

## **Abstract**

Title of Dissertation: “THE SQUADRON UNDER YOUR COMMAND”:  
CHANGE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY  
IN THE U.S. NAVY’S NORTH ATLANTIC  
SQUADRON, 1874-1897

James C. Rentfrow, PhD, 2012

Dissertation Directed by: Professor Jon T. Sumida  
Department of History

This dissertation examines the transformation of the United States Navy as a fighting organization that took place on the North Atlantic Station between 1874 and 1897. At the beginning of this period, the warships assigned to this station were collectively administered by a rear-admiral, but were operationally deployed as individual units, each of whose actions were directed by their captains. By 1897 the North Atlantic, or “Home” Squadron as it was known, was a group of warships constituting a protean battle fleet – that is, an organized body moving and fighting in close-order, which meant that the actions of the captains were directed by a commanding admiral.

The development of an American battle fleet resulted in the construction of a new organizational identity for the North Atlantic Squadron. This process was as critical as the eventual outcome. It was not linear, but one in which progress in critical areas was modulated by conflicting demands that caused distraction. From 1874-1888, exercises in fleet tactics under steam were carried out sporadically utilizing existing wooden cruising

vessels. From 1889-1894, the last wooden cruisers were decommissioned and the Squadron consisted entirely of new steel warships. Ad-hoc concentrations of vessels for purposes besides exercise and training retarded the continued development of doctrine and tactics necessary for a multi-ship fighting capability during this time. However, much work was done to develop a concept of multi-ship operations. From 1895-1897, the identity of the North Atlantic Squadron as a combat unit solidified. Tactical exercises were held that had specific offensive and defensive wartime applications. These exercises were necessary to develop a combat capability.

The results of this study demonstrate that the United States government had an interest in developing an offensive naval combat capability as early as the 1870's. Based on the record of the North Atlantic Squadron, it is argued that imperial aspirations, in the sense of possessing a capability to restrict the actions of other great powers in the Caribbean region, existed prior to the War of 1898. However, the process of change often resulted in the appearance of capability without the rigorous exercise necessary to possess it.

“THE SQUADRON UNDER YOUR COMMAND”: CHANGE AND THE  
CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN THE U.S. NAVY’S NORTH  
ATLANTIC SQUADRON, 1874-1897

By  
James Christopher Rentfrow

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
2012

Advisory Committee:  
Professor Jon Sumida, Chair  
Professor Julie Greene  
Professor Whitman Ridgway  
Dr. David Alan Rosenberg  
Professor David Segal

© Copyright by

James C. Rentfrow

2012

## **United States Department of Defense Disclaimer**

The views expressed in this dissertation are those of the author. They do not reflect the official policy or position of the United States Navy, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

*“It has to do with the fact that the Navy is not only an armed force: it is a society. In the forty years following the Civil War, this society had been forced to accommodate itself to a series of technological changes---the steam turbine, the electric motor, the rifled shell of great explosive power, case-hardened steel armor, and all the rest of it. These changes wrought extraordinary change in ship design, and therefore in the concepts of how ships were to be used: that is, in fleet tactics, and even in naval strategy. The Navy of this period is a paradise for the historian or sociologist in search of evidence of a society's response to change.”<sup>1</sup>*

---

<sup>1</sup> Elting E. Morison, "A Case Study of Innovation," *Engineering and Science Magazine* 13, no. 7 (April 1950) (1950): 9.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>I</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>IV</b>
<b>LIST OF CHARTS AND FIGURES</b> .....	<b>VI</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
HISTORIOGRAPHY .....	2
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE .....	5
THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON’S AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY .....	12
THE U.S. AND EMPIRE.....	15
DISSERTATION OVERVIEW .....	17
<b>CHAPTER 1: THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON, THE <i>VIRGINIUS</i> AFFAIR, AND THE BIRTH OF SQUADRON EXERCISES, 1874-1881</b> .....	<b>24</b>
NAVAL TACTICS, 1874 .....	25
THE U.S. NAVY, 1874 .....	32
THE ROYAL NAVY, 1874.....	42
THE VIRGINIUS AFFAIR .....	48
THE 1874 SQUADRON EXERCISES .....	58
RETURN TO STATION CRUISING, 1874-1876.....	68
THE 1877 LABOR RIOTS .....	79
CONCLUSIONS .....	86
<b>CHAPTER 2: TOWARDS A NEW IDENTITY, 1882 - 1888</b> .....	<b>89</b>
POLICY AND MATERIEL DEBATES: “PROCEEDINGS” AND THE NAVAL ADVISORY BOARDS.....	90
SQUADRON EXERCISES, 1882 .....	99
REAR ADMIRAL COOPER AND THE LIMITS OF WOODEN CRUISING VESSELS .....	105
STEPHEN B. LUCE AND THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE.....	115
REAR ADMIRAL JOUETT AND INTERVENTION IN PANAMA, 1885 .....	122
STEPHEN B. LUCE AND THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON .....	134
CONCLUSIONS .....	144
<b>CHAPTER 3: THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON AND THE SQUADRON OF EVOLUTION, 1889-1891</b> .....	<b>147</b>
BANCROFT GHERARDI AND THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON – 1889 .....	148
JOHN GRIMES WALKER AND THE SQUADRON OF EVOLUTION .....	153
GHERARDI AND THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON, 1890 .....	163
WALKER AND THE SQUADRON OF EVOLUTION, 1890 .....	173
THE TWO SQUADRONS COLLIDE, 1891 .....	178
CONCLUSIONS .....	194
<b>CHAPTER 4: THE LIMITS OF AD-HOC CRISIS RESPONSE, 1892 – 1894</b> .....	<b>198</b>
WAR SCARE WITH CHILE AND CONCENTRATION IN MONTEVIDEO, 1892 .....	200
THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON – OPERATIONS 1892 .....	209
JOHN G. WALKER AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF .....	217
GHERARDI AND THE SQUADRON FOR SPECIAL SERVICE .....	218
WALKER, THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON, AND UNREST IN VENEZUELA .....	224
THE INTERNATIONAL NAVAL REVIEW, 1893.....	230
REAR ADMIRAL A.E.K. BENHAM TAKES OVER .....	244
CONCLUSIONS .....	251

<b>CHAPTER 5: LUCE’S VISION REALIZED. THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON SOLIDIFIES A NEW IDENTITY, 1895-1897.....</b>	<b>256</b>
SQUADRON CRUISE TO THE WEST INDIES, 1895.....	256
ADMIRAL MEADE RETIRES.....	272
REAR ADMIRAL BUNCE AND SQUADRON EXERCISES, 1895.....	274
NAVAL MILITIA DRILLS, 1896.....	287
SQUADRON TACTICAL EXERCISES, 1896.....	293
THE BLOCKADE OF CHARLESTON.....	299
REAR ADMIRAL SICARD TAKES OVER.....	306
NAVAL MILITIA DRILLS, 1897.....	314
CONCLUSIONS.....	323
<b>EPILOGUE.....</b>	<b>326</b>
<b>CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>336</b>
<b>APPENDIX A.....</b>	<b>345</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>346</b>
PRIMARY SOURCES.....	346
SECONDARY SOURCES.....	346



## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: Line Abreast, Column, Echelon .....	31
Figure 2: Warships move from line abreast to column.....	62
Figure 3: Warships move from column to columns abreast by division .....	62
Figure 4: Days Engaged in Fleet Tactics Under Steam, By Year.....	345

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: The North Atlantic Squadron - 1874 .....	44
Table 2: The Channel Squadron - 1874 .....	45
Table 3: Royal Navy – Pacific Northwest Squadron, 1874.....	47
Table 4: The North Atlantic Squadron, 1882.....	100
Table 5: The North Atlantic Squadron, 1889.....	151
Table 6: The Squadron of Evolution, 1891.....	154
Table 7: The North Atlantic Squadron, 1892.....	200
Table 8: The North Atlantic Squadron, 1895.....	259

## Introduction

This dissertation examines the transformation of the United States Navy as a fighting organization that took place on the North Atlantic Station between 1874 and 1897. At the beginning of this period, the warships assigned to this station were collectively administered by a rear-admiral, but were operationally deployed as individual units, each of whose actions were directed by their captains. By 1897 the North Atlantic, or “Home” Squadron as it was known, was a group of warships constituting a protean battle fleet – that is, an organized body moving and fighting in close-order, which meant that the actions of the captains were directed by a commanding admiral. Its officers and sailors trained and conducted tactical exercises together, cruised to overseas ports together, socialized on liberty, and fought together at Santiago de Cuba in July of 1898. The reason for this change in form was a change in function. The objective of American naval power in the event of war shifted from commerce-raiding to being able to engage and defeat hostile battle fleets.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, moreover, the basic materiel of navies was undergoing radical changes. In 1874 most of the U.S. Navy’s inventory consisted of wooden cruising vessels. The first steel warships were authorized in 1883 and entered service between 1885 and 1889. These unarmored cruisers were followed rapidly by armored cruisers, then battleships. By 1897 the entire North Atlantic Squadron was comprised of modern warships.

That the Squadron underwent important changes in the period 1874-1897 is unquestioned. The modern battleships that confronted the Spanish Navy in 1898 are

---

<sup>1</sup> Geroge W. Baer, *One Hundred Years of Sea Power: The U.S. Navy, 1890-1990* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 11.

proof that significant changes in strategic purpose and materiel took place. Historians have studied both of these aspects extensively. However, the process the Squadron went through to effect these changes has received little attention. The development of a multi-ship fighting capability was more than simply a materiel problem. It involved the development of doctrine, tactics, and a hierarchy of command suited to the control of a complex fighting organization. Structurally, official change did not come until the designation of a North Atlantic Fleet in 1902, followed quickly by the consolidation of the North Atlantic Fleet and the South Atlantic Squadron into the Atlantic Fleet in 1906. The North Atlantic Squadron's identity as a warfighting unit had changed long before this, however, having become a combat unit with the cohesion necessary to carry out combat operations at the squadron and fleet level in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This critical process of change was accomplished by rigorous exercise at sea. An inquiry into the nature of this process gives insight into the combat effectiveness of the United States Navy prior to the War of 1898, as well as the Navy's role in U.S. imperial aspirations.

### *Historiography*

The core histories of this period follow two basic lines of argument.<sup>2</sup> The first is theoretical and strategic in nature, and covers the development of a new strategic purpose for the U.S. Navy. The standard narrative begins with Stephen B. Luce successfully agitating for the establishment of the Naval War College in 1884. Luce then enticed

---

<sup>2</sup> Core naval history: "Standard narrative histories of naval policy and operations...which establish the master plot." See Jon T. Sumida and David A. Rosenberg, "Machines, Men, Manufacturing, Management, and Money: the Study of Navies as Complex Organizations and the Transformation of Twentieth Century Naval History," in John B. Hattendorf, ed. *Doing Naval History: Essays Towards Improvement*, ed. John B. Hattendorf, Naval War College Historical Monograph Series (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1995).

Alfred Thayer Mahan to join the faculty of the new school. Luce and Mahan became the uniformed face of the so-called “navalism” movement. Together with politicians like Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, they “called for a navy to fulfill the nation’s destiny, and by 1890 agreed that it should be a “blue-water navy” – a battle-oriented fleet of fighting ships.”<sup>3</sup> This narrative typically culminates in the 1890 publication of Mahan’s opus, *The Influence of Seapower Upon History, 1660-1783*. In that work, Mahan argued decisively for the abandonment of the traditional U.S. naval strategy of coastal defense and commerce raiding and advocated a battle fleet which could protect American commerce and sea lines of communication. The second line of argument emphasizes the political and legislative battles which led to the purchase and construction of the modern warships which made up the “New Steel Navy.” This narrative typically begins with the Naval Advisory Boards of 1881 and 1882 and the authorization of the first four steel warships in 1883. It then traces the construction of various classes of ships, beginning with unarmored cruisers, then armored cruisers, and culminating with the introduction of battleships in the mid-1890’s. The congressional battles to secure approval and appropriations for the various building programs are detailed. While some monographs treat only one of the main narratives,<sup>4</sup> most of the core histories address them both. The two lines of argument are deployed in arcs that intersect at the War of 1898, where the Navy’s new strategic purpose and newly-

---

<sup>3</sup> Mark R. Shulman, *Navalism and the Emergence of American Sea Power, 1882-1893* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1995), 2.

<sup>4</sup> An example is Ronald Spector, *Professors of War: The Naval War College and the Development of the Naval Profession*, ed. B.M. III Simpson, U.S. Naval War College Historical Monograph Series (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1977).

constructed warships are tested in combat.<sup>5</sup> Ancillary histories<sup>6</sup> explore structural and ideological aspects of the changes undergone by the naval officer corps,<sup>7</sup> the enlisted force<sup>8</sup>, or the changes wrought by new technologies.<sup>9</sup>

The traditional narratives are fundamentally incomplete. None address the crucial questions of the process of developing a multi-ship fighting capability.<sup>10</sup> With few exceptions, very little is said in any of these histories about the day-to-day operations of the Navy while engaged in this generation of transition from cruising to the battle line.<sup>11</sup> If operations are addressed, they are largely dismissed as a rag-tag collection of ships

---

<sup>5</sup> Kenneth J. Hagen, *This People's Navy* (New York, NY: MacMillan, Inc., 1991), 180-192; Walter R. Herrick, *The American Naval Revolution* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1966), 30-85; Robert W. Jr. Love, *History of the U.S. Navy, Volume 1, 1775-1941*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1992), 345-382; Alfred T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, Twelfth ed. (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1918; reprint, 1918); Donald W. Mitchell, *History of the Modern American Navy, from 1883 through Pearl Harbor* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), 22-23; Harold and Sprout Sprout, Margaret, *The Rise of American Naval Power, 1776-1918*, ed. Jack Sweetman, Classics of Naval Literature (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1990), 214-257.

<sup>6</sup> "Ancillary naval history consists of those studies that deal primarily with naval machines, men (including biography), manufacturing, and management." Sumida and Rosenberg, "Machines, Men, Manufacturing, Management, and Money: the Study of Navies as Complex Organizations and the Transformation of Twentieth Century Naval History"

<sup>7</sup> Donald Chisholm, *Waiting for Dead Men's Shoes: Origins and Development of the U.S. Navy's Officer Personnel System, 1793-1941* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001); Peter Karsten, *The Naval Aristocracy: The Golden Age of Annapolis and the Emergence of Modern American Navalism* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> Frederick S. Harrod, *Manning the New Navy: The Development of a Modern Naval Enlisted Force, 1899-1940*, ed. Jon L. Wakelyn, Contributions in American History (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978).

<sup>9</sup> William M. McBride, *Technological Change and the United States Navy, 1865-1945*, ed. Merritt Roe Smith, Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> George Baer comes the closest. In a single sentence concerning the designation of the Atlantic Fleet in 1907, he notes that "fleet formation was necessary. Maneuvers were conducted accordingly." What those maneuvers consisted of is left to the reader's imagination. See Baer, 24.

<sup>11</sup> Exceptions to this rule are Kenneth J. Hagen, *American Gunboat Diplomacy and the Old Navy, 1877-1889*, Contributions in Military History (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1973); Stephen S. Roberts, "An Indicator of Informal Empire: Patterns of U.S. Navy Cruising on Overseas Stations, 1869-1897," in *Fourth Naval History Symposium*, ed. Craig L. Symonds (United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1979).

haphazardly cruising around to various ports, for the purpose of protecting American businessmen and their property.<sup>12</sup> Mahan and his battleships then arrive on the scene, *sui generis*, just in time to fight the Battles of Manila Bay and Santiago de Cuba. This approach to U.S. naval history creates a “black box”,<sup>13</sup> in which the wooden navy of the cruising era is entered in one end, and the New Steel Navy magically appears from the other end in time for the War of 1898. The generation-long struggle of the operational Navy to re-create itself is entirely missing. This ignores the crucial development of the doctrine, tactics, and hierarchy of command necessary for a navy to possess a true multi-ship fighting capability. The organization that fought the War of 1898 was not an inevitable outcome. The process of organizational change that produced a trained combat squadron of armored ships, and that squadron’s combat effectiveness throughout the transformation, is the subject of this study.

### ***Organizational Change***

The introduction of a new technology, in this case armored ships, into an organization causes changes in the routines and roles of the organization undergoing the change.<sup>14</sup> The North Atlantic Squadron underwent significant changes in both its operational routines and its role as a combat unit. Organizational change is defined in the sociological literature as a transformation of an organization between two points in time.

It can be analyzed either in terms of structural changes – what is actually different at the

---

<sup>12</sup> C.f. Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Twelfth ed. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1995; reprint, 1985), 228.

<sup>13</sup> Jon T. Sumida and David A. Rosenberg, “Machines, Men, Manufacturing, Management, and Money: The Study of Navies as Complex Organizations and the Transformation of Twentieth Century Naval History” in Hattendorf, ed., 31.

<sup>14</sup> Olga Volkoff, Diane M. Strong, and Michael B. Elmes, "Technological Embeddedness and Organizational Change," *Organization Science* 18, no. 5 (2007).

second point in time, or by studying the process undergone by the organization as the transformation occurs. This study takes the latter approach. Core structural changes for an organization take place in the areas of mission, authority structure, technology, and marketing strategy (public relations). I argue that by focusing on the changes in day-to-day processes, much can be done to unpack the black box of America's naval revolution.<sup>15</sup>

As the process of change occurred, the organizational identity of the squadron changed fundamentally. Organizational identity is the way in which members perceive their organization. It encompasses all that is central, distinctive, and enduring about the organization. Image, on the other hand, deals with the way that outsiders perceive the organization.<sup>16</sup> The North Atlantic Squadron ceased to be an administrative unit, which largely provided a structure for a flag officer to oversee the individual movements of cruising vessels. It became a combat unit that had to train constantly in order to be ready to do battle with an enemy fleet. Although it was still referred to regularly by its formal title: "U.S. Naval Forces on the North Atlantic Station," by the 1890's it was much more common to see it referred to as the "North Atlantic Squadron", or simply the "Home Squadron", an indication of its growing identity as a fighting unit. While engaged in a process of organizational change, the squadron took on an identity different than its

---

<sup>15</sup> The term "The American Naval Revolution" belongs to Herrick, see Herrick. For more on organizational change, see William P. Barnett, and Carroll, Glenn R., "Modeling Internal Organizational Change," *Annual Review of Sociology* 21, no. (1995).

<sup>16</sup> Jane E. and Dukerich Dutton, Janet M., "Keeping an Eye on the Mirror: Image and Identity in Organizational Adaptation," *The Academy of Management Journal* 34, no. 3 (1991); Dennis A. and Thomas Gioia, James B., "Identity, Image, and Issue Interpretation: Sensemaking During Strategic Change in Academia," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (1996).



previous one: that of an organization devoted to learning and readiness.<sup>17</sup> Its new primary mission required time to be spent annually on training for combat as a unit, in addition to the previous routine of carrying out drills in individual ships. Reports to the Navy Department on drills and training held for their ships by commanding officers become secondary to more frequent reports by the squadron commander-in-chief, outlining training and drills undergone by the entire unit.

The organizational changes and the new identity assumed by the squadron required new and different leadership skills from the commanders-in-chief. Morris Janowitz has identified a shift in military leadership during this era, from the authoritarian, or “heroic” officer, who led by force of personality and threat of punishment, to the “managerial”. In Janowitz’ words:

“The technology of warfare is so complex that coordination of a complex group of specialists cannot be guaranteed simply by authoritarian discipline. Members of a military group recognize their greater mutual dependence on the technical proficiency of their team members, rather than the formal authority structure.”<sup>18</sup>

Timothy Wolters has argued that naval commanders’ cognitive experience of command changed in the early twentieth century. Traditionally, commanders had been trained to take pragmatic action – that is, cognitive action carried out in order to bring one immediately closer to a desired end state. Examples of pragmatic action would include such things as directing one’s ship to close with the enemy, ordering the crew to general quarters, or ordering the gunners to “open fire.” Increasingly, commanders had to learn to take epistemic action, performed to enable one to direct large-scale fleet

---

<sup>17</sup> On organizational learning as part of the process of organizational change, see Andrew D. and Starkey Brown, Ken, "Organizational Identity and Learning: A Psychodynamic Perspective," *The Academy of Management Review* 25, no. 1 (2000).

<sup>18</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1971; reprint, 1971), 41.

maneuvers, by making clearer information that is obscure or difficult to process. Examples of this could include receiving reports from subordinate vessels or plotting locations of enemy warships.<sup>19</sup> Wolters attributes much of this shift to epistemic cognition to the introduction of wireless communications. I argue that a shift in the cognitive experience of command for squadron commanders-in-chief was well underway before this. The commander-in-chief of the 1870's was used to providing administrative oversight to ships spread throughout the area of operations. His function did not include leading his organization in combat. By 1897, the commander-in-chief had to have the force of personality to build unit identity and cohesion in a concentrated squadron of warships, and lead them in tactical formation under combat conditions.<sup>20</sup> Throughout the narrative, it will become apparent that the commanders-in-chief who were best able to embrace the change to an epistemic cognition, and a managerial leadership style had the most success bringing their squadron together as a unit. Those who had trouble with this transition ended up in trouble with the Navy Department and their fellow flag officers.

Whenever there were enough ships otherwise unassigned and available to sail together under a squadron commander-in-chief's tactical command, there were logistical problems. The major ports which had the facilities and supply lines to handle concentrations of multiple ships were New York and Norfolk, Virginia, yet these two ports were far from the Squadron's operational responsibilities in the Caribbean. Key West, Florida, was closer but yellow fever often racked the port, and squadron commanders were therefore uneasy about concentrating their ships at that location for

---

<sup>19</sup> Timothy Scott Wolters, "Managing a Sea of Information: Shipboard Command and Control in the United States Navy, 1899-1945" (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2003), 21-23.

<sup>20</sup> For more on the "cognitive experience of command", see Ibid.

long periods of time. Regardless of where the ships were concentrated, the delivery of sufficient amounts of coal to power more than one of the new steel warships was a constant concern, and occupied much of a deployed commander-in-chief's time. Signaling was primitive and constantly being changed or experimented with. Despite these obstacles, commanders-in-chief of the North Atlantic Squadron throughout the late 1870's and 1880's drilled their warships in fleet tactics under steam whenever possible. These exercises have not received the attention they deserve from naval historians.

Although the entire Navy was undergoing organizational change, as a unit of analysis it is difficult to focus on the operations of all Navy warships around the world. For this reason, it was considered appropriate to select one of the squadrons as most representative of the change in the Navy as a whole. The North Atlantic, or "Home" Squadron, therefore is the subject of this study. Among the cruising stations, only the North Atlantic Squadron was expected to carry out two distinct missions: the traditional cruising mission of protection of business and commercial interests abroad, as well as the protection of the vital cities of the U.S. east coast.<sup>21</sup> Its missions, therefore, most closely resembled European squadrons such as the Royal Navy's Channel Squadron, which were equipped with the most modern materiel. Throughout the period studied, the North Atlantic Squadron received the latest equipment first, was close enough to the capital for the commander-in-chief to consult often in person with the Navy Department, and it worked closely with the Naval War College to implement the latest thinking in tactics. The North Atlantic Station was considered to be a "plum" flag officer assignment. Often, a perspective commander-in-chief would have already completed a C-in-C tour in one of

---

<sup>21</sup> It could be argued that the Pacific Squadron had a national defense role with respect to California and the Puget Sound region, but that hardly compared with the expectation that the North Atlantic Squadron would have the ability to protect cities vital to the national economy, such as New York.

the lesser squadrons before being rewarded with command of the coveted North Atlantic Squadron. A study of the process of change from a cruising navy to one that expected to fight in a battle line would rightfully start here.

At the close of the Civil War, the Navy Department moved to reestablish the overseas cruising stations that had been abandoned at the war's outbreak. Established by order of the Navy Department on the first of November, 1865, the North Atlantic Squadron was formed by joining together the Atlantic Coast and West India Squadrons. At the time of its formation, Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles noted that:

“These squadrons...have, by one or more of their vessels, during the year visited nearly every principal port of the world. The views of the department enjoining activity, and the exhibition of the flag of our navy wherever our commerce penetrated, have been faithfully observed, and the reappearance of our men-of-war has been welcomed, not only by our countrymen, but by the people of every nation which they have visited.”<sup>22</sup>

The post-war national naval strategy is clear in the Secretary's remarks. The navy was, in the words of one junior officer, “absorbed in police duty for the State Department.”<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps, then, tactical operations during this period have been rightfully de-emphasized by naval historians who have grappled with larger questions of strategy and policy? History is an attempt to understand the thought processes of those who have gone before; to recreate not only their experiences, but how they conceptualized these experiences.<sup>24</sup> This is important. Even though the ships they commanded were unarmored and had been designed for a naval strategy of commerce raiding, the fact that the Navy Department desired the capability to engage an enemy in line-of-battle

---

<sup>22</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy on the Operations of the Department, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1866* 1866.

<sup>23</sup> A. P. Niblack, "Discussion of Prize Essay, 1895," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 21, no. 2 (1895).

<sup>24</sup> R.G. Collingwood and J. Dussen, *The Idea of History: With Lectures 1926-1928* (Oxford University Press, 1994).

formation, and repeatedly ordered this capability practiced whenever an opportunity presented itself, suggests imperial and expansionist tendencies in the United States prior to the 1890's. This critical decade in U.S. history can only be understood in the context of the preceding half-century.<sup>25</sup> To the extent that the North Atlantic Squadron was becoming less an administrative collection of ships and more an integrated combat unit, it can be argued that expansion and possible conflict with European powers was being conceived as early as 1874. In this way, an inquiry into the construction of the North Atlantic Squadron's identity provides evidence in the debate on the nature of imperialism and the United States.

Evidence exists for America's "outward thrust"<sup>26</sup> in the day-to-day operations of the North Atlantic Squadron. The twenty-three year span studied saw growing numbers of squadron exercises and attempts to solve the problems of maneuvering, short and long range signaling, basing strategies, coaling, and leadership. These problems had not been completely solved by 1898 but at least "ten years before Mahan", to borrow a phrase from Robert Seager, naval commanders were actively working to perfect fleet tactical maneuvering. It is easy to say that the construction of cruisers, commerce raiders, monitors, and other craft associated with an offensive defense in the 1880's are proof that those who were responsible for naval policy had no desire, prior to the authorization of the first battleships in 1889, for an overseas combat capability. It remains to address the operational record, however, and ask the question: why were these protected cruisers and commerce raiders performing fleet tactics under steam and signaling exercises? Studying

---

<sup>25</sup>On this, see for example, Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898*, Fourth ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1963; reprint, Fourth), 61.

<sup>26</sup> Milton Plesur, *America's Outward Thrust: Approaches to Foreign Affairs, 1865-1890* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971).

the operational record can uncover the middle ground between cruising responsibilities to protect American commerce, lives, and property and the uneasy relationship those responsibilities shared with professional naval officers' attempts to develop a military unit with fighting capabilities that would be useful against a peer European competitor.

### ***The North Atlantic Squadron's Area of Responsibility***

The North Atlantic Squadron was responsible for two regions of intense U.S. foreign policy interest: the Caribbean and the Canadian fisheries. The Squadron spent less time and devoted fewer warships to patrolling the fishing grounds off the coast of Canada than the Caribbean. However, the touchy diplomatic situation surrounding fishing rights in the waters off Great Britain's Canadian colonies consistently threatened the otherwise-improving U.S. – British relations during this era. The rights of U.S. fishermen had been recognized as early as the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Revolutionary War in 1783. Although U.S. fishermen were no longer part of the British Empire, their livelihood rested in the cod fisheries off the coast of Newfoundland, and U.S. negotiators made recognition of this fact by the British a requirement for peace.

This recognition came in the form of Article III of the Treaty of Paris, which granted two things to American fishermen: the *right* to fish in the waters off Newfoundland and in all other international waters, and the *liberty* to come ashore at uninhabited points along the Canadian coast to dry and preserve their catch. This last provision was just as important as the right to fish in the days before refrigeration and modern methods of getting a catch to market. Thirty years later, the War of 1812 caused confusion over the agreed-upon fishing rights, as the British government maintained that the Treaty of Paris had been nullified by the outbreak of hostilities in 1812. This

necessitated a new agreement, The Fisheries Convention of 1818, which stipulated more precisely the exact geographic boundaries within which U.S. fishermen could both fish and approach the shore to dry and preserve their catch. It also forbade U.S. vessels from approaching any other harbors or settled areas not specifically authorized for any purpose other than to seek emergency shelter, repair damage, or purchase wood or water. The purpose was to prevent black market trading between U.S. fishing vessels and the Canadian mainland. The final treaty between the two nations which addressed fishing was the Treaty of Washington, signed in 1871 to settle the Civil War-era *Alabama* claims. The Treaty of Washington reaffirmed rights for both American and Canadian fishermen, with an additional \$5.5 million payment from the United States to Great Britain to compensate for what was judged to be greater concessions by the British.<sup>27</sup>

While the controversies over U.S. fishing rights in the northeast occasionally kept North Atlantic Squadron warships busy patrolling the fishing grounds, it will be seen that the majority of the commander-in-chief's time tended to be focused to the south. In the Caribbean region, three hotspots kept the Squadron continuously busy. The island of Cuba, less than ninety miles away from mainland United States, had been on the mind of Americans since the Revolution. Generations of antebellum slave owners had coveted the island's land as a site for the expansion of slavery and the southern social and economic system. Postwar expansion enthusiasts were eager to reap the rewards of investment in the island's growing economy. At least two nineteenth century administrations had attempted to buy the island outright from Spain, but had been

---

<sup>27</sup> James Phinney III Baxter, "June Meeting: The British High Commissioners at Washington 1871," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 65 (October 1832 - May 1936), no. 3 (1936); J. Jay, *The Fisheries Dispute: A Suggestion for Its Adjustment by Abrogating the Convention of 1818, and Resting on the Rights and Liberties Defined in the Treaty of 1783; a Letter to the Honourable William M. Evarts, of the United States Senate* (Dodd, Mead & company, 1887).

rebuffed. If the U.S. was unable to own Cuba, the next best alternative was a Cuba under the control of a weakened Spanish Empire, with a tacit understanding under the Monroe Doctrine that the island was not to be transferred to any other colonial power. As the “Cuba Libre” movement grew over the second half of the nineteenth century, the disorder caused by Spain’s inept colonial governance threatened U.S. security and economic aspirations.<sup>28</sup>

Another island, Haiti, was a constant source of unrest. After its independence from France in 1804, the nation’s mostly unstable government underwent a series of coups, as the military, elites, and commercial classes fought for control. Stability in Haiti was important to the United States for two reasons. By the 1870’s, the search for overseas markets had led U.S. businessmen to Haiti, where U.S. property and investments were often in need of protection. More importantly, the island of Hispaniola contained excellent, and highly-coveted, possible locations for naval stations. The U.S. government was acutely aware that whoever controlled these locations controlled the access to the Isthmus of Panama, with all its attendant commercial and national security implications. Haiti’s Mole St. Nicholas, site of Columbus’ landing in the New World, was one such location. Repeated attempts by a succession of U.S. administrations to purchase or lease Mole St. Nicholas were unsuccessful, but the continual unrest in the nation kept the warships of the North Atlantic Squadron busy in and around Port-au-Prince.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> L.A. Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 1-7.

<sup>29</sup> Rayford W. Logan, *The Diplomatic Relations of the United States with Haiti, 1776-1891* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1941); Ludwell Lee Montague, *Haiti and the United States 1714-1938* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1940).



Finally, but perhaps most importantly, was the Isthmus itself. With the expansion westward of the United States, the acquisition of California, and especially the discovery of gold in 1849, transit across the isthmus became critical to U.S. interests. Eventually a New York railroad company built a railroad across the isthmus, turning a 4-day passage into a 3-hour train ride and making the railroad and everyone financially associated with it exceptionally wealthy. Unfortunately for business investors, this was an area of great unrest. The citizens of Panama had attempted to secede from Gran Colombia several times since independence from Spain. The constant armed uprisings threatened not only the peaceful transit across the isthmus, but the property of the U.S.-controlled railroad company. Meanwhile, the attempt by the French builder of the Suez Canal, Ferdinand de Lesseps, to build a canal across the isthmus in the 1880's raised questions of European influence in the Western Hemisphere. The formal diplomatic relationship between the United States and Colombia was governed by an 1846 treaty which guaranteed the right of passage across the isthmus in exchange for U.S. guarantees of Colombian sovereignty. During the period of this study, U.S. troops would land at Panama twice, and North Atlantic Squadron warships would be tasked to call at the port of Aspinwall almost continuously, under the terms of the 1846 treaty.<sup>30</sup>

### ***The U.S. and Empire***

Historians have pondered the extent to which U.S. actions in the late nineteenth century constituted the construction of an "empire." The question is problematic,

---

<sup>30</sup> Walter LaFeber, *The Panama Canal: The Crisis in Historical Perspective* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989); John Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. In Panama*, ed. Glibert M. and Rosenberg Joseph, Emily S., *American Encounters / Global Interactions* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003); Alfred Charles Richard, Jr., *The Panama Canal in American National Consciousness, 1870-1990* (New York, NY: Garland Publishing Inc., 1990).

beginning with the definition of “empire.” Suggestions range from the imposition of a system of government on a subjected people, to dominating the subordinate country’s economy. In any event, Charles Maier argues that an empire requires both sufficient military force and the ability to project that force over distance.<sup>31</sup> If this is the case, then evidence for the argument that the U.S. project had imperial aspirations earlier than the 1890’s could be found in the operational attempts of the Navy to develop the ability to project decisive, concentrated combat power. By definition, the United States possessed an empire when it took possession of the Philippines and Puerto Rico following the War of 1898. However, historians such as William Appleman Williams and Walter LaFeber have claimed imperial aspirations for the United States from much earlier. Williams argued that the agricultural businessmen of the 1870’s and 1880’s, and their desire for expanded markets, paved the way for the naval buildup of the 1890’s and the subsequent articulation of the “frontier” thesis by historians such as Turner and Adams.<sup>32</sup> After the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 historians filled the bookshelves with analysis of the United States as an imperial power. Many of these works were polemical in nature, aimed at the Bush Administration and its wars, but all were convinced that the roots of “empire” ran deep in the United States.<sup>33</sup> For the Navy’s part,

---

<sup>31</sup> Charles S. Maier, *Among Empires: American Ascendancy and Its Predecessors* (Cambridge, MA: 2006), 61.

<sup>32</sup> LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898*; Walter Nugent, *Habits of Empire: A History of American Expansionism* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008); William Appleman Williams, *The Roots of the Modern American Empire: A Study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society* (New York, NY: Random House, 1969); William Appleman Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life: An Essay on the Causes and Character of America's Present Predicament Along with a Few Thoughts About an Alternative* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1980).

<sup>33</sup> Sidney Lens, *The Forging of the American Empire: From the Revolution to Vietnam - a History of U.S. Imperialism* (London, UK: 2003); Maier; Gretchen Murphy, *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire* (Durham, NC: 2005); Nugent.

Stephen Roberts asserts that the deployment patterns of the U.S. Navy and the ports visited from 1869 to 1897 indicate a pattern of “informal empire”, using the definition provided by British historians Gallagher and Robinson, as well as William Appleman Williams.<sup>34</sup> One of the arguments of this dissertation is that an analysis of the daily operations of the North Atlantic Squadron, with an inquiry into the extent to which it developed an identity as a coherent combat unit, can be used as evidence of presence or absence of U.S. imperial aspirations. Such study of the operational record suggests a recognition by the U.S. government in the 1870’s that the challenges to U.S. policy in the Caribbean region were about to increase in magnitude. The increasing competition between the great powers meant that the U.S. Navy would have to possess the capability to do more than simply police the status quo with the tacit approval and assistance of the Royal Navy. To the extent that there was a desire to restrict the actions of other great powers in the region, it can be argued that U.S. imperial aspirations existed well prior to the War of 1898.

### *Dissertation Overview*

What follows, then, is a narrative of the operations of the U.S. Navy’s North Atlantic Squadron during the years 1874 to 1897. The selection of the timeframe is deliberate. This is a study of operations amidst changes in structure and organizational identity during an interwar period. The Civil War Union Navy was a massive undertaking purchased and hastily built for the express purpose of combating the Confederacy and was largely dismantled within months of Appomattox. Other than understanding the very specific naval strategy that Abraham Lincoln employed to win the

---

<sup>34</sup> Roberts.

Civil War, the experience has very little to say about the strategic capabilities of the Navy beyond the lengthy southern coastline of the North American continent, or its desire to participate in overseas expansion. By the same token, this is not a battle piece about Manila Bay or Santiago de Cuba. Both engagements, and the Spanish-American-Cuban War of 1898, have no shortage of historians eager to write about them in great detail.

Chapter One, “The North Atlantic Squadron, the *Virginus* Affair and the Birth of Squadron Exercises, 1874-1881” first examines developments in naval tactics in the mid-nineteenth century, introducing Commodore Foxhall A. Parker as the recognized U.S. expert in this area. It discusses the post-Civil War sea and shore organization of the U.S. Navy, describing in particular the North Atlantic Squadron and comparing its warships with Royal Navy units that shared similar missions. It then turns to the 1873-1874 concentration of the warships of the North Atlantic, South Atlantic, and European stations at Key West, Florida, during a war scare with Spain. When threatened with war, the Navy Department reacted in a manner that was exactly opposite the naval strategy they had embraced for public consumption. Rather than reinforce vital ports and prepare to sweep Spain’s commerce from the seas through a robust program of commerce raiding, the Navy Department concentrated its wooden cruising warships and monitors, attempting to prepare for a multi-ship action against Spain’s fleet. This series of exercises was so noteworthy that Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, assigned to the Lighthouse Board at the time, kept a copy of the handwritten journal of the fleet’s movements with his personal papers.<sup>35</sup> This naval visionary recognized, as this study argues, that the maneuvers of the inefficient and obsolescent wooden warships marked

---

<sup>35</sup> Stephen B. Luce, RADM, "Journal of the Movements of the U.S.N.A. Fleet, Commencing February 3, 1874, 1874," Ship's Log, Stephen B. Luce Papers, Washington, D.C. .

the beginning of a process of significant change for the Navy. The future change in squadron identity is personified by Commander William Cushing, the commanding officer of the *Wyoming*. The month prior to the exercises, he and his ship had been one of the first responders to the capture of *Virginus*. While in Cuba, he had acted alone, on his own initiative, to protect U.S. citizens and property overseas. A month later, during the Key West exercises, *Wyoming* steamed second in a column of ships, with Cushing taking orders from the flag officer in command. It is a vivid illustration of the coming change in the cognitive experience of command, both for the commanding officers of the warships as well as the commander-in-chief. The 1877 deployment of North Atlantic Squadron sailors to the Washington D.C. area during domestic labor unrest provides an example of the continued identification of the Navy with the protection of commercial interests – in this case at home, as well as abroad.

In Chapter Two, “Towards a New Identity: 1882-1888,” the growth in the practice of holding squadron maneuvers is analyzed, providing evidence for the beginning of a change in identity for the squadron from an administrative organization to a combat unit. The early efforts of Rear Admiral Cooper to drill his wooden steam vessels are detailed, as are Rear Admiral Jouett’s intervention in Panama and Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce’s handling of unrest in Haiti and in the Canadian fishing waters. The latter part of the chapter centers on Luce’s innovative vision for a theoretical and operational partnership between the Naval War College and the North Atlantic Squadron. He had hoped to use his position as commander-in-chief of the squadron to complement his work at the Naval War College and develop the U.S. Navy’s ability to fight fleet actions. The time had not yet come, however, for the primary mission of the squadron to be recognized as training

and preparation for combat. The State Department still mandated the presence of U.S. warships throughout the North Atlantic Squadron's area of operations, and to his great disappointment, Luce was repeatedly unable to concentrate enough of his ships in one place to conduct tactical exercises.

Chapter Three, "The North Atlantic Squadron and the Squadron of Evolution, 1889-1891" discusses the acquisition and operational employment of the Navy's first four warships of the "New Steel Navy", the so-called "ABCD ships." Although they were cruisers, the decision was made to operate them as a squadron – the "Squadron of Evolution." It was led by Rear Admiral John G. Walker, who had spent the previous eight years as the powerful chief of the Bureau of Navigation and Detail. Walker was a leader who displayed at once the understanding of what it meant to lead a squadron as a military unit, and the limitations that flag officers raised in the "old navy" faced when trying to adapt the old "heroic" style of leadership to the "managerial" skills required in a new world shaped by steam propulsion and telegraph communications. Walker's role leading the Squadron of Evolution is contrasted with Rear Admiral Bancroft Gherardi's experience in command of the North Atlantic Squadron during the same time. While Walker led his squadron as a coherent unit, Gherardi was largely forced by various crises to manage his warships in the old-fashioned mode, detailing them throughout the Caribbean to carry out Navy Department tasking. Epitomizing the "warrior-diplomat" of bygone years, Gherardi became personally involved in diplomatic negotiations with the Haitian government. The limitations of the incompletely-developed hierarchy of command for fleet operations were highlighted when the two squadrons met in Haiti in 1891.

In Chapter Four: “The Limits of Ad-hoc Crisis Response, 1892-1894”, Rear Admirals John G. Walker and Bancroft Gherardi changed roles. Rear Admiral Walker’s Squadron of Evolution was broken up in late 1891, and he eventually became the commander-in-chief of the North Atlantic Squadron. He immediately had to cope with the Navy Department ordering his warships to various Caribbean ports as crises arose. Meanwhile, Gherardi was given command of the Squadron for Special Service, and then the Naval Review Fleet, and his leadership style had to become more like Walker’s as he struggled to develop the cohesion and unit identity necessary for those forces to carry out their missions successfully. Gherardi’s commands provided more opportunity for the development of a concept of multi-ship operations, but were limited in their ability to develop the doctrine and tactics necessary for a multi-ship fighting capability. Formation steaming for appearance’s sake did not equate to formation steaming in combat. The chapter culminates with the 1893 International Naval Review in New York. Here, in an example of the effect naval pageantry could have on national identity and public opinion, the United States proudly displayed to the world – not to mention its own population – its new warships and administrative and operational prowess in handling large fleet operations.<sup>36</sup> The urbanization trend which led more and more Americans to live in or near the nation’s large cities made it easier for large segments of the population to view the steel warships of the “new navy.”

In Chapter 5, “Luce’s Vision Realized: The North Atlantic Squadron Solidifies a New Identity, 1895-1897,” the Squadron took the monumental step of a peacetime, non-crisis, deployment as a squadron. Rather than splitting up for the customary winter

---

<sup>36</sup> Jan Ruger, *The Great Naval Game: Britain and Germany in the Age of Empire*, ed. Jay Winter, *Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

cruises throughout the Caribbean in 1895, Rear Admiral R.W. Meade led the North Atlantic Squadron in visiting strategic ports throughout the region as a unit. While transiting from port to port, the Squadron exercised regularly at fleet tactics and signaling. When in port, the officers mingled and the crews indulged in boat races. In their homeport of New York, squadron personnel organized a bicycle club and baseball teams. The extensive time spent steaming in company, as well as the socialization of the crews of the Squadron, provide evidence that just prior to the outbreak of the Spanish-American-Cuban War of 1898, the North Atlantic Squadron had taken on a new identity as a combat unit. The Squadron's function was not only to send single units to respond to State Department contingencies, but to be prepared to operate as a squadron in combat. Rear Admiral Meade's success as a squadron commander-in-chief was short-lived, however. Unable to adapt his confrontational leadership to the consensus-building managerial style required by the new command functions, he was forced to resign his position after publicly insulting the President and Secretary of the Navy.

The Epilogue narrates briefly the actions of the squadron during the Battle of Santiago de Cuba. While recognizing that the action at Santiago was not a true fleet engagement, it nonetheless provides a venue to reflect on the North Atlantic Squadron with respect to the development of a strategic purpose for a battle fleet, the development of a concept of multi-ship operations, and the test in combat action of a multi-ship fighting capability, as well as challenges yet to be overcome in the area of strong personalities and unified fleet command. While the North Atlantic Squadron had developed and demonstrated a protean combat capability, the process of becoming a battle fleet was incomplete. It awaited structural developments in the early twentieth



century, such as the establishment of a fleet hierarchy of command. A battle fleet also required a concept of multi-ship operations that exercised a fighting capability, rather than formation discipline geared towards appearances. Nonetheless, extensive and significant progress had been made towards the realization of this goal prior to the War of 1898. That progress is the focus of this dissertation.

## Chapter 1: The North Atlantic Squadron, the *Virinius* Affair, and the Birth of Squadron Exercises, 1874-1881

Early on the morning of February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1874, the U.S. Naval Forces on the North Atlantic Station<sup>1</sup> got underway from their anchorage off of Key West, Florida. Their mission was to execute fleet maneuvers under steam power.<sup>2</sup> As the assembled ships formed columns and steered to the southwest behind the lead ship, they represented the combined available combat power of the U.S. European, South Atlantic, and North Atlantic Squadrons. This was the largest concentration of U.S. naval forces since the Civil War, which had ended nine years before. The series of exercises which took place over the next month has received relatively little attention from historians.<sup>3</sup> They represented, nonetheless, something more than a mere collection of ships playing war games. The Key West exercises of February-March 1874 signal the beginning of the transformation of a cruising force into a battle fleet. Over the next twenty-three years, the Squadron would undergo a series of core organizational changes, not only in materiel, but in terms of unit identity and the command technique necessary to direct a group of ships in battle. In the years 1874-1881, the increasing desire on the part of the U.S. government and the Navy Department to possess a battle fleet created a conflict between

---

<sup>1</sup> The terms “Naval Forces on the North Atlantic Station” and “North Atlantic Squadron” are interchangeable, and were used interchangeably by contemporaries. I will argue that the use of the term “squadron” increases in both popular print and official correspondence throughout the period under study, as the organization’s identity evolves.

<sup>2</sup> Foxhill A. Parker, "Our Fleet Maneuvers in the Bay of Florida, and the Navy of the Future," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 1, no. 8 (1874). I use the term “fleet” here, and throughout the study, as Commodore Parker did – as a way of describing tactical evolutions involving multiple warships. I do not mean to imply that, simply by practicing these maneuvers, the U.S. possessed a “battle fleet” at this time.

<sup>3</sup> An exception to this is Love, 334-338. Professor Love argues that this episode (**in 1874**) highlights the fact that U.S. policy in the Caribbean could not move forward without a battle fleet.

the requirements of cruising missions undertaken by single warships and the need to concentrate and exercise warships in groups. Constant tasking in support of the State Department, “showing the flag” and protecting U.S. commercial interests, both abroad and domestically, regularly interfered with the North Atlantic Squadron’s ability to train for combat against a peer naval power. Far from being a reactionary backwater period, the 1870’s and 1880’s were a time of considerable development, laying the essential foundation for the more-visible naval buildup of the 1890’s. During this time, naval authorities struggled to find the correct balance between traditional missions and the many changes in technology, materiel, and mission facing the North Atlantic Squadron.

### *Naval Tactics, 1874*

Although European navies, as well as many progressive-minded U.S. naval officers, knew that the ability to maneuver warships in formation was critical to future naval combat, the exact nature of sound practice during a fleet engagement remained unclear. The gun, which had been the featured weapon in the line-ahead battles of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, had been augmented by the ram and torpedo.<sup>4</sup> Torpedoes could be attached to a spar, or like the new British Whitehead torpedo, they could be self-propelled. All of these represented options for a squadron commander in attack and defense. Experts at the time were unsure how a large-scale battle would be fought. The U.S. Civil War offered little guidance because no action between fleets occurred. One major naval action that took place not long after the Civil War gave naval

---

<sup>4</sup> “Line ahead”: A group of ships following a guide in a straight line, one behind another. Contemporary U.S. tacticians referred to this formation in tactical guides as a “column”, the term I will use throughout the study.

tacticians a rough idea of what combat between opposing groups of steam-powered ironclads would look like.

At the battle of Lissa in 1866, an Austrian squadron made up of seven ironclads and 14 unprotected vessels met an Italian squadron of 10 ironclads and 22 unarmored units.<sup>5</sup> The Italian squadron, under the command of Count Carlo Pellion di Persano, was supporting a landing attempt on the island of Lissa, which was held by the Austrians. While shelling the island, they were attacked by the Austrian squadron, led by Wilhelm von Tegetthoff. The capital ships on both sides were of wooden construction, had full sail rigs, iron armor belts, and broadside-mounted armament. The Austrians employed a larger number of breech-loading guns than the Italians, although it was not to be the guns that would play the most dramatic role.

The Italians broke off their shelling of the Austrian positions and deployed for battle in a column formation. Tegetthoff, although outnumbered by the Italians, deployed his ships in a wedge formation and pressed home his attack, driving for the center of the Italian line. His intention, which he had expressed to his captains prior to the action, was to utilize the ram bows of his ironclads in a close action. He soon got his chance. On the Italian side, Persano had taken this inopportune moment to attempt to shift his flag, which threw his line into disarray and confused his commanding officers. The Austrian wedge broke through the line and a general melee ensued. What happened next influenced naval tactical thinking for the next thirty years. The lead ship of the Italian second division was *Re d'Italia*, an armored frigate displacing 5700 tons and armed with 6 72-pounder

---

<sup>5</sup>The following account is taken from Richard Hill, *War at Sea in the Ironclad Age*, ed. John Keegan, Cassell's History of Warfare (London, UK: Cassell, 2000). See also Spencer C. Tucker, *Handbook of 19th Century Naval Warfare* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000), 131-133. Wayne P. Hughes, *Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat*, Second ed. (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 2000), 63-67.

smoothbore shell guns and 32 6-inch breechloading rifles mounted in broadside.<sup>6</sup> She had a 4.5 inch armor belt. She was attacked by the Austrian flagship *Ferdinand Max*. Also an armored cruiser, she was slightly smaller than *Re d'Italia*, with 16 48-pounder, four 8-pounder and two 3-pounder smoothbore guns. Her battery was protected by a 4 inch iron belt. Disregarding the rapid gunfire from the Italian breechloading batteries, Tegetoff executed ramming attacks on both *Re d'Italia* and another, smaller, armored corvette, *Palestro*. Both Italian ships sank in minutes, at a cost of over 800 sailors, including both captains. The Italians eventually withdrew. Tegetoff returned home to a hero's welcome, while Persano faced a court-martial and dismissal from the Italian Navy.

From a strategic standpoint, the battle meant little. Italy and her ally, Prussia, prevailed in the conflict. The battle's impact on naval tactics had a wider effect. Attention focused on the ram as an offensive weapon of importance. The position of primacy of the gun was usurped, albeit briefly, by a return to tactics that seemed more suited to the age of galleys than the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> In one respect, bringing an enemy to action was now easier than it had been in the age of sail. Sailing ships relied on combinations of current and wind for propulsion, and were only capable of sailing within six points (36 degrees) of wind direction. Station-keeping in formation, not to mention closing with and engaging an enemy, were difficult propositions even for squadrons that

---

<sup>6</sup> The nomenclature designating different types of naval guns during this period can be confusing. In general, a gun primarily designed to fire shot (solid projectiles) was designated by the weight of its shot, i.e. a "72-pounder". A gun primarily designed to fire shells (explosive projectiles) was designated in the U.S. Navy by the diameter of its bore, i.e. "6-inch". These generalizations break down quickly, as many shell guns were capable of firing solid shot, and vice versa. For more, see Tucker, Chapter 4.

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that Commodore Foxhall Parker, in addition to his more famous works on contemporary naval tactics, wrote a book on warfare in the age of galleys.

exercised together regularly.<sup>8</sup> With the advent of steam propulsion, an admiral could command his formation regardless of wind speed or direction. Theoretically, ship's speed and turning radius were known quantities, as they could be measured and controlled by engineers. But as captains tried to position their ships to ram an opponent, or launch a torpedo – both weapons that seemed capable of doing more lethal damage faster than guns – the neat line of battle was usually disrupted. Lissa cast doubt on the single column as a method of concentrating firepower.<sup>9</sup>

The development of the torpedo led to the adoption of small craft carrying torpedoes which created new hazards for a line of battleships. In theory, it was possible that a small craft, cheaply built and lightly manned, could sink a capital warship. This created a dangerous paradox for the battle line. Concentrated by necessity to maximize the impact of its guns, the battle line was vulnerable to torpedo attack. To evade such attacks required the ability to shift course as a unit on demand – that is, the entire line of ships had to be able to move in a designated direction by carrying out a designated turn – making a naval officer's ability to handle his ship in close order and high speed imperative for fleet action. Steam propulsion allowed fleet commanders to deal with these new threats to the battle line without being constrained by the direction of the wind, but that freedom came at a cost. Formations moved faster, and both commanders and subordinates had more decisions to make about direction and the disposition of formations, and less time to make them. Successful accomplishment of these tasks required constant rehearsal at sea. While Naval Academy cadets received instruction in

---

<sup>8</sup> Sam Willis, "Fleet Performance and Capability in the Eighteenth-Century Royal Navy," *War In History* 11, no. 4 (2004).

<sup>9</sup> Hughes, 64.

the theory of fleet tactics, the 1870's U.S. Navy did not possess the materiel resources necessary to both carry out its cruising mission and rehearse fleet tactics under steam.<sup>10</sup> The fleet concentration off Key West in late 1873 – early 1874 gave the Navy Department a rare opportunity to address this issue operationally.

The U.S. Navy's foremost expert on the evolution of naval tactics under steam power was Commodore Foxhall A. Parker.<sup>11</sup> He is also one of the most under-recognized figures behind the Navy's shift from cruising to line-of-battle tactics. Much of this may have to do with the fact that he died unexpectedly at a relatively young age.<sup>12</sup> Parker entered the navy as a midshipman in 1837. His development as a junior officer followed a standard antebellum path, with duty aboard the *Constitution*, serving under his father – a prominent naval officer in his own right – who was the commanding officer. During the Civil War, he held several commands, one of which was the Potomac Flotilla, where he was responsible for protecting the Potomac River approaches to the capital and Alexandria, Virginia (held by the Union for most of the war). It was here that he gained experience participating in joint operations, as he had to work closely with the Army commander in the area. It was also here that he used his time in command of a number of small gunboats to work out the tactical evolutions which would eventually be published

---

<sup>10</sup> United States Naval Academy, "Annual Register of the U.S. Naval Academy, 1870," book, Special Collections and Archives Department, Annapolis, MD.

<sup>11</sup> The following drawn from Clark G. Reynolds, *Famous American Admirals*, First Naval Institute Press Edition ed. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2002).

<sup>12</sup> Parker died in 1879 while assigned as the Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy. He is buried in the Naval Academy cemetery on Hospital Point – ironically, only feet from Rear Admiral Bancroft Gherardi's grave and a few yards from Captain William Cushing's grave. One can only speculate the heights Parker would have achieved in the New Steel Navy had he lived.

as the book “Squadron Tactics Under Steam” in 1864.<sup>13</sup> The end of the Civil War did not slow the output of his prolific pen. “The Naval Howitzer Afloat”, a short work on the use of artillery by naval battalions, was published in 1866. “Fleet Tactics Under Steam,” the sequel to “Squadron Tactics Under Steam,” came out in 1869. The Bureau of Navigation immediately provided four copies of this work for each ship fitting out for deployment.<sup>14</sup>

A “fleet” was defined as an assembly of twelve or more warships, arranged in three “divisions” that consisted of at least one “squadron” of not less than four vessels. Three basic formations covered all the options available to a fleet commander: line, column, and echelon, depicted here in Figure 1:

---

<sup>13</sup> Foxhill A. Parker, *Squadron Tactics under Steam* (New York, NY: D. Van Nostrand, 1864). In the special collection of Nimitz Library at the U.S. Naval Academy.

<sup>14</sup> Bureau of Navigation, "Circular Order, 10 December 1869, 1869," Circular Order, RG 24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. . Foxhill A. Parker, *Fleet Tactics under Steam* (New York, NY: D. Van Nostrand, 1870).



FIG. 1.

The order of battle for *iron-clads, rams, and torpedo vessels*:

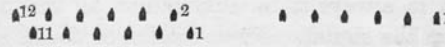


FIG. 2.

The order of battle for vessels whose fighting power is in their *broadside batteries*:



FIG. 3.

Orders offensive and defensive for *vessels of all descriptions*:



Vessels are said to be in *direct echelon* when steering the same course, each bears from its ne

Figure 1: Line Abreast, Column, Echelon<sup>15</sup>

The influence of the 1866 Battle of Lissa can be seen in Parker's diagrams. The line (Parker's "Fig. 1") is identified as useful only for ironclads, rams, and torpedo vessels. The column (Parker's "Fig. 2") is to be used only for vessels which mount broadside batteries. These were, as discussed above, the deployments used by Tegettoff and Persano, respectively. As a result of Tegettoff's success, the column fell briefly into disfavor as a formation for modern armored vessels. Improvements in gun technology

<sup>15</sup> Parker, *Fleet Tactics under Steam*, 10.

and range would soon restore the column to primacy as a tactical formation, but Parker's diagrams represented the state of the art in 1869.<sup>16</sup>

In any of the formations, the vessels could take station at "open order," defined as two cable lengths, or "close order," a single cable length. A "cable" was 120 fathoms, or 720 feet, thus two cable lengths would be 1440 feet, or just under a quarter mile. One cable length would be 720 feet, and "half distance" was 60 fathoms, or 360 feet. The ordered speed for a formation was at all times to be no greater than ½ knot less than the maximum speed of the slowest vessel in the formation. This allowed the slowest vessel a reserve of speed available in order to gain and maintain station.<sup>17</sup>

### ***The U.S. Navy, 1874***

The Union Navy during the Civil War boasted over 700 vessels of all types; steam-powered ironclads such as the famous *Monitor*, paddlewheel gunboats designed to operate in shallow rivers, and wooden cruising vessels designed for service on overseas stations. The large number of commissioned warships notwithstanding, there were no battles during the Civil War that required coordinated fleet maneuvers under steam power. This was mostly because of the small size of the Confederate Navy, but it also had to do with the missions the Union Navy was called upon to carry out during the war.<sup>18</sup> The few engagements that involved large numbers of ships were not fleet actions as such, but actually combined military operations that pitted Union ships against Confederate land fortifications, and vessels that acted as extensions of those land

---

<sup>16</sup> On the debate over these various formations, see Hughes, 70-75.

<sup>17</sup> Parker, *Fleet Tactics under Steam*, 12-13, 217-218.

<sup>18</sup> Namely blockade of Southern ports and riverine operations in support of Union ground troops.

defenses.<sup>19</sup> After the close of hostilities, the U.S. Navy returned to its antebellum deployment patterns. The majority of the vessels constructed or purchased for wartime service were paid off and sold. Six stations were established: the North and South Atlantic, North and South Pacific, Asiatic, and European. By 1874 the entire U.S. Navy consisted of 163 warships. That number is misleading, as both Secretary of the Navy Robeson and Admiral of the Navy David Dixon Porter pointed out in their annual report to Congress that year. It included tugboats and obsolete sail-only craft that were bound for sale and breaking up. The actual tally of effective warships was closer to 73, which represented the number of fighting steam vessels suitable for overseas cruising. Even that figure, though, has a certain amount of ambiguity. Included in the count of 73 were several units that were on the stocks, or in various stages of repair or construction. A review of the warships actually assigned to the six cruising stations for the calendar year 1874 yields the following: The European Station had 4 vessels, the South Atlantic Station had 1 vessel, the South Pacific Station had 3 vessels, the North Pacific Station had 6 vessels, the Asiatic Station had 8 vessels, and the North Atlantic, or “home” Station counted 10 cruising vessels and 2 monitors.<sup>20</sup> From the preceding, can be seen that the U.S. Navy had available the combat power of approximately 34 warships. To man and support these 34 warships, the Navy could draw upon an authorized strength of 10,000 officers and men and an annual budget of just over \$23 million.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Farragut at Mobile Bay (1864) being the prime example of this. For a discussion of important naval actions during the U.S. Civil War and the argument that it was an important, but unique naval conflict, see Hill.

<sup>20</sup> All figures taken from Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy on the Operations of the Department, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1874* 1874.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

The ships on these stations rarely worked together. Alfred Thayer Mahan noted in his memoirs that: “The rule was that the vessels were scattered, one to this port, another to that... to the several officers their own ship was everything, the squadron little or nothing.”<sup>22</sup> The organization of the Navy Department was also fragmented. Under the Secretary of the Navy, the Department was organized into eight bureaus by legislation in 1862: the Bureau of Navy-Yards and Docks, the Bureau of Construction and Repair, the Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting, the Bureau of Steam Engineering, the Bureau of Provisions and Clothing, the Bureau of Ordnance, and the Bureau of Navigation. This last was considered the first among equals, as it had cognizance over the Office of Detail, which controlled the movements of officers and ships. The eight bureaus oversaw a budget of just over \$19 million dollars. Cooperation among the bureaus was poor. Until the establishment of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations after the turn of the twentieth century, there was no single operational commander between the bureau chiefs and the appointed civilian Secretary of the Navy. The Admiral of the Fleet – Admiral David Dixon Porter in 1874 – was the principal uniformed advisor to the Secretary of the Navy, but his role was advisory. The exercise of executive authority was reserved for the Secretary of the Navy.

The Navy’s infrastructure to service its warships on the East Coast was provided by six navy yards: Portsmouth, Massachusetts; Charlestown (Boston), Massachusetts; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Brooklyn, New York; Washington, D.C.; and Norfolk, Virginia. Significantly, there were no other naval facilities between Norfolk and the navy yard at Pensacola, Florida, on the Gulf of Mexico. This vexed station commanders, as

---

<sup>22</sup> Alfred T. Mahan, *From Sail to Steam: Recollections of Naval Life* (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1907), 271.

they had to send their warships north, at least as far as Norfolk, if not further, if they needed extended repairs or had yellow fever cases on board.<sup>23</sup> Navy dockyards, as major bases where ships were constructed and repaired, have received attention from historians.<sup>24</sup> Less written about are the smaller naval stations, which simply existed to re-supply and re-coal the navy's vessels on the east coast, but their role in enabling the vessels of the North Atlantic Squadron to concentrate would become increasingly important in the age of steam. Unlike sailing vessels, which, once commissioned, needed very little in the way of regular supply beyond fresh vegetables and meat, steam vessels required regular transfusions of coal and greater maintenance to the variety of engines and equipment carried on board. In the early days of the steam navy, the way this was dealt with was to have single ships pull into ports at their convenience and procure their own coal or supplies. This approach tied the number of vessels that could be serviced at any one time to the ability of the surrounding civilian workforce and infrastructure to provide coal and supplies. For the fleet to spend more time concentrated, it would be necessary to have a location which could coal and supply multiple ships; this was a subject of some concern to the Navy Department in the latter part of the decade.

Operationally, the problem with utilizing the existing navy yards as homeports lay within the navy's bureau organization and structure. Under the regulations then in force, whenever a vessel was required to report to a navy yard, it came under the command of the commandant of that navy yard. Thus the vessel was no longer under the

---

<sup>23</sup> Ships with multiple cases of yellow fever on board were typically ordered to the Naval Hospital at Portsmouth, NH. See, for example, George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Robeson to Mullany, 18 July 1874, 1874," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>24</sup> Peltier, Eugene, *The Bureau of Yards and Docks of the Navy and the Civil Engineer Corps*, New York, Newcomen Society in America, 1961; R.J. Winklareth, *Naval Shipbuilders of the World: From the Age of Sail to the Present Day* (Chatham, 2000), 125-209.

operational control of the squadron commander-in-chief. This protocol often caused misunderstandings about who correspondence should be addressed to, reviewed by, or which organization (squadron or navy yard) was responsible for carrying out tasks associated with a particular warship.<sup>25</sup> This structural organization is evidence that the squadron commander-in-chief was not intended to concentrate his warships in one location as a routine practice. Instead, it was expected that ships that were in commission would spend the majority of their time deployed as single units, resupplying either off of the local economy wherever they were showing the flag, or from one of the small navy depots in the gulf region. The most-often used of these for the North Atlantic Station was Key West, Florida, where the 1874 exercises would be held. But even at the depots, there were problems. The supplies of fresh vegetables and beef that could be had locally often could not supply more than one or two ships at a time.

The fact that U.S. warships were not concentrated or regularly rehearsing tactical maneuvers is not to say that there was no innovation happening within the Navy Department in the 1870's. As ships became more heavily armored neither the accuracy nor the explosive power of the guns of the 1870's were capable of penetrating the heaviest armor. The military problem to be solved at sea became one of penetrating the non-armored skin of an opposing warship below the waterline. One way to achieve this, as the Battle of Lissa demonstrated, was to ram the opposing ship, driving the attacker's prow into its hull. The concept of a torpedo built on this concept. A "torpedo" in the mid-nineteenth century was simply an explosive device. Extended in front of the

---

<sup>25</sup> J.C. Howell, CinC, Bureau of Ordnance, "Letter, Howell to Mullany, 18 October 1875, 1875," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C. This letter is one example of the tensions between operational and yard commanders. There are many like it in this era.

attacking ship on a spar, the torpedo constituted a ram with extended reach. The explosive charge seemed to provide a much more accurate and controllable way of doing major damage to an ironclad vessel.<sup>26</sup>

All major navies were experimenting with the torpedo during this decade, as previously discussed. U.S. Secretary of the Navy Adolph E. Borie recognized the importance and possible utility of this new weapon system. During his brief three-month tenure as Navy Secretary, he authorized the foundation of a torpedo school at Newport, Rhode Island.<sup>27</sup> While the Royal Navy was successful in fielding a self-propelled variant in the 1860's, U.S. naval officers were originally drawn to their use as stationary explosives, or what would be referred to as "mines" today. The thought was that strategically important U.S. harbors could be protected by a combination of monitors and a field of electronically-detonated torpedoes.<sup>28</sup> Tactical, non-stationary versions were attached to the attacking ship either by a spar or towed alongside, physical forces holding the towed torpedo away from the offensive ship at a 45 degree angle until it could be positioned to make contact with an opponent.<sup>29</sup> Surprisingly, one of the biggest advocates of the torpedo ram was the arch-conservative Admiral of the Navy, David Dixon Porter. History has left Porter with a reputation for resistance to change, especially for his infamous stinginess with coal and insistence on the use of sails for deployed warships, but in actuality Porter enthusiastically embraced certain innovations.

---

<sup>26</sup> Hughes., pg. 67.

<sup>27</sup> Adolph Borie, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Borie to Dahlgren, 2 June 1869, 1869," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy to the Chiefs of Navy Bureaus, 1842-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>28</sup> David Dixon Porter, ADM, "Letter, Porter to Robeson, 4 December 1873, 1873," Letter, RG 74, Records of the Bureau of Ordnance, Washington, D.C.

<sup>29</sup> Tucker, 168.

The torpedo boat was one of them.<sup>30</sup> The files of the Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance are filled with letters from Porter – sometimes daily – excitedly talking about one of his pet torpedo projects.

*Alarm* was one such enterprise. She was 176 feet long and displaced 800 tons. Her main armament consisted of a 32 foot reinforced iron prow, and a torpedo spar which extended from a watertight gland at the tip of the ram.<sup>31</sup> She was assigned to the New York Navy Yard to perform experimental work with torpedoes. She would eventually be assigned to the Torpedo School at Newport, Rhode Island. *Alarm's* weakness was the inability of her steam powerplant to attain the high speeds necessary to mount a torpedo attack against a warship. At full steam, *Alarm's* maximum speed was only ten knots.<sup>32</sup> Only slightly faster was the *Intrepid*, another torpedo ram of similar characteristics launched in Boston at about the same time. With a top speed of 11 knots, *Intrepid* was still considered to be too slow to carry out her designed mission of closing a large warship, and maneuvering her spar torpedo into a position where it could be exploded under her waterline. Still, *Alarm* and *Intrepid* provided platforms from which the tactics and technology of the torpedo could be worked out for future generations of warfighters. These tactics had not yet progressed to the point where joint operations involving the torpedo ram and cruising vessels were contemplated.<sup>33</sup> Instead, most naval officers assumed that torpedo craft would be used in conjunction with moored torpedoes (mines)

---

<sup>30</sup> David Dixon Porter, ADM, "Letter, Porter to Case, 12 June 1872, 1872," Letter, RG 74, Records of the Bureau of Ordnance, Washington, D.C.

<sup>31</sup> "Bigbadbattleships: Pre Dreadnaught Homeport", <http://bigbadbattleships.com> (accessed 10 February 2011 2011).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> European navies had not yet integrated torpedo boats into "grand fleet" tactics, either.



to guard harbors.<sup>34</sup> U.S. naval officers, particularly those on the European Station, watched developments in Europe carefully. Cruising warships were outfitted with Harvey (spar) torpedoes, which they practiced deploying regularly and reported the results to the Bureau of Ordnance.<sup>35</sup>

Regardless of the capacity in which torpedo boats would be utilized, it was apparent that flagships and/or larger fleet units would have to communicate with them. This, perhaps, is why the publication of new tactical codebooks in early 1869 was overseen by the Torpedo School, prior to the assignment of a Chief Signal Officer for the Navy.<sup>36</sup> This development took place in the summer of 1869.<sup>37</sup> The establishment of the office of the Chief Signal Officer, within the Bureau of Navigation, was a tacit admission by the Navy of the fact that ships of the upcoming era would be required to work in company and communicate with each other far more often than occasional meetings in overseas ports. The future Navy was going to require tools and skills substantially more developed than exchanging numbers and requests to “send a boat on board” with the flagship every few weeks. Officers with specialized training in the art of signaling would be required, as would new and improved equipment. Several different systems of

---

<sup>34</sup> E.W. Very, Lieutenant, U.S.N, *Report on Torpedo-Boats for Coast Defense* 1884.

<sup>35</sup> James Alden, RADM, "Letter, Alden to Case, 27 April 1872, 1872," Letter, RG 74, Records of the Bureau of Ordnance, Washington, D.C; "Torpedoes and Sunken Mines," *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 551 (1874).

<sup>36</sup> E.O. Matthews, "Letter, Matthews to Alden, 15 April 1870, 1870," letter, RG 24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

<sup>37</sup> Bureau of Navigation, "General Order, Bureau of Navigation, 19 July 1869, 1869," Order, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

sending signals, both day and night, were experimented with during this time.<sup>38</sup> The amount of correspondence in the Chief Signal Officer's records dealing with methods of signaling between warships at night leads one to believe that the Navy Department assumed that future operations would require their ships to spend more time in formation.

Once the signal office was up and operating, Commodore S.P. Lee, the first Chief Signals Officer, began to work on how best to get this important training to the fleet. The problem was attacked on two fronts. First, naval cadets at the Naval Academy in Annapolis were to be instructed in signals. By 1872 they were being trained in the naval system of signaling before graduation.<sup>39</sup> It worked, because later that year, commanding officers in the fleet were reporting to the Navy Department that the midshipmen received from the Academy had been "thoroughly instructed at the U.S. Naval Academy."<sup>40</sup> At the same time, it was important to get training out to the fleet. This was accomplished by detailing an officer or two from each ship in commission to receive signals training at Washington, D.C. An agreement was made with the Army Signal Office to provide this training, as the Navy had decided to use the Army Code of Signals to transmit non-tactical messages.<sup>41</sup> Once these core officers were trained, they were to return to their

---

<sup>38</sup> Daniel Ammen, Rear Admiral, "Letter, Ammen to Parker, 5 May 1874, 1874," letter, RG24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.; Rear Admiral Ammen, "Letter, Ammen to Parker, 15 October 1873, 1873," letter, RG24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

<sup>39</sup> Commodore Worden, Superintendent of the Naval Academy, asked for copies of the new signal manual for the purpose of teaching it to the students at the Academy. See John J. Almy, Commodore, "Letter, Almy to Worden, John L., Commodore, 1872," letter, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

<sup>40</sup> John J. Almy, Commodore, "Letter, Almy to Ammen, April 1872, 1872," letter, RG 24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

<sup>41</sup>The office of the Chief Signal Officer arranged the rental of an ambulance, mules, and drivers to ferry naval officers receiving the training to Ft. Whipple, where the Army signal school was located. See Rear Admiral Ammen, "Letter, Ammen to Almy, 26 April 1872, 1872," letter, RG24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

ships and provide training to the rest of the crew. A “Quarterly Report of Signals Training” was instituted by the office of the Chief Signal Officer to monitor each ship’s progress.<sup>42</sup> Commanding officers were apparently annoyed at yet another piece of paperwork required by the Navy Department; the files of the CSO’s office are stuffed with copies of complaints sent to the chief of the Bureau of Navigation about CO’s and their missing, incomplete, or sloppy quarterly reports.<sup>43</sup> One commanding officer, however, was never late with his report, and always made certain that his signal officers conducted their required training. Commander Stephen B. Luce, CO of the *Juniata* on the European Station, consistently filed the most comprehensive reports. 140 years after the fact, it is easy to spot the many reports that were filled out at the last minute, with very little attention to the veracity of the report being made. Many commanding officers failed to grasp the importance of the coming changes in naval warfare, but Luce was not one of them.<sup>44</sup> It is evidence that, as early as 1871, the future Commander-in-Chief of the North Atlantic Squadron and founder of the Naval War College was concerned about the details involved with training and fighting as a fleet, rather than a single ship.

Even with the amount of training being conducted, both at Washington, D.C. and afloat, the combination of naval tactical signals with the Army’s signal book was unsatisfying to the Navy Department. In light of the changing face of naval warfare, it soon became evident that what was needed was a signal book that more closely

---

<sup>42</sup> Rear Admiral Alden, "Letter, Alden to Almy, 3 Feb 1871, 1871," letter, RG24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

<sup>43</sup>There are multiple reports like this. See, for example, John J. Almy, Commodore, "Letter, Almy to Alden, 26 June 1871, 1871," letter, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>44</sup> John J. Almy, Commodore, "Letter, Almy to Luce, 4 May 1871, 1871," Letter, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

complemented Commodore Parker's new book on steam tactics. In October of 1872, a board was appointed by the Bureau of Navigation, charged with "modify[ing] the Tactical Signal Book so as to conform to what is necessary for the execution of maneuvers...for Parker's Steam Tactics."<sup>45</sup> Captain Parker put in his own suggestions for the signal book as well.<sup>46</sup> By early 1873, the new Tactical Signal Book was ready for the fleet.<sup>47</sup> It was this new signal book that Commodore Parker – by then the new Chief Signal Officer – brought with him to exercise with the assembled vessels at Key West in early 1874.

### ***The Royal Navy, 1874***

The gold standard of what constituted a "fleet" in the Victorian Era, against which the North Atlantic Squadron can be measured, was deployed by Great Britain's Royal Navy. The Royal Navy of the nineteenth century had two separate and competing missions. On one hand, the protection of the lines of communication connecting Great Britain with her Colonies was crucial to the economic well-being of the Empire. To carry out this function, the Royal Navy employed squadrons of masted wooden cruisers, not unlike those of the U.S. Navy. More importantly, the Royal Navy was seen as the island's most important line of defense against invasion.<sup>48</sup> For this task, the Channel

---

<sup>45</sup> John J. Almy, Commodore, "Letter, Almy to Ammen, 31 October 1872, 1872," letter, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>46</sup> Foxhall Parker, Commodore, "Omissions, Corrections, Additions to the U.S. Naval Signal Book (Steam Tactics) Proposed and Submitted by Capt. F.A. Parker, 1872," letter, Washington, D.C.

<sup>47</sup> John J. Almy, Commodore, "Letter, Almy to Ammen, 10 January 1873, 1873," Letter, RG 24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

<sup>48</sup> N.A.M. Rodger, "Naval Strategy in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", in Geoffrey Till, ed. *The Development of British Naval Thinking: Essays in Memory of Bryan McLaren Ranft*, ed. Geoffrey Till, Cass Series: Naval Policy and History (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006), 19-33. See also Paul Kennedy, *The*

Fleet relied upon the most modern armored warships. The British “battlefleet” – in other words, the first rate warships which would be expected to take their place in a line of battle – of the 1870’s was, in fact, a homeguard.<sup>49</sup>

In 1874, the Royal Navy consisted of 102 warships, manned by 60,000 personnel with an annual budget of over \$54 million.<sup>50</sup> The cruising stations of the Royal Navy consisted of China, the East Indies, Australia, the Pacific, the South East Coast of America, the Cape of Good Hope, the West Coast of Africa, North America and the West Indies, the Mediterranean, and the “Home Waters” station.<sup>51</sup> This latter was also referred to as the Channel Squadron. While it did not have a cruising or overseas presence mission, the Channel Squadron was responsible for the defense of the home island – in that respect, her mission was much different than that of the North Atlantic Squadron, which had a cruising function in addition to being expected to defend the East Coast of the United States in the event of attack by a foreign navy. In 1874, the Channel Squadron consisted of 10 ships: *Devastation*, *Black Prince*, *Hector*, *Agincourt*, *Northumberland*, *Monarch*, *Hercules*, *Sultan*, *Audacious*, and *Glatton*. The following tables compare the eight vessels of the U.S. Navy’s North Atlantic Squadron with the ten warships of the Royal Navy’s Channel Squadron.

