

= SMS Gefion =

SMS Gefion (" His Majesty 's Ship Gefion ") was an unprotected cruiser of the German Kaiserliche Marine (Imperial Navy) , the last ship of the type built in Germany . She was laid down in March 1892 , launched in March 1893 , and completed in June 1895 after lengthy trials and repairs . The cruiser was named after the earlier sail frigate Gefion , which had been named for the goddess Gefjon of Norse mythology . Intended for service in the German colonial empire and as a fleet scout , Gefion was armed with a main battery of ten 10 @. @ 5 @-@ centimeter (4 @. @ 1 in) guns , had a top speed in excess of 19 @. @ 5 knots (36 @. @ 1 km / h ; 22 @. @ 4 mph) , and could steam for 3 @, @ 500 nautical miles (6 @, @ 500 km ; 4 @, @ 000 mi) , the longest range of any German warship at the time . Nevertheless , the conflicting requirements necessary for a fleet scout and an overseas cruiser produced an unsuccessful design , and Gefion was rapidly replaced in both roles by the newer Gazelle class of light cruisers .

Gefion initially served with the main German fleet and frequently escorted Kaiser Wilhelm II 's yacht Hohenzollern on trips to other European countries , including a state visit to Russia in 1897 . In late 1897 , Gefion was reassigned to the East Asia Squadron ; she arrived there in May 1898 . The ship took part in the Battle of Taku Forts in June 1900 during the Boxer Rebellion in China . She returned to Germany in 1901 and was modernized , but she did not return to service after the work was finished in 1904 . She was to be mobilized after the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , but a crew could not be assembled due to shortages of personnel . Instead , she was used as a barracks ship in Danzig from 1916 to the end of the war . In 1920 , she was sold , converted into a freighter , and renamed Adolf Sommerfeld . She served in this capacity for only three years , and was broken up for scrap in Danzig in 1923 .

= = Design = =

Gefion was designed to serve as a colonial cruiser in the German colonial empire ; during peacetime she was to police German holdings and suppress native unrest , and in times of war she would act as a commerce raider . In addition , the new cruiser design was intended to be capable of serving as a fleet scout . This pair of roles was necessary because the German naval budget was too small to permit development of pure fleet scouts and colonial cruisers . Indeed , Gefion was essentially a smaller version of contemporary German protected cruisers such as Kaiserin Augusta . As a result of the competing design requirements ? a high top speed necessary for a fleet scout , very long cruising radius for a commerce raider , and the firepower necessary in the colonies ? the resulting design was unsatisfactory .

Gefion , classified as a cruiser @-@ corvette , was authorized in the 1890 ? 91 budget and named for the earlier sail frigate Gefion . The contract for her construction was awarded to Schichau @-@ Werke in late 1891 . She was the last unprotected cruiser built by the Kaiserliche Marine (Imperial Navy) ; thereafter , the Germans built the Gazelle class of light cruisers to fill the need for small , overseas cruisers .

= = General characteristics and machinery = =

Gefion was 109 @. @ 2 meters (358 ft) long at the waterline and 110 @. @ 4 m (362 ft) long overall . She had a beam of 13 @. @ 2 m (43 ft) and had a draft of 6 @. @ 47 m (21 @. @ 2 ft) forward and 6 @. @ 27 m (20 @. @ 6 ft) aft . She was designed to displace 3 @, @ 746 metric tons (3 @, @ 687 long tons ; 4 @, @ 129 short tons) , but with a full ammunition , stores , and fuel load she displaced up to 4 @, @ 275 t (4 @, @ 207 long tons ; 4 @, @ 712 short tons) . The hull was constructed from transverse and longitudinal steel frames , except for the lower stem and stern parts , which were made of bronze . The frames were covered with wood planking and a metal sheath that extended to 1 m (3 ft 3 in) above the waterline to reduce fouling .

She was fitted with a fore and main pole mast with spotting tops to aid her gunnery . The ship had a crew of 13 officers and 289 enlisted men . She carried a number of small boats , including one

picket boat , one pinnace , two cutters , two yawls , and one dinghy . Gefion was crank , rolled badly , and made severe leeway , and her decks were wet in a head sea . She nevertheless maneuvered well and had a tight turning radius . She had a metacentric height of .55 m (1 ft 10 in) . Steering was controlled by a single rudder .

Gefion was powered by two vertical , 3 @-@ cylinder triple expansion engines , which drove a pair of 3 @-@ bladed screw propellers that were 4 @. @ 2 m (14 ft) in diameter . Steam was provided by six coal @-@ fired , transverse , cylindrical , double water @-@ tube boilers , which were trunked into three vertical funnels . The engines were designed to produce 9 @, @ 000 indicated horsepower (6 @, @ 700 kW) for a top speed of 19 knots (35 km / h ; 22 mph) . On trials , her engines produced 9 @, @ 827 ihp (7 @, @ 328 kW) and a speed of 20 @. @ 5 kn (38 @. @ 0 km / h ; 23 @. @ 6 mph) . The ship could store up to 860 t (850 long tons ; 950 short tons) of coal , which enabled her to steam for 3 @, @ 500 nautical miles (6 @, @ 500 km ; 4 @, @ 000 mi) at a cruising speed of 12 kn (22 km / h ; 14 mph) . Electrical power was provided by three generators , which supplied a total output of 40 kilowatts (54 hp) at 67 volts .

