

= HMS Majestic ( 1895 ) =

HMS Majestic was a Majestic class pre dreadnought battleship of the Royal Navy . Commissioned in 1895 , she was the largest predreadnought launched at the time . She served with the Channel Fleet until 1904 , following which she was assigned to the Atlantic Fleet . In 1907 , she was part of the Home Fleet , firstly assigned to the Nore Division and then with the Devonport Division . From 1912 , she was part of the 7th Battle Squadron .

When World War I broke out Majestic , together with the rest of the squadron , was attached to the Channel Fleet during the early stages of the war before being detached for escort duties with Canadian troop convoys . She then had spells as a guard ship at the Nore and the Humber . In early 1915 , she was dispatched to the Mediterranean for service in the Dardanelles Campaign . She participated in bombardments of Turkish forts and supported the Allied landings at Gallipoli . On 27 May 1915 , she was torpedoed by a U boat at Cape Helles , sinking with the loss of 49 men .

= = Design = =

Majestic was laid down at the Portsmouth Dockyard in February 1894 . She was launched on 31 January 1895 , after which fitting out work commenced . She was commissioned into the Royal Navy less than a year later , in December 1895 . The ship was 421 feet ( 128 m ) long overall and had a beam of 75 ft ( 23 m ) and a draft of 27 ft ( 8 . 2 m ) . She displaced up to 16 , 060 t ( 15 , 810 long tons ; 17 , 700 short tons ) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two 3 cylinder triple expansion engines powered by eight coal fired cylindrical boilers . By 1907 ? 1908 , she was re boilered with oil fired models . Her engines provided a top speed of 16 knots ( 30 km / h ; 18 mph ) at 10 , 000 indicated horsepower ( 7 , 500 kW ) . The Majestics were considered good seaboats with an easy roll and good steamers , although they suffered from high fuel consumption . She had a crew of 672 officers and enlisted men .

The ship was armed with four BL 12 inch Mk VIII guns in twin turrets , one forward and one aft . The turrets were placed on pear shaped barbettes ; six of her sisters had the same arrangement , but her sisters Caesar and Illustrious and all future British battleship classes had circular barbettes . Majestic also carried twelve QF 6 inch / 40 guns . They were mounted in casemates in two gun decks amidships . She also carried sixteen QF 12 pounder guns and twelve QF 2 pounder guns . She was also equipped with five 18 in ( 460 mm ) torpedo tubes , four of which were submerged in the ship 's hull , with the last in a deck mounted launcher . Majestic and the other ships of her class had 9 inches ( 229 mm ) of Harvey armour , which allowed equal protection with less cost in weight compared to previous types of armour . This allowed Majestic and her sisters to have a deeper and lighter belt than previous battleships without any loss in protection . The barbettes for the main battery were protected with 14 in ( 360 mm ) of armour , and the conning tower had the same thickness of steel on the sides . The ship 's armoured deck was 2 . 5 to 4 . 5 in ( 64 to 114 mm ) thick .

= = Operational history = =

HMS Majestic commissioned into the Channel Squadron on 12 December 1895 , and served at the Portsmouth division . She was present at the Fleet Review at Spithead for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria on 26 June 1897 , and was later flagship to Vice Admiral Sir Harry Rawson , Commander in Chief of the Channel Fleet . Captain George Egerton was appointed in command on 28 June 1899 , and paid off in April 1901 , when Captain Edward Eden Bradford was appointed in command as she became the flagship of Rear Admiral Arthur Wilson , who had been appointed Commander in Chief of the Channel Squadron . She was present at the Coronation Review for King Edward VII on 16 August 1902 . She underwent a refit at Portsmouth from February to July 1904 , and then became a unit of the Atlantic Fleet when a reorganisation resulted in the Channel Fleet becoming the Atlantic Fleet in January 1905 . On 1 October 1906 , she

paid off into reserve at Portsmouth .

Majestic recommissioned at Portsmouth on 26 February 1907 to become flagship of the Nore Division in the new Home Fleet , stationed at the Nore . She began a refit later that year in which she received radio and new fire control systems . When the flag was transferred to another ship in January 1908 , she became a private ship in the Nore Division . In June 1908 , Majestic transferred to the Devonport Division of the Home Fleet , stationed at Devonport . Her refit was completed in 1909 , and in March 1909 she transferred to the 3rd Division at Devonport , then in August 1910 to the 4th Division at Devonport , where she underwent another refit in 1911 . In May 1912 , Majestic became part of the 7th Battle Squadron in the 3rd Fleet at Devonport . On 14 July 1912 she collided with her sister ship Victorious during manoeuvres , suffering no serious damage .

