

118.03  
A. I do, sir.

67. Q. Did you draw that fix?

A. Yes, sir.

I offer in evidence this chart and ask that it be attached to the record as Exhibit "F".

There being no objection the chart was admitted in evidence as Exhibit "F".

The board informed the witness that he was privileged to make any further statement covering anything relating to the subject matter of record in connection therewith, which had not been fully brought out by the previous questioning.

The witness stated he had nothing further to say.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

The board then, at 11 p.m., June 30, 1943, adjourned until 9:30 a.m., July 1, 1943.



SECOND DAY

U. S. S. PC 815  
San Diego, California  
July 1, 1943

The Board of Investigation boarded the U.S.S. PC 815 at 9:35 a.m., and proceeded to sea to establish the location of the pyramid target at which the U.S.S. PC 815 fired on at about 1619 on June 28, 1943. At 11:45 a.m., the Board of Investigation convened on board the U.S.S. PC 815 at sea off San Diego.

Present:

Commander Jacob E. Cooper, U. S. Navy, senior member, Lieutenant Gene M. Harris, D-V(S), U. S. Naval Reserve, and Lieutenant Frank G. Morris, jr., D-V(G), U. S. Naval Reserve, members; and Ensign Noel J. Dyer, Ensign, D-V(S), U. S. Naval Reserve, recorder. Lieutenant L. Ron Hubbard, D-V(G), U. S. Naval Reserve, interested party.

The recorder introduced Arthur E. Colton, Y2c, V-6, U. S. Naval Reserve, as reporter.

The interested party introduced Lieutenant Stanley T. Tomlinson, D-V(S), U. S. Naval Reserve, and requested that he be admitted as his counsel, with permission of the board.

No witnesses not otherwise connected with the investigation were present.

The recorder stated that the record of proceedings of the first day of the investigation was not ready. The interested party waived his right to have them read before the board, and the board proceeded with the second day's proceedings.

At 11:47 a.m., the board proceeded to the navigating bridge of the U.S.S. PC 815, which was in the vicinity of the targets mentioned in previous testimony, for the purpose of establishing the geographical position of those targets. Two pyramid targets were located and identified by the Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. PC 815 on a line of bearing  $095^{\circ}-275^{\circ}$ , distance 1,000 yards apart. The Westernmost target, point "B" of Exhibit "F" was determined by cross bearing on the Los Coronados Islands to be approximately in Lat.  $32-28-15$  N., Long.  $117-12-18$  W. and the Easternmost of the two targets, point "C" of Exhibit "F", bore  $095^{\circ}$  from the Western target, distance about 1,000 yards.

The Captain of the U.S.S. PC 815 was then directed to place the ship in the same position with respect to the targets and the Coronados Islands and on the same course as when the firing of the 3" 50 cal. was conducted on 28 June.

The Commanding Officer then took his ship to the position, Point "D" of Exhibit "F", and stated that he was about in the same position and on approximately the same course as when the firing was conducted. Point "D" was determined to be in Lat.  $32^{\circ}-29'30''$  North Long.  $117^{\circ}-10'-50''$  West. The approximate course during the firing, as demonstrated was  $300^{\circ}$  True; and that from Point "D" the South Tangent of South Coronados Island bore  $206\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  true, distant 13,500 yards; North tangent of South Coronados Island bore  $219-3/4^{\circ}$  True distant 11,000 yards; and the right tangent of North Coronados Island bore  $247\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  True; and the bearing of the Western target from the ship was  $212\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  True and from the Eastern target  $225\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  True.

The PC 815 then proceeded, as directed, to the point where the ship had anchored on the 28th of June, 1943. The anchorage position was determined to be approximately 500 yards off shore to the eastward of South Coronados Island, Point "A" of Exhibit "F", with the lighthouse structure on the Northeast point of South Coronados Island bearing  $326^{\circ}$  True and the left tangent of South Coronados Island bearing  $185^{\circ}$  True.



Compass error was determined to be 3/4° W by observation of ranges in the San Diego harbor channel and other navigational ranges on several occasions while proceeding into the harbor at about 1630, 1 July.

A witness called by the recorder entered, was duly sworn, and was informed of the subject matter of the investigation.

Examined by the recorder.

