



H.M.S. Sheffield



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THE COMMISSIONING BOOK

Built By	Swan Hunter Shipbuilders
Keel laid down	29 March 1984
Launched	26 March 1986 by Mrs Susan Stanley
Contractors Sea Trials	17-26 August 1987
Accepted at Portsmouth	25 March 1988
Commissioned	26 July 1988
Commanding Officer	Captain A MORTON DSC Royal Navy
Complement	16 Officers, 77 Senior Ratings, 170 Junior Ratings

Vital Statistics	Length Overall	148.1 metres
	Beam	14.75 metres
	Draught	6.2 metres
	Displacement	4,100 tons
	Aircraft	2 Lynx helicopters
	Missiles	Exocet (<i>Surface to Surface</i>) Seawolf (<i>Point Defence</i>)



THE COMMISSIONING

The Commissioning of Ships for service with the Royal Navy has roots dating back to the time when all ships sailing under the English flag were liable to be called up for service under the King to pursue some military objective. Prior to the reign of Henry VIII there was no permanent Naval 'presence' and in a national emergency the King relied upon the commitment of ships by private shipowners.

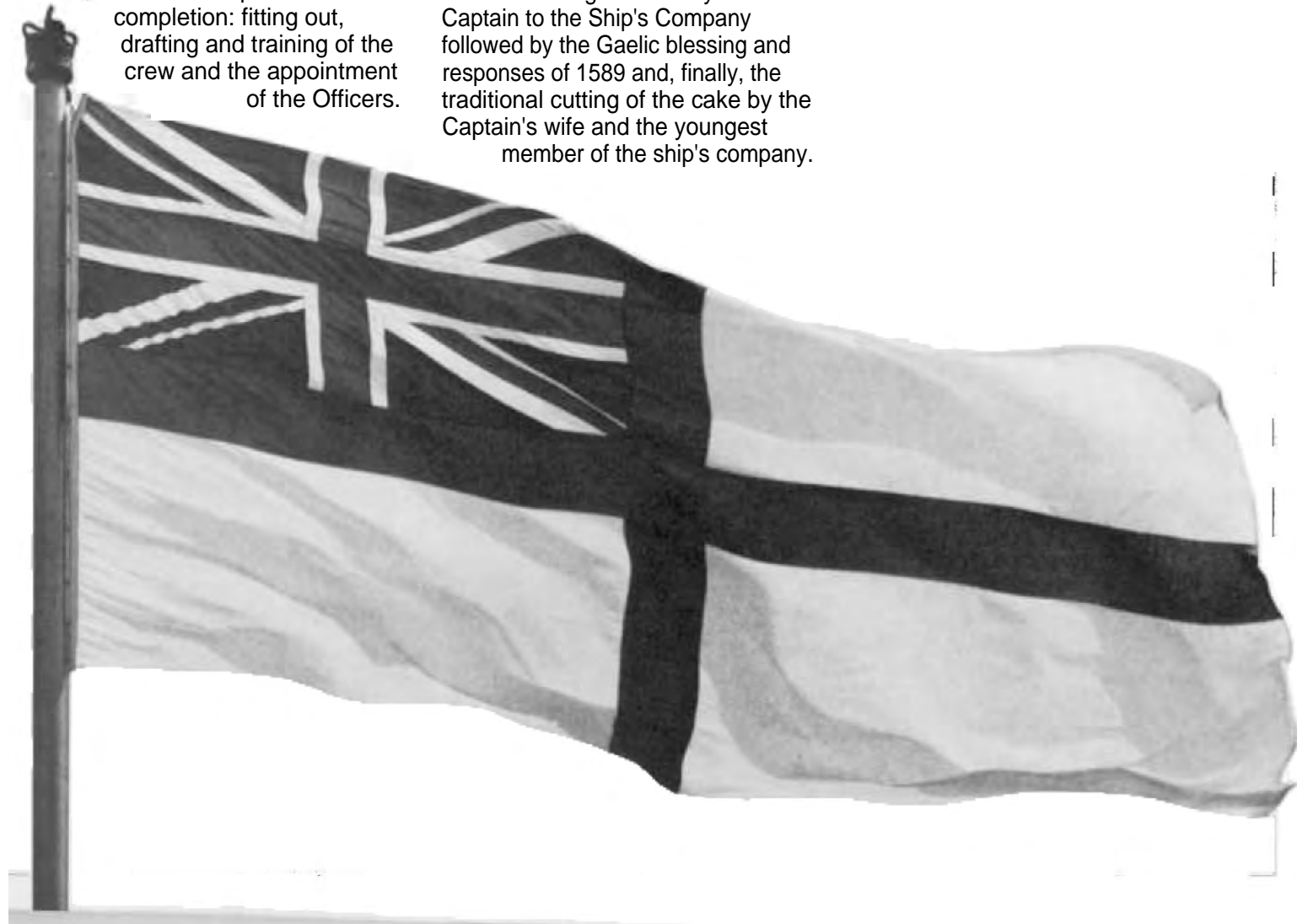
The term 'Commission' implied that a ship, crew or particular officer was under orders from the King for some purpose. Henry VIII acquired a large, permanent Fleet which was administered by a 'Navy Board', who were responsible for the provision of ships, their stores and personnel, as and when required by the King. There were 'Standing Officers' attached to each ship — 'shipkeepers' — and these included the Master, Boatswain, Carpenter and Cook, appointed 'by warrant' analagous to ship fittings in their permanency. The rest of the crew were hired for the period of a particular venture and dismissed when the ship was laid up, or 'put in ordinary' which, as they termed it later, meant 'being taken out of Commission.

