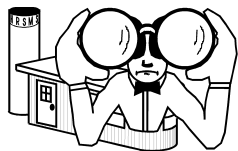


From The Bridge



It's the right thing to do?

It occurred to me the other day that I may be violating some long standing tenet of ship modeling by not soldering together the brass parts that form the two bits for the tugboat Susan Moran. Instead, I was using 2-part epoxy to hold the things together. Model heresy? Maybe. Practical alternative? Perhaps. Its decisions like these that fuel the debates of serious, and not so serious, model builders. Frankly, I didn't use solder because I just didn't want any additional heat in my already hot shop.

According to the rules—guidelines, really—for building ship models as directed by the US Navy, adopted by many institutions like The Mariners' Museum, and obtainable on the NRG web site, proper ship models should be built from a rather narrow list of materials that have proven their longevity. The list of approved material is short but it's based on sound research and it's the best we have at the moment. One overarching rule is that a model should be constructed in such a way as to last 100-years before it shows visible deterioration. Thank the guardians of the sea that I didn't use bass wood for Susan's hull!

One of the plank owners of this Society, Tom Tragle, once told me that "a model should last at least 20-years." I often wondered what that meant. Did he mean: before it requires maintenance; it would be in storage by then and forgotten; or because no one would be around to point fingers by that time? I prefer to think he was being a practical and properly frugal ship modeler and had carefully weighed the building cost verses the effort required for longevity and maintenance. I'm sure he liked the odds. He followed the rules so why did he need to worry.

So, what should we, as good modelers and keepers of the faith, do? Should we slavishly adhere to the published

(Continued on page 2)

NAUTICAL TERM

Trestletrees: The fore-and-aft timbers at the masthead of a sailing vessel, to support the crosstrees. (XVI) The word trestle came, via Middle English, from Old French, *trestal*, crossbar.

Submitted By: Tim Wood

Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #266: Let's face it; sometimes the vessel is a mystery because we can't identify it, and sometimes it's a mystery because we recognize it but can't find it. This one is a mystery because the whole class disappeared. You'll see what I mean as you read on.

First, the photograph: Here we have a vessel making a leisurely turn in very calm water with a magnificent, snow-capped mountain range as the background. The area is remote enough so that an undisturbed tree line extends to the water's edge. The image seems just a bit overexposed—it's just fuzzy enough to obscure the fine detail on the vessel. Is this an example of aerial photography at it's best for the time? I don't think so but, at the speeds involved, this may be the best for that day! In the end we have a vessel making a slow turn and displaying no identification.

Let's break down what we see and look for vessels that match. From front to rear: We have a slightly curved and very prominent stem: double anchor handling derricks face aft; short, low bulwarks at the bow and stern provide the only break to the flush deck; a rather large caliber canvas wrapped bow gun sits midway between the stem and the deckhouse break, flanked just to the rear by two smaller caliber rifles. The hull reveals two rows of port lights; the break in the lower row reveals the boiler/engine space. The superstructure is confined to one block house sited amidships. It has a flat face and is three decks high. The bridge deck features enclosed bridge wings supported by very prominent brackets. A fairly tall single pole mast rises from the deck house. It supports a rectangular, enclosed crow's nest, two signal yards and a boom. The black band on the mast locates the running lamps. Is there a hint of a flag flying from the peak? The diamond shaped antenna located on the bridge top immediately forward of the mast is the radio compass ring. Six sailors crowd the port and starboard rails near the bridge front.

The single, tall stack and forest of ventilator reveal much about the power plant. The house nestled just forward of the aft ventilators is the radio shack—hence, the term. Sup-

(Continued on page 2)

MEETING NOTICE

Date: Saturday September 13, 2008

Place: Mariners' Museum

Time: 1400 Hours

(Continued from page 1)



rules? Should we test the boundaries of available material? Should we break with tradition and do what feels right to us at the moment? To answer these questions you really need to understand why you're building the model. Ask yourself: "Is the model intended for a higher purpose or am I just having fun working in the hobby?" In other words: Is the model intended for long term public display, is it meant for a client, will it be handed down to succeeding generations as an heirloom, or is it destined for a Viking funeral when your gone?