---

*Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (Malabar, FL: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1982; reprint, 1982).

<sup>49</sup> G.A. Ballard, *The Black Battlefleet* (Naval Institute Press, 1980), 16-17.

<sup>50</sup> Barry M. Gough, *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810-1914: A Study of British Maritime Ascendancy* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1971; reprint, 1974), 248.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

## THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON - 1874<sup>52</sup>

SHIP	DISP (TONS)	TYPE/CONST	ARMOR	ARMAMENT	SPEED (KTS)	ERA BUILT <sup>53</sup> (DATE)
POWHATAN	3765	WOODEN SIDEWHL STMTR	NO	1X11" DAHLGRENS <sup>54</sup> 3X100LB PARROT RIFLE <sup>55</sup> 16X9" DAHLGRENS	11.0	ANTEBELLUM (1852)
WORCESTER	3000	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	1X60LB PARROTT 14X9" DAHLGRENS	13.0	POST-WAR (1871)
CANANDAIGUA	2030	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	1X150LB PARROT RIFLE 2X11" DAHLGRENS 1X30LB PARROT RIFLE	10.0	CIVIL WAR (1862)
WYOMING	1457	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	2X11" DAHLGRENS 1X60LB PARROT RIFLE 3X32LB GUNS	11.0	ANTEBELLUM (1859)
SHAWMUT	579	WOODEN SCREW GUNBOAT	NO	1X150LB PARROT RIFLE 3X9" DAHLGRENS	11.0	CIVIL WAR (1864)
NIPSIC	579	WOODEN SCREW GUNBOAT	NO	1X150LB PARROT RIFLE 3X9" DAHLGRENS	11.0	CIVIL WAR (1863)
TERROR	3295	MONITOR	YES	4X15" SB GUNS	8.5	CIVIL WAR (1864)
SAUGUS	2100	MONITOR	YES	2X15" SB GUNS	8.0	CIVIL WAR (1864)

**Table 1: The North Atlantic Squadron - 1874<sup>56</sup>**

<sup>52</sup> A list of specific ships on station at any given time is necessarily a moving target. Vessels were transferred on and off station constantly due to repairs, reassignment to a different cruising station, or decommissioning. The names of vessels in this table, and all others throughout the study, come from the Secretary of the Navy's Annual Report for that calendar year. See Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy on the Operations of the Department, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1874*.

<sup>53</sup> Timothy Wolters, in his work on U.S. Navy recapitalization in the nineteenth century, identifies four classifications of U.S. vessels: Antebellum Navy, Civil War Navy, Post-Civil War Navy, and New Steel Navy. All tables in this study follow his convention. See Timothy S. Wolters, "Recapitalizing the Fleet: A Material Analysis of Late-Nineteenth-Century U.S. Naval Power," *Technology and Culture* 52, no. 1 (2011): 117.

<sup>54</sup> A "Dahlgren" was a heavy, smooth-bore, muzzle-loading shell gun invented by Rear Admiral John Dahlgren, U.S. Navy. See Tucker, 82-85.

<sup>55</sup> A "Parrott Rifle" was a muzzle-loading cast iron rifle with a wrought iron band shrunk over the breech to strengthen it. It was invented by Robert P. Parrott. See *Ibid.*, 91-92.

<sup>56</sup> Donald L. Canney, *The Old Steam Navy: Frigates, Sloops, and Gunboats, 1815-1885*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1990).

## THE CHANNEL SQUADRON - 1874

SHIP	DISP (TONS)	TPYE/CONST	ARMOR	SPEED	ARMAMENT	DATE
DEVESTATION	9180	IRONCLAD TURRET SHIP	YES	13.8KTS	4X12" MLR <sup>57</sup>	1871
BLACK PRINCE	9284	BROADSIDE IRONCLAD	YES	13.6KTS	24X7" MLR	1861
HECTOR	7100	BROADSIDE IRONCLAD	YES	12.7KTS	16X7" MLR 2X8" MLR	1864
AGINCOURT	10784	BROADSIDE IRONCLAD	YES	14.1KTS	4X9" MLR 24X7" MLR 8X24 LB SB <sup>58</sup>	1867
NORTHUMBERLAND	10784	BROADSIDE IRONCLAD	YES	14.1KTS	4X9" MLR 22X8" MLR 2X7" MLR	1868
MONARCH	8456	IRONCLAD TURRET SHIP	YES	14.9KTS	4X12" MLR 2X9" MLR 1X7" MLR	1869
HERCULES	8816	CENTRAL IRONCLAD	BATTERY YES	14.7KTS	8X10" MLR 1X9" MLR 2X7" MLR	1869
SULTAN	9439	CENTRAL IRONCLAD	BATTERY YES	14.1KTS	8X10" MLR 4X9" MLR	1871
AUDACIOUS	6131	CENTRAL IRONCLAD	BATTERY YES	14.1KTS	10X9" MLR 4X64LB MLR	1870
GLATTAN	4491	MONITOR	YES	12.1KTS	2X12" MLR	1872

Table 2: The Channel Squadron - 1874<sup>59</sup>

Studying these two tables shows at once two different naval forces, designed to perform different missions. The Channel Squadron's mission was to confront the naval forces of a European power and defeat them in fleet combat. The ships' armored construction makes that clear. More than just materiel sets the Channel Squadron apart, however. Organizationally, the Channel Squadron spent the majority of its time in company, in a way almost unheard of in the U.S. Navy at that time. They possessed an identity as a unit devoted to training and preparation for combat. The warships of the

<sup>57</sup> "MLR" denotes "Muzzle-loading Rifle"

<sup>58</sup> "SB" denotes "Smoothbore"

<sup>59</sup> Roger; Kolesnik Chesneau, Eugene M., ed. *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships, 1860-1905*, ed. Robert Gardiner (London, UK: Conway Maritime Press, 1979).

Channel Squadron attended commemorations and celebrations and visited ports throughout Great Britain together. The First Lord was often requested by members of Parliament to have the Squadron (not individual ships, but the Squadron) visit their constituencies.<sup>60</sup> The Channel Squadron also possessed a homeport that it could call its own, something which enabled them to carry out squadron-wide exercises on a regular basis. Located opposite the Isle of Wight on the southeastern coast of England, the generous anchorage available at Spithead gave the Channel Squadron the opportunity to concentrate in a strategically important location opposite the French coast. Keeping the warships concentrated allowed them regular opportunities for exercise as a unit. It also allowed the officers opportunities to socialize, contributing to their ability to think of themselves as a coherent fighting unit. The officer corps of the Channel Squadron spent a great deal of time together, both at sea and ashore. At their homeport of Portsmouth, the officers of the Squadron had been instrumental in founding a popular officers' club in 1868.<sup>61</sup> Without a suitable homeport close to their area of operations, the North Atlantic Squadron did not have these same opportunities. The Squadron's focus on cruising operations meant that deployment patterns, rather than socialization, shaped the professional perspective of the U.S. naval officer corps.

Because they were not a cruising squadron, the warships of the Channel Squadron did not have a mission to support the Foreign Ministry, or use their warships to "show the flag" abroad. It is more instructive to compare the North Atlantic Squadron with a British one that did perform cruising duties. In the waters of the Pacific Northwest, for

---

<sup>60</sup> *The Parliamentary Debates (Authorized Edition)*, 1872. pt. v. 212.

<sup>61</sup> "The Service Clubs: The Royal Naval Club, Portsmouth," *Illustrated Naval and Military Magazine: A monthly journal devoted to all subjects connected with Her Majesty's land and sea forces* 3, no. (1885).



example, the Royal Navy had 9 warships on station in 1874. They were the *Boxer*, *Fawn*, *Fisgard*, *Myrmidon*, *Peterel*, *Reindeer*, *Repulse*, *Tenedos*, and *Thetis II*.<sup>62</sup>

### ROYAL NAVY – PACIFIC NORTHWEST SQUADRON, 1874

SHIP	DISP (TONS)	TYPE/CONST	ARMOR	SPEED	ARMAMENT	DATE
FISGARD	1068	WOODEN FRIGATE	NO	N/A	46 GUNS. STATION SHIP. NOT ON EFFECTIVE LIST IN 1874	1819
REPULSE	6190	CENTRAL BATTERY IRONCLAD	YES	12.5KTS	12X8" MLR	1870
FAWN	1108	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO		17 GUNS	1856
REINDEER	1365	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	9.1KTS	5X40PDR ML SB 12X32PDR ML SB	1866
PETEREL	849	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	8.9KTS	6X32PDR ML SB 4X20PDR BL 1X40PDR BL	1860
TENEDOS	1755	WOODEN SCREW CORVETTE	NO	13.0KTS	2X7" MLR 4X64PDR MLR	1872
THETIS II	1854	WOODEN SCREW CORVETTE	NO	13.4KTS	14X64PDR MLR	1873
BOXER	603	COMPOSITE GUNBOAT	NO	9-10.3KTS	1X7" MLR 1X64PDR MLR 2X20PDR BL	1868
MYRMIDON	877	WOODEN GUNBOAT/SURVEY VESSEL	NO	10KTS	1X110PDR BL 1X68PDR SB 2X20PDR	1867

Table 3: Royal Navy – Pacific Northwest Squadron, 1874<sup>63</sup>

With the exception of the central-battery ironclad *Repulse*, the forces at the Royal Navy station at Esquimalt, British Columbia closely resembled those possessed by the commander in chief of the North Atlantic Station. The point of this comparison is that the oft-maligned warships of the 1870's U.S. Navy compare favorably with those of the most advanced fleet in the world when analyzed by mission type. This is important because it begs the question why, when equipped with materiel and a mission resembling the cruising squadrons of a first-rate navy, was the North Atlantic Squadron asked, in 1874, to practice the mission of a first-rate navy's battle fleet?

<sup>62</sup> Names of ships on station in 1874 come from Gough, Appendix F, pp. 256-258.

<sup>63</sup> Chesneau, ed.

## *The Virginius Affair*

The U.S. Navy had mustered all its available ships in Key West, Florida, in late 1873 in response to the threat of war with Spain. Long a declining imperial power, Spain's increasing inability to maintain order in her overseas possessions had caused uneasiness around the world.<sup>64</sup> In no location was this truer than Cuba, one of the focal points of the North Atlantic Squadron's operations in the Caribbean Sea.

The events that nearly led to war with Spain began in 1870, at the pier of the Washington Navy Yard, where a surplus ex-Confederate blockade runner named *Virgin* was moored. *Virgin* had been in and out of government hands since being captured by the Union Navy during the war. She was a side-paddlewheel steamer, 225 feet long, with a powerful engine. Offered for sale by the government, she was bought by an American businessman who was acting as a proxy for Cuban insurrectionists. They intended to use the ship to run troops and supplies to their positions in Cuba. Over the next three years *Virginius*, as she had been renamed, made several successful runs with weapons, supplies, and fresh troops. Along the way, *Virginius* became well-known to just about everyone in the Caribbean. It was no secret that she was supplying the Cuban rebels. U.S. naval forces in the Caribbean were familiar with the nature of work that *Virginius*

---

<sup>64</sup> On Spain as a declining world power during this era, see Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2012), 16. As an example of the enormous financial toll which prolonged wars exacted from Spain, see Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567-1659*, ed. J. H. and Koenigsberger Elliott, H. G., paperback ed., Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

was engaged in.<sup>65</sup> She was, however, flying an American flag, which for a time stopped Spanish officials from seizing her.<sup>66</sup>

In October of 1873, her luck ran out. After a chase of several hours, the *Virginus* was captured by a Spanish gunboat as she attempted to bring a load of war materiel and volunteers to the rebel forces in Cuba. *Virginus* was brought into port at Santiago de Cuba, where the Spanish military authorities rushed through a perfunctory court-martial and sentenced the captain, Joseph Fry (who was an American citizen, Annapolis graduate, and ex-Confederate naval officer), as well as another 53 passengers and crew, to death. These executions were carried out, over the strenuous objections of the U.S. vice counsel on the scene, between the 4th and 13<sup>th</sup> of November, 1873. Fortunately for the rest of the imprisoned crew of the *Virginus* a Royal Navy ship, *HMS Niobe* (4), Captain Sir Lambton Loraine commanding, arrived on the scene, having been dispatched by the admiral commanding the British West Indian Naval Forces. The British were at first reluctant to become involved in the filibustering imbroglio, but the U.S. counsel at Jamaica managed to convince the Admiral that there were British citizens aboard the *Virginus*. Loraine intervened with the Spanish authorities to prevent any further executions. With British Imperial disfavor now plainly displayed by a black-hulled warship at anchor in the harbor, Captain-General Burriel relented. The executions stopped.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup> Willaim Ronckendorff, CAPT, "Letter, Ronckendorff to Scott, Radm, 3 July 1873, 1873," Letter, RG 313, Records of the Operating Forces, Washington, D.C.

<sup>66</sup> On the events leading up to the confrontation over the *Virginus*, see Richard H. Bradford, *The Virginus Affair* (Boulder, CO: Colorado Associated University Press, 1980); French Ensor Chadwick, RADM, *The Relations of the United States and Spain: Diplomacy* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909).

<sup>67</sup> Bradford.

Meanwhile, the closest U.S. ship to Santiago de Cuba was the *Wyoming* (6), Captain William Cushing commanding. She had arrived at Aspinwall, on the isthmus of Panama, in September 1873.<sup>68</sup> Operating independently, as was standard for U.S. ships on the North Atlantic Station, her mission was to protect U.S. interests in this always-important geographic nexus for travel and commerce. A recent revolution in Panama had made the U.S. merchants and railroad agents uneasy, and they welcomed the visit of a U.S. warship to their harbor.<sup>69</sup>

Cushing epitomized the independent-operating naval officer. A member of the Annapolis class of 1862, Cushing proved his stubbornness and determination before he even received a commission. When he was forced to leave the Naval Academy in his senior year due to academic difficulties, Cushing pushed for and received a wartime commission as a master.<sup>70</sup> Master Cushing excelled at his early wartime assignments, and eventually won reinstatement to the rank of Passed Midshipman. Thanks to the exigencies of the Civil War, he was promoted quickly, and soon was a lieutenant.

Cushing's exploits while on blockading duty off the coast of North Carolina represented a kind of leadership that the industrial revolution was rapidly making obsolete. Cushing acted independently, carrying out what he perceived to be his duty with minimal input from superiors and the freedom, as a relatively junior officer, to

---

<sup>68</sup> "Aspinwall" was the name used by Europeans to refer to the city founded by Panama Railroad president William Henry Aspinwall at the eastern terminus of the Panama Railroad. Indigenous Panamanians called the city "Colón," to honor Christopher Columbus. Eventually the city was universally referred to as "Colón." Throughout this study, I will conform to the contemporary usage of U.S. naval officers in their official reports.

<sup>69</sup> William Cushing, CDR, "Letter, Cushing to Scott, 7 October 1873, 1873," Letter, RG 313, Records of the Operating Forces, Washington, D.C; G. H. Rear Admiral Scott, "Letter, Scott to Robeson, 30 October 1873, 1873," Letter, RG 45, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron (1866-1885), Washington, D.C.

<sup>70</sup> An officer rank no longer in use that was roughly the equivalent of today's lieutenant, junior grade.

determine his own best course of action given whatever circumstances he was in. Often, this required him to act decisively first, and seek approval from higher up after the fact. Cushing relished this role. “A ship at sea is a complete system in itself”, he wrote his cousin, “The captain is king, and as absolute a monarch as ever lived. The officers are his house of lords, and some five hundred men are his subjects...I had rather be an officer on board a man o’ war than the President of les Etats-Unis.”<sup>71</sup>

Cushing is best known for his daring raid on the Confederate ram *Albermarle* during the Civil War. *Albermarle* was constructed in a shipyard in North Carolina in 1863-1864. She was 158 feet long, carrying on her superstructure a casemate 60 feet long covered with 4 inches of iron plating. Her armament consisted of broadside guns, but more importantly an armored bow that was to be used as a ram. She got underway on 17 April and made her way down the Roanoke River. She ran a gauntlet of Union fire at Warren’s Neck, the shot from the Union fort bouncing off her casemate, and then happened upon two Union Navy gunboats. Like most of the hurriedly purchased and armed vessels that the Union Navy used for river patrol, *Miami* and *Southfield* were heavily armed, but unarmored, and no match for the Confederate ironclad. *Albermarle* attacked the two boats aggressively, plunging her armored bow deep into *Southfield*’s side and causing the gunboat to sink almost immediately. *Miami*, meanwhile, fired furiously into *Albermarle* at almost point-blank range, but the shots simply bounced off the Confederate ram’s armored sides. Frustrated, and with her commanding officer disabled, *Miami* withdrew. Thusly, in the space of a few minutes, *Albermarle* had established Confederate naval supremacy on the Roanoke River. After recovering a few

---

<sup>71</sup> Cushing to Mary Edwards, May 20, 1860, quoted in Robert J. Jr. Schneller, *Cushing: Civil War Seal*, ed. Dennis E. Showalter, Military Profiles (Washington, D.C.: Brassey’s Inc., 2004).

survivors from *Southfield*, she returned to port. Another, larger, engagement took place on 5 May. While *Albermarle* and another Confederate steamer, *Bombshell*, were escorting a troop transport, they were engaged by four Union warships: *Miami*, *Mattabesett*, *Sassacus*, and *Wyalusing*. *Bombshell* was forced to surrender, but *Albermarle* successfully traded fire with all four Union ships before retiring, unharmed. The situation for the Union was now critical. The Union Navy's ability to conduct naval warfare on the Roanoke River was completely negated by one armored ship, about which their gunboats could do nothing. The ram would have to be cut out and destroyed.

Unfortunately for the Confederate Navy, Commander Fusser, the commanding officer of the *Southfield*, had been a close friend of Lieutenant Cushing. "I shall never rest until I have avenged his death", Cushing swore.<sup>72</sup> Without hesitation, he volunteered to take two small boats upriver to destroy the Confederate ironclad. The mission was carried out on the night of 27 October 1864. Leading two small boats and 20 men, he crept up the river, past a detachment of sentries standing watch on the sunken hulk of the *Southfield*, and drove a spar torpedo underneath the hull of the *Albermarle*, personally detonating it when it was placed correctly. He and his crew then dove overboard amidst heavy small arms fire and swam away. For his actions, Lieutenant Cushing was voted the thanks of Congress (which resulted in his being advanced in rank) and a large share of the prize money awarded by a court of admiralty when the hulk eventually fell into Union hands. Northern newspapers made much of the brilliant naval exploit, at a time when

---

<sup>72</sup> Ralph J. and Van Doren Roske, Charles, *Lincoln's Commando: The Biography of Cdr. William B. Cushing, USN*, Bluejacket Books ed., Bluejacket Books (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1957; reprint, 1995).

civilian morale and zeal for prosecuting the war was at a low point in the Northern states.<sup>73</sup>

This, then was the officer who received a telegram in November 1874 while at Aspinwall, Colombia, stating that American citizens were in danger in Cuba. Any naval officer of that era would be expected to act exactly as Cushing now did – taking immediate, decisive action. Although, in this case, Cushing’s actions were not as immediate as the vice-counsel in Santiago de Cuba would have liked them to be. As much of a reputation as Cushing might have had for celerity, he does not seem to have been in much of a hurry to leave Aspinwall. This may have had something to do with the fact that everyone in the U.S. Navy knew exactly what *Virginius* was doing, and it was not exactly surprising that she had been caught in flagrant violation of the law. The assumption was that the American flag flying from *Virginius*’ mast would protect her passengers and crew. After receiving the initial telegram, Cushing telegraphed back to the vice consul at Santiago de Cuba, asking for “more information”, then waited over the weekend (the telegraph office was closed) for his reply. Satisfied that American lives and property were, in fact, in danger, Cushing took on coal and departed from Aspinwall on 11 November.<sup>74</sup> After leaving Aspinwall, Cushing touched at Kingston, Jamaica, where he satisfied himself that the *Virginius*’ papers were in order, then proceeded immediately to anchor at Santiago de Cuba.<sup>75</sup> Here Cushing met with Captain Loraine and the US counsel. He then wrote a scathing letter to the Spanish military officer in

---

<sup>73</sup> "Further Particulars," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 3 November 1864.

<sup>74</sup> Bradford, 49.

<sup>75</sup> U.S. Attorney General George Henry Williams subsequently ruled that the *Virginius* was, in fact, the legal property of the Cuban rebels and, as such, had no right to be flying the U.S. flag. See Bradford, pg.

charge, demanding both an immediate halt to the executions and a personal meeting, and threatened to fire on the town.<sup>76</sup>

Cushing met with General Burriel the next day. Hagiographic accounts depict Cushing standing with his “hand on the hilt of his revolver” making demands of the general while telling him to evacuate the women and children from Santiago before he shelled the city.<sup>77</sup> Other authors do not present such a heroic picture. Depending upon which account one reads, Cushing was either the single-handed savior of the *Virginus* crew, who took charge of events from an ineffectual British officer, or he arrived after the heavy lifting had been done by Captain Loraine and took the credit.<sup>78</sup> As is often the case in history, the truth probably lies somewhere in between. In any event, the combination of British and U.S. naval presence convinced the Spaniards that there was little to be gained by continuing to execute prisoners. The Spanish military officers had almost certainly heard of Cushing’s Civil War exploits, and perhaps took his threat to shell the city of Santiago de Cuba seriously.<sup>79</sup> The *USS Juniata*, Captain Braine commanding, soon arrived on the scene. *Kansas* and *Canandaigua* followed as quickly as they could. As the senior officer present, Captain Braine took charge of things in Santiago and sent Cushing north with *Wyoming* to report on the situation in person. There is some evidence that the Navy Department was concerned that the hotheaded

---

<sup>76</sup>Reprints of the letters between Cushing and the Spanish military officials in Bradford

<sup>77</sup> E.M.H. Edwards, *Commander William Barker Cushing of the United States Navy* (New York, NY: F. Tennyson Neely, 1898).

<sup>78</sup> Bradford tends more towards the latter, Edwards and Roske/VanDoren definitely present the former.

<sup>79</sup> The authors of the best Cushing biography make this claim, without providing documentation. Without going through Spanish archival sources it is hard to substantiate whether the Spanish were familiar with Cushing or not. Cushing’s attack on the *Albermarle* was sensationally covered in U.S. newspapers, and Cushing did receive a vote of thanks from Congress. It is not too much of a stretch to say that Spanish naval officers would have been aware of the mission. We have much better proof that U.S. officials were afraid of Cushing and his hot-headedness. See Roske and VanDoren, pg. 293.



Cushing would start a war, and had hurried Braine down to Cuba to relieve him as quickly as possible.<sup>80</sup>

During a meeting of President Grant's cabinet on 14 November, Secretary of the Navy Robeson was told to gather all available naval forces at Key West, in anticipation of trouble with Spain.<sup>81</sup> Telegrams began to fly, as the cruising forces of the North Atlantic, South Atlantic, and European squadrons began to move towards Key West, Florida. It was decided that Rear Admiral A. Ludlow Case, the commander-in-chief of the European Station and senior to the North Atlantic Squadron's commander-in-chief, Rear Admiral Scott, would take command of the combined forces.<sup>82</sup> Case's chief of staff would be the Navy Department's current Chief Signal Officer, Commodore Foxhall Parker. Parker's involvement was important, because he had authored the Navy Department's newly-published manual for steam tactics and brought copies of the new signal manual with him to Key West. In Case's words: "Some of the drills and exercises, directed by the Department, which had commenced before his arrival, will now be carried on more efficiently, as he brings books for details to be followed by all vessels – a great desideration."<sup>83</sup> Parker's work up until now had been largely theoretical, and based on

---

<sup>80</sup> D.L. Braine, CDR, "Letter, Braine to Scott, 11 December 1873, 1873," Letter, RG 313, Records of the Operating Forces, Washington, D.C.

<sup>81</sup> Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State, "Hamilton Fish Diary, 14 November 1873, 1873," Diary, The Papers of Hamilton Fish, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>82</sup> G. H. Rear Admiral Scott, "Letter, Scott to Robeson, 20 December 1873, 1873," Letter, RG 45, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanders, North Atlantic Squadron (1866-1885), Washington, D.C.

<sup>83</sup> A. Ludlow Case, RADM, "Letter, Case to Robeson, 22 January 1874, 1874," Letter, RG45, Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron (1866-1885), Washington, D.C.

the publications of foreign authors. This would be the Navy's first opportunity to have enough ships in one location to test the tactical formations that Parker had written about.

The crisis, however, ended before the fleet could be gathered. After hurried negotiations both in Madrid and Washington, D.C., the release of the prisoners was eventually agreed upon. *Juniata* took custody of one hundred two prisoners and departed Santiago de Cuba on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December, 1873.<sup>84</sup> In this case, the mutual desire of both Spain and the United States to avoid war had prevailed. The limitations of the U.S. warships have already been discussed. The Spanish fleet of 1873 was superior both in numbers and technology to the U.S. Navy. It boasted seven heavy armored vessels, ten screw frigates, three armored turret vessels, and five screw corvettes, as well as several advice vessels and gunboats.<sup>85</sup> European powers, propelled by defense requirements more pressing than those of the United States, invested early in such things as armor and improved armament. The Spanish ironclad *Arapiles*<sup>86</sup>, which was in dry dock at the Brooklyn Navy yard at the time the *Virginus* Affair took place, was an example of this. Spain was one of the few second-rate naval powers to invest in broadside ironclads like *Arapiles*.<sup>87</sup> Launched in 1864, *Arapiles* was 280 feet long and displaced 5500 tons. Her main armament consisted of 22 10-inch muzzle-loading rifles (MLR), 5 8-inch MLR and 10 7.9-inch breechloaders (BL), mounted in broadside. These were protected by a by a 4.25-4.75-inch armor belt of iron amidships. With a top speed of 12 knots, *Arapiles* was

---

<sup>84</sup> G. H. Rear Admiral Scott, "Telegram from Rear Admiral G.H. Scott to Secretary of the Navy Robeson, 1873," Telegram, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron (1866-1885). Roll 10 (August 1872-December 1873), Washington, D.C.

<sup>85</sup> "Foreign Miscellany," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 25 August 1874.

<sup>86</sup> A village near Salamanca, in Spain. The ship's name commemorates a victory over French forces there in 1812, during the Peninsular War.

<sup>87</sup> Chesneau, ed., 381-381.

more than a match for any warship the North Atlantic Squadron could send against her. But, she had suffered major damage off the coast of Venezuela while on deployment. As Spain had no dock facilities in her overseas possessions capable of repairing *Arapiles*, she was forced to put in at New York to have the work done and, ironically, was docked there during the 1873 diplomatic standoff with Spain. Although there were no problems during her detainment at the height of the *Virginus* crisis, her officers and crew wasted few opportunities to remind their hosts at the Brooklyn Navy Yard that she could outgun anything they owned.<sup>88</sup> The fact that a nearly-obsolete warship was widely viewed in the press as being superior to anything that the U.S. Navy could mount against it certainly gave U.S. policy-makers reason for pause.

However, Spanish circumstances were also difficult. The Spanish Empire was mired in a costly civil war. Followers of Carlos VII controlled the city of Cartagena, where many of Spain's naval assets were located, and it was doubtful that the Spanish government would have access to them in the event of war.<sup>89</sup> On the whole, it was mutually beneficial to come to an agreement regarding the *Virginus*.

The account of the *Virginus* incident to this point highlights the performance standards that informed the professional perspective of a mid-nineteenth century U.S. naval officer. When the first telegrams from the panicked vice counsel at Santiago reached him at Aspinwall, Commander Cushing took immediate action. He had no opportunity to consult with Rear Admiral Scott, the Commander-in-Chief of the North Atlantic Station. He did not receive orders from any superior. The commanding officer

---

<sup>88</sup> "The Spanish War Vessel Arapiles," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 25 November 1873.

<sup>89</sup> "The Spanish Navy in War. Its Uselessness against Our Ports Attacks on Our Commerce," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 25 November 1873.

of the *Wyoming* took it upon himself to get underway and steam for Jamaica, knowing that he was expected to deal with the situation. For Cushing, command involved making decisions that amounted to the execution of national policy, at an operational, and even strategic, level. Cushing's performance in this episode epitomizes the warrior/diplomat naval officer of the first half of the nineteenth century. However, two months after the *Virginus* incident, the same *USS Wyoming* that had taken a city under her guns and risked war with the Spanish Empire was steaming in close order formation with eleven other warships. The skills that Commander Cushing would be called upon to display over the next two weeks had nothing to do with diplomacy or making decisions that would affect national policy. Instead, the *Wyoming* would be expected to respond to signals quickly and accurately, keep her station in close order with the ships in front and behind of her, and execute complicated maneuvers in concert with the other ships of the fleet while an admiral made strategic and operational decisions.

### ***The 1874 Squadron Exercises***

Rear Admiral A. Ludlow Case arrived in Key West on 3 January, 1874.<sup>90</sup> Tapping Case to command the combined European, North Atlantic, and South Atlantic squadrons was an excellent choice. Case entered the Navy as a midshipman in 1828.<sup>91</sup> After distinguished service in both the Mexican-American War and the Civil War, he spent the four years from 1869-1873 as the Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance. Perhaps no

---

<sup>90</sup> A. Ludlow Case, RADM, "Letter, Case to Robeson, 3 January 1874, 1874," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanders, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C.

<sup>91</sup> W.B. Cogar, *Dictionary of Admirals of the U.S. Navy: 1862-1900* (Naval Institute Press, 1989), 26; Reynolds, 63.

other officer on active duty at the time was more familiar with the new weapons systems being deployed by European navies, and certainly no officer was more eager to experiment with new weapons and tactics, unless it was his chief of staff, Commodore Foxhall A. Parker.<sup>92</sup> The selection of a command team that featured an ordnance expert assisted by a tactical and signaling expert was one of the keys to success of the exercise.

Commodore Parker arrived in Key West on 22 January.<sup>93</sup> One of his first duties was to act as the commander of a naval brigade which carried out landing exercises on 23 January 1874.<sup>94</sup> Parker was the perfect man for this duty as well, having published works on the landing and employment of naval howitzers using small boats.<sup>95</sup> It is noteworthy that, in the midst of this unprecedented effort to exercise U.S. Navy warships tactically as a coherent combat unit capable of engaging an enemy squadron, Admiral Case's first thoughts, before the exercises even got underway, were to practice landing troops. He understood that the primary mission of the U.S. Navy still involved protection of American interests on overseas soil.

Mostly, they were just waiting for all the ships that had been ordered to Key West to show up. It was a point of some embarrassment to the Navy Department that the alarm had gone out on 14 November, the crisis had ended in December, and it was not really

---

<sup>92</sup> A. Ludlow Case, RADM, "Letter, Case to Jeffers, 23 November 1873, 1873," Letter, RG 74, Records of the Bureau of Ordnance, Washington, D.C. Case tells his successor at BuOrd that he needs various weapons delivered to Key West immediately, including "torpedoes, wires, fuses, and the newest and best working Electric apparatus."

<sup>93</sup> Case, "Letter, Case to Robeson, 22 January 1874. "

<sup>94</sup> Ibid

<sup>95</sup> Foxhill A. Parker, *The Naval Howitzer Ashore* (New York, NY: D. Van Nostrand, 1866).

until the end of January 1874 that anything approaching a “fleet” had been assembled.<sup>96</sup> By 4 February 1874, the twelve wooden cruisers and five ironclad monitors were in place and the exercises were ready to commence. The steaming characteristics of the monitors and the wooden screw vessels were so dissimilar as to make it almost impossible for the two ship types to operate together, so one of Case’s first decisions was to exercise the two types of vessels separately.<sup>97</sup> The cruising vessels went first.

The North Atlantic Fleet’s tactical drills evolved in a logical progression, designed by Case to ease the unfamiliar officers and crews into the highly dynamic business of operating their ships together in close order..<sup>98</sup> The first two days were devoted to moving the fleet to the exercise area in the Bay of Florida. On 3 and 4 February the ships simply got underway together, steamed in columns of vessels abreast by division at double cable length – about 1500 yards – between ships, and anchored together in the afternoon. On board *Wyoming*, Lieutenants Todd and Costen, Ensign Peck, and Master Day rotated through watches as officer of the deck, keeping station on *Congress* ahead of them.<sup>99</sup> This same work was going on throughout the fleet. 140 years later, with global positioning navigation, computers, and massive arrays of precision instrumentation, formation work is still one of the most nerve-wracking evolutions

---

<sup>96</sup>This would come back to haunt Rear Admiral J.R.M. Mullany when he asked the Navy Department to allow him to move his ships north for the sickly season later in 1874. The Department refused permission, not wanting their warships too far from the Caribbean. See Robeson, "".

<sup>97</sup> Case, "Letter, Case to Robeson, 22 January 1874. "

<sup>98</sup> The following discussion is based on the Journal of the Movements of the U.S.N.A. Fleet, Commencing February 3, 1874, "1874," Ship's Log, Stephen B. Luce Papers, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>99</sup> USS *Wyoming*, "Logbook, 22 December 1873 - 30 April 1874," Ship's Log, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Logs of US Naval Ships, 1801-1915, Washington, D.C.

practiced by modern warships.<sup>100</sup> In 1874, without a pilothouse, or any remote instrumentation, it must have been excruciating. One can picture the twelve commanding officers pacing nervously next to their junior officers of the deck, watching as more or fewer revolutions per minute were called down to the engine room to keep the correct distance from the ship immediately in front of them. The rudder was used to follow in the preceding ship's wake. This would have been difficult due to the lack of visibility from the quarterdeck – sailing ships not constructed with a raised pilothouse. Modern sailors order changes in the rudder in ½ degree increments, but the smallest rudder order available to these officers was a “point”, or six degrees on the compass. The instrumentation necessary to closely monitor the position of the rudder had not yet been developed. This made formation work that much more difficult.

By 5 February, the formation of columns was executing simultaneous direction changes on signal, as well as the more complicated shift from column formation to line abreast. This was an important fundamental maneuver for steam fleets. Cruising in column abreast by divisions allowed all the vessels in the formation to be within visual range of the flagship, and made passing signals easier. The formation for combat, however, was the time-tested line ahead, or “column.” Transitioning from one to the other would be a vital technique in fleet combat, and thus would have been one of the first maneuvers practiced.

---

<sup>100</sup> The author has personally been involved in a near-collision between a guided-missile cruiser and an aircraft carrier, with collision alarms sounding on both ships, during formation work.

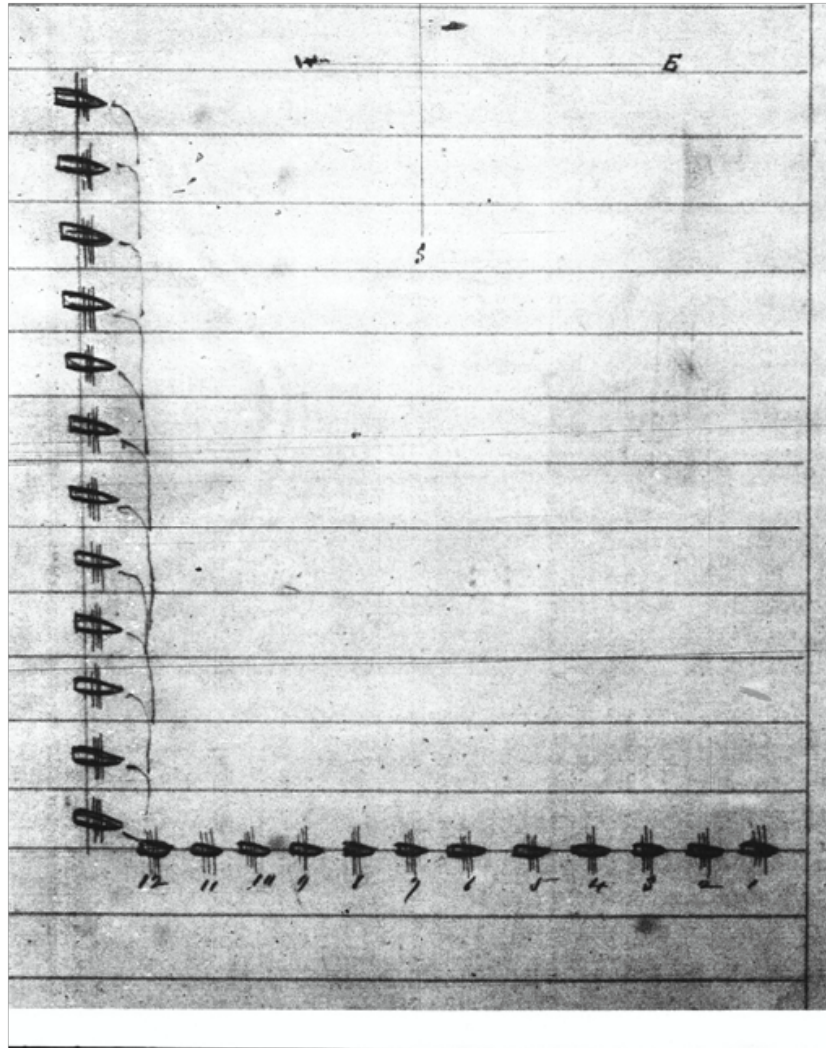


Figure 2: Warships move from line abreast to column<sup>101</sup>

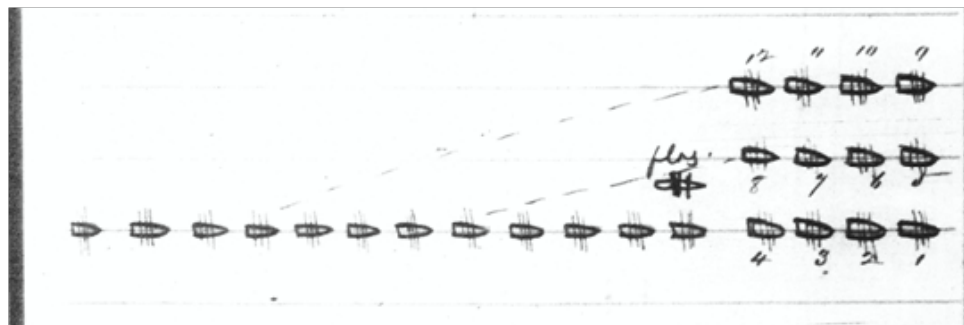


Figure 2: Warships move from column to columns abreast by division<sup>102</sup>

<sup>101</sup> The warships move from a line abreast to a column formation. Journal of the Movements of the U.S.N.A. Fleet, Commencing February 3, 1874, ""; Luce, "".

<sup>102</sup> The warships move from a column to columns abreast by division. Note the position of Case's flagship outside the formation. The proper location of a flagship was the subject of much discussion during this era.



On 6 February Admiral Case ordered the interval between ships closed to a half cable length (about 350 feet). Their confidence in their ability not to run into each other was growing. The fleet executed the reverse of the evolution practiced on 5 February, moving from a simple column to a column abreast by divisions. The recorder noted that the evolution was carried out at a speed of three knots. (The fleet was limited by the best speed of their slowest ship, and more than one of the ships had worn out boilers that could only get up enough steam to make good three knots.) This was a remarkably slow speed for a time when most navies were operating their formations at speeds of up to twelve knots. The U.S. fleet would neither be able to bring a faster enemy to action if they wanted to, or run from them if they desired to refuse action. The recorder goes on to note that the movement to column abreast by divisions took one and a half hours to perform.

After closing out 6 February with some flanking movements, the fleet spent the next four days at anchor. On 11 February, Admiral Case and Commodore Parker began to step up the pressure on the officers of the fleet. At 11:20AM, signal number 63 was ordered: "Divisions from the right of, form columns of vessels, fleet right oblique, right vessels forward." This fairly complicated maneuver was carried out in fifteen minutes. The skill and confidence of the officers of the deck was climbing rapidly. The new tactics had not entirely replaced the old ways, however, as *Wyoming* went to general

quarters at 9:45, then (while still responding to signals from *Congress*) exercised at stations for “repel boarders”.<sup>103</sup>

After this introduction to fleet operations, the fourteen ships sat at anchor for the next four days. Commander Cushing and the rest of the commanding officers were summoned to the flagship on Saturday to debrief the last three days of steaming in column order. While the commanding officers were gone, there was no rest for the engineers. *Wyoming*'s boilers had been a constant source of headache since her commission began, and the constant usage of steam tactical evolutions was beginning to tell on them. Sunday was spent attempting repairs to the port boiler.

The attempted repairs only barely got *Wyoming* through the evolutions on 11 February. On 12 February, Admiral Case decided that he had enough, and that outside help would be needed to repair *Wyoming*'s boilers. Accordingly, the signal “WYOMING EXCEPTED” was made at 6:45 that morning. Soon, the fleet weighed anchor without the *Wyoming*, and got underway for that day's operations. In the old days of cruising or showing the flag, the order simply would have been given to make sail, and the *Wyoming* would have continued with her business as usual. But there was no room in a steam navy battle formation for a ship that could not get up enough steam to keep station with the rest of the fleet. *Despatch*, a mail steamer, was detailed to take *Wyoming*'s place. Two boiler makers from Key West boarded *Wyoming* that afternoon.<sup>104</sup>

Minus the *Wyoming*, the fleet got underway at 10:00 AM. Settling into the now-familiar column of vessels, the signal was given for “close order”, which was one cable

---

<sup>103</sup> Logbook, *USS Wyoming*, 22 December 1873-30 April 1874, Entry for 6 February 1874. RG 24: Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Logs of Ships and Stations, 1801-1946, E-118, Vol. 19 of 41, NARA I, Washington, D.C.

<sup>104</sup> Logbook, *USS Wyoming*, entry for 12 February 1874

length, or 720 feet, apart. With the interval set, the column began to maneuver; simple commands first, followed by increasingly difficult deployments of the battle line. By the end of the day's exercises, the official recorder was able to note that "marked improvement in the execution of evolutions is noticeable throughout the fleet."

*Wyoming*, the emergency repairs to her boilers complete, was back in the action on Friday. That evening, Admiral Case ordered a boat sent on board the flagship with *Wyoming's* signal and order books. Apparently, he and Commodore Parker were interested in seeing how well the various ships of their fleet were receiving their signals. The weekend was spent at anchor. Once again, the commanding officers were summoned to the *Wabash* for a meeting to discuss the weeks' work. Other visiting was going on as well. During the afternoon watch, *Wyoming* sent visiting parties to the *Alaska*, *Franklin*, *Colorado*, and *Lancaster*.<sup>105</sup> Officers from the various ships were mingling, exchanging both professional notes and camaraderie in a way that would have been impossible in a cruising navy.

The evolutions began anew on Monday, 16 February. This was a week of increasingly difficult maneuvers. Apparently, *Wyoming* had some issues with her speed on Monday, because prior to Tuesday's evolutions, the Admiral signaled "Are you in condition to take position in the fleet." Commander Cushing, who no doubt was frustrated with the performance of his boilers, simply replied "Yes".<sup>106</sup> The week's work culminated in firing exercises on Friday, the twentieth of February. Admiral Case was disappointed in the results of the gunnery. According to his report, hits were made only by the *Wabash*, *Colorado*, and *Kansas*. One again has to imagine Cushing's frustration

---

<sup>105</sup> Logbook, *USS Wyoming*, entry for 15 February 1874

<sup>106</sup> Logbook, *USS Wyoming*, entry for 17 February 1874

as *Wyoming* fired her 11-inch gun four times and her 20 pound rifle twice without registering any hits on the target.<sup>107</sup>

At the beginning of the third week of exercises *Wyoming* was detached to coal. She returned Monday afternoon and anchored, while the rest of the fleet conducted another gunnery exercise. Torpedo exercises were carried out on Wednesday. Admiral Case took a personal interest in this evolution, having been the previous chief of the Bureau of Ordnance. Here was an opportunity to see, in practice, many of the innovations his office had worked on and advocated over the past three years. In spite of Admiral Case's efforts, the technology of the spar torpedo had not progressed much beyond the weapon that Lieutenant Cushing had employed against the *Albermarle* a decade earlier. Much depended upon being able to use the ship to place the spar in just the right position against the target and then activate the torpedo by means of wires running along the spar. In nineteen attempts, eight failed on the first try, mostly due either to carrying away the spar or damaging the wires in the course of the attack. Eventually, all the participating ships, with the exception of *Alaska*, were able to explode their torpedoes after one or two attempts.<sup>108</sup> Although Admiral Case generally referred to these exercises as a success, he could not have felt that the chances of a U.S. Navy ship being able to carry out a torpedo attack in combat conditions were likely. He made it obvious in his reports that much work was needed by the Torpedo School in Newport, R.I. if this weapon was to have any significance as an effective weapon.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>107</sup> Logbook, *USS Wyoming*, entry for 20 February 1874

<sup>108</sup> Luce, "" . Entry for Wednesday, 24 February. Parker, "Our Fleet Maneuvers in the Bay of Florida, and the Navy of the Future," 169.

<sup>109</sup> "I desire to call the attention of the officers...especially to that relating to the torpedo, which, in my judgment is to act so great a part in all future offensive and defensive operations. Although the Torpedo

That Friday, the fleet steamed in double echelon formation at night, as they returned to the Dry Tortugas. It was a fitting display of the tactical prowess gained by the officers and crews of the North Atlantic Fleet in their short three weeks of exercises. On 6 March, it was the turn of the monitors. Under the direction of Commodore Parker, the *Manhattan*, *Ajax*, *Mahopac*, and *Saugus* were taken out for a single day of formation maneuvering. The exercise showed the complete inability of the monitor-type vessels to fight a fleet action. Restricted to a speed of four knots to accommodate the slowest vessel, *Manhattan*, the four ships tried a series of flanking and echelon movements. Commodore Parker noted that *Mahopac*, in particular, took nine minutes to turn eight points to port.<sup>110</sup> It was apparent that the idea of engaging an enemy fleet with these vessels, especially when it was probable that an enemy would attempt to ram them, was far-fetched.

Admiral Case's farewell order to the fleet sounded a note of pleasure at the outcome of the exercises, praising Commodore Parker and the efficient execution of tactics under steam by the vessels of the fleet.<sup>111</sup> However, in reality Admiral Case's words can only be described as putting the best face on the occasion for the benefit of his subordinates. Given the disappointing results of the gunnery exercises, the torpedo exercises, and the pathetic, four-knot attempt to maneuver the monitor vessels, the best that can be said is that the assembled vessels proved the ability of their officers and crews to execute complicated formations with some degree of precision. Their ability to inflict

---

School at Newport has done much to bring the system to its present advanced condition, it is yet in its infancy, and I wish to invite a closer attention to it by all..." , *Army and Navy Journal*, 11 April 1874 1874.

<sup>110</sup> i.e. a 90-degree turn. See Foxhall Parker, Commodore, "Letter, Parker to Case, 7 March 1874, 1874," Letter, RG45, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanders, North Atlantic Squadron (1866-1885), Washington, D.C. .

<sup>111</sup> *Army and Navy Journal*, 11 April 1974, pg. 549.

any damage on an enemy formation was doubtful. Case went on to note that: "...as the practice and effect of exercises in naval tactics, gunnery, and torpedoes is of more importance to the officers who are to *command our future fleets* (my italics) than those who are just passing out, I desire to call the attention of the officers to them."<sup>112</sup> Case's reference to "fleets" shows that he felt that the exercises he had just overseen represented the future employment pattern of the North Atlantic Squadron.

Commodore Parker, in not quite as delicate a position as the flag officer commanding the exercises, had somewhat less generous remarks. "The Commodore said that it certainly demonstrated the lamentable condition of the American Navy," reported the *Army and Navy Journal* on 7 March 1874, "...The evolutions had thoroughly demonstrated the necessity of an immediate and radical change in the character of the vessels composing the navy."<sup>113</sup> The fleet of the future, according to Commodore Parker, would consist of "rams, artillery vessels, and torpedo boats"; an argument he made again in a subsequent *Proceedings* article later in the year.<sup>114</sup>

### ***Return to Station Cruising, 1874-1876***

In the short term, it was back to business as usual. The maneuvers notwithstanding, the U.S. Navy of 1874 was still devoted to carrying out detached, single-ship operations. After the fleet broke up, the North Atlantic Station returned to its practice of supplying ships singly or in pairs to represent the interests of the United States throughout the Western Hemisphere. *Wyoming* returned to the Washington Navy Yard,

---

<sup>112</sup>*Army and Navy Journal*, 11 April 1874 1874., Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> "The Naval Review," *Army and Navy Journal*, 7 March 1874 1874.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid. See also Parker, "Our Fleet Maneuvers in the Bay of Florida, and the Navy of the Future."

where she was put out of service on 30 April. The ship's commission was over, and tragically, her captain's life would be over within the year as well. William Cushing was probably suffering from prostate cancer as the exercises were underway, and his condition worsened through the summer of 1874. Taken off sea duty and assigned to the Washington Naval Yard, he died in December. Cushing's final year symbolized the massive institutional change underway in the Navy, as he shifted from operating independently to spending three weeks executing difficult maneuvers in company with eleven other ships, following orders transmitted by a rear admiral. Over the next decade, the Navy Department and the North Atlantic Squadron struggled to find the right balance between showing the flag in foreign ports and maintaining the capability to operate as a combat unit.

After issuing his farewell, Rear Admiral Case took *Franklin*, *Congress*, *Alaska*, and *Juniata* and returned across the Atlantic to reestablish the European Station.<sup>115</sup> This left the North Atlantic Squadron with a total of 12 warships, which remained under the command of Rear Admiral Scott for another two and a half months, until he was relieved by Rear Admiral J.R.M Mullany in June 1874.<sup>116</sup> A Civil War veteran who had been at Mobile Bay with Farragut, Mullany had had previous duty as a flag officer commanding the European Squadron as well as the Navy Yard at Philadelphia, PA. After assuming command of the station, Rear Admiral Mullany was ordered to place his monitors in

---

<sup>115</sup> George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Robeson to Case, March 1874, 1874," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C; George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Telegram, Robeson to Case, 7 April 1874, 1874," Telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>116</sup> George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Robeson to Mullany, 19 June 1874, 1874," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

ordinary in Pensacola.<sup>117</sup> The cruising vessels quickly deployed throughout the North Atlantic Squadron's area of operations. *Colorado* visited Havana, Cuba briefly in the summer before returning to Key West to act as Rear Admiral Mullany's temporary flagship. *Brooklyn* departed in April for a cruise throughout the Windward Islands. She touched at various ports in the Caribbean before returning to Key West in June. *Worcester* had been Rear Admiral Scott's flagship, which put her in an interesting position. After the decision by the Navy Department to turn the combined forces of the North Atlantic, South Atlantic, and European Squadrons over to the European Squadron commander, Rear Admiral Case, *Worcester* was tasked with what essentially amounted to a "special mission" to get Rear Admiral Scott out of Key West. After Scott turned over command to Case on 3 January, he and *Worcester* departed on an extended deployment to visit Cuba and the Windward Islands, reporting on conditions there in the aftermath of the *Virginius* Affair. Discreetly returning to Key West on 1 April (after Case departed), she continued as the flagship of the station after Scott, who had already asked to retire, turned over command to Rear Admiral Mullany in June.

*Powhatan*, as one of the older ships on the station, remained in home waters throughout 1874. After spending some time off the coast of New Orleans, she proceeded to Norfolk, where she was fitted out for special duty – carrying the next commander-in-chief of the European Station to Portugal in 1875. *Canidaigua* cruised in the Greater Antilles and Virgin Islands throughout the summer of 1874. *Ossipee* left Key West in April, cruising up and down the east coast of Central America. *Wachusett* cruised to various ports throughout the Caribbean in the spring and summer of 1874, before receiving orders to proceed to Norfolk for decommissioning in November. *Kansas* and

---

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., "".



*Shawmut* both spent the summer carrying out coastal surveys around various parts of the Caribbean.

The monitors remained in port – *Cannonicus* in New Orleans, and *Dictator* at Pensacola. Unlike the cruising vessels, these were not designed for long-distance work, but to provide local defense against hostile warships. They were armored, with very little freeboard, and carried their main armament in revolving turrets. Their restricted hull volume offered very little living room for her crew, and it was assumed that the officers, at least, would spend a great deal of the time ashore, rather than on board.<sup>118</sup> While their nominal fighting power was much greater than than the wooden cruisers, the monitors did have a number of significant weaknesses. They were unwieldy and very difficult to maneuver. Their top speed was such that any adversary would be free to pick the terms of the engagement. As far as endurance on the open ocean, the monitors were considered so unseaworthy and their engines so unreliable and inefficient that they usually had to be towed, or at least escorted, by a cruising ship whenever it was necessary for them to move from one port to another. The monitors (or “ironclads” as they were almost universally referred to in the correspondence of the time) were kept partially manned in ports such as New Orleans, Pensacola, and Norfolk, with the understanding that they could be quickly provided with crews in the event of a national emergency.

All of this is to show that, after the fleet exercises in January and February 1874, the forces of the North Atlantic Squadron ceased to be an operating fighting unit. They dispersed, not to operate as a tactical unit for another three years.<sup>119</sup> Partly, the reason for

---

<sup>118</sup> The files of the Bureau of Steam Engineering are full of letters from engineering officers requesting transfer to one of the larger, more comfortable, cruising ships.

<sup>119</sup> The only exception being a small landing exercise in October of 1876. See below.

this was the desire of the Navy Department to go about the normal missions of the Navy – namely to look after commercial interests. Another reason, however, was the fact that the US Navy did not possess an infrastructure that allowed its ships to spend more than a few weeks concentrated in one location. Until that changed, it was not possible for the forces of the North Atlantic Station to train together as a combat fleet on a regular basis. Part of the homeport problem had to do with yellow fever. In the 1870's, yellow fever was on the mind of any military officer who had to operate in southern latitudes. Without a vaccination or a known cure, it could sweep through a collection of ships very rapidly. This was one of the reasons that it was not a good idea to keep ships close together during the “sickly season”, but rather send them out on independent voyages. Yellow fever was very poorly understood in the nineteenth century, as Navy Department orders that urge commanders to keep the men from too much sun exposure or heat from the ships' boilers attest.<sup>120</sup> For his part, in 1874 Admiral Mullany wanted to bring his forces north. He requested permission to relocate his base of operations to Norfolk, but was denied because of the Department's concern that his warships would not be close enough to the action if they were needed for another crisis in Cuba.<sup>121</sup> Despite Admiral Mullany's best intentions, the North Atlantic Squadron did not perform any maneuvers in 1875.

When Rear Admiral William E. LeRoy took command in January of 1876, the Navy Department seemed determined to build on the “success” of the 1874 exercises with another round of squadron drills. Moreover, it appears that Admiral Mullany's

---

<sup>120</sup> See, for instance, William (For the Secretary of the Navy) Reynolds, "Telegram, Reynolds to Mullany, 13 August 1874, 1874," Telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C. Also R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Thompson to Trenchard, 18 July 1877, 1877," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>121</sup> Robeson, "Letter, Robeson to Mullany, 18 July 1874. "

concerns about keeping a large concentration of ships in the deep south had registered at the Department. Upon assuming command, Admiral LeRoy was ordered to concentrate his forces at Port Royal, South Carolina.<sup>122</sup> The importance of Port Royal to operations on the eastern seaboard of the United States had been clear since the Civil War. One of the earliest decisions of the northern Blockade Strategy Board was to seize a likely port on the Carolina coast to facilitate resupply and coaling of warships on blockade duty. By 1866, a large supply operation, complete with a dock constructed by the Navy, was in place at Port Royal, South Carolina.<sup>123</sup> After the war the facilities at Port Royal were ordered closed, but the Navy Department elected to retain ownership of the property.<sup>124</sup> When the threat of yellow fever rendered the Navy Yard at Pensacola inhospitable, the idea of using Port Royal as a rendezvous was resurrected. Here, the ships could be serviced without incurring the expense of travelling north to the next-closest shipyard at Norfolk, 460 miles away. An additional benefit was that the warships would remain under the operational control of the commander-in-chief of the station, not the commandant of a navy yard. Port Royal had the additional advantage of being relatively close to the action in the Caribbean, especially when compared with Hampton Roads.<sup>125</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup> George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Robeson to Leroy, 28 January 1876, 1876," order, RG 45, Letters to Flag Officers commanding squadrons, vessels, and stations sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>123</sup> In 1866, the paymaster at Port Royal expended over \$136,000 of provisions, small stores, clothing, and other miscellaneous supplies. Robert W. Allen, Paymaster, U.S. Navy, "Registers of Receipts and Disbursements for Provisions, Clothing, Small Stores, and Contingent Expenses by the Paymaster at Us Naval Depot Port Royal, Sc, 1865-1874, 1865-1866," Ledger, RG45, Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, Fiscal Records, 1798-1890, Washington, D.C.

<sup>124</sup> The last day of active operations was apparently 24 July, 1866. Ibid. See also Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Welles to Bureau Chiefs, 2 February 1867, 1867," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy to the Chiefs of Navy Bureaus, 1842-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>125</sup> "When our vessels are driven from Key West by yellow fever, Port Royal is the nearest and safest harbor of refuge." Secretary of the Navy Annual Report, 1875.

In 1876 the monitors which had previously been in ordinary at Pensacola, FL were also moved to Port Royal, where they could be anchored in fresh water, which was preferable for the preservation of the monitors' metal hulls.<sup>126</sup> The USS New Hampshire, an outdated ship-of-the-line, was ordered to Port Royal as a permanent depot-ship. The entire operation was placed under the command of Captain J.B. Clitz, who was given the title of commodore and the responsibility for all the warships at the Port Royal rendezvous when the Commander-in-Chief was not present.<sup>127</sup> This last stipulation is crucial to understanding how this was a move by the Navy Department towards an operational cycle for the Squadron that would involve the vessels spending more time in close proximity. One way to facilitate this was to create a "rendezvous" where the ships could gather that did not create chain-of-command difficulties with the commandant of a navy yard. This seems to indicate that the Navy Department in 1877 was moving away from a cruising mindset to one that involved a concentration of its forces. Port Royal continued to grow in importance in the eyes of the Navy Department and the North Atlantic Squadron. Opening as a "naval depot" in 1876, by 1877 it was classified as a "naval station", with its own commanding officer.<sup>128</sup>

---

<sup>126</sup> George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Robeson to Mullany, 11 February 1876, 1876," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>127</sup> "Notes from Washington", The New York Times, 3 September 1876, pg. 2. See also Daniel Ammen, Rear Admiral, "Letter, Ammen to Eastman, 21 April 1876, 1876," letter, RG45, Office of Naval Records and Library, Subject File, US Navy, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. This letter is endorsed by Captain English as the "senior officer present" at "naval depot" Port Royal. A year later, letters are endorsed by the "commanding officer, naval station Port Royal. For example, see the endorsement of Robert R. Lewis, Commander, U.S. Navy, "Letter, Lewis to Eastman, 28 May 1877, 1877," letter, RG45, Office of Naval Records and Library, Subject File, US Navy, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

The Department was eager to try out their new homeport in 1876, and sent a lengthy order to Rear Admiral LeRoy upon his assumption of command of the North Atlantic station. After a preliminary period in which the squadron would practice drills and gunnery exercises while at anchor or in the vicinity of Port Royal, Admiral LeRoy was expected to get underway and lead his squadron on a deployment to the Caribbean, exercising them along the way in “squadron evolutions and tactics.” “The Department hopes,” wrote Secretary Robeson, “that with the class and conditions of vessels in this command, and with the preliminary drill, the squadron will be able to make a creditable exhibition of our Naval power, wherever it may go and whatever work it may be directed to perform.”<sup>129</sup> Soon after taking command, LeRoy issued General Order No. 6, which organized the “vessels attached to the North Atlantic Station.” They were divided into three divisions, with a reserve division comprised of support ships and monitors.<sup>130</sup> In the beginning, at least, Admiral LeRoy was thinking in terms of commanding his forces as a single combat unit, and there was an expressed desire both on his part, and that of the Department, to project a squadron into the Caribbean in support of U.S. foreign policy objectives.

Unfortunately, real-world contingencies intruded upon the plans Admiral LeRoy and the Department had for the vessels of the North Atlantic Station, and as will be seen, the prevailing model of sending individual ships abroad to “put out fires” continued. Things began to unravel in March, when unrest in Haiti threatened U.S. interests. On 14 March, a terse telegram from the Department of the Navy ordered Admiral LeRoy to

---

<sup>129</sup> Robeson, *op. cit.*

<sup>130</sup> William E. LeRoy, RADM, “General Order No. 6, 1876,” General Order, Papers of Stephen Bleeker Luce, Washington, D.C. .

dispatch two vessels to Port-au-Prince without delay.<sup>131</sup> Unrest in Mexico was on the Administration's mind as well, and two days later, on 16 March, Admiral LeRoy was ordered to take four ships, *Hartford*, *Swatara*, *Shawmut*, and *Marion* to Tampico, Mexico.<sup>132</sup> While these orders, and subsequent ones concerning these four ships refer to this as a "squadron", the plan for them upon arrival in Mexican waters was to "distribute" them as most advisable, making sure that at least one ship was stationed at the mouth of the Rio Grande del Norte. On 1 April the U.S. government ordered LeRoy to have one of his other ships visit ports along Mexico's east coast.<sup>133</sup> With no chance remaining for the ships to conduct exercises, *Marion* was ordered to the Mediterranean on 17 May, and Admiral LeRoy was ordered to bring *Hartford* north to Philadelphia on 24 June.<sup>134</sup>

While the contingent events intruded upon the Department's extensive plans to hold squadron maneuvers in the summer, the North Atlantic Squadron was eventually able to hold a much-scaled back version in the fall, although Admiral LeRoy was no longer in command.<sup>135</sup> Rear Admiral Trenchard assumed command of the station in

---

<sup>131</sup> George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Telegram, Robeson to Leroy, 14 March 1876, 1876," Telegram, RG 45, Letters to Flag Officers commanding squadrons, vessels, and stations sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>132</sup> J.C. Howell, CinC, Bureau of Ordnance, "Letter, Howell to Leroy, 16 March 1876, 1876," letter, RG 45, Letters to Flag Officers commanding squadrons, vessels, and stations sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>133</sup> George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Robeson to Leroy, 1 April 1876, 1876," letter, RG 45, Letters to Flag Officers commanding squadrons, vessels, and stations sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C. The Department "suggested" the *Huron* for this duty.

<sup>134</sup> George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Robeson to Leroy, 24 June 1876, 1876," Letter, RG 45, Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C; George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Telegram, Robeson to Leroy, 17 May 1876, 1876," Telegram, RG 45, Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>135</sup> Daniel Ammen, Rear Admiral, "Letter, Ammen to Trenchard, 2 September 1876, 1876," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C; George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter,

September of 1876. He was immediately ordered to assemble whatever ships he had available in Port Royal in October of that year for an inspection and exercises in naval drill prior to departing to their cruising stations for the winter.<sup>136</sup> After all the attention paid to squadron exercises in steam tactics, drills with torpedoes, and the like in Admiral LeRoy's original orders of 28 January, the centerpiece of the October maneuvers, or rather the only aspect the Secretary of the Navy felt was worthy of his including in his Annual Report to Congress for 1876, was the landing of a naval brigade – a fighting unit consisting of the officers and men of the assembled ships.<sup>137</sup> Although we can see early evidence that the Department was becoming more interested in the ships of the North Atlantic Squadron spending meaningful time together as a combat unit, the Secretary's attention is still drawn to the Navy's ability to project combat power ashore, providing security for U.S. business interests on land. In an era when the U.S. Marine Corps still mainly consisted of small detachments to keep order aboard ships, it was expected that a commanding officer could deploy a fighting unit from the men of the entire ships' company.<sup>138</sup>

---

Robeson to Leroy, 9 August 1876, 1876," letter, RG 45, Letters to Flag Officers commanding squadrons, vessels, and stations sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>136</sup> J.C. Howell, CinC, Bureau of Ordnance, "Telegram, Howell to Trenchard, 11 September 1876, 1876," Telegram, RG 45, Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>137</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy on the Operations of the Department, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1876* 1876. Pgs. 36-37. See also Edgar Stanton Maclay, *Reminiscences of the Old Navy: From the Journal and Private Papers of Captain Edward Trenchard, and Rear-Admiral Stephen Decatur Trenchard* (New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's, 1898). Pg. 345.

<sup>138</sup> What we think of today as the Marines' amphibious landing capability wasn't really institutionalized until the early twentieth century. Prior to that, a ship's capability to field an infantry force consisted largely of Sailors. See Jack Shulimson, *The Marine Corps Search for a Mission, 1880-1898*, ed. Theodore A. Wilson, *Modern War Studies* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1993).

The twelve vessels under the command of Rear Admiral William E. LeRoy were never referred to as a “squadron”. Indeed, Rear Admiral LeRoy did not identify himself as a “squadron commander”, nor is there any evidence that, other than issuing General Order No. 6 assigning his ships to divisions, he had any intention of commanding the assembled vessels as a squadron or fleet. Admiral LeRoy’s job as commander-in-chief consisted largely of managing the logistics involved with the individual movements of his ships.

1877 and 1878 were lean years for the North Atlantic Station. Many of the wooden cruising vessels which had carried out the large exercises of 1874 and the smaller reprise of 1876 had been placed out of commission. In 1877, Admiral Trenchard had five cruising vessels to work with. These five were sent on deployments that touched down the eastern seaboard and into the Caribbean. This was still the overarching mission of the U.S. Navy, as the Secretary of the Navy made clear in his remarks in his Annual Report to Congress.<sup>139</sup> Protecting commerce and commercial opportunities was, however, not just a mission for overseas. 1877 brought an opportunity to exercise the naval brigade concept in a way that the Navy Department had probably not conceived of using it. Using sailors to influence events ashore had always been a secondary mission of all navies, and the North Atlantic Squadron was no exception. Ships’ logbooks give testimony to the amount of time spent practicing to call out “all boats, armed and equipped.” The 1870’s, however, seem to give an added urgency to this capability, as the

---

<sup>139</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy on the Operations of the Department, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1877* 1877.



two landings carried out during the Key West exercises of 1874 show.<sup>140</sup> In 1877, sailors of the North Atlantic Squadron would be called upon to protect U.S. business interests – not in some faraway port, but on U.S. soil.

### ***The 1877 Labor Riots***

An economic depression which lingered throughout most of the 1870's lowered prices and wages – particularly in the transportation sector – to a point that culminated in the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, as railroad workers who had seen an almost 70% cut in their pay walked off the job and then threatened violence when railroad managers attempted to keep the trains running. The B&O Railroad's operation in Cumberland, Maryland – worryingly close to Washington, D.C. – was targeted by strike activity, which threatened to freeze most of the freight and passenger service from the Old Northwest into the Baltimore/Washington DC region. When the strikes turned violent, state governors called out their militias. Unfortunately, in many of the areas where the strikes were the most violent, the local militia consisted almost entirely of strikers. Railroad officials, especially John W. Garrett, the president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, pressured governors to call for federal aid. Public opinion was in favor of federal intervention, not to mention the fact that many senior government officials, including Secretary of the Navy Richard W. Thompson, had close ties to railroad

---

<sup>140</sup> Commodore Foxhall Parker, who had published on the subject and by virtue of his work with the Potomac Flotilla during the Civil War was considered to be an expert, personally oversaw the larger of the two landing exercises in 1874, putting ashore some 2700 sailors with artillery.

money.<sup>141</sup> President Hayes eventually sent federal troops to break up the striking railroad workers. Sailors and Marines played an important part in these military operations.<sup>142</sup>

When the governors relented and asked the President for federal troops, controlled chaos ensued. The Army, once numbering millions only a decade earlier, was now little more than a frontier police force. With company-sized units spread around the country, no plan existed for mobilizing and concentrating them within the territorial boundaries of the United States. As the Army attempted to collect itself to respond, the federal government looked to another source of ready manpower: sailors. On 21 July, a message reached Hampton Roads that all available seamen and Marines from any ships currently at the navy yard, as well as anyone who could be spared from the navy yard itself, were to be sent to Washington, D.C. The initial response was 130 Marines, who were organized from the ships present at the Norfolk Navy Yard. They departed that evening for Washington, D.C. in *Swatara*. The following afternoon, *Plymouth* left with about 250 Sailors in addition to her own crew. The tug *Pinta* sailed with her. Upon arrival at Washington, D.C., the sailors and marines were detailed to protect government buildings, railroad bridges, tunnels, and other government property. Personnel from the New York Navy Yard performed the same duties around New York City.<sup>143</sup> Admiral Trenchard had been on leave when the call went out to the North Atlantic Squadron for resources. He hurried to Washington, D.C. and established himself at the Ebbitt Hotel, where he

---

<sup>141</sup> Philip Sheldon Foner, *The Great Labor Uprising of 1877* (New York, NY: Monad Press, 1977). Pg. 40

<sup>142</sup> R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Thompson to Trenchard, 9 August 1877, 1877," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>143</sup> Jerry M. Cooper, *The Army and Civil Disorder: Federal Military Intervention in Labor Disputes, 1877-1900*, ed. Thomas E. and Luvaas Griess, Jay, Contributions in Military History (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980). Pg. 51.

directed the operations of the naval forces ashore.<sup>144</sup> Eventually, the panic subsided and the sailors and marines returned to Norfolk, their efforts much appreciated by the federal government.<sup>145</sup>

By 1878, the five vessels Admiral Trenchard had commanded in 1877 had been whittled to two: *Powhatan* and *Plymouth*. There is no evidence that either of these ships either spent any sort of significant time together in port or cruised together.<sup>146</sup> Squadron tactics under steam were, for the moment, no more than a memory. Admiral Trenchard gave up his command in September of 1878, relieved by Rear Admiral J.C. Howell.<sup>147</sup>

Howell had been appointed a midshipman from Pennsylvania in 1836. After distinguished service during the Civil War, he served as chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks from 1875-1878, before being assigned as the commander-in-chief, North Atlantic Squadron. Howell's two-ship squadron became a one-ship squadron after an insurrection broke out on the island of Santa Cruz, in the Caribbean. The Navy Department cabled Howell, who was in Portsmouth, N.H, flying his flag on board *Powhatan*, to send a vessel at once.<sup>148</sup> The Department was less than satisfied with the North Atlantic Squadron's response. Of Howell's two ships, *Powhatan* was too far away to have any effect on the

---

<sup>144</sup> "Riot Duty in the Army and Navy," *The Army and Navy Journal*, 18 August 1877 1877. See also Maclay.

<sup>145</sup>The Secretary of the Navy asked that the men involved be given special liberty. See Thompson, "Letter, Thompson to Trenchard, 9 August 1877. "

<sup>146</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy on the Operations of the Department, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1878*1878.

<sup>147</sup> R.W. Shufeldt, Commodore, "Letter, Shufeldt to Howell, 12 September 1878, 1878," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C. J.C. Howell is not to be confused with John Adam Howell, who invented an early operational form of the self-propelled torpedo.

<sup>148</sup> R.W. Shufeldt, Commodore, "Telegram, Shufeldt to Howell, 3 October 1878, 1878," Telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

situation, and *Plymouth*, who was closer, but in port, had not provisioned, and was unable to get underway. In the event, a French ship got to Santa Cruz first and landed troops, but not before the American consulate had been burned.

It is likely that this event solidified the Navy Department's resistance to keeping ships in northern ports and redoubled their determination to have a facility, such as the one at Port Royal, where a concentration of North Atlantic Station assets could be ready to sail from on a moment's notice.<sup>149</sup> After reprimanding Admiral Howell for not having a warship ready to respond, the Department had the nerve to tell him that "The Department will leave to your discretion any further movements of your squadron..." as if he had control of more than two ships.<sup>150</sup>

By 1879, five ships were assigned to the Station, as the *Essex*-class wooden screw sloops began to report for service. There is no evidence, however, that any of these ships carried out either squadron-level tactical exercise or cruising deployment during the year. In January, Rear Admiral Howell was appointed to command the European Squadron, and Rear Admiral R. H. Wyman took command of the North Atlantic Station.<sup>151</sup> In keeping with tradition, Admiral Wyman had performed a previous tour as the Chief of a Bureau – in his case the Navy Hydrographic Office. During the eight years that he held this position, Wyman was responsible for instituting a world-wide program of charting

---

<sup>149</sup> R.W. Shufeldt, Commodore, "Letter, Shufeldt to Howell, 15 October 1878, 1878," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid

<sup>151</sup> R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Thompson to Howell, 21 January 1879, 1879," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

and surveying that decreased U.S. Navy reliance on foreign (often British) sources for their charts.<sup>152</sup>

Admiral Wyman was immediately greeted in his new command by a telegram from the Navy Department informing him that there was a disturbance underway at Puerto Caballo, Venezuela, and directing him to prepare his flagship to get underway to proceed there at once.<sup>153</sup> At this point, the flagship represented the only vessel Wyman had under his control, so that essentially, upon receipt of that telegram, the entire North Atlantic Squadron set out for the Caribbean. Touching at Cuba, *Powhatan* was greeted with another telegram that instructed her to proceed at once to Puerto Caballo and “look after American interests in that quarter...”<sup>154</sup> Things cooled down, however, and Admiral Wyman was back in Norfolk by April.<sup>155</sup> There was trouble in Panama in June, but the Navy Department decided that sending a vessel was not warranted.<sup>156</sup>

---

<sup>152</sup> Department of Navy, "Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships", Naval Historical Center <http://www.history.navy.mil/danfs/w11/wyman-i.htm> (accessed 3 February 2011 2011).

<sup>153</sup> R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Thompson to Wyman, 17 January 1879, 1879," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>154</sup> R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, "Telegram, Thompson to Hall, 25 February 1879, 1879," Telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

<sup>155</sup> R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Thompson to Wyman, 7 April 1879, 1879," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C. Admiral Wyman's address is "Norfolk, VA" in this letter.

<sup>156</sup> R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, "Telegram, Thompson to Wyman, 17 June 1879, 1879," Telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

The importance of the Central American region was growing as more and more thought began to be given to the project of putting a canal through the isthmus.<sup>157</sup> One of the ironic results of the Riots of 1877 was that the personal involvement of naval officers, who already felt that their mission largely involved protecting American commercial interests overseas, in the maintenance of civil order convinced them that the way to prevent future unrest was to have more and more commercial opportunities overseas, providing necessary outlets for production surplus and, by extension, jobs and money for the working class.<sup>158</sup>

Just as the question of a canal through the isthmus began to capture the imagination of the American people, the attention of the Navy Department began to turn to the north, as the fisheries questions which had been thought settled by the 1871 Treaty of Washington began to be raised again. In late July 1879, *Kearsarge* was sent to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada, where she was met by a special agent of the Department of State who had been sent to gather information about possible treaty violations in the fishing waters off Canada.<sup>159</sup>

While the United States was free from conflict in the 1870's and 1880's, other nations in the hemisphere were not, and the lessons learned from these conflicts were important in putting before the U.S. population the specter of Latin American countries

---

<sup>157</sup> For the relationship between the navy and the central American region during this time, see Hagen, *American Gunboat Diplomacy and the Old Navy, 1877-1889*. Chapter 8, "Defining American Interest in the Isthmus"

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 151-152

<sup>159</sup> R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, "Telegram, Thompson to Wyman, 29 July 1879, 1879," Telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C. Also, R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Thompson to Wyman, 2 August 1879, 1879," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters to Flag Officers Commanding Squadrons, Vessels, and Stations, Sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1867-1886, Washington, D.C.

with larger and better-equipped navies. One such example was the War of the Pacific, fought between Chile, Peru, and Bolivia from 1879-1884. This little-studied conflict featured some of the first naval battles between ironclad ships. Any of the ships in these engagements would have been more than a match for even the strongest warship on the North Atlantic Station in the 1870's. Of particular interest to naval officers was the engagement of the Peruvian ironclad, *Huascar*, with Chilean ironclads in 1879. *Huascar* was essentially a "monitor", mounting a main battery consisting of a single turret with two muzzle-loading rifles. In other words, she represented exactly what the U.S. Navy was banking on to protect important harbors along the eastern seaboard, with the exception that she was more technologically advanced and carried a crew of Peruvian regulars, as opposed to hurriedly-mobilized naval militia. In the event, *Huascar* absorbed an impressive amount of punishment from modern, armor-piercing shells, before being forced to strike her colors and being captured as a prize by the Chilean forces. The rear admiral commanding U.S. forces on the Pacific Station, C.R. P. Rodgers, was a progressive-minded naval officer who had been heavily involved in the work of the Naval Institute during his previous tour as superintendent of the Naval Academy. Admiral Rodgers immediately recognized the importance of the engagement, and dispatched a team of experienced line officers and engineers to examine the *Huascar* and report on their findings. The Chilean Navy was only too happy to show the "gringos" around their prize of war, and the commission appointed by Admiral Rodgers was able to conduct a thorough investigation. The report remarks, in several pages of very technical detail, on the effects of each of the 24 shell hits absorbed by *Huascar*. Left unsaid in the report was the fact that *Huascar*, while outdated already by the most modern European

standards, clearly outclassed any vessel of the U.S. Navy.<sup>160</sup> U.S. naval officers, and not a few politicians and citizens, realized that some basic improvements were going to have to be made to the navy if it was to retain any effectiveness in world affairs.<sup>161</sup>

Naval authorities of the time noted that during the action itself, *Huascar* was separated from her companion and defeated as a single ship. This fact directly challenged the comfortable notion that a small number of monitors spread up and down the eastern seaboard would be able to protect American coastal cities. Admittedly, the analogy only goes so far. *Huascar* was on the offensive and was in Chilean waters seeking action, not defending a harbor in coordination with coastal artillery, but the lesson was still there.

