French battleship Démocratie

Démocratie was a pre @-@ dreadnought battleship of the Liberté class built by the French Navy . She had three sister ships : Liberté , Justice , and Vérité . Démocratie was laid down in May 1903 , launched in April 1904 , and completed in January 1908 , over a year after the revolutionary British battleship HMS Dreadnought made ships like Démocratie obsolete . She was armed with a main battery of four 305 mm (12 @.@ 0 in) guns , compared to the ten guns of the same caliber mounted on Dreadnought .

Despite her out @-@ dated design , Démocratie served with the French Mediterranean Fleet throughout her career , including during World War I. She participated in the Battle of Antivari in late August 1914 , and spent the majority of the war based on the coast of Greece , in Corfu and Mudros , to keep the Austro @-@ Hungarian and Ottoman navies bottled up in port , though she saw no further action . After the end of the war , she went into the Black Sea to assist in the enforcement of the terms of the Armistice with Germany . Démocratie was stricken in 1921 and subsequently broken up for scrap .

Design

Démocratie was laid down at the Arsenal de Brest shipyard on 1 May 1903 , launched on 30 April 1904 , and completed in January 1908 , over a year after the revolutionary British battleship HMS Dreadnought , which rendered the pre @-@ dreadnoughts like Démocratie outdated before they were completed . The ship was 133 @.@ 81 meters (439 ft 0 in) long between perpendiculars and had a beam of 24 @.@ 26 m (79 ft 7 in) and a full @-@ load draft of 8 @.@ 41 m (27 ft 7 in) . She displaced up to 14 @,@ 489 metric tons (14 @,@ 260 long tons ; 15 @,@ 971 short tons) at full load . Démocratie had a crew of between 739 and 769 officers and enlisted men . The ship 's propulsion system consisted of three vertical triple expansion engines with twenty @-@ two Belleville boilers . They were rated at 18 @,@ 500 indicated horsepower (13 @,@ 800 kW) and provided a top speed of 19 knots (35 km / h ; 22 mph) . Coal storage amounted to 1 @,@ 800 t (1 @,@ 800 long tons ; 2 @,@ 000 short tons) .

Démocratie 's main battery consisted of four Canon de 305 mm Modèle 1893 / 96 guns mounted in two twin gun turrets , one forward and one aft . The secondary battery consisted of ten Canon de 194 mm Modèle 1902 guns ; six were mounted in single turrets , and four in casemates in the hull . She also carried thirteen 9 @-@ pounder guns and ten 3 @-@ pounders , and had two 450 mm (17 @.@ 7 in) torpedo tubes submerged in the hull . The ship 's main belt was 280 mm (11 @.@ 0 in) thick and the main battery was protected by up to 350 mm (13 @.@ 8 in) of armor . The conning tower had 305 mm (12 @.@ 0 in) thick sides .

Service history

In August 1910 , the 1st Squadron of the Mediterranean fleet conducted a gunnery practice using the old ironclad Fulminant as a target ; Démocratie scored 22 @.@ 7 percent hits , the second best performance in the squadron and surpassed only by her sister Justice . During a fleet exercise on 28 May 1914 , Démocratie collided with the battleship Suffren when the latter vessel lost power . Suffren was only lightly damaged , with her port anchor and hawsepipe carried away .

At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , Démocratie was assigned to the 1st Division of the 2nd Squadron in the Mediterranean , along with Justice . The French fleet was initially used to cover the movement of French troops ? the XIX Corps ? from Algeria to metropolitan France . As a result , the fleet was far out of position to catch the German battlecruiser SMS Goeben . For the majority of the war , the French used their main fleet to keep the Austro @-@ Hungarian fleet bottled up in the Adriatic Sea . In 1914 she participated in the Battle of Antivari , where the battle line caught the Austro @-@ Hungarian cruiser SMS Zenta by surprise and sank her . The French battleships then bombarded Austrian fortifications at Cattaro in an attempt to draw out the Austro @-@ Hungarian fleet , which refused to take the bait .

The French operations in the area were hampered by a lack of a suitable base close to the mouth of the Adriatic ; the British had given the French free access to Malta , but that was hundreds of miles away . The Austrians also possessed several submarines , one of which torpedoed the dreadnought Jean Bart in December 1914 . This threat from underwater weapons greatly limited French naval activities in the Adriatic . As the war progressed , the French eventually settled on Corfu as their primary naval base in the area . Later in the war , Démocratie was sent to Mudros along with her sister ships to reinforce the blockade of the Dardanelles .

Shortly after the end of the war , Démocratie , Justice , and a destroyer joined an Allied fleet (including the British dreadnoughts HMS Superb and Temeraire and the Italian battleship Roma) that was sent to the Black Sea port of Sevastopol . They oversaw the enforcement of the terms of the Armistice with Germany ; the Germans had previously seized Russian naval units and stationed occupation forces there under the terms of the Treaty of Brest @-@ Litovsk . The French contingent provided crews for a pair of Russian destroyers and two German U @-@ boats , and the other Allied ships similarly activated Russian and German vessels to secure the area . Démocratie ultimately was stricken from the naval register in 1921 and sold to ship @-@ breakers .