

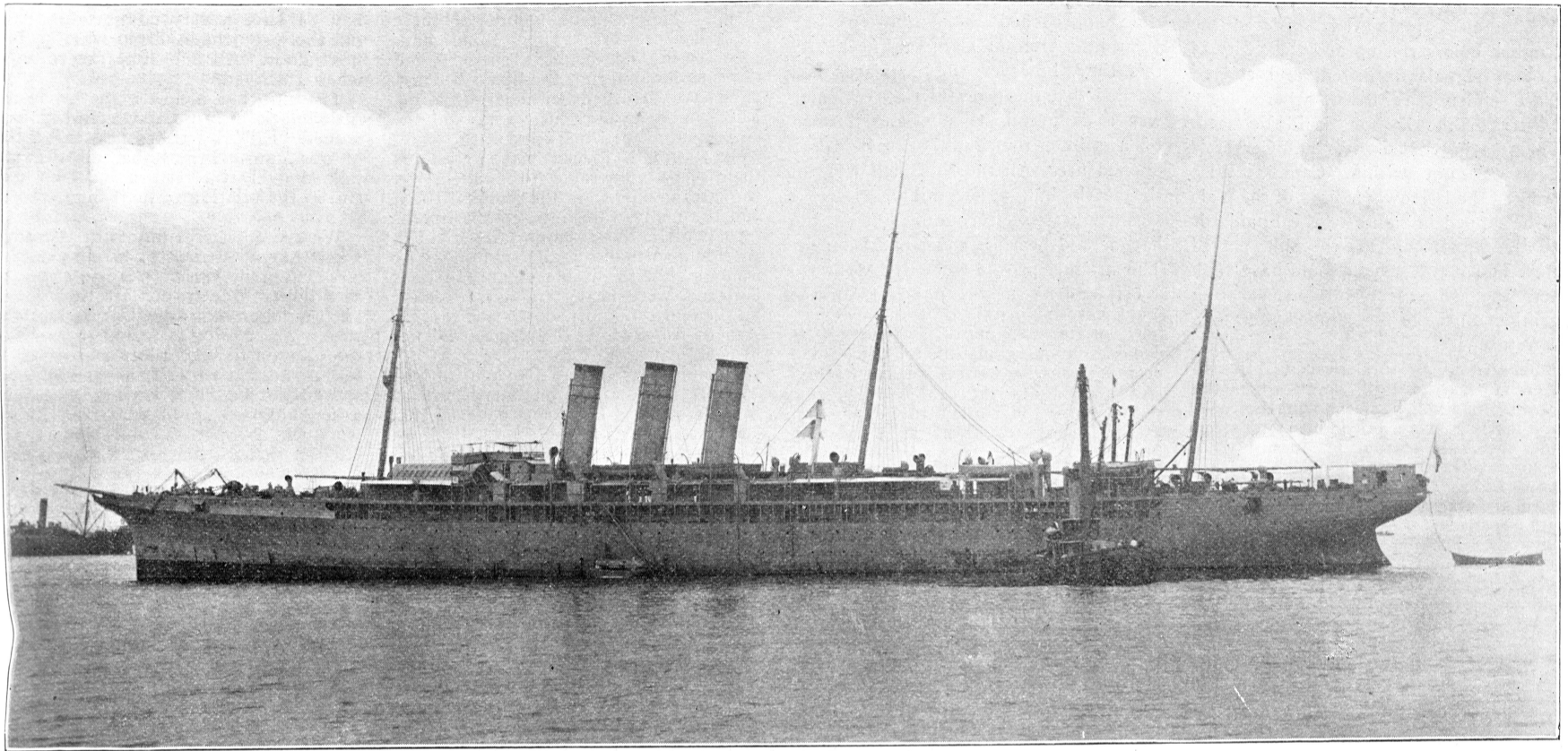
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U. S. CRUISER YALE.



Photograph by Pach.

Formerly the American Line Steamship Paris; Chartered by the United States Government April 22d, 1898; Name changed to Yale, April 30th; Used as a scout and transport vessel during the War; Returned to the American Line, August 31st, 1898.

CRUISE OF THE YALE.

A Yale Officer on Board Follows the Long Wanderings of the Cruiser—Some Diary Extracts and Foreign Comments.

