

= SMS Stuttgart =

SMS Stuttgart was a Königsberg class light cruiser of the Kaiserliche Marine , named after the city of Stuttgart . She had three sister ships : Königsberg , Nürnberg , and Stettin . Stuttgart was laid down at the Imperial Dockyard in Danzig in 1905 , launched in September 1906 , and commissioned in February 1908 . Like her sisters , Stettin was armed with a main battery of ten 10 cm ( 4 in ) guns and a pair of 45 cm ( 18 in ) torpedo tubes , and was capable of a top speed in excess of 25 knots ( 46 km / h ; 29 mph ) .

Stuttgart was used as a gunnery training ship from her commissioning to the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , when she was mobilized into the reconnaissance forces of the High Seas Fleet . There , she saw action at the Battle of Jutland , where she engaged the British cruiser HMS Dublin . Stuttgart was not damaged during the battle . She was converted into a seaplane tender in 1918 , and after the end of the war , was surrendered to Britain as a war prize in 1920 and subsequently broken up for scrap .

= Construction =

Stuttgart was ordered under the contract name " O " and was laid down at the Imperial Dockyard in Danzig in 1905 . She was launched on 22 September 1906 , after which fitting out work commenced . She was commissioned into the High Seas Fleet on 1 February 1908 . The ship was 115 meters ( 378 ft ) long overall and had a beam of 13 m ( 43 ft ) and a draft of 5 m ( 17 ft ) forward . She displaced 3 , 814 t ( 3 , 754 long tons ; 4 , 204 short tons ) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two 3 cylinder triple expansion engines powered by eleven coal fired Marine type boilers . These provided a top speed of 24 knots ( 44 km / h ; 27 mph ) and a range of approximately 5 , 750 nautical miles ( 10 , 650 km ; 6 , 620 mi ) at 12 knots ( 22 km / h ; 14 mph ) . Stuttgart had a crew of 14 officers and 308 enlisted men .

The ship was armed with ten 10 cm SK L / 45 guns in single pedestal mounts . Two were placed side by side forward on the forecastle , six were located amidships , three on either side , and two were side by side aft . The guns had a maximum elevation of 30 degrees , which allowed them to engage targets out to 12 , 700 m ( 41 , 700 ft ) . They were supplied with 1 , 500 rounds of ammunition , for 150 shells per gun . The ship was also equipped with eight 5 cm SK L / 55 guns with 4 , 000 rounds of ammunition . She was also equipped with a pair of 45 cm ( 18 in ) torpedo tubes with five torpedoes submerged in the hull on the broadside . The ship was protected by an armored deck that was 80 mm ( 3 in ) thick amidships . The conning tower had 100 mm ( 3 in ) thick sides .

= Service history =

After her commissioning into the High Seas Fleet , Stuttgart was used as a gunnery training ship for the Fleet 's gunners . At the outbreak of World War I , she was mobilized and served with the Fleet , along with the other gunnery ships like the armored cruiser Blücher . After the outbreak of war , she and several other cruisers were tasked with patrol duties in the Heligoland Bight . The cruisers were divided with the torpedo boat flotillas , and assigned to rotate through nightly patrols into the North Sea . As part of this operation , Stuttgart conducted a patrol on the night of 15 August with Cöln and the I and II Torpedo boat Flotillas , without incident .

On 15 ? 16 December , Stuttgart participated in the bombardment of Scarborough , Hartlepool and Whitby . She was assigned to the cruiser screen of the High Seas Fleet , which was providing distant cover to Rear Admiral Franz von Hipper 's battlecruisers while they were conducting the bombardment . Following reports of British destroyers from the German screen , Admiral von Ingenohl ordered the High Seas Fleet to turn to port and head for Germany . At 06 : 59 , Stuttgart , the armored cruiser Roon , and the light cruiser Hamburg encountered Commander Jones ' destroyers . Jones shadowed the Germans until 07 : 40 , at which point Stuttgart and Hamburg were

detached to sink their pursuers . At 08 : 02 , however , Roon signaled the two light cruisers and ordered them to abandon the pursuit and retreat along with the rest of the High Seas Fleet .

