Letter No 48

U. S. S. Charleston,
Yokohama, Japan
Oct 15, 1894

My dear Folks,

On Oct 12 the steamer China left here with my last letter.

Tomorrow we leave for Nagasaki, and I have just found out that a letter mailed there on our arrival will not catch the steamer leaving here Oct 20th. Therefore I send you these few lines so that you wont be disappointed - for I believe I told you in my last letter that I would write again on the 20th.

The mail steamer from San Francisco was due here day before yesterday, but she has not yet arrived, otherwise I would have (I hope) some letters to acknowledge. If she dont arrive before we leave, we may have to go to China, or Corea without our mail, and if we do I have no idea when we will get it. I need not say, that to leave without it would be a great disappointment.

We don't know for sure that we are going to Corea but we suppose so, as we can't see what else is to be done with us.

There is no ship now at Chemulpoo, (the sea port of Seoul the Capital of Corea) and when we arrive there will be three ships at Nagasaki, viz., the Baltimore (flagship) the Petrel (800 tons) and the Charleston.

They say that the Baltimore needs repairs, and it seems almost certain that the Petrel, and Charleston will be sent

to Chemulpoo, or Tiantsin (China)

However, I will write to you from Nagasaki and tell you for sure - tho. you will probably see our movements in the U. S. papers before the letter can reach you.

If you look on the map for any of the places I have or will mention you may not find them spelled the same, for no two maps agree as to the spelling of oriental names.

It would be a good scheme to look up the geography of this part of the world, and get the lay of the land - the relative positions of such places as Yokohama, Kobe, and Nagasaki, (Japan) and Tiantsin, Seoul, Chemulpoo, Chifu, Shanghai (high), Foochoo, and Hong-Kong - for I will probably have to mention them many times before I return - particularly if this war continues.

I don't intend to bore you much with Japanese war news, nor attempt to give you much of an insight into the oriental problem - as of course it cant interest you much - but from time to time I will tell you what there is interesting to tell about it, - and about the Japanese people. I mean only such things as come under my observation, and appear to me most interesting or amusing. If I go much beyond that I am sure I will bore you - and you could bore yourself just as easily reading a book on Japan.

This country has been very successfully photographed and large unmounted photos. - like those I sent by last mail

only cost a little over 8 cents each. I have bought a number of them and will write explanations on the back and send them by the next mail from Nagasaki. They can be sent around just like a letter, and I am sure they will be much more entertaining than anything I can write. Some of them are very fine - especially those giving the native costumes.

I enclose you a few "10 sen" coins. Send one of them around with this letter.

Silver is coined here at its real value, consequently 10 cents in U. S. gold will buy 20 sen in Japan.

The Japanese dollar = one yen
" " cent = " sen

The exchange here is about 2 to 1. That is for $10. in U. S. gold we get 20 Yen; and as a yen will buy more here than a dollar in the United States, it follows that our pay is more than double (measured in purchasing power) while on this station.

You can get a tweed suit made to order for from $6. to $10.50 in U. S. gold, and other things in proportion. The tariff in this country is 5%. They have not yet learned the beauties of "protection."

———— . . ————

Our cruise to Nagasaki will be through the Inland Sea and if we have the good luck to have fine weather it will be very interesting as the scenery is said to be very fine.

I will tell you something about it in my first letter from Nagasaki.

I don't think there is any duty on photos. going into the U. S. so I suppose you will get those I send you all right. By the way if I should take the notion to send you a trinket once in a while - a scrap of silk etc. you must receive it with due humiliation as a smuggled article, but if the post office authorities ask you any questions about it, please dont mention my name then the worst that can happen is the confiscation of the package.

I have been going ashore a good deal lately and I would give you some of my experiences in this letter had I not been taken by surprise by the information that I could not write it on the way to Nagasaki and post it there.

I must leave it here as I explained, to catch the steamer leaving Oct 20th.

It will reach you about Nov 10 - 12.

I enclose you a few photos. of Mare Island Navy Yard, that were given me by Dr. Arnold.

He is the chap I took such a shine to, and now I am all broken up over his leaving. He has been transferred to the Petrel, and I miss him very much indeed, the more so as I almost never become attached to a shipmate.

Don't neglect to write to me whenever the spirit moves you - the letters will reach me some time - even in Corea,

and will give me more pleasure than you can imagine.

The arrival of mails are the real landmarks in a cruise on this station - we measure time by mails instead of weeks.

Give my very best love to all at home, and believe me

Always your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

Letter No 49

U. S. S. Charleston,
Nagasaki, Japan,
Friday Oct 19, 1894

My dear folks,

This morning at 9 we dropped anchor here, and everything has been bustle and confusion since - for we are informed that the Admiral will come on board tomorrow morning and "inspect" the ship, which means that we will be put through all our drills and exercises.

Of course we are busy today making preparations, and there is no time for writing letters. The Belgic has just arrived and leaves this evening for Yokohama, thence on to San Frisco - and I am only writing this note to let you know where we are at - I really haven't time to do more than give you an outline of the news, and we are not yet very sure of the accuracy of that.

As we expected, we found that the Admiral intended to send us on at once to Chemulpoo (the seaport of Seoul) as soon as we could coal ship.

But - on the way here from Yokohama our hydraulic steering gear broke down, and we were obliged to steer by hand - which requires 8 men and is a difficult operation, especially in passing through narrow channels.

The Admiral sent a board of survey (3 officers from the Flagship) to make an examination, and we understand that they will recommend that our steering gear be repaired here -

where there is an excellent dockyard. If this recommendation is approved we will remain here at least two or three weeks, and, they say the Baltimore will go on to Chemulpoo, and remain there until we come.

This will suit me right down to the ground, and I would like to stay here a few days.

If they decide to send us to Chemulpoo, we must coal ship first - which will take several days so I will have plenty of time to write you a good letter for the next steamer, which leaves in about 10 days.

This is only a note to let you know why I haven't time to write you a sure enough letter. To be sure I might have written a letter while on the way here from Yokohama, but I didn't, and got caught by the steamer coming in before I expected her. I will try and not let it occur again.

I think I have told you that my regular address until further notice is:

U. S. S. Charleston,
Care U. S. Consul General,
Yokohama,
Japan

Postage 5 cents each ½ ounce.

As we were getting up anchor to leave Yokohama, the officer of the deck (which was not me) was stupid enough to try to heave the anchor up with the chain across the ram (?)

and as a natural consequence the chain "carried away" (broke), and we were delayed four hours picking it up with a diver (ours).

During this delay the mail steamer from Frisco, via Honolulu, arrived and brought our mail. I received a long letter from Ma (Sept 20) and a long one from Adelaide ("September the eighteenth") giving me all the news to date, and enclosing several forwarded letters and newspaper clippings.

I will answer the letters in my next.

I am sorry to send such a tiny letter on such a long journey - 8000 miles - 20 days, but you see how I am fixed this time.

It is hardly worth while numbering this letter and sending it around, but I suppose you might as well do it to let 'em know where we are, and that another, and, I hope, better one will follow soon.

I was very much interested in the account of the house party, specially the scandalous conduct of Pa with the young girls.

I can't quite make up my mind whether or not I would like to have been there. I am not old enough for Pa's racket, nor quite young enough to have been in the swim. I have arrived at that age when a man is socially of very little use.

Give my best love to all at home,

Always Y. L. S.,

(Signed) Wm

Letter No 50

U. S. S. Charleston,
Nagasaki, Japan,
Oct 23rd, 1894

My dear people,

I promised you a long letter, and a lot of photographs by this steamer, but I find I will have to put you off until the next - nine days later. When I last wrote I knew that this steamer would sail ten days later than the last, but I didn't know that letters had to be mailed here six days before the steamer sails from Yokohama. The same steamer (Peru) that takes this letter east, arrives here tomorrow, and from here goes through the Inland Sea to Kobe, and Yokohama, then on to Frisco, leaving Yokohama Oct 30.

I enclose a schedule showing all the steamers leaving Yokohama for San Francisco, and all leaving Frisco going westward.

By consulting this you can see when letters should reach you (remembering always that steamers are "subject to change and individual postponement," and that when not postponed, they are liable to delays of a few days by bad weather, heavy cargoes, etc.)

The schedule also shows you when you can write and catch the steamers at Frisco.

The last mail to reach us I have already acknowledged.

Two days ago (Oct 21) a mail arrived in Yokohama on the City of Rio de Janeiro, but I don't know how soon it will

be here, probably not before the steamer sails with this letter.

The photos. I spoke of I have already purchased, but they are not yet ready to send as I have not finished writing the explanations on the back of them.

Now for the news. We arrived here, you remember, on the 19th. The next day the Admiral "inspected" our ship, and we passed a very good inspection. That was on a Saturday. The monday# following he inspected the flagship, and the next day (today) he sailed away for Chemulpoo. He was madder than the proverbial wet hen - likewise all the officers on the Baltimore. As for their wives on shore they curse the Charleston in the choisiest# Japanese oaths.

They (the wives) arrived in Yokohama four or five months ago, but the Baltimore was absent in China and Corea. Only a couple of weeks ago the wives came down to Nagasaki to meet the Baltimore on her return from Chemulpoo. Presently an order came to send a ship at once to Chemulpoo. The Charleston was then on her way to Nagasaki, and of course she was to be sent. But as you know, our steam steering gear broke down, and the board of officers appointed to examine it decided that it must be fixed before we left, on account of the difficult channel at the entrance to Chemulpoo. So there was nothing for the Admiral to do but obey the Department's order and scoot.

We are to have our steering gear repaired as soon as

possible, and proceed at once to Chemulpoo and take the Baltimore's place, when she will probably go to some place in China - probably Shanghai. It will probably not take more than a week or ten days to make the repairs, and then we will be on the move again. It is only 500 miles from here to Chemulpoo.

We will remain there only a couple of months, for the Admiral has an order from the department to let nothing interfere with the Charleston's being docked and painted within six months of her last docking. The time will be up next Jany 15, so we must be back here (at Nagasaki) and in dock before that date. This is good news as it insures us against a long stay in a very disagreeable place. There is no regular mail communication now with Corea, but the Japanese transports will bring our mail back and take it there for us if the U. S. Consuls send it on board them.

Address always:

U. S. S. Charleston,
Care U. S. Consul General,
Yokohama, Japan

for Yokohama is the New York of Japan, and the distributing center.

Nagasaki has a perfectly landlocked harbor, and is nearly as large as Yokohama, but there are not many foreigners here - only 200 or 300, while Yokohama has 2500.

The drydocks are built here because the harbor can be perfectly defended against any attack.

Most of the foreigners doing business here are Englishmen, as we have comparatively small trade with this country. All the clothing etc. you buy here is English. Here is an English joke, or rather a joke on an Englishman that I heard the other day.

A Britisher who had been travelling in the "States" remarked, on returning to his native land, that the Americans spoke the English language very badly. He said he had frequently heard them say:

"Where am I at"

instead of:

"Where is my 'at"

There is no extra charge for this joke.

———— . . ————

The other day I met a Mr. Keller (?)# of Philadelphia. He is making a trip around the world, and intends to be two years on the way. He says he knows Billy Forbes, Stuart Patterson's boys, and some others I mentioned, but not Bromley Wharton. He says he belongs to the Germantown Cricket Club, and I think he said, Social Art. He is young, short, slender, blond, beardless, and has a hooked nose, and looks like a Jew.

He is a good example of the young American globe-trotter.

All the same I wish I had money to do the same, and buy all the fine things I see.

It seems to me that I have a mania for tautology. There are half a dozen examples in this one letter.

I enclose one paper Yen which represents one silver Yen - a coin about as large, if not larger than our dollar, but only worth one half dollar in our gold.

I don't know who the gentleman with the "wuskers" is on the Yen, but it isn't the present Mikado who is a man of only 47 or 48.

I am now enjoying my usual excellent health, and although I was well all the time at Honolulu, I suffered from the heat, and felt a lack of energy.

You can imagine then how much I appreciate the glorious autumn weather of Japan. The sky is clear, and the temperature 75° during the day and 60° at night.

If you were to take the Carolinas, the Virginias, New Jersey, Maryland, and part of New York state, and move them out into the Atlantic 300 or 400 miles where they would be washed by the Gulf Stream, you would have another Japan as far as climate is concerned.

I must close now to catch this steamer, as she only remains a short time, and the post office ashore closes hours & hours before she leaves.

Give my best love to all at home,

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm

P. S.

I have just bought some more photographs of this place and of scenery in the Inland Sea, etc. and if they reach you safely I am sure you will enjoy them.

Letter No 51

with

67 Photographs.

U. S. S. Charleston,

Nagasaki, Japan

Oct 29, 1894

My dear folks,

With this letter I send you 67 photographs that will give you an idea of what Japan is like.

On the back of each one I have written brief explanations that will, I hope, make the pictures more interesting.

It seems to me that these photos. will give you a better idea of Japan, and the Japanese than any description that could be written - certainly better than any I could write. I have selected them from among several hundred - with the view of giving you an idea of where I am at. They are numbered in the order in which I want you to look at them, for in some cases the explanation extends from one photo. to another, and in the higher numbers I sometimes refer you to the lower numbers.

I did not buy them all at one time and had numbered the first half before I bought the second, consequently, as a whole they are not well arranged.

However they will I am sure prove interesting to all those who take an interest in me and my whereabouts.

Some of them are I think excellent photos, and to some of you it may seem a shame that they should be spoiled to make Rome a holiday - for by the time they have been the rounds they will doubtless be the worse for wear and hardly worth keeping.

However, if they give you as much pleasure as I think they will they will owe me nothing, and may go into the waste basket. I will bring plenty of others home, unless we are suddenly ordered away from Japan - which is not likely.

When these pictures have been the rounds - the regular rounds - they might be kept going among your friends, if you think they would care to look at them - for I want to impress you with the fact that I dont expect them to survive in a condition fit for mounting in an album.

I make you a present of them as a letter - so work them for all they are worth.

Like good men and women I of course expect you to successfully resist any temptation you may feel to abstract any picture that may take your fancy.

This is good advise# - considering that the pictures are numbered, and you would surely be nabbed.

Today we leave Nagasaki for Chemulpoo, to remain there until about the first of Jany when we return here to be docked.

I understand that the mail communications are frequent, - the government transports carrying the mails.

Address always:

Care U. S. Consul General,

Yokohama, Japan.

The photographs referred to above, I will send separate from this letter, for fear both should be lost.

As I have written on the backs of the photos. I will pay letter postage on the package, so that there will be no complaint.

I do them up in two covers, so that the first one can be torn off and the second unfolded. With one cover the photos are liable to be torn in taking off the cover.

The last mail brought me a letter from Ma, and one from Lou, and the usual bundle of forwarded letters and clippings, all of which I enjoyed very much.

It seems absurd that we should not be able to get any war news here, but we cant - and must depend on what comes back from the U. S. by cable.

I will write to you by every mail from Chemulpoo, but I fancy there will not be much news to give you.

Please acknowledge the receipt of this letter, and the photos.

Give my best love to all at home, and to all at Martinsville, Shenandoah, 1704 and Falconhill, and believe me,

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm

(The photographs mentioned in this letter do not appear in the files. - ASF)

Letter No 52

U. S. S. Charleston,
Chemulpo, Korea,
Oct 31, 1894

My dear People,

This evening we dropped anchor in this our-of-the-way place. We were 50 hours coming from Nagasaki, and the latter part of the trip we "bucked" a very strong breeze and a heavy sea.

My part of the ship - the 3rd Division - which takes in the forecastle and the forward 8 inch gun, was under water half the time - and the gun which I had in such fine trim is now rusted as brown as a brick - that is all the bright metal work outside, for the bore, and all the interior mechanism is of course thoroughly protected. We find that a mail is about to leave for Japan, and I write you this note to let you know that we have arrived safely, tho. I haven't time to tell you anything about the place.

It is desolate looking enough, but I have no doubt it will improve on acquaintance. We find the Baltimore here, - waiting for us in order to be free to go to China (Chefoo). The Baltimore has a guard of 25 men and 3 officers at Seoul - the capital, which will have to be relieved by men from our crew. They are quartered in a house near the U. S. Minister - a timid old professor of Bugalogy from some female college.

I hope I wont have to go, as it would be very uninteresting, and much less comfortable than on board ship.

We expect to be relieved by some of the small vessels now on their way out - Yorktown, Costine (?), Machias, or Raleigh.

We find also an English, a German, and two Russian ships here. There is no "war" in this neighborhood, but it is said the foreign representatives in Seoul fear an uprising of the Coreans, and they are afraid they will get killed in the crush.

If this letter is not unduly delayed it will, or should catch the steamer leaving Yokohama, Nov. 9., and (going via Honolulu) reach Frisco Nov 26 and Rockhill Furnace about Dec 1st. If it does it will reach you at the same time as the last letters I left at Nagasaki before sailing two days ago. By the way, I registered the bundle of photos that were sent with Letter No 51. The package weighed 13 ounces and required 130 sen in stamps, plus ten for registering or in all 140 sen, or 70 cents in U. S. gold. In the U. S. it would only cost about 26 cents.

I put all the different denominations on it, and they looked so fine, that it occurred to me that someone might do away with it for the sake of the stamps, so I registered it; and besides drew a red ink mark around the margin of the stamps - which is said to protect them. If they have been tampered with please report it to the P. O. Depart.

It contained the following stamps:

25 sen
25 "
20 "
15 "
10 "
10 "
8 "
5 "
5 "
5 "
4 "
3 "
2 "
1 "
1 "
5 Ren = ½ sen
5 " " "
140 sen

I have no doubt some of you will be glad to get them either for yourselves or some stamp collecting friend.

I neglected to commence closing my mail in time at Nagasaki, otherwise I would not have rolled the photos, but sent them between two cardboards. When I bought them they were rolled sidewise, so I rolled them lengthwise.

You might put them between cardboards for mailing.

By the same mail I sent a pair of tiny straw sandals to Mary. I also mailed a pair to Joe Sims. Small Japanese babies as soon as they can toddle wear just such sandals in the streets. The mystery is how they keep from losing them when they tumble about in play.

I think the babies interest me more than anything in Japan. They are not pretty, but they are very cute. If you bow to them they will always return your salutation in the ceremonious way of their country, tho. they may be too timid too# shake hands with you.

They are very shy of foreigners, except those that inhabit much frequented stores or tea houses.

In my next letter I will be able to tell you something about Chemulpo - just now I know very little. However, don't expect too much, for I fancy there is very little to tell.

As we approached the entrance to this port we saw the wreck of the large English transport steamer that was sunk with 1700 chinamen on board by the Japanese man-of-war Naniwa. You may remember that the Naniwa was with us in Honolulu for 5 months. She is almost exactly like the Charleston, except than# her battery is a little different in calibre.

The Chinamen on the transport would not allow the English officers to surrender the vessel, so the Naniwa fired and sunk her.

We also saw the wreck of a Japanese transport that ran

on a shoal last month. She grounded about her middle, and when the tide went down she broke in two. There is a rise and fall of 30 feet here, and consequently a strong currents#.

The next steamer leaving Yokohama is Nov. 17, but as she dont stop at Honolulu she will reach Frisco only four or five days later than the steamer of Nov. 9.

We are all in excellent health, and will try to make the best of Chemulpo.

It gets very cold here in the winter, but we have lumber on board and will build houses on deck over the hatches and try and keep warm.

Give my very best love to all at home. Write often, and address as usual to

Yokohama, Care U. S. Consul General.

Always your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Charleston,

Chemulpo, Korea,

Nov. 10, 1894

My dear folks,

Since we arrived in this desolate harbor I haven't done a thing but work. Not a moment have I devoted to reading or any other amusement.

I don't think I have ever mentioned the fact that I am "Intelligence Officer" of the ship. The title does not refer to my mental qualities, but to information that I collect for the use of the Navy Department. It is my duty (in addition to all my other duties) to make a report on all ports visited, and all new ships we may happen to be in company with.

About ports they want to know everything that has any possible bearing on military matters.

This port has not been reported on since 1884, and I must verify or correct the old reports. There are six foreign vessels in the harbor. Our records contain information about five, excepting a few items which I have collected. The fifth is a fine new cruiser just out from England. She is about half again as large as the Charleston, is very fast, and has all the latest improvements in the art of destroying your fellow sailors. Our records contain no information about her, so I have had to collect it all - and the report will comprise about 40 pages of very large paper.

This report is not yet finished, and I have yet to make

the report on the port of Chemulpo, and as these must be made without delay, you see that I haven't any time to be writing letters. However, there is a mail away from here about every 10 days - they are not regular - and I will write soon, and give you all the items of interest there may be about Korea, and the Korean people.

We have had clear cold weather ever since our arrival and we are all in excellent health. We have 25 marines at Seoul for the sole object of relieving the groundless fears of our timid old minister.

The Baltimore left on our arrival, and we will doubtless remain until some other vessel relieves us - which may or may not be before Jany 1st next.

As you have seen by the papers, several small vessels, Castine (?), Machias, Raleigh etc, are on their way out here, but I dont think they are in any hurry to get through the Mediterranean Sea.

Please excuse such a short note.

I havent numbered it, as it is not worth sending around.

The last letter I received was from Adelaide, dated Sept 23rd. and it reached here yesterday. I will answer it just as soon as I get all this extra work off my hands.

Give my best love to all at home, and believe me,

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm

U. S. S. Charleston,

Chemulpo, Korea,

Nov. 24, 1894

My dear little Sissie,

I am sure you were not more pleased with your success on the examination than I was at receiving the news. I think 81% pretty fine for a small girl who has been so lacking in confidence. I always told you you would get there if you had patience and courage.

Carlisle said that genius is nothing but a capacity for taking pains.

There is no royal road to learning. You get there by hard grinding - some harder than other, but grinding all the same. It don't require very much courage and patience <u>at a time</u>, but it requires it <u>all</u> the time. The strain of a daily mental effort is what tells, and that is what you must brace your courage against. A lack of confidence is a terrible discourager, and I hope that after your success on your examination you will never be bothered that way again. If you had had the same confidence in your ability that I have always had you would not have suffered so much anxiety during the past year.

However, your anxiety is now happily over, and it is only a matter of time until you graduate; therefore it is only proper that we should celebrate the passing of the summit, and the beginning of the down-hill work; and to help

you whoop it up a little bit I enclose a small check which I received in the last mail. It came to me in an envelope without a line, and for a day or so I couldn't even guess what it was for. It is my mileage from home to New York when I joined the Philadelphia.

I had quite forgotten all about it. I remember that it was not paid to me at the time, so I asked to have the check sent to father, and dismissed it from my mind. However, it comes to me as a pure windfall, and Dad is out and you are in just $23 52/100. I send it with congratulations and best wishes for a merry xmas . I don't tell you any news for I am writing by this mail my usual home letter.

I say, "By this mail," but we never know when the mail is going to leave. I will put this in the box, and the home letter will follow.

We are having splendid clear weather, and I am in simply perfect health.

Always your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

Be very careful to indorse the check just as I have written your name, - "Louisa P. Sims."

(Signed) Wm.

No 53

U. S. S. Charleston,
Chemulpō, Korea,
Nov. 25, 1894
(steamer sailed Nov. 27.)

My dear people,

I am quite conscious of the fact that I have been neglecting you a bit lately in the matter of letters, but it doesn't matter very much as far as news goes, as there is very little to tell, and my short notes have kept you posted on my whereabouts.

The reason for all this terrible neglect I mentioned in one of my notes, i. e., the amount of work I have had to do lately in writing "Intellegence Reports." We have at Washington an Intelligence Bureau, to which a staff of officers is attached, whose business it is to collect all kinds of naval and military information. On each ship is an officer appointed as "Intelligence Officer" and it is his duty to make a report on each port visited, giving a thousand and one details - mostly military - about facilities for all kinds of operations. A report also has to be prepared on all the men of war we fall in with.

