

= USS Ozark (1863) =

USS Ozark was a single @-@ turreted river monitor built for the United States Navy during the American Civil War . The ship served in the Mississippi River Squadron during the war , and participated in the Red River Campaign shortly after she was commissioned in early 1864 . Ozark patrolled the Mississippi River and its tributaries after the end of the campaign for the rest of the war . She was decommissioned after the war and sold in late 1865 .

The ship 's activities or owner are not known after her sale , but Ozark transported Federal troops and New Orleans police attempting to apprehend the white supremacists who killed a large number of blacks during the Colfax Massacre in 1873 . She ferried witnesses back and forth to their homes on the Red River during the subsequent trials in 1874 . Her ultimate fate is unknown .

= = Description = =

The ship was 180 feet (54 @.@ 9 m) long overall and had a beam of 50 feet (15 @.@ 2 m) . She had a depth of hold of 7 feet 4 inches (2 @.@ 2 m) and a draft of six feet . Ozark had a tonnage of 578 tons burthen .

She was powered by a pair of two @-@ cylinder steam engines , each driving two four @-@ bladed , 7 @-@ foot (2 @.@ 1 m) propellers , using steam generated by four boilers . The engines were designed to reach a top speed of 9 miles per hour (14 km / h) . They had a bore of 15 inches (381 mm) and a stroke of 24 inches (610 mm) . Ozark could carry about 100 long tons (102 t) of coal . All of the machinery was built by the Franklin Foundry of St. Louis , Missouri .

The ship was fitted with three rudders , and the armored pilothouse was mounted on top of the gun turret . The officers ' staterooms were built on deck out of light pine , and a hurricane deck was positioned between the turret and the deckhouse , between the two funnels . The hull was subdivided by three transverse and three longitudinal watertight bulkheads .

Ozark 's main armament initially consisted of two smoothbore , muzzle @-@ loading 11 @-@ inch (279 mm) Dahlgren guns mounted in a twin @-@ gun turret forward . The 11 @-@ inch gun weighed 16 @,@ 000 pounds (7 @,@ 300 kg) and could fire a 136 @-@ pound (61 @.@ 7 kg) shell up to a range of 1 @,@ 710 yards (1 @,@ 560 m) at + 5 ° elevation . By July 1864 , her armament had been reinforced by the addition of one 10 @-@ inch (254 mm) Dahlgren gun and three 9 @-@ inch (229 mm) Dahlgrens , all on pivot mounts . One of these guns was mounted at the bow , another at the stern and the two others were abreast the deckhouse , one on each broadside . The 10 @-@ inch Dahlgren weighed 12 @,@ 500 pounds (5 @,@ 700 kg) and could fire a 103 @-@ pound (46 @.@ 7 kg) shell up to a range of 3 @,@ 000 yards (2 @,@ 700 m) at + 19 ° elevation . The nine @-@ inch gun weighed 9 @,@ 200 pounds (4 @,@ 200 kg) and could fire a 72 @.@ 5 @-@ pound (32 @.@ 9 kg) shell to a range of 3 @,@ 357 yards (3 @,@ 070 m) at an elevation of + 15 ° . Ozark was chosen as the testbed for an experimental " underwater battery " that consisted of a nine @-@ inch Dahlgren gun firing through a pipe in the side of the hull below the waterline . Cost overruns caused the project to be cancelled in January 1863 before it could be tested .

The cylindrical Ericsson @-@ style turret was armored with six layers of wrought iron 1 @-@ inch (25 mm) plates . The forward 40 feet (12 @.@ 2 m) of the hull was protected by two layers of 1 @.@ 25 @-@ inch (32 mm) plates that extended 1 foot (0 @.@ 3 m) below the waterline . Aft of the bow section , the hull 's armor consisted of two layers of 1 @.@ 125 @-@ inch (28 @.@ 6 mm) plates . The ship 's deck was protected by iron plates one inch thick .

= = Construction and service = =

The contract for Ozark , the first ship of that name in the United States Navy and named for the Ozark Tribe of the Quapaw Indians , was awarded to George C. Bestor on 14 May 1862 . He subcontracted the ship 's construction to Hambleton , Collier & Co. at their Mound City Marine Ways shipyard in Mound City , Illinois . Ozark was laid down in 1862 and launched on 18 February 1863 .

She was towed to St. Louis for fitting out and arrived there on 27 February . Ozark commissioned on 18 February 1864 , with Acting Volunteer Lieutenant George W. Brown in command . She cost about \$ 215 @, @ 000 .

Ozark spent her entire Union Navy career serving in the Mississippi River Squadron . From 12 March to 22 May 1864 , she took part in the Rear Admiral David Porter 's Red River Expedition to Alexandria , Louisiana . During the retreat down the Red River , Ozark was trapped above the falls at Alexandria , along with most of the other ironclads of the Mississippi Squadron , when the river 's water level unexpectedly began to fall . Two temporary dams , known as Bailey 's Dam , had to be built in April ? May to raise the water level high enough to allow the ironclads to proceed downstream . After the end of the campaign , Ozark was assigned to the Third District , patrolling the Mississippi River between Morganza , Louisiana and Fort Adams , Mississippi . Following the end of the war , she was decommissioned at Mound City on 24 July 1865 and was sold 29 November .

The identity of her purchaser is not known , nor are her activities after her sale , but Ozark was still in service in late 1873 and based at New Orleans . Louisiana governor William Pitt Kellogg used the ship to transport 35 soldiers of the 19th Infantry Regiment and 25 mounted members of the New Orleans Metropolitan Police to Colfax , Louisiana in October to apprehend the perpetrators of the Colfax Massacre . Due to widespread resistance by local whites , only a few men were arrested and transported to New Orleans by Ozark to stand trial in December . Prosecution witnesses were transported and housed in the ship during the trials in February ? March 1874 to protect them from threats made by white supremacists . Nothing further is known about the Ozark 's activities or fate .