With today's material choices these questions should never be far from our thoughts. And therein lays the caution for today's modeler. You can do what you want to your model but you must be willing to accept the consequences. I always have in my mind that I will build the best ship model I can in hopes of having it proudly displayed somewhere, sometime. I also keep in mind that I will build a model that can accept a little criticism and bounce back. The idea of creating a compelling impression always surrounds my work and should surround yours. That thinking forces me to work largely within proven parameters like those provided by the US Navy, but I will experiment where I think its safe and prudent to do so. Your answer might take you somewhere else, but I hope it doesn't.

I'm not trying to discourage innovation and experimentation; I think you should do what feels right to you. Don't be afraid to push the accepted boundaries, but be prepared for unintended consequences. I also think you should remember that your models will more than likely outlast you and they should remain as you made them for as long as possible. Build your model like you're building it for some else.

In the end by not soldering, I guaranteed that I eliminated one caustic substance—lead—but I may have introduced another. Time will tell. If you remember, Jack Bobbitt was absolutely against using cyanoacrylate on models because of its caustic effect on brass. He was concerned with longevity. But I also remember a childhood friend who couldn't wait to insert a firecracker and set his newly completed ship model on its maiden/final voyage.

Looking through the long glass
John

A WHALE IN THE CHESAPEAKE

Small Vessels Put into Annapolis
For Fear Of Shipwreck.

ANNAPOLIS, March 28.—A whale, said to be fully fifty feet in length was seen in the bay last night by Capt. George Ward of the puny *Lillie May*, of Annapolis. while on his way

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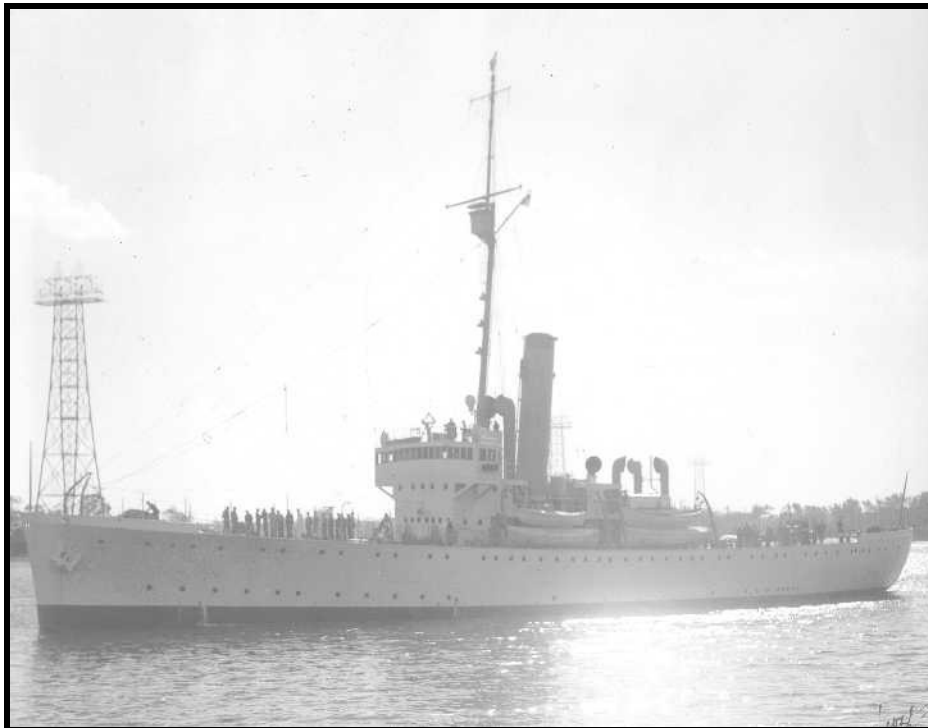


(Continued from page 1)



Mystery Photo

ported on main deck (and copied on the port side) are two sets of double stacked ship's boats; a fairly large number for a small armed vessel such as this. Continuing aft I cannot see evidence of another deck gun, but I'm willing to bet it's there. The aft deck is fairly clear of obstacles; a large towing bitt is located just aft of the off-center after deck hatch. This hatch and the one on



Pontchartrain underway pre WWII

the foredeck have canvass (?) covered

frames with sloping fronts. The deck appears to be planked in wood. Finally, the hull features a cruiser stern. Whitespace at the stern strongly suggests a single screw.