At nearly the hour that the ships of Admiral Sampson's fleet were appearing off Havana to capture their first prize and commence the blockade, the steamship Paris of the American Line was coming out of Southampton harbor and starting on her long voyage homeward. In her cabin were barely a dozen passengers; her hold was filled with the guns and ammunition so greatly needed. It was the twenty-second of April, and the newspapers contained accounts of Spanish cruisers and torpedo boats lying in wait for her off the Needles. But trusting in the speed of his ship and merely adopting such precautions as closing the port hole lights at night and following a course north of the usual transatlantic track, Captain Watkins felt confident that he could avoid every enemy.

On the last day of April, the Paris reached New York. The St. Paul, St. Louis, and Harvard (formerly the New York) were already off to the South. The gilded letters "Paris" on her stern were removed and in their place was painted "Yale"—the name under which the ocean greyhound was to serve her country.

Yale University had already begun to raise a subscription in order to present

some suitable memorial gift in recognition of the honor done her in the naming of the ship. Two rapid fire six pounders were obtained from Vicars Sons and Maxim by Mr. John Addison Porter at the suggestion of Captain O'Neil (to whose interest and assistance in this matter the University is greatly indebted). Indeed the naval officers both on board the Yale and in the Department at Washington showed the greatest appreciation of the interest which the University manifested in this ship and in the Navy.

The writer had an illustration of this feeling when in June he was sent to Hampton Roads to conduct the formal presentation of the guns. For Captain Wise then suggested that "it would be appropriate if the University had a representative on board." The officials in the busy Bureau of Navigation acquiesced in this view, and the writer was accordingly appointed an Ensign and ordered to the Yale. In fact the officers of our navy, though stern disciplinarians while directing the terrible routine of a man-of-war, revert when off duty to that which they are at heart—university men with all their college interests fresh, respecting Yale as a great antagonist in the friendly rivalry of athletics, and showing the same appreciation of Yale's interest and encouragement in the game which these representatives of Annapolis were playing against Spain, that Yale men felt at that alumni dinner when a graduate of the University of Virginia and ex-

Confederate soldier, told of the pride with which he watched the brave fight of the Yale crew at Henley, and how he "felt that he too was a Yale man and as he tore along the tow path rent high heaven with the rebel yell."

Between the arrival of the Paris in New York and her sailing again as the Yale, no time was given for extensive alterations or armament. The Yale guns "Eli" and "Handsome Dan" were mounted on the forecastle; two similar six pounders were placed upon the poop; four thousand tons of coal were poured into her bunkers and hold, and lastly, three of her officers were married.

The former officers and crew were not enlisted into the navy—time did not permit it—but signed in with the American Line as if for the usual transatlantic cruise. The Government merely chartered the ship, put Captain W. C. Wise, U. S. N., in command with Lieutenant Key as executive officer and some twenty marines to man the guns. It is interesting to remember that at this time our newspapers were filled with indignation against Spain for threatening to issue letters of marque and fit out privateers. Yet with the exception of these two naval officers and the marines, the crew of the Yale on her first voyage as scout ship and commerce destroyer were, from the standpoint of law, pirates. The quiet, efficient, peaceful and entirely unromantic officers of a transatlantic liner became the successors of the wild buccanners of the Spanish main, who once harried the coast of Porto Rico, and of Don Francisco Drake, who was repulsed, say the Spanish records, in his attack on the Morro.

CAPTAIN WISE TAKES COMMAND.

At 2.15 P. M. on the second of May, Captain Wise assumed command. The house-flag of the American Line was hauled down, the navy pennant hoisted and the Yale left her pier (No. 14, North River). At 7.26 she was off Sandy Hook; the pilot descended the Jacob's ladder over her side, and called back "Good luck to you, Captain." Then the signal was rung from the bridge to the engine room "full speed ahead," the course was laid S. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ E., and with a long white line of foam at her bow, "a bone in her teeth," as the sailors call it, the Yale went in search of that fleet from Spain which like a phantom was to-day at Cadiz, to-morrow in the Canaries, or at Porto Rico, or off the New England coast, and now lies shattered on the rocky shore at Santiago.

For four days the course was unchanged, the weather fine. Then on the sixth of May at noon, the officer of the deck reported the light-house at the entrance to the harbor of San Juan de Porto Rico to bear Sx E, distance four miles. That night and every night thereafter while the Yale was off Porto Rico, the marines slept on the deck by their guns. During the next week the Yale hung around the coast, now here, now there. At night she showed no light; not even a match could be struck on deck, and the orders were given in a low voice. Sometimes the engines drove her ahead full speed; again they were kept barely turning. Once she made the complete circuit of the Island. Twice she put into the harbor of St. Thomas, where the Captain and his clerk were busy through