



REAR-ADMIRAL LUIGI TONTA

MEMBER OF THE DIRECTING COMMITTEE
OF THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC BUREAU.

1927 to 1932.

Rear-Admiral Luigi TONTA was born in Turin on 26th March 1874 and was the son of Giuseppe and Anna TONTA (*née* CARPANO).

After attending the mathematical courses for two years at the University of Turin and having obtained the diploma of Licentiate in Physical Mathematics, he entered the Royal Naval Academy at Leghorn on 23rd November 1893 and was appointed Midshipman on 30th June 1895.

The following year he served in the Surveying Ship *Eridano* for three months and was employed during that period in surveying on the coast of Italy.

On 22nd July 1897 he was promoted to Sub-Lieutenant and in the two following years was again employed in surveying on the coast of Italy in the *Scilla*.

He was promoted Lieutenant on 15th March 1900 and, while serving in this rank, held the posts of Chief of the Section of Compasses, Magnetism and Nautical Instruments of the Hydrographic Institute at Genoa (1902 to 1904) and Chief of the Section of Research and Navigation (1905 to 1910). While holding the latter post he was employed on numerous expeditions of a hydrographic character in Naval vessels and, for his services in the areas devastated by the earthquake at Messina in December 1908, he was awarded the Commemorative Medal and created a Knight of the Order of the Crown of Italy; he was appointed a Hydrographic Surveyor on 20th January 1909 and received his promotion to Lieutenant-Commander on 29th March 1914.

During 1916 and 1917 and from October 1920 to September 1921 he was Professor of Nautical Astronomy, Magnetism and Hydrography at the Naval Academy at Leghorn, being promoted to Commander on 24th May 1917.

From 14th November 1922 to 1st May 1924 he held the appointment of Chief of the Department of Nautical Instruction at the Ministry of Marine, in charge of the reorganisation of the Naval Institutes for the training of the Officers of the Merchant Marine. While at the Ministry he received his promotion to Captain (22nd April 1923) and on leaving was appointed Director of the Hydrographic Institute of the Royal Navy at Genoa, remaining in this post until 10th December 1925.

While still Director of the Hydrographic Institute he took command of the Surveying Vessel *Magnaghi* from March to September 1925 and carried out surveys off the coasts of Italy.

During 1926 he was employed on various Councils and Committees, viz :

Ministerial Committee on Rewards for work of value to the Navy ;

Italian Geographical Committee ;

Italian Geodetic Commission ;

Government Council on Hydrography and Harbour Works ;

and was the Chief of the Italian Delegation to the Technical Committee on Buoyage and Coast-lighting of the Technical and Advisory Commission on Communications and Transit (League of Nations).

On 2nd November 1926 he became Second in Command and Director of Studies at the Naval Academy at Leghorn, a post which he relinquished to become a Member of the Directing Committee of the International Hydrographic Bureau in 1927.

He was promoted to Rear-Admiral on the Supernumerary List on 23rd April 1931 and left the Bureau in 1932.

Rear-Admiral TONTA was placed on the Retired List on 18th February 1935 and died at the age of 61 on 30th April of the same year.

He was the author of the Treatise on Astronomical Navigation used at the Royal Naval Academy at Leghorn and of many hydrographic monographs published in the *Rivista Marittima*, the *Annali Idrografici* and *The Hydrographic Review*. As readers of this Review are aware, he took a special interest in questions relating to Sound Ranging and Projections for Charts.

At the time of his death he was a Commander of the Order of Sts. Maurice and Lazarus and was a Grand Officer of the Crown of Italy, and held the Silver Medal, 1st class, for Technical and Scientific Work of value to the Navy (Hydrography and Astronomy), awarded to him in 1924.

