

= German cruiser Leipzig =

Leipzig was the lead ship of her class of light cruisers built by the German navy . She had one sister ship , Nürnberg . Leipzig was laid down in April 1928 , was launched in October 1929 , and was commissioned into the Reichsmarine in October 1931 . Armed with a main battery of nine 15 cm (5 @. @ 9 in) guns in three triple turrets , Leipzig had a top speed of 32 knots (59 km / h ; 37 mph) .

Leipzig participated in non @-@ intervention patrols during the Spanish Civil War . In the first year of World War II , she performed escort duties for warships in the Baltic and North seas . While on one of these operations in December 1939 , the ship was torpedoed by a British submarine and badly damaged . Repairs were completed by late 1940 , when she returned to service as a training ship . She provided gunfire support to the advancing Wehrmacht troops as they invaded the Soviet Union in 1941 .

In October 1944 , Leipzig collided with the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen ; the damage was so severe that the navy decided complete repairs were unfeasible . The ship was patched up to keep her afloat , and she helped to defend Gotenhafen from the advancing Red Army in March 1945 . She then carried a group of fleeing German civilians , reaching Denmark by late April . After the end of the war , Leipzig was used as a barracks ship for minesweeping forces and was scuttled in July 1946 .

= = Design = =

Leipzig was 177 meters (581 ft) long overall and had a beam of 16 @. @ 3 m (53 ft) and a maximum draft of 5 @. @ 69 m (18 @. @ 7 ft) forward . She displaced 8 @, @ 100 metric tons (8 @, @ 000 long tons ; 8 @, @ 900 short tons) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two steam turbines and four 7 @-@ cylinder MAN two @-@ stroke double @-@ acting diesel engines , which were the basis for the unsuccessful US Navy Hooven @-@ Owens @-@ Rentschler design . Steam for the turbines was provided by six Marine @-@ type double @-@ ended oil @-@ fired boilers . The ship 's propulsion system provided a top speed of 32 knots (59 km / h ; 37 mph) and a range of approximately 3 @, @ 900 nautical miles (7 @, @ 200 km ; 4 @, @ 500 mi) at 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) using only the diesel engines . Leipzig had a crew of 26 officers and 508 enlisted men .

The ship was armed with nine 15 cm SK C / 25 guns mounted in three triple gun turrets . One was located forward , and two were placed in a superfiring pair aft , all on the centerline . They were supplied with between 1 @, @ 080 and 1 @, @ 500 rounds of ammunition , for between 120 and 166 shells per gun . As built , the ship was also equipped with two 8 @. @ 8 cm SK L / 45 anti @-@ aircraft guns in single mounts ; they had 400 rounds of ammunition each . Leipzig also carried four triple torpedo tube mounts located amidships ; they were supplied with twenty @-@ four 50 cm (20 in) torpedoes . She was also capable of carrying 120 naval mines . The ship was protected by an armored deck that was 30 mm (1 @. @ 2 in) thick amidships and an armored belt that was 50 mm (2 @. @ 0 in) thick . The conning tower had 100 mm (3 @. @ 9 in) thick sides .

= = Service history = =

Leipzig was laid down at the Reichsmarinewerft shipyard in Wilhelmshaven on 28 April 1928 and launched on 18 October 1929 . She was commissioned into the Reichsmarine on 8 October 1931 . The ship trained extensively in the Baltic Sea throughout 1932 and 1933 , and also made several goodwill cruises overseas . In 1934 , she and the cruiser Königsberg made the first goodwill visit to the United Kingdom since the end of World War I. In late 1934 , Leipzig went into drydock for modifications . An aircraft catapult was installed on the aft superstructure and a crane for handling float planes replaced one of her boat derricks . The original single @-@ mount 8 @. @ 8 cm anti @-@ aircraft guns were replaced with twin mounts . These modifications were made in Kiel . In early 1935 , Leipzig joined the old pre @-@ dreadnought battleship Schlesien , the new heavy cruiser Deutschland , and the light cruiser Köln for major fleet exercises .

Later in 1935 , Adolf Hitler visited the ship during training maneuvers with the rest of the fleet . The ship joined her sister Nürnberg and Köln for exercises in the Atlantic Ocean in early 1936 . In August , Leipzig took part in the non @-@ intervention patrols off Spain during the Spanish Civil War . She conducted several patrols between August 1936 and June 1937 , and in late June , she was allegedly attacked with torpedoes ; this prompted Germany and Italy to withdraw from the non @-@ intervention patrols . She thereafter returned to Germany and went into the Baltic Sea for training , which lasted through 1938 . In March 1939 , she participated in the annexation of Memel which Germany had demanded from Lithuania . The following month , she joined the battleship Gneisenau , the cruiser Deutschland , and several destroyers and U @-@ boats for major exercises in the Atlantic . Additional maneuvers were conducted through the middle of 1939 .

