



Charles XV

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During the winter, the American vessels then cruised around the southern part of Europe. They visited, in order: Brest, France; Lisbon, Portugal; Cadiz, Spain; Gibraltar; Malaga, Cartagena, and Barcelona, Spain; the French ports of Marseilles and Toulon; Mahon on the Spanish island of Minorca; and the Italian ports of Genoa, Leghorn, Civita Vecchia, and Naples.

On 2 May, the ships left Naples for the return trip to Philadelphia. Their second trip across the Atlantic was made under very favorable weather conditions except for two days—the second day out of Naples and the day before arriving in Delaware. The *Miantonomoh* was in tow, "as a matter of convenience and precaution rather than necessity," the greater part of the way—1,900 miles. The return trip was somewhat slower; her average speed dropped from seven to six-and-a-half knots.

Coal was taken on at Barbados Island, after 13 days and two hours at sea. The *Miantonomoh* took on 417 tons, of which she burned 348 tons, or 24 tons per day, on the return trip. Improvised sails were made of her awnings. From Nassau the vessels took a direct route to Philadelphia, arriving in that port on 22 July 1867.

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One outgrowth of the mission was the report and the recommendations Fox would make to Secretary Welles on the monitors' potential as seagoing fighting cruisers. He noted that, in a moderate gale, head-on to the seas, the monitor would take about four feet of solid water. This would be broken as it swept along the deck but, after reaching the turret, the water's force was still sufficient to prevent the firing of the 15-inch guns in a forward position. The turret guns were more easily and safely handled in a seaway than guns of a broadside vessel.

The axis of the bore of the 15-inch guns was six-and-one-half feet above the water, and the extreme lurch observed when lying broadside to a heavy sea and moderate gale was seven degrees to windward and four degrees to leeward, (or a mean of five-and-one-half



Napoleon III

successful gun is just half this size . . . . Another advantage the Americans have is light tonnage with heavy armament; the *Miantonomoh* is but fifteen hundred tons with four, hundred and eighty pounders. The latest model the English have is a light cruiser, twenty-four hundred tons burden, with guns one quarter the size of the *Miantonomoh*'s. Consequently, the Americans are far ahead of us in combining light tonnage with heavy armament. Of course, there are other points for consideration, where the Monitor might not appear to so much advantage. The speed of the *Miantonomoh*, for instance, in her voyage across the Atlantic was but seven an hour, and her maximum is only put at nine. Either the *Warrior* or the *Achilles*, therefore, would run across her with ease. Then her enormous guns are of a very peculiar pattern and capacity. They are made to throw very heavy shot with a very low velocity, a principle not approved by artillerists in this country. In fact, we have no evidence of the actual power of the Dahlgren gun against really good armour-plating, nor is it certain that the 300-pounders of the *Bellerophon*, if tried against the Hercules target, would not prove as effective as the 450-pounders of the *Miantonomoh*. What the Americans have shown is this—that they can send 450-pound guns to sea in a 1,500 vessel."

The *London Times* article went on to discuss American naval policy:

"The Americans, however, are reconstructing their

navy on a double principle. They have their Monitors but they also have cruisers built especially for speed, though carrying very powerful guns . . . it is clear that the Americans . . . are recognizing two classes of vessels—one built solely for offensive and defensive power, the other for power in combination with extraordinary speed. Our first-rate Ironclads are probably unequalled for the union of all these qualities together.

"We have no doubt that many a fault could be found in American and Italian ironclads, but, in the meantime, their weight of metal is far in excess of ours, and there is a strong and growing presumption that in future actions weight of metal may carry the day."

The *Miantonomoh* next sailed to Cherbourg with John Bigelow, U. S. Minister to France. On Friday, 6 July, in the presence of Bigelow, Fox had an interview with Emperor Napoleon III. In the course of their conversation, Napoleon expressed great interest in the *Miantonomoh* and no little surprise that she had crossed the ocean with only two feet of freeboard.

Fox told him that he "had crossed sixty-four times, but never so comfortably nor with such a sense of security as in this monitor."