1. Q. Will you state to the board your name, rank, and present station.  
A. Charles Elwood Weymouth, Ensign, Instructor for visiting ships at the West Coast Sound School.
2. Q. Were you aboard the PC 815 on June 28, 1943?  
A. Yes, I was.
3. Q. What were you doing aboard that ship that day?  
A. I was there as an instructor in indoctrination in sound.
4. Q. Were you engaged in indoctrinating the crew in sound tactics at approximately 1619 that day?  
A. We had finished sound by that time.
5. Q. Were you on deck at that time?  
A. Yes, sir. At general quarters.
6. Q. Were you in position to observe the firing of the 3" 50 gun?  
A. No, sir.
7. Q. What was your position aboard at that time?  
A. I was standing aboard at the bridge desk near the sound stack.
8. Q. Did you look toward the direction the gun was fired?  
A. Well, I usually do.
9. Q. Did you this time?  
A. I don't remember that I did this particular time.
10. Q. Do you recall any splash?  
A. No, sir.
11. Q. Do you recall the direction in which the gun was fired?  
A. None in particular.
12. Do you recall any land in relation to the ship.  
A. None in particular.
13. Q. Do you recall seeing any land at all about that time?  
A. No, sir.
14. Q. Do you recall seeing any target?  
A. No, sir.
15. Q. Mr. Weymouth, do you recall the small arms firing by members of the PC 815 after the ship had anchored off the Coronados Islands? Did you observe any firing?  
A. Yes, sir.
16. Q. Did the firing take place on the port or starboard side of the ship?  
A. On the port side.



- (1813)
17. Q. Were they firing toward the mainland or toward the Coronados Islands?  
A. Toward the Coronados Islands.
18. Q. The firing was toward the Coronados?  
A. No, sir, it was done on the side toward the Coronados Islands.
19. Q. Your best recollection is that the firing took place on the side toward the Coronados Islands.  
A. Yes, sir, I saw several men on that side.
20. Q. How many men in all were firing at that time?  
A. At most times there were five or six men pulling the trigger at the same time, but at that time there were a dozen men firing with small arms. However, I couldn't swear that there were a dozen men with definiteness. That's just an estimate.
21. Q. Was the general direction of firing toward the islands?  
A. I wouldn't say generally. I happened to notice at one time some were firing toward the islands.
22. Q. Did you notice the splash of any bullets in the water.  
A. Yes, sir.
23. Q. Were those splashes in the general direction of the islands?  
A. Yes, sir.
24. Q. How long did the firing continue?  
A. I would estimate an hour and one-half. I can't say that there was continuous firing because I came back in to do book work.
25. Q. Mr. Weymouth, did you observe how close the ship was to the islands at the time of that firing? Just a rough estimate.  
A. I would estimate 2,000 yards.
26. Q. Did you notice any buildings on shore?  
A. Well, at that time we were not near any.
27. Q. Did you notice any targets in the water?  
A. No, I didn't.
28. Q. Is it correct to say that you didn't notice any particular targets at which the firing was directed.  
A. Yes, sir.
29. Q. Did you see any shots hit the islands?  
A. No, sir.
30. Q. Was it getting dark at the time the firing took place?  
A. Yes, sir.
31. Q. From where you were standing could you see the flashes of the guns?  
A. Yes, sir.

Examined by the board.

32. Q. Would it have been possible for any of the shots which you saw fired in the direction of the island to hit the island either directly or by ricocheting in the water?  
A. I would say impossible.



33. Mr. Weymouth, you have stated that at least some shots were fired in the direction of the islands but that it was not possible for them to have hit the islands. Upon what do you base this?

A. The angle from which they fired and I saw the splashes and furthermore, they were definitely aiming at the water.

34. At the time of firing the small arms, describe how the ship was lying.

A. Parallel.

35. Q. Which side to?

A. Portside to the island.

36. Q. Were these shots from the small arms fired from quartering, abeam, or direct astern from the ship?

A. Quartering.

37. Q. On the port or starboard quarter?

A. From the port side.

38. Q. Mr. Weymouth, did you at anytime while you were on board the PC 815 discuss with the captain or any of the other officers the question of anchorage?

A. No, sir.

39. Q. Did you advise the commanding officer to anchor off the Coronados Islands?

A. No, sir.

40. Did you state to him that it was the custom to so anchor?

A. No, sir.

41. Q. Have you ever while embarked--have any of the ships upon which you have been embarked ever anchored off the Coronados Islands while operating with the Scud School?

A. No, sir.

The board requested that the recorder read into the record the heading of the ship on June 28, 1943, at 1800, 1900, 2000.

The record read from the log of the PC 815 from Exhibit "A".  
1800 - 357°; 1900 - 333°; 2000 - 340°.

42. Q. Did you observe firing of small arms to the starboard as well as to the port side?

A. Yes, sir.

43. Q. Was the amount of firing conducted in each direction equally divided?

A. Yes, sir. Equally divided. Approximately equally divided.

Cross examined by the counsel for the interested party.

44. Q. Can you give me an approximation of the amount of rounds expended altogether--small arms fire?

A. I was there during twenty shots.

45. Q. Were there others?

A. Yes, after I came in for some study.

46. Q. Was there any discussion with the captain, executive officer, or any other officers of the ship in relation to anchorage with you?

