



Ministry
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FOI2020/02224

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17 February 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

Release of Information

Thank you for your correspondence of 14 February 2020 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 FIJI/'Colony' class cruisers of the Second World War era:

HMS FIJI
HMS KENYA
HMS NIGERIA
HMS MAURITIUS
HMS TRINIDAD
HMS GAMBIA
HMS JAMAICA
HMS BERMUDA

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 been completed within the Ministry of Defence and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. The Summary of Service histories for HMS FIJI, HMS KENYA, HMS NIGERIA, HMS MAURITIUS, HMS TRINIDAD, HMS GAMBIA, HMS JAMAICA and HMS BERMUDA are enclosed with this letter.

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 FIJI

Summary of Service 1940-1941

HMS FIJI was the first of nine cruisers of the "Fiji" class authorised in the 1937 and 1938 programmes. She was built by John Brown and Co, Clydebank and was laid down on 30 March 1938, launched on 31 May 1939, completed on 17 May 1940. the main armament included twelve 6in guns.

The FIJI was ordered from the Clyde to work up at Bermuda and left on 4 June, arriving on the 10th. She was at once needed for patrol in the Western Atlantic, as France had just collapsed, and a patrol was formed off Martinique to intercept any of her warships there seeking to return home, where they might have fallen into German hands. This patrol was withdrawn on 12 July, and the FIJI was ordered to Scapa to complete working up, and to join the 18th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet.

She first went to the Clyde, however, arriving at Greenock on 23 July for repairs to her machinery, and left for Scapa on 10 August. On the 20th she arrived at Rosyth, and was at first ordered to relieve the BIRMINGHAM at Sheerness as part of the anti-invasion plans. On 23 August, however, she was allocated for the expedition to Dakar (Operation "Menace").

The FIJI left Scapa on 31 August with the transports SOBIESKI, KENYA and ETTRICK, escorted by four destroyers. On the evening of the next day, 1 September, the FIJI was torpedoed by a U-boat in 58° 10' N, 12° 55' W, about 40 miles NNE of Rockall, and damaged. She was obliged to return to the Clyde, and HMAS AUSTRALIA took her place in the Dakar expedition. The FIJI was reduced to care and maintenance for repairs at Greenock, and was out of service for six months.

When ready for sea in March 1941, she went to Scapa, joining the 10th Cruiser Squadron, and left there on 27 March for the Iceland-Faeroes Patrol. Next day, however, she was ordered with other ships to take over the Bay of Biscay Patrol from Force H keeping a watch for the SCHAANHORST and GNEISENAU. On 2 April, she was ordered to Gibraltar to join Force H temporarily, being detached from time to time for escort duties.

In mid-April, she went to Freetown, and left there on the 18th to overtake escort Convoy SL72 until the end of the month. On 5 May, the FIJI left Gibraltar with Force H escorting the "Tiger" convoy to Malta and Alexandria. The Mediterranean Fleet was met south of Malta on the 9th and the FIJI, with the battleship QUEEN ELIZABETH and cruiser NAIAD, joined that Fleet as reinforcements, the whole arriving at Alexandria on 12 May. The FIJI joined the 15th Cruiser Squadron. On the night of 15-16 May, she and the GLOUCESTER landed troops in Crete.

On 20 May, the German attack on Crete began. The FIJI had already joined Force B (two cruisers, two destroyers), which was ordered to sweep the west coast of Greece from Cape Matapan to Sapienza to intercept any seaborne enemy forces making for Crete. Throughout 21 May the naval forces were subjected to heavy air attacks, at least 26 being recorded, and suffered damage and loss.

On the 22nd, the attacks were even more intensive, at least 67 being recorded. Force B suffered in common with the other forces. The GLOUCESTER was bombed and sunk about 1600, and the FIJI about 1900. The FIJI, after having survived some 20 bombing attacks in four hours, was hit by a bomb from a single Me 109 aircraft which flew out of the

clouds in a shallow dive and scored a hit very close to the port side amidships. The ship took up a heavy list, but was able to steam at reduced speed until half an hour later, when another single machine dropped three bombs which proved fatal. Destroyers which returned after dark rescued over 500 of her crew, but 16 officers and 228 ratings were lost.

Commanding Officer of the FIJI were:

Captain W G Benn appointed 28 December 1939

Captain P B R W William-Powlett appointed 16 December 1940

The battle Honour, "Crete 1941" was awarded to the FIJI.

retyped 2009.

HMS KENYA

Summary of Service

HMS KENYA was a 6-inch gun cruiser of the "Fiji" class, authorised in the 1937 programme. She was built and engined by Alexander Stephen and Sons, Linthouse, Glasgow, and was laid down on 18 June 1938; launched on 18 August 1939, by the Duchess of Gloucester; and completed on 27 September 1940.

She joined the 10th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet, arriving at Scapa on 29 September to work up, but left on 7 October, before this was complete, to act as ocean escort to the troop convoy WS3 to Freetown, and rejoined the Fleet at Scapa on 17 November. She hoisted the flag of the Rear-Admiral, 10th CS, on 10 December in place of the NIGERIA. In the same month she was lent to the Western Approaches, and left Devonport on 25 December for the Atlantic trade routes. The German cruiser ADMIRAL HIPPER had that morning attempted to attack the troop convoy WS5A and damaged one ship, the EMPIRE TROUPER. The KENYA proceeded to join the latter and escort her, first to Ponta Delgada, Azores, and then to Gibraltar, arriving on 4 January 1941, and leaving again next day.

The KENYA remained detached from the Home Fleet on Atlantic convoy duties until 6 April, when she left the Clyde to rejoin the Commander-in-Chief in the Biscay area, the SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU being then at large. She arrived at Scapa from the Biscay patrol on 14 April, and left again on the 18th after transferring the flag of CS10, and proceeded to watch the Iceland-Faeroes passage. Later in the month she covered a minelaying operation in the Denmark Strait, returning to Scapa on the 29th. In the first week of May she provided close escort for another minelaying operation between the Faeroes and Iceland.

In the operations which resulted in the destruction of the German battleship BISMARCK on 27 May 1941, the KENYA took part in the search for the enemy, and acted as screen on the 26th for the carrier VICTORIOUS which had been ordered to attack if the BISMARCK made for the Iceland-Faeroes Channel. On 3 June, after fuelling at Iceland, the KENYA, in the course of a special search for supply ships, intercepted the tanker BELCHEN fuelling a U-boat and sank her by gunfire.

Later in June the KENYA again covered minelaying operations in the Iceland-Faeroes field. On the 25th she collided with the destroyer BRIGHTON during an alteration of course in low visibility but was able to proceed to Scapa, and at the end of the month to Rosyth for repairs and refit. On 22 July she re-hoisted the flag of the Rear-Admiral, CS10, from the NIGERIA.

On 3 September she left Scapa to cover a minelaying operation off Stadlandet, Norway. On the 11th she again left for Greenock and to take part in the Malta convoy Operation 'Halberd'. She arrived and left Malta on the 28th, having covered the safe arrival of eight of the nine merchantmen in the convoy. Returning from this operation, the KENYA on 3 October intercepted and sank the German supply ship (ex-Dutch) KOTA PINANG in 43° 36' N; 24° 30' W. She arrived in the Clyde on 6 October, and at Scapa on the 11th.

The KENYA's next service was to escort a Russian convoy PQ3, which left Hvalfiord, Iceland, on 9 November and arrived intact on the 28th at Archangel except for one ship which returned with ice damage. Meantime on the 25th the KENYA with two British and two Russian destroyers bombarded the fort and batteries at Vardo. She returned to Rosyth on 6 December for docking, and arrived at Scapa on the 15th.

On 24 December the KENYA was among the ships which left Scapa for the raid on Vaagso, Operation 'Archery', which took place on 27th. Arriving off the entrance to Vaagsfiord, the KENYA led in, followed by the two assault ships and a destroyer. The last three altered course for the landing position while the KENYA moved over to a position from which to bombard Maaloy Island and to illuminate it for bombing by RAF Hampden aircraft. The raid was a success, about 16,000 tons of shipping being sunk, fish factories, oil tanks, army living quarters and ammunition stores being destroyed; and about 150 Germans being killed and 98 taken prisoner. The KENYA received three shell hits from an enemy battery at Rugsundo, but her fighting efficiency was not impaired. The force returned to Scapa on 28 December.

