

= USS Milwaukee (1864) =

The first USS Milwaukee , a double @-@ turreted Milwaukee @-@ class river monitor , the lead ship of her class , built for the Union Navy during the American Civil War . The ship supported Union forces during the Mobile Campaign as they attacked Confederate fortifications defending the city of Mobile , Alabama in early 1865 . She struck a mine in March and sank without loss . Her wreck was raised in 1868 and broken up for scrap that was used in the construction of a bridge in St. Louis , Missouri .

= = Description = =

Milwaukee was 229 feet (69 @.@ 8 m) long overall and had a beam of 56 feet (17 @.@ 1 m) . The ship had a depth of hold of 8 feet 6 inches (2 @.@ 6 m) and a draft of 6 feet (1 @.@ 8 m) . She had 970 tons burthen and displaced 1 @,@ 300 long tons (1 @,@ 300 t) . Her crew numbered 138 officers and enlisted men .

The ship was powered by two 2 @-@ cylinder horizontal non @-@ condensing steam engines , each driving two propellers , using steam generated by seven tubular boilers . The engines were designed to reach a top speed of 9 knots (17 km / h ; 10 mph) . Milwaukee carried 156 long tons (159 t) of coal .

The ship 's main armament consisted of four smoothbore , muzzle @-@ loading 11 @-@ inch Dahlgren guns mounted in two twin @-@ gun turrets . Her forward turret was designed by James Eads and her rear turret by John Ericsson . Each gun weighed approximately 16 @,@ 000 pounds (7 @,@ 300 kg) and 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 cylindrical turrets were protected by eight layers of wrought iron 1 @-@ inch (25 mm) plates . The sides of the hull consisted of three layers of one @-@ inch plates , backed by 15 inches (380 mm) of pine . The deck was heavily cambered to allow headroom for the crew on such a shallow draft and it consisted of iron plates .75 inches (19 mm) thick . The pilothouse , positioned behind and above the fore turret , was protected by 3 inches (76 mm) of armor .

= = Construction and service = =

James Eads was awarded the contracts for all four of the Milwaukee @-@ class ships . He laid down Milwaukee at his Union Iron Works Carondelet , St. Louis in 1862 . The first U.S. Navy ship to be named after the Wisconsin city , she was launched on 4 February 1864 and commissioned on 27 August 1864 . Acting Volunteer Lieutenant James W. Magune was in command .

Milwaukee was initially assigned to the Mississippi Squadron upon commissioning , but saw no action before she was ordered south to join West Gulf Blockading Squadron . The ship departed Mound City , Illinois on 15 October and arrived at New Orleans , Louisiana 12 days later . Lieutenant Commander James H. Gillis relieved Magune on 22 November . She was still under repair there on 27 November , although Milwaukee reached Mobile Bay by 1 January 1865 .

Although the victory at the Battle of Mobile Bay on 5 August 1864 had closed the port of Mobile to blockade runners , the city itself had not been taken . The Confederates fortified the approaches to the city and heavily mined the shallow waters surrounding it . On 27 March 1865 , Milwaukee , together several other Union ships , sortied upriver in an attempt to cut communications between Spanish Fort and Mobile . The following day she and her sister ship Winnebago steamed up the Blakely River to attack a Confederate transport and forced it to retreat . While returning downriver Milwaukee struck a mine in an area previously swept . She remained afloat forward , which permitted her crew to escape without loss . Another of her sisters , Kickapoo , rescued the survivors .

In 1868 the wreck was raised and towed to St. Louis and broken up ; her iron was used in the construction of the Eads Bridge across the Mississippi River .