= = = World War I = = =

Upon the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , Majestic and the rest of the 7th Battle Squadron were assigned to the Channel Fleet . Majestic underwent a refit in August and September 1914 , then covered the passage of the British Expeditionary Force to France in September 1914 . She was detached from the 7th Battle Squadron from 3 October 1914 to 14 October 1914 to escort the first Canadian troop convoy . At the end of October 1914 , Majestic was transferred to the Nore to serve as guard ship there . On 3 November 1914 , she transferred to the Humber to serve as guard ship there . In December 1914 she became a unit of the Dover Patrol , and combined with battleship Revenge to bombard German coastal artillery from off of Nieuwpoort , Belgium , on 15 December 1914 . In January 1915 , she was based at Portland .

= = = Dardanelles campaign = = =

In February 1915 , Majestic was assigned to participate in the upcoming Dardanelles Campaign to open the Turkish Straits , and she departed early that month under the command of Captain H. F. G. Talbot to join the Mediterranean Fleet . Upon arriving at Malta , she was fitted with what was termed " mine @-@ catching " gear so that she could serve as a " mine @-@ bumper " . She joined the Dardanelles force on 24 February 1915 , and on 26 February 1915 departed Tenedos to bombard the Ottoman Turkish inner forts at the Dardanelles that morning . On 26 February 1915 , Majestic and battleships Albion and Triumph became the first Allied heavy ships to enter the Turkish Straits during the campaign , firing on the inner forts from 0914 until 1740 hours . Majestic took a hit below the waterline , but was able to continue operations and patrolled the area again on 27 February 1915 . She supported the early landings , shelling the forts from 1125 until 1645 hours on 1 March 1915 and again while patrolling on 3 March 1915 . She arrived at Mudros on 8 March 1915 .

On 9 March 1915 , Majestic circumnavigated the entrance to the Dardanelles and bombarded Ottoman Turkish positions from 1007 until 1215 hours . She returned to Tenedos on 10 March 1915 , patrolled off the Dardanelles again on 15 March 1915 , and again returned to Tenedos on 16 March 1915 . Majestic participated in the final attempt to force the straits by naval power alone on 18 March 1915 . She opened fire on Fort 9 at 1420 hours and also engaged Turkish field guns hidden in woods . She shelled Fort 9 until she ceased fire at 18 : 35 ; the fort meanwhile fired on the mortally damaged battleship Ocean . Majestic was hit four times , twice in her lower tops and twice on her forecastle , and returned to Tenedos at 2200 hours with one dead and some wounded crew members . Majestic returned to patrol duties on 22 March 1915 . She shelled Turkish positions on 28 March 1915 from 0950 to 1015 and from 1250 to 1340 hours and again opened fire on 14 April at 1458 hours . On 18 April , she fired on the abandoned British submarine E15 aground near Fort Dardanos and in danger of being captured ; two picket boats , one from Majestic and one from Triumph , destroyed E15 with torpedoes , although the boat from Majestic was itself sunk by Turkish shore batteries while retiring . Majestic returned to Tenedos on 21 April 1915 .

On 25 April 1915 , Majestic was back in action , signalling London that Allied landings had begun at Gallipoli and supporting them with coastal bombardments until 1915 hours . She brought 99

wounded troops aboard at 2110 hours and recovered all her boats before anchoring off Gallipoli for the night . On 26 April 1915 , she was back in action early , opening fire at 0617 hours . On 27 April 1915 she exchanged fire with Turkish guns , with several Turkish shells achieving very near misses before both sides ceased firing at 1130 hours . On 29 April 1915 she again was anchored off Gallipoli . Majestic relieved Triumph as flagship of Admiral Nicholson , commanding the squadrons supporting the troops ashore off Cape Helles , on 25 May 1915 .

= = = Loss = = =

On 27 May 1915 , while stationed off W Beach at Cape Helles , Majestic became the third battleship to be torpedoed off the Gallipoli peninsula in two weeks . Around 0645 hours , Commander Otto Hersing of the German submarine U @-@ 21 fired a single torpedo through the defensive screen of destroyers and anti @-@ torpedo nets , striking Majestic and causing a huge explosion . The ship began to list to port and in nine minutes had capsized in 54 feet ( 16 m ) of water , killing 49 men . Her masts hit the mud of the sea bottom , and her upturned hull remained visible for many months until it was finally submerged when her foremast collapsed during a storm .