

= SMS Deutschland ( 1904 ) =

SMS Deutschland was the first of five Deutschland class pre dreadnought battleships built for the Kaiserliche Marine between 1903 and 1906 . She was named after the German name for Germany , and built at the Germaniawerft shipyard in Kiel , where she was launched on 20 November 1904 . She was commissioned on 3 August 1906 , only a few months before HMS Dreadnought was commissioned , the first of a revolutionary new standard of " all big gun " battleships which rendered Deutschland and the rest of her class obsolete .

She served as the flagship of Prince Heinrich until 1913 . With the outbreak of World War I in mid 1914 , Deutschland and her sisters were tasked with defending the mouth of the Elbe and the German Bight from possible British incursions while the rest of the fleet was being mobilized . Deutschland and the other four ships of her class were then attached to the High Seas Fleet as the II Battle Squadron ; the unit participated in most of the large scale fleet actions in the first two years of war , culminating in the Battle of Jutland on 31 May ? 1 June 1916 . Late on the first day of the battle , Deutschland and the other pre dreadnoughts briefly engaged several British battlecruisers before retreating .

After the battle , Deutschland and her three surviving sisters were assigned to coastal defense duties . By 1917 , they had been withdrawn from combat service completely and tasked with auxiliary roles . Deutschland was used as a barracks ship in Wilhelmshaven until the end of the war . She was struck from the naval register on 25 January 1920 , sold to ship breakers that year , and broken up for scrap by 1922 . Her bow ornament is preserved at the Eckernförde underwater weapons school and her bell is on display at the Mausoleum of Prince Heinrich on the Hemmelmark estate .

= = Construction = =

Deutschland was the second naval vessel to bear the name , after SMS Deutschland ( 1874 ) ( an armored frigate ) , and was intended to fight in the German battle line with the other battleships of the Imperial German Navy . She was laid down on 20 July 1903 at the Germaniawerft dockyard in Kiel , and launched on 19 November 1904 . Her trials lasted from 3 August 1906 until September . The British battleship HMS Dreadnought ? armed with ten 12 inch ( 30 @ 5 cm ) guns ? was commissioned in December 1906 . Dreadnought 's revolutionary design rendered every capital ship of the German navy obsolete , including Deutschland .

Deutschland was 127 @ 6 m ( 418 ft 8 in ) long , had a beam of 22 @ 2 m ( 72 ft 10 in ) , and a draft of 8 @ 21 m ( 26 ft 11 in ) . She had a full load displacement of 14 @ 218 metric tons ( 13 @ 993 long tons ) and was equipped with coal fired triple expansion engines that produced a rated 15 @ 781 indicated horsepower ( 11 @ 768 kW ) and gave her a top speed of 18 knots ( 33 km / h ; 21 mph ) . At a cruising speed of 10 knots ( 19 km / h ; 12 mph ) , she could steam for 4 @ 850 nautical miles ( 8 @ 980 km ; 5 @ 580 mi ) .

Deutschland 's primary armament consisted of four 28 cm ( 11 in ) SK L / 40 guns in two twin turrets . She was also equipped with fourteen 17 cm ( 6 @ 7 in ) guns mounted in casemates , twenty 8 @ 8 cm ( 3 @ 46 in ) guns in pivot mounts , and six 45 cm ( 17 @ 72 in ) torpedo tubes were submerged in the hull .

= = Service history = =

On 26 September 1906 the ship officially joined the fleet , when Admiral Prince Heinrich made her his flagship . She was tactically assigned to the II Battle Squadron , though as the fleet flagship she was not subordinate to the Squadron commander . She took part in training exercises in the North Sea in December 1906 before returning to Kiel . On 16 February 1907 , the fleet was renamed the High Seas Fleet . Fleet maneuvers in the North Sea followed in early 1907 and again in May ? June . A cruise to Norway followed the fleet training in June . After returning from Norway , Deutschland went to Swinemünde . Another round of fleet training followed in September 1907 . In November ,

she was taken into drydock for an annual refit .

Deutschland participated in fleet maneuvers in February 1908 in the Baltic Sea ; in May ? June training was conducted off the island fortress of Helgoland in the North Sea . In July 1908 , Deutschland and the rest of the fleet sailed into the Atlantic Ocean to conduct training there . During the cruise , Deutschland stopped at Funchal and Santa Cruz de Tenerife . The fleet returned to Germany on 13 August . The following month another set of training maneuvers was conducted in the Baltic and North Seas , with a winter cruise into the Baltic afterward .

The following year ? 1909 ? followed much the same pattern . Another cruise into the Atlantic was conducted from 7 July to 1 August , during which Deutschland stopped in Bilbao . After another round of exercises , Deutschland went in for another periodic overhaul . During the refit , she was given additional pedestal @-@ mounted search lights , as well as becoming the first ship in the German navy to be equipped with an X @-@ ray machine . In May 1910 , the fleet conducted training maneuvers in the Kattegat , between Norway and Denmark . The annual summer cruise went to Norway , and was followed by fleet training . In November , Deutschland hosted Kaiser Wilhelm II during the celebration of the opening of the Naval Academy at Mürwik . A training cruise into the Baltic followed at the end of the year .

