

Mormon Missionaries Witness Big U. S. Fleet Steam Into Sydney Harbor

Special Correspondence.

SYDNEY Sept. 1—Those of your readers who are fresh from their ancient history may remember whether or not it was Pompey who said, in the memorable words, "I came, I saw, I conquered." It but my privilege to use the words as best expressing the triumph of the fleet's entry into, and its stay in the famous harbor of Sydney, I venture to say that nothing heretofore, not even Commonwealth day, has so stirred up the masses to such a pitch of enthusiasm. It was a royal reception worthy in every sense of the naval representation of the government of the land which is "choicer above all other lands." Its heartiness, no less than the display in connection with it, makes it second to none in the minds of those of the fleet with whom we conversed. If the boys for most of them are boys in years have captured the hearts of the people of Sydney by the remarkable absence from rowdiness, and their "war" is not less true that many of them have been captured by the hospitality of the Australians.

IDEAL WEATHER.

The weather during almost the entire time of the fleet's stay, was ideal, much resembling the best of our May days, and it added greatly to the free rein which everyone gave to holiday making. Tens of thousands of people joined in the merry making, and the prices of meals went up from 25 to 50 per cent in the restaurants.

All things, however, in this life come to an end, and the fleet's visit is now only a memory, though an extremely pleasant one. Uncle Sam has been honored, and the people felt out of the huge vessels steamed, out of the Heads today on their way to Melbourne, where the Sydney reception will be duplicated in heartiness and good will, though the changeability of the weather and the absence of a beautiful harbor will lessen its success from a spectacular point of view.

THE ARRIVAL.

In Sydney, on the night of August 19th, the fever of expectation was high. The city was thronged with vast crowds of people, and it is probably no exaggeration to say that the majority of them retired with the determination to catch the first boat, or "train," to the Heads to witness the entrance into Sydney harbor of the great white fleet.

OBJECTIVE POINTS.

Sydney, it must be remembered, lies about 7 miles west of the entrance from the ocean. Two high rocky headlands form the North and South "Heads," and they are situated about a mile apart. It was these heights that were the principal objective points for the crowds who began to move with a common impulse at 8 o'clock on the morning of Aug. 20. Some indeed, there were, who stayed at the South Head all night. There was an element of uncertainty about the time, for although it was arranged with the admiral by cable to New Zealand that the fleet should enter at 11.30, it was bruited that Admiral Sperry might enter the heads two hours earlier. This rumor, vague as it was, gave zest to the movement of the masses, amongst whom were 17 Mormon missionaries then in Sydney. They, or some of them, were astir very early, determined, if possible, to come early and avoid the rush. Unfortunately, it appeared as if all Australia had come to Sydney and that they were all working that morning on the same plan. The trains (street cars) were all crowded to the utmost from the start. The most elaborate preparations had been made by the railway department (the trains and trams are run by the government here) for handling the throngs of people that climbed aboard en route to the metropolis. They succeeded

very well in getting the crowds from the suburbs to the center of town and to the ferries, by which they were taken to North Head, Bradley's Head and to South Head, as well as to other points of vantage. As the South Head lies on the same side of the harbor as Sydney, it was the most popular point. It was crowded out the day before that the trams could only move 80,000 people out there before noon. This reminder by the authorities that the rush of the fleet would be a deterrent in the least for tens of thousands of people perhaps, walked all of the distance there and back, a distance of 14 miles. The road home was marked by numbers of fainting and exhausted women, and many private houses were made to do temporary service as hospitals where relief might be administered to many who had found the rush of early morning to see the sea without any breakfast, and the rush back without any lunch, too much for them.

RUSH FOR STEAMERS.

The writer and a few friends had planned to go to North Head, taking the 7.30 steamer from the "Circular Quay." At that early hour the large ferry steamer was crowded to the limit, and many were denied admission when she steamed away. Another one took her place immediately and the same jostle for deck room began again, but ended when she was full, in about 10 minutes. And this was only one line of steamers. The same thing was doubtless going on at many other places.

MASS OF HUMANITY.