This bureau has been in operation about 15 years, and has collected a vast amount of information. We have all possible information about nearly all the seaports in the world - including plans of attack etc.

The information about ships has been tabulated, printed,

and copies supplied to each ship.

For example if we fall in with a foreign ship, - say the Russian ship Wipeoffyourchineskey (Captain Fullofwhiskey, First Lieut. Soberoff) or the English brig Itch (Capt. Scratch), or the "Prickleyheat" (three decks & no bottom), we have only to look in our books to find detailed information about everything on board of her.

I need not of course explain the great value of this information in war times.

New ships are being built all the time, and when we run across one I am in trouble, as a complete report has to be made on her. For the ordinary ship I have only to supply a few missing details, not contained in our books.

A few days after our arrival here a brand new English ship arrived. She is a first class cruiser of 7500 tons (about the Columbia's size) and was just completed this year. Her name is the Crescent, and she's a daisy, and entirely up to date.

My "instructions" contain hundreds of questions to be answered, and orders to report fully any new points. She only remained here five days, and I had all this information to get while performing all my other duties.

I visited her twice and was given every opportunity to inspect her from stem to stern - taking notes and making sketches.

My official reports comprised 52 pages - (about ½ larger than foolscap) and numerous sketches. When I was about half way through this report the Russian ship "Admiral Korniloff," 5500 tons, came in and remained three days. She is also a new ship. I visited her once and the report covers 22 pages. All this had to be made out rough, then smooth, then press copied, and this in a couple of weeks in the intervals of time between standing watch, drilling, etc. was what Varley would call "right smart work."

The Intelligence reports have been very generally neglected on board this ship, as you will understand when I tell you that since I have been on board (3 months) I have sent in more work than the press copy book shows since she has been in commission - since nearly seven years ago.

Our fool Captain is both astonished and delighted, He is a time server himself, and can't quite comprehend a man's sending in work when an excuse would do as well.

In the reports I have freely expressed my opinions (with my usual timidity) about various nautical matters, and the skipper, by force of explaining these opinions to others has come to regard them as his own in a measure, and for fear they will be wasted he has written to various officials calling their attention to the report - or certain parts of it. The reports go through the Admiral, and he has written to the Secretary asking him to read the document to the Admiral

(who is by the way a puddin'head) He has also written to the Chief Intelligence Officer at Washington, and to the Chief naval constructor.

I have still four reports on vessels to make - but as none of them are new vessels it will not take much time. Before we leave I must make a report on the port of Chemulpo - there hasn't been a line written on it since 1885.

All this about reports wont interest you much, but it will explain why I have been too busy to write. We have been here since Oct. 31st, and I haven't yet been ashore, and wont be ready to go for some time - but from all accounts I havent missed much, as Chemulpo is described as the dirtiest place in the world. There are not more than a dozen white people, and they are not very desirable.

It is just a small town of foul smelling streets, and there are enither hotels, restaurants, nor bars.

The rise and fall of the tide is 30 feet, and the inner harbor is too shallow for us at low tide, so we are anchored outside, about 2½ miles from the town. This makes boating very inconvenient, and rather wet when there is a breeze blowing.

The result of all these attractions is that most of our fellows who have been ashore, have only been once.

The Koreans are <u>very</u> different from the Japanese - not so much in appearance, as in their habits.

Although the Japs got their start from Korea - learned porcelains & lacker making etc. they are now centuries ahead of them, and practically a different race of people.

In Japan all is feverish energy and thrift, and cleanliness is not only a virtue but a national passion. The Koreans are lazy and filthy to the last degree, and there is nothing attractive in their country except the country itself which is said to be fertile and beautiful.

Their houses are hovels and they appear to have no sense of the beautiful, nor of the eternal fitness of things.

Their garments are shapeless and absurd. They are always white, as if the better to show the dirt. Both the men and the women wear trousers and they are baggy to the most astonishing degree.

Their social customs are most extraordinary and more or less interesting, and after I have been ashore and can connect them with my personal experience I will tell you something about them.

I think I told you that when we arrived we found that the Baltimore (flagship) had a guard of 25 marines in Seoul the capital.

So when we took her place we had to send our marines to relieve theirs. They are in charge of the marine officer, two cadets, a doctor and paymaster's clerk, and according to all accounts they don't find it at all amusing.

Seoul is a city of nearly 1000000 inhabitants of the kind I have described, and said to be the most foul smelling place imaginable. It is practically the same as it was known to be 500 years ago, There are no white people there except the foreign representatives, and a few American and French missionaries. Of course there are no hotels nor any place a white man could go except the consulates or missionaries. Two or three of our young officers have visited the city and the Minister (Mr. Sill) put them up - as he does most all Americans - and I guess he is glad to see a new face occasionally.

Day before yesterday one of the officers on duty up there came down and brought a Korean with him, and he has interested us greatly. He is a man of means, speaks English with fair fluency, a large vocabulary, and very faulty gramatical# construction. He is a gentleman of high class and is very intimate with the king, and aspires to being made Secretary of the Korean legation at Washington. He is about 25 years old, and not at all handsome as his oriental features are badly pockmarked. He learned his English at the foreign office in Seoul, and in the mission schools, and he is very fond of reading it. I listened to him talk for two hours the other evening, and I was astonished at the amount and accuracy of his information in general. He is a man of fine mind and has a keen sense of humor, and a ready laugh.

I asked him 100 questions about his country, and the habits of his people, and told him something about my own. I wish I could reproduce his appearance for you. Perhaps I will be able to get his photo. for I am going to Seoul some day and I will see him there. Everything about him marked the gentleman. His manners were most delightful without being the least stiff, and he was soon on terms of easy familiarity with us all, which did not prevent him acknowledging even the smallest attentions in the most finished manner. If you handed him a box of matches to light his long pipe, you felt that his way of extending his hand was an acknowledgement of the favor, and it appeared to me that this acknowledgement was quite as apparent in his manner of scratching the match on the box, and every other motion until he laid it on the table.

He was most interesting and I observed him very closely.

His hands were small and slender, the nails narrow and perfectly trimmed, his teeth white, and what corresponded to his linen immaculate; and these qualities, as you know, will cover a multitude of sin and oriental moral turpitude. He wore the full native costume. White silk trousers and jacket (padded for winter) and over all a loose robe something like Japanese gentlemen wear only more voluminous. It was made of old gold color silk brocade (I guess you call it) and had many folds across the breast, and reached nearly

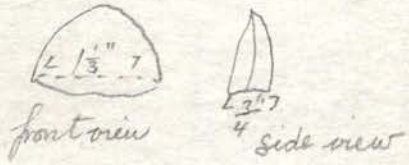
to the ground. The sleeves were very wide triple sleeves, that is, one sleeve inside the other, and next to his arm was a tight fitting sleeve of bright green satin. Around the neck and a little way down the front this robe was trimmed with white silk.

The head gear and fashion of doing the hair is very peculiar. All unmarried men wear their hair in a braid down the back, just like a young girl going to school. And, by the way, bachelors in this country have no rights. They are treated exactly like children. They have no voice in the government, can't hold office, own property except in trust etc.

The married men do their hair into a small knot on the crown of the head, and superfluous hair is cut off.

Gentlemen of rank have their hair done in a knot (when married) and over the forehead and above the ears a narrow black band is drawn so tightly that it indents the flesh. Above this band, and attached to it is an openwork net of horse hair about 1½ inches wide which confines the hair and leaves the top knot out. Attached to the net is a large piece of clear amber shaped like this:

It stands erect on the net and is the distinguishing mark of the Korean gentleman. So far the costume is only odd -





in the East - but the Korean hat makes the whole appear absurd. Only the upper classes wear a headgear - a purely ornamental contrivance made of fine bamboo and horse hair. The crown is of horse hair and the brim of bamboo so finely split that it looks like hair, and the meshes are wide enough apart to allow you to look through the hat in any direction.

The crown is very much too small for the head, so the hat has to be held in position by a band under the chin.

Mr. Pack, the gentleman I have been telling you about, was our guest on board for three days - not in the wardroom, but in the Junior Officers' quarters which are quite as fine as ours.

We had him in to dinner yesterday, and this morning he

started for Seoul accompanied by two of our officers. They started at 6 a.m. intending to walk - 28 miles. There are no railroads in this country, nor any wheeled vehicles. When you want to travel you must walk - ride a native pony, or hire a chair - a native contrivance carried by men. It takes four men to carry the chair, and two others follow behind to relieve the carriers.

The Captain of the German man of war here hired a chair, but when the six men saw the size of his tank, they insisted on having two more men.

Our fellows make the distance in about 8 hours.

I intend going up before very long to collect some information about the port, and then I will give you an account of what I see.

Since our stay here we have enjoyed most delightful weather (for Nov.) The temperature has been about 60°-65° during the day, and about 40° at night. The latter part of Dec. it gets quite cold, with snow and wind, but we hope by that time to be bound for Nagasaki. It is my opinion, however, that we won't leave here until a ship comes to take our place, and I don't think that will be much before next spring. In the mean time we are not having such a bad time - at least I am not, for as you know I never bore myself, and never have any time to kill. This country abounds in game - because the Koreans don't care for it. Our hunters have been

after the birds in the most enthousiastic manner, leaving the ship at daylight on cold mornings, etc, but they havent had any luck - five or six hunt all day and bring back three birds. Four German officers hunted for four days and got four birds, and our steward went ashore and bought 8 most beautiful pheasants for two yen, or one dollar in gold, and 20 large fish for one yen.

As you are quite aware the words "pheasant" and "quail" mean different birds in different parts of the world, and even in different parts of the same country.

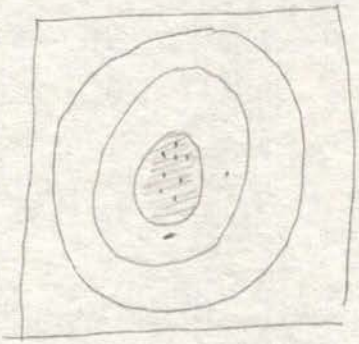
The pheasant of Korea is not the little bird (quail) you call a pheasant in Penna., but a beautiful bird nearly as large as a chicken (or a piece of chalk). The cock pheasant has most gorgeous plumage, specially the long tail feathers, and they make a splendid dish.

At the rate of 8 for one dollar, we consume whole covies (? plural of "covey"). In this country the festive chicken flourishes, and eggs are sold by the yard, - a yard of eggs looks something like this:



They are wrapped in wheat straw and tied between the eggs. When done up this way a man can shoulder a dozen yards and walk off with them, or strap many dozen yards on a pony. N. B. You remove the straw before you eat the eggs.

We are putting in all this fine weather getting the crew shaken down and proficient in all drills and exercises, and also at firing at target.



The target is on a floating platform and we let it drift down the tide until it is 300 yards astern. I have the top score so far with the rifle, 48 out of a possible 50; that is 8 bull's eyes and two just outside. My best score with the rifle at Honolulu was 45. I haven't fired with the revolver yet.

This place is, as you know, occupied by the Japanese, so that we only get such news and# they are willing to give us, and very little of that. We know practically nothing about the war. We hear rumors that are flying, and that is all. We heard the other day that the Chinese fleet fired on the Baltimore, but of course there is nothing in it. New York is probably the best place for news of this war.

You ask about the Row in Honolulu. It is very simple: A couple of young English officers returning from a dog fight, where they had entered a dog, stopped in at the bar of the Hawaiian Hotel.

While they were there with some sports and their dog, some of our young chaps came in to play billiards, and seeing

the dog, patted him on the back. The dog had been hurt in the fight, and as he was unfortunately patted on one of the chewed spots, he yelped. One of the Englishmen in a very rude manner and with the aid of profanity signified his disapproval of the proceeding, which was accordingly discontinued; but the American officers ventured a protest against the manner and the profanity as applied to them. The protest was not received in the proper christian spirit, and the debate that ensued ended in a row, in which the Englishmen were licked - the dog escaped any further injury.

The affair was investigated by the English Captain, with the result that he punished his young officers by confining them to the ship. I think our officers should have been punished too, but they were not.

_____ . . _____

It seems hard to realize that I have only been on this ship three months - it seems years.

I receive your letters, but as yet none of them are in answer to mine. My first letter from Yokohama was Oct 12, and the latest date of my home letters is Oct 22 from Rockhill Furnace. These letters passed each other at San Francisco and the next mail should bring me an acknowledgement of its receipt (my first letter).

The last mail reached here day before yesterday or say a month later than the latest dated home letter. It reached

Yokohama by steamer of Nov. 11, and was 12 days getting here, so in the present uncertainty of mail communication with Chemulpo you may count it a month from the time your letters are mailed until they reach me.

I give you these details so that when you ask me a question, you will not think yourself neglected if the answer is two months in reaching you.

The last mail brought me letters from Pa, Ma, Adelaide, Mary, and Madame Glatz, and all remembered my birthday (Oct 15 in the West and Oct 16 in the East). I am as you know 36, but officially I am 35, for that is what they have me down at the Navy Department, and I have never taken the trouble to have it changed.

I thank you all for remembering me so kindly. I dont see how you manage to remember birthdays. I am sure the section of my alleged brain devoted to that sort of thing is ossified.

The forwarded letters I read with the usual interest. The more I read of them the more I am convinced that it is a "great scheme."

The navy clippings are most interesting, and everyone in the mess reads them when I have finished. I seldom pick up a file of newspapers and get all my news from the clippings. <u>All kinds</u> interest me, so you neednt be afraid of sending too many. A clipping is vastly different from a column in

the newspapers. The fact that some one has taken the trouble to cut it out and send it, gives it an enhanced value. They will be thoroughly appreciated from any of my correspondents.

I am very sorry to say that Dr. Arnold of whom I spoke to you, was detached from this ship and ordered to the Petrel before we left Nagasaki, and I miss him very much. He is the first man I have taken a shine to since I was shipmates with the Jones boys.

Before I forget it I want to mention the fact that some of the forwarded letters I receive are written with a pencil, and by the time they have been dragged across a continent and an ocean, the lead is so much worn off that they are difficult to read.

To return to Dr. Arnold again, I learned from him for the first time who "Billy Patterson" was.

Mr. William Patterson was a wealthy Southerner, highly respected and a man of influence in his community. He was accustomed to take a hand in everything going on. He was a man of tremendous dignity.

One day while traveling through his native state, he observed a rather extensive fight going on at a country station where the train stopped. He went out, not to take a hand in the fight, but to try and quell it in the interests of order and good government. He received the Peacemakers usual reward in the shape of such a fearful thump in the eye

that he was knocked senseless, and the eye was closed for repairs before he came to.

This treatment hurt his feelings and offended his dignity so much that in order to bring the offender to trial and satisfy his vengeance he offered a reward of $5000. to anyone who would produce information leading to the conviction of the guilty party; and when the old man died he made the same provision in his will; and the money is still there for anyone who can produce the required evidence. Many's the man has put in a claim for the reward, but none have succeeded, and the man who struck Billy Patterson is still at large.

We have just been informed today (27th) that a steamer will leave here next Thursday - Thanksgiving day - for Japan, so that this letter should easily catch the next steamer leaving Yokohama Dec 8. That will take it to Frisco by Dec 22nd, and to Rockhill by the 28th - too late to wish you all a merry xmas before the event.

For Thanksgiving we have invited all the junior officers and the Captain to dinner, when we will consume the only two turkeys in Chemulpo. We had them sent to us alive from Nagasaki. The turks are not large so we have a Korean pig, and some pheasants, etc.

This may be an out of the way place and all that, but

you needn't waste any sympathy on our poor table. We will doubtless have a regular xmas dinner plum duff and all.

Have you noticed in the papers that old man Knepper was detached from the Philadelphia and ordered to the Yorktown, and is now on his way out here? Perhaps his ship will relieve us here. It's a queer business this Navy. You never know where you will be at 2 months hence. Knepper's girl is going to marry a cit, so he's not entirely without luck.

In the mail before last somebody asked me to send some more coin for Miss Dorris of Huntington, so I accordingly send by this mail

one "one yen" piece
" " 20 sen" "
½ " 10 " " "

I have placed them in a separate envelope so that if anyone wants to steal them, he wont have to destroy this letter to do so. I will register the package from here if it can be done, and I think it can, as the P. O. is in charge of the Japanese. I only see the ordinary coins that are in circulation, that is the silver "yen" with fractions thereof, and the paper "yen."

I dont know how much of a coin collector Miss Dorris is, but if she is a real crank on the subject, and wants a full collection - gold coins and all - she has only to say so and I will send them with pleasure - with a list of their

cost which Miss D. can settle with Pa.

If she only dabbles in that sort of thing and don't want to be at the expense of getting the gold coin, I can send many curious copper, brass, and iron coin that are used for small change. I think the change for a silver yen in Korea weighs about 5 pounds.

In Nagasaki I met two of my Saratoga boys - Baldwin and Krause. They were on the Pacific Mail steamer Rio de Janeiro. I also heard of O'Connor my star pupil. He got to be 3rd. mate but was sent away from his ship for getting drunk. He is now on a Pacific Mail Steamer in the Atlantic.

Another boy, Skean is 3rd mate of the steamer "Yokohama Maru" belonging to a Japanese line. Maru means "merchant steamer" in Japanese.

When I go to Seoul I will try and get some photos. to send you. At all events I will tell you what I can about the city.

Give my best love to all at home - specially Elsie if she has arrived - and wish them all a merry xmas for me; and let this be a xmas greeting to all who live on the route of my circular letters.

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm.

P. S. I am going to send to Wannie's for a book "Archibald the cat, and other sea yarns" and charge it up to Pa.

(Signed) Wm.

No 54

U. S. S. Charleston,
Chemulpo, Korea,
Dec 10, 1894

My dear folks,

Ten days ago I sent you a long letter, and since that time we have experienced 10 days, all exactly the same except the Sundays. There is hardly a scrap of news, and nothing of interest to tell. I don't think anybody bu the stewards have been on shore during that time, and I must say that everybody seems quite contented. We have been having delightful weather - only occasionally down to freezing.

The minister paid us another visit the other day. I don't remember whether his former visit was since my last letter or not, but the first time he came down from Seoul he spent the night on board. This last time we understand that he was not invited to remain. Our Captain, who is an ignorant ass, as I explained to you, is of the opinion (governed by his inclinations) that there is no necessity for a vessel being here, and he blames the Minister for keeping us. The Minister assures the State department that there is danger of an uprising among the TongHaks (rabble), and requests that a ship be sent to the port. The State department forwards the request to the Navy dept., - the Navy dept. orders the Admiral, and the Admiral orders a ship.

However, we are here, and here we will remain. In the meantime we believe that the Captain has destroyed our welcome

at the Consulate in Seoul, which will prevent any of us going there except on duty. I am sorry for I would like to have gone when all my work is finished. I want to see something of the people, particularly the Korean gentleman, Mr. Pack, who visited us. I am sure he could show a fellow many interesting things about the Capital.

Before I forget it let me tell you that I have charged up another book to you. I sent to Mr. Wm. R. Jenkins (New York) for Paul Bourget's recent book on the United States, and I told him to send the bill to you. I asked for a copy bound in paper, so it should not cost more than $1.00.

A few days ago I received a communication from the Navy Dept. enclosing a form, filled out in Oct 1892, giving the date of my birth, place of residence, etc. It was filled out in your handwriting, and signed by me.

It gives my birth, Oct. 15, 1858, and the Dept. writes to inform me that the official record has it "Oct 15, 1859," and wants me to explain the discrepancy.

I don't know where they got the data fro the official record, and I have simply told them that the form I filled out is correct, and that I was not aware that the official record was in error, tho. I knew that the pamphlet giving the dates of retirement had me down one year too late, and I supposed the error to be in the pamphlet.

I don't remember ever having been required to give the

date of my birth since I entered the naval academy. I suppose a mistake has been made in transcribing or printing.

Are you aware that day before yesterday I passed the summit of my cruise June 8 '93/18 mos. Dec 8 '94 18 mos. June 8 '96 which commenced June 8 '93, and will end June 8 '96, or thereabouts.

Eighteen months and two days behind me and 18 mos. less two days ahead of me on the down hill side.

Eighteen months is a good while. I wonder where we will go and what we will do in that time!

It seems a very long time since I joined the Philadelphia in New York; and even since I joined the Charleston in Frisco.

I have not received any home mail since I last wrote, but every day I expect to get letters in answer to the ones I sent from Yokohama. The first letter was mailed Oct. 12, or about two months ago, so the answers should be here pretty soon. I will feel more in touch with you all when they come.

Little Madame Glatz has written me three letters since she received my note from Frisco announcing my departure for the Orient - the last letter arriving yesterday, 50 days from Paris - by way of Yokohama where it arrived 42 days from Paris.

I have an idea that, although the distance is longer

by way of America, a letter will go quicker that way - having fewer stops to make while on steamers.

To test it I am going to send a few letters each way, mailing them at the same time.

By this mail I send a short note to Madame G. by the regular post, and in a letter to Adelaide I send another which is to be remailed at once at Rockhill Furnace. I expect to catch the steamer leaving Yokohama on Dec 21, and arriving in Frisco (via Honolulu) about Jany. 7. If I miss that steamer the next one (not via Honolulu) reaches Frisco Jany. 12.

When you come to think of it the world is a pretty large affair and 5000 miles is a broad expanse of ocean which is not appreciated until you see a powerful steamer plowing away at it for two weeks.

If Adelaide is not at home when this letter arrives, open the letter addressed to her and mail the enclosed letter addressed to Madame Glatz - then forward Adelaide's letter to her with a note on the margin telling her what you have done.

I have asked Maadame# G. to forward this letter to me at once, so it will come back to me around the world.

By this same mail I have written to Madame G. enclosing a letter to Adelaide - and this letter has written on it a request that Adelaide forward it at once to me, so that it will come back to me around the world, but in the opposite

direction.

This will make a fair race. Presently I am going to start two sheets around in opposite directions, as explained in the P. S. to Adelaide's letter. I will probably start them in time for the next steamer, and Adelaide, Mme G. and I will keep them going as long as I remain in China.

This letter is hardly worth forwarding, except that it conveys the information as to where I am and a promise to do better next time.

I have not been weighed for some months, but I am sure I am at the top notch, for I have never been in such good health and felt so fat.

I hope you are all feeling the same way - except those who are already too fat.

Give my love to all at home, and on the route of my letters.

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm.

No 55

10 photos.

U. S. S. Charleston,
Chemulpo, Korea,
Dec 1894

My dear folks,

I send you with this letter a number of Korean photos. They are hardly worth sending, but they are the best that can be got here, and expensive at that. However, they will give you some idea of the harbor, and the town of Chemulpo, especially the birds eye view of a street.

The other day a new English ship came in here to remain the rest of the winter. Her name is the Daphne, and she has been cruising near the scene of active operations. Of course I had to make a report on her and in the course of my inquiries I found that one of the officers had a manuscript copy of a report on the naval battle off the Yalu River. Our intelligence officers on the Baltimore have already sent in an account of the battle, but it was taken almost entirely from the Japanese version, principally from the newspapers, while this, the English version is derived from personal inquiry on board both the Japanese and Chinese ships. I did not see our (American) version, but I made a copy of the English one and forwarded it to the Dept. through the Admiral - and through a fortunate coincidence I was able to make many corrections in the manuscript, and supply various other items of information.

