

## Mixed-propulsion corvette-avisos (120 nhp)

BICHE (launched 1848)  
SENTINELLE (launched 1848)

### BICHE mixed-propulsion corvette-aviso

Displacement:	439t
Dimensions:	111ft 1in wl x 28ft 4in wl, 28ft 7in max x 12ft 6in mean, 14ft 1in max. Depth 11ft 10in
Same, meters:	33.85 x 8.63, 8.71 x 3.80, 4.30m. 3.60m
Machinery:	120nhp (Mazeline). Fixed cylinders, geared, 8.5kts
Hull material:	Iron
Armament:	(1849) 2-12p short (may have carried only 2-4p)
Complement:	81

<u>Name</u>	<u>Builder</u>	<u>Laid down</u>	<u>Launched</u>	<u>Commiss.</u>	<u>Fate</u>
BICHE	Malo, Dunk.	12.46	3.9.48	25.10.48	Stk. 13.2.68

**Class.** This ship and Sentinelle were built as part of a program for the suppression of the West African slave trade (see the paddle corvette Euménide for details). Unlike the screw 2nd class avisos (which they resembled in size and horsepower), they were designed as mixed propulsion ships (sailing ships with auxiliary steam power) and classified as mixed-propulsion corvette-avisos. Their designers were instructed to follow the hull lines of the highly successful sail corvette-aviso Diligente as closely as possible. They were completed with brig rigs. Plans for Biche were completed by Dupuy de Lôme in 7.46 and the ship was built by Gaspard Malo at Dunkirk. Biche became the first French navy ship with water-tube boilers when she was experimentally fitted in 1854 with new high-pressure 200nhp engines by Charbonnier, Bourgougnan and Co. (Cavé's successors) and a high-pressure boiler by Belleville. Two boilers were tried but gave much trouble. The original engine of Biche was reused in the transport-aviso Loiret (1856).

**Disposal.** Biche was BU 1868 at Toulon.

### SENTINELLE mixed-propulsion corvette-aviso

Displacement:	457t
Dimensions:	111ft 7in wl, 115ft 1in deck x 28ft 3in wl x 12ft 6in mean, 14ft 5in max. Depth 11ft 10in
Same, meters:	34.00, 35.08 x 8.62 x 3.80, 4.40m. 3.60m

Machinery:	120nhp (Mazeline). Fixed cylinders, geared, 8.5kts
Hull material:	Iron
Armament:	(1850) 2-12p short. (1851) 6-12p carronades.
Complement:	81

<u>Name</u>	<u>Builder</u>	<u>Laid down</u>	<u>Launched</u>	<u>Commiss.</u>	<u>Fate</u>
SENTINELLE	Chaigneau	15.1.47	29.8.48	6.4.50	Stk. 17.8.69

**Class.** Sentinelle was designed to the same specifications as Biche. Her plans were completed by Gervaise in 7.46 and she was built by Chaigneau and Bichon at Lormont (Bordeaux). She was placed in reduced commission on 27.3.49. On trials in 6.49 she reached 8.5kts under steam and 7.6kts under sail. In service her best performance under both sail and steam was 10kts and she rarely exceeded 8.5kts. While her speed under steam was about what would have been expected from auxiliary propulsion, her speed under sail was far less than the ship whose hull lines she imitated, Diligente. New 120nhp engines by Gouin were fitted in 1861.

**Disposals.** The engines of Sentinelle were removed in 1869 and the ship was fitted for the transport of mules and sent to Algeria. She was towed back to Toulon in 1872 for use as a maritime school for young convicts at Tremblade. She was BU 1877 at Toulon.