## ***Conclusions***

The Key West exercises of 1874 signified recognition by the Navy Department that conducting fleet tactics under steam would be a skill required of its officers in the future. The continued development of U.S. strategic interest in the Caribbean meant that it was no longer enough to simply train naval cadets in tactical theory at the Academy. The process of developing a fleet capable of fighting in formation could only be accomplished by rigorous exercise at sea. Although managing the individual movements

---

<sup>160</sup> For discussion of the report sent by RADM Rodgers to the Department of the Navy, see Jeffery M. Dorwart, *The Office of Naval Intelligence: The Birth of America's First Intelligence Agency, 1865-1918* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1979). Pg.10. For the report itself, see C.R.P. Rodgers, RADM, "Letter, Rodgers to Secnav, 24 October 1879, 1879," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, Pacific Squadron, 1841-1886, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>161</sup> For the War of the Pacific, see William F. Sater, *Andean Tragedy: Fighting the War of the Pacific, 1879-1884*, ed. Peter; Graff Maslowski, David; and Pennington, Reina, *Studies in War, Society, and the Military* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007). For concerns about U.S. ships in relation to Latin American ironclads, see Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* 1881. Vol. 1.



of his ships was still the best description of what the commander-in-chief did on a daily basis, it was now clear that he would be spending an increasing amount of time leading his vessels in formation. The conflict faced by the North Atlantic Squadron between these two distinct mission types would become evident over the next two decades. While the Royal Navy possessed enough warships, armored and unarmored, to field different squadrons for cruising and fleet operations, the U.S. Navy did not. The North Atlantic Squadron would be forced to attempt to maintain proficiency in both missions with the assets available.

The Squadron did not yet have a permanent homeport, although the Navy Department had been considering various options for one. Nor did they yet have different classes of vessels which would utilize different weapons systems to fight in coordination with one another against an enemy force, although experiments were being carried out in Newport with the torpedo vessel *Alarm*. Methods of rapidly transmitting tactical signals throughout a formation were a subject of intense focus for the Chief Signal Officer of the Navy. In short, the vessels on the North Atlantic Station could not yet be referred to as constituting a fleet, although the elements of a fleet were beginning to take shape. The 1880's would see two major developments. The authorization of the U.S. Navy's first four steel warships in 1883 would herald the arrival of a "naval renaissance."<sup>162</sup> Two years later, an officer who would almost single-handedly be responsible for the development of fleet tactical doctrine was setting up shop across Newport Harbor from the Torpedo School. Commodore Stephen B. Luce would not only become the first president of the Naval War College, he would follow that

---

<sup>162</sup>This is one of Nathan Miller's chapter titles. Nathan Miller, *The U.S. Navy: A History*, Third ed. (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1997), 143.

accomplishment with a tour as the Commander in Chief of the North Atlantic Squadron, where he would put in action many of the tenants he had so fervently preached at the War College.

## **Chapter 2: Towards a New Identity, 1882 - 1888**

The decade of the 1880's witnessed a number of centennial celebrations across the United States, as various anniversaries associated with the founding of the nation were observed. This was particularly true for cities along the East Coast such as Philadelphia and New York, where celebratory showings by the Navy were popular. It was a time when the legacy of the Revolution was being reconciled with the horrific experience of the Civil War to forge a new identity for the nation. Into this heady atmosphere of celebration and new possibilities came something that had been missing in the 1870's: a revived post-war economy. With the federal government enjoying a budget surplus for the first time since the war, it was a favorable time for a discussion about the nation's future naval policy. These discussions provided the foundation for the naval renaissance that was to come, but as they were being carried out, identity confusion and conflict of missions continued for the North Atlantic Squadron.

Organizational change in the North Atlantic Squadron took place slowly. In the squadron's operations during the 1880's, the impetus for a shift in identity can clearly be identified. Concern about European encroachment in the Western Hemisphere, the rise of South American nations, and a war scare with Chile created the context within which a debate about the Navy's mission and materiel took place. The first ships of the "New Steel Navy" were authorized in 1883, but would not enter active service until almost six years later. Although materiel and structure did not change significantly in the early to mid 1880's, the mission did. The Squadron became concerned not solely with cruising operations, but with training exercises to prepare for combat as a unit. Naval strategists,

through the work of two separate Naval Advisory Boards and numerous articles in the *Proceedings* of the U.S. Naval Institute, officially insisted that the U.S. Navy's proper mission was to guard the coastline and raid enemy commerce. However, during this time, the North Atlantic Squadron regularly engaged in fleet maneuvers. By 1888, something such as the Key West exercises of 1874 was, if not routine, at least commonplace.

The theoretical justification for tactical exercises was provided by Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce. In the years before his groundbreaking work in establishing the Naval War College, he advocated a synthesis of operational exercises and classroom theoretical work, and attempted to implement such a program during his tour as commander-in-chief of the North Atlantic Squadron. But regardless of the desire, either on the part of the Navy Department or the commander-in-chief, to carry out fleet tactical training, both Rear Admiral Luce and his predecessor, Rear Admiral Jouett, spent most of their time carrying out diplomatic tasking and protecting U.S. commercial interests rather than training their forces for fleet combat. However, exercises did occur. While the establishment was still publicly promoting a cruising navy, the North Atlantic Squadron was repeatedly practicing as if the intended primary mission was to meet an enemy in a fleet engagement at sea.

### ***Policy and Materiel Debates: "Proceedings" and the Naval Advisory Boards***

The election of James A. Garfield of Ohio to the presidency in 1880 placed the moderate, or "Half-Breed" wing of the Republican Party in power.<sup>1</sup> The leader of this

---

<sup>1</sup> So-called because their detractors surmised that they couldn't possibly be "full-blooded" Republicans.

faction was Maine Senator James G. Blaine. As a reward for his efforts on Garfield's behalf, Blaine was appointed Secretary of State in the new administration. Blaine was an energetic and outgoing politician who desperately wanted to be president. His vision for U.S. foreign policy included dominance of the Western Hemisphere and increased trade both there and throughout the Pacific. His particular interest in Latin American affairs indirectly encouraged the nascent naval reform movement. In an attempt to head off possible British involvement, he injected the United States into the still-raging War of the Pacific (1879-1884), backing Peru against Chile.<sup>2</sup> It was a politically risky move, as Chile had largely established military superiority by this point in the war. Chilean naval power at the time was centered on two central-battery ironclads, *Cochrane* and *Blanco Encalada*. The U.S. Navy of 1881 had nothing to deploy in the Pacific that could contend with either British or Chilean naval assets, a fact of which U.S. officials were uncomfortably aware. As in the 1874 *Virginius* affair, a conflict existed between the foreign policy objectives of the U.S. government in the Western Hemisphere and the naval means of obtaining those objectives. Naval officers in the early 1880's worked to address this conflict. Far from being the mindless advocates of offensive naval power as they are sometimes characterized, the published record shows that officers who led the push for naval reform did their best to reconcile national strategic requirements and operational naval capabilities.<sup>3</sup> The professional forum provided by the U.S. Naval Institute offered an opportunity for these officers to voice their policy recommendations.

---

<sup>2</sup> David Healy, *James G. Blaine and Latin America* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2001), 54-99.

<sup>3</sup> On naval officers as uncompromising advocates of increased naval power, see: Karsten, 385-389.

For its 1880 prize essay contest, the Naval Institute asked members to write on the subject “Naval Strategy for the United States.” The submissions were evaluated by a panel of three distinguished judges: William M. Evarts, the Secretary of State; Richard W. Thompson, the Secretary of the Navy; and Senator John R. McPherson, the chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee. The winning entry, submitted under the motto *sat cito, si sat bene*,<sup>4</sup> was written by a lieutenant who was a member of the Naval Academy faculty and the Institute’s secretary: Charles Belknap. Belknap reviewed the reasons for maintaining a strong navy: “the unsettled condition of society in the less civilized parts of the world; the depressed state of our maritime interests; the enforcement of the principles of the Monroe Doctrine and of our neutral rights.”<sup>5</sup> He then translated those reasons into four operational requirements: “the naval defense of our coasts and sea ports...the protection of our commerce and the destruction of an enemy’s...the destruction or capture of the men-of-war of an enemy [and]...carrying the war into an enemy’s country.”<sup>6</sup> Although the stated order of the operational requirements seemed to privilege the historic priorities of coastal defense and commerce raiding, it is clear the Belknap was calling for the development of an offensive capability. Belknap reminded readers of the diplomatic “draw” between Spain and the United States that ended the *Virginius* affair, and warned against “our again being placed in such a false position before the eyes of the world.”<sup>7</sup> Belknap’s essay may be taken to represent the thinking of junior officers in the 1879-1880 period. The fact that the essay was judged ahead of seven others by the three

---

<sup>4</sup> “Quick enough, if well enough”

<sup>5</sup> Charles Belknap, “The Naval Policy of the United States,” *US Naval Institute Proceedings* 6, no. 13 (April 1880) (1880): 380.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*: 386.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*: 372.

men most influential in naval matters in the Hayes Administration is suggestive that there was some consensus as early as 1879 that the United States Navy should possess the capability in certain circumstances to conduct fleet operations against an enemy.

The specifics, however, of the materiel necessary to carry out this function were not so easily agreed upon. The 1881 prize essay attempted to address this problem, by posing the question of “The type of (I) armored vessel, (II) cruiser, best suited to the present needs of the United States”. The winning essay was submitted by Lieutenant Edward W. Very, from the Navy Signal Office. If any junior officer in the Navy was intimately involved with the real operational questions of close order formation, it was Lieutenant Very, whose work in perfecting a night signaling system for warships in formation will be discussed below. Yet his prize essay gave a very conservative answer to the issue raised. In it, Very recommended a two-pronged construction plan. Improved monitors for coastal defense would be aided by cruising vessels with full sail rigs to attack enemy shipping and protect U.S. overseas commercial interests. Nowhere in his essay is the requirement to operate in close order with other warships mentioned. The honorable mention essay, written by Lieutenant Seaton Schroeder of the Hydrographic Office, differed only slightly from Very’s in the recommendation for the type of armored vessel to be used for coastal defense. Schroeder favored a version of what the Europeans were calling a “central-battery ironclad”, rather than a monitor.<sup>8</sup>

This inconsistency, then, between policy ambition and materiel reality was the major challenge facing the Navy in the 1880’s. Lieutenant Belknap claimed that the capability to engage enemy combatants on the high seas was necessary. However, the

---

<sup>8</sup> Seaton Schroeder, LT, "The Type of (I) Armored Vessel, (Ii) Cruiser, Best Suited to the Present Needs of the United States," *US Naval Institute Proceedings* 7, no. 1 (1881).

next year, neither Lieutenant Very nor Lieutenant Schroeder spent much time on this dimension of naval warfare in their essays, discussing instead the relative merits of monitors and sail-rigged cruisers. None of the three essays discussed fleet maneuvers, fleet combat, or the ability of the recommended types of armored or cruising vessels to be built to be able to operate together in close order. Historian Peter Karsten accuses naval writers who published essays during this time of artificially keeping their work conservative, thereby making it easier for Congress to vote them money. However, a close reading of Lieutenant Very's other correspondence throughout his active duty career renders it unlikely that he, as a lieutenant, cared what the establishment thought.<sup>9</sup>

With the Republican ascent to power in the 1880 election, President Garfield's new Secretary of the Navy intended to do something about this identified inconsistency between stated mission and anticipated wartime operational employment of the Navy. William H. Hunt was a former Confederate officer and attorney general of the state of Louisiana. Although his tenure as Secretary of the Navy lasted only a little over a year, Hunt understood that a major reason for the Congressional reluctance to spend more for the Navy was that, as the prize essays for 1880 and 1881 showed, there was no clear consensus on either what the national naval strategy should be or what kind of warships should be built. To remedy this, Hunt appointed a Naval Advisory Board, under the leadership of Rear Admiral John Rodgers (of the well-connected Rodgers naval family) to prepare a single, coordinated recommendation to Congress about the future of the Navy and its warships. The board was instructed to meet on 11 July 1881 and to transmit

---

<sup>9</sup> Very eventually left the Navy and went to work for an arms manufacturer in France. For an example of his non-politically correct correspondence, see Lieutenant Very, U.S.N, "Letter, Very to Wells, 5 January 1880, 1880," letter, RG 24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. On the idea that naval officers wrote conservatively to curry congressional favor, see Karsten, 312.



a report by 10 November.<sup>10</sup> The Naval Advisory Board consisted of fourteen officers, representing the line as well as engineers and naval constructors. After meeting for the four months the Secretary had allowed them, they found that they were unable to reach a consensus. Two reports were submitted: a majority report, signed by 11 members and largely representing the views of the line officers, and a minority report, signed by Chief Engineer Isherwood and three other engineers and naval constructors.

The introduction to the majority report stated that: “At present the unarmored vessels of the service are the only ones required to carry on the work of the navy.”<sup>11</sup> The line officers were willing to leave it at that. They acknowledged that armored warships would be required in time of war, but expressed confidence that the national production capabilities would be enough to produce these ships on demand.<sup>12</sup> The report went on to review the vessels available to cruise on foreign stations against the number they felt was sufficient, including a reserve. The result was a recommendation for the construction of 38 new unarmored cruising vessels. Two would be capable of sustaining a speed of 15 knots, six would be designed to maintain 14 knots, ten 13 knots, and twenty would have a maximum speed of 10 knots. The 10 knot vessels would be of wooden construction, the rest were to be built of steel. All of the vessels would have full sail power, as well as steam engines. The majority supplemented their building plan with a call for smaller ram

---

<sup>10</sup> Paolo Coletta, ed. *American Secretaries of the Navy, Volume I, 1775-1913* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1980), 389-393.

<sup>11</sup> Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy*. 29.

<sup>12</sup> “Such vessels [ironclads] are absolutely needed for the defense of the country in time of war; and if Congress be willing to at once appropriate the large sum necessary for their construction, thoroughly efficient vessels can be designed and built in this country.” *Ibid.*, 36.

vessels as well as torpedo vessels – to be used in conjunction with the existing monitors for harbor defense.<sup>13</sup>

The minority report, representing the views of Chief Engineer Isherwood and the Bureaus of Steam Engineering and Construction and Repair, agreed with the majority that the current needs of the Navy did not include the ability to engage armored warships in combat. They were, however, more forceful about pointing out that such a capability was necessary to be considered a first-rate navy.<sup>14</sup> The minority report pointed out that unarmored cruising vessels “enable[d] a naval organization to be maintained by serving as training vessels for crews and officers during peace...”<sup>15</sup> The minority report went on to reject entirely the construction of new wooden vessels, and instead insisted that all vessels should be of iron. This represented the pragmatic view of the engineers and naval constructors that the U.S. steel industry was not capable of producing the amount and quality of steel necessary to build a ship. Overall, the minority recommended the construction of two spar-deck ships (frigates), six first-rate single-deck sloops, ten second-rate sloops, twenty gunboats and fifteen steam torpedo boats. All were to be constructed of iron. After reviewing the documents, the full House Naval Committee eventually recommended the construction of a total of fifteen ships and reported the bill to the floor of Congress for a vote. After the bill went to conference, only two ships were finally authorized, but no funding was appropriated for their construction. Congress

---

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 27-81. See also Coletta, ed., 391-392.

<sup>14</sup> “In making this statement, we do not wish to be understood that an efficient navy can be composed of unarmored vessels...” House of Representatives, *Condition of the Navy: Letter from the Secretary of the Navy, in Response to a Resolution from the House of Representatives, Requesting the Views of the Minority of the Commission to Consider the Condition of the Navy*, 47 Cong., 1st sess., 1882. pt. Executive Document No. 30.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

expected the Navy Department to build the new warships with construction and repair funds which had already been appropriated. A small beginning, but it was acknowledgement nonetheless that new, non-wooden warships were considered necessary by Congress. The assassination of President Garfield in 1881 and the subsequent elevation of Chester Arthur to the presidency led to a change in the Secretary of the Navy's office. William H. Hunt, who was ill and having difficulty carrying out his duties as Secretary of the Navy anyway, was posted to St. Petersburg as the U.S. minister to Russia.<sup>16</sup> This cleared the way for now-President Chester Arthur to repay some political favors.

President Arthur's appointee to head the Navy Department was William E. Chandler.<sup>17</sup> The New Hampshire state assemblyman and newspaper editor Chandler turned out to be a surprisingly effective advocate of increased naval spending and a new construction program. He appointed a second Naval Advisory Board on 5 August 1882 to make recommendations concerning the construction of the two cruisers authorized by Congress earlier that year. This board was chaired by Rear Admiral Robert W. Shufeldt, and consisted of six other members, including a civilian naval architect and a civilian marine engineer. Shufeldt's Advisory Board submitted its recommendations on 21 November 1882. Having been witness to the reception on Capitol Hill of the first Advisory Board's report, they were somewhat more pragmatic. In addition to the two warships already authorized by Congress, the board recommended two more second-rate single-deck unarmored cruisers for a total of four ships, all to be constructed of steel.

---

<sup>16</sup> He eventually died in St. Petersburg. See Coletta, ed., 393.

<sup>17</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Luce, 3 May 1884, 1884," Official Orders, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. .

The “New Steel Navy” was born on 3 March 1883, when Congress appropriated 1.3 million dollars for the construction of the four ships, to be named *Atlanta*, *Boston*, *Chicago*, and *Dolphin* – the so-called “ABCD Ships”.<sup>18</sup>

The significance of the reports of the two Naval Advisory Boards and the eventual congressional construction approval is to point out the continued conflict between materiel and the professional expectations placed on the North Atlantic Squadron. The “ABCD” ships were cruising vessels. They were unarmored and had full sail rigs. However, as the decade progressed, the North Atlantic Squadron was increasingly expected to maintain proficiency at fleet tactical drills and close order steaming. As Secretary Chandler put it in his 1883 remarks: “It is not now, and it never has been, a part of that policy to maintain a fleet able at any time to cope on equal terms with the foremost European armaments...we unquestionably need vessels in such numbers as fully ‘to keep alive the knowledge of war’, and of such a kind that it shall be a knowledge of modern war; capable on brief notice of being expanded into invincible squadrons.”<sup>19</sup> While Congress was debating the missions and composition of the New Navy, the North Atlantic Squadron rendezvoused in Port Royal in April 1882 and steamed north to Hampton Roads for a change-of-command and exercises in fleet tactics off Fort Monroe.

---

<sup>18</sup> Miller, 149. See also Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* 1882. Vol. 1. 154-155.

<sup>19</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* 1883. Vol. 1. 8-9.

## *Squadron Exercises, 1882*

On 1 May 1882, Rear Admiral Wyman was relieved by Rear Admiral George H. Cooper as Commander-in-Chief.<sup>20</sup> Cooper was a native of New York, and was the last nineteenth century commander-in-chief of the North Atlantic Squadron not to have attended the Naval Academy at Annapolis. He joined the Navy in 1837 as a 16 year-old midshipman and spent four years on the *Constitution* before being sent to the naval school at Philadelphia to prepare for his exams.<sup>21</sup> Service in the Mexican and Civil Wars followed. He had been the commanding officer of Rear Admiral John Rodgers' flagship, *Colorado*, in the Asiatic Fleet during the Korean Expedition of 1871, where he gained experience conducting squadron-level operations. Subsequently, he had commanded the navy yard at Pensacola, FL, before his assignment as commandant of the New York Navy Yard.<sup>22</sup> The change-of-command took place in Hampton Roads, Virginia, where the squadron had been ordered to assemble.<sup>23</sup> All six warships of the North Atlantic Squadron were in attendance: *Tennessee*, *Kearsarge*, *Vandalia*, *Alliance*, *Enterprise*, and *Yantic*.

Launched in 1865, the flagship *Tennessee* represented the culmination of the technology marrying wooden sailing ships with steam auxiliary power. At a displacement of 3200 tons, she was large and roomy, and was a coveted assignment for

---

<sup>20</sup> George H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 1 May 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>21</sup> The naval school at Philadelphia was the direct predecessor of the U.S. Naval Academy.

<sup>22</sup> Cogar, 33-34; "Obituary," *New - York Tribune (1866-1899)*, 18 November 1891.

<sup>23</sup> NYT Article, 25 April 1882, "Naval Review off Fortress Monroe"

sea duty.<sup>24</sup> *Kearsarge* was the most famous and decorated of the Navy's Civil War-era steam sloops, being the celebrated veteran of the epic battle with the Confederate raider *Alabama*. The less famous screw sloops *Vandalia*, and *Enterprise* and the gunboats *Alliance* and *Yantic* rounded out the squadron.

#### THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON, 1882

SHIP	DISP(TONS)	TYPE/CONST	ARMOR	SPEED	ARMAMENT	ERA BUILT (YEAR)
TENNESSEE (FLAG)	3281	WOODEN SCREW FRIGATE	NO	13.9KTS	2X8" DAHLGREN RIFLES 2X100LB PARROT RIFLE 1X60LB PARROT RIFLE 8X9" SMOOTH BORE	CIVIL WAR (1865)
KEARSARGE	1550	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	11KTS	2X11" DAHLGRENS 1X30LB PARROTT RIFLE 4X32LB SMOOTH BORE	CIVIL WAR (1861)
VANDALIA	2033	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	10.2KTS	1X60LB PARROT RIFLE 6X32LB SMOOTH BORE 3X20LB HOWITZERS	POST-WAR (1875)
ALLIANCE	1375	WOODEN SCREW GUNBOAT	NO	11KTS	1X11" DAHLGREN 4X9" DAHLGRENS 1X60LB PARROT RIFLE	POST-WAR (1875)
ENTERPRISE	1375	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	11KTS	1X11" DAHLGREN 4X9" DAHLGRENS 1X60LB PARROT RIFLE	POST-WAR (1874)
YANTIC	836	WOODEN SCREW GUNBOAT	NO	9.5KTS	1X100LB PARROT RIFLE 1X30LB PARROT RIFLE 2X9" DAHLGRENS 2X24LB HOWITZERS 2X12LB	CIVIL WAR (1864)

Table 4: The North Atlantic Squadron, 1882<sup>25</sup>

The Navy Department was anxious to take advantage of this rare opportunity of having the ships concentrated to conduct fleet tactical exercises. Much of the Department's new-found drive to carry out these exercises probably had to do with the energetic new chief of the Bureau of Navigation and Detail, Commodore John G.

<sup>24</sup> Canney. Other descriptions of ships in this section are from Canney as well.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

Walker.<sup>26</sup> Within two days of assuming command, the Department (probably Walker) had cabled Cooper with instructions to take his squadron to sea for exercise at steam tactics. Cooper promised to get to sea by 10 May.<sup>27</sup> There is some evidence that the order to conduct exercises initially caught Cooper off guard. His correspondence during the eventual 20-day at-sea period makes several oblique references to the speed at which his commanding officers had prepared their ships for sea and commends them for being able to stay at sea for so long on such short notice.<sup>28</sup> The printing press on *Tennessee* was kept busy as a flurry of general orders and circular instructions to commanding officers were quickly produced, outlining Admiral Cooper's organization of his squadron.<sup>29</sup>

On 10 May 1882 Cooper's six ships got underway and stood out from Hampton Roads. They spent the next two days scattered in heavy fog, but eventually were able to commence steam maneuvers on 13 May. With a slight northwest breeze, smooth seas, and his ships making an average speed of 4.5 knots under steam, Cooper ordered the Squadron to form in simple echelon at "open order." This allowed commanding officers

---

<sup>26</sup> Walker had been ordered to the Bureau in late 1881. See Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Porter, 31 August 1881, 1881," Letter, David D. Porter Family Papers, Washington, D.C. We know that Porter was happy to have him there, and felt that he would be a positive influence on the Secretary of the Navy. See David Dixon Porter, ADM, "Letter, Porter to Luce, 15 August 1881, 1881," letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>27</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 4 May 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>28</sup> See for instance, Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 30 May 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>29</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Circular Order, Cooper to Commanding Officers, 8 May 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Circular Order, Cooper to Commanding Officers, 9 May 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

to maintain position with a greater interval between ships than that called for in the tactical manual. Cooper explained in his after-action report that “close order” forced the expenditure of larger amounts of coal, as commanding officers had to constantly use higher engine settings to achieve and maintain their positions. The supply of coal was on Rear Admiral Cooper’s mind throughout these exercises.<sup>30</sup>

Cooper began with the same basics Rear Admiral Case had practiced eight years before. For any squadron commander, the fundamental formation skill was the ability to move his ships from line to column and back. A line abreast formation enabled a commander to spread his ships out in such a manner that they could maximize the amount of ocean searched for opposing forces, yet remain in visual contact with the flagship. The column allowed him to concentrate his firepower at the onset of battle. The ability to rapidly shift from line to column could mean the difference between victory and defeat in a fleet engagement.<sup>31</sup> Once established in echelon formation, Cooper’s first order was to move into line abreast. This took nine minutes. The line of ships then made a simultaneous turn to the right, a “right flank”, which turned the formation into a column. It took the ships fifteen minutes to establish their correct positions in the column, before Cooper ordered a column turn to the right. After the column was established on its new heading, Cooper ordered another flanking movement (changing column into line) and then ordered the ships in line to reform as a column.

---

<sup>30</sup> Earl English, CAPT, "Letter, English to Cooper, 25 May 1882, 1882," Letter, RG 313, Records of the Naval Operating forces, Washington, D.C.

<sup>31</sup> On this see Andrew Gordon, *The Rules of the Game: Jutland and British Naval Command* (London, UK: John Murray Publishers, 2005), 434-437. See Chapter 1, pg. 30 of this study for illustrations of these formations.



This was the most difficult maneuver yet attempted, taking eighteen minutes to execute correctly at an ordered speed of seven knots.<sup>32</sup>

The exercise was not problem-free. At 8:20, *Yantic* signaled the flag: “My engines are disabled.” *Yantic’s* captain, Commander Frank Wildes, initially estimated two hours required for repair, but by 9:20 he was able to send signal 4271 to the flagship: “Engine repairs completed.” That allowed about two hours of tactical work before an unknown vessel strayed into the exercise area. Cooper suspended the maneuvers and signaled *Vandalia* to “Ascertain character of strange vessel.” As *Vandalia* departed the formation at 11:45, the rest of the ships paused for about an hour. At 12:30, *Vandalia* was able to report that the interloper was the schooner *Race*, out of Joinville Island, on her way to Philadelphia with a load of lumber. Satisfied, Rear Admiral Cooper resumed tactical signaling. As the afternoon progressed, the maneuvers became more difficult. Cooper formed the squadron in double echelon on *Yantic*, then ordered them into “close order” at a speed of five knots. Another series of shifts from line to column and back ensued until about 2:30PM, when Cooper placed his ships in an easy echelon formation at open order, asked for a report on coal expended, and terminated the exercises.<sup>33</sup>

The weather was not as promising on the morning of 14 May, overcast and hazy with drizzle, but the Squadron pressed on with its formation work. From a line, the ships formed a column on a northeast heading in eighteen minutes, an improvement over the previous day of 4.5 minutes. From the column formation, the six ships split into three

---

<sup>32</sup> George H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 1 June 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.""; USS Tennessee, "Logbook, Uss Tennessee, 29 December 1881 - 10 June 1882," Ship's Log, p. Entry for 13 May, 1882, RG24: Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Logs of US Naval Ships, 1801-1915, Washington, D.C.

columns of two ships each, forming a mini “fleet” of three “squadrons,” and moved into close order.<sup>34</sup> Cooper then maneuvered his “fleet” as in the previous day, moving the two-ship “squadrons” into and out of a battle line. The third and final day of steam tactics was “clear and pleasant.” The entire day’s work took place at close order, and consisted mainly of column work. The Squadron formed a column, then practiced shifting the order of ships in the column from natural to reverse order while the entire column changed course repeatedly.

The tactical exercises were completed on 15 May. The Squadron spent that afternoon conducting a number of turning trials to, in Cooper’s words, “ascertain the relative handiness of the different vessels in turning.”<sup>35</sup> His written orders to each of his commanding officers stipulated that measurements would be taken at full speed and 2/3<sup>rds</sup> speed, with the helm half over and hard over. The idea of spending extensive amounts of time in formation was still new enough that accurate data on the turning abilities of U.S. ships did not exist. In giving his instructions for measuring tactical diameter, Admiral Cooper referenced a work by Chief Constructor W.O. White of the Royal Navy entitled “Turning Powers of Ships.”<sup>36</sup>

The remainder of the time at sea was spent under sail. The Secretary of the Navy’s report for 1882 makes special mention of the twenty days the ships of the North Atlantic Station spent cruising “in squadron,” but in reality, steam maneuvers only took

---

<sup>34</sup> Cooper had assigned the order of ships in the column of twos in his pre-exercise orders. See Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, “North Atlantic Station General Order No. 19, 1882,” letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>35</sup> Cooper, “Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 1 June 1882. ”

<sup>36</sup> Cooper, “Circular Order, Cooper to Commanding Officers, 9 May 1882. ”

place from 13-15 May. The remainder of the squadron's time underway was spent under sail. Rear Admiral Cooper was adamant about keeping the ships' crews busy with sail and spar drills and other training aboard the individual ships. These drills were much more in line with the daily operations of a navy whose chief mission was cruising and "showing the flag." Target practice with the ships' guns was carried out on 20 May, and torpedo practice took place on 24 May. The Squadron returned to Hampton Roads on 30 May 1882.<sup>37</sup> In twenty days, Rear Admiral Cooper had already spent more time in direct tactical control of his warships than the previous five commanders-in-chief combined.<sup>38</sup>

### ***Rear Admiral Cooper and the Limits of Wooden Cruising Vessels***

Upon his return to Hampton Roads, Rear Admiral Cooper was pleased to learn that the Navy Department intended to keep the Squadron together during the summer. This would afford many more opportunities for training in fleet tactics under steam.<sup>39</sup> An indication that Cooper intended to spend the summer working was his 2 June circular letter to commanding officers in which he actively discouraged officers from applying to take leave for periods longer than 24 hours, and required that the papers be submitted to him for approval if any did.<sup>40</sup> After routinely dealing with yellow fever year after year, the Navy Department suspended the practice of sending warships to the Caribbean during

---

<sup>37</sup> Cooper, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 1 June 1882. "; Tennessee, "", p. Entry for 30 May, 1882.

<sup>38</sup> This observation is based on a review of the Annual Reports of the Secretary of the Navy for 1875-1881, as well as an analysis of the movements of the squadron flagship, *Tennessee*, as recorded in her logbooks.

<sup>39</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 2 June 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>40</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Circular Letter to Commanding Officers, 2 June 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

the hot fever season and replaced it with the practice of moving north in the summer for exercises, then dispersing throughout the Caribbean as the weather cooled and the threat of yellow fever decreased.<sup>41</sup> Admiral Porter endorsed this new convention, noting in his annual report to the Secretary of the Navy that “cruising together the past summer has been of great advantage to the squadron in many respects, and I recommend that the practice be kept up.”<sup>42</sup>

After a couple of weeks to perform minor repairs and resupply the ships, *Tennessee*, *Vandalia*, *Alliance*, and *Yantic* got underway on 17 June. *Kearsarge* and *Enterprise* needed more substantive repairs, and so stayed behind at the Norfolk Navy Yard.<sup>43</sup> Once underway, the squadron immediately began to do formation work, as ordered by the Navy Department.<sup>44</sup> On Sunday 18 June, after divine services, the officer of the deck noted that “The Chief of Staff exercised the fleet in naval tactics under steam.”<sup>45</sup> He went on to note in his entry that he had to “revolve the engines by the bell during the maneuvers.” The methods of rapidly sending engine orders from the deck to the engine room were still being worked out. This set of exercises began more aggressively than the previous one, no doubt owing to the experience that the ships and

---

<sup>41</sup> It is during this period that newspapers begin to regularly refer to the “annual winter cruise” and “annual summer exercises.”

<sup>42</sup> Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy*. 230.

<sup>43</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 17 June 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>44</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 30 June 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>45</sup> USS *Tennessee*, "Logbook, Uss *Tennessee*, 11 June 1882 - 9 December 1882," Ship's Log, p. Entry for 18 June, RG24: Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Logs of US Naval Ships, 1801-1915, Washington, D.C.

their crews had received the previous month. In close order at seven knots, the four ships shifted first into echelon, then line abreast, then formed two columns of two in a respectable 8.5 minutes. The evolutions continued over the next two hours, the Squadron working through line abreast, column, and echelon formations before maneuvering ceased for the day.<sup>46</sup> The four ships followed the same routine for the next four days, 19 through 21 June, spending at least two hours each day maneuvering in response to tactical signals from the flagship. On 21 June, each ship performed more maneuvers to test and chart their tactical diameter.<sup>47</sup> Once the fleet exercises were complete, *Vandalia* was detached and sent to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, while *Alliance* was sent to Boston. In his after-action report, Rear Admiral Cooper noted that, in accordance with his instructions from the Navy Department, "All the evolutions laid down in Parker's Steam Fleet Tactics were made that were possible with a Squadron of four vessels...the vessels were maneuvered in closer order than during the previous cruise, and more care was observed in preserving proper positions." He went on to offer his recommendation that "in future, the time to be devoted to these exercises be shortened."<sup>48</sup> Cooper's correspondence throughout 1882 gives the impression that he found tactical exercises useful to a point, but he was not as excited about them as Rear Admirals Stephen B. Luce or John G. Walker would be in a few years. Cooper carried out tactical exercises with his wooden cruising vessels not because he was preparing to fight a fleet action, but because he thought formation work in appropriate doses was good professional development for

---

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. "".

<sup>47</sup> George H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 22 June 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>48</sup> Cooper, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 30 June 1882. "

his officers, and because the Navy Department repeatedly directed him to throughout the summer.

*Tennessee* and *Yantic* arrived in New York City on 22 June. It was a homecoming of sorts for Rear Admiral Cooper, as he had been the commandant of the New York Navy Yard prior to his assignment as the North Atlantic Squadron commander-in-chief. They stayed at anchor there for the next twenty days, taking on coal and supplies from the New York Navy Yard. On 12 July, *Tennessee* and *Enterprise* set out for Boston by way of Provincetown, Massachusetts, where they were to meet up with *Yantic* and the other vessels of the squadron.<sup>49</sup> The Navy Department continued to press Cooper to conduct squadron exercises at every opportunity.<sup>50</sup> On the way to Boston, *Tennessee*, *Enterprise*, *Alliance*, and *Yantic* carried out exercises in steam fleet tactics on 31 July. The after-action report is unremarkable. All the usual combinations of column, line abreast, and echelon formations were practiced. This time the base speed was eight knots and everything was done at close order. At the conclusion of the fleet drills, fires were banked and the remainder of the underway period was spent under canvas. The crews were worked at spar and sail drills, as well as general quarters, both day and night. On the fourth day underway, steam was raised in order to hold target practice. The four ships moved in a circle around the targets at ranges from 1000 to 2500 yards. Cooper was pleased with the results, noting that Seaman N. P. Peterson of

---

<sup>49</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 12 July 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>50</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 22 July 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "North Atlantic Station General Order No. 11, 1882," order, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

*Tennessee's* No. 12 gun (an 8inch rifle) had struck the target at 800 yards.<sup>51</sup> It speaks to the low state of efficiency of naval artillery in the 1880's, prior to range-finding and sighting equipment, that the attainment of a single hit was cause for the commander-in-chief to mention the gun captain by name in his report.

Overall, Cooper was pleased with his ships' performance on the trip to Boston. He reported that the enthusiasm shown by the officers and men "goes to prove the utility of squadron exercises, as long as circumstances will admit."<sup>52</sup> He goes on to say that "In carrying out the views of the Department in this matter, I make it an object to keep every one on the alert...At the same time I am very careful not to worry or harass the command with anything like overwork."<sup>53</sup> Cooper represents the epitome of the commander-in-chief in transition. He recognized the utility of squadron exercises and carried them out professionally (when directed to by the Navy Department). However, without fail, he ordered his cruising vessels to bank fires and spread canvas at the first available opportunity. With the materiel in place on the North Atlantic Station in 1882, sail was still the primary method of propulsion.

The Squadron anchored in Boston on 2 August 1882.<sup>54</sup> After three days in Boston, the four ships headed to Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Portland, Maine.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 2 August 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>52</sup> Ibid."".

<sup>53</sup> Ibid."".

<sup>54</sup> Ibid."".

<sup>55</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 8 August 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

Cooper held brief tactical exercises as the Squadron departed the harbor under steam power, but once out to sea, fires were banked and the Squadron continued under sail alone. Exercises in wearing and tacking, making and shortening sail, reefing and shifting topsails were carried out.<sup>56</sup> At night the Squadron exercised with Very signals, a new method of night communication using flares that would eventually replace the not-very-reliable Costen lights.<sup>57</sup> The signal office had been hard at work on perfecting a system to maneuver large numbers of ships at night, and after testing several systems had settled on the rockets designed by Naval Institute Prize Essay-winning Lieutenant E.W. Very. Testing would continue over the next few years, but little was found that enabled quicker or easier understood night signaling than the Very system.<sup>58</sup> The interest and amount of effort expended by the signal office to tackle the night signaling problem is yet another indicator of the operational navy's interest in being able to sail and fight in tactical formations.

At Portsmouth the Squadron was reviewed by President Chester A. Arthur and Secretary of the Navy William Chandler. The two dignitaries arrived at Portsmouth in *Despatch* on 9 September. Over a period of three days, official visits were exchanged. The President and Secretary Chandler visited *Tennessee* on 11 September, and were able to witness tactical drills as well as target practice. President Arthur, who had just

---

<sup>56</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 12 August 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>57</sup> Department of the Navy, "General Order No. 301, 1882," Order, RG24: Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Logs of US Naval Ships, 1801-1915, Washington, D.C. This was the same Lieutenant Very who had submitted the 1881 U.S. Naval Institute prize essay.

<sup>58</sup> Commodore Johnson, U.S.N., "Letter, Johnson to Walker, 30 June 1882, 1882," letter, RG 24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. Commodore Johnson, U.S.N., "Letter, Johnson to Walker, 6 February 1884, 1884," Letter, RG 24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. ; Commodore Johnson, U.S.N., "Letter, Johnson to Walker, 12 April 1884, 1884," Letter, RG 24, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. .



assumed his office following the death of President Garfield, would prove to be a great friend of the Navy. He and Secretary Chandler were appropriately pleased with the state of training of their naval forces. Rear Admiral Cooper was as well, noting that “in performing evolutions under steam in close order, the commanding officers showed much skill and confidence in handling their vessels.” Cooper was genuinely concerned with training for his junior officers. He went out of his way to ensure that each of them was given ample opportunity to act as the officer of the deck during tactical maneuvers, responsible for directing their ship’s movements with proper rudder and engine orders. North Atlantic Squadron General Order No. 14, published on 8 September, mandated that after-action reports from fleet tactical exercises would list each line officer and give the times they had stood watch as officer of the deck during maneuvers. Cooper insisted that ensigns and midshipmen get more time as the officer of the deck, to enhance their professional development.<sup>59</sup> The Presidential review signaled the end of tactical training for the Squadron in 1882. One afternoon was devoted to fleet tactics on the way to Portland, Maine from Portsmouth – a training period insignificant enough that it did not warrant an after-action report from Cooper. It was time for the Squadron to break up and send the individual ships on their way with their cruising assignments in the West Indies. After a squadron visit to Philadelphia in October, the warships moved south to Hampton Roads, Virginia, where they departed for the winter cruise on 12 December, 1882.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> George H. Cooper, RADM, "North Atlantic Station General Order No. 14, 1882," order, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>60</sup> George H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 27 November 1882, 1882," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

The flagship operated alone on the winter cruise. *Tennessee* traveled first to Martinique, then St. Christopher's Island, St. Thomas, Santa Cruz, and finally Aspinwall, on the Panama isthmus. This was a traditional mission. At each stop, Rear Admiral Cooper reported carefully to the Department economic information such as the port's main imports and exports and the main crops grown. He noted the number of ships in each port and how many of them were American. At each stop, he was wined and dined by the local dignitaries, whom he invited in turn to be entertained on board *Tennessee*. Such socialization served to promote U.S. business interests, assuring local leaders and ex-patriot businessmen alike of the stability and security following the Stars and Stripes. The detail that Cooper went into in his official reports concerning commercial opportunities suggests that he considered such business dealings to be an integral part of his job as commander-in-chief.<sup>61</sup>

*Tennessee* arrived back in New Orleans on 13 March 1883.<sup>62</sup> Cooper had ordered the Squadron to assemble there after their individual cruises. After two weeks in New Orleans, *Tennessee* departed in company with *Vandalia*, *Kearsarge*, and *Yantic*. The Squadron carried out brief fleet tactical drills on their way from the mouth of the Mississippi River to Tortugas Islands, off of Key West, Florida. Again, fires were

---

<sup>61</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 1 March 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 5 February 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 8 January 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 22 January 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>62</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 13 March 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

banked and sails set after the Squadron stood out to sea.<sup>63</sup> The four ships then proceeded north independently and rendezvoused at Hampton Roads in May. After replenishing stores and making minor repairs, Cooper intended to conduct a week or ten days of exercises, but the Department ordered him back to New York. *Tennessee*, *Vandalia*, *Kearsarge*, and *Yantic* were to take part in the celebration of the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge on 24 May, with Rear Admiral Cooper as the senior Navy representative.<sup>64</sup>

The request to have the Squadron present for the Brooklyn Bridge festivities was an example of the nature of Navy Department tasking that prevented the North Atlantic Squadron from conducting any tactical exercises for the remainder of 1883. Not only were there several public relations events to be attended, but unrest in Haiti called ships away as well. “At the request of the State Department,” read Cooper’s orders to *Vandalia*’s commanding officer, Captain Wallace, “the U.S.S. *Vandalia* under your command has been detailed to proceed to Port-au-Prince...to care for the interests of Americans during the present troubles in that island.” Wallace’s orders went on to require him to “afford such protection and security to the Americans residing in the

---

<sup>63</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 1 April 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>64</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 20 May 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "North Atlantic Station General Order No. 23, 1883," order, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

Island as they may require of you.”<sup>65</sup> Later in the year, *Vandalia* would be relieved by *Swatara*.<sup>66</sup>

The remainder of the Squadron stayed busy with a variety of tasks. *Alliance* was ordered to the north, to visit the various fishing ports and show the U.S. flag in the always-contested Canadian fishing grounds.<sup>67</sup> She would later be joined by *Vandalia* and *Swatara*.<sup>68</sup> In July, Rear Admiral Cooper was ordered to take the flagship to LaGuyara, Venezuela, to represent the United States at the unveiling of a stature of George Washington in Caracas.<sup>69</sup> Other engagements included the Newburgh, New York centennial celebration in October and the celebration of the evacuation of New York by the British, held on November 26<sup>th</sup>, 1883.<sup>70</sup> The majority of the Squadron was able to reunite at that time, with *Tennessee*, as well as *Colorado*, *Saratoga*, *Jamestown* and

---

<sup>65</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Wallace, 20 June 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>66</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 10 November 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>67</sup> Cooper, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 22 June 1882. "

<sup>68</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Report of Condition and Employment of Vessels of the North Atlantic Squadron for the Month Ending August 31, 1883, 1883," report, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>69</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 22 June 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>70</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 17 August 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 22 November 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "North Atlantic Station General Order No. 30, 1883," order, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

*Yantic*, in attendance. Soon, it was cruising season. In December, Rear Admiral Cooper gathered the Squadron in Hampton Roads and issued his orders for the various warships' West Indies deployments.<sup>71</sup> Although they spent some time together at various events, there is no evidence that the North Atlantic Squadron units carried out any tactical exercises in the summer or fall of 1883. The dual nature of the functions expected of the Squadron was evident. While there was initiative within the Navy Department, certainly from the Bureau of Navigation, to concentrate the Squadron's warships and exercise them frequently, there was no set plan for executing this. Although there was a general idea that the Squadron should cruise to the south in the winter and concentrate in the north during the summer, this convention was easy to ignore if exigencies arose. Senior officers also believed that they had, at that point, simply gotten everything they could out of having the wooden cruising vessels practice formations at the extremely slow speeds of 4-6 knots. As Admiral Cooper put it while at Hampton Roads in May: "I do not think it will be of any advantage to devote a longer period to these exercises as all the vessels have already had much practice in them."<sup>72</sup> Cooper's actions and his after-action reports clearly demonstrate that he felt that the North Atlantic Squadron had reached the outer limits of what productive good could be accomplished with wooden cruising ships.

### ***Stephen B. Luce and the Naval War College***

---

<sup>71</sup> George H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 11 December 1883, 1883," RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>72</sup> George H. Cooper, RADM, "Letter, Cooper to Chandler, 16 May 1883, 1883," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

One officer who was determined to push for a more systematic approach to fleet training and readiness for combat was Commodore Stephen B. Luce. Luce was the epitome of that rare breed of officer who was both exceptionally successful at sea, and a path-breaking leader ashore.<sup>73</sup> He, perhaps more than any naval officer of the nineteenth century, understood that a “fleet” was more than just a collection of ships. He both articulated, and then put into action, a comprehensive system of education. In 1841, as a fourteen year-old, he signed on aboard the USS Congress as a midshipman, and moved through the ranks over the next twenty years. After distinguished service during the Civil War, Luce’s association with the North Atlantic Squadron began with his tour of duty as the commanding officer of Rear Admiral LeRoy’s flagship, *Hartford*, from 1 November 1875 to 21 August 1877. Although he was not present during the Key West exercises of 1874, we know that he understood the importance of that initial set of maneuvers, since his personal papers contain a full set of copies of all the reports submitted by Rear Admiral Case.<sup>74</sup> Luce would, however, have been present for the landing exercises held in 1876.<sup>75</sup> As the commanding officer of the flagship, he would have been privy to Rear Admiral LeRoy’s frustration that year as planned fleet tactical exercises off Port Royal were rendered impossible to carry out by Navy Department tasking which scattered his warships throughout the North Atlantic Squadron’s operating area. It was a pattern that

---

<sup>73</sup> For example, Luce’s more famous subordinate, Alfred Thayer Mahan, was widely considered to be a sub-par shiphandler and operational naval officer.

<sup>74</sup> Luce was on duty at the Boston Navy Yard at the time, although he had briefly been detailed to command the *Minnesota* when it was thought that she would be put in commission during the *Virginius* crisis.

<sup>75</sup> *Hartford*, along with *Plymouth*, *Vandalia*, *Marion*, and *Huron* put ashore a combined 516 men and 6 guns. See Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy on the Operations of the Department, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1876*. 36-37.

would repeat itself during Luce's career with the North Atlantic Squadron: high hopes of executing fleet training undermined by other duties. After leaving command of *Hartford*, Luce turned to naval education and training. He successfully established the New York State Maritime School, then spent the years 1877-1883 in various positions associated with training naval apprentices, including command of the U.S. Training Ship *Minnesota* and command of the Apprentice Training Squadron.

His interests extended to education for officers as well, which led to his most lasting contribution as the founder and first president of the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island. In *Professors of War*, Professor Ronald Spector argues that the foundation of the War College was an important step in the professionalization of the naval officer corps.<sup>76</sup> The opportunity for post-graduate professional interaction, when added to the initial bonding experience at the Naval Academy, the work of the Naval Institute at Annapolis, and the networking influence of various military-themed periodicals discussed in the previous chapter, was a major move for the profession. As such, the foundation of the War College is a subject which has received its share of attention from naval historians. Typically, the narrative focuses on the study of strategy and the cast of characters usually features Alfred Thayer Mahan and his ideas about the political-economic role of a navy in the shaping of national destiny. While correct, this interpretation does not give enough attention to Luce's belief in the importance of development of operational naval tactics in his fight to establish the War College. Luce's had a passion for putting naval theory into practice. He was fundamentally interested in the daily work associated with operating large ships together. One of the reasons that Luce felt that something like a war college was necessary was that the new naval

---

<sup>76</sup> Spector.

professional of the 1880's would have to learn to fight entire squadrons of ships together as a unit.<sup>77</sup>

After much lobbying, on 3 May 1884, Luce was ordered, along with Commander William T. Sampson and Commander Goodrich, to “consider and report upon the whole subject of a post graduate school or school of application, to be established by the Navy Department for officers of the Navy.”<sup>78</sup> The report that these three officers submitted the following year specifically noted, under the heading “PRACTICAL EXERCISES”:

"The North Atlantic Squadron affords the nearest approach to be found to a proper course in naval tactics. It should be assembled once a year, and during a stated period, go through a series of fleet evolutions, gunnery practice with the latest types of ordnance, the landing of seamen for military operations, boat operations, torpedo attack and defense, etc, having the class on board for instruction."<sup>79</sup>

It is evident that from the beginning, the Naval War College was not intended by Luce to be simply a classroom-based institution. Before it had even been officially chartered, the NWC concept included the study and development of formation steaming tactics, with the North Atlantic Squadron acting as the laboratory.

On 26 July 1884, Commodore Luce was ordered to take command of the North Atlantic Squadron.<sup>80</sup> It was to be a temporary position, as Luce had already been tapped to open the new Naval War College later that year, but he was determined to make the

---

<sup>77</sup> John B. and Hayes Hattendorf, John D., ed. *The Writings of Stephen B. Luce*, ed. John B. Hattendorf, U.S. Naval War College Historical Monograph Series (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1975). Pg.15.

<sup>78</sup> Walker, "Letter, Walker to Luce, 3 May 1884. "

<sup>79</sup> *Letter from the Secretary of the Navy Reporting, in Answer to Senate Resolution of the 4th Instant, the Steps Taken by Him to Establish an Advanced Course of Instruction of Naval Officers at Coasters' Harbor Island, Rhode Island.*, 48 Cong., 2 sess., 1885.

<sup>80</sup> Stephen B. Luce, RADM, "Letter, Luce to Chandler, 26 July 1884, 1884," RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; Nichols, "Letter, Nichols to Luce, 22 July 1884, 1884," Official Orders, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. .



most of his brief opportunity to command ships at sea. On 10 July 1884, *Tennessee*, *Vandalia*, *Alliance*, and *Yantic* got underway from the squadron anchorage off Staten Island, headed for Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where the change-of-command was to take place. Rear Admiral Cooper took advantage of having four ships steaming together to carry out one final set of fleet exercises under his flag. Moving out of New York Harbor in column, the ships commenced exercises at 9:10AM. At first glance, the Squadron would seem to have been doing fairly well, showing the gains made by having had increased opportunities over the past two years to work together. An order to form columns of twos from a single column in natural order was carried out in seven minutes. They then returned to a single column in eight minutes. Rear Admiral Cooper, though, was not impressed. "Fleet not performing well," he wrote in his remarks, "Alliance frequently out of position. The commanding officers rather nervous as regards approaching each other in close order."<sup>81</sup> He did go on to say that they improved as the afternoon progressed.

On 11 July, more exercises commenced at 8AM. The Squadron moved from echelon into line and back several times, changing course along the way. At 4PM, a light fog required Rear Admiral Cooper to give tactical signals for a while using the ship's steam whistle. Cooper reported that this was done successfully, and went on comment, begrudgingly, "Alliance improving slowly."<sup>82</sup> Nine more days of exercises followed, until the Squadron arrived at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. There, they met *Swatara*.

---

<sup>81</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, "Report of Exercises, North Atlantic Squadron at Sea for Exercises, 1884," RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. "".

After conducting the change-of-command, the five ships of the North Atlantic Squadron, together with the ships of the Training Squadron, participated in the reception for the Greely Relief Expedition.<sup>83</sup>

From Portsmouth, *Tennessee*, *Vandalia*, *Swatara*, *Yantic*, and *Alliance* got underway on 6 August and conducted 10 days of tactical exercises, including a landing of the naval brigade on Gardiner's Island on 11-13 August. 660 men from the ships of the Squadron were landed under the command of *Tennessee's* commanding officer, Captain J. N. Miller. Luce proudly noted that it had been a surprise exercise, with the landing orders given after the Squadron had left Portsmouth for Newport, and that it was the largest exercise of its kind ever conducted on as little notice.<sup>84</sup> The Squadron arrived in Newport on 16 August.<sup>85</sup> Once in Narragansett Bay, Luce had the ships of his squadron conduct measured mile speed and tactical diameter tests.<sup>86</sup> Knowing exactly how many revolutions needed to be ordered for each ship to make a given speed, as well as knowing the arc each ship would scribe through the water at a given rudder angle was crucial to the ability of a squadron to operate together, and was information that was typically lacking at this formative stage. Officers of the deck were previously expected to carry

---

<sup>83</sup> In 1881, Army Lieutenant Adolphus W. Greely's polar expedition became stranded when their ship, *Proteus*, was stuck in the ice. After two failed attempts, a relief expedition, led by then-Captain Winfield Scott Schley, rescued them on 20 June 1884, and returned them to the Naval Hospital at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Of an original party of 25 men, 6 were rescued and 5 survived.

<sup>84</sup> John D. and Hattendorf Hayes, John B., ed. *The Writings of Stephen B. Luce*, ed. John B. Hattendorf, First ed., U.S. Naval War College Historical Monograph Series (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1975), 195.

<sup>85</sup> Stephen B. Luce, RADM, "Letter, Luce to Chandler, 18 August 1884, 1884," RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>86</sup> Stephen B. Luce, RADM, "Letter, Luce to Chandler, 20 August 1884, 1884," RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

out tactical maneuvers by “seaman’s eye”, rather than rely on data.<sup>87</sup> In the days before instrumentation, maneuvers were made much more difficult without a reliable way to know how fast each ship was going. By immediately ordering speed trials for his new command, Luce showed both that he recognized this fact, and that he intended his squadron to spend a lot of time operating together. Even before the official opening of the Naval War College, Luce was doing his best to fulfill his vision of the North Atlantic Squadron as a squadron of evolution, working out tactical problems studied at the Naval War College through actual exercises at sea. In fact, the board’s selection of Newport, Rhode Island as the permanent location for the Naval War College had a lot to do with the fact that the proximity of the deep water of the Narragansett Bay made it easy for the entire North Atlantic Squadron to call at Newport, and coordinate fleet exercises with the War College. However, Luce’s first tour as Commander-in-Chief of the North Atlantic Squadron was short-lived, as Congress approved the Secretary of the Navy’s recommendation to open a Naval War College, based on the report of Luce’s board. Naturally, he was tapped to be the first president of the College, which cut short – for the moment – his squadron command tour. In fact, much of Luce’s’ correspondence during this period was focused more on his work to get the War College up and operating than it was on his position as a squadron commander-in-chief.<sup>88</sup> On 20 September, 1884, onboard *Tennessee* anchored in Newport Harbor, Luce turned over command of the North

---

<sup>87</sup> Ship’s logs show the frustrations associated with this. For example, from the *Tennessee*’s log, “To Alliance (Army): Watch our speed ball” (A speedball was a dayshape indicating the flagship’s speed), “To Fleet: Take position faster”, and “To Vandalia: Get a better speed ball in next port.” Tennessee, “Logbook, Uss Tennessee, ” p. Entry for 21 June 1882.

<sup>88</sup> See for instance, Stephen B. Luce, RADM, "Letter, Luce to Walker, 29 August 1884, 1884," RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

Atlantic Squadron to Rear Admiral James E. Jouett.<sup>89</sup> He then went ashore to take possession of the abandoned poorhouse on Coasters Harbor Island, and begin the work of establishing the Naval War College.

### ***Rear Admiral Jouett and Intervention in Panama, 1885***

James E. "Fighting Jim" Jouett entered the Navy as a midshipman in 1841, graduating from the Naval Academy six years later, in 1847. The highlight of his distinguished service during the Civil War was fighting alongside Rear Admiral Farragut at the Battle of Mobile Bay, as commanding officer of the Union steamship *Metacoma*.<sup>90</sup> Unlike the previous two changes-of-command of the North Atlantic Squadron, there was no grand review nor series of tactical exercises. Jouett returned to New York with his new flagship *Tennessee*, where he remained until after New Years' Day. As 1885 dawned, the most important item on the Squadron's calendar was representing the Navy at the World Exposition in New Orleans, during the festive Mardi Gras season. On 10 January 1885, *Tennessee* arrived at Fort Monroe, Virginia, enroute to New Orleans. Jouett's correspondence during this time is light-hearted and not concerned with warfighting. Among other letters commenting on the "delightful" sailing conditions, he sent the Navy Department a request for an entertainment budget of \$4000 (something on the order of \$80,000 today)<sup>91</sup> He was soon joined in New Orleans by *Yantic*, *Alliance*, and *Swatara*.<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> "Army and Navy News," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 21 September 1884.

<sup>90</sup> Cogar, 86-87; "Rear Admiral Jouett Dead," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 2 October 1902; Reynolds, *Famous American Admirals*, 170-171.

<sup>91</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Chandler, 28 January 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic

But entertaining guests soon became one of Rear Admiral Jouett's least concerns. On 4 March, he received word that a revolution in Colombia threatened the transit of people and goods across the Panamanian isthmus. In addition to endangering U.S. citizens and property, the closure of this vital communication route would be disastrous to business interests and the flow of goods between the east and west coasts of the United States. Keeping it open was considered to be a vital U.S. interest. Contingency took precedence over squadron training opportunities from that point on. Jouett would be forced to spend most of 1885 on what would become the most noteworthy event of his career as a flag officer - responding to the crisis in Panama. *Galena*, with Commander T. F. Kane in command, was immediately ordered to proceed to Aspinwall – the Atlantic terminus of the Panamanian isthmus – with “all possible dispatch.”<sup>93</sup> When Kane arrived on 13 March, he found an insurrection underway and the city of Aspinwall in danger. After communicating by telegraph with the Navy Department on 14 March, *Galena* was ordered to stay until further notice. Jouett did not leave New Orleans at first, but carried on with his entertaining duties. The situation did not appear to be overly serious, and his actions were in keeping with the usual role of a squadron commander-in-chief as a manager of scattered assets. Jouett even had time to request and receive permission to leave the flagship and travel to Washington D.C. on personal business. The trip was no

---

Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; "King Carnival's Plans," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 16 February 1885; "National Capital Topics," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 30 July 1885.

<sup>92</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Telegram, Jouett to Chandler, 15 February 1885, 1885," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>93</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Chandler, 4 March 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

doubt timed to coincide with the assumption of office of a new Secretary of the Navy. On 4 March 1885, Democrat Grover Cleveland was sworn in as President. His new Navy Secretary was New York financier and political reformer William C. Whitney. Apparently some questions had been raised with the new secretary about Jouett's seniority and why he had been appointed to the North Atlantic Squadron. Jouett wanted to set the record straight immediately.<sup>94</sup>

The situation in Panama, however, was getting out of hand. Rebels fired the city on 30-31 March, destroying and damaging millions of dollars worth of U.S. property. When the insurgents began burning the city, Commander Kane allowed American citizens to seek refuge in *Galena*, while sending his naval battalion ashore to protect U.S. property. When insurrectionists captured a mail steamer belonging to the Pacific Mail Line, Kane immediately recovered her.<sup>95</sup> He also arrested two of the more prominent insurrectionists, and held them on board *Galena*. He let it be known that he was unwilling to turn them over to Colombian authorities, as their corruption or incompetence would allow the criminals to escape.<sup>96</sup>

Jouett was ordered to coal and proceed to Pensacola with *Tennessee*. There, a detachment of 60 Marines boarded the flagship, which departed on 4 April headed

---

<sup>94</sup> On 7 March, William C. Whitney became the Secretary of the Navy in Democrat Grover Cleveland's first administration. Jouett corresponded with him immediately upon his return to *Tennessee*. Apparently some questions had been raised with the new secretary about Jouett's seniority and why he had been appointed to the North Atlantic Squadron. See James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 28 March 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>95</sup> "The Burned City," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 2 April 1885.

<sup>96</sup> United States. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs and others, *The Story of Panama: Hearings on the Rainey Resolution before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives* (Govt. Print. Off., 1913); *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1885. 244-245.

directly to Aspinwall.<sup>97</sup> *Alliance* was sent to the vicinity of Cartagena, where her commanding officer, Commander Lewis Clark, was to make contact with U.S. consular officials and protect U.S. property and business interests.<sup>98</sup> *Swatara* was sent directly to Aspinwall to reinforce *Galena* as quickly as possible.<sup>99</sup> When Jouett arrived he took personal charge of the situation. His initial letter to the Colombian government representative at Aspinwall demonstrated the fine balance of military muscle and diplomatic tact that was required of a nineteenth century flag officer. After announcing his arrival (“with *four* vessels of the United States Squadron under my command”), he went on to assure the authorities that he had no intention of interfering with the constitutionally-recognized government of Colombia, and requested permission to land additional U.S. troops if he deemed it necessary. It is doubtful that anyone reading the letter, least of all the Colombians, was under any illusion that Jouett cared about their permission, but the diplomatic niceties were observed to the letter.<sup>100</sup> Under Jouett’s supervision, transit across the isthmus reopened on 11 April. By 14 April, Jouett was able to report to Secretary Whitney that the situation was stabilized.<sup>101</sup>

On 15 April, a naval brigade consisting of sailors and Marines under the command of Commander B.H. McCalla, arrived from New York to assist Rear Admiral

---

<sup>97</sup> "Barrios Reported Dead," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 5 April 1885; James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 2 April 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C.

<sup>98</sup> Jouett, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 2 April 1885. "

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. "".

<sup>100</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Vlooa, 10 April 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>101</sup> "Notes from Central America," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 14 April 1885.

Jouett in restoring order and “maintaining treaty obligations” (i.e. keeping transit across the isthmus open for U.S. commerce).<sup>102</sup> Jouett gave McCalla careful instructions to as much as possible not interfere with internal Colombian politics. He then sent McCalla’s force on the railroad across the isthmus to prevent Panama City from being burned as Aspinwall had. In light of the orders he had given, Jouett was taken aback when McCalla formally occupied the entire city. He quickly instructed McCalla to remove his troops to the train station and worked to smooth relations with Colombian officials.<sup>103</sup> In any event, Panama City was spared the fate Aspinwall had suffered two weeks earlier. By 24 April, Jouett was able to report that all was quiet, and that a contingent of 700 Colombian troops was expected to arrive soon, in which case Jouett planned to withdraw McCalla’s troops and turn Aspinwall and Panama City over to the proper Colombian authorities.<sup>104</sup> Once the Colombian troops arrived, Jouett, with two officers of his staff, rode the railroad across the isthmus to Panama City to meet with them and personally express his support for the constitutional government. Jouett was well-received by the Colombian officers in charge of the detachment, who were grateful for his assistance and assurances about Colombian sovereignty.<sup>105</sup> In that spirit, they asked Jouett to deliver the two prisoners

---

<sup>102</sup> "The Panama Rebellion," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 4 April 1885.

<sup>103</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 30 April 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>104</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 24 April 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; "Quiet Restored in Panama," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 26 April 1885.

<sup>105</sup> Jouett, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 30 April 1885. "



Commander Kane had taken on board *Galena* after the burning of Aspinwall.<sup>106</sup> Jouett assented to the prisoner transfer. On 7 May, after a quick court-martial, the two were publicly hanged in Aspinwall. Jouett pronounced the outcome “beneficial.”<sup>107</sup> On 8 May, the first contingent of U.S. Marines boarded a transport for home, as more Colombian troops arrived to secure the city.<sup>108</sup>

With the military situation secure, at least in regard to U.S. interests in the isthmus, Rear Admiral Jouett turned his attention to diplomacy. On 11 May, he proceeded in *Tennessee* to Cartegena, the capital of Colombia, for the purpose of mediating a permanent cession of hostilities between the rebel forces and the forces of the constitutional government.<sup>109</sup> There, *Tennessee* happened upon two steamers loaded with insurrectionists who were planning to retreat after having been repulsed during a battle for the capital city. Jouett refused to let the rebels leave, and informed them that he would prevent the departure of their vessels from Cartegena’s harbor by force, if necessary. He then invited the rebel leaders to join him in *Tennessee*, where he convinced them to allow him to attempt to mediate a settlement. On 3 June, Jouett wrote Secretary Whitney that the President of Colombia had granted him permission to mediate between the government and the rebels. Additionally, the president had offered terms

---

<sup>106</sup> Rafael Reyes, "Letter, Reyes to Jouett, 5 May 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>107</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 7 May 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>108</sup> "The Situation in Panama," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 9 May 1885.

<sup>109</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 11 May 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

which Jouett thought were reasonable. He was hopeful that “a successful mediation is probable, which will end the revolution.”<sup>110</sup> Jouett’s optimism, however, was misplaced. The departure of U.S. ground forces emboldened the rebels who immediately refused to disarm completely. The Colombian government refused to negotiate with them unless they disarmed, so that by 25 June, Jouett was writing the Navy Department that “a peaceable settlement” would be impossible.”<sup>111</sup>

Although they did not have an opportunity to conduct fleet maneuvers, at one time or another the entire North Atlantic Squadron was involved in the Panama operation. *Swatara* remained in Colombian waters until July, at which time she proceeded back to the U.S. *Alliance* remained for two months, departing in June. *Yantic* arrived in May, sailing from Guatemala, where she had been ordered to protect U.S. interests at Livingston. She relieved the other ships and stayed until 1 August.<sup>112</sup> Rear Admiral Jouett and *Tennessee* remained until 11 July when, with a yellow fever outbreak threatening the health of his sailors, he was ordered north by the Navy Department.<sup>113</sup> *Tennessee* arrived at Fort Monroe, Virginia, on 23 July 1885.<sup>114</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup> "Admiral Jouett to Arbitrate," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 3 June 1885; James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 12 June 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>111</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 13 June 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; "They Must Fight It Out," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 26 June 1885.

<sup>112</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Wildes, 14 July 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>113</sup> "National Capital Topics." *New York Times (1857-1922)* 30 July 1885.

<sup>114</sup> "Army and Navy News," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 24 July 1885.

The Navy Department was sensitive to public opinion surrounding the Panamanian operation. Democrat Grover Cleveland became president in March 1885, replacing Republican Chester Arthur. Cleveland had run on a platform of non-intervention and disapproval of the aggressive foreign policy and expansionist tendencies of Arthur and his Secretary of State, Fredrick Freylinghuysen. It would not do to have the first foreign crisis to confront his administration be a naval intervention that got out of hand. Prior to his departure with the troop reinforcements, Commodore Walker, the chief of the Bureau of Navigation, reminded Commander McCalla that: "It is of considerable importance...that we keep the country with us in this matter." He went on to instruct McCalla to be sure to take every opportunity to send information back to the Department, "that it may be given out to the press, and the people kept in accord with the Department."<sup>115</sup> This was apparently news to Rear Admiral Jouett who, when he opened the stateside newspapers that arrived in Aspinwall on 1 June, was incensed to see that correspondence between Walker and McCalla to which he was not privy had been published for the general public. Furthermore, some of McCalla's information and opinions directly contradicted information given by Jouett in his own official dispatches. Jouett demanded, and received, from McCalla copies of every communication he had had with the Navy Department, and requested clarification of McCalla's subordinate role from the Secretary of the Navy.<sup>116</sup>

In the meanwhile, a letter arrived from the commanding officer of the USS *Wachusett*, who was none other than Alfred Thayer Mahan. Mahan, whose world fame

---

<sup>115</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Mccalla, 1885," Letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>116</sup> Jouett, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 7 May 1885. "

was years in the future, had been sent to Panama City by the commander-in-chief of the Pacific Squadron. His predecessor on station, Captain Norton of the *Shenandoah*, had carried out some tasks “suggested” by Rear Admiral Jouett’s in support of his mission to keep the isthmus transit open. Mahan now asked Jouett directly if he had the authority to order these tasks, or if they were simply advisory in nature, in which case he did not intend to carry them out. Jouett wrote Mahan a curt reply (“I do not care to discuss the matter with you”), and referred the whole matter to the Secretary of the Navy.<sup>117</sup>

Taken together, these two incidents demonstrate the structural difficulty of determining the operational chain-of-command in the era before the establishment of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in 1913. With each bureau its own entity, answering only to the Secretary of the Navy, Commodore Walker had no problem corresponding directly with Commander McCalla, even though it violated the chain-of-command at the scene in Panama. For his part, Mahan’s letter was technically correct but short on political savvy. The Secretary of the Navy later agreed that the senior officer present, regardless of squadron, should be in charge of all matters at the isthmus. Mahan’s predecessor on station had been much more politically astute, even if not as by-the-book, which shows why Mahan was considered by his contemporaries to be, at best, a mediocre line officer. He would go on to have a much more successful career as an academic.<sup>118</sup>

---

<sup>117</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 1 June 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>118</sup> The Secretary of the Navy eventually decided that whoever the senior officer present (SOPA) was, regardless of side of the isthmus, would have tactical control over any navy units there, regardless of squadron. See James E. Jouett, RADM, "North Atlantic Station General Order No. 31, 1885," order, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

The operations of the North Atlantic Squadron in the spring and summer of 1885 show the simple effectiveness of the old way of dealing with traditional U.S. foreign relations problems – threats to property and the transit of goods and services. These threats were adequately addressed with the presence of one or more wooden ships in the port of Aspinwall, and sailors and Marines deployed ashore. It would seem that the opinions of the majority report of the first Naval Advisory Board were justified, as Jouett's wooden cruisers carried out their mission in a timely manner with great effectiveness. Naval officers such as Lieutenant Belknap feared, however, that these capabilities would not be enough for a future encounter with a peer naval competitor. This seemed more likely as U.S. assertion of claims to exclusive leadership in the Western Hemisphere grew stronger throughout the 1880's.<sup>119</sup> The North Atlantic Squadron had to be able to keep the Panamanian isthmus open for business not only in the face of poorly-armed insurrectionists, but in the event of hostilities with a European naval power. It did not help matters that a French national (Ferdinand de Lesseps) was then engaged in an attempt to build a canal across the isthmus. To meet future threats, either from South American nations or from European incursions into the Western Hemisphere, the North Atlantic Squadron would have to be capable of engaging an armored fleet at sea as a tactical combat unit.

The arrival of the flagship *Tennessee* back at Fort Monroe on 23 July 1885 coincided to the day with the death of former president General Ulysses S. Grant.<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>119</sup> George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*, ed. David M. Kennedy, The Oxford History of the United States (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 290-293.

<sup>120</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 23 July 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

Jouett had been trying to arrange some liberty for the crew of his flagship and the Department had been anxious to have the Squadron conduct some fleet tactical drills, but all was put on hold pending Grant's funeral.<sup>121</sup> Naturally, it was expected that warships from the North Atlantic Squadron would be present at the ceremonies in New York. Rear Admiral Jouett returned to New York in *Tennessee* and immediately became involved in the planning for the massive funeral procession.<sup>122</sup> On 8 August, a naval brigade consisting of sailors and Marines from every ship in the Squadron marched in the funeral procession, while Jouett and his staff rode in carriages with the official mourners. Five warships of the Squadron, *Despatch*, *Powhatan*, *Omaha*, *Alliance*, and *Swatara*, anchored just off the tomb and fired salutes as the procession made its way past.<sup>123</sup>

The remainder of the year proved frustrating for Rear Admiral Jouett. Plans for squadron tactical exercises, desired by both Jouett and the Navy Department, were consistently hampered by the poor material condition of the Squadron's wooden ships. After working through various mechanical conditions, Jouett had managed to collect three of his ships, *Tennessee*, *Alliance*, and *Galena* at Bar Harbor, Maine, in August. Just as they were about to get underway, however, the Navy Department ordered *Tennessee*

---

<sup>121</sup> Secretary of the Navy Whitney, "Letter, Whitney to Jouett, 24 July 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>122</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 31 July 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; "Making Ready in This City," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 4 August 1885.

<sup>123</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "North Atlantic Station General Order No. 29, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. ; "A Nation at a Tomb," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 9 August 1885.

back to New York to have her seams re-caulked.<sup>124</sup> Later in the fall, a series of exercises Jouett had planned to hold in Florida Bay were placed on indefinite hold by the Navy Department, and *Tennessee* was instead sent, with *Galena*, on a cruise in the West Indies.<sup>125</sup> Meanwhile, Jouett spent most of the fall of 1885 fighting not to have his pay docked for the expenses he incurred at New Orleans, while hosting various dignitaries aboard *Tennessee*.<sup>126</sup>

Having thus been twice denied the opportunity to conduct fleet exercises in 1885, Jouett was determined to do better in 1886. He ordered his forces to rendezvous in Key West at the end of March 1886, for a week of fleet tactical exercises.<sup>127</sup> These were carried out between Key West and Pensacola during the month of April. While in the south, Jouett corresponded with Commodore Walker of the Bureau of Navigation, about ways to keep his force intact. Walker's answer was instructive: "If you come north in the usual way, your ships are sure to be scattered to the different yards, and you will lost control of them just as you did last summer."<sup>128</sup> This was exactly what happened. Against Walker's advice, Jouett took the squadron, consisting of *Tennessee*, *Brooklyn*, *Swatara*, *Galena*, and *Yantic* to New York, where they were promptly split up. *Brooklyn*

---

<sup>124</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 3 September 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>125</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 10 November 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>126</sup> The \$4000 he had asked the Navy Department for on his way to New Orleans never materialized.

<sup>127</sup> James E. Jouett, RADM, "Letter, Jouett to Whitney, 4 November 1885, 1885," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>128</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Jouett, 1 April 1886," in *Naval Historical Foundation Collection* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, 1886).

went into the Navy Yard for work; the rest were sent to visit ports in the northeast and Canada.

### ***Stephen B. Luce and the North Atlantic Squadron***

Meanwhile, between October of 1884 and June of 1886, Stephen B. Luce had been busy at work at the Naval War College, honing his ideas about tactical theory and operational practice. Along the way he gathered associates, such as Admiral of the Navy David Dixon Porter and Commodore John G. Walker, who agreed with and supported his vision of post-graduate centralized education for naval officers.<sup>129</sup> He also provoked opposition, which included the Superintendent of the Naval Academy, who viewed the Naval War College as an infringement on the Academy's mandate as the home of officer education.<sup>130</sup> Superintendent Ramsey failed to understand the operational aspects of Luce's project. At the Naval War College, it was always Luce's intention to marry intellectual efforts at the shore establishment with practical work at sea.<sup>131</sup> He, perhaps more than any other officer of the time, understood that the complicated multi-ship formations which would characterize naval warfare of the future would require a different kind of naval officer. It would not be enough for these officers of the future to have a common entry-level education at Annapolis. They would require a new, more specialized body of professional knowledge, and this body of knowledge would have to be the same across the fleet, because these officers would be required to operate their

---

<sup>129</sup> David Dixon Porter, ADM, "Letter, Porter to Luce, 21 March 1882, 1882," Letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>130</sup> CAPT Ramsey, "Letter, Ramsey to Luce, 10 January 1884, 1884," Letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C.

<sup>131</sup> Hayes, ed., 13.



ships in close formation and fight as multi-ship units. In short, modern naval warfare required the U.S. Navy to develop fleet doctrine.

