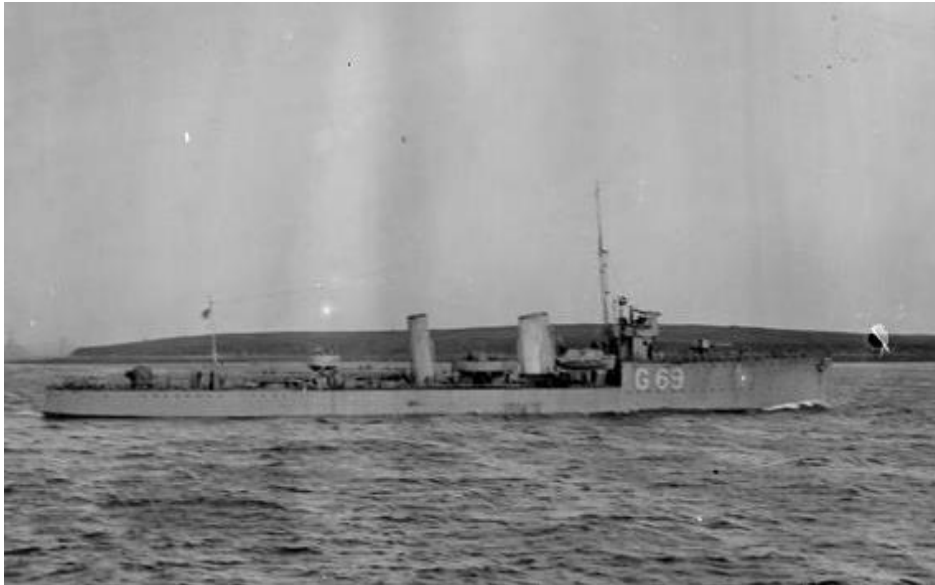


THE FIRST HMS RELENTLESS

By Sam185



'M' Class Torpedo Boat Destroyer - 1916-1926



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An 'M' Class torpedo boat destroyer, the first HMS RELENTLESS was ordered under the Emergency Shipbuilding Programme of 1914. Laid down in May 1915, she was built by Messrs Yarrow & Co. - Yard No. 1391 - at Scotstoun, Glasgow.

'Relentless' was the first ship to bear the name - chosen by The Right Honourable James Balfour, the First Lord of the Admiralty – and after being launched on 15th April 1916, she was commissioned on 23rd May 1916 under the command of Lt Hugh D Colville.

With a stated complement of 79 and weighing 930 tons, she was 273ft long, had a beam of 26ft and a draught of 10ft 6in. She was armed with 3 x 4" guns, a 2pdr pom-pom and 4 x 21" torpedoes. Propulsion came from 3 Yarrow-type boilers, Brown-Curtis steam turbines and 2 shaft which produced 27,000 hp; in all, this gave 'Relentless' a maximum speed of 36 knots.

The ship was initially given the pennant number G57 but that was changed to G69 in January 1917 and, it seems, to H49 in 1918. I am only currently able to find three photos from this time period attributed to "HMS Relentless", one of G59 and two of H49.

As part of the 14th Destroyer Flotilla, 'Relentless' joined the Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow in June 1916 shortly after the Battle of Jutland and was kept fully employed on patrol and on escort duties leading up to the Battle of the Heligoland Bight.

14TH DESTROYER FLOTILLA, GRAND FLEET - *Vampire Anzac Ophelia **Relentless** Medina Nonpareil Observer Opportune Orestes Pellew Peyton Plover Patriot Offa Peregrine Plucky Norman Orford Pylades Warwick Velox Whirlwind Paladin Penn Octavia Patrician Tyrant Splendid Tobago Sabre Seafire Seraph*

On 17th April 1917 while exercising with paravanes, the starboard paravane exploded by contact with some unknown object. The explosion caused the port paravane to break surface and it also exploded. No submarines had been seen or heard and it was considered that the explosion had been accidental.

In May 1917, the 14th Destroyer Flotilla including 'Relentless' was employed in screening the 4th Battle Squadron (Admiral Sir F.C. Doveton Sturdee, Bt.) during the activities in the North Sea at the time. In November, the Flotillas acted as a screen to the Battleship 'Iron Duke' during the Heligoland Bight operations.

January 1918 saw 'Relentless' attached to the 4th Destroyer Flotilla for services with the Battle Cruiser Squadron and for the remainder of the year was employed on duties in the North Sea and the Norwegian coast. On 19th September 1918, 'Relentless' was in action against an enemy submarine, the only time the ship appears to have been in actual contact with the enemy.



The 'Navy List' for the period shows the complement as approx. 80 with the following officers:

JULY 1916	G57
Commander	Lt Hugh D Colville
1 st Lt	Lt George M Crockett
	S/Lt Roger V C Hunt
Gunner (T)	Alfred Gittus
Engineer	Lt (E) Augustus G Jarrett
Surgeon	Surg Prob Kenneth F D Waters
JANUARY 1917	G69
Commander	Lt Hugh D Colville
1 st Lt	Lt George M Crockett
	S/Lt Reginald A B Williams
Gunner (T)	Alfred Gittus
Mid	Midshipman John F D Bowen
	Midshipman Brian de Courcy- Ireland
Engineer	Lt (E) Augustus G Jarrett
Surgeon	Surg Prob Thomas Carlyle
AUGUST 1918	H49
Commander	Lt Edward F B Law
1 st Lt	Lt George M Crockett
	S/Lt Kenneth E Gain
	S/Lt George R Falcon
Gunner (T)	William E Palmer
Mid	Midshipman George A Nott
Engineer	Lt (E) Andrew M Wallace
Surgeon	Surg Prob Thomas Carlyle

On 19th March 1919, following the end of the Great War 'Relentless' was reduced to the Reserve at Portsmouth. Subsequently, on 16th December 1926 she was sold for disposal to Mr John Cashmore of Trent Bridge, Staffordshire and scrapped at Cashmore's in Newport, South Wales (<http://www.newportpast.com/jd/cashmore.htm>)