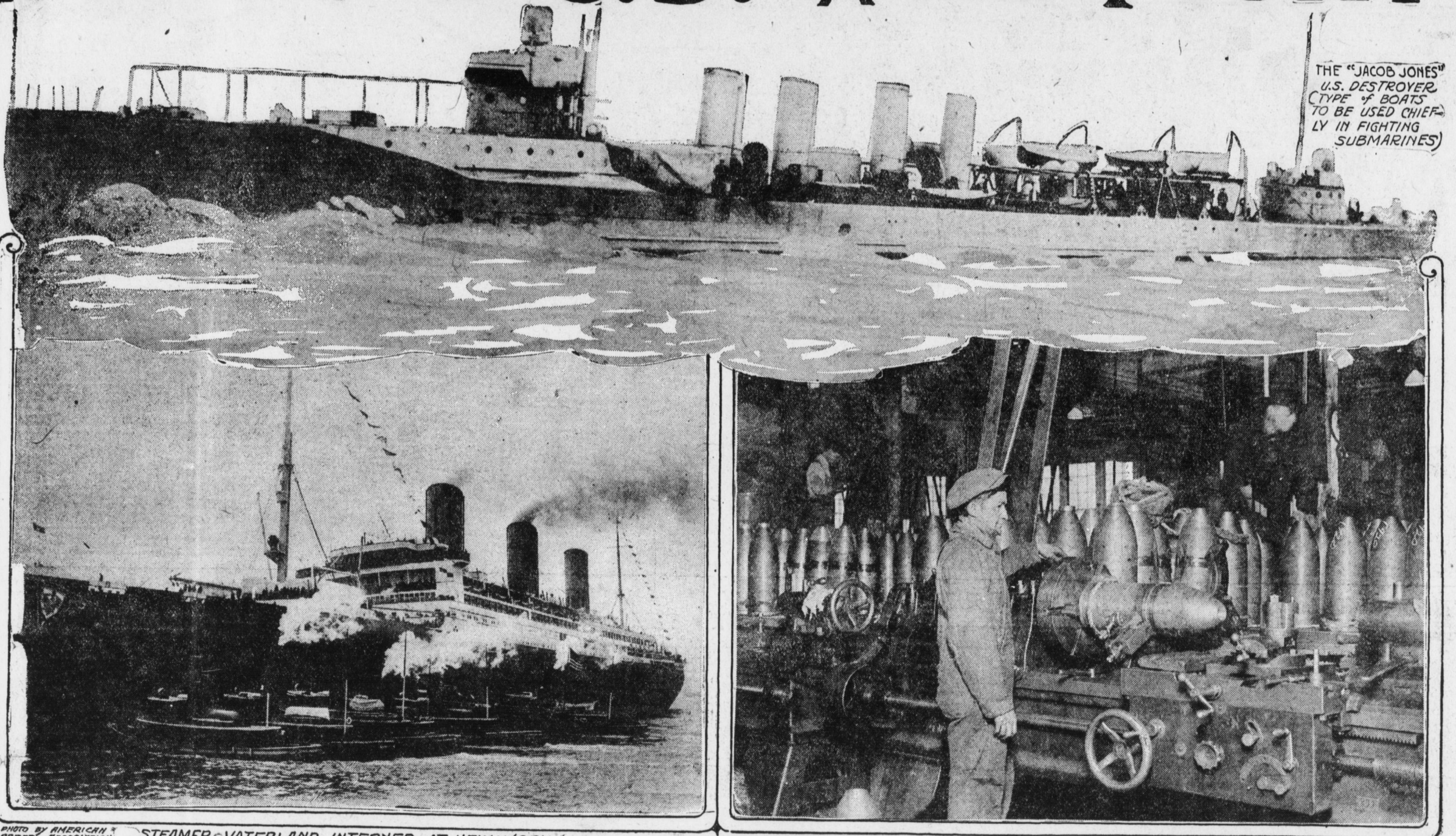


Magazine Feature Section

How The U.S. Will Fight



THE "JACOB JONES" U.S. DESTROYER TYPE OF BOATS TO BE USED CHIEFLY IN FIGHTING SUBMARINES

STEAMER VATERLAND INTERNED AT NEW YORK

SHELLS BEING MADE IN ST. LOUIS FOR FOREIGN COUNTRIES

BY EDWARD B. WATERWORTH, Until Recently Company Clerk in Marine Corps, Norfolk, Va.

TUST what would Uncle Sam do in case of war with some first-class foreign power? To take a hypothetical case, What could America do if war, which at the time of this writing seems inevitable, is declared by Germany?

Many think the country would be helpless. Others believe that we would be overwhelmed by superior force, even if we put up a good fight.

