

# Battlecruisers after Jutland in the U.S. and Britain

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# Naval Administration

## Britain

- Board of Admiralty
- First Lord
- First Sea Lord

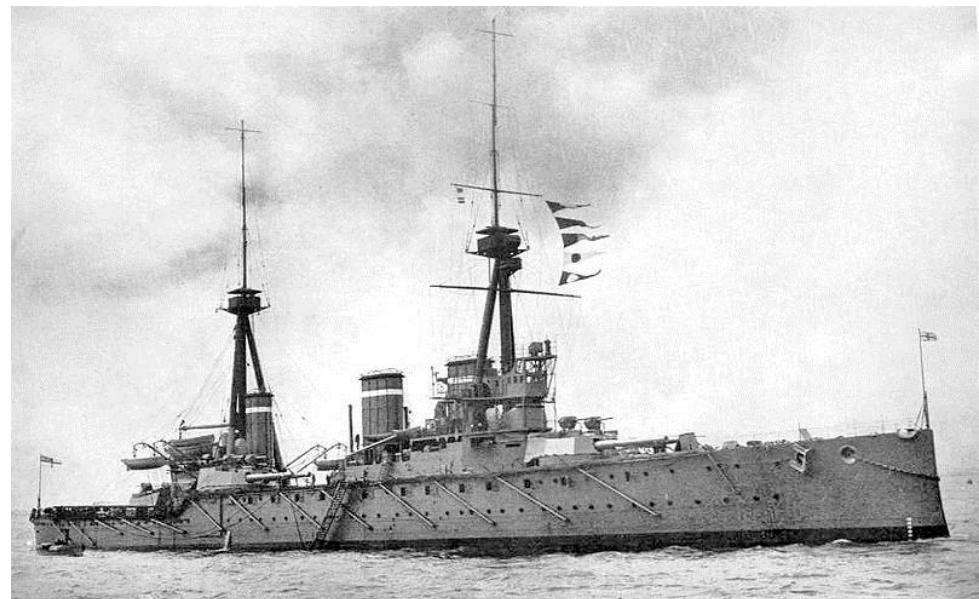
## United States

- Secretary of the Navy
- Chief of Naval Operations
- Office of Naval Operations (OpNav)
- General Board
- Technical Bureaus.

# What is a Battlecruiser?

- Large guns, high speed, light armor
- Introduced in 1905 by British Navy under Adm. Fisher, as part of new global strategy.
- Germany, Japan follow British lead by 1911. U.S. does not.

Right: Admiral  
John Fisher  
Below: HMS  
*Invincible*



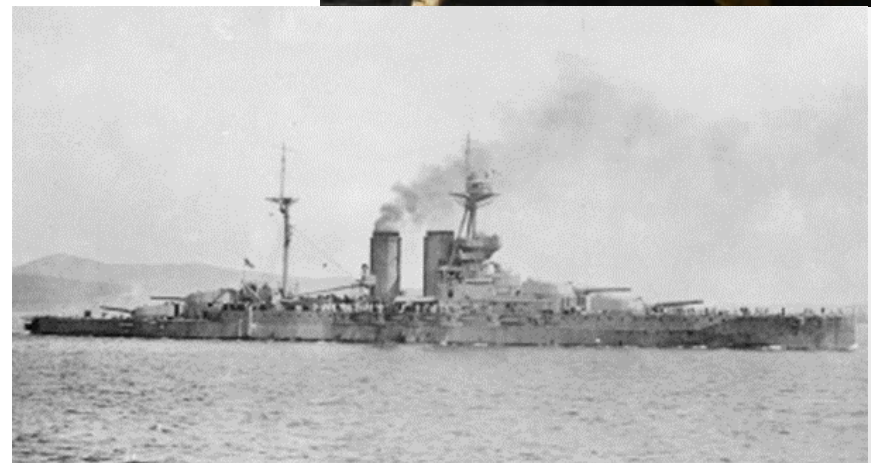
# The “*Dreadnought* Revolution”

