1942.

On 29 September 1942, the Capetown section, now made up of the following ships; *Almanzora*, *Dominion Monarch*, *Franconia*, *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, *Nieuw Holland* and *Orduna* departed. They were escorted by the armed merchant cruisers *HMS Alcantara* and **HMS Ranchi** (Capt.(Retd.) Sir J.M. Alleyne, DSO, DSC, RN).

On 3 October 1942, *HMS Alcantara* parted company with the convoy and entered Durban. The Durban section of the convoy then joined. It was now made up of the following ships; *Boissevain*, *California*, *Canara*, ***Ekma*** (British, 5108 GRT, built 1911), ***Felix Roussel*** (British, 17083 GRT, built 1930), ***Indrapoera*** (Dutch, 10825 GRT, built 1925), *Rangitata* and *Ruys*. They were escorted by the heavy cruiser **HMS Devonshire** (Capt. R.D. Oliver, CBE, DSC, RN).

Around 0600D/8, *HMS Ranchi* parted company with the convoy to fuel at Diego Suarez. She arrived there around 1730D/9. Having completed fuelling she departed again around 2330D/9 to rejoin the convoy which she did around 0600D/11.

Around 1130E/10, the 'heavy' cruiser **HMS Hawkins** (Capt. G.A. French, RN) joined the convoy. *HMS Devonshire* then parted company with the convoy to proceed to Kilindini / Mombasa taking the *Almanzora* and *Rangitata* with her. They arrived at Kilindini / Mombasa on the 12th.

Around 0710D/11, *HMS Hawkins* parted company taking the Bombay section of the convoy with her. The Bombay section was made up of the *Boissevain*, *California*, *Canara*, *Dominion Monarch*, *Franconia*, *Indrapoera*, *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, *Nieuw Holland* and *Ruys*. They arrived at Bombay on 17 October 1942 minus the *Canara* which had been detached around 1920EF/15 to Karachi where she arrived on 18 October 1942.

*HMS Ranchi* escorting the Aden section, made up of the *Ekma*, *Felix Roussel* and *Orduna*, had meanwhile arrived at Aden on 16 October 1942. (9)

**4 Oct 1942**

## Convoy WS 23.

This convoy was formed off Oversay on 5 October 1942.

It consisted of the following transports / troopships; *Capetown Castle* (British, 27002 GRT, built 1938), *Empress of Russia* (British, 16810 GRT, built 1913), *Highland Monarch* (British, 14139 GRT, built 1928), *Kina II* (British, 9823 GRT, built 1939), *Moreton Bay* (British, 14193 GRT, built 1921), *Port Jackson* (British, 9687 GRT, built 1937), *Silverandal* (British, 6770 GRT, built 1930) and *Straat Malakka* (Dutch, 439 GRT, built 1939).

Initial escort consisted of the light cruisers *HMS Despatch* (Capt. W.R.C. Leggatt, RN), *HMS Durban* (Capt. G.F. Stevens-Guille, DSO and Bar, OBE, RN), armed merchant cruiser *Queen of Bermuda* (A/Capt.(Retd.) A.D. Cochrane, DSO, RN), destroyers *HMS Beagle* (Cdr. R.C. Medley, RN), *HMS Wrestler* (Lt. R.W.B. Lacon, DSC, RN) and the escort destroyers *HMS Bicester* (Lt.Cdr. S.W.F. Bennetts, RN), *HMS Puckeridge* (Lt. J.C. Cartwright, DSC, RN), *HMS Zetland* (Lt. J.V. Wilkinson, RN) and *RHS Kanaris*.

At 2200Z/6, *HMS Durban* parted company with the convoy to proceed to Ponta Delgada to fuel.

At 1850Z/8, *HMS Beagle* parted company with the convoy to return to the UK. *HMS Zetland* had a leaking Asdic dome and was apparently also detached on the 8th to return to the UK for a docking and repairs.

At 1000Z/9, *HMS Puckeridge* arrived at Ponta Delgada to refuel. She departed to rejoin the convoy at 1345Z/9. *RHS Kanaris* arrived at 1100Z/9 and departed again at 1430Z/9. [It is currently not known to us when they had left the convoy to proceed to Ponta Delgada.]

