

14. Q. Were there any officers firing from the port side of the ship?

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

15. Q. What was the direction of the aim?

A. Away from the South Coronados Islands to the eastward in a direction true of about 155 judging from the ship's head and true bearing of that point.

16. Q. How near to the ship was the target at which you were firing?

A. From fifteen to thirty yards.

17. Q. In general what was the distance from the ship of the targets at which the people engaged in this firing used?

A. In general, not over 75 yards.

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

The board informed the interested party 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 interested party stated that he had nothing further to say.

Neither the board, the recorder, nor any party to the investigation desired to call any more witnesses.

The investigation was finished, all parties thereto withdrawing.

FOURTH DAY

U. S. S. PC 815
San Diego, California
July 3, 1943

The board met at 2:05 p.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, Ensign, D-V(S), U. S. Naval Reserve, recorder,
Arthur E. Colton, Y2c, V-6, U. S. Naval Reserve, reporter,
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 interested party.

The board declared the investigation reopened because new evidence has been discovered.

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

No witnesses not otherwise connected with the investigation were present.

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

Examined by the recorder.

1. Q. Please state your name, your rate, and your present station.
A. Glen McGuire, Son2c, West Coast Sound School.

2. Q. Were you on board the PC 815 on June 28?
A. Yes, sir.

3. Q. Who ordered you to be aboard that ship that day?
A. I was under orders of the Operational Command and the Fleet Sound School.

4. Q. Did you observe the firing of the 3" 50 cal. gun on that day?
A. Yes, sir.

5. Q. At about what time on that date was the 3" 50 fired?
A. I would say somewhere between 1600 and 1700.

6. Q. Will you relate to the board all that you know of your own knowledge concerning the firing of the 3" 50 gun. Tell everything concerning the operation of the vessel PC 815 from the time you finished operating with the Sound School until 2000 that night.

A. Well, I don't know exactly what time we finished operations and since my days aboard ceased of that date, I was just really an observer to the ship's following actions. The word was passed general quarters would be sounded and firing of the guns was to be the termination of the general quarters period. From what I heard, we were in search of targets previously spotted during the day. Those targets were merely observed, however, they were not used at any time or, to my knowledge, at any time for firing purposes. The day was the 28th of June.

The next thing in order, to my knowledge, was the fact that a target north of the South Coronado Island was to be used for firing purposes. Target was a small island or large rock. The time was somewhere between 1500 and 1600, judging my time upon the position of the sun.

62473

The sun was directly behind the target, correction, it was slightly to the right; but would definitely have a bearing upon the firing line of the gun. The target was somewhat shaded due to the sun's position. The range, I judge, would have been approximately 5,000 yards. The two first shots were observed by me to have struck the target used. The third and final shot appeared to have gone slightly over the target and struck a small island behind and directly in line of the target used. Three shots were all I observed, and to my knowledge, at the termination of these shots the firing was ceased.

Another parallel to the time of firing was that chow was down immediately afterward and it was dusk. Concerning the firing at chow, I was not on the deck for some time afterwards, being both below deck and in the chart house.

At dusk word was passed we were to anchor off the eastern side of South Coronados Island. At the time of anchoring it was really dark and that, to my knowledge is all I know.

7. Q. How far was the PC 815 from land at the time the shots were fired?

A. I previously stated the range was approximately 5,000 yards. The target, which was a small rock, was just off the tip of the South Coronados Island, the north tip; consequently, land was no further than the target.

8. Q. Where were you standing when the shots from the 3" 50 were fired?

A. I was standing in the pilot house.

9. Q. Port or starboard side?

A. I was standing on the port side, which was the direction in which they fired.

10. Q. Were you able to see the impact of the shells at any time?

A. I saw evidence of their striking the rock.

11. Q. What do you mean by evidence?

A. Flying bits, sprays of rock or gravel or whatever the small rock consisted of.

12. Q. What was the visibility at the time of firing? Was it clear?

A. The visibility in general was good.

13. Q. Could the island be clearly seen?

A. The island was nearly directly in line with the sun. It's effect upon the island made the target shaded upon the side observed.

