

= Italian ironclad Sardegna =

Sardagna was the third of three Re Umberto class ironclad battleships built for the Italian Regia Marina (Royal Navy) . The ship , named for the island of Sardinia , was laid down in La Spezia in October 1885 , launched in September 1890 , and completed in February 1895 . She was armed with a main battery of four 13 in (340 mm) guns and had a top speed of 20 knots (37 km / h ; 23 mph) ? albeit at the cost of armor protection ? and she was one of the first warships to be equipped with a wireless telegraph .

Sardagna spent the first decade of her career in the Active Squadron of the Italian fleet . Thereafter , she was transferred to the Reserve Squadron , and by 1911 , she was part of the Training Division . She took part in the Italo Turkish War of 1911 - 12 , where she escorted convoys to North Africa and supported Italian forces ashore by bombarding Ottoman troops . During World War I , Sardagna served as the flagship of the naval forces defending Venice against a possible attack from the Austro Hungarian Navy , which did not materialize . After the city became threatened following the Battle of Caporetto in November 1917 , the ship was withdrawn to Brindisi and later Taranto , where she continued to serve as a guard ship . She took part in Allied operations in Turkey in 1919 - 22 , and after returning to Italy in 1923 , she was broken up for scrap .

= = Design = =

Sardagna was 130 m (428 ft) long overall ; she had a beam of 23 m (76 ft) and an average draft of 8 m (29 ft) . She displaced 13,641 metric tons (13,426 long tons ; 15,037 short tons) normally and up to 15,426 t (15,182 long tons ; 17,004 short tons) at full load . Her propulsion system consisted of a pair of triple expansion steam engines , each driving a single screw propeller , with steam supplied by eighteen coal fired , cylindrical fire tube boilers . She was the first Italian warship to be equipped with triple expansion engines . Her propulsion system produced a top speed of 20 knots (37 km / h ; 23 mph) at 22,800 indicated horsepower (17,000 kW) . Specific figures for her cruising radius have not survived , but the ships of her class could steam for 4,000 to 6,000 nautical miles (7,400 to 11,000 km ; 4,600 to 6,900 mi) at a speed of 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . She had a crew of 794 officers and men . Sardagna was one of the first warships equipped with Marconi 's new wireless telegraph .

Sardagna was armed with a main battery of four 13 in (343 mm) 30 caliber guns , mounted in two twin gun turrets , one on either end of the ship . She carried a secondary battery of eight 6 in (152 mm) 40 cal. guns placed singly in shielded mounts atop the upper deck , with four on each broadside . Close range defense against torpedo boats was provided by a battery of sixteen 4 in (119 mm) guns in casemates in the upper deck , eight on each broadside . These were supported by twenty 57 mm (2 in) 43 cal. guns and ten 37 mm (1 in) guns . As was customary for capital ships of the period , she carried five 17 in (450 mm) torpedo tubes in above water launchers . The ship was lightly armored for her size . She was protected by belt armor that was 4 in (102 mm) thick , an armored deck that was 3 in (76 mm) thick , and her conning tower was armored with 11 in (300 mm) of steel plate . The turrets had 4 in thick faces and the supporting barbettes had 13 in (349 mm) thick steel .

= = Service history = =

Sardagna was named after the island of Sardinia . She was built by the Arsenale di La Spezia in La Spezia , with her keel being laid down on 24 October 1885 . She was launched on 20 September 1890 , and completed on 16 February 1895 . After entering service , Sardagna was assigned to the 2nd Division of the Reserve Squadron as its flagship , along with the older ironclad Ruggiero di Lauria and the torpedo cruiser Aretusa . At the time , the ships of the Reserve Squadron were based

in La Spezia . Sardegna joined the ironclads Re Umberto , Ruggiero di Lauria , and Andrea Doria and the cruisers Stromboli , Etruria , and Partenope for a visit to Spithead in the United Kingdom in July 1895 . Later that year , the squadron stopped in Germany for the celebration held to mark the opening of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal . While there , Sardegna accidentally ran aground in front of the canal , blocking the entrance for several days .

