

= HMS Caesar (1896) =

HMS Caesar was a Majestic class pre dreadnought battleship of the Royal Navy , named after the Roman military and political leader Julius Caesar . The ship was built at the Portsmouth Dockyard , starting with her keel laying in March 1895 . She was launched in September 1896 and was commissioned into the fleet in January 1898 . She was armed with a main battery of four 12 inch (300 mm) guns and a secondary battery of twelve 6 inch (150 mm) guns . The ship had a top speed of 16 knots (30 km / h ; 18 mph) .

Caesar served with the Mediterranean Fleet after a brief stint in the Channel Fleet . In 1905 , she resumed service with a now re organised Channel Fleet and was also part of the Atlantic Fleet for a time . In the service of the Home Fleet from 1907 , she was placed in reserve in 1912 . Following the outbreak of World War I , Caesar returned to the Channel Fleet before being transferred to the North America and West Indies Station in 1915 after a brief spell as a guard ship at Gibraltar . From 1918 to 1919 she served as a depot ship , firstly in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas and then the Black Sea , in support of naval operations against the Bolsheviks . In this latter role , she was the last of the pre dreadnought battleships to see service outside the United Kingdom . Returning to England in 1920 , she was decommissioned and sold for scrap in 1921 .

= = Design = =

Caesar was 421 feet (128 m) long overall and had a beam of 75 ft (23 m) and a draft of 27 ft (8 m) . She displaced up to 16,060 tonnes (15,810 long tons ; 17,700 short tons) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two 3 cylinder triple expansion engines powered by eight coal fired cylindrical boilers . By 1907 ? 1908 , she was re-boilered with oil fired models . Her engines provided a top speed of 16 knots (30 km / h ; 18 mph) at 10,000 indicated horsepower (7,350 kW) . The Majestics were considered to have handled well , with an easy roll , although they suffered from high fuel consumption . She had a crew of 672 officers and enlisted men .

The ship was armed with four BL 12 inch Mk VIII guns in twin turrets , one forward and one aft . The turrets were placed on circular barbettes , unlike six of her sisters , which retained earlier pear shaped barbettes . Caesar also carried twelve QF 6 inch / 40 guns . They were mounted in casemates in two gun decks amidships . She also carried sixteen QF 12 pounder guns and twelve QF 2 pounder guns . She was also equipped with five 18 inch (450 mm) torpedo tubes , four of which were submerged in the ship 's hull on the broadside , with the last in a deck mounted launcher on the stern . Caesar and the other ships of her class had 9 inches (229 mm) of Harvey armour , which allowed equal protection with less cost in weight compared to previous types of armour . This allowed Caesar and her sisters to have a deeper and lighter belt than previous battleships without any loss in protection . The barbettes for the main battery were protected with 14 in (360 mm) of armour , and the conning tower had the same thickness of steel on the sides . The ship 's armoured deck was 2 to 4 in (64 to 114 mm) thick .

= = Service history = =

HMS Caesar was built at the Portsmouth Dockyard , with her keel laying taking place on 25 March 1895 . She was launched on 2 September 1896 , and completed in January 1898 . The ship was commissioned at Portsmouth on 13 January to serve in the Mediterranean Fleet . Before leaving for the Mediterranean , she was attached temporarily to the Channel Fleet to serve in home waters . In May 1898 , Caesar departed the United Kingdom for her Mediterranean service , undergoing a refit at Malta in 1900 ? 01 . Captain George Callaghan was appointed to command her on 21 December 1901 , succeeding Captain John Ferris . She ended her Mediterranean service in October 1903 , paying off at Portsmouth on 6 October 1903 to begin a refit . Her refit completed , Caesar was

commissioned at Portsmouth on 2 February 1904 to relieve her sister ship HMS Majestic as flagship of the Channel Fleet . When the Channel Fleet became the Atlantic Fleet as a result of a reorganisation on 1 January 1905 , Caesar became flagship of the Atlantic Fleet . She was relieved of this duty in March 1905 , becoming 2nd Flagship of the new Channel Fleet (which had been the Home Fleet prior to the reorganisation) .

On 3 June 1905 , Caesar collided with and sank the barque Afghanistan off Dungeness , suffering significant damage ; her bridge wings were carried away and the boats , davits , and net booms on her port side were badly damaged . Caesar was refitted at Devonport to repair the damage . Caesar became Flagship , Rear Admiral , Home Fleet , in December 1905 . She was relieved of this duty in February 1907 and transferred back to the Atlantic Fleet to become its temporary flagship . She served in this role until May 1907 . On 27 May 1907 , Caesar was recommissioned for service in the Devonport Division of the new Home Fleet , which had been formed in January 1907 . During this service she underwent a refit at Devonport in 1907 ? 08 . In May 1909 , Caesar transferred to the Nore , temporarily serving as the flagship of Vice Admiral , 3rd and 4th Divisions , Home Fleet . In April 1911 she transferred to Devonport to serve in the 3rd Division , Home Fleet . On 16 January 1911 , Caesar was rammed by the barque Excelsior in fog at Sheerness , suffering no serious damage . In March 1912 , Caesar was placed in commissioned reserve with a nucleus crew as part of the 4th Division , Home Fleet .

At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , Caesar was brought back into full commission and transferred to the 7th Battle Squadron of the Channel Fleet ; the squadron was charged with the defence of the English Channel . During this service she helped in transporting the Plymouth Marine Division from Plymouth to Ostend , Belgium , and covered the passage of the British Expeditionary Force from England to France in September 1914 . In December 1914 , Caesar was detached from the 7th Battle Squadron and transferred to Gibraltar to serve as guard ship and gunnery training ship there . In July 1915 , she transferred to the North America and West Indies Station , serving as guard ship and gunnery training ship at Bermuda and patrolling the Atlantic .

Her North America and West Indies Station service ended in September 1918 , when Caesar was transferred to relieve HMS Andromache (the old second @-@ class cruiser and former minelayer HMS Latona) as flagship of the Senior Naval Officer , British Adriatic Squadron , at Corfu , the last British pre @-@ dreadnought to serve as a flagship . In September 1918 , Caesar went to Malta for refit as a depot ship , during which she was equipped with repair shops and with leisure facilities such as recreation rooms and reading rooms . This conversion completed , she took up duties in October 1918 at Mudros as depot ship for the British Aegean Squadron . In January 1919 she was transferred to Port Said , Egypt , for service as a depot ship there . In June 1919 , Caesar transited the Dardanelles and transferred to the Black Sea , where she served as a depot ship for British naval forces operating against the Bolsheviks during the Russian Revolution . In this service she became the last British pre @-@ dreadnought to serve operationally overseas . Caesar returned to the United Kingdom in March 1920 , paid off at Devonport on 23 April 1920 , and was placed on the disposal list . She was sold to a British firm for scrapping on 8 November 1921 , then resold to a German firm in July 1922 and towed from Devonport to Germany to be scrapped .

= = Endnotes = =