

= Italian ironclad Re Umberto =

Re Umberto (" King Humbert ") was a Re Umberto class ironclad battleship built for the Italian Regia Marina (Royal Navy) in the 1880s , the lead ship of her class . She was laid down in July 1884 and launched in October 1888 ; work proceeded so slowly that she was not finished until February 1893 . She was armed with a main battery of four 13 inch (340 mm) guns and had a top speed of 20 knots (37 km / h ; 23 mph) , though this high speed came at the cost of armor protection .

Re Umberto carried out various duties during her service career , including large scale fleet maneuvers and diplomatic missions in Europe . She saw limited action during the Italo Turkish War in 1911 , escorting convoys and bombarding Ottoman troops in North Africa . By the end of the year she was withdrawn from front line service . Decommissioned before World War I , she was used during the war as a depot ship and then as a floating battery . In 1918 her armament was exchanged for a number of 3 inch (76 mm) guns and trench mortars as part of her role as the lead ship in the planned Italian assault on the main Austro Hungarian naval base at Pola . The war ended before the Italians could carry out the attack and she was stricken again in 1920 .

= = Design = =

Re Umberto was 127 meters (419 ft) long overall ; she had a beam of 23 meters (76 ft) and an average draft of 9 meters (30 ft) . She displaced 13,673 metric tons (13,457 long tons ; 15,072 short tons) normally and up to 15,454 t (15,210 long tons ; 17,035 short tons) at full load . Her propulsion system consisted of a pair of vertical compound steam engines , each driving a single screw propeller , with steam supplied by eighteen coal fired , cylindrical fire tube boilers . Her engines produced a top speed of 18 knots (34 km / h ; 21 mph) at 19,500 indicated horsepower (14,500 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 733 officers and men .

Re Umberto was armed with a main battery of four 13 inch (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 inch (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 inch (119 mm) guns in casemates in the upper deck , eight on each broadside . These were supported by sixteen 57 mm (2 inch) 43 cal. guns and ten 37 mm (1 inch) guns . As was customary for capital ships of the period , she carried five 17 inch (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 inch (102 mm) thick , an armored deck that was 3 inch (76 mm) thick , and her conning tower was armored with 11 inch (300 mm) of steel plate . The turrets had 4 inch thick faces and the supporting barbettes had 13 inch (349 mm) thick steel .

= = Service history = =

Re Umberto was named after the Italian King Umberto I of Italy . Re Umberto was built by the Castellammare Naval Shipyard in Castellammare di Stabia , Naples . Her keel was laid down on 10 July 1884 . After over four years of construction , she was launched on 17 October 1888 . Following sea trials , the battleship was formally commissioned into the Regia Marina on 16 February 1893 .

At the time the Re Umberto was commissioned into the Regia Marina , the navy maintained two battleship squadrons ; the Active Squadron and the Reserve Squadron . The ships alternated between the two in February of each year ; in 1895 , Re Umberto was assigned to the Reserve

Squadron , along with the older battleships Ruggiero di Lauria , Italia , and Lepanto . In June 1895 , the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal in Germany was completed ; to celebrate , dozens of warships from 14 different countries gathered in Kiel for a celebration hosted by Kaiser Wilhelm II . Re Umberto was one of four battleships in the flotilla that represented Italy . All three ships of the class participated in the 1896 Naval Maneuvers in the Tyrrhenian Sea .

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 , Re Umberto 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 Laurias 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 . Re Umberto 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 , Re Umberto 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 , Re Umberto 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 . In November , Re Umberto , Sicilia , the torpedo cruiser Partenope , the destroyer Fulmine , and the torpedo boat Cassiopea bombarded the oasis at Taguira , though no Turkish forces were present . The Italians then sent a garrison to protect the oasis .

By December , the three ships were stationed in Tripoli , where they were replaced by the old ironclads Italia and Lepanto . Re Umberto 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 , Re Umberto 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 . Re Umberto 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 = = =

She was laid up in Genoa in 1912 and became a depot ship . Towed to La Spezia in June 1915 , after having been stricken from the Navy List on 10 May 1914 , she became a depot ship for the dreadnought Andrea Doria . She was reinstated on 9 December 1915 and became a floating battery at Brindisi and , later , Valona , Albania . In 1918 Re Umberto was tasked to lead the planned assault on the primary Austro @-@ Hungarian naval base at Pola and modified for the role by the removal of her armament and the addition of eight 3 @-@ inch guns with gun shields as well as a number of trench mortars . A special saw and cutters were also installed to deal with the harbor boom and net defenses . The war ended before the Italians could carry out the attack and she was

again stricken on 4 July 1920 .