



anz Losel, a German photographer long-established in Sheerness, was accused of being a spy. His house was vandalised and he was ordered to be deported within days of war being declared. He ended up in Brixton prison but his fate is unknown.

ENCE OF TH 





Sheppey's strategic location led to it being heavily fortified and nicknamed Barbed Wire Island. Miles of trenches were dug along the cliffs and those wanting access needed special identity cards — 'Sheppey Passports'.



Keeping guard over the Thames and Medway estuaries was an array of heavy guns stretching along Sheppey's coast — most notably the formidable 9.2in guns of the Ravelin Battery near the dockyard. Th bottom image shows the emplacement in the 1920s.

## SHEPPEY IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR Barbed Wire Island

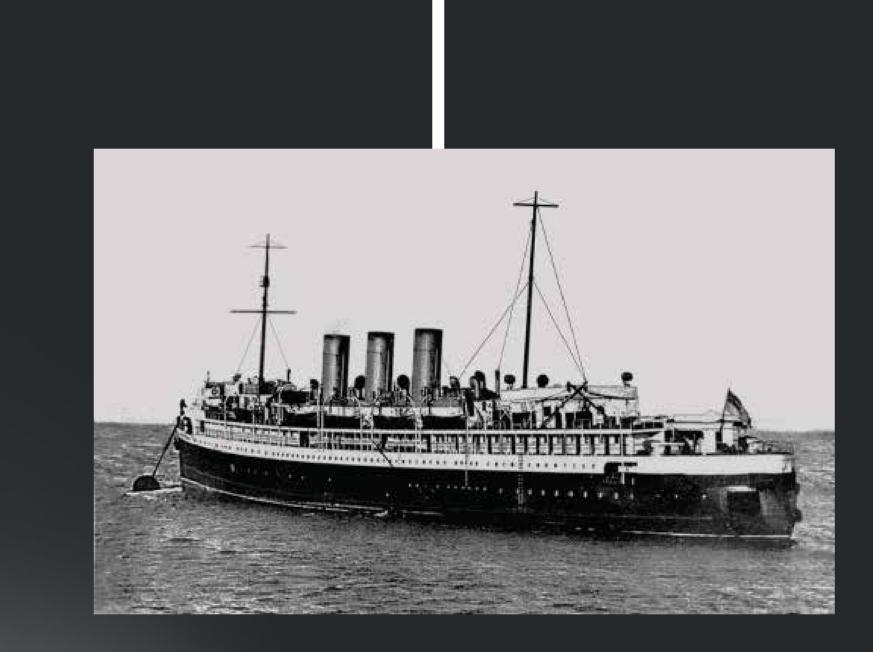
astchurch airfield can claim to be the firm al Naval Air Station and it was here tha irst operational unit sent overseas w ned under the command of pionee aviator Charles Samson (right). The base w ed mostly for training but also provided a defence. There was also an air gunnery hool in Leysdown (below).

EASTCHUR

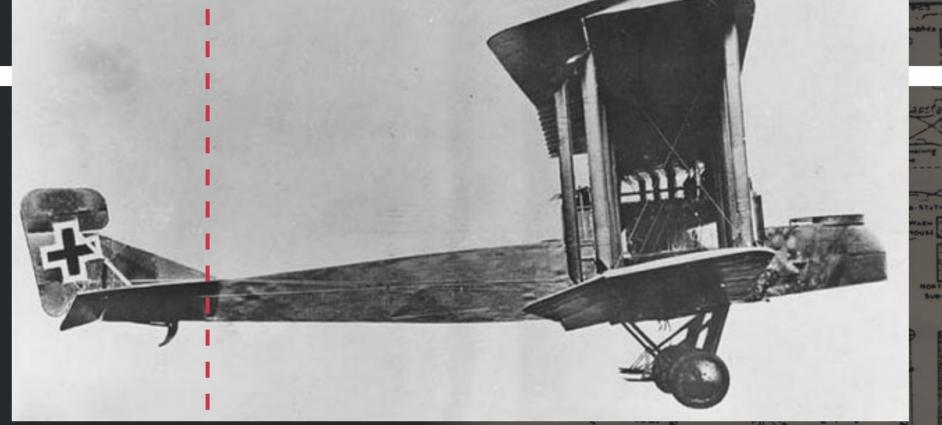
SITE PLAN.

HMS Bulwark, a battleship guarding the Thames Estuary against possible invasion, was destroyed by an interna explosion while anchored near Sheerness on November 26th 1914 Only 12 of its 750 crew survived.

BULWARK BL.

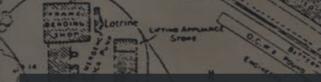


Six months later, the Princess Irene an ocean liner converted into a minelayer, blew apart as mines we being loaded off Sheerness. The explosion scattered debris for miles and killed 352 personnel, including 76 dockyard workers.

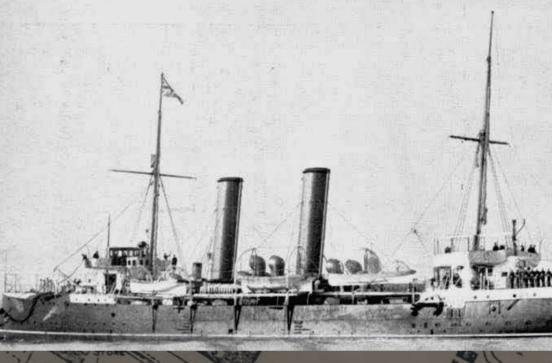


Sheppey was attacke bombers and airships people at home no themselves on the fr line. The worst at on June 5th 1917 whe people were killed i bombers, one of w shot down and re near Barton's Point (





and repairs were the ouilt there — HMS Espieale, ( nd Odin (bottom right) earned battle honours in th iddle East. Sheerness-buil HMS Brilliant (top right), a ligh cruiser, was also used as a block ship during the raid or erman-held Ostend ir



BLUE TO WN



Although Armistice Day, November 11th 1918, is when hostilities were halted, Sheppey's main celebration of the War's end was on June 29th 1919, when the Treaty of Versailles, which set out the peace terms, was signed.

Unveiled on April 29th 1922, Sheerness War Memorial is one of the few to remember civilian losses, in particular James McCudden VC, a forme those killed in air raids. It is be a pilot by watching the fliers at Leysdown and went on to become also unusual in featuring the figure of Liberty as a one of the top fighter aces of the War. He died in a crash on July 9th on-triumphalist tribute to the fallen. 1918 aged just 23 — three months after being awarded the Victoria Cross for his outstanding service.



