

= HMS Duke of York ( 17 ) =

HMS Duke of York was a King George V @-@ class battleship of the Royal Navy . Laid down in May 1937 , the ship was constructed by John Brown and Company at Clydebank , Scotland , and commissioned into the Royal Navy on 4 November 1941 , subsequently seeing service during the Second World War .

In mid @-@ December 1941 , Duke of York transported Prime Minister Winston Churchill to the United States to meet President Franklin D. Roosevelt . Between March and September 1942 Duke of York was involved with convoy escort duties , but in October she was dispatched to Gibraltar where she became the flagship of Force H.

In October 1942 , Duke of York was involved in the Allied invasion of North Africa , but saw little action as her role only required her to protect the accompanying aircraft carriers . HMS Duke of York stopped the Gil Eannes on 1 November 1942 and a commando arrested Gastão de Freitas Ferraz . The British had picked up radio traffic indicating naval espionage , possibly compromising the secrecy of " Operation Torch " .

After Torch , Duke of York was involved in Operations Camera and Governor , which were diversionary operations designed to draw the Germans ' attention away from Operation Husky . On 4 October , Duke of York operated with her sister @-@ ship Anson in covering a force of Allied cruisers and destroyers and the American carrier Ranger , which raided German shipping off Norway . The attack sank four merchant ships and badly damaged a further seven .

On 26 December 1943 Duke of York was part of a task force which encountered the German battleship Scharnhorst . During the engagement that followed , Scharnhorst hit Duke of York twice with little effect , but was herself hit by several of Duke of York 's 14 @-@ inch shells , silencing one of her turrets and hitting a boiler room . After temporarily escaping from Duke of York 's heavy fire , Scharnhorst was struck several times by torpedoes , allowing Duke of York to again open fire , contributing to the eventual sinking of Scharnhorst after a running action lasting ten @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half hours .

In 1945 Duke of York was assigned to the British Pacific Fleet as its flagship , but suffered mechanical problems in Malta which prevented her arriving in time to see any action before Japan surrendered .

After the war , Duke of York remained active until she was laid up in November 1951 . She was eventually scrapped in 1957 .

= = Construction = =

In the aftermath of the First World War , the Washington Naval Treaty was drawn up in 1922 in an effort to stop an arms race developing between Britain , Japan , France , Italy and the United States . This treaty limited the number of ships each nation was allowed to build and capped the tonnage of all capital ships at 35 @, @ 000 tons . These restrictions were extended in 1930 through the Treaty of London , however , by the mid @-@ 1930s Japan and Italy had withdrawn from both of these treaties and the British became concerned about a lack of modern battleships within their navy . As a result , the Admiralty ordered the construction of a new battleship class : the King George V class . Due to the provisions of both the Washington Naval Treaty and the Treaty of London , both of which were still in effect when the King George Vs were being designed , the main armament of the class was limited to the 14 @-@ inch ( 356 mm ) guns prescribed under these instruments . They were the only battleships built at that time to adhere to the treaty and even though it soon became apparent to the British that the other signatories to the treaty were ignoring its requirements , it was too late to change the design of the class before they were laid down in 1937 .

Duke of York was the third ship in the King George V class , and was laid down at John Brown & Company 's shipyard in Clydebank , Scotland , on 5 May 1937 . Ironically , the title of Duke of York was in abeyance at that time , having been that held by King George VI prior to his succession to the throne in December 1936 . The battleship was launched on 28 February 1940 and was completed on 4 November 1941 . After this , the ship joined the Home Fleet at Scapa Flow .

## = = Description = =

Duke of York displaced 36 @, @ 727 long tons ( 37 @, @ 300 t ) as built and 42 @, @ 076 long tons ( 42 @, @ 800 t ) fully loaded . The ship had an overall length of 700 feet ( 213 @. @ 4 m ) , a beam of 103 feet ( 31 @. @ 4 m ) and a draught of 29 feet ( 8 @. @ 8 m ) . Her designed metacentric height was 6 feet 1 inch ( 1 @. @ 85 m ) at normal load and 8 feet 1 inch ( 2 @. @ 46 m ) at deep load .

She was powered by Parsons geared steam turbines , driving four propeller shafts . Steam was provided by eight Admiralty 3 @-@ drum water @-@ tube boilers which normally delivered 100 @, @ 000 shaft horsepower ( 75 @, @ 000 kW ) , but could deliver 110 @, @ 000 shp ( 82 @, @ 000 kW ) at emergency overload . This gave Duke of York a top speed of 28 knots ( 52 km / h ; 32 mph ) . The ship carried 3 @, @ 700 long tons ( 3 @, @ 800 t ) of fuel oil , which was later increased to 4 @, @ 030 long tons ( 4 @, @ 100 t ) . She also carried 183 long tons ( 200 t ) of diesel oil , 256 long tons ( 300 t ) of reserve feed water and 430 long tons ( 400 t ) of freshwater . At full speed Duke of York had a range of 3 @, @ 100 nautical miles ( 5 @, @ 700 km ; 3 @, @ 600 mi ) at 27 knots ( 50 km / h ; 31 mph ) .