During January 1942 the KENYA took part in Home Fleet patrols in the Iceland area, and in February covered a further minelaying operation. In [March?], April and May she was among the ships which covered the passage of the North Russian convoys PQ[12?] and 15? and PQ[9?] and [11?].

On 4 June, the KENYA, flying the flag of the Vice-Admiral Second-in-Command, Home Fleet, was among the ships which left Scapa to take part in another Malta convoy operation, 'Harpoon', returning on the 24th, when the flag of the Vice-Admiral was transferred to the ANSON. After bitter fighting, only two of the six merchantmen in this convoy reached Malta.

Patrols in the Iceland area were resumed by the KENYA in July, and on 24 July she re-hoisted the flag of the Rear-Admiral CS10. Her next big operation was another Malta convoy, 'Pedestal', the last to be fought through before the fortress was relieved in November. The convoy and escort left the Clyde on 2 August, and passed through the Gibraltar Strait on the 10th. Vice-Admiral E N Syfret in the NELSON was in command, and Rear-Admiral H M Burrough, CS10, in the KENYA, was in command of the cruisers and destroyers which saw the convoy through the Sicilian Narrows and then returned. Of the 14 merchant ships in the convoy, five reached Malta. On 12 August, while escorting them, the KENYA was hit by a torpedo from a U-boat, and although her fighting efficiency was not seriously impaired her speed was reduced. Two days later she was struck by an aircraft bomb which glanced off and exploded under water, causing further minor damage. The KENYA arrived at Scapa on 25 August and at Newcastle-on-Tyne on the 27th, where she was under repair and refit until the end of the year, when it was decided that she should join the Eastern Fleet when ready for service in 1943.

The KENYA left Plymouth on 12 March 1943 for patrol in the Biscay area and to protect convoys on the Gibraltar route. She arrived at Durban and sailed with the troop convoy WS28 on 18 April, and at Kilindini on 2 May, returning to Durban with Convoy JM1 from Bombay on the 18th.. On the 26th she left again with Convoy WS29. The next few months were chiefly spent on patrol and the escort of convoys in the Indian Ocean, as the Eastern Fleet in 1943 had not the strength to undertake offensive operations while such were proceeding in the Mediterranean.

In 1944, however, after reinforcement, the Eastern Fleet passed to the offensive. The KENYA took part in the seaborne air strike on Sourabaya on 17 May; the similar strike on Port Blair on 21 June; and the bombardment of Sabang on 25 July. The last-named was notable as being the first occasion on which, since it turned to the offensive, the Fleet brought the guns of its ships, as well as the bombs of its aircraft, into action against Japanese shore defences.

On 18 September, the KENYA took part in another seaborne air strike on Sigli, Sumatra. During the rest of the year she provided escort and cover to troop transports between Aden and Australia, and support for the operations of the Army in Burma.

On 26 January, 1945, the KENYA took part in Operation 'Sankey', the landing of Royal Marines on Cheduba Island, about 100 miles south-east of Akyab. The neighbouring island of Sagu was similarly occupied on 30 January. In February she also took part in Operation 'Stacey', a series of sweep in enemy waters.

On 28 March, the KENYA left Colombo for the United Kingdom via the Seychelles, Durban, Cape Town and Freetown, arriving at Sheerness on 13 May. She was taken in hand for refit at Chatham until the summer of 1946, and left in October to work up in the Mediterranean. In mid-December she arrived at Bermuda to join the America and West Indies Station. She was there for a year, returning to Chatham at the end of 1947 to go into reserve.

In October, 1949, the KENYA was ordered to replace the LONDON in the Far East Fleet, and did so in January, 1950, after working up in the Mediterranean. On passage to Colombo, where she arrived on 8 January, she had as passenger Mr Ernest Bevin, then Foreign Secretary.

From the start of the War in Korea on 25 June, 1950, the KENYA was actively engaged in that conflict, leaving Singapore on the 27th and arriving in Japan for the first time on 8 July. She proceeded on her first operational patrol off the West Coast of Korea on 16 July. In December, 1951, her crew returned home in HMS MAURITIUS, but the KENYA remained in Eastern waters as a unit of the 4th Cruiser Squadron, East Indies Station.

On 20 October, 1952, she was ordered to Mombasa owing to the emergency in KENYA, and left there on 10 November, on relief by the LOCH QUOICH, for Aden and the Mediterranean Station.

The KENYA returned to Portsmouth on 24 February, 1953, and was welcomed by the Duchess of Gloucester, who had launched her in 1939. The cruiser underwent an extensive refit at Rosyth in 1954-55. In November, 1955, she rejoined the America and West Indies Station.

In May, 1956, having been transferred to the South Atlantic Station, she visited Tristan da Cunha, the first cruiser to do so since 1937. The KENYA should have joined the Mediterranean Fleet in July, 1956, but her arrival there was delayed by the Suez Canal crisis that month, and she remained at Aden. Between 25 and 29 August she transported the 1st Battalion of the Gloucester Regiment to the Persian gulf, returning to Aden on 3 September. The second lift of the Regiment began on 6 September and arrived at Sitra on the 10th.

The KENYA returned to Portsmouth on 5 November, 1956, and hoisted the flag of the Flag Officer Flotillas, Home Fleet, in succession to the GLASGOW. She was transferred to the Reserve Fleet in August, 1958, and approval to scrap her was given in February, 1959.

Battle Honours awarded to the KENYA were:

Atlantic	1941
"Bismarck"	1941
Norway	1941
Malta Convoys	1941-42
Arctic	1941-42

Sabang	1944
Burma	1944-45
Korea	1950-51

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HMS NIGERIA

Summary of Service 1940-1957

HMS NIGERIA was ordered in 1937 as one of a class of eleven light cruisers named for British colonies. With a displacement of 8,000 tons, they were armed with twelve 6in guns and eight 4in anti-aircraft guns, and were capable of over 32 knots. The class saw extensive service throughout the world, both during the Second World War and afterwards and it was not until the 1980s that the last ships, by now serving with the navies of India and Peru, were retired from service and scrapped. The class as a whole was therefore a very successful design and the NIGERIA's career was most distinguished, as well as being prolonged.

The NIGERIA was built at Vickers-Armstrong's yard on the River Tyne. Launched on 18 July 1939, six weeks before the outbreak of war, she was completed on 23 September 1940 and joined the 10th Cruiser Squadron at the Home Fleet's base at Scapa Flow a week later. Initially, she was employed on patrol duties off Iceland, guarding against a break-out by German surface ships and ready to intercept merchant ships attempting to return to Germany from the Far East, but in early 1941 she escorted troop convoys to and from the United Kingdom.

Before returning to the "Northern Patrol", the NIGERIA was ordered to take part in a Commando raid on the Lofoten Islands, off northern Norway, her role being to provide close cover for the assault force. The German surface forces made no attempt to interfere and the raid, on 4 March 1941, was completely successful.

The next three months passed without contact with the enemy, but on 25 June the NIGERIA was detached from her patrol to intercept a German weather-reporting trawler in the Arctic Ocean. The crew of the LAUENBURG was "persuaded" to abandon ship by firing close to their vessel and a boarding party then captured the German cipher material and scuttled the trawler. The German Army had invaded the Soviet Union only three days before this incident and operations in support of the Russian war effort resulted in a major change of task for the British Home Fleet – the NIGERIA was one of the first ships to see service and action in the far north.

At first, it was intended that the NIGERIA and a smaller cruiser, HMS AURORA, together with four destroyers, should be based in North Russia, but Rear Admiral Philip Vian, who was to have commanded the force, found that the Russian base on the Kola Inlet was inadequate and an alternative was sought. In late July 1941, Admiral Vian, with his flag in the NIGERIA, visited Spitzbergen to investigate the suitability of that remote spot as an advanced base. Vian advised against the location but returned in the NIGERIA, on 25 August, to evacuate the Norwegian and Soviet inhabitants.

On 7 September 1941, when returning from Archangel (where the Russians had been disembarked), the NIGERIA and AURORA intercepted a German troop convoy near the North Cape and in a confused action at short range in very bad weather, they sank the minelaying-cruiser BREMSE. The NIGERIA sustained damage to her bows but returned safely to Scapa Flow, despite a heavy gale, and then went back to the Tyne for repairs.

