

NEW BATTLE SHIP IN PORT

THE INDIANA PAYS HER FIRST VISIT TO NEW-YORK.

Gropes in Through the Fog and Anchors Astern the Flagship New-York Off Tompkinsville, S. I., Where She Attracts Much Attention—Minor Alterations to be Made—Inspected on the Run from Hampton Roads.

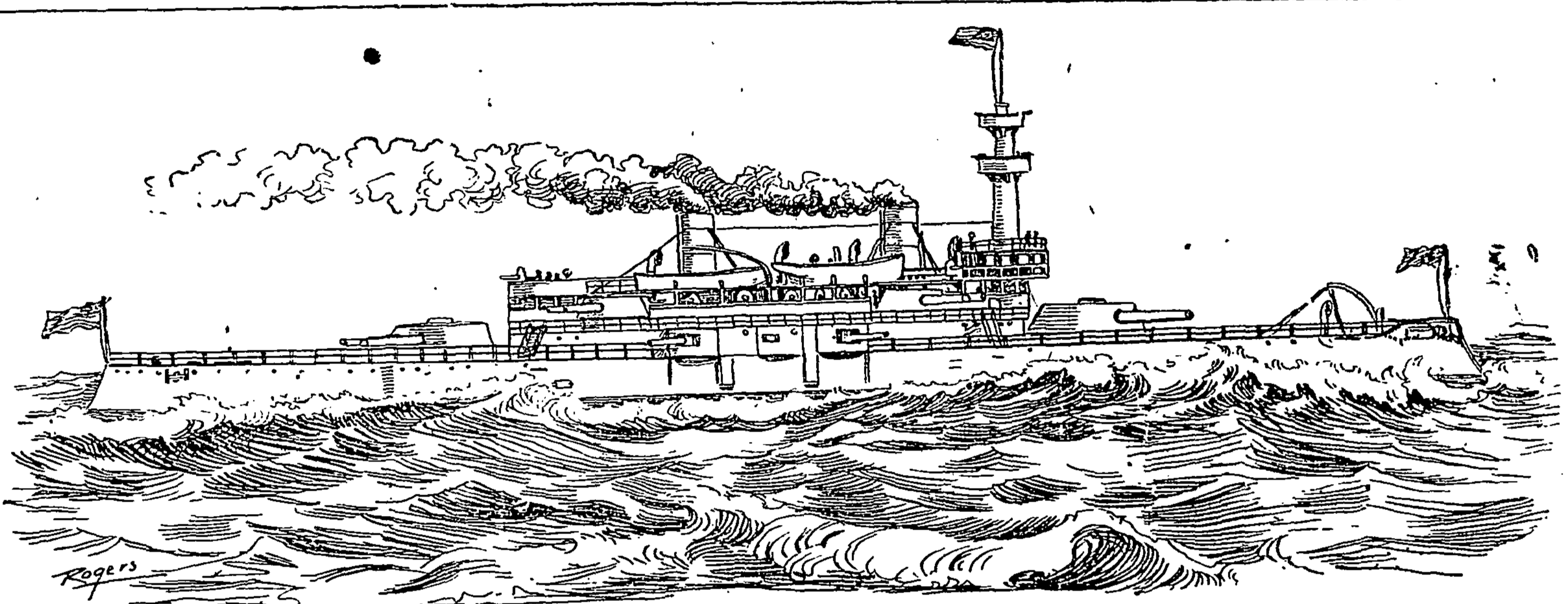
The United States battleship Indiana, the first of her class to be commissioned, made her first appearance in New-York Harbor yesterday. The big floating fortress groped her way through a thick fog which hung over the Narrows during the early forenoon hours, and shortly after 10 A. M. her ponderous anchor splashed into the water off Tompkinsville, S. I. The battleship took up a position astern of the flagship New-York, and in the berth vacated an hour or so before by the triple screw racer Columbia, which sailed yesterday morning for Hampton Roads, the present rendezvous for the ships of the North Atlantic Station.

The Indiana attracted much attention as she swung to her anchor off the Staten Island shore, and many were the comments made on her appearance. Contrasted with the armored cruiser New-York, which lay only a few ship lengths distant, the battleship seemed to be a craft much smaller than the cruiser. The latter has a very high freeboard, while the battleship floats deep in the water, and it is only upon drawing near that the vast difference in

dred little holes about the size of a thimble, caused by unconsumed grains of powder. The main armament of the Indiana consists of four thirteen-inch rifles, mounted in pairs in two immense turrets, one situated forward, the other aft; eight eight-inch rifles in pairs in barbette turrets, and four six-inch guns. The secondary battery comprises twenty six-pounders, six one-pounders, and six torpedo tubes. She carries a crew of 438 men, of whom 80 are marines. That is an unusually large number of sea soldiers for one ship, and especially a ship commanded by an officer who has put himself on record as being opposed to marines on shipboard. It appears that when the ship was being fitted out Capt. Evans made a protest to the department against any marines being ordered to her. The department answered the protest by assigning thirty-six to the vessel. Capt. Evans protested again, and the force was swelled to sixty, and a corresponding reduction made in the complement of seamen. Capt. Evans made no further protest, and what he thought about the matter he kept to himself.

Capt. Evans is more familiarly known as "Fighting Bob Evans." He formerly commanded the cruiser New-York, and after bringing that vessel to a high state of efficiency, he was detached and ordered to the Indiana. Lieut. Commander Swift, his chief executive of the New-York, who divided with Capt. Evans the honor of making the New-York a model for other cruisers to imitate, was ordered to accompany his chief to his more pretentious command.