Later in the week, Fox met with the Emperor's cousin, Prince Napoleon. This roly-poly, look-alike of his uncle, Bonaparte, had been christened Jerome, but was known irreverently as "Plon-Plon." Capricious and irascible, Plon-Plon told Fox, "Do not be too friendly with Russia."

Fox replied: "Russia and America have no rival interest. Russia has always been friendly to America, and we reciprocate the feeling."

"But you can stand alone," Prince Napoleon said, "You do not want friends."

Fox answered: "When it was doubtful whether we should ever stand again, at a time when most powerful nations menaced us, Russia felt and expressed her sympathy for us, and America will never forget it."

After a few moments silence, Plon-Plon retorted, "Russia is for herself alone." And the subject was changed.

After his interview with Napoleon III, Fox returned to Cherbourg accompanied by many French dignitaries, all of whom examined the vessel. Perhaps it is not surprising that the country that produced Nicolas Chauvin, and gave to the world the word "Chauvinism," should produce many other "experts" who would announce publicly that they thought that their country's most powerful ship could sink her in action. These French superpatriots pointed out that the American monitor would only make 8½ knots, whereas, in 1863,



U.S. Maintenance

12 May 1885

Fore Noon Watch

- 0745 Arrived at shore in Thunder Beach, Virginia.
- 0800 Arrived in land on station! All hands departed for.
- 0830 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 0840 Commenced putting out setting of the ship.
- 0845 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 0900 Commenced putting out training exercises in forward main battery. For deck drill training exercises.
- 0908 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 0930 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 0943 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 0945 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 1005 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 1015 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 1028 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 1044 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 1100 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 1115 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 1125 Arrived returned to the ship.
- 1142 Arrived returned to the ship.



Napoleon III

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Tsar Alexander II

On approaching port, the *Augusta* ran up the Russian ensign and fired the national salute of 21 guns. The public had been notified that the fleet would arrive, and a steamboat—with a band on board playing "Hail Columbia"—went out to meet the Americans. The pier was crowded with cheering spectators. The *Miantonomob* was visited by many dignitaries and her crew was congratulated on their safe arrival. Invitations were sent by the government to visit the different cities.

Fox and Commanders Murray and Beaumont went ashore to pay their respects to the military governor of Kronstadt, after which they went to St. Petersburg by steamer.

On arriving in the Russian capital, Fox paid his respects to U. S. Minister Cassius Clay, and gave him a written report of his arrival.

In St. Petersburg, Fox, Clay, Commanders Murray and Beaumont, and other Americans went to the palace of Peterhof to present the Congressional Resolution to Alexander II. Court officials met the party at the railway station, and they traveled by carriage to the palace, where they were received by the Tsar and His Excellency Prince Gortchakoff, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Fox read the Resolution in English and the Tsar responded in a speech which was translated by Prince Gortchakoff into English as follows: "His Majesty said that he rejoiced at the friendly relations existing between Russia and the United States, and he was pleased to see that those relations were so well appreciated in America." The Tsar closed by remarking that the cordial reception which had been given to his



Prince Gortchakoff

squadrons in the United States would never be effaced from his memory.

While at Kronstadt the *Miantonomob* went into the navy yard to have some work done and have the towing cable repaired. The Russians fashioned a new towing cable—13 inches in diameter and 165 fathoms long, fitted with bridles—but refused to accept payment for it. This generosity was typical of the Russian hospitality and entertainment that were showered upon the Americans.

On 8 August 1866, after his audience with the Tsar, Fox sent a telegram to Secretary of State Seward. This first message ever transmitted from Russia to America over the newly-laid Atlantic cable informed Secretary of State Seward:

"RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS PRESENTED  
PERSONALLY TO EMPEROR OF RUSSIA AT  
ONE TODAY.

FOX."

Fox, his secretaries, Commanders Murray and Beaumont, Clay, and Jeremiah Curtin, Secretary of the U. S. Legation at St. Petersburg, then proceeded to Kronstadt to join the squadron, and assist at the reception for the Tsar, who had indicated his desire to visit the ships.

