

# Uncle Sam's New Pirate Destroyers

Two Ships to Join the International Fleet at Shanghai—Will Clean the Sea and Rivers of Chinese/Pirates. Cases of Atrocities Perpetrated by These Cutthroats—Fighting the Pirates a Hopeless Task Until the Other Nations Took a Hand.

Special Correspondence.  
WASHINGTON, D. C., August 7, 1914.  
Two "pirate" destroyers have just been added to the United States Navy. The one end and aim of their existence will be to sweep from the now-a-day ocean hordes of freebooting gentry—the two-century-old demise of "Black-beard" Teach and the swinging of Capt. William Kidd gibbet high in chains of Execution dock a time beyond the memory of living man, to the contrary.  
Now, there is no gainsaying that when Justice pulled the blindfold from one eye long enough to catch the buccaners England, Rackham, Lowther, Kidd, Blackbeard and another score of the Jolly Roger brotherhood red-handed, sending them to look their last through hempen collars while they danced in air, the Lady of Scapes and Bandage did a pretty thorough job.  
Yet, after all of these and many of the lesser lawless lights were swept from the seas, there remained that which sailors tree nor king's sloop-of-war could lay—the spirit of piracy.

The "pirate destroyers" will not go to the new peaceful Spanish main, or sail the stretches where once the plate ships of the King of Spain struck colors to raking broadsides from low, black-top-sail schooners, for the spirit of piracy now dwells along the shore of the shimmering China sea, and rides the reaches of the Sulu and South Pacific waters, upon the prow of great pirate junks or cannon-bristling Malay prahus.  
And so the station of the two "pirate destroyers" of the United States Navy will be at Shanghai, within easy striking distance of the great Yangtze river, along whose banks are thousands of settlements where American concessionaries, agents of great commercial enterprises and missionaries spend perilous lives.

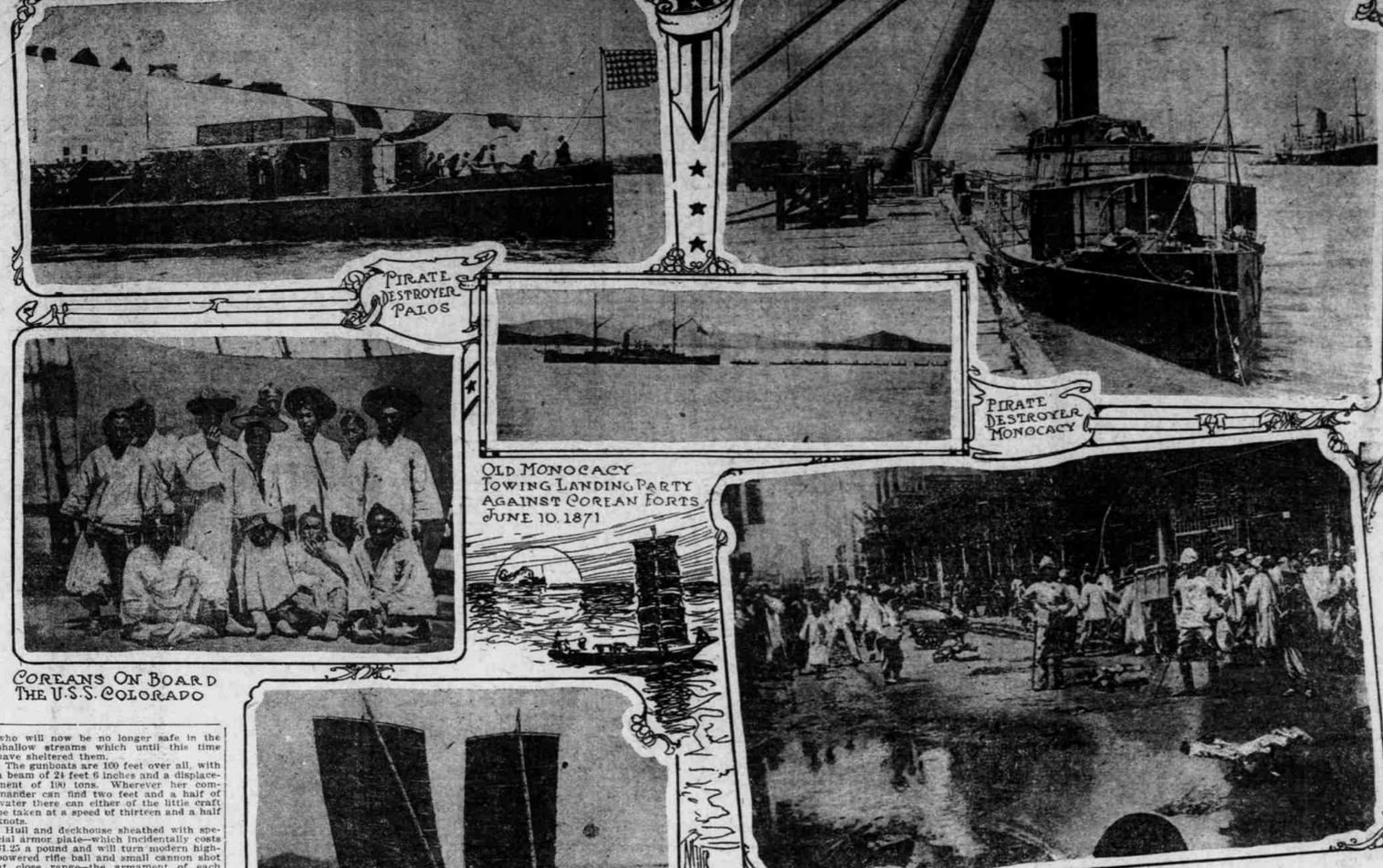
Although the United States maintains a score of vessels on the China station—most of them spoils of the war with Spain—it so happened that there were no light-draft gunboats among them, and the volume of water necessary to float them was so great as to make any pursuit up rivers and canals little less than a farce.