To operationalize this, Luce brought to the War College faculty retired Lieutenant William McCarty Little, a member of the Annapolis Class of 1866. While Alfred Thayer Mahan is the most famous of Luce's appointments to the Naval War College, McCarty Little would have to be a close second.<sup>132</sup> He had become acquainted with Luce while serving as the navigator aboard the USS New Hampshire, one of the vessels in Luce's Training Squadron. McCarty Little's promising career had been cut short by a chronic eye condition which had cost him the sight of one eye and periodically threatened the sight in the other. Profoundly disappointed over his medical retirement, he enthusiastically joined the War College staff, often on a volunteer basis without pay. While Mahan and Luce got much of the press for their publications and their sweeping ideas about national maritime strategy, McCarty Little quietly went about developing the methods for War College students to try out steam tactics. When it proved impractical to gather enough actual ships in Narragansett Bay to conduct exercises, it was McCarty Little who suggested that the War College use steam launches instead.<sup>133</sup>

Whatever else fighting in the Age of Sail had been, it had not been a science. "Captains and commanders knew that nothing was certain other than uncertainty, nothing predictable other than unpredictability..." writes an authority on seventeenth century tactics.<sup>134</sup> Luce understood that steam power and the ability to maneuver independently

---

<sup>132</sup> Alfred Thayer Mahan, CAPT, "Letter, Mahan to Luce, 4 September 1884, 1884," Letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. . It is fitting that the building which houses NWC's operational studies and wargaming facilities today bears McCarty Little's name.

<sup>133</sup> Spector. Pg. 36.

<sup>134</sup> Sam Willis, *Fighting at Sea in the Eighteenth Century: The Art of Sailing Warfare* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2008), pg. 133-134.

of the elements fundamentally changed this condition. It would enable naval tactics to be studied with much greater precision, and he intended to do exactly that.<sup>135</sup> Luce planned from the beginning to use his new shore-based post-graduate platform at the United States Naval War College to apply scientific principles to the questions of naval tactics and strategy, while marrying that effort with fleet maneuvers that would extend the theoretical knowledge with exercises of practical naval tactics.

After seeing the Naval War College safely established, Luce was sent back to sea in June 1886, this time as the permanent commander-in-chief of the North Atlantic Squadron.<sup>136</sup> As has been previously shown, Luce felt that the squadron which operated regularly on the east coast should regularly work in conjunction with the Naval War College to try out tactics which had been developed by the War College students. Leaving Captain A. T. Mahan – by now detached from *Wachusett* and established in Newport – in charge of things ashore, he had successfully maneuvered to place himself in a position to be the important practical partner of the War College's theoretical effort. He set to work immediately, corresponding with the Bureau of Navigation about what warships he would have assigned to him in the summer of 1887 and what he would be able to do with them.<sup>137</sup> As one of the junior officers in his squadron later recalled: "We immediately ceased to spend the summers at the principle New England watering places and the winters at the New Orleans Mardi Gras, and went into the most intensive and, as

---

<sup>135</sup> William Bainbridge-Hoff, CDR, "Letter, Bainbridge-Hoff to Luce, 7 January 1886, 1886," Lette, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>136</sup> Secretary of the Navy Whitney, "Letter, Whitney to Luce, 18 June 1886, 1886," Official Orders, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D. C. .

<sup>137</sup> Bowman Hendry McCalla, "Letter, Mccalla to Luce, 7 December 1886, 1886," letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C.

many learned to think, irritating and unnecessary tactical maneuvers.”<sup>138</sup> Luce had another innovation that rankled his officers, but gave a clue to the direction that the professionalization of the officer corps was taking: he liked to score his subordinates on their proficiency in carrying out tactical maneuvers, and he ranked them accordingly with these scores.<sup>139</sup> Promotion in the late 1880’s was not yet done on the basis of merit, but officers such as Luce understood that if ships were going to fight together, their officers would have to be held to a common standard across the squadron.

Despite the support of the Navy Department, tactical exercises soon took a back seat to international politics. In November 1886, Luce was directed to send a warship back to Aspinwall, once again protecting U.S. citizens, business interests, and free transit of the isthmus during the continued political unrest there.<sup>140</sup> 1887 would bring more tasking from the State Department, this time on the other side of the Squadron’s area of responsibility. Much of Luce’s attention in 1887 was directed to the Canadian fisheries question. In July 1887, the Secretary of the Navy ordered that the North Atlantic Squadron proceed into the Gulf of St. Lawrence to enforce the fishing rights of American fishermen, in accordance with the 1818 treaty establishing those rights and the Treaty of Washington in 1871. Unrest had been brewing over what was seen as unlawful British prosecution of U.S. fishing captains in Canadian waters.<sup>141</sup> The flagship was ordered to

---

<sup>138</sup> J.M. Ellicott, CAPT, "Three Navy Cranks and What They Turned," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 50, no. 10 (1924), pg. 1617

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Luce, 6 November 1886, 1886," Letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C.

<sup>141</sup> In fact, the Navy Department was beginning to be concerned about hostilities with Great Britain, as evidenced by a curious exchange between Commodore Walker and another naval officer about doing reconnaissance on locks and canals to obstruct in Canada in the event of war. See Admiral J.G. Walker,

proceed to Portland and Halifax, while the *Galina* and *Swatara* were sent one at a time into the Gulf.<sup>142</sup> Luce's handling of this situation shows his matter-of-fact approach to such political questions, and his desire to concentrate on preparing for what he felt was the true calling of the Navy. Although he does not directly say so in his correspondence, one gets the feeling that Luce viewed these deployments of his ships as a distraction at best, and an outright misuse of resources at worst. Rather than honing tactics to be used in naval warfare on the high seas, he was forced to spend much of the prime exercise season looking after the business interests of American fishermen. Contrasting Luce's correspondence with that of Rear Admiral Cooper (C-in-C 1882-1884), whose dispatches were always newsy and full of commercial information, throws the two distinct, and often conflicting, missions required of commanders-in-chief during this era into stark relief.

Luce was determined to settle the fisheries problem as soon as possible. Arriving on station in the *Richmond*,<sup>143</sup> Luce interviewed various representatives of the U.S. fishing industry in Portland, Maine, as well as sent a questionnaire to the British commandant at Halifax, Nova Scotia, to ascertain what ports American fishermen were allowed to call in, where they were allowed to fish, and how they would clear customs, in the opinion of the British government. Having received replies to his questionnaire, Luce had copies printed and distributed throughout the waterfront for the information of

---

"Letter, Walker to Gridley, 25 July 1887," in *Naval Historical Foundation Collection* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, 1887).

<sup>142</sup> Secretary of the Navy Whitney, "Letter, Whitney to Luce, 20 June 1887, 1887," letter, *Naval Historical Foundation Collection*, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>143</sup> *Tennessee* was decommissioned in January of 1887.

American fishing captains. Problem solved. Back to the business of preparing his fleet for naval warfare; or so he thought.

The State Department did not see it that way. When the correspondence between the British officer and Rear Admiral Luce made its way into the northern newspapers, Washington D.C. exploded in partisan finger-pointing. Republicans accused President Cleveland of being soft on the fisheries question. An exchange of letters between Luce and Secretary of the Navy Whitney followed, culminating in Luce's request to be relieved of his command. This was the last thing the Secretary wanted. The political ins and outs of the fisheries question do not require discussion for present purposes, but it is evident in the letter sent by Secretary of the Navy Whitney to Luce, turning down his offer to resign, that the secretary recognized the important work that Luce was doing with the War College/North Atlantic Squadron tandem and wanted it to continue. "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of September 9<sup>th</sup>," wrote Whitney, "and am satisfied that you should retain your present command. *Your handling of the Squadron at sea and the practice in tactics and in fleet movements which you have given your officers during the last year, are especially to be commended.*" (Italics added.)<sup>144</sup>

With the political issues left behind for the moment,<sup>145</sup> the North Atlantic Squadron returned to Narragansett Bay where, in conjunction with the Army, they carried

---

<sup>144</sup> Secretary of the Navy Whitney, "Letter, Whitney to Luce, 23 September 1887, 1887," Letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. All of the correspondence related to this question can be found in *Papers of Stephen Bleeker Luce*, Box 17, Folio "Fisheries (North Atlantic), 1887-1888", (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1887-1888)

<sup>145</sup> The questions regarding fishing rights for American fishermen were eventually settled to the satisfaction of the respective U.S. and British fisheries commissioners in 1888.

out a very successful series of landings and maneuvers in the fall of 1887.<sup>146</sup> Back at New York for the winter, Luce worked on fleet training plans for the following summer. This is a significant indicator of progress in the development of a multi-ship fighting capability. In contrast to ad hoc deployments of single ships based on requirements to “show the flag” and protect commercial interests, Luce’s actions during the winter of 1887-1888 show a commander-in-chief actively planning combat training for his squadron and working to incorporate that training into his unit’s deployment plans. Even the previously unprecedented tactical training under Rear Admiral George Cooper in 1882 does not really appear to have been more than taking advantage of the squadron’s orders to be present together at the various celebrations they participated in that summer.

Although Luce had a vision of a complete system of training and exercise for his command, and although he had colleagues such as Commodore John G. Walker (about whom more in the next chapter) in positions of importance such as the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, the North Atlantic Squadron was still captive to the need to perform political missions as requested by the Department of State. On board *Richmond*, which was spending the winter in New York, Luce began working on his plans for the next year. He corresponded with General Sheridan of the Army, suggesting that the Marines participate in joint Army-Navy exercises in 1888.<sup>147</sup> He also carried on a regular dialog with Commodore Walker and the Secretary of the Navy about available

---

<sup>146</sup> Edward H. Hart, *Squadron Evolutions: As Illustrated by the Combined Military and Naval Operations at Newport, R.I., November 1887, Rear Admiral S.B. Luce* (New York, NY: E.H. Hart, 1887). See also Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Luce, 4 December 1887, 1887," Letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>147</sup> Letter reprinted in Albert Gleaves, *Life and Letters of Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, U.S. Navy, Founder of the Naval War College* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925), 214.

ships and their possible ports-of-call for the next summer.<sup>148</sup> The initial plan was for Luce to take his warships, in company, on a tour of the southern ports, namely New Orleans, Mobile, Pensacola, Savannah, and Charleston, then proceeding north. It made sense, the squadron having spent the last two summers visiting northern ports. It appeared that Luce would have *Richmond* (his flagship), *Atlanta* (the first of the “New Steel Navy” cruisers), *Yantic*, *Dolphin*, and *Galena*. This was not a large squadron, but there were enough ships to work through some tactical problems and train the officers of the squadron in handling their ships in formation.

The first indication that Luce was not going to be able to carry out his planned exercises in the summer was a request for support from the U.S. minister at San Domingo.<sup>149</sup> On 11 January 1888, only 10 days after Walker had expressed the approval of the Navy Department for Luce’s training plan, Walker wrote Luce a somewhat apologetic letter in which he instructed him to detach a ship to serve the needs of the State Department.<sup>150</sup> In July, Luce’s flagship *Richmond* was summoned for service on the Asiatic station. He was given *Pensacola* as a replacement, but she was unseaworthy, so he would be forced to transfer his flag to another, smaller, ship if he wanted to lead at sea.<sup>151</sup> Meanwhile, political conditions in Haiti<sup>152</sup> were deteriorating throughout the

---

<sup>148</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Luce, 1 January 1888, 1888," Letter, Naval Historical Collection, Washington, D.C.

<sup>149</sup> Today’s Dominican Republic

<sup>150</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, “Letter, Walker to Luce, 11 January 1888”, reprinted in Gleaves, 214.

<sup>151</sup> He eventually moved onto *Galena*, a 1900-ton steam sloop completely unsuited to carry an admiral’s staff.

<sup>152</sup> The contemporary correspondence all refers to the Republic of Haiti as “Hayti”, the spelling common at the time. The modern spelling is used throughout the text, except in cases of direct quotation.

summer, culminating in an order from the Navy Department in August to send a ship to Port-au-Prince.

About this time, a letter arrived from the Navy Department asking Luce's opinion on summer training plans for his squadron. It should have been obvious at this point to anyone bothering to pay attention in the Navy Department that Luce had at his command only two ships. Training of any sort, other than perhaps to send signals to one another, was completely out of the question. The letter was the last straw. On 28 July 1888, Luce fired off a 7-page reply from New York, in which he described his attempt to put together a coherent training plan for that summer. He detailed the detachment of his ships, one by one, for tasking to support the State Department. He questioned, with astonishment, the attempt by the Navy Department to charge the War Department for any coal expended carrying soldiers in Navy ships during combined exercises. He lamented his inability to carry out his vision of making the North Atlantic Squadron a "school of practical instruction" which would exercise the theoretical concepts developed by the Naval War College.<sup>153</sup>

The *fundamental idea* (italics added) is to make theoretical instruction and practical exercise go hand in hand; or, in other words, to correlate the work of the Squadron and that of the College. In the lecture room certain tactical propositions are laid down, or war problems given out, to the officers under instruction. Their merit is then tested in the School of Application, the Squadron, and the result afterwards discussed in the lecture room. This system raises our Squadron exercises to a higher plane than those of any other known to me, and places our Navy, comparatively insignificant in all else, in advance of the Navies of the world in respect to professional education.<sup>154</sup>

---

<sup>153</sup> Stephen B. Luce, RADM, "Letter, Luce to Whitney, 28 July 1888, 1888," Official Letter, Papers of Stephen Bleeker Luce, Washington, D.C.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. "".



The 28 July 1888 letter from Luce to the Secretary of the Navy is a pivotal piece of Luce's correspondence, second only perhaps to the letter inviting Alfred Thayer Mahan to join the faculty of the Naval War College. Here, encapsulated in one document, is the basic difference between the modern fleet concept and the historical utilization of the U.S. Navy. Under Luce, the identity of the North Atlantic Squadron was that of a single combat unit, which sailed together, trained together, and expected to fight together. In short, the North Atlantic Squadron was an embryonic fleet, in the modern use of the word. To the State Department, however, and to a lesser extent the Navy Department, the North Atlantic Squadron was simply a collection of ships, from which the Executive Branch could draw upon as necessary to fulfill commitments to U.S. citizens, property, and business interests throughout their area of responsibility. While squadron exercises became commonplace, and even expected, throughout the decade of the 1880's, it was clear in 1888 that the new concepts had not yet been accepted as the basis of peacetime naval operations.

In any event, Luce did not have long to stew about his failure to convince the Navy Department of the validity of his views. Down in Haiti, the political unrest which had already deprived him of one of his ships earlier in the year had taken a turn for the worse. The *Haytian Republic*, a steamer flying the U.S. flag, was seized by the Haitian government. This was a clear violation of the international rights of U.S. citizens, and one that struck especially at the sensibilities of a United States always keenly interested in the protection of U.S. property abroad. On 8 December 1888, Luce was given back *Richmond* (temporarily), and told to take her and his remaining two ships *Galena* and *Yantic*, and depart for Port-au-Prince at once. *Ossipee* would meet them on the way

down, as they passed Norfolk. In the event, Luce accomplished the job with only *Galena* and *Yantic*, the other two vessels not being ready for sea fast enough. There is little doubt that Luce thought that there was a good possibility that hostilities would result, as he drilled his little command and made out battle instructions while in transit.<sup>155</sup> The two ships would prove to be enough, however. They entered the harbor at Port-au-Prince at quarters, cleared for action with guns loaded. The Provisional Government, sensing that this was a fight that would be unprofitable for them, quickly released the *Haytian Republic*. In a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of State Bayard praised the “high and intelligent discretion which has characterized the action of Admiral Luce in the execution of this National duty to American citizens...”<sup>156</sup> This recognition of the Secretary of State was a small satisfaction, at the end of Luce’s tour as commander-in-chief, for the way in which the State Department had questioned his judgment two years earlier during the 1887 Canadian fisheries question.

### ***Conclusions***

Luce applied for, and received, his detachment from the North Atlantic Squadron in January of 1889. The decade of the 1880’s had seen a change in the North Atlantic Squadron, not in structure or materiel, but in its sense of itself as an organization. As in any organization undergoing a fundamental change in image and identity, the Squadron inhabited a middle ground between the old identity and the new. Although this characterization of the Squadron’s dual identity would be accurate until the middle of the

---

<sup>155</sup> Stephen B. Luce, RADM, "General Order, Naval Forces North Atlantic, 1888," General Order, Papers of Stephen Bleeker Luce, Washington, D.C.

<sup>156</sup> “Bayard to Whitney, 3 January 1889”, letter reprinted in Gleaves, 222. See also: NYT Article, 2 January 1889, “Admiral Luce’s Report.”

1890's, it was at no time truer than during the 1880's. The command tours of Rear Admirals Cooper and Jouett bring this characterization into relief. Under Admiral Cooper's somewhat reluctant leadership, the Squadron carried out at least four major sets of exercises, operating as a unit for a total of 44 days. But the tactical exercises under Cooper were not part of an overall plan readying the squadron for combat as a tactical unit. They were products of opportunity that were dropped as events occurred that were determined to be more important to the Squadron's critical function of showing the flag and protecting and promoting U.S. commerce. This is seen clearly in the command tour of Rear Admiral Jouett, who was only able to conduct a single week of tactical exercises, in April 1886. The highlight of his tenure as commander-in-chief was the revolution in Colombia, an experience very much in keeping with the old-navy image of the naval officer as a warrior-diplomat.

After Rear Admiral Luce took command of the squadron in 1886 he brought a vision for an integrated training plan. Under his leadership, the North Atlantic Squadron warships not only trained together more often, but they did so as part of an overall scheme linking the theoretical work of the Naval War College with practical preparation. A routine developed that sent the warships of the Squadron north in the summer so that their officers could participate in the Naval War College's summer session, then return to their ships to put into action theoretical concepts worked out in the classroom. After these summer exercises, the Squadron could send warships north to the Canadian fishing waters or south to the Caribbean. Its identity was becoming more that of a fighting unit and training organization and less as an administrative body that facilitated assignment of ships to individual missions by the Navy Department. Years before Mahan popularized

the theory of seapower, the operational patterns of the North Atlantic Squadron were laying the foundations for the development of a national battlefleet.<sup>157</sup>

This vision was only partially realized in the 1880's.<sup>158</sup> The decade to come would bring not only materiel changes with the arrival the first of the steel ships of the "new steel navy", but changes in the way those ships were employed. It would also bring to the forefront a powerful, politically-connected officer who shared Luce's vision for a well-trained fighting squadron. Under Rear Admiral John Grimes Walker, the Squadron of Evolution, consisting of the *Atlantic*, *Boston*, *Chicago*, and *Dolphin* would tour Europe, showing the nations of the old world that the naval power of the United States was in the process of rebirth.

---

<sup>157</sup> This is the title of an article by Robert Seager II. See: "Ten Years Before Mahan: The Unofficial Case for the New Navy, 1880-1890", *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Dec 1953), pp. 491-512.

<sup>158</sup> Hattendorf, ed. *The Writings of Stephen B. Luce*, 13.

### **Chapter 3: The North Atlantic Squadron and the Squadron of Evolution, 1889-1891**

This chapter traces the ground-breaking deployment of the Squadron of Evolution from November of 1889 to the fall of 1891, in the context of the day-to-day operations of the North Atlantic Squadron. Comparing the leadership styles as well as the operational employment of the two squadrons gives examples of the slow development of the organizational identity of the North Atlantic Squadron as the nation's foreign policy became more coherent and the U.S. Navy shifted from a focus on cruising and commerce raiding to one of engaging enemy fleets in open ocean combat. The Squadron of Evolution will be shown to be the operational expression of the new identity that had been slowly coalescing in the North Atlantic Squadron over the previous fifteen years.

In both identity and image, the North Atlantic Squadron was an organization in the midst of change, and sociologists have demonstrated the impact that identity and image have on organizational adaptation to change.<sup>1</sup> In the process of this change, the organizational identity was evolving. A unit that previously thought of itself, and was viewed by outsiders, as an administrative collection of ships, to be sent to various ports as political conditions required, was beginning to identify itself as a combat unit, composed of subunits (ships), but increasingly focused on the necessity to train and the ability to fight together as a squadron. In the decision to create a squadron out of the "ABCD" ships, and deploy them as a squadron, the Navy Department revealed its belief that future naval operations would involve combat on the squadron or fleet level, and that the proper mission of a squadron should involve constant training and combat preparation. As the

---

<sup>1</sup> Gioia.

Navy Department experimented with the employment of the Squadron of Evolution, the North Atlantic Squadron under the leadership of Rear Admiral Bancroft Gherardi clung to what appeared to be the traditional pattern of cruising assignments.

### ***Bancroft Gherardi and the North Atlantic Squadron – 1889***

With the successful outcome of the *Haytian Republic* affair barely behind him, Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce was detached from command of the North Atlantic Squadron on 28 January 1889.<sup>2</sup> He was relieved at Key West by Rear Admiral Bancroft Gherardi, whose previous assignment had been as Commandant of the New York Navy Yard.<sup>3</sup> It is significant that, in commenting on this, both the *New York Times* and the Secretary of the Navy report for 1889 noted that “the *squadron* on this [North Atlantic] station is now under the command of Rear Admiral Bancroft Gherardi.”<sup>4</sup> The image of the North Atlantic Squadron was slowly transforming, as outsiders (in this case, newspapers as well as the Secretary of the Navy) began to use language consistent with viewing the Squadron as a fighting unit. This can be contrasted to reports from as late as four years previously that referred to the “force on this station.”<sup>5</sup>

The commander-in-chief’s flag was still flying from *Galena* when Rear Admiral Gherardi took charge. *Galena* remained at Key West for another two months, getting underway again in February for the Caribbean. Unrest in Haiti continued to occupy the attention of the North Atlantic Squadron throughout much of 1889. At issue was the

---

<sup>2</sup> Secretary of the Navy Whitney, "Letter, Whitney to Luce, 28 January 1889, 1889," Official Orders, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>3</sup> "Admiral Gherardi Transferred," *New York Times* (1857-1922), Feb 10 1889.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Navy Department, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* 1889. Vol. I. 78.

<sup>5</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* 1885. Vol. 1. 207.

long-standing desire of the United States to have a naval presence on the island of Hispaniola.<sup>6</sup> The dueling forces of Francois Legitime (president from October of 1888 to August of 1889) and Florvil Hyppolite (president from October 1889 to March 1896) were attempting to disrupt the flow of arms and supplies to each others' supporters. On his previous visit to the area in 1888, Rear Admiral Luce had determined that then-President Legitime's gunboat navy did not have the resources necessary to establish a legal blockade. Their declaration of a blockade was therefore illegitimate. *Yantic* had then remained behind after the *Haytian Republic* affair had concluded and Rear Admiral Luce departed. She maintained a presence on station until a case of yellow fever forced her return north in January 1889. The Haitian attempts at blockade were a disruption of business in an area considered to be strategically important, and thus a matter of continuing concern for the Navy.<sup>7</sup> After a cruise through the area, *Galena* returned to New York in May 1889.

In New York, Rear Admiral Gherardi was ordered to transfer his flag to the venerable *Kearsarge* and then return to the Caribbean for another cruise in Haitian waters. *Kearsarge* was added to the North Atlantic Squadron to replace *Ossipee*, which was scheduled for decommissioning at the end of the year. Gherardi had been offered *Boston* as his flagship, but he demurred, preferring the older but much more spacious *Kearsarge*. Much of the available interior room in the new steel warships was taken up by machinery; their living conditions were considered cramped, even without the added personnel of an admiral's staff. The older wooden cruising vessels, even a sloop like

---

<sup>6</sup> President U.S. Grant's various attempts to secure a naval base in Santo Domingo are discussed in Chapter 1.

<sup>7</sup> For strategic interest in Haiti, see Love, 363-365. On *Galena*'s cruise, see "Back from Hayti," *New York Times* (1857-1922), May 30 1889.

*Kearsarge*, offered plenty of room for a flag staff's operations in addition to the ship's company.<sup>8</sup> The relatively minor issue of the selection of a flagship seems a small point, but it is not. It provides evidence that Rear Admiral Gherardi did not view his command the same way that Luce had. The idea of Stephen B. Luce turning down the opportunity to fly his flag on one of the first ships of the "New Steel Navy" would have been unthinkable. Gherardi's selection of an obsolescent wood sloop as his flagship shows that he was more focused on having the room necessary for his staff to administer the Squadron's presence duties than he was leading the Squadron in multi-ship tactical drills.

It did not escape the attention of the *New York Times* that the North Atlantic Squadron had not exercised in fleet tactics since the departure of Rear Admiral Luce, the newspaper going so far as to note that: "It is true that not a few commanding officers of vessels dislike squadron operations. This became eminently conspicuous during the rumored fitting out of a "flying squadron" designed to cruise round the world. To have their vessels assigned to such a squadron would completely handicap the independence of the Captains, for henceforth their every movement would be regulated by the will of the Admiral in command of the fleet."<sup>9</sup> This is exactly what, for the moment, was precluded in the North Atlantic Squadron, but not in the soon-to-be-constituted Squadron of Evolution.

---

<sup>8</sup> "Ordered to Sea," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Jun 14 1889.

<sup>9</sup> "Of Naval Interest," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Aug 28 1889. In seeming critical of Rear Admiral Gherardi, it must be remembered that the NYT was a strong supporter of Luce and his various projects.



## THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON - 1889

SHIP	DISP(TONS)	TYPE/CONST	ARMOR	SPEED	ARMAMENT	ERA BUILT (YEAR)
KEARSARGE (FLAG)	1550	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	11KTS	2X11" DAHLGREN 1X30LB PARROTT RIFLE 4X32LB SMOOTH BORE	CIVIL WAR (1862)
OSSIPEE	1240	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	10KTS	1X11" DAHLGREN 1X100LB PARROTT RIFLE 3X30LB PARROTT RIFLE 6X32LB SMOOTH BORE	CIVIL WAR (1862)
PENSACOLA	3000	WOODEN SCREW STEAMER	NO	9.5KTS	1X11" DAHLGREN 16X9" DAHLGREN	CIVIL WAR (1861)
GALENA	1900	WOODEN SCREW STEAMER	NO	9.5KTS	1X8" DAHLGREN RIFEL 1X60LB PARROT RIFLE	POST-WAR (1880)
YANTIC	836	WOODEN SCREW GUNBOAT	NO	9.5KTS	1X100LB PARROT RIFLE 1X30LB PARROT RIFLE 2X9" DAHLGREN 2X24LB HOWITZERS 2X12LB	CIVIL WAR (1864)

Table 5: The North Atlantic Squadron, 1889<sup>10</sup>

The only other opportunity for the North Atlantic Squadron to sail in company in 1889 was the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the bombardment of Fort McHenry and the Battle of North Point at Baltimore, Maryland. For the festivities, *Yantic*, *Ossipee*, and *Pensacola* were present in the harbor from 9 to 15 September 1889. Among the events planned for the week-long celebration was a reenactment of the British naval bombardment of Ft. McHenry. This was carried out by the three North Atlantic Squadron representatives. The citizens of Baltimore had hoped that the ships of the New Steel Navy would make an appearance, but they were occupied with the formation of the new Squadron of Evolution, and did not make the trip to Baltimore.<sup>11</sup> There is no

<sup>10</sup> Canney.

<sup>11</sup> "The Guest of the City," *The Sun (1837-1985)* 1889; "Key's Spangled Banner," *The Sun (1837-1985)*, Aug 29 1889.

evidence that the three warships steamed in formation or carried out any other tactical training during this time, but they did feature a new song to be played at morning and evening colors. On 24 July 1889, Secretary of the Navy Tracy signed General Order #374, making "The Star Spangled Banner" the Navy's official song to be used when raising and lowering the flag. The song eventually became the national anthem in 1931.

*Kearsarge's* next assignment caused some controversy, and showed the identity changes underway in the nation, as well as the Navy. In September, she was detailed to carry the newly-appointed U.S. minister to Haiti - Frederick Douglass. *Ossipee* had originally been given the assignment, but the Norfolk Navy Yard reported that her boilers were in need of two weeks' worth of repairs before she would be sea-worthy, so *Kearsarge* was given the assignment instead. Newspapers in New York and Washington picked up the story and reported that *Ossipee's* captain and executive officer were uneasy about the social status of the African-American dignitary they were ordered to carry on board, and had fabricated the mechanical problems to avoid the duty. This was denied vehemently by everyone involved, including *Ossipee's* XO, Admiral Evans, in his memoirs.<sup>12</sup> Appearances were not helped when the commanding officer of the *Kearsarge*, Commander Shepard, was quickly relieved by Commander Whiting the next day. The official explanation was that Commander Shepard had previously asked to be relieved from sea duty, but the timing of the change-of-command pointed to the possibility of his sharing the same racial sensitivities allegedly attributed to the *Ossipee's*

---

<sup>12</sup> Robley RADM Evans, *A Sailor's Log: Recollections of Forty Years of Naval Life* (New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1901), 241. See also "Douglass's Trip to Hayti," *New York Times* (1857-1922), Sep 30 1889.

commanders.<sup>13</sup> Eventually Minister Douglass, his wife, daughter, and private secretary were housed as comfortably as possible in Commander Whiting's cabin onboard *Kearsarge*, and delivered to Haiti without further incident, arriving on 8 October 1889.<sup>14</sup>

### ***John Grimes Walker and the Squadron of Evolution***

Meanwhile, the first steel ships of the "New Steel Navy" were making their operational appearance. It had been a long time coming. The results of the two Naval Advisory Boards ordered by Secretaries of the Navy The construction contract for all four of the "ABCD" ships was subsequently awarded to John Roach's shipyard in Chester, Pennsylvania. Roach was a friend of Secretary of the Navy Chandler, a fact that caused no small amount of public furor, but in fact he had the only facilities capable of handling steel of the amount and size necessary to construct steel warships.

The Navy's first steel warship, *Atlanta*, was commissioned in 1886. She, and her identical sister ship *Boston*, were both 270 feet long, carried a crew of 265 enlisted personnel and 19 officers, and boasted two 8-inch rifles, six 6-inch rifles and a battery of various smaller weapons. The flagship of the Squadron of Evolution, *Chicago*, at 325 feet long was the largest of the four, and generally considered the best-looking.<sup>15</sup> She drew 4500 tons and had a crew of 376 enlisted and 33 officers. Her armament consisted of four 8-inch guns, eight 6-inch guns, two 5-inch guns, and various other quick-firing smaller weapons. Rounding out the squadron was the *Yorktown*, a 230 foot-long

---

<sup>13</sup> "Ready for Mr. Douglass," *New York Times* (1857-1922), Oct 1 1889.

<sup>14</sup> "The Kearsarge Sails," *New York Times* (1857-1922), Oct 2 1889.

<sup>15</sup> John D. Alden, *The American Steel Navy: A Photographic History of the U.S. Navy from the Introduction of the Steel Hull in 1883 to the Cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1989; reprint, 1989), 16.

gunboat with six 6-inch guns and the ability to mount launchers for the new Whitehead torpedoes.

### THE SQUADRON OF EVOLUTION, 1891

SHIP	DISP(TONS)	TYPE/CONST	ARMOR	SPEED	ARMAMENT	ERA	BUILT
							(YEAR)
CHICAGO (FLAG)	4500	STEEL PROTECTED CRUISER	NO	14.0KTS	4X8" BLR 8X6" BLR 2X5" BLR VARIETY WEAPONS	OF SMALLER	NEW (1889)
ATLANTA	3189	STEEL PROTECTED CRUISER	NO	16.3KTS	2X8" BLR 6X6" BLR VARIETY WEAPONS	OF SMALLER	NEW (1886)
BOSTON	3189	STEEL PROTECTED CRUISER	NO	15.6KTS	2X8" BLR 6X6" BLR VARIETY WEAPONS	OF SMALLER	NEW (1887)
YORKTOWN	1710	STEEL GUNBOAT	NO	16.1KTS	6X6" BLR VARIETY WEAPONS	OF SMALLER	NEW (1889)

Table 6: The Squadron of Evolution, 1891<sup>16</sup>

These four ships represented halfway points between the wooden steamers of the 1870's and the modern ships which were to come in the next twenty years. While designed with double steel hulls, watertight compartments, and fully-electric lighting systems, they retained masts, canvas, and the ability to make way under sail power with partial sail rigs.<sup>17</sup> As "protected cruisers", these were essentially unarmored ships. They had a thin layer of steel plating which covered the top of the vital engineering spaces, but no armor belt along the sides. With the exception of *Chicago*, they had single screws, underscoring the fact that they had not been designed for extensive formation work. The

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Potter, op. cit.

axial forces generated by the rotation of a single screw on the centerline require constant rudder corrections to prevent the vessel from constantly falling off course. This makes a single-screw ship significantly more difficult to maneuver precisely than one provided with two screws, one on either side of the keel. The construction of these four ships gives an insight into the expectations of Congress and the Department of the Navy when they approved the designs of these ships. Although modern in many respects, these were still cruising vessels, not designed for the line-of-battle. “A solitary American steel cruiser with its delusive prefix of ‘protected,’” wrote Stephen B. Luce in 1889, “represents the latent possibilities of a great country placidly awaiting some national disaster to generate its mighty forces.”<sup>18</sup>

By the spring of 1889, the first three cruisers of the New Steel Navy were almost ready for squadron assignment. How the new ships were to be assigned and utilized was the subject of much speculation, both among naval officers and the general public.<sup>19</sup> The assumption was that the new ships would be spread out among the established stations around the world. In other words: exactly as the wooden steamships they were replacing were used. However, in May 1889, stories began to be whispered about other plans that the Department of the Navy might have. While the major newspapers argued over who had the inside “scoop” on the story, a naval officer entered the scene who would continue Stephen B. Luce’s movement to change the way the ships of the navy were employed. As the chief of the Bureau of Navigation and Detail, Commodore John G. Walker

---

<sup>18</sup> Stephen B. Luce, RADM, "Our Future Navy," *The North American Review* 149, no. 392 (1889). Pg. 65. See also the remarks by Sampson about coastal defense for a different viewpoint. "Capt. Sampson's Scheme," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Aug 2 1889.

<sup>19</sup>"Editorial Article 4 -- No Title," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Oct 25 1889. Pg. 4. See also “Work at the Navy Yard: A Decidedly Mythical Cruise”, *New York Tribune*, May 12 1889, pg. 3 for early gossip about possible utilization of the new ships.

enjoyed the confidence of the Secretary of the Navy. He also had an inordinate amount of power over the movement of ships and the detailing of officers to man them. After two consecutive tours in the Bureau, Commodore Walker was in line to be detailed to sea. The command he desired was the North Atlantic Squadron". However, that command had been promised to Rear Admiral Gerhardi, who was senior to Walker. Unable to get himself placed in the "twilight tour" he desired, Commodore Walker went about quietly setting up the next best thing: command of the navy's newest vessels. Walker was known within the Department as someone interested in concentration of naval assets whenever possible, and we have seen him encourage Jouett and Luce to keep their ships together and conduct exercises.<sup>20</sup> In July 1889, he convinced the Secretary of the Navy to appoint him the head of a board which would conduct trials on the new cruisers *Atlanta*, *Boston*, and *Chicago*. The so-called "Walker Board" would be responsible for determining and documenting the maximum speed and horsepower generated, as well as the turning radii of the three ships.<sup>21</sup> This information was of particular importance for two reasons: the first was to establish exactly what top speed could be expected from the ship operationally. The structure of the contracts to build the ships promised bonuses for the shipbuilder for excess horsepower developed and knots of top speed. In pursuit of these bonuses, the shipbuilders conducted acceptance trials with the ship crewed with the best stokers and firemen that money could buy, using the highest-grade coal. Naval officers had good reason to be suspicious of these results, and wanted to try it for themselves using ordinary sailors as the crew, and standard-grade coal

---

<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 2

<sup>21</sup> "Editorial Article 5 -- No Title," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Jul 20 1889. Pg. 4. Also, "Naval Speed Premiums," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Aug 8 1889. Pg. 4.

for the boilers. Secondly, although the new steel ships had been designed as cruisers – optimized for single-ship operations – it was becoming evident that the navy intended to conduct multi-ship squadron operations with them. In the absence of modern instrumentation which gave accurate readings of ship speed and rudder angle, it would be necessary to take careful note of their speed and turning radius through experimentation. Accordingly, as they were completed, the three cruisers made their way to the Narragansett Bay and the waters off of Newport, Rhode Island for the trials.

Within the decentralized bureau system of the Department of the Navy, the unusual appointment of a board to collect this information caused annoyance if not offense. The Board of Inspection and Survey, headed by Rear Admiral Jouett, a previous North Atlantic Squadron CinC, was supposed to conduct all trials for new warships. RADM Jouett, although on friendly terms with Walker, resented that well-connected officer's intrusion onto what he considered to be his turf. Jouett's entreaties to the Admiral of the Navy were dismissed, however, and the new ships continued with their trials under the supervision of the Walker Board throughout the fall of 1889.<sup>22</sup>

Meanwhile, Walker was looking ahead to the work he planned to do while underway. In preparing for his deployment, he had to confront a Navy structure that was unprepared to support the innovative work he was trying to accomplish. Methods of signaling provide an example of this. In the deployments analyzed in the previous chapter, signals exchanged between ships were few, and routine in nature. When ships were together in port, the senior officer present would coordinate the raising and lowering

---

<sup>22</sup> Commodore John G. Walker, by C. F. Goodrich, CDR, 21 September 1889, Telegram, Telegram, Goodrich to Walker, 21 Sept 1889. Washington, D.C. And C. F. Goodrich, CDR, "Telegram, Goodrich to Walker, 24 September 1889, 1889," Telegram, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

of topgallant yards, and occasionally request that junior ships “send a boat” to receive instructions. None of this required dedicated signals personnel. The officer of the deck and whatever Sailors on watch were assisting him could handle the duties of decoding these flags and reporting their meaning to their captain for action. Walker, however, had different things in mind, and he knew that constant and rapid communications between ships would be a vital requirement. To that end, he instructed each of his captains to select six especially capable sailors and train them to handle signal flags.<sup>23</sup>

Being prepared for daytime signaling was not enough in Walker’s mind. In a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, written just prior to departing New York, he complained that the ships’ allocation of rockets and Very signals was not adequate for the “amount of night signaling which I propose to do in this Squadron.”<sup>24</sup> For all the formation work that previous commanders-in-chief had been successful in carrying out, only a small fraction had been done at night, mostly to evaluate new night signaling devices.<sup>25</sup> Walker, who contemplated his four ships spending the vast majority of their deployment in company, found that the Navy Department bureaucracy that supplied the Navy’s warships had not caught up with the plans for a Squadron of Evolution.

By and large, the media approved of these plans. “It is now patent”, crowed the New York Times, “that Admiral Luce’s ideas were proper ones in the matter of handling

---

<sup>23</sup> Daniel Howard Wicks, “New Navy and New Empire: The Life and Times of John Grimes Walker” (University of California, Berkeley, 1979).

<sup>24</sup> Letter, Walker to SECNAV, 17 September 1889, in Department of the Navy, “Situation Reports, Squadron of Evolution, Dec 7 1889 - May 25, 1892, 1889-1892,” Letterbook, RG 45, Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, Washington, D.C.

<sup>25</sup> Geroge H. Cooper, RADM, “Signal Instructions, 1882,” order, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers, North Atlantic Squadron, 1866-1885, Washington, D.C. .



squadrons, and were furthermore the only right ones for the securing of efficiency on the part of naval forces when called upon for duty ashore.”<sup>26</sup> The old days of single ships under sail were giving way to concentrated multi-ship operations under steam. It required a different set of competencies, and naval officers – especially young ones – applied to the Bureau of Navigation and Detail for a chance to be a part of this cutting-edge experience.<sup>27</sup> It was as if naval officers of the era knew that the future had arrived, and that future was not duty on a single ship showing the flag by itself in a faraway port. Not surprisingly, Admiral Walker took many of the officers who had staffed the Bureau of Navigation with him when he left, offering them first pick of the “plum” assignments.<sup>28</sup>

From August through October, the *Atlanta*, *Boston*, and *Chicago* moved from New York to Newport and back, completing their trials. The timetable for departure of the squadron was pushed back a few weeks when the *Boston* ran aground off of Newport on 3 August 1889.<sup>29</sup> Fortunately, the new double-bottomed construction minimized the damage, and *Boston* was able to make her way slowly back to the New York Navy Yard, where she entered drydock immediately. The setback with *Boston* notwithstanding, eventually the trials were complete and the ships returned to the Navy Yard, where they were fully manned and supplied. On 18 November 1889, the Squadron got underway

---

<sup>26</sup> "Practical Naval Work," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Oct 6 1889.

<sup>27</sup> "Army and Navy News," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Apr 2 1889. Pg. 2. "That Flying Squadron," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, May 9 1889. Pg. 1

<sup>28</sup> "Admiral Walker's Departure", *Washington Post*, (1877-1922), Nov 1 1889, pg. 5.

<sup>29</sup> "A New Cruiser Disabled," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Aug 4 1889.

from New York. Secretary of the Navy Tracy and Admiral of the Navy Porter were among the notables who descended on the Navy Yard to see them off.<sup>30</sup>

Their first order of business had nothing to do with experimentations in fleet tactics. The four ships headed to Boston where they joined in a maritime celebration taking place there.<sup>31</sup> Besides being deeply interested in the development of fleet tactics, Walker understood the important public relations aspect of the “White Squadron”, and took specific pains to make the ships accessible to the American public prior to taking them on their overseas cruise. He was pleased with the results of the time spent in Boston, where thousands of citizens had the opportunity to climb around on “their” new steel ships. According to Walker, “Probably not less than twenty thousand people...have been received on the Chicago.” He went on to note that “From all sources are heard expressions of satisfaction that the United States is again taking position as a naval power, and I have been deeply impressed with the strength and sincerity of this feeling and the advantage which future naval legislation will probably derive from it.”<sup>32</sup>

From Boston, the Squadron set sail for Lisbon, Portugal.<sup>33</sup> Daniel Wicks points out that fleet tactical exercises could have taken place anywhere, if they had been the only mission of the Squadron of Evolution. There was more at stake here. A newly-powerful American navy wanted the nations of Old Europe to be aware not only of the

---

<sup>30</sup> "The Squadron Sails," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Dec 8 1889.

<sup>31</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Secnav, 18 November 1889, 1889," Telegram, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>32</sup> Navy, "Situation Reports, Squadron of Evolution, Dec 7 1889 - May 25, 1892. "

<sup>33</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Secnav, 7 December 1889, 1889," Telegram, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

new ships it was fielding, but of the ability to deploy them across long distances.<sup>34</sup> It's worth pointing out, though, that a large segment of the public felt this way as well, not just the "navalists". Witness the words of the New York Times correspondent who wrote: "The presence of such a fleet for two years abroad will do more to secure respect to American travelers than a host of State Department documents well-worded but not backed up by a show of military force."<sup>35</sup>

After a two-week journey across the Atlantic, the Squadron arrived at Lisbon, Portugal.<sup>36</sup> Using his newly-printed letterhead that proudly proclaimed the "Flagship CHICAGO of the United States Squadron of Evolution", Admiral Walker reported that the three cruisers had weathered the crossing well, in spite of some heavy weather, but that the smaller *Yorktown* had become separated. He assumed that she had been forced to heave to by the weather and would rejoin the squadron in port in a couple of days, as indeed happened.<sup>37</sup>

The captain of the *Yorktown*, French Endsor Chadwick, was uniquely qualified for duty with the new Squadron of Evolution. As one of the earliest proponents of the Office of Naval Intelligence, Chadwick had been posted to London, England, as the first U.S. naval attaché. While there, he had corresponded regularly with then-Commodore Walker, who was the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation and Detail about technological

---

<sup>34</sup> Wicks., pg. 218.

<sup>35</sup> "War Ships to Be Proud Of," *New York Times*, 13 October 1889.

<sup>36</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Secnav, 1889," Telegram, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>37</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 21 December 1889, 1889," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

advancements in the various European navies.<sup>38</sup> He had also been instructed to produce a report for the Department of the Navy on the training systems of the British and French navies, which was forwarded to Congress in 1880.<sup>39</sup> Although he did not say much about ships operating in close order, Chadwick would have been more knowledgeable than any other officer in the U.S. Navy about the methods foreign navies used to conduct naval warfare.

In any event, Chadwick's *Yorktown* had indeed been forced to lie to in the bad weather, the seaworthiness of the little gunboat being further compromised by the parting of the ship's steering gear. After touching at Fusal for repairs, *Yorktown* rejoined the squadron on 23 December 1889.<sup>40</sup> In Portugal, Admiral Walker received the records of the U.S. Naval Force on the European Station from Commander McCalla of the *Enterprise*, who had been in temporary command of the station.<sup>41</sup> The Squadron then proceeded to enjoy the hospitality of the Portuguese for the next ten days, putting to sea on 31 December with the expressed intention of "exercise[ing]...in squadron tactics under steam."<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Doris D. Maguire, ed. *French Ensor Chadwick: Selected Letters and Papers* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981). See especially pp. 16-143.

<sup>39</sup> French Ensor Chadwick, *Report on the Training Systems for the Navy and Mercantile Marine of England and on the Naval Training System of France Made to the Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting, U.S. Navy Department, September 1879*, 46th Cong., 2nd sess., 1880.

<sup>40</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 23 December 1889, 1889," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>41</sup> The same Commander McCalla who had been Jouett's ground forces commander in Panama in 1885. Apparently his disagreements with Jouett, covered in Chapter 2, did not affect his ability to gain command of a ship. See Bowman Hendry McCalla, "Letter, McCalla to Secnav, 29 December 1889, 1889," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>42</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 31 December 1889, 1889," RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

This was Admiral Walker's first real opportunity to put the Squadron through its paces...and he was not impressed. "The manner in which the Squadron got underway and took positions in column of ships", he wrote the Secretary of the Navy, "was unsatisfactory, showing that much practice in Squadron tactics is required to arrive at the necessary promptness and accuracy in handling the individual ships..."<sup>43</sup> By 1 January 1890, the ships having traveled in company for the past 24 hours, he had somewhat nicer things to say about the day's tactical work.<sup>44</sup>

### ***Gherardi and the North Atlantic Squadron, 1890***

January 1890 found Rear Admiral Gherardi still preoccupied with affairs in Haiti and, in the manner of a traditional warrior-diplomat, spending much more time on diplomatic duties than training a squadron for fleet combat. After arriving in Port-au-Prince on 20 December 1889, his dispatch of 29 December made it clear that he was predicating his personal movements and those of his squadron on the arrival of the French minister to Haiti, with whom he hoped to have an opportunity to meet.<sup>45</sup> This was curious behavior, considering the fact that President Harrison had appointed a minister to Haiti, Fredrick Douglass. The resident minister should have taken care of meeting foreign dignitaries. The U.S. government, it seems, had little faith in the ability of Frederick Douglass to conduct diplomacy, and was counting on the presence of Rear

---

<sup>43</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 2 January 1890, 1890," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 29 December 1889, 1889," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

Admiral Gherardi to make sure events played out in such a way to favor the interests of the United States.

Admiral Gherardi's flag was now flying from the little *Dolphin*, fresh from her 58,000 mile cruise around the world on steam power alone. *Dolphin* was the first of the ships of the "New Steel Navy" to be commissioned and, fittingly, she was assigned to the "Home Squadron". At just over 1400 tons, *Dolphin* was not designed for combat, but to do utility work and deliver messages for station commanders. One of her secondary planned uses was as a flagship for a squadron commander and his staff, so Rear Admiral Gherardi's relocation from *Galena* represented the first opportunity to put that capability to the test. Her gunboat armament consisted of a single 6-inch breechloading rifle and a pair of 6-pounder rapid fire guns.<sup>46</sup> Small as she was, she represented the newest achievement of American shipbuilding, and the very fact that an admiral's flag was flying from *Dolphin's* mast was a vindication of sorts for her builder, John Roach, by now dead for almost three years.<sup>47</sup>

Rear Admiral Gherardi did not stay on board *Dolphin* for long. As the newest and best of his ships, he detailed her to transport Minister Douglass to Santo Domingo to present his credentials to the government there. Not wanting to go himself – he was still anxiously monitoring the Haitian elections and the arrival of a new French minister – he shifted his flag to *Galena* on 9 January. It is evident that none of the uneasiness about hosting an African-American which had marred Douglass' original transport to Haiti

---

<sup>46</sup> Alden, *The American Steel Navy: A Photographic History of the U.S. Navy from the Introduction of the Steel Hull in 1883 to the Cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909*, 14.

<sup>47</sup> For all the trouble associated with building *Dolphin* and getting the Navy Department to accept her, see Leonard Alexander Jr. Swann, *John Roach Maritime Entrepreneur: The Years as Naval Contractor, 1862-1886* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1965).

reared its ugly head during this mission. Douglass' after-action report to the Secretary of State was filled with praise for both the *Dolphin* and her crew.<sup>48</sup>

Gherardi returned to *Dolphin* when she arrived back in Haitian waters with Minister Douglass.<sup>49</sup> He then sent *Kearsarge* and *Galena* north under the command of the CO of the *Galena*, Commander Sumner, while the admiral and his flagship visited Havana, Cuba. Sumner and his charges were ordered to proceed to Matanzas, then Havana, Cuba, then to Key West, where they were to reprovision, re-coal, and meet up with *Yantic*. While underway, the two ships were to exercise regularly in the "School of the Section", found in the Fleet Drill Book.<sup>50</sup> Gherardi kept his ships well-drilled, but he was less interested in personally leading them than he was attending to political business on his station – namely the ongoing negotiations for a U.S. naval base at the Mole St. Nicholas, a desirable harbor on the north coast of Haiti. The Mole would provide an excellent vantage point for the U.S. Navy to keep an eye on the Caribbean and the approaches to any canal that might be built across the central American isthmus.

*Galena* and *Kearsarge* arrived in Key West on March 5<sup>th</sup>, where they were met by *Yantic* two days later.<sup>51</sup> *Yantic* had been on special duty for the Bureau of Navigation. She pulled into Key West on March 7<sup>th</sup> with the longitude party on board. This

---

<sup>48</sup> Fredrick Douglass, "Letter, Douglass to Blaine, 11 February 1890, 1890," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>49</sup> G.W. Sumner, CDR, "Letter, Sumner to Tracy, 17 February 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>50</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Sumner, 13 February 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>51</sup> G.W. Sumner, CDR, "Telegram, Sumner to Bureau of Navigation and Detail, 5 March 1890, 1890," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. G.W. Sumner, CDR, "Telegram, Sumner to Bureau of Navigation and Detail, 7 March 1890, 1890," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

expedition, under the command of Lieutenant J. A. Norris, had left the United States in November 1889, charged with the telegraphic determination of longitudes in the West Indies and on the north coast of South America. In this day and age of GPS, it can be hard to remember that in the late nineteenth century there were still major portions of the earth that were not charted accurately. As a rising world power, the United States became more and more interested in correcting these deficiencies. The geographic points surveyed say something about the United States' interests. Their first stop was Santiago de Cuba, followed by St. Nicholas Mole in Haiti. Upon arrival in Key West, the expedition unloaded their equipment and departed for Washington, D.C., arriving on 11 March 1890.<sup>52</sup> The continued presence of U.S. warships in Haitian waters caused problems for Minister Douglass. Within a month of his trip on *Dolphin*, Douglass was writing his boss to complain about "speculation as to alleged designs of the United States upon the integrity of Haiti; speculation supported in part by the frequent appearance of United States vessels of war in Haitian waters."<sup>53</sup> This entreaty, and others like it, had little if any effect.

Meanwhile, the northern portion of the North Atlantic Squadron's area of operations was covered by *Petrel*, which was assigned to the squadron in June and cruised through the waters off the northeast coast. Rear Admiral Gherardi thought he would finally be able to gather his squadron together, without being distracted by Haitian politics, when he returned to Key West in March 1890. However, within a week he was

---

<sup>52</sup> Department. 1890. 165-167. See also G. H. Rockwell, CDR, "Letter, Rockwell to Tracy, 8 March 1890, 1890," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>53</sup> James G. Blaine, "Letter, Blaine to Tracy, 13 March 1890, 1890," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.



summoned to Washington, D.C. to discuss the situation in Haiti. He delayed his departure from Key West long enough to observe his squadron take target practice, but eventually was forced to leave the ships in the care of the Senior Officer Present, Commander Sumner, and head north.<sup>54</sup> From there, he was forced to resort to ordering his squadron around by telegram.<sup>55</sup> Per Gherardi's orders, the squadron went to sea on April 10<sup>th</sup> and drilled for five days. Noticeably absent was *Yantic*, whose boilers were in such need of repair that she could not make the speed necessary to participate in squadron maneuvers. Upon Rear Admiral Gherardi's return to Key West in April, *Yantic* was detailed to return to New York with a load of naval cadets and men whose enlistment terms were up. She was eventually transferred from the North Atlantic Squadron and put out of commission.<sup>56</sup>

Rear Admiral Gherardi did not have to wait long for a replacement ship to arrive. In May *Baltimore* arrived in Key West and Gherardi, acting in accordance with orders from the Department, shifted his flag to the new steel cruiser.<sup>57</sup> She was part of the second generation of protected cruisers, built from plans originally drawn for the Spanish government that the Navy Department purchased from Cramp's shipyards. At 4600 tons and mounting a main battery of 6-inch and 8-inch breechloading rifles, she was the first

---

<sup>54</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 24 March 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>55</sup> G.W. Sumner, CDR, "Letter, Sumner to Tracy, 6 April 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>56</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 18 April 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>57</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 3 May 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

warship of the “New Steel Navy” to join the North Atlantic Squadron.<sup>58</sup> With the new flagship in place, the training program for the summer could begin. In keeping with the tradition which had been established over the last fifteen years, the squadron prepared to move north to conduct training during the hot and sickly summer months. Before departing Key West, a naval brigade of 350 men was put ashore, commanded by the executive officer of the *Kearsarge*, for practice in landings and naval infantry operations ashore.<sup>59</sup>

While the squadron trained, Rear Admiral Gherardi continued to be more concerned about conditions in Haiti. On 3 May 1890, he dispatched *Kearsarge* to run down to Port-au-Prince and “inquire about the condition of affairs in Haiti.”<sup>60</sup> Political affairs by all rights should have been left to the representative of the State Department, while Gherardi concerned himself with the training of his combat unit. However, in keeping with the traditional role of naval officers as warrior-diplomats, Gherardi clearly felt that it was within his rights to inject his squadron’s warships into Haitian politics. This slight did not go unnoticed by Minister Douglass, who complained in a letter to Secretary of State Blaine that “the presence of one of our national vessels in these waters is apt to attract general attention and to awaken curiosity and speculation.”<sup>61</sup> Left unsaid (but clearly intended) was the observation that the captain of the *Kearsarge* was encroaching on his area of responsibility.

---

<sup>58</sup> Excluding *Dolphin*, which was not designed to be a “warship” in the best sense of the word.

<sup>59</sup> “News of the Navies,” *New York Times* (1857-1922), Apr 11 1890.

<sup>60</sup> Gherardi, “Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 3 May 1890. ”

<sup>61</sup> Fredrick Douglass, “Letter, Douglass to Blaine, 14 May 1890, 1890,” letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

Fortunately, *Kearsarge* returned to Key West on 15 May with news that all was quiet in Haiti. Thus assured, Rear Admiral Gherardi was able to at last continue with his summer training program. The squadron sailed from Key West, proceeding to Charleston, South Carolina, where they paused off the coast of Jacksonville, Florida for target practice on 28 May.<sup>62</sup> The target practice session featured the use of the new Fiske rangefinder, which had just been installed in *Baltimore*. *Baltimore* fired her guns on both sides, steaming in large circles around a stationary target at ranges between 800 and 2000 yards. The rangefinder's inventor, as well as *Baltimore's* officers, were very pleased with the results. A 75% hit rate with the main battery was reported in the press; unprecedented if not entirely believable numbers.<sup>63</sup> The quality of U.S. gunnery seemed to be improving.

After stopping in at Port Royal, the squadron visited the port of Charleston from 5-8 June 1890. The four ships traveled in company, practicing tactical maneuvers along the way. From all evidence, this was the only practice of steam tactics undertaken by the squadron in 1890. After the Charleston port visit, the squadron proceeded to Portland Maine for a reunion of the Society of the Army of the Republic in July. In August President Harrison embarked on *Baltimore* for a trip to Boston, where the Grand Army of the Republic held a reunion. In company with *Baltimore* was her sister ship *Philadelphia*, recently put in commission from the Cramp shipyards in her namesake city,

---

<sup>62</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 29 May 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>63</sup> Contemporary reports concerning the results of target practice have to be taken with a grain of salt, as it was commonplace for umpires to record near-misses of the target as "hits", the logic being that an actual ship would be much larger than the target. Nonetheless, the fact remains that everyone who witnessed this exercise was pleased with the results. See B.A. Fiske, *From Midshipman to Rear-Admiral* (The Century Co., 1919), 123-124; "Our Squadron in Port," *New York Times* (1857-1922), Jun 13 1890.

Philadelphia. Officially designated Cruiser No. 4, she was a sister ship to *Baltimore*, sharing nearly the same hull and machinery but having a slightly different armament arrangement.<sup>64</sup> When the two ships returned to New York, Rear Admiral Gherardi shifted his flag to *Philadelphia*, and *Baltimore* was assigned special duty from the Bureau of Navigation. She was tasked with returning the remains of Captain John Ericsson from New York to Stockholm, Sweden.<sup>65</sup> Of the remaining ships of the squadron: *Philadelphia*, *Petrel*, *Enterprise*, *Dolphin*, and the newly-commissioned *Vesuvius* were together in New York, while *Kearsarge* was away on special assignment.<sup>66</sup> Without a doubt, much of the participation of the squadron in various commemorations throughout 1890 was done with an eye to showing the new *Baltimore* to a public supportive of continued expenditures on new ships.

In September, Rear Admiral Gherardi detailed *Kearsarge* to proceed to Colón<sup>67</sup>, on the Isthmus of Panama, to “see that American interests [were] properly protected.”<sup>68</sup> Her captain was Commander Horace Elmer. Once a young lieutenant onboard *Colorado* during the Key West exercises of 1874, he was now a commander with his own ship – but still sailing alone to carry out national policy abroad. Upon arrival in Colón, Elmer found the situation quiet. In accordance with his orders from Rear Admiral Gherardi, he got underway on 22 September for Greytown, promising to return by 1 October. The

---

<sup>64</sup> Alden, *The American Steel Navy: A Photographic History of the U.S. Navy from the Introduction of the Steel Hull in 1883 to the Cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909*, 26.

<sup>65</sup> Department. 1890.

<sup>66</sup> "Of Naval Interest," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Oct 17 1890.

<sup>67</sup> In keeping with the contemporary usage of naval officers in their correspondence, I (as they did) now switch reference to the city of Aspinwall to the Spanish name chosen by its mestizo inhabitants, “Colon”.

<sup>68</sup> Horace Elmer, CDR, "Letter, Elmer to Tracy, 16 September 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

U.S. consul and the superintendent of the Panama Rail Road had asked for *Kearsarge's* presence on that date which, presumably, was a payday which might result in drunken unrest among the laborers in Colón.<sup>69</sup> Trouble came sooner than that. No sooner had *Kearsarge* got underway than a massive fire broke out downtown, burning most of the business district to the ground. The U.S. consul cabled frantically to Washington, D.C., begging for the return of the U.S. warship. Upon his arrival in Greytown, Elmer received a cable from the Secretary of the Navy directing him to return to Colón, which he did at once. It turned out that the fire was accidental, and not the result of labor unrest, but that did little to stop Elmer from offering his less-than-complementary observations about the citizens of the city. "With a city built of such material [wood frame buildings], warehouses full of such inflammable stores [liquor], a lazy idle and careless population, no efficient fire department, the first accidental fire was almost sure to result in its destruction." He proceeded in another report to blame the unrest of unemployed laborers in the city on "Jamaica negroes, ignorant, vicious, and troublesome."<sup>70</sup>

Across the Caribbean, Minister Douglass was still under fire. In October, the State and Navy Departments received a flurry of letters from William P. Clyde, owner of a steamship line that stood to profit greatly from concessions if the United States successfully gained access to the Mole St. Nicholas. Apparently, the French were moving in on his business interests and Clyde felt that Minister Douglass was not doing enough about it. He was none too subtle in essentially calling Douglass incompetent.

---

<sup>69</sup> Horace Elmer, CDR, "Letter, Elmer to Tracy, 22 September 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>70</sup> Horace Elmer, CDR, "Letter, Elmer to Tracy, 4 October 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; Horace Elmer, CDR, "Letter, Elmer to Tracy, 24 October 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

“...after Admiral Gherardi left Haiti”, according to Clyde’s missive, “these people took advantage of Mr. Douglas’s (sic) sympathy for the African Race and his lack of familiarity with the language and perhaps of diplomatic affairs to delay the carrying out of their pledges made to Admiral Gherardi as representing the United States government.”<sup>71</sup> Despite his pleadings, Gherardi remained in New York and continued to plan for the squadron’s winter activities.

*Enterprise* joined the squadron in New York in November, and was promptly sent to Colón to relieve *Kearsarge*, which returned to Key West. Commander Converse reported things in Colón quiet, to the extent that, by December, his presence there was no longer deemed necessary, and *Enterprise* left Colón.<sup>72</sup> Later that month, Rear Admiral Gherardi released his winter plans for the squadron, which were eagerly reported on by the New York papers. The North Atlantic Squadron was to carry out independent cruising throughout the West Indies before rendezvousing at Key West in March 1891 for tactical exercises.<sup>73</sup> This was very much in keeping with the operation cycle of winter cruises in the Caribbean followed by work in company in northern latitudes in the summer, that had been established for the squadron over the past decade. The New York Times congratulated Rear Admiral Gherardi on his extensive plans for training in 1891, calling him “one of the most progressive officers in the navy.”<sup>74</sup> It was curious praise,

---

<sup>71</sup> William P. Clyde, "Letter, Clyde to Ramsey, 7 October 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>72</sup> G.A. Converse, CDR, "Letter, Converse to Tracy, 15 November 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 12 December 1890, 1890," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>73</sup> "To Winter at the Indies," *New York Times* (1857-1922), Dec 12 1890.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* See also "Of Naval Interest."

since the same paper in January had compared him unfavorably with the recently-retired Stephen B. Luce, calling him a partisan of the “old school” and noting that fewer exercises and naval battalion landings had taken place under his leadership.<sup>75</sup> In fairness to Gherardi, the operations of the North Atlantic Squadron in 1890 show evidence of an organization in transition, exhibiting two different identities. The Squadron now consisted of two steel ships, *Baltimore* and *Dolphin*, and two old wooden cruisers, *Kearsarge* and *Galena*. On the whole, it spent very little time conducting tactical exercises in 1890, yet the Squadron steamed in formation regularly and made portcalls together.

### ***Walker and the Squadron of Evolution, 1890***

From 17-20 January, the Squadron of Evolution called at Cartagena, Spain, having first stopped at Gibraltar. Diplomatically, this was an important visit, as the situation in Cuba and the events of the 1870’s were not far from anyone’s mind. The Spanish authorities took great pains to show the American officers their facilities and warships under construction. The American delegation also toured the torpedo factory and school. In turn, Admiral Walker hosted a delegation of Spanish officers aboard the four ships of the Squadron of Evolution, where they expressed, in the words of the vice consul, “their favorable opinions regarding the handsome construction, clean state, and the latest sea and war improvements and perfect order of the four ships.”<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> G.L.C, "Bluejackets on Shore," *New York Times* (1857-1922), Jan 26 1890.

<sup>76</sup> Alberto Molina, "Letter, Alberto to Blaine, 24 January 1890, 1890," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

From Cartagena, the squadron moved on to Port Mahon, Menorca, then Toulon and Villefranche, France, and finally to Spezia, Italy, arriving there on 3 March 1890. Here, Walker sent off a long letter to the Secretary of the Navy, outlining an altercation he had had with Captain Howell of the *Atlanta*. Captain Howell had allegedly not paid enough attention to the position of his ship in the squadron's formation, and eventually Walker – after repeated signals to *Atlanta* to improve her station-keeping – relieved Howell. This action provoked a long letter of protest from Howell to the Secretary of the Navy, which Walker endorsed and forwarded with his explanation of the circumstances. In his words: "The *Atlanta* has repeatedly been very badly handled, not apparently through lack of seamanlike skill and judgment on the part of her commanding officer, but rather from an indifference to the tactical precision and appearance of the squadron and to the necessity for prompt and literal obedience to signals." Here we can see the clash of the old navy and the new. An officer of the old guard, brought up under the old standards of professionalism, simply did not attach any importance to station keeping. They were used to being the master of their own vessel, reporting to the commodore for administrative matters, and occasionally sailing about somewhere in the vicinity of the commodore's ship, but not keeping a tight station at high speed. Walker noted that Howell "does not seem to appreciate the military requirement of his duty as the commanding officer of a cruiser in a *tactical squadron, and for the present service this appreciation is an officer's highest quality* (my italics)."<sup>77</sup> The work done in the intervening two months since his less-than-charitable remarks about the performance of his squadron in tactical drills had evidently paid off, as Walker noted in his report to the

---

<sup>77</sup> Walker to SECNAV, 3 March 1890, in Navy, "Situation Reports, Squadron of Evolution, Dec 7 1889 - May 25, 1892." See also "Article 1 -- No Title," *New York Times* (1857-1922), Mar 2 1890.



Secretary of the Navy that, "The ships were much better handled, and the maneuvers were more satisfactory than ever before, showing that experience only is required to make the exercises all that is to be wished."<sup>78</sup>

Admiral Walker was looking for good weather, which the Adriatic had not provided, so he next took the Squadron further down the Mediterranean, calling at Corfu, Greece. The cruise of these four ships represented a sharp change from previous deployments. Dispatches from squadron commodores in previous years had mostly centered on the diplomatic and business functions of the U.S. naval mission. Commodores talked about the individual movement of ships, the ports they had spent time in, and how they had exchanged courtesies with the local authorities. Walker's dispatches contain those elements as well, but they also have a new focus: his perceived mission to train his squadron. Walker chose to take the Squadron to Corfu not because the consul had requested it or because American business interests were at risk, but because Corfu presented the best opportunities for the Squadron to hold target practice and conduct landing exercises.<sup>79</sup> In fact, although the consul to Greece desperately tried to get the Squadron to call at Piraeus (near Athens) so that the King of Greece could inspect the ships and host the officers, Walker declined the invitation, giving the excuse that duty required him to concentrate on taking advantage of Corfu's facilities for training the squadron.<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>78</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 16 March 1890, 1890," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>79</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 29 March 1890, 1890," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>80</sup> A. Loudon Snowden, "Letter, Snowden to Blaine, 18 April 1890, 1890," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

Upon leaving Corfu, the Squadron was split up briefly. *Boston* and *Atlanta* proceeded to Messina where they were docked and their bottoms were carefully inspected and cleaned. *Chicago* and *Yorktown* went straight to Malta, arriving on 17 April. The other two ships rejoined them a few days later. In Malta there came another sign of the modernization of naval organization, and another change in the conception of the use of concentrated naval forces as national instrument of power. A telegram arrived for Admiral Walker on 28 April instructing him to keep his squadron in the Mediterranean until further notice. Walker had no way of knowing that the desire of the Secretary of the Navy to keep the squadron together and ready to respond as a unit had to do with the political situation in Brazil at the time. What he did know was that he had over a hundred men whose term of enlistment was drawing to a close. An extension on deployment of unknown duration would raise difficulties with these sailors. Additionally, the Squadron's stores had been purchased with the intent of returning to the United States in June. Additional time at sea would require the purchase of additional supplies, and Admiral Walker wrote to the Secretary of the Navy requesting information on the nature of their orders to remain in the Mediterranean.<sup>81</sup> The letter does not address openly Walker's prerogative as squadron commander to determine the deployment and utilization of his assets, but that was almost certainly on his mind as he wrote it. Walker was finding out first hand that an instrument of power such as a squadron composed of multiple warships was a tempting tool for national policymakers to use to influence political events ashore. U.S. Navy deployments were shifting from the traditional role of

---

<sup>81</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 28 April 1890, 1890," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

showing the flag and protecting business interests to being a display of national ability to project combat power.<sup>82</sup>

Walker departed Malta two days after the telegram arrived and headed to Algiers. There, another telegram was waiting for him informing him that the Squadron was to prepare for deployment to the coast of Brazil. He left Algiers and proceeded to Gibraltar, where he procured the supplies he felt necessary to carry out the orders. In his acknowledgement of his orders, Walker could not help pointing out that, had he been privy to the Department's intentions, he could have focused more on the material condition of his ships, making sure that they were ready for a cruise of uncertain duration to South America. As it was, Walker wanted to make sure that the Secretary of the Navy understood that "I have placed before all other considerations not absolutely imperative, the training and tactical work of the Squadron of Evolution."<sup>83</sup> Perhaps Walker was simply hedging his bets in case there was a mechanical problem with one of his ships later, but his remarks still show a change in the conception of what the deployment of U.S. naval assets overseas should accomplish. Walker felt that it was his job to produce a combat-trained unit. Conducting diplomacy was secondary.

Once provisioned, the Squadron left Gibraltar and touched at Tangier for one day, a quick reversion to the old navy practice of "showing the flag" in support of the new U.S. consul. They then proceeded to Madeira, arriving on 30 May 1890. Admiral Walker took advantage of the stop at Madeira to send another report to the Secretary of the Navy, bemoaning at length the fact that he had not been informed about the

---

<sup>82</sup> Wicks. Pg. 238.

<sup>83</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 17 May 1890, 1890," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. See also "The Cruise Was a Success," *New York Times* (1857-1922), May 26 1890.

Department's intentions for his squadron. Walker went so far as to intimate that the Department did not trust him with sensitive information, in spite of his over forty years of faithful service.<sup>84</sup> After touching at Porto Grande, St. Vincent, Cape de Verde to communicate again with the Department, *Atlanta*, *Boston*, and *Chicago* headed for Brazil, while French Chadwick and the little *Yorktown* were sent to New York with the Squadron's short-time men, invalids, and prisoners.<sup>85</sup>

### ***The Two Squadrons Collide, 1891***

By 3 January 1891, *Philadelphia* was ready to put to sea to lead the squadron in Rear Admiral Gherardi's 1891 plans, but unfortunately the admiral was not ready. His wife's serious illness required him to ask for a delay in getting underway, which was granted.<sup>86</sup> *Dolphin* was at New York with *Philadelphia*, and would get underway with her in January. The "dynamite cruiser" *Vesuvius* was at New York as well, although she was still conducting tests on her pneumatic guns and was not expected to be employed as a cruising vessel with the squadron.<sup>87</sup> *Kearsarge* was at Norfolk; Gherardi ordered her to get underway and meet him in Port-au-Prince. Commander Elmer pointed out to the admiral that the amount of work necessary for *Kearsarge* would prevent her from getting

---

<sup>84</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 30 May 1890, 1890," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>85</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 6 June 1890, 1890," Letter, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>86</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Ramsey, 3 January 1891, 1891," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>87</sup> ""Various Naval Items, 24 Jan 91", " *Army and Navy Journal*, 24 January 1891 1891.

underway as quickly as the admiral would have liked, but promised to meet him in Port-au-Prince as soon as possible.<sup>88</sup> *Petrel* was already in the West Indies, under orders to arrive at Port-au-Prince not later than 25 January.<sup>89</sup> *Enterprise* was at Colón, Columbia. It was a pivotal year in the evolving identity of the North Atlantic Squadron. In 1891, old ships worked alongside ships of the “New Steel Navy.” Old deployment patterns and assumptions about responsibilities operated, at times spectacularly unsuccessfully, alongside new paradigms of squadron deployment and unit identity. At the center of that transition was an incident which took place in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, which drove to the heart of the question of the organizational identity of the two naval units simultaneously occupying the same geographical space.

Rear Admiral Bancroft Gherardi embarked in his new flagship was finally able to leave New York on 17 January.<sup>90</sup> He headed straight to Haiti to continue negotiating his government’s earnest desire to have a naval base there. Upon his arrival on 25 January, he found *Petrel* waiting for him.<sup>91</sup> At 890 tons, the little gunboat was one of the smallest of the ships of the new steel navy, but she was heavily armed for her size and a versatile

---

<sup>88</sup> Horace Elmer, CDR, "Letter, Elmer to Gherardi, 13 January 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 5 January 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>89</sup> ""The Navy: Naval Vessels in Commission, Where and When Last Heard From", " *Army and Navy Journal*, 3 January 1891 1891.

<sup>90</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 15 January 1891, 1891," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>91</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 27 January 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

warship. The venerable *Kearsarge* joined the squadron on 5 February.<sup>92</sup> Rear Admiral Gherardi was under orders to treat with President Hyppolite of Haiti for the cession of the Mole St. Nicholas.

The negotiations soon ran into a snag, as it was discovered that Rear Admiral Gherardi's commission had been signed by the Secretary of the Navy, and not the President. For the Haitian officials, this would not do. They refused to talk further until a commission was delivered bearing the signature of President Harrison.<sup>93</sup> Gherardi had assumed that his position as an admiral in the United States Navy would provide enough diplomatic power to negotiate for a naval base, but finding that it did not, he took it upon himself to write home for a presidential commission. Rather than training his squadron for combat, Rear Admiral Gherardi was acting the part of a warrior-diplomat of the "old" navy.

Gherardi had asked for his special commission to be delivered by the Clyde steamer due in Port-au-Prince later that month, but the powers that be decided that it would be useful to have some more U.S. warships to provide a backdrop for the negotiations, and dispatched Acting Rear Admiral John G. Walker's Squadron of Evolution to personally deliver the commission.<sup>94</sup> This would turn out to be a fateful decision, not only for the negotiations themselves, but for the relationship of two of the Navy's most senior admirals.

---

<sup>92</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Bureau of Navigation and Detail, 5 February 1891, 1891," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>93</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 26 February 1891, 1891," RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. See also Montague.

<sup>94</sup> "Various Naval Items, 18 Apr 91," *Army and Navy Journal*, 18 April 1891 1891.

From the start, the mission got off on the wrong foot with Acting Rear Admiral Walker. As usual, he was not given enough information far enough in advance about the Department's wishes. When his orders (and presumably, Rear Admiral Gherardi's special commission) arrived at Key West by registered mail on 13 April, the complaints started immediately. "If sent by open mail, I should have received them on the 10<sup>th</sup>, and if I had had any intimation of the duty required of me...the Squadron could have gone to sea on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup>. I shall now have *considerable difficulty* (my italics) in getting to sea on the 15<sup>th</sup>."<sup>95</sup> For someone who was probably the most modern-thinking flag officer in terms of viewing his squadron as a single combat entity, Walker had a surprising amount of difficulty with urgent orders sent to him by telegram. As promised, he got underway on 15 April with *Chicago, Boston, and Yorktown – Atlanta* remaining behind in Key West to have work done on her bottom. He arrived with his squadron in Port-au-Prince on 18 April 1891.<sup>96</sup>

The three white-painted steel ships steamed into the harbor and dropped anchor a mere three hundred yards from Rear Admiral Gherardi's flagship, without asking permission – a striking breach of both regulations and naval etiquette.<sup>97</sup> There are many versions of what happened next. Newspaper accounts emphasize the animosity between the two officers – an approach which obviously made more interesting reading. On the

---

<sup>95</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Secnav, 13 April 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>96</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 18 April 1891, 1891," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>97</sup> To steam into the presence of the flagship of a senior admiral (Gherardi was No. 2 on the list at this time) and not at the very least request permission to "proceed on duties assigned" from the senior officer would be considered an eyebrow-raising discourtesy even today, when these sorts of things are usually done over the internet via instant chat or email. Walker's actions must have been utterly shocking in an era of social rigidity and strict attention to etiquette.

other hand, first-person accounts in print tend to have been cleaned up for publication. In any case, Rear Admiral Walker was summoned aboard *Philadelphia*, where Rear Admiral Gherardi pointed out to him in no uncertain terms that he was the senior officer present afloat (SOPA), that *Acting* Rear Admiral Walker was junior to him, and that it was expected that Walker's squadron would obey all signals from the North Atlantic Squadron flagship.<sup>98</sup>

It was a clash of the old school and the new. Walker felt that his squadron owed allegiance to no one but its commander, and that its commander owed allegiance to no one but the Secretary of the Navy. It was not the first time Walker had run into trouble on this point. He had had several arguments with various navy yard commandants prior to leaving for his European cruise, as well as with the Navy Department over making personnel decisions for ships in his squadron without consulting him.<sup>99</sup> It is unlikely that an officer as aware of his prerogatives as squadron commander as Walker was would not have been completely aware of the way in which he was snubbing Rear Admiral Gherardi.

Captain Beach Sr.'s memoirs relate that the two officers ended up having a drink in Gherardi's cabin and came out all smiles, the incident behind them.<sup>100</sup> This is, perhaps, fanciful, but in any event Walker returned to his ship and lost no time in requesting permission to depart from the senior admiral. This permission was not granted

---

<sup>98</sup> "Gherardi's Stern Rebuke," *New York Times* (1857-1922), Aug 23 1891. For a first-person account from a junior officer who witnessed the event, see Edward L. Sr. and Beach Beach, Edward L. Jr., *From Annapolis to Scapa Flow: The Autobiography of Edward L. Beach, Sr.* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003), 59.

