

# THE BRITISH DESTROYER

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## A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

During the 20th Century, the British destroyer was the workhorse of the fleet, generally fast and suitable for a variety of roles.

The first destroyers were strictly Torpedo Boat Destroyers (TBDs); that is, they were designed to destroy German Torpedo Boats. The type developed into a Torpedo Boat itself, with the dual role of attacking the enemy with torpedoes and of beating back similar attacks made by enemy destroyers. With the introduction of submarine warfare, the destroyer also took on the role of screening the fleet against submarine attack and, from 1917, convoy escort as well as some being fitted as minelayers. Destroyer became the common name used from 1925. The earliest were 'small ships' indeed and the first British TBD was HMS Havock, launched in 1893.

From 1950 new destroyers were more akin to the 'light cruisers' of old. Since 1960 new destroyers would be hardly recognisable to destroyermen of the Second World War and some were almost the size of 'heavy cruisers'. The latest type of destroyer in the Royal Navy is a large ship indeed: the Daring class (Type 45) is 7,350 tonnes and 500 feet in length, comparable to a Leander class cruiser of the 1930s but, with a complement of 190, just over one-third of the cruiser's 550 men!

The development, and growth in size, of British warships called Destroyers is easily seen in the following list, which names one example from each of the principal classes; (year of launch in brackets) with tonnage, speed and complement (included women at sea, from 1993 onwards):

HMS Havock (1893) – the first British destroyer - 240 tons – 27 knots – 46 men  
HMS Skate (1895) – A class - 260 tons – 28 knots – 52 men  
HMS Spiteful (1898) – B class - 335 tons – 30 knots – 55 men  
HMS Fairy (1897) – C class - 305 tons – 30 knots – 55 men  
HMS Cynthia (1898) – D class - 280 tons – 30 knots – 55 men  
HMS Taku (1898) – no class\*\*\*\* - 305 tons – 32 knots – 62 men  
HMS Jed (1904) – E (River) class - 550 tons – 26 knots – 70 men  
HMS Nubian (1909) – Tribal class - 1,062 tons – 33 knots – 70 men  
HMS Swift (1907) – Special Flotilla Leader\*\*\* – 2,000 tons – 39 knots – 138 men  
HMS Harpy (1909) – G (Basilisk) class – 925 tons – 28 knots – 96 men

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<sup>1</sup> For the story of how the inventor of the torpedo, Robert Whitehead, became grandfather of the Von Trapps and, therefore, linked to the Hollywood film musical **The Sound of Music** (1965), see **The Industrial Revolutionaries: The Creation of the Modern World 1776-1914** by Gavin Weightman (Atlantic Books, 2007).

