

**A SQUADRON OF THE  
UNITED STATES NAVY:  
ON A FRIENDLY CRUISE  
AROUND LATIN AMERICA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760579371

A Squadron of the United States Navy: On a Friendly Cruise Around Latin America by  
William Wallace Swinyer

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

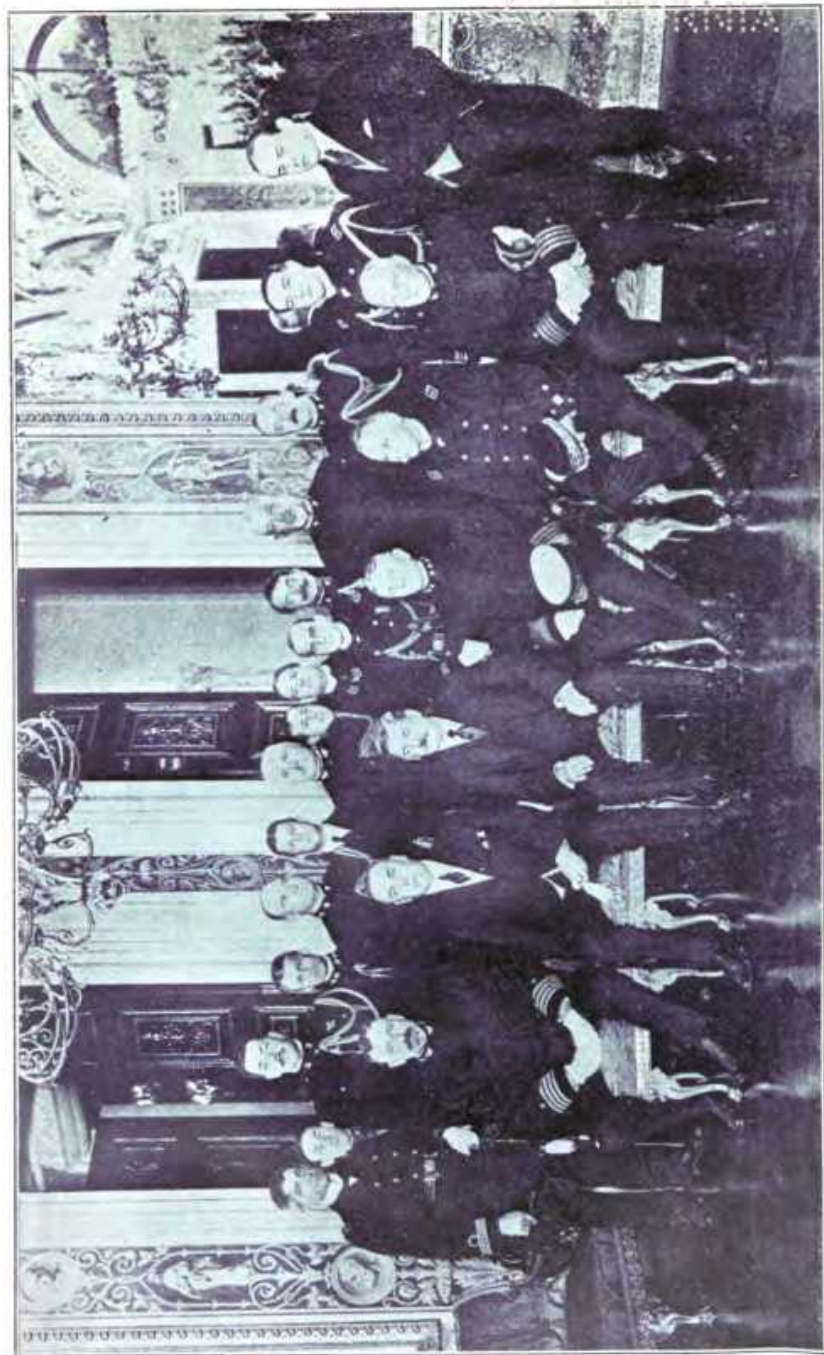
[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**WILLIAM WALLACE SWINYER**

**A SQUADRON OF THE  
UNITED STATES NAVY:  
ON A FRIENDLY CRUISE  
AROUND LATIN AMERICA**







United States Naval Officers and Brazilian Notables. Admiral Caperton is the man with a white cap, who is seated in the front row. Commander Bradshaw, of the Flagship Pittsburg, is the tallest man in the rear row, directly back of the Admiral.

State of  
California

1971

OFFICE OF  
RECORDS AND  
COMMUNICATIONS

### PROLOGUE.

At the outset of the following story the writer begs leave to mention that, as a result of the journey therein about to be described, his own ideas concerning Latin America have shifted. Heretofore this particular domain has been a sort of minus quantity that did not come within the radius of his scope.

Yes, North America hasn't a monopoly on all of the good things that are to be found upon the Western Hemisphere, and your humble servant is glad of it. Latin Americans are different, but by no means inferior, to other enlightened people. Their country is ahead of North America in apparently so many important ways as the latter excels the former in others. Surely all Americans have reason to take pride in their own country, every foot of it, from Hudson Bay to Cape Horn.

Each man of the United States squadron was so sincerely welcomed throughout Latin America that none of them, so far as I know, had a chance to see anything that did not appeal to his better nature. Therefore the writer is enabled to make mention of only the things that ennoble rather than of those that degrade.

The southern portion of America undoubtedly has, just like the region up north, many disturbing elements to contend with; but, you may depend upon it, that it is strictly alert thereto. It is amazing how so many discordant elements can be held so severely in restraint as they are in most of the Latin American commonwealths. The efficient manner in which United States sailors were everywhere shielded from petty annoyances pleased the lads.

