

= HMS Royal Sovereign (05) =

HMS Royal Sovereign (pennant number 05) was a Revenge @-@ class (also known as Royal Sovereign and R @-@ class) battleship of the Royal Navy displacing 28 @, @ 000 metric tons (27 @, @ 560 long tons ; 30 @, @ 860 short tons) and armed with eight 15 @-@ inch (381 mm) guns in four twin turrets . She was laid down in January 1914 and launched in April 1915 ; she was completed in May 1916 , but was not ready for service in time to participate in the Battle of Jutland at the end of the month . She served with the Grand Fleet for the remainder of the war , but did not see action . In the early 1930s , she was assigned to the Mediterranean Fleet and based in Malta .

Unlike the Queen Elizabeth @-@ class battleships , Royal Sovereign and her sisters were not modernised during the interwar period . Only minor alterations to her anti @-@ aircraft battery were effected before the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 . Assigned to the Home Fleet , she was tasked with convoy protection until May 1940 , when she returned to the Mediterranean Fleet . She was present during the Battle of Calabria in July 1940 , but her slow speed prevented her from engaging the Italian battleships . By March 1942 , she was assigned to the Eastern Fleet in the Indian Ocean , but after the Indian Ocean raid by Admiral Nagumo 's Kido Butai , she was withdrawn to eastern Africa to escort convoys . In January 1944 , she returned to Britain , and in May the Royal Navy transferred the ship to the Soviet Navy , where she was renamed Arkhangelsk . She then escorted Arctic convoys into Kola until the end of the war . The Soviets returned the ship in 1949 , after which she was broken up for scrap .

= = Description = =

Royal Sovereign had a length overall of 620 feet 7 inches (189 @. @ 2 m) , a beam of 88 feet 6 inches (27 @. @ 0 m) and a deep draught of 33 feet 7 inches (10 @. @ 2 m) . She had a designed displacement of 27 @, @ 790 long tons (28 @, @ 240 t) and displaced 31 @, @ 130 long tons (31 @, @ 630 t) at deep load . She was powered by four Parsons steam turbines using steam from eighteen oil @-@ fired Babcock & Wilcox boilers . The turbines were rated at 40 @, @ 000 shaft horsepower (29 @, @ 828 kW) and a top speed of 23 knots (42 @. @ 6 km / h ; 26 @. @ 5 mph) . She had a range of 7 @, @ 000 nautical miles (12 @, @ 964 km ; 8 @, @ 055 mi) at a cruising speed of 10 knots (18 @. @ 5 km / h ; 11 @. @ 5 mph) . Her crew numbered 1 @, @ 240 officers and enlisted men in 1921 . Royal Sovereign cost £ 2 @, @ 570 @, @ 504 upon completion .

= = = Armament = = =

The ship was equipped with eight breech @-@ loading (BL) 15 @-@ inch (381 mm) Mk I guns in four twin gun turrets , in two superfiring pairs fore and aft of the superstructure , designated ' A ' , ' B ' , ' X ' , and ' Y ' from front to rear . Twelve of the fourteen BL 6 @-@ inch (152 mm) Mk XII guns were mounted in casemates along the broadside of the vessel amidships ; the remaining pair were mounted on the shelter deck and were protected by gun shields . Her anti @-@ aircraft armament consisted of two quick @-@ firing (QF) 3 @-@ inch (76 mm) 20 cwt Mk I guns .

In August ? September 1924 , the 3 @-@ inch guns were replaced by a pair of QF 4 @-@ inch (102 mm) Mk V guns , During the ship 's 1927 ? 28 refit , the shelter deck 6 @-@ inch guns were removed and another pair of 4 @-@ inch AA guns were added . These were replaced by eight QF 4 @-@ inch Mk XVI guns in twin turrets during Royal Sovereign 's 1937 ? 38 refit . A pair of eight @-@ barrel 2 @-@ pounder " pom @-@ poms " were added in 1932 abreast the funnel , and two four @-@ barrel " pom @-@ poms " were added in early 1942 atop ' B ' and ' X ' turrets . Ten 20 mm Oerlikon guns were also added in 1941 . Another six were added in 1943 . Royal Sovereign was initially equipped with four submerged 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes on her broadside , though the after pair were removed in 1932 . The forward pair were also removed in 1937 ? 38 , during the ship 's last prewar refit .