Not until 21 December was she ready for operations once more and on 8 January 1942 she sailed with a convoy for the Kola Inlet, where she was to be based to reinforce the defences until the Soviet Navy could build up its strength to provide protection for shipping arriving with war material. From this base, she covered the arrivals of two convoys from the United Kingdom but did not encounter the enemy before she left for Scapa Flow on 1 March,

with a returning convoy. Thereafter, the NIGERIA operated with the battleships of the Home Fleet, which acted as a distant protection for the convoys and which only approached the merchant ships when it appeared that the German Fleet might sail from its Norwegian bases. The NIGERIA flying the flag of the Rear Admiral, 10th Cruiser Squadron (Rear Admiral H M Burrough) took part in six such operations up to July 1942, the last being the ill-fated PQ17 convoy, but saw no action.

On return from PQ17, she was sent to the Clyde to join the escort of a convoy bound for Malta. Leaving on 2 August 1942, she passed through the Straits of Gibraltar on 10th and on the 12th took part in one of the hardest days' fighting of the war, beating off repeated German and Italian air attacks so successfully that no merchant ship was lost from the convoy up to the evening of that day, when the battleships and aircraft carriers turned back, 200 miles from Malta. An hour later, the NIGERIA and two other ships were torpedoed by the Italian submarine AXUM: the NIGERIA was hit almost amidships, low down on the port side but despite listing to 17° and flooding in two engine rooms she managed to maintain a speed of 18 knots. Admiral Burrough transferred to another ship and the cruiser made her way back to Gibraltar. Forty feet of the ship's length was wrecked from the keel to the upper deck, and besides the extensive damage to main machinery her steering was jammed, so that she spent two months under repair at Gibraltar to make her seaworthy for passage to a major repair yard.

Between 23 October 1942 and 26 June 1943, the NIGERIA was in the hands of the US Navy Yard at Charleston, South Carolina. Although she sailed for the United Kingdom early in July and arrived at Chatham on 27th of that month, the need to modernise her by fitting her with the new weapons and equipment that had been introduced since she had been completed, as well as to make her fit for tropical operations, resulted in her not rejoining the Fleet until the following December.

The NIGERIA worked up at Scapa Flow with the Home Fleet and took part in one operation – a successful carrier aircraft strike on shipping off Norway on 11 February 1944 – but she had already been allocated to the Eastern Fleet. She left Scapa for the last time on 24 February and, after passing through the Mediterranean, reached Ceylon exactly one month later, to be based at Trincomalee – "Scapa Flow in Technicolor", as it was known to the sailors of the Fleet.

The Eastern Fleet's operations took the form of air strikes from the carriers, delivered at approximately monthly intervals. HMS NIGERIA, the flagship of the 4th Cruiser Squadron, took part in the April 1944 attack on Sabang (Sumatra), missed the May attack on Surabaya (Java) but was present for the strike on the Andaman Islands in June. On 25 July, the "gun ships" had their first opportunity of action and the NIGERIA joined the battleships and other cruisers in bombarding the port and airfields of Sabang, firing to great effect.

This was the NIGERIA's last offensive operation for some months. Japanese surface raiders had made an appearance in the Indian Ocean for the first time in many months and the cruiser was sent to Fremantle, Western Australia, to protect shipping against any campaign which the enemy might wage. In the event, the Japanese sortie was an isolated event, but the NIGERIA remained in Australian waters until early October 1944, when she was recalled to Trincomalee.

In November, the Eastern Fleet was reorganised, the fast carriers and most of the modern ships being formed into the British Pacific Fleet, while the older battleships, the escort carriers and a mixture of the older cruisers and some of the newer vessels, including the NIGERIA (which would soon require a refit), remained as the East Indies Fleet. The NIGERIA now became flagship of the 5th Cruiser Squadron.

On 3 January 1945, HMS NIGERIA was in the cruiser force which covered the unopposed reoccupation of Akyab Island and on 26th she fired 233 rounds of 6in at suspected beach defences on Cheduba Island to cover a Royal Marines assault. On return to Trincomalee, she was ordered to proceed to Simonstown to refit and she thus missed the operations off the coast of Burma which culminated in the capture of Rangoon, the city being reoccupied as the cruiser was returning to Ceylon.

The NIGERIA undertook just one more operation before the Japanese surrender, this being another carrier strike sortie, in which she served as an escort. She was part of the force which relieved Singapore in September 1945 and she remained in the area for another month, undertaking relief work and evacuating Allied prisoners of war from Malaya and Sumatra. The NIGERIA left Trincomalee (not for the last time) on 22 October and reached Chatham 28 days later to pay off and begin a 6-month refit.

On 15 May 1946, the cruiser sailed once more, first to the Mediterranean, where she spent a month working up and then direct to Simonstown, where she was to serve as the flagship of the South Atlantic Station for four years. The station was a broad one, stretching from north of the Equator to the Antarctic and the NIGERIA spent long periods away from her base, visiting the main ports of Africa and also, occasionally, South America. Approximately, her first cruise took her to the country for which she was named and she arrived at Lagos on 31 October 1946 for a most successful visit, which lasted until 7 November.

She was not able to repeat the visit every year, for there were often changes to the programme due to unexpected events. One such was the departure of the entire Argentine Fleet for "exercises" in the Falklands area in early 1948. The NIGERIA had recently completed a short refit at Simonstown and was ordered to proceed to the Falklands to reinforce the two sloops which were already there (one of these, the NEREIDE, had visited Lagos in the previous November). Her arrival, in February 1948, together with a firm diplomatic caution, persuaded the Argentine government to abandon the exercise and recall its Fleet.

The NIGERIA paid her last visit to Lagos between 10 and 15 November 1949. On 2 September 1950, she left Simonstown at the end of a long and successful career on the South Atlantic Station and arrived at Devonport, where she was to be placed in reserve, on 25th of the same month. Although three of her sister-ships (HMS CEYLON, KENYA and JAMAICA) saw action during the Korean War, the NIGERIA was not re-commissioned, although between 1952 and 1954 she served as an accommodation ship at Rosyth. There was little likelihood that she would be required again as a "frontline" ship, for in 1954 the Royal Navy possessed 15 other 6in cruisers of the NIGERIA's vintage and three ships of a modern design were under construction.

Postscript

On 21 July 1959, the Fleet Minesweeper HMS HARE was handed over at Portsmouth and commissioned as the NIGERIA, the flagship of the new Nigerian Navy.

To commemorate the occasion and as a gesture of friendship from the Royal Navy, the silver bell which had been presented in 1940 to the cruiser by the Government and people of the Colony of Nigeria "as an ornament of HMS NIGERIA as long as she remains in the Royal Navy" was given to the "new" NIGERIA for return to the independent Government and people of the Federation of Nigeria.

HMS MAURITIUS

Summary of Service

HMS MAURITIUS was a 6-inch cruiser of the "Fiji" type and was authorised in the Navy Estimates of 1937-38. She was built by Swan Hunter and Wigham Richardson on the Tyne and engined by the Wallsend Slipway and Engineering Company. Laid down on 31 March, 1938, she was launched on 19 July, 1939, and completed on 1 January, 1941. Her standard displacement was 8,000 tons, and she had an extreme length of 555½ feet, extreme breadth of 62 feet, and mean draught of 16½ feet. She was originally armed with twelve 6-inch guns in four triple turrets. Geared turbines of 65,000 horsepower driving four shafts gave her a designed speed of 31½ knots. She had one Walrus aircraft.

The MAURITIUS joined the 10th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet, on 7 January, 1941, at Scapa, but from mid-February was detached to escort the troop convoy WS6B on the first stage of its voyage to the Middle East, arriving at Freetown on 5 March. A week later she left escorting the Sierra Leone convoy SL68 en route to the United Kingdom. Later in the month after fuelling at Bathurst she rendered similar service to Convoy SL69. In April she escorted Convoy SL71, and in May another Middle East troop convoy, WS8A, to the Cape. She was then ordered to relieve the SHROPSHIRE on the East Indies Station, and did so on 20 June, arriving at Mombasa on the 27th, after escorting Convoy CM11 to Aden.

On 6 November she arrived at Singapore with Convoy WS11X. A month later, after the entry of Japan into the War, the MAURITIUS was allocated to the Eastern Fleet, but returned to the United Kingdom for refit. She arrived at Plymouth on 11 February, 1942, and was under refit at Devonport until April. After working up at Scapa, she arrived in the Clyde on 9 May, and left next day escorting a troop convoy, WS19. She left Simonstown on 10 June escorting this convoy, and was employed on escort and patrol duties in the Eastern Fleet until 1943.