= = = Armament and armor = = =

Gefion was originally to be armed with 15 @-@ centimeter (5 @. @ 9 in) guns , but the main battery was revised to fifteen 10 @. @ 5 cm (4 @. @ 1 in) SK L / 35 guns and finally to ten 10 @. @ 5 cm guns . These guns were supplied with a total of 807 rounds of ammunition , and they had a maximum range of 10 @, @ 800 m (35 @, @ 400 ft) . She was also equipped with six 5 cm (2 @. @ 0 in) SK L / 40 guns , with 1 @, @ 500 rounds . They had a range of 6 @, @ 200 m (20 @, @ 300 ft) . The ship was also fitted with two 45 cm (18 in) deck @-@ mounted torpedo tubes with a total of five torpedoes . The ship was protected with a light armored deck consisting of steel . The deck was 25 mm (0 @. @ 98 in) thick , with 30 mm (1 @. @ 2 in) thick sloped sides . The coaming around the funnels was 40 mm (1 @. @ 6 in) thick . The engine rooms received much more significant protection , with coaming 100 mm (3 @. @ 9 in) thick on top of 180 mm (7 @. @ 1 in) of teak .

= = Service history = =

The keel for the new cruiser was laid down on 28 March 1892 at the Schichau @-@ Werke shipyard in Danzig , and the completed hull was launched on 31 March 1893 . Kaiser Wilhelm II attended her launching , and the speech was given by the director of the Kaiserliche Werft (Imperial Shipyard) in Danzig , Kapitän zur See (Captain at Sea) Graf Kurt von Haugwitz . Sea trials began on 27 June 1894 at Kiel and lasted until 2 October . Serious defects in her design , in particular poor ventilation , were revealed through the trials , which necessitated modifications at the Kaiserliche Werft in Kiel . She was accordingly placed in reserve after completing her trials . The work lasted until mid @-@ 1895 , and the ship was ready for commissioning on 5 June 1895 . That month , she was present for the celebration marking the opening of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal .

In July , she escorted Wilhelm II 's yacht Hohenzollern on a visit to the king of Sweden and a trip to the Cowes Regatta . The two ships thereafter visited Leith in the Firth of Forth . Following her return to Wilhelmshaven on 17 August , she participated in the annual autumn fleet maneuvers . During the maneuvers , Gefion , a pair of torpedo boats , and a salvage ship searched for the wrecked torpedo boat S 41 in Jammer Bay on 28 August . A second attempt was made on 24 September , but it too was unsuccessful . She thereafter resumed her duties as escort for Hohenzollern , and during this period she conducted further sea trials that confirmed her cruising radius , which was the highest of all German ships at the time .

In February 1896 , she was assigned as the watch ship in Kiel . From 24 to 30 May , she joined maneuvers in the Baltic Sea with the II Division of the I Squadron ; these were the four Sachsen @-@ class ironclads . Gefion rejoined Hohenzollern as her escort for Wilhelm II 's voyage to Norway in July . While there , on 10 July , Gefion helped pull free the stranded French steamer SS Chanzy . From 9 August to 15 September , Gefion participated in the annual autumn fleet maneuvers in the

Baltic and North Seas . By 17 September , she was back in Kiel to resume her duties as watch ship . From 2 to 14 December , she accompanied the II Division through the Kattegat and Skagerrak . She returned to Kiel in early 1897 and continued her watch ship duties until June . She took Admiral Hans von Koester on a trip to Sassnitz in April for celebrations to mark the opening of the first telegraph cable between Germany and Sweden . In June she began to serve as a training ship for stokers . During this period , she escorted Hohenzollern to a sailing regatta in the mouth of the Elbe , which was followed by another trip to Norway and Sweden in July .

On 30 July , Gefion was back in Kiel , though she escorted Hohenzollern to Kronstadt from 4 to 13 August for Wilhelm II to have a meeting with Czar Nicholas II of Russia , along with the I and II Divisions of the Heimatflotte (Home Fleet) . Gefion thereafter joined the autumn maneuvers , which lasted until 22 September . She then returned to Kiel for periodic repairs . After this work was completed in December , Gefion was assigned to the newly formed II Division of the East Asia Squadron . The Division was commanded by Prince Heinrich , the brother of Wilhelm II , who flew his flag in the re @-@ built armored cruiser Deutschland . The protected cruiser Kaiserin Augusta was the third ship in the division . On 15 December , the three ships left Germany , Wilhelm II having instructed their crews , " Should anyone seek to hinder you in the proper exercise of our legitimate rights , go for them with a mailed fist . " The division was bound for the newly conquered base at Tsingtau in the Kiautschou Bay concession . They arrived on 5 May 1898 and met the rest of the squadron , which was commanded by Vizeadmiral (Vice Admiral) Otto von Diederichs .

