

= Japanese battleship Aki =

Aki (??) was a Satsuma class semi dreadnought battleship built for the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) during the first decade of the 20th century . She was the second battleship built domestically in Japan and the first to use steam turbines for propulsion . The ship was named for Aki Province , now a part of Hiroshima Prefecture . The ship saw no combat during World War I. Aki was disarmed in 1922 and sunk as a target in 1924 in accordance with the terms of the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 .

= Background =

The Satsuma class was ordered in late 1904 under the 1904 War Naval Supplementary Program during the Russo Japanese War . Unlike the previous Katori class pre dreadnought battleships , they were the first battleships ordered from Japanese shipyards . They were originally designed with a dozen 12 inch (305 mm) guns , but had to be redesigned because of a shortage of guns in Japan and to reduce costs .

= Design and description =

The ship had an overall length of 492 feet (150 m) , a beam of 83 feet 7 inches (25 m) , and a normal draft of 27 feet 6 inches (8 m) . She displaced 20,000 long tons (20,000 t) at normal load . The crew consisted of 931 officers and enlisted men .

Aki was fitted with a pair of Curtiss steam turbine sets using steam from 15 Miyabara water tube boilers . The turbines were rated at a total of 24,000 shaft horsepower (18,000 kW) for a design speed of 20 knots (37 km / h ; 23 mph) . The ship reached a top speed of 20.25 knots (37.5 km / h ; 23.3 mph) during her sea trials from 27,740 shp (20,690 kW) . She carried enough coal and oil to give her a range of 9,100 nautical miles (16,900 km ; 10,500 mi) at a speed of 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . Unlike her half sister , she had three funnels .

The ship was completed with four 45 caliber 12 inch 41st Year Type guns in two gun turrets , one each fore and aft of the superstructure . They fired 850 pound (386 kg) armor piercing (AP) shells to a maximum range of 24,000 yd (22,000 m) . The intermediate armament consisted of six twin gun turrets equipped with 45 caliber Type 41 10 inch guns , three turrets on each side of the superstructure . Her heavy intermediate armament of guns larger than 9 inches (229 mm) is why the ship is considered to be a semi dreadnought .

Aki 's secondary armament consisted of eight 40 caliber 6 inch 41st Year Type guns , mounted in casemates in the sides of the hull . The ship was also equipped with eight quick firing (QF) 40 caliber 12 pound 12 cwt guns and four 28 caliber 12 pound QF guns . In addition , the battleship was fitted with five submerged 18 inch (457 mm) torpedo tubes , two on each broadside and one in the stern .

The waterline main belt of the Satsuma class vessels consisted of Krupp cemented armor that had a maximum thickness of 9 inches (229 mm) amidships . It tapered to a thickness of 4 inches (102 mm) at the ends of the ship . A 6 inch (152 mm) strake of armor protected the casemates . The barbettes for the main guns were 7 ? 9 inches (180 ? 240 mm) thick . The armor of Aki 's main gun turrets had a maximum thickness of 8 inches (203 mm) . The deck armor was 2 ? 3 inches (51 ? 76 mm) thick and the conning tower was protected by six inches of armor .

= Construction =

Aki was laid down at Kure Naval Arsenal on 15 March 1906 . She was launched on 15 April 1907 , but construction was suspended for about five months after the decision was made on 26 November to install steam turbines on Aki and the armored cruiser Ibuki . Aki 's turbines were already behind

schedule and the suspension allowed the less valuable ship to be completed first , and changes made to its turbines after testing were also incorporated into Aki 's turbines . Aki was finally completed on 11 March 1911 and her first captain was Tatsuo Matsumura .

= = Operational history = =

When World War I began in August 1914 , Aki was refitting at Kure Naval Arsenal . She was assigned to the 1st Battleship Squadron upon the completion of her refit and remained with it until she was transferred to the 2nd Battleship Squadron in 1918 , seeing no combat during the war . From December 1915 to December 1916 , she was commanded by Captain Kiyokazu Abo . The ship was disarmed at Yokosuka in 1922 to comply with the provisions of the Washington Naval Treaty , stricken from the navy list during 1923 and converted into a target ship . Aki was sunk by the battlecruiser Kong? and the battleship Hy?ga on 2 September 1924 in Tokyo Bay . Two of her 10 @-@ inch gun turrets were installed as coastal artillery batteries on J?gashima island to protect Tokyo Bay .