<sup>99</sup> Navy, "Situation Reports, Squadron of Evolution, Dec 7 1889 - May 25, 1892. "

<sup>100</sup> Beach, 52.



for a week – for reasons Gherardi did not care to share with Walker. “I was detained there by Rear Admiral Gherardi,” fulminated Walker in his report, “acting under the authority of the Navy Department, until 2:30 PM of the 24<sup>th</sup> instant, at which time I sailed for this port [Norfolk].”<sup>101</sup> Over the course of the next year, the two squadrons would ply the waters off the east coast of the United States, carefully staying away from each other, to avoid any more questions of seniority.

Meanwhile, Rear Admiral Gherardi and his squadron remained indefinitely in the Caribbean. This caused some concern about the possibility of an outbreak of yellow fever, which was one of the major reasons the Navy Department preferred to schedule cruises to the Caribbean in the winter months and exercises in the north in the summer. Unfortunately for Department planners, political situations did not keep as healthy a calendar. Gherardi was preoccupied now not only with the situation in Haiti but another tasking as well, this time directly from the President of the United States.<sup>102</sup> President Harrison had received a letter from an African-American laborer from Washington, D.C. who was working for the Navassa Island Phosphate Company. Fred Carter felt that he was being treated unjustly and had been held on the island past the expiration of his contract. From the tiny island off the coast of Haiti, Carter took it upon himself to write the President of the United States to plead his case. President Harrison, in turn, wrote the Secretary of the Navy saying, with a hint of understatement, “I do not intend that any

---

<sup>101</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 29 April 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. See also ""Various Naval Items, 9 May 91"," *Army and Navy Journal*, 9 May 1891 1891.

<sup>102</sup> ""Various Naval Items, 16 May 91"," *Army and Navy Journal*, 16 May 1891 1891.

system of slavery shall be maintained upon that island.” He went on to ask that the Secretary have Rear Admiral Gherardi look into the matter.<sup>103</sup>

While the literature on military involvement in labor unrest mostly centers on the mainland use of the Army and National Guard<sup>104</sup>, as we have seen in previous chapters it was not unusual for the Navy to become involved as well. Here, the Navy was involved in a labor dispute overseas, and once again, Rear Admiral Gherardi was occupied doing something other than training his squadron for war. Commander Elmer was ordered to take *Kearsarge* and proceed to Navassa Island. In his written orders to Elmer, Gherardi instructed him to “Be pleased to make your report direct to the Secretary of the Navy, sending a copy to the Commander-in-Chief.”<sup>105</sup> This short sentence reveals a telling difference between Admirals Gherardi and Walker, and their different conceptions of the identity of the units they commanded. The historian would be hard pressed to find any communication from Rear Admiral Walker directing any of his ships to do anything without his direct involvement – especially reporting to higher-ups. Indeed, when his ships are detached by the Department for one reason or another, there is typically an immediate complaint from him in the correspondence. Gherardi, on the other hand, was used to dispatching units of his force on independent duty, and saw his role as commander-in-chief as one of administratively facilitating these deployments. He was not threatened by having one of his captains correspond with the Secretary of the Navy.

---

<sup>103</sup> Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States, "Letter, Harrison to Tracy, 10 April 1891, 1891," RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. The North Atlantic Squadron had checked out the conditions on Navassa before, when Rear Admiral Cooper detailed a ship to inspect labor concerns about the phosphate operations in 1882.

<sup>104</sup> Cooper, *The Army and Civil Disorder: Federal Military Intervention in Labor Disputes, 1877-1900*.

<sup>105</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Elmer, 27 April 1891, 1891," orders, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

Elmer departed Port-au-Prince on 28 April and arrived at Navassa Island the next day. There he met with Fred Carter, as well as a very relieved Mr. Everett, the superintendent in charge of operations on the island. He found that out of a total labor force of 189 workers, 140 refused to do any work whatsoever. In consultation with Mr. Everett, it was decided that it was best that these disaffected workers be removed from the island as quickly as possible by a company steamer. To facilitate this, Elmer transported one of the company officers to Jamaica where he would be able to book passage on a steamer back to the United States in order to make arrangements.

Meanwhile, Elmer deployed his Marine guard to maintain order. After a meeting with the strikers in which he heard their grievances, he appointed a board of officers to investigate and document the workers' allegations, but he informed them in no uncertain terms that "if they attempted to carry out any of the threats they had made against the men who continued work...or in any way to disturb the peace and order of the Island, I would suppress them by force of arms."<sup>106</sup> Elmer asked for and received a request in writing from Superintendent Everett for the Marines, evidently wanting to be able to show the Navy Department that the use of armed force was not simply his idea but had been requested by an American citizen in fear for his life and property.<sup>107</sup>

The situation took a little over a month to resolve, with the arrival of Navassa Island Phosphate Company ships to bring fresh provisions and take the dissatisfied workers and those whose contracts had expired back to the mainland. In his final report,

---

<sup>106</sup> Horace Elmer, CDR, "Letter, Elmer to Tracy, 4 May 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>107</sup> F. M. Everett, "Letter, Everett to Elmer, 2 May 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

Commander Elmer praised the conduct of his Marine guard, noting that “the value of such a body of men on board ship is well illustrated by this case.”<sup>108</sup> With that, *Kearsarge* weighed anchor and returned to New York, stopping through Key West for mail and resupply.<sup>109</sup>

Meanwhile, the collapse of talks with the Hyppolite government on 22 May 1891 showed, not for the last time, the shortcomings of “gunboat diplomacy.” The proud Haitian government in the end simply told Gherardi and Douglass that they were not interested in ceding any of their land to the United States and the Harrison Administration was left with the option of taking the Mole St. Nicholas by force or leaving. Unwilling to attack Haiti, (and thereby risk alienating the African-American vote which had been instrumental in catapulting him into the presidency in 1888), the Republican Harrison was forced to take hat in hand and depart Port-au-Prince quietly. Minister Douglass resigned over the incident, remaining loyal to Harrison and assigning most of the blame to Blaine. The ham-handed attempts by Blaine, Tracy, and Gherardi to circumvent Douglass and use the Navy to carry out their designs on Caribbean hegemony had backfired.<sup>110</sup>

On his way back to the United States, Gherardi in *Philadelphia* stopped through Santo Domingo, where he met with President Heureaux and discussed the possibility of

---

<sup>108</sup> Horace Elmer, CDR, "Letter, Elmer to Tracy, 20 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. The Marines were embroiled in one of their usual controversies about the role of Marines on board Navy warships. Eventually, they solidified their continued existence by promoting their expertise at disembarked missions such as this one. See Shulimson.

<sup>109</sup> Commander Winn, Commandant of Naval Station Key West, "Telegram, Winn to Bureau of Navigation and Detail, 26 June 1891, 1891," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>110</sup> Montague, 150-152.

leasing the Samana Bay property that President Grant had been interested in twenty years previously.<sup>111</sup> Although President Heureaux was willing, his people were not, and nothing further came of the initiative. The North Atlantic Squadron finally returned to New York on 16 May. On the way home, Rear Admiral Gherardi's flag lieutenant, Lieutenant Allen G. Paul died of what the papers called "brain fever," brought on by the excessive heat of Haiti's climate.<sup>112</sup> It was one final disappointing note to end what had been a professionally unrewarding cruise.<sup>113</sup>

With both squadrons now temporarily back in the states, one of the sillier naval episodes of the 1890's got into full swing: the wild machinations to ensure that the two admirals would not have to come in contact with each other. Walker's Squadron of Evolution was at Norfolk, refitting and having maintenance done. Gherardi's ships, with the exception of *Kearsarge*, which was finishing up its business at Navassa Island, and *Vesuvius*, which was at Norfolk, were at the Navy Yard at New York. It was well-known that Walker wanted Gherardi's job, and equally well-known that Gherardi had no intention of leaving his commander-in-chief billet until his prescribed tour was up.<sup>114</sup> While newspapers and seapower enthusiasts stirred up excitement about the possibility of combined-squadron fleet operations, both admirals demurred. Walker, who was in no

---

<sup>111</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 3 May 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>112</sup> Probably either meningitis or encephalitis –both viral and neither caused by the climate. In any event, the Army and Navy Journal reported that "He was a man conscientious to the extreme in the matter of duty and might have come North before but manfully stuck to his post." A very typical Victorian-era linkage of gender to certain personality traits; see Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, Women in Culture and Society (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

<sup>113</sup> ""Recent Deaths, 23 May 91"," *Army and Navy Journal*, 23 May 1891 1891.

<sup>114</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Phillip, J.W., Cdr, 11 March 1889, 1889," Letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. . Also,

hurry to subordinate his forces to Gherardi again, let the Army and Navy Journal know that he “[did] not think that there will be any joint maneuvers on the sound this summer.”<sup>115</sup>

What Walker was up to was summer maneuvers of his own. Characteristically, he knew how to make a media event of it. On the first of July, *Chicago*, *Atlanta*, *Boston*, *Yorktown*, and *Newark* got underway for Norfolk, headed to Boston for the Forth of July celebration. *Chicago* had engine problems immediately upon getting underway, so Walker transferred his flag to *Newark*, as they were on a schedule to be in Boston in time for the Forth.<sup>116</sup> *Newark* was one of the Navy’s newest ships, having been completed earlier that year. She was the first of the so-called “second generation cruisers” to be authorized by Congress, but the last to be completed due to complications during the design phase.<sup>117</sup> Improvements over the “ABCD” cruisers included triple-expansion engines, an increased steel protective deck, and better auxiliary machinery. She was well-armed for a cruiser, with a main battery of 12 6-inch breechloading rifles, all mounted on the gundeck.<sup>118</sup>

Arrival in Boston was a gala affair and, again, Walker knew exactly how to get the most from an event. After the full-dress recognitions of the Forth of July holiday, 5 July was designated as a general visiting day. Thousands flocked to see the ships of the White Squadron. On 6 July, official visits were exchanged with the governor of

---

<sup>115</sup> ""Various Naval Items, 6 Jun 91", " *Army and Navy Journal*, 6 June 1891 1891.

<sup>116</sup> ""The Navy: Naval Vessels in Commission - When and Where Last Heard from, 4 Jul 91", " *Army and Navy Journal*, 4 July 1891 1891.

<sup>117</sup>The others being “*Charleston*, *Baltimore*, *Philadelphia*, and *San Francisco*.”

<sup>118</sup> Alden, *The American Steel Navy: A Photographic History of the U.S. Navy from the Introduction of the Steel Hull in 1883 to the Cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909*, 25.

Massachusetts. One reporter noted that the state flag of Massachusetts flew from the foremast of *Newark* while honors were being rendered to the governor, testament to Walker's attention to the details of public relations.<sup>119</sup>

Another ground-breaking event for the Squadron of Evolution was the embarkation of Massachusetts' battalion of naval militia for training and joint maneuvers. The militia members were drilled at the great guns and secondary battery. Subsequently, the Squadron got underway for live fire exercises which were witnessed by the Governor of Massachusetts, embarked with Rear Admiral Walker on board *Newark*. That night, members of the militia in small boats armed with simulated spar/attachable torpedoes made attacks on *Newark*, *Boston*, and *Atlanta*, which were simulating enemy ships in Boston Harbor. Newspapers credited the naval militia with successful attacks on two of the three ships. Walker in his official report brushed off these claims, simply saying that "the attack, in all cases, had failed." The culmination of the exercises came on Friday, with a landing exercise on Deer Island. The sailors of the Squadron of Evolution formed one battalion, under the command of Commander French Endsor Chadwick, while the naval militiamen formed another. Together, the two attacked a strongpoint on the island held by the Squadron's Marines. After a series of balls and dinners the following day, the Squadron sailed for New York. Two weeks later, the Squadron repeated almost the exact same schedule of events with the naval militia of New York, conducting landing

---

<sup>119</sup> The state flag would not have been part of *Newark's* signaling equipment. Walker obviously sent a subordinate out in New York with orders to find and purchase a Massachusetts state flag just for this occasion, prior to departing for Boston. It says a lot about Walker, the kinds of things he focused on, and what he felt the role of his Squadron was.

exercises on Fisher's Island off the coast of Connecticut. Again there were combined landings and naval infantry exercises, boat races, dinners, and celebratory parades.<sup>120</sup>

In all, Rear Admiral Walker predictably claimed success. "I regard the week spent in Boston as extremely interesting and valuable; instructive to the naval volunteers and encouraging to the officers and men of the regular service." In retrospect, the exercises probably did more to boost popular support for the New Steel Navy than make any actual preparations for a national emergency. The idea of militiamen piloting small boats with spar torpedoes to attach to enemy battleships (swinging quietly at anchor, no less) was laughable. However, the idea of having a trained core of civilians to man the ships the nation would have to produce in the event of a war had taken hold. "If war were to break out," remarked Rear Admiral Walker at a reception given for the Squadron in New London, Connecticut, "the great and pressing question at once arising would be as to the manning of our ships...The Naval Reserve is a great need..."<sup>121</sup>

Spending only a couple of weeks in New York, the Squadron of Evolution got underway on 12 August to cruise along the coast of New England. On board were several members of the Senate Naval Committee. Since the Boston/Fisher Island exercises, new ships had been added to the Squadron. *Bennington* and *Concord* were sister ships of *Yorktown*: 1700 ton gunboats mounted six 6-inch breechloading rifles and had hull openings for six torpedo tubes, although self-propelled torpedoes were not introduced into fleet use until 1894. These gunboats were often criticized for not packing

---

<sup>120</sup> "The White Squadron's Attack on Fisher's Island," *Army and Navy Journal*, 8 August 1891 1891.

<sup>121</sup> "The Boston Naval Militia Exercises: Admiral Walker's Report to the Navy Dept.," *Army and Navy Journal*, 1 August 1891 1891; "Honors to the Squadron of Evolution," *Army and Navy Journal*, 8 August 1891 1891; Navy, "Situation Reports, Squadron of Evolution, Dec 7 1889 - May 25, 1892. "; "The White Squadron at Boston," *Army and Navy Journal*, 18 July 1891 1891.



enough firepower or protection to be effective fighters, but they proved to be the workhorses of the new steel navy – the “steam sloops” of the 1890’s.<sup>122</sup> Thus enlarged, the Squadron made its way up the coast, stopping at Newport, Boston, Bar Harbor, and New London, Connecticut. Everywhere along the way, the Squadron’s officers socialized with prominent citizens and were feted at dinners and balls. These events, while undoubtedly good for public opinion of the Navy (not that the citizens of New England ever had any trouble supporting a navy), also added fuel to the intense dislike that many both in and out of the Navy felt for John Grimes Walker. About this time, the New York Times began a series of articles exposing Walker’s “pull” within the Navy Department and lamenting his cruises up and down the east coast, entertaining and being entertained, while others did the daily work of overseas cruising.<sup>123</sup>

Meanwhile, Rear Admiral Gherardi’s North Atlantic Squadron, without dinner parties or senators aboard, slipped quietly from New York up to Bar Harbor, Maine, for exercises and target practice. As the Squadron of Evolution had grown, the North Atlantic Squadron had dwindled down, now comprising three ships – *Philadelphia*, *Petrel*, and *Enterprise*, with *Kearsarge* just back from the Caribbean at Norfolk for refitting.<sup>124</sup> From Bar Harbor they moved to New London, Connecticut, departing

---

<sup>122</sup> Alden, *The American Steel Navy: A Photographic History of the U.S. Navy from the Introduction of the Steel Hull in 1883 to the Cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909*, 39.

<sup>123</sup> "Admiral Walker's "Pull"," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Aug 24 1891; "Reducing Walker's Fleet," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Sep 11 1891; "Tracy Bows to the Pull," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Sep 5 1891; "Walker's Hurtful Pull," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Sep 3 1891; "Walker's Singular Pull," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Sep 4 1891; "Walker Still Defiant," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Aug 26 1891.

<sup>124</sup> "The Navy: Naval Vessels in Commission, When and Where Last Heard from, 15 Aug 91," *Army and Navy Journal*, 15 August 1891 1891.

quickly as Walker arrived with his Squadron of Evolution (and various senators).<sup>125</sup> Upon completion of their cruise to the north, the North Atlantic Squadron returned to New York, where Rear Admiral Gherardi busied himself making plans for winter operations in the Caribbean.<sup>126</sup> Gherardi's attention continued to focus on the Caribbean, and when his three warships sailed in November, they sailed separately and to different ports in the Caribbean. For the North Atlantic Squadron, operations in company were something that was done at a particular time of year for training purposes. The mission of the Squadron and its commander-in-chief continued to be traditional cruising duty.

This may explain why the Department turned to Rear Admiral Walker's Squadron of Evolution for the next political crisis, which occurred later in the year with Chile. There, a civil war was underway pitting incumbent president J. M. Balmaceda and the Chilean Army against the Chilean Congress and Navy, headed by Captain Jorge Montt. The Congressional forces under Montt eventually prevailed and by October 1891 it appeared for a while that the situation was going to quiet down. Things were calm enough for the commanding officer of *Baltimore*, the hapless Captain Winfield Scott Schley, to make what can only be referred to in the kindest possible terms as an ill-considered decision to send his sailors into Valparaiso for liberty.<sup>127</sup> Predictably, violence broke out. In the resulting brawl, the Chilean police stood idly by while two

---

<sup>125</sup> "The Navy: Naval Vessels in Commission, When and Where Last Heard from, 29 Aug 91," *Army and Navy Journal*, 29 August 1891 1891.

<sup>126</sup> "Vairous Naval Items, 31 Oct 91," *Army and Navy Journal*, 31 October 1891 1891.

<sup>127</sup> Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, naval leadership is cautious about where they send sailors ashore to blow off steam – particularly when they have been at sea for a period of several months with no liberty. A port in a country that we had a few weeks earlier almost gone to a kinetic confrontation with would probably not be considered. In Schley's defense, his men were getting restless and he was trying to maintain order on his ship, but here he showed the same sort of poor decision-making that would cause him so much grief at Santiago Bay seven years later. See Love, 367.

sailors were killed and several others injured. Eventually, the police dealt with the situation by arresting the Americans.

Feelings ran hot in the United States, and when President Harrison went to Congress asking for a declaration of war, Tracy's Navy Department made immediate preparations.<sup>128</sup> In addition to forces in the Pacific, Rear Admiral Walker's Squadron of Evolution was dispatched from Hampton Roads on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December with orders to proceed to Montevideo. As Walker stopped in the Caribbean for coal and fresh water, he reacted typically when encouraged by Navy Department telegram to hurry to Montevideo. "The Department can reasonably believe that I have some knowledge of my profession, and as much interest in doing my duty efficiently as the Department can possibly have."<sup>129</sup> While he was at it, he made sure to mention that the Department had changed out many of his officers and men, and that his engineering department was green and "more or less inefficiency in the Engineers' force and in waste of both coal and water for steaming purposes."<sup>130</sup>

The plan was to gather the forces of both the North Atlantic Squadron and the Squadron of Evolution at Montevideo, where the Department had bought a large stockpile of coal, and launch the combined forces of the two squadrons, under the leadership of Rear Admiral Gherardi, to attack Valparaiso.<sup>131</sup> One can only imagine how Rear Admiral Walker would have responded to being placed in a subordinate position

---

<sup>128</sup> Secretary of State Blaine, who probably would have been a calming influence on Harrison, was out of town at the time.

<sup>129</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 22 December 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Love, 368.

under Rear Admiral Gherardi. Fortunately for both U.S. foreign policy and the Navy's relationships among their senior admirals, the fleet concentration never took place, as the Chilean government balked at the idea of war with the United States and capitulated to U.S. demands in January 1892.

### *Conclusions*

In the previous chapter, we followed the North Atlantic Squadron as its identity began to slowly transition from an administrative organization to a combat unit. While exercises became more commonplace and the ships of the squadron quantitatively spent more time in company than they had in the previous decade, the focus of the North Atlantic Squadron continued to be traditional cruising, protection of U.S. commerce, and “showing the flag.” This observation is confirmed by analyzing the operational movements of the North Atlantic Squadron and comparing them with those of a second squadron constituted in the home waters in 1889: the Squadron of Evolution. The Squadron of Evolution embodied everything the North Atlantic Squadron was still in the process of transitioning towards. Without ties to a specific geographic region and the political and diplomatic baggage such ties brought, the Squadron of Evolution was free to focus on what its commander repeatedly referred to in his correspondence as its primary duty: training together to operate as a combat unit. This focus resulted in a unit with an organizational identity that had as yet not been seen in the United States Navy. It was not the first time that the Navy had deployed its warships organized as a squadron; some of these had even developed a protean sense of organizational identity, such as “Preble’s Boys” in the Mediterranean during the Barbary Wars, but none had been as consistently employed as a single combat unit, and thought of itself as such, as the Squadron of

Evolution.<sup>132</sup> When its commander wanted to report its presence somewhere in the world, he sent a telegram that said simply: “squadron.” Everyone in the Navy Department knew what that meant – that all four ships of the Squadron of Evolution had arrived. Those telegrams might be the best evidence of the development of the Squadron of Evolution’s organizational identity.

The North Atlantic Squadron, on the other hand, although it had made great strides in operating as a single unit since the 1870’s, still focused largely on solving foreign policy problems for the Secretary of State. For all the evidence that Rear Admiral Gherardi took pains to exercise his squadron at naval tactics under steam, there is more that suggests that he was largely preoccupied with political matters, such as the fact that he was frequently called away from his squadron to Washington, D.C. for consultations. The alleged ineffectiveness of the U.S. Minister to Haiti, Fredrick Douglass meant that the State Department relied heavily on the admiral to carry out its policies on the island of Hispaniola.

Sadly, the relationship between the two squadron commanders precluded initiatives to exercise as a fleet. Perhaps it was inevitable that the two would clash, as they were part of a Navy whose command structure was largely unchanged since the 1840’s. The personal bickering and habitual comparing of lineal numbers and privileges that had plagued the officer corps since the War of 1812 was still very much alive in the 1890’s.<sup>133</sup> The senior officer corps was having a hard time catching up with the demands

---

<sup>132</sup> F. Pratt, *Preble's Boys: Commodore Preble and the Birth of American Sea Power* (Sloane, 1950).

<sup>133</sup> For a good discussion of the problems, issues, and personal animosities associated with multiple senior officers and squadrons on the same station in the early Navy, see Stephen Budiansky, *Perilous Fight: America's Intrepid War with Britain on the High Seas, 1812-1815* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010). Maybe the best-known result of this mindset in the old navy is the death of Commodore Stephen Decatur in 1820 in a duel with Commodore James Barron.

of a modern fleet, and the friction between the two squadrons in the summer of 1891 was proof of this. The *Army and Navy Journal* saw the need for better organization in 1891, writing in an editorial that: “We should like to see some definite programme adopted for the use of the vessels of the American Navy which, in point of numbers, is growing daily, for its efficiency will continue to be seriously impaired until the officials cease working in the dark and adopt a definite naval policy.”<sup>134</sup> In his 1889 address to the Phi Beta Kappa society at Harvard, Envoy to the Court of St. James Edward J. Phelps recognized that:

Naval strength has become at this day the right hand of diplomacy, and the most important element in large and critical foreign relations...I would propose, therefore, as one of the first steps towards such an international attitude as it seems to me our country should assume, and having assumed maintain, that a naval force should be created that should leave us nothing to fear from collision with any other naval power in the world.<sup>135</sup>

Service in this new navy, which the nation increasingly intended to operate as an overt instrument of power, meant not traditional cruising activities, but the deployment of an instrument of national power – a squadron. As Assistant Navy Secretary James Soley put it in 1891:

The old theory of squadron-cruising, in accordance with which a large force was maintained upon each of several foreign stations, where it lay for a great part of the time in port, and during the remainder cruised aimlessly about, is a thing of the past. Some force undoubtedly must continue to be maintained at certain points at all times, but the true place for a naval force in time of peace is in the waters that wash the shores of its own country. It is here that it should gain the practice that will enable it successfully to defend those shores when they are attacked.<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>134</sup> "Wanted: A Naval Policy," *Army and Navy Journal*, 5 December 1891 1891.

<sup>135</sup> Edward J. Phelps, "International Relations", in Milton Plesur, *Creating an American Empire, 1865-1914*, ed. A.S. Eisenstadt, Major Issues in American History (New York, NY: Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1971). Pp. 70-77.

<sup>136</sup> "The Value of Naval Maneuvers," *Army and Navy Journal*, 15 August 1891 1891.

Whatever one thinks of the methods of Acting Rear Admiral John Grimes Walker, the Squadron of Evolution represented the future. While many government officials and naval officers pressed for this change in identity, the day-to-day operations of the North Atlantic Squadron over the next few years would demonstrate the fact that this change was happening very gradually.

## **Chapter 4: The Limits of Ad-hoc Crisis Response, 1892 – 1894**

The Navy Department wanted to develop the ability of its officers and ships to fight in formation. Despite attempts throughout the 1880's and early 1890's to exercise the warships of the North Atlantic Squadron at fleet tactics under steam, the Squadron had not yet developed a coherent identity. Contingency operations required the deployment of single warships from the Squadron to safeguard overseas U.S. business interests, interfering with the ability of the Squadron to develop a multi-ship fighting capability.

With the introduction of the "ABCD" ships in 1889, the Squadron of Evolution was formed to give a trained nucleus of officers experience at operating as a squadron. There were not yet enough of the new steel warships to distribute them throughout the Navy, so a considered decision was made to keep them concentrated. The North Atlantic Squadron, as has been seen, was largely left with cruising vessels to continue to carry out its mission during 1889-1891. By 1892, new construction that had been authorized since 1883 resulted in enough materiel assets that the capability existed to keep a substantial concentration of modern steel warships together, while deploying single vessels to handle diplomatic affairs and threats to business. The process of developing a fleet mentality, however, was not complete.

Rather than assign the new warships to the North Atlantic Squadron, giving it the ability to train tactically in the manner envisioned by Luce, and to a lesser extent, Walker, the new assets were put to use to further national objectives in foreign affairs and public relations. In late 1892, Rear Admiral Bancroft Gherardi was sent to California to lead a



“Squadron for Special Service” around South America from the Pacific. The Squadron’s purpose was to deliver a message of goodwill to the major nations of Latin America and invite them to participate in the New York Naval Review of 1893. The Naval Review, which was held in conjunction with the Chicago 1893 Columbian Exposition, saw the creation of the “Naval Review Fleet”, comprised of two squadrons under two flag officers, with a fleet commander overseeing the formation. A fleet of this size and organization had not been constituted since the Key West maneuvers of 1874.

Jan R uger has identified naval reviews as a “theatre of power and identity that unfolded...in the imperial age.”<sup>1</sup> A powerful navy was a way to not only influence world events, but to build national identity – something that was critical to the post-Civil War United States.<sup>2</sup> The movements of the Squadron for Special Service and the participation of the Naval Review Fleet in the 1893 International Naval Review supported the Navy’s public relations effort and afforded the Navy extended opportunities to exercise operational and logistical challenges associated with maintaining large concentrations of warships. They did not, however, contribute to the development of the doctrine and tactics necessary for the North Atlantic Squadron to possess a multi-ship fighting capability. Naval reviews, public relations, and tactical maneuvers were not necessarily comparable strategic activities. The primary duty of the North Atlantic Squadron during 1892-1894 continued to be the protection of commercial interests overseas, which the Squadron accomplished with the deployment of single warships to trouble spots across its

---

<sup>1</sup> R uger, 1.

<sup>2</sup> On the use of a navy to build national identity, see Jan R uger, "Nation, Empire, and Navy: Identity Politics in the United Kingdom, 1887-1914," *Past and Present* No. 185 (2004). For different interpretations of the development of post-Civil War U.S. national identity, see D.W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001); D.G. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (Vintage Books, 2009).

area of responsibility. While the Navy’s new warships gained experience in multi-ship formations, those duties came at the expense of fleet tactical exercises. The process of constructing a new identity for the North Atlantic Squadron as a combat unit remained unfinished.

### THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON - 1892<sup>3</sup>

	DISP(TONS)	TYPE/CONST	ARMOR	SPEED	ARMAMENT	ERA BUILT (YEAR)
PHILADELPHIA(FLAG)	4324	PROTECTED CRUISER	NO	19.7KTS	2X6" BLR 4X6LB 4X3LB 2X1LB 3X37MM	NEW (1890)
CONCORD	1710	STEEL GUNBOAT	NO	16.1KTS	6X6"BLR 2X6LB 2X3LB 1X1LB 2X37MM 2X GATLINGS	NEW (1891)
CHICAGO	4500	PROTECTED CRUISER	NO	15.3KTS	4X8"BLR 8X6"BLR 2X5"BLR 2X6LB, 2X1LB, 4X47MM 2X37MM 2X GATLINGS	NEW (1889)
KEARSARGE	1550	WOODEN SCREW SLOOP	NO	11KTS	2X11" DAHLGRENS 1X30LB PARROTT RIFLE 4X32LB SMOOTH BORE	CIVIL WAR (1861)
MIANTONOMOH	3990	MONITOR	7.0"SIDE 11.5" TURRETS	10.5KTS	4X10" BLR 2X6LB, 2X3LB, 2X1LB 2X37MM	NEW (1891)

Table 7: The North Atlantic Squadron, 1892<sup>4</sup>

### *War Scare with Chile and Concentration in Montevideo, 1892*

The fallout from the *Baltimore* incident in October 1891 pushed the United States closer and closer to war with Chile. The Navy Department began to consider its options for concentrating a force capable of contending with the Chilean Navy. Unlike the

<sup>3</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* 1892. Vol. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Alden, *The American Steel Navy: A Photographic History of the U.S. Navy from the Introduction of the Steel Hull in 1883 to the Cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909*; Canney.

confrontation with Spain over the *Virginius* incident in 1874, this was a fight the Navy Department felt ready to take on. Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy was even accused of warmongering in an effort to show off his new warships. At least one newspaper editor at the time put forward the idea that action for the New Steel Navy would make Tracy a dark horse candidate for the 1892 presidential election:

A war with Chile would certainly develop one name as a compromise candidate between Blaine and Harrison. And that dark horse might be the horse marine, the alert, active, and accomplished...Benjamin F. Tracy, who would have more to do with the immediate making of war with Chile than all the rest of the cabinet combined.<sup>5</sup>

There is little evidence to support the editor's contention. When the Chilean revolution first broke out, Tracy went to great lengths to ensure that his commanders understood his wish to remain neutral and avoid trouble.<sup>6</sup> The deaths of two American servicemen may have lessened that resolve somewhat; still, he vehemently denied any desire for a war.<sup>7</sup> What is obvious are the immediate and aggressive steps Secretary Tracy took to place his New Steel Navy on a war footing. In early December, coded telegrams began flying from the Navy Department, moving ships, supplies, and coal towards South America.

The first unit to respond was, predictably, the remnant of Acting Rear Admiral John G. Walker's Squadron of Evolution. December 1891 found Walker's ships in Hampton Roads, as Secretary Tracy was doing his best to keep Walker away from Rear

---

<sup>5</sup> New York Advertiser, 19 January 1892, as quoted in B. F. Cooling, *Benjamin Franklin Tracy: Father of the Modern American Fighting Navy* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1973), 119.

<sup>6</sup> "Take no part in troubles further than to protect American interests...use every precaution to avoid if possible such measures.", Benjamin F. Tracy, "Telegram, Tracy to Mccann, 4 March 1891, 1891," Telegram, RG 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, 1691 - 1945 Washington, D.C. .

<sup>7</sup> Cooling, 121.

Admiral Gherardi of the North Atlantic Squadron, who was on the usual winter cruise in the West Indies at the time. The relationship between the two admirals since the difficulties in Haiti in the summer of 1891 had not improved noticeably, and since nobody in the Department quite seemed to know what to do about the hostile relationship, the solution was simply to keep the two admirals as far apart as the East Coast would allow. This arrangement was, however, unworkable in an international crisis.

A coded telegram sent to Hampton Roads on 8 December 1891 initiated the formation of an ad-hoc squadron to deal with the Chilean imbroglio. Walker was sent to the Dutch West Indies with *Chicago* and *Bennington*. The two ships were instructed to proceed to St. Thomas, where they arrived on 15 December to find a flurry of telegrams from the Navy Department concerning when and where to coal.<sup>8</sup> While the new Navy was enjoying materiel improvements in the form of new warships, getting them coaled and provisioned without a network of overseas bases was a chronic problem. The United States at this point was simply not prepared logistically to deploy concentrated combat squadrons across great distances. Secretary Tracy had been working non-stop since the crisis began to purchase and deliver coal to the U.S. warships headed south. The ad-hoc nature of this process resulted in an unusually large number of telegrams issuing sometimes contradictory instructions to the fleet. The hectoring telegrams annoyed the self-confident Walker, who responded predictably. "I had no intention of coaling here

---

<sup>8</sup> Benjamin F. Tracy, "Telegram, Tracy to Walker, 10 December 1891, 1891," Telegram, RG 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, 1691 - 1945 Washington, D.C; Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 15 December 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

[St. Thomas],” he retorted at one point, “I had not intended coming to this port, but came in obedience to Department’s telegram of the 8<sup>th</sup> instant.”<sup>9</sup>

The two ships were joined by *Atlanta* a day later, and all three got underway for Saint Lucia, where the Department had American coal waiting. They arrived on 18 December and immediately went about the grueling business of coaling ship. Admiral Walker was worried about yellow fever, and for this reason did not want to stop in Brazil on his way to Montevideo. He thus ordered all three ships’ bunkers filled to capacity. Additionally the much larger (and less fuel efficient) *Chicago* and *Atlanta* took deck loads of coal.<sup>10</sup> Fresh water was another matter. Saint Lucia did not have the facilities to provide enough fresh water for the boilers of three modern warships in a timely fashion, so Walker made the decision to stop for a day at Barbados on the way south, where both the proper quantity of fresh water would be available as well as better facilities for pumping the water onto the warships. About this time, Assistant Secretary Soley made the mistake of sending Walker a fairly innocuous cable reminding him to reach Montevideo as soon as practicable.<sup>11</sup> This perceived slight inspired a four-page missive in response, as an enraged Walker railed against anyone who could question his abilities as a squadron commander. “...thus far, not an hour has been lost by this Squadron since leaving Hampton Roads,” fumed Walker. He went on to find fault with the Department’s

---

<sup>9</sup> Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 15 December 1891. "

<sup>10</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 20 December 1891, 1891," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Tracy, 16 December 1891, 1891," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Tracy, 18 December 1891, 1891," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>11</sup> James R. Soley, "Telegram, Soley to Walker, 21 December 1891, 1891," Telegram, RG 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, 1691 - 1945 Washington, D.C. .

sailing instructions (“The call at that port was by order of the Department, and of the cause of the order I have no knowledge.”), the Bureau of Navigation and Detail (“The numerous changes of both officers and men, made at the last moment in the United States, have undoubtedly resulted in more or less inefficiency in the Engineers’ force...”), and finished by petulantly noting that “The Department can reasonably believe that I have some knowledge of my profession...If these ships do not reach Montevideo at the proper time it will be for reasons entirely beyond my control.”<sup>12</sup> In the event, both *Atlanta* and *Bennington* had to stop through Bahia, Brazil for coal, while Walker and *Chicago* obeyed Department orders to press on to Montevideo, arriving on 10 January 1892.<sup>13</sup> He was joined by *Bennington* on 12 January and *Atlanta* on 15 January.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, the decision had been made to supplement Walker’s Squadron of Evolution with the rest of the modern warships available on the East coast. On 24 December, Rear Admiral Gherardi, who was back in Haiti to assist the U.S. minister with managing possible unrest there, received a coded telegram ordering him to take *Philadelphia* and *Concord* and get underway for Barbados. There he was to coal and await further instructions.<sup>15</sup> *Yantic*, was already in Montevideo, having left Hampton

---

<sup>12</sup> Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 22 December 1891. "

<sup>13</sup> Benjamin F. Tracy, "Telegram, Tracy to Walker, 24 December 1891, 1891," Telegram, RG 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, 1691 - 1945 Washington, D.C. .

<sup>14</sup> Francis Higginson, CAPT, "Letter, Higginson to Tracy, 6 January 1892, 1892," Letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C; Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 11 January 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C; Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 12 January 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C; Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Tracy, 15 January 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>15</sup> Benjamin F. Tracy, "Telegram, Tracy to Gherardi, 24 December 1891, 1891," Telegram, RG 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, 1691 - 1945 Washington, D.C. .

Roads in October 1891 to be transferred to the South Atlantic Squadron by way of Porto Grande, Cape Verde. She had arrived in Montevideo on 2 January 1892. Not finding any other U.S. vessels present, Lieutenant Commander Belden decided to proceed to Buenos Aires, Argentina and report to Commander James M. Forsyth, the senior officer present in the area at the time. Forsyth was busy preparing *Tallapoosa*, one of the last of the wooden steam cruisers, to be sold for scrap.<sup>16</sup> In a somehow fitting commentary on the final demise of the old wooden cruising navy, *Tallapoosa* had literally rotted while assigned as a dispatch vessel on the South Atlantic Station, to the point that it was no longer safe to operate her. Her crew had to be sent home by merchant steamers, her supplies were salvaged by Admiral Walker, (who ordered *Essex* to proceed from Buenos Aires to Montevideo with whatever useful objects from *Tallapoosa* she could carry), and the hulk was ordered sold to the highest bidder at the dock in Buenos Aires.

Once settled in Montevideo, Admiral Walker made the diplomatic rounds, calling on the senior officers of the various navies represented in the port, the U.S. legation and, on 22 January 1892, the President of Uruguay.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, supplies and coal ordered by the Navy Department continued to accumulate.<sup>18</sup> The plan was for the assembled ships at Montevideo to proceed around Cape Horn, through the Strait of Magellan, to Callao, Peru where they would unite with the warships of the Pacific fleet. To do this,

---

<sup>16</sup> CDR Belden, "Letter, Belden to Tracy, 2 January 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>17</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 28 January 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>18</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 2 February 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

they would require the services of a collier, which Rear Admiral Walker was ordered to arrange.<sup>19</sup>

Unfortunately, Walker was not able to get out of Montevideo with his three warships before Rear Admiral Gherardi arrived with his two. Gherardi's arrival automatically made him the senior officer present, and meant that Rear Admiral Walker would have to report to him. *Philadelphia* arrived at Montevideo on 6 February, followed a day later by *Concord*. Gherardi immediately went about making the formal calls on military and civilian officials that would be expected of the new U.S. senior officer present. It can be safely assumed that Rear Admiral Walker, who took the integrity of his command so seriously, and had just made all these same calls not three weeks earlier, was annoyed that his primacy on station, not to mention overall command of "his" ships, had been taken over by Gherardi. The New York Times reported that Walker stayed out of sight while Gherardi was in port, withdrawing to another anchorage to conduct target practice.<sup>20</sup> The Times notoriously disliked Walker, so its reporting must be accepted with caution. Walker did report to Gherardi on the movements of his warships while the two occupied the same station.<sup>21</sup> Throughout this period, in his official communications with Rear Admiral Walker, Rear Admiral Gherardi left absolutely no doubt about who was reporting to whom.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Benjamin F. Tracy, "Telegram, Tracy to Walker, 13 January 1892, 1892," Telegram, RG 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, 1691 - 1945 Washington, D.C. .

<sup>20</sup> "North Atlantic Squadron," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 22 May 1892.

<sup>21</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Walker, 6 February 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of the Naval Operating Forces, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>22</sup> "You [Rear Admiral Walker] will be pleased to direct...." Formal language very clearly and unquestionably denoting a senior/subordinate relationship. Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to



On 25 January, President Harrison went before Congress to ask for a declaration of war. Hours later, the news that Chile had accepted unconditionally all U.S. demands reached Washington D.C. The crisis was over, and it was perhaps as well for the harmony of the senior officer corps of the U.S. Navy. Within days of the President's message to Congress, Commodore Ramsey of the Bureau of Navigation was in touch with Admiral Gherardi, asking him how he wanted to be detailed after his current job.<sup>23</sup> Admiral Gherardi was subsequently recalled to home waters, to take up his post as Commander-in-Chief, North Atlantic Squadron for a few more months, prior to his relief.<sup>24</sup>

Walker stayed behind in his new assignment as Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic Station. It did not take long for the new C-in-C to complain. Before Gherardi had even departed the station, Walker had already fired a five-page missive to the Department. South America, it seemed, was unhealthy. There were not enough docking facilities available, and the bottoms of the steel warships had fouled rapidly. Anyway, "The duties [on the South Atlantic Station] are inadequate to a Flag Officer's rank and position, and the expense is unnecessary."<sup>25</sup> It was apparent that Walker's real desire was Gherardi's position as the C-in-C of the North Atlantic Squadron, and he was making sure the Department did not forget about him in the cruising backwaters of South

---

Walker, 13 February 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of the Naval Operating Forces, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>23</sup> CAPT Ramsey, "Telegram, Ramsey to Gherardi, 9 February 1892, 1892," Telegram, RG 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, 1691 - 1945 Washington, D.C. .

<sup>24</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 16 February 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; "Various Naval Items, 30 Jan 92," *Army and Navy Journal*, 30 January 1892 1892.

<sup>25</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 15 February 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

America. Whatever his opinion of Latin America, he was still required to represent the U.S. flag there. The three ships departed Montevideo on 8 March and arrived the next day at Ensenada, Argentina. Walker and his personal staff boarded a train for Buenos Aires where he was presented to the President.<sup>26</sup>

As happy as Walker was to have attention paid to him, his opinion of the station only worsened when he was made aware of an article in the New York Herald of 2 February 1892. It accused the sailors of the “White Squadron” with “riotous conduct” while on liberty in Montevideo. Walker fired off a three-page rebuttal to the Department, in which he denied that there had been any trouble, other than a couple of sailors who had been arrested for disorderly conduct. Whether or not that was the case, what is significant about Walker’s letter is the closing, where he remarks that “it is due to the seamen of this Squadron and of the whole to give publicity to this authoritative denial of the false telegram enclosed.”<sup>27</sup> Walker’s salvation came not a moment too soon, in his eyes. On 27 April, he was ordered back to northern waters.<sup>28</sup> *Chicago* left immediately, *Atlanta* following on 3 May 1892. Left on the South Atlantic Station were *Bennington*, *Yantic*, and *Essex*, under the command of *Bennington*’s captain, as Senior Officer Present – precisely the way Walker wanted it. It seems that he still had some “pull” at the Navy Department after all.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 30 March 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>27</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Tracy, 17 March 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>28</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Tracy, 27 April 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>29</sup> R.B. Bradford, LT, "Letter, Bradford to Tracy, 5 May 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

The Chilean incident and the ad-hoc formation of a squadron to respond to it exposed the Janus-faced thinking at the Navy Department during this era. The standard operating practices of the Navy were still focused on cruising, showing the flag, and, most importantly, protecting property and commercial interests in foreign ports. However, at the first hint of conflict, the Department concentrated its forces, anticipating some sort of naval battle utilizing fleet tactics under steam. These squadron concentrations were logistically and organizationally of an ad-hoc nature. They did not contribute to the long-term construction of identity of the Navy's squadrons as combat units, nor were they as effective at developing a multi-ship fighting capability as they could have been. The exigencies of whatever international crisis was underway typically prevented the temporary fleet from carrying out any training to refine doctrine or tactics. Additionally, getting enough fuel to the warships in the absence of an infrastructure designed to support multiple ships was always a limitation, and the personal conflicts that resulted from flag officers being forced to work together without a clearly-defined fleet organization hindered the Navy's effectiveness.

### ***The North Atlantic Squadron – Operations 1892***

Rear Admiral Gherardi, in his flagship, *Philadelphia* had departed Montevideo on 18 February 1892 in company with *Concord*. The two ships reached the Barbados on 8 March, Gherardi remarking that *Concord* had spent most of the transit under sail to conserve coal, as the load of "Eureka" coal she had on board burned much less efficiently

than the “Cardiff” coal that fueled the *Philadelphia*.<sup>30</sup> From Barbados, they touched at Havana and Matanzas, before arriving at Key West on 8 April.<sup>31</sup> In Key West, the old North Atlantic problem of piecemeal assignment of squadron assets immediately presented itself. On 9 April, *Concord* was ordered to proceed up the Mississippi River to Memphis, Tennessee, and to be there by 12 May 1892. She was to support the gala festivities marking the opening of the Memphis Bridge between West Memphis, Arkansas and Memphis, Tennessee.<sup>32</sup>

*Concord's* departure from Key West on 24 April for her trip up the Mississippi set off a wave of frantic telegrams from various civic associations along the way, begging the Secretary of the Navy to order *Concord* to stop at their municipality. Local vendors greedily eyed the money that the hundreds, if not thousands, of spectators who would flock to see one of the new steel ships would spend at their establishments.<sup>33</sup> While demonstrating the increased popularity of the Navy during the 1890's, *Concord's* goodwill trip up the Mississippi is evidence of the continued inability of the North Atlantic Squadron to build the kind of unit identity that Rear Admiral Luce had dreamed of for the Squadron in 1886-1887, and Rear Admiral Walker had made a reality for the Squadron of Evolution in 1889-1891. In 1892, the North Atlantic Squadron still operated in a largely piecemeal fashion, with most of its warships away from the flag at any given

---

<sup>30</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 11 March 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. Cardiff was the main port for export of high-quality coal from Wales, Great Britain. Eureka coal was from Pennsylvania.

<sup>31</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 8 April 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>32</sup> "Going to Memphis," *The Atlanta Constitution (1881-2001)*, 7 May 1892.

<sup>33</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 23 April 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

time, covering contingencies and public relations events throughout the area of operations.

*Kearsarge*, for example, remained behind in Haiti while Admiral Gherardi and the rest of the Squadron headed for Montevideo. By the 1890's, the venerable old warship had settled into a role of being the North Atlantic Squadron's representative in Haitian waters. It was a good use for a ship which otherwise could not operate in a formation with the vessels of the New Steel Navy. Commander Elmer spent much of his time shuttling the U.S. minister to Haiti back and forth from Port-au-Prince to Santo Domingo.<sup>34</sup> It was duty that Elmer did not really think was necessary, given the peaceful conditions in Port-au-Prince. With his Commander-in-Chief away at Montevideo, Elmer corresponded directly with the Navy Department, informing them of the current political conditions in Haiti and requesting permission to take his ship to Key West, where he could perform quarterly target practice and give his men liberty.<sup>35</sup> After another round of trips between Port-au-Prince and Santo Domingo, this permission was granted, and *Kearsarge* pulled into Key West on 17 March 1892.

*Newark*, meanwhile, which had been detached from the Squadron of Evolution in late 1891 and prepared for cruise in Hampton Roads, was assigned to the North Atlantic Squadron in March 1892 and immediately ordered to La Guayra, Venezuela. *Newark* was Cruiser No. 1, the first ship of the 1885 authorization built and next in line after the "ABCD" ships. She had been commissioned in 1891 and assigned to the Squadron of Evolution for training prior to her assignment to the North Atlantic Station. At 4000

---

<sup>34</sup> Horace Elmer, CDR, "Letter, Elmer to Tracy, 16 January 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>35</sup> Horace Elmer, CDR, "Letter, Elmer to Tracy, 22 February 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

tons, she was just smaller than *Chicago*, but larger than *Atlanta* or *Boston*. Her main armament consisted of 12 6-inch breech loading rifles, and her new triple-expansion engines could drive her at a top speed of 19 knots, 4 knots better than the best speed of the "ABCD" cruisers.

On 22 March 1892, Admiral Gherardi ordered *Newark* to leave St. Thomas and proceed to La Guayra, Venezuela to "protect American interests as may be required."<sup>36</sup> *Newark* arrived two days later, on 24 March at La Guayra, a small port about twenty miles from the capital of Caracas. Captain Silas Casey, *Newark's* commanding officer, immediately contacted the U.S. consul at that port and two days later journeyed inland to Caracas to call upon the U.S. minister to Venezuela. Casey found from his contacts with U.S. officials, as well as local informants, that a small insurrection was underway in Venezuela, but that violence was mostly taking place in the interior. The coastal cities and the capital were quiet and Casey, in his report, remarked that although the insurrection was causing a general depression which might be bad for business, American lives and property were not in danger.<sup>37</sup> After a stay of another five weeks, Captain Casey concluded that his presence was no longer necessary, and in accordance with his orders from Admiral Gherardi, departed for Key West.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Silas Casey, CAPT, "Letter, Casey to Tracy, 28 March 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid."".

<sup>38</sup> Silas Casey, CAPT, "Letter, Casey to Tracy, 9 April 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C; Silas Casey, CAPT, "Letter, Casey to Tracy, 30 April 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

*Newark* was able to spend just less than a week in Key West before getting underway for Savannah, Georgia.<sup>39</sup> There, she joined Rear Admiral Gherardi in *Philadelphia* and *Kearsarge*, and *Vesuvius*, which had come down from New York. This concentration of warships for a goodwill tour of the East coast represented the all of the cruising vessels of the North Atlantic Squadron in May 1892, besides *Concord*, which was on her cruise up the Mississippi. As *Philadelphia's* draft was too deep to allow her to enter the harbor, Rear Admiral Gherardi transferred his flag to *Kearsarge*, which allowed him to tie up at the city docks and entertain prominent citizens of the town. *Vesuvius* tied up at the dock as well, and Admiral Gherardi reported that the two ships were visited by "thousands." "The visit....cannot fail to be of benefit, by means of the increased interest in the Navy that has been created."<sup>40</sup> Especially popular with the visiting crowds was the former enemy *Kearsarge*, which had won fame by sinking the Confederate raider *Alabama* so many years earlier. *Philadelphia* had to remain several miles out at sea, but even so, Admiral Gherardi reported that many steamers and tugs had brought visitors out to see her.<sup>41</sup> Admiral Gherardi and his officers were feted at special dinners, and the Marine guards of the four ships marched in a parade through town.<sup>42</sup>

Altogether, the Squadron spent eleven days in Savannah, departing on 18 May.

*Philadelphia*, *Newark*, and *Vesuvius* proceeded to Charleston, South Carolina, where the

---

<sup>39</sup> Commander Winn, Commandant of Naval Station Key West, "Telegram, Winn to Bureau of Navigation and Detail, 12 May 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>40</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 14 May 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid."".

<sup>42</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 21 May 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; "May Week in Savannah," *The Atlanta Constitution (1881-2001)*, 11 May 1892.

local chamber of commerce had invited the squadron to stop on their way north. Rear Admiral Gherardi's acceptance of this invitation again shows his mindfulness of the public image of both the Navy and his squadron in the port cities in his jurisdiction.<sup>43</sup> *Kearsarge* was sent to Port Royal for coal, with orders to rejoin the squadron when able.<sup>44</sup> At Charleston, the Squadron was once again feted ashore, and visited by what Rear Admiral Gherardi referred to as "large numbers of the people."<sup>45</sup> They sailed for Annapolis on the evening of 21 May, arriving in time to take part in the Naval Academy's "June Week" graduation celebrations.<sup>46</sup> After the festivities at Annapolis, the squadron withdrew to Hampton Roads to await the arrival of *Concord*, fresh from her goodwill trip up the Mississippi to Memphis. From there, *Philadelphia*, *Concord*, and *Vesuvius* returned to New York, while *Newark* stayed behind for work at the Norfolk Navy Yard and *Kearsarge* was tasked with towing the monitor *Passaic* to Boston.<sup>47</sup>

Gherardi only spent three weeks in New York before getting underway for drills and target practice. The destination was Gardiner's Bay, Long Island, where the North Atlantic Squadron routinely held gunnery exercises. Gherardi sent *Minatonomoh* ahead 10 days early, as her slow speed would have held back the rest of the squadron had she

---

<sup>43</sup> Gherardi, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 14 May 1892. "

<sup>44</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 18 May 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>45</sup> Gherardi, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 21 May 1892. "

<sup>46</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 24 May 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>47</sup> Henry Erben, "Telegram, Erben to Bureau of Navigation and Detail, 10 June 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 13 June 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; CAPT Weaver, Commandant of Navy Yard Portsmouth, "Telegram, Weaver to Bureau of Navigation and Detail, 11 June 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.



been in company. After target practice, the Squadron reunited at New London, Connecticut, where the Naval Station had facilities for small arms practice.<sup>48</sup> At New London there was some discussion of a trip up the St. Lawrence to the major port cities of Canada, but this did not materialize.<sup>49</sup> The Squadron left New London instead for Bar Harbor, Maine on 6 August to take part in festivities there.<sup>50</sup> The squadron was joined at Bar Harbor by *Dolphin*, which embarked the Secretary of the Navy to witness a naval review that concentrated the available warships on the east coast.<sup>51</sup> Four hundred sailors were landed to march in a parade through town, while Secretary of the Navy Tracy entertained such luminaries as J.P. Morgan at a dinner given on board *Dolphin*. From Bar Harbor, the Squadron proceeded to Gloucester, Massachusetts, where they were met by *Miantonomoh*.<sup>52</sup> Again, the duty assigned them was to participate in a celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Gloucester.<sup>53</sup>

The warships of the North Atlantic Squadron spent a good deal of time together in the summer of 1892. In this way, they continued to develop their unit identity. What was missing was any mention – official or otherwise – of tactical exercises or formation work

---

<sup>48</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gharardi to Tracy, 5 July 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gharardi to Tracy, 29 June 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; "War Ships at New-London," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Aug 5 1892; "War Ships at New-London," *New York Times (1857-1922)* 1892.

<sup>49</sup> "Army and Navy," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 9 August 1892.

<sup>50</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 6 August 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>51</sup> W. H. Brownson, LCDR, "Telegram, Brownson to Secnav, 9 August 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; "Doings at Bar Harbor," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 18 August 1892.

<sup>52</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 21 August 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>53</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 27 August 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

during the months from June to September. The concept of the Squadron as a tactical unit had not fully taken hold yet, and while the daily work of formation steaming was useful from developing a concept of multi-ship operations, it did not contribute to the doctrine and tactics necessary to possess a multi-ship fighting capability. At least one contemporary observer was mystified by this. Retired Captain Edward L. Beach, Sr. noted in his memoirs that “The *Philadelphia* was always active with drills, but seemed to me to steam about purposelessly. Instead of following a carefully arranged program, as would be the case today [the 1930’s], we were able to attend flower shows and carnivals from Maine to Florida. We seldom cruised in squadron formation.”<sup>54</sup>

Rear Admiral Walker, on the other hand, made a point of keeping his squadron together. His official communications and telegrams with the Navy Department often refer simply to the “Squadron” when reporting their movements, understanding that the Department will know which ships are his and will assume that they are together.<sup>55</sup> As previously noted, Walker departed from the South American station in April. The station was without a C-in-C for a few months, until Rear Admiral A.E.K. Benham raised his flag aboard his new flagship, *Newark* on 25 June 1892. *Newark* had returned to Norfolk and was fitting out for her cruise at the Norfolk Navy Yard at the time. Benham and *Newark* left the yard in July, cruising across the Atlantic to Spain to represent the United States at the celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Christopher Columbus’ departure for the new world. Their duties in connection with the multi-nation commemoration took them next to France, then to Italy, before finally passing Gibraltar on the way to their new

---

<sup>54</sup> Beach, 54.

<sup>55</sup> As an example, see Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Secnav, 23 July 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

station in 1893. Walker's opinion that the presence of a flag officer on the South American Station was not necessary was at least partially validated, as there was no C-in-C in the region for almost an entire year.

Speculation ran rampant in New York City and Washington D.C. as to what the new flag officer assignments would be at this time. Both Gherardi and Walker were completing sea tours, and were due to be rotated ashore, if not retired.<sup>56</sup> In a series of surprising moves, however, both senior officers managed to stay at sea. Rear Admiral Walker took command of the North Atlantic Squadron on 10 September 1892. Gherardi was given command of something to be called the "Squadron for Special Service." It is an interesting juxtaposition of duties, as Gherardi would now have a squadron formed for the express purpose of staying together and operating as a unit, while Walker—who had spent the last three years with just such a unit, whose identity and image he had carefully cultivated, would now command a unit which had not yet fully developed an identity, and whose members were constantly changing or being sent on individual missions by the Navy Department.

### ***John G. Walker as Commander-in-Chief***

It did not take the new Commander-in-Chief long to chafe at his situation. The week before he took command, he was sent with *Chicago* to the Naval War College to participate in the maneuvers associated with the fall course. Unfortunately, *Chicago* was the only ship assigned by the Department to carry out the maneuvers, which Walker found ridiculous. In one of his characteristic four-page litanies of dissatisfaction, Walker complained that "I have absolutely no knowledge of what I am expected to do here with

---

<sup>56</sup> "Admiral Walker's Return," *New York Times* (1857-1922)1892; "Various Naval Items, 4 Jun 92," *Army and Navy Journal*, 4 June 1892 1892.

my command.” He went on to note that more ships were necessary to carry out the turning radius and speed trials the Naval War College class wished to study. “If anything is done here, by my ships, while I am in command, I mean that it shall be well done; and therefore, write this to urge that the ships coming here may be sent at once...”<sup>57</sup> It does not seem that he was upset about working with the Naval War College. Indeed, much of his correspondence with Rear Admiral Luce five years earlier when he was the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation was positive about things he could do to help the War College project.<sup>58</sup> Instead, it simply seems that Walker was annoyed because he did not have a formation of ships to direct. He even signed himself the Commander-in-Chief of the “Squadron of Evolution”, although the squadron at that point consisted of *Chicago*. After the change-of-command on 10 September, Rear Admiral Gherardi’s old flagship, *Philadelphia*, reported to Walker for duty, and the two ships (he was allowed to keep *Chicago*) prepared for sea.<sup>59</sup>

### ***Gherardi and the Squadron for Special Service***

In the meanwhile, Rear Admiral Gherardi left New York for San Francisco in mid-September, accompanied by his flag secretary, Lieutenant William Potter and flag lieutenant, Lieutenant Ridgley Hunt. The party stopped at Chicago on the way to inspect the construction underway for the World’s Fair to be held the next year. Once in San Francisco, Gherardi was to raise his flag on the *Baltimore*. Together with *Charleston* and

---

<sup>57</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 4 September 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>58</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Luce, 6 January 1887, 1887," Letter, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>59</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Telegram, Walker to Secnav, 9 September 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

*San Francisco*, the three ships would begin a special diplomatic cruise down the west coast of Central and South America, stopping first at San Diego, California, to take part in the commemoration of the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cabrillo's exploration of the coast of California.<sup>60</sup>

The "Squadron for Special Service" can be seen as an attempt by the U.S. government to strike a conciliatory tone in Latin America after the fiasco with Chile in 1891-1892. While traveling down the west coast of South America, the squadron was slated to stop at each of the major Latin American ports, where Rear Admiral Gherardi, himself no stranger to the diplomatic side of his job, would personally deliver an invitation from the President of the United States for the nation to send representatives to the Naval Review scheduled for spring 1893 in New York City.<sup>61</sup>

Gherardi was insistent on having the latest and best equipment for his squadron, knowing not only that they were going to be spending a lot of time in formation, but that other navies around the world were going to be observing them. One of his first acts upon assuming command of the Squadron for Special Service was to ask the Navy Department to ensure that his ships were equipped with the latest Ardois night signaling capability.<sup>62</sup> The Ardois system was a series of five groups of two lamps, red and white, which were hung from stays in the rigging and operated by a keyboard on the bridge. By illuminating different five-digit combinations of red and white, orders could be transmitted to the rest of the fleet. The system could only be utilized by ships equipped

---

<sup>60</sup> "Various Naval Items, 17 Sept 92," *Army and Navy Journal*, 17 September 1892 1892.

<sup>61</sup> "Various Naval Items, 1 Oct 92," *Army and Navy Journal*, 1 October 1892 1892; "Various Naval Items, 17 Sept 92."

<sup>62</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 24 September 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

with auxiliary electric power. Fortunately, all the vessels in the Squadron for Special Service were so equipped.<sup>63</sup> Gherardi had not shown this level of interest in communications during his assignment as the North Atlantic Squadron commander-in-chief. An analysis of 282 Gherardi communications, covering all of his afloat flag assignments, reveals that this letter was the first time he addressed an issue of signal communication and fleet maneuvering. His concern in this area was related to the public relations aspect of his mission and the appearance of power. The fact that the Squadron for Special Service had not developed any substantive fighting capability through rigorous exercise was secondary to the appearance of such a capability.

*Baltimore* and *Charleston* left Mare Island, San Francisco on 25 September 1892 for the three-day voyage down the California coast to San Diego, where a celebration was underway to honor the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the exploration of the California coast by the Spanish explorer Cabrillo. The two ships arrived on 28 September. *Charleston's* sailors were put ashore to march in a parade and Gherardi received the Governor of California and other notables onboard *Baltimore*. He also took the opportunity to pay an official visit to *Charleston*, which had recently joined his flag. He pronounced himself “pleased with the neat and efficient appearance of both vessel and personnel.” Thousands of civilians visited the two ships as they took part in the commemoration of the Spanish explorer Cabrillo.

It was not all pleasure for the two ships' companies, as Admiral Gherardi ordered first *Charleston* then the flagship *Baltimore* out into the bay to complete their quarterly target practice. On 5 October, the Naval Reserve of San Diego reported onboard

---

<sup>63</sup> J. Otis, *The Boys of '98* (D. Estes & company, 1898), 164.

*Charleston* for a day of drill.<sup>64</sup> Then, it was off to Mazatlan, Mexico, arriving on 15 October 1892. On the way down from San Diego, Gherardi reported that the “ships of the Squadron were exercised at fleet tactics and signaling, especially night signaling (sic) by the Morse Code with the steam whistles.” Gherardi’s report does not give any detail as to the tactics practiced, but the inference is that the drills involved the formations described in Parker’s “Fleet Tactics Under Steam.” Gherardi also forwarded the Department a copy of the Routine and Instructions established by the flag for the Squadron.<sup>65</sup> The squadron called next at Acapulco, Mexico and then continued to San Jose de Guatemala, where the Admiral traveled to the capital of Guatemala on a special train to call upon the Guatemalan president.<sup>66</sup> This process was repeated in Peru a few weeks later. A state dinner was given in the Peruvian capital of Lima for the officers of the Squadron.<sup>67</sup> In Peru, Gherardi got down to some of the most important business of the voyage of the Squadron for Special Service. On 3 December 1892, he and the U.S. minister to Peru made an official call on the Chilean minister. One year out from the very real threat of war between the two countries, Gherardi was feeling out the reception *Baltimore* could expect in Valparaiso, their next destination. The Chilean minister returned Gherardi’s call on board *Baltimore* the next day, and was received with honors

---

<sup>64</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 10 October 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>65</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 15 October 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>66</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 5 November 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>67</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 19 December 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

and a fifteen-gun salute. The goodwill visit to Valparaiso would proceed as planned.<sup>68</sup> In Callo, Peru, *Yorktown* joined the Squadron.<sup>69</sup>

Rear Admiral Gherardi continued to be concerned about the unity of his command even as he was carrying out his diplomatic mission. While in Peru, he wrote the Department to suggest that any ships which were going to be assigned to the upcoming Naval Review Fleet, of which he was going to be the commander-in-chief, be scheduled to meet his Squadron for Special Service in Barbados, so that they could practice formation steaming prior to arriving at Hampton Roads or New York. "It is absolutely essential that the ships should be able to maintain position accurately in column, both on a straight course and when changing direction, and be able to act together in getting underway." He went on to note that these seemingly simple evolutions often were not simple at all: "my experience since leaving San Francisco is a fresh illustration of this fact."<sup>70</sup> Gherardi's major concern, both for the Squadron for Special Service and the upcoming Naval Review, was the smart appearance of his command.

Gherardi exercised his four ships at fleet tactics on the way to Valparaiso.<sup>71</sup> The Squadron anchored at Valparaiso on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December. Salutes and official visits

---

<sup>68</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 6 December 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. ; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 10 December 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>69</sup> Gherardi, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 6 December 1892. "; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 16 November 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>70</sup> Gherardi, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 10 December 1892. "

<sup>71</sup> Again, Gherardi simply says that "the four ships were exercised at fleet tactics." The reader is left to decide for himself what that means, although only so many things can be done with four ships. Based on previous squadron work, it is a safe assumption that the four vessels formed in line abreast and column and practiced shifting between those two formations, and probably to a line of columns (of two); all described in Parker's "Fleet Tactics Under Steam."



were exchanged, with both sides eager to display the utmost civility to each other. The Intendente of Valparaiso came aboard to express his hope that Gherardi would give the men of the Squadron liberty in his city and offered to help facilitate that. Gherardi politely declined, pointing out that he was in a hurry to get home and begin his preparations for the Naval Review. What he failed to point out was that he had received a frantic coded telegram from the Navy Department while in Peru: "Do not give your men liberty at Valparaiso. Ramsey."<sup>72</sup> Gherardi was only too happy to oblige. He went ashore, however, to make his official calls, and pronounced the civilian populace "peacefully inclined."<sup>73</sup> On 20 December, Gherardi and his staff boarded a special train that had been provided for them by the Chilean government for the trip to Santiago. Gherardi's report describes the visit to the capital as proper, though not enthusiastic. He noted that they were not welcomed at the train station by anyone other than the U.S. minister. His audience with the Chilean Republic's president, Admiral Monett, was largely perfunctory. Gherardi informed Admiral Monett that the President of the United States had personally asked him to bring four of their newest warships to Valparaiso to deliver an invitation to take part in the Naval Review scheduled for the following year. Whether the Chilean president accepted this as anything other than a thinly veiled threat is hard to say, but he politely demurred, saying that it was too expensive for the young government to attempt to send one of its ships to New York. An invitation to visit the squadron was similarly declined, and after both men expressed their satisfaction that the two nations would recover their previous good relations, Gherardi was dismissed. "I was

---

<sup>72</sup> CAPT Ramsey, "Telegram, Ramsey to Gherardi, 8 December 1892, 1892," Telegram, RG 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, 1691 - 1945 Washington, D.C. .

<sup>73</sup> Gherardi, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 19 December 1892. "

not encouraged to delay my departure” was the slightly more diplomatic way he described it in his report.<sup>74</sup> There would be no state dinners in Chile. The Squadron’s next stop was Montevideo, the scene of the fleet gathering eleven months earlier.

### ***Walker, The North Atlantic Squadron, and Unrest in Venezuela***

Rear Admiral Walker, meanwhile, had to satisfy himself with the mundane duties of the North Atlantic Squadron, which included minor crisis management across the Caribbean region, safeguarding U.S. business interests. The first exigency was unrest in Venezuela, where a faction of the Venezuelan Congress was fighting against an incumbent president who refused to cede power. There were reports of violence against the U.S. minister there, as well as molestations of U.S. citizens and property. *Concord* was the first North Atlantic Squadron warship to respond, leaving from St. Thomas, Dutch West Indies and arriving at La Guyara on 14 September 1892.<sup>75</sup> There, Commander White, *Concord*’s commanding officer made an initial assessment of the situation.<sup>76</sup> Meanwhile, the Navy Department dispatched additional forces. *Kearsarge* departed Port-au-Prince, Haiti on 9 September, and after leaving orders for *Philadelphia* to represent the Squadron at the Annual Encampment of the Naval Veterans of the United

---

<sup>74</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 24 December 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>76</sup> Edwin White, CDR, "Letter, White to Tracy, 8 September 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C; Edwin White, CDR, "Letter, White to Tracy, 15 September 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C; Edwin White, CDR, "Letter, White to Tracy, 16 September 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

States in Baltimore, Admiral Walker himself left New York aboard *Chicago* on 11 September.<sup>77</sup>

When Admiral Walker arrived at La Guyara on September 19<sup>th</sup>, he found *Kearsarge* and the gunboat *Concord* in port. After conferring with their commanding officers, Commanders Crowninshield and White, and meeting with U.S. consular officials ashore, he came to the conclusion that the situation in Venezuela as regarded U.S. citizens and property was largely stable. *Concord* was dispatched to Puerto Caballo, a port city near the border with Colombia, about a day's sail from La Guyara, with orders to prevent interference with the movements of the American Mail Steamers which called there and to report back anything of interest to Admiral Walker.<sup>78</sup> *Kearsarge* was sent to Coro, Venezuela, with similar orders.<sup>79</sup> The Venezuelan Congressional forces under General Crespo enjoyed substantial support from the population at large, and were widely expected to prevail in the civil war. When they did, it was assumed that the situation would quickly revert to peace. Having said that, Walker, reporting to the Department on the situation, went on to complain about the length of time since *Chicago* had been in drydock and to note that the European naval forces had all assessed the situation as stable and withdrawn from La Guyara. He then requested to be recalled to New York as soon as possible.<sup>80</sup> The Navy Department answered with a coded telegram on the 8<sup>th</sup> of

---

<sup>77</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Barker, 10 September 1892, 1893," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>78</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to White, 20 September 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>79</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Crowninshield, 22 September 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>80</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 28 September 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

October, ordering a reluctant Admiral Walker to remain in Venezuelan waters until further notice.

The fact that he was unhappy with his posting in Central America may account for his worse-than-usual temper during this time. On 29 September, Commander Crowninshield of *Kearsarge* was the recipient of a scathing letter in which Walker upbraided him for the sloppy performance of his boat crews during a boat drill controlled by the flagship. "You will require each line officer under your command to read the instructions for sail and spar drill and for boat drills, to make a copy of them and to report to you that he understands them."<sup>81</sup> *Kearsarge*, as an older wooden sloop, was accustomed to single-ship operations and not used to operating under the eyes of the flagship.

This minor annoyance, though, paled in comparison with the venom with which Walker handled *Chicago's* Marine complement following an incident on shore in La Guayara on 7 October. A detachment of Marines had been sent ashore under the command of Marine Captain Meeker to secure the U.S. consulate against possible unrest. Once at the consulate, Captain Meeker handed the detachment over to a non-commissioned officer and headed off for a local hotel to eat lunch. This gave the enlisted Marines an opportunity to raid the consulate's liquor stores, get drunk, and begin fighting among themselves. Meeker returned, got the situation under control and consulted with his commanding officer, but the damage had been done. From a military standpoint, anyone would have considered this a serious breach of discipline, but the always image-conscious Walker was infuriated. The next day, *Chicago's* crew was drawn up at

---

<sup>81</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Crowninshield, 29 September 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

quarters to hear a general order from the commander-in-chief read. “[The Marines] proving themselves as a body unreliable and worse than worthless, you [Captain McGlensey] will detail a detachment of Blue-jackets, under the command of a line officer of the Navy, for service...and will hereafter, never send a detachment of Marines out of this ship on duty without special instructions from me.”<sup>82</sup> Everyone involved in the incident was subsequently court-martialed, Captain Meeker being convicted of inattention to duty. Meeker attempted to plea in bar of trial that the public rebuke by Walker on board *Chicago* constituted a punishment, and therefore he could not be tried for the same offense again. Walker ignored his defense and continued with the court-martial proceedings, which were later overturned on appeal. The context of this incident is important: the Marine Corps was in one of their perennial fights to justify their existence. There was a large faction of naval officers who thought that their presence on the new navy’s steel warships was unnecessary and that properly-trained sailors, called upon to “away all boats, armed and equipped”, could do the job just as well. Admiral Walker’s words and actions leave little doubt as to which faction he belonged.<sup>83</sup>

Walker eventually was able to depart Venezuelan waters. On 19 October, after spending the opening portion of his report of that date recounting the political news from Venezuela, including the news that the Congressional forces had taken the capital and the port town of La Guayara, Walker once again opined that there were too many U.S

---

<sup>82</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Mcglensey, 8 October 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>83</sup> For more on this, see Chapter 5 of Allan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps*, ed. Louis Morton, Free Press Paperback Edition ed., The Macmillan Wars of the United States (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1980), especially pg 124. Meeker’s conviction was ultimately thrown out by the Secretary of the Navy, who agreed with Meeker that he had already been punished by Walker’s public reprimand, and found that Walker had been wrong to order the trial to proceed. See "The Case of Capt. Meeker," *Army and Navy Journal*, 4 February 1893 1893.

warships present, and informed the Department that he was going to St. Thomas for coal and requested further orders from there.<sup>84</sup> No more coded telegrams were forthcoming from the Department, and Walker did as he promised, arriving at St. Thomas, Dutch West Indies on 28 October 1892. Before he left, he dispersed his warships to investigate various incidents which concerned U.S. businessmen, taking such action to safeguard U.S. lives and property as the situation(s) might warrant. *Concord* had already left for Colón, Columbia (Aspinwall) to investigate unrest that might be hindering the business operations of the Panama Railroad Company, a U.S.-owned interest.<sup>85</sup> Any disruption to the flow of goods and mail across the Panamanian isthmus was cause for immediate corrective action by the United States. This U.S. right was codified by the 1846 treaty with Colombia that guaranteed Colombian sovereignty over the isthmus, but reserved to the United States the right to intervene to keep transit open.<sup>86</sup> A week earlier, frantic telegrams from the Panama Railroad Company had begun arriving at the Navy Department, urging the dispatch of a U.S. warship so that transit across the isthmus might be kept open. *Concord* arrived at Colón and found everything in good order. Commander White reported back to the Department that all was “tranquil” on the isthmus.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>84</sup> Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 19 October 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.; Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to Tracy, 25 October 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>85</sup> Edward Lauterbach, "Telegram, Lauterbach to Tracy, 20 September 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.  
Admiral J.G. Walker, "Letter, Walker to White, 22 September 1892, 1892," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>86</sup> LaFeber, *The Panama Canal: The Crisis in Historical Perspective*, 8-10.

<sup>87</sup> Edwin White, CDR, "Telegram, White to Secnav, 28 September 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

The New York newspapers reported that *Concord* would be sent next to Ciudad Bolivar, Venezuela, to investigate the treatment of a U.S. citizen there by the Venezuelan government.<sup>88</sup> It is an interesting comment on the state of strategic communications at the time that Commander White of the *Concord* found out about orders for his warship from a clipping from the New York Herald which he received from the mail steamer while *Concord* was at Colón. This touched off a minor disagreement among the U.S. diplomatic representatives in Columbia, as the U.S. consul at Colón wanted *Concord* to remain there. The U.S. consul-general of Panama felt that the situation was secure and saw no reason for detaining *Concord*.<sup>89</sup> After reading the newspaper, White telegraphed the Department for clarification. It was reminiscent of *Concord's* trip up the Mississippi a few months earlier, each city along the way clamoring for the economic and civic pride advantages that would accompany the presence of a U.S. warship. In the event, Rear Admiral Walker decided to send *Kearsarge* to Ciudad Bolivar, and *Concord* left for Key West, arriving there on 12 November. She subsequently sailed for New York on 1 December.<sup>90</sup>

*Kearsarge* touched at Trinidad, prior to proceeding up the Orinoco River. There Commander Crowninshield met with the alleged wronged U.S. citizen, a Mr. George F. Underhill. On the 200-mile plus voyage up the Orinoco, Crowninshield had an opportunity to interview Mr. Underhill. Essentially, Underhill had chosen to work for the

---

<sup>88</sup> "General News of the Navy," *New York Herald*, 20 October 1892; Edwin White, CDR, "Letter, White to Tracy, 1 November 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>89</sup> Edwin White, CDR, "Letter, White to Tracy, 2 November 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>90</sup> White, "Letter, White to Tracy, 1 November 1892. "; Commander Winn, Commandant of Naval Station Key West, "Telegram, Winn to Bureau of Navigation and Detail, 1 December 1892, 1892," telegram, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

losing side in a civil war, with the result that when the Crespo forces came to power, he was forced to sell his property at a loss and leave town. Upon arrival at Ciudad Bolivar, Crowninshield met with and hand-delivered an official letter to rebel general Jose Hernandez, the rebel military and civil governor of the State of Bolivar. After getting an official reply from General Hernandez, and thoroughly investigating the alleged incident among the populace, Commander Crowninshield wrote an extensive thirteen-page report which he mailed, not to the Navy Department, but to Rear Admiral Walker, to be forwarded. In it, he seems to have very little sympathy for Underhill, appearing to believe that he should have been more careful with his business dealings. By this time, Walker was safely in New York with *Chicago*, although it is noteworthy that he required his commanding officers to send their reports to the Navy Department through him even though he was not physically located with them.<sup>91</sup> After completing his assignment at Ciudad Bolivar, Crowninshield steamed quickly down the Orinoco River, as the river was falling and *Kearsarge's* displacement was such that he could barely make it as it was.

### ***The International Naval Review, 1893***

Rear Admiral Gherardi reported the arrival of his Squadron for Special Service at Montevideo, Uruguay, on 9 January 1893. The squadron had left Valparaiso, Chile on 24 December 1892, passing through the Strait of Magellan on its trip to Uruguay. After a stay of two weeks in Montevideo, during which time visits were exchanged with the President of Uruguay, the squadron got underway for the Barbados.<sup>92</sup> The time spent in

---

<sup>91</sup> A. S. Crowninshield, CDR, "Letter, Crowninshield to Walker, 18 November 1892, 1892," letter, RG45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>92</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 23 January 1893, 1893," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .



