

= French ironclad Marceau =

Marceau was an ironclad turret ship built for the French Navy during the 1880s , the lead ship of her class . She served in the Mediterranean Squadron until 1900 , when she was rebuilt and subsequently placed in reserve . She returned to service in 1906 as a torpedo training ship . During World War I , she served in Malta and Corfu as a submarine tender . The old ironclad was sold for scrapping in 1920 , and while being towed to Toulon , she ran aground in a gale off Bizerte and became stranded . The wreck remained visible there until the 1930s .

= = Design = =

Marceau had an overall length of 101 @. @ 6 meters (333 ft 4 in) and was 98 @. @ 6 meters (323 ft 6 in) long between perpendiculars . She had a beam of 20 @. @ 23 m (66 ft 4 in) and a draft up to 8 @. @ 3 m (27 ft 3 in) . She displaced 10 @, @ 850 tonnes (10 @, @ 680 long tons) . The ship was powered by a pair of vertical triple @- @ expansion steam engines , each driving one shaft , using steam provided by eight coal @- @ fired cylindrical boilers that were trunked into a single large funnel . The engines were designed to reach 12 @, @ 000 metric horsepower (8 @, @ 800 kW) and propel the ship at a top speed of 16 @. @ 5 knots (30 @. @ 6 km / h ; 19 @. @ 0 mph) , but they only managed 11 @, @ 169 metric horsepower (8 @, @ 215 kW) and 16 @. @ 194 knots (29 @. @ 991 km / h ; 18 @. @ 636 mph) on the ship 's sea trials . Marceau had a range of 4 @, @ 000 nautical miles (7 @, @ 400 km ; 4 @, @ 600 mi) at a speed of 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . She had a crew of 643 ? 651 officers and enlisted men .

The ship was armed with a main battery of two 340 @- @ millimeter (13 @. @ 4 in) M1881 28 @- @ caliber guns and two slightly newer M1884 guns of the same caliber . These weapons were mounted in individual barbets in a " lozenge " arrangement , with one gun forward , one aft , and two amidships . The secondary battery consisted of sixteen 138 @. @ 6 mm (5 @. @ 46 in) M1884 quick @- @ firing (QF) guns , all firing through unarmored embrasures in the hull . Marceau 's light armament varies widely between sources : Chesneau & Kolesnik give a range of three to six 65 mm (2 @. @ 6 in) 9 @- @ pounder guns , nine to eighteen 47 mm (1 @. @ 9 in) 3 @- @ pounder guns , eight to twelve 37 mm (1 @. @ 5 in) 1 @- @ pounder five @- @ barrel Hotchkiss revolving cannon , and three to five 450 mm (18 in) torpedo tubes in deck @- @ mounted launchers ; naval historian Eric Gille gives four to seven 65 mm guns , nine to twelve 47 mm guns , eight 37 mm guns and five to six torpedo tubes , all above water ; naval historian Paul Silverstone says six 65 mm guns , twelve 47 mm guns and five torpedo tubes . The ship 's compound armor belt was 450 mm (17 @. @ 7 in) thick amidships and reduced to 300 mm (11 @. @ 8 in) at the stern and 230 mm (9 @. @ 1 in) . The barbets were also 450 mm thick . The conning tower was protected by 120 mm (4 @. @ 7 in) of armor plating and the deck was 80 mm (3 @. @ 1 in) thick .

= = Service history = =

Marceau was ordered in October 1880 , but was not laid down until 27 January 1882 at the Société Nouvelle des Forges et Chantiers de la Méditerranée shipyard in La Seyne @- @ sur @- @ Mer . Work proceeded slowly , and she was not launched until April 1890 . This was a result of the influence of Admiral Théophile Aube , who was the Minister of Marine in 1886 ? 87 ; Aube was a staunch advocate of the so @- @ called Jeune École and opposed new battleship construction . Fitting out work was completed much more quickly , however , and she was commissioned into the French fleet on 14 March 1891 . After her commissioning , she joined a French fleet that visited Kronstadt and was inspected by Czar Alexander III of Russia . On the return voyage , the fleet stopped in Spithead , where Queen Victoria reviewed the ships . This turned out to be the only time Marceau operated in the Atlantic ; after returning to France , she was assigned to the Mediterranean Squadron , where she remained for the duration of her career .

In 1895 , Marceau and the ironclads Courbet , Amiral Baudin , and Formidable all nearly ran aground off Hyères ; Marceau and three tugs used to tow Amiral Baudin back to port . During the

1897 fleet gunnery trials , which saw the first use of a new system of centralized fire control in the French fleet , Marceau , her sister Neptune , and the new battleship Brennus all achieved more than 25 percent hits at ranges of between 3 @, @ 000 yd (2 @, @ 700 m) and 4 @, @ 000 yd (3 @, @ 700 m) . On 30 August 1900 , Marceau returned to La Seyne for a major reconstruction . Her heavy military masts were cut down , her engines were modernized and her boilers were replaced with 16 Niclausse boilers . Another 138 @. @ 6 mm gun was installed in the bow under the forecastle . The work was completed in May 1902 , and Marceau underwent a series of sea trials for the remainder of the year . She did not return to active service with the fleet , however , and was placed in reserve at Toulon . In 1906 , she was converted into a training ship for torpedo operators in Toulon .

After the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , Marceau was converted into a floating workshop to support torpedo boats and submarines . She was initially based in Malta , but was later moved to Corfu and then to Bizerte in 1918 . She was stricken from the naval register on 1 October 1920 , and sold to a shipbreaking firm based in Toulon in 1921 . While she was being towed to Toulon , a storm caused her to run aground off Bizerte . She remained visible there until the 1930s .