Both ideas are wrong. The United States has so much military preparedness as has Germany. But the nation that "tickles" this country, thinking it will find easy prey, will make a bad mistake.

In the first place, the American navy's marksmanship can overcome a great disparity in numbers.

In the second place, although the amount of military arms in this country is small, compared to those existing in other countries, Uncle Sam would make a first-class showing when it came to a fight.

Thirdly, we have manufacturing plants that are already being turned to advantage in the manufacture of ammunition. Plants of this sort, developed to their highest extent, would give us a capacity of producing ammunition that would overwhelm the production of any other country.

It is true that we are desperately in need of fast cruiser battleships, of cruiser scouts and of many supply ships in the navy. We would have to depend upon "the man behind the gun," as we did in the Spanish-American war, in case conflict actually broke forth.

But the tide of battle would not turn against this country for many months. Rudyard Kipling, who, in his tour through the United States, spoke affectionately of this "great, fat, unprotected country," probably may have been mistaken about our unreadiness. At the time he visited the United States, prior to the Spanish-American war, our army consisted of about 25,000 men. He paid a high tribute to the character of the men in the service, devoting a large part of one article to a young soldier he found patrolling a post in Yellowstone Park and easily sitting a half-broken horse that was made almost unmanageable by the continuous roar of a big waterfall near by.

System of Defense Evolved.

AMERICA has developed since then. In spite of the fact that we citizens are prone to sit back and look at things too complacently, our security has not been overlooked.

We have a board of officers in the army and

navy, hampered, it is true, by small appropriations and by congresses that are riddled with politics. But these same officers have managed to evolve a system of defense, in spite of handicaps, that will give this country more than the average "fighting chance" against any nation that is foolish enough to try conclusions with it. Many of the preparations made by the army and navy boards are not known to the average citizen. This is as it should be. It is not best for the knowledge of everything that is being done to be published, so foreigners can learn of it. So long as we have good, active men intelligently directing our military preparations we can rest assured of the results.

Marksmanship has always been featured in our navy. We can count on the results. If the battle off the Skagerrack, wherein both English and German battle fleets claim victory, had been fought with an American fleet taking part there would be no question of the outcome.

Both fleets on that occasion claimed "low visibility," or a foggy and hazy condition of the atmosphere, as the reason for their low percentage of hits. Under similar circumstances, off the training grounds near Guantanamo Bay, in Cuba, the American navy has made treble the number of hits actually recorded.

The first step as hostilities start, is the immediate order mobilizing the army and the navy. Every available man and every available piece of war equipment would be brought into service.

When the European war began it was estimated that 750,000 Springfield rifles of the 1906 pattern were in the hands of the regular troops and of the militia. At the same time, it was known that 385,000 rifles of the Krag-Jorgensen type, such as were used in the Spanish-American war, were being held in storage. These Krag rifles are an effective arm and the efforts made by the Russian and other governments to buy them from the United States at an early stage of this war aroused widespread publicity.

Springfield Is Best Rifle.

THE Krags are not as powerful as the Springfield, but they are considered a better arm than the Mauser, which the Boers used in the South African war. At that time, it was considered remarkable that the Boers could pick off men at 500 yards, shooting from behind cover. Today the point-blank range of the Springfield rifle is 530 yards, due to an adjustment of the sights. The actual flight of the bullet, wherein it was a practically level course, is about 300 yards. The variation in this distance is only a few inches.

The Springfield is the universal arm of the service today. It is used by cavalry, infantry and coast artillery. The field artillery is armed only with the .45-caliber automatic pistol, to supplement their field pieces.

The Springfield is said to be the finest military rifle in the world. It has a velocity of 2700 feet per second and has a "smashing power" second to no military rifle in the world.

Ever since this war started the United States

Government has been manufacturing rifles at both the Rock Island and Frankfort arsenals. Just how many have been produced is unknown. The government has wisely kept silent about that. At the same time, field belts and other equipment have been turned out in large numbers.

Even if we had only the amount of rifles with which this war started, we would have enough to equip more than 1,000,000 men—for the Krags would be perfectly serviceable for use by the militia and all the big battles in Europe have been fought at a range that is well within the limits of the rifle. Moreover, with the number of plants now producing ammunition for war, we could easily turn out a supply of cartridges equal to that produced by foreign countries. This production could be increased indefinitely if occasion arose.

One million armed men could easily stand off any force that attempted to land in this country, unless our fleet is destroyed. We have some of the largest transports in the world in the American service, plying between this country and the Philippines. Among them are the Thomas and the Sheridan. The Sumner recently ran aground off the New Jersey Coast and was broken up by the waves.