HMS Larne (1910) – H (Acorn) class – 780 tons – 28 knots – 72 men  
HMS Hydra (1912) – I (Acheron) class – 765 tons – 29 knots – 72 men  
HMS Ambuscade (1913) – K (Acasta) class – 960 tons – 31 knots – 76 men  
HMS Lassoo (1915) – L class – 1,030 tons – 30 knots – 77 men  
HMS Magic (1916) – M class – 1,020 tons – 34 knots – 90 men  
HMS Tipperary (1915) – Botha class (ex-Chilean) \*\* - 1,098 tons – 32 knots – 102 men  
HMS Trident (1916) – Talisman class (ex-Turkish) - 1,098 tons – 32 knots – 102 men  
HMS Nimrod (1916) – Marksman class\*\* – 1,630 tons – 34 knots – 110 men  
HMS Rob Roy (1916) – R class – 1,066 tons – 36 knots – 90 men  
HMS Saladin (1918) – S class - 905 tons – 36 knots – 90 men  
HMS Tara (1918) – S (not T) class – 1,075 tons – 36 knots – 90 men  
HMS Verdun (1917) – V class - 1,090 tons – 34 knots – 110+ men  
HMS Wishart (1919) – W class - 1,140 tons – 35 knots – 110+ men  
HMS Broke (1920) – Shakespeare class\*\* – 1,480 tons – 36½ knots – 164 men  
HMS Campbell (1918) – Scott class\*\* – 1,530 tons – 36½ knots – 164 men  
HMS Amazon (1926) – Prototype A class - 1,352 tons – 37 knots – 138 men  
HMS Ardent (1929) – A class - 1,350 tons – 35 knots – 138 men  
HMS Beagle (1930) – B class - 1,360 tons – 35 knots – 138 men  
HMCS Ottawa (ex-Crusader) (1931) – C class - 1,375 tons – 35½ knots – 145 men  
HMS Diamond (1932) – D class - 1,375 tons – 35½ knots – 145 men  
HMS Express (1934) – E class - 1,375 tons – 35½ knots – 145 men  
HMS Fury (1934) – F class - 1,335 tons – 35½ knots – 145 men  
HMS Gipsy (1935) – G class - 1,335 tons – 35½ knots – 145 men  
HMS Hotspur (1936) – H class - 1,335 tons – 35½ knots – 145 men  
HMS Ivanhoe (1937) – I class - 1,370 tons – 36 knots – 145 men  
HMS Punjabi (1937) – Tribal class - 1,870 tons – 36 knots – 190 men  
HMS Jupiter (1938) – J class – 1,690 tons – 36 knots – 183 men  
HMS Kashmir (1939) – K class – 1,690 tons – 36 knots – 183 men  
HMS Hambledon (1939) – Hunt class Escort destroyer – 907 tons – 26 knots – 146 men  
HMS Lightning (1940) – L class – 1,920 tons – 36 knots – 221 men  
HMS Matchless (1941) – M class – 1,920 tons – 36 knots – 221 men  
HMS Norman (1940) (HMAS from 1941-45) – N class – 1,690 tons – 36 knots – 183 men  
HMS Churchill\* (ex-USS Herndon 1940) (1919) – Town class – 1,190 tons – 35 knots  
HMS Obdurate (1942) – O class – 1,540 tons – 36¾ knots – 175 men  
HMS Paladin (1941) – P class - 1,540 tons – 36¾ knots – 175 men  
HMS Quail (1942) – Q class - 1,705 tons – 36¾ knots – 175 men  
HMS Relentless (1942) – R class - 1,705 tons – 36¾ knots – 175 men  
HMS Savage (1942) – S class - 1,710 tons – 36¾ knots – 180 men  
HMS Tuscan (1942) – T class - 1,710 tons – 36¾ knots – 180 men  
HMS Undaunted (1943) – U class - 1,710 tons – 36¾ knots – 180 men  
HMS Virago (1943) – V class - 1,710 tons – 36¾ knots – 180 men  
HMS Wager (1943) – W class - 1,710 tons – 36¾ knots – 186 men

HMS Zest (1944) – Z class - 1,710 tons – 36¾ knots – 186 men  
HMS Comus (1945) – C class - 1,710 tons – 36¾ knots – 186 men  
HMS Agincourt (1945) – Battle class - 2,400 tons – 35¾ knots – 232 men  
HMS Scorpion (1946) – Weapon class - 1,980 tons – 35 knots – 234 men  
HMS Dainty (1950) – Daring class - 2,610 tons – 34¾ knots – 278 men  
HMS Hampshire (1961) – County class – 6,200 tons – 32 knots – 485 men  
HMS Bristol (1969) – Type 82 (only one built) - 6,750 tons – 30 knots – 407 men  
HMS Sheffield (1971) – Type 42, Sheffield class - 3,660 tons – 30 knots – 280+  
HMS Daring (2006) – Type 45, Daring class - 7,350 tonnes – 27+ knots – 190+

\* One of 50 USN destroyers transferred to the Royal Navy on 2 Sep 40 under Lend-Lease arrangements

\*\* All the class was designed as Leaders

\*\*\* The only ship on the class, reputed to have achieved 40 knots, the fastest ship in the Fleet

\*\*\*\* HMS Taku was captured from China in 1900, during the Boxer Rising

By the Second World War, the principal roles changed again, adding anti-aircraft work and general purpose escort, with some units being fitted for air- direction work. With the re-introduction of frigate in the early 1950s, the anti-submarine role transferred to that class of ship. The anti-aircraft role – now called Air Defence – is that of today’s destroyer.