So it was that the United States finally grew tired of having the light-draft pirate craft show clean heels and get away in safety, which exhibition on the part of yellow outlaws soon became a joke at which Uncle Sam could not and would not laugh. Therefore, with the sanction of the "pirate destroyers" authorized.

A long time ago the United States maintained among her ships in eastern waters a side-wheel iron-hulled steam and screw vessel—the Monocacy, and also a screw tug of iron—the Palos. And because of the havoc wrought by both of these vessels, which long ago were in the junk heap, the two river gunboats have been named for them.

Taking pattern after the type of gunboat exemplified in the British Whitcomb, these two little craft were constructed at the Mare Island navy yard. But they were too small to steam up the Yangtze Pacific, where typhoons and big waves are frequent. Therefore they were "knocked down" and shipped to the ocean liner to Shanghai, where they were reassembled by Lieut. Andrew F. Carter, U. S. N. A few weeks ago they were launched and given their trial trips.

Although the "missiles" of the China station were too small to undertake the trans-Pacific trip, they will be none the less efficient against the pirate men, who depend largely upon fighting at hand-rips in overpowering their victims, and



CORAINS ON BOARD THE U.S.S. COLORADO

who will now be no longer safe in the shallow streams which until this time have sheltered them.  
The gunboats are 100 feet over all, with a beam of 21 feet 6 inches and a displacement of 180 tons. Whatever her commander can find two feet and a half of water there can either of the little craft be taken at a speed of thirteen and a half knots.  
Hull and deckhouse sheathed with special armor plate—which incidentally costs \$1.25 a pound and will turn modern high-powered rifle ball and small cannon shot at close range—the armament of each of the boats consists of a main battery mounting two six-pounder rifles and six thirty-caliber machine rifles from which high-powered service ammunition is fired. These are reinforced by two 2-inch field guns for the use of landing parties. In addition to this, the deckhouse walls are pierced with loopholes for riflemen.  
Each gunboat is officered by two commissioned officers, two chief petty officers and forty-three men.

Within a short time the Palos and Monocacy will be in full commission, the first commanded by Lieut. Frank Rorschach and the second by Lieut. Carter, who was second in command of assembling them.

For time out of mind piracy has been a favored calling in the China sea. Nor has the domain of the ancient Chinese dynasty under which it thrived apparently been any deterrent to these lawless predatory crews, who are a tribe apart from the coolie dwellers of the land side of the late celestial empire, and they carry on their silt-collaring trade today totally untroubled by the fact that the hands of all their countrymen are against them.

Piracy in Chinese waters today takes two general forms. The first is that practiced by the crews of great, high-pooped war junks which usually infest the waters near Amoy and Swatow and prey upon the small unarmed trading vessels near the Pile-see-long islands near the Tonkin gulf, although they frequently have appeared much farther down the coast.  
These great junks, carrying hundreds of half-naked freebooters, are a constant menace to small unarmed trading ships and steamers, as well as to smaller junks owned by the great commercial

PIRATE DESTROYER PALOS



OLD MONOCACY TOWING LANDING PARTY AGAINST COREAN FORTS JUNE 10, 1871



A PIRATE JUNK ON THE YANG-TSE-KIANG RIVER

companies of China. And the junk pirate's methods of attack are today quite as brutal and primal as they were fifty years ago.  
Four months have hardly passed since the British steamer Taiou was attacked and burned by pirates north of Monaco, with the loss of the ship and 188 British seamen.

