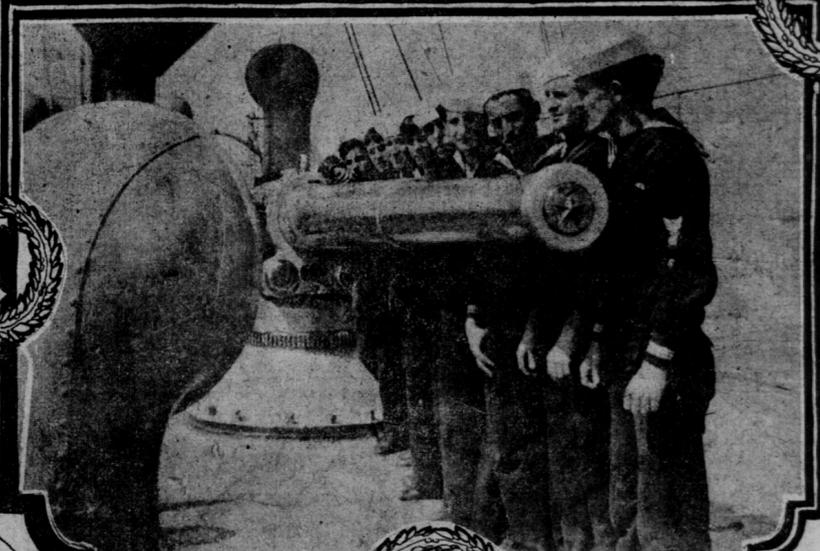
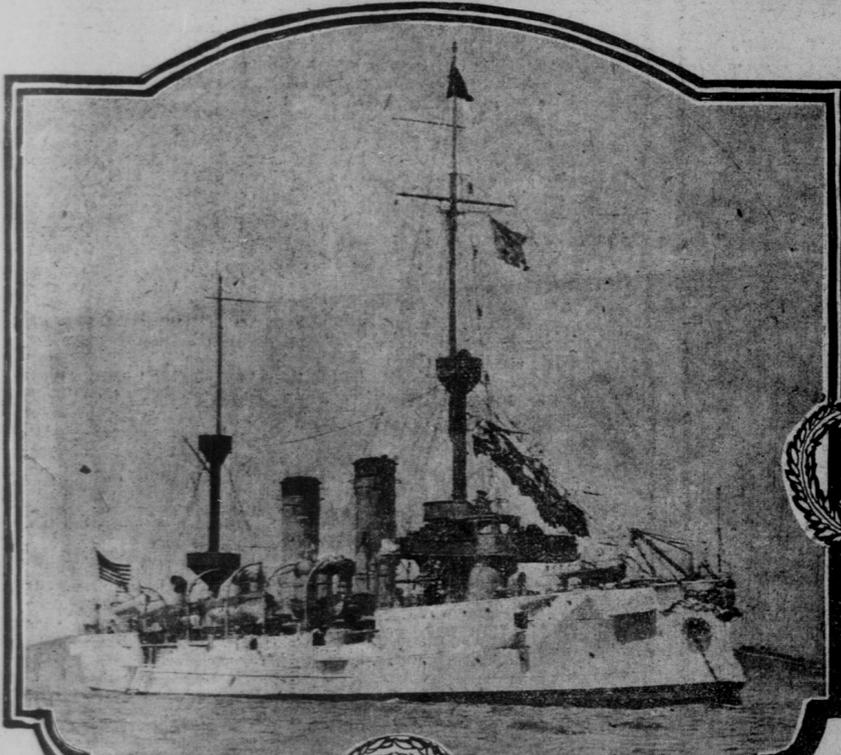
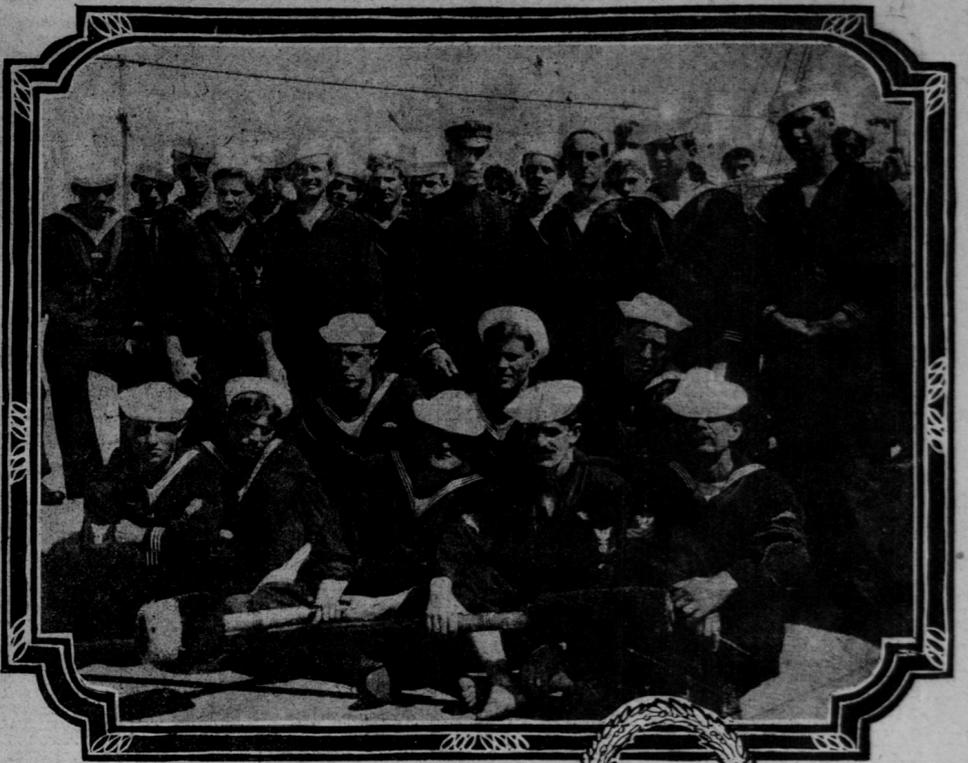


