

BLOWN UP BY A SUBMARINE MINE.

Full Text of the Report of the Court of Inquiry Into the Destruction of the Battleship Maine.

PRESIDENT MCKINLEY'S MESSAGE TO CONGRESS.

An External Shock Exploded Two Magazines—Captain Sigbee and Other Officers of the Maine Exonerated From Blame—The Court is Unable to Fix Responsibility for the Disaster—The State of Discipline on Board the Maine Was Excellent and All Orders and Regulations in Regard to the Care and Safety of the Ship Were Strictly Carried Out.

The President Monday sent the following message to Congress:

To the Congress of the United States:

For some time prior to the visit of the Maine to Havana harbor our consular representative pointed out the advantages to flow from the visit of national ships to the Cuban waters, in accustoming the people to the presence of our flag as the symbol of good will and of our ships in the fulfillment of the mission of protection to American interests, even though no immediate need therefore might exist.

Accordingly, on the 24th of January last, a conference with the Spanish Minister, in which the renewal of visits of our war vessels to Spanish waters was discussed and accepted, the peninsular authorities at Madrid and Havana were advised of the purpose of this Government to resume friendly visits to Cuban ports, and that in that view the Maine would forthwith call at the port of Havana. This announcement was received by the Spanish Government with appreciation of the friendly character of the visit of the Maine and with notification of intention to return the courtesy by sending Spanish ships to the principal ports of the United States. Meantime the Maine entered the port of Havana on the 25th of January, her arrival being marked with no special incident besides the exchange of customary salutes and ceremonial visits.

Explosion in Havana Harbor.

The Maine continued in the harbor of Havana during the three weeks following her arrival. No appreciable excitement attended her stay; on the contrary, a feeling of relief and confidence followed the resumption of the long-interrupted friendly intercourse.

No noticeable was this immediate effect of her visit that the Consul-General strongly urged that the presence of our ships in Cuban waters should be kept up by retaining the Maine at Havana, or in the event of her recall, by sending another vessel there to take her place.

At 9:40 o'clock in the evening of the 15th of February the Maine was destroyed by an explosion, by which the entire forward part of the ship was utterly wrecked.

In this catastrophe two officers and 264 of the crew perished, those who were not killed outright by her explosion being panned between decks by the tangle of wreckage and drowned by the immediate sinking of the hull.

Prompt assistance was rendered by the neighboring vessels anchored in the harbor, aid being especially given by the boats of the Spanish cruiser Alphonso XIII, and the Ward Line steamer City of Washington, which lay not far distant.

The wounded were generously cared for by the authorities of Havana, the hospitals being freely opened to them, while the earliest-recovered bodies of the dead were interred by the municipality in a public cemetery in the city. Tributes of grief and sympathy were offered from all of the quarters of the island.

An Appalling Calamity.

The appalling calamity befell on the people of our country with crushing force and for a brief time an intense excitement prevailed which in a community less just and self-controlled than ours might have led to hasty acts of blind resentment. This spirit, however, soon gave way to the calmer processes of reason and to the resolve to investigate the facts and await material proof before forming a judgment as to the cause, the responsibility, and if facts warranted, the remedy due.

This course necessarily recommended itself from the outset to the Executive, for only in the light of a dispassionately ascertained certainty could it determine the nature and measure of its full duty in the matter.

The usual procedure was followed, as in all cases of casualty or disaster to national vessels of any maritime state. A Naval Court of inquiry was at once organized, composed of officers well qualified by rank and practical experience, to discharge the onerous duty imposed upon them.

Aided by a strong force of wreckers and divers, the Court proceeded to make a thorough investigation on the spot, employing every available means for the impartial and exact determination of the causes of the explosion.

Its operations have been conducted with the utmost deliberation and judgment, and while independently pursued no sources of information were neglected, the fullest opportunity was allowed for a simultaneous investigation by the Spanish authorities.

It is herewith laid before the Congress, together with the voluminous testimony taken before the Court.

Report of the Court.

