

## SMS Dresden Wreck - Scapa Flow

Nationality:	German
Launched:	25 April 1917
Commissioned:	28 March 1918
Builder:	Howaldtswerke, Kiel
Construction number:	601
Type:	Light Cruiser
Subtype/class:	Cöln Class
Displacement (standard):	5620 tonnes
Displacement (full load):	7486 tonnes
Length:	115m*
Beam:	12m
Draught:	6.01 – 6.43m
Complement:	559
Material:	Steel
Cause of loss:	Scuttled
Date lost:	21 June 1919; 13:50 hrs
Casualties (in scuttling):	0
Propulsion:	8 coal and 6 oil marine type boilers, two sets geared steam turbines, two propellers
Fuel:	1100 tonnes coal maximum, 1050 tonnes oil maximum
Power:	49428 shp** maximum
Range:	5400 nautical miles at 12 knots
Speed:	27.8 knots
Armour:	Ranges from 20mm – 60mm (position dependent), control tower 100mm (on the sides)
Armament:	8 x 15cm guns, 3 x 8.8cm anti-aircraft guns (reduced to 2 in 1918), 4 x 60cm deck mounted torpedo tubes, 200 mines

\* measurements taken from the ships plans

\*\* shp – shaft horse power

NB Two of the 15cm guns were mounted on the forecastle of the Cöln but were on the upper deck of the Dresden.

### History of the vessel

The light cruiser Dresden was built by Howaldtswerke at Kiel, and launched on 25 April 1917. She was the second and final ship of the Cöln class to be commissioned and was built as a replacement for the earlier SMS Dresden which was scuttled at Robinson Crusoe Island off the coast of Chile in the Pacific after the Battle of the Falkland Islands. She was completed on 28 March 1918, at which date priority in manning was given to the submarine service, so she did not see full service until August 1918.

The ships of this class were a slightly larger and faster redevelopment of the Königsberg class. For more information on the design structure of the Cöln class ships please see the factsheet for the SMS Cöln.

The ship was assigned to the II Scouting Group, alongside the cruisers Königsberg, Pillau, Graudenz, Nürnberg and Karlsruhe. The ships were in service in time for the major fleet operation to Norway on 23–24 April 1918. The I Scouting Group and II Scouting Group, along with the Second Torpedo-Boat Flotilla, were to attack a heavily-guarded British convoy to Norway. The Germans failed to locate the convoy, which had in fact sailed the day before the fleet left port. As a result, Admiral Reinhard Scheer broke off the operation and returned to port.

In October 1918, Dresden and the rest of the II Scouting Group were to lead a final attack on the British navy. Dresden, Cöln, Pillau and Königsberg were to attack merchant shipping in the Thames estuary while the rest of the Group were to bombard targets in Flanders, to draw out the British Grand Fleet. Admiral Reinhard Scheer, the commander in chief of the fleet, intended to inflict as much damage as possible on the British navy, in order to secure a better bargaining position for Germany.

This operation had to be cancelled when the crew on several of the ships of the German High Seas Fleet at Kiel refused to accept the orders and mutinied. The crew of Dresden appear to have stayed loyal, and she was ordered to steam to Eckenförde to serve as a relay to Kiel after the unrest had disrupted military communications. The battleship Markgraf was lying in the path of Dresden. At first the mutinous crew of Markgraf refused to move out of her way. Markgraf aimed one of her 30.5cm (12") gun turrets at Dresden, but then her crew backed down and let Dresden leave the port. The ship then went to Swinemünde, where her crew partially scuttled her following reports that mutinous ships were en route to attack the cruisers stationed there. After these proved false, Dresden was re-floated and returned to seaworthy condition. This involved removing the ammunition for all of the guns and allowing them to air-dry.

Following the capitulation of Germany in November 1918, most of the High Seas Fleet's ships were sent to Scapa Flow for internment. Dresden was not able to steam with the rest of the fleet in November, owing to her poor condition, including turbine failure, following the naval mutiny. She arrived on 6 December, leaking badly.

