

= SMS Danzig =

SMS Danzig was a light cruiser of the Imperial German Navy . Named for the city of Danzig (Gdansk) , she was the seventh and last ship of the Bremen class . She was begun by the Imperial Dockyard in her namesake city in 1904 , launched on 23 September 1905 and commissioned on 1 December 1907 . Armed with a main battery of ten 10 cm (4 in) guns and two 45 cm (18 in) torpedo tubes , Danzig was capable of a top speed of 22 knots (41 km / h ; 25 mph) .

Danzig spent the first ten years of her career in the reconnaissance forces of the High Seas Fleet . The ship saw extensive service during the First World War ; she was present at the Battle of Heligoland Bight in August 1914 , but did not engage British warships . She also saw action in the Baltic Sea against Russian forces , and was badly damaged by a Russian mine in November 1915 . Danzig was also involved in Operation Albion , the seizure of the islands at the entrance of the Gulf of Riga , in September 1917 . She was thereafter withdrawn from service , and surrendered to Britain after the end of the war as a war prize . Danzig was dismantled for scrap starting in 1921 .

= = Construction = =

Danzig was ordered under the contract name Ersatz Alexandrine and was laid down at the Imperial Dockyard in Danzig in 1904 and launched on 23 September 1905 , after which fitting out work commenced . She was commissioned into the High Seas Fleet on 1 December 1907 . The ship was 111 meters (365 ft) long overall and had a beam of 13 m (44 ft) and a draft of 5 m (18 ft) forward . She displaced 3 , 783 t (3 , 723 long tons ; 4 , 170 short tons) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two triple expansion engines , designed to give 10 , 000 indicated horsepower (7 , 500 kW) for a top speed of 22 knots (41 km / h ; 25 mph) . The engines were powered by ten coal fired Marine type water tube boilers . Danzig carried up to 860 tonnes (850 long tons) of coal , which gave her a range of 4 , 690 nautical miles (8 , 690 km ; 5 , 400 mi) at 12 knots (22 km / h ; 14 mph) . She had a crew of 14 officers and 274 ? 287 enlisted men .

The ship was armed with ten 10 cm SK L / 40 guns in single mounts . Two were placed side by side forward on the forecastle , six were located amidships , three on either side , and two were placed side by side aft . The guns could engage targets out to 12 , 200 m (40 , 000 ft) . They were supplied with 1 , 500 rounds of ammunition , for 150 shells per gun . She was also equipped with two 45 cm (17 in) torpedo tubes with five torpedoes . They were submerged in the hull on the broadside . Danzig was also fitted to carry fifty naval mines . The ship was protected by an armored deck that was up to 80 mm (3 in) thick . The conning tower had 100 mm (3 in) thick sides , and the guns were protected by 50 mm (2 in) thick shields .

= = Service history = =

After her commissioning , Danzig served in the reconnaissance forces of the High Seas Fleet . In 1910 , she was used as a training ship for the fleet 's gunners . She returned to fleet service in August 1914 after the outbreak of World War I. She was moored in Brunsbüttel with her sister ship München , en route to Kiel via the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal on the morning of 28 August 1914 , when the British attacked the German patrol line in the Heligoland Bight . During the ensuing Battle of Heligoland Bight , Danzig and München were recalled and ordered to steam to the mouth of the Elbe and wait for further orders . Danzig reached the stricken cruiser Ariadne shortly before 15 : 00 and lowered boats to rescue survivors . Konteradmiral Franz von Hipper , the commander of the I Scouting Group , issued an order for all cruisers to regroup on the approaching battlecruisers Von der Tann and Moltke , but Fregattenkapitän Reiß , Danzig 's commander , refused , replying that he was " Rescuing people from Ariadne . "

On 7 May 1915 , the IV Scouting Group , which by then consisted of Danzig , München , Stettin , and Stuttgart , and twenty one torpedo boats was sent into the Baltic Sea to support a major

operation against Russian positions at Libau . The operation was commanded by Rear Admiral Hopman , the commander of the reconnaissance forces in the Baltic . The IV Scouting Group was tasked with screening to the north to prevent any Russian naval forces from moving out of the Gulf of Finland undetected , while several armored cruisers and other warships bombarded the port . The Russians did attempt to intervene with a force of four cruisers : Admiral Makarov , Bayan , Oleg , and Bogatyr . The Russian ships briefly engaged München , but both sides were unsure of the others ' strength , and so both disengaged . Shortly after the bombardment , Libau was captured by the advancing German army , and Stettin and the rest of the IV Scouting Group were recalled to the High Seas Fleet . On 8 May , Danzig joined the old pre - dreadnought battleships of the IV Battle Squadron on a reconnaissance toward Gotland ; the operation lasted until 10 May , but encountered no Russian forces . Danzig ran into a Russian minefield on the evening of 25 November 1915 , and was badly damaged by one of the mines . She was towed back to port , however , and repaired .

In early September 1917 , following the German conquest of the Russian port of Riga , the German navy decided to eliminate the Russian naval forces that still held the Gulf of Riga . The Admiralstab (the Navy High Command) planned an operation to seize the Baltic island of Ösel , and specifically the Russian gun batteries on the Sworbe Peninsula . On 18 September , the order was issued for a joint operation with the army to capture Ösel and Moon Islands ; the primary naval component was to comprise the flagship , Moltke , along with the III and IV Battle Squadrons of the High Seas Fleet . The invasion force amounted to approximately 24 , 600 officers and enlisted men . Danzig had by this time been transferred to the II Scouting Group , which was tasked with screening for the invasion force . During the operation , Prince Adalbert , Kaiser Wilhelm II 's son , was the ship 's commander . Danzig 's only significant action during the operation came on the 19th , when she and Königsberg and Nürnberg were sent to intercept two Russian torpedo boats reported to be in the area . The Germans could not locate the vessels , and broke off the operation .

Danzig was withdrawn from active service in late 1917 . She survived the end of the war , and was stricken from the naval register on 5 November 1919 . The ship was surrendered to the United Kingdom as the war prize R on 15 September 1920 , and broken up for scrap in Whitby in 1921 ? 1922 .