

= USS Osage ( 1863 ) =

USS Osage was a single @-@ turreted Neosho @-@ class monitor built for the Union Navy during the American Civil War . After completion in mid @-@ 1863 , the ship patrolled the Mississippi River against Confederate raids and ambushes as part of Rear Admiral David Porter 's Mississippi Squadron . Osage participated in the Red River Campaign in March ? May 1864 , during which she supported the capture of Fort DeRussy in March and participated in the Battle of Blair 's Landing in April . The ship was grounded on a sandbar for six months after the end of the campaign and badly damaged . Osage , after being refloated and repaired , was transferred to the West Gulf Blockading Squadron in early 1865 for the campaign against Mobile , Alabama . During the Battle of Spanish Fort in March 1865 she struck a mine and rapidly sank . The ship was later salvaged and sold in 1867 .

= = Design and description = =

The steam @-@ powered gun turret of the Osage was at the bow and she had a deckhouse between the funnel and the sternwheel , although another was later added between the turret and the funnel . Her pilothouse was positioned above the rear deckhouse , next to the forward face of the sternwheel . The ship was 180 feet ( 54 @.@ 9 m ) long overall and had a beam of 45 feet ( 13 @.@ 7 m ) . When launched she proved to have a draft 1 foot ( 0 @.@ 3 m ) deeper than planned and she measured 523 tons burthen . Osage had four steam boilers powering a two @-@ cylinder , western steamboat @-@ type engine that drove the sternwheel . The ship had a maximum speed of 12 miles per hour ( 19 km / h ) in service and she carried 50 long tons ( 51 t ) of coal . Her crew numbered 100 officers and enlisted men .

Osage 's main armament consisted of two smoothbore 11 @-@ inch ( 279 mm ) Dahlgren guns mounted in a single turret that had an arc of fire of 300 ° . Firing the guns tended to jam the turret until modifications were made to the guns ' recoil system . Each gun weighed approximately 16 @.@ 000 pounds ( 7 @.@ 300 kg ) . They could fire a 136 @-@ pound ( 61 @.@ 7 kg ) shell up to a range of 3 @.@ 650 yards ( 3 @.@ 340 m ) at an elevation of 15 ° . The turret was protected by 6 inches ( 152 mm ) of wrought iron while the hull had 2 @.@ 5 inches ( 64 mm ) of armor . The armor plates of the deck and paddle housing were 1 @.@ 25 inches ( 32 mm ) thick .

= = Service = =

Osage , named after the American Indian tribe , was laid down in mid @-@ 1862 and launched 13 January 1863 by James Eads at his Union Iron Works , Carondelet , Missouri . She was commissioned at Cairo , Illinois on 10 July 1863 , with Acting Volunteer Lieutenant Joseph Pitty Couthouy in command .

After completion , the ship was assigned to Rear Admiral David Porter 's Mississippi Squadron and patrolled the Mississippi River against Confederate raids and ambushes . During the Red River Campaign Osage was commanded by Lieutenant Commander Thomas O. Selfridge , Jr . She supported the Union Army when it captured Fort DeRussy and captured Alexandria , Louisiana by herself on 15 March 1864 without firing a shot . She successfully defended the navy transports attacked during the Battle of Blair 's Landing on 12 April , driving off the Confederate forces with heavy losses after having run aground and freed herself . After the end of the campaign in May she was assigned to patrol the Mississippi River . During that month she grounded on a sandbar near Helena , Arkansas and could not be refloated due to the rapidly falling water level even when some of her armor was removed . As the water receded Osage began to hog at the ends because only her middle was supported by the sand . This caused her longitudinal bulkheads to split and broke many rivets in her hull and on her deck . She was repaired in place before being refloated at the end of November .

After being towed to Mound City for more permanent repairs , Osage was transferred to the West Gulf Blockading Squadron on 1 February 1865 for the attack on Mobile , Alabama . She participated

in the Battle of Spanish Fort , defending Mobile from the east , but struck a mine in a previously swept channel and sank rapidly on 29 March . Two crewmen were killed and some others wounded . The ship was later refloated and sold at auction at New Orleans on 22 November 1867 , along with three ex @-@ Confederate ships , for \$ 20 @,@ 467 .