Originally, the preparation of a ship for service was initiated by the appointment of King's Officers, with the King's Commission to direct the

military preparation of the ship: navigation and administration of the individual ship was the responsibility of the Master and the Standing Officers.

Today, the Commissioning Ceremony marks the climax of all the varied aspects of completion: fitting out, drafting and training of the crew and the appointment of the Officers.

The Commissioning Warrant is the authority for the Captain to command the ship and her company. The ceremony itself has evolved over many years and consists of a non-denominational religious service which includes the reading of the Commissioning Warrant by the Captain to the Ship's Company followed by the Gaelic blessing and responses of 1589 and, finally, the traditional cutting of the cake by the Captain's wife and the youngest member of the ship's company.





FOREWORD

Captain N Barker CBE Royal Navy

March 26th 1988

My Ship's Company and myself consider it a privilege to Serve in the third and perhaps the "Shiniest" of all the "Shiny Sheffs". Our predecessors had a National, indeed an International reputation, which exceeded almost any other British Warship of their time and consequently we have a very gallant and profound act to follow

No ship, in recent years, can have emerged from her Shipbuilding Yard with such support and goodwill both from her Builder and the City of her name.

It has been our pleasure to work amongst the Geordies. We always knew that Swan Hunters would build a good ship but they have surpassed our expectations. We are grateful to them, the sub-contractors, the MOD departments and all those who have contributed towards the creation of a real 21st Century Warship

May I thank my own Officers, Ship's Company and all the families and friends who have patiently waited for this Commissioning Day and for the Ship to arrive in her Base Port

Finally, we would all like to reuse a glass to Mrs Susan Stanley who launched our Ship and in whom we are proud to have such an attractive and thoughtful "sponsor". Long may she remain as part of our company.

PS. Since my initial remarks I have learnt that I will have to be relieved before the Commissioning Ceremony. Although this is a personal blow, I can not only recommend my successor as a fine arid brave Captain from the Falkland Conflict of 1982, but I know that he is as keen as I am to continue our strong friendship with the City of Sheffield and all our other affiliations.

May I wish HMS SHEFFIELD, her Ship's Company and her Ship's Companies families every bit of good luck. good fortune and good humour





FOREWORD

Captain A Morton DSC Royal Navy

Having only recently arrived in the Ship I am very conscious of my good fortune in joining you at such an exciting time, with operational acceptance only months away. I am also aware of how much you have already achieved and of the debt of gratitude I owe to Captain Barker and all those who have worked so hard to bring the Ship this far.