# The CRACK BIG GUN SHOOTERS of the WORLD



How the Men of the Cruiser Albany  
for the Second Time Won the Trophy  
of Navy by Their Wonderful Work  
at Magdalena Bay . . . . .

CREW OF U.S.S.  
ALBANY'S PORT 5-INCH  
BATTERY WHICH AT  
MAGDALENA BAY  
SCORED 136 HITS OUT  
OUT OF 144 SHOTS.  
IN THE CENTER IS  
MIDSHIPMAN CHARLES  
A. WOODRUFF WHO  
FIRED THE FIRST SIX  
SHOTS, ALL HITS,  
HIMSELF



perfect harmony. And talk about team work. The "play altogether" of a crack football team is a riot of divided purposes compared with the combined effort necessary to make a record at Magdalena bay.

The target is anchored at the apex of an imaginary triangle, along the base of which the cruiser steams back and forth at a 10 knot gait. The center of the base of the triangle for five inch gun practice is 1,400 yards away from the target. The extremities of the base are 1,600 yards away. Every revolution of the cruiser's propeller changes the distance and calls for a corresponding readjustment of the direction in which the gun is pointed. The readjustment differs with each gun according to its position on the ship, and for a half dozen guns to be banging away at the same time and all hitting the same target in about the same place calls for mathematical legerdemain that more resembles black magic than scientific calculation.

The Albany reached the range 105 men short of its full complement. A few days before practice was begun all hands had been vaccinated and in the majority of cases the vaccine had "taken." Nearly everybody knows how sore that process makes the victim. Picture yourself with one of those exquisitely painful "vaccination" arms. Imagine a game rougher than football and a prize fight combined. Then think of taking that arm into that game and you have some idea of the conditions under which the Albany's men went to their task, and under a pitiless tropical sun, at that.

Uncle Sam has few secrets that all the world may not know if it takes the trouble to find out. Experience, however, has taught the advisability of silence on certain matters, and one of the official secrets is the exact degree of proficiency shown by the men behind the guns. None of the figures published are official. The official figures are known only to certain officers on each ship. Their report goes to the navy department, where it is hidden from all but men who remain discreetly dumb in unofficial talkfests. The men on the ships know in a general way the result of their work and it is from them that the public acquires its knowledge of the scores. Navy officers are not allowed to give out scores, but occasionally they relax to the point of confirming one of these general estimates or admitting that it is approximately correct.

These figures of the work done at Magdalena bay by the Albany's port 5 inch battery, commanded by Midshipman Charles A. Woodruff, are approximately correct. They are not, I was assured by an officer, exaggerated. Out of 144 shots fired by this battery while the ship was steaming at a speed of 10 knots an hour 136 were hits. Of the first 66 shots fired 45 were hits. Midshipman, now Ensign, Woodruff fired the first six shots himself. The time in which this record was made was not divulged, but is a general estimate of the record made by all the guns on the Albany; the cruiser's battery includes 10 5 inch guns and 10 3 pounders; the score averaged 10 hits per gun per minute.

I asked one of the officers what in his opinion was the factor that contributed to the Albany's success. He had told me of the disadvantages under which the men worked. How they had gone on the range worn out by six months of vitiating service in the tropics and they were further handicapped by sore arms from vaccination. He said:

"It was simply splendid team work. The men in the fireroom, who kept up a steady supply of steam, the engineers who maintained the revolutions of the wheel at a regular speed, the navigator who laid the ship's course, the quarter-masters who steered, the men who served the ammunition all contributed equally with the men actually behind the guns. A break in the chain anywhere might have meant a miss or no shot at all. They all worked together, and God bless them, they're the fittest bunch of fighting men that ever cleared a ship for action."