= = = Fire control = = =

Royal Sovereign was completed with two fire @-@ control directors fitted with 15 @-@ foot (4 @-@ 6 m) rangefinders . One was mounted above the conning tower , protected by an armoured hood , and the other was in the spotting top above the tripod foremast . Each turret was also fitted with a 15 @-@ foot rangefinder . The main armament could be controlled by ' X ' turret as well . The secondary armament was primarily controlled by directors mounted on each side of the compass platform on the foremast once they were fitted in March 1917 . A 30 @-@ foot (9 @-@ 1 m) rangefinder replaced the smaller one originally fitted in ' X ' turret in 1919 . Similarly , another large rangefinder was fitted in ' B ' turret during the ship 's 1921 ? 22 refit . A simple high @-@ angle rangefinder was added above the bridge during that same refit .

About 1931 , a High @-@ Angle Control System (HACS) Mk I director replaced the high @-@ angle rangefinder on the spotting top . During the 1932 refit two positions for 2 @-@ pounder " pom @-@ pom " anti @-@ aircraft directors were added on new platforms abreast and below the fire @-@ control director in the spotting top . In the 1937 ? 38 refit a HACS Mark III director replaced the Mk I in the spotting top and another was added to the torpedo @-@ control tower aft . By 1942 , a Type 279 air warning radar , a Type 273 surface @-@ search radar , a Type 284 gunnery radar and two Type 285 anti @-@ aircraft gunnery radars were installed . By September 1943 , the Type 284 radar had been replaced by an improved Type 284B and two Type 282 radars had been fitted for the " pom @-@ poms " .

== = Protection == =

Royal Sovereign 's waterline belt consisted of face @-@ hardened Krupp cemented armour (KC) that was 13 inches (330 mm) thick between ' A ' and ' Y ' barbettes and thinned to 4 to 6 inches (102 to 152 mm) towards the ship 's ends , but did not reach either the bow or the stern . Above this was a strake of armour 6 inches thick that extended between ' A ' and ' X ' barbettes . Transverse bulkheads 4 to 6 inches thick ran at an angle from the ends of the thickest part of the waterline belt to ' A ' and ' Y ' barbettes .

The gun turrets were protected by 11 to 13 inches (279 to 330 mm) of KC armour , except for the turret roofs which were 4 @-@ 75 ? 5 inches (121 ? 127 mm) thick . The barbettes ranged in thickness from 6 ? 10 inches (152 ? 254 mm) above the upper deck , but were only 4 to 6 inches thick below it . The Revenge @-@ class ships had multiple armoured decks that ranged from 1 to 4 inches (25 to 102 mm) in thickness . The main conning tower had 13 inches of armour on the sides with a 3 @-@ inch (76 mm) roof . The torpedo control tower in the rear superstructure had 6 inches of armour protecting it . After the Battle of Jutland , 1 inch of high @-@ tensile steel was added to the main deck over the magazines and additional anti @-@ flash equipment was added in the magazines . In 1918 the gun shields for the upper deck 6 @-@ inch guns were replaced by armoured casemates .

To protect against underwater explosions , the ship was fitted with longitudinal torpedo bulkheads 1 to 1 @-@ 5 inches (38 mm) inches thick that ran from the forward to the rear magazines . During her 1921 refit , Royal Sovereign was fitted with an anti @-@ torpedo bulge that ran the length of the ship between the fore and aft barbettes . It was divided into a water @-@ tight empty lower compartment and an upper compartment filled with water @-@ tight " crushing tubes " intended to absorb and distribute the force of an explosion . The space between the tubes was filled with wood and cement .

== = Aircraft == =

The ship was fitted with flying @-@ off platforms mounted on the roofs of ' B ' and ' X ' turrets in 1918 , from which fighters and reconnaissance aircraft could launch . In 1932 the platforms were removed from the turrets and a trainable catapult was installed on her quarterdeck , along with a crane to recover a seaplane . The catapult and crane were removed by March 1937 .

