

= SM UB @-@ 12 =

SM UB @-@ 12 was a German Type UB I submarine or U @-@ boat in the German Imperial Navy (German : Kaiserliche Marine) during World War I. The submarine disappeared in August 1918 .

UB @-@ 12 was ordered in October 1914 and was laid down at the AG Weser shipyard in Bremen in November . UB @-@ 12 was a little under 28 metres (92 ft) in length and displaced between 127 and 141 tonnes (125 and 139 long tons) , depending on whether surfaced or submerged . She carried two torpedoes for her two bow torpedo tubes and was also armed with a deck @-@ mounted machine gun . UB @-@ 12 was broken into sections and shipped by rail to Antwerp for reassembly . She was launched and commissioned as SM UB @-@ 12 in March 1915 .

UB @-@ 12 spent her entire career in the Flanders Flotilla and sank 22 merchant ships , about half of them British fishing vessels . The U @-@ boat was also responsible for sinking the British destroyer HMS Laforey in 1917 . By early 1917 , UB @-@ 12 had been converted into a minelayer with the replacement of her torpedo tubes with four mine chutes . UB @-@ 12 disappeared after 19 August 1918 .

= = Design and construction = =

After the German Army 's rapid advance along the North Sea coast in the earliest stages of World War I , the German Imperial Navy found itself without suitable submarines that could be operated in the narrow and shallow seas off Flanders . Project 34 , a design effort begun in mid @-@ August 1914 , produced the Type UB I design : a small submarine that could be shipped by rail to a port of operations and quickly assembled . Constrained by railroad size limitations , the UB I design called for a boat about 28 metres (92 ft) long and displacing about 125 t (123 long tons) with two torpedo tubes .

UB @-@ 12 was part of the initial allotment of seven submarines ? numbered UB @-@ 9 to UB @-@ 15 ? ordered on 15 October from AG Weser of Bremen , just shy of two months after planning for the class began . UB @-@ 12 was laid down by Weser in Bremen on 7 November . As built , UB @-@ 12 was 27 @. @ 88 metres (91 ft 6 in) long , 3 @. @ 15 metres (10 ft 4 in) abeam , and had a draft of 3 @. @ 03 metres (9 ft 11 in) . She had a single 59 @-@ brake @-@ horsepower (44 kW) Körting 4 @-@ cylinder diesel engine for surface travel , and a single 119 @-@ shaft @-@ horsepower (89 kW) Siemens @-@ Schuckert electric motor for underwater travel , both attached to a single propeller shaft . Her top speeds were 7 @. @ 45 knots (13 @. @ 80 km / h ; 8 @. @ 57 mph) , surfaced , and 6 @. @ 24 knots (11 @. @ 56 km / h ; 7 @. @ 18 mph) , submerged . At more moderate speeds , she could sail up to 1 @, @ 500 nautical miles (2 @, @ 800 km ; 1 @, @ 700 mi) on the surface before refueling , and up to 45 nautical miles (83 km ; 52 mi) submerged before recharging her batteries . Like all boats of the class , UB @-@ 12 was rated to a diving depth of 50 metres (160 ft) , and could completely submerge in 33 seconds .

UB @-@ 12 was armed with two 45 @-@ centimeter (17 @. @ 7 in) torpedoes in two bow torpedo tubes . She was also outfitted for a single 8 @-@ millimeter (0 @. @ 31 in) machine gun on deck . UB @-@ 12 's standard complement consisted of one officer and thirteen enlisted men .

After work on UB @-@ 12 was complete at the Weser yard , she was readied for rail shipment . The process of shipping a UB I boat involved breaking the submarine down into what was essentially a knock down kit . Each boat was broken into approximately fifteen pieces and loaded on to eight railway flatcars . In February 1915 , the sections of UB @-@ 12 were shipped to Antwerp for assembly in what was typically a two- to three @-@ week process . After UB @-@ 12 was assembled and launched on 2 March , she was loaded on a barge and taken through canals to Bruges where she underwent trials .

