= Italian battleship Dante Alighieri =

Dante Alighieri was the first dreadnought battleship built for the Regia Marina (Royal Italian Navy) . Completed in 1913 , she was the first battleship built with her main armament in triple @-@ gun turrets . The ship served as a flagship during World War I , but saw very little action other than the Second Battle of Durazzo in 1918 where she did not engage enemy forces . She never fired her guns in anger during her career . Dante Alighieri was refitted in 1923 , stricken from the Navy List in 1928 and subsequently sold for scrap .

= = Description = =

Dante Alighieri was designed by Rear Admiral Engineer Edoardo Masdea , Chief Constructor of the Regia Marina , based on the ideas of General Vittorio Cuniberti who advocated a battleship with main guns of a single caliber and optimized for broadside fire . In addition , the ship 's superstructure and funnels were to be kept to a minimum .

The dreadnought was 158 @.@ 4 meters (519 ft 8 in) long at the waterline , and 168 @.@ 1 meters (551 ft 6 in) overall . The ship had a beam of 26 @.@ 6 meters (87 ft 3 in) , and a draft of 8 @.@ 8 meters (28 ft 10 in) . She displaced 19 @,@ 552 tonnes (19 @,@ 243 long tons) at normal load , and 21 @,@ 600 tonnes (21 @,@ 300 long tons) at deep load . Dante Alighieri had two rudders , one behind the other , and a crew of 31 officers and 950 enlisted men .

The ship was propelled by four propeller shafts driven by Parsons steam turbines . Steam for the turbines was provided by 23 Blechynden water @-@ tube boilers , seven of which burned oil and the remaining 16 burned a mixture of oil and coal . The boilers were widely separated in two compartments , each with two funnels , and the turbines were positioned between the two center turrets . Designed to reach a maximum speed of 23 knots (43 km / h ; 26 mph) from 35 @,@ 000 shaft horsepower (26 @,@ 000 kW) , Dante Alighieri failed to reach this goal on her sea trials . The ship only made a maximum speed of 22 @.@ 83 knots (42 @.@ 28 km / h ; 26 @.@ 27 mph) using 32 @,@ 190 shp (24 @,@ 000 kW) . The ship could store a maximum of 3 @,@ 000 tonnes (3 @,@ 000 long tons) of coal and an unknown quantity of fuel oil that gave her a range of 4 @,@ 800 nautical miles (8 @,@ 900 km ; 5 @,@ 500 mi) at 10 kn (19 km / h ; 12 mph) , and 1 @,@ 000 nmi (1 @,@ 900 km ; 1 @,@ 200 mi) at 22 knots (41 km / h ; 25 mph) .

= = = Armament = = =

Dante Alighieri 's main armament consisted of a dozen 46 @-@ caliber 305 @-@ millimeter (12 inch) guns , in four triple @-@ gun turrets positioned on the ship 's centerline . None of the turrets were superfiring . While the later classes of battleships and battlecruisers designed for the Imperial Russian Navy shared the turret layout of the Dante Alighieri , all surviving evidence shows that the Russians decided on this layout for their own reasons .

Sources disagree regarding these guns ' performance , but naval historian Giorgio Giorgerini claims that they fired 452 @-@ kilogram (996 lb) armor @-@ piercing (AP) projectiles at the rate of one round per minute and that they had a muzzle velocity of 840 metres per second (2 @,@ 800 ft / s) which gave a maximum range of 24 @,@ 000 meters (26 @,@ 000 yd) .

The ship 's secondary armament consisted of twenty 50 @-@ caliber 120 @-@ millimeter (4 @.@ 7 in) guns . Eight of these guns were fitted in twin @-@ gun turrets abreast the forward and aft main gun turrets while the remaining 12 guns were mounted in casemates on the sides of the hull . These guns could depress to ? 10 degress and had a maximum elevation of + 15 degrees ; they had a rate of fire of six shots per minute . They could fire a 22 @.@ 1 @-@ kilogram (49 lb) high @-@ explosive projectile with a muzzle velocity of 850 meters per second (2 @,@ 800 ft / s) to a maximum distance of 12 @,@ 000 yards (11 @,@ 000 m) . For defense against torpedo boats , Dante Alighieri carried thirteen 50 @-@ caliber 76 mm (3 @.@ 0 in) guns mounted on the turret tops . These guns had the same range of elevation as the secondary guns , although their rate of fire was higher at 10 rounds per minute . They fired a 6 @-@ kilogram (13 lb) AP projectile with a

muzzle velocity of 815 meters per second (2 @,@ 670 ft / s) to a maximum distance of 10 @,@ 000 yards (9 @,@ 100 m) . The ship was also fitted with three submerged 45 @-@ centimeter (18 in) torpedo tubes , one on each broadside and the third in the stern .

Dante Alighieri had a complete waterline armor belt that had a maximum thickness of 254 millimeters (10 @.@ 0 in) . The ship 's armored deck was 38 mm (1 @.@ 5 in) thick . The main turrets were protected by a maximum of 254 millimeters of armor while the secondary turrets and the casemates had 98 millimeters (3 @.@ 9 in) of armor . The conning tower had walls 305 millimeters (12 @.@ 0 in) thick .

= = Construction and service = =

Dante Alighieri , named after the medieval Italian poet , was the only battleship ever named for a poet . She was laid down at the naval shipyard in Castellammare di Stabia on 6 June 1909 , launched on 20 August 1910 , and completed on 15 January 1913 . The ship was used to evaluate Curtiss floatplanes in 1913 ? 14 . When Italy entered World War I in May 1915 , Dante Alighieri was the flagship of the 1st Battle Squadron based at Taranto and remained with the squadron through 1916 . For the rest of the war , the ship was assigned to the Southern Adriatic and Ionian Sea forces . Under the command of Vice Admiral Paolo Thaon di Revel , the ship was positioned to intercept any Austro @-@ Hungarian ships based at Cattaro if they sortied to attack the Allied ships bombarding Durazzo on 2 October 1918 . The Austro @-@ Hungarians remained in harbor and Dante Alighieri did not fire her guns during the battle .

King Victor Emmanuel III entertained delegates to the Genoa Conference aboard Dante Alighieri in 1922 . The ship was refitted in 1923 with a tripod foremast , an aircraft flying @-@ off platform on Turret No. 3 , and her forward funnels was made taller to reduce smoke interference with the bridge . She tested a new fire @-@ control system in 1924 at ranges up to 26 @,@ 000 meters (28 @,@ 000 yd) ; her new tripod mast was not sturdy enough for the weight of the system , but it was judged to be successful and subsequently installed in the Conte di Cavour @-@ class battleships . That same year , the ship transported Benito Mussolini to Palermo , Sicily . The Italian economy had been weakened by fighting World War I , and by the late 1920s , it could no longer afford to maintain a sizable fleet . As a result , Admiral Sechi decided to scrap Dante Alighieri and the salvaged battleship Leonardo da Vinci to reduce the naval budget . The ship was stricken on 1 July 1928 and was subsequently scrapped .