Monocacy has always lain in a belt ever threatened by pirates, for it is the Portuguese settlement at the mouth of the Bocca Tigris, which gives ingress to the Canton river, and steamers which ply these waters are constantly upon the alert for danger from this source.

As a general thing, every steamer room aboard Chinese coastwise craft is equipped with a brace of heavy-caliber revolvers, a modern repeating rifle and plenty of ammunition within easy reach of passengers, so that in the event of a piratical attack passengers may protect themselves.  
Precautions, too, are taken against pirates boarding the steamers in the guise of harmless native passengers for

PIRATE DESTROYER MONOCACY



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"up coast." This is usually accomplished by inclosing each deck of the steamer in wire netting, preventing communication between any two of the decks, so that if pirates manage to get aboard one part of the ship they will be segregated.

But something went wrong with the precautions aboard the Taiou on the night of April 28 last, for, before the steamer entered the Bocca Tigris, a confederate of the pirates smuggled himself aboard, and when the steamer slowed down to enter the Canton river, he disabled the machinery.  
With her engines out, the Taiou rocked helplessly in the swell, while from the shadowed shore two great junks, propelled by long sweeps in the hands of brawny yellow crewmen, shot out to hang one upon her starboard, the other upon her port, while scores of half-naked ruffians boarded her.

Warned in time to arm themselves, the crew met the yellow boarders in a hand-to-hand conflict. The passengers, protected by the wire netting, fastened the boat deck in safety, where, launching the lifeboats, they made their escape from the ship under cover of the darkness and confusion.  
But the crew, outnumbered three to one, were beaten back, and those who escaped the pirate knives leaped into the sea to drown.  
Left victors, the pirates looted the steamer and then applied the torch, but the flames of the burning Taiou attracted the attention of other steamers, and they speeded full ahead for the doomed vessel, making up all the passengers. The second form of freebooting in Chinese waters takes the form of river piracy. The pirates themselves are, unlike their deep-water outlaw brethren, more of the jackal type, slinking cowardly, but still murderous and deadly wherever they fall in with unarmed parties. They infest the shallow rivers, creeks and canals which cut in from the China coast.

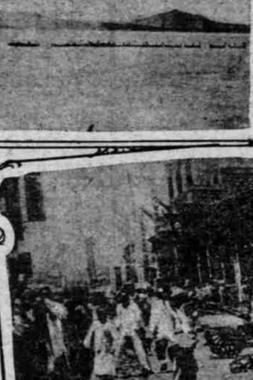
The big junks, in use by the deep-sea freebooters, are of no earthly good in shallow waters, and so the river robbers make use of light-draft craft known locally as "fast crabs" and "scrambling dragons." The West river near Canton is a favored ground for these shallow-water freebooters, although the great Yangtze-Kiang river is also infested with them.  
In this little craft they navigate without trouble over the shallows and rapids inland as far as Chungking, which is less than 1,000 miles from the coast, and instead of preying upon the merchant ships and steamers of the deep, they prey upon the smaller craft, and cause untold trouble to the missionaries, of whom there are many hundreds in this part of inland China. And it is against them that the United States has directed her attention.

Long ago it became apparent that the Chinese government either would not, or could not, cope with the perpetrators of pirate outrages. But this was learned only after the great barges owned by the Standard Oil Company to carry case of inland had been repeatedly attacked and sacked, several vessels loaded with tobacco belonging to an English company controlled entirely by American capital had been looted, and American citizens and missionaries without number had been murdered.  
Thereupon, lacking the necessary means of pursuing the pirates and bringing them to justice, a system of "vicarious punishment" grew up in the Chinese provinces. By this system, upon the perpetration of an outrage the American consul would file his complaint with the Chinese government, and the government, upon learning the amount of damage sustained by the missionaries, or the indemnity demanded for the loss of life, would promptly levy the amount upon the village nearest to the scene of the crime.

But this system was soon discovered, worked only hardship without lessening to any appreciable degree the number of pirate atrocities; for seldom did the looters come from the village assessed and upon one occasion a few years ago, the head man of a village was forced to sell his six young daughters into slavery, which none of his villagers had committed.  
Such a system was worse than ineffective, each nation having commercial interests in China has sent to the Shanghai station light-draft river gunboats to hunt down and bring to justice the vandals who prey upon the river traffic.  
Germany and Japan have maintained these light-draft river boats. Now the United States has added her complement in the Palos and the Monocacy.