In February, 1943, the MAURITIUS was among the ships which provided cover in the Indian Ocean to the return of the 9th Australian Division from Suez to Australia in five large transports. When a 6-inch cruiser was required from the Eastern Fleet to take part in the landing in Sicily, the MAURITIUS was selected, and eventually left Kilindini on 29 May for Aden, Suez and Port Said, joining the 15th Cruiser Squadron on her arrival in the Mediterranean.

In the Sicily landing on 10 July, Operation 'Husky', the MAURITIUS took part in various bombardments as a unit of the Support Force under Rear-Admiral C H J Harcourt. After the NEWFOUNDLAND was torpedoed by a U-boat on 23 July, Rear-Admiral Harcourt transferred his flag to the MAURITIUS. She was thus employed in later operations in Italy, including the landing near Reggio (Operation 'Baytown') on 3 September, and the landing at Salerno (Operation 'Avalanche') on 9 September. The supporting squadron remained in the northern assault area until 5 October, when the MAURITIUS and other ships left for Naples.

On 24 December, the MAURITIUS was detailed for Operation 'Stonewall', the interception of enemy blockade runners in the Bay of Biscay, after which she was detached to Plymouth, arriving there on 2 January, 1944. She left a week later to return to the Mediterranean.

On 24 January, 1944, the MAURITIUS joined in the bombardments connected with Operation 'Shingle', the landing at Anzio two days earlier. Gun support was continued at intervals until March.

On 2 April, the MAURITIUS left Gibraltar and the Mediterranean Station for England to prepare to take part in the Normandy landing, and was repaired at Chatham until May. She was allocated to the 1st Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet. In the landing, Operation 'Neptune', she flew the flag of Rear-Admiral W R Patterson Commanding the Second Cruiser Squadron, allocated to Bombardment Force D in the Eastern Task Force under Rear-Admiral Sir Philip Vian.

The MAURITIUS was the only big ship to take part in the four invasions of Sicily, Salerno, Anzio and Normandy, and under the command of Captain W W Davis she bombarded the enemy on over 250 occasions.

The flag of Rear-Admiral Patterson was struck on 21 June, but the MAURITIUS continued in the Bombarding Squadron during July. In August she was transferred to operations in the Bay of Biscay. On the 15th, with two destroyers, she severely handled an enemy convoy between Sables d'Olonne and La Pallice consisting of a destroyer, two M-class minesweepers, four merchant vessels and a small tanker. A further success was obtained on 23 August, in Audierne Bay, when two M-class minesweepers, three flak ships, one medium and two small merchant ships were destroyed.

The MAURITIUS was under repair at Plymouth during September, and on 17 October arrived at Scapa to rejoin the Home Fleet. A week later she left with a force from that Fleet which attacked enemy shipping in the Norwegian Leads, Operation 'Athletic', between the 27th and 28th, by air strikes from the carrier IMPLACABLE, in which the C-in-C, Home Fleet, flew his flag.

On 20 December, the MAURITIUS was with another force of the Home Fleet which left Scapa under the Vice-Admiral, 10th Cruiser Squadron, to attack enemy shipping off Norway near Aalesund. No shipping was sighted, however, and the force returned on the 23rd.

On 27 January, 1945, the cruisers DIADEM, flagship of the Vice-Admiral, 10th Cruiser Squadron, and MAURITIUS left Scapa to intercept three German destroyers of the "Narvik" class reported off Norway. Interception took place early next morning about 50 miles north-west of Bergen, and in an inconclusive action at high speed, during which the enemy made continuous smoke, the MAURITIUS had one man wounded, from one shell-hit by a destroyer.

On 23 February, the MAURITIUS left Scapa for Birkenhead, where she was under refit until March, 1946. She left a month later to relieve the SIRIUS in the Mediterranean, arriving at Malta on 26 April. In June, the flag of the FO, 15th Cruiser Squadron, was transferred to her from the ORION. This squadron was shortly afterwards renumbered the 1st Cruiser Squadron.

On 19 April, 1948, the flag of the Rear-Admiral was transferred to the PHOEBE and the MAURITIUS arrived at Portsmouth on the 30th. She was under refit for a year, and on 6 May, 1949, left Devonport for the East Indies Station to replace the NORFOLK.

Between 9 and 19 September, 1950, the MAURITIUS visited the Island of Mauritius after which she was named.

For much of 1951 the MAURITIUS was employed in the Persian Gulf, where the oilfields at Abadan were nationalised in May. On 3 October she evacuated the staff of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company from Abadan. She returned to Chatham on 18 December, 1951, and was refitted at the Palmers' yard on the tune during 1952-53.

She was afterwards in the Reserve Fleet, Portsmouth, and on 11 September, 1959, was downgraded to Extended Reserve.

Sold to Thomas Ward Ltd, for scrap in March 1965.

Battle Honours awarded to the MAURITIUS were:

Atlantic	1941
Sicily	1943
Salerno	1943
Mediterranean	1943-44
Anzio	1944
Normandy	1944
Biscay	1944
Norway	1945

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HMS MAURITIUS AT NORMANDY

On 2 April 1944 the MAURITIUS left Gibraltar and the Mediterranean Station for England to prepare to take part in the Normandy landings. She arrived at Sheerness on 7 April where she remained until 13 May undergoing repairs. The MAURITIUS was allocated to Bombarding Force 'D', which was assembling on the Clyde. When she arrived there on 14 May Rear Admiral Patterson, Rear Admiral Commanding 2nd Cruiser Squadron, transferred his flag to her.

The most formidable enemy batteries likely to interfere with the approach of the naval forces during Operation 'Neptune' lay on the eastern flank of the assault on either side of the Seine estuary. For this reason Bombarding Force 'D', the largest of the three Bombarding Forces, was attached to Force 'S', Eastern Task Force, which carried the 3rd British Infantry Division. The role of the cruisers in Force 'D' was to neutralise the batteries on the 3rd Division's front, up to the time that our troops were expected to be attacking them.

The first sailing of warships for the Assault Area took place on the evening of 2 June with the departure of Bombarding Force 'D' from the Clyde. The Bombarding Force rendezvoused with the main body of Force 'S' off Portsmouth. Force 'S' was then routed down Channels 9 ('Slow' Channel) and 10 ('Fast' Channel), the eastern most channels swept through the intervening German Mine Barrier.

In spite of difficult weather for landing craft and minesweepers the approach and assault of the ETF proceeded entirely according to plan. Bombarding Forces took up their positions between 0500 and 0515 and commenced opening fire on their battery targets with aircraft spotting shortly afterwards. As bombarding Force 'D' arrived in position on the eastern flank at 0515 an attack was made by four enemy E-boats and some armed trawlers which had come out of Le Havre. The enemy were obscured by the pre-arranged smoke screen laid by our aircraft, from behind which they fired torpedoes. Fire from the WARSPITE, RAMILLIES, MAURITIUS and ARETHUSA prevented the attack from being pressed home, and heavy ships managed to comb torpedo tracks.

Facilities to observe Operation 'Neptune' in progress were afforded to the Russians and General Burrows, Head of the British Military Mission to the USSR, embarked in the MAURITIUS with Admiral Kharlamov; two other Russians embarking in the WARSPITE. They were there for nine days, including two days off the beaches during which time the MAURITIUS and the WARSPITE took part in bombarding sea and shore targets.

The bombarding ships were maintained in the Assault Area no longer than necessary to meet the Army's fire support needs. The Naval Commander, ETF allocated them as required to the Assault Force Commanders and ANCF decided the load distribution between the Eastern and Western Task Forces. The number of ships present on any given day varied, and after the first few days became progressively fewer. A system of reliefs was organised as ships returned to the UK for ammunition.

The MAURITIUS had returned to Portsmouth, to leave again on 16 June, arriving back at the Assault Area on the 21st. The flag of Rear Admiral Patterson was also struck on 21 June but the MAURITIUS continued in the Bombarding Force during July; on 18 and 19 July she was bombarding enemy batteries in the Caen area. In August she was transferred to operations in the Bay of Biscay.

HMS TRINIDAD

Summary of Service

HMS TRINIDAD was a cruiser authorised in the naval programme year, 1937; laid down on 21 April 1938; launched on 21 March 1940 and completed on 14 October 1941. She was built at Devonport and her machinery was supplied by Hawthorn Leslie. She joined the 10th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet at Scapa.

In January 1942, she was one of the escorts for the Russian Convoy PQ 8. The Convoy was attacked by U-boats. HMS MATABELE one of the two escorting destroyers was torpedoed and sunk, ss HARMATRIS was also torpedoed but was able to reach harbour.