British destroyers have been built at shipyards around our coastline, on the riparian banks of the Clyde, the Tyne, the Wear, the Hull, the Thames, the Medina, the Itchen and the Mersey and at Barrow. Some were also built for the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and others for foreign governments.

The marine turbine soon replaced the triple-expansion engine and then oil instead of coal as fuel, thus revolutionizing the design; larger vessels, of course, had a much increased endurance and thus the utility of the destroyer made her a maid of all work.

There were huge numbers of destroyers in service during the Great War and many were commanded by Lieutenants, some quite junior. Service in these boats was acknowledged to be excellent sea training, producing true seamen, an essential part of a naval education. When not at sea, these destroyers crowded into ‘Pens’ at Portland and Port Edgar, in the Pockets at Gibraltar and in Malta’s Sliema Creek or the home bases at Chatham, Portsmouth, Devonport, sometimes, Milford Haven, the Humber, Harwich and Dover or Bunrana in Northern Ireland or, later, in exotic ports overseas such as Wei-Hai-Wei, in China.

Destroyers were organized into Flotillas of sometimes twenty boats, each with three or four officers. Life on board was hard and they tended not to follow strictly naval regulations; the ‘tot’ of rum was generally issued neat to those who wished, as opposed to being issued with water as was the regulation. At different times these Flotillas of Destroyers worked under the

Admiral of Patrols or formed part of the Channel Fleet, the Grand Fleet, the Home Fleet, the Mediterranean Fleet, the Atlantic Fleet, the China Fleet and the British Pacific Fleet. By the Second World War, flotillas tended to comprise eight destroyers of the same class. Each flotilla had a Flotilla Leader, sometimes a slightly larger vessel, always with a larger complement of men and commanded by a senior officer known as Captain 'D'.

Fitted with a mix of armaments, weapons and systems over the century, destroyers have carried torpedoes, guns, depth charges, mines, mortars, missiles and, now, a helicopter. They have been fitted with ASDIC, later known as Sonar, with Radar and Hedgehog and Squid anti-submarine weapons. The most familiar, perhaps, are the 21-inch Whitehead torpedo and the 4.7-inch (later 4.5-inch) guns and 40mm Bofors and 20mm Oerlikon AA (anti-aircraft) guns.

HMS Havock (1893) had one 12-pounder gun, three 18-inch torpedo tubes and three funnels. A few early boats had four funnels. Later in the 1890s, the speed was raised to 30 knots but none could keep up much speed in bad weather; they were very wet and uncomfortable. An ill fate or damage was not uncommon and those with snake names, such as HMS Viper and HMS Cobra, fared particularly badly, such that those names were deemed unlucky, never to be used again.

As can be seen from the list above, destroyers grew in size over the years. They saw a great deal of active service in the First World War. Huge numbers were built in 1918-19, by which time two funnels defined the standard profile of the destroyer. Some of the famous S & T and V & W classes, built 1917-20, saw service in the Second World War, the last being scrapped in 1948. No more destroyers were authorised for construction until the two prototypes of 1926.

From then until 1950 there were broadly two main types of British destroyer. The earlier destroyers built from 1926 to 1937 – the A to I classes – had two funnels as did the larger ships of the Tribal class of 1937. They all had open bridges and the distinctive break in the forecastle (the fo'c's'le) as did the later destroyers, with one funnel, built from 1938 to 1945 – the J to Z and the C classes. Subsequent classes, those built up to 1952, were obvious successors to these handsome ships, their profile similar but their lines less attractive.