China herself is about to come into the

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fold, and add several vessels to the international fleet, for it has been recently announced that the twenty-five-million-dollar loan, negotiated by the new republic with an American steel plant and approved by the Chinese president, will be devoted to the construction of small cruisers and large gunboats to rout out the pirates.

In the last two years many citizens of the United States have lost their lives through the pirates of the China waters, and perhaps the case of Hicks, Hoffman and Sheldon is as typical as any.

These three men were American citizens and teachers in the Government College at Chengtu, toward which they were traveling from Shanghai up the Yangtze river. The start of their journey had been safe enough in a large river steamer to Hankow and thence by a smaller boat to Ichang.

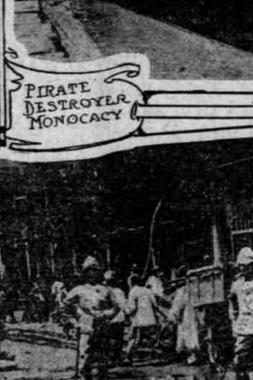
But there, at the entrance to the Gorges, they were forced to take to a small craft, which they propelled themselves by oars, and March 22, 1912, upon their arrival at Wanshan, they made two fatal blunders. The first was that they anchored in a lonely little light away from the usual smelly anchorage of the town. The second was that they did not dig their arms out of their baggage.

The river pirates fell upon them during the night. Hicks was murdered, while Sheldon and Hoffman were dangerously wounded, although the latter was recovered. And the perpetrators of this outrage remained undetected, although the head men of Wanshan village were held responsible.

During the progress of the Russo-Japanese war an American war correspondent was set upon near Newchuan, Manchuria, and killed, and the members of the consular service who have been on China station will tell you, or marines to be sent to the interior of China, up the Yangtze river, to bring out missionaries and prevent them from being massacred.

Nor are the river pirates the only cause which the United States has for keeping light-draft vessels in Chinese waters. For another "Tampeco incident," similar almost in every detail to that which occurred near Hankow, China, July 27, 1912, at that time there were numerous rebel forces along the river, and one of these boats went so far on that date as to open a Standard Oil steamer flying the American flag. As soon as word of the incident reached Hankow the matter was immediately taken up in official circles, and the twenty-one guns, which Huerta never developed, and are among the most highly prized records in the Navy Department library today.  
The assault upon the Korean forts was occasioned by an attack made by them June 1, 1871, upon the United States gunboat "Albatross" in the river, upon which they were situated. The forts were manned by freebooters, and although a demand for reprisal was made to the Korean government no action was taken by the United States. Therefore, after waiting one day, Rear Admiral John Rodgers, commanding the Asiatic fleet, ordered an advance upon the forts.  
In accordance with the orders the Monocacy, the Palos and four steam

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launches, together with the Bencha, on board of which there were 500 men from the various ships of the fleet, entered the Saiee river, and before forty-eight hours had passed five Korean forts had been taken, 200 guns destroyed and one killed, in which the loss of the enemy was 350 killed and wounded, while the forces of the United States lost only three killed and nine wounded.  
The ocean launch Wesshawken, sound ing, led the advance of the fleet June 11, 1871, followed by the Monocacy, the Bencha, three steam launches and the Palos towing in the landing party of fifty ten boats in the order named.

An hour later they shelled the Korean battery on Louise Island, which did not reply, and then engaged the second of the line of forts. This redoubt gave them battle, and the Korean shots cut away the standing rigging of the fleet, but did not damage their hulls. The third shelled, the fleet proceeded to the fourth embankment, where, under shelter of fire, the landing party and artillery were put ashore.

First Lieut. McKee and the headquarters at Sun-took fell before the Korean citadel was attacked, and when that fell to the American forces it was discovered that the enemy had entrenched themselves upon a knoll a mile to the northward, and it was there that the hand-to-hand fighting took place in which Lieut. H. W. McKee received a mortal wound.

The late Rear Admiral Winfield Scott Schley, then lieutenant commander, and the man who organized the expedition, was the second to gain the inside of the redoubt with Lieut. McKee, and he it was who shot down the Korean who had given McKee his mortal wound. The redoubt was later renamed in honor of the young lieutenant. Here is Schley's own report of the fighting at the redoubt:  
"About 12:30 p.m., June 11, the charge was made through a deep ravine fully 100 feet deep, and the enemy met for the first time. The approach was clear of any covering and the fire of the enemy most terrific and severe. Nothing could withstand the men. The impetuosity of the charge was met by brave men in the front, who contested inch by inch and who fought hand to hand.  
"The honor of gaining the first foothold in the fort fell to Lieut. McKee, who was at once charged by the enemy. But a moment had elapsed before I gained the inside and went to his aid in his desperate fight. In a moment he fell mortally wounded by a musket ball in the groin and a spear stab in the side. The same brave one who had spared McKee rushed upon me, but the spear passed between my left arm and my body and before he could withdraw it for a second trial he was shot dead and useless as my feet."

