

= HMS Jamaica (44) =

HMS Jamaica , a Crown Colony @-@ class cruiser of the Royal Navy , was named after the island of Jamaica , which was a British possession when she was built in the late 1930s . The light cruiser spent almost her entire wartime career on Arctic convoy duties , except for a deployment south for the landings in North Africa in November 1942 . She participated in the Battle of the Barents Sea in 1942 and the Battle of North Cape in 1943 . Jamaica escorted several aircraft carriers in 1944 as they flew off airstrikes that attacked the German battleship Tirpitz in northern Norway . Late in the year she had an extensive refit to prepare her for service with the British Pacific Fleet , but the war ended before she reached the Pacific .

Jamaica spent the late 1940s in the Far East and on the North America and West Indies Station . When the Korean War began in 1950 she was ordered , in cooperation with the United States Navy , to bombard North Korean troops as they advanced down the eastern coast . The ship also provided fire support during the Inchon Landing later that year . Jamaica was refitted late in the year and returned to Great Britain in early 1951 where she was placed in reserve .

She was recommissioned in 1954 for service with the Mediterranean Fleet . In 1955 Jamaica was used to play HMS Exeter in the film Battle of the River Plate , in company with her wartime partner HMS Sheffield as HMS Ajax . In 1956 the ship participated in Operation Musketeer , the Anglo @-@ French invasion of Egypt to seize control of the Suez Canal . Jamaica was paid off in 1958 and sold for scrap in 1960 .

= = Description = =

Jamaica displaced about 8 @, @ 631 long tons (8 @, @ 770 t) at standard load and 11 @, @ 017 long tons (11 @, @ 194 t) at deep load . The ship had an overall length of 555 feet 6 inches (169 @. @ 3 m) , a beam of 68 feet 5 inches (20 @. @ 9 m) and a draught of 19 feet 10 inches (6 @. @ 0 m) . She was powered by Parsons geared steam turbines , driving four shafts , which developed a total of 80 @, @ 000 shaft horsepower (60 @, @ 000 kW) and gave a maximum speed of 32 @. @ 25 knots (59 @. @ 73 km / h ; 37 @. @ 11 mph) . Steam for the turbines was provided by four Admiralty 3 @-@ drum water @-@ tube boilers . Jamaica carried a maximum of 1 @, @ 700 long tons (1 @, @ 700 t) of fuel oil that gave her a range of 6 @, @ 520 nautical miles (12 @, @ 080 km ; 7 @, @ 500 mi) at 13 knots (24 km / h ; 15 mph) . The ship 's complement was 733 officers and men in peacetime and 900 during war .

The ship mounted twelve 50 @-@ calibre 6 @-@ inch (152 mm) guns in four three @-@ gun turrets . Her secondary armament consisted of eight 4 @-@ inch (102 mm) anti @-@ aircraft (AA) guns in four twin turrets . Jamaica mounted two quadruple 2 @-@ pounder (40 mm) light AA mounts (" pom @-@ poms ") . Her short @-@ range AA armament is not known . The ship carried two above @-@ water triple torpedo tube mounts for 21 @-@ inch (533 mm) torpedoes .

Jamaica lacked a full waterline armour belt . The sides of her boiler and engine rooms and the magazines were protected by 3 @. @ 25 ? 3 @. @ 5 inches (83 ? 89 mm) of armour . The deck over the machinery spaces and magazines was reinforced to a thickness of 2 ? 3 @. @ 5 inches (51 ? 89 mm) . She carried an aircraft catapult and two Supermarine Sea Otter seaplanes .

= = History = =

Jamaica was laid down on 28 April 1938 by Vickers @-@ Armstrongs in Barrow @-@ in @-@ Furness , England as part of the 1938 Naval Programme and named for the Colony of Jamaica . The ship was launched on 16 November 1940 and completed on 29 June 1942 . After working up , the ship provided distant cover to Convoy PQ 18 in September . She was assigned to the Centre Task Force of Operation Torch in early November and was unsuccessfully attacked by the Vichy French submarine Fresnel . The Arctic convoys had been suspended at PQ 18 , but were scheduled to resume on 15 December with Convoy JW 51A . HMS Jamaica and HMS Sheffield , with several escorting destroyers , formed Force R , under the command of Rear @-@ Admiral Robert Burnett

and were tasked to cover the convoy against any German surface ships . The convoy was not spotted by the Germans and arrived at the Kola Inlet without incident on 25 December .