The Emperor first boarded the *Miantonomob*, and after examining the monitor, he and his retinue proceeded to the *Augusta*. From the deck of the *Augusta*, the Tsar witnessed an Imperial Salute, fired by the *Miantonomob*'s 15-inch guns. It was the first salute ever rendered by this class of gun.



The Russian fleet was ordered home in April 1864. A year later, President Lincoln was shot by an assassin and Russia sent condolences. On 16 April 1866, Alexander was saved from the attack of an assassin. Cassius Clay, U. S. Minister to Russia, sent a dispatch to Secretary of State William N. Seward reporting what had happened. In response, the Congress not only voted to send its congratulations to the Emperor but, for added significance, resolved to send a special envoy in a national vessel to carry the dispatch.

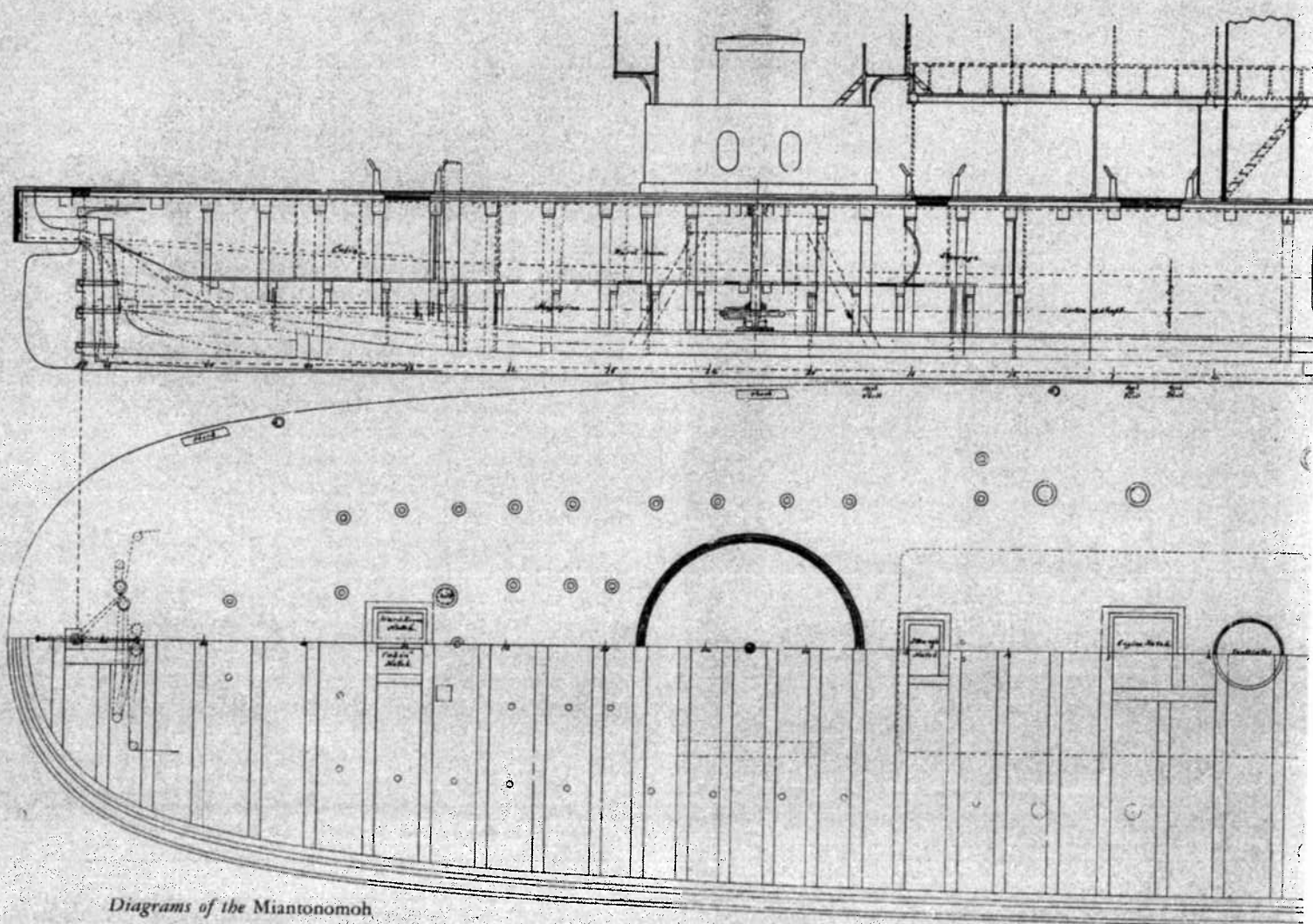
The Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Gustavus Vasa Fox, whose efficient administration of this office and role in the development of the monitor during the Civil War had won recognition both at home and abroad, was chosen as the American emissary.\* Fox asked for, and got, permission to make the journey in a monitor, a class of vessel which had never before crossed the Atlantic. One of his reasons for the selec-