At 1545Z/9, *HMS Durban* rejoined the convoy. *HMS Despatch* was then detached to fuel at Ponta Delgada.

At 1900Z/9, *HMS Puckeridge* and *RHS Kanaris* rejoined the convoy.

At 0100Z/10, *HMS Wrestler* and *HMS Bicester* parted company with the convoy to fuel at Ponta Delgada after which they were to return to the UK.

At 0810Z/13, *HMS Antelope* (Lt.Cdr. E.N. Sinclair, RN) joined the convoy shortly afterwards followed by *HMS Velox* (Lt. G.B. Barstow, RN).

On 16 October 1942 the convoy arrived at Freetown escorted by *HMS Despatch*, *HMS Durban*, *HMS Queen of Bermuda*, *HMS Antelope*, *HMS Velox*, *HMS Puckeridge* and *RHS Kanaris*.

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The convoy departed Freetown for Durban on 20 October 1942.

The same ships made up the convoy plus the merchant vessels *Hai Lee* (Norwegian, 3616 GRT, built 1934) and *Tamesis* (Norwegian, 7256 GRT, built 1939).

On departure from Freetown the convoy escort was made up of the light cruisers *HMS Despatch*, *HMS Durban*, armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (A/Capt.(Retd.) W.V.H. Harris, DSC, MVO, RN), escort destroyers *HMS Avon Vale* (Lt.Cdr. P.A.R. Withers, DSO, RN), *RHS Kanaris*, sloop *HMS Milford* (Cdr.(Retd.) the Hon. V.M. Wyndham-Quin, RN) and the corvette *HMS Tamarisk* (Lt. S. Ayles, RNR).

At 1020A/23, *HMS Avon Vale* parted company. *HMS Southern Gem* (T/Lt. D.C. Hayes, RNVR) had joined just before. She had sailed from Takoradi on the 22nd.

At 1842A/23, *HMS Durban* parted company with the convoy to proceed to Takoradi to repair a defect. She arrived at Takoradi around 0745/24 and departed again around 0230A/25. She rejoined the convoy around 0945A/27.

Also detached on 23 October were the two Norwegian merchant vessels and the corvette *HMS Tamarisk*. These were also to proceed to Takoradi.

The corvette ***HMS Amaranthus*** (T/Lt. W.S. Thomson, RNR) joined on the 25th coming from Ponte Noire. After she joined *HMS Southern Gem* was detached to Ponte Noire due to engine trouble.

On the 26th, *HMS Amaranthus* parted company.

On 30 October the destroyer ***HMAS Norman*** (Cdr. H.M. Burrell, RAN) and the corvettes ***HMS Rockrose*** (Lt. E.J. Binfield, DSC, RNR) and ***HMS Thyme*** (Lt. H. Roach, RNR) joined the convoy. These ships had sailed from Walvis Bay, the corvettes at 0600Z/29 and *HMAS Norman* at 2000Z/29. *HMAS Norman* joined the convoy around 1300B/30 and the corvettes around 1530B/30.

At 2100B/30, *HMS Durban*, *HMS Despatch* and *HMS Milford* were detached to fuel at Walvis Bay where they arrived around 0840/30. *HMS Durban* departed Walvis Bay around 1845B/31 and she rejoined the convoy around 1800B/1

On 2 November the transport / troopship ***Rimutaka*** (British, 16576 GRT, built 1923) joined the convoy coming from Capetown.

At 1330C/2, the destroyer ***HMS Express*** (Lt.Cdr. F.J. Cartwright, RN) and escort destroyer ***HMS Catterick*** (Lt. A. Tyson, RN) joined coming from Simonstown.

Around 1545C/2, *RHS Kanaris* parted company to refuel at Simonstown. She rejoined the convoy around 0100C/3.

At 2215C/2, *HMS Rockrose* and *HMS Thyme* were detached to search for survivors from ships that had been torpedoed by German submarines.

At 1950C/4, *HMS Express* was detached to search for survivors from a ship that had been torpedoed by a German submarine.

At 0530C/5, the escort destroyer ***HMS Derwent*** (Cdr. R.H. Wright, DSC, RN) joined.