On 7 May 1915 , the IV Scouting Group , which by then consisted of Stuttgart , Stettin , München , and Danzig , and twenty @-@ one torpedo boats was sent into the Baltic Sea to support a major operation against Russian positions at Libau . The operation was commanded by Rear Admiral Hopman , the commander of the reconnaissance forces in the Baltic . The IV Scouting Group was tasked with screening to the north to prevent any Russian naval forces from moving out of the Gulf of Finland undetected , while several armored cruisers and other warships bombarded the port . The Russians did attempt to intervene with a force of four cruisers : Admiral Makarov , Bayan , Oleg , and Bogatyr . The Russian ships briefly engaged München , but both sides were unsure of the others ' strength , and so both disengaged . Shortly after the bombardment , Libau was captured by the advancing German army , and Stuttgart and the rest of the IV Scouting Group were recalled to the High Seas Fleet .

= = = Battle of Jutland = = =

Stuttgart was assigned to the IV Scouting Group during the Battle of Jutland on 31 May ? 1 June 1916 . The IV Scouting Group , under the command of Commodore Ludwig von Reuter , departed Wilhelmshaven at 03 : 30 on 31 May , along with the rest of the fleet . Tasked with screening for the fleet , Stuttgart and the torpedo boat V71 were positioned at the rear of the fleet , astern of the II Battle Squadron . Stuttgart and the IV Scouting Group were not heavily engaged during the early phases of the battle , but around 21 : 30 , they encountered the British 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron ( 3rd LCS ) . Reuter 's ships were leading the High Seas Fleet south , away from the deployed Grand Fleet . Due to the long range and poor visibility , only München and Stettin were able to engage the British cruisers . Stuttgart was the fourth ship in the line , and her gunners could only make out one British ship in the haze . Since that ship was already being engaged by the other German cruisers , Stuttgart held her fire . Reuter turned his ships hard to starboard , in order to draw the British closer to the capital ships of the German fleet , but the 3rd LCS refused to take the bait and disengaged .

During the ferocious night fighting that occurred as the High Seas Fleet forced its way through the British rear , the IV Scouting Group encountered the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron at close range in the darkness . As the two squadrons closed on each other , the Germans illuminated HMS Southampton and HMS Dublin and concentrated their fire on the two ships . Stuttgart and Elbing fired on Dublin . During this period , Dublin was hit by eight shells , probably all from Stuttgart , though these hits did not do serious damage . The two British ships were badly damaged and set on fire and forced to retreat , while the Germans also fell back in an attempt to bring the British closer to the battlecruisers Moltke and Seydlitz . In the melee , the cruiser Frauenlob was hit and sunk by a torpedo launched by Southampton ; this forced Stuttgart to haul out of line to starboard . She then lost contact with the rest of the IV Scouting Group , so she fell in with the I Battle Squadron . She was present during a later encounter with British light forces around midnight . She remained concealed in the darkness and observed the I Battle Squadron dreadnoughts hammering several British destroyers . The British meanwhile launched torpedoes at the German line , which forced it to turn away . Stuttgart had to thread her way in between the battleships Nassau and Posen in the darkness .

By 02 : 30 , Stuttgart was steaming at the head of the German line , ahead of Westfalen , the leading battleship . She led the I Battle Squadron back to port , and later assisted the III Battle Squadron and the fleet flagship , Friedrich der Grosse . In the course of the battle , Stuttgart had fired 64 rounds , the least of all of the German cruisers in the battle . She emerged from the battle unscathed , unlike many of the other German cruisers .

= = = Conversion and fate = = =

Earlier in the war , the German Navy had experimented with converting steamers into seaplane tenders . They were too slow to operate with the fleet , however , and so a faster alternative was

needed . By 1918 , the Navy had decided to convert Stuttgart , which was fast enough to steam with the fleet ; conversion work started in February 1918 . The work was done at the Imperial Dockyard in Wilhelmshaven , and was completed in May . As a seaplane tender , her forward and rear 10 @. @ 5 cm guns , and the two rearmost broadside guns were removed , leaving only four broadside guns remaining . Two 8 @. @ 8 cm SK L / 45 anti @- @ aircraft guns were installed forward ; she retained her submerged torpedo tubes . Two large hangars were installed aft of the funnels , with space for two seaplanes ; a third seaplane was carried on top of the hangars . Since Stuttgart could carry only three aircraft , a number which was deemed insufficient to support the entire High Seas Fleet , plans were drawn up to convert Roon into a seaplane carrier as well . Neither ship was ever used operationally . Stuttgart survived the war , and was stricken from the naval register on 5 November 1919 . She was surrendered to the United Kingdom on 20 July 1920 , as the war prize " S " and subsequently broken up for scrap .