14. Q. Did you hear the commanding officer or any other officer of the PC 815 give the order to fire on the island?

A. No, sir.

15. Q. Did you observe any buildings on the island which you saw as the target?

A. It was barren.

16. Q. Did you observe the small arms firing after the PC 815 had anchored that evening?

A. Not after it anchored.

17. Q. Did you observe small arms firing at any time?

A. Yes, sir.

18. Q. What time?

A. I don't even know which day or what time of that day.

19. Q. Can you recollect that small arms firing did take place on the PG 815 on the 28th Of June?

A. The day I still don't recall.

Examined by the board:

20. Q. During the conduct of the firing of PG 815 on the afternoon of the 28th of June, where were the two targets that you stated were being searched for at the time of firing, with relation to the island and to the ship?

A. In relation to both the island and ship, they were North and somewhat East.

21. Q. The two targets which you mention in your previous testimony, were to the North and to the East of the ship?

A. That's correct.

22. Q. What was the range to those targets at the time of firing?

A. I have no idea. I cannot even say that they were in sight.

23. Q. Did you observe two shots hit the target in direct flight?

A. That was my observation.

24. Q. Did you see any splashes in the water as from a shell splash between the ship and the island?

A. None whatsoever.

25. Q. Was there any discussion on the bridge, or I would say in the pilot house, concerning the fall of shot from this firing during the firing?

A. There was.

26. Q. Relate to the board what discussion took place.

A. The discussion merely concerned the evenness and accuracy of the firing.

27. Q. With whom did you discuss the accuracy and evenness of the firing?

A. With the first class signalman, Price.

28. Q. What did Price say?

A. Word for word, I don't know. We both agreed the first two shots struck the target and the third went slightly over the top.

29. Q. Could you see the shell in flight?

A. No, sir.

30. Q. Did you see the third shot hit the water or land?

A. Only the same evidence of apparent flying debris when it struck land.

31. Q. Was the land that the third shot struck directly behind the rock that was struck by the first two shots?

A. I cannot answer. I was not sure what the third shot struck - the target or the land directly beyond the target.

32. Q. There was land directly beyond the rock that was hit by the first two shots?

A. There was.

33. Q. Did the third shot land on the main part of the South Coronados Island?

A. No.

34. Q. I show you exhibit "F". Can you refer to this chart and identify the land that you saw the third shot hit? Identify the rock that you saw the first two shots hit.

A. You want where the first two shots were observed?

This was identified by the witness as Point "E" on Exhibit "F".

35. Q. Can you further identify the fall of shot as to location; whether it was to the right of that group of rock, to the left or to the center of the group?

A. I would judge it would be the center of the group.

36. Q. Referring to the same chart, can you identify the land upon which the third shot fell? On the bearing of the land with respect to the first target?

A. On this chart, no.

37. Q. During the firing could you see North Coronados Island or did you see North Coronados Island?

A. I didn't notice.

38. Q. Who passed the word on the PC 815 that there would be general quarters or that firing of the gun would be at the end of the general quarters drill or words to that effect?

A. I heard that from the Commanding Officer, Mr. Hubbard.

39. Q. To whom was the word passed?

A. It was a direct statement to Ensign Weymouth and myself. I mean, I think, it was words to that effect.

40. Q. Did you hear that word passed throughout the ship?

A. No, sir.

41. Q. Were any other officers or members of PC 815 present when that statement was made?

A. None to my knowledge.

42. Q. Where were you when the statement was made?

A. On the flying bridge.

43. Q. Did you hear firing of small arms after the PC 815 had anchored on the 28th of June?

A. No.

44. Q. How many days were you aboard the PC 815?

A. Three days.

45. Q. Which days?

A. Sunday, the 27th; Monday, the 28th; and Tuesday, the 29th; of June, 1943.

46. Q. During the three day period during which you were aboard the PC 815 was there any small arms practice held?

A. There was.

47. Q. Can you give the day on which that was held?

A. No, sir.

48. Q. Do you remember whether it was forenoon or afternoon?

A. The previous records will show not knowing the day or the date of the day.

49. Q. Do you remember where the small arms practice occurred?

A. I didn't know the general locality.

50. Q. What were you doing when this practice occurred?

A. I was observing the small arms fire.

51. Q. Tell the board what you do remember about the small arms fire?

A. Merely that small arms were brought out with ammunition and practice was held upon the target which was an empty 5 gallon tin.