<i>Lord Nelson</i> (1904)	<i>Minotaur</i> (1904)	Name Design Year	<i>Dreadnought</i> (1905)	<i>Invincible</i> (1905)
£1,500,000	£1,415,000	Cost	£1,783,900	£1,769,000
16,750	27,000	Horsepower	23,000	41,000
18 kts.	23 kts.	Speed	21 kts.	25 kts.
4x12”	4x9.2”	Main Battery	10x12”	8x12”
12”	6”	Armor: Belt	11”	6”
1.5”	2”	Deck	3”	2.5”
12”	7”	Turrets	11”	10”
16,750 tons	14,600 tons	Displaceme nt	18,000 tons	17,370 tons

# Battlecruisers and the Royal Navy

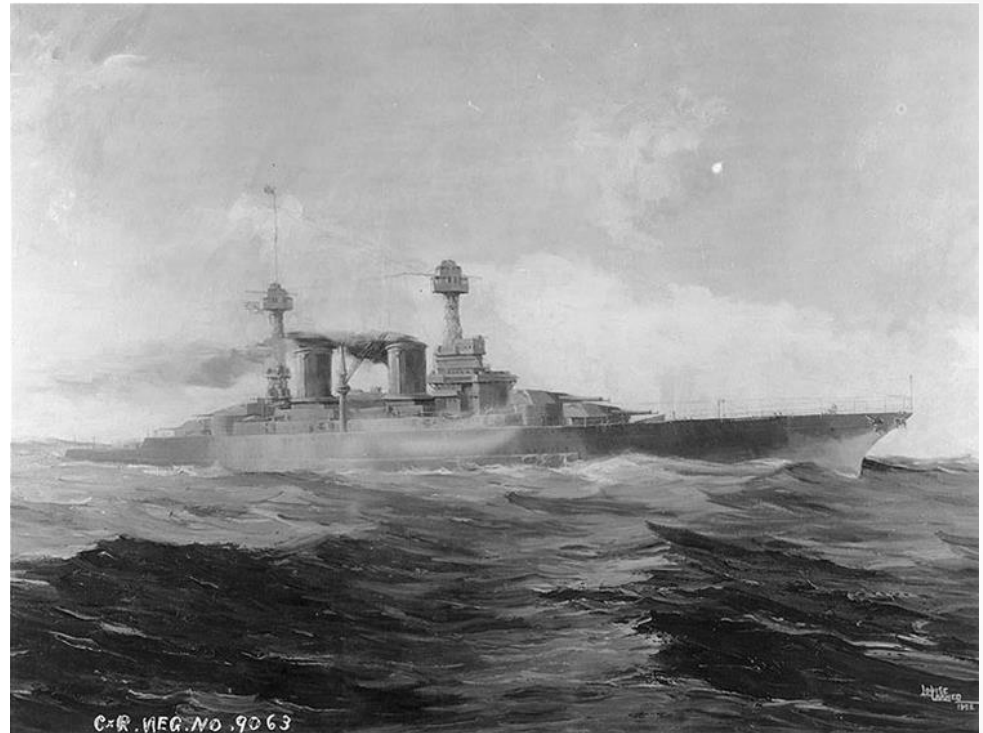
- 1908-9: Battlecruisers enter service.
- Early 1910: Fisher forced out of office.
- 1910-12. Battlecruiser remain, but Fisher's ideas are ignored.
- 1911-12. Churchill stops building battlecruisers in favor of "fast battleships."
- 1914: Fisher's return. Battlecruiser construction restarted

Right: Winston Churchill, 1916  
(Painting by William Orpen)  
Below: "Fast battleship" HMS *Queen Elizabeth*.



# Battlecruisers and the U.S. Navy

- Last major naval power to build battlecruisers.
- USN strategic culture uniquely hostile.
- Some early interest as “fast wing” to 1910, role rejected.
- Battlecruiser concept resurrected by 1912 for scouting.
- Six included in 1916 Navy Bill.



