

= French battleship Diderot =

Diderot was one of the six Danton class semi @-@ dreadnought battleships built for the French Navy in the early 1900s . Shortly after World War I began , the ship participated in the Battle of Antivari in the Adriatic Sea and helped to sink an Austro @-@ Hungarian protected cruiser . She spent most of the rest of the war blockading the Straits of Otranto and the Dardanelles to prevent German , Austro @-@ Hungarian and Turkish warships from breaking out into the Mediterranean . Diderot briefly participated in the occupation of Constantinople after the end of the war . She was modernized in 1922 ? 25 and subsequently became a training ship . The ship was condemned in 1936 and later sold for scrap .

= = Design and description = =

Although the Danton @-@ class battleships were a significant improvement from the preceding Libert  class , they were outclassed by the advent of the dreadnought well before they were completed . This , combined with other poor traits , including the great weight in coal they had to carry , made them rather unsuccessful ships , though their numerous rapid @-@ firing guns were of some use in the Mediterranean .

Diderot was 146 @.@ 6 meters (481 ft 0 in) long overall and had a beam of 25 @.@ 8 meters (84 ft 8 in) and a full @-@ load draft of 9 @.@ 2 meters (30 ft 2 in) . She displaced 19 @,@ 736 metric tons (19 @,@ 424 long tons) at deep load and had a crew of 681 officers and enlisted men . The ship was powered by four Parsons steam turbines using steam generated by twenty @-@ six Belleville boilers . The turbines were rated at 22 @,@ 500 shaft horsepower (16 @,@ 800 kW) and provided a top speed of around 19 knots (35 km / h ; 22 mph) . Diderot , however , reached a top speed of 19 @.@ 9 knots (36 @.@ 9 km / h ; 22 @.@ 9 mph) on her sea trials . She carried a maximum of 2 @,@ 027 tonnes (1 @,@ 995 long tons) of coal which allowed her to steam for 3 @,@ 370 nautical miles (6 @,@ 240 km ; 3 @,@ 880 mi) at a speed of 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) .

Diderot 's main battery consisted of four 305mm / 45 Mod le 1906 guns mounted in two twin gun turrets , one forward and one aft . The secondary battery consisted of twelve 240mm / 50 Mod le 1902 guns in twin turrets , three on each side of the ship . A number of smaller guns were carried for defense against torpedo boats . These included sixteen 75 mm (3 @.@ 0 in) L / 65 guns and ten 47 mm (1 @.@ 9 in) Hotchkiss guns . The ship was also armed with two submerged 450 mm (17 @.@ 7 in) torpedo tubes . The ship 's waterline armor belt was 270 mm (10 @.@ 6 in) thick and the main battery was protected by up to 300 mm (11 @.@ 8 in) of armor . The conning tower also had 300 mm thick sides .

= = = Wartime modifications = = =

During the war 75 mm anti @-@ aircraft guns were installed on the roofs of the ship 's two forward 240 mm gun turrets . During 1918 , the elevation of the 240 mm guns was increased which extended their range to 18 @,@ 000 meters (20 @,@ 000 yd) .

= = Career = =

Construction of Diderot began on 26 December 1906 by Ateliers et Chantiers de la Loire in Saint @-@ Nazaire and the ship was laid down on 20 October 1907 . She was launched on 19 April 1909 and was completed on 1 August 1911 . The ship was assigned to the First Division of the First Squadron (escadre) of the Mediterranean Fleet when she was commissioned . The ship participated in combined fleet maneuvers between Provence and Tunisia in May ? June 1913 and the subsequent naval review conducted by the President of France , Raymond Poincar  on 7 June 1913 . Afterwards , Diderot joined her squadron in its tour of the Eastern Mediterranean in October ? December 1913 and participated in the grand fleet exercise in the Mediterranean in May 1914 .

=== World War I ===

In early August 1914 , the ship cruised the Strait of Sicily in an attempt to prevent the German battlecruiser Goeben and the light cruiser Breslau from breaking out to the West . On 16 August 1914 the combined Anglo - French Fleet under Admiral Auguste Boué de Lapeyrère , including Voltaire , made a sweep of the Adriatic Sea . The Allied ships encountered the Austro - Hungarian cruiser SMS Zenta , escorted by the destroyer SMS Ulan , blockading the coast of Montenegro . There were too many ships for Zenta to escape , so she remained behind to allow Ulan to get away and was sunk by gunfire during the Battle of Antivari off the coast of Bar , Montenegro . Voltaire subsequently participated in a number of raids into the Adriatic later in the year and patrolled the Ionian Islands . From December 1914 through 1917 , the ship participated in the distant blockade of the Straits of Otranto while based in Corfu . In May 1918 , Diderot became flagship of the First Division of the Second Squadron and was transferred that month to Mudros with her sister ships , Mirabeau and Vergniaud , to prevent Goeben from breaking out into the Mediterranean and remained there until the end of the war .

=== Postwar ===

After the Armistice of Mudros was signed on 30 October between the Allies and the Ottoman Empire , the ship participated in the early stage of the occupation of Constantinople from 12 November to 12 December . Diderot was based in Toulon throughout 1919 and was modernized in 1922 ? 25 to improve her underwater protection . The ship became a training ship in 1927 and was condemned in on 17 March 1937 ; sold to M. Gosselin - Duriez on 30 July 1937 for 3 @, @ 557 @, @ 010 FF , she arrived at Dunkirk for breaking up on 31 August .