

= HMS Grafton ( H89 ) =

HMS Grafton ( H89 ) was a G-class destroyer built for the Royal Navy during the mid 1930s . During the Spanish Civil War of 1936 ? 1939 the ship spent considerable time in Spanish waters , enforcing the non-intervention measures agreed by Britain and France . After the beginning of World War II she was transferred from the Mediterranean Fleet to Great Britain for escort and contraband inspection duties . Grafton was refitting when the Norwegian Campaign began in April 1940 , but the ship escorted convoys to Norway once her refit was completed . She evacuated British troops from the Dunkirk bridgehead in May , but was sunk by a German submarine after she stopped to rescue survivors from another British destroyer .

= = Description = =

Grafton displaced 1,350 long tons ( 1,370 t ) at standard load and 1,883 long tons ( 1,913 t ) at deep load . The ship had an overall length of 323 feet ( 98.5 m ) , a beam of 33 feet ( 10.1 m ) and a draught of 12 feet 5 inches ( 3.8 m ) . She was powered by Parsons geared steam turbines , driving two shafts , which developed a total of 34,000 shaft horsepower ( 25,000 kW ) and gave a maximum speed of 36 knots ( 67 km / h ; 41 mph ) . Steam for the turbines was provided by three Admiralty 3-drum water-tube boilers . Grafton carried a maximum of 470 long tons ( 480 t ) of fuel oil that gave her a range of 5,530 nautical miles ( 10,240 km ; 6,360 mi ) at 15 knots ( 28 km / h ; 17 mph ) . The ship's complement was 137 officers and men in peacetime , but increased to 146 in wartime .

The ship mounted four 45-calibre 4.7-inch ( 120 mm ) Mark IX guns in single mounts . For anti-aircraft defence Hostile had two quadruple Mark I mounts for the 0.5 inch Vickers Mark III machine gun . She was fitted with two above-water quadruple torpedo tube mounts for 21-inch ( 533 mm ) torpedoes . One depth charge rail and two throwers were fitted ; 20 depth charges were originally carried , but this increased to 35 shortly after the war began .

= = Service = =

Grafton was laid down by John I. Thornycroft & Company , at Woolston , Hampshire on 30 August 1934 , launched on 18 September 1935 and completed on 20 March 1936 . Excluding government-furnished equipment like the armament , the ship cost £ 248,485 . Aside from a brief period when she was assigned to the 20th Destroyer Flotilla after her commissioning , Grafton spent the prewar period assigned to the 1st Destroyer Flotilla with the Mediterranean Fleet . Between 10 August and 9 September 1936 , she escorted the yacht Nahlin as King Edward VIII cruised the eastern Mediterranean . Afterwards Grafton patrolled Spanish waters during the Spanish Civil War enforcing the policies of the Non-Intervention Committee . The ship was refitting in Malta when World War II began in September 1939 .

Grafton and three of her sisters were transferred to the Western Approaches Command at Plymouth in October . The following month , however , the ship was reassigned at the end of the month to the 22nd Destroyer Flotilla in Harwich of the Nore Command for patrol and escort duties . On 10 January 1940 , she was transferred to the reconstituted 1st Destroyer Flotilla , also based at Harwich , where Grafton inspected ships travelling between German and Dutch ports for contraband . Between 26 March and 14 April the ship was given a brief overhaul in Hull in the shipyard of Brigham and Cowan . As the Norwegian Campaign had begun while Grafton was refitting , she was reassigned to the Home Fleet where she escorted convoys to Norway until 11 May .

= = = Operation Dynamo = = =

During the Siege of Calais , Grafton escorted the light cruisers Arethusa and Galatea as they provided naval gunfire support for the 30th Motor Brigade on 26 May . The following day she

evacuated over 1 @, @ 600 troops from the beaches of La Panne and Bray , northeast of Dunkirk . On the morning of 29 May , she stopped to rescue survivors from the destroyer Wakeful , which had been torpedoed and sunk earlier that morning by the German E @-@ boat S @-@ 30 . While rescuing survivors from Wakeful off Nieuwpoort , Belgium , Grafton was struck in the stern by a torpedo from the German submarine U @-@ 62 . This seriously damaged the ship , and also triggered a secondary explosion which damaged the bridge , killing the captain and another officer . 13 ratings and the Canteen Manager were also killed . The ship 's back was broken , but she remained afloat long enough for all survivors to be rescued by the destroyer Ivanhoe and the transport Malines . Ivanhoe sank Grafton with naval gunfire , as she was too badly damaged to be towed to safety .