One of these large ships could easily carry 2200 men. So if any foreign nation were to send out a fleet of transports, it can be seen how huge a number it would take to establish a "landing base" in this country and also how vast a fleet would become vulnerable to attacks by our own submarines.

That foreign vessels would have an advantage over our own ships in point of speed is certain. They might be able to locate our own fleet, then steam around it to some unprotected section of the coast, and land their men. But it does not seem as if this move would profit them to any great extent.

The enemy might devastate the coast and capture a town or two. But they would never be able to land re-inforcements. Moreover, most of our Eastern coast is low lying and intervals of swamps in the Southern States would make a landing impracticable there. They never could pull heavy artillery through those regions.

In the more Northern States the centralization of railroads would make it easy to rush troops to the scene that could block any attempt at a permanent landing. Desperate battles, of course, would ensue, but there could be no question of the final outcome. Unless an alliance was formed with Mexico by some foreign power, our boundary lines would be practically safe from invasion.

Destroyers Main Fighters.

FOLLOWING the mobilization of all branches of the service and the issuance of abundant supplies to all, our naval destroyers probably would be ordered to take the seas at once.

We have at least seventy-six destroyers fit for sea service. They are among our most valuable vessels, both for scouting purposes and for actual defense. They are the especial Nemesis of submarines.

Even the destroyers of the type of 1898, when 3-pound and 6-pound guns were thought sufficient armament for the Spanish-American war, would be ships that could easily handle any submarine. It is true the "intersee" boats carry 3 and 4 inch rifles, throwing shells weighing from 18 to 40 pounds. But they cannot bring them into action quickly and the destroyers of the older pattern could puncture the thin shell of a submarine with so many 6-pound shells

that the boat would be rendered unseaworthy while a hostile submarine was unshipping its gun.

If the range was too much for the older type of destroyer, it probably could steam into range of the submarine before the latter boat could get its larger guns into action.

Our older type of destroyers still possess enough speed to hold their own with any ship afloat, except the newest models developed by foreign nations. The new models developed by foreign nations have ships like the Jacob Jones, of 1050 tons displacement and of great speed. These ships are armed with 5-inch guns, a single shell from which will make a submarine look like a sieve. The thin plates of the underwater boats cannot stand the explosive power of the new form of shrapnel that has been developed for the purpose of fighting submarines.

One or two destroyers of this pattern would protect any port from the attacks of light cruisers such as the Emden and the Karlsruhe—the commerce destroyers that created such havoc on the ocean some time since.

The Emden was sunk by the cruiser Sidney of the Australian fleet off the Cocos Islands. The Karlsruhe is supposed to have been blown up near the British East Indies after the commander of the ship found that the vessel had been crippled by striking a reef.

Our destroyers would be the ships in demand for foreign powers. Every additional destroyer means that the submarine menace is lessened. If we could send fifty destroyers to the English channel, that is all that could be required of our fleet.

"Unbroken Line of Defense."

THE American navy has admittedly been built on the principle of having an "unbroken line of defense" along the coast. It has repeatedly been announced that the fleet is not intended for offensive purposes or to attack any nation. On this ground the designers justify the low speed that characterizes most of our ships—a factor that might prove serious in time of war, so far as we are concerned.

It was all right to talk about the "unbroken line of defense" when battleships the world over averaged only seventeen knots in speed. Today, however, every leading nation in the world has battle cruisers with a speed of thirty knots—equivalent to thirty-four miles per hour on land—and the United States does not possess a single battle cruiser.

Several have been provided for, but it will be two years before they are in commission.

We have some huge ships like the Arizona, Pennsylvania and the recently launched Mississippi. What will their size avail if a submarine torpedoes them? It is on the destroyers the fleet will have to depend to protect those great ships which will deliver the crushing blows in action.

The 14-inch guns of the Pennsylvania, constructed since criticism arose of lack of range of some of our guns, probably can shoot as far as the 15-inch guns of the Queen Elizabeth, the battleship of the British fleet that took so prominent a part in storming the Dardanelles.

The Queen Elizabeth has a speed of twenty-five knots or nearly twenty-nine miles per hour, and in this respect the British have shown themselves cleverer than ourselves. There is little question but that the Pennsylvania could sink the Queen Elizabeth if the English ship would agree to fight on even terms. But it is certain that the British vessels would not do this. It would steam away from our own battleship, trusting to its superior speed, and would pick its own time and conditions for fighting.

All our big ships would have to be held near the coast in time of war. We have enough submarines to protect them. Moreover, they probably would be kept under the shelter of the big guns of our fortifications like those at New York, Boston and the entrance to Chesapeake Bay.

With a cloud of our older destroyers in front of them, with nets arranged like the British have done along the English Channel and with mines laid as modern warfare has proved practicable, there would be little danger of any foreign power invading our shores.

