

= Greek battleship Kilkis =

Kilkis (Greek : ? / ? ?????) was a 13 @, @ 000 ton Mississippi @-@ class battleship originally built by the US Navy in 1904 ? 1908 . As Mississippi she was purchased by the Greek Navy in 1914 , and renamed her Kilkis , along with her sister Idaho , renamed Lemnos . Kilkis was named for the Battle of Kilkis @-@ Lahanas , a crucial engagement of the Second Balkan War . Armed with a main battery of four 12 in (305 mm) guns , Kilkis and her sister were the most powerful vessels in the Greek fleet .

The ship saw limited action during World War I. Greece 's pro @-@ German monarch , Constantine I opted to remain neutral until October 1916 , when pressure from the Triple Entente forced him to abdicate in favor of a pro @-@ Entente government . For the remainder of the war , Kilkis operated solely as a harbor defense ship . In the immediately ensuing Greco @-@ Turkish War of 1919 ? 1922 , Kilkis supported Greek landings in Turkey and participated in the final Greek sea @-@ borne withdrawal in 1922 . She remained in service into the early 1930s , when she was used for a training ship . During the German invasion of Greece in 1941 , she and her sister were sunk in Salamis by German Ju 87 Stuka dive @-@ bombers . The two ships were ultimately raised in the 1950s and broken up for scrap .

= = Design = =

Kilkis was 382 feet (116 m) long overall and had a beam of 77 ft (23 m) and a draft of 24 ft 8 in (7 @. @ 52 m) . She displaced 13 @, @ 000 metric tons (13 @, @ 000 long tons ; 14 @, @ 000 short tons) as designed and up to 14 @, @ 465 t (14 @, @ 237 long tons ; 15 @, @ 945 short tons) at full combat load . The ship was powered by two @-@ shaft vertical triple expansion engines and eight coal @-@ fired Babcock & Wilcox boilers rated at 10 @, @ 000 indicated horsepower (7 @, @ 500 kW) and a top speed of 17 knots (31 km / h ; 20 mph) . Lattice masts were installed in 1909 . She had a crew of 744 officers and enlisted men .

The ship was armed with a main battery of four 12 in (305 mm) L / 45 guns in two twin turrets , one on either end of the superstructure . Eight 8 in (203 mm) L / 45 guns were mounted in four twin turrets , two on other side of the vessel amidships . The secondary battery was rounded out with eight 7 in (178 mm) L / 45 guns mounted individually in casemates along the length of the hull . Close @-@ range defense against torpedo boats was protected by a battery of twelve 3 in (76 mm) L / 50 guns , six 3 @-@ pounder guns and two 1 @-@ pounder guns . The ship 's armament system was completed by two 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes submerged in her hull . Kilkis and Lemnos were the most powerful vessels in the Greek Navy .

= = Service history = =

Laid down on 12 May 1904 , the ship was launched on 30 September 1905 and commissioned into the United States Navy on 1 January 1908 as USS Mississippi . Greece became engaged in a naval arms race with the Ottoman Empire at the time ; the Ottomans had purchased a pair of German pre @-@ dreadnoughts ? Kurfürst Friedrich Wilhelm and Weissenburg in 1910 ? and ordered dreadnought battleships from Britain in 1911 and 1914 . The Greek Navy ordered the dreadnought Salamis from Germany in 1913 and the dreadnought Basileus Konstantinos from France . As a stop @-@ gap measure , the Greeks purchased Mississippi and Idaho from the US Navy , for the sum of \$ 12 @, @ 535 @, @ 276 @. @ 58 , on 30 June 1914 . , The two ships were transferred to the Greek Navy in Newport News , Virginia the following month . Kilkis and Lemnos quickly left the United States after their transfer in July , due to the rising tensions in Europe following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria the previous month . After arriving in Greece , Kilkis became the flagship of the Greek fleet .

