

= SMS Cormoran (1892) =

SMS Cormoran (" His Majesty 's Ship Cormorant ") was an unprotected cruiser of the Bussard class , the fifth member of a class of six ships . She was built for the Imperial German Navy for overseas duty . The cruiser 's keel was laid down in Danzig in 1890 ; she was launched in May 1892 and commissioned in July 1893 . Cormoran was armed with a main battery of eight 10 @. @ 5 @-@ centimeter (4 @. @ 1 in) guns , and could steam at a speed of 15 @. @ 5 knots (28 @. @ 7 km / h ; 17 @. @ 8 mph) .

Cormoran spent the majority of her career abroad , usually in Germany 's South Pacific colonies in the Samoan Islands . Her duties there typically consisted of survey work and suppressing colonial unrest . She briefly cruised in South African waters in late 1894 and early 1895 before steaming to the Pacific . She participated in the seizure of the Kiautschou Bay concession in the Shandong Peninsula in China in 1897 . Cormoran returned to Germany in 1903 and was modernized in 1907 ? 08 . The following year , she returned to the South Pacific , where she remained until the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 . Docked in Tsingtau for repairs at the onset of hostilities , she was unable to actively take part in the fighting . She was therefore disarmed and scuttled in the harbor ; her guns were used to strengthen the defenses of the port .

= = Description = =

Cormoran was 82 @. @ 6 meters (271 ft) long overall and had a beam of 12 @. @ 7 m (42 ft) and a draft of 4 @. @ 42 m (14 @. @ 5 ft) forward . She displaced 1 @, @ 864 t (1 @, @ 835 long tons ; 2 @, @ 055 short tons) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two horizontal 3 @-@ cylinder triple @-@ expansion steam engines powered by four coal @-@ fired cylindrical boilers . These provided a top speed of 15 @. @ 5 kn (28 @. @ 7 km / h ; 17 @. @ 8 mph) and a range of approximately 2 @, @ 950 nautical miles (5 @, @ 460 km ; 3 @, @ 390 mi) at 9 kn (17 km / h ; 10 mph) . She had a crew of 9 officers and 152 enlisted men .

The ship was armed with eight 10 @. @ 5 cm SK L / 35 quick @-@ firing (QF) guns in single pedestal mounts , supplied with 800 rounds of ammunition in total . They had a range of 10 @, @ 800 m (35 @, @ 400 ft) . Two guns were placed side by side forward , two on each broadside , and two side by side aft . The gun armament was rounded out by five Hotchkiss guns . She was also equipped with two 35 cm (14 in) torpedo tubes with five torpedoes , both of which were mounted on the deck .

= = Service history = =

Cormoran was built by the Kaiserliche Werft (Imperial Shipyard) in Danzig . Her keel was laid in 1890 and her completed hull was launched on 17 May 1892 . Kaiser Wilhelm II attended the launching ceremony with the senior director of the Kaiserliche Werft . Work was completed by 25 July 1893 , when she was commissioned into the Imperial German Navy . Following her commissioning , she underwent two months of sea trials , which were completed on 22 September . Starting in 1894 , Cormoran was assigned to overseas service in Germany 's colonial possessions . She was initially ordered on 2 October to the East Asia Station to replace the gunboat SMS Wolf , but the rising tensions in South Africa led the Navy to send the new cruiser to German East Africa to secure German interests in the region instead .

On 16 October , Cormoran and her newly commissioned sister ship Condor left Germany , bound for East Africa . They arrived in Lourenço Marques , the capital of Portuguese Mozambique , on 15 December . Cormoran remained there for the next seven months . In January 1895 , she towed the Portuguese cruiser Afonso de Albuquerque back to Lourenço Marques . In July , Condor arrived there to replace Cormoran ; the latter was now free to return to her original deployment to East Asian waters . She left East Africa on 5 July . While en route , she stopped in Muscat , Oman , where she paid an official visit to the sultan . On 5 August while steaming in the Strait of Hormuz , the safety valve on the starboard low @-@ pressure cylinder of the starboard engine was damaged

. As a result , Cormoran had to put into Bushehr , Persia , for repairs . Following completion of the repair work , Cormoran cruised to Basra via the Shatt al Arab , where she paid visits to the local German consul and Turkish authorities .