Swan Hunter's have built us a fine Ship which carries a proud name and tradition. It is now our exciting task to take her forward through trials and work up to full operational readiness and to make her the happiest, shiniest and most efficient Ship in the Fleet. This is a challenge which will test us all but one that we can face with confidence, knowing that we enjoy the support and good will of the City of Sheffield as well as many other friends and well wishers both on the Tyne and among the Royal Navy.

Finally I would like to say how enormously grateful we all are to our Sponsor, Mrs Susan Stanley, and to so many people in the City of Sheffield for their most generous gifts, which will remind us of our close ties with them and mark HMS SHEFFIELD as a very special Ship.

Tony Morton





OUR LADY SPONSOR

In the Spring of 1986, it was my great good fortune to be asked to launch HMS SHEFFIELD, and through all the excitement and colour of that marvellous day, two equally vivid memories remain; the sight of the ship herself, towering above everyone, combining tremendous strength with breathtaking delicacy and grace of line, and then the great sense of affection and pride expressed by everyone associated with her.

Since then this happy partnership has continued and all who admire her today will see that she has grown up into a superlatively fine ship with the most advanced defence capabilities. She has proved herself through demanding sea trials to be a fitting match for the highest skill and professionalism of all who will sail in her.

HMS SHEFFIELD comes from a famous line. The Battle Honours she proudly carries speak for themselves. Both her predecessors played highly distinguished parts in our recent history and I have every confidence that in her turn she is set fair to give her own outstanding performance on into the 21st century. I know that this will only be possible with the dedication of all her ship's company and with the help and support of their wives and families, to whom I should like to express special appreciation.

May I wish everyone in HMS SHEFFIELD, both now and in the future, the best of all possible good fortune for a long and safe life at sea in the finest traditions of the Royal Navy.

Every happiness to you all,





THE SHIPBUILDER

Swan Hunter has been building ships on the River Tyne in the North East of England since the middle of the nineteenth century. In that time shipyards of the Company have built over 2,700 ships including more than 400 warships and fleet auxiliaries.

HMS SHEFFIELD was the first ship to be launched by the new look Swan Hunter Shipbuilders Limited which was formed in January 1986 when the Company returned to the private sector after a buy-out from British Shipbuilders. The buy-out involved Managing Director, Alex

Marsh; former Managing Director, Ken Chapman; Roger Vaughan, Director of Performance, Improvement and Productivity at British Shipbuilders; and his brother Peter Vaughan, formerly with a merchant bank. The shareholders of the holding company — Swan Hunter Limited — include a number of financial institutions, investment trusts, insurance companies, merchant banks and senior Swan Hunter Managers.

The main strength of Swan Hunter lies in its design capability and technical expertise. It is the only shipbuilder in the United Kingdom whose breadth of present day experience encompasses warships, auxiliaries and complex merchant vessels. In addition it has been the lead designer for most of the Royal Fleet Auxiliaries built over the past twenty years.

Swan Hunter is one of the world's leading experts in the use of computer graphics for ship design. It pioneered the development in the UK and 63 computer work stations and some 200 interactive terminals are now in use throughout the company.

The company has a financial turn over of the order of £80 million per annum and employs over 3,500 people at three sites — Wallsend, Neptune, where HMS SHEFFIELD was built, and Hebburn.



Keel laying ceremony



HMS Sheffield taking shape at Neptune Yard



**A message
from
Mr Alex J Marsh
Chief Executive
Swan Hunter**



Swan Hunter hand over HMS SHEFFIELD to the Royal Navy with both pride and sadness. We are proud to have produced a fine ship which we know will serve the Royal Navy well in the years to come. We feel sadness that a ship, to which we have contributed so much, is leaving the shipyard for the last time. The people of Tyneside will remember her with affection.

HMS SHEFFIELD is a fine ship, her performance and trials gave all of us at Swan Hunter enormous satisfaction. We will follow her career with great interest and know that she will serve her country with the same dignity and honour as her predecessors.

We all wish HMS SHEFFIELD and her Ship's Company,
Good Luck and God Speed.

Swan Hunter Shipbuilders on the north bank of the river Tyne