The destroyer leaders in the J to Z classes were no longer larger vessels, the accommodation being altered internally so as to accommodate the larger complement of a Captain 'D'. Costs had to be reduced as war approached and larger vessels were more expensive to build; a standard design was imperative but each class inevitably had modest improvements in equipments as they became available. These J to Z classes were mostly part of the War Emergency programme and sacrifices were made in their construction, with poorer quality steel for example, and equipment, such as reverting to the simpler design of 4.7-inch guns, the Royal Navy being desperately short of most types of ship, but especially modern destroyers.

Some of these destroyers had their torpedo tubes removed during the Second World War, shipping an extra gun instead. Others were completed with 4-inch guns. Surface warning RDF (radar) was added either to the bridge, or in place of the searchlight in between the torpedo

tubes, and air warning RDF added to the masthead. The differences are too many class by class, sometimes ship by ship, to detail here.

The standard Second World War destroyer fell short of the requirements for the Pacific theatre, where the naval war was mostly an air war, carried to the enemy by carrier borne aircraft. Supporting vessels had to be amply equipped with AA guns for their own defence, thus releasing the maximum number of carrier borne aircraft for offensive strikes. Surface torpedo attack had become virtually obsolete but the threat was ever present from over and under the sea.

The conventional destroyer, the true destroyer, had met the fleet requirement for just over half a century but, as with the passing of the line of battle, sea warfare had changed.

British destroyers of the Second World War served in all theatres and with distinction, earning a great affection and comradeship among their ship's companies and the flotillas.

HMS Cavalier (1944) is now preserved at The Historic Dockyard, Chatham, as a memorial to 142 Royal Navy destroyers sunk during the Second World War and over 11,000 men who lost their lives as a result. The memorial – see:

<http://www.chdt.org.uk/NetsiteCMS/pageid/738/TheDestroyerMemorial.html> - was unveiled by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh KG KT on 14 November 2007, in the presence of some 900 guests, many of whom served in destroyers, or whose fathers or husbands did so. Lieutenant The Prince Philip of Greece RN, as he then was, served as First Lieutenant of HMS Whelp from 1944-46. In a second destroyer, as Lieutenant HRH Philip, Duke of Edinburgh KG RN, he was First Lieutenant of HMS Chequers, based in Malta with the Mediterranean Fleet, from 1949-1950.

## **Bibliography – Destroyers**

(try [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com))

I must acknowledge two principal works that have helped me write this overview of the British Destroyer:

*THE BRITISH DESTROYER* by Captain T D Manning CBE VRD RNVR (Putnam, 1961)

*WARSHIPS OF WORLD WAR II* by H T Lenton & J J Colledge (Ian Allan, 1964)

Other books that help to give an understanding of the history of the type, the spirit of the early years and life in destroyers include:

*FLOTILLAS* by Lionel Dawson (1933)

*ENDLESS STORY* by “Taffrail” (Hodder & Stoughton, 1938)

*DESTROYER: AN ANTHOLOGY OF FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS OF THE WAR AT SEA 1939-1945* by Ian Hawkins (Conway Maritime 2005 – paperback £9.99)

*VERY ORDINARY SEAMAN* by J P W Mallalieu (Victor Gollancz, 1944 - reprinted by other publishers in 1970s) – life on the lower deck of a destroyer in the Second World War, written by a junior rating who became a Labour minister

## **Bibliography – Royal Navy and the Second World War**

(try [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com))

*CHURCHILL'S NAVY – THE SHIPS, MEN AND ORGANISATION 1939-1945* by Brian Lavery (Conway Maritime, 2006 - £40). An excellent, comprehensive, lavishly illustrated, large format guide to the Royal Navy in the Second World War; it is not a book about the battles of the war, rather it's all the information those books don't cover.

*THE ROYAL NAVY OFFICERS' POCKET BOOK 1944* (Conway Maritime, 2007 - £6.99). A compilation of seven pamphlets aimed at RNVR officers entering the service during the war, including an Officer's Aide Memoire (Leadership, Defaulters and Navigation etc), the destroyer HMS Duncan Captain's Standing Orders, Your Ship (advice to captains), Home Fleet Destroyer Orders, Mutiny in the Royal Navy (then a confidential book).

