

## SMS König Wreck - Scapa Flow

Nationality:	German
Launched:	1 March 1913
Commissioned:	9 August 1914
Builder:	Kaiserliche Werft, Wilhelmshaven (Imperial Dockyard, Wilhelmshaven)
Construction number:	33
Type:	Battleship
Subtype/class:	König class
Displacement (standard):	25797 tonnes
Displacement (full load):	29669 tonnes
Length overall:	146m*
Beam:	28m
Draught:	6 – 8.5m
Complement:	1136**
Power:	43300 shp
Material:	steel
Cause of loss:	Scuttled
Date lost:	21 June 1919; 14:00 hrs
Casualties (in scuttling):	0
Propulsion:	3 oil fired and 12 coal fired marine type boilers, 3 sets of Parsons turbines, 3 propellers
Fuel:	3000 tonnes coal, 600 tonnes oil
Range:	8000 nautical miles at 8 knots
Speed:	21 knots
Armament:	10 x 30.5cm guns in 5 twin turrets, 14 x 15 cm casemate guns. Fitted with 10 x 8.8cm anti-aircraft guns (6 removed after Jutland), 5 x 50cm submerged torpedo tubes
Armour:	Deck 60 – 100mm, forward control tower 300mm (on sides), lower belt 350mm, upper belt 180mm, turrets 300mm (sides), casemate 170mm

\*measurements taken from ships plans

\*\*The ship would have carried an extra 82 men if it had been the squadron flagship

NB Torpedo nets had been fitted to all the König class ships. These were removed after the Battle of Jutland having proved cumbersome and inadequate.

## History of the vessel

### Pre - Jutland

- 7 December 1914 – Grounded in the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal, on her return from a training exercise in the Baltic; consequently the Großer Kurfürst ran into her stern. She was sent for repairs.
- 29 March 1915 – She took part in the advance on Terschelling in the Netherlands.
- 24/25 April 1916 – She formed part of the supporting force for the raid on Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth.

### 31st May 1916 – the Battle of Jutland

- She was the lead ship at the battle and therefore was engaged in the heaviest of the fighting.
- 19:32 hit heavily and lists to port
- 19:38 shrapnel hits and wounds Konteradmiral Behncke
- 1 June – early in the morning III Squadron made its way to safe haven with reduced speed due to the damage to individual ships. The König was drawing 10.5 metres, two metres more than usual due to the amount of water she had taken on board. She was unable to pass the Amrum Bank channel

until after high tide.

- By 14:30 hours on 1 June she was tied up in port.
- She had suffered 10 heavy and 5/6 medium calibre hits.
- 1 officer and 44 men were killed
- 27 men were wounded
- She was sent to Kiel for repairs from 6 June to 26 July 1916

Post Jutland

- Routine patrols and advancements, training exercises and some convoy work.
- 16 June 1917 – She underwent refit at Wilhelmshaven where a new heavy tubular foremast containing an artillery direction position was fitted. All torpedo nets had been removed by this date as they had proved next to useless at Jutland.
- October 1917 – Her last significant action was taking part in Operation Albion. She landed troops on the island of Ösel on 12 October 1917 and attacked several shore batteries. Her main action was to engage the Russian battleship Slava along with the Kronprinz Wilhelm. She achieved seven hits which resulted in the crew of the Slava scuttling their ship.
- 17 November 1917 – Re-launched from Kiel following repairs necessary as she ran aground on her return to Germany from Operation Albion, having taken onboard 300 tonnes of water.
- October 1918 – Officers defended the König during the mutiny at Kiel and as a result several were killed.
- 6 December 1918 – The König, along with the light cruiser Dresden, were the last to be interned in Scapa Flow with the König having been delayed by mechanical failure.

## People Associated with the Ship

Kapitän zur See Friedrich Brüninghaus (August 1914 - July 1916)

Kapitän zur See Hugo Meurer (July 1916 - May 1917)

Hugo Meurer, born 28 May 1869 in Sallach, Styria, joined the Kaiserliche Marine on 16 April 1886 as a cadet. He took part in WWI as commander of the battleship SMS Deutschland and as Captain on the battleship SMS König. From 14 October 1917 as a Rear Admiral Hugo Meurer, he became Second Admiral of the Squadron of the Fourth High Seas Fleet.