Improving the Potato.  
FRENCH agricultural experts have decided that the potato, that standard food of the western hemisphere, needs rejuvenation. The common practice in raising new potatoes is to cut up old ones and plant them. After a series of experiments the scientists have come to the conclusion that the continual reproduction of the potato without the use of seed has resulted in its deterioration, on the same theory that the interbreeding of animals will result in their deterioration.  
Hence they have, with the aid of a certain fungus, begun the raising of a crop which has so far shown itself practically immune from potato disease. It was at first thought that the potato crop could be improved if raised from seed. This process, however, proved too long and weary.  
"The new fungus process will probably be adopted by other countries."

## UNDER THE BIG WHITE DOME

Plenty of Room.

Representative C. H. Sloan of Nebraska is from the land of big farms—farms whose cornfields run along a railroad sometimes for ten miles, while in its wheatfields several German principalities could be lost. So Sloan is used to taking a big view of things, as well as viewing things from the standpoint of a homesteader.

During this warm weather the securing of a good attendance in the House has been a difficult job, and the request three rings for a call to the House is common over in the offices. One day recently Sloan went over to the chamber to find out how many there. All around were rows of empty seats, with only a few cases of members in a desert of desks. It reminded Sloan of his big quarter sections out in the bounding prairies. So he rose to his feet.

"Mr. Chairman," he said, "I have looked around on the vast unoccupied area in this House, and, not desiring to submit a question of no quorum, wish to raise a parliamentary inquiry."  
"The gentleman will state it," responded the chair.  
"I wish to ask, Mr. Chairman," continued Sloan, "if it would be proper to make a filing for a homestead on the great unoccupied public domain in this chamber?"

What Is the Brand?

Representative H. T. Holgren of North Dakota is of Norwegian descent. In his district is the famous Devil's lake, which in recent years has receded so much that the town of that name, on the bank of the lake, is now some miles inland.  
In the course of time the water will be entirely gone and the lake but a "tale that is told." It was called Devil's lake in account of the Indian legend connected with it.  
The story runs that once, in times far before the coming of the white man, two tribes lived on opposite sides of the water. There were frequent fights, and at last one day both took to their war canoes and set out simultaneously for a raid upon the foe.  
In the middle of the lake they met in deadly embrace. The battle was short and the white man stands the victor. The last canoe had sunk beneath the waves, and now, on a stormy night, when the lightning is flashing across the dark waters, it shows the stream filled with canoes and painted men with tomahawks in their hands. In a ghostly array in the mist, the fleet melting away in the storm clouds.

A Big Asset.

If there is one thing that Representative Anderson of Minnesota hates above all else it is a demagogic fraud in politics—one of those big friends-of-the-people type, who spout and spout but never do anything.  
He tells a story of two voters who were discussing a candidate for Congress.  
"I'm blinded if I can see any reason why anybody should want a man like that as a representative," growled the first man. "He is one of those long-haired ranters who has never done a thing in his life but criticize other persons. He is a bluffer and a brayer."  
The friend nodded.  
"Yes," he agreed. "I guess that's all right. But you must admit that when he gets on his truck coat and string tie he certainly does look the part."  
And Representative Anderson concludes invariably:  
"We'll have better government when fewer people continue voting for men who look the part."

Both in Same Boat.

Senator Albert B. Cummins of Iowa rejoices in initials similar to those by which the diplomatic mediation commission was designated, for the first letters of his three names are A. B. C. His family originally came from Pennsylvania, but they emigrated to Iowa some years ago.  
If Cummins has a fond it is books, and first-edition books, at that. His library is magnificent, and particularly rich in historical works. His pride is his ancient tomes, though he is equally proud of the fine farms of which his state boasts.  
There is a story told on Senator Cummins to the effect that last summer he and his wife went to a fashionable resort in Washington. After a day at the Capitol, the cool breeze and music seemed delightful; so the senator brought himself of something to eat.  
"Waiter," he said, "please read this for me."  
The man took the card, looked at it in a puzzled way, then gave it back.  
"I'm sorry, boss, that I can't help you out," he said, with a shake of the head, "but you see I ain't got much education either."

Both in Same Boat.

Both in Same Boat.