A. No, sir.



- (over)
47. Q. The matter was not discussed in any way?  
A. No, never.
48. Q. Were there any enlisted personnel detailed with you in the instruction party?  
A. Yes, sir, one.
49. Q. What was his name?  
A. His name is McGuire.
50. Q. Rate?  
A. Soundman second class.
51. Q. Do you know of your own knowledge whether any craft attached to the Sound School have ever anchored in the vicinity of the Coronados Islands?  
A. No, sir, not at that moment.
52. Q. Do craft attached to the Sound School frequently stay out overnight?  
A. Yes, sir.
53. Q. How long have you been attached to the Sound School as an instructor?  
A. Since January, 1943.

Neither the board, the recorder nor counsel for the interested party desired further to examine this witness.

The board informed the witness that he was privileged to make any further statement covering anything relating to the subject matter of the investigation which he thought should be a matter of record in connection therewith, which had not been fully brought out by the previous questioning.

The witness stated that he had nothing further to say.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

A witness called by the recorder entered, was duly sworn, and was informed of the subject matter of the inquiry.

Examined by the recorder.

1. Q. State to the board your name, your rate, and your present station.  
A. John Emerson Weaver, Cox, U. S. Navy, U.S.S. PC 815.
2. Q. Were you on board the PC 815 on June 28, 1943?  
A. Yes, sir.
3. Q. What was your battle station at that time?  
A. A gun pointer on gun 1.

Examined by the board.

4. Q. Did you fire the 3 inch gun on the 28th of June?  
A. Yes, sir.
5. Q. What was your target?  
A. A wooden, frame-like structure that aircraft had been using as a target.



6. Q. What was your range to this target?  
A. I don't know, sir.

7. Q. Did you see the target through the telescope?  
A. Yes, sir.

8. Q. Was there any land beyond the target in this line of sight?  
A. Yes, sir.

9. Q. Did you recognize the land?  
A. No, sir.

10. Q. What proportion of the field of your telescope did the land that you saw behind the target fill? I must get this. You say you saw land when you were on the target. Now I want to know how much of your field of your telescope you could see land in.

A. I can't say with any degree of accuracy. I really don't know. I was bearing on it and I wouldn't want to say a quarter or a half on account it wouldn't be truthful.

11. Q. Did you observe the splash from the fall of shot on this occasion?

A. I don't remember.

12. Q. Did you see any shots that the PG 815 had fired on this occasion?

A. No, sir. I didn't observe any?

13. Q. What was the condition of visibility at the time you were firing?

A. Very poor, sir.

14. Q. Could you see land at any time while you were firing?

A. I don't think so.

15. Q. How many shots were fired by this gun?

A. Four, sir.

16. Q. Where did the shots land?

A. I don't know that either, sir.

17. Q. How many targets did you see in the area at that time?

A. All I saw was one, sir.

18. Q. Have you ever seen more than one in that area of the ocean?

A. I saw two today, sir.

19. Q. Had you never seen two before?

A. Not so that I would have known. I could have seen two and felt it was the same one or seen one and felt it was two. I don't know.

Cross examined by the counsel for the interested party.

20. Q. Didn't you receive any reports as to whether you were on the target or off the target by anybody in the crew?

A. Afterwards the gun captain, Morsen, said there had been good firing. I was too busy keeping on the target.

21. Q. But they did say it was good firing?

A. Yes, sir.

The board informed the witness that he was privileged to make any further statement covering anything relating to the subject matter of the investigation which he thought should be a matter of record in



connection therewith, which had not been fully brought out by the previous questioning.

The witness stated that he had nothing further to say.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

The board then, at 6 p.m., adjourned until 9 a.m., July 2, 1943.



Third Day

West Coast Sound School  
San Diego, California.  
Friday, July 2, 1943.

The board met at 9:00 a.m.

Present:

Commander Jacob E. Cooper, U.S. Navy, senior member,  
Lieutenant Gene M. Harris, D-V(S), U.S. Naval Reserve, and  
Lieutenant Frank G. Morris, Jr., D-V(G), U.S. Naval Reserve, members; and  
Ensign Noel J. Dyer, D-V(S), U.S. Naval Reserve, recorder.  
Lieutenant L. Ron Hubbard, D-V(G), U.S. Naval Reserve, interested party.  
Lieutenant Stanley T. Tomlinson, D-V(S), U.S. Naval Reserve, counsel for  
the interested party.

The board convened on the third day at the West Coast Sound School, San Diego, California.

The recorder introduced Jack O. Conner, yeoman first class, U.S. Navy, as reporter.

The record of proceedings of the first and second day of the investigation was read and approved.

No witnesses not otherwise connected with the investigation were present.

The interested party was called as a witness by counsel for the interested party.