For just as I was about to mail the communication a

Japanese transport steamer, the Yokohama Maru, (Maru means: merchant steamer) came in with one of my boys on board. The boy is Skean who graduated just before I left. He is now 3rd. mate on board this steamer which has been transporting troops since this miserable war broke out. He came to see me as soon as his ship anchored, and I enjoyed his visit very much. He told me where many of the other boys are, but of course he has lost track of some of them. We went over the list together and here is the result:

Skean	3rd mate Yokohama Maru
Kress	Qr. Mr. Am. Line
Jackel	At sea somewhere
Brenner	Qr. Mr. "Pekin"
Barnes	Qr. Mr. ?
Hoffman	Str. "Pekin"
Oswald	Red D Line
O'Connor	3rd mate "San Juan"
Teh	3rd mate "San Blas"
Baldwin	Qr. Mr. str "Rio de Janeiro"
Bispels	Sailing vessel
Harns	"Pekin"
Ward	Brazil line
Payne	3rd mate "Pekin"
Hausmann	Red D Line
Jackson	Pacific Mail Line

Botson	Sailing vessel
Moore	American Line
Power	2nd Mate Am. Line
Stevenson	1st Mate Am. Line

The last named was not a pupil, but one of the sailors who picked up his knowledge of Nav. from the boys, only coming to me occasionally for a lift.

There are quite a number of sailors who learned navigation in the same way, and they are all doing well at sea, but I don't know where they are. I remember one chap a Norwegian who "gave it up" three times, but with a little cheering up he finally mastered it. Then he was offered the billet of "mate" on a big American schooner, but was afraid of the responsibility, and came to me for advise#. I advised him to take it, and he did.

Just before I left the Saratoga his ship was back in Phila. and he came to see me. He was carrying his head in the air, and was quite a different man.

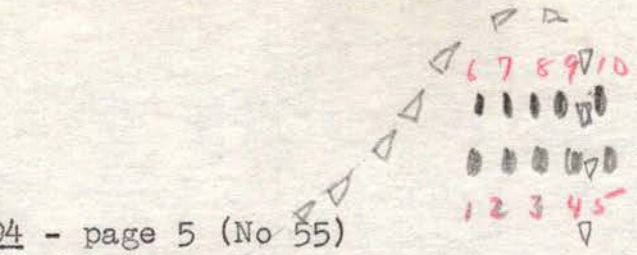
You can imagine that it is very gratifying to meet my old pupils.

The account of the battle off the Yalu river is, of course very largely technical, and as it took place close in shore, there was not much opportunity for manoeuvring.

The Chinese fleet was anchored in the mouth of the Yalu

river protecting some transports that were landing troops. When they saw the smoke of the Japanese fleet they stood out to sea, in the order shown in the picture - in double line of battle. The Japanese were in double columns as shown in the lower right hand corner of the picture. They formed in single column (2nd formation) the Admiral (Ito) leading in his flagship Matsusima, then obliquing to the left opened fire with the leading ships (3rd formation) while passing across the front of the Japanese fleet. Arriving opposite the right flank of the Chinese fleet they steered the old course again in single column of vessels, (4th formation) and in this order passed by the Chinese right flank, each of the Jap vessels in succession pouring her broadsides into the Chao Yuen and Yang Wei without the other vessels of the Chinese fleet being able to reply except at long range. These two vessels were so badly used up that they were obliged to drop out of the line, being on fire in so many places that it required "all hands" to fight the fire. The Japanese fleet passed in rear of the Chinese and intended to pass in rear of the left flank vessels, but the latter sheered off and they passed between them and the fleet as shown in the sketch.

This manoeuvre was executed at low speed and required considerable time during which a terrific fire was kept up on both sides, and almost every ship in both fleets was on fire between decks. Remember that this is the first time



Chinese black

Japanese white

Matsusima
Hasidate
*Naniwa
Blackship
Itsukusima
*Takachiho
Yoshino
Chiyoda-Katal
Fuso
Gunboat
Transport

4th formation

3rd formation

2nd formation

Chinese

1 Chao Yuen
2 Ting Yuen
3 Chih Yuen
4 King Yuen
5 Lai Yuen
6 Yang Wei
7 Chen Yuen
8 Ching Yuen
9 Hai Ting Yuen
10 Chi Yuen

Get onto the names.

1st formation when the Jap. fleet was seen advancing

*The Japanese ships marked * were in Honolulu while I was there. First the Naniwa came and remained five months, then the Takachiho came to take her place. I remember the day she left for Japan. The mail steamer came in in the morning bringing orders for the Takachiho to return to Japan and such was their hurry that they left that night.

The Naniwa and Takachiho are almost exactly like the Charleston.

You will perhaps remember my telling you about a ball given on a Japanese ship at Honolulu. It was on the Takachiho, and was quite the most beautifully gotten up affair that I ever saw. The ship was a mass of flowers - now she is bruised, scorched and bloody.

(The diagram copied on the preceding page, and the note above are from a separate sheet enclosed with this letter- ASF)

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real sure enough modern guns have been in action, and the first time modern ships have been under fire, and the effect one would have on the other was a matter of conjecture.

The first and most apparent effect was the remarkable power the modern shell possesses of setting fire to woodwork. This was specially the case with the rapid fire guns or what is called the secondary battery.

It seemed that every shell passing through the ships sides exploded promptly and set fire to the woodwork. Shortly

after the action commenced these fires were so severe that hostilities were practically suspended for about one hour.

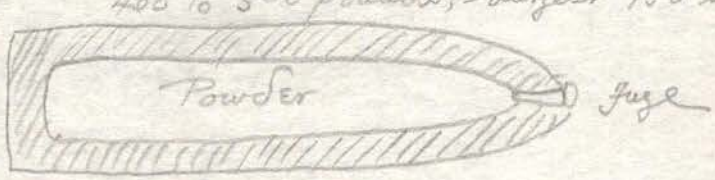
In the skirmish the fleets had last July this was noticed and they were prepared for it - specially the Chinese who removed all articles of wood, and even sent all their boats but one ashore.

As you know the interior of all iron vessels, specially in the living spaces is lined with wood, and it was this wood that was constantly on fire in spite of the fact that the ships went into action with their fire pumps going and their lower decks flooded with water.

Perhaps you already know that nearly all the vessels in both fleets were cruisers - or unarmored vessels through which shell of all sizes could pass freely, except below the protective deck,
a curved steel deck
covering the engines,
magazines, and
vital parts of the vessels.



All shell are now filled with percussion fuzes designed to burst on impact, and the Japanese shell did so with terrible effect on the Chinese ships.



One large shell entered the Chinese flagship, Ting Yuen, and exploding burst open a steel water tight door, tore down a steel bulkhead, pulverized and set on fire all wood work in the vicinity, killed 13 and wounded 30, and completely gutted two compartments.

This is the history of one shell only out of a great many, and they are all much the same, varying only in degree.

The details will be useful in constructing new ships, but the sickening accounts of destruction and death are none the less horrible.

But these are small affairs compared to the real disasters in the fleet. One Chinese cruiser was so badly wounded by these powerful shell that she turned over and disappeared bow first with her screw still revolving in the air. Of course everybody in her was lost - for in a fleet action there is no quarter, and ships don't strike their flags, nor can anyone stop to pick up people in the water. But the most ghastly part of it is that the bulk of the crew are shut up in the hundreds of compartments below - In the engine rooms, fire rooms, coal bunkers, magazines, shell rooms, etc, etc. and all are shut in by steel water tight doors, so that if one compartment is flooded it wont flood the remainder.

When warning enough is given a signal is sounded for "all hands on deck," but in battle it must frequently happen that the fatal blow (a torpedo for example) brings death to

all below in its most horrible form. Probably no one could imagine the frightful scenes in the closed compartments of a sinking battleship.

The accounts of the battle published in the newspapers read like the accounts of a foot ball game. The experts explain the fine points, tell how gallantly the squadrons swept into line, applaud a fine torpedo shot that wrecks a vessel and kills 300 or 400 men, but there is never a word expressing regret at the horror of the whole business, or any indication that war is not approved and found amusing in these fin de siecle days.

There might be some excuse if somewhere behind all this there was a principle involved, but there is absolutely none.

Japanese officers traveling on the transport Yokohama Maru told my late pupil that for years Japan has been ready and waiting for an opportunity to occur in the spring so that they could make war with the summer before them. Her object is commercial greed, hereditary enmity, and glory, and I find it impossible to sympathize with her.

I admire the Japanese, particularly the Japanese girls, and I understand their superiority to the Chinese, but I can wish them no success.

But I have wandered a long way from the battle.

After the first manoeuvre, and the hour spent fighting the fire, the action was resumed without tactical manoeuvres

by fleets, the principal part being the attempt by the Japanese cruisers to subdue or destroy the two Chinese ironclads.

From the experts point of view this was the most interesting part of the action, for it furnished a test of the relative fighting qualities of cruisers (unarmored except the protective deck) and battleships. The Japanese, tho. they had no armor, had very heavy guns, some 12 and 13 inch, but in four hours hard fighting they failed to damage the Chinese battleships to such an extent that they were at any time incapable of continuing the action. On the other hand none of the Japanese cruisers were knocked out, tho. some of their guns were disabled and they were damaged in various ways. Four Chinese ships were destroyed. One was sunk in deep water and three were burned and run ashore.

At sundown the action was discontinued, and both fleets made for port. It is believed that both were out of ammunition, and made haste to replenish their stock. Ammunition weighs so much that ships cant carry as much as they would like to. We carry about 100 rounds for each gun. We could carry more, but not very much more, not twice as much for example:

The 8 inch shell of "my" gun weighs		250 lbs
" " powder charge	"	112
100 charges weigh		36200 lbs
or say -		18 tons,

We have two 8-in guns, or 36 tons

In the same way the weight

of 100 rounds for six 6 inch

guns would be - - - - - - - - - -45 tons

total weight 81

And this does not include the weight of the copper powder tanks, and all the gear necessary to keep this ammunition on board. Nor the weight of the elaborately constructed magazines, etc to contain them.

All these facts about this action will materially change many ideas about naval matters. It was the almost universal opinion that naval battles would be very short, that one or the other of two ships would soon be sunk.

This long resistance and exhaustion of ammunition will modify many things that are too technical to interest you. Except the vessel sunk it is believed that none of the ships on either side had their main engines damaged.

The Japs now hold command of the sea, as far as China is concerned. The American newspapers give you the war news long before it reaches us.

My boy Skean tells me that the Japs about Port Arthur are suffering very much from the cold, not so much the soldiers at# the Coolies who transport baggage.

Considerable numbers are being invalided home, and to hospitals here but not more I fancy than might be expected

for it is very cold up in that region.

———— . . ————

All merchants doing business in Chinese and Japanese ports are suffering terribly in their business through the interruption of trade, specially of course, the English in China, and their government will doubtless bring all the pressure they can to end the war. Russia is out for plunder and wants the row kept up.

I hope it will end soon.

———— . . ————

Have you seen in the newspapers that my late commanding officer, Captain Barker has at last fallen a victim to the wily widow he met at Honolulu. After all these years he has finally been "downed," and a "widder done it," and he might have married any one of a dozen fine Hawaiian girls anywhere from white to gingerbread in color.

I guess a man isnt out of danger of that sort of thing until he has broken his pipe, and been thoroughly cremated.

Captain Coffin tells me that Capt Barker was in love with some girl in his youth, but she "trone him down" and it took him 30 years to recover and marry a widow.

———— . . ————

I have often and often thought of the little 20 ton schooner with the small children on board, and wondered if they had arrived safely. We often spoke of them in the mess

were very glad to hear of their safe arrival.

———————— . . ————————

Tell Pa I received the Herald and all the clippings, but that I dont remember receiving a letter that was addressed to Honolulu, tho. it is possible I may have opened it without noticing the address.

We received the election news about a month after the result, and I think, that without exception we were all (Ds & Rs) pleased with the result. Party feeling on board seems to be very weak, and the reason must be that we are not in it, don't get the daily papers daily, thereby accumulating excitement. A ship on the home station usually gets much wrought up - has an election on board, etc, but with us politics is seldom mentioned in the mess. I offered 3 yen to 1 that Hill would be defeated, and a fellow took it up and that is the only bet I have heard of on board.

As for me I am very much pleased with the result in New York as far as Hill is concerned. Ever since the Ds came in I have been adding to my already complete contempt and intense dislike of Hill and his gang, until the feeling has entirely submerged any other political sentiment I have or ever had. In order to defeat Hill and Tammany I would have voted for anything not equally corrupt, and certainly no financial or commercial principle would have stopped me voting against him.

Freetrader as I am I would have voted for prohibitive duties rather than for the kind of polotics# Hill represents. It seems to me that to vote for Hill as Gov. of New York would be to endorse the methods of Tammany etc. and it is my belief that the Ds are in a better position with 140000 against Hill, than with 140000 for him. As for the landslide all over the country no honest D. can say it was not deserved. The plain evidences of corruption in the senate was enough to disgust anything.

Of course the commercial panic all over the world had a great deal to do with it. But if the Ds. had "tended" to business and promptly passed a good tariff bill they wouldn't be licked today.

They have been fools, and they stood by Hill & Murphy against Cleveland and clean politics and the Fool Killer came along and gave them their medicine.

This election and the last should convince the politicians that if the great american people don't get what they ask for, somebody's going to get hurt. (unless he gets out in time like Crocker)

I wonder if you have seen in the papers that Knepper was detached from the Philadelphia, and ordered to the Yorktown - which vessel is now on her way out here.

They have 50 boxes of powder for us, so I guess we are sure to meet them soon. We hope they will come here and

take our place.

I envy you all at home the company of my little red-headed niece and I think you might have sent me one of the numerous photos. floating around even if they are not very good.

There is no immediate prospect of our getting away from here at# the situation is worse now than it has ever been. About one week ago the Japanese Minister at Seoul notified the Korean government that it must hereafter be governed by certain "21 articles," which while leaving all purely domestic affairs in the hands of the Koreans, has at the same time laid out the system of government somewhat on the lines of their own.

The Queen of Korea is a violent and wicked woman, and for 30 years she has ruled the country with a rod of iron.

Her son is mentaly# weak, and for years she has spent large sums of money in offering sacrifices to the Spirit of the Mountain and the Spirit of the Sea, etc. to effect a cure. They say thousands of tons of rice have been cast into the sea to propitiate the latter - an all powerful spirit to the Korean, but the young man is still a harmless spend-thrift in the gay set at Seoul. Well one of the articles requires that the power of the Queen's party be utterly broken.

They have all been turned out and it is feared that they will make common cause with the Tong Haks.

There may be no real danger, but there is a possibility of it, and I think this vessel will remain here until some other vessel comes to relieve her.

———— . . ————

My dear Pa

I have written to Mr. Frank Gomes, a clerk in the U. S. Navy Pay Office at San Francisco, to send me the November number of the North American Review, as there are several articles in it that I want to read. I cant send money from here without getting a government check, so I have told him you will send him the price of the book. Therefore please do so at once so as not to forget it.

The book and postage will cost about 55 cents.

———— . . ————

*On the map enclosed the places marked in red ink are always provided with an American man of war every winter.

The old Monacay (?) is at Tientsin housed over and made comfortable. The Petrel with my friend Dr. Arnold on board is at New Chwang (Niu Chwang on some maps). The English gunboat Firebrand is there also, and they are both on cry land and must remain there until # . The winter is extremely cold there and no ship could lie in the river on account of the ice, and the rise and fall of the tide. So each fall when we send a ship there, they dig a hole - a sort of dock - in the bank of the river - and haul the ship in,

and when the tide goes down it leaves her in the mud, where she remains until the high tides in the spring.

The Firebrand and the Petrel are both on the same bank, and close enough together to be surrounded by the same earth embankment which has been thrown up as an additional protection, as that part of the country is full of disbanded soldiers from the Chinese armies.

The whole is called "Fort Emory" after the commander of the American gunboat.

I dont know when this letter will go, but I will put it in the bos and let it take its chances.

I will send the photos in a separate package, so that the letter may not be destroyed for the sake of the photos,

Give my very best love to all at home, and write often.

Always your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

(The "10 photos." and map mentioned in this letter are not included in the files. - ASF)

PHOTOGRAPH OF W. S. S. FILED WITH LETTERS

OF 1894

(The following is written on back of this photograph.)
Tropical verdure at Lahaina, on the island of Maui.

Get "onto" the coconuts. The trees in the background, and on the right are breadfruit trees. If you look sharp you can see the buttered rolls, and buns.

The gentleman in the foreground is Lieut. Sims, late of the "Philadelphia." He has on a large grass hat, made by the South Sea Islanders of Maui.

C. W. sent me a number of Lahaina pictures mounted, but I passed them on the way, and they are now in Frisco, and will doubtless be forwarded to me to Yokohama.

No 56

U. S. S. Charleston,
Chemulpo, Korea
Xmas morning 1894
4 a.m.

My dear People,

This is a curious place to spend xmas - this far away land of "Cho-sen" as they call it themselves.

We sent to Nagasaki for turkeys - which don't grow here - but they didn't come. However, we are going to brew a punch which will, we think, make us forget all about the turkeys.

Last evening a steamer came in from Japan and brought our mail, giving us news from home about 40 days old. The letters arrived at Yokohama Dec 13., but had hard luck reaching this port. There were letters from all at home - Pa, Ma, and Adelaide, and from John Sims, acknowledging the receipt of 1700 Jap babies I sent him.

I also received Captain Barker's "cards." I will have to write him a note - or else another toast taking back what I said in the last one.

I am sure I need not say that my heart is with you all today at Rockhill Furnace, where I will be the only absentee if Varley gets there, and I feel pretty sure he will. I am a very long way from home but my spirit is with you and kisses you all tenderly. In the midst of your merry making and chattering you will miss the share I would gladly

contribute and will occasionally think of me away over here on the opposite side of the world. We will do the best we can on board ship, but it don't amount to much. We say "merry xmas" but there's nothing in it, for everybody is thinking of the sure-enough xmas at home.

Yesterday I sent a telegram for the Captain. It was to his daughter and grandson - he has no wife - There were 16 words including the address and it cost $62.½

I was tempted to send one myself, but $3.90 a word is rather beyond my figure these hard times.

I am very glad Hal & Allie managed to get up home this xmas. I# will do 'em good and be a great pleasure to everybody. I would love to smoke a few pipes with the "old man" and when I come home ('96) I'm going to do it - and would have done it last time if it had not been that every day I expected the mail to bring me orders requiring me to leave in 48 hrs.

I hope you have kept Ruth and the baby for xmas. It certainly is hard luck that I can't see her while she is little. However I think some of you might send me one of her numerous photos. that I see mentioned in all your forwarded letters to each other. Get a move somebody and send me an old one.

All the newspaper clippings in the letters were received, but I haven't gotten any newspapers recently - I

mean from home. Sometimes I think they are not forwarded from Yokohama - you know a newspaper isn't respected like a letter. I don't mind much losing the newspapers, as we take the Herald, and several Frisco papers, but I dont like to lose the clippings - as there is something personal about them, so suppose you always put them in letters after this. And when you clip them, leave about half an inch of paper at the top and botton so I can paste them together to keep them from getting lost as they are passed from one to the other - for everybody reads them after I have finished.

Perhaps you have noticed in the Herald that an order has been sent from the Department to Admiral Carpenter to keep the fleet in Chinese and not Japanese waters. The harbors of Japan are delightful in winter, and the country is interesting as you know, while China is anything but interesting and the winters are stormy and severe. It is therefore, quite natural that ships, specially flagships, should fetch up in Japan, especially as that is where all the numerous wives are during these war times. They are in Tokio and Yokohama - probably engaged in cursing the Navy Department and this heathen war. In the good old days our ships used to winter in Japan - spending five or six months in one port, with all hands living on shore - but nowadays they touch the button at Washington and keep us moving. The Yorktown arrived at Yokohama on Dec. 7th, and may be sent

here to relieve us, when we will go to Nagasaki to be docked. After that we rather hope to be sent back here to remain until spring, for if we dont come here, we will probably be sent to Chefoo where it is very cold and blows many gales of wind during the winter. We have had only one cold snap here, - the thermometer being in the twenties for several days - but generally it is about 40 with bright clear days, and no wind.

I went ashore the other day to get some information about the port - steamer communications, coal, hospitals, etc., etc., as required by my instructions as "Intelligence" Officer, That was my first time since I have been here - about seven weeks, and unless I have business ashore I will probably not go much often, for there is absolutely nothing interesting to see in the town, and it is a long cold ride both ways in the boats. I met one of the American Missionaries ashore, and while I was calling at his house, a young and very sissy doctor came in. He is attached to the English mission here. I took him for an Englishman, and referred to his country's interest in the Chinese trade, when he promptly informed me that he was an American from Phila. and a graduate of the U. P. - about 4 or 5 years ago. As I remember his name it is Landis.

This missionary business is very uphill work in Cho-sen except for the catholics who have about 25000 converts and are making about 1000 yearly. One of the protestant

missionaries told me this. As I said in my last letter the Koreans cant see any sacrifice in a missionary living in this country in a house better than their wealthy class have, and on a salary that to them appears very large. Whereas they can understand the devotion of a priest living in a native mud hut, and having no family. The latter fact impresses them particularly for this is the country of the married - the unmarried man being treated as a child, and allowed no voice in anything.

Then again I am sure that Americans are regarded with grave suspicion throughout the land, for we have treated them very badly. In 1860 something an American schooner asked permission to enter one of the rivers, which was refused by the proper authorities, as it was at that time not allowed. The schooner forced an entrance, and ascended the river. The crew went on shore, and terrorized the neighborhood and molested the women - the greatest possible crime in Korean eyes, where women are kept absolutely secluded.

At low tide when the schooner was ashore they floated fire vessels against her and burned her up, and killed the crew as they escaped. Of course the U. S. demanded indemnity.

In 1871 we sent an expedition to Korea to make a treaty, and try and open up the country as we had done Japan. The fleet came here to Chemulpo, Mr. Low, minister to China being charged with the negociations. He was utterly incompetent,

and thirsting for revenge of the schooner affair, and promptly got into a row which resulted in our attacking the forts on the Han River and slaughtering 350 Koreans, at the expense of one officer, and one man killed on our side.

Then we retired in utter failure to negotiate a treaty.

All this is of course a heavy handicap against American missionaries.

I read with the greatest interest the Heralds very amusing account of the manner in which the U. P. wiped up the earth with the Princeton tigers. It was fine, and how I would have liked to be there. I hope it means that the U. P. team has really reached the standard of excellence the victory would seem to indicate. How the boys must have "hiter-up" in Phila. that night! and what great rejoicing there must have been at Falconhill in the family of the President of the Athletic Association.

We hear very little here about the way except gossip and rumors. I saw a letter from one of the officers of the Baltimore - the flagship - telling about the Massacre at Port Arthur. It was even worse than at first reported.

The Baltimore was at Chefoo, when the news came of the fall of Port Arthur, and she went there at once, arriving before the bodies had been buried. You will never see in print a full description of what they saw, for such things are not printed, except to barely indicate them, as I can

only do. It is true that the butchery was complete - not a wounded man, nor a prisoner was spared. But more than that the non combatants were slaughtered with the rest; nor was the savage hatred of the Japanese satisfied until many women and little children had been slain. They seem to have forgotten what they have read in the European military books, and returned to their customary manner of making war, for nearly all the bodies were decapitated, and subjected to mutilations that are quite nameless. Our officers saw the bodies of men whose bellies had been slit open and whose bowels had been twisted about a stake as on a capstan, and women who had been ripped up, and little babies cut in two.

It is true that none of these horrible things were practiced by the Japanese during the first part of the war, and that they were forced into it in a measure by the Chinese killing some of the Japanese prisoners; but I believe they only refrained for fear of European interference. At Port Arthur they have evidently gotten beyond control of their officers and given full play to their natural inclinations - I mean the inclinations of soldiers in the excitement of a campagne against an enemy they hate with a hatred that is hard for us to understand.

Most people in America are astonished at what the Japanese have accomplished, because they very largely confound the two races and consider the Japanese as only slightly

different from the Chinese. Those who have associated with the Japanese know the military qualities of the race, and none better than Naval officers, who have been to school with them and visited their country.

