

= SMS Radetzky =

SMS Radetzky was the first of the three Radetzky class pre dreadnought battleships built for the Austro-Hungarian Navy (K.u.K. Kriegsmarine). She was named for the 19th century Austrian Field Marshal Joseph Radetzky von Radetz . Radetzky and her sisters , Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand and Zrínyi , were the last pre dreadnoughts built by the Austro-Hungarian Navy ? they were followed by the larger and significantly more powerful Tegetthoff class dreadnoughts .

Radetzky was built by the shipbuilding company Stabilimento Tecnico in Trieste and commissioned into the fleet on 15 January 1911 . The ship conducted training cruises in the Mediterranean before the outbreak of World War I in mid 1914 . During the war , Radetzky operated largely as part of a fleet in being alongside the rest of the Austro-Hungarian Navy ; in doing so , the ships tied down considerable naval forces from the Triple Entente . Radetzky did participate in some offensive operations , primarily shore bombardments in the Adriatic Sea against French , Montenegrin , and Italian targets .

Towards the end of 1918 , with the war going against the Austrians , Radetzky was prepared to be transferred to the State of Slovenes , Croats and Serbs . On 10 November 1918 ? six days after the Austrian armistice ? Yugoslav navy officers sailed the battleship out of Pola and surrendered it to a squadron of American submarine chasers . Under the terms of the Treaty of Saint Germain-en-Laye , the transfer was not recognized ; instead , Radetzky was given to Italy and broken up for scrap .

= = Construction = =

Radetzky was built at the Stabilimento Tecnico Triestino dockyard in Trieste , the same place where her sister ships were built . She was the second ship of her class to be constructed and her keel was laid down on 26 November 1907 . The teak used on Radetzky 's deck was the only material Austria-Hungary had to purchase abroad to build the ship . Radetzky was launched from the slipway on 3 July 1909 , and commissioned into the Austro-Hungarian navy on 15 January 1911 and had a crew of 880 to 890 officers and men .

Radetzky was 138 m (455 ft 4 in) long , and had a beam of 24 m (80 ft 8 in) and a draft of 8 m (26 ft 9 in) . She displaced 14 ,508 long tons (14 ,741 t) normally , and up to 15 ,845 long tons (16 ,099 t) with a full combat load . The ship was powered by two shaft four cylinder vertical triple expansion engines rated at 19 ,800 indicated horsepower and a top speed of 20 .5 knots (38 .0 km / h ; 23 .6 mph) . She had a maximum range of 4 ,000 nmi (7 ,400 km ; 4 ,600 mi) at a cruising speed of 10 kn (19 km / h ; 12 mph) .

The ship 's primary armament consisted of four 30 .5 cm (12 in) 45-caliber guns in two twin gun turrets . This was augmented by a heavy secondary battery of eight 24 cm (9 .4 in) guns in four wing turrets . The tertiary battery consisted of twenty 10 L / 50 guns in casemated single mounts , two 66 mm (2 .6 in) landing guns , four 47 mm (1 .85 in) L / 44 and one 47 mm L / 33 quick-firing guns . Three 45 cm (17 .7 in) torpedo tubes were also carried , two on the beams and one in the stern .

= = Service history = =

= = = Pre-war = = =

One of Radetzky 's first duties was to attend the British Coronation Review for King George V in Spithead in June 1911 . Following her return to the Austro-Hungarian fleet , she conducted several training cruises in the eastern Mediterranean with her two sisters in 1912 . Later that year , Radetzky and her sisters , under the command of Vice Admiral Maximilian Njegovan , took part in an

international fleet demonstration in the Ionian Sea to protest the Balkan Wars . Among the ships from other navies were the British pre @-@ dreadnought HMS King Edward VII , the Italian pre @-@ dreadnought Ammiraglio di Saint Bon , the French armored cruiser Edgar Quinet , and the German light cruiser SMS Breslau . The combined flotilla , under the command of British Admiral Cecil Burney , proceeded to blockade the Montenegrin coast to prevent Serbian reinforcements from supporting the siege at Scutari .

During the operation , the first seaplanes to be used in combat were operated from Radetzky and her two sisters . This proved unsatisfactory , however , because the ships lacked cranes with which to lift the planes onto the deck , as well as the fact that the deck was too small to accommodate the aircraft . As a result of the pressure from the international blockade , Serbia withdrew its army from Scutari , which was then occupied by a joint Allied ground force . By 1913 , the new dreadnoughts of the Tegetthoff class were coming into active service , and so Radetzky and her sisters were shifted from the 1st Division to the 2nd Division of the 1st Battle Squadron .