= = Early career = =

The submarine was commissioned into the German Imperial Navy as SM UB @-@ 12 on 29 March 1915 under the command of Kapitänleutnant (Kapt .) Hans Nieland , a 29 @-@ year @-@ old first

@-@ time U @-@ boat commander . On 18 April , UB @-@ 12 joined the Flanders Flotilla (German : U @-@ boote des Marinekorps U @-@ Flotille Flandern) , which had been organized on 29 March . When UB @-@ 12 joined the flotilla , Germany was in the midst of its first submarine offensive , begun in February . During this campaign , enemy vessels in the German @-@ defined war zone (German : Kriegsgebiet) , which encompassed all waters around the United Kingdom , were to be sunk . Vessels of neutral countries were not to be attacked unless they definitively could be identified as enemy vessels operating under a false flag .

On 24 July , Nieland and UB @-@ 12 sank four British fishing vessels while patrolling between 30 nautical miles (56 km ; 35 mi) east @-@ northeast of Lowestoft . All four of the sunken ships were smacks ? sailing vessels traditionally rigged with red ochre sails ? which were stopped , boarded by crewmen from UB @-@ 12 , and sunk with explosives . UB @-@ 12 similarly sank a pair of smacks off Lowestoft on 4 August , and another trio from 23 to 25 August .

On 21 November , Nieland was succeeded by Oberleutnant zur See (Oblt .) Wilhelm Kiel in command of UB @-@ 12 . Under Kiel 's command , UB @-@ 12 sank three ships on 21 February 1916 : the 100 @-@ ton Belgian fishing ship La Petite Henriette , the largest sunk to @-@ date by UB @-@ 12 , and another pair of British smacks , Oleander and W.E. Brown .

UB @-@ 12 sank her largest ship , Silksworth Hall of 4 @-@ 777 gross register tons (GRT) , on 10 April . The British @-@ registered ship was en route from Hull to Philadelphia in ballast when Kiel torpedoed her without warning a little more than one nautical mile (two kilometers) from the Corton Lightvessel . Other ships picked up 31 survivors from Silksworth Hall , but 3 men were lost . Later in the month , Admiral Reinhardt Scheer , the newest commander @-@ in @-@ chief of the High Seas Fleet , called off the merchant shipping offensive and ordered all boats at sea to return , and all boats in port to remain there .

= = Grand Fleet ambush attempts = =

In mid @-@ May , Scheer completed plans to draw out part of the British Grand Fleet . The German High Seas Fleet would sortie for a raid on Sunderland , luring the British fleet across " ' nests ' of submarines and mine @-@ fields " . In support of the operation , UB @-@ 12 and five other Flanders boats set out at midnight 30 / 31 May to form a line 18 nautical miles (33 km ; 21 mi) east of Lowestoft . This group was to intercept and attack the British light forces from Harwich , should they sortie north to join the battle . Unfortunately for the Germans , the British Admiralty had intelligence reports of the departure of the submarines which , coupled with an absence of attacks on shipping , aroused British suspicions .

A delayed departure of the German High Seas Fleet for its sortie (which had been redirected to the Skagerrak) and the failure of several of the U @-@ boats stationed to the north to receive the coded message warning of the British advance caused Scheer 's anticipated ambush to be a " complete and disappointing failure " . In UB @-@ 12 's group , only UB @-@ 10 sighted the Harwich forces , and they were too far away to mount an attack . The failure of the submarine ambush to sink any British capital ships allowed the full Grand Fleet to engage the numerically inferior High Seas Fleet in the Battle of Jutland , which took place 31 May ? 1 June .

Kapitänleutnant Georg Gerth took command of UB @-@ 12 on 26 June , after Oblt . Kiel was assigned to command the new minelaying submarine UC @-@ 18 . Two months later , Admiral Scheer set up another ambush for the British fleet with plans for another High Seas Fleet raid on Sunderland (as had been the original intention in May) . The German fleet planned to depart late in the day on 18 August and shell military targets the next morning . As in May , UB @-@ 12 was part of a group intended to attack the Harwich forces . As one of five boats forming the second line of boats from the Flanders Flotilla , UB @-@ 12 was stationed off Texel by the morning of 20 August . Once again , British intelligence had given warning of the impending attack and ambush , causing the Grand Fleet to sortie at 16 : 00 on 18 August , five hours before the German fleet sailed . Faulty intelligence caused Scheer initially to divert from Sunderland , and then to eventually call off the whole operation . Although U @-@ boats to the north sank two British light cruisers , UB @-@ 12 and her group played no part in the action .