Its purports in brief are as follows:

When the Maine arrived at Havana she was conducted by the regular Government pilot to buoy No. 4, to which she was moored, in from five and one-half to six fathoms of water.

The state of discipline on board and the condition of her magazines, boilers, coal bunkers and storage compartments are passed in review, with the conclusion that excellent order prevailed, and that no indication of any cause for an internal explosion existed in any quarter.

At 8 o'clock in the evening of February 15 they had been reported secure and all was quiet.

Forty minutes past 9 o'clock the vessel was suddenly destroyed.

There were two distinct explosions, with a brief interval between them. The first lifted the forward part of the ship very perceptibly; the second, which was more open, prolonged and of greater volume, is attributed by the Court to the partial explosion of two or more of the forward magazines.

The evidence of the divers establishes that the after part of the ship was practically intact and sank in that condition a very few minutes after the explosion. The forward part was completely demolished.

Upon the evidence of a concurrent external cause the finding of the Court is as follows:

The Tell-Tale Plates.

At frame 17 the outer shell of the ship, from a point 11½ feet from the middle line of the ship and six feet above the keel when in its normal position, has been forced up so as to be now about four feet above the surface of the water; therefore, about 31 feet above where it would be had the ship sunk uninjured.

The outside bottom plating is bent into a reversed V-shape, the after wing of which, about 15 feet broad and 32 feet in length (frames 17 to frame 23) is doubled back upon itself against the continuation of the same plating extending forward.

At frame 18 the vertical keel is broken in two, and the flat keel bent into an angle similar to the angle formed by the outside bottom plating. This break is now about six feet below the surface of the water and about 30 feet above its normal position.

In the opinion of the Court this effect could have been produced only by the explosion of a mine situated under the bottom of a ship at about frame 18 and somewhat on the port side of the ship.

Conclusions of the Court.

The conclusions of the court are: That the loss of the Maine was not in any respect due to fault or negligence on the part of any of the officers or members of her crew.

That the ship was destroyed by the explosion of a submarine mine, which caused the partial explosion of two or more of her forward magazines, and

That no evidence has been obtainable fixing the responsibility for the destruction of the Maine upon any person or persons.

I have directed that the finding of the Court of Inquiry and the views of this government thereon be communicated to the government of Her Majesty, the Queen Regent, and I do not permit myself to doubt that the sense of justice of the Spanish nation will dictate a course of action suggested by honor and the friendly relations of the two governments.

It will be the duty of the Executive to advise the Congress of the result, and in the meantime deliberate consideration is invoked.

WILLIAM MCKINLEY,
Executive Mansion, March 28, 1898.

COURT'S FINDING.

The following is the full text of the report of the Court of Inquiry in the case of the destruction of the United States battleship Maine in the harbor of Havana February 15th:

U. S. S. Iowa, 1st rate,
Key West, Fla., Monday, March 21, 1898.

After full and mature consideration of all the testimony before it the Court finds as follows:

1. That the United States Battleship Maine arrived in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, on the 25th day of January, 1898, and was taken to buoy No. 4, in from 5½ to 6 fathoms of water by the regular government pilot. The

Of those bunkers adjacent to the forward magazines and shell rooms, four were empty, namely, "D 3, B 4, B 5, B 6." "A 15" had been in use that day, and "A 16" was full of river coal. This coal had been carefully inspected before received on board. The bunker in which it was stowed was accessible on three sides at all times, and the fourth side at this time on account of bunkers "B4" and "B6" being empty. This bunker, "A16," had been inspected that day by the engineer officer on duty. The fire alarms in the bunkers were in working order, and there had never been a case of spontaneous combustion of coal on board the Maine.

Boilers Not the Cause.

The two after boilers of the ship were in use at the time of the disaster, but for auxiliary purposes only, with a comparatively low pressure of steam and being tended by a reliable watch. These boilers could not have caused the explosion of the ship. The four forward boilers have since been found by the divers and are in a fair condition.

All Right at 8 P. M.

