

= SMS Frankfurt =

SMS Frankfurt was a light cruiser of the Wiesbaden class built by the German Kaiserliche Marine (Imperial Navy) . She had one sister ship , SMS Wiesbaden ; the ships were very similar to the previous Karlsruhe @-@ class cruisers . The ship was laid down in 1913 , launched in March 1915 , and completed by August 1915 . Armed with eight 15 cm SK L / 45 guns , Frankfurt had a top speed of 27 @.@ 5 knots (50 @.@ 9 km / h ; 31 @.@ 6 mph) and displaced 6 @,@ 601 t (6 @,@ 497 long tons ; 7 @,@ 276 short tons) at full load .

Frankfurt saw extensive action with the High Seas Fleet during World War I. She served primarily in the North Sea , and participated in the Bombardment of Yarmouth and Lowestoft and the battles of Jutland and Second Heligoland . At Jutland , she was lightly damaged by a British cruiser and her crew suffered minor casualties . At the end of the war , she was interned with the bulk of the German fleet in Scapa Flow . When the fleet was scuttled in June 1919 , Frankfurt was one of the few ships that were not successfully sunk . She was ceded to the US Navy as a war prize and ultimately expended as a bomb target in tests conducted by the US Navy and Army Air Force in July 1921 .

= = Design = =

Frankfurt was ordered under the contract name " Ersatz Hela " and was laid down at the Kaiserliche Werft shipyard in Kiel in 1913 and launched on 20 March 1915 , after which fitting @-@ out work commenced . She was commissioned into the High Seas Fleet on 20 August 1915 , after being rushed through trials . The ship was 145 @.@ 3 meters (477 ft) long overall and had a beam of 13 @.@ 9 m (46 ft) and a draft of 5 @.@ 76 m (18 @.@ 9 ft) forward . She displaced 6 @,@ 601 t (6 @,@ 497 long tons ; 7 @,@ 276 short tons) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two sets of Marine steam turbines driving two 3 @.@ 5 @-@ meter (11 ft) propellers . They were designed to give 31 @,@ 000 shaft horsepower (23 @,@ 000 kW) . These were powered by twelve coal @-@ fired Marine @-@ type water @-@ tube boilers and two oil @-@ fired double @-@ ended boilers . These gave the ship a top speed of 27 @.@ 5 knots (50 @.@ 9 km / h ; 31 @.@ 6 mph) . Frankfurt carried 1 @,@ 280 tonnes (1 @,@ 260 long tons) of coal , and an additional 470 tonnes (460 long tons) of oil that gave her a range of 4 @,@ 800 nautical miles (8 @,@ 900 km ; 5 @,@ 500 mi) at 12 knots (22 km / h ; 14 mph) . Frankfurt had a crew of 17 officers and 457 enlisted men .

The ship was armed with eight 15 cm SK L / 45 guns in single pedestal mounts . Two were placed side by side forward on the forecastle , four were located amidships , two on either side , and two were placed in a superfiring pair aft . The guns could engage targets out to 17 @,@ 600 m (57 @,@ 700 ft) . They were supplied with 1 @,@ 024 rounds of ammunition , for 128 shells per gun . The ship 's anti-aircraft armament initially consisted of four 5 @.@ 2 cm (2 @.@ 0 in) L / 44 guns , though these were replaced with a pair of 8 @.@ 8 cm SK L / 45 anti @-@ aircraft guns . She was also equipped with four 50 cm (19 @.@ 7 in) torpedo tubes with eight torpedoes . Two were submerged in the hull on the broadside and two were mounted on the deck amidships . She could also carry 120 mines . The ship was protected by a waterline armored belt that was 60 mm (2 @.@ 4 in) thick amidships . The conning tower had 100 mm (3 @.@ 9 in) thick sides , and the deck was covered with up to 60 mm thick armor plate .

= = Service history = =

The first operation in which Frankfurt saw action was the Bombardment of Yarmouth and Lowestoft on 24 April 1916 . Frankfurt was assigned to the reconnaissance screen for the battlecruisers of the I Scouting Group , temporarily under the command of Konteradmiral Friedrich Boedicker 's . During the raid , Frankfurt attacked and sank a British armed patrol boat off the English coast . Due to reports of British submarines and torpedo attacks , Boedicker broke off the chase , and turned back east towards the High Seas Fleet . At this point , Scheer , who had been warned of the Grand Fleet

's sortie from Scapa Flow , turned back towards Germany .