THE U.S. CRUISER ALBANY

DESIDERATA 5-INCH GUN

By Lindsay Campbell

THAT the actual worth in battle of the modern machinery of war is largely theoretical is admitted by naval authorities, who also are unanimous in their appreciation of personnel as a vital factor, an all important factor, and in many cases the essential factor in considering the relative values of opposing forces. The naval history of the war of 1812 proved that with the fighting machinery of those days personnel counted for more than tonnage and armament. The Yankee navy put a kink in King George's armada that John Bull hates to discuss to this day. Theoretically the American ships of that day enjoyed the same chance of surviving conflict with the ships of England as the snowball of the proverb. What actually happened is history. That history will not repeat itself is only theory. Precedent would suggest that with the same kind of men behind the guns, a few inches more or less of armor plate, a misfit in the relative size of the opposing ordnance or a foe's numerical superiority would make little difference and that "licking creation" would be the same easy and congenial task for the Yankee ships of today as it was to that dinky little navy of long ago.

The value of the ships themselves—of speed, of big guns, of all the modern mechanical devices of war—is all a matter of theory. The worth of the right kind of personnel has been demonstrated in actual conflict times innumerable and so far as absolute knowledge goes it may be said that the warship with the best crew is the best ship to bet on in a fight.

The test of a crew's worth on a fighting ship is in the ability of that crew to handle the batteries and to send shot and shell to a designated mark, whether target, hostile fort or enemy's ship, and to hit it, early and often. In the United States navy the crew that responds most perfectly to this test is awarded a trophy and the ship flying the trophy pennant may be considered, as far as actual experience has proved, the best ship of its class.

The cruiser Albany, whose crew on the Boston won the trophy last year,

is entitled by virtue of that same crew's shooting to fly the pennant for another year.

The Albany therefore is fittest of all the cruisers to fight and the Albany of all the ships in the navy was selected by Uncle Sam to carry the olive branch to the revolution belt of Central America.

Sentimental Uncle Sam, who won the Philippines in a fair fight and then bought them for a fancy figure; who prevented Yankee traders from exploiting the islands; who said: "Give the Filipino a chance," and then passed laws that killed the trade of the islands with other nations and built a tariff wall which barred the little brown brother from trading with America; the same Uncle Sam who collected indemnity from China and returned the money and later calmly submitted to a costly boycott at the hands of his beneficiaries, is the Uncle Sam who has sent this fittest of fighting ships to the toy kingdoms of Central America on a mission of peace, with a cargo of olive branches and two doves of peace by way of passengers.

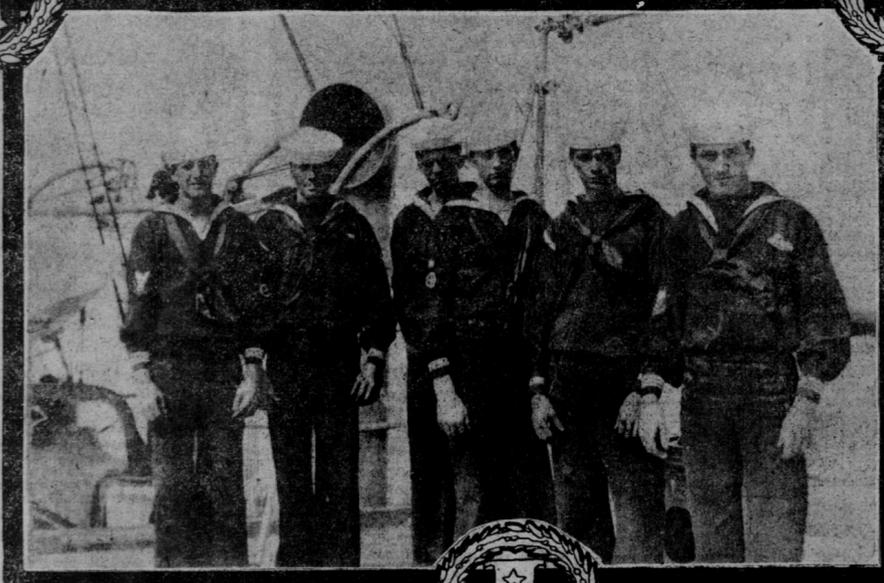
The officers and men of the Albany proved their right to the trophy and all that it means by their matter of fact acceptance of the orders that made the cruiser a peace-ship and literally spiked the guns that had talked to such good purpose at Magdalena bay. They would not have been human, however, if they had not regretted the loss of the opportunity to fly that trophy pennant in the presence of 14,000 men who really knew its worth.

The interest of the landsman in that pennant is merely patriotic. He knew Yankee gunners could shoot anyway. The landsman's appreciation does not interest Jack. He knows the landsman doesn't understand. With the professional fighting man it is different. The fellows on the other ships can shoot some themselves. They tried to win that same trophy and mean to do it some day. In the meanwhile, however, it is hats off to the trophy ship, and when the round, flat lid of the "man behind" comes off the cup of the fellow on the trophy ship is full to overflowing. It was bad enough to miss the fleet. To take that flag on a

peace mission and flutter it before the eyes of republics that fought naval battles in gasoline launches and with smooth bore guns was a highly dis-

gusting performance and a task that only sentimental Uncle Sam would have set a prize crew.

task of keeping the air filled with shrieking shells and the hurry and hustle must be directed with mathematical precision and must combine in



SOME OF THE ALBANY'S CRACK GUNNERS



THE TROPHY WON FOR THE SECOND TIME BY THE MEN WHO MAN THE ALBANY