On the night of the destruction of the Maine everything had been reported secure for the night at 8 P. M. by reliable persons, through the proper authorities, to the commanding officer. At the time the Maine was destroyed the ship was quiet, and, therefore, least liable to accident caused by movements from those on board.

Two Distinct Explosions.

3. The destruction of the Maine occurred at 9:40 P. M. on the 15th day of February, 1898, in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, she being at the time moored to the same buoy to which she had been taken upon her arrival.

There were two explosions of a distinctly different character, with a very short but distinct interval between them, and the forward part of the ship was lifted to a marked degree at the time of the first explosion.

The first explosion was more in the nature of a report, like that of a gun; while the second explosion was more open, prolonged, and of greater volume. The second explosion was, in the opinion of the Court, caused by the partial explosion of two or more of the forward magazines of the Maine.

The evidence bearing upon this, being

principally obtained from divers, did not enable the Court to form a definite conclusion as to the condition of the wreck, although it was established that the after part of the ship was practically intact and sank in that condition a very few minutes after the destruction of the forward part.

A Magazine Explosion.

The following facts in regard to the forward part of the ship are, however, established by the testimony:

That portion of the port side of the protective deck which extends from frame 30 to about frame 41 was blown up aft and over to port. The main deck from about frame 30 to about frame 41 was blown up aft and slightly over to starboard, folding the frame forward part of the middle superstructure, over and on top of the after part.

This was, in the opinion of the Court, caused by the partial explosion of two or more of the forward magazines of the Maine.

Outer Shell Forced Upward.

5. At frame 17 the outer shell of the ship from a point 11½ feet from the middle line of the ship and six feet above the keel when in its normal position has been forced up so as to be now about 4 feet above the surface of the water—therefore about 34 feet above where it would be had the ship sunk uninjured. The outside bottom plating is bent into a reversed V shape, the after wing of which, about 15 feet broad and 32 feet in length (from frame 17 to frame 23) is doubled back upon itself against the continuation of the same plating extending forward.

At frame 18 the vertical keel is broken in two, and the flat keel bent into an angle similar to the angle formed by the outside bottom plating. This break is now about six feet below the surface of the water and about 30 feet above its normal position.

A Mine the Only Cause.

In the opinion of the Court, this effect could have been produced only by the explosion of a mine situated under the bottom of the ship at about frame 18, and somewhat on the port side of the ship.

8. The Court has been unable to obtain evidence fixing the responsibility of the destruction of the Maine upon any person or persons.

W. T. SAMPSON, Capt. U. S. N.,
President.

A. MARIX, Lieut.-Com. U. S. N.,
Judge Advocate.

The Court having finished the inquiry it was ordered to make, adjourned at 11 A. M. to await the action of the convening authority.

W. T. SAMPSON, Captain U. S. N.,
President.

A. MARIX, Lieutenant-Commander U. S. N.,
Approved by Sicard.

United States Flagship New York, March 22, Off Key West, Fla.—The proceedings and findings of the Court of Inquiry in the above case are approved.

M. RICARD,
Rear Admiral, Commander-in-Chief of the United States naval force on the North Atlantic Station.

WAR PAINT FOR THE FLEET.

Coats of Drab Will be Given to the Vessels at Key West.

Painting the ships of the United States fleet at Key West has begun.

A Navy Department order to paint the ships black was received Saturday, and the New York and Nashville had put on their war paint before a resending order came in the afternoon. It was Captain Sampson's opinion that drab would be better than black. The department assented and a number of boards painted the standard color were distributed among the vessels.

Results of visual tests which have been made show that the color selected for the vessels is better for war purposes than any other. The big guns will be painted to match the hulls and superstructure in order that their location will not show as targets for the rapid-fire guns of an enemy.

ABOUT NOTED PEOPLE.

During the absence in Europe of President Merrill E. Gates, of Amherst College, Prof. Edward Hitchcock will be acting president.

Lord Charles Berosford has dared the Admiralty to give the Belleville boilers a real test by speeding the new cruiser Diadem across the Atlantic under its full steam of 12,500 horsepower.

