

= USS South Carolina (BB @-@ 26) =

USS South Carolina (BB @-@ 26) , the lead ship of her class of dreadnought battleships , was the fourth ship of the United States Navy to be named in honor of the eighth state . She was also the first American dreadnought ; though she did not incorporate turbine propulsion like HMS Dreadnought , South Carolina 's design included revolutionary aspects as well , primarily the superfiring arrangement of her main battery . The ship was laid down in December 1906 and launched in July 1908 before being commissioned into the US Atlantic Fleet in March 1910 .

South Carolina spent much of her career in the Atlantic and Caribbean patrolling the eastern coast of the United States . She made two trips to Europe in 1910 and 1911 and participated in a visit by a German cruiser squadron in 1912 . In 1913 ? 14 , she frequently patrolled the coast of Mexico to protect American interests during the Mexican Revolution , and in April 1914 she took part in the United States occupation of Veracruz . After the United States entered World War I in April 1917 , South Carolina trained sailors for the rapidly expanding wartime navy , and in late 1918 , she was assigned to convoy escort duty . An accident with her propellers in September kept her from active service for the remainder of the conflict . In 1919 , she made four trips to bring American soldiers back from Europe . Midshipmen training cruises followed in 1920 ? 21 , but the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 cut her career short . She was broken up for scrap as part of the arms limitation treaty , starting in mid @-@ 1924 .

= = Design = =

South Carolina was 452 ft 9 in (138 m) long overall and had a beam of 80 ft 3 in (24 m) and a draft of 24 ft 6 in (7 m) . She displaced 16 @,@ 000 long tons (16 @,@ 257 t) as designed and up to 17 @,@ 617 long tons (17 @,@ 900 t) at full combat load . The ship was powered by two @-@ shaft vertical triple @-@ expansion engines rated at 16 @,@ 500 ihp (12 @,@ 304 kW) and twelve coal @-@ fired Babcock & Wilcox boilers , generating a top speed of 18 @.@ 5 kn (34 km / h ; 21 mph) . The ship had a cruising range of 5 @,@ 000 nmi (9 @,@ 260 km ; 5 @,@ 754 mi) at a speed of 10 kn (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . She had a crew of 869 officers and men .

The ship was armed with a main battery of eight 12 @-@ inch (305 mm) / 45 caliber Mark 5 guns in four twin gun turrets on the centerline , which were placed in two superfiring pairs forward and aft . The secondary battery consisted of twenty @-@ two 3 @-@ inch (76 mm) / 50 guns mounted in casemates along the side of the hull . As was standard for capital ships of the period , she carried a pair of 21 @-@ inch (533 mm) torpedo tubes , submerged in her hull on the broadside . The main armored belt was 12 in (305 mm) thick over the magazines , 10 in (254 mm) over the machinery spaces , and 8 in (203 mm) elsewhere . The armored deck was 1 @.@ 5 to 2 @.@ 5 in (38 to 64 mm) thick . The gun turrets had 12 inch thick faces , while the supporting barbettes had 10 inch thick armor plating . Ten inch thick armor also protected the casemate guns . The conning tower had 12 inch thick sides .

= = Service history = =

The keel for South Carolina was laid down at the William Cramp & Sons shipyard in Philadelphia on 18 December 1906 . The completed hull was launched on 1 July 1908 , and Frederica Ansel , the daughter of the governor of the ship 's namesake state , Martin Ansel , christened the ship . Fitting @-@ out work was completed by the end of February 1910 , and she was commissioned into the fleet on 1 March . She was then assigned to the Atlantic Fleet . Five days after her commissioning , the ship steamed out of Philadelphia for her shakedown cruise , which took the ship to the Caribbean Sea and included stops in the Danish West Indies and Cuba , before returning to the United States for a visit to Charleston in her namesake state , which lasted from 10 to 15 April . Sea trials followed ; they were conducted off the Virginia Capes and outside Provincetown , Massachusetts . South Carolina then visited New York City on 17 ? 18 June to take part in a reception for former President Theodore Roosevelt . The ship spent most of the rest of the year

conducting fleet maneuvers , training naval militia , and receiving repairs at Norfolk , Virginia .

On 1 November 1910 , South Carolina left the United States for a trip to Europe with the 2nd Battleship Division . During the tour , the Division stopped in Cherbourg and Portland . The ships arrived back in Norfolk on 12 January 1911 , where South Carolina entered the shipyard for maintenance . She then returned to the fleet , which conducted battle training off the coast of New England . The ship made a short stop in New York City before joining the 2nd Battleship Division for another tour of Europe . This trip included stops in Copenhagen , Stockholm , and Kronstadt . On the way back from Kronstadt , South Carolina stopped in Kiel , where the German Kaiser Wilhelm II was hosting the annual Kieler Woche (Kiel Week) sailing regatta . South Carolina arrived off Provincetown on 13 July and continued to the Chesapeake Bay , where she conducted battle practice .

In late 1911 , South Carolina was present for a naval review in New York City before conducting training exercises with the 1st Squadron off Newport , Rhode Island . The ship then steamed south on 3 January 1912 for training exercises off Guantanamo Bay , Cuba before returning to Norfolk on 13 March . She cruised the east coast of the United States from March to late June . That month , she participated in a reception for a visit by the German battlecruiser SMS Moltke and the light cruisers Bremen and Stettin in New York . On 30 June , South Carolina returned to Norfolk for an overhaul . In early October , the ship steamed to New York for a visit that lasted from 11 to 15 October . The first half of November was spent conducting training exercises off New England and the Virginia Capes . She then steamed south with the Special Service Division for a tour of the Caribbean ; stops included Pensacola , New Orleans , Galveston , and Veracruz .

