

= HMS Iron Duke (1912) =

HMS Iron Duke was a dreadnought battleship of the Royal Navy , the lead ship of her class , named in honour of Arthur Wellesley , 1st Duke of Wellington . She was built by Portsmouth Dockyard , and her keel laid in January 1912 . Launched ten months later , she was commissioned into the Home Fleet in March 1914 as the fleet flagship . She was armed with a main battery of ten 13 @. @ 5 @-@ inch (340 mm) guns and was capable of a top speed of 21 @. @ 25 knots (39 @. @ 36 km / h ; 24 @. @ 45 mph) .

Iron Duke served as the flagship of the Grand Fleet during the First World War , including at the Battle of Jutland . There , she inflicted significant damage on the German battleship SMS König early in the main fleet action . In January 1917 , she was relieved as fleet flagship . After the war , Iron Duke operated in the Mediterranean as the flagship of the Mediterranean Fleet . She participated in both the Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War in the Black Sea and the Greco @-@ Turkish War . She also assisted in the evacuation of refugees from Smyrna . In 1926 , she was assigned to the Atlantic Fleet , where she served as a training ship .

Iron Duke only remained on active duty for a few more years ; in 1930 , the London Naval Treaty specified that the four Iron Duke @-@ class battleships be scrapped or otherwise demilitarised . Iron Duke was therefore converted into a gunnery training ship ; her armour and much of her armament was removed to render her unfit for combat . She served in this capacity until the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 , when she was moored in Scapa Flow as a harbour defence ship . In October , she was badly damaged by German bombers and was run aground to avoid sinking . She continued to serve as an anti @-@ aircraft platform for the duration of the war , and was eventually refloated and broken up for scrap in the late 1940s .

= = Design = =

Iron Duke was 622 feet 9 inches (190 m) long overall and had a beam of 90 ft (27 m) and an average draught of 29 ft 6 in (9 m) . She displaced 25 @, @ 000 long tons (25 @, @ 401 t) as designed and up to 29 @, @ 560 long tons (30 @, @ 034 t) at combat loading . Her propulsion system consisted of four Parsons steam turbines , with steam provided by eighteen Babcock & Wilcox boilers . The engines were rated at 29 @, @ 000 shaft horsepower (21 @, @ 625 kW) and produced a top speed of 21 @. @ 25 kn (39 km / h ; 24 mph) . Her cruising radius was 7 @, @ 800 nautical miles (14 @, @ 446 km ; 8 @, @ 976 mi) at a more economical 10 kn (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . Iron Duke had a crew of 995 officers and enlisted men , though during wartime this grew to up to 1 @, @ 022 .

Iron Duke was armed with a main battery of ten BL 13 @. @ 5 @-@ inch Mk V naval guns mounted in five twin gun turrets . They were arranged in two superfiring pairs , one forward and one aft ; the fifth turret was located amidships , between the funnels and the rear superstructure . Close @-@ range defence against torpedo boats was provided by a secondary battery of twelve BL 6 @-@ inch Mk VII guns . The ship was also fitted with a pair of QF 3 @-@ inch 20 cwt anti @-@ aircraft guns and four 47 mm (2 in) 3 @-@ pounder guns . As was typical for capital ships of the period , she was equipped with four 21 in (530 mm) torpedo tubes submerged on the broadside . Iron Duke was protected by a main armoured belt that was 12 in (305 mm) thick over the ship 's vitals . Her deck was 2 @. @ 5 in (64 mm) thick . The main battery turret faces were 11 in (279 mm) thick , and the turrets were supported by 10 in (254 mm) thick barbettes .

= = Service history = =

Iron Duke was laid down at Portsmouth Dockyard on 12 January 1912 and launched on 12 October of that year . After completing fitting @-@ out work , she began sea trials on 25 November 1913 . The ship was completed in March 1914 , and she joined the Home Fleet after completing her trials . In the Home Fleet , she served as the flagship of Admiral Sir George Callaghan . On 29 July 1914 , as war loomed on the Continent , Iron Duke and the rest of the Home Fleet was ordered to proceed

to Scapa Flow from Portland to safeguard the fleet from a possible German surprise attack .

= = = World War I = = =

In August 1914 , after the outbreak of World War I , the Home Fleet was reorganised as the Grand Fleet ; Iron Duke remained the flagship of the fleet , now under Admiral John Jellicoe , 1st Earl Jellicoe . On the evening of 22 November 1914 , the Grand Fleet conducted a fruitless sweep in the southern half of the North Sea ; Iron Duke stood with the main body in support of Vice Admiral David Beatty 's 1st Battlecruiser Squadron . The fleet was back in port in Scapa Flow by 27 November . Iron Duke and most of the fleet initially remained in port during the German raid on Scarborough , Hartlepool and Whitby on 16 December 1914 , though the 3rd Battle Squadron was sent to reinforce the British forces in the area . After receiving further information about the possibility of the rest of the German fleet being at sea , Jellicoe gave the order for the fleet to sortie to try to intercept the Germans , though by that time they had already retreated . Iron Duke went to sea with the 2nd and 4th Battle Squadrons for gunnery practice north of the Hebrides on 23 and 24 December . The following day , the rest of the fleet joined Iron Duke for a sweep in the North Sea , which concluded on 27 December .

