

= SMS Wettin =

SMS Wettin ( " His Majesty 's Ship Wettin " ) was a German pre-dreadnought battleship of the Wittelsbach class of the Kaiserliche Marine . She was built in Schichau , in Danzig . Wettin was laid down in November 1899 , and completed October 1902 , at the cost of 22 , 597 , 000 marks . Her sister ships were Wittelsbach , Zähringen , Schwaben and Mecklenburg ; they were the first capital ships built under the Navy Law of 1898 , brought about by Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz .

Wettin saw active duty in the I Squadron of the German fleet for the majority of her career . After the start of World War I in August 1914 , the ship was mobilized with her sisters as the IV Battle Squadron . She saw limited duty in the Baltic Sea against Russian forces , though the threat from British submarines forced the ship to withdraw by 1916 . For the remainder of the war , Wettin served as a training ship for navy cadets and as a depot ship . After the end of the war , the ship was stricken from the navy list and sold for scrapping in 1921 . Her bell is currently on display at the Militärhistorisches Museum der Bundeswehr in Dresden .

= = Description = =

Wettin was 126 m ( 416 ft 0 in ) long overall and had a beam of 22 m ( 74 ft 10 in ) and a draft of 7 m ( 26 ft 1 in ) forward and 8 m ( 26 ft 5 in ) aft . The ship was powered by three 3-cylinder vertical triple expansion engines that drove three screws . Steam was provided by six naval and six cylindrical coal-fired water-tube boilers . Wettin 's powerplant was rated at 14 , 000 metric horsepower ( 13 , 808 ihp ; 10 , 297 kW ) , which generated a top speed of 18 knots ( 33 km / h ; 21 mph ) . She had a crew of 30 officers and 650 enlisted men .

Wettin 's armament consisted of a main battery of four 24 cm ( 9 in ) SK L / 40 guns in twin gun turrets , one fore and one aft of the central superstructure . Her secondary armament consisted of eighteen 15 cm ( 5 in ) SK L / 40 guns and twelve 8 cm ( 3 in ) SK L / 30 quick-firing guns . The armament suite was rounded out with six 45 cm ( 18 in ) torpedo tubes , all in above-water swivel mounts . Her armored belt was 225 millimeters ( 9 in ) thick in the central portion that protected her magazines and machinery spaces , and the deck was 50 mm ( 2 in ) thick . The main battery turrets had 250 mm ( 10 in ) of armor plating .

= = Service history = =

Wettin 's keel was laid on 10 October 1899 , at the Schichau-Werke in Danzig , under construction number 676 . She was ordered under the contract name " D " , as a new unit for the fleet . The vessel was a member of the first class of battleships built under the direction of State Secretary Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz , according to the terms of the Navy Law of 1898 . Wettin was launched on 6 June 1901 ; King Albert of Saxony , a member of the House of Wettin , gave a speech at the ceremony . In August 1902 , a crew of 60 men took the ship to Kiel for sea trials , which were supervised by Konteradmiral ( Rear Admiral ) Hunold von Ahlefeld . During the trials , Kaiser Wilhelm II , aboard his yacht Hohenzollern , reviewed Wettin while she was in Swinemünde on 10 August . The ship was commissioned on 1 October 1902 , the first member of her class to enter service . The ship 's cost totaled 22 , 597 , 000 marks .

After she was commissioned into the fleet , Wettin resumed sea trials , which were completed by January 1903 . She was assigned to the I Squadron of the fleet , where she replaced the battleship Weissenburg . In March 1905 , Wettin was sent to assist her sister ship Mecklenburg , which had run aground in the Great Belt . That year , the German fleet was reorganized into two squadrons of battleships . Wettin was assigned to the I Division of I Squadron , alongside her sister ships Zähringen and Wittelsbach . The German fleet at that time consisted of another three-ship division in the I Squadron and 2 three-ship divisions in the II Squadron . This was supported by a reconnaissance division , composed of two armored cruisers and six protected cruisers .

The Deutschland-class battleships ? the most powerful battleships yet built in Germany ?

were beginning to enter service by 1907 . This provided the Navy with enough ships to form a second full battle squadron composed of another eight ships . The fleet was then renamed the Hochseeflotte ( High Seas Fleet ) . Starting in 1911 , Wettin was employed as an artillery training ship for German gunners . This work lasted until 1914 .

= = = World War I = = =

By 1914 , Wettin and her sisters were removed from active service and placed in the reserve squadron . However , after the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , Wettin and the rest of her class were mobilized to serve in the IV Battle Squadron , under the command of Vice Admiral Ehrhard Schmidt . Starting on 3 September , the IV Squadron , assisted by the armored cruiser Blücher , conducted a sweep into the Baltic . The operation lasted until 9 September and failed to bring Russian naval units to battle . In May 1915 , IV Squadron , including Wettin , was transferred to support the German Army in the Baltic Sea area . Wettin and her sisters were then based in Kiel .

On 6 May , the IV Squadron ships were tasked with providing support to the assault on Libau . Wettin and the other ships stood off Gotland in order to intercept any Russian cruisers that might try to intervene in the landings , which the Russians did not attempt . On 10 May , after the invasion force had entered Libau , the British submarines HMS E1 and HMS E9 spotted the IV Squadron , but were too far away to make an attack . Wettin and her sister ships were not included in the German fleet that assaulted the Gulf of Riga in August 1915 , due to the scarcity of escorts . The increasingly active British submarines forced the Germans to employ more destroyers to protect the capital ships .

By 1916 , the increasing threat from British submarines in the Baltic convinced the German navy to withdraw the elderly Wittelsbach @-@ class ships from active service . Wettin was subsequently used as a training ship for naval cadets ; she also acted as a depot ship . The ship was stricken from the naval register on 11 March 1920 and sold to ship breakers on 21 November 1921 . Wettin was broken up for scrap the following year in Rönnebeck , a part of Bremen . Her bell is on display at the Militärhistorisches Museum der Bundeswehr in Dresden .