= = = Unrest in the Caribbean and World War I = = =

South Carolina was back in Norfolk by 20 December , where she remained until 6 January 1913 . She then departed for another trip south , this time to Colón , Panama , at the entrance to the recently completed Panama Canal . The ship then took part in maneuvers off Guantanamo Bay before returning to Norfolk on 22 March . Another cruise off the east coast of the United States followed , and included a stop in New York from 28 to 31 May , where the USS Maine National Monument was dedicated . The ship briefly trained midshipmen from the US Naval Academy in June before departing at the end of the month for Mexico . There , she cruised off Tampico and Veracruz to protect American interests during the Mexican Civil War . She returned to Norfolk for an overhaul in September that lasted until January 1914 .

South Carolina then took part in training exercises off Culebra Island . On 28 January , the ship sent a contingent of Marines ashore in Port-au-Prince , Haiti , to secure the American embassy during a period of unrest in the country , as well as to set up a radio station there . She left the city on 14 April after tensions calmed following the election of President Oreste Zamor . South Carolina coaled at Key West before continuing on to Veracruz , where she took part in the occupation of the city . The ship left Veracruz in July and spent the next several months cruising off the Dominican Republic and Haiti to monitor the political situations in the neighboring countries . She returned to Norfolk on 24 September ; by this time , World War I had broken out in Europe , though the United States initially remained neutral .

On 14 October , the ship went to Philadelphia for an overhaul that lasted until 20 February 1915 . She thereafter steamed to Cuba for the routine peacetime training maneuvers . At the time , tensions between the United States and Germany were high due to the sinking of the passenger ship RMS Lusitania by a U-boat , though the Germans agreed to suspend their unrestricted submarine warfare campaign . For the next two years , she followed the same pattern : training exercises off Cuba in the first quarter of the year , followed by maneuvers off Newport , and periodic maintenance at the end of the year at Philadelphia . On 6 April 1917 , the United States declared war on Germany over the latter's resumption of the unrestricted submarine campaign earlier that year . South Carolina continued to cruise off the east coast of the United States through August 1918 .

Starting in September , South Carolina and the pre-World War I dreadnoughts of the Atlantic Fleet began

escorting convoys to France . On 6 September , she departed with the pre @-@ dreadnoughts Kansas and New Hampshire to protect a fast HX troopship convoy . On 16 September , the three battleships left the convoy in the Atlantic and steamed back to the United States , while other escorts brought the convoy into port . On the 17th , South Carolina lost her starboard propeller , which forced her to reduce speed to 11 kn (20 km / h ; 13 mph) using only the port shaft . On 20 September , the port engine stopped after a throttle valve broke down . She got underway temporarily using an auxiliary throttle before severe vibration forced her to stop for six hours while the main throttle was fixed . Four days later , the ships reached the United States and South Carolina made her way to Philadelphia for repairs . After South Carolina returned to service , she participated in gunnery training , which continued until Germany signed the Armistice of 11 November 1918 that ended the fighting in Europe . In mid @-@ February 1919 , South Carolina began the first of four round trips between the United States and Brest , France to bring American soldiers back from Europe . In the course of the voyages , the last of which concluded in late July , the ship had carried over 4 @, @ 000 soldiers home . She then went to the Norfolk Navy Yard for a lengthy overhaul .

= = = Later career = = =

After returning to service , the ship took on a contingent of midshipmen for a training cruise to the Pacific . On 5 June 1920 , South Carolina began the voyage , crossing into the Pacific via the Panama Canal . She stopped in Hawaii before continuing on to the west coast of the United States , with visits in Seattle , San Francisco , and San Diego . She left the last port on 11 August and arrived back in Annapolis on 2 September . After disembarking the midshipmen there , she went to Philadelphia , where she remained for seven months . South Carolina returned to sea in early April 1921 for training off Culebra Island , followed by exercises in Chesapeake Bay . Another training cruise for midshipmen began on 29 May , this time to Europe . Ports of call included Christiana , Norway , and Lisbon , Portugal . She returned to Annapolis via Guantanamo Bay on 30 August before proceeding to Philadelphia the next day .

In the years immediately following the end of the Great War , the United States , Britain , and Japan all launched huge naval construction programs . All three countries decided that a new naval arms race would be ill @-@ advised , and so convened the Washington Naval Conference to discuss arms limitations , which produced the Washington Naval Treaty , signed in February 1922 . Under the terms of Article II of the treaty , South Carolina and her sister Michigan were to be scrapped . The ship was decommissioned on 15 December , but was not formally stricken from the Naval Vessel Register until 10 November 1923 . She was sold for scrap on 24 April 1924 and subsequently dismantled .

The ship 's silver service was commissioned by the state of South Carolina and was presented on 11 April 1910 . After South Carolina was withdrawn from service in 1922 , the service was given to the South Carolina chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution for display at the Old Exchange . Following the outbreak of World War II , the service was hidden in the basement of the Old Exchange for safekeeping . In 1947 , they were retrieved and sent to the South Carolina Governor 's Mansion , where they are currently on display .