For 1903 , the Active Squadron was on active service for seven months , with the rest of the year spent with reduced crews . In 1904 ? 05 , Sardegna and her sisters were in service with the Active Squadron , which was kept in service for nine months of the year , with three months in reduced commission . The following year , the ships were transferred to the Reserve Squadron , along with the three Ruggiero di Lauria @-@ class ironclads and the ironclad Enrico Dandolo , three cruisers , and sixteen torpedo boats . This squadron only entered active service for two months of the year for training maneuvers , and the rest of the year was spent with reduced crews . Sardegna was still in the Reserve Squadron in 1908 , along with her two sisters and the two Ammiraglio di Saint Bon @-@ class battleships . By this time , the Reserve Squadron was kept in service for seven months of the year .

= = = Italo @-@ Turkish War = = =

On 29 September 1911 , Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire in order to seize Libya . At the time , Sardegna and her two sisters were assigned to the Training Division , along with the old armored cruiser Carlo Alberto , under the command of Rear Admiral Raffaele Borea Ricci D 'Olmo . On 3 ? 4 October , Sardegna and her sisters were tasked with bombarding Fort Sultanje , which was protecting the western approach to Tripoli . The ships used their 6 @-@ inch guns to attack the fort to preserve their stock of 13 @.@ 5 @-@ inch shells . By the morning of the 4th , the ships ' gunfire had silenced the guns in the fort , allowing landing forces to go ashore and capture the city . The ships of the Training Division thereafter alternated between Tripoli and Khoms to support the Italian garrisons in the two cities ; this included repulsing a major Ottoman attack on Tripoli over 23 ? 26 October , where Sardegna and Sicilia supported the Italian left flank against concerted Ottoman assaults . During this engagement , Sardegna used a spotter aircraft to help direct the fire of her guns , the first time aircraft had been used in that role . By December , the three ships were stationed in Tripoli , where they were replaced by the old ironclads Italia and Lepanto . Sardegna and her sisters arrived back in La Spezia , where they had their ammunition and supplies replenished .

In May 1912 , the Training Division patrolled the coast , but saw no action . The following month , Sardegna and her sisters , along with six torpedo boats , escorted a convoy carrying an infantry brigade to Buscheifa , one of the last ports in Libya still under Ottoman control . The Italian force arrived off the town on 14 June and made a landing ; after taking the city , the Italian forces then moved on to Misrata . Sardegna and the rest of the ships continued supporting the advance until the Italians had secured the city on 20 July . The Training Division then returned to Italy , where they joined the escort for another convoy on 3 August , this time to Zuara , the last port in Ottoman hands . The ships covered the landing two miles east of Zuara two days later , which was joined by supporting attacks from the west and south . With the capture of the city , Italy now controlled the entire Libyan coast . On 14 October the Ottomans agreed to sign a peace treaty to end the war .

= = = Later career = = =

Italy had declared neutrality at the start of World War I , but by July 1915 , the Triple Entente had convinced the Italians to enter the war against the Central Powers . Admiral Paolo Thaon di Revel , the Italian naval chief of staff , believed that the threat from Austro @-@ Hungarian submarines and naval mines in the narrow waters of the Adriatic was too serious for him to use the fleet in an active way . Instead , Revel decided to implement a blockade at the relatively safer southern end of the Adriatic with the main fleet , while smaller vessels , such as the MAS boats , conducted raids on Austro @-@ Hungarian ships and installations . For their part , the Austro @-@ Hungarians adopted

a similar strategy , as they too were unwilling to risk the heavy units of their fleet . She was the flagship for the Northern Adriatic Naval Forces after Italy entered the war . The Northern Adriatic Naval Forces also included the two old Ammiraglio di Saint Bon class battleships , two cruisers , and several smaller craft . The ships were tasked with defending Venice from Austro - Hungarian attacks ; this service lasted until 15 November 1917 . Since neither the Italians or Austro - Hungarians were willing to risk the main units of their fleets , Sardegna had an uneventful career during the war .

The ship was thereafter transferred to Brindisi for use as a harbor defense ship . The reason for her withdrawal was the major Italian defeat at the Battle of Caporetto ; the German and Austro - Hungarian advance threatened to continue to Venice . Here , all of her secondary and light guns were removed , leaving her with only her main battery guns . She was equipped with a small battery of anti - aircraft guns , consisting of four 3 in (76 mm) / 40 guns and two machine guns . On 10 June 1918 , Sardegna was moved to Taranto , where she continued serving as a guard ship . She took part in Allied operations in Constantinople after the end of the war , from 7 November 1919 to 5 April 1922 . The ship did not remain in service long after returning to Italy . She was stricken on 4 January 1923 and subsequently broken up for scrap .