= = = Battle of Jutland = = =

At the Battle of Jutland on 31 May ? 1 June 1916 , Frankfurt served as Boedicker 's flagship , the commander of the II Scouting Group . The II Scouting Group was again screening for the I Scouting Group battlecruisers , again commanded by Vizeadmiral Franz von Hipper . Frankfurt was engaged in the first action of the battle , when the cruiser screens of the German and British battlecruiser squadrons encountered each other . Frankfurt , Pillau , and Elbing briefly fired on the British light cruisers at 16 : 17 until the British ships turned away . Half an hour later , the fast battleships of the 5th Battle Squadron had reached the scene and opened fire on Frankfurt and the other German cruisers , though the ships quickly fled under a smokescreen and were not hit .

Shortly before 18 : 00 , the British destroyers Onslow and Moresby attempted to attack the German battlecruisers . Heavy fire from Frankfurt and Pillau forced the British ships to break off the attack . At around 18 : 30 , Frankfurt and the rest of the II Scouting Group encountered the cruiser HMS Chester ; they opened fire and scored several hits on the ship . Rear Admiral Horace Hood 's three battlecruisers intervened , however , and scored a hit on Wiesbaden that disabled the ship . About an hour later , Chester scored four hits on Frankfurt in quick succession : two 6 @-@ inch (150 mm) hits in the area of Frankfurt 's mainmast and a pair of 4 @-@ inch (100 mm) hits . One of the 4 @-@ inch shells hit forward , well above the waterline , and the second exploded in the water near the stern and damaged both screws .

Frankfurt and Pillau spotted the cruiser Castor and several destroyers shortly before 23 : 00 . They each fired a torpedo at the British cruiser before turning back toward the German line without using their searchlights or guns to avoid drawing the British toward the German battleships . Almost two hours later , Frankfurt encountered a pair of British destroyers and fired on them briefly until they retreated at full speed . By 04 : 00 on 1 June , the German fleet had evaded the British fleet and reached Horns Reef . Frankfurt had three men killed and eighteen wounded in the course of the engagement . She had fired 379 rounds of 15 cm ammunition and a pair of 8 @.@ 8 cm shells , and launched a single torpedo .

= = = Subsequent operations = = =

The ship participated in Operation Albion in October 1917 , an operation to eliminate the Russian naval forces that still held the Gulf of Riga . The ship was part of the II Scouting Group , commanded by Rear Admiral Ludwig von Reuter . The following month , Frankfurt and the rest of the II Scouting Group were engaged during the Second Battle of Heligoland Bight . Along with three other cruisers from the II Scouting Group , Königsberg escorted minesweepers clearing paths in minefields laid by the British . The dreadnought battleships Kaiser and Kaiserin stood by in distant support . During the battle , Frankfurt fired torpedoes at the attacking British cruisers , but failed to score any hits . The British broke off the attack when the German battleships arrived on the scene , after which the Germans also withdrew .

At 19 : 08 on 21 October 1918 , Frankfurt accidentally rammed and sank the U @-@ boat UB @-@ 89 in Kiel @-@ Holtenau , killing seven of her crew . Twenty @-@ seven survivors were pulled from the water . UB @-@ 89 was raised by the salvage tug Cyclop on 30 October but with the war almost over , she was not repaired and did not see further service .

In the final weeks of the war , Großadmiral Reinhard Scheer and Hipper intended to inflict as much damage as possible on the British navy , in order to secure a better bargaining position for Germany , whatever the cost to the fleet . On the morning of 29 October 1918 , the order was given to sail from Wilhelmshaven the following day . Starting on the night of 29 October , sailors on Thüringen and then on several other battleships mutinied . The unrest ultimately forced Hipper and Scheer to cancel the operation . Most of the High Seas Fleet 's ships , including Frankfurt , were interned in the British naval base in Scapa Flow , under the command of Reuter .

== Fate ==

The fleet remained in captivity during the negotiations that ultimately produced the Versailles Treaty . Reuter believed that the British intended to seize the German ships on 21 June 1919 , which was the deadline for Germany to have signed the peace treaty . Unaware that the deadline had been extended to the 23rd , Reuter ordered the ships to be sunk at the next opportunity . On the morning of 21 June , the British fleet left Scapa Flow to conduct training maneuvers , and at 11 : 20 Reuter transmitted the order to scuttle his ships . British sailors boarded Frankfurt and beached her before she could sink .

She was raised the following month and thereafter transferred to the United States Navy as a war prize . She was formally taken over on 11 March 1920 in England and commissioned into the US Navy on 4 June . Frankfurt was towed to the United States . The ship was ultimately expended as a bomb target on 18 July 1921 for United States Army Air Service and U.S. Navy bombers off Cape Henry , Virginia . The attacks started with small 250 @-@ pound (110 kg) and 300 lb (140 kg) bombs , which caused minor hull damage . The bombers then changed over to larger 550 lb (250 kg) and 600 lb (270 kg) bombs ; Army Air Service Martin MB @-@ 2 bombers hit Frankfurt with several of the 600 lb bombs and sank the ship at 18 : 25 .