

= SMS Hertha =

SMS Hertha was a protected cruiser of the Victoria Louise class , built for the German Imperial Navy ( Kaiserliche Marine ) in the 1890s . Hertha was laid down at the AG Vulcan shipyard in 1895 , launched in April 1897 , and commissioned into the Navy in July 1898 . The ship was armed with a battery of two 21 cm guns and eight 15 cm guns and had a top speed of 19 knots ( 35 km / h ; 22 mph ) .

Hertha served abroad in the German East Asia Squadron for the first six years of her career ; she served briefly as the Squadron flagship in 1900 . She contributed a landing party to the force that captured the Taku Forts during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 . After returning to Germany in 1905 , she was modernized and used as a training ship in 1908 , following the completion of the refit . She conducted a series of training cruises , and several notable officers served aboard the ship as cadets , including Karl Dönitz and Ernst Lindemann . At the outbreak of World War I , Hertha was mobilized into the 5th Scouting Group , but served in front @-@ line duty only briefly . She was used as a barracks ship after 1915 , and ultimately sold for scrapping in 1920 .

= = Design = =

Hertha was ordered under the contract name " K " and was laid down at the AG Vulcan shipyard in Stettin in 1895 . She was launched on 14 April 1897 , after which fitting @-@ out work commenced . She was commissioned into the German navy on 23 July 1898 . The ship was 110 @.@ 6 meters ( 363 ft ) long overall and had a beam of 17 @.@ 4 m ( 57 ft ) and a draft of 6 @.@ 58 m ( 21 @.@ 6 ft ) forward . She displaced 6 @,@ 491 t ( 6 @,@ 388 long tons ; 7 @,@ 155 short tons ) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of three vertical 4 @-@ cylinder triple expansion engines powered by twelve coal @-@ fired Belleville boilers . Her engines provided a top speed of 19 kn ( 35 km / h ; 22 mph ) and a range of approximately 3 @,@ 412 nautical miles ( 6 @,@ 319 km ; 3 @,@ 926 mi ) at 12 kn ( 22 km / h ; 14 mph ) . She had a crew of 31 officers and 446 enlisted men .

The ship was armed with two 21 cm SK L / 40 guns in single turrets , one forward and one aft . The guns were supplied with 58 rounds of ammunition each . They had a range of 16 @,@ 300 m ( 53 @,@ 500 ft ) . Hertha also carried eight 15 cm SK L / 40 guns . Four were mounted in turrets amidships and the other four were placed in casemates . These guns had a range of 13 @,@ 700 m ( 44 @,@ 900 ft ) . She also carried ten 8 @.@ 8 cm SK L / 35 guns . The gun armament was rounded out by machine guns . She was also equipped with three 45 cm ( 18 in ) torpedo tubes with eight torpedoes , two launchers were mounted on the broadside and the third was in the bow , all below the waterline .

= = Service history = =

Hertha served as a colonial cruiser after she was completed , starting in 1899 . After arriving on the East Asia station , she temporarily served as the flagship of Vice Admiral Felix von Bendemann , the commander of the East Asia Squadron , which included the cruisers Hansa , Gefion , Irene , and Kaiserin Augusta . After the new armored cruiser Fürst Bismarck reached the Asia station , she relieved Hertha as the Squadron flagship .

As part of the East Asia Squadron during the Boxer Rebellion , the ship made a noteworthy contribution in the Battle of the Taku Forts . In June 1900 , Hertha , along with Hansa , Gefion , and Irene landed detachments of Seebataillone ( marines ) to seize the Taku Forts . The marines joined detachments sent from warships of several other countries . A total of around 450 German troops were contributed to the multi @-@ national force , which totaled around 2 @,@ 200 officers and men . During the attack on the forts , Hertha 's commanding officer was shot and killed . In September , Hertha carried Alfred von Waldersee to Shanghai , arriving on the 21st , where he took command of the international forces suppressing the rebellion .

Hertha was detached from the East Asia Squadron and returned to Germany in 1905 . In 1906 ,

she went to dry dock at the Imperial Dockyard in Danzig for a refit , during which she was re @-@ boilered . Hertha originally had three stacks , and during the modernization they were trunked into two funnels . The refit was finished by 1908 , at which point Hertha became a cadet training ship ; several prominent naval officers trained aboard the ship during this period . In September ? October 1909 , Hertha , Victoria Louise , Dresden , and Bremen traveled to the United States to represent Germany during the Hudson @-@ Fulton Celebration .

In 1910 , Karl Dönitz , the future commander of the Kriegsmarine during World War II , served as a cadet on Hertha for a year . The ship cruised in the western Mediterranean in the autumn of 1912 , along with her sister Vineta . The old cruiser Geier was also in the region . The future commander of the battleship Bismarck , Ernst Lindemann , served aboard the ship as a cadet in 1913 . The ship conducted a training cruise in the Baltic and North Seas in late May to early July , stopping in a number of foreign ports , including Stockholm , Visby , and Bergen . The ship then embarked on a seven month training cruise into the Atlantic Ocean ; during the voyage , Hertha called on numerous ports , including Vera Cruz , Mexico , Port @-@ au @-@ Prince , Haiti , Kingston , Jamaica , and Halifax , Canada . The cruise lasted from mid @-@ August 1913 to mid @-@ March 1914 .

Hertha had a short career during World War I. At the outbreak of hostilities , she was briefly mobilized into the 5th Scouting Group , which was tasked with training cadets in the Baltic Sea . By the end of 1914 , however , the ships were again removed from service . She was then put into service as a coastal defense ship . After 1915 , she was withdrawn from front @-@ line duty again and employed as a barracks ship for the seaplane base in Flensburg . She was stricken from the naval register on 6 December 1919 and sold to ship @-@ breakers in Audorf @-@ Rendsburg . She was scrapped the following year .