The convoy arrived at Durban in the early afternoon of 5 November escorted by *HMS Durban*, *HMS Carthage*, *HMAS Norman*, *HMS Catterick*, *HMS Derwent* and *RHS Kanaris*.

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The convoy departed Durban around noon on 9 November 1942, now made up of *Capetown Castle*, *Empress of Russia*, *Highland Monarch*, *Kina II*, *Port Jackson*, *Silversandal* and *Straat Malakka*.

On departure from Durban the convoy was escorted by the light cruiser ***HMS Dauntless*** (Cdr.(Retd.) N.G. Leeper, RN), armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage*, destroyers *HMAS Norman*, ***HMS Inconstant*** (Lt.Cdr. W.S. Clouston, RN), escort destroyers ***HMS Blackmore*** (Lt. H.T. Harrel, RN), *RHS Kanaris* and the corvettes ***HMS Genista*** (Lt.Cdr. R.M. Pattinson, DSC, RNR) and ***HMS Jasmine*** (Lt.Cdr.(Retd.) C.D.B. Coventry, RNR).

At 1700C/10, *HMS Inconstant*, *HMS Genista* and *HMS Jasmine* were detached.

At 1500D/11, *HMS Dauntless*, *HMAS Norman*, *HMS Blackmore* and *RHS Kanaris* were detached.

At 1830D/11, the cruiser *HMS Hawkins* (Capt. G.A. French, RN) joined.

At 1600E/16, *HMS Mauritius* (Capt. W.D. Stephens, RN) joined and at 1230E/16, *HMS Hawkins* parted company with the convoy to proceed to Kilindini taking the *Empress of Russia* with her. They arrived at Kilindini around 1700D/18.

At 1800E/17, the convoy was split up into the 'Aden section' and the 'Bombay section'.

The 'Aden section' was made up of the *Highland Monarch*, *Kina II*, *Port Jackson* and the *Straat Malakka*. They were escorted by *HMS Carthage* and arrived at Aden around 1300C/21. They had earlier been joined by the destroyer *RHS Panther* around 0615/20.

The 'Bombay section' was made up of the other transports escorted by *HMS Mauritius*. They arrived at Bombay around 1000FG/24 except for the *Silversandal* which had been detached on November 22nd to proceed to Karachi where she also arrived on the 24th. (9)

### 5 Nov 1942

During the afternoon, *HMS Durban* (Capt. G.F. Stevens-Guille, DSO and Bar, OBE, RN), *HMS Carthage* (A/Capt. (Retd.) W.V.H. Harris, DSC, MVO, RN), *HMAS Norman* (Cdr. H.M. Burrell, RAN), *HMS Catterick* (Lt. A. Tyson, RN), *HMS Derwent* (Cdr. R.H. Wright, DSC, RN) and *RHS Kanaris* arrived at Durban with convoy WS 23. (10)

### 9 Nov 1942

The light cruiser *HMS Dauntless* (Cdr.(Retd.) N.G. Leeper, RN), armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (A/Capt. (Retd.) W.V.H. Harris, DSC, MVO, RN), destroyers *HMAS Norman* (Cdr. H.M. Burrell, RAN), *HMS Inconstant* (Lt.Cdr. W.S. Clouston, RN), escort destroyers *HMS Blackmore* (Lt. H.T. Harrel, RN), *RHS Kanaris* and the corvettes *HMS Genista* (Lt.Cdr. R.M. Pattinson, DSC, RNR) and *HMS Jasmine* (Lt.Cdr.(Retd.) C.D.B. Coventry, RNR) departed Durban to provide escort to convoy WS 23.

[For more info on this convoy see the event 'Convoy WS 23' for 5 August 1942.]

### 10 Jan 1943

## Convoy MC 3.

This convoy departed Aden on 10 January 1943 and arrived at Durban on 23 January 1943.

The convoy was made up of the transports *Arona* (British, 9031 GRT, built 1941), *Ascanius* (British, 10048 GRT, built 1910) and *Felix Rousell* (British, 17083 GRT, built 1930).

On departure from Aden the convoy was escorted by the heavy cruiser *HMS Devonshire* (Capt. D. Young-Jamieson, RN), armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (A/Capt.(Retd.) W.V.H. Harris, DSC, MVO, RN), destroyer *RHS Panther* and the minesweeper *HMS Romney* (Lt. W.E. Halbert, RNR).