Osman Pasha, the Turkish General, seems to be as successful a matchmaker as soldier. He has married off two of his sons to daughters of the Sultan, who bring with them very handsome dowries.

A fund of \$5,000 is being raised in London for the establishment of a memorial to Charles L. Dodgson ("Lewis Carroll"), the author. The memorial is to take the form of an "Allice in Wonderland" set at the Hospital for Sick Children.

Sir Claude Macdonald, the British Minister to China, is 46 years old and holds rank in the army as a major. He served with the Seventy-fourth Highlanders, and was in the Egyptian campaign of 1882, and the Suakin expedition, before he was appointed Consul-General at Zanzibar, in 1887.

The Empress Frederick, who is still at Berlin, has postponed her trip to England until the first week in May, when she will arrive at Windsor Castle on a visit to the Queen.

The originator of the famous three "r's" alliteration, "reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic," was Sir William Curtis, a Lord Mayor of London. In 1795 he proposed it as a toast before the Board of Education. This section, however, was not taken up. It is said to be seriously ill. As a consequence the famous explorer has canceled all his lecture engagements.

Everybody interested in seeing the latest developments in high-grade wheels should send a postal to the John P. Lovell Company, Boston, Mass., for their new catalogue. It contains valuable information.

A Nine-Thousand-Dollar Nugget.

The steamer Pakahau, which has arrived at Vancouver, B. C., from Skaguay, Alaska, has among her passengers four men direct from Dawson City. They are Messrs. J. F. Deaham, of San Francisco; B. Lung, of Tacoma; E. La Salle, of Leadville, and C. A. Goodwin, of Los Angeles. They report a stamped for the American side of the boundary below the harbor. This section, they say, will beat the Klondike. A \$3,000 nugget they state, has been found on Eldorado creek.

Dr. Creighton, the Lord Bishop of London, rolled and smoked 19 cigarettes while talking to a reporter the other day.

Four Men Drowned at Dutch Harbor.

The steamer Bertha brings news to Seattle, Wash., that on March 6 C. A. Andrews, second engineer of the steamer J. C. Barr; T. H. Trasey, a riveter and fitter; J. C. Doerr and Peter Doerr, father and son of St. Louis, Mo., were drowned at Dutch Harbor. They were crossing in a small boat from Unalakleet to Dutch Harbor. In a squall their boat capsize. The boat was found next day by the cutter Barr.

Mr. Gladstone's Condition Critical.

Elaborate precautions are taken to keep information from reaching the press concerning Mr. Gladstone, but it is learned that his condition is extremely critical.

United States Consul-General at Havana had notified the authorities at that place the previous evening of the intended arrival of the Maine.

Every Precaution Taken.

2. The state of discipline on board the Maine was excellent, and all orders and regulations in regard to the care and safety of the ship were strictly carried out.

All ammunition was stored in accordance with prescribed instructions, and proper care was taken whenever ammunition was handled.

Nothing was stowed in any one of the magazines or shell rooms which was not permitted to be stored there.

The magazines and shell rooms were always looked after having been opened, and after the destruction of the Maine the keys were found in their proper place in the captain's cabinet, everything having been reported secure that evening at 8 P. M. The temperature of the magazines and shell rooms were taken and reported. The only magazine which had an undue amount of heat was the after 10-inch magazine, and that did not explode at the time the Maine was destroyed.

Care With Explosives.

The torpedo war heads were all stowed in the after part of the ship under the ward-room, and neither caused nor participated in the destruction of the Maine.

The dry gun cotton primers and detonators were stored in the cabin aft, and remote from the scene of the explosion. Waste was carefully looked after on board the Maine to obviate danger. Special orders in regard to this had been given by the commanding officer.

Varnishes, dryers, alcohol and other combustibles of this nature were stored on or above the main deck, and could not have anything to do with the destruction of the Maine.

The medical stores were stowed aft under the wardroom and remote from the scene of the explosion.

No dangerous stores of any kind were stowed below in any of the other store-rooms.