In March the TRINIDAD was providing close cover for another Arctic Convoy PQ 13 with the help of two destroyers from Iceland which had reinforced the close escort. The Convoy met with a heavy concentration of U-boats and was also attacked by aircraft and destroyers but of the 19 ships in convoy 14 arrived safely. The convoy was located by the enemy on 28 March, each of Bear Island and repeatedly attacked by dive bombers. On the morning of the 29th the TRINIDAD and ECLIPSE came in contact with three enemy destroyers north of Murmansk. In brief engagements in very low visibility and snow, one German destroyer, Z 26 was sunk and the others damaged. The TRINIDAD was hit by one of her own torpedoes which ran full circle owing to a defect in the gyro mechanism probably caused by the extreme cold but she reached Kola Inlet under her own steam accompanied by tugs and the two destroyers ECLIPSE and FURY. Both the TRINIDAD and the ECLIPSE were damaged during this encounter.

The TRINIDAD, temporarily repaired at Murmansk and being able to steam at 18 knots, was ready by 9 May to leave for permanent repair in the United States but her departure was delayed until the 13th to allow time for air reconnaissance. She left Kola Inlet late in the evening wearing the Flag of CS 18 escorted by four destroyers. On 14 May, 100 miles out, the TRINIDAD was sighted by enemy aircraft and attacked the same evening by bombers and torpedo aircraft simultaneously. Some twenty-five bombers and one torpedo attack failed to damage her, but at 10.45 pm a lone Ju 88 dived out of low clouds and scored a hit with a bomb close to the site of the torpedo damage. This started a serious fire, which spread rapidly; her condition was made more precarious by a near miss blowing a temporary patch off her side and causing flooding. She was still able to steam, but by midnight the fire was out of control and it was decided that, situated as she was, far from any friendly port, in the presence of U-boats, and in certain danger of renewed attack by aircraft, salvage was impossible. She was sunk by our own torpedoes at 1.20 am on the 15th.

HMS TRINIDAD was awarded the Battle Honour for Arctic 1942.

HMS GAMBIA

Summary of Service

HMS GAMBIA, a cruiser of the "Fiji" class of 8,000 tons displacement, was authorised in the 1918 programme and built by Swan Hunter and Wigham Richardson, Wallsend-on-Tyne, with machinery by the Wallsend Slipway Company. She was laid down on the 24th July 1939; launched on the 30th November 1940; and completed on the 21st February 1942.

After working up at Rosyth and Scapa she left in April as part of the escort for troop convoy SW 18, bound for the Middle East, and to join the Eastern Fleet. On the 15th May the depot ship HECLA, accompanying this convoy, was mined and damaged off Cape Agulhas, and the GAMBIA assisted her into Simonstown, leaving on the 17th for Mombasa, where she arrived on the 23rd, to join the 4th Cruiser Squadron.

For the next twelve months the GAMBIA was employed in various operations by the Eastern Fleet, chiefly the escort of troop convoys, searches for enemy raiders, and the like. In September 1942, she took part in the operations in Madagascar for the occupation of the whole island, the naval base at Diego Suarez having been captured in May of that year.

In February 1943, she formed part of the escort of troops of the 9th Australian Division from Suez to Australia, arriving at Fremantle on the 18th, and leaving on the 7th March for Durban. On the 8th May, she left Kilindini for the United Kingdom via the Cape. On the way, she paid a courtesy visit to Gambia and left Bathurst on the 3rd June for Liverpool, coming under the order of the C-in-C Plymouth from the 7th, arriving there on the 12th, and going on to Liverpool on the 16th.

While she was under refit at Liverpool, a proposal was made by New Zealand that as their cruisers ACHILLES and LEANDER were both under repair following action damage, the GAMBIA might be loaned to the Dominion so that the New Zealand Navy might continue to play an active part in operations in the Pacific. The suggestion was approved and the GAMBIA was manned by New Zealand from the 22nd September and formally handed over in November. She worked up with the Home Fleet, and left Scapa for Plymouth on the 3rd December.

In the last week of December the GAMBIA took part in Operation "Stonewall" for the interception of German blockade runners off the Bay of Biscay. On the 27th December these operations resulted in the destruction of the ALSTERUFER by aircraft off Cape Finisterre.

At the end of January 1944, the GAMBIA left Plymouth to join the Eastern Fleet. She arrived at Trincomalee on the 19th February, and left again on the 22nd for Fremantle, where she was from the 2nd to the 8th March, returning to Colombo on the 17th.

Between the 19th and 31st March she took part in Operation "Diplomat", to protect shipping on the Australian-Indian Ocean shipping routes, to meet the United States Task Force 58.5, and to gain experience in oiling the Fleet at sea.

In April, the GAMBIA took part in Operation "Cockpit", a seaborne air strike on Sabang, Sumatra, which was successfully made on the 19th. In May, she took part in another such strike, Operation "Transom", on Sourabaya, Java, made on the 17th.

In July, GAMBIA was with the Eastern Fleet when for the first time since turning to the offensive it was able to bring its guns into action against the Japanese as well as its aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm. On the 25th July, the Fleet itself went right up to Sabang, the enemy naval base in Northern Sumatra, and battleships, cruisers and destroyers, all turned their guns on harbour installations.

In October, GAMBIA went to Australia, and on the 4th November arrived at Wellington, New Zealand. She was taken in hand for refit at Auckland until January 1945, and then joined the British Pacific Fleet, leaving Auckland with the HOWE (flagship of the Commander-in-Chief) and other ships on the 13th February.

On the 28th February the Fleet proceeded to the base at Manus, Admiralty Islands, to take part in Operation "Iceberg", the assault on Japan. The task allotted to it during the American operations against Okinawa was to neutralise the enemy airfields in the Sakishima group, at the southern end of the Ryukyus. On the 26th and 27th March, the Fleet made the first of a series of carrier-borne air strikes on these islands. On the 1st April the GAMBIA took the destroyer ULSTER in tow for Leyte after she had been hit by a bomb whilst operating off the Ryukyus. She left Leyte on the 6th April with the UGANDA and destroyers to resume the operations, which continued until May.

She visited Sydney in June and July, and on the 12th July, left Manus for the first British attack on the Japanese mainland on the 17th and 18th. About 1,500 carrier-borne aircraft from the combined American and British forces raided the Tokyo area, and during the night the KING GEORGE V and lighter British units joined with American battleships in shelling the Hitachi area off Honshu. Operations continued until the end of the month by which time Japan had begun to put out peace feelers. Operations were resumed on the 13th and 15th August, until the cease fire order was received on the latter date.

On the 11th August, when the Japanese surrender appeared likely, the Allied Commander-in-Chief, Nimitz USN, had accepted the offer of the British Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, of a token force of one battleship, two cruisers, one fleet carrier and the necessary destroyer screen, to take part in the naval occupation of Japan. The GAMBIA was one of the two cruisers, and was present when the Allied naval forces entered Tokyo Bay on the 28th, 29th and 30th August, and at the surrender on the 3rd September. Later in September she was employed in the evacuation of prisoners of war from Japan.

The GAMBIA left Sydney for the United Kingdom on the 23rd February and arrived at Portsmouth on the 27th March 1946. She was taken in hand for refit at Devonport. On the 1st July 1946, she was paid off and reverted to service in the Royal Navy. On completing refit in September she was ordered to return to the British Pacific Fleet and arrived at Singapore on the 23rd November. She afterwards became the flagship of the 5th Cruiser Squadron.

The GAMBIA left Singapore early in December 1947 for home and on the way arrived at Aden on the 16th to assist in preserving order. She arrived at Plymouth in January 1948, and was reduced to reserve.

On the 3th March 1950, she left Plymouth to replace the NEWCASTLE in the Mediterranean Fleet. On the 28th March 1951, at the time of unrest in the Persian oilfields, she left Malta for the Red Sea. The SNO, Persian Gulf, transferred to her at Bahrain on 19 April. And she left there on 6 May to return to the Mediterranean.

On the 16th October 1951, she was sent to Port Said owing to unrest in Egypt, which on that day abrogated the Treaty of 1936. The LIVERPOOL relieved her at Port Said on the 20th November. She returned to Port Said, however, on the 7th January 1952, owing to a further strike of Suez Canal employees. Later in the month she was lent to the East Indies Station temporarily, until the 10th May, when she rejoined the 1st Cruiser Squadron, Mediterranean.