We always had a number at the Naval Academy, and I was never tired talking to them about Japan and admiring the polish of their manners, which it would be quite impossible for tall Anglo Saxons to imitate. With one exception those that I knew were thorough students, and they were not studying for the "marks" as we were, but because they possessed an ardent desire to understand all western military science.

The other day a steamer came in here and signalled for a boat, which when it returned brough on board an American reporter (for the San Francisco Chronicle I think). He was a Mr. Smith, a journalist and professionaly revolutionest. He was engaged in the Southern Cal. affair, and at the time of the Hawaiian affair was hired by the missionary party to edit a paper for them. He was at Honolulu nearly all the time I was there but I never met him.

During his stay there he made the acquaintance of Mr. Fugii the Japanese consul who is now in Japan, and who told Mr. Smith the other day that while at Honolulu, the Japanese vessel (just like this vessel) kept up the most rigid discipline imaginable.

We of course noticed that they were constantly drilling notwithstanding the heat, but Mr. Fugii said that the Captain's idea of discipline was so strict that he would not allow any newspapers, novels, histories, cards, chess, etc. on board even in the wardroom. They had plenty of professional books, and the captain said they should spend their time with them. It was of course a mistake, and not a measure calculated to promote good discipline, but it shows that they expected the war any day - and that was more than one year ago.

We now believe that the enthousiasm# of the war students was sustained by the knowledge that Japan was only waiting for a favorable opportunity to declare war.

Years ago immense storehouses were built in seaport town# in Japan, and it now turns out that they were filled with war supplies of all kinds. There was "not a button missing" when the war broke out - the commissariat department was complete.

Add to all this the fact that for 20 years Japan has sent students abroad to the best military and naval schools, and that these students are now the professors in their military and naval schools, and commanders of their forces; and that the army and fleet has for years imitated the best manoeuvres abroad, and you can understand what they have done. You know, of course, that they are the sturdiest race under

the sun.

The Chinese we knew to be indifferently trained, but we did not think that they would prove so weak under fire. Li Hung Chang's troops were drilled in the European tactics, but there were not very many of them. All the rest are armed with old fashioned arms, if indeed they have fire arms at all, and it is not likely that they will make any determined resistance to Japan's armies.

However, the winter is not over yet, and the war can be prolonged by China even after the Japs go to Peking, if indeed they venture there this winter. But the chief danger is from the European complications that may arise over the settling of the terms of peace.

It is said out here the England# will take advantage of China's necessities, supply her with munitions of war, and money, in return for certain bits of Chinese territory. Russia is opposed to this naturally. Japan will want to keep Port Arthur and complete control of Corea. Russia has already declared that she will not permit this, and England wouldn't like it. Germany and France are interested in a less degree, and there is material for a first class row. Fortunately we are only spectators, as we will be in all future wars if we mind our own business and remain quietly on our own continent.

War is a beautiful game if it were not for the killing

of the husband and sons of women. All good women would send their sons to defend La Patrie, but only misguided ones would send them to fight in a war for "glory" and conquest.

Japan is absolutely aflame with the war spirit. The voluntary contributions are immense - men, women, and little children help swell the amount. Some laborers give one third of their wages. The consul general at Nagasaki told me that his "boy" (servant) gives 3 yen, which must be about ½ of his wages.

Any afternoon on the commons you see the small boys playing at war with their native clothes and red paper hats shaped like those of western soldiers. The boys whose turn it is to represent the Chinese army usually get mauled in style.

In Tokio there is a Japanese actor of considerable ability. He traveled in America and Europe, and spent considerable time in Paris watching the famous actors. Finally he "caught on" and made up his mind to break away from the old classical school of Japanese acting and go in for realism.

He did, and it worked to a charm, and now of course he is playing war pieces. Dr. Arnold saw the play (in which Chinese soldiers get terribly thumped) and afterwards met the actor, invited him to run down to Yokohama and visit the

ship, which he did. Well this actor told us that at every performance two doctors were in attendance to look out for the chaps who took the parts of Chinese soldiers, it being impossible to restrain the actors in the presence of the galleries standing on their feet howling, and hurling bitter curses at the "Chinese." The latter by the way are the best paid men in the theatre. They had to give them more money, and medical attendance free to keep them from leaving. Besides showing the war enthusiasm I think the incident is amusing. The circumstances would be about the same if a company of actors should represent (in a realistic manner) the P. U. - Princeton game on a Philadelphia stage. The unfortunate actors who took the part of the Tigers would probably get hurt.

The Chinese are not in it with the Japanese, who possess real ability and have unlimited energy and industry, I admire them very much as I said before, sepcially the girls (in a purely aesthetic way) but my heart is not with them in this war. The Chinese are not admirable nor lovable, but after all they are <u>human beings</u>, and much better than we think they are. It is the very lowest class of Chinese, and the highest of Japanese who visit our country.

I am aware that American sympathy is almost entirely with the Japs. But Americans as a rule are very ignorant of "Eastern" questions, and they live in a country where the

"Chinese question" is a burning one.

A German vessel came in here the other day, and her intelligence officer is going to give me a copy of all the information he picked up about the Japanese fleet, and if there is anything interesting in it I will send it to you.

He told me that out of a crew of 300 men the Japanese flagship Matsisuma had 50 killed and 60 wounded. He also told me that Major Von Hunneken told him, that at no part of the action were the fleets closer than 2000 yards, or over a mile. The popular idea is that the muzzles of the guns lap over somewhat, and that they don't fire until they see the "whites of their eyes."

I am sorry I can't give you more news of the war, but tho. only one day's steam away from the "front" we are kept in the dark for reasons that I have explained.

Now I must send this letter ashore so as to be sure and catch a steamer for Japan, in time for this to get to Yokohame for the "Peru" which sails Jany 8th, arriving at Frisco the 22nd, and at home the 28th of next January.

Give my best love to all at home and send this letter to the absent ones; and let them forward it promptly so that "all hands" can get the good of my prophesies before they have time to turn out wrong.

I send by this mail a pair of Korean baby shoes for Elsie. They are too big for her now, but she will grow. I

address them Rockhill Furnace, but if she is not there, open them and have a look at them and forward them.

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

Please try and acknowledge all the letters I send you, and mention all the numbers. I keep a list, and it is a great pleasure to be able to tell which ones are at home. The last ones acknowledged were 48 and 49, and the acknowledgement of succeeding ones is doubtless on the way.

It takes a long time to get an answer.

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

No 57

U. S. S. Charleston,
Chemulpo, Korea,
Jany 6, 1895

My dear Folks,

A Happy new year, and many returns of the same.

But this time nexy year I hope we will be some place besides Chemulpo.

In one more week it will be six months since we have been docked to have the bottom scraped and painted, but it looks just now as if we would run over the time more or less.

The Yorktown arrived on the Station one month ago tomorrow, and is now at Chefoo, in China with the flagship.

It is rumored here that the third army corps has left Japan for Chefoo, and if that is the case I doubt our leaving here for some time - a month or so, and perhaps not until the Detroit and Castine (?) arrive on the station.

It has been rumored here that the third army corps would operate against Formosa, and that the attempt toward Peking would be postponed until spring, but this move on Chefoo seems to indicate an attack in the rear on We-hai-wei (the point of land opposite Port Arthur to Sd) preparatory to moving on Peking. If that is the case the flagship will probably remain at Chefoo, and either keep the Yorktown with her or send her to some port west.

We really know nothing about it, but it is my idea that the Dept. is not losing any sleep over the condition of the

paint on the Charleston's bottom. The Philadelphia was overboard 15 months without any damage, so I guess the Charleston can remain a few months longer.

A letter came from Nagasaki from one of the officers wives saying that the Japanese government would occupy the dry dock for some momths to come - and as this dock is the only one in Japan it seems more than likely that our stay at Chemulpo will be prolonged. We might be sent to Hong-kong, but that is 1000 miles away, and would be too good luck. It is in latitude 20°N. and the climate is delight-ful in winter.

Chemulpo is not bad for winter. For the last two weeks the temperature has been a little below freezing, but the weather has been clear. We have had almost no snow.

As I have told you we are a long way from shore, which makes boating disagreeable, and besides there is nothing to see.

The Japanese government, as indicated by the pro-Jap-anese press, seems very much wrought up over the account given by the newspaper correspondents of the Massacre at Port Arthur. I think the New York World is the one they complain most about. We have not seen the original accounts, only telegraph abstracts, but I suppose the papers will be out here soon, perhaps are now in Japan.

The captain, supposing that we would leave for Nagasaki

soon telegraphed to hold the next mail, but was a little too previous, and caught this one. All mail sent Care Consul General, Yokohama was stopped. We telegraphed to the Consul at Nagasaki some days after the mail had arrived in Yokohama, but he has evidently taken the trouble to telegraph to some port in the Inland Sea, and have the mail sent to Nagasaki. I received two letters from the U. S. that were not addressed in care of the consul. One was a wedding invitation - Lieut. Jayne, - Miss Eastman of Washington, and the other a letter from the sweet and and# only original Nancy Shunk of Harrisburg, Pa.

It was addressed, "Washington, D. C." and had a 2 cent stamp "onto" it, so evidently it is not generally known in Harrisburg that I am temporarily out of the country. Nancy wrote at the instigation of a Mrs. Torrington, - said to be related to Grandfather Peacock - who wanted to know my opinion on the advisability of allowing her son (15 years) (who has evidently been reading sea yarns) to go to the Saratoga. Mrs. T. is said to be "desperately poor," and I fancy she would like to see her way clear to letting the boy go. I told them all about the ship and answered all their questions, and I think the result will be that they will not send him.

———— . . ————

As we do nothing but remain on board ship, I am afraid I will have to look inboard for some news (news to you).

The only other ship in the harbor is the English ship Daphne of 1350 tons - that is smaller than the Swatara, and not much bigger than the Yantic.

We have exchanged visits, and calls, and had them to dinner, and sent a delegation to dine with them. They are most of them young fellows, and have been more with our junior officers than with us - hunting parties etc.

The other evening they invited us to a "Singsong" as the invitation put it. A small stage was rigged and their men gave songs (If ladies had been present some of the songs would have required more careful "editing"), recitations, stump speeches etc. etc.

About 50 of our sailors were invited and went, and seven of the officers. At these affairs all hands smoke and join in the chorus; and between the acts the officers retire to the wardroom and bite off large pieces of Irish and Scotch whiskey, and light a fresh cigar, and Jones, he pays the freight.

They say we have plenty of "variety" talent on the Charleston, and we used to have a minstrel troupe, but it broke up in a row before I joined the ship.

———————— . . ————————

Some of the young fellows have just returned from shore, and they say they have just seen a letter written by a fellow on the flagship to an American in Chemulpo, which says

that she leaves Chefoo today for Chemulpo. If that is true we will get to Nagasaki after all, and have a change of scene and a run ashore.

And now for some ship's news. I told you when I came to this ship that I found my division in poor condition.

They were "time serving" as we call it. That is, they performed their duties in a listless manner and didn't take any interest in their drills, and exercises, which of course would not suit me. So I set about establishing the same relations as existed between me and my boys on the Saratoga. They were a smart set of young fellows and I had no trouble. I worked for them, and pretty soon they began to work for me.

I made them sectional views of all the guns amunition, etc., a complete catechism of all the things they were required to know about gunnery. Whenever I visited a foreign vessel to make a report to the Intelligence Office, I always told them about all the new points I found, explained the significance of the Yalu River Naval fight, etc.

Then I explained to them that a drill was for the same purpose as a practice game of baseball - that to lick the other fellow you must play a smarter game etc. They "caught on" and now they can make things hum. The other day the Executive Officer (Mr. Reeder) said to me after watching them drill, "Mr. Sims, I am very much pleased with the condition of your division. I like the way they move;

they seem to take an interest in their drills, allow me to compliment you sir."

The result of this condition of affairs is that the division runs itself now, for they wont allow any one to get ahead of them.

I started to make a detail the other day for a piece of work, assigning each man a certain part, when the captain of my 8 inch rifle came to me and said with some diffidence: "If you please, sir, if you dont mind, sir, if you will tell us what you want done we will "tend" to it."

In the last target practice they "laid out" all the other divisions, making an average of 56.78 points (71%) out of a possible 80. The executive officer has caused a copy of my catechism to be made for use in all the other divisions.

Of course this is all very gratifying to me; and I give you an account of it because I know it will please you.

Now let me tell you something about our domestic arrangements, especially our servants, because it is something unique in its way.

According to the funny papers everyone on shore has endless trouble with servants, but on the Charleston there is absolutely no friction.

Here is the staff:

Chinese	Ah Gong	Steward
	Ah Lung	Cook
	Ah Pow	Assistant Cook
	Ah Ting	Boy
	Ah Sam	"
	Ah Sung	"
Japanese	Oishi	"
	Kawajiro	"

Ah Gong is an American citizen, and has a wife and family in Frisco. He is about 5'-10" and stout and has a fine face, and what is better, plenty of executive ability, and he keeps the boys in perfect discipline. The cook Ah Lung is tall and very thin, but an excellent cook. After our xmas dinner we called 'em both in, made 'em drink a glass of punch, and gave 'em $25 and $15 (silver) respectively.

They all wear their native costumes, and at meal times put on white, starched, linen, chinese blouses. Twice a week they shave their heads for about 2 inches back from the roots of the hair, and they wear long cues coiled around like a cap, and they always look as if they had just stepped out of a bandbox. A Sung is a student, and a serious man. He never smiles, makes out your wash list in "pigeon" English, and dabbles in photography.

Ah SAm is round and fat. His face is like a full moon, his hair like braided silk, and he always smiles. His

complexion is very light and his cheeks tinged with red. In addition to his other duties he is "wine boy," that is, he has charge of all our stores, and when you drink a bottle of beer Sam smiles, and hands you a card to sign with unerring certainty. He gets $5. extra as wine boy and all shortage comes out of his pocket.

Ah Ting is as regular in the performance of duty as a chronometer and as grave as a wooden image. Nothing causes him to smile, - apparently nothing concerns him but the business in hand.

If anyone attempts a plaisanterie for his benefit, he assumes the imitation smile of the perfect servant, but it vanishes as soon as he ceases to be under observation. Each boy "looks out" for three officers, and I had the good luck to fall to Ting's share.

I give him $3. (6 silver yen) each month; for what with my afternoon tea, hot baths at night, and fussy ways (common to all old bachelors) I require many extra small services.

His attention to details is very remarkable, and his punctuality astonishing. He never forgets anything. He does everything just exactly as I want it done, and he discovered most of my cranky ways without my telling him. He will clean out my room, dust the bureau and put everything back in <u>exactly</u> the same place. I've amused myself laying

traps for him, but never caught him. The pieces of a broken collar button were on my bureau for weeks, and he always put them back in exactly the same spot after dusting. If I tear up a letter and leave it about, I always find it where I left it after dusting. A scrap of paper is an important document to him, and if I want to be rid of it I must crumple it up before he will take it away.

Ting and I are excellent friends tho. we seldom find it necessary to say a word to each other. He can't read English, but he likes pictures - especially of ships, and war material.

He regards my intelligence reports with great curiosity, and likes me to tell him about the foreign ships I visit - how many guns they have etc. He seldom makes any observations and acknowledges my remarks by a very funny and scarcely audible little grunt.

He is of course greatly interested in the war. When the mails come in I tell him the news, and once he brought me a Chinese paper and translated into "pigeon" English the news that they were going to cut Admiral Ting's head off for losing the naval battle, and likewise the General who gave up Port Arthur.

Our means of communication is in "pigeon" English. I used to think it was a shame that people didn't speak good English to Chinamen and give them a chance to learn it properly.

But the longer you live the more you find out. It appears that the Chinaman's talking apparatus is so poorly adapted to speaking the English language that pigeon English was invented as a means of communication. In China there are professors who teach it, and it serves as a means of intercourse between Chinamen from widely separated parts of the Empire who don't understand each other's spoken dialect.

The written language is the same throughout the empire, but nobody speaks it, but the highly educated.

1 a.m. Jany 8, 1895

It was a straight tip about the flagship's coming here to take our place. She arrived yesterday from Chefoo, and this morning at 8 a.m. we will leave for Nagasaki where I will post this letter - on the 10th.

We are ordered to make all possible haste in getting the ship docked and painted, and then to return at once to Chemulpo where we will probably remain until spring.

You can imagine what sort of a place Chefoo is in winter from the fact that the flagship's officers say they are glad to come here. Chefoo is the Newport of China. There are cottages and grand hotels that are filled with European visitors from the south of China during the summer, but during the winter it is shut up tight. Something like Mount Desert - and half the time it is blowing a gale of wind.

It was only a rumor that the Japanese 3rd Army Corps

had landed at Chefoo. There is not a sign of them there. That just shows you what idle rumors are flying about these war times.

Directly after the flagship came in the mail arrived from Japan and brought me one letter - from Ma. It was written on the last sheet of one of Lou's letters and dated Nov 27, or 41 days from home to this port, which is rather better than the average. There was also a letter from Varley (Nov. 22) enclosed.

You (Ma) mentioned letter No 50 as having arrived. I hope the next one (No 51) reached you safely, for I sent it with a great many photos with descriptions written on the back, and I expect it to be thoroughly appreciated, as it cost me considerable trouble.

For weeks I have been expecting to receive a photo of Elsie, but none has arrived. I have read all your descriptions of her and her doings, and my heart aches for a sight of her small red head. Being the first Sims baby since Adelaide's time she is very liable to be "spoiled" in the bringing up - and when I come home in '96 I expect to take a hand.

One of the chaps on the Baltimore gave me a silver puzzle ring that he got in China. He had it some time and was never able to put it together, so he gave it to me. I never "did" a puzzle in my life, so I forward it to Mary. If

she cant put it together in ten days let her send it to Old Hal, and I'll bet he'll do it in 10 minutes.

Nagasaki, Japan,

Jany 12, 1895

We arrived here on the 10th, and since that time I have been on the jump with my intelligence work, and will probably not have much time until after we leave. There are no less than ten foreign men of war in the harbor, and seven of them I have never seen before, consequently they must all be reported on.

This morning we went in dock, and will probably remain about four days. Then it will take us about 2 or 3 days to coal, when we will leave at once for Chemulpo, where the Admiral is waiting for us. I think we will be sent to some port in China, as I see the papers have been rubbing up "Chips" (Admiral Carpenter) for keeping such a big ship at Chemulpo.

We will not know anything about it until we see the admiral.

The weather here is warm and bright, and it will be hard going back to the cold coast of Korea.

What a terrible thing war is. In peace times our ships winter in this harbor.

Give my very best love to all at home, and write to

me often,

Always your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

P. S. The next steamer after this (Jany 18) is the Rio de Janeiro which leaves Yokohama the 26, but as she has been ashore and will have to be docked she may be late or miss the trip, according to the extent of her injuries. The steamer following her is on Feby 6.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Charleston,

Nagasaki, Japan,

Jany 8, 1895

My dear Ma,

The last regular mail was a disappointment to all hands - everybody had letters missing; but about a week later they all came along postmarked Tacoma. They went by that route and struck a very slow steamer, hence the delay.

Your letters dated Dec. 1st arrived nearly a week before those mentioned as follows:

Ma's Nov. 23 with forwarded letters

Varley's Nov 3 (Sent back to Ma)

Ma's Nov 26 with forwarded letters

Mary's Nov 29 with forwarded letters

Adelaide's Nov 25.

Varley's Nov 27 with forwarded letters

Jack Forbes Nov.-

All these including the forwarded letters made a fine old stack, and you cant possibly imagine the satisfaction the reading of them gave me, because you know comparatively little about the hunger one has for home news after being some time without it.

Before I forget it let me tell you that the "Daniel Barnes" (Capt. Arpe) sailed three days ago for Hongkong, China, where she will take a cargo for home - probably New York. Besides the big shell that she is carrying (gratis)

home for John Sims, she has my long, queer looking Chinese gun that I got a New Chwang. It is a home made match lock fowling piece, the kind used before they had flint locks.

They are still made and used in Manchuria, tho I have seen similar guns with a nipple for percussion caps. I had it covered with vasaline, sewed up in strong canvass# and addressed "Care of H. N. Sims, Mt. Union." Captain Arpe will put it in the express office C. O. D. I only thought of it at the last moment and it was sewed up in a hurry, without removing the hammer as I should have done. However if it gets damaged it can easily be repaired.

The "match" used is a small loosely woven rope that smudges like punk. It is wrapped around the gun and the burning end held in the crotch of the hammer.

I doubt very much its reaching home before I do, as the D. Barnes will probably not be loaded before Feby. 1st. and it is a long way home. She was 174 days coming here from Phila with oil.

———— . . ————

I suppose you have water in the house by this time, and I am very glad of it, as it will be such a comfort.

I enjoy so much Varley's letters home telling about Elsie and her clever tricks. She seems to be an unusually "smart" kid, and she will make things hum when she once gets the use of her tongue. To me it would be exceedingly

interesting to watch the development of a young mind, and as Varley is of a philosophic turn he might with very little trouble, keep a note book in which to jot down not so much her cute sayings, as those which illustrate her mental processes - commencing with her investigation of heads in general after finding that her doll's was loose. It would be a book of permanent interest in the Sims family - particularly to Elsie herself when she gets growed.

I think she was pulling her dad's leg when she "strode" up and down the room taking him off in his great act of thinking.

Lou's xmas box was fine and very pleasant to read about.

If you send me one you will have to galvanize the Turk to keep it from spoiling.

The photograph of Adelaide's wedding smile is immense.

If my bride smiles that way I will feel very much flattered.

I am sure Mr. Newlin will appreciate your comfortables & sich, I know how they go. I am very sorry he has such bad health, and the comfort Adelaide gives him is very pleasant to me. I like the picture of the poor old man spending rainy afternoons before the fire in Adelaides newly "fixed up" room.

I am amused at Adelaide being a Mother to the Newlin boys.

Speaking of boys here is a yarn about one: A very small

chap noticed one day for the first time the moon shining during daylight. After a moments reflection he made a break for the house screaming with laughter, and rushing in told his mother:

"Oh Ma. I've got such a good joke on our Heavenly Father, he forgot to take in the moon last night."

Here's another. It's not very select, so perhaps you'd better skip to the next paragraph and not read it:

A certain gentleman had contracted in his youth the habit of using profanity and could not shake it off; and to the great distress of his good wife she noticed her young son picking up an occasional bad word. One day she invited the Bishop to dinner, after having made her husband promise he would make no "breaks."

She provided a roast of beef and a goose, and was particular to have them tender, but forgot to sharpen the knife which was extremely dull.

The old gent made a brave struggle, and, by sheer strength, got a few slices off the roast. The bishop politely declined to take any. He went through the same struggle with the goose, and the bishop again declined. Whereupon the small son, who had watched the performance with interest remarked:

Pop, maybe the d- fool will suck an egg!"

_____ . . _____

I am very glad to hear that you have such a good servant

and that Buffy is doing such good work. I wish we had a few Buffies out this way. Cattle are scarce in Japan, and butter is almost unknown. All ours is imported and is, consequently always an object of suspicion.

I am glad you sent the letter and photos. to Mrs. Kelleher. She was my best girl for years and is a very fine woman.

You are doing first rate to keep in such good health, and I hope you will continue to take excellent care of yourself.

My health is simply perfect. I surprised myself by catching a lively cold in the head the other day. I didn't take anything for it, I never do. I turned in early, and the next day it had entirely disappeared.

I think I told you that Madame Glatz sent me ten fine etchings of scenes in Paris.

To return to the health business, I dont like to hear of Adelaide's having one of her old time headaches.

They are due to <u>something</u>, either overwork, or a mistake in diet or sich, and she should discover the cause and apply the remedy, for when such things are neglected they get worse and worse until they become chronic.