Inspection of Coal Bunkers.

The coal bunkers were inspected daily.

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SPAIN'S ACTS.

Fresh Proposals Submitted to the United States.

CONCESSIONS MADE.

Gen. Blanco Issues a Decree Ending the Reconcentration in the Four Western Provinces of Cuba—Congress Waiting Until Monday, by Which Time the President is Expected to Have Definite Information.

At a meeting of the Spanish Cabinet held in Madrid Thursday and presided over by the Queen Regent, fresh proposals to the United States, it is reported, were decided upon. The result of the cabinet's action was cabled in cipher by Minister Woodford to Washington. The nature of the new proposals were not disclosed, but they are said to be conciliatory. A special cablegram from Madrid quotes a member of the cabinet as saying that "Sagasta has made enormous concessions."

The cablegram from Minister Woodford was received in Washington Thursday night. General Woodford's dispatches up to that time had been of an optimistic character and he had indicated a belief that the Spanish government would make the most liberal concessions, even to the point of submitting the whole question to President McKinley as arbitrator, if the Cubans and Spaniards cannot come to an understanding after an armistice has been arranged.

HOUSE RESOLUTIONS.

From a Formal Declaration of War to Recognition of Independence.

Cuban Independence.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives, That the separate political existence and independence of the republic of Cuba, now and for some time heretofore maintained by force of arms, be, and by the same is hereby, recognized as a separate and independent nation; that the United States shall immediately intervene and put an end to the war now being waged on the Island of Cuba and succor and release from imprisonment the people there concentrated for the purpose of starvation and extermination.

And for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this act and enabling the President of the United States to furnish such concentrated people with food, raiment and medicine, the sum of \$500,000 is hereby appropriated out of any funds in the United States Treasury not otherwise appropriated.

Representative Lewis (Democrat, of Washington) introduced in the House a resolution asking information of the President as to what he communicated to the Spanish government as to the views of the government of the United States upon the court of inquiry on the destruction of the Maine, and asking that such information be communicated to Congress at once.

A Declaration of War.

Representative Marsh, of Illinois, chairman of the House committee on militia, introduced the following joint resolution declaring war between the government of Spain and its dependencies and the United States and her Territories.

"That war be, and the same is hereby declared to exist between the government of Spain and her dependencies and the United States and her Territories, and that the President of the United States is hereby authorized to use the whole land and naval force of the United States, including the militia and the naval militia thereof, to carry the same into effect.

Representative Hartman, of Montana, introduced in the House a resolution declaring that the government of the United States hereby recognizes the independence of the republic of Cuba and pledges the full measure of its support for the maintenance of that independence.

DOINGS OF CONGRESS.

The House Judiciary Committee has favorably reported a bill to obviate legal difficulties in cases of recent occurrence were prosecutions were suspended or delayed on account of a government officer leaving office.

An agreement has been reached by the conferees on the Alaska land bill to insert a provision allowing Canadian miners the same rights in Alaska as are given by the Canadian government to the American miners. Canadians will have to be naturalized to take mines in Alaska.

The House Committee on Revision of the Laws agreed on and favorably reported to the House the complete codification of the criminal law and procedure in criminal cases in Alaska. The bill comprises the report of the government commission appointed to codify the laws of the United States.

The House Committee on Public Lands has recommended to the House the passage of a bill providing that a qualified single woman has a bona-fide residence on unsurveyed public land, intending to take it as a homestead, her marriage will not forfeit the right to perfect entry unless she abandons that residence.

The Secretary of the Interior sent to the House an estimate calling for appropriations of over \$8,000,000 to meet a deficiency in the pension funds. Of this amount \$2,000,000 is credited to the lack of last year's appropriations and the other \$6,000,000 to large increases, restorations, and new pensions granted. This brings the estimates so far submitted for incorporation into the general deficiency bill to about \$14,000,000.

The Broderick bill, raising the age of protection for girls in the District of Columbia from sixteen to eighteen years has been favorably reported to the House by the Judiciary Committee.