In September , Gerth led UB @-@ 12 in sinking two more ships and capturing a third ship as a prize . The 313 @-@ ton Norwegian steamer Rilda was sunk on 6 September , while the 55 @-@ ton Marjorie was sunk on the 28th . In between the Dutch ship Niobe was seized as a prize on the 7th .

= = Conversion to minelayer = =

UB @-@ 12 and three sister boats ? UB @-@ 10 , UB @-@ 16 , and UB @-@ 17 ? were all converted to minelaying submarines . UB @-@ 12 was at the dockyard from November 1916 to January 1917 , and it is likely the boat was converted during this timeframe . The conversion involved removing the bow section containing the pair of torpedo tubes from each U @-@ boat and replacing it with a new bow containing four mine chutes capable of carrying two mines each . In the process , the boats were lengthened to 105 feet (32 m) , and the displacement increased to 147 t (145 long tons) on the surface , and 161 t (158 long tons) below the surface .

During this same time , Kapt . Gerth was transferred to SM UC @-@ 61 , and replaced on UB @-@ 12 by Oblt . Friedrich Moecke in early November . Moecke was , in turn , replaced by Oblt . Ernst Steindorff in January 1917 .

By March , the newly converted submarine had begun laying mines off the French coast . The French Navy trawler Elisabeth struck one of UB @-@ 12 's mines off Calais on 13 March and sank . Five days later , the British auxiliary minesweeper Duchess of Montrose sank with a loss of 12 men after detonating a mine laid by UB @-@ 12 off Gravelines . On 23 March , HMS Laforey , a destroyer with the Dover Patrol , struck one of UB @-@ 12 's mines off Cape Gris @-@ Nez and went down with the loss of 59 men .

In May , UB @-@ 12 was on a patrol with UB @-@ 39 in the English Channel . On the night of 14 / 15 May while UB @-@ 12 was on the surface , Steindorff noted a large underwater explosion some miles away in a British minefield , and when UB @-@ 39 failed to return to Zeebrugge , one of the bases for the Flanders Flotilla , reported what was likely the demise of UB @-@ 39 at the hands of a British mine .

April found two more victims added to UB @-@ 12 's tally . On the 20th , Nepaulin , another British auxiliary minesweeper was lost on one of UB @-@ 12 's mines near the Dyck Lightvessel . Six days later , the British steamer Alhama was mined while loaded with pit props destined for Dunkirk . The 1 @, @ 744 @-@ ton cargo ship was the largest ship sunk by UB @-@ 12 since the Silksworth Hall , sunk the previous April . UB @-@ 12 sank another two ships under Steindorff 's command , one each in June and July . The steamer Dulwich ? carrying coal from Seaham for London ? was mined and sunk with the loss of five men on 10 June . One month later , the French patrol vessel Jupiter I was mined off Calais . These were the last two ships credited to mines from UB @-@ 12 for the next fourteen months .

= = Fate = =

UB @-@ 12 's activities over the next year are not well documented , and no specific record of her can be found in English @-@ language sources . However , it is known that during this period , she was helmed by four different commanders , with the final officer , Oblt . Ernst Schöller , assuming command in May 1918 . Under Schöller 's command , UB @-@ 12 departed Zeebrugge on 19 August to lay mines in the Downs off the Kentish coast , but never returned . According to one British source , UB @-@ 12 was herself mined off Helgoland sometime in August . Author Dwight Messimer considers this unlikely given that Helgoland is nowhere near the route that UB @-@ 12 could have taken to get to the Downs . A postwar German study concluded the two most likely fates for UB @-@ 12 were that she either struck a British mine or was destroyed by one of her own mines that malfunctioned during deployment . Messimer also considers it possible that UB @-@ 12 may have had a diving accident related to her conversion to a minelayer .

Some two months after UB @-@ 12 's presumed loss , she was credited with the sinking of her final ship . On 27 October , two weeks before the end of the war , the 92 @-@ ton British ship

Calceolaria struck one of UB @-@ 12 's mines near the Elbow Lightvessel and sank .

= = Summary of raiding history = =

= = External Links = =

'UB @-@ 12 off Ramsgate : Marine Geophysical Survey and Archaeological Report ' ' Historic England project to research First World War submarines'