Tell Mary I will answer her letter soon, but I can hardly catch this steamer. This same remark applies with equal force to Adelaide's letter.

I had lots of fun out of Grove's problem of the cows, pigs and sheep. Many tried it without success. But one fellow, the mathematician of the mess did it easily by algebra.

I think Mary is wise in getting all the work for her wedding done now. I received a letter from Dr. Arnold today saying he would gladly look into the silk matter for me. He is going to get one of our officer's wife, and the Consul Genl.'s wife to help him.

This will inform Adelaide that I received her xmas present of Reily's Rhymes of Childhood, for which I thank her very much. I am reading it now. Her photograph was between the leaves and Lt White said it was the best thing in the book. Adelaide must not, however, be too much flattered by this remark, for White is just now at peace with the entire world, and pleased with everything; for on new years day he received a cablegram informing him that on xmas eve Mrs. White added one small anti-Tammany vote to the Rep. majority in New York. It was of course champagne for the mess.

This is their second attempt, the first baby living only a few days. Mrs. W. is not a strong or a healthy woman.

I compliment Old Jip (Gip) on being such an efficient watchman. She must be getting along in years now, and perhaps it would be wise to get a pup and let her teach him his business. Old Yaller Fan certainly holds out well.

Our first piston is in working order, but we dont know

whether the second has left or not. I wish it would come, so that we would be sure of getting home in time.

I hope to hear by the next mail whether or not the Dept. let Lieut Hughes remain on the Saratoga a month or so over his time until I return. I have great hopes that they will. You may remember that I waited two months for him to come.

I will keep all the foreign stamps I get and send them home, but I dont get very many. Until about two months ago we had a Chief Engineer who spent all his spare time collecting stamps, and spent a great deal of money at it. But with all his experience he was often taken in by counterfeits. Stamp collecting is a regular business, and the counterfeit part of it is very extensive.

I have never seen any Formosa stamps (they are now all Japanese) and I doubt their having been any of the F. Republic, it existed such a very short time.

There is no news at all here - we are part of the community and it is a small one - not counting the Japanese. It is by reason of this lack of news that I dont write any more circular letters.

I said I would continue them and would have done so if we had moved on, but, as you see, my letters from here have only a personal interest, and are not worth sending outside the family.

I must close not and write a note to Varley. He has

written me a number of times lately and his last letter was in the delayed mail.

Give my love to all at home, including Mary, Hen & Frank, and Mr. and Mrs. Ripple, and old Man Hal and Allie.

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm.

My writing gets worse and worse, tho. my hand is all right.

U. S. S. Charleston,
Nagasaki, Japan,
Jany 21, 1895

My dear People,

I regret exceedingly to be obliged to put you off without a letter, but for the present I will have to, for I am, and have been too busy to do anything.

We arrived here on the 10th and today we leave. During these ten days I have been on the keen jump, although I have been excused from standing watch. There are ten foreign men of war in the harbor, - 5 Russians, 3 French, 1 German, and 1 Japanese, and it is my duty as Intelligence Officer to make a report on each one of them, besides making a report on the port, the docking of the ship etc.

Three of the vessels are splendid new ships, and have to be reported on in full.

One is an 8000 ton armored Russian cruiser that has many new features. It takes two or 3 hours to go all over one of these ships, and a whole day to write it up. I would rather have stayed at Chemulpo, where it was quiet and cold.

There is no one on board here who speaks French at all easily, so I have to be always ready for a call.

The ship that arrives in port last must call first, - so we had to send a committee of three (of one of whom I was which). We started at 1 P. M. and got back at 5 P. M. and considering the fact that they always set up champagne on

each ship, we were in fairly good condition when we returned.

We leave today for Chemulpo, where the Admiral is awaiting us. What we will do then I dont know - but I hope to remain there until spring, as it is more agreeable than the coast of China.

The next steamer leaves Feby. 6th., and if I can get my reports in by the time we get to Chemulpo, I will be able to write and catch the same steamer.

We are all in excellent health, specially me.

I am indeed very sorry to send you such a wee letter, but I really cant help it this time.

I will put no number on it, and you need only send it to the immediate family.

Give my best love to all at home, and write often,

Always your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Charleston,

Chemulpo, Korea,

Jany 24, 1895

My dear People,

On the 21st we left Nagasaki after a stay there of eleven days, and this afternoon we arrived here at our old anchorage. We expected to find the Baltimore here, but she was gone. We sent a boat to the Consulate and it brought back a letter from the Admiral directing us to proceed at once to Chefoo, China, and join the Flagship. It was too late to get out this evening, for Chemulpo is surrounded by a chain of small islands and shoals, and there are no light-houses on the coast, but early tomorrow morning we will be on our way, and will arrive there the following day, as the distance is only 300 miles.

It is reported that the Japanese 3rd. Army Corps is moving on Wei-hai-wei with the object of capturing it and the Chinese fleet shut up there. When the news arrived the whole English fleet was here, and they left inside of two hours. The Admiral telegraphed for us to go there direct from Nagasaki, but we got away before the telegram arrived.

All foreign men of war are moving in that direction principally to comfort the foreign residents in China, who are afraid of the Chinese armies in case they are defeated.

If you will look on the map of China, you will find Cheefoo (Chifu, Chefu, Chefoo, and lots of other ways of

spelling) about south of Port Arthur on the opposite shores of the gulf. Near it is Wei-hai-wei, a naval station that may not be on the chart. I don't know much about either place, or how much we will be able to see of the operations going on there, but whatever we do see you may depend on my putting into a circular letter for the benefit of you all.

Probably we will see nothing but I will doubtless be able to give you some interesting gossip, - always provided this infernal Intelligence duty dont occupy too much of my time.

I don't know what opportunities there are for getting information, or rather mails, and sending them but I will take advantage of all that turn up.

Keep on addressing always:

Care U. S. Consul General,

Yokohama,

and we will keep them posted by cable.

I don't think we will remain long at Chefoo, for as soon as all the fleets arrive and the excitement begins to abate it will be remembered that we have 25 men and four officers at Seoul - we left them there when we went to Nagasaki.

We are all in excellent health - I have never been better, - am getting fat, and gradually losing my bangs.

I am sorry I haven't time to gossip a bit with you, but

it will have to be postponed until later.

I have told you all the news, but if I were at leisure I might give you a dozen pages or so of pure chin.

Give my very best love to all at home, and write often,

Always your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

No 58

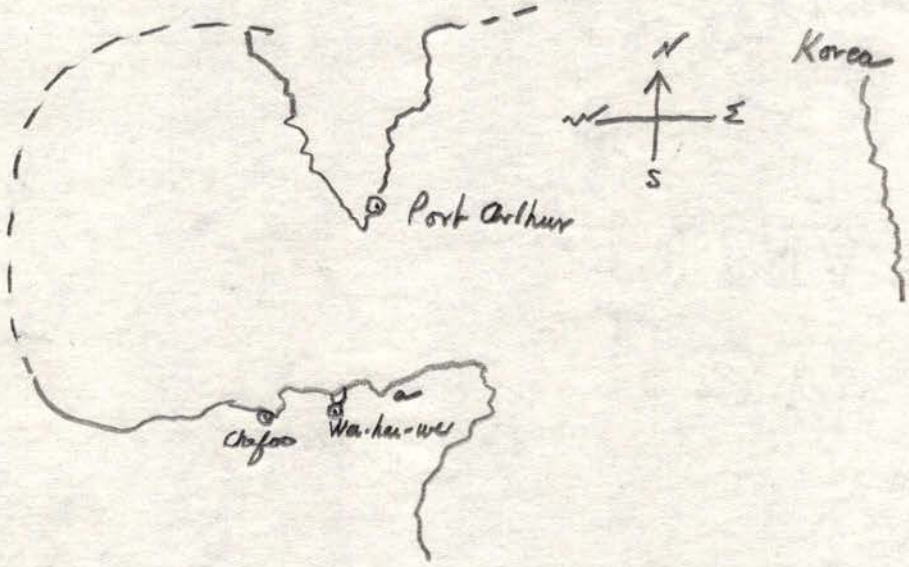
U. S. S. Charleston,
Chefo, China,
Jany 29, 1895

My dear Folks,

On the 25th I wrote you a note at Chemulpo to let you know that we had arrived there from Nagasaki, and had been ordered to proceed at once to Chefoo. We did so and arrived here after a run of 24 hours to find ourselves in company with 15 other men of war - about half of them English. Chefoo is almost an open roadstead - only a few small islands outside of us. The anchorage is immense, and the ships are a long way apart. It is perhaps two miles from one end of the fleet to the other. We take plenty of room because a gale of wind is liable to spring up at any time.

We are anchored about two miles from the shore, and it looks most uninviting - a range of rugged brown hills partly covered with snow, and a few large buildings - the hotels where foreigners summer when they find it too hot in Southern China.

The place is fortified and held by 10,000 troops - so they say, and our business here is to look out for the interests of foreign residents, in case anything turns up. For that purpose all the ships on the station are banded together. The English, French, German, American, etc. will join their forces to protect the citizens of any other nation whether represented by ships or not.



As near as I can make out the situation is about as follows:

The Japanese with a fleet of 50 transports, convoyed by men of war, landed at (a) about 20 miles east of Weihaiwei, one of China's strongest ports. The defeated Chinese fleet is now at anchor there protected by a line of torpedoes across the channel and blockaded by a Japanese fleet.

The Japs intend to make a land attack and attempt to capture both the port and the fleet.

If they do so the Chinese will probably retreat to Chefoo, and it may be necessary to capture that also.

We don't know when the fighting will begin, as we get very little news. We are 40 miles from Wei-hai-wei, and <u>all</u> communications are cut off. Occasionally a ship goes down and brings back a few rumors.

The foreign residents ashore are very nervous about the

Chinese troops that they expect to see retreating soon, and to comfort them we (all of us) have made the following arrangement.

A small guard with a signal corps is maintained on shore, and on the hoisting of a certain signal each ship will send a certain number of men ("armed to the teeth" of course). We send 30. At a certain other signal we will send boats to bring off the women and children.

There probably will not be any trouble, but of course there might, and I am thankful that I am not on the detail for it is blustery, cold weather, the thermometer remaining below 20°, most of the time.

It is hard weather for the Chinese and Japs to make war in, but they are well protected as the oriental winter clothing is a splendid protection against the cold. Their clothes are all light in weight, but very thick, being padded with cotton.

We are not allowed to go ashore, and most of the time it is too rough to go ship visiting, so we remain on board and wait for something to turn up. The Baltimore and Yorktown are here. Of course we have no idea how long we will remain.

We can never tell when the next mail will arrive or leave, as all regular communications are suspended. Men of war, and transports that happen to be making a trip between China

and Japan carry our letters.

Tomorrow a German man-of-war is going to Yokohama and will carry this. I brought Japanese stamps here with me so that I could send letters to Japan to be mailed.

I would have had a long letter ready for you by this time, had it not been for my troublesome Intelligence reports. I am just finishing up the notes that I took in Nagasaki.

On our way here we passed Wei-hai-wei, but it was before daylight in the morning so we could see nothing.

We met one of the Jap. blockading squadron, and he made a few signals to us - rockets, and colored roman candles, that signified something in Japanese, but nothing to us. It was probably a private signal intelligible only to the squadron.

You remember my boy Ting? I told you something about him in one of my recent letters. He is a graven image as far as any communication goes - at least I thought so; but he has only been watching me for five months to see if I could be trusted.

He has come to the conclusion that I am not a dangerous man, and now we have long chats in Pigeon English.

He told me all about himself. Eleven years ago he went as a boy on the steamer Rio, running to Frisco, and afterwards went on men of war. He soon learned the difference

between China and America and much prefers the latter - Frisco, where there are lots of his countrymen.

He only has one regret, and that is leaving his old mother in Canton. Ting is quite incapable of using such an abstract English word as "regret" but he manages to express the idea. I understand him when he talks but I cant easily recall his words. His manner and phrases are not in the least like the stuff you see on the stage and in the "funny" papers.

Ting takes a great interest in the war, but only as an outsider, for he comes from the South, and has no sympathy with the north. He can neither speak nor understand a word of the language spoken in this part of China, and all but one of our boys are in the same fix. Referring to the present dynasty Ting says, "China now King no good," which means that China's present emperor don't enjoy his confidence.

One of our boys - Ah Sung has gone to Shanghai to see his people having hired a funny little Jap to do his work while he is gone. He is a north country Chinaman, but is very clever, and speaks the southern language as well as Japanese and English.

Most of our Chinamen in the U. S. come from the South. The northern men are superior in every way, and would be formidable if they were organized and properly handled by honest and patriotic officers. The trouble is that the

Chinese government is rotten from the head down. The soul-
dier's# worst enemy is his own officer, who "squeezes" his
rations, clothing, and even powder. It seems to me that
China has little chance of defeating Japan in any single
action, tho. she may exhaust the limited resources of the
latter.

There is considerable talk here about the schemes of
Russia, and England.

Nothing is known of course, except that each are in-
creasing their fleet. The Russians have about 30 ships on
the station and a powerful squadron is on the way out.
Russian ships are frequenting Japanese ports, a great deal,
and it is rumored that when they come to divide the spoils
of war, Japan and Russia will back up each other's claims.

Russia wants the large slice of Manchuria that extends
up into Siberia north of Korea, in order to build a R. R.
to connect with her Siberian road. She also wants a port
in the north of the Yellow Sea that will remain open all
winter.

England wants the Earth, and seems likely to be grat-
ified. Their fleet here is more powerful than that of Rus-
sia and a cablegram to Australia will bring up a squadron
of powerful vessels. New ships are arriving on the station
every little while. Recently a first class cruiser came out
from England, beating the mail steamer time.

The Japs want Port Arthur, Weihaiwei etc, and more that

they will not be allowed to take.

The French want to add something to their Tonquin (?) conquest.

The Americans want to mind their own business, and I hope they will do it.

It would be a real misfortune for us to acquire any territory in this direction, for we could not possibly hold it unless our fleet were as strong as the first power that wanted to take it away from us.

As a military force our Navy is not counted, as it is not up to date in any way. I cant explain very well without being too technical, but in the performance of my duties as Intelligence officer I make numerous reports on vessels of the Charleston's tonnage that could "lick" us while we were spitting on our hands. Only the other day I completed a full report on the French cruiser Isly. She has ten rapid fire guns that can be discharged five times a minute, while our system cannot be fired more than once a minute.

We are building rapid fire guns, but we havent them mounted, and the others have.

We are building torpedoes but only two or three ships have them on board, and the others have all had them for years. We haven't powder and shell enough on hand to go into a war with anybody - we had to send to * and buy

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*Blank space in letter - possibly an erasure? - ASF

some during the recent Chili affair - while all other navies are kept on a war footing.

To be sure there is extreme improbability of our getting into a row with anybody (provided we mind our own business) and that is the reason we are always behind and probably will always remain so. We can't get an appropriation until it can be shown how much better other nations are in that respect, then by the time we get the money and commence to build we are left behind again.

I am aware that this is not the opinion of the American public, which is immensely impressed by the speed of the Columbia, and Minneapolis, but it is the truth all the same.

I have just completed reports on twenty foreign vessels, and I know whereof I speak.

Do you remember asking and receiving an explanation of a row that took place in the barroom of the Hawaiian Hotel between some young English and American officers?

Well, they tell me on board the Yorktown that the gossips at the Mare Island Navy Yard have it that I was in it, and that I am the one who struck the young Englishman.

I can't imagine how such a yarn was put on me, and I am infinitely disgusted.

I must close now as the mail must soon go to the man of war that is to take it - The German vessel Alexandrina that has been with this ship in almost every port - in Rio #

Janeiro, Callao, Honolulu, Yokohama, Nagasaki, Chemulpo, and Chefoo. We are on very familiar terms with all the officers.

She leaves today, and if she dont stop on the way, this letter should catch the steamer of Feby 6th from Yokohama.

I send by the same mail a handsomely illustrated pamphlet on the naval battle, and I hope it reaches you safely, as I am sure it will interest you if you have not already seen it.

I cant register it from here or I would do so.

Give my very best love to all at home, and write when you (all) can.

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm.

man of war "Alexandrina," bound for Yokohama but I haven't the least idea when I will be able to send this.

For the last two days our communication has even been cut off with the shore, as it has been blowing half a gale of wind, so that a boat could not be lowered without danger. I have no idea when I will have a chance to send this, but when the chance comes there will probably be no warning, so that if you dont have a letter written and waiting, you will get left. Therefore I will write a bit whenever I have time, and the longer the delay, the longer the letter will be when it finally reaches you.

I have made you another little map so that you can get the lay of the land.

Port Arthur and Wei-hai-wei are China's strongest sea ports, in the North. They had to be reduced before Japan could make any permanent advance on Peking.

Port Arthur has already fallen, and Wei-hai-wei is being attacked while I write.

The other day I went ashore and while there called with another fellow on a curious character by the name of McGiffin. He was a Cadet at the Academy in my time, a couple of classes after mine, and is a most eccentric character. He didn't stand high enough in the class to be retained in the service, and when he was mustered out he went into the service of China. For a number of years he was Supt. of their naval

No 59

U. S. S. Charleston,
Chefoo, China,
Feby 1st., 1895

My dear Folks,

I have often thought that it would be a good scheme to write a couple of pages each day between steamers, so as to include items of interest that would be forgotten in hurriedly writing a letter in time to catch the mail.

I have often intended to try it but I never have. The trouble is that life on board ship is subject to so many interruptions that no regular time can be set aside each day for such a purpose. And even if it were not so, it would not be easy to accomplish, for as every one knows any daily mental task becomes irksome. It don't seem to be so much the task itself, for writing letters is seldom a task for me, but I think it must be the effort required to get started each day - to overcome the constant desire one has to procrastinate.

But however, that may be, I am obliged to try the scheme now, for we are entirely cut off from all communication with the rest of the world except by telegraph. In times of peace there are regular steamers running here three times a week from Shanghai, but now there are none; and our only means of getting and sending mail is by men of war that happen to be going to or coming from Japan.

Day before yesterday I sent you a letter by the German

school at Wei-hai-wei.

During the recent naval action he was second in command of one of the big iron clads. He was wounded in several different places, and his uniform, which he showed us, was shot and burned into rags.

I talked to him for about an hour. He is on sick leave, and was in bed at the time.

He told me that the Chinese naval officers were quite confident of success, and could not be persuaded that the Japs were to be feared - that their vessels were well equipped (The Jap vessels).

He also said that the Chinese had so long regarded Port Arthur as the Gibraltar of the North, that they had not the least fear of losing it. They were so confident that they withdrew all the good troops, and sent them to the front, filling their places with recruits; and that the officers left in command were so incompetent that the troops were not even taught their way from one defense to another - the fortress being very complicated. He thinks Wei-hai-wei will be better defended, but he tells the same old story of Chinese lack of esprit de corps, and even patriotism, and of the utter corruption of the ruling classes, army officers, etc.

Until yesterday we knew almost nothing of the operations against Wei-hai-wei. Besides the fleet here, there are several vessels down there to see what is going on, and

yesterday a small French gunboat returned and reported the situation. The capt. of the gunboat called on our Admiral and explained it and as he owed a call here he came on board, and explained it to our captain, - or rather to me, and I translated it, - for the French language is one of a very long list of things that our ass of a captain don't know.

The first day's operations was not much more than a reconnaissance in force to get the lay of the land. The explanation would not interest you much as it is very technical, so I will only draw you a plan of it and give you a general idea of it.

(Here follows a diagram of the action, which is drawn with such an exceedingly fine pen that it would be impossible to trace, - therefore I have not attempted to copy it. ASF)

The first position shows the disposition of Admiral Ito's fleet.

The Jap army was advancing from the eastward, and supported by a fleet of small vessels and torpedo boats. The army drove in the Chinese outposts, and the fleet shelled the forts for about an hour from the second position. The forts replied until the fleet drew off at sunset and the French gunboat started back with the news.

The captain of the gunboat praised highly the manner in which Admiral Ito handled his fleet. He was indignant

with the English Admiral for remaining in the way of the Jap fire. It was expected that the place would be bombarded early the next morning, then carried by assault. But that night the gods of the Chinese (small "g" for Chinese gods) smiled upon them and sent a gale of wind with snow and bitter cold.

The wind was probably 30 or 35 miles an hour, and the temperature 12°, and a tremenduous# sea rolled in on the coast, and would render bombardment impracticable. The fleet would be all right, but the sufferings of the troops in the field must have been fearful - also very well deserved, for they have comfortable homes in Japan, and have no possible business at Wei-hai-wei.

As a military achievement their conduct of this war has been admirable; but that makes me none the more in love with injustice and the unnecessary and inhuman shedding of blood.

I am of a mild and gentle disposition, but nevertheless I would be pleased to see every Japanese frozen so stiff that they would not thaw out until late spring, or until, or until# they experienced a change of heart.

Immediately that the news was received of the first day's action the Yorktown was despatched to report the subsequent operations. She returned a couple of hours ago, but we haven't yet heard the news - there is still a heavy sea running and boats are not lowered except when necessary

During the gale we had two anchors down and and# all boats secured. It was very cold on deck, and all winter duds came in handy. My cardigan leggins that you folks lengthened for me saved my life several times.

I wear plenty of "Jaegers," two vests, a padded coat, a storm coat, heavy overshoes, a knitted scarf, a woollen cap and a capot. I am quite "out of sight" except my eyes, - but a 35 miles, 12° wind is rather too much to expose your whiskers to.

It is reported by signal from town that there are 2000 Chinese deserters from Wei-hai-wei (I'm tired writing this name - I will represent it by a "W" hereafter) in the neighborhood of the city, but they are "pacific" and no trouble is anticipated.

That's about all the news I have at present - but I have a theory in regard to this war which is founded on nothing to speak of like most theories. When we left Nagasaki, or shortly before, a large Russian frigate was sent to Yokohama, and the Russian Admiral remained in Nagasaki with his flagship - a powerful battleship - and three other vessels.

The French admiral also remained with his flagship, and another splendid vessel. The German ship Alexandrina on arriving here received a telegram to proceed at once to Yokohama. The English Admiral (Freemantle) with his flagship the "Centurian" (10500 tons) and two other vessels is

at "W" watching the operations. The German Admiral is there also, but there is a sure enough Duke on the Alexandrina. Now it appears to me that, if there were not some good reason to the contrary, the Russian and French fleets would be here - I therefore conclude (with great astuteness) that there is some good reason to the contrary. Now my idea is that the reason of this singular behavior is that Russia and France with or without the authority of China, are trying to arrange a peace between the belligerents, on the basis of certain concessions to themselves. If this turns out wrong I won't lose anything as I am not betting.

Feby 5th., 1895 (Mid watch)

Different rumors arrive every day. Yesterday within two or three hours of each other came the two rumors, 1st. that Wei-hai-wei had been taken and 2nd. that the Japanese would not attack for four days.

Later we heard that the Japanese had most of the forts, and that the Chinese before leaving a certain fort had mined it and blown 1300 Japs into the air. At last accounts they had not yet come down.

The Yorktown's "Captain," Commander Folger, one of the brightest officers in the service, and late Chief of Bureau of Ordnance, called on our mess - to return the call we made on him - and told us what a tough time he had off "W" watching the operations of the second day. He could see nothing

from the sea except the bombardment of the forts by the fleet, and the reply by the forts, and the ironclads in the harbor. He says they kept up a terrific cannonade with one division of the Jap fleet at a time, while the others lay off. He is loud in his praises of the Japanese fleet and the way they handle it, and says it is the best in the world, with ships of equal weight of course.

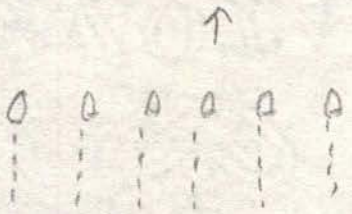
The Japa you know have no iron clads in their fleet, although her cruisers carry heavy guns.