At the outbreak of World War I in July 1914 , Greece 's pro @-@ German monarch , Constantine I , decided to remain neutral . The Entente powers landed troops in Salonika in 1915 , which was a source of tension between France and Greece . Ultimately , the French seized the Greek Navy on

19 October 1916 (see Noemvriana and National Schism) . Kilgis was reduced to a skeleton crew and had the breech blocks for her guns removed to render them inoperable . All ammunition and torpedoes were also removed . Ultimately , a pro @-@ Entente government replaced Constantine and declared war on the Central Powers . Kilgis , however , did not see active service with Greece 's new allies , and instead was used solely for harbor defense until the end of the war .

After the end of World War I Kilgis saw service during the Greco @-@ Turkish War , where she supported landings to seize Ottoman territory . These operations also included actions to support the Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War in the Black Sea . While supporting the French and British forces defending Sevastopol in April 1919 , Kilgis observed mutinies on several French battleships . Her crew taunted the French mutineers by hanging a dummy from the yardarm . Kilgis then returned to Greece ; on 5 May 1919 , she and a pair of destroyers escorted a convoy of six troop transports to Smyrna , where the soldiers were disembarked . Kilgis carried Rear Admiral Kaloulides , who thereafter served as the military governor of the city . The Ottoman Navy had been interned by the Allies after the end of World War I , and so provided no opposition to the Greek Navy 's activities .

In March 1920 , Kilgis was stationed in Constantinople as part of an Allied fleet , which was composed primarily of British warships . The ships ' crews practiced landing operations to support the garrison occupying the city , but in the event only crews from the British ships went ashore . Kilgis left the theater to represent Greece during the Fleet Review in Spithead to honor King George V on his birthday , 3 June 1920 . In July , Kilgis and a pair of destroyers escorted a convoy carrying 7 @,@ 000 infantrymen , 1 @,@ 000 artillerymen , and 4 @,@ 000 mules to Panderma . Among the Greek naval vessels that supported the landings with Kilgis were the armored cruiser Georgios Averof and the destroyers Aetos , Leon , and Ierax , and a hospital ship . Landings also took place at Ereğli on the other side of the Sea of Marmara . On 19 July , Kilgis departed with several transport ships and the British seaplane carrier HMS Ark Royal , which provided aerial reconnaissance for the Greek forces . Operations came to a close in September 1922 when the Greek Army was forced to evacuate by sea , along with a sizable number of civilians , from Asia Minor . The fleet transported a total of 250 @,@ 000 soldiers and civilians during the evacuation . Kilgis and Lemnos departed Smyrna on the evening of 8 September .

Kilgis underwent repairs and upgrades in 1926 ? 1928 but was already obsolete due to low speed and low freeboard . The ship had her boilers re @-@ tubed during this refit . On 29 November 1929 , the Greek navy announced that Kilgis would be withdrawn from service and broken up for scrap . Consequently , in 1930 , Georgios Averof replaced her as the fleet flagship . Nevertheless , Kilgis remained in service with the fleet until 1932 . The ship was then withdrawn from the active fleet and used as a training ship . A failed insurrection in the Greek fleet in March 1935 led to a reduction in the number of personnel in the Navy . As a result , Kilgis and Georgios Averof were removed from active service . After the revolt , Kilgis was used as a training ship for anti @-@ aircraft gunners .

= = = World War II = = =

On 28 October 1940 , Italy invaded Greece , initiating the Greco @-@ Italian War as part of the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini 's expansionist program . The Greek army quickly defeated the Italians and pushed them back to Albania . Less than two weeks later , the Italian fleet was badly damaged in the British Raid on Taranto , which significantly reduced the threat the Italian Regia Marina posed to the Greek fleet . From the start of the conflict , Kilgis was used as a floating battery based in Salamis . Spare guns from Kilgis and Lemnos were employed as coastal batteries throughout Greece .

On 6 April 1941 , the German Wehrmacht invaded Greece to support its Italian ally in the stalemated conflict . British planners suggested using the ship to block the Corinth Canal by scuttling her at the southern entrance to the canal , but the Greek Navy refused , preferring to use the ship as a barracks ship if they should have to retreat from Salamis . The ship was attacked in Salamis Naval Base by Ju 87 Stuka dive bombers on 23 April 1941 , during the German invasion . Kilgis attempted to get underway to evade the attacks , but she was hit by several bombs and sank in the harbor .

Her wreck was refloated and broken up for scrap in the 1950s .