This vessel's livery should look familiar to readers of this column, it's very close to the standard Coast Guard and Revenue Cutter paint scheme of white hull with buff stack, ventilators, and mast and black stack cap. This one is just slightly different in that all buff surfaces seem to be recoated in white except for the section of mast carrying the running lights, which is black.

It sounds to me like I just described most of the business end of a Coast Guard patrol cutter—one intended for patrol in cold northern waters and rigged for towing, rescue, derelict destruction, and showing the flag (?). The features give away the time frame as well; early 1920's to the late 1930's.

Three replies this month suggest that our Mystery vessel produced the right amount of confusion. Tim Wood replied first with his "stab at the mystery photo for August." He says, "I know the class but I can't place the exact hull (White Ensign models has a kit for this class). I have seen the

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Mystery Photo

class of cutter called "Lake Class" and also "Chelan Class" both names for the same 10 cutters in the class." It's interesting to note that he identified the vessel's class through a maker of resin-hulled kits.

This statement and a rather large amount of data copied from the internet were as deep as his stab went. The Lake class was known as the 250-ft class as that was how Coast Guard cutters were identified in those days.

Dave Baker and Bob Comet also replied. While Bob found "a reasonably close match in the Tampa class coast guard cutters, consisting of *Haida*, *Modoc*, *Mohave* and *Tampa*" in his trusty "WWI copy of *Jane's*," Dave attempted to positively identify a specific member. He says: "This



USCGC Chelan Thunder Bay, B.C. 1935

month's mystery ship is a USCG 240-ft Class cutter of the Tampa class, almost certainly the *Haida*, which was the only one of the four to be regularly operating in Alaskan waters." He later concedes that "sister *Mojave* did make one Bering Sea Patrol tour during her original basing at Honolulu but spent most of her career based at Boston, and later at Ft. Lauderdale." He also is confident that the "photo was taken in Alaskan waters...prior to WW II. The paint scheme is typical 1920s-1930s USCG cutter, with white hull and buff upperworks, while the main deck was wood plank faced."

Prior to settling on his choice, Bob studied and found most of the same features previously described by this author: "In looking at the photo I see a well kept ship whose vintage is between WWI and WWII, cruising in northern waters. She still has port holes, old fashioned ventilators, a crow's nest, no radar antennae, a four or five inch deck gun under canvas on the fore deck. The bow seems to be reinforced. The bridge structure is high (about 30' above the main deck) and enclosed, probably for operating in cold conditions. The funnel is remarkably tall. The hull has plenty of freeboard, about 12'. The length, estimated by using the deck spacing of the bridge at about 10' gives me a deck length of about 235'. It

doesn't look like a naval vessel, so it's probably Coast Guard."

So, who is correct, Tim or Dave and Bob? Are they all wrong? Dave and Bob seem pretty sure, but Tim has "kit evidence" on his side.

As I always do, I checked out all claims, and here is what I found:

Dave says that "according to Robert L. Scheina's U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft Of World War II, the *Haidas* [*Tampas*] were not pleasant sea boats in heavy weather, but they surely encountered enough of that during their relatively long careers." That's a good place to start the discussion of what Bob calls "a reasonably close match."

In selecting the *Tampas* neither reply mentions anything about the hull shape except for Bob's comment of "plenty of freeboard." The *Tampas*, according to Scheina "followed the traditional cutter hull form, having a plumb bow and counter stern. Heavy seas coming up under the counter caused severe shocks." It has already been stated that the stern of our Mystery vessel is of the cruiser type. Looking into Donald L. Canney's book U.S. Coast Guard and Revenue Cutters, 1790 - 1935, we find this design note: "The 250-foot class was... in many respects, modernized 240-footers. The counter stern and plumb bow of the older class had given way to the flared stem and cruiser stern. The reconfiguration of the stern was to eliminate the heavy shocks common in the North Atlantic Ice Patrol."