= = Service history = =

= = = First World War = = =

Royal Sovereign was laid down on 15 January 1914 at the Portsmouth Dockyard . The ship was launched on 29 April 1915 and commissioned in May 1916 . She was still working up during the Battle of Jutland and the end of the month , and so she was not present during the engagement . On 30 May 1916 , three weeks after her commissioning , Royal Sovereign was present in Scapa Flow when the fleet commander , Admiral John Jellicoe ordered the fleet to sea . Jellicoe purposely left Royal Sovereign in port due to the inexperience of her crew ; as a result , she missed the Battle of Jutland the following day . In the months after the engagement , Royal Sovereign was quickly made ready for service with the fleet to further increase the numerical superiority of the Grand Fleet over the German High Seas Fleet .

The Grand Fleet sortied on 18 August 1916 to ambush the High Seas Fleet while it advanced into the southern North Sea , but a series of miscommunications and mistakes prevented Jellicoe from reaching the German fleet before it returned to port . Two light cruisers were sunk by German U @-@ boats during the operation , prompting Jellicoe to decide to not risk the major units of the fleet south of 55 ° 30 ' North due to the prevalence of German submarines and mines . The Admiralty concurred and stipulated that the Grand Fleet would not sortie unless the German fleet was attempting an invasion of Britain or there was a strong possibility it could be forced into an engagement under suitable conditions .

In April 1918 , the High Seas Fleet again sortied , to attack British convoys to Norway . They enforced strict wireless silence during the operation , which prevented Room 40 cryptanalysts from warning the new commander of the Grand Fleet , Admiral David Beatty . The British only learned of the operation after an accident aboard the battlecruiser SMS Moltke forced her to break radio silence to inform the German commander of her condition . Beatty then ordered the Grand Fleet to sea to intercept the Germans , but he was not able to reach the High Seas Fleet before it turned back for Germany . This was the last time Royal Sovereign and the rest of the Grand Fleet would go to sea for the remainder of the war . On 21 November 1918 , following the Armistice , the entire Grand Fleet left port to escort the surrendered German fleet into internment at Scapa Flow .

= = = Inter @-@ war period = = =

The Royal Marines detachment assigned to Royal Sovereign left the ship on 21 June 1919 to conduct exercises . The ship meanwhile went into drydock at Invergordon in September . Post @-@ war demobilisation in 1919 saw some 500 men leave the ship while she was in dock . Upon returning to service in late 1919 , the ship was assigned to the 1st Battle Squadron of the Atlantic Fleet . Conflicts between Greece and the crumbling Ottoman Empire prompted the Royal Navy to deploy a force to the eastern Mediterranean . In April 1920 , Royal Sovereign and her sister ship Resolution steamed to the region via Malta . While in the Ottoman capital Constantinople , Royal Sovereign and the other British warships took on White émigré fleeing the Communist Red Army . Among those refugees aboard Royal Sovereign was a princess of the Galitzine family .

The 1922 Washington Naval Treaty cut the battleship strength of the Royal Navy from forty ships to fifteen . The remaining active battleships were divided between the Atlantic and Mediterranean Fleets and conducted joint operations annually . Royal Sovereign remained with the Atlantic Fleet through 1926 . On 4 October 1927 , the ship was placed in reserve to effect a major refit . Four new rangefinders and eight searchlights were installed . On 15 May 1929 , the refit was finished , and the ship was assigned to the 1st Battle Squadron of the Mediterranean Fleet . The squadron consisted of Royal Sovereign , her sisters Resolution and Revenge , and Queen Elizabeth , and based in Malta . By the 1930s , the five ships of the Queen Elizabeth class were rotated through extensive modernisation . Royal Sovereign and her sisters , however , were smaller and slower than the Queen Elizabeth class , and so they were not extensively modernised in the inter @-@ war period .

The only changes made were augmentations to their anti @-@ aircraft batteries .