At 1800C/11, *RHS Panther* parted company to return to Aden.

At 0800C/12, *HMS Romney* was detached to return to Aden.

Around 1300C/16, *HMS Birmingham* (Capt. H.B. Crane, RN) joined the convoy. *HMS Devonshire* then parted company to proceed to Kilindini.



Around 0345D/21 the destroyers *HMS Express* (Lt.Cdr. F.J. Cartwright, RN), *HMS Hotspur* (Lt. P. Bekenn, RN) and escort destroyer *HMS Blackmore* (Lt. H.T. Harrel, RN) joined the convoy escort.

Around 0345D/22, the destroyers *HMS Fortune* (Lt.Cdr. R.D.H.S. Pankhurst, RN) and *HMS Inconstant* (Lt.Cdr. W.S. Clouston, RN) joined the convoy escort.

The convoy arrived at Durban on 23 January 1943.

### 7 Mar 1943

Around 1800C/7, the armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (A/Capt.(Retd.) W.V.H. Harris, DSC, MVO, RN), seaplane tender *HMS Albatross* (A/Capt.(Retd.) S. Barry, RN) and the destroyers *HMAS Quiberon* (Cdr. G.S. Stewart, RAN) and *HMAS Quickmatch* (Lt.Cdr. R. Rhoades, DSC, RAN) departed Durban and proceeded northwards.

Around 1900C/9, *HMS Albatross* and *HMAS Quickmatch* parted company to proceed to Tulear, Madagascar where they arrived around 1200C/10. They departed again around 1515C/10 for Majunga where they arrived around 1215C/12. They departed Majunga around 1730C/12 for Kilindini where they arrived around 0830C/15.

*HMS Carthage* and *HMAS Quiberon* continued on to Kilindini where they arrived around 1000C/13. (ii)

### 26 Mar 1943

## Convoy WS 27.

### Part of the convoy that proceeded from South Africa to the Gulf of Aden.

A part of the convoy departed Capetown on 26 March 1943.

The composition of the convoy on departure from Capetown was as follows; *Bergensfjord* (Norwegian, 11015 GRT, built 1913), *Duchess of Richmond* (British, 22022 GRT, built 1928), *Leopoldville* (Belgian, 11509 GRT, built 1929), *Orbita* (British, 15495 GRT, built 1915), *Ruys* (Dutch, 14155 GRT, built 1937) and *Sibajak* (Dutch, 12226 GRT, built 1927).

On departure from Capetown the convoy was escorted by the destroyers *HMS Quail* (Lt.Cdr. R.F. Jenks, RN), *HMS Queenborough* (Cdr. E.P. Hinton, DSO and Bar, MVO, RN) and *HMS Raider* (Lt.Cdr. K.W. Michell, RN).

On 29 March 1943 the 'Durban section' of the convoy departed Durban, it was made up of the; *Capetown Castle* (British, 27002 GRT, built 1938), *Christiaan Huygens* (Dutch, 16287 GRT, built 1927), *Strathaird* (British, 22281 GRT, built 1932) and *Strathmore* (British, 23428 GRT, built 1935).

On departure from Durban this section was escorted by the heavy cruiser *HMS Frobisher* (Capt. J.F.W. Mudford, RN) and the destroyers *HMS Rotherham* (Lt. J.R.L. Moore, RN), *HMAS Napier* (Lt.Cdr. A.H. Green, DSC, RAN), *HMS Foxhound* (Cdr. C.J. Wynne-Edwards, DSC and Bar, RN) and the escort destroyer *HMS Catterick* (Lt. A. Tyson, RN). The destroyers which had escorted the 'Capetown section' then went to Durban.

The four destroyers parted company at 2100C/1 to return to Durban.

Around 1500C/3, the armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (A/Capt.(Retd.) W.V.H. Harris, DSC, MVO, RN) joined.

On the 4th the transport *Bergensfjord* was detached to Kilindini.

Around 0930D/5, the light cruiser ***HMS Durban*** (Capt. G.F. Stevens-Guille, DSO, OBE, RN) took over the escort duty from *HMS Frobisher* which then set course for Kilindini.

