

= French ironclad Trident =

The French ironclad Trident was the second and last ship of the Colbert class ironclads that were built for the French Navy in the 1870s . The ship was the flagship of the deputy commander of the Mediterranean Squadron for most of her career . She took part in the French occupation of Tunisia , notably shelling and landing troops in Sfax in 1881 . Trident was reclassified as a training ship in 1894 and condemned in 1900 , before she was finally sold for scrap in 1909 .

= = Design and description = =

The Colbert class ships were designed by Constructor Sabattier as improved versions of the ironclad Richelieu . As a central battery ironclad , Trident had her armament concentrated amidships . Like most ironclads of her era she was equipped with a plough shaped ram . Her crew numbered 774 officers and men . The metacentric height of the ship was low , a little above 0 .6 meters ( 2 ft ) .

The ship measured 102 .1 meters ( 335 ft 0 in ) overall , with a beam of 17 .7 meters ( 58 ft 1 in ) . Trident had a maximum draft of 8 .58 meters ( 28 ft 2 in ) and displaced 8 ,814 metric tons ( 8 ,675 long tons ) .

= = = Propulsion = = =

Trident had a single Wolf three cylinder horizontal return connecting rod compound steam engine that drove one propeller . The engine was powered by eight oval boilers and was designed for a capacity of 4 ,600 indicated horsepower ( 3 ,400 kW ) . On sea trials , the engine produced 4 ,882 metric horsepower ( 3 ,591 kW ) and Trident reached 14 .18 knots ( 26 .26 km / h ; 16 .32 mph ) . She carried a maximum of 620 metric tons ( 610 long tons ) of coal which allowed her to steam for approximately 3 ,300 nautical miles ( 6 ,000 km ; 3 ,800 mi ) at a speed of 10 knots ( 19 km / h ; 12 mph ) . Trident was ship rigged with three masts and had a sail area around 2 ,100 square meters ( 23 ,000 sq ft ) .

= = = Armament = = =

Trident had two 274 millimeter ( 10 .8 in ) guns mounted in barbettes on the upper deck , one gun at the forward corners of the battery , with six additional guns on the battery deck below the barbettes . The side of the upper deck were cut away to improve the ability of the barbette guns to bear fore and aft . One 240 millimeter ( 9 .4 in ) was mounted in the forecastle as a chase gun . The ship 's secondary armament consisted of six 138 millimeter ( 5 .4 in ) guns , four forward of the battery and two aft . These latter two guns were replaced in 1878 by another 240 millimeter gun as a stern chaser . The ship also mounted four above water 356 millimeter ( 14 .0 in ) torpedo tubes .

All of the ship 's guns could fire both solid shot and explosive shells . The 274 millimeter Modèle 1870 gun was credited with the ability to penetrate a maximum 14 .3 inches ( 360 mm ) of wrought iron armor while the 240 millimeter Modèle 1870 gun could penetrate 14 .4 inches ( 366 mm ) of wrought iron armor .

At some point the ship received fourteen to eighteen 37 millimeter ( 1 .5 in ) Hotchkiss 5 barrel revolving guns . They fired a shell weighing about 500 g ( 1 .1 lb ) to a range of about 3 ,200 meters ( 3 ,500 yd ) . They had a rate of fire of about 30 rounds per minute .

= = = Armor = = =

The Colbert class ships had a complete wrought iron waterline belt that was 220 millimeters ( 8 .7 in ) thick amidships and tapered to 180 millimeters ( 7 .1 in ) at the stern . It was backed by 89 millimeters ( 3 .5 in ) of wood . The sides of the battery itself were armored with

160 millimeters ( 6 @. @ 3 in ) of wrought iron , backed by 62 millimeters ( 2 @. @ 4 in ) of wood , and the ends of the battery were closed by transverse armored bulkheads 120 millimeters ( 4 @. @ 7 in ) thick , backed by 480 millimeters ( 18 @. @ 9 in ) of wood . The barbets were unarmored , but the deck was 15 millimeters ( 0 @. @ 59 in ) thick .

= = Service = =

Trident , named after the weapon that symbolized mastery of the seas , was laid down in April 1870 in Toulon and launched on 9 November 1876 . While the exact reason for such prolonged construction time is not known , it is believed that reduction of the French Navy 's budget after the Franco @-@ Prussian War of 1870 ? 71 and out @-@ of @-@ date work practices in French dockyards were likely causes . The ship was completed on 1 November 1878 and became the flagship of the second @-@ in @-@ command of the Mediterranean Squadron the following month . Trident , together with her sister ship Colbert , bombarded the Tunisian port of Sfax on 15 ? 16 July 1881 as the French occupied Tunisia . She was disarmed and placed in reserve in 1886 ? 89 , but was recommissioned on 17 February 1889 and resumed her role as flagship until she was again placed in reserve in 1894 . The ship served as a gunnery training ship until she was condemned on 5 March 1900 . Trident was renamed Var in 1904 and was sold for scrap five years later .