*A SEAMAN'S POCKET-BOOK JUNE 1943 (BR 827)* (Conway Maritime, 2006 - £6.99). A faithful reproduction of BR 827 issued to seaman ratings.

*ROYAL NAVY HANDBOOK 1939-1945* by David Wragg (Sutton Publishing, 2005 - £25). A much fuller account than the following book, with more detail about ships and less about uniforms.

*THE ROYAL NAVY 1939-1945* by Ian Sumner (Osprey (Elite 79), 2001 - £10.99). An illustrated overview of the actions, ships, men and women, uniforms, recruitment, training and organisation.

*NAVAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS (1943)* by Lt Cdr John Irving RN (Sherratt & Hughes, 1943). Out-of-print but the text is available online at <http://www.naval-history.net/WW2aaNavalLife-Customs1.htm>; it gives a wonderful overview of traditions, routines and life in the wartime Royal Navy.

*THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC* by Donald Macintyre (B T Batsford, 1961)

*THE FORGOTTEN FLEET: STORY OF THE BRITISH PACIFIC FLEET 1944-45* by John Winton (1970)

*THE NAVY AT WAR 1939-1945* by Captain S W Roskill RN (Collins, 1960). A one-volume account based on his official history (see below).

*THE WAR AT SEA* by Captain S W Roskill DSC RN (HMSO, 1954-61 – the official history in four volumes). Lots of detail and track charts for actions.

*THE CRUEL SEA* by Nicholas Monsarrat. Although a novel, it's written by an RNVR officer who commanded a corvette on Atlantic convoys, and is an excellent story about a ship at

war. Moreover, the story starts with Flower class corvette HMS Compass Rose at the builder's yard on the River Clyde, just as did the story of HMS Wager.

## Websites

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Destroyer> - for an overview of the destroyer in the navies of the world

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torpedo>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War\\_Emergency\\_Programme\\_destroyers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_Emergency_Programme_destroyers)

## Model ships

Some British destroyers are available in 1:1250 scale waterline models. The best places to look online are [http://www.shipmodels.co.uk/1662\\_1.html](http://www.shipmodels.co.uk/1662_1.html) and <http://www.photrek.co.uk/welton.html>. Detailed die-cast models of these destroyers have been found:

- V and W class HMS Vansittart as she was in 1939
- V and W class HMS Vivien as she was in 1939
- V and W class HMS Wivern as she was in 1939
- G and H class of 1935/36 and of HMS Hardy (H class Leader)
- I class of 1937 and of HMS Inglefield (I class Leader)
- Tribal class of 1937
- J and K and N classes of 1938/40
- L and M class of 1940/41
- O + P class of 1941/42 (and with AA modifications in 1943)
- Destroyer Depot Ship HMS Tyne

Waterline models in 1:1200 scale were also made by Tri-ang in the 1960s (M series numbers) and now by their modern successors (P series numbers) - see <http://www.triangminicships.com> for full details of both series. All sixteen models from the 1960s listed below are, essentially, four different classes of destroyer and destroyer/frigate conversion, customised with the name on the base; thus, the model of HMS Daring, when displayed, looks no different to the other three models of the same class. These models may still be found for sale online and at collectors' fairs. Collectors often insist on pristine original boxes, as these much enhance the price and value; destroyermen who seek only a memento of their ship, or type of ship, may find cheaper examples sold without the original boxes. These waterline models are (with date of ship's launch in brackets):

- HMS Alamein (1945) – model M779
- HMAS Anzac (1948) – model M781
- HMS Dainty (1950) – model M773

