

Warship Wednesday, Oct. 26, 2022: Limping into Exile

laststandonzombieisland.com/tag/admiral-georgy-karlovich-stark

By laststandonzombieisland

October 26, 2022

Here at LSOZI, we take off every Wednesday for a look at the old steam/diesel navies of the 1833-1954 period and will profile a different ship each week. These ships have a life, a tale all their own, which sometimes takes them to the strangest places. – Christopher Eger



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Above we see Tsar Nicholas II's once-mighty Russian Pacific fleet at anchor at Vladivostok, in September 1903. From left to right: the battleship *Sevastopol*, armored cruisers *Gromoboi* and *Rossia*, battleship *Peresviet*, protected cruiser *Bogatyr*, cruiser *Boyarin*, center; auxiliary cruiser *Angara* (three funnels, black hull); and battleships *Poltava* and *Petropavlovsk*. Of course, the following year would bring war with the Japanese Empire, and just about all the above would be swept away.

Tracing its origins to the old Okhotsk flotilla of 1731, the Tsarist Pacific fleet would reach its zenith in 1904 and, just a decade later, was a shadow of its former self.

Here is the tale of how the Tsar's final Pacific flotilla ended its days, 100 years ago this week.

1914-17

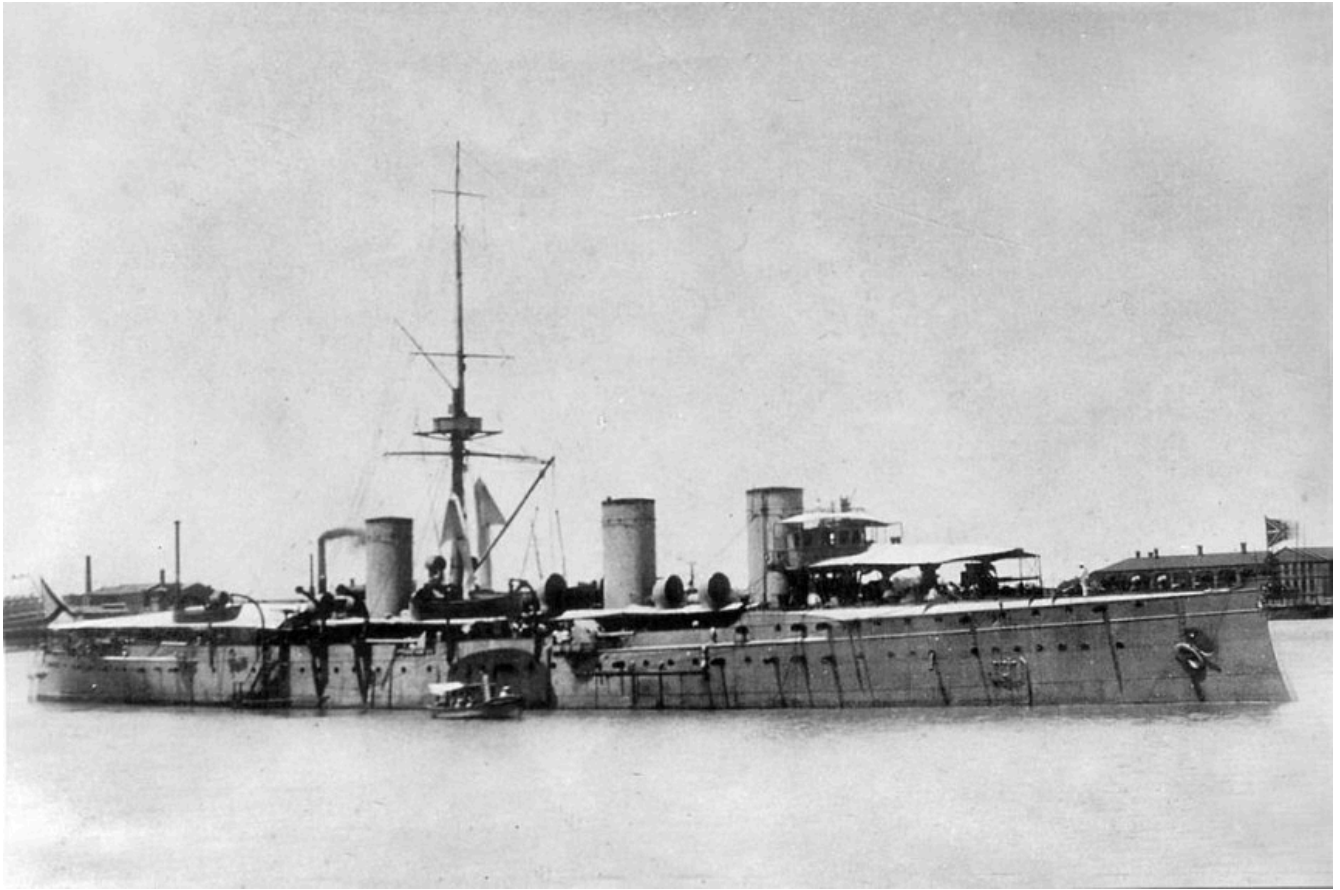
When Russia entered the Great War in August 1914, the renamed Siberian Military Flotilla included the smallish protected cruisers *Askold* (Krupp-built, 5,900 tons, 12×6-inch guns) and

Zhemchug (3,100 tons, 8×4.7 inch), a mix of 22 old/small torpedo boat-sized destroyers, seven or eight early submarines, a couple of auxiliary cruisers (really just converted steamers), three minelayers, some random gunboats exemplified by the old Danish-built *Mandzhur*, and two new *Taymyr*-class icebreakers.

The flotilla was manned by some 6,000 officers and men, including shore establishments, magazines, and drydocks.



Russian protected cruiser Askold under repair in Toulon, Sept 1916



Russian Cruiser Zhemchug as part of the Siberian Flotilla



Russian Siberian Military Flotilla Ulysses Bay 1908 with the submarines Delfin, Kasatka, Skat, Nalim, Sheremetev, Osyotr, Kefal, Paltus, Bychok or Plotva, and destroyer Grozovoy

All-in-all, a respectable coastal defense force to protect its two key ports at Vladivostok and Petropavlovsk, both of which had a serious network of modern coastal artillery emplacements ashore. Further, this did not consider the 30 or so small shallow-draft gunboat flotillas on the Amur, Ussuri, and Sungari River systems coursing through the somewhat outlaw China and Korean border regions.

Its commander, since November 1913, was RADM Maximilian Fedorovich Schultz, one of the few Russian officers who came out of the 1904 War with a decent combat record as the skipper of the hard-fighting cruiser *Gromoboi*.

However, this force was soon whittled down as the war went on, with *Zhemchug* scandalously blasted away at her moorings at Penang by the German raider *Emden* in October, and *Askold* was sent into the Indian Ocean to search for *Emden* and then spent practically the rest of the war in the Mediterranean Sea.

Once the Ottoman Turks entered the war and closed off Russia's Black Sea ports to British and French war material in late 1914, coupled with the destruction of the German East Asia Squadron under Admiral Maximilian von Spee, leaving the Pacific largely safe, Russia's far Northern ports at Archangel and Romanov-on-Murman (today's Murmansk) would become strategically important to the War effort. This saw a lot of the Siberian Flotilla siphoned off to become part of the new Arctic Flotilla/Northern Fleet in the freezing White Sea under Rear Admiral Ogrimov.

Askold would eventually end up in Archangel, as would the six best torpedo boats from Vladivostok and the submarine *Delfin*— the latter sent across the Trans-Siberian railroad and then barged up the Dvina River, a trek of over 8,000 miles. The minelayer *Ussuri*, along with the shiny new icebreakers *Taymyr* and *Vaygach*, would likewise be sent to the White Sea in 1915, largely by the Northern Route.



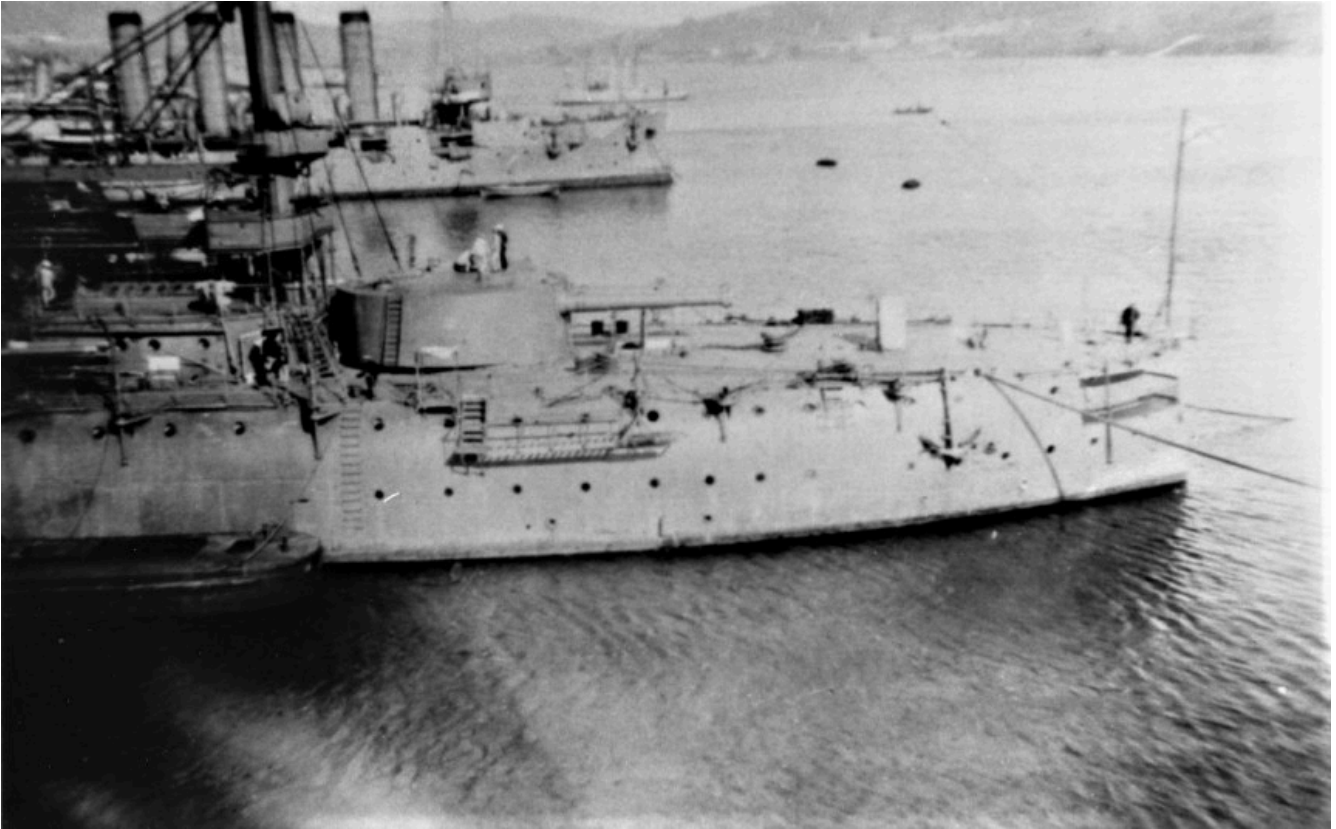
The twin icebreakers Taymyr and Vaigach are coaling from a freighter at Emma Harbor, 1913. Part of the Arctic Ocean Hydrographic Expedition under CDR (later ADM) Aleksandr Kolchak that helped chart the Northern Sea Route over Siberia and discovered what is now Severnaya Zemlya, they were assigned to the Pacific pre-war but would end up in the White Sea by 1915.

