

= French cruiser Waldeck Rousseau =

Waldeck Rousseau was an armored cruiser built for the French Navy in the first decade of the 20th century . She was the second and final member of the Edgar Quinet class , the last class of armored cruiser to be built by the French Navy . She was laid down at the Arsenal de Lorient in June 1906 , launched in March 1908 , and commissioned in August 1911 . Armed with a main battery of fourteen 194 mm (7.6 in) guns , she was more powerful than most other armored cruisers , but she had entered service more than two years after the first battlecruiser ? HMS Invincible ? had rendered the armored cruiser obsolescent . Waldeck Rousseau nevertheless proved to be a workhorse of the French Mediterranean Fleet .

After the outbreak of World War I , Waldeck Rousseau joined the main French fleet that blockaded the southern end of the Adriatic to prevent the Austro Hungarian Navy from operating in the Mediterranean . In October and November , Waldeck Rousseau was twice attacked by Austro Hungarian U boats but she escaped unscathed in both engagements . She thereafter alternated between stints in the southern Adriatic and patrols in the eastern Mediterranean once the Ottoman Empire joined the war in November .

After the war , the British and French intervened in the Russian Civil War ; this included a major naval deployment to the Baltic Sea , which included Waldeck Rousseau . Shortly after arriving , her crew mutinied due to poor living conditions and a desire to return to France . The unrest was quickly suppressed , and Waldeck Rousseau joined the effort to support the Whites against the Red Bolsheviks . In May 1929 , the ship was sent to French Indochina to serve as the flagship of the Far East squadron . She remained there until May 1932 , when she returned to France , where she was decommissioned and hulked . Waldeck Rousseau was ultimately scrapped in 1941 .

= Description =

Waldeck Rousseau was 158 meters (521 ft) long overall , with a beam of 21 meters (70 ft) and a draft of 8 meters (27 ft) . She displaced 13,995 metric tons (13,774 long tons ; 15,427 short tons) . Her power plant consisted of three triple expansion engines powered by forty coal fired Niclausse boilers , which were trunked into six funnels in two groups of three . Her engines were rated at 36,000 indicated horsepower (27,000 kW) and produced a top speed of 23 knots (43 km / h ; 26 mph) . She had a crew of between 859 and 892 officers and enlisted men .

Waldeck Rousseau was armed with a main battery of fourteen 194 mm (7.6 in) 50 caliber M1902 guns ; four were in twin gun turrets forward and aft , with three single gun turrets on either broadside . The last four guns were mounted in casemates abreast the main and aft conning towers . Close range defense against torpedo boats was provided by a battery of twenty 9 pounder guns in casemates in the ship 's hull . She was also equipped with two 450 mm (17.7 in) torpedo tubes submerged in the hull . She was protected with a armored belt that was 150 mm (5.9 in) thick amidships . The gun turrets had 200 mm (7.9 in) thick plating , while the casemates had marginally thinner protection , at 194 mm . The main conning tower had 200 mm thick sides .

During World War I , several 14 pounder and 9 pounder anti aircraft guns were added , with the older 9 pounder guns being removed to keep displacement down . In 1930 , she was modified to carry a reconnaissance seaplane .

= Service history =

Waldeck Rousseau , named for the recently deceased Prime Minister of France , Pierre Waldeck Rousseau , was ordered on 31 July 1905 and was laid down at the Arsenal de Lorient on 16 June 1906 . She was launched on 4 March 1908 , and fitting out work was completed in time to begin sea trials in January 1911 . While on her acceptance trials on 2 February , she

struck a submerged object that bent her port propeller shaft and damaged the screw . Waldeck Rousseau was completed in August ; the ship was the most powerful armored cruiser completed by France , but she entered service two years after the British battlecruiser HMS Invincible , which rendered the armored cruiser obsolescent as a warship type . Her lengthy construction interfered with the scheduled keel laying for the new dreadnought battleship Mirabeau , which could not be started until Waldeck Rousseau was launched . After entering service the new cruiser was assigned to the Mediterranean Fleet , based in Toulon .

