

= SMS Dresden (1917) =

SMS Dresden was the second and final ship of the Cöln class of light cruisers to be completed and commissioned in the Kaiserliche Marine . The ship was laid down in 1916 and launched on 25 April 1917 ; she was commissioned into the High Seas Fleet on 28 March 1918 . She and her sister Cöln were the only two of her class to be completed ; eight of her sisters were scrapped before they could be completed . The ships were an incremental improvement over the preceding Königsberg @-@ class cruisers .

Dresden was commissioned into service with the High Seas Fleet eight months before the end of World War I ; as a result , her service career was limited and she did not see action . She participated in a fleet operation to Norway to attack British convoys to Scandinavia , but they failed to locate any convoys and returned to port . Dresden was to have participated in a climactic sortie in the final days of the war , but a revolt in the fleet forced Admirals Reinhard Scheer and Franz von Hipper to cancel the operation . The ship was interned in Scapa Flow after the end of the war and scuttled with the fleet there on 21 June 1919 , under orders from the fleet commander Rear Admiral Ludwig von Reuter .

= = Construction = =

Dresden was ordered under the contract name " Ersatz Ariadne " and was laid down at the Blohm & Voss shipyard in Hamburg in 1916 . She was launched on 25 April 1917 , after which fitting @-@ out work commenced . She was commissioned into the High Seas Fleet on 28 March 1918 . The ship was 155 @.@ 5 meters (510 ft) long overall and had a beam of 14 @.@ 2 m (47 ft) and a draft of 6 @.@ 01 m (19 @.@ 7 ft) forward . She displaced 7 @,@ 486 t (7 @,@ 368 long tons ; 8 @,@ 252 short tons) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two sets of steam turbines powered by eight coal @-@ fired and six oil @-@ fired Marine @-@ type boilers . These provided a top speed of 27 @.@ 5 kn (50 @.@ 9 km / h ; 31 @.@ 6 mph) and a range of approximately 6 @,@ 000 nautical miles (11 @,@ 000 km ; 6 @,@ 900 mi) at 12 kn (22 km / h ; 14 mph) .

The ship was armed with eight 15 cm SK L / 45 guns in single pedestal mounts . Two were placed side by side forward on the forecastle , four were located amidships , two on either side , and two were arranged in a super firing pair aft . These guns fired a 45 @.@ 3 @-@ pound (20 @.@ 5 kg) shell at a muzzle velocity of 840 meters per second (2 @,@ 800 ft / s) . The guns had a maximum elevation of 30 degrees , which allowed them to engage targets out to 17 @,@ 600 m (57 @,@ 700 ft) . They were supplied with 1 @,@ 040 rounds of ammunition , for 130 shells per gun . Dresden also carried three 8 @.@ 8 cm (3 @.@ 5 in) L / 45 anti @-@ aircraft guns mounted on the centerline astern of the funnels , though one was removed in 1918 . She was also equipped with a pair of 60 cm (24 in) torpedo tubes with eight torpedoes in deck @-@ mounted swivel launchers amidships . She also carried 200 mines . The ship was protected by a waterline armored belt that was 60 mm (2 @.@ 4 in) thick amidships . The conning tower had 100 mm (3 @.@ 9 in) thick sides , and the deck was covered with 60 mm thick armor plate .

= = Service history = =

After her commissioning , Dresden joined the reconnaissance screen for the High Seas Fleet . She was the last light cruiser built by the Kaiserliche Marine . The ship was assigned to the II Scouting Group , alongside the cruisers Königsberg , Pillau , Graudenz , Nürnberg , and Karlsruhe . The ships were in service in time for the major fleet operation to Norway in 23 ? 24 April 1918 . The I Scouting Group and II Scouting Group , along with the Second Torpedo @-@ Boat Flotilla , were to attack a heavily guarded British convoy to Norway , with the rest of the High Seas Fleet steaming in support . The Germans failed to locate the convoy , which had in fact sailed the day before the fleet left port . As a result , Admiral Reinhard Scheer broke off the operation and returned to port .

In October 1918 , Dresden and the rest of the II Scouting Group were to lead a final attack on the

British navy . Dresden , Cöln , Pillau , and Königsberg were to attack merchant shipping in the Thames estuary while the rest of the Group were to bombard targets in Flanders , to draw out the British Grand Fleet . Großadmiral Reinhard Scheer , the commander in chief of the fleet , intended to inflict as much damage as possible on the British navy , in order to secure a better bargaining position for Germany , whatever the cost to the fleet . On the morning of 29 October 1918 , the order was given to sail from Wilhelmshaven the following day . Starting on the night of 29 October , sailors on Thüringen and then on several other battleships mutinied . The unrest ultimately forced Hipper and Scheer to cancel the operation .

During the sailors ' revolt , Dresden was ordered to steam to Eckernförde to serve as a relay to Kiel . Communications had been disrupted by major unrest there . The battleship Markgraf laid in Dresden 's path , and her unruly crew refused to move out of Dresden 's way ; Markgraf aimed one of her 30 @. @ 5 cm (12 @. @ 0 in) gun turrets at Dresden , but then her crew backed down and let Dresden leave the port . The ship then went to Swinemünde , where her crew partially scuttled her following reports that mutinous ships were en route to attack the cruisers stationed there . After these proved false , Dresden was re @-@ floated and returned to seaworthy condition . This involved removing the ammunition for all of the guns and allowing them to air @-@ dry . Following the capitulation of Germany in November 1918 , most of the High Seas Fleet 's ships , under the command of Rear Admiral Ludwig von Reuter , were interned in the British naval base in Scapa Flow . Dresden was among the ships interned , but owing to her poor condition following the naval mutiny , she was not able to steam with the rest of the fleet in November . She arrived on 6 December , leaking badly .

The fleet remained in captivity during the negotiations that ultimately produced the Versailles Treaty . Von Reuter believed that the British intended to seize the German ships on 21 June 1919 , which was the deadline for Germany to have signed the peace treaty . Unaware that the deadline had been extended to the 23rd , Reuter ordered the ships to be sunk at the next opportunity . On the morning of 21 June , the British fleet left Scapa Flow to conduct training maneuvers , and at 11 : 20 Reuter transmitted the order to his ships . Dresden began to sink at 13 : 50 . Her wreck lies to this day on her port side at the bottom of Scapa Flow to the south east of the island of Cava , in a depth of 25 to 45 meters (82 to 148 ft) . Her upper decks have been badly damaged ; her weather deck has fallen off , exposing her internal structure . Her guns are buried in mud .