Fleet exercises in 1934 were carried out in the Bay of Biscay , followed by a fleet regatta in Navarino Bay off Greece . In 1935 , the ship returned to Britain for the Jubilee Fleet Review for King George V. In August 1935 , Royal Sovereign was transferred to the 2nd Battle Squadron of the Atlantic Fleet , where she served as the flagship of Rear Admiral Charles Ramsey . The ship served as a training vessel until 2 June 1937 , when she was again placed in reserve for a major overhaul . This lasted until 18 February 1938 , after which she returned to the 2nd Battle Squadron . In 1939 , King George VI made a state visit to Canada ; Royal Sovereign and the rest of the fleet escorted his ship halfway across the Atlantic and met it on the return leg of the voyage .

In early 1939 , the Admiralty considered plans to send Royal Sovereign and her four sisters to Asia to counter Japanese expansionism . They reasoned that the then established " Singapore strategy " , which called for a fleet to be formed in Britain to be dispatched to confront a Japanese attack was inherently risky due to the long delay . They argued that a dedicated battle fleet would allow for faster reaction . The plan was abandoned , however , because the new King George V @-@ class battleship (1939) s would not begin to enter service until 1941 . In the last weeks of August 1939 , the Royal Navy began to concentrate in wartime bases as tensions with Germany rose . Royal Sovereign steamed to Invergordon , where she joined her sisters Resolution and Royal Oak , Rodney , and the battlecruiser Repulse . By 31 August , the force joined Nelson , the flagship of Admiral Charles Forbes , the commander of the Home Fleet .

= = = Second World War = = =

On 31 August , the day before the German invasion of Poland , Royal Sovereign was assigned to a screening force in the Greenland @-@ Iceland @-@ United Kingdom gap to patrol for German merchant ships that might be attempting to reach Germany . At the outset of war in September 1939 , Royal Sovereign was assigned to the 2nd Battle Squadron of the Home Fleet . She was assigned to the North Atlantic Escort Force , which was based in Halifax , Nova Scotia , and was tasked with protecting convoys to Britain . Upon returning to Plymouth , she underwent a short refit . In May 1940 , she moved to the Mediterranean Fleet . There she was based in Alexandria with the battleships Warspite , Malaya , and Valiant , under the command of Admiral Andrew Cunningham . On 25 ? 27 June , she and her sister ship HMS Ramillies escorted two convoys from Alexandria to Malta . On 28 June , aerial reconnaissance located Italian destroyers off Zakynthos ; Admiral John Tovey took the 7th Cruiser Squadron . Royal Sovereign was left behind due to her slow speed . Cunningham split his fleet into three groups ; Royal Sovereign and Malaya were the core of Group C. She was present at the Battle of Calabria on 18 July , but her slow speed prevented her from engaging the Italian battleships . Warspite bore the brunt of the action , as Royal Sovereign and Malaya lagged behind .

In mid @-@ August 1940 , while steaming in the Red Sea , Royal Sovereign was unsuccessfully attacked by the Italian submarine Galileo Ferraris . Later that month , she returned to Atlantic convoy duties . These lasted until August 1941 , when periodic maintenance was effected in Norfolk , Virginia . The Admiralty decided in May 1941 to deploy a powerful fleet to be based in Singapore to counter any Japanese attempt to invade Western colonies in Southeast Asia . Royal Sovereign and her sisters Revenge , Ramillies , and Resolution were assigned to the force . The unit was to have been assembled in Singapore by March 1942 , though Royal Sovereign reached the theatre earlier . At the beginning of March 1942 , Royal Sovereign , the heavy cruiser Cornwall , and several smaller vessels escorted the convoy SU.1 of twelve troopships transporting 10 @,@ 090 soldiers . The convoy departed Colombo on 1 March , bound for Australia . The convoy reached Fremantle without incident on 15 March .

By the end of March 1942 , the Eastern Fleet had been formed , under the command of Admiral James Somerville . The fleet was centred on a pair of fleet aircraft carriers , the elderly carrier Hermes , and five battleships , four of which were Royal Sovereign and her sisters ; the fifth was Warspite . The fleet also included seven cruisers and sixteen destroyers . Despite the numerical strength of the Eastern Fleet , many of its units , including the four Revenge @-@ class battleships ,

were no longer front line warships . Vice Admiral Ch?ichi Nagumo 's powerful Kido Butai , composed of six carriers and four fast battleships , was significantly stronger than Somerville 's Eastern Fleet . As a result , only the modernised Warspite could operate with the two fleet carriers ; Royal Sovereign , her three sisters , and Hermes were kept away from combat to escort convoys in the Indian Ocean .