= = = Battle of the Barents Sea = = =

Force R sailed from Kola on 27 December to rendezvous with Convoy JW 51B in the Norwegian Sea , but the convoy had been blown southwards by a major storm . Several of its ships had been separated during storm and they confused the radar of Force R 's ships as to the true location of the convoy . Thus Force R was 30 miles (48 km) north of the convoy on the morning of 31 December when the heavy cruiser Admiral Hipper attacked the convoy . Admiral Hipper was first held at bay by the British destroyers HMS Onslow , HMS Obedient , HMS Obdurate and HMS Orwell . Initially driven off , Admiral Hipper returned , only to be engaged by Force R shortly before noon and was hit by three 6 @-@ inch shells from the cruisers . Two German destroyers , Z16 Friedrich Eckoldt and Z4 Richard Beitzen , misidentified Sheffield as Admiral Hipper and attempted to form up on her . Sheffield sank Friedrich Eckoldt at a range of 2 miles (3 @.@ 2 km) while Jamaica unsuccessfully engaged Richard Beitzen . Less than an hour later Force R spotted the pocket battleship Lutzow and Admiral Hipper and opened fire . Neither side scored any hits in the darkness before both sides turned away a few minutes later . Force R continued to track the German ships for several hours before they lost contact . Although the destroyer HMS Achates and the minesweeper HMS Bramble were sunk by the Kriegsmarine , the convoy reached the Kola Inlet intact . Force R remained at sea to protect Convoy RA 51 that was returning to Great Britain until relieved by HMS Berwick and HMS Kent .

Jamaica was relieved of escort duties on her return in January 1943 and had her main gun barrels replaced in March . She rejoined the Home Fleet , but was refitted in Portsmouth from July to September . Sometime during the year she received six twin power @-@ operated 20 @-@ millimetre (0 @.@ 8 in) AA guns as well as four single guns . During November she protected the convoys RA 54B , JW 54A , JW 54B and RA 54B , but was not engaged . On 15 December she was assigned to Force 2 , the distant escort for Convoy JW 55A , with the battleship HMS Duke of York and four destroyers . Force 2 was commanded by Admiral Bruce Fraser , Commander @-@ in @-@ Chief of Home Fleet , in Duke of York . For the first time the British distant cover force escorted the convoy all the way to the Kola Inlet . Their passage was uneventful and Force 2 sailed on 18 December to refuel at Iceland . Before he reached his destination , Admiral Fraser received Ultra information that a sortie by the German battleship Scharnhorst was likely to attack Convoy JW 55B , which was already at sea .

= = = Battle of North Cape = = =

German aerial reconnaissance spotted the convoy on 22 December , and Scharnhorst , escorted by five destroyers of the 4th Destroyer Flotilla , sailed on 25 December to intercept it . The resulting engagement became known as the Battle of North Cape . The Germans were spotted on the morning of 26 December and were engaged by the covering force that consisted of the cruisers HMS Belfast , HMS Sheffield , HMS Norfolk and four destroyers . Meanwhile , HMS Jamaica and HMS Duke Of York approached from the south west , barring the Scharnhorst 's path of retreat . The German battleship turned for her base at Altafjord in the early afternoon after two brief encounters with the British cruisers . She was spotted by Duke of York 's Type 273 radar at a range of 45 @,@ 500 yards (41 @,@ 600 m) and Duke of York opened fire half an hour later . Jamaica fired her first salvo a minute after , and hit Scharnhorst on her third broadside . She was forced to cease fire after 19 volleys as the German ship was faster in the heavy seas than the British ships , and was opening up the range despite heavy damage from the British shells . One shell from Duke of York 's last volley penetrated into Scharnhorst 's Number One boiler room and effectively destroyed it . This reduced the German ship 's speed sufficiently for the British destroyers to catch up and make four torpedo hits using a pincer attack . This slowed the ship again , so that Jamaica and Duke of York also caught up and opened fire at a range of 10 @,@ 400 yards (9 @,@ 500 m)

. They hit the German ship continually , but she was not sinking after 20 minutes of firing so Jamaica was ordered to torpedo her . Two torpedoes from her first volley of three missed and the third misfired , so the cruiser had to turn about to fire her other broadside of three , two of which appeared to hit . Belfast and the destroyers also fired torpedoes before Scharnhorst finally sank .