1. Q. I call your attention to questions 20 and 21, and the answers thereto, on page 3 of this record of proceedings: "20. Q. Did you have authority to anchor for the night? A. Yes, sir. 21. Q. What was this authority? A. The authority of custom given to me by the Sound School Instructor who was aboard (Ensign Weymouth) and whom I believe to be in possession of all pertinent data." Now Captain, have you anything to add to the answers to questions 20 and 21 just quoted?

A. Yes. I wish to qualify the statement in view of the fact that such report came to me through my executive officer and, who on further discussion, states that he said that the soundman told him that SC's operating with the Sound School normally anchored during the night at the anchorage specified while under orders to remain at sea, the purpose of this being to keep them close to the operating area and save wear and tear on their machinery and personnel. I was at no time aware of any irregularity in my anchoring as we later did and do not now believe that I departed from my orders and instructions, having in the absence of proper advice acted in accordance with naval practice in this area to the best of my belief.

2. Q. Captain, why did you anchor at the Coronados Islands in the position shown by the testimony on the 28th of June?

A. Because I have no officer with more than three and one-half months total officer of the deck experience aboard naval vessels and because it was foggy and there were kelp beds and menaces to navigation in my designated operating area, which I did not leave. By so entering I would have had to spend the entire night on the bridge a thing which I have done on the ship many times before. On three separate occasions when leaving my officers in charge of the bridge they have become lost, a fact which was dangerous to the safety of the ship. I am attempting to remedy their lack of experience as rapidly as possible but at the time in question I do not think any commanding officer sensible of his responsibilities could have guaranteed the safety of his ship unless he utilized an existing anchorage. There was no reason to continue steaming in these waters through the night.

3. Q. Have you observed any firing by aircraft or surface vessels on the targets which were observed by this board on July 1st?

A. Yes. During the entire time of our operation in this area I had to give considerable attention to the danger of aircraft bombs falling around the targets which were close to our sound operations, and on July 1st it is an established fact that aircraft were firing machine guns near these targets. Additional bombing was witnessed by myself and my officers well



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inside those waters referred to as Mexican Territorial Waters. The bomb target being just to the south of middle Coronados and off the middle of south Coronados. In view of the considerable amount of aircraft machine cannon firing, aircraft bombing and destroyer depth-charging ahead by the Coronados Islands I believe I was justified in interpreting the aircraft targets, as located by the Board on Exhibit "F" as being in a firing area and it was upon this that I based my decision to train my three-inch gun crew.

4. Q. On Saturday, the 26th of June, 1943, was there a discussion at the Saturday Operations Conference, at the Eleventh Naval District Headquarters, concerning firing in the areas designated for operations?

A. Yes. At the conclusion of the conference I found that I had considerable time at sea unoccupied by assigned and scheduled exercises or drills. I asked Commander Ferguson, Operations Officer of Commander, Fleet Operational Training Command, Pacific, regarding my lack of time to train my crew in firing and asked that additional firing particularly at planes be scheduled for me. He answered that this was not necessary, as I could request planes which would tow sleeves for me from the Aircraft Training Command (VJ-7). On my own authority I asked him if he would so schedule me for firing and he answered that such schedule was not necessary. He referred me to Lieutenant (jg) Mosher of the Aircraft Training Command (VJ-7) who was at the conference and said Lieutenant (jg) Mosher would arrange with me to send me targets and permit me to specify how I wished the planes to behave during the firing, and specify the firing area. I took the statement of Commander Ferguson to mean that it was not necessary to schedule firing in addition to firing called for in the operational orders.

Examined by the Board:

5. Q. During the firing of the three-inch gun on 28 June, did you observe the fall of shot?

A. I observed a splash by the target, well over behind it.

6. Q. Did you observe four splashes?

A. I did not. I was not looking for them.

7. Q. Which of the two previously located pyramid targets did you observe this one splash near to, or which of the two targets in the area was the one splash that you observed closer to?

A. The westerly of the two targets, which I at that time designated as the north target.

8. Q. At what distance beyond the target did the splash occur? Would you say a considerable distance?

A. Well within 500 yards.

9. Q. Could you have seen it if it had been 2000 yards over?

A. I doubt it.

10. Q. Could you see land at any time in the direction of the line of fire?

A. No, not at the time of firing, but shortly afterward.

11. Q. After anchoring and during the conduct of small arms firing was firing conducted from the port quarter and from the starboard quarter of the ship?

A. All firing was in an easterly direction, which I included to mean an east 090 to 160, and it was very possible that men were standing on the fantail on the port side to fire in that easterly direction.

12. Q. Were men firing from the port side of the ship?

A. Yes, I fired from the port side of the ship.

13. Q. Were men firing from the port side of the ship?

A. I observed no men firing from the port side of the ship.