The next two years followed the same pattern of training exercises and cruises to Norway in the summer , with the exception of 1912 when , due to the Agadir Crisis , the cruise only went into the Baltic . In September , following maneuvers , Deutschland was partially grounded in the Baltic . The damage necessitated dry @-@ docking , and repairs were completed by November . In January 1913 , the new dreadnought battleship Friedrich der Grosse replaced Deutschland as the flagship of the fleet . The golden bow ornament that denoted the flagship was removed , and Deutschland returned to the ranks of the II Battle Squadron .

= = = World War I = = =

At the outbreak of war , the ship was deployed to the mouth of the Elbe to guard the area . Deutschland remained with the High Seas Fleet in the II Battle Squadron for the first two years of the war . While her sisters covered the raid on the English coast on 15 ? 16 December , Deutschland remained on picket duty in the mouth of the Elbe . On 21 February 1915 , Deutschland went into dock in Kiel , where work lasted until 12 March . Afterward , Deutschland returned to the Elbe for guard duty . On 21 September the ship went to the Baltic for training , which was completed by 11 October , after which she went into the dockyard in Kiel again for maintenance . Deutschland went to the AG Vulcan drydock in Hamburg for additional work from 27 February to 1 April 1916 . After returning to the fleet , Deutschland was made the flagship of the II Battle Squadron under the command of Admiral Franz Mauve .

On 24 ? 25 April 1916 , Deutschland and her four sisters joined the dreadnoughts of the High Seas Fleet to support the battlecruisers of the I Scouting Group on a raid of the English coast . While en route to the target , the battlecruiser Seydlitz was damaged by a mine ; she was detached to return home while the operation proceeded . The battlecruisers conducted a short bombardment of the ports of Yarmouth and Lowestoft . Visibility was poor , and the operation was called off before the British fleet could intervene . On 4 May , Deutschland took part in a sortie against British ships off Horns Reef , without result .

= = = Battle of Jutland = = =

Admiral Scheer immediately planned another foray into the North Sea , but the damage to Seydlitz delayed the operation until the end of May . Deutschland was the first ship in the III Division of the II Battle Squadron and the flagship of Rear Admiral Franz Mauve . The II Battle Squadron , with the weakest battleships involved in the battle , was positioned at the rear of the German line . During the " Run to the North , " Admiral Reinhard Scheer , the commander of the fleet , ordered the fleet to pursue the retreating battleships of the British V Battle Squadron at top speed . Deutschland and her sisters were significantly slower than the dreadnoughts , and quickly fell behind . By 19 : 30 , the

Grand Fleet had arrived on the scene and confronted Admiral Scheer with significant numerical superiority . The German fleet was severely hampered by the presence of the slower Deutschland @-@ class ships ; if Scheer ordered an immediate turn towards Germany , he would have to sacrifice the slower ships to make good his escape .

Admiral Scheer reversed the course of the fleet via the Gefechtskehrtwendung ( ' battle turn ' ) , a maneuver that required every unit in the German line to turn 180 ° simultaneously . Having fallen behind , the ships of the II Battle Squadron could not conform to the new course following the turn . Deutschland and the other five ships of the squadron were therefore on the disengaged side of the German line . Admiral Mauve considered moving his ships to the rear of the line , astern of the III Battle Squadron dreadnoughts , but decided against it when he realized the movement would interfere with the maneuvering of Admiral Franz von Hipper 's battlecruisers . Instead , he attempted to place his ships at the head of the line .

Later on the first day of the battle , the hard @-@ pressed battlecruisers of the I Scouting Group were being pursued by their British opponents . Deutschland and the other so @-@ called " five @-@ minute ships " came to their aid by steaming between the opposing battlecruiser squadrons . Poor visibility made the subsequent engagement brief . Deutschland fired only one round from her 28 cm guns during this period . Admiral Mauve decided it would be inadvisable to continue the fight against the much more powerful battlecruisers , and so ordered an 8 @-@ point turn to starboard .

Late on the 31st , the fleet organized for the night march back to Germany ; Deutschland , Pommern , and Hannover fell in behind König and the other dreadnoughts of the III Battle Squadron towards the rear of the line . British destroyers conducted a series of attacks against the fleet , some of which targeted Deutschland . In the melee , Deutschland and König turned away from the attacking destroyers , but could not make out targets clearly enough to engage them effectively . Soon after , Pommern was struck by at least one torpedo and exploded . Fragments of the ship rained down around Deutschland . Regardless , the High Seas Fleet punched through the British destroyer forces and reached Horns Reef by 4 : 00 on 1 June . The German fleet reached Wilhelmshaven a few hours later , where the undamaged dreadnoughts of the Nassau and Helgoland classes took up defensive positions .

= = = Later career = = =

After Jutland , Deutschland and her sisters returned to picket duty in the mouth of the Elbe . They were also occasionally transferred for guard duty in the Baltic . From 22 December 1916 to 16 January 1917 , Deutschland lay idle in the Bay of Kiel . On 24 January , the ship was taken to Hamburg where she went into the drydock for maintenance ; this work lasted until 4 April . Deutschland sailed out of the Altenbruch roads at the mouth of the Elbe and then to the Baltic for continued guard duty . On 15 August , the II Battle Squadron was disbanded ; two weeks later , on 31 August , Deutschland arrived in Kiel and was decommissioned on 10 September . Deutschland had her guns removed in Kiel before she was transferred to Wilhelmshaven to serve as a barracks ship . On 25 January 1920 the ship was struck from the naval register and sold for scrapping , which was complete by 1922 . The ship 's bow ornament is on display at the Eckernförde underwater weapons school and her bell is located in the mausoleum of Prince Heinrich at the Hemmelmark estate .