

At the Mast

Notes:

*The entire book is written on the backside of, what seems to be, life insurance receipts.
The receipts read as follows:*

Guardian Mutual Life Insurance Company
of New York.
BRANCH OFFICE No. 620 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA.

Philadelphia, _____ 187

RECEIVED from _____
dollars and _____ cents, it being the amount of
Premium due the _____ day of _____ 187 insuring his life
until the _____ day of _____ 187
\$ _____ Agent

Cover Page

*Two ship illustrations
Fort Washin [sic]*

[Originally written in all caps; this transcript maintains the manuscript's original punctuation]

AT THE MAST

[page 1]

It was in the year 1898 that war was declared between Chipewa and Big Continent and both governments were thrown into hurried activity—recruiting from the working-classes, hurrying freshly- formed companies to the military camps and preparing ships of war for battle.

Chipewa was fighting against a nation much stronger than itself but its citizens gave freely of both money and ships and as-history can testify to the grand results attained.

It was of the cruiser “New York” that I am about to write.

The New York’s captain was Harry Nelson—a great, broad-shouldered sailor, deep of chest and of great muscular ability—one of the best commanders

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in the Chipewa Navy.

[*Illustration of Capt. Nelson*] As to the crew; they were all brave, daring men who, if they were ordered to, would stand before a cannon's mouth with no outward sign of fear.

It was on a bright, August day that the "New York" finished her repairs and dropping down the river, from her dock, with the tide she was soon in open sea, the engines started at nearly full speed and the cruiser was off. The last mountain-peaks of the Chipewa coast dropped down behind the vast, rolling expanse of billows before noon and

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except for a few fishing-[smacks?] whose sails glimmered in the hazy distance like birds the "New York" was alone.

"Now" said Captain Nelson, casting his eye down upon the busy scene the deck presented with its scores of green-bloused sailors, its tall masts and smoking funnels "Now, unless I'm mistaken, we're in for some fun!"

"Think we'll meet the big continent squadron?" His first lieutenant asked who had just joined the captain on the bridge.

"I hope so!" The captain rejoined smiling [*illustration of Captain Nelson on the ship*]

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with evident pride at the fine ship he sailed.

Chap. 2.

As the days wore on with no appearance of the big continent fleet there was less talk and thought about it and the ship-board life settled down to its usual routine.

Then one day, just at sunrise, a hazy [column?] of smoke drifted up against the dawn from far down behind the rolling stretch of waters and while the watchful men in the fighting tops were lazily watching it another smoke appeared then another and another until ten steadily rising wreaths of brown were in ~~sight~~ sight.

The lookout had already told the captain and officers of the approaching fleet and they were all on deck, gazing forward with an excitement that was quickly shared by the

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crew, as the pillars of distant smoke rose until black hulls were seen beneath.

"It's surely the big continent squadron captain Nelson exclaimed when his lieutenant reported the fleets within ten miles of each other and this supposition correct when, five minutes later, a flash of red [spot?] up to the mast-head of the leading ship and the next moment a puff of smoke jerked up into the air from its bow and a few minutes a smell burst over the "New York" with a deafening roar.

The Chipewa fleet immediately answered with its thirteen-inch guns and officers and men worked with breathless energy. Huge volumes of smoke poured from the funnels of the ships and [*illustration titled "A puff of Smoke"; picture of the thirteen-inch gun*]

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they fairly shook with the throbbing of the straining engines.

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[illustration of a flag at full mast; looks like a smoking cannon and a sailors legs]