

= SMS Yorck =

SMS Yorck (" His Majesty 's Ship Yorck ") was the second and final ship of the Roon class of armored cruisers built for the German Imperial Navy . Yorck was named for Ludwig Yorck von Wartenburg , a Prussian field marshal . She was laid down in 1903 at the Blohm & Voss shipyard in Hamburg , and finished in November 1905 , at the cost of 16 @, @ 241 @, @ 000 marks . She displaced up to 9 @, @ 875 metric tons (9 @, @ 719 long tons ; 10 @, @ 885 short tons) and was armed with a main battery of four 21 cm (8 @. @ 3 in) guns . Her top speed was 20 @. @ 4 knots (37 @. @ 8 km / h ; 23 @. @ 5 mph) .

The ship had a short career ; she served with the fleet for the first seven years , after which she was decommissioned and placed in reserve . After the outbreak of World War I , she was reactivated and returned to front @-@ line service . After returning from the raid on Yarmouth on 3 ? 4 November 1914 , the ship made a navigational error in heavy fog and accidentally sailed into a German defensive minefield . The ship sank quickly with heavy loss of life , though sources disagree on the exact number of fatalities . Her commander was court @-@ martialled and imprisoned for disobedience and negligent homicide . Yorck was broken up incrementally , with work occurring in 1929 ? 30 , 1965 , and finally completed in 1982 .

= = Construction = =

Yorck was ordered under the provisional name Ersatz Deutschland and built at the Blohm & Voss shipyard in Hamburg under construction number 167 . Her keel was laid in 1902 and she was launched on 14 May 1904 . Fitting @-@ out work was completed by 21 November 1905 , being commissioned into the Imperial German Navy the same day . She had cost the Imperial German Government 16 @, @ 241 @, @ 000 Goldmarks .

Yorck displaced 9 @, @ 087 t (8 @, @ 943 long tons) as built and 9 @, @ 875 t (9 @, @ 719 long tons) fully loaded , with a length of 126 @. @ 50 m (415 ft 0 in) , a beam of 19 @. @ 60 m (64 ft 4 in) and a draft of 7 @. @ 43 m (24 ft 5 in) forward . She was powered by three vertical triple expansion engines , which developed a total of 17 @, @ 272 indicated horsepower (12 @, @ 880 kW) and yielded a maximum speed of 20 @. @ 4 knots (37 @. @ 8 km / h ; 23 @. @ 5 mph) on trials . She carried up to 1 @, @ 630 t (1 @, @ 600 long tons) of coal , which enabled a maximum range of up to 5 @, @ 080 nautical miles (9 @, @ 410 km ; 5 @, @ 850 mi) at a cruising speed of 12 knots (22 km / h ; 14 mph) .

She was armed with four 21 cm (8 @. @ 3 in) guns arranged in two twin gun turrets , one on either end of the superstructure . Her secondary armament consisted of ten 15 cm (5 @. @ 9 in) guns , four in single turrets arranged two each on either side , the rest in casemates amidships , fourteen 8 @. @ 8 cm (3 @. @ 5 in) guns and four 45 cm (18 in) underwater torpedo tubes , one in the bow , one in the stern , and one on both beams .

= = Service history = =

= = = Peacetime = = =

Yorck was launched on 14 May 1904 , and commissioned into the German navy on 21 November 1905 . At the commissioning Field Marshal Wilhelm von Hahnke spoke , saying , " old wisdom , si vis pacem , para bellum ? he who wants peace shall be prepared for war ... may the guns and machines of the Yorck be operated only by men with iron hearts and an iron will , men who know no other order than to put their lives at risk when the might , the greatness and honor of the German people are being fought for . " After her commissioning , Yorck served with the fleet in the cruiser squadron . In 1908 ? 1909 , Erich Raeder served aboard the ship as Yorck 's navigation officer . From 1 October 1911 to 26 January 1912 , Franz von Hipper , later commander @-@ in @-@ chief of the German navy , served as the ship 's commanding officer .

In early March 1913 , the fleet conducted maneuvers off the island of Helgoland in the North Sea . Early on 4 March , the destroyer S178 fell out of formation in heavy seas and attempted to cross in front of Yorck . The destroyer was caught by a large wave and thrown into Yorck , which cut S178 in half . Out of a crew of 83 men , only 13 were pulled from the stormy sea . Yorck was decommissioned and laid up in the reserve fleet in May 1913 with most of her crew transferring to the newly completed battlecruiser Seydlitz . Hipper , by now the deputy commander of the battlecruiser squadron , stated that " the Seydlitz has a fine spirit and high morale , having carried over the spirit of the old Yorck crew . " On 12 August 1914 Yorck was recommissioned and assigned to III Scouting Group .

= = = First World War = = =

On 3 November , Yorck participated in the first offensive operation of the war conducted by the German fleet . She augmented the forces assigned to the I Scouting Group , which primarily consisted of the battlecruisers Seydlitz , Moltke , and Von der Tann and the large armored cruiser Blücher . The I Scouting Group , commanded by Rear Admiral Hipper , was ordered to bombard Great Yarmouth on the English coast . The four large cruisers bombarded the port but inflicted little damage ; minelayers laid minefields off the coast , which sank British submarine D5 . Upon returning to the Heligoland Bight late that day , Hipper 's forces encountered heavy fog . The fog prevented the ships from entering Wilhelmshaven ; instead , they anchored for the night in the Schillig roadstead . Yorck attempted to enter Wilhelmshaven early on the 4th , but her crew made a navigational error which led the ship into a German defensive minefield . She struck two mines , and capsized and sank with heavy loss of life .

Sources disagree on the exact figures ; V. E. Tarrant 's Jutland : The German Perspective , states that 127 men out of a crew of 629 were rescued , while Erich Gröner 's German Warships 1815 ? 1945 indicates that there were only 336 fatalities . Daniel Butler 's Distant Victory states that " some 235 " men perished in the sinking . The Norddeutsche Volksblatt reported " the loss of over 300 men " at the time of the court @-@ martial on the sinking ; this report was echoed around the world .

Yorck 's commanding officer , Captain Piper , was among those rescued . In December 1914 he was court @-@ martialled and sentenced to two years ' imprisonment for negligence , disobedience of orders , and homicide through negligence . The ship 's wreck was partially scrapped in 1929 ? 30 ; more work was done in 1965 , though the ship was not completely removed until work resumed in 1982 .