

= French ironclad Reine Blanche =

The French ironclad Reine Blanche was a wooden @-@ hulled armored corvette built for the French Navy in the late 1860s as an improvement over the Belliqueuse armored covervette . She played a minor role in the Franco @-@ Prussian War of 1870 and was accidentally rammed by one of her sisters in 1877 . The ship bombarded the port of Sfax during the French occupation of Tunisia in 1881 before being sent to the Pacific in 1884 . She quickly returned to port with worn @-@ out boilers and was condemned later that year .

= = Design and description = =

The Alma @-@ class ironclads were designed as improved versions of the armored corvette Belliqueuse , suited for foreign deployments . Unlike their predecessor , the Alma @-@ class ships were true central battery ironclads as they were fitted with armored transverse bulkheads . Like most ironclads of their era , they were equipped with a metal @-@ reinforced ram .

Reine Blanche measured 69 @.@ 02 meters (226 ft 5 in) between perpendiculars , with a beam of 13 @.@ 94 meters (45 ft 9 in) . She had a mean draft of 6 @.@ 48 meters (21 ft 3 in) and displaced 3 @.@ 768 metric tons (3 @.@ 708 long tons) . Her crew numbered 316 officers and men .

= = = Propulsion = = =

The ship had a single horizontal return connecting @-@ rod steam engine driving a single propeller . Her engine was powered by four oval boilers . On sea trials the engine produced 1 @.@ 860 indicated horsepower (1 @.@ 390 kW) and the ship reached 11 @.@ 72 knots (21 @.@ 71 km / h ; 13 @.@ 49 mph) . Reine Blanche carried 250 metric tons (250 long tons) of coal , allowing the ship to steam for 1 @.@ 610 nautical miles (2 @.@ 980 km ; 1 @.@ 850 mi) at a speed of 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . She was barque @-@ rigged and had a sail area of 1 @.@ 454 square meters (15 @.@ 650 sq ft) .

= = = Armament = = =

Reine Blanche mounted her four 194 @-@ millimeter (7 @.@ 6 in) Modèle 1864 breech @-@ loading guns in the central battery on the battery deck . The other two 194 @-@ millimeter guns were mounted in barbettes on the upper deck , sponsoned out over the sides of the ship . The four 120 @-@ millimeter (4 @.@ 7 in) guns were also mounted on the upper deck . She may have exchanged her Mle 1864 guns for Mle 1870 guns . The armor @-@ piercing shell of the 20 @-@ caliber Mle 1870 gun weighed 165 @.@ 3 pounds (75 @.@ 0 kg) while the gun itself weighed 7 @.@ 83 long tons (7 @.@ 96 t) . The gun fired its shell at a muzzle velocity of 1 @.@ 739 ft / s (530 m / s) and was credited with the ability to penetrate a nominal 12 @.@ 5 inches (320 mm) of wrought iron armour at the muzzle . The guns could fire both solid shot and explosive shells .

= = = Armor = = =

Reine Blanche had a complete 150 @-@ millimeter (5 @.@ 9 in) wrought iron waterline belt , approximately 2 @.@ 4 meters (7 @.@ 9 ft) high . The sides of the battery itself were armored with 120 millimeters (4 @.@ 7 in) of wrought iron and the ends of the battery were closed by bulkheads of the same thickness . The barrette armor was 100 millimeters (3 @.@ 9 in) thick , backed by 240 millimeters (9 @.@ 4 in) of wood . The unarmored portions of her sides were protected by 15 @-@ millimeter (0 @.@ 6 in) iron plates .

= = Service = =

Reine Blanche was laid down at Lorient in 1865 and launched on 10 March 1868 . The ship began her sea trials on 15 April 1869 and was put into reserve at Brest after they were completed . She was commissioned on 20 July 1870 and made one cruise to the Shetland Islands during the Franco-Prussian War before she was placed in reserve again on 20 September . Reine Blanche was recommissioned in July 1871 as flagship of the second division of the Evolutionary Squadron . During the Cantonal Revolution Reine Blanche and her sister Thétis spent much of September ? October 1873 in the port of Cartagena , Spain , where they could protect French citizens . She was reduced to reserve on 1 February 1876 and recommissioned in April 1877 .

On 3 July 1877 she was accidentally rammed by Thétis and had to be run ashore to prevent her from sinking . Reine Blanche was placed back into reserve in 1878 . She was recommissioned on 15 April 1879 for service with the Levant Squadron . From 5 ? 16 July 1881 Reine Blanche bombarded the Tunisian port of Sfax as part of the French occupation of Tunisia . The ship was named as the flagship of the Pacific Squadron on 20 January 1884 under command of Rear Admiral Franquet , but she returned to Cherbourg on 22 May 1884 with worn out boilers and her hull in poor shape . Reine Blanche was paid off and condemned on 12 November 1884 .