

= French battleship Condorcet =

Condorcet was one of the six Danton class semi @-@ dreadnought battleships built for the French Navy in the mid @-@ 1900s . When World War I began in August 1914 , she unsuccessfully searched for the German battlecruiser SMS Goeben and the light cruiser SMS Breslau in the Western and Central Mediterranean . Later that month , the ship participated in the Battle of Antivari in the Adriatic Sea and helped to sink an Austro @-@ Hungarian protected cruiser . Condorcet spent most of the rest of the war blockading the Straits of Otranto and the Dardanelles to keep German , Austro @-@ Hungarian and Turkish warships bottled up .

After the war , she was modernized in 1923 ? 25 and subsequently became a training ship . In 1931 , the ship was converted into an accommodation hulk . Condorcet was captured intact when the Germans occupied Vichy France in November 1942 and was used by them to house sailors of their navy (Kriegsmarine) . She was badly damaged by Allied bombing in 1944 , but was later raised and scrapped by 1949 .

= = Design and description = =

Although the Danton @-@ class battleships were a significant improvement from the preceding Liberté 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 unsuccessful ships overall , though their numerous rapid @-@ firing guns were of some use in the Mediterranean .

Condorcet was 146 @. @ 6 meters (481 ft 0 in) long overall and had a beam of 25 @. @ 8 m (84 ft 8 in) and a full @-@ load draft of 9 @. @ 2 m (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 Niclausse 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) . Condorcet reached a top speed of 19 @. @ 7 knots (36 @. @ 5 km / h ; 22 @. @ 7 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 miles (2 @, @ 930 nmi) at a speed of 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) .

Condorcet 's main battery consisted of four 305mm / 45 Modèle 1906 guns mounted in two twin gun turrets , one forward and one aft . The secondary battery consisted of twelve 240mm / 50 Modèle 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 main 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 mainmast was shortened to allow the ship to fly a captive kite balloon and the elevation of the 240 mm guns was increased which extended their range to 18 @, @ 000 meters (20 @, @ 000 yd) .

= = Career = =

Construction of Condorcet was begun on 26 December 1906 by Ateliers et Chantiers de la Loire in Saint @-@ Nazaire and the ship was laid down on 23 August 1907 . She was launched on 20 April 1909 and was completed on 25 July 1911 . Condorcet was initially assigned to the 1st Division of the 1st 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 Poincaré on 7 June 1913 . Afterwards , Condorcet 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 = = =

At the beginning of the war , the ship , together with her sister Vergniaud and the dreadnought Courbet , unsuccessfully searched for the German battlecruiser Goeben and the light cruiser Breslau in the Balearic Islands . On 9 August , Condorcet cruised the Strait of Sicily in an attempt to prevent the German ships from breaking out to the West . On 16 August 1914 the combined Anglo @-@ French Fleet under Admiral Auguste Boué de Lapeyrère , including Condorcet , 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 . Condorcet subsequently participated in a number of raids into the Adriatic later in the year and patrolled the Ionian Islands . From December 1914 to 1916 , the ship participated in the distant blockade of the Straits of Otranto while based in Corfu . On 1 December 1916 , Condorcet was in Athens and contributed troops to the Allied attempt to ensure Greek acquiescence to Allied operations in Macedonia . Shortly afterwards , she was transferred to Mudros to prevent Goeben from breaking out into the Mediterranean and remained there until September 1917 . The ship was transferred to the 2nd Division of the 1st Squadron in May 1918 and returned to Mudros where she remained for the rest of the war .

= = = Postwar career = = =

From 6 December 1918 to 2 March 1919 , Condorcet represented France in the Allied squadron in Fiume that supervised the settlement of the Yugoslav question . Afterwards , the ship was assigned to the Channel Division of the French Navy . She was modernized in 1923 ? 24 to improve her underwater protection and her four aft 75 mm guns were removed . Together with her sisters Diderot and Voltaire , she was assigned to the Training Division at Toulon . Condorcet housed the torpedo and electrical schools and had a torpedo tube fitted on the port side of her quarterdeck . She was partially disarmed in 1931 and converted into an accommodation hulk ; by 1939 her propellers had been removed . The famous underwater explorer Jacques Cousteau began diving while stationed aboard the ship in 1936 .

In April 1941 , the ship was towed to sea to evaluate the propellant used by the battleship Richelieu during the Battle of Dakar on 24 September 1940 . One 38 @-@ centimetre (15 in) gun had an explosion in the breech and the propellant for the shell was thought to be the cause . A number of shots were successfully fired from Condorcet 's aft turret by remote control that exonerated the propellant . The following July , the ship was modified to house the signal , radio and electrician 's schools . Berthing areas were installed in the bases of four funnels , which had been removed previously , and the latest radio equipment was installed for the students to train on . Later that year , Condorcet was accidentally rammed by the submarine Le Glorieux as she was leaving drydock . The impact punctured the ship 's hull and flooded one compartment which required Condorcet to be drydocked for repairs . The ship was captured intact by the Germans when they occupied Vichy France on 27 November 1942 . Unlike the bulk of the French Fleet in Toulon , Condorcet was not scuttled because she had trainees aboard . Used by the Germans as a barracks ship , she was badly damaged by Allied aircraft in August 1944 and scuttled that same month by the Germans . The ship was salvaged in September 1945 and listed for sale on 14 December . Condorcet 's breaking up was completed about 1949 .