TRIPLE MURDER IN ATLANTA.

Firemen Find Three Mutilated Bodies in a Store Which Was Set on Fire.

Firemen responding to an alarm at an early hour the other morning found the bodies of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Briley, white, and Robert Wilkinson, colored, in a store on fire at 75 Humphries street, Atlanta, Ga.

The bodies were gotten out without being mangled by the flames, and all were horribly mutilated, having been murdered with two heavy hatchets and a meat knife, which were found on the floor.

Mr. Briley was the proprietor of the store, and it is believed that robbery was the motive. The police have made a number of arrests.

THE TEXAS STRUCK A REEF.

Reason Why the Battleship Went to New York.

Of all the surmises made as to the reason for the sudden trip to New York of the battleship Texas none was correct. She struck a coral reef while in Southern waters recently, and it had much to do with the transfer.

It is likely that she will be put in dry dock. The machinery of her starboard turret is also out of gear and will need extensive repairs.

A new rubber overshoe for wet weather wear does not extend around the heel, but is fastened to the narrow part of the shoe sole by spring clips to hold it in place.

Tragedies at Dinges, W. Va.

Oliver Hardin, in a fit of jealousy, shot his wife through the heart, and then attempted to blow out his own brains. He had been married scarcely a year.

During a drunken row at Tidewater, on Norfolk and Western, Henry Edwards and Frank Johnson were both shot, the former fatally.

Killed Because She Refused to Wed.

Because Bertha Spiegler would not marry him, William Hillman, a farmer, near Pittsburg, Pa., shot and killed her and cut his own throat with a razor. The girl was 21 years old. Hillman will die.

SPAIN'S POSSIBLE PROPOSALS.

Three Points Which Gen. Woodford Expected to be Submitted.

President McKinley's assurances to Congress in regard to the outlook for a settlement of the Cuban difficulty without war between this country and Spain are based upon representations made to him by Minister Woodford. Gen. Woodford thinks, after repeated conferences with Premier Sagasta and other members of the Spanish Ministry, that that government, if its own accord, will make a proposition to this country looking to the definite settlement of the Cuban question. This proposition is expected to cover three points, as follows:

First, That Spain shall send the reconcentrados back to their homes and supply them means of sustaining life until normal conditions can be restored.

Second, That there shall be an armistice between Spain and Cuba with the end in view of securing a settlement of the difficulties and the withdrawal of the Spanish forces from Cuba.

Third, In case of a failure of the Cubans and Spaniards to come to an understanding during the armistice, Spain will submit the entire matter to President McKinley as arbitrator with the understanding that he will decide in this event for the absolute independence of Cuba.

GERMANY'S CLAIM ON SPAIN.

Cruiser Ordered to Cuba if Satisfaction is Not forthcoming.

Germany has commenced diplomatic representations to Spain, relative to the Cannamaba case, and the German cruiser Geyer, on her way to Bahia, has been ordered to get ready to proceed to Cuba, if satisfaction is not quickly forthcoming.

The German version of the Cannamaba case is that some Cuban insurgents, during the night of March 18, attacked a German refinery at Cannamaba (also written Cannamaba), belonging to the firm of Fisher & Schmidt, of Trinidad, province of Santa Clara. The insurgents are said to have rifled the safes, burned the building, killed four persons, and wounded ten occupants of the refinery.

The Washington State Department has no record whatever concerning the Cannamaba case.

FIELD OF LABOR.

India exports coal.

Japan is making watches.

John Bull makes paper bricks.

The South contains 483 cotton mills.

Some Chicago bicycle makers struck.

Ceylon's tea crop—125,000,000 pounds.

There are 18,000 union iron molders.

United States has 800,000 railroads.

Texas Haute unions held a convention.

America has 17,300,000 cotton spindles.

Ohio printers will hold a State convention.

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CAPTAIN W. T. SAMPSON.
CAPTAIN F. E. CHADWICK.
COMMANDER ADOLPH MARIX.
LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER W. P. POTTER.