

= French destroyer Espingole =

Espingole was a Durandal class destroyer built for the French Navy in the late 1890s . Commissioned in 1900 , she saw only a few years of service before running aground and sinking in 1903 off the Côte d 'Azur . Her captain was acquitted at his court martial seven years later . Multiple salvage attempts failed and a legal dispute arising from the last attempt was not settled until 1926 .

= Design and description =

Espingole had an overall length of 57 @. 64 meters (189 ft 1 in) , a beam of 6 @. 3 meters (20 ft 8 in) , and a maximum draft of 3 @. 2 meters (10 ft 6 in) . She displaced 311 metric tons (306 long tons) at deep load . The two triple @-@ expansion steam engines , each driving one shaft , were designed to produce 5 @, 200 metric horsepower (3 @, 825 kW) , using steam provided by two water @-@ tube boilers . The ship had a designed speed of 26 knots (48 km / h ; 30 mph) , but Espingole reached 27 @. 41 knots (50 @. 76 km / h ; 31 @. 54 mph) during her sea trials in August and September 1900 . The ship carried 37 @. 6 metric tons (37 @. 0 long tons) of coal , enough to give her a range of 2 @, 300 nautical miles (4 @, 300 km ; 2 @, 600 mi) at 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . Her hull was subdivided by nine watertight transverse bulkheads . She had a crew of four officers and sixty enlisted men .

Espingole carried a single 65 @-@ millimeter (2 @. 6 in) gun forward of the bridge . The gun had a maximum range of 9 @, 000 meters (9 @, 800 yd) and a rate of fire of five rounds per minute . The ship carried 375 rounds for the gun . She also mounted six 47 @-@ millimeter (1 @. 9 in) Hotchkiss guns , three on each broadside . The guns had a sustained rate of fire of seven rounds per minute and a maximum range of 4 @, 000 meters (4 @, 400 yd) . She carried a total of 2 @, 850 rounds of 47 mm ammunition . Espingole mounted two single 381 @-@ millimeter (15 @. 0 in) torpedo tubes : one between the funnels and the other on the stern . Two reload torpedoes were also carried ; their air flasks , however , had to be charged before they could be used , a process that took several hours . The Modèle 1887 torpedo that they used had a warhead weight of 42 kilograms (93 lb) .

= Construction and career =

The ship was laid down in 1896 ? 97 by Normand at their Le Havre shipyard , as the last of the four Durandal @-@ class destroyers . She was named after a French type of blunderbuss ; all of the ships in her class were named after weapons . Espingole was launched on 28 June 1900 and completed around September when she ran her speed trials . Construction costs were 1 @, 690 @, 994 francs . She was assigned to the Mediterranean Fleet in December and made a number of port visits in France , Corsica and French North Africa throughout 1901 . Her rudder was damaged after striking the bottom off Golfe @-@ Juan and Espingole was under repair 3 ? 27 September .

In October 1901 , the 1st Battleship Division , under the command of Rear Admiral (contre @-@ amiral) Leonce Caillard , consisting of the battleships Gaulois and Charlemagne , the armored cruiser Pothuau , and escorted by Espingole and the destroyer Epée , was ordered to proceed to the port of Mytilene on the island of Lesbos , then part by the Ottoman Empire . After Caillard landed two companies of marines that occupied the major ports of the island on 7 November , Sultan Abdul Hamid II agreed to enforce contracts made with French companies and to repay loans made by French banks . The ships made a number of port visits while they were in the Aegean , including the islands of Milos , Syros , and Tinos , in addition to the ports of Smyrna and Piraeus . The 1st Division returned to Toulon on 12 December . The ship was refitted from 3 to 17 April 1902 before she resumed her normal routine of port visits . Lieutenant (Lieutenant de vaisseau (LV)) Marcotte de Sainte @-@ Marie relieved LV Langier in June and Espingole was refitted again from 13 November to 2 December . She made a port visit in early 1903 at Rochefort before resuming

training .

The ship struck a rock in Cavalaire Bay , off Cavalaire @-@ sur @-@ Mer , on 4 February 1903 after straying outside the channel , and ripped a hole 2 @.@ 5 ? 3 @-@ meter (8 ft 2 in ? 9 ft 10 in) in the bottom of the hull . Coal , ammunition , and two 47 mm guns were thrown overboard to lighten the ship and her sister ship Hallebarde attempted to pull her off . The hawser broke after only moving Espingole roughly 5 ? 6 meters (16 ft 5 in ? 19 ft 8 in) , injuring two of Hallebarde 's crewmen . Hallebarde then rescued Espingole 's 62 @-@ man crew before the ship sank at coordinates 43 ° 09 ? 20 ? N 06 ° 36 ? 30 ? E. LV Marcotte de Sainte @-@ Marie was finally acquitted at his court @-@ martial seven years after his ship ran aground .

The initial salvage attempts were unsuccessful and the Espingole was struck off the naval register on 16 September . The navy sold her wreck at auction in December 1909 and decided to offer an escalating series of bonuses if the winner could refloat the ship and deliver it intact . The salvage company was no more successful and abandoned the effort after five months of work . The company claimed that the navy had disturbed the wreck and sued for 60 @,@ 000 francs plus damages . The dispute was not settled until 3 March 1926 .