Artist's rendering of USS *Lexington*

# The General Board's Battlecruiser, 1915

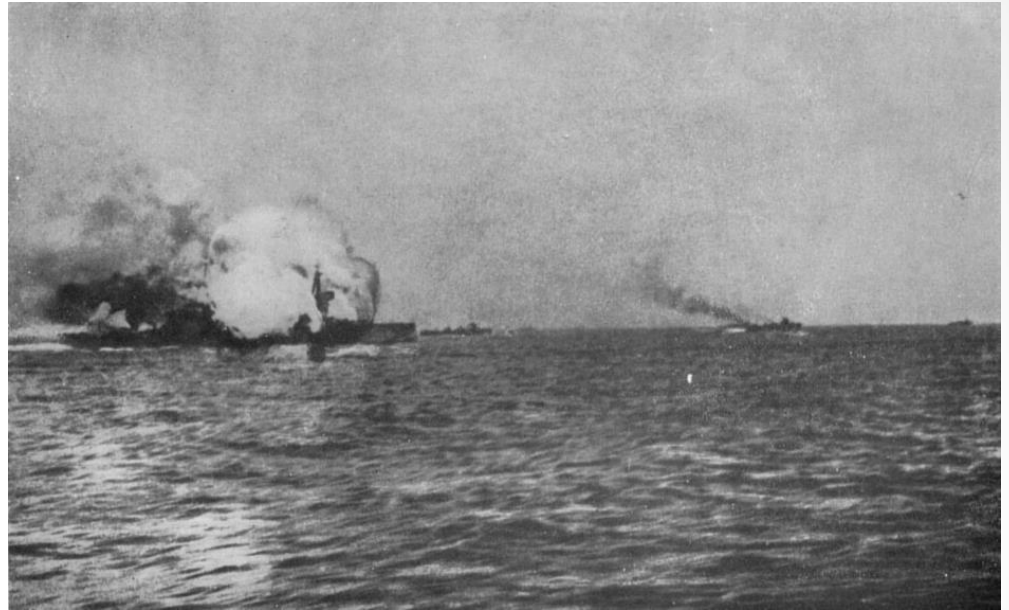
- Light armor; proof against 6" shells.
- High speed.
- Heavy battery.
- More firepower, less armor than foreign counterparts.

	U.S., 1915	HMS <i>Tiger</i>	HIJMS <i>Kongo</i>
Speed	35 kts	28 kts	27.5 kts
Main Battery	10x14"	8x13.5"	8x14"
Armor: Belt	5"	9"	8"
Deck	2"	3"	1"
Turrets	6"	9"	10"
Barbettes	5"	9"	10"



# The Battle of Jutland

- May 31-June 1, 1916
- British Grand Fleet and German High Seas Fleet
- Largest naval battle of WWI.
- 3 British battlecruisers lost
- New British battlecruiser redesigned.



HMS *Invincible* blowing up during the battle.



# Initial U.S. Responses to Jutland

- Did not affect passage of 1916 Bill.
- U.S. Navy officers focus on faulty British doctrine.
- Adm. Dewey and General Board reaffirm that U.S.N. wants battlecruisers as scouts—Jutland not possible with U.S. doctrine.
- Cpt. Sims, “When . . . they are deliberately put against battleships they must expect to suffer.”

# American Entry into WWI

- Work on battlecruisers stopped, June 1917.
- Access to Admiralty war records and Grand Fleet.
- Sims to London as commander of U.S.N. in Europe.
- Liaison officers baffled by British wartime battlecruisers (*Renown, Repulse, Courageous, Glorious, Furious*).

# HMS *Hood* and the U.S. Navy

- First post-Jutland capital ship.
- U.S.N. given plans, mid-1917.
- Battlecruiser or fast battleship?
- Future of naval warfare?



