

= USS Neosho (1863) =

USS Neosho , the lead ship of her class , was an ironclad river monitor laid down for the Union Navy in the summer of 1862 during the American Civil War . After completion in mid @-@ 1863 , the ship spent time patrolling the Mississippi River against Confederate raids and ambushes as part of Rear Admiral David Porter 's Mississippi Squadron . She participated in the Red River Campaign in March ? May 1864 . Neosho resumed her patrols on the Mississippi after the end of the campaign . She supported the Union Army 's operations on the Cumberland River and provided fire support during the Battle of Nashville in December 1864 . Neosho was decommissioned after the war and remained in reserve until sold in 1873 .

= = Design and description = =

The steam @-@ powered gun turret of the Neosho was at the bow . She had a single deckhouse between the funnel and the sternwheel , although another was later added between the turret and the funnel . Her pilothouse was positioned above the rear deckhouse , next to the forward face of the sternwheel . The ship was 180 feet (54 @.@ 9 m) long overall and had a beam of 45 feet (13 @.@ 7 m) . When launched she proved to have a draft 1 foot (0 @.@ 3 m) deeper than planned and she measured 523 tons burthen . Neosho had four steam boilers powering a two @-@ cylinder , western steamboat @-@ type engine that drove the sternwheel . The ship had a maximum speed of 12 miles per hour (19 km / h) in service and she carried 50 long tons (51 t) of coal . Her crew numbered 100 officers and enlisted men . After commissioning , the ship was modified with a small breakwater at her bow .

Neosho 's main armament consisted of two smoothbore 11 @-@ inch (279 mm) Dahlgren guns mounted in a single turret that had an arc of fire of 300 ° . Firing the guns tended to jam the turret until modifications were made to the guns ' recoil system . Each gun weighed approximately 16 @,@ 000 pounds (7 @,@ 300 kg) . They 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 turret were protected by 6 inches (152 mm) of wrought iron while the hull had 2 @.@ 5 inches (64 mm) of armor . The armor plates of the deck and paddle housing were 1 @.@ 25 inches (32 mm) thick .

= = Service = =

Neosho , named after the Neosho River that flowed through Kansas and Oklahoma , and the first of her name , was laid down in mid @-@ 1862 by James Eads at his Union Iron Works in Carondelet , Missouri . She was launched on 18 February 1863 and commissioned at Cairo , Illinois on 13 May 1863 , with Commander John C. Febiger in command , but was not completed until 1 July . She left Cairo on 14 July 1863 and reached Vicksburg on 6 August , just over a month after it had surrendered after a lengthy siege . Neosho and other warships patrolled the Mississippi and its tributaries to prevent Confederate raiders and flying batteries from ambushing Union supply ships . One example was on 8 December 1863 when " a Confederate shore battery attacked the disabled the merchant steamer Henry Von Phul ; Neosho and Signal steamed up to defend the ship and silenced the battery . "

From 12 March to 22 May 1864 , Neosho participated in the unsuccessful Red River Campaign under the command of Rear Admiral David Porter . During the retreat down the Red River , Neosho was trapped above the falls at Alexandria , Louisiana , 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 . During the Franklin @-@ Nashville Campaign in December 1864 Neosho , accompanied by the casemate ironclad Carondelet , bombarded Confederate artillery batteries on the Cumberland River , near Bell 's Mills , Tennessee , on 6 December . Despite being hit over 100 times , she was not seriously damaged . The monitor bombarded the Confederate right wing during the Battle of Nashville on 15 ? 16 December .

Neosho was decommissioned at Mound City , Illinois on 23 July 1865 and placed in reserve . She was renamed Vixen on 15 June 1869 and renamed again Osceola on 2 August 1869 . The ship was sold on 17 August 1873 for \$ 13 @, @ 600 .