Montevideo gave Admiral Gherardi an opportunity to complain to the Navy Department about the practice of sending communications to his ships without first passing them through the flagship. This was an issue that had vexed Admiral Walker and his Squadron of Evolution. Gherardi had not dealt with issues of chain-of-command often, as the North Atlantic Squadron during his tenure was rarely together in one place for long enough for it to become a problem.<sup>93</sup>

The Squadron left Montevideo on 23 January and proceeded to the Barbados, where they arrived on the morning of 12 February. Gherardi was forced to disperse his squadron throughout the West Indies, as there was not a port that had the facilities to coal all four ships expeditiously. *San Francisco* and *Yorktown* went to St. Lucia, *Charleston* stayed at the Barbados, and *Baltimore* headed to St. Thomas. Much like the fleet concentration in Montevideo the previous year, the fact that Gherardi had to break up the squadron in order to coal and replenish them shows that the logistical resources of the Navy had not yet matched the desire to deploy multi-ship squadrons on a regular basis.<sup>94</sup> Coal consumption was a subject of constant concerns for the bureaus of the Navy Department, and soon after arriving back at New York, Gherardi was asked to submit a report showing by ship the amount of coal bought at each port and the price paid.<sup>95</sup>

---

<sup>93</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 14 January 1893, 1893," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>94</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Tracy, 18 February 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>95</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 12 March 1893, 1893," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

Gherardi also reported to the Navy Department on the feasibility of sending Morse Code or Myer Code signals using the ships' steam whistles.<sup>96</sup> The Signal Office was constantly on the lookout for better ways for ships to communicate at night and in bad weather. On the whole, Gherardi thought that the Modified Myer Code worked better with the steam whistles, although both methods were slow, requiring as much as twenty-seven seconds per word.<sup>97</sup> While the Squadron for Special Service was not directly adding to the Navy's ability to fight in multi-ship formations, it was continuing the process by providing a venue to test such fleet essentials as effective signaling. The Squadron left Barbados on 18 February, bound for Hampton Roads, the home waters of the East coast, and their next assignment at the Columbian Exposition of 1893.<sup>98</sup>

The mid to late-nineteenth century witnessed an explosion in the popularity of large, international fairs and expositions. A series of world's fairs held in London and Paris from the 1850's to the 1880's proved immensely successful as celebrations of European progress and wealth. By the 1890's, the United States was ready to host a lavish debut onto the world stage. The 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the New World proved to be a perfect opportunity. The 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition which ran from 1 May to 30 October 1893 is most famous in popular memory for bringing us Cracker Jack and the Ferris Wheel. More serious historians have treated the underlying themes of race, gender, and class that underscored the opulent

---

<sup>96</sup> Shuttered lamps for sending Morse Code had not been invented yet.

<sup>97</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 15 February 1893, 1893," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>98</sup> "Special Service Squadron," *Army and Navy Journal*, 4 March 1893 1892.

undertaking.<sup>99</sup> Rarely, though, does one run across mention of one of the major components of the celebration, because it took place some 1000 miles from the Fair itself, in the waters off New York City.

The International Naval Review and Rendezvous was scheduled to be held in conjunction with the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Congress had appropriated \$250,000.00 for this purpose, and expected that every available warship of the New Steel Navy would be represented. On 1 March 1893, the Squadron for Special Service, the North Atlantic Squadron, and the South Atlantic Squadron were disestablished. In their place, the Secretary of the Navy issued Special Order No. 2, creating the Naval Review Fleet. Commanded by Rear Admiral Gherardi, the Naval Review Fleet consisted of the First Squadron under South Atlantic C-in-C Rear Admiral A.E.K. Benham in his flagship *Newark*, and the Second Squadron with Rear Admiral J.G. Walker as the commander in his flagship *Chicago*. A Patrol Division was also established, with Captain Frederick Rodgers in command. This fleet not only represented the largest concentration of U.S. naval power since the Key West maneuvers of 1874, it was also the first time since the Civil War that an attempt was made – although largely administrative and not tactical – to bring ships of various types and missions together under a single commander.

Anxious to be back aboard “his” flagship after his trip with the Squadron for Special Service, Gherardi shifted his flag to *Philadelphia* on 20 March. Although the two vessels were sister ships, built by the same shipyard, *Philadelphia’s* quarters and “certain

---

<sup>99</sup> R. Badger, *The Great American Fair: The World's Columbian Exposition & American Culture* (N. Hall, 1979); T.J. Boisseau, A.M. Markwyn, and R. Rydell, *Gendering the Fair: Histories of Women and Gender at World's Fairs* (University of Illinois Press, 2010); R.W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (University of Chicago Press, 1987); R.W. Rydell, *World of Fairs: The Century-of-Progress Expositions* (University of Chicago Press, 1993).

other arrangements” were preferred by Gherardi for use as his flagship.<sup>100</sup> From the beginning, Gherardi made it clear that he expected the two squadrons and all of their assigned ships to act as a unified command while the Naval Review Fleet was in existence. A “Routine and Instructions” was published in booklet form and copies were sent to every ship. On 1 March, Rear Admiral Walker immediately and properly reported to Gherardi in New York. This marked at least the fourth time in the last three years that Walker had been placed under the direct authority of Rear Admiral Gherardi. For someone who was so concerned about the image of his squadron and had coveted the North Atlantic C-in-C position for so long, to have communications to and from the Navy Department now have to pass through Rear Admiral Gherardi, subject to his endorsement, must have exasperated Walker. The obvious glee with which the New York newspapers speculated on Walker’s humiliation did not help matters.<sup>101</sup> Throughout the Naval Review Fleet correspondence, virtually every communication that had to do with Rear Admiral Walker had a slightly negative tone about it. On 24 March, Walker complained to the Navy Department that Rear Admiral Gherardi’s staff had not provided his ship with copies of the new “Wig-Wag” signal book. Gherardi’s chief of staff put an exasperated-sounding endorsement on the complaint, noting that *Chicago* had been provided with 25 copies of the new signal book, but that the flagship would be happy to send over another 30 copies, addressed specifically to Rear Admiral Walker.<sup>102</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> Gherardi, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 12 March 1893. "; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 22 May 1893, 1893," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>101</sup> "Admiral Guerardi's Fleet," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 26 February 1893; "Cool from Admiral Walker," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 9 January 1893; "Walker Not Satisfied," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 25 February 1893.

<sup>102</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Herbert, 24 March 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter,

On 29 March, an annoyed Gherardi responded to a Navy Department query about landing facilities at Norfolk, stating that he had asked Walker that very question already and was still waiting for the reply. "As soon as I reach Hampton Roads, the existing landing facilities will be carefully examined..." It does not take much to read between the lines the fact that Walker had simply ignored Gherardi's instructions to carry out the task at Norfolk."<sup>103</sup>

Walker's North Atlantic Squadron was, characteristically, not concentrated but spread throughout the area of operations. *Atlanta* was at Key West, having recently returned from relieving *Kearsarge* in Haitian waters. *Concord* was in Norfolk, just back from her mission to Colón, Colombia. *Miantonomoh* was in New York, from whence she rarely ventured due to her slow speed and poor sea-keeping qualities. The North Atlantic Squadron was rounded out by the dynamite cruiser *Vesuvius*, which was on her way back to New York from a stay at the Torpedo Station at Newport, Rhode Island to load her distinctive projectiles.<sup>104</sup> From the South Atlantic Squadron, Rear Admiral Benham was returning from his mission to Europe, where he had taken part in several commemorations of Christopher Columbus' European connections before leaving Cadiz, Spain with *Newark* and *Bennington*. The two ships were towing across the Atlantic two of the three replicas of Columbus' caravels, *Nina*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria*, which the Spanish government had donated to the Exposition.

---

Gherardi to Secnav, 24 March 1893, 1893," Endorsement, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>103</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Herbert, 29 March 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>104</sup> William Folger, "Letter, Folger to Tracy, 27 December 1892, 1892," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

Bringing this diverse collection of vessels together as one unit was a problem that continued to occupy much of Rear Admiral Gherardi's time. One of the first things that he observed was that there was no standard paint scheme for the New Steel Navy. Gherardi ordered that the masts and stacks of all ships under his command be painted to match the flagship, for "uniformity in appearance." There is no evidence that Gherardi was concerned about this as C-in-C of the North Atlantic Squadron. Probably, his ships were never together long enough for the issue to become apparent to him, but with twelve ships guaranteed to be together for the review, it had to be addressed. Gherardi's order caused objections from the bureaus who felt that they were responsible for the painting of ships, but he got his way and the ships were repainted.

Rear Admiral Walker departed New York for Hampton Roads on 15 March in his flagship *Chicago*. Already there, shuttling between the Navy Yard at Norfolk and anchorage in Hampton Roads were *Newark*, *San Francisco*, *Charleston*, *Atlanta*, *Concord*, and *Dolphin*. *Bennington*, which had been engaged in towing the replica caravel *Pinta* across the Atlantic from Spain, arrived on 26 March.<sup>105</sup> On 30 March, Admiral Gherardi left New York in *Philadelphia*, with *Baltimore*, *Vesuvius*, *Yorktown*, and *Cushing* in company. The warships arrived at Hampton Roads the next day.<sup>106</sup> Rear Admiral Gherardi immediately began shaping his command into a fleet. The correspondence at this time shows a leader who was aware of rivalry among the flag officers and taking extra pains to establish a clear chain-of-command. Within hours of

---

<sup>105</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* 1893. Vol. 1. 181-196.

<sup>106</sup> Henry Erben, "Telegram, Erben to Secnav, 30 March 1893, 1893," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Herbert, 31 March 1893, 1893," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

his arrival in Hampton Roads, he fired off a curt note to Rear Admiral Benham, who was already in Norfolk with *Newark*: “I can only explain your failure to report to me since your arrival by the supposition that you have not received [General Order No. 1, establishing the Naval Review Fleet].<sup>107</sup>

His fleet’s chain-of-command and uniformity in appearance were two things on the Admiral’s mind, but signaling and cruising in formation were to be even more serious problems for the Naval Review Fleet. A new signal system, which had been worked out in the North Atlantic Squadron, had been approved by the Bureau of Navigation and was to be used by the Naval Review Fleet to supplement the standard Navy code.<sup>108</sup> Difficulties in communication were compounded by the fact that the various different types of vessels required different rudder angles to describe the agreed-upon standard turning circle of 2730 feet. Gherardi had two buoys placed in Lynhaven Roads exactly 2840 feet apart, and ordered his ships to describe a perfect half circle between the two buoys (an extra 110 feet allowed so that the ships would not run the buoys over). They were to note the rudder angle required to perform this maneuver, which would then be known as that ship’s “Standard Full Rudder.” The fact that Gherardi had to devote time prior to the Naval Review to work on details such as this shows a navy that was still unaccustomed, even in 1893, to operating in formation.

On 4 April, Gherardi ordered every ship currently at Hampton to sea for four days of exercises under the overall command of Rear Admiral Walker. While at sea, Walker was ordered to “exercise [his] Squadron as per paragraphs eight and nine, of Section five,

---

<sup>107</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Benham, 31 March 1893, 1893," Memorandum, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>108</sup> "New Code of Naval Signals," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 26 January 1893.

“Programme for Naval Review”. Specifically, they were to drill at getting underway together, keeping position when steaming in column, changing direction two and four points, and anchoring together.<sup>109</sup> Squadron commanders were also to ascertain the number of revolutions necessary to maintain a set speed of eight knots, and the standard full helm, using the method described above. Competence at each of these tasks by the officers and crews of each ship would be important if all twelve ships were to maneuver together without mishap during the Naval Review.<sup>110</sup>

Gherardi’s orders to Walker on this occasion make very interesting reading, more for what was not said than what was printed in the order. They were detailed, explicit, and professionally correct to the letter. Walker is specifically instructed to “signal for permission to get underway”, and later to “make the necessary anchoring signals, but signal for permission to anchor.” These were both signals which would have been professionally expected without a prompt, but Gherardi was taking no chances, and was explicit about putting Walker in his place. Rear Admiral Benham was sent out to do essentially the same thing with his 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron on 11 April. Gherardi’s orders to Benham also spell out various things the Commander-in-Chief wanted done as far as getting underway and anchoring, but the phrase “signal for permission” is never used. Reading the two sets of orders side-by-side (Walker and Benham probably did not see each other’s orders), makes it clear that Gherardi wanted no repetition of the ugly business with Walker in Haiti in 1891, hence the specific language in Walker’s version.

---

<sup>109</sup> Gherardi, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 22 May 1893, " p. 3; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Walker, 3 April 1893, 1893," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>110</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Herbert, 11 April 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Herbert, 11 April 1893, 1893," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .



Both squadrons were sent out on 11 April, drilling independently under the command of their respective squadron commanders. Upon their return to Hampton Roads on 14 April, they anchored in their Rendezvous formation, each ship riding to a single anchor, two cables (about 480 yards) apart. The "United States Fleet", as Gherardi had taken to calling it in his correspondence, was ready for the Review. That same day, the bulk of the foreign naval contingents began to arrive. Two ships of the Russian squadron, the armored cruiser *General Admiral* and the corvette *Kynda* were already there, having arrived on 8 and 10 April, respectively. They were followed by the Italian cruiser *Giovanni Bausan* and the French cruiser *Jean Bart*. On 14 April, the entire British squadron arrived, consisting of the flagship of the North Atlantic and West Indies Squadron, the protected cruiser *Blake*, attended by the cruisers *Australia*, *Magicienne*, the torpedo cruiser *Tartar*, and the gunboat *Partridge*. The last-named ship, *Partridge*, did not get to stay for the review, being called away on 19 April to deal with civil unrest in Nassau.<sup>111</sup>

The Dutch were next to arrive, on 17 April, with the cruiser *Van Speijk*. Also arriving on 17 April was the French cruiser *Hussard*, which joined the *Jean Bart*. On 18 April, the German squadron, consisting of the protected cruiser *Kaiserin Augusta* and the small Colónial cruiser *Seeadler*, arrived, the latter under tow as she had run out of coal during the crossing. The U.S. Navy apparently was not the only one that was learning to deal with the logistical side of power projection in the steam era. On 19 April, the French flagship, the cruiser *Arethuse*, arrived and took her place at the head of the French squadron. The next day, the Italian flagship, the cruiser *Etna*, arrived and took her place

---

<sup>111</sup> Gherardi, "Letter, Gherardi to Secnav, 22 May 1893, " p. 6.

at the head of the Italian squadron. On 21 April the Spanish squadron, towing the three replicas of Columbus' caravels, arrived.<sup>112</sup>

The Spanish squadron got underway two days later, as they would require extra time to tow the replica caravels to New York. That same evening, the Brazilians arrived with three ships: the ironclad *Aquidaban*, the *Tiradentes*, and *Republica*. These were the last vessels to join the Naval Review Fleet before they proceeded to New York. The rendezvous at Hampton Roads was complete. With all ships assembled, a round of entertainments began. Admiral Gherardi gave a dinner for the flag and commanding officers of the visiting warships on board *Dolphin*, which had returned on 22 April from an errand to Annapolis to pick up the Secretary of the Navy. Meanwhile, the wardroom officers of the U.S. ships entertained the foreign wardroom officers on two separate occasions. There were dances ashore, in Norfolk, as well. The social events culminated with a dinner for the flag officers on board *Dolphin* with the Secretary of the Navy. The enlisted men had fewer opportunities for gala affairs, but a series of boat races were held, resulting in "handsome prizes" from the host city.<sup>113</sup> There were also baseball games – *Chicago* in particular was said to have an excellent "nine", and a competition for ships' bands, with a cash prize for the one judged to be the best.<sup>114</sup>

On 24 April, it was time for the international fleet to begin its journey to New York. The United States Fleet got underway first, weighing anchor at 9:00 AM. The twelve ships were reviewed by the Secretary of the Navy as they passed *Dolphin*, then

---

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.", p. 7.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.", p. 9. On the feelings of U.S. naval officers following the Key West exercises, see Parker, "Our Fleet Maneuvers in the Bay of Florida, and the Navy of the Future."

<sup>114</sup> "Gherardi Well Pleased," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 7 April 1893.

passed between the visiting squadrons, which were still at anchor, as they proceeded to sea. There is no doubt that this was done with a purpose. The Navy which, twenty years earlier was mortified that any foreigners would see the motley collection of wooden cruising vessels at Key West, now not only had four credentialed correspondents embarked, but were pointedly passing in review in front of an assembly of modern warships from major naval countries.<sup>115</sup> In this display the United States was proclaiming its new international status.<sup>116</sup> The assembled U.S. warships compared favorably in appearance to the various protected and unprotected cruisers of other countries. This was a relatively new state of affairs. Even five years earlier, the warships of the North Atlantic Squadron had consisted entirely of “Old Navy” wooden cruising vessels. The Army and Navy Journal recognized this: “What an exhibition we should have made of ourselves had Columbus landed a few years earlier so as to bring the four hundredth anniversary of his landing within the eighties,” noted an editorial.<sup>117</sup>

The fleet steamed in two columns up the East coast, the American, Dutch, and German ships on the port side and British, Russian, French, Italian and Brazilian vessels on the starboard. The two columns were 600 yards apart, with an interval of 300 yards between ships in column.<sup>118</sup> While this made an impressive sight during the day, it was not a safe formation for nighttime transit, so as evening approached, *Philadelphia*

---

<sup>115</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Memorandum, Gherardi to the Naval Review Fleet, 7 April 1893, 1893," Memorandum, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>116</sup> Hilary A. Herbert, "The Lesson of the Naval Review," *The North American Review* 156, no. 439 (1893).

<sup>117</sup> "The International Naval Review," *Army and Navy Journal*, 29 April 1893 1893.

<sup>118</sup> Modern events like this are done with a heavy reliance on email, exchanges of officers by helicopter, bridge-to-bridge radio, and other modern means of communication. – and they are still difficult. That this formation could be brought together and maneuver at a uniform speed while keeping station, all by way of signal flags, has to be recognized as a truly impressive monument not only to Rear Admiral Gherardi's organizational skills, but the seamanship of the various assembled navies, and the advances made by the U.S. Navy.

signaled for the fleet to form columns of squadrons, each led by its own flagship, for the night. The night passed uneventfully, and the review columns were formed again in the morning.

As the fleet arrived in the waters of New York, they were met first by the Argentine flagship *9<sup>th</sup> of July* and later by the Russian flagship, *Dimitri Donskoi*, which were already in New York. Also waiting for Rear Admiral Gherardi's arrival was the Patrol Division of the Naval Review Fleet, commanded by Captain Frederick Rodgers. Captain Rodgers had set up a headquarters at the Army Building on Whitehall Street in New York City, and commanded the movements of the torpedo boat *Stillette*, and every Navy tug that could be spared on the East coast, as well as Revenue Marine (forerunner of today's Coast Guard) steamers, Light House steamers, Naval Reserve and police tugs and other service craft.<sup>119</sup>

The question of a parade had been on the minds of the organizers of the event from the beginning. The Committee of One Hundred was anxious to get the sailors, U.S. as well as foreign, off their ships and into the city. Admiral Gherardi, perhaps more than a little familiar with the trouble that could be caused by 9000 sailors loose in New York City, was just as adamantly against the idea. The Committee went ahead with the planning for an entertainment for the men at the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory Building, the idea being that the sailors would march from the landings to the Armory after the afloat portion of the Naval Review had been completed. They continued to pressure Admiral Gherardi until he cabled the Navy Department from Hampton Roads on 18 April, asking

---

<sup>119</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Herbert, 15 April 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Programme for Naval Review 1893, 1893," Printed program, p. 15, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

if he was going to be given the authority to invite the foreign squadrons to land armed forces for a parade.<sup>120</sup> Unlike the military disciplinarian Admiral Gherardi, the politically-savvy Secretary of the Navy Hilary Herbert was in favor of a parade, and on 20 April, Gherardi notified Thomas F. Gilroy, the Mayor of New York, that he planned to land 1200 of his men and that it was possible that the visiting squadrons would as well.

The fleet spent the night of 25 April at anchor in the Lower Bay, where they were joined by the Spanish squadron, which had completed delivery of the *Nina*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria* replicas. At 9:00 AM on 26 April, Admiral Gherardi flew the preparatory signal for getting underway. At 9:25, a gun was fired and the entire fleet began to move north, towards the Narrows at eight knots. The ships were arranged in the same two columns they had traveled up from Hampton Roads in, with the U.S. squadron, led by *Philadelphia* at the head of one column and the British squadron, led by *Blake* at the head of the other, 600 yards apart. The formation passed through the Narrows and stood up the Upper Bay into the North River, where they tightened their formation to a distance of 400 yards between columns. With the assistance of the Patrol Division, the Fleet came to its final anchorage positions, each marked by a buoy, at 11:45 AM.

The next day, signal guns from *Dolphin* and *Miantonomoh* announced that President Cleveland had embarked. The Naval Review was underway. After the difficult formation maneuvering, the actual review was easier for the ships, as they were stationary, with all hands manning the rails. *Dolphin* moved between the two columns of ships. As her bow reached the stern of each ship, their guard presented arms; her band sounded ruffles and flourishes and played the "Star Spangled Banner", then gave a

---

<sup>120</sup> Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Telegram, Gherardi to Secnav, 18 April 1893, 1893," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

twenty-one gun salute. Following close behind *Dolphin* was the U.S. Coast Survey steamer *Blake* with members of the diplomatic corps on board, the steamer *Monmouth* with members of Congress, governors of states, and mayors of cities, and the steamer *General Meigs* with the Duke de Varagus and his retinue on board.

After a luncheon for dignitaries and the flag and commanding officers of the fleet on board *Dolphin*, the President boarded a launch and was landed near 48<sup>th</sup> Street. With a final salute to the Chief Executive, the Naval Review was over. At this point, the Patrol Division, which had been keeping civilian sightseeing boats away from the fleet, removed their cordon, and the civilian craft flocked around the warships. That evening, the spotlights of each ship lit up the harbor in a fascinating display of electrical power and pyrotechnics. This was followed on 28 April by the much-anticipated and unprecedented parade through New York of sailors from the international fleet.<sup>121</sup>

### ***Rear Admiral A.E.K. Benham Takes Over***

As the celebration drew to a close, the Navy Department had decisions to make about the future assignments, not only of all the ships concentrated in New York, but of the various flag officers involved. The disposition of the United States Fleet and the flag officer assignments after the Naval Review had been a subject of open speculation throughout the spring. As the senior officer in the Navy, having been at sea for over four years with the North Atlantic Squadron, the Squadron for Special Service, and the Naval Review Fleet, it would have made sense that the successful completion of the International Naval Review would have signaled the end of his career. It was reported,

---

<sup>121</sup> So, even though Gherardi was against it, Mr. Miller of the New York State Militia ended up getting his way in the end. See Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Miller, 12 April 1893, 1893," Letter, RG313, Records of Naval Operating Forces, 1849 - 1980, Washington, D.C. .

however, that Gherardi wished to remain on active duty until his statutory retirement for age in 1894, and that the command he wanted was his old North Atlantic Squadron. This, of course, would place him directly in conflict with his old nemesis, Rear Admiral John Grimes Walker.<sup>122</sup> Secretary Herbert, with barely three months on the job, had a political minefield to negotiate, and he settled the question by giving none of the flag officers exactly what they had requested. Rear Admiral Gherardi became the Commandant of the New York Navy Yard, relieving Captain Erben, who was scheduled to take *Chicago* to European waters to become Commander-in-Chief, European Station. Rear Admiral Walker was sent on three months leave, to await orders, and Rear Admiral A.E.K. Benham, who had been C-in-C of the South Atlantic Station, was named the new C-in-C, North Atlantic Station.<sup>123</sup>

The disposition of the ships elicited almost as much interest as the flag officer assignments. The Naval Review Fleet represented the best and newest ships the New Steel Navy had to offer, and where the Navy Department decided to station them would speak volumes about the Cleveland Administration's priorities.<sup>124</sup> The decisions eventually arrived at created a situation which prompted the New York Times to remark: "At no time within recent years has the United States Government been so well represented in foreign waters by an armed naval force, nor so poorly provided for in ships at home."<sup>125</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup> "Admiral Gherardi's Command," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 19 April 1893; "After the Naval Review," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 3 May 1893; "Seniority Should Prevail," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 26 April 1893.

<sup>123</sup> "Gherardi to Leave the Sea," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 20 May 1893.

<sup>124</sup> "After the Naval Review."

<sup>125</sup> "How Our Navy Is Distributed," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 28 December 1893.

Immediately after the Naval Review, five of the twelve ships comprising the U.S. Fleet were sent to navy yards to be fitted out for deployment. There was some concern that it might appear impolite for so many of the U.S. warships to depart the anchorage before the visitors had left, but Assistant Secretary of the Navy William McAdoo hastened to explain that the seven ships left could handle all of the entertaining that would be expected for the foreign visitors.<sup>126</sup> Eventually, *Philadelphia* was sent to Honolulu, Hawaii, where naval troops from *Boston* had just figured decisively in the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. *Yorktown* and *Charleston* were sent to the Pacific Squadron as well. *Newark* went back to the South American Squadron. *Chicago*, as mentioned previously, went to Europe as the flagship of the European Station, taking *Bennington* with her. *Concord* went to the Asiatic Squadron. *Bancroft* was sent to the Naval Academy to be used as a training ship for the naval cadets. *Atlanta* was put out of commission.

By the end of 1893, all of these moves nominally left four ships for the Home Squadron: The flagship, *San Francisco*, *Kearsarge*, which was one of the last of the wooden cruisers, the double-ended monitor *Miantonomoh*, and *Vesuvius*, the experimental dynamite cruiser whose 15-inch pneumatic guns were of questionable value in actual combat. In spite of the popularity of Mahan's new theories of seapower, the decision had been made to scatter the New Steel Navy throughout the world, in support of U.S. trade interests. "It is intended," reported the *New York Times*, "to keep ships of war in the waters of countries where there is a chance of increasing American trade...The idea is based on the theory that American interests will be respected when an American

---

<sup>126</sup> "After the Naval Review."; Bancroft Gherardi, RADM, "Letter, Gherardi to Herbert, 4 May 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .



cruiser is nearby.”<sup>127</sup> In many ways, it was an unsatisfying end to the magnificent “coming-out” party of the United States Fleet.

Before these movements could be completed, and before Gherardi had even had an opportunity to relinquish command of the Naval Review Fleet, a new crisis was underway in Central America. A revolution had broken out in Nicaragua, and on 9 May telegraphic orders came from the Navy Department to Admiral Gherardi in New York to dispatch *Atlanta* to Greytown, Nicaragua, to protect American interests – specifically the men and equipment of the Nicaragua Canal Company, which was in the final stages of its failed attempt to build a trans-oceanic canal through Nicaragua. The Nicaragua Canal Company was a large concern, which had powerful friends in Washington, and the protection of the sizable capital investment made by the Company was of the utmost importance, both from a foreign policy standpoint as well as political considerations at home.

The Navy Department’s order touched off a series of events which culminated in the relief of *Atlanta*’s commanding officer. On the heels of the massive festivities in New York, Captain Higginson of the *Atlanta* was apparently caught completely flat-footed by the order to deploy overseas. He offered excuses for his inaction. *Atlanta* needed coal, which the Navy Department, through the New York Navy Yard, had to purchase and deliver. A lighter of coal appeared, tied up to *Atlanta*, then disappeared during the night. No one had any idea where it had gone or what had happened to the load of coal that had been purchased by the Department. This necessitated the re-ordering of the coal and the services of another lighter. Meanwhile, Higginson was worried that he did not have enough officers on board, especially if he had to land the

---

<sup>127</sup> "How Our Navy Is Distributed."

naval battalion, and he began pestering the Bureau of Navigation for extra officers to be assigned. On the mechanical side, two of her six boilers needed new tubes. In spite of all this, it was the opinion of the Department that *Atlanta* could sail. It was not considered a problem for her to rely on the other four of her six boilers to get to Nicaragua, but Captain Higginson was reluctant to attempt this. Things came to a head when Higginson sent an ill-advised telegram direct to the Chief of the Bureau of Steam Engineering, Chief Engineer Melville, essentially begging him not to allow *Atlanta* to sail. Secretary of the Navy Herbert was incensed by this direct communication to a bureau chief, viewing it as insubordination.<sup>128</sup> Throughout all this it did not help matters that the New York papers, already heavily attuned to naval matters because of the *Naval Review*, reported daily on the failure of *Atlanta* to get underway to deal with the Nicaraguan crisis.<sup>129</sup>

*Atlanta* finally left New York on 12 May. She proceeded to Jamaica, pulling in on 20 May for coal, and finally making Greytown, Nicaragua on 24 May 1893, 15 days after the Department's telegram to Rear Admiral Gherardi. Captain Higginson immediately sized up the situation on the ground. After consulting with Mr. Frank Davis of the Nicaragua Canal Construction Company, he found that the insurgents had taken control of the city that North Americans referred to as "Greytown"; known locally as San Juan del Norte. They had deposed the governor and placed someone loyal to the insurgency, Señor Manuel Pasos, in charge. Davis was concerned about security for the

---

<sup>128</sup> ""Various Naval Items", 20 May 1893," *Army and Navy Journal*, 20 May 1893 1893.

<sup>129</sup> "Atlanta's Delay in Sailing," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 13 May 1893; "Hurried Off to Nicaragua," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 13 May 1893; "Nicaragua's Revolution," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 13 May 1893.

property of the Nicaragua Canal Construction Company, which he valued at over \$1,000,000.<sup>130</sup>

Higginson worked out the details of *Atlanta's* assistance for the Company. He agreed to land troops – 36 men and 4 officers. The landing party contained both Marines and sailors, but notably was under the command of a navy lieutenant, Higginson almost certainly having in mind the debacle with *Chicago's* Marine detachment earlier in the year. The instructions to Lieutenant Cutler were detailed. His command and operations were to be confined strictly to the limits of the Canal Company's property. He was not to discuss political questions with any representatives of either the recently deposed government or the insurgency, instead referring everything to Captain Higginson. He was to "avoid in every way giving offence to the inhabitants." Furthermore, Higginson cautioned Cutler to "be very careful about the health of your command, keeping the men out of the sun and observing all sanitary precautions."<sup>131</sup> The threat of yellow fever was never far from the mind of anyone who had to operate in the region. *Atlanta's* coal supply was an issue for Captain Higginson as well, affecting his ability to stay on station. Mr. Davis promised to have the Company deliver some coal to Greytown that could be given to *Atlanta*, otherwise, she would have to leave after 24 days and proceed to Colón for coaling. Higginson also fired off an official letter to the insurgent provisional governor of Greytown, informing him of his actions and promising to remain clear of any

---

<sup>130</sup> Frank R. Davis, "Letter, Davis to Higginson, 25 May 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>131</sup> Francis Higginson, CAPT, "Letter, Higginson to Herbert, 25 May 1893, 1893," Letter, p. Enclosure No. 3, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. . Higginson's sanitary instructions to Custer are amusing, given our modern understanding of the causes of yellow fever, e.g.: "Drills and work in the sun to be suspended between 8:30AM and 4:30PM, and no one to be allowed to be exposed to sunshine during that time."

internal Nicaraguan political issues, so long as the property of the Nicaragua Canal Construction Company was respected.<sup>132</sup>

Governor Pasos' reply was not long in coming, arriving the next day. He was understandably insulted by the U.S. intrusion onto Nicaraguan soil, and concerned about the image of the new government as it was affected by what appeared to be a foreign occupation. More importantly to Captain Higginson, he appeared willing to work to ensure the security of the American company's property. Higginson replied promptly, setting the conditions under which he would remove his security force. These conditions were met by the insurgent government. After some haggling over the size of the security force Pasos was supposed to supply, and in consultation with the U.S. consul and Mr. Davis of the Canal Company, Higginson ordered his forces removed on 28 May. It would be his last official act as the commanding officer of *Atlanta*. On the evening of 28 May, Captain John R. Bartlett reported to Captain Higginson as his relief. After *Atlanta's* failure to get underway in a timely fashion, and Higginson's telegram to Chief Engineer Melville, Secretary of the Navy Herbert had ordered his replacement the day after *Atlanta* finally left New York. The turnover between the two men was cordial and professional. Captain Bartlett accompanied Captain Higginson ashore on 29 May to inspect the Canal Company's property and its security, and pronounced himself satisfied. Visits were exchanged with representatives of the Revolutionary government. These had to be done surreptitiously, as the new government had not been recognized by the United States, but the revolutionary dignitaries were welcomed to *Atlanta* as private citizens of

---

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. Enclosure No. 2.

Nicaragua, and the series of meetings was entirely successful.<sup>133</sup> *Atlanta* spent another month on station, as the Revolutionary government consolidated its hold on the country and peace returned. Ironically, the operations of the Nicaragua Canal Company had dwindled to almost a complete standstill, and Captain Bartlett reported that much of the equipment he was there to protect was falling into disrepair.<sup>134</sup> During this time, one of Captain Bartlett's greatest worries was his coal supply, and he constantly had to come up with innovative ways to get it, such as contracting with the Panama Railroad Company at Colón, Columbia to receive whatever leftovers the company could spare, or asking the Navy Department to send him some on a steamer. His constant preoccupation with this problem serves to demonstrate the limitations of the U.S. Navy's power projection capabilities with large numbers of steam-powered warships at this point.<sup>135</sup> *Atlanta* departed for Norfolk on 26 June, leaving behind a failed U.S. business investment and the dream of a canal across the isthmus that would have to wait another decade. Upon her arrival in Norfolk, she was put out of commission

## ***Conclusions***

On 31 May 1893, Rear Admiral Gherardi hauled down his flag as commander-in-chief of the Naval Review Fleet and moved ashore to take over as Commandant of the Navy Yard and Station, New York. Rear Admiral A.E.K Benham became the Commander-in-Chief of the North Atlantic Squadron, aboard his flagship *San Francisco*.

---

<sup>133</sup> John R. CAPT Bartlett, "Letter, Bartlett to Herbert, 31 May 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>134</sup> John R. CAPT Bartlett, "Letter, Bartlett to Herbert, 14 June 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. "" .

The rest of the fall of '93 remained relatively quiet. *San Francisco* traveled to Newport, Rhode Island in August for the opening of that year's Naval War College class. She was joined there by *Miantonomoh* and *Vesuvius*, the former taking the Rhode Island Naval Militia on board for their yearly training.

Less than two months after the Naval Review, an event occurred which shocked the naval community. On 22 June 1893, *HMS Victoria*, the flagship of the British Mediterranean Fleet, collided with *HMS Camperdown* during a tactical maneuver. She sank in minutes, taking most of her crew with her. A Royal Navy inquiry placed the blame for the disaster squarely on Vice Admiral Sir George Tryon, who had ordered a complicated maneuver without enough space between ships to carry it out. U.S. naval officers used the occasion to point out: "the necessity of constant practice...to prevent just such calamities in time of war and to familiarize our officers and men with the exact turning radius of each ship."<sup>136</sup>

In spite of this lesson, the Squadron since the Naval Review was not much of a squadron. By October of 1893, it consisted of Benham's flagship, the protected cruiser *San Francisco*, which represented the only operational modern warship of the Squadron. The double-turreted monitor *Miantonomoh*, which never strayed far from her New York homeport. The venerable wooden cruiser *Kearsarge* was a relic suitable only to show the flag in Caribbean ports. The Navy Department was unsure what to make of the yacht-like appearance and unconventional pneumatic guns of the experimental *Vesuvius*, consequently she spent much of her time doing utility work, finding and destroying hazards to navigation along the East coast. The newly-commissioned *Machias* was in

---

<sup>136</sup> "Blame for Admiral Tryon," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 7 July 1893.

Norfolk fitting out for an eventual cruise to the West Indies.<sup>137</sup> No two of these ships were alike, had the same functions, or had been designed with any thought to their being used together. When Benham left New York for the yearly cruise to the West Indies, his flagship went by itself. In fact, in his monthly report to the Navy Department, Benham confessed that the report was only accurate up to 18 October. "Since the latter date I have not been informed of their distribution or employment."<sup>138</sup> His December report was worse. "I have no knowledge of the distribution or employment of the other ships of the Squadron during the month. The evidence is clear that by 1893, the North Atlantic Squadron was a fighting unit in name only.

Admiral Benham's plans for a peaceful winter cruise from port to port in the Caribbean were dashed when revolution broke out in Brazil. *San Francisco* sailed on 21 December 1893, for Rio de Janeiro. Captain Philip, of the newly-commissioned *New York* received a telegram on 26 December, ordering her to sea immediately from New York. The aftermath of the incident with Captain Higginson and *Atlanta* in May was obviously in Captain Philip's mind, as he sent a frantic letter ashore from his anchorage in Gravesend Bay that evening, stating that the tide was too low for *New York* to pass through "the knuckle" and proceed to open ocean, and enclosing a copy of the pilot's written opinion for good measure.<sup>139</sup> These two ships were eventually joined in Rio de Janeiro by *Charleston*, *Newark*, *Detroit*, and *Yantic*. Upon his arrival, Rear Admiral Benham became the Commander-in-Chief of the South Atlantic Station while the

---

<sup>137</sup> A.E.K. Benham, RADM, "Letter, Benham to Herbert, 31 October 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>138</sup> Ibid. "" .

<sup>139</sup> J.W. Philip, CAPT, "Letter, Philip to Secnav, 26 December 1893, 1893," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

incumbent, Rear Admiral O.F. Stanton, proceeded north to act as a caretaker for the eviscerated North Atlantic Squadron until his retirement in August. Training for the various naval militias took place during the summer, but otherwise no tactical exercises were conducted during 1894. For much of this time, most of the Navy's modern assets were with Benham in the South Atlantic.

The years 1892-1894 had seen many steps forward in the process of developing a concept of multi-ship operations for the U.S. Navy. The Squadron for Special Service and the Naval Review Fleet gave an entire generation of officers of the New Steel Navy vital experience in operating warships in formation. The Navy Department worked through complications with structural components of a fleet, such as a clear chain-of-command and a reliable logistics network. The international community, as well as the American public, had a new image of an ascendant United States, viewed through the pageantry of the International Naval Review. The process, however was not complete.

The development of processes critical to the formation of a multi-ship fighting capability, namely tactics and doctrine, stagnated during this time. The Navy Department's attention was drawn instead to the political and diplomatic requirements associated with the Squadron for Special Service's many official visits during its trip around Cape Horn, and the International Naval Review. These shortcomings, however, were about to be addressed.

With enough vessels of the New Steel Navy now in commission to cover the various stations, Secretary of the Navy Herbert announced a new squadron policy in 1894. Noting that "heretofore an insufficiency of numbers has, in cases of sudden emergency abroad, necessitated sending vessels from one station to another", Herbert



declared that, from then on, he would “keep a number of cruising vessels sufficient for the ordinary needs of naval policing on each of the six stations.”

This policy will allow frequent fleet and squadron evolutions, which are absolutely necessary for the instruction of officers and men. To the North Atlantic, or home squadron, a sufficient number of vessels will be assigned to permit of a number being employed in practical exercises connected with the course of instruction at the Naval War College. Vessels fitting out on this coast will generally remain attached to the North Atlantic Squadron for the first six months of their cruise, for purposes of instruction and to enable officers and men to familiarize themselves with their ships. The home squadron will thus become the feeder for all the other squadrons.<sup>140</sup>

This was Stephen B. Luce’s vision. He had been unable, during his uniformed career, to see it through to completion, but the stage was now set for his theories to become reality. The process of constructing an identity as a fighting force could only occur through rigorous exercise at sea. The conditions were now favorable for such an operational program, dedicated to training the North Atlantic Squadron to operate as a combat unit.

---

<sup>140</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* 1894. Vol. 1. 23.

## **Chapter 5: Luce's Vision Realized. The North Atlantic Squadron Solidifies a New Identity, 1895-1897**

The advances in multi-ship operations under Rear Admiral Gherardi greatly increased the logistical and operational ability of the Navy to field a formation of warships, Gherardi's work, however, had been largely concerned with appearance, not tactical skills. It remained for the North Atlantic Squadron to develop a greater measure of the substance of a multi-ship fighting capability. By 1895, the Caribbean, the North Atlantic Squadron's traditional area of operations, was troubled by the renewal of armed resistance against the Spanish Colonial authorities in Cuba. Elsewhere, both Great Britain and Germany threatened the Monroe Doctrine with unilateral actions against Caribbean governments. As the warships which had been authorized in the late 1880's began to arrive in the Squadron, the commander-in-chief, for the first time, possessed the ability to concentrate enough vessels to regularly hold productive tactical exercises

### ***Squadron Cruise to the West Indies, 1895***

The warships of the North Atlantic Squadron had cruised the West Indies regularly since the establishment of the station in 1865. Political and military requirements in the West Indies had often created roadblocks to effective squadron training, as the presence of one or more vessels was often urgently requested by the U.S. consulate whenever unrest broke out. The Navy Department, under pressure from the Department of State, typically had stripped warships from the Home Squadron to fulfill these requests. The winter of 1895, however, would be different. For the first time in the thirty years of the station's existence, in the absence of a crisis requiring separate

deployments, the warships of the North Atlantic Squadron would visit the ports of the West Indies – “showing the flag” as a squadron, not as individual cruising vessels.<sup>1</sup>

From his flagship *New York*, berthed at the navy yard in her namesake city, Rear Admiral R.W. Meade made preparations for the cruise. His squadron consisted of the flagship, the new protected cruisers *Columbia* and *Montgomery*, *Atlanta*, and the experimental dynamite cruiser *Vesuvius*. *Columbia* was the namesake of a new class of lightly protected but speedy cruisers designed specifically for commerce raiding. She and her sister ship, *Minneapolis*, both built by the Philadelphia yards of Cramp and Sons, were fast for the time at just under 23 knots, but the machinery necessary to drive the unique triple-screw engines made for a cramped and uncomfortable ship when at sea for extended periods. They were unpopular with sailors and officers alike, including Admiral Meade.<sup>2</sup> *Cincinnati* and *Raleigh* were smaller protected cruisers. Authorized in 1888 and commissioned in 1894, they displaced 3213 tons (about half the size of *Columbia*) and had a top speed of 19 knots. *Montgomery*, launched in June 1894, was technically listed as an “unprotected cruiser”, but she was often referred to as a “peace cruiser”, the implication being that she was suited for peacetime patrolling duties but not engagement in combat with major warships. With a top speed of 19 knots and a mixed armament of 6” and 5” guns, *Montgomery* was essentially a slightly-larger version of a gunboat. The Squadron was rounded out by *Atlanta*, one of the original “ABCD” ships, and *Vesuvius*. The latter was technically referred to as a “cruiser”, but at 929 tons she

---

<sup>1</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 4 January 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. . "The North Atlantic Squadron," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 21 January 1895.

<sup>2</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 1 January 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

was really more of an unarmored experimental gun platform than a warship. Taken together, the seven warships which made up the North Atlantic Squadron represented a national naval strategy which emphasized the traditional functions of cruising and attacks on commerce (see Table 7). This was not, however, how the Department intended to utilize them in 1895.

Secretary Herbert and Rear Admiral Meade's objectives for this deployment were to be unlike what the annual Secretary of the Navy report had come to call the "usual winter's cruise". As he told a newspaper reporter: "Everything regarding the capabilities and weaknesses of the new navy is as yet experimental...a fleet hastily assembled and untried in fleet tactics meeting one that has been well drilled is a fleet destroyed."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> "The North Atlantic Squadron."

## THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON – 1895

SHIP	DISP(TONS)	TYPE/CONST	ARMOR	SPEED	ARMAMENT	ERA BUILT (YEAR)
NEW YORK (FLAG)	8200	ARMORED	4.0" SIDES	21KTS	6X8"BLR 12X4" RAPID FIRE 8X6LB,4X1LB,4XGATLING 3XTORPEDO TUBES	NEW (1888)
		CRUISER	5.5" TURRET			
RALEIGH	3213	PROTECTED	PROTECTIVE	19KTS	1X6" RAPID FIRE 10X5" RAPID FIRE 8X6LB, 4X1LB, 2XGATLING 4XTORPEDO TUBES	NEW (1888)
		CRUISER	DECK			
CINCINNATI	3213	PROTECTED	PROTECTIVE	19KTS	1X6" RAPID FIRE 10X5" RAPID FIRE 8X6LB, 4X1LB, 2XGATLING 4XTORPEDO TUBES	NEW (1888)
		CRUISER	DECK			
COLUMBIA	7375	PROTECTED	PROTECTIVE	22.8KTS	1X8" BLR 2X6" RAPID FIRE 8X4" RAPID FIRE 12X6LB,4X1LB, 4XGATLING 4XTORPEDO TUBES	NEW (1890)
		CRUISER	DECK			
MONTGOMERY	2094	UNPROTECTED	NO	19KTS	2X6" RAPID FIRE 8X5" RAPID FIRE 6X6LB, 2X1LB, 2XGATLING 3X TORPEDO TUBES	NEW (1888)
		CRUISER				
ATLANTA	3189	PROTECTED	PROTECTIVE	15.6KTS	2X8" BLR 6X6" BLR 2X6LB, 2X3LB, 2X1LB, 2X47MM, 2X37MM	NEW (1883)
		CRUISER	DECK			
VESUVIUS	929	DYNAMITE	NO	21.4KTS	3X15"PNEUMATIC DYNAMITE GUNS 3X3LB	NEW (1886)
		CRUISER				

Table 8: The North Atlantic Squadron, 1895<sup>4</sup>

In order to have a squadron that could perform tactical maneuvers together, it was first necessary to get rid of warships that would be unable to keep up with the most modern vessels.<sup>5</sup> A request from the city of New Orleans to have a representative of the New Steel Navy at their Mardi Gras celebration provided the perfect excuse to detach

<sup>4</sup> Alden, *The American Steel Navy: A Photographic History of the U.S. Navy from the Introduction of the Steel Hull in 1883 to the Cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909.*

<sup>5</sup> Timothy Wolters makes this point in Wolters, "Recapitalizing the Fleet: A Material Analysis of Late-Nineteenth-Century U.S. Naval Power."

*Atlanta*, which was already at Hampton Roads.<sup>6</sup> Now nine years old, her horizontal compound engines were a generation behind the vertical triple expansion engines of the newer cruisers, and her top speed of fifteen knots was four to eight knots slower than the other ships in the squadron. In addition, Rear Admiral Meade apparently did not like her commanding officer.<sup>7</sup> *Vesuvius* was detached from the North Atlantic Squadron on 2 January 1895, and detailed by the Navy Department to search for and destroy partially submerged wrecks and other hazards to navigation along the East coast.

*New York* departed Navy Yard New York for Hampton Roads on 10 January. She traveled alone down the coast to Norfolk, arriving on 13 January. In the meantime, the other ships of the squadron were finishing their post-commissioning fitting out and preparation for deployment. *Raleigh* was to be sent to Newport to have her torpedo outfit installed, while *Cincinnati* was still in the New York Navy Yard and *Columbia* had work to be performed on her at the Norfolk Navy Yard.<sup>8</sup> *Montgomery* was in Mobile, Alabama, performing coal tests for the Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting.<sup>9</sup> Concerned about an outbreak of measles and convinced that a warmer climate would “destroy or drive out the disease germs”, Rear Admiral Meade departed Hampton Roads as soon as

---

<sup>6</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Cromwell, 17 January 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 17 January 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>7</sup> "I regret to say that I did not expect very much from Captain Cromwell when I heard he had been appointed to the ATLANTA..." Meade, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 17 January 1895. "

<sup>8</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 13 January 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. . The Torpedo Station at Newport, Rhode Island, installed all torpedo equipment on ships.

<sup>9</sup> Equipment and Recruiting was responsible for procuring and delivering coal to the fleet. The quality and grade of coal used in a ship's fireroom was crucial to the performance of its engines.

he was able to collect *Cincinnati* and *Raleigh*. The three ships left on 30 January 1895.<sup>10</sup> *Minneapolis* and *Columbia* were to follow when their yard work was completed. The Squadron made for St. Thomas, Dutch West Indies, stopping at Samana Bay along the way to check for the rumored presence of the French fleet.

Rear Admiral Meade found much to satisfy him on his squadron's first underway evolution together. On the way to St. Thomas, the ships exercised at maneuvers and held signal drills.<sup>11</sup> Meade had observations to make about both. On the whole, he was pleased with the performance of his flagship, *New York*, although he felt that she had too much woodwork and other flammable materials that needed to be removed after her current commission was up.<sup>12</sup> He was, however, less impressed with the protected cruisers. These he criticized as difficult to steer handily and inefficient in the burning of coal. His problems as a commander-in-chief also included the inability to send signals efficiently, both night and day. "On this trip I made twelve pages of fools-cap [scratch paper]," lamented Meade, "of signals important at this day that are absolutely ignored in the General Signal Book, each of which should be made in one hoist of flags."<sup>13</sup> The more time his warships spent in company with the flagship, the more the inadequacy of the Navy's signaling system was exposed.

---

<sup>10</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 30 January 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>11</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 1 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>12</sup> The Battle of the Yalu in 1894 yielded several important lessons learned, among them the danger of flying splinters from interior woodwork shattered by enemy shells impacting on the armored exterior surface of a ship. Admiral Meade obviously had this in mind when he criticized the internal arrangements of *New York*.

<sup>13</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 6 February 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

From St. Thomas, the three ships went to St. Croix, then St. Lucia before stopping at St. Pierre, Martinique, then St. Lucia, and finally Bridgetown, Barbados. Here, the Squadron paused to celebrate Washington's Birthday. The holiday provided another opportunity for the Squadron to grow together as a team. A series of boat races was organized, including a printed program outlining the rules and the different classes of boats for each race. There was nothing new about marking holidays with boat races between ships that happened to be in port together, but this particular event, with its printed program advertising the races of the "United States Squadron", provides another small piece of evidence pointing to the solidification of a permanent identity for the North Atlantic Squadron.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, Captain Cromwell of the *Atlanta* was keeping a wary eye on the revolution underway in Colombia. On 25 February, he reported to the Department that since *Atlanta* had been dispatched to Colón, there had been three attempts to start fires in the city with incendiary devices. Fortunately, none had been successful. Cromwell continued to guard U.S. interests in the isthmus, particularly the property and operations of the Panama Railroad Company.<sup>15</sup>

The Squadron left for Port-au-Spain, Trinidad on 28 February, arriving on 1 March. Although Rear Admiral Meade was irritated that the local authorities had not acknowledged Washington's Birthday, but otherwise the visit at Barbados had been a success. The U.S. consul noted that the local officials had arranged a ball for the officers of the squadron – the first time he was aware of that "any public entertainment has been

---

<sup>14</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 23 February 1895, 1895," Letter, p. Enclosure #2, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>15</sup> Cromwell, "Letter, Cromwell to Herbert, 25 February 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .



given in honor of the visit of foreign warships.” Meade sent a proper letter of thanks to the committee in charge of the dance, which was reprinted in the local paper. If he was unhappy with the authorities, he at least kept it to himself while he was there.

In his 1 March situation report, Meade praised the idea of having the three ships cruise together, boasting that: “I am informed by officers who served in the White Squadron that the NEW YORK, RALEIGH, and CINCINNATI keep better line and column, and maneuver better than the White Squadron did after six months practice...”<sup>16</sup> He went on to properly give some of the credit for this to his ships’ twin screw designs, but his delight in the Squadron’s prowess was unmistakable.<sup>17</sup> He was also proud of their signaling ability, which he exercised daily, but was of the opinion that the current system of signaling would have to be improved upon if a number of vessels were going to operate together and maneuver rapidly.<sup>18</sup> Meade’s chief-of-staff, *New York’s* commanding officer, Captain Robley Evans, noted that “Admiral Meade...gave us admirable and systematic drill. Modern methods and appliances were used in a modern way – torpedoes were run under service conditions and searchlights used to their utmost capacity as a means of communicating...”<sup>19</sup>

The Squadron’s stay in Port-au-Spain took a dramatic turn on 4 March when a large fire was spotted downtown. Rear Admiral Meade immediately gave orders for all three of his ships to prepare fire parties to go ashore, and dispatched an officer to the U.S. consulate with an offer of assistance. Meade was concerned about landing troops on

---

<sup>16</sup> Meade, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 1 March 1895. "

<sup>17</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 3 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. "".

<sup>19</sup> Evans, 364.

foreign territory without a formal request for assistance from the local authorities. This led to some delay in sending the boats ashore. As the fire grew in intensity, Chief-of-Staff Evans took the initiative to order about 225 men from all three ships to land in the city and provide assistance.<sup>20</sup> After about four hours ashore, the tide had turned and the rest of the city was saved. The next day, a letter from the governor arrived on board *New York*, profusely thanking the men of the North Atlantic Squadron for their timely assistance. Meade promptly had the letter copied into a circular order and ordered it read to all hands at quarters. It was a great example of squadron teamwork, and what Capt. Evans referred to as “the most important work of Admiral Meade’s squadron during the West India cruise.”<sup>21</sup>

While the city of Port-au-Spain was still smoking, *Minneapolis* arrived from the U.S., fresh from having her torpedo outfit installed at Newport. Rear Admiral Meade, whose criticism of the unarmored protected cruisers has already been discussed, was unimpressed. He ridiculed the “much vaunted ocean racer ‘Minneapolis’” in a report to the Department, pointing out that she had arrived in Trinidad, six days from Newport with only 740 tons of coal remaining on board.<sup>22</sup> In contrast, Meade’s beloved *New York* had been at sea for 34 days and was not short on coal, while being capable of 21 knots and having armament and armor far superior to that of *Minneapolis*. The cost of construction of the two ship classes was about the same. Meade did not see the value of

---

<sup>20</sup> A formal request from the governor arrived about 10 minutes after the boats cast off. Robley notes in his autobiography that the delay caused “much property to be lost”. In Meade’s defense, the North Atlantic Squadron had not had great luck with putting landing parties ashore over the previous couple of years – *Chicago*’s 1894 debacle with drunken Marines and *Atlanta*’s strained relationship with the new revolutionary government of Nicaragua after putting troops ashore being two examples. See Chapter 4. Meade probably had these things in mind when hesitating to land assistance.

<sup>21</sup> Evans, 365.

<sup>22</sup> Roughly three days’ supply at average consumption.

the unprotected commerce raider design, and was of the opinion that an armored cruiser such as *New York* offered substantially more warfighting capability with a top speed almost as high and increased coal burning efficiency.<sup>23</sup>

The Navy Department detached a member of the Squadron on 6 March, when it cabled orders for Meade to send *Raleigh* to Colón to reinforce *Atlanta*. The Nicaraguan rebels had attacked Bocas del Toro, about one hundred miles north of Colón. *Atlanta* was ordered to Bocas del Toro to protect the considerable U.S. commercial interests there, while *Raleigh* was ordered to secure the Atlantic end of the Panama Railroad at Colón.<sup>24</sup> Like other commanders-in-chief before him, Meade took it personally that one of “his” ships was being sent on detached duty, and in his usual outspoken manner expressed his views to the Department. “I regret very much to lose her at this time,” he wrote as he acknowledged his orders, “...the sister ships were beginning to show the effects of drill together in squadron...I trust the reports received by the Department from Colón were accurate enough to justify the orders.”<sup>25</sup>

The reports from Colón did indicate a lot of unrest, which in turn, threatened U.S. commercial interests. “While everything is comparatively quiet here now,” reported the U.S. consul at Colón, “there is an undercurrent of dissatisfaction, which may result in incendiarism or an outbreak.”<sup>26</sup> The consul went on to express his hope that *Atlanta* would stay around in case of any further trouble. *Atlanta*, meanwhile, was busy at Bocas

---

<sup>23</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 6 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>24</sup> "Colombia's Stubborn Rebels," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 6 March 1895.

<sup>25</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 7 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>26</sup> Josiah L. Percy, "Letter, Percy to Uhl, 8 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

del Toro. Although the rebel attack was repelled, the U.S. consul at Bocas del Toro was nervous, as there were a large number of rebel sympathizers known to be in the area. He requested that Captain Cromwell land troops to “protect American interests”, including the property of American merchants doing business there.<sup>27</sup> By 8:30 PM, his executive officer, Lieutenant Commander Taussig was ashore with a detachment of 66 men, a surgeon and apothecary. While Taussig secured the U.S. consulate and the property of American and German merchants nearby, Assistant Surgeon Moore treated the men wounded in the engagement earlier in the day. The night passed uneventfully, and the detachment was back on board *Atlanta* the next morning, having received the thanks of both the U.S. consular agent as well as the town’s mayor.<sup>28</sup>

*Raleigh* arrived on 11 March and reported to Captain Cromwell as the senior officer present. Between the two warships, a continuous presence was maintained at the isthmus for another month, *Atlanta* finally departing for Key West in April. The North Atlantic Squadron, meanwhile, left Trinidad on 13 March for LaGuayra, Venezuela, arriving the next day.<sup>29</sup> Meade, along with the CO of *Cincinnati* and the members of his staff, boarded a train for Caracas. There he and the U.S. minister to Venezuela called on General Crespo, the President of Venezuela, as well as various members of his cabinet.

---

<sup>27</sup> D. R. Hand, "Letter, Hand to Cromwell, 8 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>28</sup> Cromwell, "Letter, Cromwell to Herbert, 8 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; J. Miller Moore, Assistant Surgeon, "Letter, Moore to Cromwell, 11 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; E.D. Taussig, LCDR, "Letter, Taussig to Cromwell, 10 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>29</sup> Evans, 365; R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 13 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

The U.S. party returned to LaGuayra on 17 March and made preparations to depart for San Domingo.

Coal continued to be an issue for the squadron, demonstrating once again evidence that, logistically, the United States did not have the resources in place to support a large concentration of warships. On 15 March, Captain Cromwell of *Atlanta* sent *Raleigh* from Colón to Cartagena to take on coal. It had to be purchased from a civilian company, the Cartagena Terminal and Improvement Company. Captain Miller reported to the Navy Department that the Company had about 1000 tons of coal "to spare," and that he could purchase it at \$5.45 per ton.<sup>30</sup> The Navy Department's reliance on private suppliers and the good graces of local businesses to fuel their warships was a major hindrance to having more than one ship in any port at a given time.

While *Raleigh* was busy refueling, the rest of the squadron departed LaGuayra, Venezuela on 18 March. *Cincinnati* was detached and sent to Curacao for mail and dispatches. She rendezvoused with the rest of the squadron off Little Curacao Island Light on the morning of 19 March, and the three ships continued on to the Dominican Republic. Along the way, Admiral Meade exercised the squadron in distant signaling with searchlights and Very signals. The Squadron arrived at Santo Domingo City on 20 March 1895.

On 22 March, Admiral Meade was presented to the president of the Dominican Republic by the American consul. President Heureaux was concerned about the French squadron patrolling the Caribbean, and more than a little grateful for the presence of U.S. warships and for the good offices of the U.S. government in the ongoing trouble between

---

<sup>30</sup> Merrill Miller, CAPT, "Letter, Miller to Herbert, 19 March 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

France and the Dominican Republic.<sup>31</sup> Meade replied that he and his Squadron were “in these waters for the protection of American interests...and that I could assure him it was my intention to fully protect the interests of all citizens of the United States.” Whether or not Meade offered President Heureaux direct protection against the French fleet, his presence was still reassuring.

The Squadron departed for Kingston, Jamaica, bypassing a planned port visit at Port-au-Prince, Haiti, much to the chagrin of the U.S. minister there, who complained to the Secretary of State about all the disappointed U.S. businessmen in Haiti who would have benefited from the visit of the North Atlantic Squadron. The Squadron arrived at Kingston on 24 March, having exercised at fleet maneuvers and signaling on the way. After exchanging the usual visits and salutes, the Squadron was met on 27 March by *Columbia*, carrying Assistant Secretary of the Navy McAdoo. Much of the Squadron’s time over the next week was spent coaling. The Navy Department had hired colliers to bring U.S. coal to the Squadron at Jamaica. This was an improvement over trying to get coal either from local firms at inflated prices or from U.S.-owned firms who might have some coal to spare. It was still a headache, however, as the Department had sent too much coal.<sup>32</sup>

The Squadron left Jamaica on 8 April, proceeding to Port-au-Prince. Once again, Admiral Meade had issues with the amount of time the local authorities took to grant the Squadron pratique.<sup>33</sup> The delay of 3 hours, fifteen minutes earned the U.S. minister resident a letter from Meade asking for an explanation. The small hints at Meade’s

---

<sup>31</sup> Heureaux’ government was heavily in debt to several European countries, France included.

<sup>32</sup> "To See the St. Paul Launched," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 24 March 1895.

<sup>33</sup> Port clearance

temper in his official correspondence help the reader understand the Navy Department's reluctance to allow him much interaction with foreign officials. In Port-au-Prince, Meade got word that the French flagship *Duquesne* was possibly headed towards Santo Domingo City to investigate the murder of a French citizen at Samana Bay, in the Dominican Republic, and press the French government's demands for payment of debt. Meade ordered Captain Wadleigh and the *Minneapolis* to Santo Domingo City to keep watch on the French admiral's actions and report back. Meanwhile, the Department seemed reluctant to allow Meade to become involved – even as an observer. Meade was cabled, countermanding his orders. He was told to leave the French alone and proceed to Colón, Colombia.<sup>34</sup>

Meade's temper was about to get him in worse trouble. Before he left Port-au-Prince, he answered Secretary Herbert's letter of 9 March which had reprimanded him for some earlier remarks he had made about the British Colonial officials at Barbados failing to observe Washington's Birthday. Meade's reply to the secretary's disapproving letter was a single sentence: "The information contained therein is very interesting." He seemed unable to acknowledge an error in judgment and move on, and his snide reply of 10 April infuriated Secretary Herbert. Herbert, in turn, dictated a letter to Meade dated 19 April demanding an explanation in writing of what Meade meant by the remark "the information contained therein is very interesting."<sup>35</sup> Meade's reply of 24 April from Key

---

<sup>34</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 10 April 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 11 April 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Wadleigh, 10 April 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>35</sup> Hilary A. Herbert, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Herbert to Meade, April 19 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; Meade, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 10 April 1895. "

West was no better than his first answer, challenging the Secretary that “If I had stated that I found the information furnished by the Department not interesting, the Department might, with justice, have taken me to task.”<sup>36</sup>

In the meantime, the Squadron left Port-au-Prince for Colón, Colombia on 11 April, arriving on 14 April. Meade again exercised his squadron at fleet maneuvers during the run from Haiti to Colón. The correspondence does not specify exactly what maneuvers the warships were performing, but according to Captain Robley Evans, *New York's* CO at the time, they were realistic and worthwhile. “During our winter’s cruise with the squadron [Admiral Meade] gave us admirable and systematic drill. Modern methods and appliances were used in a modern way – torpedoes were run under service conditions and searchlights used to their utmost capacity...the tone of the squadron was excellent.”<sup>37</sup>

At Colón, the Squadron met *Atlanta* and *Raleigh*. Captain Cromwell reported all quiet since his arrival. Meade not only thought that things were quiet, he questioned just how much business interest U.S. citizens even had in Colón. He pointed out that most of the property of the Panama Rail Road was owned by the French, and went on to say that the guarantee of the integrity of the transit across the isthmus mainly benefited the French. “These men and their employees are the people who constantly raise the cry that because there is a revolt...800 miles off and up the country, than an American ship of war must be kept at Colón to protect American interests.” He went on to say that: “if the Navy Department could only realize what an extraordinary amount of humbug and self

---

<sup>36</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 24 April 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>37</sup> Evans, 364.



interest of the foreigners enters into this business, it might save much money for work more useful.” Meade was referring to tactical formation work. He was still annoyed that *Raleigh* had been ordered away from the squadron while he was trying to exercise his warships back in March.<sup>38</sup> Meade saw the time spent on what he considered to be a “humbug” as a distraction from his ability to exercise his squadron in tactical work.<sup>39</sup>

*Minneapolis* was sent out on 20 April for her final speed trial, Captain Evans of *New York* again acting as the president of a board appointed by Meade to oversee the trials. That same day, *New York* and *Columbia* sailed for Key West. *Minneapolis* headed for Kingston, Jamaica to take the rest of the coal from the schooner which the Navy Department had sent there for the Squadron. *Atlanta* and *Raleigh* were ordered to Key West as well, although those two were ordered to proceed separately, as *Atlanta*'s slow cruising speed (about eight knots) would make it uneconomical for her to sail with the flagship.<sup>40</sup>

The deployment of the North Atlantic Squadron to the West Indies ended with the arrival of the flagship *New York* off Key West on 24 April, 1895. It had been a historic cruise. While individual ships had been ordered off on Navy Department tasking, on the whole the Squadron operated as a unit. Meade had emphasized training, formation work whenever possible, and night and day signaling. In fact, on the run in to Key West,

---

<sup>38</sup> Meade, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 7 March 1895. "; R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 19 April 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. . Meade recommended simply seizing the isthmus and sending two regiments of “colored troops” to hold each end of it. No explanation of why he felt that African-Americans should be used, but his letters consistently remark about the unhealthiness of the oppressive heat, and he probably felt—as many did in 1895 – that African-Americans were more suited for work in tropical climates than whites.

<sup>39</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 14 April 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>40</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Telegram, Meade to Secnav, 20 April 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

Meade reported on exchanging search light signals with *Cincinnati* at ranges up to thirty miles.<sup>41</sup>

### ***Admiral Meade Retires***

Rear Admiral Meade arrived back in New York aboard his flagship on 28 April. He reported his arrival and went on to express his “great disappointment at the virtual breaking up of this Squadron just at a time when it was getting into promising condition and especially do I regret that I could not have had the drills in Florida Bay that I projected three months since.”<sup>42</sup> The Navy Department had other concerns, however. In Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm II was preparing to celebrate the opening of the Kiel Canal. This strategically-important waterway linked the North Sea with the Baltic Sea, allowing ships to save about 250 miles by not having to transit around Denmark when moving to or from the Baltic Sea. To represent the United States at the naval celebration, the Navy Department decided to send *New York* and *Columbia*.

The loss of his flagship frustrated Meade even more than having other warships under his command ordered away for Navy Department errands. He sent a petulant letter, complaining among other things that his band instruments and typewriter were going to be damaged while moving from ship to ship and requesting, if he absolutely had to move, to be allowed to shift his flag to *Cincinnati*.<sup>43</sup> Meade thought particularly highly of Captain Glass, *Cincinnati*'s CO, and it was probably not a surprise at the Navy

---

<sup>41</sup> Meade, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 24 April 1895. "

<sup>42</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 28 April 1895, 1895," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>43</sup> R.W. Meade, RADM, "Letter, Meade to Herbert, 6 May 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

Department that he wanted to shift his flag to her, but she had been ordered by the Bureau of Construction to Norfolk for repairs and refitting. Work at the shipyards was slow. Consequently, the Bureau was trying to distribute the Navy's needed repair work evenly. The New York Navy Yard already had several ships of the Squadron in hand.

None of this mattered to Meade, who essentially demanded *Cincinnati*. Amazingly, the Department relented, going so far as to have a pilot boat intercept *Cincinnati* off Hampton Roads and tell Captain Glass to steam directly to New York.<sup>44</sup> It was, however, too late. While those orders were being given, but before they could be carried out, Meade asked to be relieved of command. In nine and a half months of command, Meade had never been able to find his stride. From the controversy over his assignment to the *Cincinnati* board of inquiry, to his exchange of disrespectful letters with the Secretary of the Navy, to his constant complaints over the employment of his warships, Meade was unable to function effectively as a commander-in-chief in the new Navy.<sup>45</sup>

At first, the papers reported that he was retiring for his health and desire to take a European trip.<sup>46</sup> But, having resigned his command, Meade could not resist public declarations. When a reporter for the New York Tribune cornered him, he vented his frustration. "My ideas are not in accordance with those of this Administration. I am just as much disgusted with it as the people at large in the country are, and I preferred to quit rather than continue my association with it...I am an American and a Union man. Those

---

<sup>44</sup> Henry Glass, CAPT, "Letter, Glass to Herbert, 13 May 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>45</sup> "Herbert Shows up Meade," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 15 May 1895; "Meade's Ensign Down," *New York Tribune* (1866-1899), 10 May 1895.

<sup>46</sup> "Admiral Meade May Retire," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 5 May 1895.

are two things that this Administration cannot stand.”<sup>47</sup> It was outright insubordination – not only to Secretary Herbert (an ex-Confederate) but to President Cleveland himself. For a while, it appeared that Meade would not be allowed to retire quietly, but would face court-martial. Eventually, the president allowed him to retire quietly to New York.<sup>48</sup>

### ***Rear Admiral Bunce and Squadron Exercises, 1895***

Command of the Squadron devolved to Rear Admiral Francis M. Bunce. Bunce was a native of Hartford, Connecticut. He was appointed to the Naval Academy in 1852, at the age of 16, graduating in 1857. As a lieutenant during the Civil War, he served in a variety of positions that gave him experience both in small boat and disembarked operations, as well as the more traditionally squadron-orientated blockading duty. His Civil War service culminated in command of the monitor *Monadnock*, which he took around Cape Horn, from Philadelphia to San Francisco after the war ended. It was the first extended sea voyage ever made by a monitor. Prior to taking command of the North Atlantic Squadron, he commanded the Naval Training Station and the training ship *Richmond* at Newport, Rhode Island.

Within weeks of taking command, Bunce had proposed a training schedule for the Squadron. The Department had requested the Squadron’s presence at Portland, Maine not later than 26 August 1895. Bunce proposed leaving New York on 1 August and sailing to Gardiner’s Bay for target practice. They would then proceed to Newport, Rhode Island for exercises in support of the Naval War College class graduating that term. After a call at Bar Harbor, Maine, they were to arrive at Portland, Maine, by 25

---

<sup>47</sup> "Meade's Ensign Down."

<sup>48</sup> "Talk About His Successor," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 13 May 1895.

August. Bunce was anxious to exercise his new command at fleet tactics, and stipulated that fleet tactics at sea would be exercised en route between ports.<sup>49</sup>

Fleet tactics would share top billing in the summer and fall of 1895 with the exercise of the various naval militia units up and down the east coast. Bunce detailed the monitor *Amphitrite* to carry out most of this tasking. This slow and unseaworthy vessel was not very useful for fleet tactical work, but her big guns made her an excellent training platform for the militia crews. *Amphitrite* was ordered to proceed to Brunswick, Georgia, where Captain Wise was to report to the adjutant general of Georgia and provide the Georgia naval militia with two days of drill. *Amphitrite* was then to proceed to Charleston, South Carolina, where the naval militia of South Carolina would be drilled; finally to Southport, North Carolina for five days of drill with the North Carolina naval militia.<sup>50</sup>

While the rest of the squadron was preparing for the summer maneuvers along the East coast, *Atlanta* was at Key West, Florida, enforcing President Cleveland's proclamation of strict U.S. neutrality in the ongoing revolution in Cuba.<sup>51</sup> There were various rumors of groups of "filibusters" organizing to send arms and men to the Cuban rebels, but *Atlanta* had not thus far uncovered any activity.<sup>52</sup> On 23 July the Department cabled orders for her to proceed to Havana, Cuba and report to the U.S. minister there. She was to observe and assess on the unrest in Havana, returning to Key West when her

---

<sup>49</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 11 July 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>50</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Wise, 16 July 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>51</sup> "Atlanta to Be Thoroughly Overhauled," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 14 August 1895.

<sup>52</sup> Recall that the *Virginus* incident which started the crisis in Chapter 1 was the result of just such activity.

captain felt that the lives of U.S. citizens and their property were adequately safeguarded. Upon arrival in Cuba, *Atlanta* reported that there had indeed been some unrest in Havana, but Captain Cromwell felt that it was under control, and that U.S. citizens were secure. Yellow fever was rampant, so Cromwell elected to return to Key West as soon as possible.<sup>53</sup> The squadron trend here seemed to be to use ships which were unsuited to fleet duty to take care of ancillary duties (naval militia, diplomatic missions), leaving the modern vessels free to concentrate and practice tactical drills together.<sup>54</sup> Bunce avoided, unless absolutely necessary, sending his first class vessels to do single-ship work. In August, however, he was forced to relieve *Atlanta*. *Cincinnati* was detailed for this duty.<sup>55</sup> *New York* and *Columbia*, meanwhile, returned from their mission to the Kiel Canal opening. *Columbia* set a new Atlantic crossing record for a warship with a time of six days twenty-three hours and forty-nine minutes from Great Britain to the Sandy Hook Lightship.<sup>56</sup> Bunce immediately made arrangements to transfer his flag from *Cincinnati* to the larger *New York*.<sup>57</sup>

*New York* moved to the Navy Yard for repairs. Once those repairs were complete, the Squadron, now consisting of *New York*, *Cincinnati*, and *Montgomery*, left New York

---

<sup>53</sup> CAPT Ramsey, "Letter, Ramsay to Bunce, 26 July 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>54</sup> "Atlanta to Be Thoroughly Overhauled."

<sup>55</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 9 August 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>56</sup> Montgomery Sicard, CAPT, "Letter, Sicard to Herbert, 2 August 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>57</sup> Hilary A. Herbert, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Herbert to Evans, 22 July 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

for Newport and the Naval War College.<sup>58</sup> *Minneapolis* was coaling at Hampton Roads, under orders to join the Squadron in Newport as soon as she was able. *Raleigh*, which was in dock at the New York Navy Yard, had the same orders.<sup>59</sup> The newspapers called the planned summer maneuvers “a series of naval evolutions and strategic manoeuvres (sic) on a larger scale than has ever been attempted before by a United States fleet in time of peace.”<sup>60</sup> On the way to Newport, the three ships practiced basic fleet maneuvers.<sup>61</sup>

The Squadron anchored together in Newport Harbor on 8 August 1895. They were met by Secretary Herbert, who had traveled to Newport in *Dolphin* for the commencement of the summer maneuvers.<sup>62</sup> Their presence in Newport marked the height of the Newport social season.<sup>63</sup> A gala reception awaited the officers of the Squadron the Tuesday night after their arrival. On 13 August, Governor Lippitt of Rhode Island was hosted on board the *New York*, as were many other visitors.<sup>64</sup> It was not all festivities. While in Newport, the ships exercised boats, landing parties, and torpedoes, and planned for the follow-on maneuvers which would take place at sites up and down

---

<sup>58</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 6 August 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>59</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 5 August 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>60</sup> "Fleet Off for Newport," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 8 August 1895.

<sup>61</sup> "Land Drill of Sailors in Newport," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 10 August 1895.

<sup>62</sup> "Atlantic Squadron at Newport," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 9 August 1895.

<sup>63</sup> "Fleet Off for Newport."

<sup>64</sup> "The North Atlantic Squadron."

the East coast.<sup>65</sup> The idea was to “conduct a campaign such as would prevail during a war with foreign vessels endeavoring to capture cities along the Atlantic coast.”<sup>66</sup>

After conferring with the War College and completing their business in Newport, the Squadron, now joined by *Raleigh*, got underway on 15 August for the resort town of Bar Harbor, Maine.<sup>67</sup> The Secretary of the Navy quietly took passage to Bar Harbor on *New York*, not raising his flag to be officially recognized on that vessel, but simply observing. Along the way, the warships practiced every maneuver in the fleet drill book. Some of the more important ones were performed several times. In all, Admiral Bunce reported that “The good results have begun to appear, already, in increasing uniformity in speed, in keeping distance, and in time of making turns and circles.”<sup>68</sup> After exhaustive trial and error, the Squadron concluded that their squadron tactical diameter should be 750 yards, based on the turning capability of *Minneapolis* at 9 knots. In all, it was a successful trip, not only from the point of view of the tactical work they were able to accomplish, but of the social calls they were able to make in the various cities in the northeast that they visited, as well as the time the officers of the squadron were able to spend together at social functions.

At Bar Harbor, Secretary Herbert disembarked from *New York* and went back aboard *Dolphin*. The arrival of the North Atlantic Squadron had been eagerly awaited by the society luminaries who summered in Bar Harbor. Among the notables who waited to

---

<sup>65</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 14 August 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; "Land Drill of Sailors in Newport."; "The North Atlantic Squadron."

<sup>66</sup> "Fleet Off for Newport."

<sup>67</sup> "Squadron Sails for Bar Harbor," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 15 August 1895.