== World War I ==

At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , Waldeck Rousseau was under repair at Toulon owing to a grounding incident off Golfe Juan during a hurricane on 22 February . Work was completed by 5 September , and by the end of the month she had joined the French fleet blockading the Austro Hungarian Navy at the southern end of the Adriatic Sea . On 17 October she briefly engaged Austro Hungarian forces off Cattaro ; she fired at the Austro Hungarian U boat SM U 4 that had tried to torpedo her and engaged several destroyers that were supported by an airplane before she broke off the action to rejoin the French fleet . She was unsuccessfully attacked a second time by an Austro Hungarian U boat while on patrol on 4 November . On this occasion , she was patrolling with the cruiser Ernest Renan ; Waldeck Rousseau engaged the submarine and forced it to withdraw .

On 30 November , the cruiser was transferred to the Ionian Sea and was based in Salonika . While there , Waldeck Rousseau patrolled the eastern Mediterranean and the coast of the Levant . She returned to Malta on 13 December , where she resumed patrols in the southern Adriatic . In early March 1915 Waldeck Rousseau returned to the Ionian . From 25 April to 1 May she briefly patrolled in the Strait of Otranto at the southern end of the Adriatic , before returning to her station in the Ionian . On 8 January 1916 , Waldeck Rousseau , her sister Edgar Quinet , Ernest Renan and Jules Ferry embarked a contingent of Chasseurs Alpins (mountain troops) to seize the Greek island of Corfu . The cruisers sent the troops ashore on the night of 10 January ; the Greek officials on the island protested the move but offered no resistance . For the rest of the war , she patrolled in the Ionian and eastern Mediterranean but did not see further action .

== Black Sea operations , 1919 ? 1920 ==

Starting in 1919 , the French Navy joined the Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War in the Black Sea to support the Whites against the Red Bolsheviks . Waldeck Rousseau arrived in early 1919 , flying the flag of Admiral Caubet . While in Odessa on 26 ? 29 April 1919 , sailors aboard Waldeck Rousseau mutinied ; the ship , which had just arrived from France with a fresh crew , had not yet had contact with Russian revolutionaries . Nevertheless , the crew had quickly grown weary of poor living conditions and wanted to return to France . After three days , the unrest was suppressed and she returned to service , though Caubet was relieved of command for failing to control his crew . The Vietnamese communist Tôn Th?ng , who was at that time serving in the French Navy , claimed to have participated in the mutiny , but French records do not list him as having been aboard Waldeck Rousseau at the time . At the same time , the crews of other French ships in Constantinople became restive , and so Admiral Jean Fran?oise Charles Amet refused to allow Waldeck Rousseau to join the rest of the fleet there , owing to her crew 's earlier mutiny .

On 26 March 1920 , Waldeck Rousseau provided gunfire support to White Russian forces outside Novorossiysk , along with the British dreadnought battleship Emperor of India . The Anglo French fleet then evacuated the White Russians from the city to the Crimean peninsula . Later in the year , she assisted in the evacuation of General Pyotr Nikolayevich Wrangel 's army . The motley collection of ships departed the Crimea on 14 November ; Waldeck Rousseau steamed at the rear of the fleet as it made its way to Constantinople .

Waldeck Rousseau remained in the Black Sea while the fleet continued on into the

Mediterranean and eventually to internment at Bizerte in Algeria . On 16 December 1922 , the French transport SS Vinh Long caught fire while in the Sea of Marmara . The United States destroyer USS Bainbridge arrived on the scene first and took off the survivors , which numbered 482 of the 495 crew and passengers that had been aboard . Waldeck @-@ Rousseau arrived shortly thereafter , and the survivors were transferred to the larger cruiser , since she could better accommodate them . For his part in the rescue operations , the commander of Bainbridge ? Lieutenant Commander Walter Edwards ? was awarded the Medal of Honor , the French Legion of Honour , and the British Distinguished Service Order .

= = = Fate = = =

She later served as the flagship of the French Far East squadron , having left France on 10 May 1929 . She arrived on 22 June and replaced the cruiser Jules Michelet as the flagship . Waldeck @-@ Rousseau served there until May 1932 , when she departed for France , having been replaced by the light cruiser Primauguet . Waldeck @-@ Rousseau reached France on 3 July . After returning to France , she was decommissioned and placed in reserve . On 14 June 1936 , she was stricken and subsequently converted into a hulk at Landévennec , outside Brest . Waldeck @-@ Rousseau was scuttled on 18 June 1940 at Brest and ultimately broken up for scrap between 1941 and 1944 .