

= SMS Thetis =

SMS Thetis was the fourth member of the ten ship Gazelle class , built by the Imperial German Navy . She was built by the Imperial Dockyard in Danzig , laid down in 1899 , launched in July 1900 , and commissioned into the High Seas Fleet in September 1901 . Armed with a main battery of ten 10 cm (4 in) guns and two 45 cm (18 in) torpedo tubes , Thetis was capable of a top speed of 21 knots (39 km / h ; 24 mph) .

Thetis served in the reconnaissance forces of the High Seas Fleet during her peacetime career . After the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , she was deployed as a coastal defense ship in the Baltic , where she saw heavy service against the Russians . She supported the German drive on Libau in April ? May 1915 , and was damaged by mines during the Battle of the Gulf of Riga . She was repeatedly attacked by Allied submarines , though she was never hit . In 1917 , Thetis was withdrawn from front line service for use as a gunnery training ship . She survived the war and continued on in service with the Reichsmarine through the 1920s . She was stricken from the naval register on 29 March 1929 and broken up for scrap the following year .

= = Construction = =

Thetis was ordered under the contract name " C " and was laid down at the Imperial Dockyard in Danzig in 1899 and launched on 3 July 1900 , after which fitting out work commenced . She was commissioned into the High Seas Fleet on 14 September 1901 . The ship was 105 meters (345 ft) long overall and had a beam of 12 meters (40 ft) and a draft of 4 meters (16 ft) forward . She displaced 3,017 t (2,969 long tons ; 3,326 short tons) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two triple expansion engines manufactured by AG Germania . They were designed to give 8,000 shaft horsepower (6,000 kW) , for a top speed of 21 knots (39 km / h ; 24 mph) . The engines were powered by ten coal fired Marine type water tube boilers . Thetis carried 560 tonnes (550 long tons) of coal , which gave her a range of 3,560 nautical miles (6,590 km ; 4,100 mi) at 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . She had a crew of 14 officers and 243 enlisted men .

The ship was armed with ten 10 cm SK L / 40 guns in single mounts . Two were placed side by side forward on the forecastle , six were located amidships , three on either side , and two were placed side by side aft . The guns could engage targets out to 12,000 m (40,000 ft) . They were supplied with 1,000 rounds of ammunition , for 100 shells per gun . She was also equipped with two 45 cm (17 in) torpedo tubes with five torpedoes . They were submerged in the hull on the broadside . The ship was protected by an armored deck that was 20 to 25 mm (0.79 to 0.98 in) thick . The conning tower had 80 mm (3 in) thick sides , and the guns were protected by 50 mm (2 in) thick shields .

= = Service history = =

After her commissioning , Thetis was assigned to the reconnaissance forces of the High Seas Fleet , a role she served in until the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 . She was thereafter reduced to a coastal defense ship . As the Central Powers prepared to launch the Gorlice ? Tarnów Offensive in early May 1915 , the extreme left flank of the German Army was ordered to launch a diversionary attack on 27 April . Thetis was assigned to the naval support for the attack ; on the first day of the attack , she and the cruiser Lübeck shelled the port of Libau . Ten days later , the Army was poised to seize Libau , and so requested naval support for the attack . Thetis and several other cruisers and torpedo boats covered the assault on the city and patrolled to ensure no Russian naval forces attempted to intervene .

On 14 May 1915 , Thetis had taken the U boat U 4 under tow off Bogskär island in the Gulf of Finland . The Russian submarine Drakon attacked the two German vessels , launching three torpedoes at Thetis and a fourth at U 4 , all of which missed . From the recently captured

naval base at Libau , the Germans began to make offensive operations further into the Baltic . On 3 June , Thetis , four torpedo boats , and a seaplane tender attempted to force the Irben Strait into the Gulf of Riga , where they intended to lay a minefield . Russian and British submarines intercepted the flotilla in the Strait , however . The Russian submarine Okun attempted to move into position to attack Thetis , but one of the torpedo boats spotted her periscope and forced it off . On 5 June , the British submarine HMS E9 arrived on the scene , while Thetis was resupplying from a collier . E9 launched a spread of torpedoes at the two ships ; the one fired at Thetis missed , but the collier was hit , as was the torpedo boat S148 . The collier sank , but the torpedo boat survived and made it back to port .

In August , Thetis was assigned to the fleet that was to break into the Gulf of Riga to support the German Army 's attempt to capture the city . On 8 August , the Germans made their first attempt to force the Irben Strait , during which Thetis and the torpedo boat SMS S144 were damaged by mines . Thetis had to be towed back to Windau . The attack failed due to heavy Russian resistance , and the operation had to be postponed .

In 1917 , Thetis was rearmed with nine newer 10 @. @ 5 cm SK L / 45 guns in U @- @ boat mountings ; in this configuration , Thetis was used as a gunnery training ship . She was one of six light cruisers Germany was permitted to retain by the Treaty of Versailles . She served in the newly reorganized Reichsmarine through the 1920s . In 1922 , the ship was assigned to the Reserve Squadron on the Baltic Station , along with the battleships Hessen and Schleswig @- @ Holstein and the cruiser Berlin . Thetis was stricken from the naval register on 27 March 1929 and sold to Blohm & Voss , along with the torpedo boats V1 and V6 for a total of 351 @, @ 000 Reichsmarks . She was broken up for scrap the following year in Hamburg .