

= French battleship Vérité =

Vérité was a pre-dreadnought battleship of the Liberté class built by the French Navy . She had three sister ships : Liberté , Justice , and Démocratie . Vérité was laid down in April 1903 , launched in May 1907 , and completed in June 1908 , over a year after the revolutionary British battleship HMS Dreadnought made ships like Vérité obsolete . She was armed with a main battery of four 305 mm (12 in) guns , compared to the ten guns of the same caliber mounted on Dreadnought .

Vérité took the French President on a goodwill trip to Russia in 1908 and visited America in September 1909 . In September 1911 , she was damaged by the explosion that destroyed her sister Liberté in Toulon . At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , she covered troop convoys from North Africa to France along with the rest of the French Mediterranean Fleet . She spent the rest of the war based at Corfu and later Mudros , without seeing any action at either location . After the end of the war , she was stricken from the naval register and broken up for scrap in 1922 .

= Design =

Vérité was laid down at the Forges et Chantiers de la Gironde shipyard in Bordeaux in April 1903 , launched on 28 May 1907 , and completed in June 1908 , over a year after the radically innovative British battleship HMS Dreadnought , which rendered the pre-dreadnoughts like Vérité outdated before they were completed . The ship was 133.81 meters (439 ft 0 in) long between perpendiculars and had a beam of 24.26 m (79 ft 7 in) and a full load draft of 8.41 m (27 ft 7 in) . She displaced up to 14,489 metric tons (14,260 long tons ; 15,971 short tons) at full load . The ship had a crew of between 739 and 769 officers and enlisted men . Vérité was powered by three vertical triple expansion engines with twenty-two Belleville boilers . They were rated at 18,500 indicated horsepower (13,800 kW) and provided a top speed of 19 knots (35 km / h ; 22 mph) . Coal storage amounted to 1,800 t (1,800 long tons ; 2,000 short tons) .

Vérité 's main battery consisted of four Canon de 305 mm Modèle 1893 / 96 guns mounted in two twin gun turrets , one forward and one aft . The secondary battery consisted of ten Canon de 194 mm Modèle 1902 guns ; six were mounted in single turrets , and four in casemates in the hull . She also carried thirteen 9-inch pounder guns and ten 3-inch pounders . Additionally , the ship was armed with two 450 mm (17.7 in) torpedo tubes submerged in the hull . The ship 's main belt was 280 mm (11 in) thick and the main battery was protected by up to 350 mm (13.8 in) of armor . The conning tower had 305 mm (12 in) thick sides .

= Service history =

Vérité 's first major assignment was received in late July 1908 , a month after she joined the French fleet . She carried the President of France Armand Fallières to Reval , Russia , arriving on 27 July . There , Fallières visited with the Russian Tsar , Nicholas II , who inspected Vérité . She joined Liberté and Justice for a visit to the United States for the Hudson-Fulton Celebration in September 1909 . The three ships , representing France during the celebrations and commanded by Admiral Jules le Pord , were the first foreign ships to arrive . The ships departed from Brest and reached New York seven days later , having run at an average of 16 knots (30 km / h ; 18 mph) ; the performance of the ships ' propulsion systems was regarded as satisfactory by contemporary naval experts , including the United States Naval Institute . In early 1911 , the French Navy conducted experiments with wireless telegraphy , and used Vérité and Justice for the tests . The wireless transmitters could pick up messages as far as 72 miles (116 km) away . On 25 September 1911 , Liberté was destroyed by an accidental explosion in Toulon , the result of the spontaneous combustion of nitrocellulose gel in her ammunition magazines . Debris hurled by the explosion damaged several nearby battleships , including Vérité .

At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , Vérité was assigned to the 1st Division of the 2nd

Squadron in the Mediterranean , along with République and Patrie . The French fleet was initially used to cover the movement of French troops ? the XIX Corps ? from Algeria to metropolitan France . As a result , the fleet was far out of position to catch the German battlecruiser SMS Goeben , which , contrary to French expectations , steamed to Constantinople rather than attempt to interfere with the troop transports . For the majority of the war , the French used their main fleet to keep the Austro @-@ Hungarian fleet bottled up in the Adriatic Sea . In 1914 she participated in the Battle of Antivari , where the battle line caught the Austro @-@ Hungarian cruiser SMS Zenta by surprise and sank her . The French battleships then bombarded Austrian fortifications at Cattaro in an attempt to draw out the Austro @-@ Hungarian fleet , which refused to take the bait .

The French operations in the area were hampered by a lack of a suitable base close to the mouth of the Adriatic ; the British had given the French free access to Malta , but it was hundreds of miles away . The Austrians also possessed several submarines , one of which torpedoed the dreadnought Jean Bart in December 1914 . The threat from underwater weapons greatly limited French naval activities in the Adriatic . As the war progressed , the French eventually settled on Corfu as their primary naval base in the area . Later in the war , Vérité was sent to Mudros along with her sister ships . After the end of the war , Vérité was stricken from the naval register in 1922 and subsequently broken up for scrap .