When it comes right down to sincere hospitality, oh, say! enough said!! Just go south once and there, under the southern cross, learn the meaning of **Simpatico**. Satisfy yourself as to whether the people are not of an unusually friendly type, and, if this friendship is not genuine. A few of us, who had not journeyed abroad before, expected to find a sort of semi-wilderness in the southern clime. All of this notion was dispelled in the very first Latin American town that we struck.



TO THE  
ARMY AND  
NAVY

---

## IN MEMORIAM.



CLAY TENNEY LYLES  
Died July 23, 1917.  
Body sent to Garland, Texas.



EARL HASTINGS CRAWFORD,  
Died Sept. 19, 1917.  
Buried at Houston, Texas.

E. D. WETTSTEIN,  
Of Bremerton, Wash.,  
Died May 16, 1917, in Guatemalan  
Waters.  
Buried at Sea.

---

# A SQUADRON OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY

## On a Friendly Cruise Around Latin America

Copyright, 1918, by William Wallace Swinyer

### CHAPTER I.

The writer enlisted in the United States Naval Coast Reserve, for service on shore, and was not surprised at suddenly finding himself aboard of a cruiser. His presumption was that, after being properly outfitted, he would be assigned to duty at some naval station. Had he any idea that an extensive cruise was in store, then a decided objection would have been made, and especially at San Diego. However, he felt quite sanguine that, when his ship should leave the latter harbor it would go north, but after passing Point Loma it turned south. Needless to say, he was then very much surprised and realized that a perplexing situation must be faced.

Throughout all of the extensive cruise that followed there was so much of interest and so little of discomfort that it was a source of pleasure to participate.

Admiral Caperton's squadron, consisting of the cruisers Pittsburg, Frederick, Pueblo and South Dakota, passed through the Golden Gate April 25th, 1917, and headed south. After a pleasant voyage, of five hundred miles, it came to anchor under the protecting guns of Point Loma. Now, as everybody knows, the beautiful city of San Diego, California, is safeguarded by these same guns, and that it is a metropolis of unusual interest.

The first thing that attracted attention was a fleet of seventeen aeroplanes that were then in the air, darting hither and yon in preparation for possible eventualities. The second object of interest was a large rust covered steel ship that had just been refloated, and after it was stranded fourteen years on a South American island. This craft had just arrived and under its own motive power. The latter fact added to the rescue of so great a vessel after it had been so long on the rocks caused general amazement.

During our stay here I made but a single journey ashore, and that for the purpose of seeing the grounds of the Panama-California Exposition. Was astonished and charmed at the panorama that the buildings and grounds, together with the swarms of jet black doves flying overhead presented. Beautiful beyond the possibility of justifiable description and decidedly original; this great achievement does reflect credit upon the people of Southern California. The

## TO THE ADIRONDACK

writer was privileged to visit six of the world's great shows, beginning with the mighty Columbian exhibit at Chicago, and at none of these places were there such beautiful grounds as there are at San Diego.

After weighing anchor, on May 7th, the ships began a twenty-three hundred mile run to San Jose de Guatemala, where they arrived May 14th, and then laid too three miles distant from shore.

While the admiral, accompanied by his staff and the usual escort of marine orderlies, were ashore, those of us who remained afloat enjoyed ourselves in various ways. Bathing was out of the question, because of the immense number of sharks that swam lazily about. A few of these monsters were of the man-eating variety (namely, tiger sharks, with striped backs). These sharks afforded no little enjoyment, as several of them, one fourteen feet long, fell victims to our fishermen. All hands were delighted with the balmy air and exquisitely blue tropical sea waters. They were also interested in the swarms of flying-fish that circled about at times not unlike a flock of blackbirds. Each night all men who could find space, therefore, slept out on deck and watched the peculiar antics of the Southern Cross. The expression "peculiar" is here used, because the five star constellation of the Southern Cross, that is seen only in southern latitudes, seems to those who are unversed in astronomy to ignore the accepted laws that govern the universe. While other luminaries pursue the course of stupendous orbits, this cross apparently remains in a fixed position slowly revolving on a central pivot. Another constellation, also peculiar to Latin America, is that of the false cross.

It was pleasant to sleep out on deck here; but the charm ended when we were always driven to cover on account of the midnight daily tropical showers.

### **BURIAL AT SEA.**

A sad incident closed our stay in these waters, when it became necessary to bury at sea the body of E. D. Wettstein, who died on the cruiser South Dakota. Upon this occasion a twenty-mile run out to sea was made, and there, in latitude 13 degrees, 30 minutes and 30 seconds north and longitude 90 degs., 50 minutes and 00 seconds west, Wettstein's body was buried. The surrounding water was literally alive with sharks, that were disappointed when the heavily weighted body sank with amazing swiftness to the very lowest depths of the sea. Fleet Chaplain L. N. Taylor conducted the burial, under the half-masted colors, upon the quarterdeck. This was in presence of the entire ship's company. Spotless white was the uniform of the day; except that the guard of honor wore, in addition to the regulation whites, a black neckerchief. Shipmate Wettstein's body, heavily weighted and encased in a strong canvas bag, and enwrapped in the national colors, was lying in state on the starboard side. At the close of Chaplain Taylor's impressive eulogy, the body was consigned to the sea, and, while it was sinking from sight, twelve marines fired a three-volley salute. This was immediately followed by a very im-