

Basic Detail Report



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Title

HMAS AUSTRALIA - England expects that every man this day will do his duty

Date

c 1916

Primary Maker

Stephen Cribb

Medium

Printing ink on paper

Dimensions

Overall: 88 x 138 mm

Name

Postcard

History

HMAS AUSTRALIA (I) was an Indefatigable class battle cruiser launched in 1911 and later commissioned as the first flagship of the Royal Australian Navy. It was built by John Brown and Co Ltd at Glasgow and sailed for Australia in 1913 after extensive gun, torpedo and machinery trials. It led the Australian Fleet Unit consisting of MELBOURNE, SYDNEY, ENCOUNTER, YARRA, WARREGO and PARRAMATTA into Sydney Harbour on 4 October 1913. It was the embodiment of the Commonwealth of Australia's sea power, and as the flagship of the new Fleet, was the focal point of public interest. AUSTRALIA visited most of Australia's main ports in the first year and several songs and music compositions were dedicated to the vessel. In World War I HMAS AUSTRALIA was active in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans during which time the ship became the first battle cruiser to launch an aircraft in 1918 (light cruiser HMAS SYDNEY (I) was the first Australian ship to launch an aircraft in 1917). In the Pacific AUSTRALIA took part in seizing German Pacific colonies and destroying their radio networks. In the Atlantic it took part in sweeps, patrols and convoy escort tasks particularly in the North Sea and was present at the surrender of the German Fleet at Firth of Forth, Scotland in November 1918. HMAS AUSTRALIA arrived back in Australia in 1919. After the war, AUSTRALIA resumed normal duties in Australian waters until December 1921 when a lack of funding saw the vessel paid off into reserve. Most of the vessel's useful equipment and fittings were removed, and eventually it was decided to scrap AUSTRALIA under the terms of the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 (which aimed at reducing global tonnage of warships after World War I). In January 1924 AUSTRALIA was sold for a mere £3,000, and on 12 April the battle cruiser was scuttled by demolition charges off Sydney Heads. In attendance were HMA Ships BRISBANE and ANZAC, and HM Ships DEHLI, DANAE, DAUNTLESS

and DRAGON of the British Light Cruiser Squadron, and steamers crowded with spectators. The vessel disappeared amid almost as much fanfare as when it first arrived in Australia only 11 years previously. Admiral Sir John Jellicoe (1859-1935) commanded the Grand Fleet at the Battle of Jutland in World War I and was later First Sea Lord of the Admiralty. On 21 October 1805, the Battle of Trafalgar was fought off the south-west coast of Spain. It turned the tide against the French Emperor Napoléon Bonaparte's threatened invasion of Britain. Under the command of Vice Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson, the Royal Navy defeated the combined French and Spanish fleets - but it came at a high price when Nelson was mortally wounded.