

= Italian cruiser Minerva =

Minerva was a torpedo cruiser of the Partenope class built for the Italian Regia Marina (Royal Navy) in the 1880s . The second of eight ships , Minerva was built by Gio . Ansaldo & C. ; her keel was laid down in February 1889 , she was launched in February 1892 , and she was commissioned in August that year . Her main armament were her five torpedo tubes , which were supported by a battery of ten small 102 mm caliber guns . Minerva spent most of her career in the main Italian fleet , where she was primarily occupied with training exercises . She was converted into a minelayer in 1909 . She did not see significant action during the Italo - Turkish War in 1911 or World War I in 1915 , though she was used to lay defensive minefields during the latter conflict . The ship was sold for scrap in 1921 .

= = Design = =

Minerva was 73.1 meters (240 ft) long overall and had a beam of 8.22 m (27.0 ft) and an average draft of 3.48 m (11.4 ft) . She displaced 833 metric tons (820 long tons ; 918 short tons) normally . Her propulsion system consisted of a pair of horizontal triple expansion steam engines each driving a single screw propeller , with steam supplied by four coal fired locomotive boilers . On speed trials with a displacement of 828 t (815 long tons ; 913 short tons) , Minerva 's engines produced an average top speed of 19 knots (35 km / h ; 22 mph) from 3,884 indicated horsepower (2,896 kW) with forced draft . The ship had a cruising radius of about 1,800 nautical miles (3,300 km ; 2,100 mi) at a speed of 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . She had a crew of between 96 - 121 .

Minerva was armed with a main battery of one 120 mm (4.7 in) / 40 gun and six 57 mm (2.2 in) / 43 guns mounted singly . She was also equipped with three 37 mm (1.5 in) / 20 guns in single mounts . Her primary offensive weapon was her six 450 mm (18 in) torpedo tubes . The ship was protected by an armored deck that was up to 1.6 in (41 mm) thick ; her conning tower was armored with the same thickness of steel plate .

= = Service history = =

Minerva was laid down on 1 February 1889 at the Gio . Ansaldo & C. shipyard in Genoa , and was launched on 27 February 1892 . After fitting out work was completed less than six months later , the ship was commissioned into the fleet on 20 August . During the 1893 fleet maneuvers , Minerva served with the 1st Division of the Reserve Squadron , along with the ironclads Re Umberto and Caio Duilio and four torpedo boats . During the maneuvers , which lasted from 6 August to 5 September , the ships of the Reserve Squadron defended against a simulated attack by the Active Squadron , which gamed a French attack on the Italian fleet . In 1895 , Minerva was stationed in the 2nd Maritime Department , split between Taranto and Naples , along with most of the torpedo cruisers in the Italian fleet . These included her sister ships Partenope , Aretusa , Euridice , Iride , Urania , and Caprera , the four Goito class cruisers , and Tripoli .

In 1903 , Minerva was assigned to the 1st Squadron , along with Euridice . The unit also included eight battleships , six other cruisers , and six destroyers . The 1st Squadron was kept in active service for seven months of the year for training , and had reduced crews for the remainder of the year . She remained in the squadron the following year , which was reduced in size , with the two oldest battleships having been withdrawn , though three destroyers were added . Between 1909 and 1910 , the ship was modernized and converted into a minelayer . She received new oil fired boilers and had her armament reduced to two 3 in (76 mm) guns , four 57 mm guns and two 37 mm guns . Minerva 's speed was reduced to 18.28 knots (33.85 km / h ; 21.04 mph) on 3,524 ihp (2,628 kW) . At the start of the Italo - Turkish War in September 1911 , Minerva was attached to the 4th Division of the 2nd Squadron of the Italian fleet . By this time , she was being used as a minelayer . She did not see significant action during the war .

Italy had declared neutrality at the start of World War I , but by July 1915 , the Triple Entente had

convinced the Italians to enter the war against the Central Powers . Admiral Paolo Thaon di Revel , the Italian naval chief of staff , believed that the threat from Austro - Hungarian submarines and naval mines in the narrow waters of the Adriatic was too serious for him to use the fleet in an active way . Instead , Revel decided to implement a blockade at the relatively safer southern end of the Adriatic with the main fleet , while smaller vessels , such as the MAS boats , conducted raids on Austro - Hungarian ships and installations . Minerva was initially used to lay a series of defensive minefields , along with her sister Partenope and the cruiser Goito , in support of this strategy . Minerva survived the war and was discarded in May 1921 , the last surviving member of her class . She was subsequently broken up for scrap .