

= Japanese battleship Fuji =

Fuji ( ?? ) was the lead ship of the Fuji class of pre @-@ dreadnought battleships built for the Imperial Japanese Navy by the British firm of Thames Iron Works in the late 1890s . The ship participated in the Russo @-@ Japanese War of 1904 ? 1905 , including the Battle of Port Arthur on the second day of the war with her sister Yashima . Fuji fought in the Battles of the Yellow Sea and Tsushima and was lightly damaged in the latter action . The ship was reclassified as a coastal defence ship in 1910 and served as a training ship for the rest of her career . She was hulked in 1922 and finally broken up for scrap in 1948 .

= = Design and description = =

Fuji was 412 feet ( 125 @.@ 6 m ) long overall and had a beam of 73 feet 6 inches ( 22 @.@ 4 m ) and a full @-@ load draught of 26 feet ( 7 @.@ 925 m ) . She normally displaced 12 @,@ 533 long tons ( 12 @,@ 734 t ) and had a crew of 637 officers and enlisted men . The ship was powered by two Humphrys Tennant vertical triple @-@ expansion steam engines using steam generated by ten cylindrical boilers . The engines were rated at 13 @,@ 500 indicated horsepower ( 10 @,@ 100 kW ) , using forced draught , and designed to reach a top speed of around 18 knots ( 33 km / h ; 21 mph ) . Fuji , however , reached a top speed of 18 @.@ 5 knots ( 34 @.@ 3 km / h ; 21 @.@ 3 mph ) on her sea trials . She carried a maximum of 1 @,@ 200 tonnes ( 1 @,@ 200 long tons ) of coal which allowed her to steam for 4 @,@ 000 nautical miles ( 7 @,@ 400 km ; 4 @,@ 600 mi ) at a speed of 10 knots ( 19 km / h ; 12 mph ) .

The ship 's main battery consisted of four 12 @-@ inch ( 305 mm ) guns mounted in two twin gun turrets , one forward and one aft . The secondary battery consisted of ten 6 @-@ inch ( 152 mm ) quick @-@ firing guns , four mounted in casemates on the sides of the hull and six mounted on the upper deck , protected by gun shields . A number of smaller guns were carried for defence against torpedo boats . These included fourteen 47 @-@ millimetre ( 1 @.@ 9 in ) 3 @-@ pounder guns and ten 2 @.@ 5 @-@ pounder Hotchkiss guns of the same calibre . She was also armed with five 18 @-@ inch torpedo tubes . Fuji 's waterline armour belt consisted of Harvey armour and was 14 ? 18 inches ( 356 ? 457 mm ) thick . The armour of her gun turrets was six inches thick and her deck was 2 @.@ 5 inches ( 64 mm ) thick .

= = Construction and career = =

Fuji , named after Mount Fuji , was ordered as part of the 1894 Naval Programme and the ship was laid down by Thames Iron Works at their Blackwall , London shipyard on 1 August 1894 . The ship was launched on 31 March 1896 and completed on 17 August 1897 . The work was supervised by a team of over 240 engineers and naval officers from Japan , including future Prime Ministers Sait? Makoto and Kat? Tomosabur? . While fitting out at Portland , she participated in the fleet review marking Queen Victoria 's Diamond Jubilee on 26 June 1897 at Spithead before departing for Japan via the Suez Canal .

In 1901 , the ship exchanged 16 of her 47 mm guns for an equal number of QF 12 pounder 12 cwt guns . This raised the number of crewmen to 652 and later to 741 .

At the start of the Russo @-@ Japanese War , Fuji , commanded by Captain Matsumoto Kazu , was assigned to the 1st Division of the 1st Fleet . She participated in the Battle of Port Arthur on 9 February 1904 when Admiral T?g? Heihachir? led the 1st Fleet in an attack on the Russian ships of the Pacific Squadron anchored just outside Port Arthur . T?g? had expected his surprise night attack on the Russians by his destroyers to be much more successful than it actually was and expected to find them badly disorganized and weakened , but the Russians had recovered from their surprise and were ready for his attack . The Japanese ships were spotted by the Boyarin which was patrolling offshore and alerted the Russian defences . T?g? chose to attack the Russian coastal defences with his main armament and engage the Russian ships with his secondary guns . Splitting his fire proved to be a bad idea as the Japanese 8 @-@ inch ( 203 mm ) and six @-@ inch guns

inflicted very little significant damage on the Russian ships who concentrated all their fire on the Japanese ships with some effect . Although a large number of ships on both sides were hit , Russian casualties numbered only 17 while the Japanese suffered 60 killed and wounded before T?g? disengaged . Fuji was hit by two shells during the battle that killed two and wounded 10 crewmen .

On 10 March , Fuji and her sister Yashima , under the command of Rear Admiral Nashiba Tokioki , blindly bombarded the harbour of Port Arthur from Pigeon Bay , on the southwest side of the Liaodong Peninsula , at a range of 9 @.@ 5 kilometres ( 5 @.@ 9 mi ) . They fired 154 twelve @-@ inch shells , but did little damage . When they tried again on 22 March , they were attacked by Russian coast defence guns that had been transferred there by the new Russian commander , Vice Admiral Stepan Makarov , and also from several Russian ships in Port Arthur using observers overlooking Pigeon Bay . The Japanese ships disengaged after Fuji was hit by a 12 @-@ inch shell .

Fuji participated in the action of 13 April when T?g? successfully lured out a portion of the Pacific Squadron , including Makarov 's flagship , the battleship Petropavlovsk . When Makarov spotted the six battleships of the 1st Division , he turned back for Port Arthur and Petropavlovsk struck a minefield laid by the Japanese the previous night . The Russian battleship sank in less than two minutes after one of her magazines exploded , Makarov one of the 677 killed . Emboldened by his success , T?g? resumed long @-@ range bombardment missions , which prompted the Russians to lay more minefields .

During the Battle of the Yellow Sea in August 1904 , Fuji was not hit because the Russian ships concentrated their fire on the leading ship of the column , T?g? 's flagship , the battleship Mikasa . During the Battle of Tsushima in May 1905 , she was hit a dozen times ; the most serious of which penetrated the hood of the rear barbette , ignited some exposed propellant charges and killed eight men and wounded nine . After the ammunition fire was put out , the left gun in the barbette resumed firing and apparently fired the coup de grâce that sank the battleship Borodino .

On 23 October 1908 , Fuji hosted a dinner for the American Ambassador and the seniormost officers of the Great White Fleet during their circumnavigation of the world . In 1910 , her cylindrical boilers were replaced by Miyabara water @-@ tube boilers and her main armament was replaced by Japanese @-@ built guns . Fuji was reclassified as a first @-@ class coast defence ship that same year , and was used for training duties in various capacities until disarmed in 1922 . She spent all of World War I based at Kure . Her hulk continued to be used as a floating barracks and training center at Yokosuka until 1945 . Fuji was damaged by American carrier aircraft during their 18 July 1945 attack on Yokosuka and capsized after the end of the war . The ship was scrapped in 1948 .