

= SMS Ariadne =

SMS Ariadne was the fifth member of the ten @-@ ship Gazelle class of light cruisers , built by the Imperial German Navy . She was built by the Imperial Dockyard in Danzig , laid down in 1899 , launched in August 1900 , and commissioned into the High Seas Fleet in May 1901 . Armed with a main battery of ten 10 @.@ 5 cm (4 @.@ 1 in) guns and two 45 cm (18 in) torpedo tubes , Ariadne was capable of a top speed of 21 @.@ 5 knots (39 @.@ 8 km / h ; 24 @.@ 7 mph) .

Ariadne served with the reconnaissance forces of the High Seas Fleet for the majority of her career . After the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , she was used to patrol the Heligoland Bight . On 28 August , the British Royal Navy attacked the patrol line , and in the ensuing Battle of Heligoland Bight , Ariadne was attacked and sunk by a pair of battlecruisers . Some 200 of her crew were killed in the battle , with only 59 survivors pulled from the sea .

= = Construction = =

Ariadne was ordered under the contract name " D " and was laid down at the AG Weser shipyard in Bremen in 1899 and launched on 10 August 1900 , after which fitting @-@ out work commenced . She was commissioned into the High Seas Fleet on 18 May 1901 . The ship was 105 @.@ 1 meters (345 ft) long overall and had a beam of 12 @.@ 2 m (40 ft) and a draft of 4 @.@ 93 m (16 @.@ 2 ft) forward . She displaced 3 @, @ 006 t (2 @, @ 959 long tons ; 3 @, @ 314 short tons) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two triple @-@ expansion engines . They were designed to give 8 @, @ 000 shaft horsepower (6 @, @ 000 kW) , for a top speed of 21 @.@ 5 knots (39 @.@ 8 km / h ; 24 @.@ 7 mph) . The engines were powered by ten coal @-@ fired Marine @-@ type water @-@ tube boilers . Ariadne 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 @.@ 5 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 @, @ 200 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 @.@ 7 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 @.@ 1 in) thick sides , and the guns were protected by 50 mm (2 @.@ 0 in) thick shields .

= = Service history = =

After her commissioning , Ariadne was assigned to the reconnaissance forces of the High Seas Fleet . In 1905 , she was assigned to the Cruiser Division , alongside her sisters Medusa and Amazone and the armored cruiser Prinz Heinrich . She served with the fleet in German waters for the entirety of her peacetime career . After the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , Ariadne was detached from the fleet for use as a patrol vessel in the Heligoland Bight .

On 23 August , several British commanders submitted a plan to attack the patrol line with the light cruisers and destroyers of the Harwich Force , commanded by Commodore Reginald Tyrwhitt . These ships would be supported by submarines and Vice Admiral David Beatty 's battlecruisers and associated light forces . The plan was approved and set for 28 August . The British forces began to leave port on the evening of 26 August , beginning with the submarines assigned to the operation . Most of the surface forces went to sea early on the following morning ; the 7th Cruiser Squadron , which had been added to provide further support to the Harwich Force , left port later in the day .

On the morning of 28 August , Ariadne had been rotated out of the front patrol line and laid at anchor in the entrance of the Weser River in support of the cruisers and torpedo boats on patrol . After receiving reports of the British attack on the morning of the 28th , Ariadne and several other cruisers got up steam and rushed to support the German patrols . She met SMS Stettin at around

13 : 40 , but less than twenty minutes thereafter , Beatty 's battlecruisers , chasing SMS Cöln , arrived and began firing on Ariadne as well . She turned to starboard and attempted to flee . She was hit several times by the British guns , and one hit the forward boiler room . The coal bunker caught fire and five boilers were disabled ; her speed fell to 15 kn (28 km / h ; 17 mph) . Two battlecruisers closed in , until they were firing their 12 in (300 mm) guns at a distance of 3 @,@ 000 m (9 @,@ 800 ft) , point @-@ blank range for guns of that caliber . Ariadne returned fire as best she could , but to no effect .

With fires raging forward and aft , Ariadne had her forward magazine flooded so the fires would not reach the propellant charges . At 14 : 15 , the British ceased fire and allowed Ariadne to limp away . The surviving crew that was able to escape the ship assembled on the forecastle and prepared to abandon the ship . The cruiser Danzig arrived shortly before 15 : 00 and began to pick up survivors , and Stralsund joined the rescue effort shortly thereafter . At 16 : 25 , Ariadne capsized , though she remained afloat for some time before she finally sank . In all , nine officers , including her commander , and fifty enlisted men were rescued . The rescue effort was hampered by frequent explosions of ammunition stored on Ariadne 's deck , which prevented boats from getting too close to the wrecked cruiser .