HMS Daring (1949) – model M771  
HMS Decoy (1949) – model M774  
HMS Devonshire (1960) – model M785  
HMS Diana (1952) – model M772  
HMS Hampshire (1961) – model M783  
HMS Jutland (1946) – model M780  
HMS Kent (1961) – model M784  
HMS London (1961) – model M786  
HMAS Tobruk (1947) – model M782  
HMS Venus (1943, converted 1952-54) – model M788 (as a Type 15 frigate)\*  
HMS Vigilant (1942, converted 1951-52) – model M787 (as a Type 15 frigate)\*  
HMS Virago (1943, converted 1951-52) – model M789 (as a Type 15 frigate)\*  
HMS Volage (1943, converted 1952-53) – model M790 (as a Type 15 frigate)\*  
Type 42 Batch 2 Destroyer - model P745  
Type 42 Batch 3 Destroyer - model P750

\* Although these four models are of Type 15 frigates, with rather different superstructure and armaments, these former V Class destroyers are exactly the same hull size and waterline length as HMS Wager and the W Class destroyers. A description of these conversions to Type 15 frigate is at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Type\\_15\\_frigate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Type_15_frigate).

## Filmography

(for best online prices – see [www.find-dvd.co.uk](http://www.find-dvd.co.uk))

Some of these films contain footage of destroyers and life on board. Other films are listed because they contribute to giving a flavour of the history of the Royal Navy, and its various fighting arms, of tactics and action in war, of training at sea and ashore and of the work of various branches. They are ideal aids to understanding sailors and ships, and will be of interest to researchers of family history where someone served in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines or WRNS.

*BATTLEFLEET: ROYAL NAVY IN THE 20TH CENTURY* (DDHE D.23185, 2006 – 2 discs, running time 7 hrs 46 mins. RRP £19.99). Produced by Movietone Television in 2002, this is the most comprehensive film history on the RN, with much footage not previously made public. Good.

*THE ROYAL NAVY AT WAR FILM COLLECTION* (DDHE DD21481, 2005 – 4 disc box set, running time 10 hrs 20 mins. RRP £39.99 but few remain for sale). A collection of training, recruiting and public information films about the Royal Navy in the Second World War. Available separately as the four discs that follow (titles underlined) but availability is reducing:



*THE ROYAL NAVY AT WAR 1940-1943* (DDHE DD21480, 2005 – running time 1 hr 53 mins. RRP £15.99). Includes Commissioning a Battleship (1942), Corvettes (1941), Meet the Ship (1943) – a tour of HMS London, Battleship (1942) – a picture of life on board HMS King George V and Raising Sailors (1940). Excellent!

*THE ROYAL NAVY AT WAR – NAVAL INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS* (DDHE DD22216, 2005 – running time 2 hrs 33 mins. RRP £15.99). Includes Duties of a Helmsman (1940) – set in a destroyer's wheelhouse, Raising Steam (1942) – in a J class destroyer's machinery spaces, Ship Safety (1944), Duties of a Lookout (1943) and Ships' Internal Communications (1944).

*THE ROYAL NAVY AT WAR – KNOW YOUR OWN NAVY* (DDHE DD22212, 2005 – running time 2 hrs 33 mins. RRP £15.99). Includes Know Your Own Navy (Parts 1, 2 and 3, all 1941) – recognition training for the RAF, Submarine Patrol, The Navy in Action and Our Company.

*THE ROYAL NAVY AT WAR – FLEET AIR ARM* (DDHE DD22214, 2005 – running time 2 hrs 17 mins. RRP £15.99). Includes Battlefleets of Britain, Carrier Flying, Deck Landing (1942) and Fleet Fighter.

*PROTECT THE CONVOY* (DDHE DD20143, 2005 – running time 1 hr 22 mins. RRP £15.99). Includes Night Attack on a Convoy (1940), Food Convoy (1940), Escort Teams at Work (1943) and Merchant Seaman (1941).

*CLOSE QUARTERS (1943)* (DDHE DD21367, 2005 – running time 1 hr 15 mins. RRP £15.99). A drama-documentary giving an authentic impression of a routine T class submarine patrol.

*WESTERN APPROACHES (1944)* (DDHE 06167, 2004 – running time 2 hrs+. RRP £15.99). A drama-documentary about merchant seamen in the Battle of the Atlantic, listed by Halliwell's Film Guide (2008) as one of the top 5% of films of the 24,000 reviewed.