The Japanese, now Russian allies on paper at least, also retroceded (for a token fee) some wrecked old Tsarist warships captured during the 1904-05 War that they had rebuilt on a budget: the *Petropavlovsk*-class battleship *Chesma* (ex-*Poltava*), the battleship *Peresvet* (reclassified as an armored cruiser as she had been equipped with smaller caliber British Armstrong guns by the Japanese), the cruiser *Varyag*, and the auxiliary cruiser *Angara*.

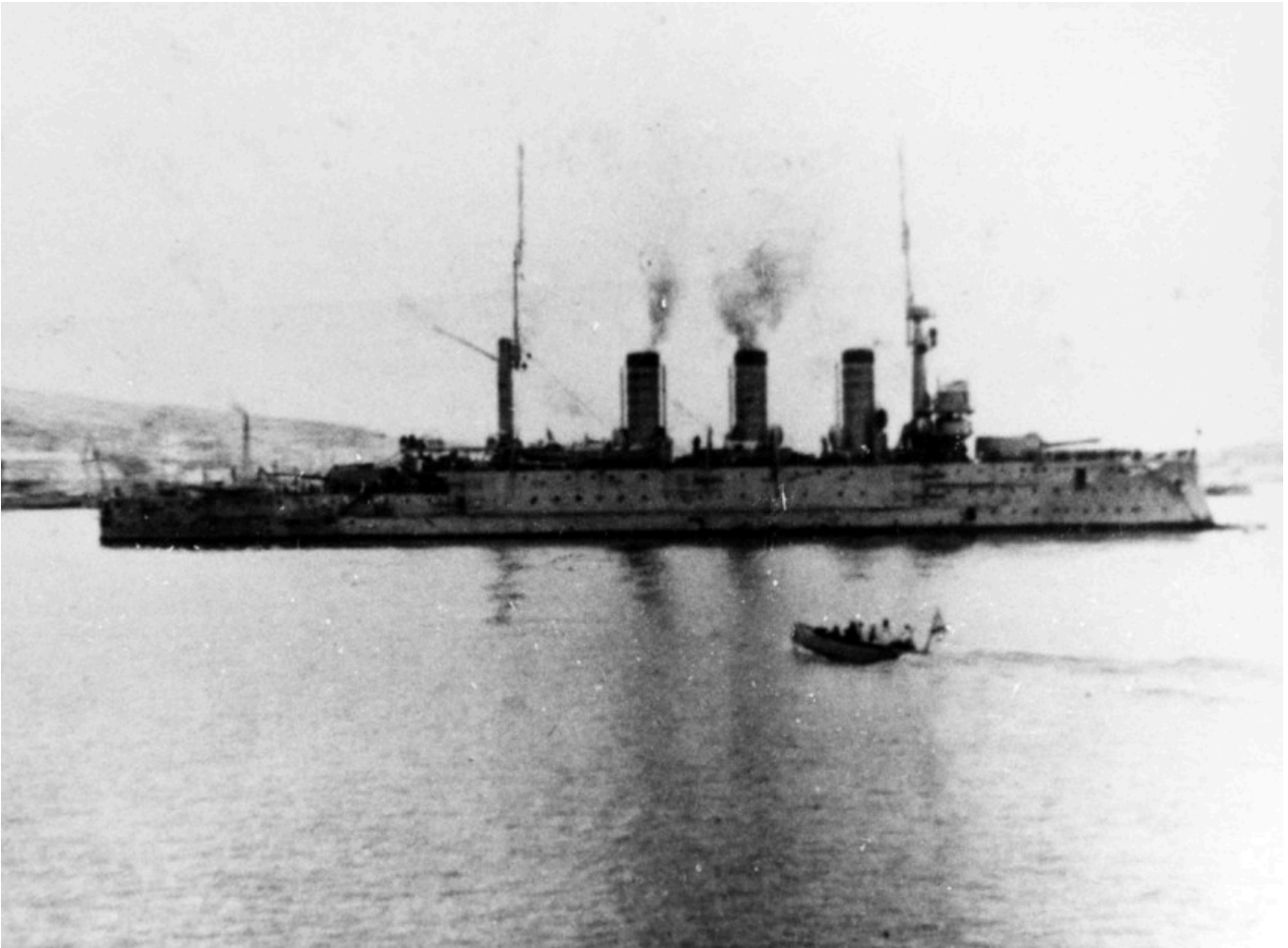
Transferred by the Japanese at Vladivostok in March/April 1916, the first three were soon dispatched to the Med (where *Peresvet* was promptly sunk by a German mine off Port Said) within weeks, and two would end up in Archangel by 1917.



Chesma was photographed at Vladivostok in 1916, after being repatriated by Japan to Russia. This ship served as The Japanese Tango after being salvaged at Port Arthur after The Russo-Japanese War; previously, she was The Russian Poltava. NH 94326



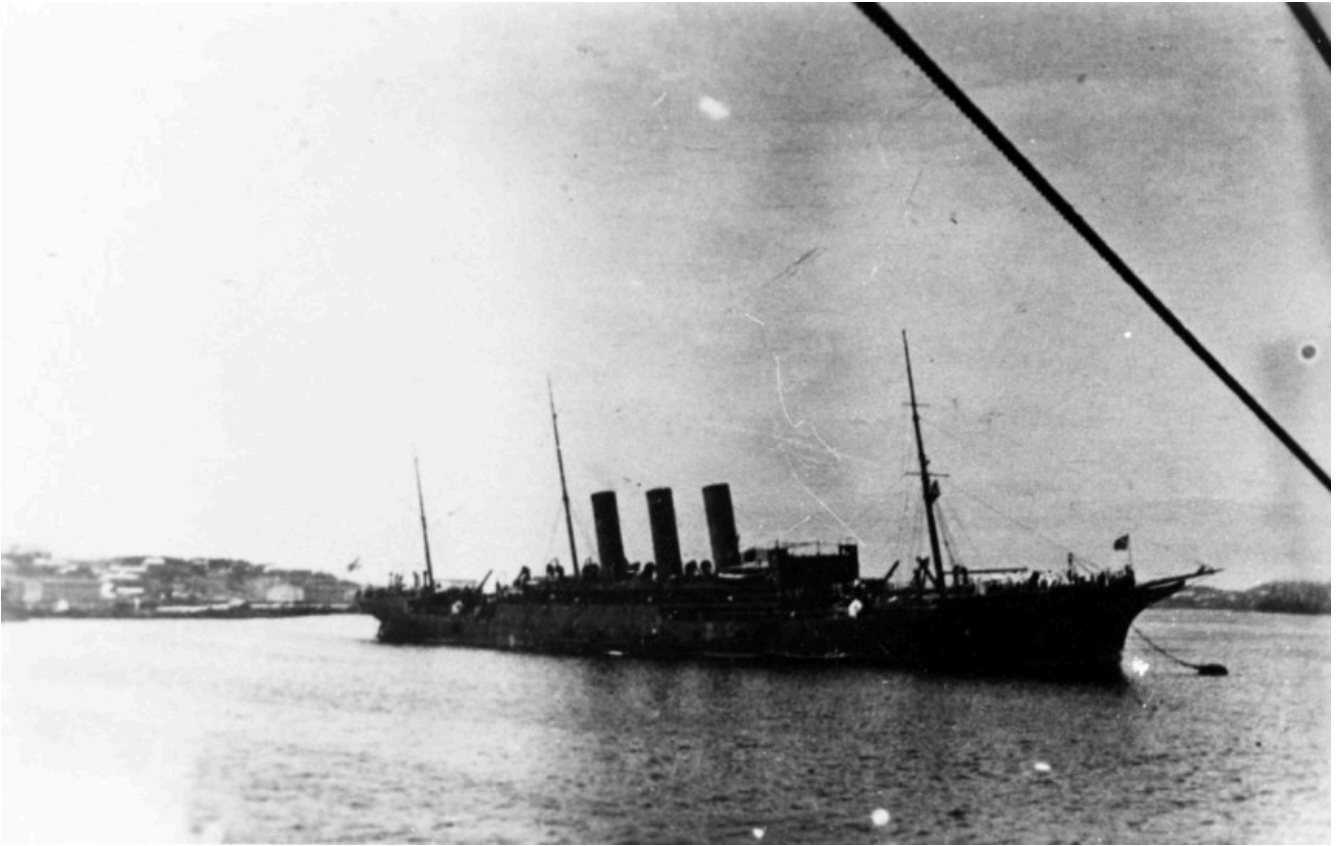
Chesma, foreground, and Varyag, background, photographed at Vladivostok after being retroceded by Japan in March 1916. NH 94355



