

= HMS Blonde ( 1910 ) =

HMS Blonde was the lead ship of the her class of scout cruisers built for the Royal Navy in the first decade of the 20th century . She led the 7th Destroyer Flotilla in the Mediterranean Fleet from completion until 1912 . The ship was temporarily assigned to the 1st Destroyer Flotilla before she joined the 4th Battle Squadron in 1913 . During the First World War , Blonde was assigned to various battleship squadrons of the Grand Fleet . The ship was converted into a minelayer in 1917 , but never actually laid any mines . She was reduced to reserve in 1919 and sold for scrap in 1920 .

= = Design and description = =

Designed to provide destroyer flotillas with a command ship capable of outclassing enemy destroyers with her 10 four @-@ inch ( 102 mm ) guns , Blonde proved too slow in service from the start of her career . Her 25 @-@ knot ( 46 km / h ; 29 mph ) speed was inadequate to match the 27 @-@ to @-@ 30 @-@ knot ( 50 to 56 km / h ; 31 to 35 mph ) speeds of the destroyers she led in her flotilla .

Displacing 3 @, @ 350 long tons ( 3 @, @ 400 t ) , the ship had an overall length of 406 feet ( 123 @. @ 7 m ) , a beam of 41 feet 6 inches ( 12 @. @ 6 m ) and a deep draught of 14 feet 3 inches ( 4 @. @ 3 m ) . She was powered by four Parsons steam turbines , each driving one shaft . The turbines produced a total of 18 @, @ 000 indicated horsepower ( 13 @, @ 000 kW ) , using steam produced by 12 Yarrow boilers , and gave a maximum speed of 25 knots ( 46 km / h ; 29 mph ) . She carried a maximum of 780 long tons ( 790 t ) of coal and 189 long tons ( 192 t ) of fuel oil . Her crew consisted of 314 officers and enlisted men .

Her main armament consisted of 10 breech @-@ loading ( BL ) four @-@ inch Mk VII guns . The forward pair of guns were mounted side by side on a platform on the forecastle , three pairs were port and starboard amidships , and the two remaining guns were on the centreline of the quarterdeck , one ahead of the other . The guns fired their 31 @-@ pound ( 14 kg ) shells to a range of about 11 @, @ 400 yards ( 10 @, @ 400 m ) . Her secondary armament was four quick @-@ firing ( QF ) three @-@ pounder ( 47 mm ( 1 @. @ 9 in ) ) Vickers Mk I guns and two submerged 21 @-@ inch ( 530 mm ) torpedo tubes .

As a scout cruiser , the ship was only lightly protected to maximize her speed . She had a curved protective deck that was one inch ( 25 mm ) thick on the slope and .5 inches ( 13 mm ) on the flat . Her conning tower was protected by four inches of armour .

= = Construction and service = =

Blonde , the eighth and last ship of that name , was laid down on No. 5 Slipway at Pembroke Royal Dockyard , on 6 December 1909 and launched on 22 July 1910 by Lady Frances Williams , wife of Sir Osmond Williams , 1st Baronet . She was completed in May 1911 with Captain Thomas Bonham in command and became the leader of the 7th Destroyer Flotilla in the Mediterranean through 1912 . Captain Arthur Hulbert assumed command of the ship and the 1st Destroyer Flotilla of the First Fleet on 10 May 1912 . He was lost at sea on 12 January 1913 and replaced by Captain Thomas Shelford . He was relieved by Captain William Blunt on 25 April and transferred to the scout cruiser , Fearless , when that ship was assigned to the flotilla . The ship had been transferred to the 4th Battle Squadron as of 18 June and Captain Albert Scott assumed command on 5 July .

The ship was still assigned to the 4th Battle Squadron of the Grand Fleet in Scapa Flow at the start of the war in August 1914 . Captain John Casement was in command 20 March ? 21 May 1916 . Blonde and the Flotilla leader Broke were on patrol east of Scapa Flow when a depth charge carried by Blonde accidentally exploded . , damaging here upper deck and killing two of her crew . The accident resulted in the type of depth charge carried by Blonde , the Egerton Depth Charge , being withdrawn from use by the Grand Fleet . The ship was under refit in April 1916 and missed the Battle of Jutland on 31 May ? 1 June 1916 . Blonde was still detached in August . By October , she had rejoined the 4th Battle Squadron , with Captain Basil Brooke in command , but had been

transferred to the 1st Battle Squadron by April 1917 , Captain The Honourable Arthur Forbes @-@ Sempill having assumed command in February . On 1 June , Commander Theodore Hallett relived Forbes @-@ Semphill . In September 1917 , she was converted into a minelayer , but never laid any mines in combat . Hallett was relived by Captain Gregory Wood @-@ Martin on 30 December and he retained command until 10 January 1919 when he was relieved in turn by Captain Maurice Evans . Blonde was in reserve by February and had been assigned to the Nore Reserve by 1 May , together with her sister ship Blanche . The sisters were listed for sale by 18 March 1920 and Blonde was sold for scrap on 6 May to T. C. Pas , and was broken up in the Netherlands .