= = = World War II = = =

At the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 , Leipzig was assigned to the blocking force that was intended to prevent the escape of the Polish Navy from the Baltic ; they were unsuccessful . Leipzig thereafter went to the North Sea , where she and the other light cruisers laid a series of defensive minefields . This task lasted through the end of the month , after which she returned to the Baltic for training maneuvers . On 17 ? 19 November , Leipzig covered a minelaying operation in the North Sea . She joined Deutschland , Köln , and three torpedo boats for a sweep in the Skagerrak for Allied shipping on 21 ? 22 November . Leipzig was tasked with escorting the battleships Scharnhorst and Gneisenau through the Skagerrak , and with covering their return on the 27th .

On 13 December , Leipzig was tasked with escorting a flotilla of destroyers and other small vessels as they proceeded through the Skagerrak to lay a minefield . While en route , the British submarine HMS Salmon attacked the German warships , and at 11 : 25 , hit Leipzig with a torpedo . The torpedo hit Leipzig just below the waterline , where a bulkhead separated two of the ship 's three boiler rooms . The explosion bent her armored deck and damaged her keel ; some 1 @,@ 700 t (1 @,@ 700 long tons ; 1 @,@ 900 short tons) of water flooded the ship , and the damage cut electrical power to the ship 's pumping system . The two boiler rooms were flooded , steam lines were damaged , and the port turbine was shut down . At around the same time , her sister Nürnberg was also torpedoed . A pair of destroyers arrived to escort the damaged cruisers back to port ; an hour after Leipzig was torpedoed , one of the escorting destroyers was also torpedoed , just outside the mouth of the Elbe . Another torpedo passed just ahead of Leipzig , nearly hitting the damaged cruiser .

After safely returning to port in Kiel , Leipzig was taken into the Deutsche Werke shipyard for repairs . She was decommissioned while under repair and reclassified as a training ship . To accommodate additional training crews , four of the ship 's boilers were removed . She returned to service in late 1940 . In early June 1941 , she escorted the heavy cruiser Lützow (formerly Deutschland) to Norway . After she returned to the Baltic , she and the cruiser Emden provided artillery support to advancing German ground forces during Operation Barbarossa , the invasion of the Soviet Union . In September , she supported the invasion of the Baltic islands in the West Estonian archipelago . While bombarding Soviet positions on Moon Island , Leipzig was attacked unsuccessfully by the Soviet submarine Shch @-@ 317 . In late September , the ship joined the German Baltic Fleet , centered on the battleship Tirpitz ; the fleet was tasked with blocking a possible Soviet attempt to break out of the Baltic . Leipzig returned to Kiel in October , and conducted maneuvers with the heavy cruiser Admiral Scheer . Leipzig became the flagship of the training fleet in 1942 ; she spent the year performing training duties .

Leipzig was decommissioned briefly in March 1943 , and recommissioned on 1 August . She was in need of an overhaul , however , and the work significantly delayed her return to operational status . Furthermore , an outbreak of meningitis killed two crewmen and created an additional delay . Leipzig returned to escort duties in the Baltic in mid @-@ September 1944 . Her first operation covered troop transports between Gotenhafen and Swinemünde in company with Admiral Scheer . On 14 October , Leipzig departed Gotenhafen , bound for Swinemünde , to take on a load of mines . In a heavy fog , she collided with the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen , which was steaming at 20 knots (37

km / h ; 23 mph) . At the time of collision , Leipzig was switching from her diesel cruise engines to her steam turbine main engines , a process of first uncoupling the diesels from the shafts and then coupling turbines to the shafts , which left the ship temporary without propulsion drifting out of her fairway into the path of Prinz Eugen which was moving in the opposite way Prinz Eugen struck C on her port side , just forward of her funnel , cutting her nearly in half - the forward point of the clipper bow of Prinz Eugen actually stuck out beyond the starboard side of Leipzig . The collision destroyed the number 3 (port) engine room , flooded a second engine room and killed or wounded 39 crewmen . The ships remained stuck fast for over a day , after which Leipzig was towed back to Gotenhafen . The damage was so severe that repairs were deemed impractical , especially considering Germany 's pressing military situation by late 1944 . Only repairs to keep her afloat in the harbor were effected .

Leipzig provided fire support to the defending German forces in March 1945 , while Soviet Red Army forces advanced on the city . On 24 March , Leipzig was moved to Hela , laden with refugees ; she was capable of steaming at only 6 knots (11 km / h ; 6 @. @ 9 mph) . She was repeatedly attacked by Soviet aircraft , and Allied submarines attempted to torpedo her twice . She nevertheless safely reached Denmark on 29 April . Due to her poor state following the end of the war , she was used as a barracks ship for the men of the German Mine Sweeping Administration , tasked with clearing mines off the German coast . The battered ship was eventually towed out and scuttled in July 1946 .