Peresvet photographed at Vladivostok in 1916 after being returned by Japan to Russia. This ship was sunk at Port Arthur in 1904 and served the Japanese Navy as the Sagami from 1905 to March 1916. Peresvet was mined and sunk on 4 January 1917 near Port Said, Egypt. NH 94791

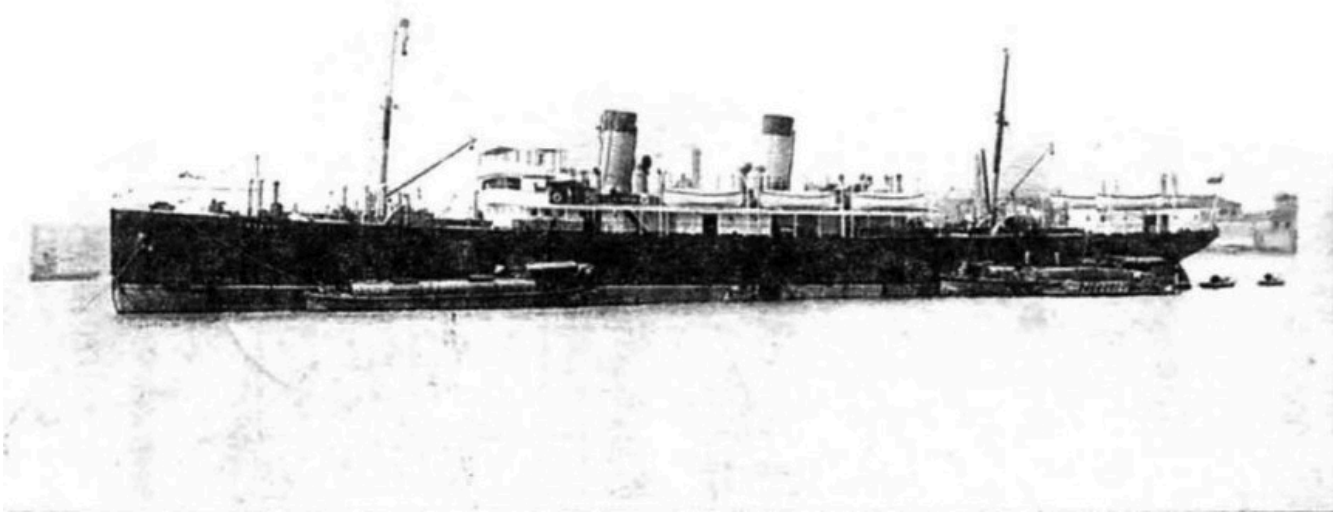
Staffing these three large ships significantly drained the flotilla of manpower, leaving several ships laid up afterward.

Angara, in poor material condition, never left Vladivostok and served as a barracks and depot ship there.



Pechenga, a Russian depot ship probably photographed at Vladivostok during World War I. This ship was built in 1898 in Scotland as Moskva for the Russian Volunteer Fleet Association; it was renamed Angara in late 1903 for naval service and sunk at Port Arthur. She was raised by Japan and renamed Anegawa Maru, then served as a transport until and ceded back to Russia in 1916. Scuttled in 1922, she was later raised and scrapped by the Soviets. NH 92087

Further transfers of the rest of its submarines to the Black and Baltic Sea via rail, and the paying off of three worn-out torpedo boats/destroyers (*Besposhtchadny*, *Boiki*, and *Grozny*) in 1916 would leave the Siberian Military Flotilla in 1917 without any battleships, submarines, or cruisers, and precious few escorts. Its two most powerful ships being its auxiliary cruisers.

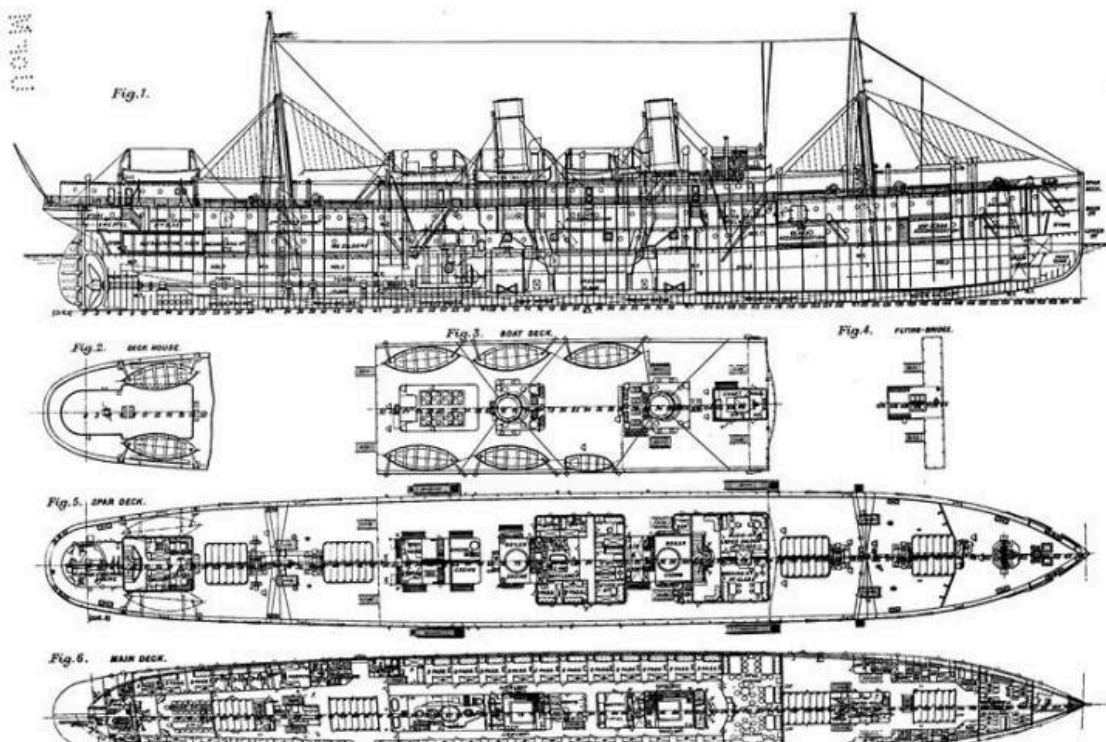


Orel ("Eagle"), a German F. Schichau-built fast passenger steamer with accommodations for 390 passengers, built originally for the Russian Volunteer Fleet, was the Siberian Military Flotilla's most fearsome warship after October 1914 and would remain so until she sailed away in January 1920. Mounting eight deck guns ranging from 47mm to 120mm along with a few machine guns and capable of maintaining 16 knots, she was classed as an auxiliary cruiser by the Russians. During the Great War, she looked for the German raider Emden, landed her naval infantry at Singapore to suppress a rebellion of Sepoys, and patrolled from Hawaii to Bombay. She was sold after the Russian Civil War to an English shipping firm and, as the SS Silvia and later SS Haitian, would survive in merchant service until 1950. Image from Yu.N. Trifonov, A.E. Volkov's "Marine collection" 2007/06.

THE RUSSIAN VOLUNTEER STEAMERS "OREL," "POLTAVA," "SIMBIRSK," "PENSA," AND "RJASAN."

CONSTRUCTED BY MR. F. SCHICHAU, SHIPBUILDER AND ENGINEER, ELBING AND DANTZIG.

(For Description, see Page 313.)



Orel and her sisterships, the passenger steamers Poltava, Simbirsk, Pensa, and Rjasan, from the 1910 Engineering magazine

Revolution

By the time of the March Revolution that overthrew the Tsar in far-away Petrograd, the Siberian flotilla would number only about a dozen semi-active torpedo boats/destroyers, the auxiliary cruisers *Lieutenant Dydymov* and *Orel*, the 700-ton gunboat *Adm. Zavoyko*, the gunboat *Mandzhur*, and the 2,500-ton minelayer *Mongugay*.

On 29 November 1917, *Adm. Zavoyko* raised a red flag on her masts while in Golden Horn Bay, the first such vessel in the Pacific to do so, and the rest of the fleet went over to the Bolsheviks, becoming the Red Siberian Flotilla on 12 December 1917— with most ships' officers and senior NCOs released from duty.

RADM Schultz, after a term in the brig guarded by red-arm banded sailors, was retired. He returned to his sister's home near Luga, outside of Petrograd, and was later arrested in late September or early October 1919 and shot by the Bolsheviks. His body was never found.

Intervention and Civil War

Meanwhile, with stockpiles of allied war aid crowding the docks of Vladivostok, American (cruiser *USS Brooklyn*), British (cruiser *HMS Suffolk*), and Japanese (battleships *Iwami* and *Asahi*) warships were in the harbor by January 1918 and had sent marines ashore to protect their consulate.

