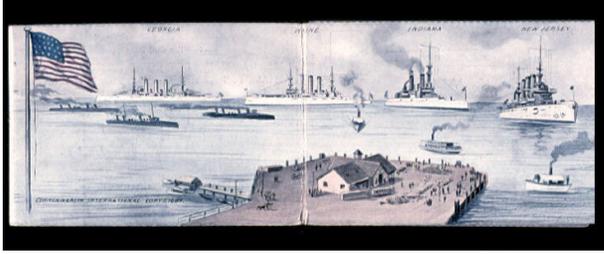


Basic Detail Report



00015317

Title

United States Fleet at Hampton Roads, Virginia

Date

1908

Medium

Off-set lithographic print set on paper.

Dimensions

Overall: 87 x 759 mm

Name

Postcard

History

In December 1907 United States President Theodore Roosevelt sent the US Atlantic Battle Fleet of 16 battleships on a 14 month goodwill cruise around the world. The fleet was a chance for the Navy to practice seamanship and express America's world power. Roosevelt was also concerned about rising Japanese aggression and their expansionist foreign policy. The cruise would be a political and public relations exercise to build domestic support for more naval construction. Led by the flagship, USS CONNECTICUT, the Great White Fleet as it became known, consisted of 16 battleships painted white, as was the practice of all US Navy ships in times of peace. The ships sailed in four divisions of four ships each. Early in the voyage the order of the ships was altered to allow the best-looking vessels to be at the front of the fleet. The cruise incorporated six continents, 26 countries and 32 ports with 614 officers and 13,504 crew. It consumed 435,000 tons of coal, more than any other naval expedition and was the largest fleet to ever accomplish a circumnavigation of the globe. The Great White Fleet began its tour on 16 December 1907 from Hampton Roads, Virginia. The Fleet sailed to Trinidad, the British West Indies, Brazil, Chile, Peru and Mexico before sailing up the West Coast of America. The Fleet landed at San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Monterey and then San Francisco, California. The Fleet departed San Francisco on 7 July 1908 for the third and final legs of its tour, visiting Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia, the Philippine's, Japan, Ceylon and Egypt. The Fleet visited Messina, Italy in January 1909 to offer support and assistance following an earthquake, and after departing Messina, the Fleet visited Naples and Gibraltar before returning home to Hampton Roads, Virginia on 22 February 1909. Vast arrays of souvenirs were produced for a population caught up in the euphoria generated by the Great White Fleet's world tour. Badges, medallions, pins, postcards and photographs all reflected the enthusiasm surrounding the tour.