tion of a monitor was to give European nations a look at this latest achievement of New World enterprise and ingenuity. The vessel chosen was the *Miantonomoh*. Two wooden men-of-war, the *Augusta* and the *Ashuelot*, were to accompany her.

Earlier, on 9 March 1862, Fox had been impressed by the new monitors while witnessing the action between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* at Hampton Roads. He had turned over the monitor program to John Ericsson. Probably because Ericsson did not bother to make tests on the construction, but simply turned out drawings from which they were built, most of the early ones had poor ventilation, were very slow, burned a lot of coal, and were not always buoyant. It was Fox, too, who had persuaded John Dahlgren to design a 15-inch gun for monitors.

The Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, gave Fox additional instructions. He was to collect information about the most important naval stations in Europe; to observe their methods of building, repairing, and

\* See J. D. Hayes, "Captain Fox—He IS the Navy Department," U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings, September 1965, pp. 64-71.



Diagrams of the *Miantonomoh*

MINISINK HILLS, PA 18341  
9 July 1974

Dear Mr De Christopher,

I wish to  
thank you again for the  
opportunity of firing your  
Gatling gun. It was a unique  
experience particularly since  
one can vary the rate of fire  
so directly. Tom McCool and  
I have had a number of discussions  
about the gun and also about  
the monitors. Since your Gatling  
was mounted in the USS MANTONOMOH  
I thought you would be interested  
in the enclosed article about that  
ship. (Unfortunately the pictures of the  
MANTONOMOH and her sister the MONADNOCK  
from the June 1961 Naval Institute Proceedings  
do not show anything recognizable as  
your Gatling)

Thanks again.

Sincerely,  
Matthew J. Schindling  
Captain USN (Retired)



a pilot was taken on board the *Augusta* and headed her for Cork harbor. The vessels arrived at Queenstown, Ireland, at 4:00 p.m., after a voyage of ten days and eighteen hours. The monitor had been in tow for 1,000 miles and had only enough coal left to steam two days. Thus, it is questionable whether she could have made the voyage alone in rough weather. The *Augusta* had a ten-day supply of coal left. The American vessels dropped anchor near the English flagship *Black Prince* and rendered a 13-gun salute, which was promptly returned.

*Europe.* Although the *Miantonomoh* must have looked insignificant between the two splendid English broadside ironclads, *Achilles* and *Black Prince*, her powerful guns could easily have obliterated both of them.

When Fox and Commander Murray called on the admiral in command at Queenstown, they found him high on a bluff, spyglass in hand, examining the monitor. After introductions, the British admiral asked Fox, "Did you cross the Atlantic in that thing?" Fox replied that he had, indeed, to which the admiral retorted, "I doubt if I would!"

Fox left the *Miantonomoh* at Queenstown and, after visiting Dublin, went to London, where a dinner was given in his honor. He was also presented to Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace and given a tour of Royal Navy dockyards and vessels.