On 9 April 1943 the convoy was dispersed in the Gulf of Aden.

**30 May 1943**

## **Convoy CM 42.**

This convoy departed Durban on 30 May 1943.

The exact composition of this convoy is currently not known to us but the following transports seems to have made up this convoy;

*Ascanius* (British, 10048 GRT, built 1910), *Empire Woodlark* (British, 7793 GRT, built 1913) en *Llanstephan Castle* (British, 11340 GRT, built 1914).

On departure from Durban the convoy was escorted by the armed merchant cruiser ***HMS Carthage*** (A/Capt.(Retd.) W.V.H. Harris, DSC, MVO, RN), destroyer ***HMAS Nizam*** (Lt. W.F. Cook, RAN) and the corvettes ***HMS Fritillary*** (Lt.Cdr. W.H. Barker, RD, RNR) and ***HMS Rockrose*** (Lt. E.J. Binfield, DSC, RNR).

Around 2200B/30, the corvettes parted company to search for a reported enemy submarine.

Around 1900C/1, *HMAS Nizam* parted company to return independently to Durban.

The convoy arrived at Mombasa / Kilindini on 30 May 1943. (12)

**15 Jun 1943**

## **Convoy KR 5.**

This convoy departed Kilindini / Mombasa on 15 June 1943.

it was made up of the following (troop) transports; *Aorangi* (British, 17491 GRT, built 1924), *Ascanius* (British, 10048 GRT, built 1910), *Cap Tourane* (British, 8009 GRT, built 1923), *City of Paris* (British, 10902 GRT, built 1922), *Ekma* (British, 5108 GRT, built 1911), *Empire Woodlark* (British, 7793 GRT, built 1913), *Lancashire* (British, 9557 GRT, built 1917), *Llanstephan Castle* (British, 11348 GRT, built 1914) and *Salween* (British, 7063 GRT, built 1937).

The convoy was escorted by the light cruiser ***HMS Capetown*** (Capt. C.L. Robertson, RN) and the armed merchant cruiser ***HMS Carthage*** (A/Capt.(Retd.) W.V.H. Harris, DSC, MVO, RN).

On 20 June 1943, the destroyer ***HMAS Nepal*** (Cdr. F.B. Morris, RAN) joined. She had departed Port Victoria earlier that day.

On 24 June 1943, the sloop ***HMS Hindustan*** (T/A/Lt.Cdr. W.J. Wilson, DSO, RINR) and the RFA tanker *Appleleaf* (5891 GRT, built 1917) joined. *HMS Hindustan* had departed Colombo on 22 June 1943 for Addu Atoll to collect the *Appleleaf* and then join the convoy.

On 27 June 1943 the convoy arrived at Colombo.

**17 Sep 1943**

## Convoy MKF 24.

This convoy departed Port Said on 17 September 1943.

It was made up of the (troop) transports; *Clan Campbell* (British, 9545 GRT, built 1943), *Eastern Prince* (British, 10926 GRT, built 1929), *Staffordshire* (British, 10683 GRT, built 1929) and *Strathmore* (British, 23428 GRT, built 1935).

The armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* (A/Capt. U.H.R. James, RN) was also part of the convoy. She was en-route from the East Indies station to the U.K. to be decommissioned and be outfitted for her new role as troop transport.

The convoy was escorted by the escort destroyers *HMS Aldenham* (Lt.Cdr. H.A. Stuart-Menteth, RN), *HMS Rockwood* (Lt. S.R. Le H. Lombard-Hobson, RN), *RHS Kanaris* and *RHS Miaoulis*.

At 0620C/18, the *Eastern Prince* was detached to Alexandria.

The convoy arrived at Algiers on 22 September 1943.

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On 28 September 1943 the convoy departed Algiers for the U.K.

