

= German destroyer Z1 Leberecht Maass =

The German destroyer Z1 Leberecht Maass was a Type 1934 destroyer built for the Kriegsmarine during the 1930s . The ship was named after Rear Admiral Leberecht Maass who commanded German forces in the Battle of Heligoland Bight in August 1914 . Several days after the start of World War II , she unsuccessfully attacked , together with another destroyer , Polish ships anchored at the naval base on the Hel Peninsula . Leberecht Maass was lightly damaged during the action . In mid @-@ February 1940 , while proceeding into the North Sea to search for British fishing trawlers , the ship was bombed by a patrolling German bomber that damaged her steering . She either drifted into a newly laid British minefield or was again hit by bombs and broke in half with the loss of the bulk of her crew .

= = Design and description = =

Leberecht Maass had an overall length of 119 meters ( 390 ft 5 in ) and was 114 meters ( 374 ft 0 in ) long at the waterline . The ship had a beam of 11 @.@ 30 meters ( 37 ft 1 in ) , and a maximum draft of 4 @.@ 23 meters ( 13 ft 11 in ) . She displaced 2 @,@ 223 long tons ( 2 @,@ 259 t ) at standard load and 3 @,@ 156 long tons ( 3 @,@ 207 t ) at deep load . The two Wagner geared steam turbine sets , each driving one propeller shaft , were designed to produce 70 @,@ 000 PS ( 51 @,@ 000 kW ; 69 @,@ 000 shp ) using steam provided by six high @-@ pressure Wagner boilers . The ship had a designed speed of 36 knots ( 67 km / h ; 41 mph ) , but her maximum speed was 38 @.@ 7 knots ( 71 @.@ 7 km / h ; 44 @.@ 5 mph ) . Leberecht Maass carried a maximum of 752 metric tons ( 740 long tons ) of fuel oil which was intended to give a range of 4 @,@ 400 nautical miles ( 8 @,@ 100 km ; 5 @,@ 100 mi ) at a speed of 19 knots ( 35 km / h ; 22 mph ) , but the ship proved top @-@ heavy in service and 30 % of the fuel had to be retained as ballast low in the ship . The effective range proved to be only 1 @,@ 530 nmi ( 2 @,@ 830 km ; 1 @,@ 760 mi ) at 19 knots .

The ship carried five 12 @.@ 7 cm SK C / 34 guns in single mounts with gun shields , two each superimposed , fore and aft . The fifth gun was carried on top of the aft superstructure . Her anti @-@ aircraft armament consisted of four 3 @.@ 7 cm SK C / 30 guns in two twin mounts abreast the rear funnel and six 2 cm C / 30 guns in single mounts . The ship carried eight above @-@ water 53 @.@ 3 @-@ centimeter ( 21 @.@ 0 in ) torpedo tubes in two power @-@ operated mounts . A pair of reload torpedoes were provided for each mount . Four depth charge throwers were mounted on the sides of the rear deckhouse and they were supplemented by six racks for individual depth charges on the sides of the stern . Enough depth charges were carried for either two or four patterns of 16 charges each . Mine rails could be fitted on the rear deck that had a maximum capacity of 60 mines . A system of passive hydrophones designated as ' GHG ' ( Gruppenhorchgerät ) was fitted to detect submarines . The crew numbered 10 officers and 315 enlisted men , plus an additional four officers and 19 enlisted men if serving as a flotilla flagship .

= = Service history = =

Leberecht Maass was the first destroyer to be built in Germany since World War I. The ship was ordered on 7 July 1934 and laid down at Deutsche Werke , Kiel , on 10 October 1934 as yard number K232 . She was launched on 18 August 1935 and completed on 14 January 1937 . She became the flagship of the Führer der Torpedoboote ( Chief of Torpedo Boats ) upon commissioning . Leberecht Maass spent most of her first year training and made a port visit to Gothenburg in April 1938 . Upon her return she was taken in hand by Deutsche Werke to have her bow rebuilt to reduce the amount of water that came over the bow in head seas . The ship participated in the August 1938 Fleet Review and the following fleet exercise . In December , Leberecht Maass , together with her sisters Z2 Georg Thiele , Z3 Max Schultz , and Z4 Richard Beitzen , sailed to the area of Iceland to evaluate her seaworthiness in a North Atlantic winter with her new bow . On 23 ? 24 March 1939 , the ship was one of the destroyers that escorted Adolf Hitler aboard the pocket battleship

Deutschland to occupy Memel . She participated in the Spring fleet exercise in the western Mediterranean , as the flagship of Rear Admiral Günther Lütjens , and made several visits to Spanish and Moroccan ports in April and May .

On 3 September 1939 , Z1 Leberecht Maass and Z9 Wolfgang Zenker took part in an attack on the Polish ships Gryf and Wicher in Gdynia harbour . The Poles replied effectively and forced the German destroyers to make evasive maneuvers and to lay a smoke screen to throw off the aim of the Polish gunners . Leberecht Maass was hit in the superstructure by a 152 @-@ millimeter ( 6 @.@ 0 in ) shell from the coast defense battery at Hel that killed four crewmen and wounded another four men . Lütjens ordered the action broken off 40 minutes later as the German fire was ineffective . The following day , she sailed to Swinemünde to have her damage repaired , a process that took until 10 September . After its completion , Leberecht Maass helped to lay defensive minefields in the North Sea . The ship began a scheduled refit in Swinemünde on 29 September and Lutjens transferred his flag to Z21 Wilhelm Heidkamp . She was attached to the 2nd Destroyer Flotilla on 22 December .

On 22 February 1940 , Leberecht Maass and five other destroyers , Z3 Max Schultz , Z4 Richard Beitzen , Z6 Theodor Riedel , Z13 Erich Koellner and Z16 Friedrich Eckoldt , sailed for the Dogger Bank to intercept British fishing vessels in " Operation Wiking " . En route , the flotilla was erroneously attacked by a Heinkel He 111 bomber from KG 26 . Leberecht Maass was hit by at least one bomb , lost steering , and broke in half , sinking with the loss of 280 of her crew , among them the ship 's commanding officer , Korvettenkapitän Fritz Bassenge . Only 60 men were saved . During the rescue effort , Z3 Max Schultz hit a mine and sank with the loss of her entire crew . Hitler ordered a Court of Inquiry to be convened to investigate the cause of the losses and it concluded that both ships that been sunk by bombs from the He 111 . The Kriegsmarine had failed to notify its destroyers that the Luftwaffe was making anti @-@ shipping patrols at that time and had also failed to inform the Luftwaffe that its destroyers would be at sea . Postwar evidence revealed that one or both ships struck a British minefield laid by the destroyers Ivanhoe and Intrepid .