## **People Associated with the Ship**

- Korvettenkapitän Prince Adalbert of Prussia (March 1918 - November 1918)

Prince Adalbert of Prussia (Adalbert Ferdinand Berengar Viktor) (1884-1948), third son of Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany by his first wife, Empress Augusta Viktoria of Schleswig-Holstein. He married Princess Adelheid "Adi" granddaughter of Duke George II of Saxe-Meiningen on 3 August 1914 in Wilhelmshaven, Germany. The uncle of Princess Adelaide, later Duke Bernhard III was married to the sister of Kaiser Wilhelm II, Princess Charlotte.

He was named after a nephew of Kaiser Wilhelm I who was instrumental in building the Prussian fleet. After a strict military education he joined the Imperial Navy on 31 May 1894 and attended the Naval Academy at Kiel. After completion of training Adalbert took a few trips abroad, including to Brazil and represented Kaiser Wilhelm II at the courts in Beijing and Athens. As a naval officer, he lived in a small house at the port of Kiel, Villa Seelust.

During WWI he was also commander of the light cruiser SMS Danzig and a torpedo boat. He was transferred shortly before the end of the war to the front in Flanders in Belgium. Adalbert was also a major in the Prussian army.

After the overthrow of the monarchy Adalbert lived with his family in Kiel and Bad Homburg. They gave their new home the name Adelaide Werd. The next few years they lived secluded lives as private individuals in Germany. Adelheid poor state of health required frequent visits to Switzerland and in 1928 the family moved over permanently. Adalbert took no further part in German politics and he died at Lake Geneva at the age of 64 years.

- Kapitän zur See Kurt Franck (November 1918)
- Korvettenkapitän Albert Gayer (6 - 16 November 1918)
- Korvettenkapitän Johann Bernhard Mann (November - December 1918)
- Kapitänleutnant (internment) Ludwig Fabricius December (1918 - June 1919)

## Artefacts from the Wreck

### In Lyness Museum

- Lightbulb (2007.8.8)

### In Stromness Museum

- Bell

### Material reported under RoW amnesty (2001):

A1414 brass plug: from seabed

A2011 1 small and corroded brass cleat (15ins x 5ins): from seabed

A3026 1 lamp: from seabed

A3377 1 lump coal: from seabed.

NMRS, MS/829/35.

## Books and References

Ferguson, D M (1985) The wrecks of Scapa Flow Stromness

Page(s): 40, 46-7 fig. p. 47 Held at RCAHMS E.5.14.FER

Ferguson, D M (1988) Shipwrecks of Orkney, Shetland and Pentland Firth, Newton Abbot

Page(s): 86 Held at RCAHMS E.5.14.FER

Larn and Larn, R and B (1998) Shipwreck index of the British Isles: volume 4, Scotland, London

Page(s): DD 21/06/1919 Held at RCAHMS E.5.14.LAR

Macdonald, R (1990) Dive Scapa Flow, Edinburgh

Page(s): 11, 15, 26, 53, 54, 56, 57, 81, 87-91 pl. p. 88, figs. pp. 88, 90 Held at RCAHMS E.5.14.MAC

Macdonald, R (1993) Dive Scotland's greatest wrecks, Edinburgh

Page(s): 139, 147 Held at RCAHMS E.5.15.MAC

Macdonald, R (1998) Dive Scapa Flow, Edinburgh

Page(s): 12, 17, 30, 56, 58, 59, 60, 93-5, 97 pl. p. 92, figs. pp. 92, 94 Held at RCAHMS E.5.14.MAC

Owen, O (2002a) 'Wrecks and the diving public: the Scapa Flow experience', The Archaeologist, vol.45

Page(s): 34-5

Ridley, G (1992) Dive Scotland: the northern isles and east coast, Revision London