The GAMBIA arrived at Devonport on the 31st July 1952 to pay off and refit. She rejoined the 1st Cruiser Squadron at Malta on the 15th January 1953. She left the Mediterranean again on the 8th October 1954, when the Emperor of Abyssinia took passage in her to Portsmouth. The GAMBIA was under repair at Devonport until the end of March 1955.

She was next assigned to the East Indies and arrived at Trincomalee on the 17th May. The Emperor of Abyssinia's grandson was in her as a midshipman, and on the 11th February 1956 she paid a courtesy visit to Massawa on her way home, arriving at Devonport on the 1st March 1956.

Between March 1956 and April 1957 the GAMBIA was refitted at Rosyth, and afterwards served with the Home Fleet from May to October, when she returned to the East Indies. She proceeded to Aden on the 18th April 1958, on account of unrest there.

The East Indies Command was abolished on the 7th September 1958, and the GAMBIA, which was the late flagship of the Commander-in-chief on this station, arrived at Chatham on the 19th September. She was recommissioned in the Home-Mediterranean cycle on the 4th November.

In November 1959 the GAMBIA called at Volos, Greece, where the ship's company visited the graves of men killed by an explosion in "X" turret of HMS DEVONSHIRE on the 26th July 1929, going on to Dar-es-Salaam and Karachi VIA Suez.

In February 1960 the GAMBIA was at Male (Indian Ocean) for the signing of an agreement for the use of Gran (Maldives) as a Service base for a period of 30 years. Shortly afterward, the GAMBIA sailed from Trincomalee for Port Louis with supplies for the victims of a cyclone in Mauritius. After calling at Singapore, she turned for home, visiting South African ports en route, and arrived at Portsmouth to go into reserve in December, where she remained until she was put on the scrap list in 1965. She was sold to T W Ward Ltd, Sheffield, on the 21st November 1968, and left Portsmouth in tow on the 2nd December 1968 for Inverkeithing to be broken up.

BATTLE HONOURS:

Sabang	1944
Okinawa	1945

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HMS JAMAICA
Summary of Service

The cruiser JAMAICA, built by Vickers-Armstrongs, was completed on 29 June 1942, and arrived at Scapa on 1 July to work up, before joining the 10th Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet.

Captain J L Storey had been in command of the ship since 27 February 1942.

One of her earliest tasks was to cover Operation SN89 (minelaying off the Faeroe Islands), for which she left Scapa on 1 September 1942.

Next the JAMAICA was in the covering force for the Russian convoys PQ18 and QP14. She returned to Scapa on 3 October.

Towards the end of October the JAMAICA left for Gibraltar to take part in Operation "torch" (the invasion of North Africa). She was one of the units of the Centre Naval Force (Oran), ready to provide supporting fire on the first day (8 November). On 9 November, the JAMAICA and AURORA engaged two Vichy destroyers, driving one ashore in flames south of Cape de l'Aiguille and forcing the other to retire damaged to Oran where it was beached near La Marine. On the 14th, the assault phase being ended, the JAMAICA was recalled to the Home Fleet, arriving at Scapa on the 20th.

During December the JAMAICA covered the Russian convoys JW51 and RA51. On 31 December, she was present in the action off the North Cape in which the German pocket battleship TUTZOW and cruiser ADMIRAL HIPPER with destroyers, endeavoured to attack Convoy JW51B. The HIPPER was damaged by three hits, and the destroyer FRIEDRICH ECKOLDT was sunk. On the British side the destroyer ACHATES and minesweeper BRAMBLE were sunk. The convoy escaped unharmed. It was in this action that Captain R St V Sherbrooke, Capt (D)17, in the ONSLOW, gained the VC.

At the end of January 1943, it was decided to use the JAMAICA with the KENYA and SUSSEX in anti-blockade runner operations off the Bay of Biscay, and she left Scapa for this duty (Operation "Regulation ") on 1 February. She made two patrols north of the Azores, from 4 to 8 February and 20 to 24 February both without success.

For the rest of 1943 the JAMAICA took part in a number of Home Fleet operations, including the passage of Russian convoys, without important incident, until December, when she was engaged in the action which resulted in the sinking of the SCHARNHORST. Before this, on 12 December 1943, Captain J Hughes-Hallett succeeded Captain Storey in command.

The German battle cruiser SCHARNHORST endeavoured to attack convoy JW51B, which had left Loch Ewe for North Russia on 20 December.

On 26 December she was brought to action and sunk in about 72.16 N, 28.41 E. Two attempts by the SCHARNHORST to close the convoy were frustrated by a cruiser force under Vice-Admiral R L Burnett, which then shadowed her throughout the afternoon until the arrival on the scene of the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, in the DUKE OF YORK, with the JAMAICA and four destroyers. The JAMAICA engaged the enemy both with gunfire and torpedoes, and obtained several hits with the former.

During February and March 1944, the JAMAICA provided cover for further convoys to and from Russia.

On 3 April 1944, she took part in the Home Fleet carrier-borne aircraft attack on the battleship TIRPITZ in Kaa Fiord, Norway, under the command of Vice-Admiral Sir Henry Moore, Second-in-Command, in the battleship ANSON. Powerful forces of bombers and fighters from two fleet carriers and four escort carriers severely damaged the TIRPITZ and put her out of action for several months.

Between April and June, the JAMAICA took part in various shipping strikes off Norway. Between 16 and 25 June, she was employed in an operation for the relief of the Norwegian garrison in Spitsbergen.

On 17 July, she took part in a further naval air strike on the TIRPITZ in Kaa Fiord (Operation "Mascot"). This was unfortunately ineffective owing to the thick smoke which was found to be covering the entire Fiord up to 800 feet.

In August, the JAMAICA covered further convoys to and from Russia, and in October another relief expedition to Spitsbergen.

Between October 1944 and May 1945, the JAMAICA underwent long refit at Portsmouth.

One of her first duties on returning to service was to convey the King and Queen on their visit to the Channel Islands after liberation. Their Majesties crossed from Portsmouth on the night of 6-7 June in the JAMAICA, the weather being too bad for then to fly as had been arranged.

On 23 August 1945, the JAMAICA left Plymouth for the East Indies. The JAMAICA arrived at Colombo on 5 October 1945, from the United Kingdom and joined the 5th Cruiser Squadron. In April 1946, the flag of the Rear-Admiral Commanding 4th Cruiser Squadron was transferred to her from the NORFOLK.

She remained in the East Indies until the autumn of 1947, returning to Plymouth on 14 November. During 1948 she was refitted at Devonport.

On 17 January 1949, she arrived at Bermuda to join the America and West Indies Station. On 25 April, a few days after the Communist firing on HMS AMETHYST in the Yangtze, she was ordered to the Far East, and arrived at Hong Kong at the end of May.

She was in the Far East when the War in Korea broke out on 25 June 1950, and was among the first British ships engaged in hostilities. On 2 July, while bombarding shore installations on the East Coast of Korea, she was present in an action with six North Korean E-boats, of which five were destroyed.

On 8 July, while bombarding a cliff road target on the East Coast, she was hit by an enemy battery. No material damage was caused to the ship, but one sailor and five soldiers (Army volunteers as supply parties for the guns) were killed and two sailors and a soldier wounded. These were the first British casualties in the Korean War.

On 17 September 1950, while operating off the West Coast, she was attacked by cannon fire from a hostile aircraft, and had three men wounded, one fatally.

The JAMAICA was refitted at Singapore from the end of October 1950, to January 1951, and left for home on 27 January, arriving at Devonport a month later, where she was reduced to reserve. She was afterwards refitted at Rosyth.

Between May and November 1953, the JAMAICA was flagship of the Flag Officer Commanding Reserve Fleet, at Portsmouth, and after a refit there until April 1954, hoisted the flag of the Flag Officer (Flotillas) Home Fleet on 18 May.

Having been relieved in the Home Fleet by the BERMUDA, the JAMAICA arrived at Malta on 20 November 1954, to join the 1st Cruiser Squadron, Mediterranean Fleet. She returned to Chatham on 4 August 1955, and after an extended refit there until April 1956, rejoined the 1st Cruiser Squadron at Malta in May.

