

MINUTES



HRSMS Monthly Meeting
December 14, 2001
Host, Jack Bobbitt

Guest: Rick Shawn, 1st meeting

The skipper called the meeting to order at 2000 hours.

Corrections to the minutes consisted of the flagging of editorial gaffs and misspellings. The editors missed Alan Frazer's keen eye, as he was not in attendance.

A Purser's report was given.

The Skipper opened the meeting noting that the Richmond area was well represented.

Old Business: Len Wine had a shirt catalog. He said that, in quantity, the shirts would be priced at \$12 each. After discussion, a sheet was passed among those in attendance so the members could indicate the size needed. The Skipper asked for volunteers to host the 2002 meetings. Dave Baker agreed to host the meeting in February, Dean Sword the meeting in April, Bill Clarke, May and Joe McCleary and Len Wine the June meeting.

New Business: Jack Bobbitt had an interesting tool catalog from Alpha Supply. Dean Sword showed miniature wood turning tools from Wood Turners' Catalog. An announcement was made that the HRSMS members were invited to attend "Corporate Appreciation Day" at The Mariners' Museum. The event was scheduled for December 29, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dave Baker showed a poster of the *Eagle*, with a most interesting mailing envelope. Len Wine had a certificate of appreciation from the Nautical Research Guild to the HRSMS for our support for the year 2002. Joe McCleary showed several new shapes for the SurForm tool. He also had several books purchased from the Mariners' Museum Library.

Show & tell: Rick Shawn showed his model of the *Sovereign of the Seas*.

The meeting was adjourned to "Making a Silk Purse From a Sow's Ear", a presentation by Jack Bobbitt.

Mystery Photo



Welcome to Mystery Photo, *Logbook* No. 185!

As we wrap up another year of Mystery Photo, Bill challenges us one last time in 2001 with something we haven't seen in a while--a photo of a ship in dry dock. Bill, is this the last or can we count on your staying in the dock for some time to come? Aside from that, the image, taken on a bright sunny day, should make worthy prey for our intrepid sleuths. The reproduction doesn't leave us much to work with, so you must be good to solve the mystery. Is this slightly overexposed, almost head-on image too much of a challenge for our members? If yes, then too bad! If not, then for extra credit, I challenge you with this question: Can anyone tell me the approximate time of day and the day of the week this image was made?

Here are this month's responses:

"I think the ship in the fuzzy, head-on shot in *Logbook* 185 is the cruiser *Baltimore*--certainly, it is either she or her half-sister *Philadelphia*." Claims Dave Baker in our first response. Close on Dave's heels, Joe McCleary agrees with this author that the bow-on photo doesn't give much to work with, but proposes this: "My best guess is that the Mystery Photo for November is USS *Baltimore* (C-3)." Independent of their guesses, I made this month's choice unanimous by also selecting *Baltimore* as the mystery vessel. Now, let's see if we can make the facts fit.

Dave chose *Baltimore* over her near sister *Philadelphia* for this reason: "...only the *Baltimore* had the 6-in guns amidships in sponsons, and there appear to be sponsons visible on the port side in the photo." Then he adds, "but the *Baltimore* did have such distinguishing features as a derrick stepped to the foremast, rather short topmasts as completed, and, of course, fighting tops, while the single gunmounts on the forecastle were mounted, as in the photo." Finally he defines his choice of the two with this: "*Philadelphia* through the 1890s had three masts, which would rule her out." Joe was equally vocal with his reasoning: "...the twin 8 inch guns on the foc's'l, the configuration of the two masts and the size and height of the stacks would seem to be consistent with *Baltimore*."

I, on the other hand, originally thought that Bill was giving another rendition of a *Yorktown*-class gunboat. I saw the three masts, shielded deck guns, and ram bow and made a too-hasty guess. I completely missed the second funnel, and didn't see the error until I eliminated the *Yorktowns* due to other inconsistencies, namely the much larger size of this

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vessel!



The location of this photograph didn't fool anyone. By now we should all be some-what familiar with the Mare Island Navy Yard physical plant. Apparently the official naval photographer stationed at Mare Island Navy yard enjoyed photographing ships from the head of this dry-dock. And Bill must really appreciate that man's work—I don't blame him. If the picture had been taken from dead, bow on, I imagine vessel identification would be very tough. By being slightly off the port bow, the careful observers spotted features unique to the *Baltimore*-class of protected cruisers.