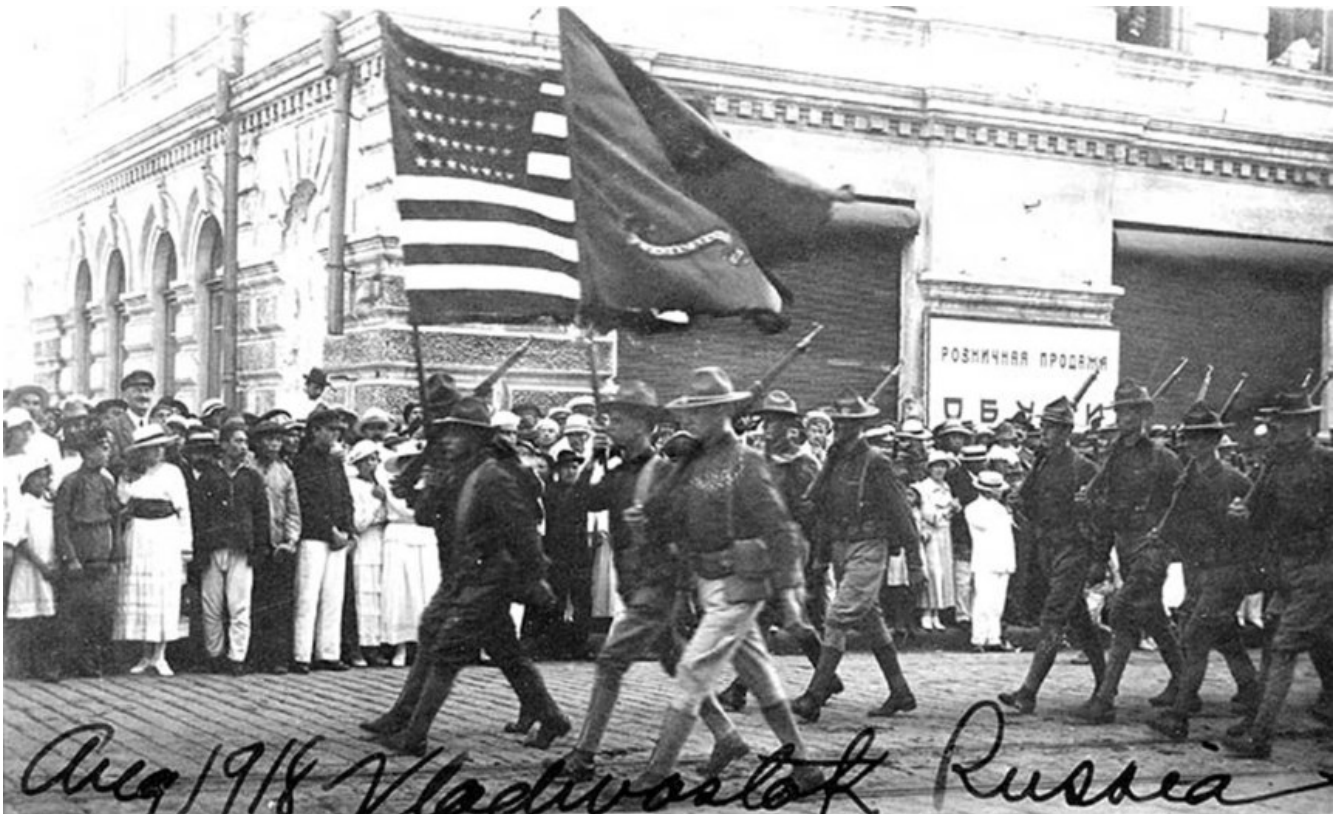


Bundled up, U.S. Marines landed from USS Brooklyn (CA-3) at Vladivostok, Siberia, in 1918-19. 111-SC-76186

This soon expanded to a mandate to support the withdrawal of the newly formed Czech Legion, recruited from Austrian POWs held in Russian camps, and whole divisions of ground troops came ashore over the summer, with the Japanese eventually landing 72,000 troops under the command of Gen. Kikuzo Otani. By comparison, the smaller American Expeditionary Force, Siberia, of Maj. Gen. William S. Graves only amounted to about 8,000 soldiers. The latter was supported by a U. S. Navy task force under RADM William L. Rodgers. Similar forces were landed by the Canadians (4,400) and British (6,700, mostly Indian, troops).



American sailors equipped with Remington-made Mosin rifles and helmets in Vladivostok, Russia, 1918. 111-SC-50100

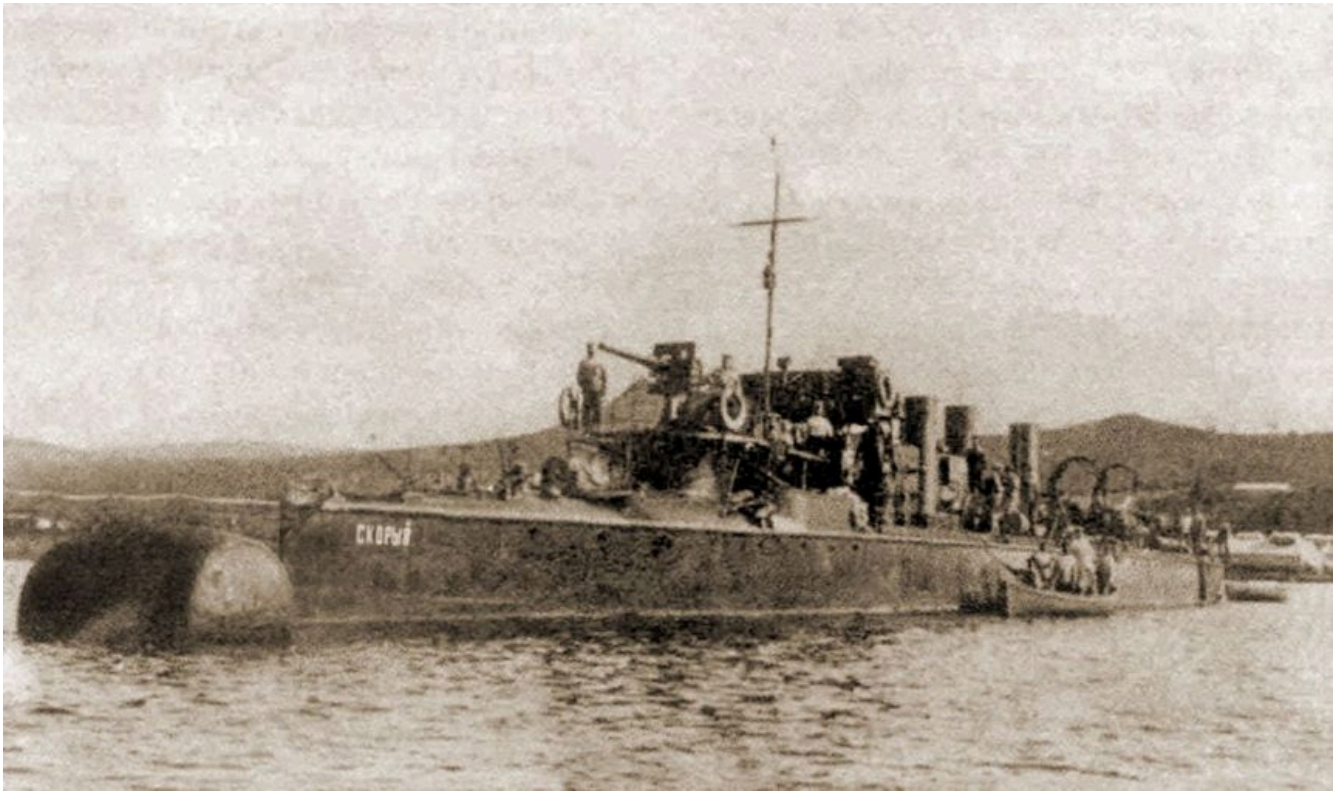


U.S. Soldiers in Vladivostok, Aug. 1918, a mission that would span four years



Russian Intervention, 1918-20. Hospital Car operated by the American Expeditionary Forces at Khabarovsk, north of Vladivostok. American Red Cross Collection. The war in Siberia was one of railways and ports. Photograph received November 11, 1919. National Archives.

With the change in Eastern Siberia's political polarity in June 1918, the anti-Bolshevik White Russians under then-Admiral Kolchak, with the interventionists as muscle, took control of the Siberian Military Flotilla. The Japanese duly impounded the destroyers *Tochnyy*, *Tvordyy*, *Smelyy*, and *Skoryy*, along with most of the gunboats of the Amur River flotillas, and never gave them back.



Russian destroyer Skoryy, seen at Port Arthur in 1903. The 258-ton Sokol-class destroyer was assembled at Port Arthur from a Nevsky-supplied kit and, escaping the fall of the fortress in 1905, was eventually taken over by the Japanese in June 1918, who kept her in operation for four years, scuttling the vessel in October 1922 along with the other destroyers the Japanese had taken up.

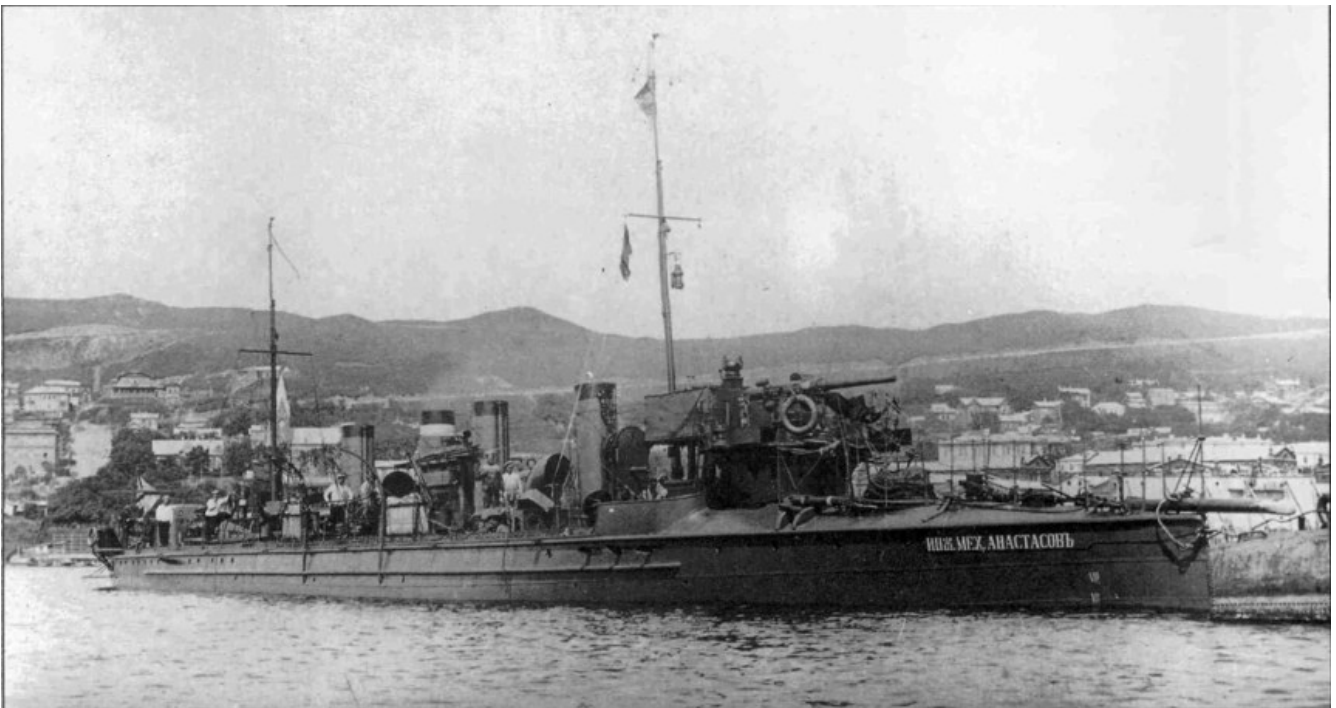
Bereft of lower ratings, who had either signed up with the Reds or deserted, the Flotilla was sidelined through most of the Russian Civil War. During this period, its leadership shifted between Rear Admirals Sergei Nikolaevich Timirev and Mikhail Andreevich Berens. Efforts to train new officers and crews from local recruits were begun but, as it would turn out, were short-lived.