Page(s): 138, 146-7, no. 2154

Smith, P L (1989) Naval Wrecks of Scapa Flow Kirkwall, Orkney

Page(s): 66-73, 97, 114-15 section p. 66

Van der Vat, D (1986) The Grand Scuttle: the sinking of the German fleet at Scapa Flow in 1919, Staplehurst

Page(s): 129, 222 Held at RCAHMS D.9.3.SCA

Whittaker, I G (1998) Off Scotland: a comprehensive record of maritime and aviation losses in Scottish waters, Edinburgh

Page(s): 80 Held at RCAHMS E.5.14.WHI

[Jane], [F] (2001a) Jane's fighting ships of World War I, London

Page(s): 113

The Lawless Society of Berlin: Founded in Berlin on 4 November 1809 <http://www.gesetzlose-gesellschaft.de/m/mann.phtml>

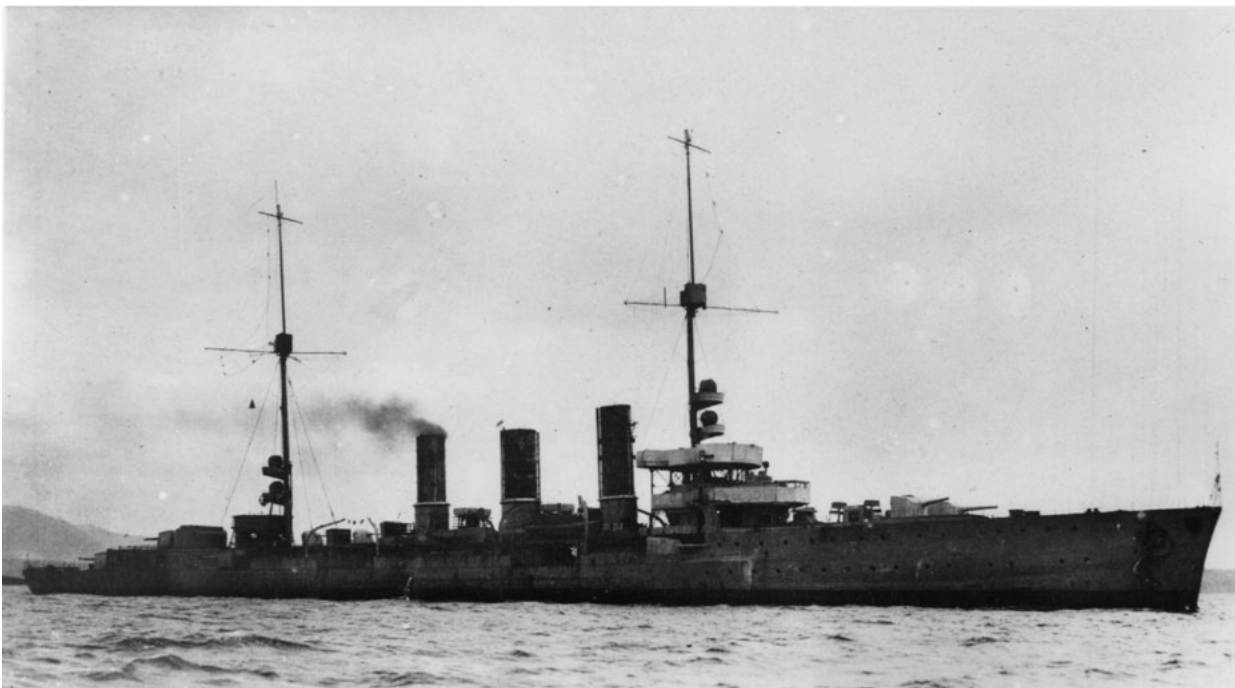
## Photos of the SMS Dresden



COPYRIGHT Orkney Library and Archive



COPYRIGHT Orkney Library and Archive



COPYRIGHT Orkney Library and Archive