

= Russian battleship Imperatritsa Mariya =

Imperatritsa Mariya (Russian : ??????????? ????? : Empress Maria) was one of three Imperatritsa Mariya @-@ class dreadnoughts built for the Imperial Russian Navy , lead ship of her class . Construction began before World War I and she served with the Black Sea Fleet during the war . She covered older pre @-@ dreadnought battleships as they bombarded Ottoman facilities in 1915 and engaged the Ottoman light cruiser Midilli , (formerly the German SMS Breslau) several times without inflicting anything more serious than splinter damage . Imperatritsa Mariya was sunk at anchor in Sevastopol by a magazine explosion in late 1916 , killing 228 crewmen . She was subsequently raised , but her condition was very poor . She was finally scrapped in 1926 .

= = Description = =

Imperatritsa Mariya was 168 meters (551 ft 2 in) long at the waterline . She had a beam of 27 @.@ 43 meters (90 ft 0 in) and a draft of 8 @.@ 36 meters (27 ft 5 in) . Her displacement was 23 @, @ 600 long tons (23 @, @ 979 t) at load , 1 @, @ 000 long tons (1 @, @ 016 t) more than her designed displacement of 22 @, @ 600 long tons (22 @, @ 963 t) . She proved to be very bow @-@ heavy in service and tended to ship large amounts of water through her forward casemates . The ammunition for the forward 12 @-@ inch (305 mm) guns was reduced from 100 to 70 rounds each , while the 130 @-@ millimeter (5 @. @ 1 in) ammunition was reduced from 245 to 100 rounds per gun , in an attempt to compensate for her trim . This did not fully cure the problem , but Imperatritsa Mariya was lost before any other changes could be implemented .

The ship was fitted with four Parsons @-@ type steam turbines imported from John Brown & Company of the United Kingdom . They were designed for a total of 26 @, @ 000 shaft horsepower (19 @, @ 000 kW) , but produced 33 @, @ 200 shp (24 @, @ 757 kW) on her sea trials using steam produced by 20 mixed @-@ firing triangular Yarrow boilers with a working pressure of 17 @. @ 5 atm (1 @, @ 773 kPa ; 257 psi) . Designed speed was 21 knots (39 km / h ; 24 mph) . Her maximum coal capacity was 1 @, @ 700 long tons (1 @, @ 727 t) plus 500 long tons (510 t) of fuel oil , which gave her a range of 1 @, @ 640 nautical miles (3 @, @ 040 km ; 1 @, @ 890 mi) at maximum speed . All of her electrical power was generated by three Curtis 360 @-@ kilowatt (480 hp) main turbo generators and two 200 @-@ kilowatt (270 hp) auxiliary units .

Her main armament consisted of a dozen 12 @-@ inch Obukhovskii Pattern 1907 guns mounted in four triple gun turrets distributed the length of the ship . Her secondary armament consisted of twenty 130 mm B7 Pattern 1913 guns mounted in casemates . They were arranged in two groups , six guns per side from the forward turret to the rear funnel and the remaining four were clustered around the rear turret . She was fitted with four 75 @-@ millimeter (3 @. @ 0 in) anti @-@ aircraft guns , one mounted on the roof of each turret . Four 17 @. @ 7 @-@ inch (450 mm) submerged torpedo tubes were carried , two tubes on each broadside abaft the forward magazine .

= = Service = =

Imperatritsa Mariya , named after Tsarina Maria Feodorovna , mother of Tsar Nicholas II , was built by the Russud Shipyard at Nikolayev , Russian Empire . She was laid down on 30 October 1911 along with her sister ships Imperator Aleksander III and Imperatritsa Ekaterina Velikaya , but this was merely a ceremonial event as the design had not yet been finalized nor the contract signed . She was launched on 19 October 1913 and arrived in Sevastopol on 13 July 1915 , where she completed her fitting out during the next few months and conducted sea trials . On 1 October she provided cover for the Black Sea Fleet 's pre @-@ dreadnoughts as they bombarded targets in Kozlu , Zonguldak and Karadeniz Ere?li . She did much the same when older battleships bombarded targets in Bulgaria on 20 ? 22 October and then Varna itself on 27 October . The light cruiser Midilli narrowly escaped a running engagement with the Imperatritsa Mariya on 4 April 1916 as the battleship narrowly missed her several times before she could disengage . Three months later both Imperatritsa Mariya and Imperatritsa Ekaterina Velikaya , alerted by intercepted radio

transmissions , sortied from Sevastopol in an attempt to intercept the ex @-@ German battlecruiser Yavuz as she returned from a bombardment of the Russian port of Tuapse on 4 July . The Yavuz dodged north and avoided the Russians by paralleling the Bulgarian coastline back to the Bosphorus . The Midilli mined the harbor of Novorossiysk on 21 July , but the Russians , again alerted by radio intercepts , attempted to catch her on her return journey . Midilli was lured into range of Imperatritsa Mariya 's guns the next day when the cruiser pursued the Russian destroyer Schastlivy , but she managed to escape with only splinter damage .

On the morning of 20 October 1916 , a fire was discovered in the Imperatritsa Mariya 's forward powder magazine while at anchor in Sevastopol , but it exploded before any efforts could be made to fight the fire . Sailors led by Engineer @-@ Mechanic Midshipman Ignatyev , however , managed to flood the forward shell magazine before the explosion at the cost of their own lives . Their action probably prevented a catastrophic detonation and all of the other magazines were flooded as a precaution . About forty minutes after the first explosion , a second occurred in the vicinity of the torpedo compartment that destroyed the watertight integrity of the rest of the forward bulkheads . Imperatritsa Mariya began to sink by the bow and listed to starboard . She capsized a few minutes later , taking 228 sailors with her . The subsequent investigation determined that the explosion was probably the result of spontaneous combustion of the nitrocellulose @-@ based propellant as it decomposed .

Following a complex salvage operation , the ship was eventually refloated on 18 May 1918 and moved into Sevastopol 's Northern Dry Dock on 31 May , still upside down . The chaos of the Russian Revolution and Civil War , prevented further repair work , although her 130 mm guns were removed . By 1923 , the wooden blocks supporting her in place were rotting . She was floated out and grounded in shallow water in 1923 . She was approved for scrapping in June 1925 and officially stricken on 21 November 1925 , although the work did not begin until 1926 when she was refloated and moved back into the dry dock . Her gun turrets , which had fallen out of the ship when she capsized , were later salvaged . Two of them were used as the 30th Coast Defense Battery defending the city during the Siege of Sevastopol in World War II .