Iron Duke and the rest of the fleet conducted gunnery drills on 10 ? 13 January 1915 west of the Orkneys and Shetlands . On the evening of 23 January , the bulk of the Grand Fleet sailed in support of Beatty 's Battlecruiser Fleet , but Iron Duke and the rest of the fleet did not become engaged in the ensuing Battle of Dogger Bank the following day . Upon returning from the operation , Iron Duke went to Invergordon for refit ; while she was away , HMS Centurion acted as the temporary fleet flagship . The work was completed by 23 February , after which she returned to Scapa Flow . On 7 ? 10 March , the Grand Fleet conducted a sweep in the northern North Sea , during which it conducted training manoeuvres . Another such cruise took place on 16 ? 19 March . On 11 April , the Grand Fleet conducted a patrol in the central North Sea and returned to port on 14 April ; another patrol in the area took place on 17 ? 19 April , followed by gunnery drills off the Shetlands on 20 ? 21 April .

The Grand Fleet conducted a sweep into the central North Sea on 17 ? 19 May without encountering any German vessels . On 25 May , Iron Duke carried Jellicoe to Rosyth to meet with Admiral Henry Jackson , the new First Sea Lord . Iron Duke returned to Scapa Flow on 28 May , in time to participate in another sweep into the North Sea on 29 ? 31 May . After returning to Scapa Flow , Iron Duke immediately departed for Cromarty . The fleet conducted gunnery training in mid @-@ June . Iron Duke , the 2nd Battle Squadron , and the 1st Cruiser Squadron conducted gunnery training at Cromarty on 2 August ; after completing the drills , the ships returned to Scapa Flow . On 7 August , the ship again took Jellicoe to Cromarty for another meeting , this time with the Prime Minister , H. H. Asquith . Iron Duke was back in Scapa Flow by 16 August .

On 2 ? 5 September , the fleet went on another cruise in the northern end of the North Sea and conducted gunnery drills . Throughout the rest of the month , the Grand Fleet conducted numerous training exercises . Iron Duke went to Invergordon on 1 October for another period of refitting ? the work lasted until 11 October . Two days later , the majority of the fleet conducted another sweep into the North Sea , returning to port on 15 October . On 2 ? 5 November , Iron Duke participated in another fleet training operation west of the Orkneys . Another such cruise took place on 1 ? 4 December . Later in the month , Iron Duke took part in gunnery drills , and during them , conducted an experiment of sorts to determine the accuracy of the ship 's gunners . Jellicoe concluded that the " result was very satisfactory . "

Iron Duke collided with the tanker Prudentia on 12 January 1916 while in Scapa Flow , and the latter sank . The tanker had come loose during a severe gale , which had winds of up to 80 miles per hour (130 km / h) . Iron Duke was undamaged in the accident . The typical routine of gunnery drills and squadron exercises occurred in January . The fleet departed for a cruise in the North Sea on 26 February ; Jellicoe had intended to use the Harwich Force to sweep the Heligoland Bight , but bad weather prevented operations in the southern North Sea . As a result , the operation was confined to the northern end of the sea . On the night of 25 March , Iron Duke and the rest of the

fleet sailed from Scapa Flow to support the Battlecruiser Fleet and other light forces that raided the German zeppelin base at Tondern . By the time the Grand Fleet approached the area on 26 March , the British and German forces had already disengaged and a severe gale threatened the light craft . Iron Duke guided the destroyers back to Scapa while the rest of the fleet retired independently .

On 21 April , the Grand Fleet conducted a demonstration off Horns Reef to distract the Germans while the Russian Navy relaid its defensive minefields in the Baltic Sea . The fleet returned to Scapa Flow on 24 April and refuelled before proceeding south in response to intelligence reports that the Germans were about to launch a raid on Lowestoft . The Grand Fleet did not arrive in the area until after the Germans had withdrawn , however . On 2 - 4 May , the fleet conducted another demonstration off Horns Reef to keep German attention focused on the North Sea .