Both Dave and Joe were quick to point out that *Baltimore* spent time at the Mare Island facility from 1896-1897 and chose that as the time frame for this image. Dave added that *Baltimore* emerged from this yard period with taller masts, while Joe added, "During this overhaul she lost the "crows nest" style fighting tops on her masts in favor of simple cross trees."

Joe supplied another anecdote that is well worth sharing, one that has a local connection: "One of her first duties was to carry the remains of John Ericsson back to Sweden for interment." If you don't remember, Captain John Ericsson was the engineer/designer/builder of the first ironclad--*Monitor*. Following service in the Spanish American War, *Baltimore* served her time on routine patrol, showing the flag and protecting American interests. During World War one she was converted to a minelayer and participated in the laying of the North Sea Mine Barrage, laying approximately 900 mines. She was transferred to the Pacific Fleet in 1918 and remained on the West Coast until January 1921. She then proceeded to Pearl Harbor, where she was subsequently placed out of commission 15 September 1922 and sold 15 February 1942.

John Cheevers

MYSTERY PHOTO #186

By Joe McCleary (Guest Commentator)

There were four responses to this month's Mystery Photo, coming from John Wyld, Bob Krumpen, John Cheevers and myself. All agreed that the ship in question is USS IOWA (BB-4). Once again Bill Clarke has made it as hard as possible for the photo sleuths by giving us a bow-on aspect and revealing as little of the ship in question as possible. Bill has become so fond of these "down the throat" shots, that he may have to change his name to Linda Lovelace.

One circumstance made the problem a little easier, IOWA was a one ship class, so it was only necessary to identify the class and not separate an individual ship from her sisters. I could not locate the same photo that Bill provided, but photo #NH93702 from the Naval History Center's web site shows the ship from near water line height and fine on the port bow, so it is possible to make a good comparison and a very certain identification. Wyld concentrated on the four hawse pipes, the anchor stowage, the bilge keels, and casemate gun sponsons as well as the bow torpedo tube to make his identification. Krumpen used Navy photo 181- nys-

29-27 from DANFS. He keyed on the very tall stack in relation to the fighting top, the hull form, two rows of port holes, high freeboard, bow decoration and bow torpedo tube to lock in his ID. Cheevers also clued on the high stacks, plated over bow torpedo tube, bow gun sponsons and bow scroll but added the very noticeable twin tub fighting top as a clue.