From 21 February to 2 May 1918, he served as chief of the Special Union of the Baltic Sea marine expedition for the liberation of Finland. On 8 January 1920, while chief of the naval station at Kiel and the Baltic Sea, Meurer retired with the promotion to Vice Admiral. He died on 4 January 1960 in Kiel. ([http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugo\\_Meurer](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugo_Meurer)).

Kapitän zur See Carl Wilhelm Weniger May 1917 to November 1918

Kapitän zur See Otto Breuer November 1918 to December 1918

Korvettenkapitän Ernst Junkermann (internment) December 1918 to June 1919

## Artefacts from the Wreck

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

A2100 deck bolt

A3784 1 communications earpiece: from seabed

A4364 2 turbine blades: from seabed.

NMRS, MS/829/35.

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

A4514 Brass plaques marked 'Aus.. Langsam..', '61-Autzug' and 'Linke Seite'; one showing the shape of a shell case. NMRS, MS/829/77.

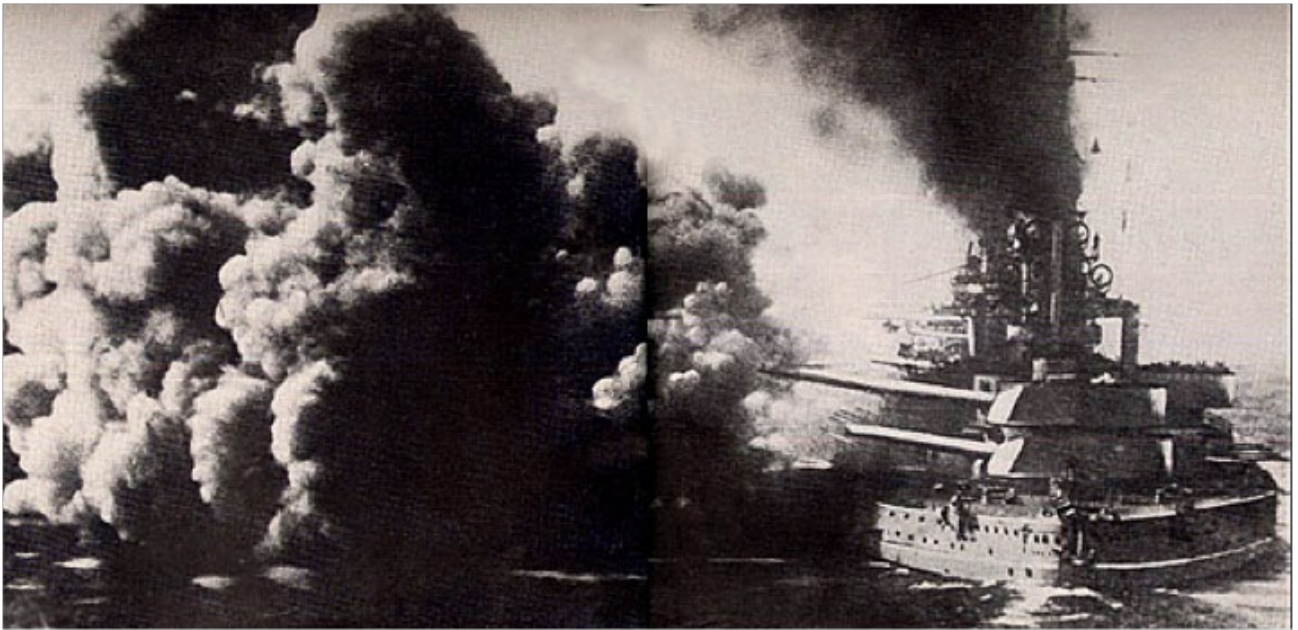
### In Lyness Museum:

Decanter from officer's mess

### In Stromness Museum

Lamp cage, donated by Kevin Heath in 2000

**Photos of the SMS König**



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