

= SMS Lothringen =

SMS Lothringen was the fifth of five pre-dreadnought battleships of the Braunschweig class in the German Imperial Navy laid down in 1902 and commissioned 1906. She was named for the then German province of Lothringen, now Lorraine, a region of France. Her sister ships were Braunschweig, Elsass, Hessen, and Preussen.

Lothringen served in the II Battle Squadron of the German High Seas Fleet for the majority of her career. She participated in a fleet advance in December 1914 in support of the Raid on Scarborough, Hartlepool and Whitby during which the German fleet encountered and briefly clashed with a detachment of the British Grand Fleet. Her poor condition necessitated her withdrawal from fleet service in 1916, after which she was used as a guard ship in the Baltic Sea, and later as a training ship. After the war, Lothringen was retained by the re-formed Reichsmarine and converted into a depot ship for F-type minesweepers. She was stricken in March 1931 and sold to ship breakers later that year.

= = Construction = =

Lothringen was laid down in 1902, at the Schichau Werke in Danzig under construction number 716. The fifth and final unit of her class, she was ordered under the contract name "M" as a new unit for the fleet. The ship cost 23,801,000 marks. Lothringen was launched on 27 May 1904 and commissioned into the fleet on 18 May 1906.

The ship was 127.7 m (419 ft) long overall and had a beam of 22.2 m (73 ft) and a draft of 8.1 m (27 ft) forward. The ship was powered by three 3-cylinder vertical triple expansion engines that drove three screws. Steam was provided by eight naval and six cylindrical boilers, all of which burned coal. Lothringen's powerplant was rated at 16,000 metric horsepower (15,781 ihp; 11,768 kW), which generated a top speed of 18 knots (33 km/h; 21 mph).

Lothringen's armament consisted of a main battery of four 28 cm (11 in) SK L/40 guns in twin gun turrets, one fore and one aft of the central superstructure. Her secondary armament consisted of fourteen 17 cm (6.7 in) SK L/40 guns and eighteen 8.8 cm (3.5 in) SK L/35 quick-firing guns. The armament suite was rounded out with six 45 cm (18 in) torpedo tubes, all mounted submerged in the hull.

= = Service history = =

After commissioning, Lothringen was assigned to the II Battle Squadron of the German fleet. Lothringen participated in the de Ruyter festival in Amsterdam on 24 March 1907. In 1909, Lothringen and the older battleship Mecklenburg won the annual Kaiser's Prize for accurate shooting. By 1911, Germany's first two classes of dreadnought battleships, the Nassau and Helgoland classes, were entering service. These ships were assigned to I Battle Squadron; all of the older Kaiser Friedrich III and Wittelsbach-class vessels, armed with only 24 cm (9.4 in) guns, were placed in reserve. Germany now had a battleship fleet armed entirely with guns 28 cm (11 in) or larger.

Lothringen was present during the fleet cruise to Norway in July 1914, which was cut short by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and subsequent rise in international tensions. On 25 July the ship's crew was made aware of Austria-Hungary's ultimatum to Serbia; Lothringen left Norway to rendezvous with the rest of the fleet the following day.

= = = World War I = = =

After the outbreak of war in August 1914, the High Seas Fleet conducted a series of operations designed to lure out a portion of the numerically superior British Grand Fleet and destroy it. By achieving a rough equality of forces, the German navy could then force a decisive battle in the

southern portion of the North Sea . The first such operation in which the High Seas Fleet , including Lothringen , participated was the raid on Scarborough , Hartlepool and Whitby on 15 ? 16 December 1914 . The main fleet acted as distant support for Rear Admiral Franz von Hipper 's battlecruiser squadron while it raided the coastal towns . On the evening of 15 December , the fleet came to within 10 nmi (19 km ; 12 mi) of an isolated squadron of six British battleships . However , skirmishes between the rival destroyer screens in the darkness convinced the German fleet commander , Admiral Friedrich von Ingenohl , that the entire Grand Fleet was deployed before him . Under orders from Kaiser Wilhelm II , von Ingenohl broke off the engagement and turned the battlefleet back towards Germany .

Like her sister Preussen , Lothringen missed the Battle of Jutland on 31 May ? 1 June 1916 , though for different reasons . Preussen had been temporarily transferred to guard duties in the Baltic , while Lothringen was in such poor condition that Vice Admiral Reinhard Scheer , the fleet commander , removed her from the squadron . Jutland proved to Scheer that the pre @-@ dreadnought battleships were too vulnerable to take part in a major fleet action , and so detached the II Squadron from the High Seas Fleet . Lothringen became a guard ship in the Baltic after she left the battle fleet . The following year she was transferred to Wilhelmshaven , where she was used as an exercise ship , as well as to train engineers . She served in this capacity until the end of the war in 1918 .

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

The Treaty of Versailles , which ended the war , specified that Germany was permitted to retain six battleships of the " Deutschland or Lothringen types . " Lothringen was among those ships chosen to remain on active service with the newly reformed Reichsmarine . Like her sister Preussen , Lothringen was converted into a parent ship for F @-@ type minesweepers at the Kriegsmarinewerft in Wilhelmshaven in 1919 ; the ship was disarmed and platforms for holding the minesweepers were installed .

Lothringen served in this capacity with the newly reformed Reichsmarine from 1922 until 1926 , after which she was placed in reserve . She was stricken from the naval register on 31 March 1931 ; the Reichsmarine then sold her , minus her armor plating , to ship breakers that year for 269 @,@ 650 Reichsmarks . Lothringen was subsequently broken up for scrap by Blohm & Voss in Hamburg .