= = = First deployment to the Pacific = = =

On 13 September 1895 , Cormoran arrived in Singapore and joined the East Asia Division under the command of Rear Admiral Hoffmann , who flew his flag in the armored cruiser SMS Kaiser . In July 1896 , she participated in the recovery of the stranded gunboat Itis . In October and November 1897 , Cormoran steamed up the Yangtze River to Hankow . She was also involved in the occupation of the Kiautschou Bay concession . She went to the Philippines during the Spanish ? American War in May 1898 ; the American cruiser USS Raleigh prevented Cormoran from entering Cavite . In November , she towed Kaiser from Samsah Bay in Fujian to Hong Kong for repairs . The tense political situation in German Samoa prompted the Admiralstab (Admiralty Staff) to send Cormoran to reinforce her sisters Bussard and Falke there .

While en route to Samoa on the night of 23 ? 24 March 1899 , Cormoran ran aground on the Whirlwind Reef , north of the western tip of New Pomerania . She was stuck on the reef amidships , so that her bow was sticking about a meter out of the water . The crew attempted to lighten the ship by removing coal and ammunition , but she remained grounded on the reef . The ship 's commander , Korvettenkapitän Hugo Emsmann , sent the steam pinnace and a dinghy with two officers and eleven men , towing a load of coal , to Friedrich @-@ Wilhelmshafen , some 162 nautical miles (300 km ; 186 mi) away . There , they met the steamer Stettin , which arrived on the scene on 29 March . Emsmann then decided to remove all unnecessary coal and ammunition ? some of which was put ashore and the rest simply thrown overboard ? to cut away the fore and mainmast , and to move the stern guns forward . These measures allowed the ship to float free from the reef . The crew then re @-@ stowed the supplies that had been sent ashore before returning to Friedrich @-@ Wilhelmshafen . There , her seaworthiness was inspected , and additional supplies were brought aboard . Cormoran then steamed to Sydney for dry @-@ docking ; a full inspection of her hull revealed that it had only been slightly damaged . Repairs lasted until early June .

Cormoran returned to Sydney in mid @-@ June 1900 for her annual overhaul . Part of her crew was replaced ; these men were then sent to China to take part in the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion . On 2 October , Cormoran anchored in Apia , before embarking on a tour of the German Pacific colonies . Another overhaul in Sydney followed , which lasted from 15 March to 1 May 1901 . During this period , she and the protected cruiser Hansa represented Germany during the first Parliament of Australia in Melbourne . While on the return journey to Samoa , Cormoran was sent to the St Matthias Islands in the Bismarck Archipelago , where a German researcher named Mencke had been murdered , along with his assistant . There , Cormoran and the survey vessel Möwe attacked the islanders responsible for the murders . On 28 July , Cormoran had returned to Apia , and through November , the ship was occupied with survey work and trips to the other islands .

In 1902 , she again visited the Bismarck Archipelago and the Marshall Islands . Further repairs were effected in Sydney , and the cruiser was back in Apia by 18 August . Another tour of Germany 's colonies began on 23 September . She returned to Sydney for periodic maintenance in mid @-@ March 1903 , and there she received the order to return to Germany . Cormoran departed Sydney on 23 May , bound for Germany ; she reached Kiel on 13 September . While in Germany , she served a stint in the main fleet . The ship was modernized during a lengthy reconstruction that started in 1907 at the Kaiserliche Werft in Danzig . New boilers manufactured by J W Klawitter in Danzig were installed , and her sailing rig was reduced . A new , larger conning tower was also installed . Work was completed in 1908 , and on 1 May 1909 , Cormoran was recommissioned for service in the Pacific .

