

(Verbatim) F129-1A

W. N. Darroch died early in 1965
JPC

This is an interview with William N. Darroch, of Coronado, interview taken by Jerry MacMullen Oct. 19, 1957, at Mr. Darroch's home. Mr. Darroch was born in ^{Brooklyn} New York, was educated as a Marine Engineer in Glasgow, joined the Naval Militia ^{at N.Y.} and later the United States Navy, on April 30, 1898. He came to San Diego in the early part of the century as an engineer in the American-Hawaiian Line, and later became Chief Engineer in John D. Spreckels' yacht Venetia; the Venetia arrived here in 1911. During his service in the Spanish-American war, Mr. Darroch served in the old Civil War monitor Nahant, which had been taken out of reserve and put into service as a defense for the Port of New York against possible Spanish attack.

Q Bill, suppose you tell us something about the Nahant? How long had she been out of ~~commission~~ commission when you took her into ^{New York} ~~service~~ in the Spanish War?

A Oh -- she had been put out of commission at the close of Civil War, and lay there on the fresh meadow lands at League Island Navy Yard, decommissioned, and she was recommissioned when the Reserves went down there to put her in service for the defense of New York Harbor -- there was two of them, the Nahant and the Jason. The Jason was stationed at the entrance to Long Island Sound, and the Nahant was at the entrance to New York Harbor.

Q How large a crew did she carry?

A We had a crew of close to 70 personnel, including officers.

Q How large was the Nahant -- roughly how long was she?

A Well, I guess the Nahant was over 200 feet long.

Q Now, she had a wooden hull, didn't she, instead of a metal hull?

A She had a metal hull, blanketed with wood for armor.

Q The metal was on the outside?

A Complete deck and all. Everything was metal, and that was blanketed over, with a wood covering.

