

= French battleship République =

République was a pre-dreadnought battleship of the French Navy built in the early 1900s . The lead ship of her class , she had only one sister ship : Patrie . The ship was built by the Arsenal de Brest , laid down in December 1901 , launched in September 1902 , and commissioned into the fleet in December 1906 , the same time as the revolutionary British battleship HMS Dreadnought . Armed with a main battery of four 305 mm ( 12 in ) guns , she was outclassed by Dreadnought by the time she entered service .

République served in the Mediterranean Fleet for the duration of her career . In 1910 she was accidentally torpedoed by Patrie . She was moored near the battleship Liberté when the latter exploded accidentally in 1911 , and was damaged by flying debris . After the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , she covered troop convoys from Algeria to France , and participated in the sinking of the Austro-Hungarian cruiser SMS Zenta later that month . She spent the majority of the war in Corfu at the mouth of the Adriatic Sea , to keep the Austro-Hungarian fleet bottled up in the Adriatic . She was eventually stricken in 1921 and broken up for scrap thereafter .

= Design =

République was laid down at the Arsenal de Brest in December 1901 , launched on 4 September 1902 , and completed in December 1906 , at the same time as the revolutionary British battleship HMS Dreadnought , which rendered the pre-dreadnoughts like République outdated . 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 14,605 metric tons ( 14,374 long tons ; 16,099 short tons ) at full load and had a crew of between 766 and 825 officers and enlisted men . She was powered by three vertical triple expansion engines with twenty-four Niclausse boilers . They were rated at 18,000 indicated horsepower ( 13,420 kW ) and provided a top speed of 19 knots ( 35 km / h ; 22 mph ) . Coal storage amounted to 1,800 t ( 1,770 long tons ; 1,980 short tons ) .

République'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 eighteen Canon de 164 mm Modèle 1893 guns ; twelve were mounted in twin turrets , and six in casemates in the hull . She also carried twenty-five 3 pounder guns . The ship was also 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 =

After commissioning in December 1906 , République conducted her sea trials . During the speed trials , she reached a top speed of 19.15 knots ( 35.47 km / h ; 22.04 mph ) , more than a knot faster than her contract speed of 18 knots ( 33 km / h ; 21 mph ) . In 1907 , after joining the fleet , République took first place in the annual gunnery competition . She was assigned to the 1st Division of the Mediterranean Fleet , along with her sister Patrie and Suffren , the divisional flagship .

On 16 February 1910 , during exercises in the Gulf of Jouan , a torpedo was accidentally launched from her sister ship Patrie . The torpedo struck République , damaging her hull . On 25 September 1911 , the battleship Liberté was moored near République in Toulon . An accidental explosion , the result of the spontaneous combustion of nitrocellulose gel , occurred aboard Liberté ; she was destroyed and debris was hurled into the air . République was hit by a 37-metric-ton ( 36-long-ton ; 41-short-ton ) piece of armor plate from Liberté , on the starboard quarter directly behind the main battery turret .

At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , République was assigned to the 1st Division of the 2nd Squadron in the Mediterranean , along with Patrie and the flagship , Vérité ; this was the main

battle fleet of the French Navy . 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 . 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 . Together with the pre @-@ dreadnought Gaulois , the ship covered the Allied evacuation from Gallipoli in January 1916 .

Later in 1916 , République , Patrie , and the surviving Liberté @-@ class battleships supported Allied operations in Salonica and also detached landing parties to support the Allied attempt to force Greek acquiescence for those operations in Athens on 1 December . They spent the rest of the war at Salonica and Athens . During the war , four of République 's 3 @-@ pounder guns were converted into anti @-@ aircraft guns with new high @-@ angle mounts . After the end of the war , République was placed in reserve in 1919 , along with Patrie . She was disarmed the following year and subsequently stricken from the naval register in 1921 and broken up for scrap .