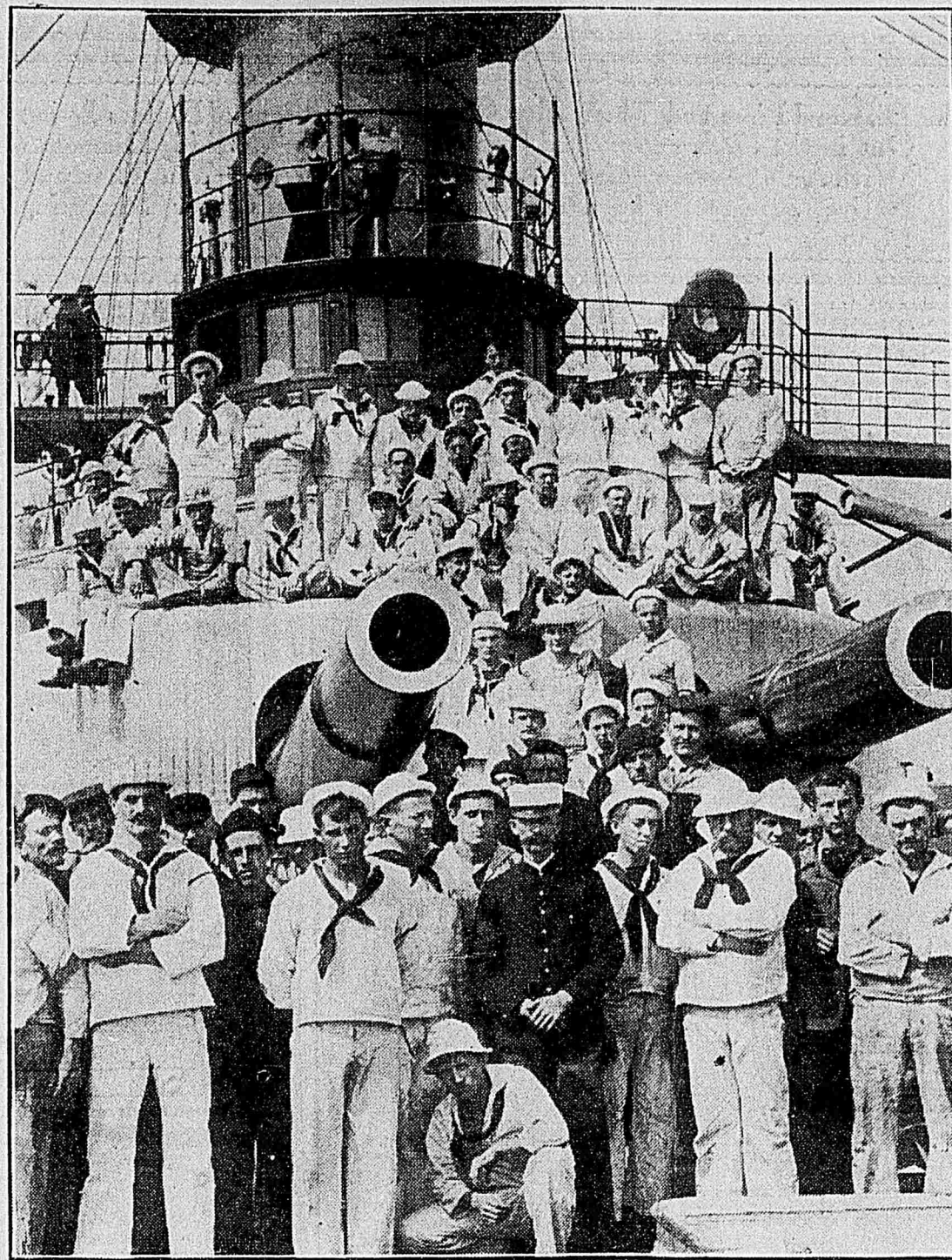
The 55-minute run to Manly was very pleasant in the keen bracing air of that beautiful spring morning. Once there, we followed the crowd on a stiff climb to the road leading to the extremity of the North Head, the thousands of acres of which were used as a quarantine station. As such it is surely an ideal location. Once on the road an interesting sight presented itself. The winding of the road through the low brush was marked for a mile or more ahead by a black mass of moving human beings. It looked not unlike a huge serpent winding around in its course to the distant hill. Once there it was found that there was a fine tract of cleared land stretching away to the water on an angle of about 35 degrees, sufficient to afford a good view of the entrance, which it overlooked, for the whole of the population of Australia—yet everybody along the road seemed to be in a hurry.

SNAP SHOTS EN ROUTE.

The wraps and overcoats which were so comfortable on the street cars and on the boats, were now found to be cumbersome. Yet every one pressed on as if his life depended on his being on time. One man with his little girl astraddle his shoulders, attracted my attention, and the thought of what I would give to have my little girls, now so far away from me, where I could be able to find pleasure by giving them pleasure, as he was doing, induced me to speak to him as I passed, and made me wonder what he would do. Another old man—a farmer evidently—tall and stooping under the weight of 70 summers at least, hastened, all animation, to keep pace with a tall girl beside him, evidently his daughter. Out of sympathy for him a gentleman leaned over his gate as he passed and said, "You do not need to hurry, there is plenty of room out there." The words did not make him slacken his steps, however. The cheery, though coarse tones of the peasant, old and young, and fruit vendors, made the morning air, but few stopped to buy them. The getting to the end of the journey was the absorbing question, and to a great extent all thoughts of edibles on the way.

IMPRESSIVE SIGHT.