52. Q. Was the ship underway or at anchor?

A. The ships was underway and from my observation it was in a clear area.

53. Q. What would be your estimate of the nearest land at the time of the small arms fire?

A. Between four and five miles.

54. Q. Referring to the firing of the 3rd gun on the afternoon of the 28th of June. Did you participate in or were you present when any discussion concerning this firing took place between officers or enlisted men of PC 815 other than the conversation you have already related with the signalman?

A. I have previously stated there was some discussion concerning the firing at chow.

55. Q. Can you give the names of any person who participated in the discussion?

A. No.

56. Q. Were there any members of the 3rd/50 caliber gun crew who participated?

A. Yes.

57. Q. Can you identify them by their assignment on the gun crew?

A. No.

58. Q. Tell the board what was stated.

A. There was discussion concerning the accuracy of the firing. One side maintained as I maintained that two shells struck the target and the third went over. The other side maintained all three struck the target, but that the third shell glanced off and hit the further bit of land.

59. Q. Would it be possible for you to identify any of the persons who participated in this discussion?

A. No, sir.

60. Q. What time did you leave the PC 815 on the 29th of June, 1943?

A. Approximately 1745.

61. Q. Have you discussed this subject with any of the officers or members of the crew of the PC 815 since that time?

A. No.

62. Q. Where was the commanding Officer of the PC 815, if you know, at the time the 3" gun was fired?

A. I don't know.

63. Q. Where was the gunnery officer, Mr. Walker, at the time the gun was fired?

A. That I don't know.

64. Q. Do you know where Mr. Navarro was at the time of firing?

A. No, sir.

65. Q. Did you observe any officer of the PC 815 on the forecandle in the vicinity of the 3" gun at the time of firing?

A. I observed none.

66. Q. Where was the executive officer at the time the 3" was fired?

A. In the pilot house or on the port wing of the pilot house.

67. Q. What was he doing during the period of firing?

A. Observing.

68. Q. Observing what?

A. The firing.

69. Q. What in particular was he observing, the firing of the gun or the fall of shot?

A. I don't know.

70. Q. Did he appear to pay any attention to the firing?

A. Yes, sir.

71. Q. Did you hear any word passed to the gun crew as to what the target was to be, or when they were to commence fire?

A. I heard words spoken, whether they were orders or not I don't know, but they were to the effect that the target would be "that rock".

72. Q. By whom and to whom?

A. I don't know that at all.

73. Q. Were those words spoken by somebody in the pilot house or did you hear them, for example, over a voice tube?

A. It was spoken either by someone in the pilot house or on the wing.

74. Q. What apparent speed was the ship making during the firing of the 3"/50 caliber on June 28?

A. As I remember, there was very little way on.

75. Q. Was spray coming over the forecandle?

A. No, not at the time of firing.

76. Q. Did you hear any comment from either the officers or the crew of the PC 815 as to the advisability of firing on the target selected?

A. No, sir.

77. Q. Did you confer with Mr. Weymouth on any subject during the period at which the crew of the PC 815 was at general quarters on this date?

A. I didn't even see Mr. Weymouth during the general quarters period under discussion.

78. Q. Did you advise the captain of the PC 815 that it was customary for ships operating with the Sound School to anchor overnight off the Coronados Islands?

A. I didn't say it was customary.

79. Q. What did you say?

A. I stated to the captain that we had anchored on the north of the South Coronados Island all during the previous week at night.

80. Q. Who do you mean by we?

A. The ship under my instructions for sound training and myself.

81. Q. What ship?

A. SC 735.

82. Q. Was this statement by you to the commanding officer in response to a question from him or the volunteering of information by you?

A. It was the latter, I volunteered the information when the question was put to me by the captain. The question put was, "What was the general procedure of ships at night while waiting for the next day's operations?"

83. Q. Did you discuss the question of anchoring with any of the other officers of PC 815?

A. Nothing anymore than what I had stated to the captain.

84. Q. Have you been aboard any vessels or present when any vessel other than the PC 815 and SC 735 have anchored in this same vicinity off the South Coronados Island?

A. Sunday, June 20, 1943, the SC's 728, 729, and 735 anchored together in this vicinity. I may be corrected somewhat upon those numbers.