Commander Folger particularly admired the way they handled their squadrons. He said they were imposing.

Everybody is admiring a trick they have practiced for keeping their squadrons always in hand, and ready to move in any direction.

While one Japanese squadron was bombarding the other squadrons were ordered to maintain a certain position and be ready to engage the enemy's battleships if they ventured out.

Now while it is a very easy matter to keep a squadron well in hand - in good line,



and in "close order" (400 to 500 feet apart) while steaming ahead, it is a difficult matter to keep them in position when stopped. What with the wind and the currents



they drift about and head in different directions in spite of engines and rudders, and of course in that position they are not ready to receive the attack of the enemy neither as a fleet, nor as individual ships, as it is difficult to keep the engines ready for instant use when they have been stopped for some time - not to mention the strain on the boilers etc.

To overcome all these difficulties the Japs hit on the scheme of steaming at full speed in a circle. This kept their ships in position, in close order, with the engines and boilers doing their work regularly at the top notch, and ready to keep it up.



The commander of the squadron in the leading ship could be leaving the circle at any part, bring his squadron quickly to bear on any point of the compass.

This is a very cute trick, and is not I believe in any tactics.

When the gale of wind came on the Japanese fleet hauled off in fleet formation and stood out to sea as there was a tremenduous# sea running and further bombardment was out of the question. It was very cold, and most of the time

there was a blinding snow storm.

The little Yorktown (1700 tons) took seas over the bows, and spray over everything, and was a mass of ice. The muzzles of her guns collected ice until they were as big as flour barrels, and I suppose there was considerable in the officer-of-the-deck's whiskers.

I would like to have seen the bombardment, but would just as soon be excused from the gale of wind.

We are having smooth weather now but it is still below freezing, and there is much ice in the harbor. At the landing - around the wharves etc. it is frozen up. Tugs break it up each morning so that steam launches can get in, tho. with difficulty.

For days we haven't been able to buy a scrap of fresh provision, not on account of the war, but on account of the grand annual drunk that all chinese indulge in on their new year (Jany 26).

The drunk lasts about two weeks, and men who ordinarily will work for 20 cents a day cant be hired to move. I told you something about it in one of my Honolulu letters. Perhaps you remember that my washerman spent $100. dollars.

When "W" has been taken as it doubtless will, this place will probably be attacked, as it is fortified. I don't think it will offer much resistance if any. Captain McGiffin mentioned above - advised the Chinese not to fortify it,

saying the Japs would not molest unforified places.

The English, represented by Admiral Freemantle (a very wide-awake man) are very much opposed to the Japanese attacking it, and would like other nations to join them in a protest but, as far as we know none others will.

The place is really an English watering place but of course there is no anxiety about the safety of the people. The secret of the English action is a desire to put an end to the war which is doing them great damage by stopping their enormous trade with Northern China.

Japan is after territory, glory, and the satisfaction of centuries of prejudice and hate, and will go on to Peking, and as much further as allowed. Russia, I feel sure, is helping Japan with money and advise#, and perhaps France is, for it is to the interests of both to have China as well licked as possible. Germany's commercial interests in China (2nd to Englands) are also being damaged, and she wants the war stopped. It will be a wonder if a settlement is made without European war.

Wouldn't

England and Germany	against	Russia, France and Japan

make a daisy scrap, and wouldn't the eastern heathen point the finger of scorn at them, and their great and only original christian civilization.

Thank the Lord we are safely out of it, now that Jim Blain is dead - for if the ignorant conceit of the American people ever wishes us into a war with a second or third class power, the "new navy" will be wiped "offen" the face of the earth, and although we could and would "lick" anybody in the end, the knowledge would perhaps not bring sufficient consolation to those who were keeping my grave green while they were building up a new navy. The United States of American belong among the spectators, and they have a spectators privilege of going out if they dont like the show.

Feby 6 '95. Wednesday

An English man-of-war the Spartan leaves for Hong Kong next Saturday, and I intended to add more before sending this, but now I wont have time as orders have just arrived for us to go to a place about 100 miles west of here and bring back to Chefoo some nervous missionaries. We leave at 4 a.m. and this letter must be sent to the Baltimore in a few minutes for transfer to the Spartan in the morning.

It was a good idea having a letter ready wasn't it?

At last accounts Weihaiwei was not taken. The people in town - Chefoo - are very nervous. The military governor (Chinaman) caught some deserters from Wei-hai-wei - officers and men and beheading them stuck their heads on poles at the

entrance to the Chinese part of the town. I did not see them.

I put Hongkong stamps (purchased here) on the letter so that they can be mailed down there. They will catch the U. S. mail bound for Frisco.

I am sorry to close so hurridly#.

I will write again at the first opportunity.

Love to all at home,

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm

(Attached to this letter is a map drawn by W.S.S. on such a small scale that it is impossible to trace. I therefore copy the remarks under some of the names. ___ indicates underlining in red ink. - ASF)

Manchuria

This is what Russia wants to make a short cut from her Siberian R. R. to Vladivostok.

Vladivostok - frozen up half the year.

HongKong I. Already English.

Chusan I. the one the English want.

Formosa

Japan wants - and everything else that the "Powers" will allow her to take from China. She would probably like to keep Port Arthur and Wei-hai-wei.

France wants to augment their Tonquin conquest.

All underlined in red (except Japan's share) bears the same relation to morality, as robbing a drunken sailor - But then, you know, moral codes and histories are written in different books.

PHOTOGRAPH

(Enclosed in letter No 59 ?? * ASF)

I picked this up on the Ting Yuen, the wrecked battle-ship - in Admiral Ting's cabin. It was covered with snow and dirt, and I have cleaned it as best I could.

I dont know who the well-fed, and (for a Chinaman) handsome looking man is. It is not Admiral Ting, - I am acquainted with his personal appearance.

It may be Commodore Lin -

No 60

U. S. S1 Charleston

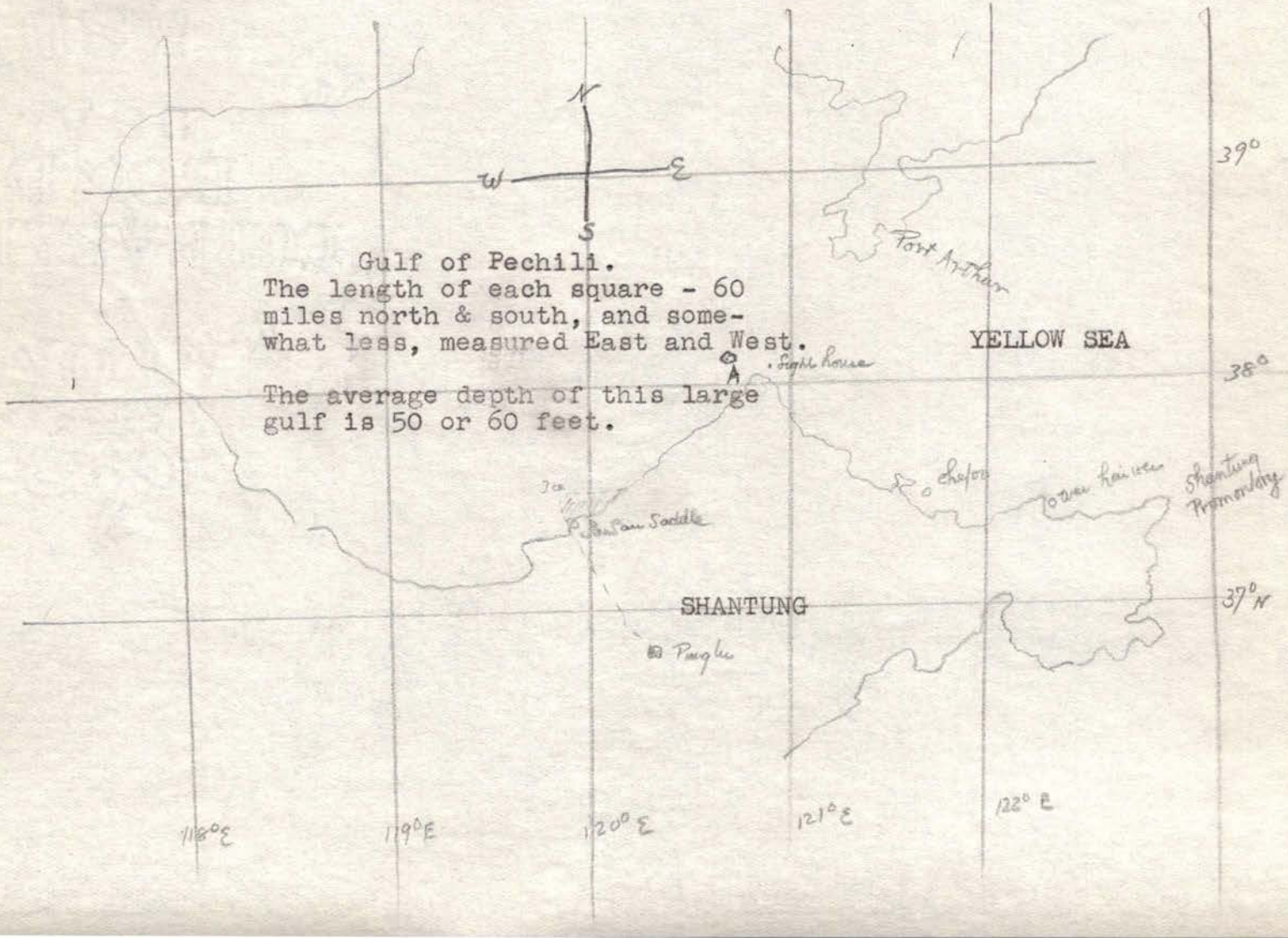
Anchored at "A" on map

Feby 7, 1895,

My dear Folks,

This morning at 4 a.m. we left Chefoo bound for Sansan Saddles, a small Chinese village, probably named "Sansan," and named "Saddles" on the chart, because, on approaching from the sea, a couple of high hills back of the town resemble saddles.

We arrived there about 3 P. M. finished our business at 5 P. M. and and# returning reached "A" (see map) where



we anchored for the night because in these war times the "light house" (in red ink) is not in operation and the passage between the islands is not easy.

It has been a rather curious experience, and if I have time to write you all about it, I will mail this letter tomorrow by the same steamer that took - or will take my No 59 that I hurriedly closed before leaving.

A letter was received in Chefoo from some missionaries living at Pingtu (see map) saying that they were afraid of being molested by soldiers retreating from Wei-hai-wei. The deserters traveled in bands of 100 or so, and took what they wanted, and shot all who resisted. The entire Chinese nation believe that the "foreigners" (and the common people make no distinction between different nationalities) are assisting the Japanese with money, men, and ships.

The people are told this in order to save their pride. The consequence is increased bitterness against "foreigners" especially on the part of the "soldiers."

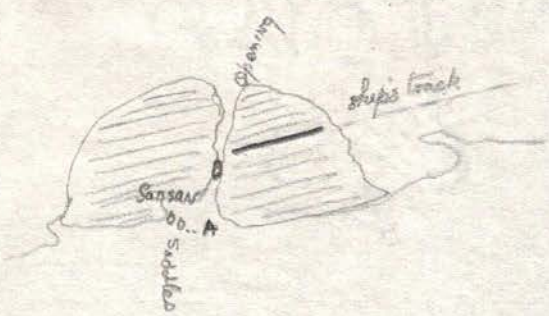
At all events the missionaries were believed to be in danger, and were told that a ship would be sent to Sansan at once to pick them up.

The weather was cold (25°) but almost a dead calm - I never remember seeing the water so smooth - for, being very shallow, there was no swell. On nearing Sansan we found the entire sea covered with a sheet of ice about $\frac{1}{4}$"

thick. We were steaming about 13 knots, and we madd the splinters fly. It was all new ice formed during the few hours calm. I don't ever remember seeing a uniform sheet of ice at sea. As we appraoched the harbor itself, the ice became thicker, and there was more old ice - cakes that had been driven in by current or winds and one thin cake sliding over another had piled it up until it was a foot or a foot and one half thick in places.

It was as much as we could do to get through it by repeatedly backing and charging into it. It took us an hour and a half to go about one mile, but much time was consumed by the necessity of cutting our way in a certain direction. The ship could not be steered in the ice, and we had to handle her with the twin screws.

The water was very shallow, and we could not approach the shore nearer than three miles, and if there had been no opening in the ice we might have been delayed for days - but fortunately there was a channel almost as if made on purpose - I suppose the missionaries thought it was opened for them.



It didn't quite reach the town, so they had to be embarked at "A".

The opening was closing when we arrived, and by the time we had them all on board it was nearly shut. If it had closed before our launch returned, towing the other boats, we would have been in a bad way, as the water was too shoal for us to run in and break them out, and in many places the ice was not strong enough to walk on.

However, we got them safely on board - four men, six women, and six children, three of the latter being tiny babies, one little girl only 5 months old.

There was a bride and groom - married just before leaving Pingtu.

They spent their honeymoon walking or riding donkeys from Pingtu to the coast.

One missionary with his wife and family (4 in all) Americans all the others are English and Danes. The party had baggage (all their effects, - or most all) to the amount of one hay waggon full.

They travelled from Pingtu mostly on foot - while donkies# carried the luggage.

On arriving at Sansan the tom-toms were beaten, warning guns were fired, the gates were closed and they were refused admittance.

The beating of the tom-toms was kept up all night, and the lights remained lighted and nobody slept. They were in mortal terror. All the missionaries were in full Chinese

costume, but there#faces were those of "barbarians," Some supposed them to be foreigners belonging to the Japanese army.

At all events they found shelter with difficulty in a small village 5 miles from town.

The next morning Mr. Sears induced the authorities to grant him an interview - he speaks Chinese, and had a passport. He finally made them understand dimly what it was all about. He told them a big ship was coming for them, but he could not make them understand what country she was from. They had never seen "foreigners" before, and the whole population came out to see them and stood for yours gazing at them while they were watching for the ship.

This little harbor must have been surveyed some 70 or 80 years ago, but none of the inhabitants now living had ever seen a steam vessel, let alone a rather imposing looking man of war, so they could not have had much of an idea of what was coming. They are most all fishermen, and their light junks are hauled up on shore for the winter. They assured the missionaries that it would not be possible for any ship to get through the ice.

Our bunkers are now filled with Takasima (Japanese) coal which makes a very black smoke and long before we appeared over the horizon they saw the black column rising in the calm wintery air. Every man woman and child that could

walk or be carried came out on the side of the hills to see the foreign ships. They didn't come down to the beach but remained well up the side of the hills out of danger's way. When they saw us "sailing" through the thin ice without any sails and against the wind at that, they were sufficiently astonished, but when they saw us smashing our way through the pack, they would have taken to the woods had they not been reassured by the barbarian who had the "writing" (passport) with the seal of "Great China" "onto" it.

As soon as we made out the town we blew our siren, which they took to be the natural voice of a man of war.

When we anchored in the open space and lowered our boats, they came down to the beach to see our steam launch arrive. I suppose it must be impossible for us to conceive of their state of mind on beholding such miracles.

In complete silence they gazed and gazed. They were absolutely awed. Their feelings were so far past astonishment that they had nothing to say even to each other. They understood that we were there on a peaceful mission, and were devoutly thankful. When the officer stepped ashore and was taking down the names of the missionaries they gathered so close around him that he could scarcely write, and followed his every motion with their eyes. Seeing him looking through his binoculars, one very old man held his hand out for permission to look through them. He was allowed

to do so, but expressed no astonishment - he had no more to express. If the loaded boats had floated in the air off to the ship, and they ship had ascended into heaven, I am sure that the comvined elevation of the eyebrows of the entire population would not have been more than one sixteenth of an inch.

I wish I had time to tell you of the ignorance and superstition of these people. They cannot conceive of anything new being invented. They probably think that all foreign ships are exactly like the Charleston in shape and color, and that such ships have existed since time out of mind when the foreigner's gods gave them to them.

Mrs. Sears the missionary's wife has a sewing machine in Pingtu.

Chinese, who have not seen it but heard of it ask astonishing questions about it. It is called in the country round about the "Iron Tailor" and it is actually supposed to be alive. Mr. Sears says he has been repeatedly asked what he fed it, and whether or not he found it necessary to tie it up at night.

They don't connect the machine with any superior ability on the part of foreigners - they simple think their gods (small g for these gods) gave it to them. But singularly enough they have no desire to possess one. Their fathers never had such things, and why should they. They feel little

or no interest in the war. They hate the Emperor, and say it is his affair.

My boy Ting expresses this same idea, says he would not mind seeing the Emperor and China beaten by the English, French, Russians and Germans, but he don't like to think that such a little country as Japan can do it.

In getting out of the ice pack we had more difficulty than going in. We must have struck a place where it was thicker, for during half an hour we were solidly wedged in and could not move either way with the full power of the engines, and with all the crew on deck running from one side to the other we could not heel her. At the end of half an hour what with the engines and men she fetched loose, and backing down the channel we had already made we charged the floe at full speed and forced our way through.

It is very curious to hear the voices of children on board a man of war.

The Charleston used to be a flagship, and her cabin is divided into two compartments by a fore-and-aft bulkhead. The women and children were given one compartment, and as they had their own bedding, they were quite comfortable. They expect to return to their posts when the fate of We-hai-wei is settled, and the country is cleared of deserters.

Whenever I meet any missionaries, which is not often I always ask them if they know Miss Haines, for I know that "Billy" Haines has, or had, a sister out here somewhere.

These people don't remember to have heard of her, so perhaps she is in another part of China. If she had been with them I would have given her my room, and made her comfortable on the passage to Chefoo.

If anyone knows where Miss Haines is, please let me know, and I will look her up if I ever go where she is. Jack or Billy Forbes might ask Billy Haines and then drop me a line.

I hope this will catch the same mail as the letter I mailed before leaving Chefoo - that is catch the English man of war Spartan, bound for Hongkong - But if it dont it will be sent at the very first opportunity.

Give my very best love to all at home,

Always your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

No 61

U. S. S. Charleston,
Chefoo, China,
Feby 11, 1895

My dear People,

On Feby 6th I mailed you a letter just before we sailed for Sansan Saddles, to pick up the missionaries, and on Feby 8th I mailed another just after returning. When I say I mailed them I mean that I sent them on board the English man of war "Spartan" bound for Hongkong.

They will catch the first Pacific Mail steamer touching there and will both reach you at the same time. They have English Hongkong stamps on them that we purchased here from an English firm.

I have no idea when I will have a chance to send this, but will have it ready in case something turns up.

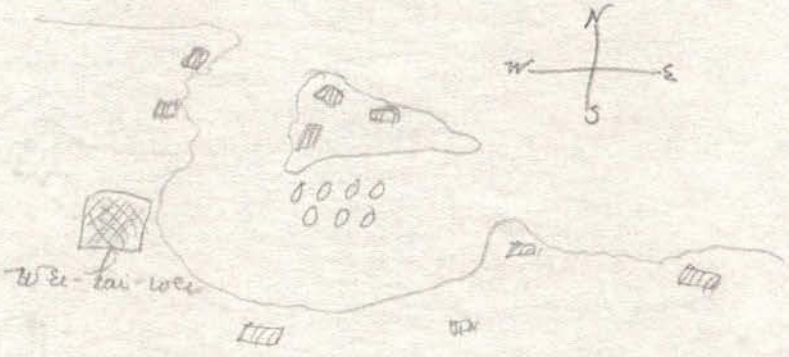
I am, however, much more interested in getting a mail than in sending one, for it is a very long time since we have received any, and it seems very much longer than it really is. I think it was in the first week in January that the last sure enough mail reached us at Chemulpo. At Nagasaki we received a few straggling letters, and since then nothing. I leave you to imagine how welcome the next mail will be.

The missionaries are not all in yet, but we are not going after them this time. We wouldn't have gone last time if the the# Yorktown had been here, as she can do such

jobs at a much less expense (of coal).

This time the people in trouble are to the southward of the peninsula on which Wei-hai-wei is situated. They are from the interior and have sent word that they are afraid and have gone to the coast, but they didnt say to what point, and the Yorktown has the job of finding them.

Rumors still continue to arrive here concerning the seige of Wei-hai-wei. We know, however, for a fact that the Japanese have possession of all the forts except those on



the island and it is only a question of time when the island must give out.

This place was well fortified and armed with some of Krupp's best and heaviest guns mounted on disappearing carriages.

Rumor says that these guns damaged some of the Jap ships very much. We also learn that six Japanese torpedo

boats made a night attack on the Chinese fleet anchored inside the island, and succeeded in sinking four of them - including the Ting Yuen, the flagship of Admiral Ting. The Admiral now has his flag hoisted on the Chin Yuen - the other battleship.

There are daily rumors that the Japanese are on their way to attack this place, and the native population ashore is very much excited. From time to time, both day and night you hear them beating tom toms, and firing off guns. From the anchorage we can see some of the forts to the Eastward of the town, and a stone defense wall running from the shore up over the hills. Occasionally there is heavy firing from the forts and along the wall as tho. they were being attacked.

We all go up on deck with our glasses, and watch only to find that they are drilling, or trying to "hoodoo" the Japs.

I can hear them firing now as I write (11 P. M.)

The Japs will certainly take or rather occupy this place, as it is fortified, and mounts some modern guns. However, there is not likely to be any fighting, as the forts are only stone, and can easily be destroyed by the Jap fleet. Rumor also says that when this business is finished, they will move on up the coast into the gulf. This means that we will have to remain about until spring, and perhaps away into the summer.

It was a sad day when I left the old Philadelphia - for they have been having a fine time in Mare Island and San Francisco. If I think of it I will send you a letter from one of the fellows.

He refers to my letters to the 8th ward. I wrote them several when we first arrived on the station, and they seem to have been pleased with them.

We have had a long "spell" of cold weather (10° to 20°) and it was very uncomfortable as our ship is not sufficiently heated. The doctor is making a report on her. She has never been in cold weather before to amount to anything.

The thermometer is away up today (45°) and no wind, and it seems like spring.

Hardly anybody goes ashore as it is such a long ride in the boats, and sometimes very wet, for in an hour's time a breeze will spring up and kick up a lively sea.

The English man of war "Edgar" has just notified us that she is about to leave for Nagasaki, but as she is to stop at Wei-hai-wei and watch the fighting, there is no telling when this will be mailed. However, I will put a Jap stamp on it and send it, and it may or may not beat our next mail from here.

The Edgar expects to be in Nagasaki two weeks, and then return, and I should not be surprised if she brought us our next mail.

We are all well on board, barring many colds.

Give my love to all at home,

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

I hope you have sent me clippings about the row in Honolulu, as it is only mentioned in the "Eastern" papers.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Charleston

Wei-hai-wei harbor

Feby 22nd, 1895

My dear Folks,

Just a word to send by the English man of war Porpoise. I am up to my eyes in reports on the naval and military operations relating to the taking of this place. Reports on all the forts, ships, the torpedo attack on the Chinese fleet, etc.

Absolutely I haven't time to eat, but when I have finished I will write you a letter which I think will be very interesting.

I am in excellent health

Love to all at home

Y. L. S.

(Signed) Wm

No 62

U. S. S. Charleston,
Chefoo, China,
Feby 28, 1895

My dear People,

It seems years since I have heard from any of you.

Since before xmas I have not received a letter from any one. I dont mean that exactly, but I mean that the last letters from home were dated some time before xmas, and here it is the last of Feby. Of course it is not "you - all's" fault, for there is plenty of mail for us in Japan if we could only get at it. When we came here we telegraphed to Yokohama to have our mail held, and since then communications have been sadly interrupted by the war. Yesterday the flagship left for Nagasaki, and she will get our mail and send it to us.

It may reach us in two or three weeks. You may try, but I dont believe you can imagine the satisfaction of receiving a mail from home after such long delay.

