

Screw Gunboats (1st class)

ALARME class (launched 1855)

COMETE (launched 1859)

ALARME class screw gunboats (1st class)

Displacement:	484t
Dimensions:	144ft 2in wl, 148ft 11in deck (Toulon ships 145ft 7in, Brest ships 147ft 0in) x 25ft 6in x 7ft 9in mean, 8ft 1in max.
Same, meters:	43.94, 45.40 (44.38, 44.80) x 7.76 x 2.37, 2.47m
Machinery:	110nhp (Schneider). High pressure. Coal 41t
Hull material:	Wood
Armament:	(1855) 4-50p SB. (typical postwar) 2-16cm M1855 MLR, 2-16cm shell, 2-12cm No.2 bronze shell on forecastle and poop.
Complement:	79

Name	Builder	Laid down	Launched	Commiss.	Fate
ALARME	Toulon	11.54	3.5.55	3.5.55	Stk. 29.11.71
FLECHE	Toulon	11.54	9.5.55	8.5.55	Stk. 11.2.65
FUSEE	Toulon	11.54	16.5.55	16.5.55	Stk. 5.11.68
MITRAILLE	Toulon	11.54	24.5.55	24.5.55	Stk. 5.11.68
DRAGONNE	Normand	12.54	12.5.55	12.5.55	Stk. 7.3.67
AIGRETTE	Normand	12.54	15.5.55	14.5.55	Lost 17.8.59
FULMINANTE	Normand	12.54	20.5.55	20.5.55	Stk. 11.2.65
AVALANCHE	Normand	12.54	26.5.55	27.5.55	Stk. 16.11.66
ETINCELLE	Cherbourg	26.11.54	18.3.55	25.4.55	Lost 19.3.62
ECLAIR	Cherbourg	26.11.54	18.4.55	25.4.55	Stk. 20.11.71
FLAMME	Brest	22.11.54	7.5.55	1.5.55	Stk. 24.3.72
GRENADE	Brest	22.11.54	7.5.55	1.5.55	Stk. 1871

Class. This class was designed by De Roussel for Crimean War operations in shallow parts of the Black Sea and the Danube River. Its wartime mission was to carry out shore bombardment and protect armored floating batteries against enemy boat attacks. A relatively low speed (8 knots) was accepted because the seagoing qualities of the class would be mediocre because of the shallow draft. Separate plans were drawn up for a similar class for the Baltic, but it was decided to use this type

for both. The armament originally proposed for the Black Sea ships was 2-30p No.1, 2-22cm No.1 shell, and 2-16cm shell. Most of the ships were commissioned within a few days of their launchings and before their machinery was embarked; machinery installation was begun in 5.55 and completed between 6.55 and 7.55. The navy hoped the class would be useful after the war for tasks in which shallow draft and economy were more important than speed: for coast guard duties on the French coast, on naval stations (such as Spain) near France, and on colonial service. In 1858, however, the navy decided that this type was unsatisfactory, and its functions were reassigned to the new second-class avisos of the Prégent and following classes. At the end of the 1850s, a false keel averaging half a meter in depth was added, increasing the displacement and draft of the ships. Typical figures as modified were the 536 tons, 9ft 11in mean and 11ft 1in max draft of Flèche in 1861. The sail area of the class as built was 635 sq.yd.

Disposals. Aigrette was lost at Antivari. Fulminante and Flèche became coal hulks and were BU respectively in 1879 and 1883. Etincelle was last seen on 15.3.62, 60 leagues from her destination of Mayotte. Eclair was BU 1873, and Flamme became a lightship and was BU 1878. The other five were BU when struck.

COMETE screw gunboat (1st class)

Displacement:	820t
Dimensions:	240ft 6in wl, 248ft 8in deck x 28ft 9in wl, 29ft 2in max x 7ft 5in mean
Same, meters:	73.30, 75.80 x 8.76, 8.90 x 2.25m
Machinery:	120nhp (Schneider). 10.67kts
Hull material:	Composite (Arman system)
Armament:	4- 16cm rifles
Complement:	?

<u>Name</u>	<u>Builder</u>	<u>Laid down</u>	<u>Launched</u>	<u>Commiss.</u>	<u>Fate</u>
COMETE	Arman Bord.	12.58	29.9.59	7.11.59	Stk. 1.7.72

Class. This large ship was designed by Arman as a dual-purpose vessel: a shallow draft, 11-knot gunboat which could also carry 1,000 troops short distances.

Disposal. Comète became a service craft and was BU 1880.