

= HMS Concorde ( 1783 ) =

Concorde was a 32 @-@ gun frigate of the French Navy , lead ship of her class . Built in Rochefort in 1777 , she entered service with the French early in the American War of Independence , and was soon in action , capturing HMS Minerva in the West Indies . She survived almost until the end of the war , but was captured by HMS Magnificent in 1783 . Not immediately brought into service due to the draw @-@ down in the navy after the end of the war , she underwent repairs and returned to active service under the White Ensign with the outbreak of war with France in 1793 as the fifth @-@ rate HMS Concorde .

Initially part of squadrons cruising off the French coast , she played an important part in the Action of 23 April 1794 , capturing the French frigate Engageante , and at a later engagement , where she helped to capture the French frigate Virginie . From 1797 until the early 19th century she had especial success against privateers , capturing a large number in the West Indies and in the Atlantic . She had a narrow escape from a superior French force in 1801 , but was able to batter her pursuer , the 40 @-@ gun Bravoure into submission . She was prevented from capturing her by the arrival of French reinforcements . Her last years were spent on a variety of stations , including at the Cape of Good Hope and the East Indies . Laid up in 1807 , she was sold for breaking up in 1811 .

= = Construction and French career = =

Concorde was one of a three @-@ ship class of Concorde @-@ class frigates built for the French Navy to a design by Henri Chevillard . She was built at Rochefort between April 1777 and January 1778 , being launched on 3 September 1777 . She went out to the West Indies after the French entry to the American War of Independence , and reached Martinique on 17 August 1778 . On 28 August 1778 she came up on the 32 @-@ gun HMS Minerva , under Captain John Stott , and after two and a half hours of fighting , captured her . Minerva was towed to Cap Français on Saint @-@ Domingue , where she was joined shortly afterwards by the captured HMS Active , which a hurricane had dismasted in late August and which the French frigates Charmante and Dédaigneuse had captured on 1 September .

In 1781 Concorde was responsible for vital transfers of personnel , funds , and communications that contributed to the allied success at Yorktown . In March 1781 she carried despatches to George Washington and the Comte de Rochambeau from France . These despatches included a request from the comte de Grasse , commander of the West Indies fleet , for information on planned allied operations and the delivery of pilots familiar with the American coast . She also carried 6 million livres to support the war effort , and the new commander of the French naval squadron at Newport , Rhode Island , the comte de Barras . Following a conference of allied leaders in May , Concorde was sent to Cap @-@ Français with despatches for de Grasse and the requested pilots . When de Grasse received these despatches , he made the critical decision to sail his fleet to the Chesapeake Bay to assist in land operations against British forces operating under the command of Charles Cornwallis in Virginia . Concorde carried de Grasse 's letters for Washington , Rochambeau , and de Barras back to Newport ; arrival of this news set in motion Washington 's march to Virginia and the eventual entrapment of Cornwallis at Yorktown .

On 7 January 1783 , Concorde was in company with Nymphé . They sighted HMS Raven , which initially sailed towards them until she realized that they were not British frigates . An all @-@ day chase ensued until about 9p.m. when one of the frigates got within pistol @-@ shot and fired a broadside that took away Raven 's main topgallant @-@ mast . The chase continued until about 10 : 30p.m. when one of the frigates was again in range , with the other coming up rapidly . At this point , Raven , which was under the command of Commander John Wells , struck . The French Navy took Raven into service under the name Cérès , which she had born when under French colours between 1778 and 1782 .

= = = Capture = = =

On 15 February the 74 @-@ gun HMS Magnificent , under Captain Robert Linzee , sighted Concorde . Magnificent had sailed from Gros Islet Bay on 12 February on a cruise in company with the 64 @-@ gun ships HMS Prudent and HMS St Albans , and on sighting the strange sail , Magnificent gave chase . She was close enough to identify the mysterious ship as a frigate by 18 : 00 , and by 20 : 00 as darkness fell Concorde opened fire on her pursuer with her stern guns . Magnificent overhauled the French ship by 21 : 15 , and after fifteen minutes forced her to strike her colours . Magnificent took possession of Concorde , the latter being described as carrying 36 guns and 300 men , and being under the command of M. le Chevalier du Clesmaur . Shortly after surrendering the Concorde 's maintopsail caught fire , forcing the crew to cut away the mainmast to extinguish it . Prudent and St Albans came up two hours later and Magnificent towed Concorde to St. John 's , Antigua .

= = Interwar years = =

Concorde was bought into the navy and commissioned in the West Indies for a return to Britain later in the year , though her commander for this voyage is unknown . She arrived in Britain and was paid off in September at Chatham . With the end of the American War of Independence and the draw @-@ down in the navy , Concorde was not brought into immediate service but remained laid up at Chatham until November 1790 , when a great repair was begun by Wilson , of Frindsbury . The work , which cost a total of £ 18 @,@ 259 , was completed by April 1793 , by which time the French Revolutionary Wars had broken out . She was fitted for service at Chatham between April and May 1793 , at a cost of £ 6 @,@ 600 , and was commissioned in April under Captain Thomas Wells .

= = Cruising the French coast = =

In 1794 she passed to Captain Sir Richard Strachan , and joined Commodore John Borlase Warren 's squadron off the French coast . The squadron consisted of Concorde , Warren 's 36 @-@ gun HMS Flora , the 38 @-@ gun HMS Arethusa under Captain Sir Edward Pellew , and the 36 @-@ gun frigates HMS Melampus , under Captain Thomas Wells , and HMS Nymphe , under Captain George Murray .