Once Kolchak was betrayed and executed at the end of 1919 and it looked like the Reds were going to win, a great flight from Vladivostok led to the departure of a convoy led by *Orel* (with RADM Berens aboard), the transport *Yakut*, and a group auxiliary ships manned by midshipmen of the local Naval School and refugees from Vladivostok to Japanese-held Tsingtao in January 1920, with *Orel* proceeding ultimately to Sevastopol where they would join the White Russian forces there.



Two Siberian Flotilla units were probably photographed off Vladivostok. Transport Yakut was a former British Steamship, purchased in 1892. A Nevski-built, Yarrow-Type Destroyer appears at left. NH 94289

In their wake, Berens (or the Japanese) had scuttled the destroyers *Trevozhnyy*, *Inzhener-mekhanik Anastasov*, and *Leytenant Maleyev*.



Destroyer Inzhener-mekhanik Anastasov in Vladivostok. She had been scuttled in 1920.

Their supply lines running short and the Japanese still in control of the region as far inland as the eastern shores of Lake Baikal, the Reds stopped just short of overrunning the maritime region and Vladivostok languished as the principal port of a rump state– the Far Eastern Republic– under the protectorship of the Allied interventionists and with the tacit agreement of Moscow.



This thing. The population, just 1.7 million-ish, half of it Chinese/Mongol, was sparse but the mineral riches were heavy

It should be noted that the FER kind of wanted to just break away from the whole Russia thing and go its own way, much like the Baltics, Caucasus, Ukraine, Finland, and Poland had already. Their much-divided 400-member representative Constituent Assembly consisted of about a quarter Bolsheviks with sprinklings of every other political group in Russia, including Left and Right Social Revolutionaries, Kadets (which had long ago grown scarce in Russia proper), Mensheviks, Socialists, outright Monarchists, and Anarchists. This produced a weak and divided buffer state between Soviet Russia and Imperial Japan, and Moscow, fighting Poland in the West and against Wrangel's White Russian forces in Ukraine at the time, had bigger fish to fry.

The thing is, Washington and London were tired of their Russia expenditures once it became clear regime change wasn't going to be a thing, and, with the withdrawal of the British, the Czech Legion, and AEF-Siberia by April Fool's Day 1920, it became an outright Japanese puppet, safe and snug behind a *cordon sanitaire* of the Emperor's bayonets.

Enter RADM Georgy Karlovich Stark

The descendant of a Scottish family of the Clan Donnachaidh that moved to Russia back during the days of Peter the Great, Stark was a career naval officer born in 1878. Graduating from the naval cadet school in 1898, he was well-placed as his great uncle was Admiral Oskar Viktorovich Stark, the commander of the Russian Pacific Fleet at the beginning of the 1904 war. The younger Stark spent his career in destroyers, ultimately going on to command the 5th and 12th destroyer divisions against the Germans in the Baltic in 1916 and, after the March Revolution, was promoted to rear admiral in charge of the Baltic Fleet's mine forces—the most effective unit of that fleet.

Cashiered once the Bolsheviks came into power, Stark made his way east and fell in with Kolchak by June 1918, ultimately leading an infantry division of all things in combat along the Trans-Siberian. Narrowly escaping the White collapse along the shores of Lake Baikal and crippled by typhus, he was in a Vladivostok convalescence bed when Berens pulled stumps with the flower of the Siberian Flotilla's officer corps.

Under the squishy politics of the FER, the flotilla was rechristened the republic's "People's Revolutionary Fleet" but, following a pro-White coup under Gen. Mikhail Diterikhs and others in Vladivostok in May 1921, became the Siberian Military Flotilla once again—using the old St. Andrew's naval flag—under the new Provisional Priamur Government, with a recovered Stark in command. Reforms and rebuilding efforts by Stark (who also pitched in with running the government) put some of the fleet's destroyers and gunboats back in service, and they were used to support a variety of amphibious landings along the coastline to fight Red partisans throughout the summer periods of 1921 and 1922.

The gunboat *Adm. Zavoyko*, away on a mission when the coup went down, rather than sail for Vladivostok and join the Whites, instead made for Shanghai. There, according to legend, she successfully fended off several plots from foreign actors, Whites, monarchists, and the like to take over the vessel.

Then, starting in June 1922, the Japanese began to slowly withdraw from the Priamur enclave, with the final troops sailing away in early October. Diterikhs tried to go on the offensive near Khabarovsk to scare the Reds off, but they were driven back. On 9 October, the Reds occupied Spassk and began moving into South Primorye, then, by 19 October, were on the outskirts of Vladivostok.



Members of the Provisional Amur Government in Vladivostok, 1922. In the center are the brothers Spiridon (Chairman of the Government) and Nikolai Merkulov (Minister of Foreign Affairs), and to the right, in a bow-tied Tsarist admiral's uniform, is RADM Georgy Stark, commander of the Siberian Flotilla.

This left Stark tasked with a maritime evacuation of the last die-hard White Russians, bereft of international support, using what remained of the flotilla. A genuine spit-and-bubble gum effort. Scuttling the already disarmed destroyers-turned-minesweepers *Serdityy* and *Statnyy*, as well as the *Pechenga* (old *Angara*) after stripping them of everything useful, he was able to scrape together a handful of vessels that could make the open ocean.



Serdityy, a Russian destroyer, photographed at Vladivostok in 1916. Note that the ship's guns have been removed, probably for service as a minesweeper. This ship was ordered as *Bekas* but was renamed on 26 December 1899 (old-style calendar). Note the floating dock in the left background. NH 92392

Stark's force included the auxiliary cruiser *Lieutenant Dydymov*, the gunboats *Mandzhur*, *Farvater*, *Strela*, *Strazh*, and *Porazhayushchiy*; the minelayer *Mongugai*, the tug *Baykal*, dispatch boat *Ayaks*, and the freighters *Diomed*, *Zapal*, *Patrokl*, *Svir*, *Uliss*, *Il'ya Muromets*, *Batareya*, and *Parizh*. Joined by a dozen miscellaneous civilian vessels— including fishing trawlers and construction barges— under a tri-color Russian flag at Posyet Bay, Stark's little fleet numbered 28 ships all told by 28 October, filled with over 10,000 refugees.