## = = Armament = =

Duke of York mounted 10 BL 14 @-@ inch ( 356 mm ) Mk VII guns , which were mounted in one Mark II twin turret forward and two Mark III quadruple turrets , one forward and one aft . The guns could be elevated 40 degrees and depressed 3 degrees , while their training arcs varied . Turret " A " was able to traverse 286 degrees , while turrets " B " and " Y " could both move through 270 degrees . Hydraulic drives were used in the training and elevating process , achieving rates of two and eight degrees per second , respectively . A full gun broadside weighed 15 @, @ 950 pounds ( 7 @, @ 230 kg ) , and a salvo could be fired every 40 seconds . The secondary armament consisted of 16 QF 5 @. @ 25 @-@ inch ( 133 mm ) Mk I dual purpose guns which were mounted in eight twin turrets . The maximum range of the Mk I guns was 24 @, @ 070 yards ( 22 @, @ 009 @. @ 6 m ) at a 45 @-@ degree elevation , the anti @-@ aircraft ceiling was 49 @, @ 000 feet ( 14 @, @ 935 @. @ 2 m ) . The guns could be elevated to 70 degrees and depressed to 5 degrees . The normal rate of fire was ten to twelve rounds per minute , but in practice the guns could only fire seven to eight rounds per minute .

Along with her main and secondary batteries , Duke of York carried 48 QF 2 pdr ( 40 @-@ millimetre ( 1 @. @ 6 in ) ) Mk.VIII " pom @-@ pom " anti @-@ aircraft guns in six octuple , power @-@ driven , mountings . These were supplemented by six 20 @-@ millimetre ( 0 @. @ 8 in ) Oerlikon light AA guns in single , hand @-@ worked , mounts .

## = = Operational history = =

In mid @-@ December 1941 , Duke of York embarked Prime Minister Winston Churchill for a trip to the United States to confer with President Franklin D. Roosevelt . She arrived at Annapolis , Maryland , on 22 December 1941 , made a shakedown cruise to Bermuda in January 1942 , and departed for Scapa Flow on 17 January with Churchill returning home by air .

On 1 March 1942 she provided close escort for Convoy PQ 12 in company with the battlecruiser Renown , the cruiser Kenya , and six destroyers . On 6 March that force was reinforced with one of Duke of York 's sister ships , King George V , and the aircraft carrier Victorious , the heavy cruiser Berwick , and six destroyers as a result of Admiral John Tovey 's concerns that the German battleship Tirpitz might attempt to intercept the convoy . On 6 March the German battleship put to sea and was sighted by a British submarine around 19 : 40 ; no contact was made , however , except for an unsuccessful aerial torpedo attack by aircraft from Victorious .

Later that month , Convoy PQ 13 was constituted and Duke of York again formed part of the escort force . In early April , Duke of York , King George V , and the carrier Victorious formed the core of a

support force that patrolled between Iceland and Norway to cover several convoys to the Soviet Union . In late April , when King George V accidentally rammed and sank the destroyer Punjabi in dense fog , sustaining significant bow damage , Duke of York was sent to relieve her . She continued in these operations through May , when she was joined by the American battleship USS Washington . In mid @-@ September , Duke of York escorted Convoy QP 14 .

In October 1942 , Duke of York was sent to Gibraltar as the new flagship of Force H , and supported the Allied landings in North Africa the following month . During this time Duke of York came under air attack by Italian aircraft on several occasions , but the raids were relatively small scale and were swiftly dealt with by the " umbrella " provided by the aircraft from the accompanying carriers Victorious , Formidable and Furious . After this action , Duke of York returned to Britain for a refit .

With her refit completed , Duke of York resumed her status as flagship from 14 May 1943 pending the departure of King George V and Howe for Operation Husky . Operation Gearbox in June 1943 involved a sweep by Duke of York and Anson , in company with the US battleships Alabama and South Dakota , to provide distant cover for minor operations in Spitsbergen and the Kola Inlet , while the following month diversionary operations , codenamed " Camera " and " Governor of Norway " , were carried out in order to draw the Germans ' attention away from Operation Husky . On 4 October , Duke of York and Anson covered a force of Allied cruisers and destroyers and the American carrier Ranger , which raided German shipping off Norway . The attack resulted in the sinking of four German merchant ships and damage to seven others , which forced many of them to be grounded .

