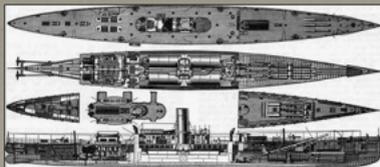




USS Vesuvius muzzles of dynamite guns



These drawings illustrate Vesuvius' internal arrangement. Most of her forepart is taken up by three 15-inch compressed-air guns and banks of air tanks. Like submarine torpedo tubes, these guns were fixed. They were traversed by turning the ship; elevation was adjusted by varying the compressed-air propulsion charge.



USS Vesuvius breeches of dynamite guns



USS Vesuvius Chief Petty Officer adjusts the air chambers of the dynamite guns

USS Vesuvius 1890-1922 A Dynamite Ship



USS Vesuvius, a 930-ton "dynamite gun cruiser" was commissioned in June 1890. Her armament was unique, consisting of three 15" pneumatic guns, mounted forward side-by-side, that fired special high explosive projectiles.

In order to train these weapons, the ship had to be aimed, like a gun, at its target. Compressed air projected the shells from the "dynamite guns." Ten shells per gun were carried on board, and the range of flight—varied from 200 yards to one and one-half miles—depending on the amount of air entering the firing chamber.

During the Spanish-American War, she was employed off Cuba, used to bombard Santiago. Vesuvius conducted eight shore bombardment missions. The effect of the bombardment was minimal. However, the bombardments caused great anxiety among the Spanish forces ashore, since the shells came in without warning, unaccompanied by the roar of gunfire usually associated with a bombardment.

After the end of the Spanish-American war, the "dynamite ship" was converted into a torpedo boat, serving in that capacity until her retirement in 1921.

1890s USS Vesuvius



<http://www.history.navy.mil/danfs/v2/vesuvius-iii.htm>

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