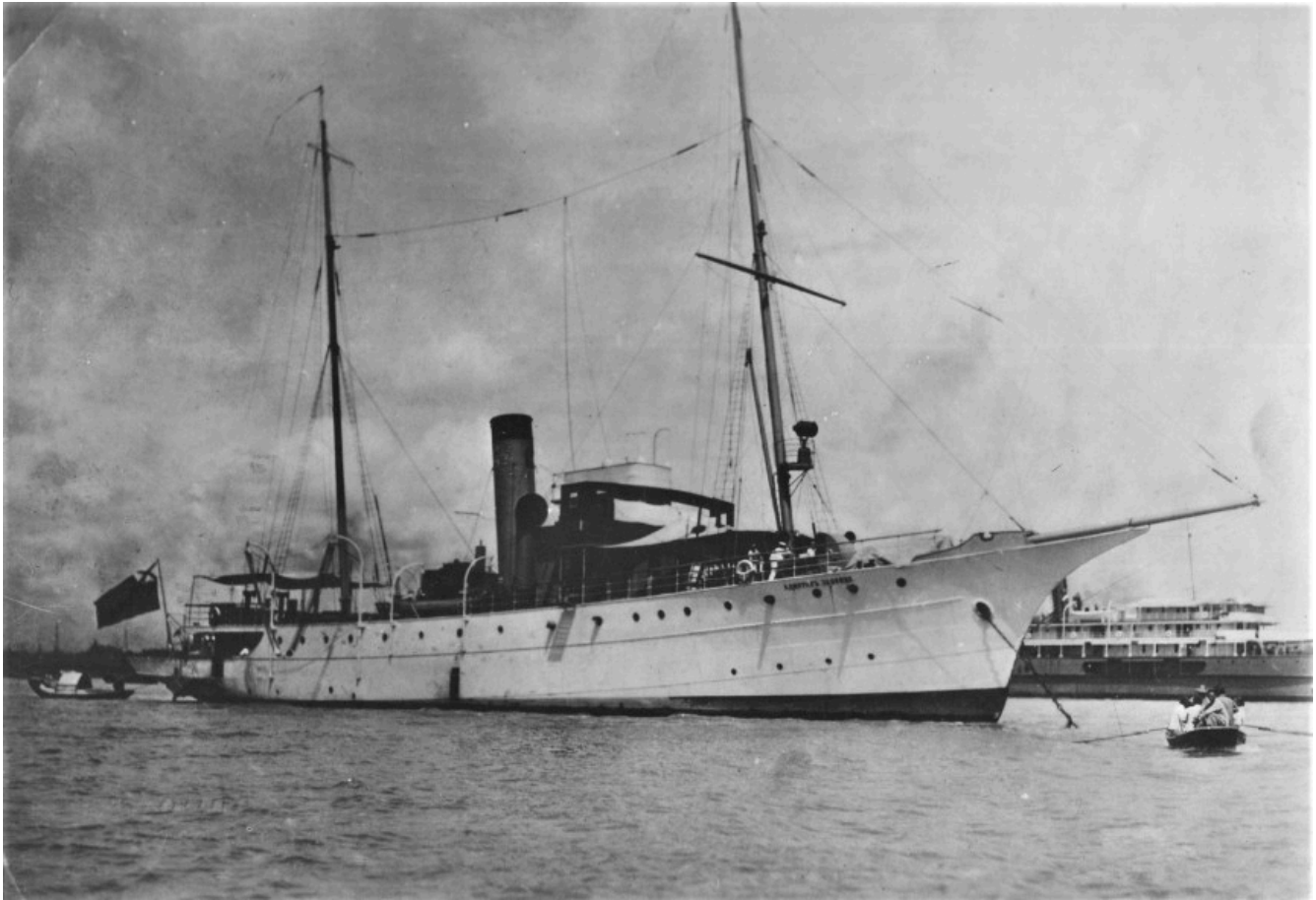
Korea and China

Sailing 370 miles for Genzan (Wonson) in what is now North Korea, they arrived on Halloween 1922 and remained there for three weeks as other White Russian vessels swelled Stark's exile fleet to over 40 ships. Ordered to leave by the Japanese, who were not anxious to support a Russian exile community in the Hermit Kingdom, Stark consolidated his ships, shedding the crippled vessels along the way (*Dydymov* was tragically lost in a storm while the dispatch boat *Ayaks* was later lost off Formosa) and stopped briefly at Fuzan (Busan) before arriving at Shanghai with just 15 ships. He was joined there by the White Russian gunboat *Magnit*, which had left Petropavlovsk with 200 Siberian Cossacks aboard.

Soon, the gunboats *Farvater*, *Strela*, *Strazh*, and *Porazhayushchiy* were disarmed and sold to a French concern in Shanghai in exchange for enough credit to buy 1,500 tons of coal for the ships that were left.

Meanwhile, (acting) RADM (formerly Capt. 2nd rank) Vasily Viktorovich Bezuar remained at Genzan with 11 broken ships that he would liquidate, arriving in Shanghai before the year was out.

In a state of the surreal, the exiled anti-White gunboat *Adm. Zavoyko* was still in Shanghai at the time, and only sailed back home to the now-all-Soviet Vladivostok in March 1923 (after Stark's fleet left), where she became a unit of the Red Banner Fleet– the only one in the Pacific until 1932.



ADMIRAL ZAVOYKO 1921

It was in Shanghai that Red Navy Capt. Vladimir Alexandrovich Belli– like Stark from a Scottish family that had been in Russia since the 1700s– was sent by Moscow to talk with Stark. He brought the White admiral a photo and letter from his family in Petrograd and offered a general amnesty on behalf of the Central Committee in exchange for the return of the flotilla. Stark refused and, according to some reports, Belli didn't blame him. Nonetheless, some of the refugees had second thoughts about their new lives abroad and returned to Russia with the Red officer.

With most of the sad little fleet's refugees leaving the ships to cast their lot ashore with the thousands of White Russian exiles in Manchuria and China, by January 1923 it had been

decided that the remaining ships which could still steam would head as a force to Manila, where— with the diplomatic support of fellow White RADM Boris Petrovich Dudorov who was serving as naval attaché in Tokyo from 1918 to 1922 and Washington after 1923 for the exile government as the Japanese did not recognize the Moscow government— they would be given a literal safe harbor.

Much like the welcome the Tsar's battered fleet received in 1905 and the exiled South Vietnamese Navy would receive in 1975 following the fall of Saigon, the Philippines became home to Stark's Whites.

The Last Leg

On 20 January, ten of Stark's vessels carrying 720 or so White Russian naval officers and sailors, along with 175 of their wives and children, appeared in the Lingayen Gulf. They would be escorted into Cavite by the U.S. Navy, where their ships would be swept for weapons, the breechblocks of their guns removed, and a (guarded) camp established at Olongapo ashore.

RUSSIANS IN PHILIPPINES.

Vladivostok Refuge Fleet Arrives at Port 200 Miles From Manila.

MANILA, Jan. 20 (Associated Press).—The fleet without a home port, commanded by the Russian anti-Bolshevist leader, Admiral Stark, and bearing the destitute remnants of the Czar's forces that left Vladivostok when that city fell into Soviet hands, arrived today at Lingayen Gulf, 200 miles north of here in Pangasinan Province, according to advices received here.

An American destroyer is starting for Lingayen this evening to direct the movements of the Russian ships. It is understood that they will be escorted to Manila and held for the present at Morivelos Quarantine Station, at the entrance to Manila Bay. Governor-General Wood has already made preparations to care for the refugees there until they are able to proceed to another port.

The crowded ships, in poor repair and short of both fuel and food, left Shanghai several days ago after the Chinese authorities had refused permission for the debarkation of their human cargo. The Chinese, however, gave them some supplies, and they limped to Lingayen,

seeking a haven under the stars and
Stripes.

The New York Times

Published: January 21, 1923

Governor General Leonard Wood went on to secure \$5K from the American Relief Administration for Russia and a matching \$5K from the American Red Cross while pushing the local government to allow some of the smaller Russian ships to engage in inter-island trade. On 23 March 1923, in agreement with the U.S. Navy, Stark ordered the St. Andrews Cross lowered on his ships, replaced by the Stars & Stripes alone.

In April, President Harding authorized the emigration of 500 Russian refugees from Stark's ships to the U.S., provided they could pay their own way on an Army-provided transport and be granted visas— while many of the balance would go on to take jobs in Mindanao.

On 24 May 1923, some 529 Russians, mostly former naval personnel and their families, were taken on the 3,000-ton U.S. Army Transport *Merritt* and, subject to military justice with Stark's blessing, would sail for San Francisco in a transit paid for by Stark's remaining funds. The fees for the necessary visas, likewise, had been paid for out of the fleet's strongbox.

529 CZAR REFUGEES SAIL FOR AMERICA

Leave Olongapo on an Army
Transport After Being Ma-
rooned in Philippines.

STARK REMAINS BEHIND

Admiral in Leavetaking Praises
American Generosity and
Urges Appreciation.

Copyright, 1923, by The New York Times Company
By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.
MANILA, May 26.—The Merritt sailed
from Olongapo at 2 o'clock this after-

noon with the 529 Russian refugees for the United States. Colonel Munson and his staff witnessed the departure. Admiral Stark, in a touching speech, bade farewell to his men, who, bareheaded, massed about him on the rear deck half an hour before the sailing. He recalled his long, arduous and adventurous journey and expressed regret on leaving them. He continued:

"The generous American Government has enabled you to seek homes and a fortune in that great country. We cannot too deeply appreciate American generosity. Comrades, may you all be happy over there and benefit by what you will see, learn and do."

The men cheered vociferously and again broke out in loud cheers that reverberated across the bay as Admiral Stark and his staff rounded the ship in their launch before heading for shore.

The embarkation went off without a hitch under the direction of Colonel Munson. At the last moment thirty-six on the original list decided to remain in the Philippines. All the commanding officers of the Russian ships are remain-

ing here with their families. Altogether seventy-five people guard the white fleet which Admiral Stark desires to lease or sell for inter-island trade.

The ranking Russian officer aboard the Merritt is Lieut. Gen. Kheiskenen. The others in the cabins are Lieut. Commander Kheiskenen, the General's son; Lieut. Commander Afrosimoff, Lieut. Commander Zoon, Colonel Minitzky, Colonel Kolonoff, Captain Danieloff, Lieutenant Stepanoff, Lieutenant Eimanovitch, Dr. Sapoginkoff and Colonel Dedenko, with their families. About half the men are mechanics, 100 farmers, 40 seamen, 27 fishermen, 13 wireless operators and 10 engineers.

All the emigrants are healthy and well fed. The Olongapo people declare some of the refugee women attended a dance wearing diamonds worth thousands of dollars, and the officers appear to have plenty of money.

One group of thirty-two men, women and children desire employment farming as a body.

A translation of the order issued by Admiral Stark yesterday follows: "The United States Army transport Merritt is due to arrive today at Olongapo to take aboard the ranks of the former Siberian flotilla and to transfer them to America as Russian immigrants. At the request of the American Commandant I order:

"1. During the whole passage all the Russians aboard are under and must

comply with American military laws, rules and regulations.

"2. In all cases of coaling or shifting coal or cargo all the men, without exception, must give a hand, seniors as leaders, juniors as laborers.