So, Tim must have the right class, but why did Dave and Bob miss? I wonder if it's due to the entire *Lake* class being transferred to Great Britain, and identified by Tim as *Banff* class sloops, early in their careers as part of the Roosevelt Lend Lease

Treaty in 1941. Bob sort of hints at something funny with his "reasonably close match" comment. He should have been able to make an exact class match and not settled for close. After the transfer, the class was deleted from the United States section in reference lists like *Jane's*, which, I'm sure, is why he did not have it to choose. Dave, on the other hand, was just two pages away from the *Lake* class entry in Scheina's book. If he had spotted it, he would have found an excellent image of *Mendota* to match against the Mystery Photo.

According to Canney or Scheina, of the 10 *Lakers*, only *Cayuga*, *Ponchartrain*, *Chelan*, *Itasca*, *Shoshone*, and *Tahoe* saw [extended] service in 'Northern' waters; all made arctic patrols at some point in their service. While this doesn't positively exclude any of the 10 from our list of candidates,

(Continued on page 6)

THE ANSWER

The answer to Mystery Photo 266:
 USCGC Tahoe
 02 August, 1929
 #80G-468633

MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society
Monthly Meeting
August 16, 2008
Mariners' Museum

The meeting was called to order by the Clerk, Tom Saunders at 1410 hours. There were no guests present. There were no corrections to the minutes as published. The Purser's report was given by Dave Baker due to the absence of Eric Harfst. There was no Webmaster's due to Greg Harrington's absence.

Old Business: The October picnic was discussed. Bill Dangler had two lists; one for members to indicate if they would be in attendance and the number in their party and the other to sign up to bring necessary items and edibles. As with past picnics, the HRSMS will provide hot dogs, hamburgers and sodas. (See the picnic notice elsewhere in this issue.) Dean Sword asked if the society was going to have a Christmas gathering this year. Tom said that Bob Comet and Tim Wood hosted the December meeting last year. Dean said that he would review

his calendar with the intent of hosting the December meeting this year. Dean said that

New Business: The Clerk offered some positive comments on the International Plastic Model Society (IPMS) Convention held in Virginia Beach and said he hoped the HRSMS would participate in future events. Charles Landrum talked about some future IPMS events.

Show & Tell: Tim Wood showed and discussed the book, Jutland 1916: Death in the Grey Wastes by Peter Hart and Nigel Steel. Charles Landrum showed a 1:700 resin kit of the *USS Florida* and a kit of the *USS Onondaga*. Dave Baker a book on collecting 1:1200 scale models, showed several prototype posters showing every US Navy class of ship from the civil war to the present and a resin kit of the *USS Spokane* by Admiralty Model Works. David Tagg showed a paper model of a German cruiser and detailed some of his construction techniques. Hugh Van Brimmer talked about his tour of the *HMS Victory* and the museum at Plymouth. There was more discussion of the models at the IPMS Model Competition and the criteria for judging them.

The meeting was adjourned to presentation "Internet Research", by John Wyld.

HAMPTON ROADS SHIP MODEL SOCIETY ANNUAL PICNIC

WHERE: Newport News City Park, Shelter #11. Enter off Jefferson Ave, just north of Fort Eustis Boulevard. Our picnic site is in a tree-sheltered area with rest rooms nearby, a lakeside view, tables, benches and barbecue grills.

WHEN: Saturday, October 11, 2008, 1130 am to 1630 pm. The Picnic Area is covered so the event will be held rain or shine.

EVENT COORDINATOR: Bill Dangler, Tel: (757) 245-4142

Contact Bill Dangler or e-mail Tom Saunders (t.e.saunders@worldnet.att.net) as soon as practicable, but not later than Sunday, September 16 to indicate how many will be in your party, and what you would like to bring to help feed the hungry crowd.

