

= Italian ironclad Sicilia =

Sicilia was the second of three Re Umberto @-@ class ironclad battleships built for the Italian Regia Marina ( Royal Navy ) . The ship , named for the island of Sicily , was laid down in Venice in November 1884 , launched in July 1891 , and completed in May 1895 . She was armed with a main battery of four 13 @.@ 5 @-@ inch ( 340 mm ) guns and had a top speed of 20 @.@ 3 knots ( 37 @.@ 6 km / h ; 23 @.@ 4 mph ) , though this high speed came at the cost of armor protection .

Sicilia spent the first decade of her career in the Active Squadron of the Italian fleet . Thereafter , she was transferred to the Reserve Squadron , and by 1911 , she was part of the Training Division . She took part in the Italo @-@ Turkish War of 1911 ? 12 , where she escorted convoys to North Africa and supported Italian forces ashore by bombarding Ottoman troops . She was thereafter used as a depot ship for the new dreadnought battleship Giulio Cesare . During World War I , she continued in service as a depot ship , and later in the war she was converted into a repair ship . Sicilia was stricken in 1923 and subsequently broken up for scrap .

= = Design = =

Sicilia was 127 @.@ 6 meters ( 419 ft ) long overall ; she had a beam of 23 @.@ 44 m ( 76 @.@ 9 ft ) and an average draft of 8 @.@ 83 m ( 29 @.@ 0 ft ) . She displaced 13 @,@ 058 metric tons ( 12 @,@ 852 long tons ; 14 @,@ 394 short tons ) normally and up to 14 @,@ 842 t ( 14 @,@ 608 long tons ; 16 @,@ 361 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 20 @.@ 1 knots ( 37 @.@ 2 km / h ; 23 @.@ 1 mph ) at 19 @,@ 131 indicated horsepower ( 14 @,@ 266 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 @,@ 100 km ; 4 @,@ 600 to 6 @,@ 900 mi ) at a speed of 10 knots ( 19 km / h ; 12 mph ) . She had a crew of 736 officers and men .

Sicilia was armed with a main battery of four 13 @.@ 5 in ( 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 in ( 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 @.@ 7 in ( 119 mm ) guns in casemates in the upper deck , eight on each broadside . These were supported by twenty 57 mm ( 2 @.@ 2 in ) 43 @-@ cal. guns and ten 37 mm ( 1 @.@ 5 in ) guns . As was customary for capital ships of the period , she carried five 17 @.@ 7 in ( 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 in ( 102 mm ) thick , an armored deck that was 3 in ( 76 mm ) thick , and her conning tower was armored with 11 @.@ 8 in ( 300 mm ) of steel plate . The turrets had 4 in thick faces and the supporting barbettes had 13 @.@ 75 in ( 349 mm ) thick steel .

= = Service history = =

Sicilia was named after the island of Sicily . She was built by the Venetian Arsenal in Venice . Her keel was laid down on 3 November 1884 , and her completed hull was launched on 6 July 1891 . At her launching ceremony , the new ship was christened by Queen Margherita . Fitting @-@ out work was completed on 4 May 1895 , after which the ship entered service with the Italian fleet . Sicilia took part in an international naval demonstration in 1897 off Crete during a period of tension between Greece and the Ottoman Empire that culminated in the Greco @-@ Turkish War . At the time , Sicilia was the flagship of the 1st Division , which also included her two sister ships , the protected cruisers Giovanni Bausan and Vesuvio , and the torpedo cruiser Euridice . By 1899 , Sicilia had been assigned to the 2nd Division , which also included the ironclads Affondatore and Castelfidardo , and the torpedo cruisers Partenope and Urania .

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 , Sicilia and her sisters were still 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 Lauria @-@ class ironclads 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 . Sicilia 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 , Sicilia and her two sisters were assigned to the Training Division , along with the old armored cruiser Carlo Alberto , with Sicilia serving as the flagship of Rear Admiral Raffaele Borea Ricci D 'Olmo . On 3 ? 4 October , Sicilia 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 . These included a contingent led by Sicilia 's captain . The ships of the Training Division thereafter alternated between Tripoli and Khoms to support the Italian garrisons in the two cities ; this included repulsing a major Ottoman attack on Tripoli over 23 ? 26 October , where Sicilia and Sardegna supported the Italian left flank against concerted Ottoman assaults . In November , Sicilia , Re Umberto , 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 . Sicilia 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 , Sicilia 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 . Sicilia 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 became a depot ship for the new dreadnought battleship Giulio Cesare at Taranto , which was then nearing completion . Sicilia was stricken on 9 July 1914 and slated to be scrapped , but the Regia Marina decided to retain the ship after World War I broke out at the end of the month . On 16 August , the ship was disarmed and returned to service as a depot ship in Taranto for ammunition and sailors . 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 . Later in the war , Sicilia was converted into a repair ship . The ship was stricken again in 1923 and thereafter broken up for scrap .