She was on a visit to Alexandria when on 26 July 1956, Nasser seized the Suez Canal. The visit was cut short and she returned to Malta. In the Suez operations between October and December 1956, the JAMAICA patrolled off the Egyptian coast during the first two days of the air assault, and then took over the task of flagship of Rear-Admiral D E Holland-Martin, in command of the British Assault Group. She lay off the beaches during the day of the Allied landing. She claimed to have been the first ship into Port Said harbour, and after spending nearly two months there shared the honour of being the last ship to leave with HMS DUCHESS at the time of the Allied withdrawal.

She returned to Chatham on 16 May 1957, and from 24 June visited Kiel for the 75th Kiel week. On 5 September, she was ordered to be paid off into Extended Reserve.

HMS JAMAICA was awarded the following Battle Honours:

Arctic	1942-44
North Africa	1942
Barents Sea	1942
North Cape	1943
Korea	1950

Historical Section
March 1962

HMS JAMAICA - FACTS AND FIGURES

HMS JAMAICA was one of eight MAURITIUS Class cruisers, the others being BERMUDA, GAMBIA, KENYA, MAURITIUS, FIJI, TRINIDAD and NIGERIA. The FIJI and TRINIDAD were lost during the Second World War.

Tonnage (Displacement): 8,000 standard, 11,000 full load

LOA: 555 ft 6 in

Beam: 62 ft

Draught: 16 ft 6 in (light) 21 ft (maximum)

Armament:

Guns: 12 x 6 in (four triple turrets); 8 x 4 in AA, and a variety of smaller weapons including 6 quadruple 2 pdr Pompom mountings

Note: turret was removed from all of the class except the NIGERIA post war, leaving the main armament as 9 x 6 in guns in three turrets.

Torpedoes: 6 x 21 in tubes

Complement: Peace 730; War 980

Four shafts, maximum speed 31.5 knots

Built by Vickers Armstrong, Barrow, Launched 16 November 1940, Completed 29 June 1942.

HMS BERMUDA

SUMMARY OF SERVICE 1939 - 1965

HMS BERMUDA was laid down on 30 November 1939 at Clydebank, launched on 11 September 1941 by Viscountess Weir and completed on 21 August 1942. HMS BERMUDA first commissioned on 5 August 1942, at Glasgow with Captain T H Black, RN in command. The next ten weeks were spent in trials and working up, and the ship's first task was to take part in Operation "Torch". BERMUDA left Plymouth for Gibraltar on 26 October with the advance guard of Admiral Cunningham's staff. Leaving Gibraltar on 3 November she joined Force 'H' which moved into the Mediterranean on 6 November to provide distant cover for the landings at Oran and Algiers. The landings took place on 8 November and BERMUDA was detached to bombard Fort Matafon. Fort D'Estrees was also bombarded successfully, and the ship then proceeded to join HMS SHEFFIELD (Flagship CS 10). Between 1640 and 1740 that day the BERMUDA came under heavy air attack, which was successfully repulsed without damage to the ship. A total of 34 torpedo carrying HE 111's took part, and 23 torpedoes and two sticks of bombs were dropped. One "probable" and one "damaged" aircraft were claimed.

BERMUDA remained with Force 'H' until 14 November 1942, and then wore the flag of Rear Admiral C H J Harcourt, CBE, as Flagship Force 'Q' (BERMUDA, SIRIUS, ARGONAUT and 3 destroyers). HMS BERMUDA returned to Scapa and in January 1943 took part in supporting convoy JW 51B, and covering force for convoys JW 52 and RA 52. In March the ship twice carried out Patrol 'Black', and escort in May, and in June the ship took part in operation "Gearbox III", and made a passage to Algiers and return.

The scene of operations then shifted to the Bay of Biscay, and in July BERMUDA twice took part in Operation "Musketry", covering escort groups and convoys from surface attack, and also in Operation "Governor". During her first year in commission the ship steamed 54,456 miles and spent 189 days at sea. After covering convoys OS 53 and SL 134 in early August 1943, the period until the end of October was spent carrying out patrols in the Bay of Biscay. These usually lasted from 5 to 12 days, one of the objects being the direction of long range fighters to engage enemy aircraft directed against our convoys' escort groups and reconnaissance aircraft.

During November and December 1943 and January 1944 the BERMUDA escorted Arctic Convoys.

On 24 February she left Scapa, wearing the flag of the Admiral Commanding 1st Cruiser Squadron, for Operation 'Bayleaf' – an attack on enemy shipping in the Norwegian Leads by aircraft from HMS FURIOUS. This operation was postponed, and finally cancelled on 28 February.

On 17 March she was allocated to Force 5 under VA (2) Home Fleet for Operation 'Cosmic' – dispositions in the event of a breakout by the German battleship TIRPITZ from Alten Fiord, Norway. Force 5 consisted of HM Ships ANSON, FURIOUS, 2 escort carriers, BERWICK, BERMUDA and JAMAICA.

On 29 May the BERMUDA left Scapa with DUKE OF YORK flying the flag of C in C Home Fleet, ANSON and JAMAICA, covering Operation 'Tigerclaw' – air strikes against the TIRPITZ. The force was sighted by enemy aircraft east of the Faeroes on 30th and returned to Scapa.

On 10 and 22 June the BERMUDA was engaged in diversionary operations off the south coast of Norway to maintain the threat of invasion during the Normandy operations.

HMS BERMUDA arrived at Clyde for a long refit on 30 June 1944 and remained there until recommissioning in March 1945.

HMS BERMUDA recommissioned on Tuesday 27 March 1945, and after trials and working up arrived in Malta on 10 May, where working up continued. Leaving on 6 June, the ship arrived at Fremantle on 1 July, after calling at Alexandria, Aden and Colombo. Arriving at Sydney on 7 July, working up was continued in Jervis Bay. VJ day was 15 August and the ship immediately sailed for Kiirun in Formosa, calling at Manus and Leyte. The period 6 to 12 September was spent evacuating POWs from a hospital at Tahikon (25 miles from Kiirun) to the Hospital Ship MANGANNI. On completion of this task the ship sailed for Tsingtao, and from 20 September to 8 October took part in the evacuation of internees from Weittsien. The BERMUDA at this time was wearing the flag of CS 2, Task Group III.3 consisting of BERMUDA, ARGONAUT, COLOSSUS, TYRIAN, TUSCAN and TUMULT.

HMS BERMUDA arrived in Shanghai on 11 October and played a small part in the evacuation of internees. From 25 November to 27 December police duties and anti-looting patrols were carried out in Hong Kong. At the beginning of 1946, the ship sailed for Sydney and after attending the Royal Hobart Regatta, returned to Hong Kong on 18 March for a refit. In June the ship sailed to Shanghai to take part in the Victory Day celebrations, including the rehoisting of the flag which had flown over the Consulate until the Japanese arrived. The remainder of the month was occupied in short visits to Tsingtao, Kure, Chemulpho and Fukuoka.

The first three weeks of July were spent visiting Nagasaki and Yokohama. After a short stay in Hong Kong, the ship returned to Sydney. During September, Melbourne and Adelaide were visited, and after 8 days in Sydney farewell was said to Australia. On 8 October, BERMUDA arrived in Hong Kong and Yokohama and Kure were visited between 19 November and 17 December. A long spell of almost three months in Hong Kong was broken only by four days at sea from 23 – 27 December, standing by HMS CONSTANCE towing the Swedish freighter ROSEBANK.

In March and April 1947, farewell visits were made to Yokohama, Kure and Shanghai. The BERMUDA sailed from Hong Kong on 10 May, called at Singapore, Trincomalee, Aden, Port Said, Malta and Gibraltar on the way home. The ship arrived at Plymouth on 19 June and was reduced to reserve at Sheerness from 27 July. After 8 months in Chatham dockyard, the ship was towed to Plymouth on 27 May 1948.

During 1950, the ship was brought forward, and re-commissioned on 2 October 1950, with Captain H G Scott, DSC, RN, in command. BERMUDA sailed from Plymouth on 23 October and arrived in Malta after calling at Gibraltar. After a month's work up the ship left Malta on 30 November 1950, the long passage to Simonstown being broken only by a call at Freetown for fuel. Arriving in Simonstown on 18 December, the flag of Vice Admiral Sir Herbert Packer, KCB, was hoisted.

In February 1951, a short cruise was carried out with brief visits to Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban. The ship sailed for the long East Coast cruise on 19 June, exercises being carried out on the passage to Durban with HM Ships ACTAEON and NEREIDE, HM Submarine STURDY, the South African Ships JAN VAN RIEBEECK, TRANSVALL and BLOEMFONTEIN and French Ship GAZELLE. Sailing from Durban on 16 July, Diego Suarez was visited from 21 – 28 July and Lourenco Marques from 1 –

7 August. After embarking fuel at Durban, the period 9 – 14 August was spent in East London. BERMUDA arrived in Simonstown on 16 August.