=== Battle of Jutland ===

In an attempt to lure out and destroy a portion of the Grand Fleet , the German High Seas Fleet , composed of 16 dreadnoughts , six pre - dreadnoughts , six light cruisers , and 31 torpedo boats , departed the Jade early on the morning of 31 May . The fleet sailed in concert with Rear Admiral Franz von Hipper 's five battlecruisers and supporting cruisers and torpedo boats . The Royal Navy 's Room 40 had intercepted and decrypted German radio traffic containing plans of the operation . The Admiralty ordered the Grand Fleet , totalling some 28 dreadnoughts and 9 battlecruisers , to sortie the night before to cut off and destroy the High Seas Fleet . On the day of the battle , Iron Duke steamed with the 4th Battle Squadron , and was the 9th ship in the British line .

The initial action was fought primarily by the British and German battlecruiser formations in the afternoon , but by 18 : 00 , the Grand Fleet approached the scene . At around 18 : 14 , two large 12 - inch caliber shells fell near Iron Duke but caused no damage . Fifteen minutes later , Iron Duke had closed to effective gunnery range - some 26 ,000 yards (24 ,000 m) - of the German fleet , and took the dreadnought SMS König under fire . Iron Duke 's first salvo fell short , but the next three were on target ; the ship 's gunner claimed at least six hits on the German battleship . In fact , they had scored seven hits on König and inflicted significant damage .

Shortly after 19 : 00 , fighting around the disabled German cruiser SMS Wiesbaden - which had been badly damaged earlier in the engagement - resumed . Iron Duke opened fire on the crippled cruiser and nearby destroyers with her secondary battery at 19 : 11 at a range of 9 ,000 to 10 ,000 yards (8 ,200 to 9 ,100 m) . Iron Duke 's gunners claimed to have sunk one of the destroyers and hit a second , but they had in fact missed their targets entirely . Shortly thereafter , the German destroyers attempted to launch a torpedo attack on the British line ; Iron Duke began firing at 19 : 24 . The sinking of the destroyer SMS S35 is credited to a salvo from Iron Duke , but determining which ship fired which shells in the melee is difficult , according to naval historian John Campbell .

Following the German destroyer attack , the High Seas Fleet disengaged , and Iron Duke and the rest of the Grand Fleet saw no further action in the battle . This was , in part , due to confusion aboard Iron Duke over the exact location and course of the German fleet ; without this information , Jellicoe could not bring his fleet to action . At 21 : 30 , the Grand Fleet began to reorganise into its nighttime cruising formation . Early on the morning of 1 June , the Grand Fleet combed the area , looking for damaged German ships , but after spending several hours searching , they found none . Iron Duke returned to Scapa Flow , arriving at 11 : 30 . Over the course of the battle , Iron Duke had fired ninety rounds from her main battery , along with fifty rounds from her secondary guns .

=== Subsequent actions in the North Sea ===

On 18 August , the Germans again sortied , this time to bombard Sunderland ; Scheer hoped to draw out Beatty 's battlecruisers and destroy them . British signals intelligence decrypted German wireless transmissions , allowing Jellicoe enough time to deploy the Grand Fleet in an attempt to engage in a decisive battle . Both sides withdrew , however , after their opponents ' submarines

inflicted losses : the British cruisers Nottingham and Falmouth were both torpedoed and sunk by German U @-@ boats , and the German battleship SMS Westfalen was damaged by the British submarine E23 . After returning to port , Jellicoe issued an order that prohibited risking the fleet in the southern half of the North Sea due to the overwhelming risk from mines and U @-@ boats unless the odds of defeating the High Seas Fleet in a decisive engagement were high .

In the aftermath of Jutland , the Royal Navy determined that horizontal protection , particularly over ammunition magazines , was insufficient . As a result , many ships in the Grand Fleet had additional armour installed ; Iron Duke went into dock for this work in October . The work , which saw over 100 long tons (100 t) of armour added to the ship , was completed by December . On 28 November 1916 , while she was still in dry dock , Admiral Beatty replaced Jellicoe as the commander of the Grand Fleet ; Iron Duke served as his flagship until January 1917 , when he transferred to Queen Elizabeth . In 1918 , flying @-@ off platforms for aircraft were installed on Iron Duke 's " B " and " Q " turrets .

= = = Post @-@ war career = = =

In March 1919 , Iron Duke was transferred to the Mediterranean Fleet , where she again served as flagship . The ship went into the Black Sea in April to participate in the Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War . While en route , the ship stopped in Constantinople on 7 April . There , Iron Duke was involved in the destruction of warships and other materiel that might be used by the Bolsheviks . On 12 May , Iron Duke travelled from Constantinople to Smyrna , where she provided a landing party to occupy some of the city 's outer forts . She returned to the Black Sea , where she remained until June , when she returned to the Mediterranean .

Iron Duke returned to the Black Sea in late 1919 . She arrived in Novorossiysk on 12 October , where she met the White Russian protected cruiser General Kornilov . On 14 October , the ship stopped in Sevastopol . Iron Duke returned to Novorossiysk on 19 January 1920 . On 25 January , she stopped in the ports of Yalta and Sevastopol to inspect the situation of the White Russians there . On 17 June , shore parties from Iron Duke and the destroyer Shark destroyed Turkish guns in the forts protecting the Bosphorus on the Black Sea .