= = = Deployment to the China Station = = =

Shortly before the arrival of the II Division , the US Navy destroyed the Spanish fleet at the Battle of Manila Bay during the Spanish ? American War . Diederichs detached Gefion to investigate the situation in Manila in an attempt to maneuver Germany into a position to secure colonial possessions in the Philippines , or even to obtain a German prince on the Philippine throne outright . In late March 1899 , Gefion was sent to Kiautschou in response to mistreatment of German missionaries there ; Kapitänleutnant (Captain Lieutenant) Franz Grapow went ashore with a landing party of 132 marines and artillerymen to punish the offenders .

In April , Prince Heinrich replaced Diederichs as the squadron commander . That same month , Gefion had to leave the harbor at Wusong to assist Deutschland , which had suffered engine damage . At the end of the month , Gefion steamed up the Yangtze River as far as Hankou . She visited Japanese ports , including Nagasaki , starting in June and the Russian port of Vladivostok in August , before having to assist Deutschland once again , after the latter vessel struck a reef in Samsah Bay in Fujian . As a precautionary measure , she escorted Deutschland to Hong Kong for repairs . At the end of the year , Gefion met Deutschland in Bangkok ; the latter vessel was carrying Prince Heinrich back to Germany . In January 1900 , Vizeadmiral Felix von Bendemann arrived to take command of the East Asia Squadron , aboard his flagship , the protected cruiser Hertha . In the first half of the year , Gefion and the rest of the squadron cruised in the German central Pacific colonies .

By the end of May 1900 , the unrest that sparked the Boxer Rebellion began to appear in the Shandong Peninsula , particularly around the German base at Tsingtau . After the outbreak of the rebellion , Gefion and the rest of the squadron joined ships from other European navies to launch a relief expedition under the command of Edward Hobart Seymour . The ships bombarded Chinese coastal defenses southeast of Tianjin and sent an expeditionary force ? the Seymour Expedition ? ashore at the Battle of Taku Forts on 16 ? 17 June . The contingent from Gefion was commanded by Kapitänleutnant Otto Weniger ; these men participated in the storming of the Great Hsi @-@ Ku Arsenal in Tianjin . Starting in mid @-@ July , Gefion was stationed outside the mouth of the Yangtze to monitor traffic in the area . In November , she went to Hong Kong for an overhaul . In January 1901 , the ship 's commander was sent to temporarily govern Tsingtau on behalf of the ill governor . Between February and April , Gefion was in Nagasaki , and in June she was stationed at Shanghai . She stayed there until September , when the Admiralstab (Admiralty Staff) ordered her to return to Germany . On 22 September she departed Chinese waters and arrived back in Germany

on 1 October .

== Later service ==

She was decommissioned for a major reconstruction the day she returned to Germany . The work was done at the Kaiserliche Werft in Wilhelmshaven from December 1901 to 1904 . New , more powerful electrical generators were installed , the upper deck was enclosed , and the 10 @. @ 5 cm guns that had been located on the upper deck were moved to gun ports in the hull . The two 5 cm guns that were located abreast of the center funnel were moved further aft , to the third funnel . After completion of the work , Gefion was left out of service in reserve . Following the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , the Admiralstab ordered Gefion to be reactivated , and on 10 August Korvettenkapitän (Corvette Captain) Waldeyer was placed in command of the ship . A crew could not be assembled due to shortages in personnel , however , and so the ship could not be placed back into service . Waldeyer was therefore transferred to another ship on 21 August . Gefion was thereafter moved to Danzig in 1916 for use as a barracks ship for crews of warships being repaired at the Kaiserliche Werft there . She remained there for the duration of the war , and was stricken from the naval register on 5 November 1919 .

She was thereafter sold to Norddeutsche Tiefbaugesellschaft , converted into a diesel @-@ powered freighter , and renamed Adolf Sommerfeld in 1920 . With her new diesel engines , which had come from the unfinished U @-@ boats U @-@ 115 and U @-@ 116 , she could steam at 11 knots (20 km / h ; 13 mph) and had a cargo capacity of 2 @, @ 600 t (2 @, @ 600 long tons ; 2 @, @ 900 short tons) . The conversion was not particularly successful , and was only done due to a severe shortage of shipping in the aftermath of the war . As a result , Adolf Sommerfeld served only very briefly , and was broken up for scrap by Danziger Hoch- und Tiefbau in Danzig in 1923 .