Other officers of the battleship are Lieuts. S. P. Comly, J. C. Frémont, H. H. Hosley, R. Henderson, and F. L. Chapin; Ensigns D. C. Decker and O. P. Jackson; Cadets R. Stone, R. McLean, R. Spear, R. C. Bulmer, W. G. Groesbeck, and D. R. Merritt; Chief Engineer P. O. Rearic, Passed Assistant Engineers H. Hall and A. McAllister, Assistant Engineer J. R. Brady, Capt. R. Wallack of the Marine Corps and Second Lieut. W. C. Dawson, Paymaster H. G. Colby, Boatswain J. Dowling, Gunner W. Walsh, Carpenter W. Burroughs, Surgeon E. Brady, Passed Assistant Surgeon E. P. Stone, and Pay Clerk J. Dercinck.



THE BATTLESHIP INDIANA, Arrived Yesterday at This Port from Hampton Roads.

tonnage can be appreciated, the massive steel turrets and ponderous thirteen-inch rifles of the Indiana give more than a suggestion of the weight of armor, armament, and machinery which is carried by the deeply submerged and somewhat chubby-looking hull.

The Indiana is from the Port Royal dry dock, by way of Hampton Roads. She comes here to have her decks calked, some minor alterations made in her machinery and battery equipment, and to give her crew a bit of recreation on shore. The ship has been in commission since November last, and during that period has had no opportunity of giving the men a run on shore. Capt. Robley D. Evans and his executive officer, Lieut. Commander William Swift, both believe in that old adage about the tendency of all work and no play toward making Jack dull, and when the ship goes to the navy yard, which she will do to-day, the men will have shore leave in watches, one watch going when the other returns.

The battleship's run from Hampton Roads was made the occasion of an important investigation at the hands of the Naval Board of Inspection, of which Rear Admiral J. G. Walker is President. Accompanied by Commodore Phythian, Capt. Remy, Chief Engineer Farmer, Naval Constructor Woodward, and Lieut. Staunton, Admiral Walker boarded the ship at Hampton Roads on Saturday, just prior to her departure for New-York.

The board had orders to inquire into a number of things concerning the battleship, but its most important mission was to formulate and express in a report to the Secretary of the Navy its opinion regarding the mounting of the main battery guns and the present disposition of turrets. Upon this report will doubtless hinge the Secretary's decision as to whether the guns for the new battleships Kentucky and Kearsarge shall be mounted similar to those on the Indiana, or whether, as has been warmly advocated by some, the turrets for the eight-inch gun shall be superimposed upon the two big turrets which shield the thirteen-inch rifles. The proposed change would effect a vast saving in weight, and its advocates in the Construction Bureau have also claimed that there is a disadvantage in the way the guns of the Indiana are now mounted. These urge that when the eight-inch rifles are fired either directly ahead or directly astern the blast from the guns when fired in that direction endangers the lives of those who are stationed in the big turrets beneath, and over which the eight-inch rifles project when trained fore and aft.

The chief danger anticipated was to the officer in command of the lower turret. In action he would have to stand with his head in the hood, a projection on the top of the turret with small slits cut into it through which the officer fighting the turret guns can get a glimpse of the target. The theory that it was dangerous to occupy a position there was disproved by actual test on the Indiana's trip off the coast. The eight-inch rifles were loaded with full service charges and trained dead astern. Lieut. Henderson went to the hood in the after turret and remained there while the two pair of after eight-inch rifles were discharged at short intervals. The concussion was plainly felt, but the officer sustained no harm.

To a reporter for THE NEW-YORK TIMES Lieut. Commander Swift, the Indiana's courteous executive, said that he did not know what conclusion the board had reached. Its members had gone ashore soon after the vessel's arrival, with the intention of taking the first train to Washington. Lieut. Staunton, who had acted as its Secretary, had hurried on to Boston to act in a similar capacity to the board which is to test the speed capabilities of the Massachusetts, the Indiana's big sister.

This question of turrets has been agitating the Bureau of Construction and the Bureau of Ordnance for a considerable length of time. The former favors the superimposed turret by reason of the great saving in weight it gives, and the latter opposes it on the ground that it lessens the efficiency of the battery, arguing that a shot disabling the lower turret would throw out of action the guns in the upper turret. So far the Construction Bureau is ahead in the argument, and recently orders were given to build the Kearsarge and Kentucky with a view to mounting the guns on plans furnished by the Bureau of Construction. It is possible that those orders may be rescinded when the Walker board makes its report.

Although not knowing what opinion the Walker board has formed of the Indiana, that vessel's officers have some ideas of their own about the craft. Lieut. Commander Swift thinks the vessel is as good as any that floats, and says so. The big fighting machine, he says, is phenomenally steady in a seaway, and rolls when roll she must with a slow and easy motion, and lifts to the seas in a way which shows a reserve of buoyancy, despite her tremendous load of guns and armor. He instanced the trip to Port Royal from Norfolk, when the battleship encountered a heavy gale off Hatteras. Many ships have to meet the blast, but the Indiana grimly held her course, and, according to Mr. Swift, never rolled more than five degrees, although the waves were swaying high and frequently tumbled over the forecastle in roaring cat-acts.

And on the run up the coast, Mr. Swift says that were it not for the tremor of the engines one not looking over the side would not have known that the ship was at sea. He thinks that the board was impressed with the extraordinary steadiness and stability of the ship, qualities that are invaluable to a ship of war, as a steady gun platform is necessary for accurate firing. For, after all, a battleship is little more than a floating battery.

It was found that the concussion of the heavy thirteen-inch rifle, when fired ahead or astern, "dished" the battle hatches, which are placed over the forward and after hatches when the ship is cleared for action. Heavier ones have been built, and these will be fitted to the ship during her stay in the navy yard. The wooden deck around the hatches is freckled with a hun-