85. Q. Any others that you recollect?

A. No.

Referring to Exhibit "F" take the pencil and mark the spot relative to the South Coronados and to the North Coronados Islands that you consider the firing to have been conducted from. This will be known as Point "F". The witness made a mark on Exhibit "F" at Point "F".

86. Q. What course was the ship on at that time?

A. This will be Point "G" of Exhibit "F". The line "FG" indicates this course.

The witness made a mark at Point "G" of Exhibit "F" and indicated the line "FG" on exhibit "F".

The witness made the following statement.

87. I previously estimated the distance or the range to be 5,000 yards. From the chart, I make a slight change in this range. I believe it to be shorter. I would say within 4,000 yards. Judging from this range, the target would be the larger of this small group of rocks and the land beyond would be middle Coronados. If I have mistaken my range and it is shorter, the target could well have been one of the larger rocks with the larger one in the rear as the other island in the discussion.

[1913]

Cross examined by the counsel for the interested party.

88. Q. You stated that you did not discuss the matter of the firing with any of the officers or members of the crew of PC 815 subsequent to the firing.

A. That was my answer.

89. Q. Who have you discussed the question of the firing with since the incident?

A. No one other than those stated previously aboard ship and until this morning, July 3, Saturday, when a discussion arose again.

90. Q. Who did you discuss it with the morning of July 3?

A. Lieutenant Norris.

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

The witness made the following statement: "There's one. You had me point out on the chart the approximate position of the firing and I did so to the best of my knowledge. I trust my eyesight a great deal and my sense of relative bearing. If it becomes necessary I can point very surely and with confidence the exact targets used and the approximate position from firing. Without a doubt there will be evidence upon the target to verify the statements that said a rock was used for a target.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Ensign Lewis J. Navarro was recalled by the board and warned that the oath previously taken was still binding.

Examined by the board.

1. Q. Mr. Navarro, at the firing that was conducted by the PC 815 on the 28th of June at about 1600 with the 3" 50 cal., describe the target that was used as a point of aim.

A. The target was an aerial bombardment target triangular in shape. Larger at base than at highest part.

2. Q. How do you know that that was the target?

A. That was the target I gave the gun crew to pick up.

3. Q. Who told you to pick up and use the target as described?

A. My commanding officer.

4. Q. Did you see any shots hit land or rocks that had been fired by the PC 815.

A. No, sir.

5. Q. Describe your actions during the conduct of this firing.

A. On given the word to pick up the target I sent down to the gun an opening range of 4,000 and a scale of 498. Gave them the word to fire when on target. I observed only the first shot. I saw no splash or no hit and I began to direct the simulated fire of the 20 millimeter.

6. Q. Specifically what did you do?

A. After having given the order to the No. 2 --- the order to pick up cloud, bearing 270, position angle about 50, and to fire when on target. I went over to No. 1 on the other side and corrected the men at their stations on obvious errors - such as the drum operator touched the fellow in charge of the firing. And that's about all the definite information I can give.

7. Q. Did you put your fingers in your ears?

A. Yes, Commander, I did because I expected the firing to come at the time. I had no cotton in my ears.

8. Q. Did you discuss the accuracy of the firing with any person after the firing on this date?

A. No, Mr. President.

9. Q. Have you heard any discussion other than in this board concerning the firing on that date?

A. No.

10. Q. Not even with the commanding Officer?

A. By discussion I am not exactly sure what you mean.

11. Q. How many rounds were fired from the 3"/50 caliber gun?

A. Four, sir.

12. Q. How do you know?

A. I could hear the reports from the gun itself.

13. Q. How did you pass the word to the gun captain to pick up the target and fire on the target?

A. By talker. Telephone talker.

14. Q. Who was the telephone talker?

A. The yeoman on board, Sammy Kleinman.

15. Q. What is his actual rate?

A. Yeoman.

16. Q. Where was this yeoman talker stationed?

A. Just aft the signal bridge.

17. Q. Port, starboard, or amidship?

A. He was on the starboard, back.

18. Q. Mr. Navarro, where were you standing at the time the first shot was fired?

A. I was standing on the opposite side from the yeoman on the port side. The same relative position that he was on the starboard side.

19. Q. How many targets did you see in the water?

A. Only one, sir.

20. Q. How many aircraft bombing targets did you see?

A. Only one.

Examined by the recorder:

21. Q. Where were you when general quarters were sounded?

A. I was on the wardroom couch.