HRMS will supply hot dogs, hamburgers, buns, and sodas. The range of other items that need to be brought:

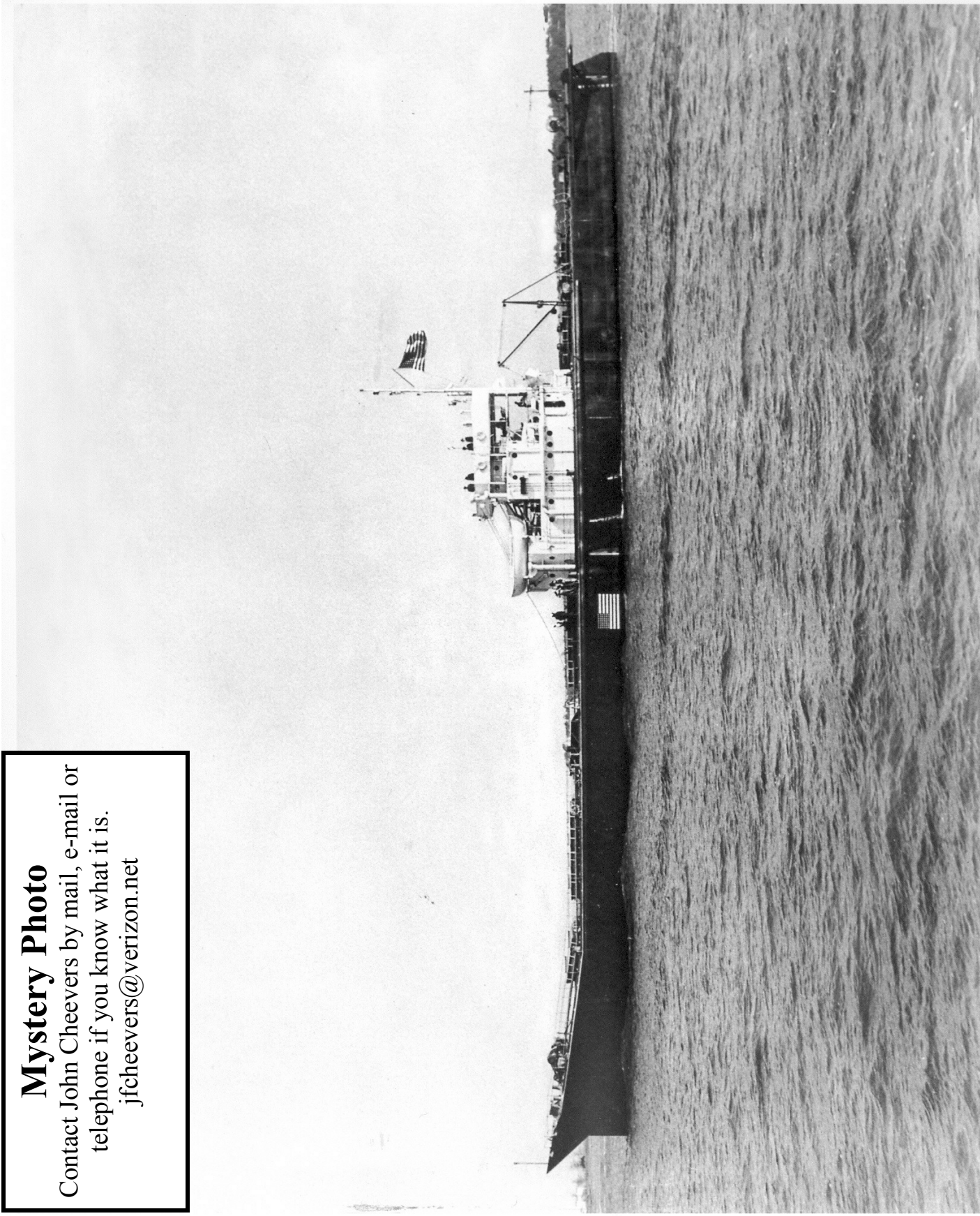
Ice, Appetizers, Salads, Side dishes such as: Beans, Desserts
Condiments (ketchup, Mustard, Relish, Pickles)
Toppings (sliced tomatoes, onions, and lettuce)
Etc.

