

= HMS Foresight ( H68 ) =

HMS Foresight was one of nine F class destroyers built for the Royal Navy during the 1930s . She was assigned to the Home Fleet upon completion . Unlike her sister ships , she does not appear to have been attached to the Mediterranean Fleet in 1935 ? 36 during the Abyssinia Crisis , nor did she enforce the arms blockade imposed by Britain and France on both sides of the conflict the Spanish Civil War of 1936 ? 1939 . The ship escorted the larger ships of the fleet during the early stages of World War II and played a minor role in the Norwegian Campaign of 1940 . Foresight was sent to Gibraltar in mid 1940 and formed part of Force H where she participated in the attack on Mers el Kébir and the Battle of Dakar . The ship escorted numerous convoys to Malta in 1941 and Arctic convoys during 1942 . Later that year , Foresight participated in Operation Pedestal , another convoy to Malta . She was torpedoed by an Italian aircraft on 12 August and had to be scuttled the next day .

= = Description = =

The F class ships were repeats of the preceding E class destroyers . They displaced 1 ,405 long tons ( 1 ,428 t ) at standard load and 1 ,940 long tons ( 1 ,970 t ) at deep load . The ships had an overall length of 329 feet ( 100 .3 m ) , a beam of 33 feet 3 inches ( 10 .1 m ) and a draught of 12 feet 6 inches ( 3 .8 m ) . They were powered by two Parsons geared steam turbines , each driving one propeller shaft , using steam provided by three Admiralty three drum boilers . The turbines developed a total of 36 ,000 shaft horsepower ( 27 ,000 kW ) and gave a maximum speed of 35 .5 knots ( 65 .7 km / h ; 40 .9 mph ) . Foresight carried a maximum of 470 long tons ( 480 t ) of fuel oil that gave her a range of 6 ,350 nautical miles ( 11 ,760 km ; 7 ,310 mi ) at 15 knots ( 28 km / h ; 17 mph ) . The ships ' complement was 145 officers and ratings .

The ships mounted four 4 .7 inch ( 120 mm ) Mark IX guns in single mounts , designated ' A ' , ' B ' , ' X ' , and ' Y ' in sequence from front to rear . For anti aircraft ( AA ) defence , they had two quadruple Mark I mounts for the 0 .5 inch Vickers Mark III machine gun . The F class was fitted with two above water quadruple torpedo tube mounts for 21 inch ( 533 mm ) torpedoes . One depth charge rack and two throwers were fitted ; 20 depth charges were originally carried , but this increased to 38 shortly after the war began .

= = = Wartime modifications = = =

Between October 1940 and April 1941 , Foresight had her rear torpedo tubes replaced by a 12 pounder AA gun . Around this time , she probably had two single 20 mm ( 0 .8 in ) Oerlikon light AA guns installed abreast the bridge . By July 1942 , a Type 286 short range surface search radar was fitted as was a HF / DF radio direction finder mounted on a pole mainmast .

= = Construction and career = =

Foresight was ordered on 17 March 1933 from Cammell Laird and was laid down at their Birkenhead shipyard on 31 July , launched on 29 June 1934 , and completed on 15 May 1935 . The ship cost 245 ,428 pounds , excluding government furnished equipment such as the armament . All of the F class destroyers were assigned to the 6th Destroyer Flotilla ( DF ) of the Home Fleet , and , Foresight , unlike her sisters , did not leave home waters during the 1930s . The 6th DF was renumbered the 8th Destroyer Flotilla in April 1939 , and Foresight remained assigned to it until July 1940 . World War II began in September and she was tasked to escort the larger ships of the fleet during this time . She played a minor role in the Norwegian Campaign in early 1940 .

In late June , the 8th DF was ordered to Gibraltar where they were to form the escorts for Force H.

A few days later , they participated in the attack on Mers @-@ el @-@ Kébir against the Vichy French ships stationed there . On 13 September , Force H rendezvoused with a convoy that was carrying troops intended to capture Dakar from the Vichy French . Ten days later , they attacked Dakar where Foresight and the destroyer Inglefield sank the French submarine Persée and Foresight sank the submarine Bévéziers on the 25th . She returned home for a refit after the battle and was damaged by a near @-@ miss during a German air raid on Liverpool on the night of 21 / 22 December .