During September the combined RN and SAN Fleet Regatta was held at Saldanha Bay, opportunity being taken for exercises, on passage and harbour drills and exercises. On 23 October BERMUDA sailed on the West Coast Cruise, visiting Luanda (28 October – 1 November) Lagos (4 – 12 November), Takoradi (13 – 17 November), Dakar (21 – 28 November), Freetown (30 November – 5 December), Ascension Island (8 – 10 December) and St Helena (12 – 14 December), arriving back in Simonstown on 23 December.

From January to March 1952 the ship was under refit in Simonstown Dockyard. On 31 March she sailed for Saldanha Bay for working up and exercises, where she remained until 6 May, with a break in Simonstown over the Easter weekend.

BERMUDA sailed on the East Coast Cruise on Thursday 12 June, spending 3 days at Gordon's Bay, a week at Port Elizabeth and a month in Durban. The ship left Durban on 23 July and after a week in East London arrived back in Simonstown on 1 August.

HMS BERMUDA's next cruise was on the West Coast of Africa. She left Simonstown on the 6 October 1952, and called at Luanda, Lagos, Takoradi, Dakar, Freetown, Ascension Island and St Helena arriving back at Simonstown on 17 December.

1953 HMS BERMUDA sailed from Simonstown on 26 January and proceeded to Plymouth, via Freetown arriving on 16 February. She sailed from Plymouth at the end of March and proceeded to Malta via Gibraltar, where she arrived on 30 March. HMS BERMUDA was attached to the 1st Cruiser Squadron, Mediterranean Fleet. From May to August she spent her time cruising in the Eastern Mediterranean, arriving back at Malta on 12 August when she was taken in hand for a refit. Her refit was completed on 30 October and she did one working up cruise to Port Said before returning to Malta on 31 December.

1954 After a short visit to Leghorn (22 to 27 January), HMS BERMUDA left Malta on 14 March to join the combined Fleet meeting at Gibraltar from 19 to 29 March, then returning to Malta via Ajaccio and Naples, arriving on 14 April. HMS BERMUDA's next task was to leave Malta on 1 May to meet the Royal Yacht BRITANNIA, and escort the Royal Family into Malta on 3 May. In June and July HMS BERMUDA was in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Adriatic arriving back at Malta on 2 August. September was spent visiting Palmas Bay, Corsica, Taranto and Venice arriving back at Malta on 4 October. On 23 October she sailed from Malta to Plymouth arriving on 2 November when she was transferred to the Home Fleet and on 27 November became the Flagship of Flag Officer Flotillas, Home Fleet (FOFH). On arrival at Plymouth she was taken in hand for A and A's which were completed on 7 January 1955.

1955 HMS BERMUDA left Plymouth on 17 January to take part in the Home Fleet's Spring Cruise to Gibraltar, South of France and Malta, arriving back at Plymouth on 1 April. Her next cruise was the Home Fleet's Summer Cruise, when she visited Invergordon, Scapa Flow, Kiel, Aarhus, Helingsborg, Rosyth and Hove arriving back at Plymouth on 20 July. HMS BERMUDA then paid off and was towed to the Tyne by the tug WARDEN in November to undergo an extensive refit which was not completed till 24 October 1957.

- 1957 HMS BERMUDA commissioned on a General Service Commission on 24 October, and spent the remainder of the year working up, arriving at Plymouth on 10 December, when she joined the Home Fleet.
- 1958 HMS BERMUDA left Plymouth for a cruise to the West Indies on 14 January. During this cruise she visited Bermuda, Bridgetown (Barbados), Bequia Bay, St Georges (Grenada), and Roseau (Dominica) arriving at Portsmouth on 14 March. On 10 April she sailed for the Mediterranean, and on arrival at Malta on 16 April she was attached to the 1st Cruiser Squadron, Mediterranean Fleet. After a call at Aranci Bay in April and Istanbul in June, HMS BERMUDA spent approximately four weeks in Cyprus from the 17 July before returning to Malta, two weeks in October. She then went to Leghorn, Toulon and Izmir (Turkey) before returning to Malta in the middle of December.
- 1959 At the end of January, HMS BERMUDA left Malta and visited La Spezia, Benghazi, Cyprus, Beirut and Venice arriving back in Malta on 16 March. On 23 March HMS BERMUDA left for Devonport arriving there on 3 April, when she was transferred to the Home Fleet. She left Portland for the Spring Cruise with the Home Fleet on 16 June, calling at Rosyth (18 – 24 June), Faroes (24 – 29 June), Greenland (3 – 15 July) and Bermuda (22 – 31 July), arriving back at Devonport on 11 August. HMS BERMUDA hoisted the Flag of Flag Officer Flotillas, Home Fleet on 23 June. In this last cruise there were two items of note, HMS BERMUDA was the first Royal Navy Ship to visit Greenland since the war, and her visit to Bermuda was to mark the 350th anniversary of that Island. HMS BERMUDA spent the Autumn Cruise round the British Coast making one call to Hamburg on 12 – 16 October. She arrived back at Portland on 1 December.
- 1960 On 4 January, HMS BERMUDA sailed from Portsmouth to Gibraltar where she arrived on 7th, and was immediately taken for a refit. On completion of her refit she left Gibraltar on 8 April and arrived at Devonport on 11th. She sailed with the Home Fleet on their Summer Cruise and visited Helsinki for the British Trade Fair between 20 and 26 May. She also visited Norway and Denmark. Between 29 July and 3 August she was Guard Ship at Cowes Regatta, and she visited Lisbon from 6 to 11 August to celebrate the Fifth Centenary of the death of Prince Henry, the Navigator. She arrived back at Devonport on 15 August, and sailed again for Lagos on 16 September, arriving on 29 September to take part in Nigerian Independence Celebrations. From here she went to Victoria (6 – 10 October), Freetown (13 – 14 October), Madeira (19 – 23 October) arriving at Gibraltar on 25 October when she was transferred to the Mediterranean Fleet. She spent the remainder of the year visiting Oran and Toulon finally finishing up in Malta on 26 November.
- 1961 In February, HMS BERMUDA called on Leghorn, Suda and Athens, arriving back at Malta on 24 February. She sailed again on 6 March, called at Palma and arrived at Gibraltar on 14 March when she was attached to the Home Fleet. She left Gibraltar on 16 March called at Brest and arrived at Devonport on 24 March. Before joining the Home Fleet for the Summer Cruise HMS BERMUDA made a visit to Freetown (24 – 29 April) and Las Palmas (2 – 4 May). She left Portsmouth on 23 May and during the cruise she visited Denmark. The Autumn Cruise was spent round the British Isles except for visits to Amsterdam (29 September - 4 October) and Antwerp (5 – 11 October).

1962 In February, HMS BERMUDA went to Bermuda and spent the whole month there exercising. On the return journey she called at Gibraltar arriving back at Portsmouth on 6 April. On 20 May HMS BERMUDA made her last cruise from Portsmouth which was to Stockholm, and when she returned to Portsmouth on 2 June she paid off into reserve.

HMS BERMUDA was accepted into unmaintained reserve on 30 July 1962, and was towed to the ship breakers on 23 August 1965. HMS BERMUDA's Silk Battle Ensign was laid up in the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity at Bermuda. It was carried from England in HMS WHIRLWIND whilst on passage to the West Indies.

BATTLE HONOURS

NORTH AFRICA	1942
ATLANTIC	1943
ARCTIC	1943

Data

Displacement	11,040 tons
Length, overall	555' 6"
Beam	62' 0"
Draught, fore	20' 0"
" aft	21' 3"
Machinery	Supplied by Messrs John Brown, turbined geared four screws
Designed speed	31.5 Knots (72,500 HP)
Endurance at 12 knots	10,200 Miles
" at 20 "	6,000 "
" at full speed	2,400 "

Armament

9 x 6" in triple mountings
 8 x 4" in twin"
 20 x 2 pdr pom-poms in quad mountings
 4 x 2 pdr Power single
 8 x 20 mm Oerlikons in twin power
 4 x 20 mm" single

2 treble mounted torpedo tubes
 7 x 21" torpedoes

Naval Historical Branch
 December 1976

DK/96