<sup>68</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 29 August 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .



greet the Squadron were John Jacob Astor, the retired secretary of state and sometime presidential candidate James G. Blane, and the Rockefellers.<sup>69</sup> Again, the Squadron officers were entertained at numerous society events, the highlight of which was the grand ball and reception given in honor of the Secretary of the Navy on 20 August.<sup>70</sup> The officers were able not only to socialize with the citizens of Bar Harbor, but to spend time with each other. The officers of the various ships would had the opportunity to discuss the previous week's tactical exercises, exchanging information and observations about the drills. This socialization of the officer corps was a crucial component of the development of an identity as a fighting organization. Critics, however, felt that the North Atlantic Squadron was not doing enough. They complained that the warships of the South Atlantic and European stations had not been called to New York to assemble a United States Fleet for massive exercises, simulating attacks on New York or Boston. The Navy Department largely shrugged off these complaints, in keeping with Secretary Herbert's stated 1894 policy of keeping squadrons together as much as possible on their respective stations. The old days of responding to every contingency with ad hoc concentrations of all available warships were being traded for the cohesion and professionalism to be found in the repeated, rigorous exercise of a single combat unit.<sup>71</sup>

The North Atlantic Squadron left Bar Harbor on 22 August, arriving at Portland, Maine after another four days of intensive tactical drills. They were now routinely performing intricate maneuvers at nine knots during the daytime and six knots at night.

---

<sup>69</sup> "Waiting for the Atlantic Squadron," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 30 July 1895.

<sup>70</sup> "Bar Harbor," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 16 August 1895; "Grand Naval Reception," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 20 August 1895.

<sup>71</sup> "No Manoeuvres Necessary," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 21 August 1895.

While at Portland, the officers of the Squadron had yet another opportunity to be entertained by the city notables.<sup>72</sup> After three days in Portland, the warships departed for Boston on 29 August.<sup>73</sup> By now, newspaper articles were showing confusion over the new image and identity of the North Atlantic Squadron. Reporters were so used to squadron-sized operations being the result of an ad hoc concentration of warships for a specific contingency or purpose, that they were frankly unsure of what to do with the fact that the summer maneuvers were simply the normal operations of the North Atlantic Squadron. Various reporters in the *New York Times* began to refer to the “White Squadron,” or the “Squadron of Evolution,” as if there had to be some purpose for all these warships to be concentrated on the East coast. Finally, the editors of the *New York Times* put an end to the confusion by promising in an editorial to stop referring to the North Atlantic Squadron as the “White Squadron,” as they pointed out that the rest of the ships in the Navy were white as well.<sup>74</sup>

The Squadron departed Portland for Boston on 29 August, arriving the next day. The wharves were lined with hundreds of people anxious for a look at, or perhaps even a visit to, the white warships.<sup>75</sup> Eventually, the four ships hosted over 30,000 of these citizens, enabling them to get a closer look at the warships their government had purchased. The Squadron took on coal at Boston and stayed five days, enjoying the usual dinners and celebrations. *New York*, *Minneapolis*, and *Raleigh* got underway on 5 September. *Montgomery* had a casualty which forced her to spend an extra day in port,

---

<sup>72</sup> Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 29 August 1895. "

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.""; "Movements of the White Squadron," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 28 August 1895.

<sup>74</sup> "Topics of the Times," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 22 April 1897.

<sup>75</sup> "North Atlantic Squadron at Boston," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 30 August 1895.

but she was able to rejoin the other three ships by 7 September. The Squadron took up positions in Block Island Sound, off Fisher's Island. A farm on Fisher's Island owned by brothers William and E.M. Ferguson had been used successfully for landing exercises four years earlier, in 1891, by Walker's Squadron of Evolution. Bunce's staff officers had secured the use of the farm again. The owners of Fisher's Island Farm were happy to give permission for the Squadron to land its naval brigade, asking only that they stay off of any fields that had been freshly seeded.<sup>76</sup> The Squadron spent a week off Fisher's Island, organizing their boats and landing forces. Each day from 8:30 AM until 5:00 PM the sailors practiced embarking and debarking from the boats, marching, and forming skirmish lines. Overall, Bunce pronounced himself satisfied, and proclaimed that "There is no question but that the landing force of the four ships – NEW YORK, MINNEAPOLIS, RALEIGH AND MONTGOMERY can be landed at short notice, fully equipped and thoroughly organized in all details, for active service as infantry."<sup>77</sup> Bunce's after-action report to the Navy Department went on to stress the defensive nature of the exercises. "The instruction was thoroughly practical, the exercises being confined exclusively to such preparations and drills as active operations on the Island, if held by an enemy, would necessitate."<sup>78</sup> The landing exercises did highlight a couple of weaknesses. Bunce noted that none of his ships had been provided with mobile artillery to be landed with a naval brigade, and he called the Department's attention to this

---

<sup>76</sup> E. M. Ferguson, "Letter, Ferguson to Belden, 20 August 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>77</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 16 September 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 20 September 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>78</sup> Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 20 September 1895. "

discrepancy in a letter to the Secretary prior to the exercises.<sup>79</sup> Bunce also argued that the North Atlantic Squadron needed a tender, supply, and dispatch vessel; small enough to enter any harbor but large enough to keep up with the Squadron and stay in formation in bad weather.<sup>80</sup>

The landing exercises complete, the Squadron weighed anchor from Fisher's Island Sound on 15 September, and arrived at Tompkinsville, Staten Island, New York the next day, where they took on coal. Bunce intended for the squadron to spend about five days in Tompkinsville, replenishing supplies and coaling, before departing for Virginia. They were joined there by *Columbia*, which had finished her repair period in the Navy Yard and was ready to rejoin the Squadron. The arrival of the battleships *Texas* and *Maine* was also eagerly anticipated. These two second-class battleships had been authorized by Congress in 1886, before the armored cruiser *New York*, but construction delays had slowed their commissioning. *Texas* was the product of a design completion sponsored by the Navy Department, and won by the Naval Construction and Armaments Company of Barrow-in-Furness, England. Construction took place at the Norfolk Navy Yard. At 6,315 tons displacement, she was smaller than most European battleships. Her main armament consisted of two 12-inch rifles in single turrets fore and aft, with a secondary battery of six 6-inch guns.

*Maine* was designed by the Navy Department, and built at the New York Navy Yard. She was slightly larger than *Texas*, at 6,682 tons, with a main battery of four 10-

---

<sup>79</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 31 August 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>80</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 11 September 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

inch guns mounted in two double turrets, and a secondary battery of six 6-inch guns.<sup>81</sup> *Maine* was commissioned on 17 September, the day after the Squadron's arrival back in New York. Her new commanding officer was Captain Crowninshield, who had previously served in the North Atlantic Squadron as the CO of *Kearsarge*. Crowninshield immediately reported by letter to Admiral Bunce, placing himself and the ship under his command at the Admiral's orders<sup>82</sup> It would take another four or five weeks for her to be ready to cruise. After provisioning, she had to take on ammunition, then sail to Newport for her torpedo outfit. Admiral Bunce's plans for the summer exercises had envisioned three phases. The first was complete, including the basic formation work and the landing exercises. With the addition of *Columbia*, *Texas*, and *Maine*, the second phase of maneuvers in the exercise grounds off of Hampton Roads could start.

*New York*, *Raleigh*, *Minneapolis*, *Columbia*, and *Montgomery* got underway from Tompkinsville on 23 September for target practice and Squadron drill, "repeating all former evolutions and performing such others in the Fleet Drill Book as are thought to be valuable for exercise or for use in action."<sup>83</sup> On each of the first two days out of New York, the five ships spent about two hours shifting between the basic formations of echelon, line abreast, and column.<sup>84</sup> The work got significantly more difficult as the Squadron made its way south. On the third day the ships worked for four hours,

---

<sup>81</sup> Ship descriptions from Alden, *The American Steel Navy: A Photographic History of the U.S. Navy from the Introduction of the Steel Hull in 1883 to the Cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909*, 31-32.

<sup>82</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Crowninshield, 20 December 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>83</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 23 September 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>84</sup> See Chapter 1, Figure 1, for definitions of these formations.

incorporating simultaneous turns and more intricate formation shifts. By the fourth day, they were breaking up into sections (two and three ships, respectively), forming into columns of sections, manipulating the distance between ships from close to open order, and turning the entire formation. The Squadron worked for about 4.5 hours on the fourth day and another 4.5 on the fifth. With the exception of Gharardi's Naval Review Fleet, which was executing maneuvers strictly for appearance, formations this complicated with more than four ships had not been attempted since the Key West exercises in 1874. Then, the formation could barely maintain a top speed of four knots. The ordered speed for most of Bunce's maneuvers was nine knots, which his warships had little trouble sustaining. After five days, the squadron came to anchor in Hampton Roads. The weather precluded the target practice that Admiral Bunce had hoped to hold in the Virginia Capes, but the work the Squadron had done was impressive, nonetheless. Bunce's official report of the maneuvers practiced ran to six single-space printed pages. "There is no evolution in the Fleet Drill Book," he wrote to the Bureau of Navigation, "that has not been tried by at least four of the ships now in company."<sup>85</sup>

Although the Squadron did not hold target practice after arriving at Hampton Roads, Bunce had issued the orders for the exercise which was to have taken place on 30 September. The orders give a glimpse of what stationary target practice entailed in 1895. The ships were to be anchored at 1000 yard intervals. Officers from each ship were to be sent to adjoining ships, in order to observe the fall of shots from their ship's guns. Two broadsides were to have been fired from the main battery, and four from the secondary

---

<sup>85</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 4 October 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

battery on the starboard side.<sup>86</sup> After the tide shifted and the ships swung around, the process would be repeated on the port side.<sup>87</sup>

The Squadron remained at anchor off Hampton Roads for the next two weeks, with the exception of 18 October, when all the ships got underway and proceeded to Newport News Shipyard to be present at the launching of the new gunboats *Nashville* and *Wilmington*.<sup>88</sup> On 21 October, the Squadron weighed anchor and proceeded to the Southern Drill grounds, where they were finally able to hold the long-postponed target practice. Targets were anchored and the ships were detailed to observe for each other. This evolution was carried out underway, the ships of the Squadron proceeding at a base speed of nine knots, between 1000 and 1300 yards from the targets. Each ship made four runs by the targets, firing their main and secondary batteries separately.<sup>89</sup> Admiral Bunce pronounced himself pleased with the results. Five targets were hit, "under the conditions that would obtain in action." This may have been an optimistic comment, as the Squadron's opponents in this "action" were anchored in place.<sup>90</sup>

After more tactical work, raising the formation speeds to twelve knots, the Squadron ended its training exercises and broke up. *New York* returned to the Navy Yard, New York, arriving on 9 November. *Columbia*, *Raleigh*, and *Montgomery* stayed

---

<sup>86</sup> Main battery: The largest-caliber, primary weapons of a warship. To be used against an armored peer opponent. Secondary battery: Smaller-caliber guns, which typically had a higher rate of fire. Designed to attack unarmored sections of a peer opponent, such as the bridge, as well as protect the ship against smaller threats, such as torpedo boats. See Tucker, 161.

<sup>87</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Circular Order, Bunce to North Atlantic Squadron, 29 September 1895, 1895," Order, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>88</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 1 November 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>89</sup> To be able to better judge the fall of shot, without confusing which battery it was coming from.

<sup>90</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 26 October 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

at Hampton Roads, the latter two undergoing repairs at Navy Yard, Norfolk. *Minneapolis* was detached from the North Atlantic Squadron and ordered to the European Station on 21 November.<sup>91</sup> *Amphitrite* was ordered to Key West, to relieve *Cincinnati*, which had been there since August.<sup>92</sup>

Rear Admiral Bunce wasted little time preparing for his next endeavor. The year of training complete, he was now contemplating an operational deployment of his squadron to the West Indies. In comparison with squadron plans that had been submitted in past years, Bunce's submission of his proposed itinerary for the winter cruise did not list individual ships and the ports they might be sent to, but simply assumed that the Squadron would be operating as a unit. The Navy Department was apparently also anxious to exercise this capability, asking Bunce for a list of repairs to his ships that were absolutely necessary to make the deployment happen as soon as possible.<sup>93</sup> Coaling so many ships at the same time was still a problem for deployment, as Bunce assumed that he would have to break the ships up between St. Lucia and St. Thomas for refueling. The plan was to buy from local vendors on this cruise, rather than sending the coal down from the U.S. Apparently, the sending of colliers during the previous deployment had convinced local merchants to lower their prices acceptably. Bunce proposed being gone

---

<sup>91</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 1 December 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>92</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Wise, 16 December 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>93</sup> Hilary A. Herbert, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Herbert to Bunce, 31 October 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .



from about 21 December 1895 to 12 May 1896, touching at virtually every port in the Caribbean where there was a significant U.S. business interest.<sup>94</sup>

*New York* and *Columbia* got underway from New York for Hampton Roads on 16 December, arriving off Norfolk the next day.<sup>95</sup> There, they were joined by *Montgomery* and *Raleigh*. *Maine* arrived on Christmas Day. On 29 December 1895, Rear Admiral Bunce reported the five warships ready for deployment.<sup>96</sup> 1 January 1896 found the squadron at anchor off Hampton Roads. Celebrations began at 11:50PM the night before, when the steam whistles of the ships joined in a cacophony leading up to midnight. Sailors and junior officers alike serenaded the flag quarters before turning in. The next morning after quarters, a "rope yarn" day was declared, and the sailors enjoyed rare time off on board ship. The junior officers traveled between ships in boats, wishing members of the other wardrooms a happy new year. It was evidence that the officers of the Squadron had developed close ties over the previous six months of exhaustive maneuvers together.<sup>97</sup>

### ***Naval Militia Drills, 1896***

The Squadron was not able to deploy as Rear Admiral Bunce had planned. Contingencies arose which superseded his carefully-prepared peacetime itinerary. The renewed revolutionary unrest in Cuba made the Navy Department reluctant to dispatch

---

<sup>94</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 9 December 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>95</sup> "Utah Wants Her Statehood," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 16 December 1895.

<sup>96</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 29 December 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 20 December 1895, 1895," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>97</sup> "New Year's on the Squadron," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 2 January 1896.

warships to the Caribbean, lest the Spanish become uncomfortable.<sup>98</sup> Additionally, the long-running dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela over the border of British Guiana threatened to provoke British intervention, which was increasingly perceived as a threat to the Monroe Doctrine. In the summer of 1895, the Cleveland Administration decided to act. Recent U.S. naval advances, including the North Atlantic Squadron's successful 1895 squadron deployment to the West Indies under Rear Admiral Meade, the anticipated summer and fall maneuvers, and the imminent additions of the battleships *Maine* and *Texas* almost certainly affected the decision. In July 1895, Secretary of State Olney sent a note to the British government reiterating the Monroe Doctrine, demanding that the British submit the boundary issue to arbitration, and containing the famous line that became emblematic of the age: "Today the United States is practically sovereign on this continent and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition."<sup>99</sup> That sentence would have been unthinkable a decade earlier. The perceived effectiveness of the North Atlantic Squadron was the only reason it could be uttered in 1895. The British prime minister, Lord Salisbury, waited four months before replying to Olney's note, which gave newspapers plenty of time to discuss the merits of the Royal Navy versus the new U.S. Navy, and critique U.S. shore defenses.<sup>100</sup>

Admiral Bunce traveled to Washington, D.C. for consultations at the Navy Department.<sup>101</sup> It was decided to await the arrival of *Maine* and possibly *Texas* as well

---

<sup>98</sup> Herrick, 202.

<sup>99</sup> Quoted in Herring, 307.

<sup>100</sup> "English Journals Facetious," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 6 January 1896; "Not Unprepared for War," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 18 December 1895.

<sup>101</sup> "Bunce's Fleet to Be Held," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 23 December 1895.

before the Squadron would proceed. While the Department was deciding on the best employment for the North Atlantic Squadron, another foreign relations crisis arose. The U.S. Minister to Turkey made demands upon the Ottoman authorities in Constantinople for compensation for destruction of property belonging to U.S. missionaries working in Turkey. The strong words from the minister led to a round of newspaper speculation, again involving the North Atlantic Squadron. Stories ranged from the entire squadron being sent to the European Station (whose commander-in-chief, Rear Admiral Selfridge, was senior to Rear Admiral Bunce), to a few of Bunce's ships being sent to augment the European Squadron.<sup>102</sup> In the end, nothing came of the trouble with Turkey, but it still served to delay the departure of the Squadron on a cruise to the West Indies as planned.<sup>103</sup>

*Maine* arrived on 6 January 1896, and was immediately ordered to sea with one of the seasoned ships of the Squadron, *Raleigh*, for two days of section drill. While the various political issues were playing out, it was up to Rear Admiral Bunce to keep his squadron, which was marking time off the coast of Norfolk, occupied. By February, it became clear that the Squadron was not going to be deployed immediately. One by one, Bunce began to send his ships north for liberty. *Columbia* was the first to go, leaving on 4 February.<sup>104</sup> In April, with still no definite orders in sight, Bunce detached several of his ships to give the men some rest. *Columbia* went back to Staten Island. *Montgomery* and *Cincinnati* went to the Norfolk Navy Yard. The flagship followed *Columbia* back to Tompkinsville

---

<sup>102</sup> "Claims against Turkey," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 6 January 1896; "Threatening Fleet's Force," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 7 January 1896.

<sup>103</sup> "Will Not Go to Turkey," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 13 January 1896.

<sup>104</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Sands, 4 February 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

a few days later, Admiral Bunce leaving explicit instructions for the senior officer present (SOPA) to govern the Squadron in his absence.<sup>105</sup> Upon *New York's* return to Hampton Roads, *Newark* reported to the Squadron, having been previously assigned to the South Atlantic Station.<sup>106</sup> Bunce sent her north to New York Navy Yard to be docked, have her bottom painted, and discharge sailors whose term of enlistment had expired while they were in South America.<sup>107</sup>

The attention of the Navy Department turned to other matters. The entire North Atlantic Squadron eventually relocated from Hampton Roads back to the squadron anchorage in Tompkinsville, Staten Island, a sure indication that the Department was actively trying to keep the Squadron away from the Caribbean. During the summer of 1896, the Squadron was dispatched on several goodwill visits to cities up and down the east coast. This exposed the public to the New Steel Navy in two important ways: ship visits and parades, and drills of the state naval militias. *Cincinnati* and *Montgomery* were detailed on 1 May to leave Hampton Roads and sail to New London, Connecticut to participate in a celebration marking the anniversary of the city's founding. Admiral Bunce was concerned that his warships maintain their fighting edge while involved in these goodwill tours, and his orders to the individual ships were careful to spell out that the two ships were to be "kept together and manoeuvred as a Section while under way,

---

<sup>105</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 14 April 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>106</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 29 April 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>107</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Stirling, 30 April 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

and exercised in movements and in signaling.”<sup>108</sup> In June, *Cincinnati* was used again to support a reunion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Connecticut Heavy Artillery at Bridgeport, Connecticut.<sup>109</sup> Also in June, *Columbia* was sent to Castine, Maine, to help that city’s inhabitants celebrate the centennial of their founding.<sup>110</sup> As we have seen in previous chapters, chambers of commerce vied desperately for the economic fortune that a visit from one of the new steel warships would bring their city. The fact that Rear Admiral Bunce was originally from Connecticut probably helped Bridgeport and New London secure visits, among several other cities.

Interest in a naval militia – that is, volunteer units organized and administered by the states – had started in the early 1890’s. The practice of keeping harbor defense monitors in ordinary, to be rapidly commissioned in time of war, required a source of readily-available manpower that did not have to be paid for with the Department’s limited budget. State militias fit the bill nicely. Rear Admiral J.G. Walker’s Squadron of Evolution, it will be recalled, embarked some militia units for underway training five years previously, in 1891. By 1896, there were naval militias in 14 states. Coordinating their training was a full-time job for a junior officer in the Navy Department, overseen personally by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and commanding 34 pages in the Secretary of the Navy’s annual report. It was not a simple coincidence that this rapid growth in the naval militia movement, both in its popularity with civilians, as well as its support from the Navy Department, coincided almost exactly with the development of the

---

<sup>108</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Davis, 1 May 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>109</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Johnson, 4 June 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>110</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Sands, 13 June 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

North Atlantic Squadron's unit identity as a combat force, and its increased operations as a squadron. The New Steel Navy wanted out of the business of guarding harbors, so that it could concentrate on its blue-water mission, which was fighting a fleet action against a peer naval competitor. The easiest way to accomplish this for the least money was to turn more of the defensive mission over to the various naval militias. It was universally assumed that the naval militias would focus on harbor defense.<sup>111</sup> As one author, reviewing the contributions of naval militia units during the War of 1898 put it:

It cannot, however, nor was it at the time of the Spanish-American War expected that they could go upon our modern men-of-war, with their many mechanical devices and the elaborate system required to maintain order and discipline, and render service satisfactory to themselves and to their commanding officers. Their training had not been such as would prepare them for this duty. As primarily designed the organizations were intended for the defense of the coast, and their drills and knowledge of local conditions brought them into the service better fitted to carry forward the work assigned to the Auxiliary Naval Force and the Coast Signal Service, than for assignment to vessels of the regular Navy, which would have been their preference.<sup>112</sup>

For this reason, the Navy Department was happy to lend whatever support it could to the various naval militia units. In May, Captain Ramsay in the Bureau of Navigation received a memorandum from the Secretary of the Navy, asking him to instruct the Commander-in-Chief of the North Atlantic Squadron to support the naval militias of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana with two ships, one to be a monitor, for a period of two weeks between 15 and 30 June 1896.<sup>113</sup> Ultimately, six North Atlantic Squadron ships would perform some sort of duty with the naval militia during the summer. In the north, the battleship *Indiana* was detailed to drill the

---

<sup>111</sup> Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy*. 1894.

<sup>112</sup> Wheeler Howell, "The Naval Militia in the Spanish-American War," *The United Service: A Monthly Review of Military and Naval Affairs* 1, no. 4 (April 1902) (1902): 341.

<sup>113</sup> Hilary A. Herbert, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Herbert to Ramsey, 13 May 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

Pennsylvania militia. *Newark* went to New Jersey, *Montgomery* went to New York, *Columbia* to Massachusetts, *Cincinnati* to Massachusetts.<sup>114</sup> Bunce detailed *Amphitrite* and *Raleigh* for the drills with the southern militias.<sup>115</sup>

### ***Squadron Tactical Exercises, 1896***

While the Navy Department was busy with the summer training of the militia units, Admiral Bunce had not lost sight of the training of his own forces. A series of exercises planned for the late summer was approved by the Department in June. Bunce was given permission to “make trials of such formations and movements as may seem...desirable.”<sup>116</sup> On 1 August, Bunce reported *New York*, *Indiana*, *Cincinnati*, *Amphitrite*, *Newark* and *Fern* ready for sea. *Columbia* and *Raleigh* had some repairs to complete, but were expected to join the Squadron shortly.<sup>117</sup> *Fern* had been attached to Bunce’s command officially in May, giving the North Atlantic Squadron an organic tender and dispatch ship.<sup>118</sup>

The Navy Department made a special effort not to interfere with the movements of the squadron during the exercises. This meant declining many requests received by Secretary Herbert for ships to take part in various celebrations and commemorations, as

---

<sup>114</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 13 June 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>115</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 16 May 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>116</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 17 June 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>117</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 28 July 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>118</sup> Hilary A. Herbert, Secretary of the Navy, "Letter, Herbert to Mansfield, 25 May 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

they had done earlier in the year. Newspapers billed the summer exercises as the “largest fleet ever assembled by the Navy Department for instruction in fleet tactics.”<sup>119</sup> The Squadron arrived in Hampton Roads on 9 August. *Amphitrite* and *Fern* had to be detached on the way down from New York, as they were unable to keep up with the rest of the warships. *Columbia* arrived on station, overtaking the Squadron on the morning of 9 August, prior to their arrival at Hampton Roads. Admiral Bunce reported satisfactory progress with tactical exercises and signal drills to ascertain the range of visibility of day signals and audibility of fog signals at night.<sup>120</sup> Sub-caliber target practice was carried out with artillery and with small arms.<sup>121</sup> *New York* practiced torpedo firing. She had three torpedo tubes, one in the bow and two amidships. Aiming the torpedoes by eye took some practice. A typical torpedo drill involved a target being placed out and the ship steaming by the target at 6, 9, and 11 knots, launching a torpedo as it passed. The speed increased with each pass.<sup>122</sup>

On 11 August, Admiral Bunce was informed that *Massachusetts* had been placed in commission and ordered to join his command. *Massachusetts* was one of three “sea-going coast-line battleships” authorized by Congress in 1890. Her main battery of four 13-inch rifles in two turrets, plus the turret-mounted secondary battery of eight 8-inch rifles and four 6-inch rifles made her the heaviest-armed U.S. ship built to date. At

---

<sup>119</sup> "Admiral Bunce at Sea," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 2 August 1896; "The North Atlantic Squadron," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 17 June 1896.

<sup>120</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 9 August 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>121</sup> Sub-caliber target practice: A method of installing what was essentially a rifle along the barrel of a cannon. The gun crew would go through all the correct motions to simulate loading the cannon, then fire the rifle to check proper sighting and alignment of the gun. This saved expenditure on powder and shells.

<sup>122</sup> Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 9 August 1896. "



10,288 tons, she and her sister ships *Indiana* and *Oregon* were smaller than the largest battleships being built by European powers, but their heavy armament made them nominally the most powerful battleships on the ocean at the time.<sup>123</sup> Bunce immediately sent Captain Rodgers orders to take on his ammunition load and 1000 lbs of coal, and join the squadron, either in Hampton Roads, or at the squadron anchorage at Tompkinsville, Staten Island, where he expected to be by 25 August.<sup>124</sup> The rest of the Squadron left Hampton Roads on 15 August to proceed back north. Before leaving the southern drill grounds, the Squadron spent three days “exercising at tactical maneuvers and signals,” and devoted the entire day on 19 August to target practice. This was another underway practice, with the Squadron warships firing on anchored targets as they steamed past. Torpedo practice was carried out on 21 August, the ships steaming by a fixed target and launching torpedoes from their amidships tubes as they came to bear. Upon completion of these drills, the Squadron turned north.<sup>125</sup> It arrived back at Tompkinsville on 23 August, steaming into the squadron anchorage in double columns. The outer column consisted of *Columbia*, *Indiana*, *New York*, and *Massachusetts*, while the column closer to Staten Island was *Cincinnati*, *Amphitrite*, *Raleigh*, and *Newark*. It was an impressive display of naval power, and it had a purpose. The Chinese Ambassador, Earl Li Hung Chang, was in New York, and the Squadron was scheduled to

---

<sup>123</sup> N. Friedman, *U.S. Battleships: An Illustrated Design History* (Naval Institute Press, 1985), 25-29.

<sup>124</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Rodgers, 14 August 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>125</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 23 August 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

be inspected as part of his reception.<sup>126</sup> New York had been the site of impressive naval displays before. The 1893 International Naval Review, under Rear Admiral Gherardi, had served notice of the U.S. arrival as a naval power. But that fleet had been assembled under Gherardi's command specifically to execute the programme of the Naval Review. While the Naval Review Fleet had done much formation and signaling work, it was not a combat unit, and was never handled as such. The Squadron that steamed up from the Lower Bay in double column formation to anchor off Staten Island, and which was going to be reviewed by the Chinese Ambassador, was not fashioned especially for the purpose – it was simply the North Atlantic Squadron. The next day, *Texas* reported for duty with the North Atlantic Squadron by telegram. Bunce responded with orders to join the Squadron at Tompkinsville as soon as ready for sea.<sup>127</sup>

The one contingency that caused Admiral Bunce to have to detach ships was the enforcement of U.S. neutrality in the Cuban Revolution. Bunce was trying to keep the time spent in Key West, away from the Squadron, to about 7-8 weeks. *Montgomery* had been on station since 30 July, and so needed relief before the Squadron left on their next series of maneuvers. *Newark* was designated to take *Montgomery's* place, and Captain Stirling was ordered to have her in Key West on or about 1 September.<sup>128</sup> Meanwhile, with the Chinese Ambassador's reception complete, Admiral Bunce made preparations to

---

<sup>126</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 15 August 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; F.M. RADM Bunce, "Telegram, Bunce to Ramsay, 23 August 1896, 1896," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; "White Ships Here Again," *New York Times (1857-1922)* 1896; "White Ships Here Again," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 24 August 1896.

<sup>127</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 24 August 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>128</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Stirling, 27 August 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

return to sea. Landing exercises were on the docket for this underway period, with Fisher's Island again the destination. Along the way, *Massachusetts* would be detached to pull in to Newport for her torpedo outfit.<sup>129</sup> The Squadron got underway on 1 September. Bunce made a point of having the four battleships, *Massachusetts*, *Indiana*, *Maine* and *Texas* steam together in line and column. This was a watershed moment: it marks the first time a division of U.S. battleships had operated together as a body. The North Atlantic Squadron had a true battle line, and Admiral Bunce reported "no difficulty found whatever in their steering or handling in evolutions."<sup>130</sup>

The weather did not cooperate fully off Fisher's Island, and Admiral Bunce had to cancel a couple of days' operations ashore and postpone his departure for Tompkinsville an extra day, but valuable training was had nonetheless.<sup>131</sup> The Squadron got underway from Fisher's Island on 16 September. *Massachusetts* had finished the installation of her torpedo outfit at Newport, and was waiting off Block Island to join the Squadron as it steamed past. The continued poor weather hampered squadron evolutions, but one clear day did give Admiral Bunce the opportunity to exercise his squadron in tactical formation, breaking the six ships up into two divisions of three ships each. They arrived at the squadron anchorage off Tompkinsville on 19 September.<sup>132</sup> This time, they were

---

<sup>129</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 29 August 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>130</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 5 September 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>131</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 14 September 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>132</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 19 September 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

home for ten days before getting underway for the southern drill grounds on 1 October.<sup>133</sup> From Hampton Roads, Bunce detached *Raleigh* to proceed to Southport, N.C. to receive the testimonial the citizens of North Carolina had asked to present earlier in the summer. Bunce noted that: “The Squadron exercises have reached a point where the *Raleigh*, an exceedingly well drilled ship, can be spared at any time...”<sup>134</sup>

The rest of the ships worked off Hampton Roads for two weeks, returning to Tompkinsville on 14 October. It was on this voyage, while driving through a heavy gale, that *Indiana*, under the command of Captain Robley Evans, had the locking devices on all her turrets fail, allowing the massive armored structures and the guns inside them to swing freely in the storm. In his memoirs, Rear Admiral Evans described the scene as officers and men worked frantically to secure the 13-inch guns: “I stood by the wheel on the upper bridge and frequently the whole forward end of her would go under water, men and all...At such times, I held my breath as the water rolled off and the black heads of the officers and men, one after another, came in sight. I fully expected to see them swept overboard by the dozen.”<sup>135</sup> Amazingly, no one died in the episode, although a junior officer did lose his leg when an armored watertight door broke loose from its fittings and slammed on it. By 11:10 the next morning, after a sleepless night, everything was secure. Admiral Bunce’s report somewhat matter-of-factly noted that “She [*Indiana*] rejoined

---

<sup>133</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Telegram, Bunce to Ramsay, 1 October 1896, 1896," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>134</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 7 October 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>135</sup> Evans, 399.

Squadron formation and full speed was resumed.”<sup>136</sup> Besides the unfortunate episode with *Indiana*, which necessitated the redesign of her turret locking mechanisms, the Squadron had an opportunity to exercise the new “Squadron Tactics” manual. Rear Admiral Bunce and his staff had compiled this volume specifically for the North Atlantic Squadron, building on Commodore Parker’s by-now dated tactical manual, “Squadron Tactics Under Steam.”<sup>137</sup> After testing it with the Squadron during underway exercises, Bunce reported to the Navy Department that the new manual was of “great help in the discharge of my duty and if desired they can be readily perfected and issued.”<sup>138</sup> As 1896 drew to a close with the ships of the Squadron at Tompkinsville, it marked a year of the most vigorous operational exercises of U.S. warships that had ever been undertaken in peacetime.

### ***The Blockade of Charleston***

The end of 1896 found most of the North Atlantic Squadron’s warships in the New York or Norfolk Navy Yards, undergoing upkeep and repairs.<sup>139</sup> While his ships were otherwise engaged, Rear Admiral Bunce was busy with the planning for the Squadron’s next major exercise. The series of maneuvers the Squadron had carried out in 1896 had originally been conceived to proceed down the length of the east coast. In keeping with that concept, the next exercise was set to take place in the South, off

---

<sup>136</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 14 October 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>137</sup> Note the difference in the titles. By 1896, it is assumed that all squadron tactics will take place “under steam,” rendering the phrase superfluous.

<sup>138</sup> Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 14 October 1896. "; F.M. RADM Bunce, *Squadron Tactics* 1896. Located in *Naval Historical Collection*, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI.

<sup>139</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 1 December 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

Charleston, South Carolina. This gave the added benefit of allowing citizens other than those in New England and the Mid-Atlantic region to see the warships of the North Atlantic Squadron. On 8 December, Bunce received authorization to move his Squadron from New York to Hampton Roads.<sup>140</sup> Bunce cooperated closely with the Bureau of Navigation – something his predecessors often resented, or did not care to do. Major movements of his warships were always prefaced with communications with the Navy Department, and the receipt of their blessing before he made a move. No sooner than Bunce had received the Department’s approval to begin deploying his forces, than he received a communication from Rear Admiral Ramsay at the Bureau of Navigation. In attempting to manage the anti-filibustering efforts off the Florida coast, the Navy Department had changed the orders of three of Bunce’s ships, and Ramsey had communicated those changes directly to the ships without consulting Bunce.<sup>141</sup> Bunce took this in stride, showing his comfort with the consensus-building, managerial style of leadership demanded by the new navy. This can be contrasted with his predecessor, who tended to display more “heroic” qualities (to use Janowitz’ terminology.) Bunce enjoyed a longer tour as commander-in-chief because of his ability to work within a modern command structure increasingly tied to the telegraph and the latest news.

The same day he received the “green light” from the Bureau of Navigation, Bunce ordered Captain Evans and the *Indiana* to Hampton Roads, as the advance party. Evans was given careful instructions about how and where to anchor, leaving space so that the

---

<sup>140</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 8 December 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. . "I have to acknowledge the receipt...authorizing me to send the vessels of the squadron under my command to Hampton Roads whenever it is deemed proper."

<sup>141</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 10 December 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

entire squadron could be easily constituted at Hampton Roads. Bunce himself relocated his flag on 21 December, taking *New York* and *Maine* to arrive off Norfolk just in time for Christmas.<sup>142</sup> On 8 January 1897, Rear Admiral Bunce traveled from Norfolk to Washington, D.C., where he conferred with Secretary of the Navy Herbert and others within the Navy Department about the upcoming exercises. After this meeting, it was announced that the maneuvers would consist of a mock blockade of the port at Charleston, South Carolina. The U.S. Navy was not unfamiliar with blockading Charleston, having done so during the Civil War. Admiral DuPont, victor of the successful action to take Port Royal, attempted to capture the port in 1863, but failed to subdue the famous Fort Sumter (which was held by the Confederates at the time). The North Atlantic Blockading Squadron was never able to close the port of Charleston completely the entire war. This was a matter of some pride to the locals, and a lively debate took place concerning the ability of the Blockading Squadron's modern descendants to do any better.

Rear Admiral Bunce and the representatives of the Navy Department and the War College decided during their meeting that the Squadron was to arrange itself in the best possible position to blockade the entrance, while smaller vessels, such as *Vesuvius*, would be detailed to attempt to run the blockade under various conditions. The naval station at Port Royal, South Carolina would be used to stockpile coal and supplies for the smaller vessels of the Squadron, while the battleships and other vessels of larger displacement

---

<sup>142</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 19 December 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. . At first brush, it seems cruel that Bunce would get underway from what was ostensibly the squadron "homeport" four days before Christmas, but in fact it seems that many of the officers who had families kept them in the Hampton Roads region. We know from his memoirs and newspaper articles that Robley Evans' (CO of *Indiana*) family lived in military housing on Fort Monroe, for example. No doubt this is part of the reason *Indiana* went down as the advance party. I offer this aside as another small piece of evidence that Bunce practiced a new brand of leadership that emphasized consensus-building.

would have to coal and provision at Hampton Roads.<sup>143</sup> Once the particulars had been worked out and approved, Bunce returned to *New York* to carry out the preparations.

The North Atlantic Squadron, for the first time, was exercising an offensive capability. It was couched in terms that suggested that they were experimenting to assess the capability of Spain to blockade a major port on the east coast, but there is little evidence to suggest that this explanation was any more believable in 1897 than it is today. The North Atlantic Squadron was perfecting the techniques to enable them to carry the fight to an enemy's waters, not practice coastal defense.<sup>144</sup> Admiral Bunce's staff had to tackle several problems associated with deploying a large, disparate force away from its home waters. The battleships could not move in close to the coast to chase blockade runners, so smaller vessels would have to be used in conjunction with the capital warships. Nor could the large ships utilize Port Royal as a depot because of their draft, so other ways would have to be found to supply and refuel them.<sup>145</sup> In other words, this was a protean combined arms "fleet", that required more staff work and planning than a force composed of a few ships of roughly the same size, such as Rear Admiral Walker's Squadron of Evolution, six or seven years earlier.

Admiral Bunce ordered the Squadron to have steam up and be prepared to depart Hampton Roads on the morning of 3 February 1897. In issuing his orders, he broke the Squadron into three sections. The first was *New York* and *Maine*. The second was

---

<sup>143</sup> "Will Blockade Charleston," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 9 January 1897.

<sup>144</sup> At the risk of engaging in teleology, the fact that the Squadron's major contribution to the Spanish-American-Cuban War the following year was a blockade action in foreign waters speaks for itself.

<sup>145</sup> Robley Evans, in his memoirs, devotes an entire chapter to complaining about how difficult it was to get *Indiana* into Port Royal to utilize the drydock the Navy had built there. That episode signaled the beginning of the end of Port Royal as a major naval station.



*Indiana* and *Marblehead*. The third was *Amphitrite* and *Columbia*.<sup>146</sup> The short trip down was marred by a violent storm, which resulted in the injury of six of *Marblehead's* men. They had to be landed at Charleston and taken to the hospital.<sup>147</sup> The remainder of the Squadron anchored outside the harbor. On 9 February, the Squadron took up blockading positions, anchoring with 1500 yards between the ships on a line of bearing northeast through southwest. The line was initially set with *Marblehead*, *Maine*, *New York*, *Amphitrite*, and *Columbia*. On 10 February, the mayor of Charleston and a Committee of Reception and Entertainment officially welcomed the North Atlantic Squadron to Charleston, and offered them the freedom of the city.<sup>148</sup> Citizens flooded into the area, taking extra trains run by the railroads for the express purpose of bringing people in from the countryside to see the warships (and spend money in Charleston). "15 Men-of-War. Most imposing Naval Exhibition for two weeks," advertised one railroad, "The Atlantic Coast Line via Richmond is the only line to Florida passing through Charleston."<sup>149</sup>

With the official courtesies dispensed with, the ships immediately got down to work, practicing light discipline on the first night. The Squadron's tender, *Fern*, was sent out to inspect each vessel and report to the admiral on any light which remained visible. Each commanding officer received a report on the results the next morning. They also extended the blockade line to the efficient range of the ships' searchlights, to ascertain

---

<sup>146</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Na Squadron, 2 February 1897, 1897," Order, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

<sup>147</sup> "The Marblehead's Injured," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 10 February 1897.

<sup>148</sup> "Welcomed to Charleston," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 11 February 1897.

<sup>149</sup> "Front Page 1 -- No Title," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 5 February 1897.

the maximum distance apart ships could be and still maintain an effective blockade in the dark. This was determined to be an interval of about 3000 yards.

The Squadron closed up to 400 yards between ships on the morning of 10 February, debriefed the previous night's work, and spent the day conducting torpedo practice.<sup>150</sup> That evening, night target practice utilizing searchlights was carried out. Heavy weather beset the Squadron on 11 February, preventing much in the way of meaningful drills. That evening, the ships were joined by *Indiana*, which took her place in line, and *Vesuvius*, which was to be used as the "blockade runner." The weather was also bad on 12 February, postponing the official beginning of the exercises. *Marblehead* and *Amphitrite* went in for coal, the former preparing to depart and proceed to Florida to relieve *Dolphin* on the anti-filibuster enforcement detail. The newspapers, which reported daily on the Squadron's progress, were disappointed that bad weather had delayed things, and eagerly awaited the commencement of *Vesuvius*' attempts to run the blockade.<sup>151</sup>

That evening, after sundown, *Vesuvius* got underway and headed out to sea. The line was set with four ships at 3000 yards interval. Unfortunately, the fog that rolled in soon afterward led to an inauspicious start for the blockade. "The VESUVIUS had no difficulty in getting in," remarked Admiral Bunce somewhat dourly in his report.<sup>152</sup> His brevity was more than compensated for by the newspapers the following morning. "THE

---

<sup>150</sup> Bunce's report is unclear as to the nature of these torpedo exercises, but the assumption throughout the report is that the ships are at anchor. Bunce makes later reference to stationary firing exercises with "such guns as could be brought to bear." It is likely that the torpedo crews were exercised on whichever broadside tubes were facing out to sea while the ship remained anchored.

<sup>151</sup> "Warships at Charleston," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 13 February 1897.

<sup>152</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 23 February 1897, 1897," Letter, p. 3, RG 45, U.S. Navy Department Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C.

BLOCKADE IS BROKEN,” exclaimed the New York Times. The subheading read: “It is Demonstrated that a Blockade Runner Can Safely Pass Lines of Battleships in a Fog, Despite the Searchlights.”<sup>153</sup> Bunce’s officers complained, off the record, of course, that the fog and the fact that they only had four ships on station were all factors that contributed to an “unfair” test, but the fact remained that *Vesuvius*, with her lights doused, had steamed right in between two of the warships and reached her objective without being challenged.

The following day, things went a little smoother for the Squadron. *Amphitrite* returned from coaling, and at noon, *Massachusetts* reported her arrival on station to the flag. After a day spent in target practice, Admiral Bunce was ready to try again with six warships. The weather on the evening of 13 February was clear and moonlight, with only a slight haze. This time, things went more according to plan. *Vesuvius* made four runs, and was spotted and “captured” each time, before passing the blockade line.

After a day off for Sunday, 14 February, the ships were exercised at great gun target practice on Monday. *Marblehead* completed her coaling and stood out for Florida to relieve *Dolphin*. The poor weather continued to frustrate the Squadron’s attempts to practice their blockade techniques. An attempt to blockade with the Squadron ships underway instead of anchored, and their lights doused, was finally declared unsafe at 8PM, and the exercise halted for the night. More target practice, with both the great guns and the secondary battery, was had the following day. On 17 February, the Squadron cleaned their ships in anticipation of a visit from Secretary of the Navy Herbert. A member of a lame-duck cabinet, now that William McKinley had won the 1896 election, Herbert was days from turning his portfolio over to incoming Republican John D. Long.

---

<sup>153</sup> “The Blockade Is Broken,” *New York Times* (1857-1922), 14 February 1897.

On 18 February, Secretary Herbert embarked in *Dolphin* and passed the Squadron in review. Later that evening, the Chamber of Commerce of Charleston honored him at a banquet to which all the officers of the Squadron were invited. This visit to the Squadron was his final review of the organization he had worked so hard to put together, and to develop as a fighting unit.<sup>154</sup>

After a farewell ball given the next evening for the officers by the citizens of Charleston, it was time for the Squadron to return to New York. Rear Admiral Bunce offered his assessment of the exercise as follows: "I think it has been established that, in blockading, a belt of light two miles in width, and whose length is limited only by the number of ships available, can be stretched around any harbor by the use of search lights." Bunce's remarks in his after-action report dispel any notion that this exercise was performed to try to evaluate the ability of "the Spanish" to blockade a U.S. port city. There is no mention of an enemy force anywhere in the report, Bunce's only interest being the efficiency of the North Atlantic Squadron's blockading capabilities.<sup>155</sup>

### ***Rear Admiral Sicard Takes Over***

Having concluded one of the largest naval exercises undertaken since the Civil War, Rear Admiral Bunce's attention returned to domestic matters. The approaching mild weather of spring brought a season of celebrations and commemorations. The presence of the Navy was highly sought after at each of these, and the Navy Department had a political minefield to negotiate in granting or denying requests. Meanwhile, a new administration took office in March. As of 6 March 1897, Bunce had a new superior.

---

<sup>154</sup> Herrick, 192; "Secretary Herbert Going South," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 17 February 1897.

<sup>155</sup> Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Herbert, 23 February 1897. "

President McKinley's selection of John D. Long as his Secretary of the Navy was a fortunate choice for the New Steel Navy. A previous governor of Massachusetts as well as a member of Congress for six years, Long's contacts on Capitol Hill as well as his ties to an important maritime state made him an effective secretary. But, it was McKinley's selection a month later of a young New Yorker, Theodore Roosevelt, as the assistant secretary of the Navy that would have an even more historic impact. While Roosevelt rightly gets much of the credit for preparing the U.S. Navy to prosecute the War of 1898, this study has demonstrated that the North Atlantic Squadron, under Rear Admiral Bunce's energetic leadership, spent much of the year prior to Roosevelt's appointment as assistant secretary busily engaged in developing its skills.

The Squadron (except the monitors) left Charleston on 21 February. *New York*, *Indiana*, and *Columbia* proceeded back to Hampton Roads, where *Raleigh* awaited them. *Massachusetts* went on to New York to enter the Navy Yard and test the new dock that had just finished construction. From there, she was to go to Boston where the citizens of her namesake state were to present her with a memorial.<sup>156</sup> *Newark* was in dock at Port Royal. *Texas* and *Maine* were detailed to New Orleans, with orders to arrive in time to participate in the Mardi Gras celebration. *Montgomery* left her station in Key West to be present at Mobile, Alabama's Mardi Gras festivities. *Marblehead* and *Vesuvius* both remained in Florida to reinforce the expanded anti-filibustering mission.<sup>157</sup>

---

<sup>156</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Rodgers, 2 March 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>157</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Glass, 7 March 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 1 March 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 23 February 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

The fact that the Caribbean was relatively quiet in the winter of 1897 helped the Squadron have enough ships available to carry out multi-ship exercises. The absence of urgent threats to U.S. lives and property allowed the Navy Department to use the Apprentice Training Squadron ship *Essex* to pay port visits to many of the usual stops of Squadron warships in the West Indies. *Essex*'s spring cruise in 1897 included stops in Barbados, LaGuayra, Venezuela, and Kingston, Jamaica. This not only provided valuable training for the apprentices in *Essex*, it was a low-cost alternative to issuing individual orders to Squadron warships, thereby allowing Admiral Bunce to keep his unit concentrated, and was much less threatening to the Spanish than sending the entire squadron.<sup>158</sup>

On 6 March 1897, the Squadron got underway for Tompkinsville, Staten Island. *New York* was to perform a full speed trial on the way home, so Bunce arranged for the Squadron to break up and proceed independently after clearing the Virginia Capes.<sup>159</sup> It was one of the rare times during Bunce's command that the flagship moved without having tactical control of at least one other member of the Squadron – a far cry from the year 1873, when no squadron ships sailed in company at any time during the year. Bunce, in fact, was constantly concerned with operating his warships at least in pairs whenever possible, the better to exercise their station-keeping abilities. His instructions to *Texas* and *Maine*, returning to New York from their Mardi Gras duty in New Orleans were explicit that the two ships would be exercised during the transit. "Your attention is called to the Programme of Exercise for Section, issued by me June 15<sup>th</sup> 1896, a copy

---

<sup>158</sup> E.T. Strong, CDR, "Letter, Strong to Ramsay, 23 December 1896, 1896," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>159</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Circular Order, Bunce to North Atlantic Squadron, 5 March 1897, 1897," Order, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

enclosed,” he wrote to Captain Glass.<sup>160</sup> Likewise, even the monitors – although they did not exercise with the Squadron – were sent out in section whenever possible.<sup>161</sup>

Back in New York, preparations were underway for the dedication of the General Grant National Memorial, better known as “Grant’s Tomb.” The month of April found the Squadron in Hampton Roads. It got underway on 19 April, arriving back at the squadron anchorage at Tompkinsville, Staten Island, the next day.<sup>162</sup> On 25 April, the Squadron weighed anchor and steamed up the Hudson River, anchoring directly off the new mausoleum. After the flagship, *New York*, was *Maine*, *Indiana*, *Texas*, *Columbia*, *Raleigh*, *Amphitrite*, and *Terror*. The U.S. warships were joined by foreign vessels: from Great Britain, the *Talbot*; from Italy, the *Dogali*, from France, the *Fulton*, and from Spain, *Infanta Maria Teresa* and *Infanta Isabel*.<sup>163</sup> The morning of 27 April was cold and cloudy, which kept away a lot of casual observers. Still, the parade route was lined by the time the naval brigade, which had been landed earlier that morning, marched alongside hundreds of other civic and military participants through New York to the tomb. As the head of the column drew near the reviewing stand, a signal was given to the flagship, and the guns of the Squadron and their foreign guests erupted in the 21-gun salute prescribed for a head of state.

---

<sup>160</sup> Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Glass, 7 March 1897. " A “section” is a pair of warships.

<sup>161</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 20 March 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; W.C. Wise, CAPT, "Telegram, Wise to Secnav, 12 March 1897, 1897," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>162</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Telegram, Bunce to Ramsay, 20 April 1897, 1897," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>163</sup> Richardson Clover, CDR, "Letter, Clover to Long, 29 April 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. . *Infanta Maria Teresa* was Admiral Cervera’s flagship, and was sunk at the Battle of Santiago de Cuba just over a year later.

Anchored north of the Squadron, just off 133<sup>rd</sup> Street, was *Dolphin*, which was tasked with transporting President McKinley. Just after 4PM, the president embarked in *Dolphin*, and proceeded to review the assembled squadron. Each ship's guns boomed with another 21-gun salute as *Dolphin* passed. After honors were rendered, the president returned to the wharf to be whisked away to another engagement. In all, as Admiral Bunce reported, "the ceremonies for which the fleet was gathered here...were carried out...in all respects according to the plans prepared."<sup>164</sup> The success of the naval review was a fitting close to the admiral's tenure as commander-in-chief. On 1 May, he detached from command of the North Atlantic Squadron and reported as the Commandant, New York Navy Yard and Station. Although he never took the Squadron on an operational deployment, Admiral Bunce can be credited with coming the closest yet to realizing the transformation that Rear Admiral Luce had envisioned for the Squadron a decade earlier. During Bunce's tenure, single-ship deployments were kept to a minimum, while the entire squadron, now reinforced by the arrival of battleships, conducted two major and several lesser exercises. In Admiral Robley Evans' words: "we had mastered it [handling battleships] in the only way possible to seamen – by constant work and practice out on the blue water. We all owe much to Admiral Bunce."<sup>165</sup>

Admiral Bunce was relieved by Rear Admiral Montgomery Sicard, whose previous assignment had been commandant of the New York Navy Yard.<sup>166</sup> Like all the admirals of his generation, Sicard had a distinguished Civil War record, having been

---

<sup>164</sup> F.M. RADM Bunce, "Letter, Bunce to Ramsay, 28 April 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>165</sup> Evans, 398.

<sup>166</sup> "Bunce Now in Command," *New York Times* (1857-1922), 2 May 1897.



present at the capture of New Orleans in 1862, run the batteries at Vicksburg in 1863, and commanded the gunboat *Seneca* during the assaults on Fort Fisher in 1864-1863. Post-war duty included tours at the Naval Academy, various sea commands, and nine years as chief of the Bureau of Ordnance.<sup>167</sup> Sicard inherited a squadron focused, at least in the short term, on domestic matters. However, greater problems were brewing in the North Atlantic Squadron's area of operations.

The longer the civil war in Cuba dragged on, the more desperate the Spanish Empire became to suppress the insurrection. By 1896, the Spanish forces had burned entire villages and planted fields, seized livestock, and rounded up Cuban civilians to be placed in the infamous "reconcentration" camps.<sup>168</sup> All of this, of course, was bad for U.S. business interests on the island, which amounted to \$50 million in direct investments and another \$100 million in trade.<sup>169</sup> This, coupled with the vibrant ex-patriot "Cuba Libre" movement, contributed to a constant interest by various combinations of U.S. citizens and Cubans to become involved in helping the rebels eject the Spanish from the island. As has already been shown, throughout 1896 and 1897, attempts to maintain U.S. neutrality were leading to an increasing workload for the squadron. What had begun as an assignment of one vessel to duty off Florida had become a constant deployment of three North Atlantic Squadron warships by the time Sicard took over. The trouble brewing in Cuba pushed Sicard to continue drilling his Squadron, preparing for whatever crisis

---

<sup>167</sup> Cogar, 167-168.

<sup>168</sup> Louis A. Perez, Jr., *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 99-100.

<sup>169</sup> Herring, 309-310.

might develop.<sup>170</sup> The Department took a renewed interest in training and preparedness as well, detaching *Amphitrite* from the Squadron on 7 May to serve as a training ship for gun captains.<sup>171</sup>

Spring began the season for celebrations and commemorations. One of the first orders Sicard gave as commander-in-chief was to send *Terror* and *Texas* to Philadelphia to participate in the dedication of a statue erected to George Washington by the Order of Cincinnati.<sup>172</sup> Sicard himself, in the flagship *New York*, was off to Boston for the unveiling of a statue dedicated to Colonel Robert G. Shaw, the famous commanding officer of the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts "Colored" infantry regiment. *Texas* joined the flagship in Boston after finishing her duties in Philadelphia. *Massachusetts* then joined the other two ships on 17 June for the anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill.<sup>173</sup> From Boston, *Massachusetts* headed north to St. John's, Newfoundland to take part in the celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of Newfoundland, while *Texas* headed the other direction – to Hampton Roads, where she was made available for inspection by the members of an engineering society that was holding an annual meeting there.<sup>174</sup> While these various port visits were being scheduled, representatives of the U.S. mackerel fishing fleet, which fished in the waters opened to them by treaty with Great Britain, were

---

<sup>170</sup> RAMD Robley Evans credits him with drilling hard to prepare for war. See: Evans.

<sup>171</sup> Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy 1897* 1897. Vol. 1. 230.

<sup>172</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Wise, 4 May 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>173</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Long, 13 May 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>174</sup> D. W. Prowse, "Letter, Prowse to Rodgers, 24 June 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Long, 4 June 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Long, 24 May 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

clamoring for a warship to make a cruise in those waters to discourage Canadian interference with their fishing rights.<sup>175</sup> *Marblehead* was eventually designated for this duty, after a port visit to her namesake city of Marblehead, Massachusetts in June.<sup>176</sup>

In the midst of servicing all these requests from citizens that wanted to either see their warships, or have them actually protect them, Sicard became concerned that the cohesion of his squadron, and her new mission to maintain the ability to fight a fleet action, might suffer. In June, he wrote to the Secretary of the Navy, expressing emphatically the importance of keeping “together as many of the vessels of this squadron as the demands of the service will allow.” Sicard went on to note:

Being ‘in squadron’ is of great advantage to the discipline and order of ships, as it promotes emulation between their officers and crews, and the frequent signaling made necessary by the presence of numerous vessels, keeps the personnel watchful, alert, and attentive, and accustoms them to constant use of the different kinds of signals – in other words the squadron is an excellent school of practical, every day duty.<sup>177</sup>

Sicard, like Bunce and Luce before him, envisioned the North Atlantic Squadron as a fighting organization constantly devoted to training, not an administrative grouping of ships.

Rear Admiral Sicard’s concerns were answered by Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt. In a letter sent just two days after Sicard mailed his from Hampton Roads, Roosevelt reassured the admiral, stating that: “The Department desires to keep the squadron intact after August 1<sup>st</sup>, and from that date you will have ample

---

<sup>175</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Elmer, 16 June 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>176</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, "Letter, Roosevelt to Sicard, 17 June 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Elmer, 26 June 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>177</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Long, 15 June 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

opportunity for squadron drills.”<sup>178</sup> At the time of his correspondence with Sicard, Roosevelt had just returned from Newport, Rhode Island, where on 2 June 1897 he had given one of the pivotal speeches of his career to the Naval War College class of 1897. “We must therefore make up our minds once for all to the fact that it is too late to make ready for war when the fight has once begun,” he had said then.<sup>179</sup> Sicard had a true ally in Roosevelt, who was eagerly in favor of keeping the Squadron together as much as possible, and understood that preparedness required constant training and learning. Two weeks later, Sicard traveled from Norfolk to Washington, D.C., where he met with personally with Roosevelt as well as Captain Goodrich of the Naval War College. Together with Captain Crowninshield, Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, the three men planned the Squadron’s August maneuvers.<sup>180</sup>

### ***Naval Militia Drills, 1897***

Before the Squadron could drill themselves, however, they had to provide training for the naval militia. The success of 1896 led the state organizations to expect even better things for 1897. That year’s exercises promised to be the most extensive yet. After careful planning, Sicard issued a flurry of orders to his warships on 24 June. *Wilmington* was ordered from her current station at Key West, Florida to Brunswick, Georgia, to arrive by 13 July. There she was to cooperate with the drills of the Georgia Militia. *New York, Maine, and Texas* were to depart Hampton Roads on 29 June. The three ships would proceed to the southern drill ground, exercise until 3 July 1897, then

---

<sup>178</sup> Roosevelt, "".

<sup>179</sup> T. Roosevelt, *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt: American Ideals, with a Biographical Sketch by F. V. Greene. Administration* (P. F. Collier, 1897), 277.

<sup>180</sup> "Squadron Manoeuvres," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 29 June 1897.

head north. *Maine* would leave the flag off the Capes of Delaware, proceeding to meet the Pennsylvania Naval Militia. *Texas* would proceed to Fisher's Island, where the naval militias of Connecticut and East New Jersey were to encamp. *Massachusetts* was ordered to Boston, to work with the naval militia of her namesake state alongside the torpedo boat *Ericsson* from 12 – 16 July. She was then to return to New York, where she would join *Maine* in cooperating with the Naval Militia of New York from 24 – 31 July.<sup>181</sup>

The summer militia exercises themselves were fairly unremarkable. What was new was Assistant Secretary Roosevelt's personal involvement. Characteristically, Roosevelt threw himself into advocacy for the growing naval militia movement. During the summer, he visited the encampments of the Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and New York organizations, while overseeing the assignment of North Atlantic Squadron resources to as many units as could be reasonably accommodated. While Roosevelt was generally very supportive of the militia movement, he was uncomfortable with the naval militia's subordination to the state governors, and only thought that so much could be done as long as each militia organization depended on its own state government for orders and funding. He called for a national naval reserve, which could harness expertise resident in the "seafaring classes" in time of war. Until then, Roosevelt made it clear that he thought the main contribution of the naval militia would come in harbor defense – specifically

---

<sup>181</sup> "Naval Militia Drills," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 29 June 1897; Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Long, 24 June 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

laying defensive minefields, and manning coastal signal stations to warn of the arrival of hostile fleets.<sup>182</sup>

The summer work with the naval militia complete, the Squadron prepared to resume their own training. On 2 August, *New York*, *Massachusetts*, *Indiana*, *Puritan*, *Maine*, and *Fern* left the Squadron anchorage at Tompkinsville for Newport, Rhode Island.<sup>183</sup> It was the largest gathering of the new navy ever seen in Newport, and the city turned out in force for a series of celebrations. The morning of 4 August was taken up with boat races. Racing the oar-driven cutters which served as ships' boats was a traditional favorite pastime for sailors. Commanding officers were often passionate about their cutter crews, and bragging rights throughout the Squadron often depended on a good race from a ship's handpicked crew.<sup>184</sup> At the 4 August races, the second crew from *New York* took first place, followed by the crews from *Iowa*, *Indiana*, *New York's* first boat, and *Massachusetts*.<sup>185</sup> Athletics regularly organized at the squadron level provide yet another piece of evidence that the North Atlantic Squadron had developed a discrete organizational identity. The members of the Squadron sailed together, drilled together, and engaged in recreational activities together so regularly by 1897 that there standing boat crews for their frequent cutter races.

Later in the afternoon of 4 August, a parade wound through the narrow downtown streets of Newport. Representatives from the Army troops stationed at Fort Adams, the Rhode Island militia and naval militia, the Marine detachments and sailors from each of

---

<sup>182</sup> Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy 1897*. 85-91.

<sup>183</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Telegram, Sicard to Ramsay, 2 August 1897, 1897," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>184</sup> c.f.: Evans, 401-402.

<sup>185</sup> "Boat Races and Parade," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 4 August 1897.

the warships marched past the stand as Rear Admiral Sicard, Retired Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, Governor Elisha Dyer of Rhode Island, and Secretary of the Navy John D. Long reviewed them.<sup>186</sup> In the evening, the officers of the Squadron were honored at a reception.<sup>187</sup>

From Newport, the Squadron sailed for Portsmouth, New Hampshire on 11 August. *Puritan* left the day before, as her speed of advance was considerably less than the rest of the Squadron's. Off Cape Cod, the battleship *Iowa* and armored cruiser *Brooklyn* were detached to proceed to Provincetown, MA, where they were to determine their tactical measurements, which the Squadron did not have yet due to the fact that they were the two newest ships. After completely gathering all the tactical data they could, they were to join the flag at Portland, Maine.<sup>188</sup> The remaining ships stayed in Portsmouth from 11 – 16 August, at which time they departed for Portland, Maine. They were joined in Portland by *Iowa* and *Brooklyn*, who had finished their data collection. Together, the seven ships participated in "Squadron Day" at the New England Fair on 18 August. 1250 officers and men were landed to march in a parade. The ships of the Squadron were illuminated in the evening, and the Governor of Maine was hosted on board *New York* the next day. A lengthy editorial in the *New York Times* pointed out that, only five or six years previously, the American public had taken pride in the North Atlantic Squadron led by Rear Admiral Walker, the nucleus of which was his Squadron of Evolution. Four years previously, the world had acknowledged the United States as an

---

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> "War Ships Arrive at Newport," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 4 August 1897.

<sup>188</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Bartlett, 9 August 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Ramsay, 12 August 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

emerging naval power at the 1893 International Naval Review. The Times marveled at the four battleships and three cruisers on display in New England. “This formidable squadron is presently to proceed to sea for exercise in battle evolutions. Its movements will be watched with the greatest interest...they [naval officers] cannot have too much familiarity with such undertakings.”<sup>189</sup>

After a week in Bar Harbor, Maine, where the commander-in-chief and his officers partook of the usual festivities, the Squadron got underway on 30 August for the southern drill grounds, off Hampton Roads, and Admiral Sicard’s long-awaited summer maneuvers.<sup>190</sup> These maneuvers were closely observed by Assistant Secretary Roosevelt, who joined the Squadron in *Dolphin* on 7 September. Roosevelt spent two full days with the Squadron, inspecting *Iowa* and *Brooklyn*, observing target practice – both service and sub-caliber, searchlight drills, and squadron evolutions, departing on 9 September. The maneuvers continued for another three days, finishing on 12 September. Sicard pronounced the results “generally...satisfactory.”<sup>191</sup>

After spending a couple of weeks coaling the ships and performing routine maintenance, Sicard wrote to the Department with his plans for the next month. He envisioned a series of maneuvers, taking the Squadron first to the southern drill grounds from 27 September to 1 or 2 October, then to the Yorktown area where the naval brigade could be landed for drills and target practice. After re-coaling, the Squadron would be

---

<sup>189</sup> "Admiral Sicard's Squadron," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 5 August 1897.

<sup>190</sup> "A Dinner to Admiral Sicard," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 26 August 1897; Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Telegram, Sicard to Ramsay, 30 August 1897, 1897," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. ; "Society at Bar Harbor," *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 28 August 1897.

<sup>191</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Telegram, Sicard to Ramsay, 12 September 1897, 1897," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .



ready for whatever other duties the Department might have in mind.<sup>192</sup> What followed was a bizarre exchange of letters with Assistant Secretary Roosevelt that speaks volumes about the change in the character of fleet command in the 1890's.

Roosevelt's leadership within the Navy Department during Secretary Long's lengthy illnesses and visits to his home is a well-known and accepted fact. The story of Roosevelt's telegram to Dewey in Hong Kong, telling him to coal his ships and attack the Philippines in the event of war with Spain is legend among even the most casual students of the war. What is less known is the extent to which the hyperactive Roosevelt was deeply involved in the operations of the Home Squadron during this time. On 21 September, Sicard received this letter from Roosevelt, acting as secretary in Long's absence:

The Department suggests that advantage be taken of all the passages of the Squadron under your command from one port to another to engage in fleet maneuvers, instead of waiting until your arrival upon the regular drill grounds in order to engage in these exercises.<sup>193</sup>

One can only imagine how Rear Admiral Walker, or Rear Admiral Meade would have received this letter. Previous chapters have documented Walker's multiple-page missives fired off for much less provocation than this. Sicard, however, remained calm. In a respectful reply, he gently instructed Roosevelt in how units of multiple ships move together and what sort of environmental factors govern their movements, then went on to

---

<sup>192</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Ramsay, 20 September 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>193</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, "Letter, Roosevelt to Sicard, 21 September 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

say sympathetically, "I am fully alive to the importance of practicing evolutions whenever opportunity is afforded....and shall do so."<sup>194</sup>

The Squadron anchored off Yorktown, Virginia on 27 September, Sicard having decided to do the landing drills and ashore work prior to taking on coal. The planned rifle target practice for the sailors had to be postponed until the Squadron could find another location for a makeshift range. The Yorktown area had become so settled that Sicard was concerned that the rounds from the Navy's new 6mm rifle would endanger civilian lives or property, so he decided to await another opportunity elsewhere. The Squadron made up for the lack of rifle target practice with a week of "exercising landing brigades on shore, in extended movements by companies, and in target practice with pistols and revolvers." On 1 October, sailors from *New York*, *Maine*, and *Puritan* set up defensive positions on Gloucester Point. They were then attacked by the battalions from *Brooklyn*, *Iowa*, *Massachusetts*, and *Indiana*. After a day of fighting, the offense was judged to have won the skirmish. Upon completion of the landing exercises, *Fern* left for Norfolk, Virginia, with a draft of handpicked men to be trained as gun captains on board *Amphitrite*, which had been stationed at Norfolk since being detached from the Squadron in May.<sup>195</sup> The rest of the Squadron departed Yorktown on 4 October, headed to the southern drill ground for maneuvers. *Brooklyn* was detached to Hampton Roads when one of her main steam pipes began leaking and required repairs. *Puritan* was detached to proceed to the New York Navy Yard for scheduled repairs. The remaining ships: *New York*, *Iowa*, *Massachusetts*, *Indiana* and *Maine* conducted tactical maneuvers from 5 – 9

---

<sup>194</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Long, 23 September 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>195</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Long, 2 October 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

October.<sup>196</sup> *Indiana* and *Maine* were detached by the Navy Department to proceed on other business. The three remaining ships then proceeded to Cape Cod Bay, where they met up with *Texas* and conducted another set of tactical maneuvers on 13 October, before departing the area for Boston, where the Squadron participated in ceremonies marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the launching of the USS Constitution, on 21 October.<sup>197</sup>

The Squadron arrived back at Tompkinsville, Staten Island, New York on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October. *New York* went into dock immediately, for a scheduled upkeep period.<sup>198</sup> Although not underway, Admiral Sicard never lost sight of the vital importance of continuing with training and preparedness. He dispatched *Texas*, which had been in the New York Navy Yard for much of the previous underway period, to the northern drill grounds for four days of target practice on all guns, following a set of instructions very carefully written and issued by him. Captain Wise was admonished to “express [his] opinion of the practice, using for that purpose, the Naval Academy scale of merit.”<sup>199</sup> It is a myth that accuracy with the great guns was ignored until after the War of 1898. Although there were charges of “gun-decking” target practice scores, and the real-world post-battle analysis of the accuracy at the Battle of Santiago de Cuba showed an abysmal hit rate, the fact was that better accuracy awaited advances in technology, not more effort

---

<sup>196</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Ramsay, 14 October 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>197</sup> Ibid. "" .

<sup>198</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Ramsay, 24 October 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>199</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Wise, 10 November 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

on the part of the Squadron or her commanders-in-chief to practice with the guns.<sup>200</sup> During this time, Sicard also issued a number of orders to Squadron warships concerning the ongoing efforts to patrol the Florida coastline. *Montgomery* and *Vesuvius* were ordered to Pensacola and Jacksonville, respectively, to join *Detroit* which was under the Navy Department's direct jurisdiction, patrolling the Key West district.<sup>201</sup>

The Squadron now regularly not only went to sea together, but spent time not at sea in the same port, usually Tompkinsville, Staten Island. Time in port together inevitably meant that the crews of the warships would spend their leisure time together. The time-honored tradition of racing the ships' cutters has already been mentioned. Previous chapters have touched on the existence of baseball teams on board some of the larger ships.<sup>202</sup> The 1890's craze for sporting and other leisure activities carried over to the Navy, with other sports soon joining rowing and baseball. Importantly, these sports were organized and enjoyed on a Squadron level, not by ship. Bicycling was becoming popular during this time, and two of the Squadron's commanding officers, Captain Silas Casey of *New York*, and Captain Francis Higginson of *Massachusetts* were avid cyclists. A cycling club started on *New York*, but that was insufficient to serve the numbers of officers who were interested. Soon, a circular was sent to the wardroom of every ship in the Squadron, and the North Atlantic Squadron Bicycle Club was born, complete with elected officers and representatives from each warship. At this point the officers not only were comfortable with each other when handling their ships in formation and mingled

---

<sup>200</sup> Herrick, 165-166.

<sup>201</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Telegram, Sicard to Bradford, 7 November 1887, 1897," Telegram, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>202</sup> *Chicago*, while John G. Walker's flagship, was said to have an excellent baseball team. See Ch. 3

with each other at official functions and receptions, they now formed relationships and shared interests to the point where they were participating in non-official recreational organizations on a squadron level.

### ***Conclusions***

Through 1897, the trouble in Cuba escalated to the point that the Navy Department eventually wanted the entire North Atlantic Squadron in Florida. Sicard was alerted on 3 December that the Department desired the Squadron's winter cruise and exercises to take place off Key West and the Dry Tortugas. He was directed to concentrate his Squadron at Hampton Roads prior to moving south.<sup>203</sup> In compliance with this plan, Sicard began to issue orders to his warships. Throughout 1897, Sicard had worked to successfully prepare his squadron for the deployment which they were now undertaking.<sup>204</sup> The flagship moved to Hampton Roads in December. In his instructions to the other warships which would be joining the squadron when their repairs were complete, Sicard was emphatic that all line officers be afforded an opportunity to practice the tactical maneuvers they would be expected to be familiar with. He even enclosed a copy of a table which had been created on *New York*, containing each junior officer's name, the various evolutions practiced, and the date that officer acted as the Officer of the Deck during one of the evolutions. He strongly suggested that his other warships take up this practice of systematic training.<sup>205</sup>

---

<sup>203</sup> John D. Long, "Letter, Long to Sicard, 3 December 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>204</sup> Although they would deploy without him. Sicard was condemned by medical survey in late 1897 and had to be replaced by W.T. Sampson right before the outbreak of hostilities.

<sup>205</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Co of Brooklyn, 28 December 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

On 8 December, Bunce ordered Captain Sigsbee of the *Maine* to “proceed with the MAINE under your command to Key West, Florida, and there await further orders.”<sup>206</sup> These were fateful instructions. In his memoirs, Rear Admiral Robley Evans described those last few weeks of *Maine*’s short existence. “At Key West, Florida, I found the North Atlantic Fleet under the command of Rear Admiral Sicard, and it was clear to me that that able officer expected war with Spain and was doing all he could to be ready for it when it came.”<sup>207</sup>

The previous chapter ended with a commander-in-chief who was unsure of the locations or assignments of any of his warships, other than the flagship. That was in 1894. Three years later, the Squadron not only traveled in formation, they trained together, using standardized training guides promulgated by Rear Admiral Sicard. They socialized together after hours, engaging in activities like the North Atlantic Squadron Bicycle Club. In the three years prior to the War of 1898, the commander-in-chief of the North Atlantic Squadron was in direct tactical control of at least one of his ships for 536 of 1095 days, or 49% of the time. Ten major squadron exercises took place. These facts represent a major change both in mission and identity. The Squadron’s primary mission shifted from single-ship “showing-the-flag” and presence operations to being prepared to confront an enemy fleet. With that change in function came an identity as a tactical unit which had not existed fifteen, or even three, years earlier.

Significant advances were made in multi-ship operations. Under the leadership of Rear Admiral Meade, the “usual winter’s cruise” in 1895 was accomplished not by

---

<sup>206</sup> Montgomery Sicard, RADM, "Letter, Sicard to Sigsbee, 8 December 1897, 1897," Letter, RG 45, Area Files of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, Washington, D.C. .

<sup>207</sup> Evans, 404.

sending the warships out piecemeal to various ports in the Caribbean, but by moving as a squadron throughout the operating area. Although Meade's attitude and leadership style were incompatible with the demands placed upon a modern commander-in-chief, he was effective in keeping the Squadron concentrated and developing its unit identity. Under Rear Admiral Bunce, the Squadron reached new heights in the development of doctrine and tactics through a series of meticulously-planned exercises. The support and development of a naval militia enabled the Squadron to restrict its involvement in harbor protection. With the monitors in ordinary manned by willing naval militia volunteers, the North Atlantic Squadron could focus on the tasks required of a sea-going battle fleet.

There were still challenges to be met before the true power projection capabilities of the organization could be realized. The purchase and delivery of high-quality coal for so many warships concentrated in one place continued to consume an inordinate amount of time for both the Squadron and the Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting. The steel ships had to be docked more often, and the lack of availability of enough suitable drydocks – especially for the larger ships – was a limiting factor. Target practice was unrealistic, and the concept of conducting exercises against opposing forces had not yet been perfected. Still, at 1897's end the North Atlantic Squadron was a changed organization. Consisting of entirely new materiel and better-trained, it entered 1898 as a coherent combat unit, prepared for combat as a squadron.

## Epilogue

It is appropriate that this study end in the same geographic location where it began, 23 years earlier: the waters off the coast of Key West, Florida. There, at the anchorage off the island of Dry Tortugas, the North Atlantic Squadron, with Rear Admiral Montgomery Sicard in command, was resting after a day of exercises. Late in the evening of 15 February 1898, a torpedo boat from the naval station came alongside the flagship *New York* with the shocking news of the explosion of the battleship *Maine* in Havana, Cuba. The much-anticipated war with Spain was now almost a certainty. The North Atlantic Squadron was ready; not simply because it possessed modern steel warships, but because it had spent the last two decades engaged in an ongoing process of transformation from an administrative unit to a group of warships constituting a battle fleet. The process was not complete in 1898, but enough progress had been made to test the North Atlantic Squadron's ability to engage another naval power in a multi-ship action, should the need arise.

A full scholarly treatment of the North Atlantic Squadron's actions during the War of 1898 is beyond the scope of this study. However, a brief review of the Squadron's accomplishments between February and July of 1898 will serve as a background upon which to consider the arguments of this dissertation.<sup>1</sup> This study has

---

<sup>1</sup>The following account draws from: William G. Cassard, Chaplain, USN, ed. *Battleship Indiana and Her Part in the Spanish-American War* (New York, NY: Everett B. Mero, 1898); A. B. Feuer, *The Spanish-American War at Sea: Naval Action in the Atlantic* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995); W. A. M. Goode, ed. *With Sampson through the War: Being an Account of the Naval Operations of the North Atlantic Squadron During the Spanish-American War of 1898* (New York, NY: Doubleday and McClure Co., 1899); Jim Leeke, *Manila and Santiago: The New Steel Navy in the Spanish-American War* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 2009); John D. Long, *The New American Navy*, 2 vols., vol. 1 and 2 (New York, NY:



offered evidence that the creation of fleet practices crucial for the sound deployment of the modern warships of the “New Steel Navy” began in the 1870’s, grew in the 1880’s, and matured in the 1890’s. The result of this ongoing process was the construction of an organizational identity as a combat unit.

Swinging at anchor with Sicard’s flagship, the armored cruiser *New York*, were the battleships *Iowa*, *Texas*, *Massachusetts*, and *Indiana*. During the 1874 crisis, the order for a concentration of the fleet in Key West was made during a meeting of President Grant’s cabinet on 14 November 1873, and that it was not until the end of January, 1874, after the threat of hostilities had already passed, that enough of a “fleet” could be mustered to hold tactical exercises. By late 1897, enough new ships existed that the North Atlantic Squadron could remain concentrated as the norm, rather than an exception.

