

# SOME RAID THAT, BY CRIPES!

## HMS *FURIOUS* AND THE TONDERN RAID, 19 JULY 1918 - PART 2

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THE ORDERS FOR OPERATION F.7 were issued by Sir David Beatty to Senior Officers, to be distributed to commanding officers of ships involved, on 16 July 1918. The object being: *To attack the Zeppelin sheds at Tondern with bombs and to attack any enemy airships sighted.* The forces employed were in two squadrons, both based at Rosyth.

Force A, the strike force, was made up of *Furious*, with her close escort of three destroyers, and the First Light Cruiser Squadron comprising *Caledon* (Flag; Rear-Admiral Sir Walter Cowan), *Inconstant*, *Galatea*, *Royalist* and *Phaeton* with five more destroyers of the 13th Flotilla.

Force B, the covering force, had the 1st Division of the First Battle Squadron, the Seventh Light Cruiser Squadron, and eight destroyers.

The First Battle Squadron at this time composed ten battleships, five older ships and five new *Revenge* class ships. Sir Charles E. Madden, commanding the First Battle Squadron, flew his flag in *Revenge*, and the 1st Division comprised the remainder of the class, *Ramillies*, *Resolution*, *Royal Oak* and *Royal Sovereign*. Sir Charles' Second-in-Command was Rear Admiral Sir William C.M. Nicholson, flying his flag in *Emperor of India*. Beatty's order that the 1st Division should be commanded by the Second-in-Command during the operation was viewed with a Nelsonian blind eye by Madden who sailed in his flagship. The 7th Light Cruiser Squadron, commanded by Rear Admiral George H. Borrett, comprised *Carysfort* (Flag), *Aurora*, *Penelope* and *Undaunted*.

Beatty's orders included instructions that, *MOVEMENTS. Force A is to leave Rosyth on the night 16th/17th July, and proceed to position A - 237° 14 miles from Lodbjerg Light, and thence to position C - 56.03N., 7.35E., arriving about 0300 on 18th July.*

*Machines for attacking Tondern are to be flown from position C and force is then to cruise as ordered by Admiral Commanding Aircraft.*

*After the return of all machines as ordered by Admiral Commanding Aircraft, the force is to return to Rosyth.*

*Force B is to leave Rosyth after Force A, keeping within supporting distance, proceeding to position 56.45N., 6.00E., thence to cruise in the vicinity of the Little Fisher Bank. If no intelligence has been received by 0800 on 18th July, force is to return to Rosyth.*

*SPECIAL ORDERS. Admiral Commanding Aircraft is requested to give detailed orders to Force A. The Admiral Commanding Aircraft, and Senior Officer, Force B, are to confer prior to sailing with regard to all movements so as to ensure cooperation and support.*

*If weather does not permit of machines being flown from position C, the Admiral Commanding Aircraft has discretion to postpone the operation for a period of 24 hours, or to*

*abandon the operation and return to Rosyth. If the decision is made to postpone the operation for 24 hours, Force A is to retire to the Northward, cruising as necessary to arrive in position C 24 hours later. A Light Cruiser should be detached to inform the Senior Officer, Force B, of the decision taken.*

All in all, an admirable set of orders, setting out the requirements but not tying down the commanders on the spot with impossibly detailed instructions.

The ACA, Rear Admiral Richard F. Phillimore, also provided a set of instructions for the pilots involved.

### OPERATION F.7.

#### ORDERS FOR *FURIOUS* AIRCRAFT.

(1) *The two flights for attacking Tondern will leave at as short intervals as possible after 0300, or as soon after that time as light permits of formation being picked up and kept. On account of limited fuel endurance, it is important that time should not be wasted picking up formation.*

(2) *The attack should be made at low altitude, after which machines of each flight should endeavour to meet at a pre-arranged rendezvous before returning, but only a few minutes can be allowed for this.*

(3) *Aeroplanes should pass to seaward of Blaavand Huk, and neutral territory should not be infringed.*

(4) *If a Zeppelin is encountered on the outward journey, it should be attacked, bombs being dropped beforehand. If encountered on homeward journey it should be attacked irrespective of fuel remaining, machine landing in Denmark or Germany afterwards if necessary.*

(5) *Fighting with enemy aircraft other than Zeppelins should be avoided.*

(6) *If visibility on return is so low that inshore destroyer cannot be sighted, pilots should endeavour to pick up Fleet by taking their departure and steering N. 45° W. Mag. from Lyngvig Lighthouse.*

(7) *Pilots are to be instructed in the position and movement of ships between the hours 0300 and 0630.*

*On return of machines, destroyers when ready to pick up aeroplanes will hoist an affirmative flag.*

*Pilots should land about two cables ahead of a destroyer, selecting the one nearest *Furious* which has this flag flying.*

*The inshore destroyer will not be used for picking up.*

(8) *If, on return, ships are seen to be steaming away from coast and destroyers are not flying affirmative flag, pilots should close *Furious* and read deck signals on her alighting deck before alighting in sea.*

(9) *Pilots should be guided by the amount of fuel remaining when deciding to carry out orders in para. (6) and (8).*

From the above it is obvious that the airships were the prime target, even the sheds at the base were to be ignored if