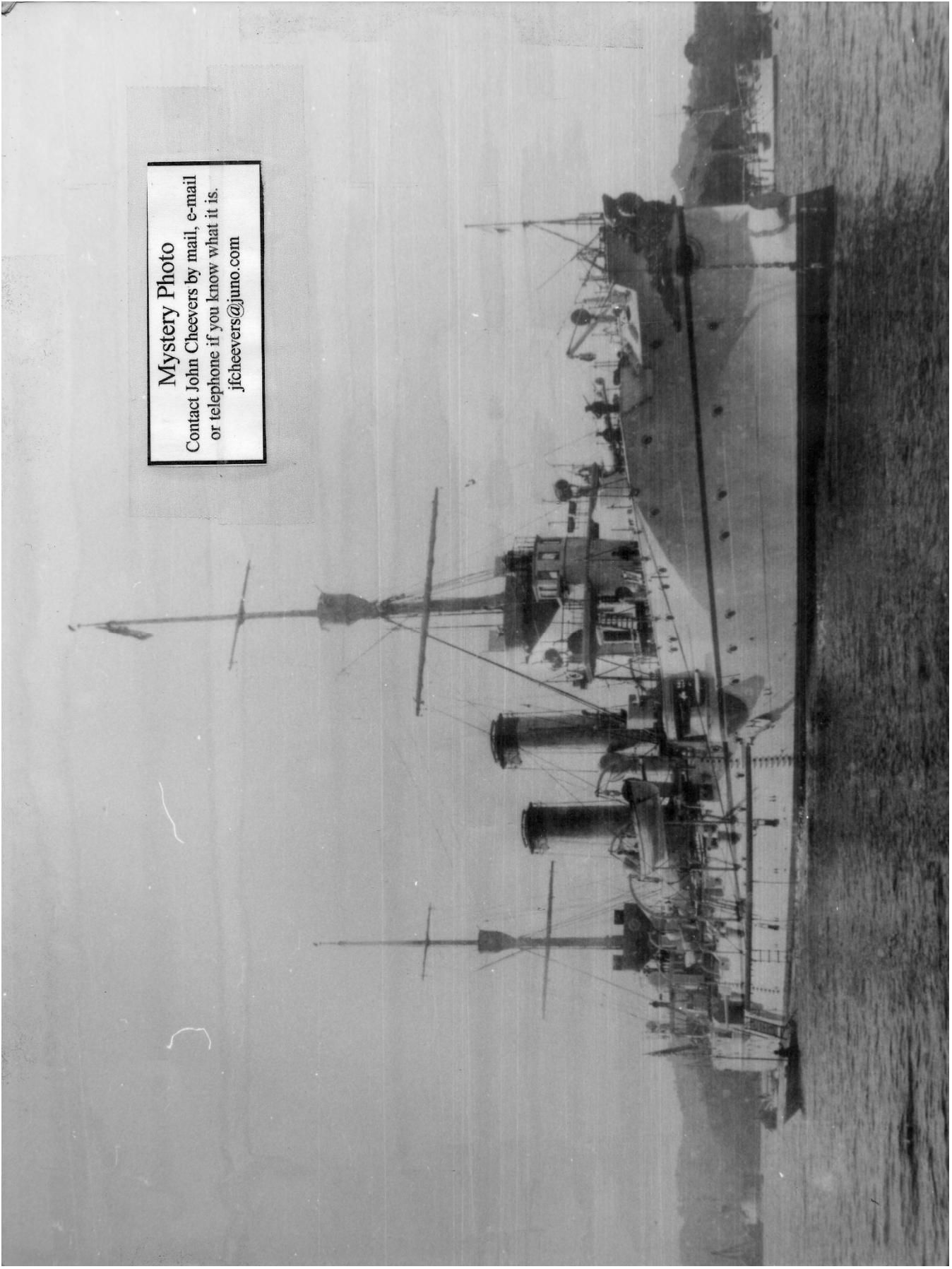
IOWA was built at Cramps shipyard in Philadelphia. She was laid down on 5 August 1893, launched on 28 March 1896 and commissioned the next year on 16 June. She had a displacement of 11,346 tons for a hull that was 360 ft long, with a beam of over 72-ft and a draft of 24 ft. The ship's main armament was four 12 inch guns in two round double turrets (hidden by the dock bridge gate in the mystery photo), with eight 8 inch and six 4 inch guns as a secondary armament. Her crew consisted of 727 officers and men. This ship was the first American battleship to have a raised foc's'l, which helped her to exceed her designed speed of 16 knots on sea trials and gave her a greater cruising radius because she could bunker a greater load of coal. She had significant "tumble home", which is noticeable in the photo. This configuration located her secondary armament closer to the center line than previous classes of American battleships, thus giving her greater stability. She was regarded as a very successful ship by the Navy

Following her shake down cruise, IOWA participated in the blockade of Cuba, since the Spanish American War had just started. IOWA played a significant part in the battle of Santiago on 3 July 1898, when the Spanish Fleet tried to escape from that port. After the war, she went to the Pacific and was drydocked at Bremerton in 1899. After two and a half years in the Pacific, the ship returned to the Atlantic and became flagship of the South Atlantic Squadron. She was decommissioned at Brooklyn Navy Yard on 30 June 1903 for an overhaul of six months. She continued to serve in the in the Atlantic Fleet until she was placed in reserve in 1907 and decommissioned at Philadelphia the next year. After that she served as a training/receiving ship in Philadelphia and Norfolk until her final decommissioning in 1919. After that, she was fitted out as a radio controlled target ship and was sunk in Panama Bay on 23 May 1923 while acting as a target.