# The General Board and *Hood*

- Could potentially fulfill scouting *and* fast wing roles.
- GB rejects “fast battleship” concept.
- Late ‘17: GB approves change in U.S. battlecruiser main battery: from 10x14” to 8x16”.
- Technical bureaus press for bigger changes.

	1915 GB Design	HMS <i>Hood</i>
Speed	35 kts	31 kts
Battery	10x14”	8x15”
Armor: Belt	5”	12”
Deck	2”	3”
Turret	6”	15”
Barbette	5”	12”

# The Bureaus' Fast Battleships

- Mid-1918: Technical bureaus suggest major changes with “ABCD” designs.
- “B” is an updated battlecruiser, but bureaus push “C” and “D,” fast battleships modeled on *Hood*.
- Support from Secretary, OpNav.

	Design B	Design C	Design D	HMS <i>Hood</i>
Speed	33 kts	30 kts	29 kts.	31 kts
Main Battery	8x16”	12x16”	12x16”	8x15”
Armor: Belt	9”	12”	12”	12”
Deck	2”	3”	3”	3”
Turrets	12”	16”	16”	15”

\*Design “A” (not shown) was the non-controversial design for the next year’s battleship.

# The Fast Battleship Debate, 1918

- ABCD memo sparks turf war inside Navy Department.
- GB objection 1: Bureaus overstepped their responsibilities.
- GB objection 2: Fast battleship is too weak to be a useful battleship, too slow to be a useful battlecruiser.
- GB objection 3: Cost.
- Late 1918, Secretary accepts GB plan, retains battlecruisers in preliminary 1919 Navy budget.

# The Fast Battleship Debate, 1919

- Commanders active in Europe during WWI support the idea of fast battleships based on war experience.
- OpNav supports fast battleships based on American needs for next war with Japan.
- This criticism from line officers bolsters the pro-fast battleship position.



# May, 1919: Final *Lexington* Design

- Special GB meeting produces compromise along the lines of the bureaus' "B" design.
- Armor upgraded, speed slightly reduced, no other changes.

	1915 GB Design	Final Design
Speed	35 kts	33.2 kts
Battery	10x14"	8x16"
Armor: Belt	5"	7"
Deck	2"	2.25"
Turret	6"	11"
Barbette	5"	9"

# Britain after World War I

- Postwar construction freeze
- Adm. Beatty and battlecruisers
- Admiralty Board pushes for fast battleships
- 1921: *G.3* design



A model of the projected G.3 battlecruisers.

# *G.3 and Lexington*

	USS <i>Lexington</i> (1919)	Admiralty G.3 (1921)
Displacement	43,500 tons	48,000 tons
Horsepower	180,000	160,000
Speed	33.2 kts	31-2 kts
Main Battery	8x16"	9x16"
Armor: Belt	7"	14"
Deck	2.25"	8"
Turret	11"	17"

# Battlecruisers and the Washington Conference

- Summer-Fall 1921: Navy-State Department negotiations over initial Conference proposal.
- U.S. Navy wants to keep some battlecruisers; State plan makes this impossible.
- In final treaty, U.S. agrees to scrap 4 under-construction battlecruisers, convert 2 to carriers.
- 35,000 ton limit on capital ships and 10,000 ton limit on cruisers. British allowed to keep 40,000 ton+ *Hood* and build two 35,000 ton capital ships.
- U.S.N. very concerned about battlecruiser gap; American fleet still lacks speed.

# The “Tinclads”

- 10,000-ton cruisers with 8” guns
- U.K.: trade protection and sea lane control
- U.S.: miniature battlecruisers.



Above: USS *Pensacola*

Left: County-class cruiser HMS *Berwick*



# American and British Tinclads

	USS <i>Pensacola</i>	British County-class
Speed	32.7 kts.	31.5 kts.
Main Battery	10x8"	8x8"
Armor: Belt	4"	4.5"
Deck	1.75"	3.5"
Turret	1.5"	1"

Questions?