= = = Further convoys and the raids on the Tirpitz = = =

In February ? March 1944 , Jamaica served as part of the covering forces for Convoys JW 57 , JW 58 and RA 58 . She was detached from the latter to escort the aircraft carrier HMS Victorious as she launched an air strike against the German battleship Tirpitz as part of Operation Tungsten . In July she formed part of the covering force for the carriers HMS Formidable , HMS Furious and HMS Indefatigable during an unsuccessful attack on the German battleship Tirpitz berthed in Kaafjord (Operation Mascot) . Jamaica escorted the Convoys JW 59 and RA 59 in August ? September before starting a major refit in October that lasted until April 1945 . The ship 's ' X ' turret (third from the front) was removed and replaced by two more 2 @-@ pounder mounts while her radar suite was modernized .

On 6 June the cruiser conveyed King George VI and the Queen on a visit the Channel Islands . Jamaica joined the 5th Cruiser Squadron at Colombo in October and replaced HMS Norfolk as the squadron flagship in April 1946 . The ship returned to Devonport for a refit in November 1947 and was transferred to the North America and West Indies Station in August 1948 after its completion . She was sent to Hong Kong in April 1949 and remained in the Far East until the Korean War began in June 1950 .

= = = The Korean War = = =

Fighting between North and South Korea had broken out on 25 June 1950 , whilst Jamaica was on passage to Japan . She , and her escort HMS Black Swan , were ordered to rendezvous with the American light cruiser USS Juneau off the east coast of Korea to bombard advancing North Korean troops . On 2 July a North Korean supply convoy was returning from Chumunjin when it was spotted by the Allied ships . The escorting motor torpedo boats and motor gun boats turned to fight , but three torpedo boats and both gun boats were sunk without inflicting any damage on the Allied ships . They resumed bombarding coastal targets . Six days later Jamaica was hit by a 75 @-@ millimetre (3 @. @ 0 in) shell that killed six and wounded five . On 15 August the ship bombarded captured harbour facilities in Kunsan . The following month , Jamaica participated in the preparatory bombardment of the island of Wolmi @-@ do before the main landing on 15 September . During the landing itself she supported the southern flank of the assault and she was tasked to support the 1st Marine Regiment afterwards . Two days after the landing Jamaica and the American heavy cruiser USS Rochester were attacked by a pair of Yakovlev piston @-@ engined fighters at dawn . One aircraft succeeded in strafing the ship , killing one sailor , before it was shot down by the ship 's guns . Jamaica was sent to refit in Singapore in October and then sailed for home after it was completed . She arrived in Plymouth in February 1952 and was placed in reserve .

= = = Post war = = =

The ship was the flagship of the Reserve Fleet from May 1953 to 1954 when she was recommissioned for service with the Mediterranean Fleet . Assigned to the 1st Cruiser Squadron , she was refitted in Chatham Dockyard from June 1955 and rejoined her squadron . The ship participated in Operation Musketeer in November 1956 . The ship led the bombardment force covering the Royal Marine landings at Port Said , but she was not permitted to fire her main guns as the Cabinet had banned naval gunfire support by guns larger than 4 @. @ 5 inches (114 mm) . In 1954 she played the part of HMS Exeter in the war film The Battle of the River Plate . Jamaica was placed in reserve again in September 1958 after a port visit to Kiel . She was sold on 14 November 1960 to BISCO . The ship arrived at Arnott Young 's yards at Dalmeir on 20 December 1960 for

scrapping . This was not completed until 15 August 1963 at Troon .