The Airship HMA No. 24 by Norman Arnold

Norman Arnold

Sold

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Height: 20.95 cm (8.2")

Width: 31.74 cm (12.5")

Description

A water colour and gouache on board of the rigid airship HMA 24 made by the Glaswegian company of William Beardmore and Sons landing at Inchinnan.

The back of the board has an inscribed label stating '3. Beardmore H.M.A. No. 24 1917, Crew 17, M.P.H. 52.m., Bombload .4. 100 lb, Landing At Inchinnan 1917'. The front of the board is initialled by the artist 'NA.' to the left bottom corner.

In June 1915 the Admiralty chose three companies, Armstrong and Whitworth, Beardmore and Shorts Brothers, to supplement the work of Vickers in building rigid airships to counter the threat of the German Zeppelins. Beardmore's No. 24 was completed in October 1917 and was found to be much heavier than those made by the other companies due to their use of larger and heavier rivets, bracing pieces and fastenings. Beardmore's shed was needed to build their next ship and so H.M.A 24 had to be moved to its air station at East Fortune. In order to do this all the machinery, including the engine and propeller had to be removed from the aft car to reduce its weight. The plan was to replace the engine in a modified, lighter car at East Fortune but this was never done. Despite her slow speed No.24 still flew over 164 hours and 4,200 miles in service.

Norman Arnold illustrates the airship well, capturing its detail and size set above Inchinnan with its mast to one side and trees to the other. Given her removal from Inchinnan to East Fortune it is probable that Arnold painted this illustration in or before October 1917.

Later framed in a period oak frame.

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