= = = World War I = = =

At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , the German battlecruisers Goeben and Breslau were coaling in Messina ; British warships had begun to assemble outside the port in an attempt to trap the German ships . The German navy called upon its Austro @-@ Hungarian allies to come to their aid ; the Austro @-@ Hungarian high command was initially hesitant , as they wished to avoid initiating hostilities with the British . However , when the Germans made clear they wanted the Austro @-@ Hungarian fleet to steam only as far as Brindisi , the high command relented and sent the portion of the fleet that had by that time been mobilized , which included Radetzky , on the operation . The fleet sailed to the designated latitude , under strict orders to only actively assist the German ships while they were in Austro @-@ Hungarian waters . After the German ships successfully broke out into the Mediterranean , the Austro @-@ Hungarian fleet returned to port .

In October 1914 , the French army established artillery batteries on Mount Lovcen to support the Army of Montenegro against the Austrian army at Cattaro . By the time they were operational , on 15 October , the Austro @-@ Hungarians were ready with the pre @-@ dreadnoughts of the Monarch class . However , their 24 cm guns were insufficient to dislodge the French artillery batteries , and so Radetzky was sent to assist them . On 21 October , the ship arrived , and the gunfire from her 30 @. @ 5 cm guns forced the French to abandon the position .

On 23 May 1915 , between two and four hours after the Italian declaration of war reached the main Austro @-@ Hungarian naval base at Pola , Radetzky and the rest of the fleet departed to bombard the Italian and Montenegrin coast . Their focus was on the important naval base at Ancona , and later the coast of Montenegro . The bombardment of Montenegro was part of the larger Austro @-@ Hungarian campaign against the Kingdoms of Montenegro and Serbia , who were members of the Entente , during the first half of 1915 . During the attack on Ancona and the surrounding coastline , Radetzky , as well as the cruisers SMS Admiral Spaun and SMS Helgoland , and the destroyers SMS Orjen , SMS Lika Csepel , and SMS Tatra traveled south to cover the ships attacking Ancona . Upon finding no enemy ships in the region , the group bombarded the Termiti Islands , Viests , Manfredonia , and Barletta . After leaving the Gulf of Manfredonia Radetzky and the rest of the ships accompanying her sighted the first enemy ships of the day , two Italian destroyers . During the encounter , one Italian destroyer managed to escape the Austrian ships but the other , Turbine , was severely damaged . Only when a larger Italian force appeared did Radetzky and her accompanying ships abandon their attempts to capture the damaged destroyer .

Aside from the encounter with Turbine , Radetzky managed to destroy a railroad bridge near the town of Fermo , severely hampering the movement of troops and supplies in the region . Sixty @-@ three Italian civilians and military personnel were killed in the bombardment . By the time Italian ships from Taranto and Brindisi arrived on the scene , the Austro @-@ Hungarians were safely back in Pola .

The attack on Ancona was an immense success , and the Austro @-@ Hungarian ships were largely unopposed during the entire operation . The objective of the bombardment was to delay the

Italian Army from deploying its forces along the border with Austria @-@ Hungary by destroying critical transportation systems . The surprise attack on Ancona succeeded in delaying the Italian deployment to the Alps for two weeks . This delay gave Austria @-@ Hungary valuable time to strengthen its Italian border and re @-@ deploy some of its troops from the Eastern and Balkan fronts .

Aside from the attack on Ancona , the Austro @-@ Hungarian battleships were confined to Pola for the duration of the war . Their operations were limited by Admiral Anton Haus , the commander of the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy , who believed that he would need to husband his ships to counter any Italian attempt to seize the Dalmatian coast . Since coal was diverted to the newer Tegetthoff @-@ class battleships , the remainder of the war saw Radetzky and the rest of the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy acting as a fleet in being . This resulted in the Allied blockade of the Otranto Strait . With his fleet blockaded in the Adriatic Sea , and facing a shortage of coal , Haus attempted to use mines and submarines , rather than battleships , to reduce the numerical superiority of the Allied navies .

= = = End of the war = = =

By October 1918 , Austria prepared to transfer her entire fleet to the newly created State of Slovenes , Croats and Serbs (later to become the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) in order to keep it out of Italian hands . On 10 November 1918 , one day before the Allied Armistice with Germany , and six days after the Austrians and Italians agreed to the Armistice of Villa Giusti , Yugoslav officers with scratch crews sailed Radetzky and Zrínyi out of Pola . Once outside Pola , the ships spotted heavy units of the Italian fleet ; the two battleships hoisted American flags and sailed south to escape . A squadron of US Navy submarine chasers operating off the city of Spalato accepted the surrender of Radetzky and Zrínyi . However , under the subsequent peace treaty , the Allied powers ignored the transfer of the Austro @-@ Hungarian ships to the Yugoslav navy which had already taken place ; instead , the ships were ceded to Italy . Radetzky was broken up in Italy between 1920 and 1921 .