

= Italian battleship Regina Elena =

Regina Elena was the lead ship of her class built for the Italian Regia Marina (Royal Navy) . The ship was built by the La Spezia shipyard between 1901 and 1907 , and was armed with a main battery of two 12 in (300 mm) guns and twelve 8 in (200 mm) guns . She was quite fast for the period , with a top speed of nearly 21 knots (39 km / h ; 24 mph) . Regina Elena was active in both the Italo -@-@ Turkish War with the Ottoman Empire in 1911 ? 1912 , where she participated in the Italian conquest of Cyrenaica , and World War I in 1915 ? 1918 , where she saw no action due to the threat of submarines in the narrow confines of the Adriatic Sea . She was retained for a few years after the war , but was ultimately stricken in February 1923 and broken up for scrap .

= = Design = =

Regina Elena was 144 @.@ 6 meters (474 ft) long overall and had a beam of 22 @.@ 4 m (73 ft) and a maximum draft of 8 @.@ 58 m (28 @.@ 1 ft) . She displaced 13 @,@ 807 long tons (14 @,@ 029 t) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two vertical triple expansion engines . Steam for the engines was provided by twenty @-@ eight coal @-@ fired Belleville boilers . The ship 's propulsion system provided a top speed of 20 @.@ 8 knots (38 @.@ 5 km / h ; 23 @.@ 9 mph) and a range of approximately 10 @,@ 000 nautical miles (19 @,@ 000 km ; 12 @,@ 000 mi) at 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . Regina Elena had a crew of 742 ? 764 officers and enlisted men .

As built , the ship was armed with two 12 in (300 mm) 40 @-@ caliber guns placed in two single gun turrets , one forward and one aft . The ship was also equipped with twelve 8 in (200 mm) 40 @-@ cal. guns in six twin turrets amidships . Close @-@ range defense against torpedo boats was provided by a battery of sixteen 3 in (76 mm) 40 @-@ cal. guns . Regina Elena was also equipped with two 17 @.@ 7 in (450 mm) torpedo tubes placed in the hull below the waterline . Regina Elena was protected with Krupp steel manufactured in Terni . The main belt was 9 @.@ 8 in (250 mm) thick , and the deck was 1 @.@ 5 in (38 mm) thick . The conning tower was protected by 10 in (250 mm) of armor plating . The main battery guns had 8 in (200 mm) thick plating , and the 8 @-@ inch gun turrets had 6 in (150 mm) thick sides .

= = Service history = =

Regina Elena was laid down at the La Spezia shipyard on 27 March 1901 , and was launched on 19 June 1904 . After fitting @-@ out work was completed , she was commissioned into the Italian fleet on 11 September 1907 . She thereafter served in the Mediterranean Squadron , and was ready for the annual maneuvers in late September and early October , under the command of Vice Admiral Alfonso di Brocchetti . In April 1908 , Regina Elena participated in a naval demonstration off Asia Minor in protest of the Ottoman decision to prohibit Italian post offices in Ottoman territory . The ship was at that time commanded by Prince Luigi Amedeo , the Duke of the Abruzzi . The ship went to Messina in the aftermath of the 1908 Messina earthquake . Regina Elena remained in the active duty squadron through 1910 , by which time her three sisters had been completed , bringing the total number of front @-@ line battleships to six , including the two Regina Margherita @-@ class battleships .

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

On 29 September 1911 , Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire in order to seize Libya . For the duration of the conflict , Regina Elena was assigned to the 1st Division of the 1st Squadron along with her three sisters , under the command of Vice Admiral Augusto Aubry . She joined the squadron late , on 5 October . On 18 October , Regina Elena and her three sisters , along with three cruisers and several destroyers and torpedo boats escorted a convoy that carried half of the 2nd Infantry Division to Benghazi . When the Ottomans refused to surrender the city before the

amphibious assault , the Italian fleet opened fire on the Turkish defenders at 08 : 00 , while landing parties from the ships and the Army infantry went ashore . The Italians quickly forced the Ottomans to withdraw into the city by evening . After a short siege , the Ottoman forces withdrew on 29 October , leaving the city to the Italians .

By December , Regina Elena and the other ships of the 1st Squadron were dispersed in the ports of Cyrenaica . Regina Elena , Roma , and the armored cruiser San Marco were stationed in Benghazi , with Regina Elena recently arriving from Tobruk . While there , they supported the Italian Army as it occupied the city and surrounding area by contributing landing parties and providing fire support to the ground troops . The gunfire support supplied by Regina Elena contributed to the defeat of a major attack on the city by an Ottoman army on 14 ? 15 December . In early 1912 , most of the fleet had withdrawn to Italy for repairs and refit , leaving only a small force of cruisers and light craft to patrol the North African coast .

In March 1914 , Regina Elena was involved in experiments with wireless telegraphy in Syracuse , Sicily . The tests were conducted by Guglielmo Marconi and were supervised by the Duke of the Abruzzi .

= = = World War I = = =

Italy declared neutrality after the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , but by July 1915 , the Triple Entente had convinced the Italians to enter the war against the Central Powers . The primary naval opponent for the duration of the war was the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy ; the Naval Chief of Staff , Admiral Paolo Thaon di Revel , believed the threat from submarines in the confined waters of the Adriatic was too serious to permit an active fleet policy . He therefore planned a distant blockade with the battle fleet , while smaller vessels , such as the MAS boats conducted raids . The heavy ships of the Italian fleet would be preserved for a potential major battle in the event that the Austro @-@ Hungarian fleet should emerge from its bases . As a result , the ship 's career during the war was limited . During the war , Regina Elena and her three sisters were assigned to the 2nd Division . They spent much of the war rotating between the bases at Taranto , Brindisi , and Valona , but did not see combat . On 14 ? 15 May 1917 , three light cruisers of the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy raided the Otranto Barrage ; in the ensuing Battle of the Strait of Otranto , Regina Elena and her sisters raised steam to assist the Allied warships , but the Italian commander refused to permit them to join the battle for fear of risking their loss in the submarine @-@ infested Adriatic .

Under the terms of the Washington Naval Treaty , Italy was permitted to retain Regina Elena and her three sisters . The Italian Navy could have kept the ships in service indefinitely , but they could not be replaced by new battleships under the normal practice of the Treaty system . Nevertheless , she was stricken from the naval register on 16 February 1923 and subsequently broken up for scrap .