= = = Second deployment to the Pacific = = =

While in Malta on 8 June 1909 , she received orders to proceed to Asia Minor , where unrest in

Turkey and violence against Armenians was prompting German intervention . She joined the cruisers Stettin and Lübeck , and took on some 300 Armenians to protect them from harassment . On 9 July , while moored in Port Said , she received the order to resume her voyage to the Pacific . Cormoran was forced to stop in Jeddah for repairs to her boilers . After reaching the Pacific , she began coastal survey work , and her landing party led a punitive expedition against cannibals in Kaiser @-@ Wilhelmsland . On 3 November , she took part in a flag raising ceremony in Blanche Bay commemorating the German possession of New Pomerania . Three days later , her crew participated in the groundbreaking ceremony for a Bismarck tower in Toma , a town southwest of the capital , Herbertshöhe .

On 13 November , Cormoran embarked the governor in Herbertshöhe , and went first to Friedrich @-@ Wilhelmshafen , then to Hansa @-@ Hafen , and then to the Kaiserin @-@ Augusta River . The cruiser steamed 183 nautical miles (339 km ; 211 mi) up the river before being ordered to reverse course . By 22 November , she had reached the mouth of the river , and by 8 January 1910 , she had moored in Apia once again . She participated in the celebrations for the tenth anniversary of the German annexation of the islands , which lasted from 28 February to 3 March . While on a trip to Hong Kong , she was caught in a hurricane , which did significant damage to the cruiser . Her sides were slightly pushed in and all of her boats were damaged by the storm . Temporary repairs were effected in Nouméa in New Caledonia . Cormoran finally arrived in Hong Kong on 3 May ; by 15 July , she had returned to Apia . She was thereafter joined by her sister Condor , the armored cruiser Scharnhorst and the light cruisers Emden and Nürnberg from the East Asia Squadron . The five ships cruised together until , on 13 December while in Rabaul , they were ordered to proceed to Ponape to suppress the Sokehs Rebellion . They arrived on 19 December and operated in the area until 22 February , with Cormoran , Emden and Nürnberg landing shore parties in support of Polizei @-@ Soldaten (a force of police officers) deployed from German New Guinea .

On 23 March , Cormoran returned to Sydney for yet another annual overhaul . Afterward , she resumed her typical cruising duties in the German Pacific colonies . In September , she and the steamer Planet pulled free the Norwegian barque Fram , which had run aground . She received another major overhaul in Tsingtau in May 1912 , which was followed by surveying cruises in the German colonies . She did not return to Apia until 10 January 1913 . Cormoran was reclassified as a gunboat on 24 February 1913 by order of Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz , the State Secretary of the Reichsmarineamt (Imperial Navy Office) . From 4 June to 5 July , she underwent repairs in Sydney . She was then obliged to stop in Bougainville due to tribal feuds on the island . She landed her shore party to assist the Polizeitruppen in suppressing the conflict . She departed for Tsingtau for further repair work in early 1914 , arriving on 30 May .

As the political situation in Europe worsened in July 1914 , the senior officer in Tsingtau at the time , Fregattenkapitän (Frigate Captain) Karl von Müller , the commander of Emden , ordered the repair work to Cormoran to be accelerated . After the outbreak of war in early August , Emden captured the Russian steamer Ryazan and brought her back to Tsingtau . Since Cormoran was still out of service , she was decommissioned and her crew was used to man Ryazan , which was commissioned as the auxiliary cruiser Cormoran . Men from the gunboats Iltis and Vaterland , along with some war volunteers , joined them aboard the new auxiliary cruiser . Much of her weaponry was removed to strengthen the shore defenses at Tsingtau on 6 August 1914 to protect the concession from British attack . She was scuttled in the harbor on the night of 28 ? 29 September 1914 by the staff of the Imperial Dockyard to prevent her from being captured .