After the war, Rear Admiral Sicard was criticized for his first actions after finding out *Maine* had been destroyed. Some felt that Sicard should have weighed anchor and got underway with the battleships for Havana instantly. Perhaps the show of force of his battleships in Havana harbor would have caused the Spanish to capitulate, and might have averted hostilities. Rear Admirals John G. Walker or Richard W. Meade might have done just that. As has been shown the concept of squadron command of these officers took an expansive view of the powers of the commander-in-chief to do as he thought best and seek permission later. Sicard reacted as the modern institution would have expected him to. He moved *New York* closer to Key West that evening, to stay in closer telegraphic communication with Washington, D.C, and awaited orders from the

---

The Outlook Company, 1903); Craig L. Symonds, *The Naval Institute Historical Atlas of the U.S. Navy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995).

Navy Department concerning the disposition of his squadron. Sicard's actions are evidence that the mode of leadership of the commander-in-chief was undergoing a process of change as well, from what Morris Janowitz has called a "heroic" leader to a "managerial" one. Sicard regarded his command not as his personal fiefdom but as an instrument of power to be directed by Washington, D.C.<sup>2</sup>

Rear Admiral Sicard was replaced in command of the North Atlantic Squadron by Captain W.T. Sampson, *Iowa's* commanding officer, on 28 March 1898. Like Sicard, Sampson had been assigned previously as the chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, prior to assuming command of *Iowa*. Much has been made of Sicard's relief by Sampson. The accusations are twofold: that Sicard had somehow been found lacking by Secretary of the Navy Long, and that Sampson was advanced over the heads of several officers senior to him due to some kind of favoritism. Both charges are vehemently denied by Secretary Long in his memoirs.<sup>3</sup> The facts are simply that a shooting war was coming, and Sicard was demonstrably unwell. Secretary of the Navy Long (not exactly healthy himself) prudently had to get someone into the commander-in-chief's position who was physically capable of the demanding duties associated with leading a squadron of warships in a fleet combat action. Sampson, although only a captain at the time, was the next senior officer in the North Atlantic Squadron, and it was his rightful place to take the squadron in the event of his senior's incapacity. Sampson had the added advantage of having worked with the Squadron while captain of *Iowa*. It was hardly the right time to attempt to break in a flag officer who might have been senior to Sampson, but was serving ashore when the crisis erupted.

---

<sup>2</sup> Janowitz.

<sup>3</sup> Long, *The New American Navy*, 209-213.

The organization of Sampson's fleet soon became an issue for the Navy Department. Faced with the threat of an actual war, the idea of a concentrated fleet broke down in the face of popular clamor for coast defense. The extensive public relations work done by the Squadron, documented in this study, produced an unexpected side effect. Immediately upon the threat of hostilities, cities up and down the east coast demanded protection from the threat of the unlocated Spanish squadron. The Navy Department's first response was to mobilize thirteen Civil War-era monitors and man them with personnel drawn from the ranks of the naval militia. However, even civilians understood that the ancient monitors and their ridiculous smooth-bore artillery were no protection against the capabilities the Spanish armored cruisers possessed.

Eventually, the decision was taken to constitute two combat squadrons and one patrol squadron with all the assets available. In addition to Sampson's North Atlantic Squadron, the so-called "Flying Squadron" was formed at Hampton Roads, which was believed to be close enough to Key West to reinforce the North Atlantic Squadron if necessary, yet close enough to New York to protect it if occasion arose. *Texas*, *Massachusetts*, and *Iowa* formed its nucleus, with *Brooklyn* as the flagship of Rear Admiral Schley. Further north, The Northern Patrol Squadron, commanded by Rear Admiral J. A. Howell, was built around a core of four converted Morgan Line steamships, renamed *Yankee*, *Dixie*, *Prarie*, and *Yosemite*. These ships were scattered up and down the east coast, ostensibly to provide early warning of the approach of the unlocated Spanish squadron. The real purpose of the vessels was to assuage the fears of the public, which were greatly magnified by the constant alarmist reporting of newspapers. The Northern Patrol Squadron served its purpose. If not for the naval

militia, the assets available to the combatant squadrons would probably have been drawn down even further.

Upon the declaration of war by Congress on 21 April, the Squadron was immediately ordered to get underway and establish a blockade of major Cuban ports. Early on the morning of 22 April, *New York* departed Key West, followed by *Indiana*, *Cincinnati*, *Wilmington*, *Helena*, *Machias*, *Nashville*, *Castine*, seven torpedo boats and three monitors. The challenge facing Sampson was to mount an effective and maintainable blockade that would deprive Spanish troops of the supplies necessary to continue fighting, while keeping in mind that the whereabouts of a Spanish squadron that was said to have left Spain under the command of Admiral Cervera were not known.

This latter complication was the reason that the Navy Department would not allow Sampson to close on Havana and shell it into submission with his battleships, as he had requested permission to do. The plan might have worked, but the Navy Department objected that there were no infantry forces available to occupy the city, even if it did surrender. Moreover, after the shocking loss of *Maine*, public opinion would not stand the loss or serious damage of another capital warship. Sampson was required to preserve his armored ships for an anticipated battle with a Spanish fleet.

After receiving word that Cervera had left the Cape Verde Islands on 29 April, Sampson left a few cruisers off Cuba and took the rest of the Squadron to San Juan, Puerto Rico. His arrival was delayed by the fact that he had to have the two monitors assigned to the squadron towed. It did not matter, however, because Cervera was not at San Juan. The Squadron bombarded the city fortifications for about an hour, with little effect, then returned to Key West to refuel. Upon arrival there, he was met with the news

that the Spanish had been sighted at Martinique. With proof that Cervera did not, therefore, pose a threat to the east coast, Schley's Flying Squadron was detached from Hampton Roads and ordered to report to Sampson at Key West. Both squadrons met at the Naval Station on 18 May. While they were deciding their next move, Cervera was able to refuel at Curacao, then steam quickly across the Caribbean to the safety of Santiago de Cuba.

While Sampson was busy hunting for Cervera, the Asiatic Squadron, under Commodore George Dewey, delivered a crushing defeat to the Spanish squadron guarding the Philippines at the Battle of Manila Bay on 1 May 1898. The Asiatic Squadron's experience is not directly concerned with this study. However, a couple of observations are in order. Dewey's squadron consisted of the cruisers *Olympia* (flag), *Baltimore*, *Boston*, and *Raleigh*, gunboats *Petrel* and *Concord*, and the revenue cutter *McCulloch*. Of these seven warships, *Baltimore*, *Raleigh*, and *Petrel* had served with the North Atlantic Squadron, and *Boston* and *Concord* with Walker's Squadron of Evolution, prior to their assignment to a foreign cruising station. Only the flagship *Olympia* had not had the opportunity to be immersed in daily, multi-ship operations. In this can be seen evidence of the fruition of Luce's vision of using the North Atlantic Squadron as a school of practical application for the fleet.

Unlike the Battle of Santiago, which will be discussed shortly, the Battle of Manila Bay was actually fought in formation. Prior to the engagement, Dewey formed his squadron into a column. He then directed the movements of the column as it attacked, withdrew, and then re-attacked the Spanish line. The simple column was not a complicated formation, nor did it have to be maneuvered in a complex manner, mostly

due to the fact that the Spanish squadron was stationary. Nonetheless, it can be argued that at least some of the credit for the success enjoyed by the Asiatic Squadron belongs to the rigorous exercise at sea that six of its seven members received while with the Home Squadron/Squadron of Evolution in the 1890's.

Meanwhile, not knowing that Cervera had steamed for Santiago, Sampson assumed that he would be headed either for Havana or Cienfuegos, a harbor on the southern coast of Cuba that was connected by railway with the capital. Accordingly, Sampson augmented the Flying Squadron with *Iowa*, and sent Schley to blockade the harbor of Cienfuegos. Meanwhile, he took the remainder of the North Atlantic Squadron and blockaded Havana. It was at this point that Schley committed the first of several missteps which contributed to the acrimony between the two men after the war. Taking an inordinate amount of time to reach Cienfuegos, Schley did not arrive off the harbor until 22 May, and then was unable to ascertain definitively whether the Spanish were there or not. Sampson, meanwhile, had received intelligence that Cervera was at Santiago, and frantically sent a dispatch vessel to Schley with orders to proceed to Santiago at once and find the Spanish.

Schley kept his own counsel, however, and delayed two days in leaving Cienfuegos. When he finally got within about 30 miles of Santiago, he decided that his squadron was low on coal. Unable to refuel at sea due to bad weather, he turned the Flying Squadron around and steamed for Key West. While headed West, the Squadron was met by another dispatch vessel with orders from the Navy Department to return to Santiago and find out whether or not Cervera's squadron was actually there, and to "take appropriate action" if it was. Schley's response was: "Much to be regretted, cannot obey

orders,” and he continued for Key West. Secretary of the Navy Long later remarked that the Department could be justly criticized for not relieving Schley on the spot.” Fortunately for Schley’s career, as well as the U.S. war effort, there was a break in the weather and Schley was finally able to refuel his ships lowest on coal. On the evening of 28 May, he returned to Santiago and found the Spanish squadron in the harbor.

Sampson brought the North Atlantic Squadron to Santiago immediately. With the two forces unified, he established a close blockade of Santiago de Cuba. On 10 June, he ordered a battalion of Marines ashore at nearby Guantanamo Bay to establish a coaling and resupply station. The successful operation validated the many landing exercises the North Atlantic Squadron had carried out in over the previous years. Sampson then called upon the Army to land and capture Santiago’s fortifications, so that he could approach the harbor without exposing his capital ships to fire from the Spanish guns. In response, 16,000 men led by General William R. Shafter embarked in transports at Tampa, Florida, and sailed to the southeastern coast of Cuba. The 32 transport ships were convoyed by Navy warships, in an escort formation reminiscent of one that had been practiced by Rear Admiral Case in 1874.

General Shafter’s forces landed twenty miles east of Santiago. Sampson met with Shafter on 20 June. On 1 July, the U.S. forces attacked Santiago’s outer defenses at El Caney and San Juan Hill. The Americans carried the defenses, but at a cost of over 1500 men killed or wounded. Shafter was concerned that he would have to withdraw, and he sent a message to Sampson begging him to attack the harbor to relieve pressure on the Army forces.

This, of course, was impossible, due to the mines and the guns of the still-uncaptured Spanish fortifications. On the morning of 3 July, Sampson set out in *New York* to meet with Shafter and tell him so. Schley was left in charge of the blockade. At 9:30AM, the Spanish squadron sortied from Santiago. Every U.S. ship that could get up enough steam took off in pursuit of the Spanish ships, firing wildly. *New York*, with Sampson aboard, turned around and frantically raced toward the scene of the battle, only to find the action largely over by the time she could get within the range of her guns.

During these initial moments, Schley's actions again came into question. Concerned either about being within range of Spanish torpedoes or that Cervera's flagship, *Infanta Maria Theresa*, was trying to ram him, or some combination of both, Schley ordered *Brooklyn's* captain to turn her to starboard<sup>4</sup>, in a circle which nearly caused a collision with *Texas* and *Oregon*. *Texas* was required to back her engines hard, bringing the battleship almost to a complete halt. She was forced to stop firing as *Brooklyn* masked her guns. *Oregon* managed to evade both *Texas* and *Brooklyn* and continue past to the east. This episode would later be referred to as "The Loop." The final outcome of the engagement, never really in question, took a little over three hours and just less than 10,000 shells to effect. In the end, "a materially superior U.S. fleet had virtually destroyed its Spanish opponent while suffering almost no damage to itself."<sup>5</sup>

In the battle's aftermath, controversy erupted over which admiral deserved credit for the victory. Rear Admiral Sampson, although he had left the area for his meeting with General Shafter, remained in overall command of the victorious fleet, and left no

---

<sup>4</sup> i.e. in the opposite direction from the heading of the escaping Spanish ships.

<sup>5</sup> The ratio of hits to shells fired at Santiago was something on the order of 1.3%. Leeke, 153; Symonds, 114.



doubt in his initial telegrams to Washington D.C. that he considered himself the victor. Rear Admiral Schley, as the acting C-in-C in Sampson's absence, was in command during the battle itself. However as previously noted, his actions as officer-in-tactical-command largely consisted of flying a signal ordering the fleet to chase down the Spanish ships. The uneasy relationship between the two admirals was at least cordial in the beginning. Schley's after-action report to Sampson congratulated him "most sincerely upon this great victory to the *squadron under your command* (my italics)...and I am glad that I had an opportunity to contribute in the least to a victory that seems big enough for all of us."<sup>6</sup> After the war, tension between the two continued to grow until certain remarks, attributed to naval officers, were made public which cast aspersions on Schley's conduct in the early days of the campaign and the inept way in which *Brooklyn* was handled during the Santiago action. Schley demanded, and received a court of inquiry into his conduct in 1901. Alerted in advance that the board's findings were largely unfavorable to him, he retired quietly before it could issue its report.

---

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Leeke, 141.

## Conclusions

*“It was not the ‘sprint’ at the end, the feverish purchase of new ships or the repair of old ones, that enabled the United States Navy to meet all emergencies without hitch. No; it was the ‘hammer, hammer’ on the hard road of routine; the result of the gradual building up, by recent administrations, of a new navy based on modern lines, whose officers were men of intelligence and training...”<sup>7</sup>*

We have no way of knowing how the North Atlantic Squadron’s transformation would have been judged if it had been fully tested in 1898. Fortunately, the Squadron did not face a peer competitor in close order fleet combat. The fact that the hapless Spanish ships were destroyed by a superior North Atlantic Squadron has dominated the historical narrative of the 3 July 1898 engagement, but the Battle of Santiago was not a fleet action. After Rear Admiral Schley’s flagship hoisted the signals to “Follow the flag,” and “Close up,” the subsequent engagement resembled nothing so much as a target practice with the targets in motion. Theodore Roosevelt later referred to it as a “captain’s fight,” the implication being that further coordination and leadership from the flag was not required.<sup>8</sup>

Viewed properly, the Battle of Santiago represents not a conclusion or a finalized outcome, but a waypoint in the process of the development of an American battle fleet. The endpoint of this transformation requires further study. It can be argued that the first true test of American ability to fight in close order was the deployment of Battleship Division Nine to join the Royal Navy Grand Fleet during the First World War. British

---

<sup>7</sup> Goode, ed., 4.

<sup>8</sup> Long, *The New American Navy*, 47.

officers were underwhelmed with the tactical abilities of the U.S. battleships, particularly with respect to gunnery.<sup>9</sup> Having been thus exposed directly to the best practices of a mature fleet, however, the U.S. Navy was able to develop its own battle fleet in the interwar period. The proper endpoint of a full study of the development of a U.S. battle fleet would thus include the fleet problems of the 1920's and 1930's, and end with the outbreak of the Second World War.<sup>10</sup>

This is not to denigrate the significance of the process the Squadron went through to develop the ability to carry out the 1898 operations. It was a process that deserves careful study. This dissertation has argued that, beginning in 1874, the North Atlantic Squadron underwent a slow transformation from a largely administrative organization to a coherent combat unit. It was not a linear process, but one in which progress in critical areas was modulated by conflicting demands that caused distraction. From 1874 to 1897, the Squadron was constantly required to balance the missions of cruising, domestic security, and public relations with the Navy Department's desire to train for fleet combat.

The operational record narrated in this study, over a period of 23 years, suggests three distinct periods of ongoing development of the identity of the North Atlantic Squadron as a combat unit. This development was not continuously progressive, but was interspersed with setbacks. The conduct of foreign policy and limitations of materiel interfered with the ability of the Squadron to concentrate its forces in a manner conducive to conducting fleet tactical exercises and building unit identity. The Squadron began conducting tactical exercises with the wooden cruising assets available. A protean

---

<sup>9</sup> Jerry W. Jones, *U.S. Battleship Operations in World War I* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1998).

<sup>10</sup> For instance, C.C. Felker, *Testing American Sea Power: U.S. Navy Strategic Exercises, 1923-1940* (Texas A&M University Press, 2006).

concept of multi-ship operations was developed, yet the Squadron did not possess a fleet warfighting capability, a fact widely acknowledged by naval officers.<sup>11</sup> An interim period began when the last of the wooden cruising vessels was replaced by steel warships. The Navy accelerated the development of multi-ship capabilities with the deployments of the Squadron of Evolution, the Squadron for Special Service, and the Naval Review Fleet. The latter two units were concerned mainly with appearance, rather than warfighting capability. While largely for public relations purposes, their deployments forced the Navy Department to deal with a range of logistical issues and provided valuable experience for junior officers in the art of close order, multi-ship operations. A mature – I do not say complete – capability arrived when the Squadron was able to exercise its modern assets under simulated combat conditions, such as the mock blockade of Charleston, South Carolina. These exercises proved valuable when the Squadron was called upon to carry out similar tasks during the War of 1898.

The U.S. Navy, circa 1874 has been criticized as ineffectual. In fact, as historian Lance Buhl has argued, the U.S. possessed an adequate navy given the nation's priorities in the 1870's.<sup>12</sup> It was highly professionalized, with entry into the officer corps controlled by the U.S. Naval Academy and the U.S. Naval Institute as a forum for professional discourse and development. From a materiel standpoint, the wooden cruising vessels in use possessed the requisite amount of firepower to successfully intimidate small Caribbean nations, while their sails allowed them to cruise on station for long periods of time economically. This study has favorably compared the North

---

<sup>11</sup> Parker, "Our Fleet Maneuvers in the Bay of Florida, and the Navy of the Future."

<sup>12</sup> Lance Buhl, "Maintaining an American Navy," in Kenneth J. Hagen, ed. *In Peace and War: Interpretations of American Naval History*, 30th Anniversary Edition ed. (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008).

Atlantic Squadron in 1874 with the Royal Navy's Pacific Northwest Squadron at the same time, showing that the warships utilized to carry out the cruising mission were similar in the two navies. The difference was that the Royal Navy possessed enough resources to execute the cruising mission while retaining enough armored warships to field another squadron with a primary mission of fleet combat against a peer European naval power. The U.S. Navy had no such luxury. Fleet tactical training prior to 1874 was largely theoretical. Visionary officers such as Commodore Foxhall Parker wrote textbooks and developed signaling capabilities. Naval cadets were examined on the theory of tactical formations at Annapolis. No operational capability existed, however, and none was thought necessary until national strategic priorities changed. The *Virginius* incident in late 1873 highlighted the fact that the U.S. government could no longer pursue its strategic priorities in the Caribbean region with the Navy as it was then constituted, and pressed for change.<sup>13</sup> A new strategic purpose for the Navy required not only new materiel, but a new concept of operations and a new identity for the Home Squadron.

From 1874, the Navy Department made a conscious decision to train its personnel in the mechanics of fleet tactics under steam. This was to be practical training to complement the instruction naval cadets received at the Academy. The 1874 exercises were conducted at a speed of four knots, useless for an actual engagement against an enemy fleet. By 1882, the speed of the maneuvers had been raised to six knots. Tactical exercises with wooden cruising vessels had limits, though. By 1882, Rear Admiral Cooper let the Navy Department know in several of his reports that he felt his squadron had accomplished what it could in terms of practicing tactical formations. The strategic purpose for multi-ship operations was still unclear, as contingencies regularly interfered

---

<sup>13</sup> Love.

with the ability to concentrate enough warships to conduct fleet tactical training. As an example, Rear Admiral Cooper's relief, Rear Admiral Jouett, spent a large portion of his commander-in-chief tour responding to the revolution in Colombia and the threats to the passage of the Panamanian isthmus.

Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce wanted more. After establishing the Naval War College in 1884, he attempted to marry the theoretical work of the War College staff and students with practical application by the North Atlantic Squadron warships during summer exercises. During his tour as commander-in-chief, the Navy Department's strategic priorities had not yet developed to this point where enough assets could be made available to carry out Luce's vision. The requirement to provide presence throughout the Caribbean and the Canadian fisheries consistently interfered with, and eventually precluded his ability to carry out tactical exercises, much to Luce's frustration.

This limitation was addressed during 1889-1891 by providing a venue for multi-ship operations which would not be subject to the requirements of station cruising. As the first four steel warships authorized in 1883 were commissioned and joined the fleet, the Navy Department made a conscious decision to concentrate them, rather than assign them piecemeal to the various cruising stations. The establishment of the Squadron of Evolution in 1889, under the leadership of Rear Admiral John G. Walker, not only provided intensive experience in daily multi-ship operations, it required the Navy Department to address logistical issues associated with the overseas deployment of concentrated forces of warships. Rear Admiral Walker's correspondence made it clear that he viewed his primary duty as a commander-in-chief to be the preparation of his

squadron for combat. This marked a clear departure from the concept of command and the command experience of previous squadron commanders-in-chief.

The absence of an operational chain-of-command hindered developments during this time. The Admiral of the Navy was an advisor to the Secretary of the Navy without executive functions. Thus, individual squadron commanders did not report to a superior naval officer, but directly to the appointed secretary of the navy or his civilian assistant. This led to conflicts of personality among squadron commanders, most notably the tense relationship between Rear Admiral Gherardi of the North Atlantic Squadron and Rear Admiral (acting) Walker of the Squadron of Evolution. No structure was in place to mitigate these difficulties. Walker was an advocate of Stephen B. Luce's ideas, having used his influential position as chief of the Bureau of Navigation to support Luce's efforts to establish the Naval War College. However, his personal behavior and his conflict with Gherardi precluded what could otherwise have been an opportunity for meaningful multi-squadron tactical exercises in 1891-1892. Indeed, the evidence shows that the Navy Department went out of its way to keep the warships of the two squadrons apart during this time. The Sampson-Schley controversy following the Battle of Santiago indicates that issues of hierarchy of command remained to be corrected in the years following the period under study.

Further refinement of multi-ship operations came with the cruise of the Squadron for Special Service in 1892-1893, and the Naval Review Fleet in 1893. Both of these organizations provided extensive formation work and experience in the administrative and logistical problems associated with the deployment of large numbers of ships. However, while live-fire practice and drills were carried out on each ship, multi-ship

formation work and maneuvers in both of these units were largely about appearance, not fighting skill. Appearance was important in this age. The participation of the U.S. Navy on the stage of international naval pageantry made important contributions both to the image of the United States in its people's eyes and abroad, as well as to the squadron-based identity of U.S. Navy warships.

From 1895, squadron maneuvers were focused more on combat. Maneuvers not only exercised the warships at various formations, they began to have a specific strategic purpose, such as the blockade of Charleston, South Carolina in 1896. Target practice, however, continued to be at stationary targets. There is no evidence during this time that practice took place which married the ability to maneuver warships in close order formation with accurate naval gunnery. The limitations of stationary target practice would be displayed at Santiago de Cuba. The outcome of that engagement would lead to gunnery reforms, most notably the work of Admiral William A. Sims, in the first decades of the twentieth century.

As the North Atlantic Squadron focused more on its mission to develop the capability to engage an enemy squadron at sea, it devoted more time and resources to the naval militia movement. Assigning the mission of the protection of strategically important harbors and cities to ironclad monitors crewed by militia volunteers served two important purposes. Supporting local and state naval militias gave key local leaders, congressmen, and senators throughout the east coast a stake in the continued modernization of the Navy. It also freed the North Atlantic Squadron to carry out its primary mission, which was training for the engagement and destruction of an enemy fleet at sea. During the War of 1898, the presence of naval militia, although not as



calming to the populace as the presence of a steel warship, enabled the formation of the Northern Patrol Squadron, which allowed the North Atlantic and Flying Squadrons to focus on taking the offense.

The unpacking of this process of organizational change in the North Atlantic Squadron has implications for the debate over the nature of U.S. imperial aspirations in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The results of this study reinforce and extend the work done by Stephen Roberts to claim that a “pattern of informal empire” existed in the years prior to the War of 1898.<sup>14</sup> This study concludes that not only did the Navy regularly call at ports considered vital to U. S. business interests, as Roberts showed, but that the Navy Department made a conscious decision as early as 1874 to develop the capability to fight fleet-level engagements. That process was not completed during the period of this study. However, the process of change provides evidence that the “imperial moment” of 1898 was not an accident. It was the result of a deliberate course of action and the development of a specific naval capability tied to the imposition of U.S. will beyond its borders. In this way, this study confirms the work of historians who have maintained that the events of 1898 can only be understood through the lens of the developments of the previous decades.<sup>15</sup>

Before either materiel or structural changes had taken place within the Navy Department, the North Atlantic Squadron was undergoing a process by which not only its function, but its very identity was changing. This was happening before it was evident to

---

<sup>14</sup> Roberts.

<sup>15</sup> Plesur, *America's Outward Thrust: Approaches to Foreign Affairs, 1865-1890*; Plesur, *Creating an American Empire, 1865-1914*; Williams, *The Roots of the Modern American Empire: A Study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society*.

outsiders in the form of new ships. Today's U.S. Navy is in the midst of a period of profound change.<sup>16</sup> With the end of the Cold War and the rise of global terrorism, a Navy which was structurally and materially designed to fight the Soviet Union has been called upon instead to fight the War on Terror. What this means for the Navy of tomorrow remains to be seen. Within today's military, function and identity have been forced to change in response to new missions. These new missions have often been carried out using materiel designed for functions in keeping with an outdated strategic purpose. This study highlights the importance of considered strategic direction and allocation of resources. It shows that the process of organizational change can be well underway in advance of new materiel, and cautions against the resulting conflict between actual and desired missions and functions. Above all, it demonstrates that any new capability not developed through rigorous exercise at sea may, in fact, not be a capability at all, but simply the appearance of one.

---

<sup>16</sup> W.A. Owens, *High Seas: The Naval Passage to an Uncharted World* (Naval Institute Press, 1995); J. Paul Reason, ADM, *Sailing New Seas*, ed. Patricia A. Goodrich, The Newport Papers (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1998).

## Appendix A

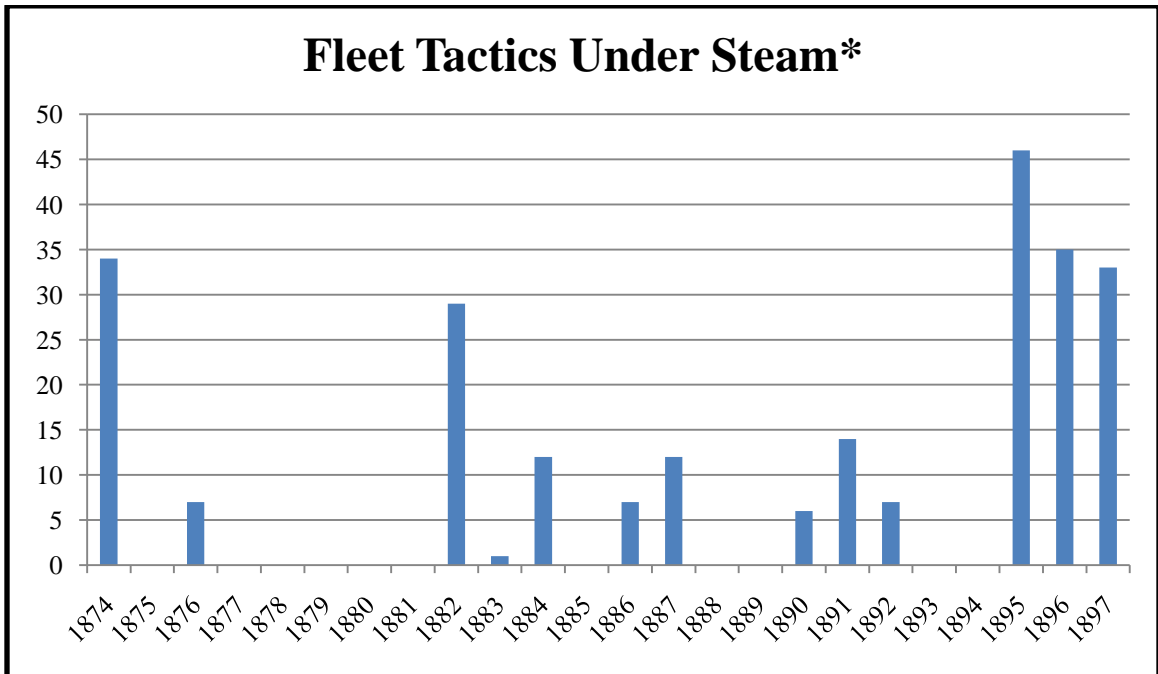


Figure 3: Days Engaged in Fleet Tactics Under Steam, By Year

\*Data taken from Secretary of the Navy Annual Reports and C-in-C after-action reports. Credit is given for an entire underway period if the Squadron remained together and at least one exercise in “fleet tactics under steam” was held. Only squadron exercise under the control of the C-in-C as Officer in Tactical Command is considered. Credit is not given for moving from port to port in company, for two-ship detached section work, or for the Squadron for Special Service/ Naval Review Fleet.

# Bibliography

## *Primary Sources*

### **National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)**

RG19, *Records of the Bureau of Construction and Repair*  
RG24, *Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel*  
RG45, *Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, 1775-1910*  
RG74, *Records of the Bureau of Ordnance*  
RG313, *Records of the Operating Forces*

### **Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Library of Congress**

Papers of Hamilton Fish  
Papers of Stephen Bleeker Luce  
Papers of David Dixon Porter  
Papers of John Grimes Walker

### **Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College, Newport, RI**

RG4, *Naval War College Publications*  
RG8, *Intelligence and Technical Archives*  
RG14, *Faculty and Staff Presentations*  
RG15, *Lectures*

### **USS *Olympia*, Independence Seaport Museum, Philadelphia, PA**

*Handbook of the USS "OLYMPIA," Flagship, Asiatic Station*

## *Secondary Sources*

### **Newspapers and Journals**

The Army and Navy Journal  
Baltimore Sun  
New York Herald  
New York Times  
New York Tribune  
U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*

## Books

- The Nation*. The Nation Company, 1895.
- Abbott, Andrew. *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1988.
- Abrahamson, James L. *America Arms for a New Century: The Making of a Great Military Power*. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1981.
- Abrahamsson, Bengt. *Military Professionalization and Political Power*. Edited by Morris; Moskos Janowitz, Charles C.; Sarkesian, Sam C., Sage Series on Armed Forces and Society. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1972.
- Affairs, United States. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign, F.D. Pavey, W.N. Cromwell, and P. Bunau-Varilla. *The Story of Panama: Hearings on the Rainey Resolution before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives: Govt. Print. Off.*, 1913.
- Albion, Robert G. *Makers of Naval Policy, 1798-1947*. Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1980.
- Alden, John D. *The American Steel Navy: A Photographic History of the U.S. Navy from the Introduction of the Steel Hull in 1883 to the Cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1989. Reprint, 1989.
- Ammen, Daniel. *The Old Navy and the New*. Philadelphia 1891.
- Anderson, Fred and Cayton, Andrew. *The Dominion of War: Empire and Liberty in North America, 1400-2000*. New York, NY 2005.
- Badger, R. *The Great American Fair: The World's Columbian Exposition & American Culture*: N. Hall, 1979.
- Baer, Geroge W. *One Hundred Years of Sea Power: The U.S. Navy, 1890-1990*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994.
- Ballard, G.A. *The Black Battlefleet*: Naval Institute Press, 1980.
- Barker, Albert S., RADM. *Everyday Life in the Navy*. Boston, MA: The Gorham Press, 1928.
- Baudry, A. *The Naval Battle: Studies of the Tactical Factors*. London, UK: Hugh Rees, Ltd., 1914.
- Beach, Edward L. Sr. and Beach, Edward L. Jr. *From Annapolis to Scapa Flow: The Autobiography of Edward L. Beach, Sr.* Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003.
- Bederman, Gail. *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, Women in Culture and Society. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Beeler, John F. *British Naval Policy in the Gladstone-Disraeli Era, 1866-1880*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Beisner, Robert L. *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865-1900*. Edited by John Hope and Eisenstadt Franklin, Abraham S., The Crowell American History Series. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975.
- Bennett, Frank M., Passed Assistant Engineer, U.S. Navy. *The Steam Navy: A History of the Growth of the Steam Vessel of War in the U.S. Navy and of the Naval Engineer Corps*. Pittsburgh, PA: Warren and Co., 1896.

- Bigelow, Donald Nevius. *William Conant Church and the Army and Navy Journal*. Edited by The Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University, Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1952.
- Black, Jeremy. *Rethinking Military History*. New York, NY2004.
- . *War and the World: Military Power and the Fate of Continents, 1450-2000*. New Haven, CT1998.
- Bledstein, Burton. *The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 1976.
- Blight, D.W. *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Boisseau, T.J., A.M. Markwyn, and R. Rydell. *Gendering the Fair: Histories of Women and Gender at World's Fairs*: University of Illinois Press, 2010.
- Boot, Max. *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power*. New York, NY2002.
- Bradford, Richard H. *The Virginius Affair*. Boulder, CO: Colorado Associated University Press, 1980.
- Brands, H.W. *American Colossus: The Triumph of Capitalism, 1865-1900*. New York: Doubleday, 2010.
- Brassey, T. A. . *The British Navy: Its Strengths, Resources, and Administration*. London, UK1882-1883.
- Brendon, Piers. *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire, 1781-1997*. New York, NY2008.
- Brodie, Bernard. *Seapower in the Machine Age*. Princeton1943.
- Browning, Robert M. *From Cape Charles to Cape Fear: The North Atlantic Blockading Squadron During the Civil War*. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1993.
- . *Success Is All That Was Expected: The South Atlantic Blockading Squadron During the Civil War*. Dulles, VA: Brassey's Inc., 2002.
- Brownson, Willard H. *From Frigate to Dreadnaught*. Sharon, CT1973.
- Brzezinski, Zbigniew. *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2012.
- Budiansky, Stephen. *Perilous Fight: America's Intrepid War with Britain on the High Seas, 1812-1815*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.
- Campbell, Charles S. *The Transformation of American Foreign Relations, 1865-1900*. Edited by Henry Steele Commager, The New American Nation Series. New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishers, 1976.
- Canney, Donald L. *The Old Steam Navy: Frigates, Sloops, and Gunboats, 1815-1885*. 2 vols. Vol. 1. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1990.
- Carrison, Daniel J., CAPT. *The Navy from Wood to Steel, 1860-1890*. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1965.
- Carter, Samuel. *The Incredible Great White Fleet*. New York, NY1970.
- Chadwick, French Ensor, RADM. *The Relations of the United States and Spain: Diplomacy*. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.
- Chandler, Alfred. *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business*.

- 16 ed. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1977. Reprint, 16.
- Chernow, Ron. *The House of Morgan: An American Banking Dynasty and the Rise of Modern Finance*. New York, NY 1990.
- Chisholm, Donald. *Waiting for Dead Men's Shoes: Origins and Development of the U.S. Navy's Officer Personnel System, 1793-1941*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001.
- Chua, Amy. *Day of Empire: How Hyperpowers Rise to Global Dominance - and Why They Fall*. New York, NY 2007.
- Cogar, W.B. *Dictionary of Admirals of the U.S. Navy: 1862-1900*: Naval Institute Press, 1989
- Coletta, Paolo. *Admiral Bradley A. Fiske and the American Navy*. Lawrence, KS 1979.
- . *French Ensor Chadwick: Scholarly Warrior*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 1980.
- . *A Selected and Annotated Bibliography of American Naval History*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 1988.
- . *A Survey of U.S. Naval Affairs, 1863-1917*. Lanham, MD 1987.
- . *A Survey of U.S. Naval Affairs, 1865-1917*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 1987.
- Collingwood, R.G., and J. Dussen. *The Idea of History: With Lectures 1926-1928*: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Cooling, B. F. *Benjamin Franklin Tracy: Father of the Modern American Fighting Navy*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1973.
- Cooling, B. F. . *Gray Steel and Blue Water Navy*. Hamden, CT 1979.
- Cooper, Jerry M. *The Army and Civil Disorder: Federal Military Intervention in Labor Disputes, 1877-1900*. Edited by Thomas E. and Luvaas Griess, Jay, Contributions in Military History. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980.
- Corbett, Julian S. *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*. London, UK 1911.
- . *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*. London, UK 1911.
- Cornelise, Alfred Emile. *Ranks and Columns: Armed Forces Newspapers in American Wars*, Contributions to the Study of Mass Media and Communications. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993.
- Cornish, Dudley Taylor and Laas, Virginia Jeans. *Lincoln's Lee: The Life of Samuel Phillips Lee, United States Navy, 1812-1897*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986.
- Crichfield, G.W. *American Supremacy: The Rise and Progress of the Latin American Republics and Their Relations to the United States under the Monroe Doctrine*: Brentano's, 1908.
- Davis, George T. *A Navy Second to None: The Development of Modern American Naval Policy*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1940.
- Doenecke, Justus D. *The Presidencies of James A. Garfield and Chester A. Arthur*. Edited by Donald R. McCoy, Griffin, Clifford S., and Socolofsky, Homer E., American Presidency Series. Lawrence, KS: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1981.
- Dorwart, Jeffery M. *The Office of Naval Intelligence: The Birth of America's First Intelligence Agency, 1865-1918*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1979.
- Edgerton, Robert B. *Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain: America's 1898 Adventure in Imperialism*. Lewiston, NY 2004.

- Edwards, E.M.H. *Commander William Barker Cushing of the United States Navy*. New York, NY: F. Tennyson Neely, 1898.
- Elias, Norbert. *The Genesis of the Naval Profession*. Dublin, Ireland: University College Dublin Press, 2007.
- Evans, David Christian. *Building the Steam Navy: Dockyards, Technology, and the Creation of the Victorian Battle Fleet, 1830-1906*. Edited by English Heritage. London, UK: Conway Maritime Press, 2004.
- Evans, Robley RADM. *A Sailor's Log: Recollections of Forty Years of Naval Life*. New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1901.
- Fatherley, John A. *In the Vortex: Charles E. Clark, U.S.N.* West Springfield, MA 2001.
- Faust, D.G. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*: Vintage Books, 2009.
- Felker, C.C. *Testing American Sea Power: U.S. Navy Strategic Exercises, 1923-1940*: Texas A&M University Press, 2006.
- Ferguson, Niall. *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2003.
- Feuer, A. B. . *The Spanish-American War at Sea: Naval Action in the Atlantic*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995.
- Fiske, Bradley A. *The Art of Fighting: Its Evolution and Progress with Illustrations from Campaigns of Great Commanders*. New York, NY: The Century Company, 1920.
- Fiske, B.A. *From Midshipman to Rear-Admiral*: The Century Co., 1919.
- Fiske, Bradley A. *The Navy as a Fighting Machine*. Edited by John B. and Hughes Hattendorf, Wayne P. Jr., Classics of Seapower Series. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1988. Reprint, 1988.
- Foner, Philip Sheldon. *The Great Labor Uprising of 1877*. New York, NY: Monad Press, 1977.
- Fremantle, E.R. *The Navy as I Have Known It: 1849-1899*: Cassell and company, limited, 1904.
- Friedman, Norman. *U.S. Cruisers: An Illustrated Design History*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1984.
- Friedman, N. *U.S. Battleships: An Illustrated Design History*: Naval Institute Press, 1985.
- Gleaves, Albert. *Life and Letters of Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, U.S. Navy, Founder of the Naval War College*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925.
- Goldrick, James. *No Easy Answers: The Development of the Navies of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, 1945-1996*. Edited by Royal Australian Navy Maritime Studies Program, Papers in Australian Maritime Affairs. Hartford, WI: Spantech and Lancer, 1997.
- Gordon, Andrew. *The Rules of the Game: Jutland and British Naval Command*. London, UK: John Murray Publishers, 2005.
- Gough, Barry M. *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810-1914: A Study of British Maritime Ascendancy*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1971. Reprint, 1974.
- Grandin, Greg. *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism*. Edited by Tom and Fraser Engelhardt, Steve, The American Empire Project. New York, NY: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Company, 2007. Reprint, 2007.



- Gray, Edwin. *Nineteenth Century Torpedoes and Their Inventors*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004.
- Grenville, John A. S. and Young, George Berkeley. *Politics, Strategy, and American Diplomacy: Studies in Foreign Policy, 1873-1917*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966.
- Haas, J. M. *A Management Odysseys: The Royal Dockyards, 1714-1914*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 1994.
- Hackemer, Kurt. *The U.S. Navy and the Origins of the Military-Industrial Complex, 1847-1883*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 2001.
- Hagen, Kenneth J. *American Gunboat Diplomacy and the Old Navy, 1877-1889*, Contributions in Military History. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1973.
- . *This People's Navy*. New York, NY: MacMillan, Inc., 1991.
- Harrod, Frederick S. *Manning the New Navy: The Development of a Modern Naval Enlisted Force, 1899-1940*. Edited by Jon L. Wakelyn, Contributions in American History. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978.
- Hart, Edward H. *Squadron Evolutions: As Illustrated by the Combined Military and Naval Operations at Newport, R.I., November 1887, Rear Admiral S.B. Luce*. New York, NY: E.H. Hart, 1887.
- Hart, Robert A. *The Great White Fleet: Its Voyage around the World*. Boston, MA 1965.
- Healy, David. *James G. Blaine and Latin America*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2001.
- Hendrix, Henry. *Theodore Roosevelt's Naval Diplomacy: The U.S. Navy and the Birth of the American Century*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 2009.
- Herrick, Walter R. *The American Naval Revolution*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1966.
- Herring, George C. *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*. Edited by David M. Kennedy, The Oxford History of the United States. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Herwig, Holger H. *"Luxury" Fleet: The Imperial German Navy, 1888-1918*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Ashfield Press, 1987.
- Hill, Richard. *War at Sea in the Ironclad Age*. Edited by John Keegan, Cassell's History of Warfare. London, UK: Cassell, 2000.
- Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to Fdr*. New York, NY 1955.
- Hone, Thomas C. and Hone, Trent. *Battle Line: The United States Navy, 1919-1939*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 2006.
- Hughes, Wayne P. *Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat*. Second ed. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 2000.
- Huntington, Samuel. *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. Twelfth ed. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1995. Reprint, 1985.
- Institute, United States Naval. *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*: United States Naval Institute, 1895.
- Institution, Royal United Service. *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*: Mitchell, 1869.
- Janowitz, Morris. *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1971. Reprint, 1971.
- Jay, J. *The Fisheries Dispute: A Suggestion for Its Adjustment by Abrogating the*

- Convention of 1818, and Resting on the Rights and Liberties Defined in the Treaty of 1783; a Letter to the Honourable William M. Evarts, of the United States Senate*: Dodd, Mead & company, 1887.
- Jones, Jerry W. *U.S. Battleship Operations in World War I*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1998.
- Karsten, Peter. *The Naval Aristocracy: The Golden Age of Annapolis and the Emergence of Modern American Navalism*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 2008.
- Kennedy, Paul. *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*. Malabar, FL: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1982. Reprint, 1982.
- . *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*. New York, NY 1987.
- King, R. W. *Naval Engineering and American Sea Power*. Baltimore, MD 1989.
- Kipling, R. *A Fleet in Being: Notes of Two Trips with the Channel Squadron*: B. Tauchnitz, 1899.
- Kloppenber, James. *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870-1920*. New York, NY 1986.
- Kolko, Gabriel. *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916*. New York, NY 1963.
- Kramer, Paul A. *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.
- LaFeber, Walter. *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898*. Fourth ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1963. Reprint, Fourth.
- . *The Panama Canal: The Crisis in Historical Perspective*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Lambert, Nicholas. *Sir John Fisher's Naval Revolution*. Edited by William N Still, Studies in Maritime History. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2002.
- Lamoreaux, Naomi. *The Great Merger Movement in American Business, 1895-1904*. Cambridge, UK 1985.
- Larson, Magali Sarfatti. *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977.
- Lears, Jackson. *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920*. New York, NY 2009.
- Leeke, Jim. *Manila and Santiago: The New Steel Navy in the Spanish-American War*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 2009.
- Lens, Sidney. *The Forging of the American Empire: From the Revolution to Vietnam - a History of U.S. Imperialism*. London, UK 2003.
- Lewis, Charles Lee. *David Glasgow Farragut: Our First Admiral*. Annapolis, MD: United States Naval Institute, 1943.
- Lindsay-Poland, John. *Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. In Panama*. Edited by Glibert M. and Rosenberg Joseph, Emily S., American Encounters / Global Interactions. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Logan, Rayford W. *The Diplomatic Relations of the United States with Haiti, 1776-1891*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1941.
- Long, John D. *The New American Navy*. 2 vols. Vol. 1 and 2. New York, NY: The Outlook Company, 1903.

- Love, Robert W. Jr. *History of the U.S. Navy, Volume 1, 1775-1941*. 2 vols. Vol. 1. Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1992.
- Maclay, Edgar Stanton. *Reminiscences of the Old Navy: From the Journal and Private Papers of Captain Edward Trenchard, and Rear-Admiral Stephen Decatur Trenchard*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's, 1898.
- Mahan, Alfred T. *From Sail to Steam: Recollections of Naval Life*. New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1907.
- . *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*. Twelfth ed. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1918. Reprint, 1918.
- . *Naval Strategy, Compared and Contrasted with the Principles and Practice of Military Operations on Land*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1919.
- Maier, Charles S. *Among Empires: American Ascendancy and Its Predecessors*. Cambridge, MA 2006.
- Marder, Arthur J. *The Anatomy of British Sea Power: A History of British Naval Policy in the Pre-Dreadnaught Era, 1880-1905*. New York, NY 1940.
- . *From the Dreadnaught to Scapa Flow: The Royal Navy in the Fisher Era, 1904-1919*. London, UK 1970.
- Massachusetts, Military Historical Society of. *Naval Actions and History, 1799-1898*. Boston, MA 1902.
- May, Ernest R. *American Imperialism: A Speculative Essay*. New York, NY: Atheneum, 1968.
- McBride, William M. *Technological Change and the United States Navy, 1865-1945*. Edited by Merritt Roe Smith, Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.
- McFeely, William S. *Grant: A Biography*. Paperback ed. New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 1981.
- McGerr, Michael. *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920*. New York, NY 2003.
- McGraw, Thomas. *Prophets of Regulation*. Cambridge, MA 1984.
- McManemin, John A. *The Barrons: Four Commodores from Virginia*. Spring Lake, NJ: Ho Ho Kus Publishing Co., 1998.
- Mead, Walter Russell. *God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007.
- Miller, Nathan. *The U.S. Navy: A History*. Third ed. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1997.
- Millett, Allan R. *The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army, 1881-1925*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975.
- . *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps*. Edited by Louis Morton. Free Press Paperback Edition ed, The Macmillan Wars of the United States. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1980.
- Millington, Herbert. *American Diplomacy and the War of the Pacific*. Edited by Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University, Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1948.
- Mitchell, Donald W. *History of the Modern American Navy, from 1883 through Pearl Harbor*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946.
- Montague, Ludwell Lee. *Haiti and the United States 1714-1938*. Durham, NC: Duke

- University Press, 1940.
- Morgan, James Morris; Marquand, John Phillip. *Prince and Boatswain: Sea Tales from the Recollection of Rear Admiral Charles E. Clark*. Greenfield, MA: E.A. Hall and Company, 1915.
- Murphy, Gretchen. *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire*. Durham, NC: 2005.
- Nenninger, Timothy K. *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army: Education, Professionalism, and the Officer Corps of the United States Army, 1881-1918*. Edited by Thomas E. and Luvaas Griess, Jay, Contributions in Military History. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978.
- Nevins, Allan. *Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration*. Second ed. 2 vols. Vol. I, American Classics. New York, NY: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1936. Reprint, 1967.
- Nugent, Walter. *Habits of Empire: A History of American Expansionism*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008.
- Otis, J. *The Boys of '98*: D. Estes & company, 1898.
- Owens, W.A. *High Seas: The Naval Passage to an Uncharted World*: Naval Institute Press, 1995.
- Palmer, Fanny Ashurst. *The Loss of the Huron: A Vindication of Lieutenant Lambert G. Palmer*. Newport, RI: Davis and Pitman, 1883.
- Palmer, Michael A. *Command at Sea: Naval Command and Control since the Sixteenth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Parker, Foxhill A. *Fleet Tactics under Steam*. New York, NY: D. Van Nostrand, 1870.
- . *The Naval Howitzer Ashore*. New York, NY: D. Van Nostrand, 1866.
- . *Squadron Tactics under Steam*. New York, NY: D. Van Nostrand, 1864.
- Parker, Geoffrey. *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567-1659*. Edited by J. H. and Koenigsberger Elliott, H. G. paperback ed, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1972.
- Parkinson, R. *The Late Victorian Navy: The Pre-Dreadnought Era and the Origins of the First World War*: Boydell Press, 2008.
- Paullin, Charles Oscar. *Paullin's History of Naval Administration, 1775-1911*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1968.
- Perez, Louis A., Jr. *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Pérez, L.A. *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography*: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Plesur, Milton. *America's Outward Thrust: Approaches to Foreign Affairs, 1865-1890*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971.
- . *Creating an American Empire, 1865-1914*. Edited by A.S. Eisenstadt, Major Issues in American History. New York, NY: Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1971.
- Potter, E.B. . *Sea Power: A Naval History*. Second ed. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1981.
- Pratt, F. *Preble's Boys: Commodore Preble and the Birth of American Sea Power*: Sloane, 1950.
- Preston, Anthony and Major, John. *Send a Gunboat: The Victorian Navy and Supremacy*

- at Sea, 1854-1904*. London, UK2007.
- Preston, Richard A. *Perspectives in the History of Military Education and Professionalism*, The Harmon Memorial Lectures in Military History. Colorado Springs, CO: United States Air Force Academy, 1980.
- Pugh, Philip. *The Cost of Seapower: The Influence of Money on Naval Affairs from 1815 to the Present Day*. London, UK1986.
- Reason, J. Paul, ADM. *Sailing New Seas: .* Edited by Patricia A. Goodrich, The Newport Papers. Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1998.
- Reckner, James. *Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1988.
- Reynolds, Clark G. *Famous American Admirals*. First Naval Institute Press Edition ed. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2002.
- Richard, Alfred Charles, Jr. *The Panama Canal in American National Consciousness, 1870-1990*. New York, NY: Garland Publishing Inc., 1990.
- Rodger, N.A.M. *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986.
- Rodgers, Daniel T. *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1998.
- Rodman, Hugh, RADM, USN. *Yarns of a Kentucky Admiral*. Indianapolis, IN: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1928.
- Ropp, Theodore. *The Development of a Modern Navy: French Naval Policy, 1871-1904*. Edited by Stephen S. Roberts. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1987.
- Roske, Ralph J. and Van Doren, Charles. *Lincoln's Commando: The Biography of Cdr. William B. Cushing, Usn*. Bluejacket Books ed, Bluejacket Books. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1957. Reprint, 1995.
- Roskill, S.W. *The Strategy of Sea Power: Its Development and Application*. London, UK1962.
- Roskill, S.W. . *The Strategy of Seapower: Its Development and Application*. London, UK1961.
- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *America, Amerikka: Elect Nation and Imperial Violence*. London, UK2007.
- Ruger, Jan. *The Great Naval Game: Britain and Germany in the Age of Empire*. Edited by Jay Winter, Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Rydell, R.W. *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916*: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- . *World of Fairs: The Century-of-Progress Expositions*: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Sater, William F. *Andean Tragedy: Fighting the War of the Pacific, 1879-1884*. Edited by Peter; Graff Maslowski, David; and Pennington, Reina, Studies in War, Society, and the Military. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007.
- Schneller, Robert J. Jr. *Cushing: Civil War Seal*. Edited by Dennis E. Showalter, Military Profiles. Washington, D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2004.
- Schrijvers, Peter. *The Gi War against Japan: American Soldiers in Asia and the Pacific During World War Ii*. New York, NY2002.
- Seymour, E.H. *My Naval Career and Travels*: Smith, Elder & co., 1911.

- Shulimson, Jack. *The Marine Corps Search for a Mission, 1880-1898*. Edited by Theodore A. Wilson, Modern War Studies. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1993.
- Shulman, Mark R. *Navalism and the Emergence of American Sea Power, 1882-1893*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1995.
- Simpson, Edward. *Yarnlets: The Human Side of the Navy*. New York, NY: 1934.
- Skowronek, Stephen. *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877-1920*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Soley, James Russel. *Admiral Porter*. New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1903.
- . *Historical Sketch of the United States Naval Academy*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1876.
- Spector, Ronald. *At War, at Sea: Sailors and Naval Warfare in the Twentieth Century*. New York, NY: The Penguin Group, 2001.
- Spector, Ronald. *Professors of War: The Naval War College and the Development of the Naval Profession*. Edited by B.M. III Simpson, U.S. Naval War College Historical Monograph Series. Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1977.
- Sprout, Harold and Sprout, Margaret. *The Rise of American Naval Power, 1776-1918*. Edited by Jack Sweetman, Classics of Naval Literature. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1990.
- Still, William N. *American Sea Power in the Old World: The United States Navy in European and near Eastern Waters, 1865-1917*. Westport, CT: 1980.
- . *Crisis at Sea: The United States Navy in European Waters in World War I*. Edited by James C. and Smith Bradford, Gene A., New Perspectives on Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2006.
- Stokesbury, James L. *Navy and Empire*. New York, NY: 1983.
- Sumida, Jon. *In Defense of Naval Supremacy: Finance, Technology, and British Naval Policy, 1889-1914*. London, UK: Routledge, 1993. Reprint, 1993.
- . *Inventing Grand Strategy and Teaching Command: The Classic Works of Alfred Thayer Mahan Reconsidered*. Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1997.
- Swann, Leonard Alexander Jr. *John Roach Maritime Entrepreneur: The Years as Naval Contractor, 1862-1886*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1965.
- Symonds, Craig L. *The Naval Institute Historical Atlas of the U.S. Navy*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995.
- Taylor, Bruce. *The Battlecruiser Hood: An Illustrated Biography, 1916-1941*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 2008.
- Teitler, G. *The Genesis of the Professional Officer Corps*. Translated by C.N. Ter Heide-Lopy. Edited by Morris and Moskos Janowitz, Charles C. Jr., Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1977.
- Tenner, Edward. *Why Things Bite Back: Technology and the Revenge of Unintended Consequences*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996.
- Trachtenberg, Alan. *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*. Edited by Eric Foner, American Century Series. New York, NY: Hill and

- Wang, 1982.
- Tucker, Spencer C. *Handbook of 19th Century Naval Warfare*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000.
- Uhlig, Frank Jr. *How Navies Fight: The U.S. Navy and Its Allies*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1994.
- VanCreveld, Martin. *The Training of Officers: From Military Professionalism to Irrelevance*. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1990.
- Watt, Donald Cameron. *Succeeding John Bull: America in Britain's Place, 1900-1974: A Study of the Anglo-American Relationship and World Politics in the Context of British and American Foreign-Policy-Making in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Wiebe, Robert H. *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*. Edited by David Donald. First ed, The Making of America. New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1967.
- Williams, William Appleman. *Empire as a Way of Life: An Essay on the Causes and Character of America's Present Predicament Along with a Few Thoughts About an Alternative*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- . *The Roots of the Modern American Empire: A Study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society*. New York, NY: Random House, 1969.
- Willis, Sam. *Fighting at Sea in the Eighteenth Century: The Art of Sailing Warfare*. Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2008.
- Winklareth, R.J. *Naval Shipbuilders of the World: From the Age of Sail to the Present Day*. Chatham, 2000.
- Winkler, Jonathan Reed. *Nexus: Strategic Communications and American Security in World War I*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Zunz, Oliver. *Making America Corporate, 1870-1920*. Chicago, IL 1990.

### **Book Section**

- Segal, David R.; Lengermann, Joseph J. "Professional and Institutional Considerations." In *Combat Effectiveness: Cohesion, Stress, and the Volunteer Military*, edited by Sam C. Sarkesian, 154-84. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1980.

### **Conference Paper**

- Dorwart, Jeffery M. "Naval Attaches, Intelligence Officers, and the Rise of The "New American Navy", 1882-1914." In *Third United States Naval Academy History Symposium*, edited by Robert W. Jr. Love, 260-69. Annapolis, MD: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1980.
- Roberts, Stephen S. "An Indicator of Informal Empire: Patterns of U.S. Navy Cruising on Overseas Stations, 1869-1897." In *Fourth Naval History Symposium*, edited by Craig L. Symonds, 253-67. United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1979.

## Conference Proceedings

- Hagen, Kenneth J.; Cooling, B. Franklin; Kipp, Jacob W.; Swanson, Bruce; McMahon, A. Michal. "Naval Technology and Social Modernization in the Nineteenth Century." Paper presented at the Society for the History of Technology, Chicago, IL, 1976 1974.
- McBride, William M. "New Interpretations in Naval History." Paper presented at the Thirteenth Naval History Symposium, Annapolis, MD, 1997.

## Edited Book

- Bradford, James C., ed. *Admirals of the New Steel Navy: Makers of the Modern American Naval Tradition, 1880-1930*. Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1990.
- , ed. *Captains of the Old Steam Navy: Makers of the American Naval Tradition, 1840-1880*. Edited by James C. Bradford, Makers of the American Naval Tradition. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986.
- , ed. *Crucible of Empire: The Spanish-American War and Its Aftermath*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1993.
- Calhoun, Craig, Cooper, Frederick and Moore, Kevin W., ed. *Lessons of Empire: Imperial Histories and American Power*. New York, NY, 2006.
- Cassard, William G., Chaplain, USN, ed. *Battleship Indiana and Her Part in the Spanish-American War*. New York, NY: Everett B. Mero, 1898.
- Chesneau, Roger; Kolesnik, Eugene M., ed. *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships, 1860-1905*. Edited by Robert Gardiner. London, UK: Conway Maritime Press, 1979.
- Coletta, Paolo, ed. *American Secretaries of the Navy, Volume I, 1775-1913*. Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1980.
- Esherick, Joseph, Kayali, Hasan, and Van Young, Eric, ed. *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World*. Lanham, MD, 2006.
- Goode, W. A. M., ed. *With Sampson through the War: Being an Account of the Naval Operations of the North Atlantic Squadron During the Spanish-American War of 1898*. New York, NY: Doubleday and McClure Co., 1899.
- Hagen, Kenneth J., ed. *In Peace and War: Interpretations of American Naval History*. 30th Anniversary Edition ed. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008.
- Hattendorf, John B. , ed. *Doing Naval History: Essays Towards Improvement*. Edited by John B. Hattendorf, Naval War College Historical Monograph Series. Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1995.
- Hattendorf, John B. and Hayes, John D., ed. *The Writings of Stephen B. Luce*. Edited by John B. Hattendorf, U.S. Naval War College Historical Monograph Series. Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1975.
- Hattendorf, John B. and Jordan, Robert S., ed. *Maritime Strategy and the Balance of Seapower: Britain and America in the Twentieth Century*. New York, 1989.
- Hayes, John D. and Hattendorf, John B., ed. *The Writings of Stephen B. Luce*. Edited by John B. Hattendorf. First ed, U.S. Naval War College Historical Monograph



- Series. Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1975.
- Karsten, Peter, ed. *The Military in America: From the Colonial Era to the Present*. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1986.
- Lynn, John A., ed. *Tools of War: Instruments, Ideas, and Institutions of Warfare, 1445-1871*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990.
- Margiotta, Franklin D., ed. *The Changing World of the American Military*. Edited by Franklin D. Margiotta, Westview Special Studies in Military Affairs. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1978.
- Marolda, Edward J., ed. *Theodore Roosevelt, the U.S. Navy, and the Spanish-American War*. Edited by Arthur M.; vanden Heuvel Schlesinger, William J.; Brinkley, Douglass, The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute on Diplomatic and Economic History. New York, NY: Palgrave, 2001.
- Merli, Frank J. and Wilson, Theodore A., ed. *Makers of American Diplomacy: From Benjamin Franklin to Alfred Thayer Mahan*. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974.
- Sarkesian, Sam C., ed. *Combat Effectiveness: Cohesion, Stress, and the Volunteer Military*. Edited by Sam C. Sarkesian. 9 vols. Vol. 9, Sage Research Progress Series on War, Revolution, and Peacekeeping. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1980.
- Schirmer, Daniel B. and Shalom, Stephen Roskamm, ed. *The Philippines Reader: A History of Colonialism, Neocolonialism, Dictatorship, and Resistance*. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1897.
- Smith, Angel and Davila-Cox, Emma, ed. *The Crisis of 1898: Colonial Redistribution and Nationalist Mobilization*. New York, NY, 1999.
- Stoler, Ann Laura, McGranahan, Carole and Perdue, Peter C., ed. *Imperial Formations*. Santa Fe, NM, 2007.
- Till, Geoffrey, ed. *The Development of British Naval Thinking: Essays in Memory of Bryan McLaren Ranft*. Edited by Geoffrey Till, Cass Series: Naval Policy and History. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006.
- Trachtenberg, Alan, ed. *Democratic Vistas, 1860-1880*. Edited by Neil Harris, The American Culture. New York, NY: George Braziller, 1970.

### **Government Document**

- "The Parliamentary Debates (Authorized Edition)." London, U.K.: H. M. Stationery Office, 1872.
- Intelligence, Navy Department Office of Naval. "The American Naval Planning Section London." Washington, D.C. : Government Printing Office, 1923.
- State, Department of. "Message of the President Relating to the Steamer *Virginius*, with the Accompanying Documents Transmitted to Congress, January 5, 1874." edited by Department of State, 211. Washington, D. C. : Government Printing Office, 1874.

### **Journal Articles**

- "The Devistation." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 551 (1874): 427-39.

- "Naval and Military Intelligence: Strength of the Royal Navy in Commission." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 545 (1874): 531-52.
- "Naval Brigades." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 547 (1874): 143-55.
- "The Navy Estimates." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 546 (1874): 78-84.
- "The Navy in 1874." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 542 (1874): 83-94.
- "The Service Clubs: The Royal Naval Club, Portsmouth." *Illustrated Naval and Military Magazine: A monthly journal devoted to all subjects connected with Her Majesty's land and sea forces* 3 (1885): 50-51.
- "Swift Unarmoured Cruisers." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 544 (1874): 317-30.
- "Torpedoes and Sunken Mines." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 551 (1874): 484-91.
- Abbott, Andrew. "Jurisdictional Conflicts: A New Approach to the Development of the Legal Profession." *American Bar Foundation Research Journal* 11, no. 2 (1986): 187-224.
- Albert, Stuart and Whetten, David. "Organizational Identity." *Research in Organizational Behavior* 7 (1985): 263-95.
- Ammen, Daniel. "The Purposes of a Navy, and the Best Methods of Rendering It Efficient." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 5, no. 7 (1879): 119-32.
- Angevine, Robert G. "The Rise and Fall of the Office of Naval Intelligence, 1882-1892: A Technological Perspective." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 62, no. 2 (1998): 291-312.
- Ashforth, Blake E. and Mael, Fred. "Social Identity Theory and the Organization." *Academy of Management Review* 14, no. 1 (1989): 20-39.
- Barnett, William P., and Carroll, Glenn R. "Modeling Internal Organizational Change." *Annual Review of Sociology* 21 (1995): 217-36.
- Barr, E. L. "The Navy Signal System." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 39, no. 2 (1913): 585-87.
- Bastert, Russell H. "Diplomatic Reversal: Frelinghuysen's Opposition to Blaine's Pan-American Policy in 1882." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 42, no. 4 (1956): 653-71.
- . "A New Approach to the Origins of Blaine's Pan-American Policy." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 39, no. 3 (1959): 375-412.
- Baxter, James Phinney III. "June Meeting: The British High Commissioners at Washington 1871." *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 65 (October 1832 - May 1936), no. 3 (1936): 334-57.
- Becker, Howard S. and Carper, James. "The Elements of Identification with an Occupation." *American Sociological Review* 21, no. 3 (1956): 8.
- Belknap, R. R. "Cruising in Formation." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 38, no. 1 (1912): 195-210.
- Bernotti, Romeo, Lieutenant, Italian Navy. "The Fundamentals of Naval Tactics." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 37, no. 3 (1911): 877-932.
- Black, Jeremy. "Frontiers and Military History." *Journal of Military History* 72, no. 4 (2008): 1047-59.
- Brown, Andrew D. and Starkey, Ken. "Organizational Identity and Learning: A Psychodynamic Perspective." *The Academy of Management Review* 25, no. 1

- (2000): 102-20.
- Bryan, H.F. and Alger, P.R. and Fiske, B.A. "Gun Distribution Aboard Modern Battleships, and Its Influence on Naval Tactics." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 33, no. 1 (1907): 205-38.
- Calkins, Carlos Gilman. "Tradition and Progress in the Navy: A Review of Service Opinions, 1841-1901." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 39, no. 3 (1913): 1189-216.
- Chamberlain, Henry, LT, Royal Navy. "The Inefficiency of Our Present System of Naval Education." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 2, no. 11 (1889): 550-56.
- . "The Inefficiency of Our Present System of Naval Education, Part II." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 2, no. 12 (1889): 696-709.
- Clowes, William Laird. "Consideration on the Battleship in Action." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 20, no. 2 (1894): 293-99.
- Collins, Frederick, LT, USN. "Naval Affairs." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 5, no. 8 (1879): 159-79.
- Crosley, W. S. "The Naval War College, the General Board, and the Office of Naval Intelligence." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 39, no. 3 (1913): 966-74.
- Dawes, R. A. . "Battle Tactics." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 41, no. 6 (1915): 1873-95.
- Dennett, Tyler. "Seward's Far Eastern Policy." *The American Historical Review* 28, no. 1 (1922): 45-62.
- Dubassov, Captain, Imperial Russian Navy. "Torpedo Warfare." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 2, no. 10 (1889): 395-416.
- Dutton, Jane E. and Dukerich, Janet M. "Keeping an Eye on the Mirror: Image and Identity in Organizational Adaptation." *The Academy of Management Journal* 34, no. 3 (1991): 517-54.
- Ellicott, J.M., CAPT. "Three Navy Cranks and What They Turned." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 50, no. 10 (1924): 1615-28.
- Fairbank, John K. "'American China Policy' To 1898: A Misperception." *Pacific Historical Review* 39, no. 4 (1970): 409-20.
- Gerstle, Gary. "The Protean Character of American Liberalism." *American Historical Review* 99, no. 4 (1994): 1043-73.
- Gioia, Dennis A. and Thomas, James B. "Identity, Image, and Issue Interpretation: Sensemaking During Strategic Change in Academia." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (1996): 370-403.
- Gorringe, Henry H. "The Navy." *The North American Review* 134, no. 306 (1882): 486-506.
- Greene, S. Dana, ENS. "Electricity on Board Warships." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 15, no. 3 (1889): 471-89.
- Gresle, Francois. "The 'Military Society': Its Future Seen through Professionalism." *Revue française de sociologie* 46, no. Supplement: An Annual English Selection (2005): 37-57.
- Grieve, Andrew P. "The Professionalization of The 'Shoe Clerk'." *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series A (Statistics in Society)* 168, no. 4 (2005): 639-56.
- Grusky, Oscar. "Leadership and Commitment in the Royal Navy ☆." *Maritime Studies and Management* 1, no. 4 (1974): 223-31.

- Herbert, Hilary A. "The Lesson of the Naval Review." *The North American Review* 156, no. 439 (1893): 641-47.
- Hunter, Mark C. "The U.S. Naval Academy and Its Summer Cruises: Professionalization in the Antebellum U.S. Navy, 1845-1861." *The Journal of Military History* 70, no. 4 (2006): 963-94.
- Ingersoll, R. E. . "Organization of the Fleet for War." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 39, no. 4 (1913): 1379-405.
- Janowitz, Morris. "Changing Patterns of Organizational Authority: The Military Establishment." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (1959): 473-93.
- Knox, Dudley W. "'Column' As a Battle Formation." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 39, no. 3 (1913): 949-63.
- Luce, Stephen B., RADM. "The Fleet." *North American Review* 1908, no. October (1908): 564-76.
- . "The Manning of Our Navy and Mercantile Marine." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 1, no. 1 (1875): 17-38.
- . "The Navy and Its Needs." *North American Review* 1911, no. April (1911): 494-507.
- . "Our Future Navy." *The North American Review* 149, no. 392 (1889): 54-65.
- . "Our Future Navy." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 15, no. 4 (1889).
- . "A Plea for an Engineer Corps in the Navy." *North American Review* 1906, no. January (1906): 74-83.
- MACDONALD, PAUL K. "Those Who Forget Historiography Are Doomed to Republish It: Empire, Imperialism and Contemporary Debates About American Power." *Review of International Studies* 35, no. 01 (2009): 45-67.
- Martinez-Fernandez, Luis. "Caudillos, Annexationism, and the Rivalry between Empires in the Dominican Republic, 1844-1874." *Diplomatic History* 17, no. 4 (Fall 1993) (1993): 571-97.
- Mason, T. B. M., LT. "Two Lessons from the Future." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 1, no. 4 (1875).
- May, Ernest R. "The Nature of Foreign Policy: The Calculated Versus the Axiomatic." *Daedalus* 91, no. 4 (1962): 653-67.
- McCormick, Thomas. "Insular Imperialism and the Open Door: The China Market and the Open Door." *Pacific Historical Review* 32, no. 2 (1963): 155-69.
- Morison, Elting E. "A Case Study of Innovation." *Engineering and Science Magazine* 13, no. 7 (April 1950) (1950): 5-11.
- . "Inventing a Modern Navy." *American Heritage* 37, no. 4 (June-July 1986) (1986): 81-96.
- Niblack, A. P. "Discussion of Prize Essay, 1895." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 21, no. 2 (1895): 271-74.
- Niblack, A. P. . "The Elements of Fleet Tactics." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 32, no. 2 (1906): 387-445.
- Niblack, A. P. "The Tactics of Ships in the Line of Battle." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 22, no. 1 (1896): 1-54.
- Officer", "A Flag. "Fighting Power of Our Navy." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 2, no. 10 (1889): 453-71.
- . "Our War Fleet and Its Guns." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 2, no. 12

- (1889): 732-40.
- Parker, Foxhill A. "Our Fleet Maneuvers in the Bay of Florida, and the Navy of the Future." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 1, no. 8 (1874): 163-78.
- Parsons, T.E., CAPT, R.N. "In Paraguayan Waters, Part I." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 547 (1874): 198-204.
- . "Notes from a Journal in Paraguayan Waters, Part II." *Colburn's United Service Magazine* 1, no. 551 (1874): 191-205.
- Pearce, George F. "The United States Navy Comes to Pensacola." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (1976): 37-47.
- Rodgers, Daniel T. "In Search of Progressivism." *Reviews in American History* 10, no. 4 (1982): 113-32.
- Ruger, Jan. "Nation, Empire, and Navy: Identity Politics in the United Kingdom, 1887-1914." *Past and Present*, no. No. 185 (2004): 159-88.
- Sampson, W.T., CAPT. "The Naval Defense of the Coast." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 15, no. 2 (1889): 169-232.
- Segal, David R. "Selective Promotion in Officer Cohorts." *The Sociological Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (1967): 199-206.
- Segal, David R.; Segal, Mady Wechsler. "Change in Military Organization." *Annual Review of Sociology* 9 (1983) (1983): 151-70.
- Shulimson, Jack. "Military Professionalism: The Case of the U.S. Marine Officer Corps, 1880-1898." *Journal of Military History* 60, no. 2 (1996): 231-42.
- Sigsbee, C.D., CDR. "Progressive Naval Seamanship." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 15, no. 1 (1889): 95-129.
- Soley, James Russel. "On a Proposed Type of Cruiser for the United States Navy." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 4, no. 8 (1878): 127-40.
- Sumida, Jon. "Reimagining the History of Twentieth-Century Navies."
- Sweitzer, Vicki Baker. "Towards a Theory of Doctoral Student Professional Identity Development: A Developmental Networks Approach." *The Journal of Higher Education* 80, no. 1 (2009): 1-33.
- Very, E. W. LT. "The Type of (I) Armored Vessel, (II) Cruiser, Best Suited to the Present Needs of the United States." *Naval Institute Proceedings* 7, no. 15 (1881): 43-83.
- Volkoff, Olga, Diane M. Strong, and Michael B. Elmes. "Technological Embeddedness and Organizational Change." *Organization Science* 18, no. 5 (2007): 832-48.
- Volwiler, A. T. . "Harrison, Blaine, and American Foreign Policy, 1889-1893." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 79, no. 4 (1938): 637-48.
- Wainwright, Richard, LT. "Naval Coast Signals." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 15, no. 1 (1889): 61-74.
- . "Tactical Problems in Naval Warfare." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 21, no. 2 (1895): 45.
- Watson, Samuel. "Continuity in Civil-Military Relations and Expertise: The U.S. Army During the Decade before the Civil War." *The Journal of Military History* 75, no. 1 (January 2011) (2011): 221-50.
- Willis, Sam. "Fleet Performance and Capability in the Eighteenth-Century Royal Navy." *War In History* 11, no. 4 (2004): 373-92.
- WOLTERS, Timothy S. "Recapitalizing the Fleet: A Material Analysis of Late-Nineteenth-Century U.S. Naval Power." *Technology and Culture* 52, no. 1 (2011):

Yarnell, Harry E., Lieutenant-Commander. "The Greatest Need of the Atlantic Fleet." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 39, no. 1 (1913): 40.

### Magazine Articles

Allin, Lawrence Carroll. "The First Cubic War: The Virginius Affair." *The American Neptune*, October 1978 1978, 233-48.

Staunton, S. A. . "Squadron Drills at Sea." *Harper's Weekly*, 31 March 1895 1895, 299-301.

### Thesis

Buhl, Lance. "The Smooth Water Navy: American Naval Policy and Politics, 1865-1876." Harvard University, 1968.

Cooling, B. F. "Benjamin Franklin Tracy: Lawyer, Soldier, Secretary of the Navy." University of Pennsylvania, 1969.

Crumley, Brian T. "The Evolution of The "New" American Navy and the Naval Aspects of the Spanish-American War." University of Louisville, 1997.

———. "The Naval Attache System of the United States, 1882-1914." Texas A&M, 2002.

Daellenbach, Dennis A. "Senators, the Navy, and the Politics of American Expansionism, 1881-1890." University of Kansas, 1982.

Davidson, Roger A., Jr. "Yankee Rivers, Rebel Shore: The Potomac Flotilla and Civil Insurrection in the Chesapeake Region." Howard University 2000.

Drake, Frederick Charles. "The Empire of the Seas: A Biography of Robert Wilson Shufeldt, Usn." Biography, Cornell University, 1970.

Etnyre, Robb P. "Naval Leadership and Society." Naval Postgraduate School, 1997.

Evans, David Christian. "The Satsuma Faction and Professionalism in the Japanese Naval Officer Corps of the Meiji Period, 1868-1912." Stanford University, 1978.

Gilliam, Bates McCluer. "The World of Captain Mahan." Princeton University, 1961.

Havern, Christopher B. "A Gunnery Revolution Manque: William S. Sims and the Adoption of Continuous-Aim in the United States Navy, 1899-1910." University of Maryland, College Park, 1995.

Heitzmann, William Ray. "The United States Naval Institute's Contribution to the in-Service Education of Naval Officers, 1873-1973." Dissertation, University of Delaware, 1974.

Herrick, Walter R. "General Tracy's Navy: A Study of the Development of American Sea Power, 1889-1893." University of Virginia, 1962.

Herwig, Holger H. "The German Naval Officer Corps: A Social and Political History, 1890-1918." State University of New York, 1973.

Jones, Jerry W. "U.S. Battleship Operations in World War I, 1917-1918." University of North Texas, 1995.

Livermore, Seward W. "American Naval Development, 1898-1914: With Special Reference to Foreign Affairs." Harvard University, 1943.

- Miller, Craig D. "Rebuilding the U.S. Navy, 1865-1890." Lamar University, 1979.
- O'Connell, Robert L. "Dreadnaught? The Battleship, the United States Navy, and the World Naval Community." University of Virginia, 1975.
- Peterson, William S. "The Navy in the Doldrums: The Influence of Politics and Technology on the Decline and Rejuvenation of the American Fleet, 1866-1886." University of Illinois, 1986.
- Reardon, Carol Ann. "The Study of Military History and the Growth of Professionalism in the U.S. Army before World War I." University of Kentucky, 1987.
- Sexton, Donal J. "Forging the Sword: Congress and the American Naval Revolution, 1880-1890." University of Tennessee, 1976.
- Stein, Stephen Kenneth. "Washington Irving Chambers: Innovation, Professionalization, and the New Navy, 1872-1919." Ohio State University 1999.
- Wicks, Daniel Howard. "New Navy and New Empire: The Life and Times of John Grimes Walker." University of California, Berkeley, 1979.
- Wolters, Timothy Scott. "Managing a Sea of Information: Shipboard Command and Control in the United States Navy, 1899-1945." Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2003.

### **Web Pages**

- "Bigbadbattleships: Pre Dreadnaught Homeport." <http://bigbadbattleships.com>.
- Navy, Department of. "Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships." Naval Historical Center, <http://www.history.navy.mil/danfs/w11/wyman-i.htm>.