Before the *Miantonomoh* and *Augusta* left Queenstown for Portsmouth and the *Ashuelot* sailed for Lisbon, an English journalist reflected:

"A strange vessel, with a stranger name has just arrived. What *Miantonomoh* may actually signify we shall not proceed to inquire; what she represents is a matter of very great importance, indeed. She is a real, genuine monitor—a true specimen of that singular fleet on which Americans rely for their position on the seas. As these vessels resemble no other floating thing, it follows almost inevitably that, if the American shipbuilders are right, ours must be wrong, and it is our imperative duty to investigate the subject without prejudice or delay."

European countries were also building ironclads at this time, but they were large, deep-draught, high-sided, iron-plated, floating batteries. France had built *La Gloire*, in 1859, and the British had built the 32-gun, 6,109-ton *Warrior* in 1860. A good deal of controversy raged over the merit of these ships. From 1860 to 1866, the Admiralty had built both large, wooden ships, protected by iron plates, and some iron hulls; but, significantly, after 1866, no large wooden-hull ships would be laid down. The *Bellerophon*, built in England

in 1865, carried 9-inch rifled guns.

On Friday, 29 June, Fox, the Duke of Somerset, the Comptroller-General of the Royal Navy, Rear Admiral R. S. Robinson, and several other high Admiralty officials, went to Portsmouth to board the *Miantonomoh*. The vessel was thoroughly inspected, and her guns fired. The Duke of Somerset, who was First Lord of the Admiralty, remarked to Fox that he did not think any cast iron made in England could endure such detonations.

At the Portsmouth Naval Station, British experts were allowed to board and inspect the *Miantonomoh* and many Englishmen agreed with the panicky *London Times* writer who bleated, "The wolf is in our fold, the whole flock at its mercy."

Perhaps, as some argued, the *Miantonomoh* was superior to any fighting machine then possessed by England; but, after apparently reconsidering the matter, the *London Times* offered a far less strident appraisal of the vessel:

"The American Monitor is literally a floating gun carriage, nothing more. She has not the least resemblance to any ordinary man-of-war either in shape or arrangements, but she does carry guns—enormous ones, too, and the *Miantonomoh* has carried them across the Atlantic. These guns weigh upward of twenty tons, they have a bore of fifteen inches, and throw a four hundred and eighty pound shot. The monitor has two of these guns in each of her turrets. Now, if the calibre of a gun is to decide the advantage in action, we have certainly nothing to match the battery of the *Miantonomoh*. Our latest and most



Queen Victoria

W. S. Mendenhall

12 May 1885

Fore Noon Watch

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 0845 | Blacked out. Arrived at shore in the ship's boat, Virginia.   |
| 0800 | Whitened in house on tobacco! All hands descended for.  |
| 0830 | Returned to the ship.   |
| 0840 | Commenced training and setting traps for mice.  |
| 0845 | Whitened blacked out again and put out coal.  |
| 0900 | Commenced training species in formal training. For blacked out for training number 1.   |
| 0908 | Received blacked out again - put out traps and commenced training coal.   |
| 0930 | Captain departed the ship.  |
| 0943 | Commenced training species in formal training. First number one trained is and second. Commenced training species in formal training. Second number two trained.  |
| 0945 | Whitened blacked out - all training and formal training put out to formal.  |
| 1005 | Received ship's boat again to the shore. Ship's boat is a great quantity of coal in the ship's boat. Ship's boat received with the ship's boat. Ship's boat is a great quantity of coal in the ship's boat.   |
| 1015 | Commenced training traps and mice.  |
| 1028 | Caught the first of the mice and put out traps.   |
| 1044 | Whitened in house on tobacco for Captain's ship to the ship.  |
| 1100 | Commenced ship's work. Ship's boat to the ship.   |
| 1115 | Ship's boat is a great quantity of coal in the ship's boat. Received one of the ship's boat. Ship's boat is a great quantity of coal in the ship's boat. Received one of the ship's boat. Ship's boat is a great quantity of coal in the ship's boat. |
| 1125 | Returned to the ship.   |
| 1142 | Blacked out again for the ship. Received one of the ship's boat. Ship's boat is a great quantity of coal in the ship's boat.  |