

= Portuguese ironclad Vasco da Gama =

Vasco da Gama was a central battery ironclad which entered service with the Portuguese Navy in 1876 , serving until 1935 . She was built by the Thames Iron Works in London , launched in 1876 , and completed in 1878 . She served as the flagship of the Portuguese fleet for the majority of her long and peaceful career . She was rebuilt and heavily modernized between 1901 and 1903 . Long @-@ since obsolete by the 1930s , Vasco da Gama was finally sold for scrapping in 1935 .

= = Design = =

Vasco da Gama was 200 feet (61 m) long between perpendiculars , and she had a beam of 40 ft (12 m) , though at the main battery guns , the ship was 46 ft 6 in (14 @.@ 17 m) wide . She had a maximum draft of 19 ft (5 @.@ 8 m) . She displaced 2 @,@ 384 metric tons (2 @,@ 346 long tons ; 2 @,@ 628 short tons) as originally built . She was fitted with a barquentine rig and a steam engine rated at 3 @,@ 000 indicated horsepower (2 @,@ 200 kW) , which produced a top speed of 10 @.@ 3 kn (19 @.@ 1 km / h ; 11 @.@ 9 mph) . She had a crew of 232 officers and men .

As built , Vasco da Gama was armed with a main battery of two 10 @.@ 2 in (260 mm) guns , placed in individual barbets side by side amidships . She was also equipped with a single 5 @.@ 9 in (150 mm) gun mounted on her stern , and four 9 @-@ pounder guns for close @-@ range defense against torpedo boats . She was protected with a complete iron armored belt that was 4 inches (100 mm) thick on either end and 9 in (230 mm) thick amidships . The main battery guns were protected by 10 @-@ inch (250 mm) thick barbets .

= = Service history = =

Vasco da Gama was laid down at the Thames Iron Works shipyard in London , Britain in 1875 , and was launched on 1 December 1876 . The ship was completed in 1878 . She served as part of the coastal defense force that protected Lisbon , the Portuguese capital , and the mouth of the river Tagus . On 26 June 1897 , Vasco da Gama participated in the Fleet Review at Spithead celebrating Queen Victoria 's Diamond Jubilee . At the time , the ship was commanded by Captain Barreto de Vascomellos .

In 1901 , Vasco da Gama was taken into drydock at Orlando shipyard in Livorno , Italy , for a major reconstruction . She was cut in half and lengthened by a 32 ft 6 in (9 @.@ 91 m) long section . She was fitted with new engines and more powerful water @-@ tube boilers rated at 6 @,@ 000 ihp (4 @,@ 500 kW) ; this increased her speed to 15 @.@ 5 kn (28 @.@ 7 km / h ; 17 @.@ 8 mph) . Her sailing rig also was removed . Her main battery guns were replaced with new 8 in (200 mm) L / 40 guns in sponsons , the short 5 @.@ 9 @-@ inch gun was replaced by a new long @-@ barreled 5 @.@ 9 @-@ inch L / 45 gun , and six 3 @-@ pounders augmented her close @-@ range defense . Her iron belt armor was removed and stronger steel armor was installed in its place . The ship 's crew increased to 260 officers and men . All of the changes caused her displacement to rise to 2 @,@ 972 metric tons (2 @,@ 925 long tons ; 3 @,@ 276 short tons) . Work on Vasco da Gama was completed by 1903 .

On 27 August 1907 , a gas explosion aboard the ship injured several crewmen . During political unrest in April 1913 , part of the crew of Vasco da Gama had to be removed from the ship , as they had been involved in a planned ultra @-@ Radical coup d 'état against the First Portuguese Republic . On 14 May 1915 , the crew again participated in unrest ; they mutinied and killed the ship 's captain and bombarded Lisbon , killing around one hundred people . Vasco da Gama remained the flagship of the Portuguese Navy at least as late as 1914 , as the Portuguese naval budget was insufficient to fund a suitable replacement vessel . Thoroughly obsolete , she remained in the Portuguese fleet until 1935 , when she was sold for scrapping .