Now let me tell you something about the war, for we have been to the front. We did not see any of the fighting but we saw everything else, - the surrender of the captured ships, and the superb forts of the Chinese given up without a decent fight.

It was all intensely interesting to me, and I hope I can make it so to you. At least it will be something out of the usual run of my letters.

On the evening of the 14th we received orders to proceed to Wei-hai-wei (pronounced "way-high-way") watch the operations until the surrender, and make a full report of everything including the damages done to the shore batteries and the fleets on both sides. We were to sail the next morning, but that night it "came on to blow," and all the next day we lay at anchor riding out the gale. We were very comfortable as the ship had very little motion, but the smaller ships in the harbor had a hard time of it.

A small Frenchman near us was rolling so much that at times we could look down his hatches.

By the next morning (16th) the wind was all gone and the sea smooth. At 7 a.m. we stood out of Chefoo bound for Wei-hai-wei. At 10 a.m. we arrived off the harbor, and found only two Japanese ships there, and the Chinese flag still flying on shore. Of the 25 men of war the Japs have here, they selected as watchers over the port just the two ships that I was acquainted with, viz., the "Naniwa" and the "Takachiho," our neighbors for five months each at Honolulu. They are as you will remember, exactly similar in appearance to the Charleston, but on this occasion they looked rather unfamiliar by reason of their coat of war paint.

When we were neighbors they were perfectly white - as we are still - but now every Japanese ship is a dirty slate color - not only the ship's outside, but all boats and other

objects visible to an enemy. Of course it is not attractive, but then you know the Japanese have not been trying to make themselves attractive to the Chinese recently.

We stopped near the "Naniwa" and lowered a boat, and I was sent to board her, and find out the lay of the land. I was received very kindly by the Commanding Officer, Captain Togo, the same man who commanded the ship at Honolulu. He set up the champagne and "seegars" and told me everything I wanted to know - showed me the Japanese "secret" chart of Wei-hai-wei, etc, etc. The latter was complete - contained the position of every fort, and every torpedo, etc. It must have been bought from some Chinese official.

At the time of my visit the fighting was all over - the surrender had been arranged, and the details were then being settled. Admiral Ting and his chief officer, with General Tai, the commander of the forces on shore, had all committed suicide after the manner of China's defeated warriors.

The two Japanese ships were watching the entrance to prevent the escape of any chinese ship. Admiral Ito with the remainder of the fleet was at anchor a few miles to the Eastward under Three Peaked Point. We went there and anchored, and, in my capacity of Intelligence officer I was sent on board the flagship Matsusima to get permission to visit all the vessels injured in the fight. I asked to see the Admiral, and was taken to his cabin by his flag lieutenant.

The interview was, to me, very interesting, as I was curious to see the man, and form my own opinion of him. I had read in the papers that he was so small that he was commonly called the "Little Admiral." I was therefore surprised to find him an unusually large man for a Japanese. He must be five feet ten at least and is solidly built.

He is very much like his photo. in the pamphlet I sent you concerning the battle of Yalu River, except that instead of having on all his parade clothes, I found him dressed in the simplest manner possible.

The Japanese have adopted our navy blouse except that they wear no insignia of rank on the collar as we do - only the stripes of black braid on the cuff.

Ito is a man of about 50 with an occasional gray hair in his noustache and his usual Japanese jet black hair. His complexion is dark even for his race, and his face though rugged and powerful had a pleasant kindly expression.

He was standing with his back to an open fireplace, and as I entered he stepped forward and offered me his hand, and, speaking English, invited me to sit down. He speaks English very indifferently and always uses an interpreter.

After the usual exchange of official courtesies - in which I represent my commanding officer - I carried out my instructions, and asked permission to visit the vessels that had been struck by shot, etc. It was promptly granted. I

had also been instructed to try and obtain permission for the Charleston to go into the harbor of Wei-hai-wei as soon as possible. He told me that he would take his fleet in on the following day, and I asked permission for the Charleston to follow in. He declined in the most courteous manner, on the ground that he would not like to take the responsibility of assuring us a safe passage, through the torpedoes, and mines, as we had no chart with their position laid down.

I asked if we might send a boat in, which he also declined - smoothing the declination with a bottle of wine and some cigarettes, in both of which he indulged.

I finally obtained permission for the Charleston to go in on the 19th - provided we were not signalled to keep out when we approached the entrance.

He was not the least bit grave or distant as Japs of high rank are liable to be. He asked me a number of questions about the condition of affairs at Chefoo - inquired after Admiral Carpenter's health, etc. Then I gave him some taffy - braided his hair as the slang goes. I told him how much his countrymen were admired in the United States, how the newspapers and magazines were full of the war, and of praises of the valor and ability of Japan etc. and that we would expect the Japanese fleet to visit America, and give the people the opportunity of seeing the ships and the Admiral

that fought the first modern naval battle. The "old man" (designation of all naval men in authority) was certainly very much pleased, and said that if he possible could he would take a fleet around the Horn to New York, and then return by way of Europe.

It would be interesting if he did, wouldn't it? And what a fine advertisement it would be for Japan.

I admire the Japanese, and wish to see them advance in civilization, and all that, but as you know, I am not wid 'em in this war.

I gave the Admiral this little bit of "guff" in cold blood. I wanted to ask a favor of him after we entered Wei-hai-wei.

It worked like a charm as you will see.

The next morning the whole Japanese fleet tripped anchor and stood away around the point bound in for Wei-hai-wei.

I# must have been a proud moment for the Admiral and the Japanese navy. They were about to steam in and take possession of a Chinese stronghold, that is so well equipped and fortified with the most beautiful and powerful modern ordnance, that with 30 or 40,000 Pennsylvania troops you could hold it against the world while provisions held out.

I will tell you all about it presently.

Before the Japanese fleet went inside I visited two of the vessels that were struck by heavy shell from the forts

during the bombardment. One was commanded by "Jim" Serata, who was a cadet at the Academy during my time. Unfortunately he was not on board at the time of my visit.

His ship was struck by a large shell



weighing about 400 pounds. It passed through the side struck a gun and smashed in pieces. The executive officer and four men were killed and six wounded.

Another ship received a similar shell which broke a large gun in two, killed one man, and wounded seven.

Many other ship# were struck but not much damaged.

When the Japanese fleet went inside we remained quietly at anchor, and that night it "came on to blow" again.

Three Peaked Point is an entirely unprotected roadstead, and as the "blow" was from the Northward it soon sent a fine sea rattling in. I came on watch at midnight, and the orders were to inform the Captain when it was getting too rough to weigh the anchor. I sent down word at once that it was already too rough to be safe to handle anchors. The Captain came on deck and decided to hold on as the barometer was rising.

He is an ass as I have told you, and dont know his business. I told him it would blow hard before morning and that he had better get under way if he intended to at all.

He held on for nearly an hour before he decided to get out. By that time the ship was plunging and kicking like

a wild horse, and taking water over the bows, and the wind was blowing "right smart."

The thermometer was about 20° and every bit of spray froze onto something, and the forward part of the ship was a sheet of ice.

We hove the anchor up with great difficulty, and then it threatened to smash a hole in the bows. It was necessary to send a man over the bows and hook a heavy tackle on the anchor to get it on board.

This I declined to do on my own responsibility until the ship should be turned around stern to the wind - even then it was difficult and dangerous, and after the tackle was hooked it was with great difficulty that we could raise the anchor - we had to put boiling water and sand on the ropes as they passed around the steam capstan. It took us from 1 a.m. until 4-30 a.m. to get the anchor (6000 pounds) safely stowed. All this time the freezing spray was flying, and I leave you to imagine the length of the icicles in my "whuskers."

This is a sample of the exposure a sailor is sometimes subjected to. I did not suffer at all from it as I was well protected with warm clos. and a raincoat. I had on a large cloth capot, and the first time the water struck it it froze stiff and acted like a rain hat the rest of the watch. We stood out to sea and rode out the gale which lasted 24 hours.

On the morning of the 19th we entered the harbor of Wei-hai-wei;

But let me first tell you the situation as we found it, and how it came about.

Of course you have read it all in the newspapers and know in a general way how it was done, so I wont go into details except in telling you what I saw.

Lieutenant O'Brien, U. S. Army, who was detailed by our government to follow the Japanese army told me that he considered Wei-hai-wei a stronger place than Port Arthur.

At each of the places where I have placed a red mark and a letter there is a battery of modern guns - see map enclosed* - the very latest pattern of Krupp and Armstrong rifles, with magazines completely charged, and every thing in its place.

On the mainland, at G. F. and E. are regular forts with earth works, fortified camps etc.

The rifles range in calibre from 6" to 11", the latter throwing a steel shell weighing about 900 lbs.

A number of other batteries are in process of erection, for example at L. they are putting up six rifled mortars throwing 11" shot.

Very many millions of dollars have been spent, and China

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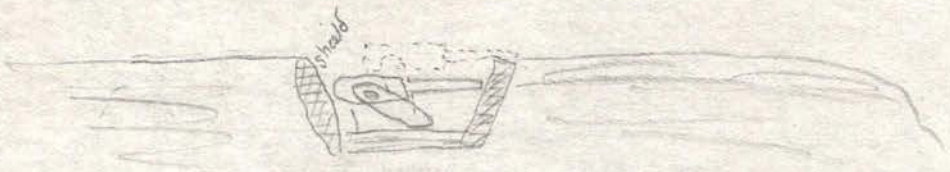
*The map enclosed with this letter is so detailed, and the handwriting so minute as to be impossible to trace. - ASF

evidently intended to make it one of her very strongest places. As it is now it could hold out against the world as long as provisions lasted if properly garrisoned.

As you have doubtless read, the Japanese had no trouble in driving the Chinese out of the forts.

At some points they made some resistance, but nothing to amount to anything. In a very short time the Japanese had all the main land forts, and had turned them against the Island (Len Kung Tan) and the fleet. The Chinese did not even take time to blow up the forts or disable the guns. They removed certain parts of the mechanism of the breech blocks, but overlooked the fact that there were plenty of spare parts in the store rooms.

Then they commenced to bombard the island. Of course it was only a question of time until that surrendered, as they were completely blockaded by the Jap. fleet on one side, and the army on the other. It could not have been taken by assault, as it is very rocky and steep, and they could not have destroyed the batteries in a year. If you will notice the scale on the chart you will see that it is a long way from the mainland to the island, and that the chances of hitting an almost invisible battery is very small. The modern gun is not placed in a fort, for the simple reason that you could soon knock it down, but is placed in a hole in the ground and surrounded by very deep parapet or embankment of



Please excuse these sketches.

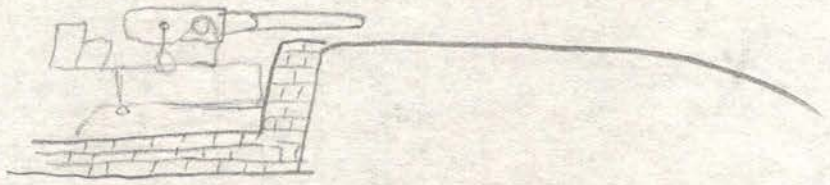
In vaults below are the magazines and shell rooms.

Parapet - 90 feet wide

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earth, and the top of the pit or hole is covered with a steel shield, having a slit through which the gun is raised or lowered.

Other guns are places in barbette, showing only their



muzzles over a deep parapet. They are almost invisible at a distance of three miles, even when they are not painted the color of the surrounding earth.

The ships in the harbor were of course a much better target, but with all the firing they did at them they only hit them <u>three times</u>, and they had 15 ships to shoot at. One shot went down through a vessel, and in spite of all they could do she sank in one hour. The others were not hurt much.

The harbor was protected by torpedoes, and also by a large "boom" made of huge timbers fastened together by chains. The latter for the purpose of keeping out the Jap. torpedo

boats.

The island of Len Kung Tan was supposed to be stocked with provisions for a siege, but it was not. The fate of the place was quite inevitable, and it is said that the brave (but incompetent) old Admiral Ting wanted to lead his fleet out and stake all on a desperate battle with the Japanese fleet.

But the general commanding the batteries on shore was afraid he intended to escape, and threatened to turn his guns on the ships if they attempted to escape.

(Let me put in a parenthesis here to apologize for my very bad writing, but it is the best I can do under the circumstances. We were in Weihaiwei four days and I was on the jump every minute of daylight visiting forts, ships, torpedo boats etc., then in order to finish before the flagship sailed for Nagasaki I composed my report, of about 75 pages of foolscap - and several small maps, and made a clean copy of it in 2½ days. At the end of that time my right hand didn't look quite like a boxing glove, but it was very stiff and swollen and the wrist was very lame. I write largely with my fingers and grip my pen very tightly, and cant break myself of either habit.

I rested my hand for two days but it has not completely recovered, and still feels as if it belonged to some one else.

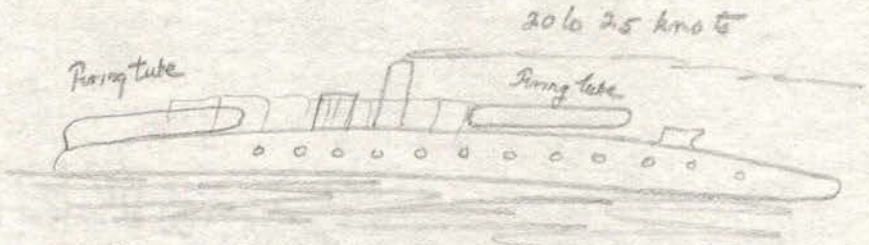
In the last six months I have composed 400 pages of intelligence work, and made numerous sketches, and I am tired and sick of it all, and have applied to be relieved of the work, and, as it is backed by the doctor's recommendation, I think it will be granted. You must remember that all this work has been in addition to my regular duties - while I was resting, as it were).

And now to resume:

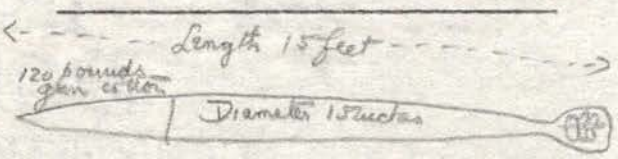
Admiral Ting must have seen that the case was hopeless as soon as the land forts were in possession of the Japanese, and as defeat means disgrace, degradation, and probable decapitation, it is said the poor old man exposed himself to every possible danger - transferring his flag always to the ships engaged with the batteries, in the vain hope of being killed and winning honor and favor for his family and posthumous promotion for himself. For several days the bombardment continued, but as I have said was not very effective.

Early on the morning of Feby 5th (at 4 a.m. after the moon had set) ten Japanese torpedo boats forced a passage past the boom, and made an attack on the fleet. I have indicated their course on the little chart. It was the most difficult part of my work to get at the facts about this attack, many of them being obscured by jealousies between the Captains of the torpedo boats. I will spare you the technical details, but briefly the affair was as follows:

On the first night ten torpedo boats attempted the passage, but two came to grief on the rocks, for the channel between the end of the boom and a rocky shoal was very difficult - see map.



Torpedo boat - Length 110 feet.



Torpedo. ("Schwartzkopf") How's that for a name.

The above is a sketch of one of the Jap. boats - they are nearly all alike, and carry automobile torpedo with an explosive charge of 120 pounds of gun cotton.

Of the ten that attempted the first attack two failed, and the remaining eight slipped into the harbor without being observed which never would have happened in a well organized fleet.

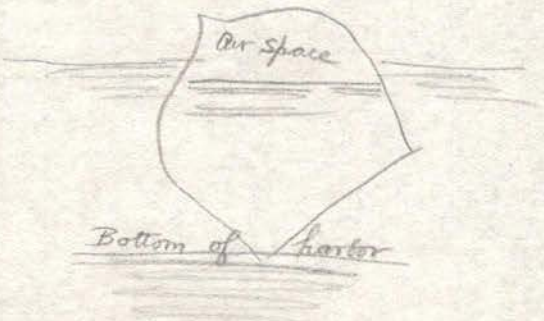
Each boat carried two torpedoes. Three boats failed to find the Chinese fleet. The remaining five discharged their ten torpedoes, and with one exception got safely out of the harbor. One boat, No 9, declared that he had discharged two torpedoes at one of the big battleships, but the

next day they were apparently unharmed. No 9 received a 3 pound Hotchkiss shell through his boiler, and six men were scalded to death. Another boat towed him out of the harbor.

In the afternoon the flagship Ting Yuen, was observed to be settling, and they were obliged to run her on the beach. No other ship was torpedoed, and no other torpedo but No 9 was struck by anything but rifle bullets.

The next night five other boats attacked, and incredible as it may seem, the Chinese allowed them to get in unobserved. One went on the rocks, and the other four succeeded in sinking four vessels, one harmless and innocent schooner, and one tug. The Wei Yuen, a wooden man of war was sunk alongside the wharf.

The Lai Yuen, a fine modern steel cruiser of 3000 tons was torpedoed, and in ten minutes she turned completely upside down and carried 170 of her crew with her. Most of them were of course instantly drowned in the ice cold water (The temperature was 25°) But, horrible to relate, 10 miserable creatures were imrpisoned under the hull, where



they were heard pounding for assistance for three days. An effort was made to save them by cutting a hole through the steel bottom, but the weather being bad, and the seas washing over

the bottom it could not at first be done. When it was finally completed the men were dead - they had perished of cold and hunger. The water remember was at a temperature of 31°.

I can imagine nothing more horrible than such a death.

But that is war, and war is all horrible. The greatest calamity that can happen to a nation.

Let all the good Sims ladies teach their little ones to hate it as the worst of curses, and the falsest of all false glories.

Dr. Arnold writes to me from New Chwang, where the U. S. S. Petrel is hauled up for the winter:

"I, too, have been pretty busy since the Chinese wounded began to filter in here about a month ago. So far nearly 200 have come to us after Oyama's attentions at Haichow. It is pretty discouraging to work against the hopeless ignorance of these poor creatures, but they are most profoundly grateful and no human being could fail to be moved to pity them. The amount of suffering that this winter campagne is causing is appalling."

You will doubtless remember that Dr. Arnold was attached to this ship about two months, and that we became great friends. He writes "I am more pleased at the warmth of feeling you express towards me than at anything else that my experience in the service comprises, and I earnestly hope

that we may be shipmates again."

———————— . . ————————

But to return to the war:

Admiral Ting now clearly saw that there could be no possible advantage in holding out any longer, so he sent a ship with a flag of truce to Admiral Ito offering terms of surrender, and before the reply came back the Admiral, Commodore Lin, and General Hai, were dead, having committed suicide.

Do not judge them by our standards, for they are Chinamen, and as such they could hardly do anything else. as any thorough history of China would inform you. Admiral Ito offered him a refuge in Japan, but knew of course that it could not be accepted, for be it known that this (Chinese) cowardly and brutal government makes no distinction between the blood of a father and his son. Admiral Ting was perfectly aware that if he had gone to Japan to save his life, the Emperor would have punished <u>him</u> by beheading or strangling his nearest relatives, and degrading and confiscating the property of his family & clan.

He was equally aware, on the contrary, that death by suicide after defeat is as honorable in China, as it was in ancient Rome. That it would bring honor to his family, and posthumous promotion for himself, the same as if he had been killed in battle.

Under the circumstances there is nothing for an officer of China to do but take the "golden pill."

I enclose the correspondence between the two Admirals, also the terms of capitulation. They have of course, been published in the U. S. papers, but some of you may not have read them.

Notice the quaintness of some of the expressions. The letters were written in English and the capitulation was drawn up in that language instead of in the classic Chinese.

The author is a Japanese International lawyer and linguist who accompanies the army.

On the morning of the 16th., according to agreement the steamer Kangchi left the harbor for Chefoo, bearing the bodies of the suicides, and the parolled officers and their effects.

The bodies are here now, and visited daily by crowds.

The Chinese coffin is usually cut from a solid tree trunk and is very thick and heavy.

Each day the coffins receive a coat of laquer or shellac, and they are frequently kept for months. Beneath the body of Admiral Ting is a white cock, which to the Chinese mind is supposed to assure the spirit or soul remaining with the body.

There is absolutely no fault to find with the Japanese in their conduct towards the Chinese in the taking of Wei-hai-wei.

It was distinguished by liberality, courtesy, and kindness. They have profited by the condemnation they received from the entire world for their massacre at Port Arthur. A propos of Port Arthur, Lieutenant O'Brien, U. S. Army, tells us (he was our guest on board ship for four days) that Mr. Creelman's (N. Y. World's reporter) report was highly colored, and not strictly truthful; but that the affair was bad enough as it was.

O'Brien favors the Japs very much, but he acknowledges that by actual count 1500 people - combatants and non-combatants were massacred, and remained unburied in the streets for several days.

He was disgusted. He believes it was ordered by the Jap. officers, but he does not believe it continued beyond the first day and that night.

On the morning of the 17th. the entire Japanese fleet, about 20 vessels got under way, and stood in for port (Wei-hai-wei) Later in the day we heard the guns saluting the Chinese flag as it was being hauled down.

On the 18th we had the gale of wind I told you about, and on the morning of the 19th we stood in and anchored close to the Japanese fleet. You can imagine that it was interesting to us. I was sent to call on Admiral Ito, conveying the captain's congratulations, and asking permission to salute him - which he had requested us not to do before the

surrender.

I asked for and obtained a written pass to visit all ships and torpedo boats, and the forts on the islands.

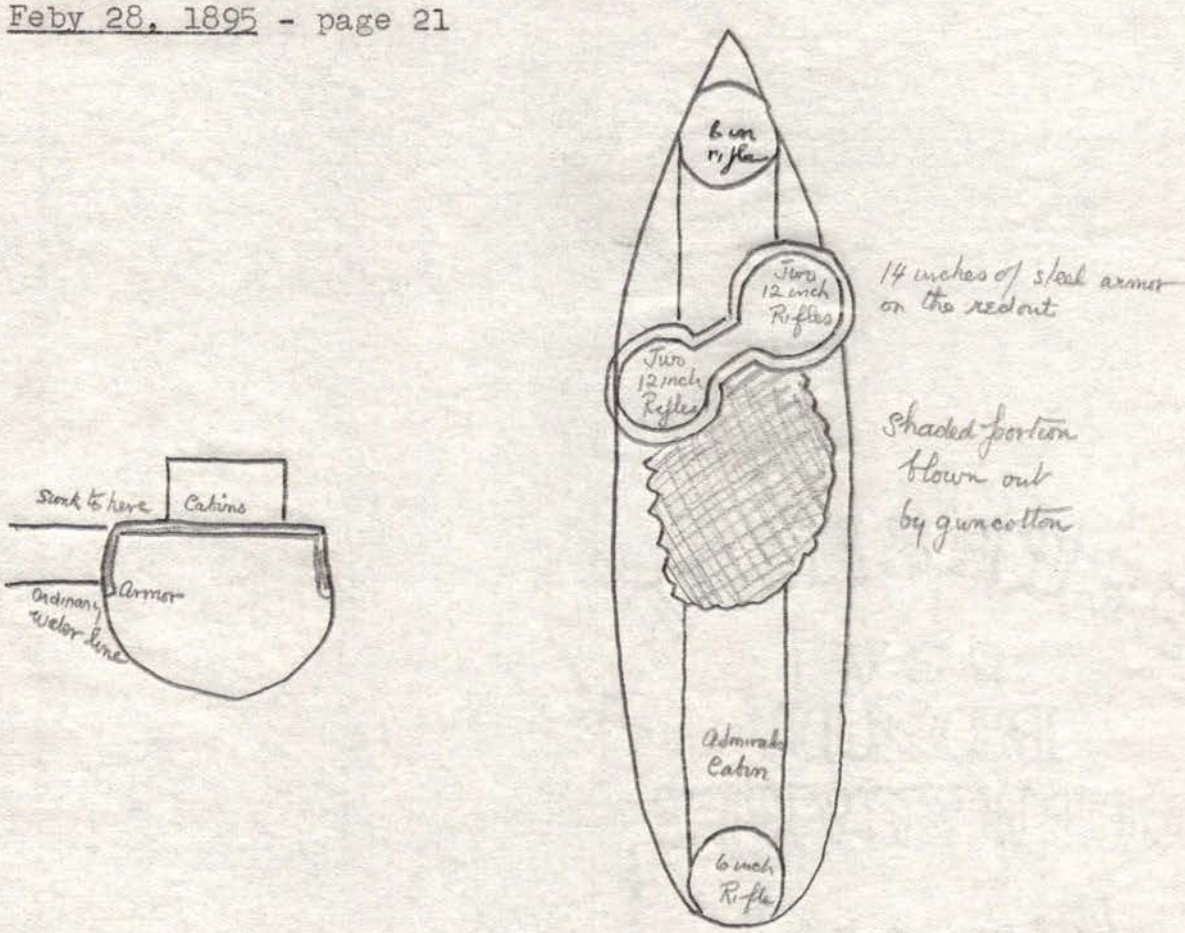
Here is the pass:

(Here a piece of tissue paper with presumably Japanese characters is pasted to the letter. On it W. S. S. has written: "This is the top." - and (down the right-hand margin) "It commences here ------- and reads down this way." -ASF)

It goes on for to say that I am to be admitted to ships, forts, etc., but that on account of the great amount of work going on, officers are not obliged to show me about. I visited a great many ships, and they invariably sent some one to show me all about, and in all the forts where there were officers they did the same, but I was allowed to go alone from one part of the island to another.