When the end of the journey was reached and a seat was found, though the kindness of a friend, an impressive sight lay around us and across the water in front of us. Thousands of people were before us in getting to the point, and these were to be augmented within a few hours by tens of thousands more on the way. Across the water on the South Head were many more than we saw around us, dimly



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SOME BOYS OF THE FLEET.

seen through the haze which hung over everything. As the morning progressed the haze from the city lifted, and by the aid of a powerful pair of glasses we could discern on the opposite shore, the famous Kilties band, then visiting Sydney. Various bands discoursed sweet music which helped to add to the joyousness of the occasion and helped the time to pass. The horizon to the south was quickly scanned, but there was no sign of the fleet. It had been agreed that the fleet should make the coast south of Sydney and thus, by steaming up the coast, allow the people between Botany Bay and Port Jackson a chance to see the vessels as they went by at a distance of about two miles from shore. We did as others were doing; we ate chocolates which my friend bought and waited. An hour or more had passed in this way, when, hurriedly

scanning the horizon, as I had done for the "tenth time, it seemed as if something white was faintly discernible through the mist. It might be a house on the opposite shore, but as there was no shore in this direction, it must be the fleet, or the advance guard. As time passed, one or two more dim white objects came into sight with the glasses. Then presently a whole line of them could be made out in the dim distance. A half hour passed, and then the whole line of 16 ships could be counted. The excitement of the crowd grew apace. Every eye was strained in the direction of the coming vessels in the attempt to penetrate the haze which now began to rise rapidly. The first excitement over, the people began to settle down to await their closer arrival. Three-quarters of an hour passed and then the fleet was opposite the

entrance and close in. The ships appeared to be separated by equal distances. It was yet too early to enter, agreeable to the program, so they steamed out to sea, and making a turn promptly at the appointed time, they glided in under our very noses, and so close to the huge rock wall on which we stood, and against which the Pacific, now in one of its gentlest moods, was lazily dashing a moderate swell against its base, that it looked as if one could almost throw a stone onto the decks of the Connecticut which led the way in. She was followed by the Kansas, Minnesota, and Vermont. The Georgia headed the second division the Louisiana the third, and the Wisconsin the fourth. It was a very impressive sight to see them glide in responding so beautifully to the helm as they turned to enter the east channel of the harbor. Each ship was in charge of a pilot, who took his ship to be anchored without the least hitch, amid the shrieking of steamship boat whistles, the playing of music and, as the flagship reached her moorings, the booming of cannon.

The sight over, the crowds made their way to the famous Manly beach, where many of them decided to spend the day picnicking, which all Australians dearly love.

ENTERTAINMENT ON SHORE.

On the day following the arrival about 2,500 marines from the boats met in the domain, with a number of commonwealth soldiers, and the naval brigade, where the formal welcome to the fleet was made. This function was attended by the notable people of the commonwealth, including the governor-general. After these formalities, the men formed and marched through the principal streets of the city, which were gaily and expensively decorated for the occasion, with flags galore, bunting and evergreens. More impressive to me than the flags and bunting were the illuminations at night. Large electric signs assured the visitors of the heartiness of the welcome. All the principal buildings, including many of the business houses, were lit up magnificently. In the harbor a very striking effect was seen at the admiralty house overlooking the harbor, and the brilliantly lighted battleships formed a feature which the masses of people of the city never seemed to tire of looking at. Tens of thousands of them walked out to the Domain night after night to gaze at them.

There was also a great review at the Centennial park, and a procession through the streets for the commonwealth men, which was quite instructive. Sports of all kinds were provided for the men. Many homes were thrown open to them, and these formed a greater attraction to the men than the public functions to which they were invited, or than the free theaters to which they had the entire. The street cars were at their service free. The police protection was perfect. None of the men were taken up if they were at all decent, and when they were they were turned over to the patrol officers from the ships, who worked in unison with the police.

ADA DWYER GREET'S FLEETS.

By a rare good chance Ada Dwyer and the "Mrs. Wiggins" company opened their engagement in Sydney the same night that the American sailors came

on shore. I need not tell you that the boys flocked and thronged to Her Majesty's theater, where the popular American play was holding forth. The theater was decorated with American flags and shields bearing the names of the different states. The reception that Miss Dwyer and the various American players received as they stepped on the stage, was of the half-lifting order. The papers are crammed with notices laudatory of Miss Dwyer and the other members of the cast. Miss Dwyer is featured in all the papers and a sketch of her printed in the Sydney Morning Herald tells that she was born in Salt Lake, educated in Boston, and received hints on elocution from Bella Bateman, then supporting Edwin Booth. Miss Dwyer states that her stage career began with the A. M. Palmer production of "The Private Secretary," but that she considers her best work done in the part of Roxey in "Pudd'nhead Wilson."

"Mrs. Wiggins" has proved so popular here that New Zealand will no doubt be visited, in which event Miss Dwyer and the company will not return to America until well into the new year. WM. ARMSTRONG.

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