

= HMS Vindex ( 1915 ) =

HMS Vindex was a Royal Navy seaplane carrier during the First World War . The ship spent the bulk of her career operating the North Sea , where she twice unsuccessfully attacked the German Zeppelin base at Tondern and conducted anti @-@ Zeppelin patrols . One of her Bristol Scout aircraft made the first take @-@ off from an aircraft carrier in late 1915 . Another made the first interception of an airship by a carrier @-@ based aircraft in mid @-@ 1916 , when it unsuccessfully attacked the Zeppelin LZ17 . Vindex was transferred to the Mediterranean in 1918 and was sold back to her original owners in 1920 . She was requisitioned again in 1939 and served through World War II as a troopship under a different name . After the end of the war , the ship was returned to her owners and was sold for scrapping in 1954 .

= = Description and conversion = =

The ship had an overall length of 361 feet 6 inches ( 110 @.@ 2 m ) , a beam of 42 feet ( 12 @.@ 8 m ) , and a draught of 13 feet 8 inches ( 4 @.@ 2 m ) at deep load . She displaced 2 @,@ 950 long tons ( 3 @,@ 000 t ) . Her three direct @-@ drive steam turbines , each driving a propeller shaft , produced a total of 11 @,@ 000 shaft horsepower ( 8 @,@ 200 kW ) . Steam was provided by four boilers . The ship carried 475 long tons ( 483 t ) of coal which meant that she could steam for 995 nautical miles ( 1 @,@ 843 km ; 1 @,@ 145 mi ) at a speed of 10 knots ( 19 km / h ; 12 mph ) . Her crew numbered 218 , including 76 aviation personnel .

Vindex 's main armament consisted of four 50 @-@ calibre , 3 @-@ inch ( 76 mm ) 12 @-@ pounder 18 cwt guns , with 130 rounds stored for each gun . They fired 12 @.@ 5 @-@ pound ( 5 @.@ 7 kg ) projectiles at a muzzle velocity of 2 @,@ 600 ft / s ( 790 m / s ) ; this gave a maximum range of 9 @,@ 300 yd ( 8 @,@ 500 m ) . Their rate of fire was 15 rounds per minute . The ship also carried a single QF 6 pounder Hotchkiss anti @-@ aircraft gun for which she carried 55 rounds . This had a maximum depression of 8 ° and a maximum elevation of 60 ° . It fired a 6 @-@ pound ( 2 @.@ 7 kg ) shell at a muzzle velocity of 1 @,@ 765 ft / s ( 538 m / s ) at a rate of fire of 20 rounds per minute . It had a maximum ceiling of 10 @,@ 000 ft ( 3 @,@ 000 m ) , but an effective range of only 1 @,@ 200 yards ( 1 @,@ 100 m ) . The 12 @-@ pounder guns were later replaced by two 4 @-@ inch ( 102 mm ) anti @-@ aircraft guns .

Vindex was fitted with a 64 @-@ foot @-@ long ( 19 @.@ 5 m ) flying @-@ off deck forward , intended for aircraft with wheeled undercarriages , and a prominent hangar aft . Two electric cranes were fitted aft and two derricks forward to handle her aircraft . Initially she carried two dismantled single @-@ seat aircraft in her small forward hangar and five floatplanes in the hangar aft . Both aircraft in the forward hangar could be reassembled and flown off in about ten minutes . She was capable of operating up to seven aircraft , and during her career , operated a range of aircraft including the Sopwith Schneider , the Sopwith Pup and the Sopwith 1 ½ Strutter in addition to the aircraft mentioned .

= = Service = =

The ship was built in 1905 by Armstrong Whitworth , Newcastle upon Tyne as the Viking , a fast passenger ferry for the Isle of Man Steam Packet . Viking was requisitioned by the Royal Navy on 26 March 1915 for conversion to a seaplane carrier , and was purchased outright on 11 November 1915 . She was renamed HMS Vindex to avoid confusion with the destroyer HMS Viking .

Vindex was assigned to the Harwich Force in November 1915 and operated in the North Sea through 1917 . A Bristol Scout C made the first take @-@ off from the ship on 3 November 1915 with the ship steaming at 12 knots ( 22 km / h ; 14 mph ) ; the aircraft only used 46 feet ( 14 @.@ 0 m ) of the flight deck and it was the first take @-@ off by a landplane from a Royal Navy ship . On 25 March 1916 Vindex attempted to attack the Zeppelin base at Tondern with three Short Type 184 and two Sopwith Baby floatplanes , but the attack was ineffective . It did , however , draw out elements of the German Navy so it was repeated on 4 May with the addition of HMS Engadine . The

two ships carried eleven Babies between them , each armed with 65 @-@ pound ( 29 @.@ 5 kg ) bombs , but eight failed to take @-@ off ; one hit the mast of an escorting destroyer and one had to return due to engine trouble . No damage was inflicted , but one Zeppelin was shot down by a cruiser when it sortied to find the British ships . On 2 August one of her Bristol Scouts unsuccessfully attacked the Zeppelin LZ17 with explosive Ranken darts , the first interception of an airship by a carrier @-@ based aircraft in history . Vindex was to provide aerial reconnaissance with two of her seaplanes for a Coastal Motor Boat raid on 22 October 1916 , but the operation was aborted because of fog .

The ship was transferred to the Mediterranean Fleet at Malta in 1918 , where she served until she was paid off in late 1919 . Vindex was originally intended to be retained for service with the fleet after the end of the war , but this proved to be too expensive and she was sold back to her original owners on 12 February 1920 and reverted to her original name . She was requisitioned again in 1939 and served through the Second World War as a troopship , but not as HMS Vindex . The ship was returned to her owners in 1945 and was finally sold for scrap in 1954 .