Note: This is a Municipal Park, and no alcoholic beverages of any kind are permitted.

Mystery Photo

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

jfcheevers@verizon.net



NOTABLE EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation "Tall Ships Op Sail Photographs"
by Peter Tagg
- 19 International Talk Like a Pirate Day

OCTOBER

- 11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Picnic, Newport News Park

NOVEMBER

- 15 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation "Photographing Ship Models using Digital
Cameras", by Tim Wood

DECEMBER

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
-

OOPS!!

In the previous issue of the Logbook there was an omission of the beginning section of the Mystery Photo column. The omitted portion is printed below. Sorry for the inconvenience.

Ed.

Mystery Photo #265: The photograph supplier this month was proud of the fact that he asked the editor to blur the letters 'ASH' on the life boat. So proud in fact that he bragged about it. He said that he "didn't want to make things too easy." Too bad he missed the vessel's entire name spelled out on the life ring mounted to the front of the bridge wing. Identification was very easy for this month's repliers. So easy that I don't think quoting their replies is warranted this time; they all correctly choose *USS Asheville*, PG-21, and pointed to the life ring as proof. Responses came from Bob Comet, Dave Baker, and Tim Wood.

With that out of the way, what do we talk about now?

The first impression I had of this image was "here is a very clean close-up of the gunboat *Sacramento*." There are a lot of similarities between its design and arrangement and our Mystery vessel. I had hopes it was *Sacramento* because I wanted an opportunity to shamelessly plug another image that I first saw in Friedman's book [U.S. Small Combatants](#) – no, I don't remember the page. That image shows *Sacramento* steaming in a channel with a tender on a parallel course. (I managed to find a copy of that image on the Internet and show it here.)



(Continued from page 2)

to Baltimore. Capt. Ward, along with several captains of vessels in the bay who came in close contact with the whale put into Annapolis for safety. The whale was seen between Thomas and Sandy points and was making its way up and into the bay. The noise from its spouting could be heard a long distance off, while the water was thrown up like a tremendous fountain several feet in the air. The last whale seen in this section before this was sixty years ago.

From: The [New York Times](#) March 29, 1898

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Mystery Photo

it's a good start. A better way to narrow the list might be to study the shape and arrangement of the bridge wings. From the limited photographic evidence available, I found that they were built with differing bridge wing arrangements. While some were fitted with enclosed wings like that seen in our Mystery Photo, some were not. Also some were constructed with the flat bridge face seen in our Mystery Photo and some were not. Those that were not had a distinctive knuckle in the bridge face with the wings angled aft from the sides of the pilot house.

A study of the available photographic evidence for these ships, mostly found at the Official United States Coast Guard web site under Cutters, Craft & Coast Guard-Manned Army & Navy Vessels, revealed an interesting fact: Only the Bethlehem built ships had the flat-faced bridge. From Scheina's book we see that five were built at Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, Quincy, Massachusetts; four were built at the General Engineering & Drydock Company, Oakland, California; and one at United Drydock, Incorporated, Staten Island, New York. From the list of those reported to have service in 'Northern' waters, only *Ponchartrain*, *Chelan*, and *Tahoe* were built at Bethlehem. Could the list be narrowed to three?

Now for the most speculative piece of this column; the part where I try and guess what the Great Clarke was thinking as he placed this image to his forehead. Of the three most promising candidates, only *Ponchartrain*, serving in the British navy as *HMS Hartland*, was lost in battle during the Allied attack on Oran, Algeria on 8 November 1942. Is that what Bill wants us to find or do we stick with the photographic evidence and discount *Ponchartrain* because her ice patrols were all "in the vicinity of the Grand Banks of Newfoundland?"

Tahoe initially assigned to the San Francisco district and *Chelan* initially assigned to the Seattle district make better choices, both served in the Bering Sea Patrol. I think Dave is correct when he states "the photo was taken in Alaskan waters..." The best assumption we can make is that Tim chose the correct class and the image is limited to one of these two vessels.

John Cheevers

WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



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