

= Blonde @-@ class cruiser =

The Blonde @-@ class cruisers were a pair of scout cruisers built for the Royal Navy in the first decade of the 20th century . Upon completion in 1910 ? 11 , they served as flotilla leaders for destroyer flotillas of the First Fleet until 1913 when they were assigned to battleship squadrons . When the First World War began in August 1914 , they remained with their squadrons as the First Fleet was incorporated into the Grand Fleet , although they changed squadrons over the course of the war . Blonde did not participate in the Battle of Jutland in mid @-@ 1916 , unlike her sister ship , Blanche , which did , but never fired a shot . They were converted into minelayers the following year , but only Blanche actually laid mines . The sisters were reduced to reserve in 1919 and sold for scrap in 1920 ? 21 .

= = Design and description = =

These scout cruisers were too slow to lead destroyers in battle or to defend the fleet against enemy destroyer attacks , but they were still used as flotilla leaders . The Blonde class was essentially a repeat of the preceding Boadicea class , albeit with a more powerful armament and less fuel . Displacing 3 @, @ 350 long tons (3 @, @ 400 t) , the ships had an overall length of 405 feet (123 @. @ 4 m) , a beam of 41 feet 6 inches (12 @. @ 6 m) and a deep draught of 15 feet 6 inches (4 @. @ 7 m) . They were powered by four sets of Parsons steam turbines , each driving two shafts . The turbines produced a total of 18 @, @ 000 indicated horsepower (13 @, @ 000 kW) , using steam produced by 12 Yarrow boilers that burned both fuel oil and coal , and gave a maximum speed of 24 @. @ 5 knots (45 @. @ 4 km / h ; 28 @. @ 2 mph) . They carried a maximum of 780 long tons (790 t) of coal and 190 long tons (190 t) of fuel oil that gave them a range of 4 @, @ 100 nautical miles (7 @, @ 600 km ; 4 @, @ 700 mi) at 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . Their crew consisted of 314 officers and ratings .

The main armament of the Blonde class consisted of ten breech @-@ loading (BL) 4 @-@ inch (102 mm) Mk VII guns . The forward pair of guns were mounted side by side on a platform on the forecastle , six were amidships , three on each broadside , 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) . Their secondary armament was four quick @-@ firing (QF) three @-@ pounder (1 @. @ 9 @-@ inch (47 mm)) Vickers Mk I guns and two submerged 21 @-@ inch (533 mm) torpedo tubes .

As scout cruisers , the ships were only lightly protected to maximise their speed . They had a curved protective deck that was one inch (25 mm) thick on the slope and 0 @. @ 5 inches (13 mm) on the flat . Their conning tower was protected by four inches of armour .

= = Ships = =

= = Service = =

Both Blonde and Blanche began their careers with destroyer flotillas , Blonde as senior officers ' ship for the 7th Flotilla of the Mediterranean Fleet and Blanche with the 1st Destroyer Flotilla of the First Fleet . But the sisters were transferred to the 4th and the 3rd Battle Squadrons , respectively , of the First Fleet in 1913 .

Blonde remained with the 4th Battle Squadron through 1916 , although she was detached for several months mid year . She had been transferred to the 1st Battle Squadron by April 1917 and was converted into a minelayer later in the year , although she never laid any mines in combat . Similarly , Blanche remained with the 3rd Battle Squadron until January 1916 when she joined her sister in the 4th Battle Squadron . The ship participated in the Battle of Jutland , but was on the unengaged side of the fleet and did not have the opportunity to fire at the Germans . She was detached from the 4th Battle Squadron at the beginning of 1917 , presumably to be converted into a

minelayer . Blanche was assigned to the 5th Battle Squadron by April and laid some mines at the entrance to the Kattegat in February 1918 .

Blonde was in reserve by February 1919 and had been assigned to the Nore Reserve by 1 May , together with Blanche . The sisters were listed for sale by 18 March 1920 and Blonde was sold for scrap on 6 May . Blanche followed on 27 July 1921 .