In late March , the code breakers at the Far East Combined Bureau , a branch of Bletchley Park , informed Somerville that the Japanese were planning a raid into the Indian Ocean to attack Colombo and Trincomalee and destroy his fleet . He therefore divided his fleet into two groups : Force A , which consisted of the two fleet carriers , Warspite and four cruisers , and Force B , centred on Royal Sovereign and her sisters and the carrier Hermes . He intended to ambush Nagumo 's fleet in a night action , the only method by which he thought he could achieve a victory . After three days of searching for the Japanese fleet without success , Somerville returned to Addu Atoll to refuel . While refuelling his ships , Somerville received a report that the Japanese fleet was approaching Colombo , which they attacked the following day , on 5 April , followed by attacks on Trincomalee on 9 April .

Following the raid in April 1942 , Somerville withdrew Royal Sovereign and her three sisters to Mombasa , where they could secure the shipping routes in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf . Royal Sovereign and her sisters departed from Addu Atoll early on the morning on 9 April , bound for Mombasa . Here they remained stationed until September 1943 , with the exception of another long period in the dockyard in Philadelphia in late 1942 . While Royal Sovereign was moored in Philadelphia , the American light cruiser USS Boise , a badly damaged veteran of the Battle of Cape Esperance , shared a pier with her . During the refit , the ship 's deck armour was increased by 2 inches (51 mm) and four of her 6 inch (150 mm) guns were removed . Royal Sovereign was sent back to the United States for a major overhaul in Philadelphia , from March to September 1943 . She then returned to the Indian Ocean to resume her patrol duties . In January 1944 , she left the Indian Ocean , bound for Britain .

== Service with the Soviet Navy ==

After returning to Britain , Royal Sovereign was sent to the naval base in Scapa Flow . On 30 May 1944 she was transferred on loan to the Soviet Navy as Arkhangelsk in lieu of war reparations from Italy . The ship left Britain on 17 August 1944 as part of the escort for Convoy JW 59 , which contained thirty three merchant vessels . Six days later , while still en route , the convoy was attacked by the U boat U 711 . The submarine 's captain , Hans Günther Lange , incorrectly reported hits on Arkhangelsk and a destroyer , though his torpedoes had exploded prematurely . Under the impression that they had crippled the battleship , the Germans launched several submarine attacks on the ship while she was moored in Kola . Anti torpedo nets ensured that the attacks failed , however . The Germans then planned to use six Biber midget submarines to attack the ship , but mechanical difficulties eventually forced the cancellation of the plan . Regardless , Arkhangelsk had already departed Kola to patrol the White Sea by the time the Bibers would have arrived . A Soviet crew commissioned the ship on 29 August 1944 at Polyarny . Arkhangelsk was the largest ship in the Soviet fleet during the war . While in Soviet service , she was the flagship of Admiral Gordey Levchenko and was tasked with meeting Allied convoys in the Arctic Ocean and escorting them into Kola .

Arkhangelsk ran aground in the White Sea in late 1947 ; the extent of damage , if any , is unknown . The Soviet Navy returned the ship to the Royal Navy on 4 February 1949 after the former Italian battleship Giulio Cesare was transferred to the Soviet Black Sea Fleet . The Soviet Navy had initially sought to avoid sending the ship back , claiming that she was not sufficiently seaworthy to make the voyage back to Britain . After an inspection by a Royal Navy officer , however , the Soviet Navy agreed to return the vessel in January 1949 . Upon returning to the Rosyth naval base , Royal Navy personnel thoroughly inspected the ship and found much of her equipment to be unserviceable . It appeared to the inspectors that the main battery turrets had not been rotated while the ship was in Soviet service , and were jammed on the centreline . As a result of her poor condition , she was sold

for scrap . The ship arrived at Inverkeithing , Scotland on 18 May to be broken up . The elevation mechanisms from her main battery gun turrets were later reused in the 250 @-@ foot (76 m) Mark I radio telescope at Jodrell Bank , Cheshire built in 1955 ? 1957 .