On 2 September 1922 , Iron Duke was steaming to the Dalmatian coast for a training cruise , when she received news of the Greek defeat in Turkey . Admiral Osmond Brock , the Mediterranean Fleet commander , ordered Iron Duke to proceed to Smyrna , where he expected disturbances . There , she served as the flagship of the British naval forces participating in the evacuation of Greek refugees from the city . She was present during the Great Fire that devastated the city . During the chaos , a number of refugees managed to come alongside Iron Duke in small boats , and were brought aboard the battleship . The following month , the Allies held a conference aboard Iron Duke at Mudania to mediate the Greco @-@ Turkish dispute . The ship thereafter proceeded to Constantinople .

In November 1924 , Queen Elizabeth relieved Iron Duke as the Mediterranean Fleet flagship ; Iron Duke was then transferred to the 3rd Battle Squadron , Mediterranean Fleet , where she became the squadron flagship . The 3rd Squadron was moved to the Atlantic Fleet in March 1926 , where it was used as a training squadron . Iron Duke remained the squadron flagship during this period , until 30 May 1928 , when she was relieved by her sister Benbow . In 1927 , the Navy considered adding anti @-@ torpedo bulges to Iron Duke and her sister ships , but the plan was discarded because the ships were due to be replaced in 1931 ? 1932 under the terms of the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 and the plan was not economical . That year , the aircraft launching @-@ platform mounted on Iron Duke 's " B " turret was removed . The ship went into dry dock in May 1928 for a periodic refit ; the work lasted until May 1929 . Two 4 in (100 mm) anti @-@ aircraft guns were installed on the forward superstructure . The aircraft platform on " Q " turret was also removed during this period .

Iron Duke returned to service on 30 May 1929 , when she was recommissioned as a gunnery training ship . She served in this capacity for only a year and a half , however . In November 1931 , under the terms of the London Naval Treaty , Iron Duke was disarmed and converted into a gunnery

training vessel . The work lasted until 21 September 1932 , when she was commissioned for new sea trials . The ship 's " B " and " Y " turrets were also removed , and several small guns of various types were installed atop " B " barbette . Two 4 @. @ 7 in (120 mm) anti @- @ aircraft guns were installed as well , but these were later removed in 1935 . A high @- @ angle director for the anti @- @ aircraft guns was also added in place of the aft rangefinder . Over 2 @, @ 500 long tons (2 @, @ 500 t) of steel from her belt armour was removed during the demilitarisation ; in all , 4 @, @ 258 long tons (4 @, @ 326 t) of material was removed from the ship and 202 long tons (205 t) added . The ship was recommissioned on 4 October 1932 at Devonport , again as a gunnery training ship . She was featured in the film Brown on Resolution , which was released in May 1935 . On 16 July 1935 , she was present at the Silver Jubilee Fleet Review at Spithead for King George V. She attended another Fleet Review , the coronation review for George VI , on 20 May 1937 . In 1939 , a twin QF 5 @. @ 25 @- @ inch dual @- @ purpose gun mount was installed aft of " Y " barbette .

= = = Second World War = = =

During the Second World War , she was used as a base ship and a floating anti @- @ aircraft platform at Scapa Flow . Her secondary guns were removed and used for coastal defence around the base . On 17 October , four Junkers Ju 88 medium bombers attacked Scapa Flow , and damaged Iron Duke with several near misses . To prevent her from sinking , her crew had to run the ship aground . On 16 March , the ship , which was still beached , was attacked again by Luftwaffe aircraft . This time , eighteen Ju 88s attacked the harbour and surrounding installations . Iron Duke was again badly damaged , as was the heavy cruiser Norfolk .

The ship 's presence in Scapa Flow may have affected the Germans ' plans during Operation Rheinübung , the Atlantic sortie of the battleship Bismarck in May 1941 . German aerial reconnaissance spotted Iron Duke and two decoy battleships in the harbour , and erroneously identified them as active units of the Home Fleet ; under the mistaken impression that the heavy units of the Home Fleet were still in port , the German fleet commander , Günther Lütjens , decided to break into the Atlantic via the Denmark Strait , which resulted in the Battle of the Denmark Strait .

The ship was later repaired and returned to service as a harbour ship for the duration of the war , though she remained beached . Iron Duke remained in the Royal Navy inventory until March 1946 , when she was sold for scrapping to Metal Industries , still beached in Scapa Flow . The ship was refloated on 19 April 1946 and transferred to Faslane on 19 August . In September 1948 , she was re @- @ sold and moved to Glasgow , arriving on 30 November 1948 , and subsequently broken up for scrap . Iron Duke 's bell is on display at Winchester Cathedral .