On 31 January 1941 , Force H , including Foresight , departed Gibraltar to carry out Operation Picket , an unsuccessful night torpedo attack by eight of Ark Royal 's Fairey Swordfish on the Tirso Dam in Sardinia . The British ships returned to Gibraltar on 4 February and began preparing for Operation Grog , a naval bombardment of Genoa , that was successfully carried out five days later . Two months later , Foresight escorted the aircraft carrier Ark Royal as she flew off aircraft for the beleaguered island of Malta near Sicily on 3 April and again on the 27th . The following month she was part of the escort screen , with five other destroyers , for the battleship Queen Elizabeth and the light cruisers Naiad , Fiji and Gloucester which were joining the Mediterranean Fleet . This was part of Operation Tiger which included a supply convoy taking tanks to Egypt and the transfer of warships to and from the Mediterranean Fleet . Foresight and her sisters had their Two @-@ Speed Destroyer Sweep ( TSDS ) minesweeping gear rigged to allow them to serve as fast minesweepers en route to Malta . Despite this , one merchant ship was sunk by mines and another damaged . Later that month , she escorted the capital ships of Force H as they searched for the German battleship Bismarck and the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen in the North Atlantic after the Battle of the Denmark Strait on 23 May . Foresight escorted another flying @-@ off mission to Malta on 14 June ; two days later , after German blockade runners reached France , Force H sortied into the Atlantic on a failed search for more blockade runners . Together with her sisters Faulknor , Fearless , Forester and Foxhound , Foresight helped to sink the German submarine U @-@ 138 on 18 June . The ship participated in another Malta convoy in late July , during which she had to scuttle her sister Fearless , after she had been crippled by an airborne torpedo on 23 July . Foresight continued to escort the ships of Force H until October , after she participated in another convoy to Malta , Operation Halberd . During this operation , the ship again served as a fast minesweeper , albeit more successfully than the last time she had done so .

The 8th DF returned to Britain after Halberd and resumed their previous task of escorting the ships of Home Fleet for the next six months . In early April 1942 , Foresight , Forester and the light cruiser Edinburgh were part of the close escort for Convoy PQ 14 , bound for Murmansk . The trio were then the close escort for Convoy QP 11 , returning from Murmansk to Iceland , when Edinburgh was torpedoed on 29 April . The two hits disabled her steering and she had to be towed by the sisters . Two days later , they were attacked by three German destroyers which badly damaged the two destroyers and put another torpedo into Edinburgh , crippling her . Foresight had eight men killed and eleven wounded during the battle . The two destroyers took off the survivors from the cruiser and Foresight scuttled the cruiser with a torpedo . Temporarily repaired at Murmansk , the sisters were part of the light cruiser Trinidad 's escort home in May . She had to be scuttled on 15 May by the destroyer Matchless after she was set on fire by a German bomber . Foresight spent June under repair .

Foresight was assigned to the convoy escort force for Operation Pedestal , a heavily escorted convoy to Malta in August . On the 12th , she was torpedoed by an Italian Savoia @-@ Marchetti SM.79 bomber at 18 : 45 ; the hit broke her back , knocked out her steering , and killed one officer and three ratings . By the time the destroyer HMS Tartar arrived , Foresight could only steam at two knots ( 3 @-@ 7 km / h ; 2 @-@ 3 mph ) and a towline was secured by 19 : 30 . Shortly afterwards , the towing wire fouled Tartar 's starboard propeller ; another wire was rigged by 20 : 40 , but it had to be slipped when an unknown force of one cruiser and two destroyers was spotted at close range . Around 22 : 30 , Foresight was secured alongside Tartar until 05 : 15 the following day when the cables snapped . Another tow wire was rigged at 06 : 10 , but it was dropped when a submarine periscope was spotted at 09 : 30 and Tartar dropped depth charges as a precautionary measure even though her ASDIC had not detected any submarines . Around that same time several Axis

shadowing aircraft were seen and Tartar 's commander thought the likelihood of attack was now too high to proceed . He took off the 181 surviving crew and scuttled Foresight with torpedoes at 09 : 55 at coordinates ( 37 ° 40 ' N 10 ° 00 ' W ) .