Better Defense System.

TO BEGIN with, although there are fewer than in any of the few fleets likely to attack us, we have a much better system of defense. Any fleet desiring to attack us would have to steam a long distance across the ocean. Naturally, our submarines and destroyers would not be idle in that period.

There are no coaling stations for foreign powers on this side of the Atlantic—or Pacific, either. Pearl Harbor, at Hawaii, would prove a mighty hard nut for any foreign power to crack. The Western coast of the United States is, roughly speaking, 7000 miles from Japan.

The ease with which a foreign fleet could land on some of the unprotected portions of our coast cannot be denied. But the ease with which such a force could be wiped out cannot be denied, either.

Suppose some force landed and took possession of a tract in the low-lying lands south of Norfolk. What could they do? The huge guns that were hauled over the magnificent roads of Belgium to bombard Namur and other points, could not be used there. The mere weight of the weapons would submerge them.

As for entering Chesapeake Bay itself, that would be one thing that every American would like to see an enemy try in time of war. The narrow mouth of the harbor, the big guns of Fortress Monroe, the skillful mining of the entrance that is known to exist—all these would make an entrance by an enemy decidedly unhealthy.

The same could be said of the forts in San Francisco Bay, where the old fortifications known by the name of Fort Winfield Scott and Fort Baker still exist.

In a little concrete shelter far under the defenses at the Presidio, opposite San Francisco, there is an elaborate form of periscope that resembles what is known as the camera obscura. This was a device used by showmen in the old days and one of the devices was tried in St. Louis soon after the panorama on Washington avenue was abolished. It was a series of lenses, showing everything that passed on the street.

This showman's toy has been turned to advantage. In the little concrete cave that is spoken of, there is a mirror with lenses above it, showing every section of San Francisco Bay and its approaches. But that little mirror is also divided into squares. When a ship steams over one of those squares, its exact location is known. All that would be necessary in time of war would be to press a tiny button connected with a mine—and that ship would cease to exist except as good matter for the front pages of the newspapers.

Japanese Possibilities.

IF JAPAN took a notion to invade us, she might possibly send ships that would reach our coastal ranges. She could run ships close

to shore above or below San Francisco—if they were fast enough—and land troops. But what could the troops do?

They might ravage a few California towns and probably would. They could never cross the mountain ranges that lie between them and this section of the country. The nightmare that seems to exist in some California minds, about Japan getting a foothold on our shores and holding all the country west of those ranges, reckons entirely without our fleet. The fleet could easily go through the Panama Canal and Japan has nothing afloat, as yet, that could whip our ships. If Japanese actually landed they might prove a valuable asset in building good roads on the Western coast; for they surely would be made prisoners when the American ships shut off their source of supplies. Moreover, those who had invaded the California towns and "stood them on their heads" probably would have an uncomfortable time of it.

Japan will not be likely to invade California in a hurry, except by way of sending peaceful workers over here—and the American immigration laws have a good deal to say about that.

But suppose a war actually should start with some nation. What would be done in an inland city like St. Louis?

To begin with, plans have already been prepared and are on file in every army office showing what steps would be taken. In any case, where a declaration of war is proclaimed, there is a lawless element that tries to plunder portions of communities when the male defenders are sent to the front.

In New York, when drafting was attempted during the civil war, serious rioting occurred. The irresponsible element thought it was a good time for outbreaks and tried anarchy. They were quickly suppressed.

The plan laid out by the War Department is simple. We have many men in this country who know how to use firearms and who are expert shots with rifles and revolvers, although they never have had military training. Many of these men own weapons of their own.

In Germany and Austria, during the present war, troops of the regular army are said to have been used to keep down disorders in some sections of the country. This might be necessary in the United States, in case of war, if there is a large foreign-born population in any city.

The plan devised is to have all citizens possessing rifles or shotguns and who wish to serve their own government turn those weapons in to some branch established by the army and to have another weapon issued in exchange.

For instance, one leading manufacturer of repeating firearms has announced that more than 500,000 guns of the .44-40 caliber—a type of weapon developed in 1873—had been issued. A 32-20 model and a 38-40 model also were put on the market at the same time and had heavy sales. Ammunition for such weapons can be obtained everywhere.

If fifty weapons of 44-40 caliber can be collected from citizens who wish to form a "home guard," they will be issued to one company. All ammunition will be taken in at the same time. Thus every man in the company will have the same type of gun. The owner will be given a receipt for his own weapon, if it happens to be of different caliber, and it will be issued to another man.

The fact that the average American is accustomed to the use of firearms would prove of value in time of war. Men who would be hopelessly retired in other countries because of their lack of knowledge of weapons could readily be made into a "home guard" here.