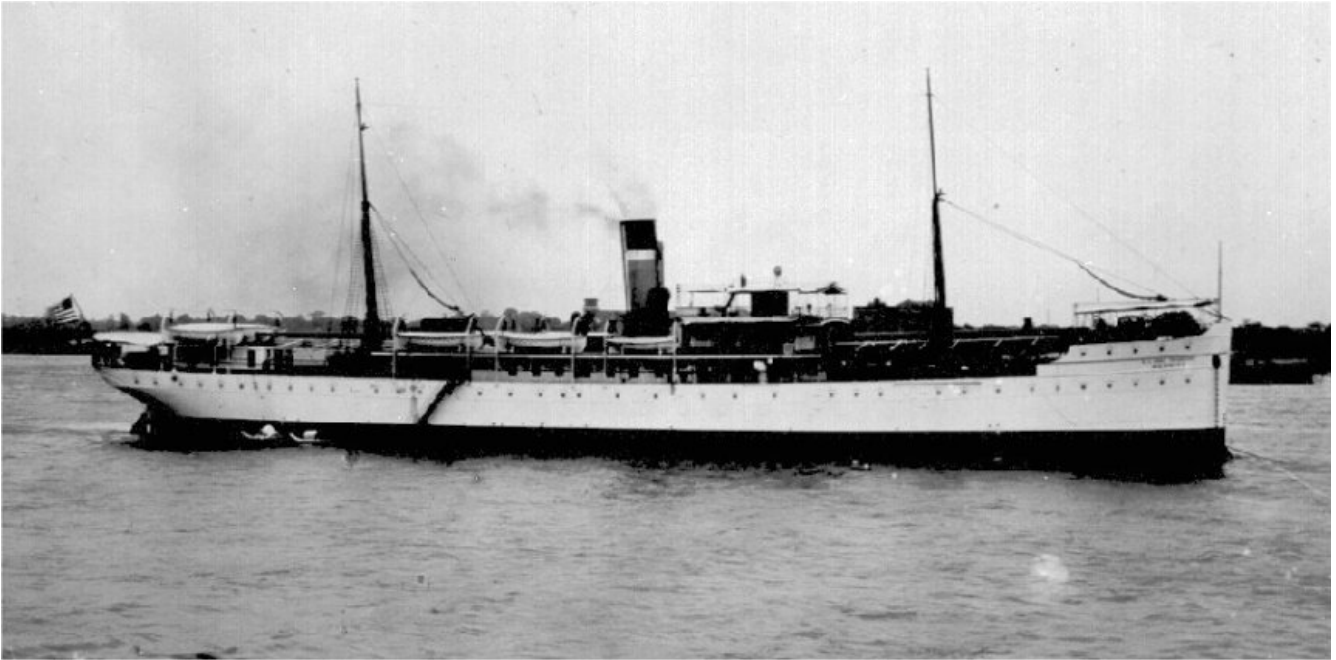
"3. All men also must help daily in cleaning up the ship.

"4. All those having firearms are to hand them over to the ship's Commander promptly and unquestionably. A receipt will be given and the arms returned on arrival in the United States.

"5. Keeping or consuming of alcoholic beverages is strictly and categorically forbidden.

"Thousands of immigrants, some Russians included, are saving money to pay their passage to America. You are going free of charge. You should always remember this, and be thankful to Americans for their kindness to you for such treatment. The only way for you to pay them back is by being of irrefragable conduct and by carrying out the work of the ship's routine as directed by the authorities. You must remember that by your conduct during the passage you will be building up your recommendation and references, and consequently you will be met over there accordingly. Every one should be imbued with the sentiment of duty, and remember that any offense committed by one of you will be a dirty spot on the conduct of the whole group and bring harm to all Russians."

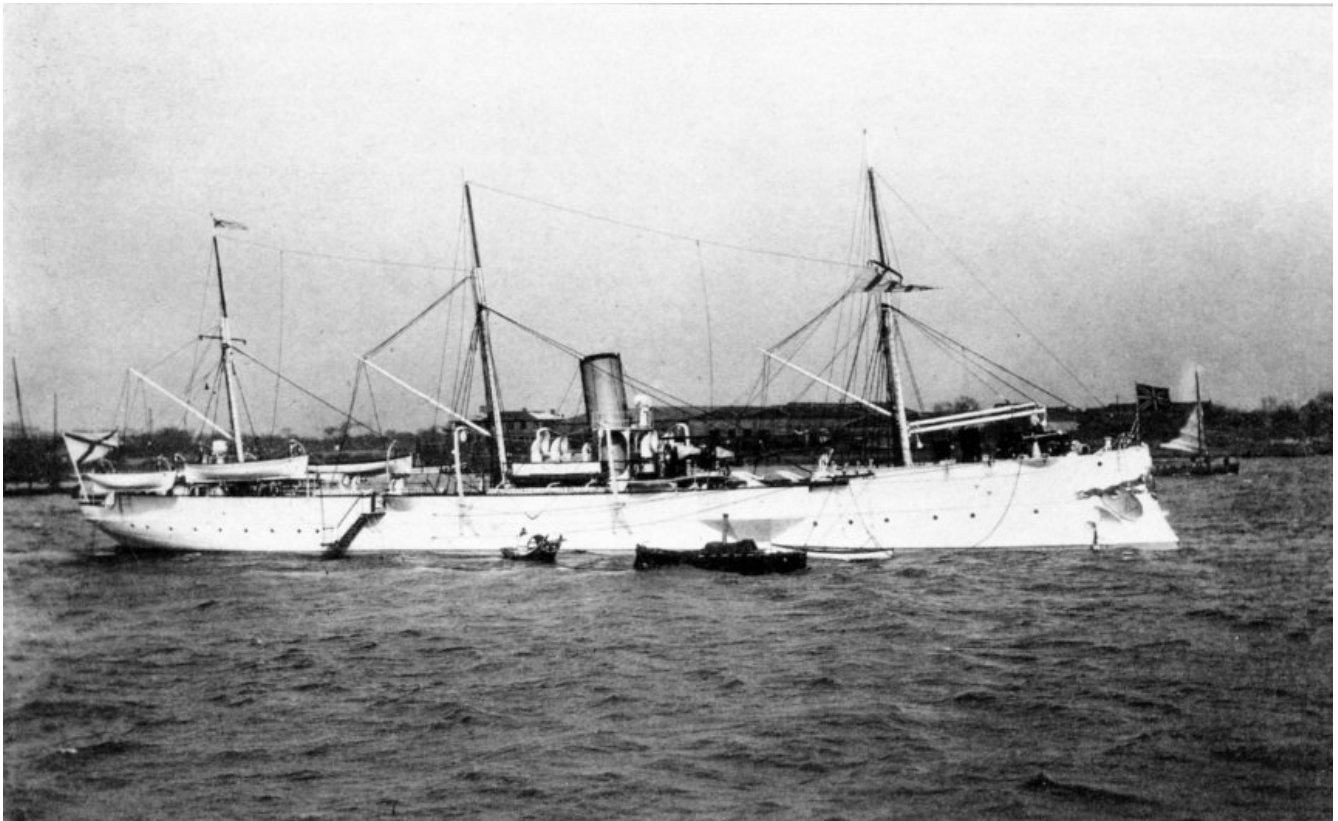
The New York Times
Published: May 27, 1923



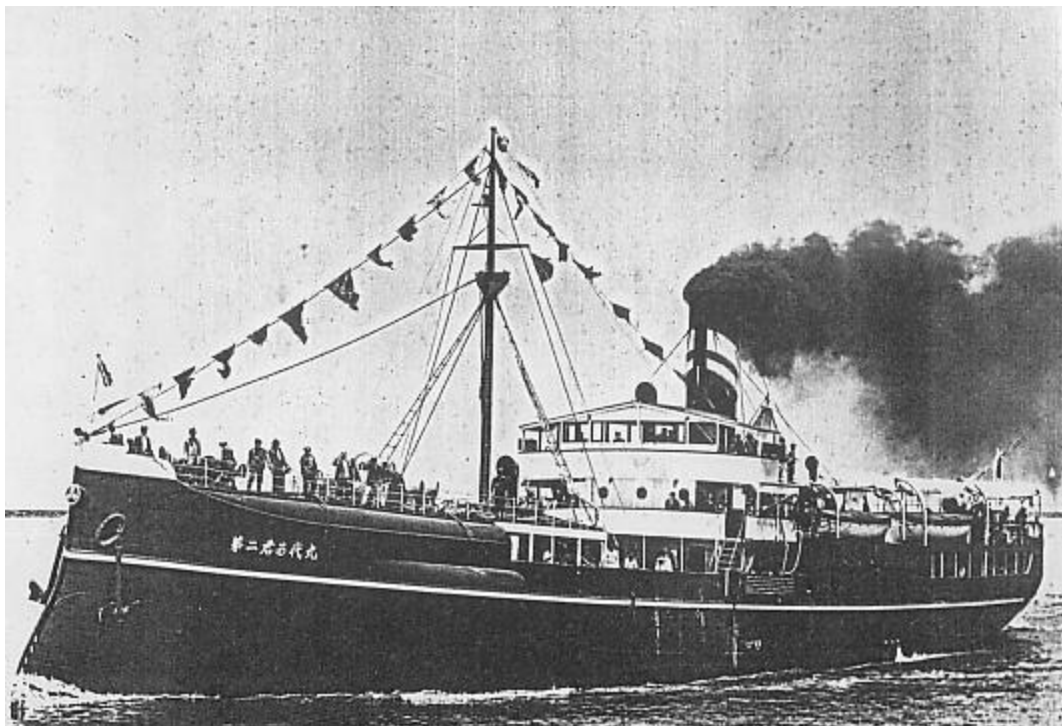
The USAT Merritt. Built in China in 1912 for the U.S. Army Quartermaster Department, she would ply the Philippines and run a shuttle service to Hawaii and California for 20 years. Sold on the commercial market as SS Bisayas, she was lost in 1942 to the Japanese, who raised her and put her back in service as the Hishigata Maru until the USAAF sent her to the bottom for a final time in 1945.

As for the last of Stark's ships, they were left to sway at their moorings in Cavite with 75 volunteers to keep them afloat until they could be sold or disposed of.

While many of the principal European countries soon reestablished relations with Soviet Russia— Great Britain concluded a trade agreement with the Soviet regime in 1921 and accorded recognition in 1924, while Germany reestablished diplomatic relations in 1922 and concluded a comprehensive commercial treaty in 1925— U.S. relations with Moscow gently warmed until the Soviet Union was recognized in 1933. However, a Soviet delegation was allowed to visit Cavite in 1925 to inspect Stark's remaining unsold ships, and, with one curious exception, they elected to sell them for scrap "as-is, where-is." Of these, one, the gunboat *Mandzhur*, was purchased by Amagasaki Kisen, refurbished, and placed into service as *Kimigayo Maru No.2*.