It was of the greatest possible assistance to me. A sentry with his gun crossed would promptly bring it to a "present" when I showed him the paper.

My object in visiting all these places was to make technical reports on their condition, particularly as regards the damage done by shot and shell. I will of course spare you these details - only mentioning a few of the interesting things I saw. The most interesting to me was the Ting Yuen, the wrecked battleship of the poor old Admiral.



When they found that she was mortally wounded by the torpedoes, and that they could not keep her afloat, they put 250 pounds of guncotton in her fire soom, and, closing the hatches, touched the button. The effect was terrific.

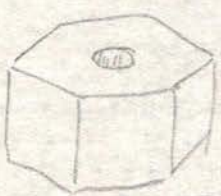
I have shown the part blown out, but unless you know something of the construction of a battleship, you can form little idea of the mighty force required to tear such a hole through steel decks. The interior is a shattered mass of twisted steel. Heavy beams and girders, and solid steel decks have been twisted and torn as though they had been made

of sheet lead and pasteboard. This ship, and her sister ship the Chen Yuen were the back bone of the Chinese Navy. In the battle of the Yalu River (of which I sent you a pamphlet) they successfully resisted the united efforts of Japan's best ships for more than four hours, and were never materially injured. Japan has no battleships, and her cruisers always gave these grim monsters a wide berth.

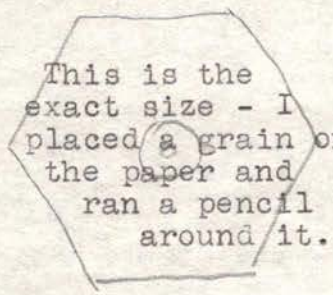
She was the first ship I visited after getting the general permission, and I don't think anyone had been on board of her since the Chinese left her. She had evidently been left in great haste, for her decks were littered with all kinds of articles. The water was on a level with her main deck, but the entire superstructure containing the cabins and living quarters was free.

I had a boat's crew of 12 men, and they ransacked every nook and corner, and brought to light many curious things. I found her 12 inch turret guns loaded, and the primers at hand, and I could have fired them without any difficulty. The shell of these guns weigh 725 pounds, and the powder charge, 202 pounds.

Shape of powder grains



This is the shape and size of one of the faces.

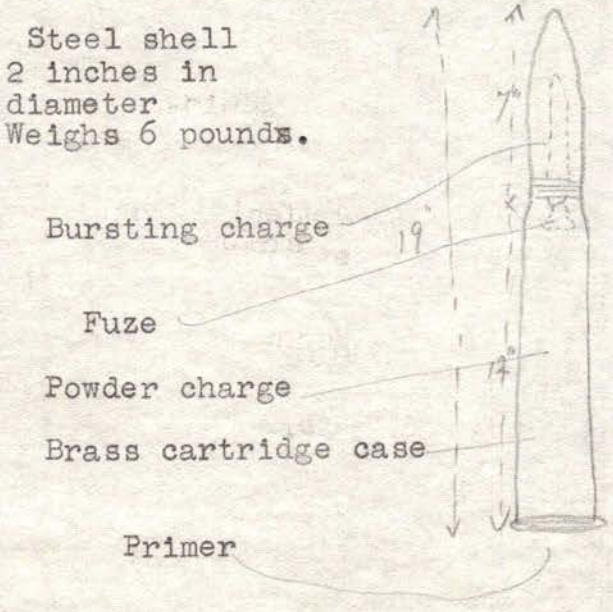


This is the exact size - I placed a grain on the paper and ran a pencil around it.

There was no one on board the ship but me and my boat's crew, so I unloaded one of the guns, and cut open the cartridge bag, and brought away some of the grains. They are brown - almost exactly the color of chocolate, and slightly mottled.

I have a dozen or so grains and will doubtless bring some home with me. They are slow burning and very slow to ignite. I doubt if you could set fire to a grain with a match or a cigar. In the base of each charge a number of similar grains of soft black powder are placed. The primer lights these and they light the brown "cocoa" powder.

On the upper deck scattered about near the Hotchkiss rapid fire guns, were plenty of empty cartridge shells where they had fallen when she was defending herself against the attack of the torpedo boats. I took several of them as curios, and have had them polished. Later I got some shell (projectiles) to fit them, and they make a very fine ornament.



Notice the size of them - 19 inches long. They would look well standing on opposite ends of a tall mantel. I have two of them.

The "bursting charge," "Powder charge," "fuze," and "primer," have, of course been removed, and the projectile loosened in the cartridge case so that you can look inside and see the wheels go around.

I picked up numerous little trinkets in the ship - one of them a case that looks like a fan holder. It is made of satin and embroidered in silver thread and has two pink and one green glass or clear stone ornaments fastened to it. It is of course much stained by the salt water. I will send it later in a newspaper.

I rummaged the papers in the cabin with great interest - all sorts of curious things in Chinese characters.

On the cabin floor, half buried in the dirt, and snow which had drifted down the hatch, I found a private letter written in English. It was without envelope and commenced: "My dear Commodore" - This is Commodore Lin, second in command who committed suicide with Admiral Ting. The letter is not without interest as the date is very recent -

I give it verbatim:

"Chefoo, Jany 3d, 1895

My dear Commodore,

Very many thanks to you for your kind letter of the 31st - I am glad to know that you are well and keeping in good spirits notwithstanding the bad condition of affairs in China: - I quite agree with every word you say regarding

opium smoking and general apathy amongst China's rulers: - but nearly every country has had to go through the fire before reformation, and I hope the present is but the fire of purification for China. As a patriotic man you must be very sorry to see how stupidly things relating to the best welfare of your country have been allowed to fall into decay. I really believe that the higher authorities in Pekin have never realized that a moment might come when a strong navy would be the very existance of their country.

They have looked on the Navy as an expensive toy. Had they been wise enough to have spent yearly 500,000 taels (about $750,000), - not a very large sum for China - this war would never have taken place. Now they will have to pay Japan enough to get that country a navy, and will for many years continue to be behind those insignificant little brats.

(this fellow dont like Japan!)

I am sending you a few papers these will be the last I can send, as owing to my uncertainty of remaining here, I have stopped taking in the paper.

You will notice that it is said two commissioners have been sent to Japan to find out on what terms they will make peace. Whether this is true or not we cannot of course say - but I hope it is, as I fear if the war is carried on to Pekin there may be a revolution in China, which may lead on to the upsetting of the present dynasty.

The Japs are so united, and China is so disunited, and your generals have so little knowledge of modern warfare that I fear if the Japs make a determined advance on Pekin in spring they will be successful: up to the present time only your navy has made a good fight. The British Admiral is expected up here again about the 15th of this month:

I continue to think that the Japs will not attempt trying to take Wei-hai-wei; they are yet something afraid of your navy.

With best wishes, believe me,

Yours sincerely

J. Calder."

In less than a month after this letter was written Wei-hai-wei had fallen, and the entire Chinese navy was captured, and Commodore Lin had died by his own hand.

As a prophet Mr. J. Calder is not a success.

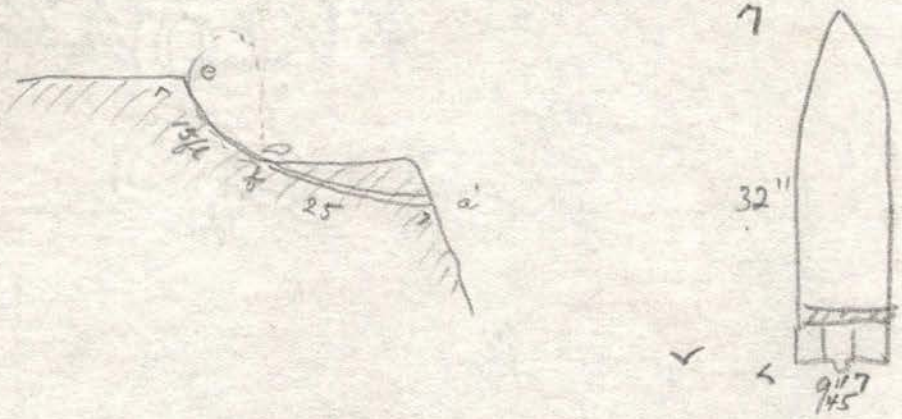
Most all our officers visited the Ting Yuen, and one of the Cadets found a small sphere which was hollow and fitted together like a small box. It contained small gilded pellets. The box had some Chinese characters on it, but unfortunately it was broken and lost.

A couple of days after we returned to Chefoo, our chaplain returned from shore - with the Yarn that when Wei-hai-wei was attacked the Emperor sent Admiral Ting a small round box

containing pellets of a very deadly poison made from the topknot of a certain sea fowl. The Cadet believes that Ting used this substance to destroy his life.

I refuse to believe it until a dog has been poisoned by one of the pellets. The Ting Yuen was blown up on Feby 10th, and the Admiral didn't take his life until the 12th.

The splendid forts on Channel Island I found deserted. Of course the Chinese were gone, but no Japs were in charge. My boats crew of sailors had a fine time "looting" as they call it. There was not much left to loot, except bits of stuff, broken shell, empty cartridge cases etc, as souvenirs. On the southern side of the channel fort I found a most interesting shell. It was a steel armor piercing shell 24



centimeters (9.5 inches) in diameter, and 32 inches long, and weighed about 475 pounds.

It was fired from one of the captured Chinese forts (D, E or F,) on the mainland, at least 1⅛ miles away - and, after travelling that distance, it struck the parapet at a.

and, for some unexplained readon, 25 feet of earth, came out at b., then cut a deep ditch up the second parapet and tumbled back to the position shown. This will give you some idea of the tremendous power of a modern steel rifle, tho. not a very large one. The gun that fired it was a Krupp 35 calibre long, that is 35 x 9.5 inches = 33 feet, 3 inches.

This shell took my eye, so I told the "Jackies" I wanted to take it on board. They said Aye Aye Sir! and after a brief "wrassel" got it into the boat.

It now stands erect, alongside of "my" 8 inch gun, nicely cleaned and oiled, - and if we ever strike a U. S. port again I intend to ship it home by freight, set in on a post in the lawn, and paint it red.

I removed the base plug, and found it filled with sand and stones instead of powder. It is now empty. If I ship it I will leave the plug out so they can look inside and satisfy themselves that it ain't loaded. It is in excellent condition, and was hardly scratched by passing through the rocky earth.

On the southern side of Len King Tan Island is a small town, the residence of the military population both Chinese and foreign - the officials of the Naval Academy, etc. and the ordinary inhabitants - choppers of wood and pumpers of water, etc.

This town being just back of the anchorage of the fleet, was, of course under fire during the bombardment, and many

of the people fled to the mainland. When the place was surrendered everyone was allowed to take all their personal property with them, but you can readily imagine that in the hurry there was much that could not be taken, but they didn't leave much of it in good order. They were allowed three days to get out, and the amount of damage they did in that time was very great. By the terms of the surrender they were obliged to turn all arms and military equipment over to the Japs, but everything else went. I found it peculiarly interesting going from one house to another to see the wreck.

The entire town is built of irregular masonry, and is as little as possible like an American place. The streets are walled in solid. Each house has an interior court opening by a narrow door on the street, and these doors are all that break the monotony of the streets, as all windows open into the court. Many of the houses were handsomely finished inside, and contained much smashed furniture that the owners could not take away.

I visited the Chinese Naval academy and found it very interesting. It is only about 10 years old, and has not been a success. For some years the superintendent was a Mr. Mc Giffin who was two classes behind me at the Naval Academy. He did not stand high enough to be retained, - which was very fortunate, as he was a disreputable and unprincipled man.

I will not attempt to describe the building, which is entirely of Chinese architecture farther than to say that it is fearfully and wonderfully made, tho. not badly adapted for the purpose. Like all Chinese buildings it is built about an interior court - or several separate courts and the grand entrance is screened by a high wall (30 feet) which has on the side facing the portal, the most extravagant Chinese paintings. Nearly the entire wall is taken up by a strange monster painted in blue and red. It has the body of an ox, the claws and head of a dragon and a forked tale, and is altogether fearful. What it signifies I dont know, as there were no chinese about to ask, but probably it's function is to keep evil spirits away. I sometimes wish I were an amature# photographer, to take down all these things for you.

The Academy was filled with wrecks that affected me quite differently from the sight of broken furniture and mirrors - there were many beautiful and very valuable nautical instruments that had been completely destroyed.

My crew of "Jackies," - and I took the same crew (13 men) with me every time - enjoyed themselves immensely. They were keenly interested. I allowed them to leave the boat while I was inspecting the forts on condition of their promising me not to drink any "rum." They kept their word and had a "good time."

After a long tramp over the island, I was returning through

the town to the wharf, when I met a most amusing procession. My crew had been lootin', and were returning with the plunder.

They had a once elegant, but now battered and roofless sedan chair. It was born by four sailors, and seated on the tattered silk cushions was another sailor - a red headed "Mick" - wearing a straw hat that was at least 3 feet in diameter. This is no exaggeration, as the Chinese wear hats quite that large. Each of the other sailors had a Chinese garment of some kind, - one had a battered trumpet, and one a double drum, and they were making the welkin ring, and singing "Marching through Georgia."

It was too much for the gravity of even the Chinese coolies who remain in the town - as for the merry Japs they fairly howled.

In all the time I was here I saw only two women, both Chinese. They belonged to the coolie class, and I was surprised to find that they had contracted feet. I had been under the impression that only the wealthy classes practiced this abomination. Their feet were apparently about 5 or 6 inches long, but I was not so much sruprised as# their size, as I was at the almost total helplessness of their owners. They were practically cripples, and it was only with considerable difficulty that they could walk on the level.

One woman I saw tottering along a path. I was overtaking her and had a good chance to observe her. She walked like

you would imagine a person would who had both feet cut off at the ankles. Her arms were extended as tho. to balance herself. Coming to a place where the path crossed a road that was about 10 or 12 feet lower than the level of the path, she would not risk the step, but actually sat down, put her feet into the road, and then got up and went on.

(Chinese ladies are always carried by their female slaves)

These poor women submit to this horrible deformity in order to render themselves more attractive to the men of China. To at least one "foreign devil" this poor creature inspired nothing but indignation, pity, and nausea. Verily verily, my children, one half the world dont know how the other half lives.

I have been reading a very voluminous history of Chinese manners and customs. They are a most extraordinary people with their 4000 or 5000 years of history, and I doubt if it is at all possible for any European to form even an approximate conception of what the chinese think of us "Western barbarians."

———————— . . ————————

Many people tell me that 99 per cent of Chinamen are delighted with the success of the Japanese, so much are they consumed with hatred for the present dynasty - the house of Shin, the military adventurers from the north whose ancestors are not even known.

It is said that a great secret society in China is acquiring all the arms in the country, including those of deserting soldiers.

There are many changes ahead.

The opinion here is that Li Hung Chang will not succeed in arranging terms of peace.

The Japanese have got some scheme on hand, and they are in a hurry about it, for, no sooner had Wei-hai-wei fallen than they began to destroy all the Chinese forts on the main land. They were in such a hurry that they would not take time to ship the splendid rifled guns to Japan, but destroyed them on the spot.

I can assure you that it produced a most disagreeable impression on me as a military man to see the superb and ponderous mechanism of these gun mounts (carriages, training gear etc) blown into shapeless masses by heavy charges of gun cotton. The forts on the island are garrisoned by the Japs, and will doubtless be held until the end of the war.

Now I think I am about at the end of my long story.

I don't remember whether I told you that we invited our two military attaches - Lieutenant O'Brien, and Beacom on board ship at Wei-hai-wei. They had been in camp for weeks - sleeping in tents and Chinese houses, and living principally on rice. We got them on board, gave them a bath, loaned them boiled shirts, collars, and cuffs, and stuffed them

full of good U. S. food.

They went from Wei-hai-wei to Japan, and will go thence to Port Arthur.

This letter is too long. It is a terrible jumble of things that I saw, did, and heard, and there is no order "into" it - I haven't time to fuss about style, or even to read over what I have written very often, and I must take advantage of many short intervals to finish a long letter.

Tomorrow or next day the British ship "Undaunted" leaves for Nagasaki, and will carry our mail This is March 6th, and still no mail from home, but we expect it soon.

The excitement at Chefoo is now over, but the foreigners are still nervous. We have two officers (from the Charleston) and 25 men (from the Yorktown) on shore here, and five of our officers, and 25 marines are in Seoul.

The Yorktown leaves here tomorrow from Chemulpo to remain a month.

We will doubtless remain here at least a month - not a very cheerful prospect. About once a week it blows a gale, but we may expect better weather soon.

I think it was mother who said in one of her letters that some one had taken away the only copy of the Bachelor's Dinner pamphlet. I enclose - or send, by this mail two copies, and I have only a couple left.

I suppose you have sent me clippings of the row in the "Republic" of Hawaii.

It was simply mentioned in a local paper, and we would have known nothing about it had it not been for a war correspondent who gave us some old copies of the Hawaiian star- he used to be editor of that paper.

I looked over all the accounts but did not see either of the Ashfords mentioned.

I hope they are not implicated. No wise man ever gets mixed up in any revolution but a successful one. We understand that the Philadelphia has returned to Honolulu.

On the night of the 13th of Feby, after I had turned in one of the fellows put a note on my bureau asking me to get up a valentine on our senior watch officer for the next day. I had the mid watch that night, and produced the following.

The victim is a big, stout, square-jawed, chap with a globular stomach and a very peppery disposition. He is a splendid fellow, and a good officer, but his temper is very easy on the trigger, and he chafes under the friction of authority. Shortly after we came on board from the Phila - for we were shipmates there - he remarked at the messtable when a fellow was growling about something, that an officer should never growl, but perform his duty with a "cheerful aye, aye"! (pronounced by seamen "eye, eye", or "I, I.")

Of course he never heard the last of it, and every time his temper got the best of him, some remark would be made about the "Cheerful Aye Aye."



This is, of course, very much caricatured, but the likeness is quite close enough to be recognized at once by all his friends.

He was raisin' a beard at the time.

The following is the valentine written in my usual doggerel:

1.

I'm a mild and gentle officer as ever I can be,
I'm as meek and lowly as a lamb, as any one can see.
When things occur to worry, or to cloud official skies,
I touch my cap with bows and smiles and cheerful aye, ayes.

2.

A tour of duty on the deck, it fills my heart with joy;
The fuss and worry of a ship will not my soul destroy.
Because I have a little way, wherein the secret lies,
I touch my cap with bows and smiles and cheerful aye, ayes.

3.

When authorities are pestering as 'tis their wont to do,
And everybody's cussin' till the air's a livid blue
I pour oil upon the waters, and all evil passions fly
When I touch my cap with bows and smiles & a cheerful
aye aye.

4.

I always do my duty with a sweet official smile
And I'm pleased to be assisten therein every little while.
I strive to please, all friction grease as far as in me
lies
I touch my cap with bows and smiles and cheerful aye, ayes.

5.

When the flagship heaves in sight, and it's every man
his burr,
That sticks closer than a brother, as it nestles in the
fur,
And when everybody's humpen', then you hear my warning cry:
Touch your cap and bow and smile me boy with a cheerful
aye, aye.

6.

Now I hope that my example may be useful to you all,
And enable you to luff through every hard official squall,
With a very little sweetness, and the willingness to try,
You can touch your cap and bow and smile with a cheerful
aye, aye.

I am sorry to say that the victim did not seem to appreciate this as much as the rest of the fellows.

Feby 7th.

We are watching the eastern horizon for the arrival of one of England's big cruisers, the "Edgar," from Nagasaki.

We telegraphed to have our mail put on board of her, and we are hoping very hard that she has it. When she arrives the "Undaunted" leaves, and perhaps I will have time to acknowledge the receipt of all of your letters.

_____ . . _____

Feby 7th. 9 P. M.

The "Edgar" arrived at 7 P. M. and brought our mail, or at least the latest letters, but there is a wide gap between these letters, and the ones I last received - and many things are missing such as books and publications that I have sent for from time to time.

I received letters from:

Dr. Forbes - enclosing numerous clippings

Miss Thompson - who has been very sick

Gil Meem - small brother of my best girl who married the other fellow.

John Sims - enclosing a bundle of forwarded letters - an example which I hope you will all follow - any old letters from anybody.

Mother - Jany 4 - with forwarded letter# from several people - including Aunt "Pop" who can give us all points as a breezy, chatty correspondent, even when she's not feeling very well.

Mother - Jany 13 - inclosing letter

Lou - Two letters enclosing many family notes.

———— . . ————

All the letters begin after xmas is all over, and as I have received no account of it there must be missing mail somewhere.

You all speak of Father's being better, and no letters mentioned his being sick. Of course you will make him take care of himself, and you will see that he minds you and don't "sass" back.

He has now arrived at the age when men obey their wimmen folks with a "cheerfull# aye aye."

He must on no account go away on a vacation without Mother or one of the girls, unless you want some strange woman to be parting his hair, for you know he has long since forgotten how to do it himself.

Elsie's photo is fine. It is best of her where she is alone, but best of Ruth where her mother is with her. You You needn't tell Ruth but it's my private opinion that Ruth was sitting for the photo, and Elsie was in it, because there

was nobody around to hold her.

I am of course very much pleased over the fuss that Adelaide's friends made over her engagement, and I herewith join my formal congratulations. I will write her a letter by her lonely.

I feel sure that she must have written to me lately and that the letter is loafing around some oriental post office where time is a drug on the market.

Little tiny Sissie's good health and spirits, and success in the hospital are the joy of my life; and I haven't the least doubt of her being graduated in style.

Mention was made of Mr. Ingham's letter to Father about Adelaides engagement, but it was not sent to me  this hand is pointing at the one who kept it.

I am in excellent health, barring the spring-halt in my right wrist caused by too much writing, and still I don't stop.

I can take no offense at busy folks who refuse to tackle such a long letter - war is a terrible thing!

I send you all my very best love. I am never too busy to think of you - "you all" - Rockhill, 1704, Falcon Hill, Baltimore, Shenandoah, and Martinsville - specially Elsie.

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm

P. S.

The picture of old Admiral Ting going from one ship to another seeking an honorable death will always be my most vivid recollection of Wei-hai-wei.