= = = Action with Scharnhorst = = =

In 1943 the German battleship Scharnhorst moved to Norway , a position whence she could threaten the Arctic convoys to Russia . With Tirpitz and two armoured ships also in Norwegian fjords , it was necessary for the Royal Navy to provide heavy escorts for convoys between Britain and Russia . One of these was sighted by the Germans in early December 1943 , and Allied intelligence concluded that the following convoy , Convoy JW 55B , would be attacked by the German surface ships . Two surface forces were assigned to provide distant cover to JW 55B , which had left Loch Ewe on 22 December . On 25 December 1943 , Scharnhorst was reported at sea . Force 1 cruisers , Belfast , Norfolk and Sheffield , with four destroyers , made contact shortly after 09 : 00 on 26 December . A brief engagement occurred around 09 : 30 , but Scharnhorst outdistanced her pursuers , and again outran them after a brief skirmish around noon .

Meanwhile , Force 2 , including Duke of York , the cruiser Jamaica and four destroyers , was closing , and it was estimated that a night action with Scharnhorst would commence around 17 : 15 . But Scharnhorst altered course , and contact was made at 16 : 32 , at a distance of 29 @,@ 700 yards ( 27 @,@ 200 m ) . Force 2 manoeuvred for broadside fire . Belfast , with Force 1 , fired starshells at 16 : 47 to illuminate Scharnhorst . This failed , so Duke of York fired a starshell from one of her 5 @.@ 25 @-@ inch ( 133 mm ) guns , taking Scharnhorst by surprise with her main battery trained fore and aft . By 16 : 50 Duke of York had closed to 12 @,@ 000 yards ( 11 @,@ 000 m ) and opened fire with a full ten @-@ gun broadside , scoring one hit . Although under heavy fire , Scharnhorst straddled Duke of York a number of times and hit her twice . A 28 @.@ 3 @-@ centimetre ( 11 @.@ 1 in ) shell passed through the mainmast and its port leg without detonating , but fragments from the hit destroyed the cable for the main search radar . A 15 @-@ centimetre ( 5 @.@ 9 in ) shell also pierced the port strut of the foremast without exploding . At 16 : 55 a 14 @-@ inch ( 356 mm ) shell silenced turrets Anton and Bruno , but Scharnhorst maintained speed so that by 18 : 24 the range had opened to 21 @,@ 400 yards ( 19 @,@ 600 m ) , when Duke of York ceased fire after expending fifty @-@ two broadsides . One shell from the final salvos hit and exploded in Scharnhorst 's number one boiler room , slowing the ship and allowing the pursuing destroyers to overtake her .

Force 2 's destroyers then attacked with torpedoes , firing 28 and scoring hits with three . This slowed Scharnhorst , and at 19 : 01 Duke of York again opened fire , at a range of 10 @,@ 400

yards ( 9 @, @ 500 m ) . She ceased fire at 19 : 30 to allow the cruisers to close on Scharnhorst . Ten 14 @-@ inch shells had hit the German battleship , causing fires and explosions , and silencing almost all of the secondary battery . By 19 : 16 all of the main turrets aboard Scharnhorst had ceased fire and her speed had been cut to 10 knots ( 19 km / h ; 12 mph ) . Duke of York ceased fire at 19 : 30 . In the final stages of the battle the destroyers fired a total of 19 torpedoes at her , causing Scharnhorst to list badly to port , and at 19 : 45 she sank after a running action lasting ten @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half hours from the first , taking with her over 1 @, @ 700 men . Following her sinking , and the retreat of most of the other German heavy units from Norway , the need to maintain powerful forces in British home waters was diminished .

= = = Subsequent operations = = =

On 29 March 1944 , Duke of York and the rest of the Home Fleet left Scapa Flow to provide a support force for Convoy JW 58 . The ship operated in the Arctic and as cover for carriers conducting the Goodwood series of air strikes on Tirpitz in mid to late August . In September , when she was overhauled and partially modernized at Liverpool , radar equipment and additional anti @-@ aircraft guns were added . She was then ordered to join the British Pacific Fleet and sailed in company with her sister ship Anson on 25 April 1945 . A problem with the ship 's electrical circuitry delayed her while she was at Malta and , as a result , she did not reach Sydney until 29 July , by which time it too late for her to take any meaningful part in hostilities against the Japanese .

Nevertheless , in early August , Duke of York was assigned to Task Force 37 , along with four aircraft carriers and her sister King George V. From 9 August , TF 37 and three American carrier task forces conducted a series of air raids on Japan , which continued until 15 August when a surrender came into effect . After the conclusion of hostilities , Duke of York , alongside her sister , King George V , participated in the surrender ceremonies that took place in Tokyo Bay . The following month Duke of York sailed for Hong Kong , to join the fleet that assembled there to accept the surrender of the Japanese garrison there . She was the flagship of the British Pacific Fleet when the Japanese surrendered , and remained so until June 1946 , when she returned to Plymouth for an overhaul .

= = = Post war = = =

Duke of York was flagship of the Home Fleet following the end of the war and remained in service until April 1949 . She was laid up in November 1951 , and on 18 May 1957 she was ordered to be scrapped . She was broken up by Shipbreaking Industries , Ltd , in Faslane .

= = Refits = =

During her career , Duke of York was refitted on several occasions to bring her equipment up @-@ to @-@ date . The following are the dates and details of the refits undertaken .