It was now made up of the following (troop) transports; *Almanzora* (British, 15551 GRT, built 1914), *Arundel Castle* (British, 19118 GRT, built 1921), *Athlone Castle* (British, 25564 GRT, built 1936), *Bergensfjord* (Norwegian, 11015 GRT, built 1913), *Cameronia* (British, 16297 GRT, built 1920), *Clan Campbell*, *Durban Castle* (British, 17388 GRT, built 1938), *Empress of Australia* (British, 21833 GRT, built 1914), *Marnix van St. Aldegonde* (Dutch, 19355 GRT, built 1930), *Monarch of Bermuda* (British, 22424 GRT, built 1931), *Otranto* (British, 20026 GRT, built 1925), *Ruys* (Dutch, 14155 GRT, built 1937), *Staffordshire*, *Strathmore*, *Tegelberg* (Dutch, 14150 GRT, built 1937) and *Volendam* (British, 15434 GRT, built 1922).

The armed merchant cruiser *HMS Carthage* was still part of the convoy.

The convoy was escorted by the sloop *HMS Pelican* (Cdr. J.S. Dalison, DSO, RN) and the frigates *HMS Evenlode* (T/A/Lt.Cdr. A.L. Turner, RNR), *HMS Jed* (Lt.Cdr. R.C. Freaker, DSO and Bar, RD, RNR), *HMS Rother* (Lt.Cdr. W.R. Hickey, RNR), *HMS Spey* (Lt.Cdr. B.A. Rogers, RD, RNR) and *HMS Wear* (Cdr. E. Wheeler, RD, RNR).

At 0700A/30, the *Ruys* and *Volendam* were detached.

At 0900A/30, the *Empress of Australia* and *Monarch of Bermuda* were detached.

At 0930A/30, the (troop) transports *Empire Might* (British, 9209 GRT, built 1942), *Highland Princess* (British, 14133 GRT, built 1930) and *Rochester Castle* (British, 7795 GRT, built 1937) joined coming from Gibraltar.

Also the following warships joined at the same time; escort carriers *HMS Attacker* (Capt. W.W.P. Shirley-Rollison, RN), *HMS Hunter* (Capt. H.H. McWilliam, RN), *HMS Stalker* (Capt. H.S. Murray-Smith, RN), seaplane carrier *HMS Albatross* (A/Capt.(Retd.) S. Barry, RN) and the destroyers *HMS Wishart* (Lt. J.A. Holdsworth, RN) and *HMS Witherington* (Lt.Cdr. R.B.S. Tennant, RN).

At 1400A/30, the *Volendam* rejoined.

At 1500A/30, the AA cruiser **HMS Charybdis** (Capt. G.A.W. Voelcker, RN) joined coming from Gibraltar.

At 1600A/30, the *Ruys* rejoined.

At 0420A/1, the *Bergensfjord*, *Highland Princess* and *Volendam* parted company to proceed to Freetown. They took *HMS Wishart* and *HMS Witherington* with them as escorts. Also the destroyer **HMS Malcolm** (Lt. I.M. Clegg, RN) joined them which had come from Casablanca.

At 1300A/1, the *Athone Castle* was detached to proceed independently to New York.

At 0640Z/4, the light cruiser **HMS Spartan** (Capt. P.V. McLaughlin, RN) joined the convoy escort.

At 0635Z/5, *HMS Spartan* parted company with the convoy.

At 0930Z/5, *HMS Charybdis* and *HMS Albatross* parted company to proceed to Plymouth where they arrived on 6 October.

On 7 October the convoy arrived in U.K waters. The bulk of the convoy proceeded either to Greenock or to Liverpool.

### Sources

1. ADM 53/111745 + ADM 53/112101
2. ADM 53/111423 + ADM 53/112051 + ADM 53/112436 + ADM 199/381 + Report of proceedings of HMAS Hobart for August and September 1941
3. ADM 199/383
4. ADM 199/1136
5. ADM 199/372 + ADM 199/1136
6. ADM 199/1138
7. ADM 53/114132
8. ADM 53/113845 + ADM 53/113858 + ADM 53/113963 + ADM 53/114104 + ADM 199/395 + ADM 199/2233
9. ADM 199/1211
10. ADM 199/2349
11. ADM 199/643 + Report of proceedings of HMAS Quiberon for March 1943
12. ADM 53/117168 + ADM 199/2349 + Report of proceedings of HMAS Nizam for May 1943 + Report of proceedings of HMAS Nizam for June 1943

ADM numbers indicate documents at the British National Archives at Kew, London.

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