= = = Concorde and Engageante = = =

While sailing off the Channel Islands on 23 April the British squadron came across a French squadron under Commodore Desgareaux consisting of the 36 @-@ gun Engageante , the 44 @-@ gun Pomone , the 36 @-@ gun Résolue and the 24 @-@ gun Babet . Warren chased and engaged them , leading the attack in Flora . When the Flora was badly damaged from the combined fire from the French ships , the remaining British ships came up in support , and forced the rear @-@ most French ships , Babet and Pomone , to surrender . Melampus , Nymphe and Concorde gave chase to the fleeing Résolue and Engageante . Strachan in Concorde attempted to damage the rearmost of the French ships , Engageante , before pushing on to chase Résolue , but the Résolue dropped back to support the Engageante , damaging Concorde 's sails and rigging . With Nymphe and Melampus still too far astern , and unable to catch Résolue himself , Strachan engaged Engageante and after 105 minutes of fighting , forced her to surrender , while Résolue made her escape . The Concorde lost one man killed and 12 wounded in the fighting .

= = = Concorde and Virginie = = =

Concorde was then assigned to Rear @-@ Admiral George Montagu 's squadron in May 1794 , and took part in the manoeuvres during the Atlantic campaign of May 1794 . Strachan left Concorde in July 1794 to take command of HMS Melampus , and in August Captain Anthony Hunt took over command of Concorde . Concorde was part of John Warren 's squadron off Quiberon between June and July 1795 , supporting the Quiberon Expedition , after which she joined Sir Edward Pellew 's

squadron . On 20 April 1796 Pellew 's squadron , then consisting of Concorde , Pellew 's 38 @-@ gun HMS Indefatigable and the 36 @-@ gun HMS Amazon under Captain Robert Carthew Reynolds , spotted and chased a mysterious sail . After chasing her for 15 hours over 168 miles they caught up with her , with Indefatigable leading the attack . Both ships exchanged fire , considerably damaging each other , upon which Concorde came up under her stern and forced her to surrender . She was discovered to be the 40 @-@ gun Virginie , under Captain Jacques Bergeret . The captured French ship was towed to port and taken into the navy .

= = Later years = =

Command of Concorde passed from Hunt to Captain Richard Bagot in November 1796 , and he in turn was succeeded by Captain Batholomew Roberts in June 1797 . Concorde captured the 4 @-@ gun privateer Poisson Volant off Cape Finisterre on 24 July 1797 . She was bound from Bordeaux to Guadeloupe carrying wines and merchandise , after which she intended to cruise as a privateer in the West Indies . Concorde was later commanded by Captain Robert Barton , who took a number of privateers in a series of cruises in the West Indies in 1798 , capturing the 16 @-@ gun Caye du Pont off St Bartholomew on 3 January , the 8 @-@ gun Proserpine off Montserrat on 8 January , the 8 @-@ gun Hardi off Barbuda on 11 February , the 2 @-@ gun Hazard off Montserrat on 13 February and the 2 @-@ gun Rosière off Montserrat on 1 April . In an action with HMS Lapwing on 8 and 9 September she captured four privateers , the 8 @-@ gun Buonaparte , 10 @-@ gun Amazone , 4 @-@ gun Sauveur and 2 @-@ gun Fortune .

Concorde 's success against privateers continued with the capture of the 18 @-@ gun Prudente on 14 February 1799 and the 6 @-@ gun San Josef off Oporto in December 1800 and the 1 @-@ gun San Miguel el Volante on 1 December 1800 . Concorde had a narrow escape from a French squadron under Rear @-@ Admiral Honoré Joseph Antoine Ganteaume , which had sailed from Brest on 23 January 1801 . The French sighted Concorde off Cape Finisterre on 27 January , and the 40 @-@ gun Bravoure was sent to chase her down . Concorde cast off a Swedish ship she was towing and drew the French frigate away from the main body of the fleet . Barton then turned and engaged her for forty minutes , silencing her guns . By now the main French fleet was fast approaching , and with his sails and rigging damaged , Barton did not attempt to take possession of Bravoure and instead made for a British port to report the encounter . Concorde had four men killed and 19 wounded in the engagement , while Bravoure had 10 killed and 24 wounded .

Captain John Wood succeeded Barton in 1802 , and the following year Concorde went out to the Cape of Good Hope . On 7 November 1804 , she captured the 24 @-@ gun privateer Fortune , under François @-@ Thomas Le Même , after a ten @-@ hour running battle . In the battle Fortune lost two men killed and had four wounded ; Concorde had no casualties . Fortune also suffered extensive damage to her rigging . A few days earlier at Qais Island Fortune had captured and scuttled Fly , a 14 @-@ gun brig belonging to the Bombay Marine of the British East India Company . Captain Wood received his prisoners " with distinction " and Concorde returned to Bombay . Fortune , reduced to a poor condition , limped in several days later .

Concorde was under Captain John Cramer , probably from February 1806 . She was still in the East Indies in 1807 , where in July she captured the 2 @-@ gun privateer Vigilant .

= = Fate = =

Concorde returned to England and was paid off in September 1807 . She spent several years laid up in Ordinary . The Navy sold her at Deptford on 21 February 1811 .