*SHIPYARDS AND DOCKS AT WAR* (DDHE DD20108, 2004 – running time 1 hr 11 mins. RRP £15.99). Includes Tyneside Story (1943), From the Seven Seas (1940), Steel Goes to Sea (1941), Clyde-Built (1943) and Shipbuilders (1941). Perhaps some impression of what standing-by was like?

*THE ROYAL MARINES AT WAR* (DDHE DD06166, 2003 – running time 1 hr 38 mins. RRP £15.99). Includes Commando (1945), Rough Weather Landing (194x), Jungle Mariners (194x) and By Sea and Land (1944) – D-Day plus 19.

*ROYAL NAVY AT WAR – BRITISH CONVOYS* (DDHE D23773, 2006 – running time 2 hrs. RRP £15.99). Compiled from diverse sources, footage of Atlantic Convoys and Russian Convoys.

*THE FLEET AIR ARM AT WAR AND PEACE* (DDHE, 2007. RRP £14.99). Includes The Volunteer (1943), a drama-documentary starring Ralph Richardson as himself, a Lt Cdr (A) RNVR – excellent footage, including the inside of a carrier and sailors watching the rushes of a film shot by Lt Cdr Tommy Woodroffe RN.

*THE CRUEL SEA* (1953) (Optimum Releasing, 2007. RRP £12.99). The film of the book, starring Jack Hawkins.

*IN WHICH WE SERVE* (1942) (ITV DVD, 2002. RRP £15.99). The story of a destroyer in the Mediterranean loosely based on the story of Louis Mountbatten's HMS Kelly, starring Noel Coward.

## Photographs

For many years, professional photographers Wright & Logan took photographs of HM Ships as they arrived and sailed Portsmouth. These high quality black and white photographs are now sold through the Royal Naval Museum shop in Portsmouth – see [http://www.rnmuseumshop.co.uk/acatalog/w\\_l.html](http://www.rnmuseumshop.co.uk/acatalog/w_l.html) for a list of those available for sale; among them are many destroyers.

## Music

(for best prices see [www.find-dvd.co.uk](http://www.find-dvd.co.uk) and click on CDs)

*BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC SUITE* by Dave Roylance and Bob Galvin (with Lesley Garrett, the Trumpeters of the Band of HM Royal Marines and the Hallé Orchestra and Choir), (Conifer CDCF 902, 1993 – playing time 48 mins). Composed for the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic.

*THE COMPLETE MARCHES OF KENNETH ALFORD – A GOLDEN JUBILEE TRIBUTE TO 'THE BRITISH MARCH KING'* – the Band of HM Royal Marines, Commandos (Clovelly CL CD102, 1993). Kenneth Alford was the pen name of Major F J Ricketts RM and this disc contains twenty marches he wrote from 1908 to 1944, so they will all have been part of the Band's wartime repertoire; 21 tracks, including Colonel Bogey (1914), On the Quarterdeck (1917), The Middy (1917), Lilliburlero (1942) and A Life on the Ocean Wave (1944).

*THE BEST OF THE ROYAL MARINES* (Music Masters MMCD 423, 1992). 19 tracks including Heart of Oak, Rule Britannia, Prelude & Sunset, Drum & Bugle Display, Cockleshell Heroes, Sailing, Schubert's Marche Militaire.

*SEA SHANTIES* – the men of the Robert Shaw Chorale (RCA Victor 09026 63528 2, 1999 – original recording made in 1961). 16 songs, including Blow the Man Down, Tom's Gone to Hilo, A-Roving, What Shall We Do with the Drunken Sailor?, Swansea Town, Shenandoah and Spanish Ladies.

*SOUSA – THE STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER!* Band of HM Royal Marines (EMI Eminence 7243 5 66126 2 4, 1996). 22 marches by John Philip Sousa, including King Cotton, Semper Fidelis, The Liberty Bell, The Thunderer.

*Lt Cdr Lester May RN, Camden Town, London NW1 – Anzac Day, 25 April 2008*