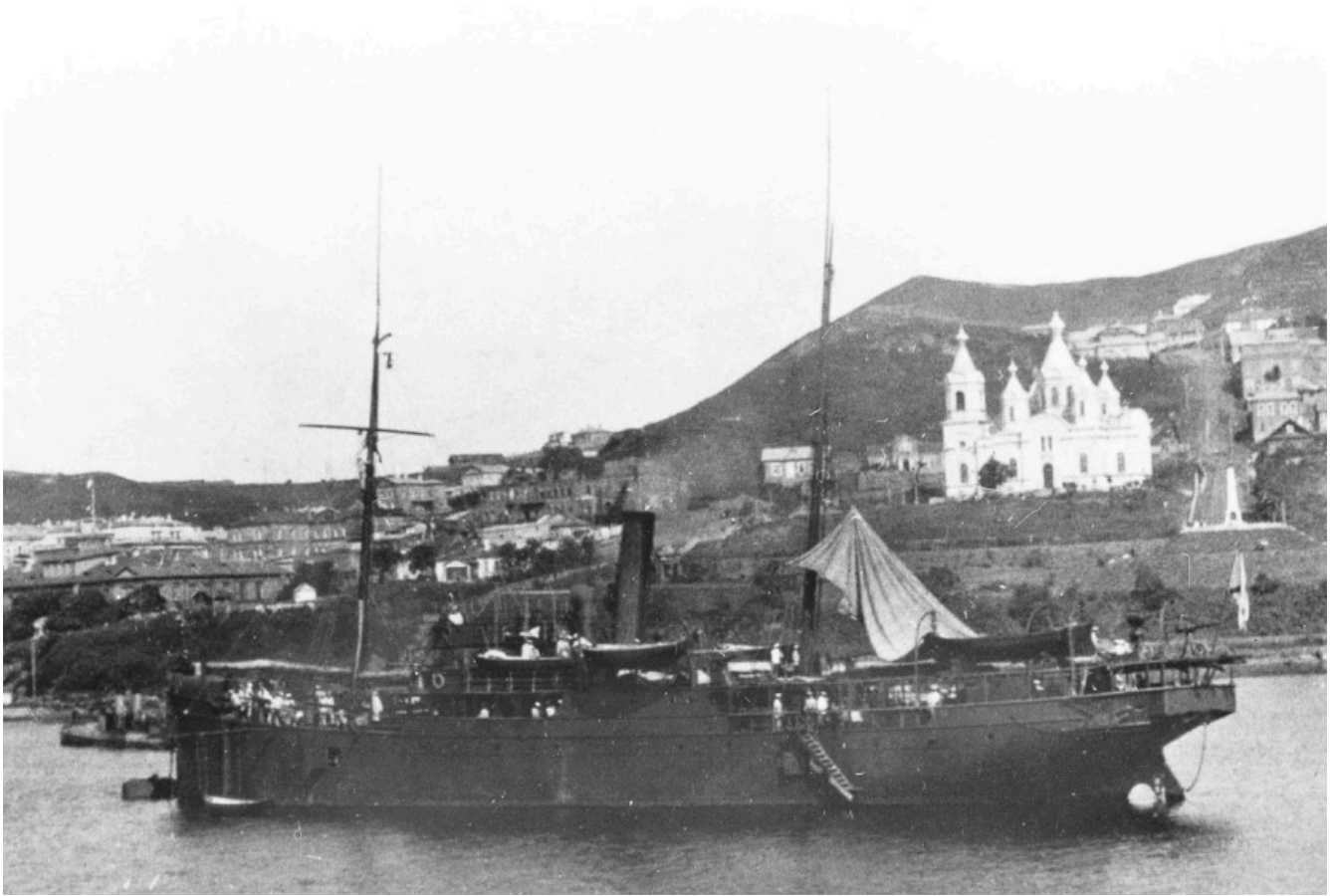


Russian auxiliary cruiser/gunboat Mandzhur (Manchu, Manjur.) built in Denmark in 1886

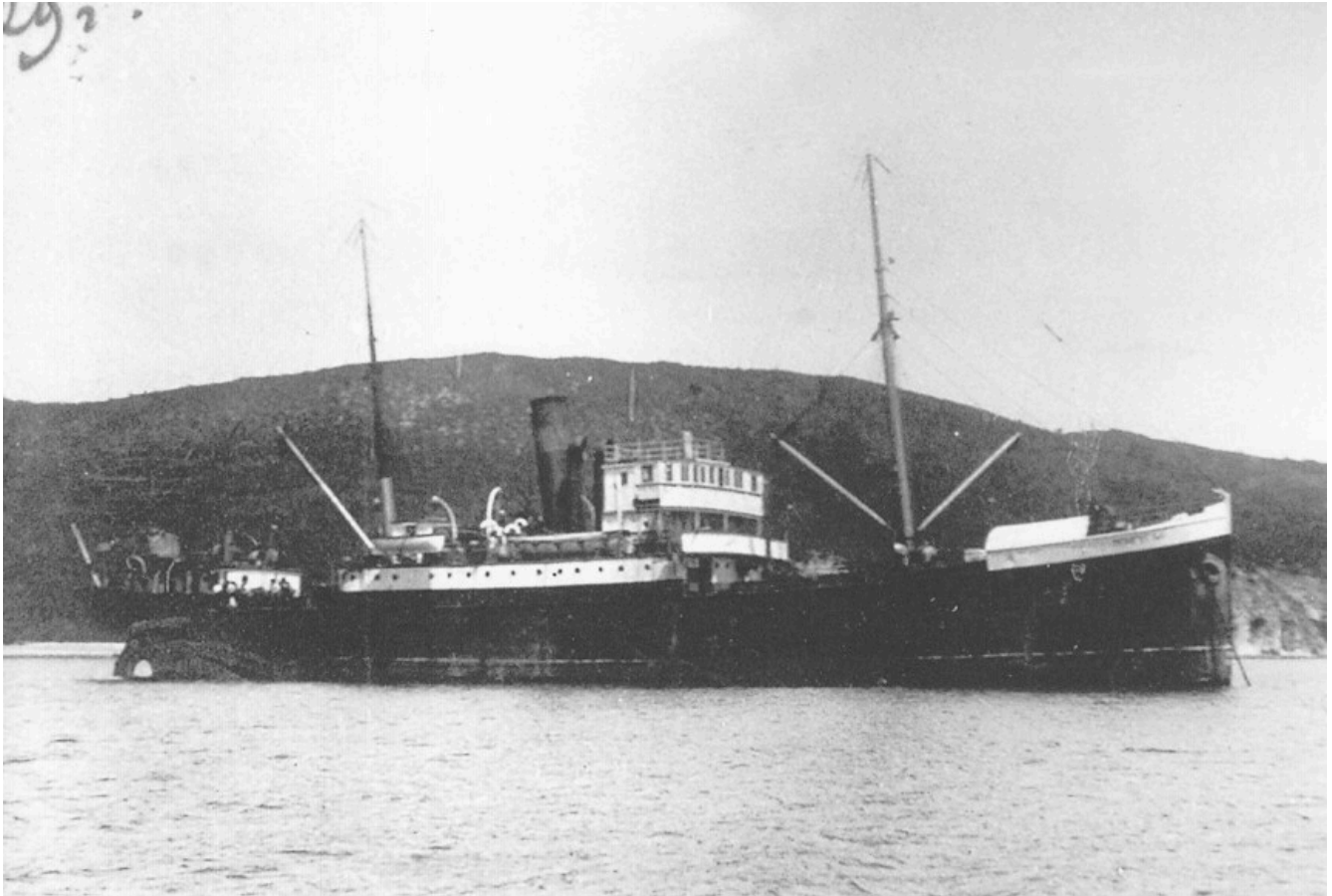


Kimigayo Maru No.2, formerly the White Russian gunboat Mandzhur, was placed in regular two-day rice and barley runs between Osaka and Jeju Island from 1926 through 1941. Taken up from service by the Japanese Navy, she was lost in the June 1, 1945, B-29 bomber raid on Osaka.

The only ship of Stark's that went back to Vladivostok was the 2,500-ton minelayer *Mongugay*.



Built in 1896 in Germany as a commercial steamer, Pronto, Mongugay had been bought by the Russian Navy in 1904 for service during the war with Japan. Able to carry 310 mines and armed with a mixed battery of 75mm and 47mm guns, she served the Tsar, then the Reds, then the Whites, and Stark until abandoned in Cavite. Reclaimed by the Reds in March 1925, she was made ready to sail and arrived back at Vladivostok on 12 April.



Used by Sovtorgflot as a tramp steamer of sorts into 1933, Mongugay was subsequently handed back over to the newly formed Soviet Red Banner Pacific Fleet and used as a receiving ship until 1951, when she was finally scrapped.

As for Stark, the unsinkable admiral would wander around Asia and Europe for a bit before settling with the large Russian exile community in Paris, where he would work as a taxi driver while serving as the chair of the "All-Foreign Association of Russian Naval Officers." During the occupation of Paris by the Germans, he refused to cooperate with the German authorities and instead was involved with the Resistance.



Passing in 1949, aged 71, Stark was buried in the Russian cemetery at Sainte-Geneviève-des-Bois.

Stark's second in command, the young Bezuar, would go on to serve as a merchant ship captain in Philippine and Chinese waters during the interwar period and was killed in December 1941 when the Japanese sank his ship. Speaking of which, many of the White Russian exiles that settled in Mindanao would go on to join and support anti-Japanese resistance forces in the islands during WWII occupation.

Belli, the Red officer of Scottish ancestry who offered Stark and company amnesty in Shanghai in 1923, went on to spend 10 years as a guest in Stalin's gulag during the Purges, then, during WWII, returned to service and eventually retired in 1951 as a rear admiral teaching international naval law at the Voroshilov Naval Academy. He outlived just about everyone else involved in this story and died in Leningrad in 1981, still officially a member of the Frunze Academy's board at age 93.

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