I talked to Bill Clarke in early December and he indicated that in addition to simply identifying the mystery ship, it was also key to identify where and when the photograph was taken. After Wyld, Krumpen and Cheevers made their initial identifications, I passed on Bill's additional challenge. Cheevers responded that he thought that the photo was taken while the ship was dry docked at Pensacola just before the start of the Spanish American War. Krumpen and Wyld had not come up with an answer to the further challenge as of the drafting of this piece on 6 January 2002. I tried to do an analysis of the few photos that exist of the ship that have dates, to identify changes in her configuration. As built, IOWA had two yards, but the lower one was removed before sometime between 1900 and 1903. A top gallant foremast was added shortly after 1903. Her bow torpedo tube

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Mystery Photo
Contact John Cheevers by mail, e-mail
or telephone if you know what it is.
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NOTABLE EVENTS

JANUARY

11 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Bob Comet
Presentation: Hull Planking, Bob Comet

FEBRUARY

8 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Dave Baker
Presentation: Research, Photos and Plans,
Joe McCleary & Bill Clarke

MARCH

8 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Southside Bunch

APRIL

5-7 Western Ship Model Conference, Long Beach, Ca.

12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Dean Sword

MAY

10 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Bill Clarke

JUNE

7 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

JULY

12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

AUGUST

9 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

SEPTEMBER

14 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

OCTOBER

12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

NOVEMBER

8 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

DECEMBER

The Answer

The answer to Mystery Photo Number 186:
(As provided on the back of the photo by Clarke)
U.S.S. Iowa ?, Dewey Dry Dock

Thanks

The members would like to thank Jack Bobbitt and his wife, Jeanne for hosting the November meeting.

WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



Skipper:	Bob Comet	(757) 934-1279
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Editors:	John Cheevers	(757) 591-8955
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Next Meeting

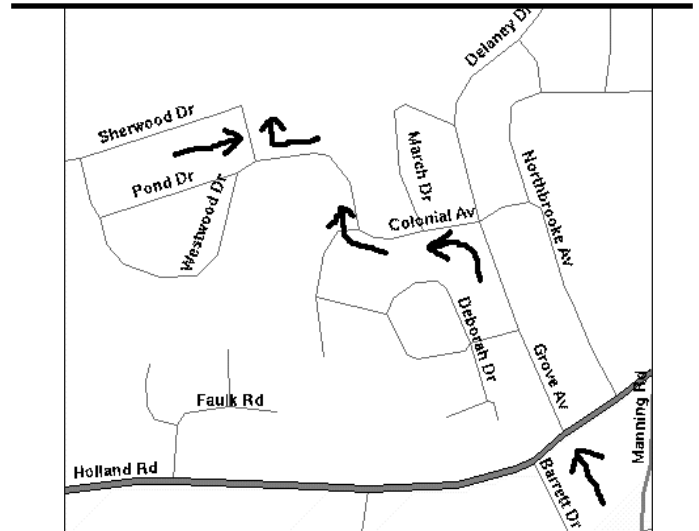
Date: January 11, 2002

Time: 2000 Hours

Place: 316 Sherwood Drive, Suffolk, Va.

Host: Bob Comet

For those coming from Richmond, take either 460 E or 64 E. From 460 E, proceed until it intersects 58 W. Proceed on 58 W, staying on 58 bypass. On the third stop light after 58 by pass joins 58 bus., turn right onto Grove Ave. Take second left onto Colonial. Take second right onto Pond. Take first right onto Sherwood. House is seventh house on right at 316 Sherwood Drive. phone 757 934 1279. For those coming via 64 E, take either James River Bridge (Mercury Blvd exit) or continue to 664 S and cross Monitor Merrimac bridge tunnel. Those taking James River Bridge, follow route 32 (state) south to 58 W then proceed as above. Those taking 664, proceed to 58 W (Suffolk exit 13) and further proceed as above. For those coming from Newport News or Hampton, take either the James River Bridge or 664 S and proceed as above. For those coming from Norfolk, Portsmouth, or Virginia Beach take 64 E to 58 W, or take 264 W to 58W and proceed as above.



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was inactivated about this time; the cap was removed and the opening plated over. In 1908 she had a tall cage style main mast added which should have been visible in the mystery photo even from the odd angle at which it was taken. So I will go out on a limb and postulate that the photo was taken at Brooklyn Navy Yard during her 1903 overhaul.