

# The Battleship Oregon (1893-1919): "Bulldog of the Navy"

**Purpose and Scope:** Using examples of mail, postcards and other ephemera, a brief history of the battleship OREGON is presented for the period 1893-1919.

For most of her active career the battleship OREGON was arguably the most famous ship of her time. Her key actions during the Spanish-American War became the stuff of legend. In 1898, in the days before the Panama Canal, she steamed from Bremerton to San Francisco, and then "around the horn" of South America to assist naval operations in Cuba. During the Battle of Santiago Bay, OREGON chased down the Spanish flagship as she attempted to escape. She then deployed to the Asiatic Fleet for several years before being placed out of commission at Bremerton in 1906. Affectionately called "*The Bulldog of the Navy*," when recommissioned in 1911, OREGON drew crowds in every port she visited—all wanting to see the celebrated ship.

Although OREGON served until 1919, by then she was of limited value to the navy. She was often in a reserve status with a skeleton crew, but her fame made the ship especially useful for public events.

**Covers related to OREGON:** Despite her long service, mail either to/from OREGON is notoriously scarce. Most examples are handwritten envelopes or postcards. It was not until 1912 that OREGON was issued a postal device—unknown to collectors until the mid-1960's. Examples are rare.

**Presentation:** The exhibit is arranged chronologically in **Chapters**, with items of special importance marked by double-line borders. The history of the battleship OREGON progresses with each chapter, along with philatelic possibilities and examples of related mail.

## Chapters:

1. Launching (1893)
2. Commissioning (1916)
3. Early Service (1896-1898)
4. Spanish-American War (1898)
5. Asiatic Station (1899-1901)
6. Back to the West Coast (1901-1902)
7. Return to U.S. Asiatic Station (1903-1906)
8. Recommissioning (1911)
9. Pre-WWI Operations (1911-1916)
10. World War I (1917-1918)
11. Final Decommissioning (1919)
12. Fate of the Battleship Oregon

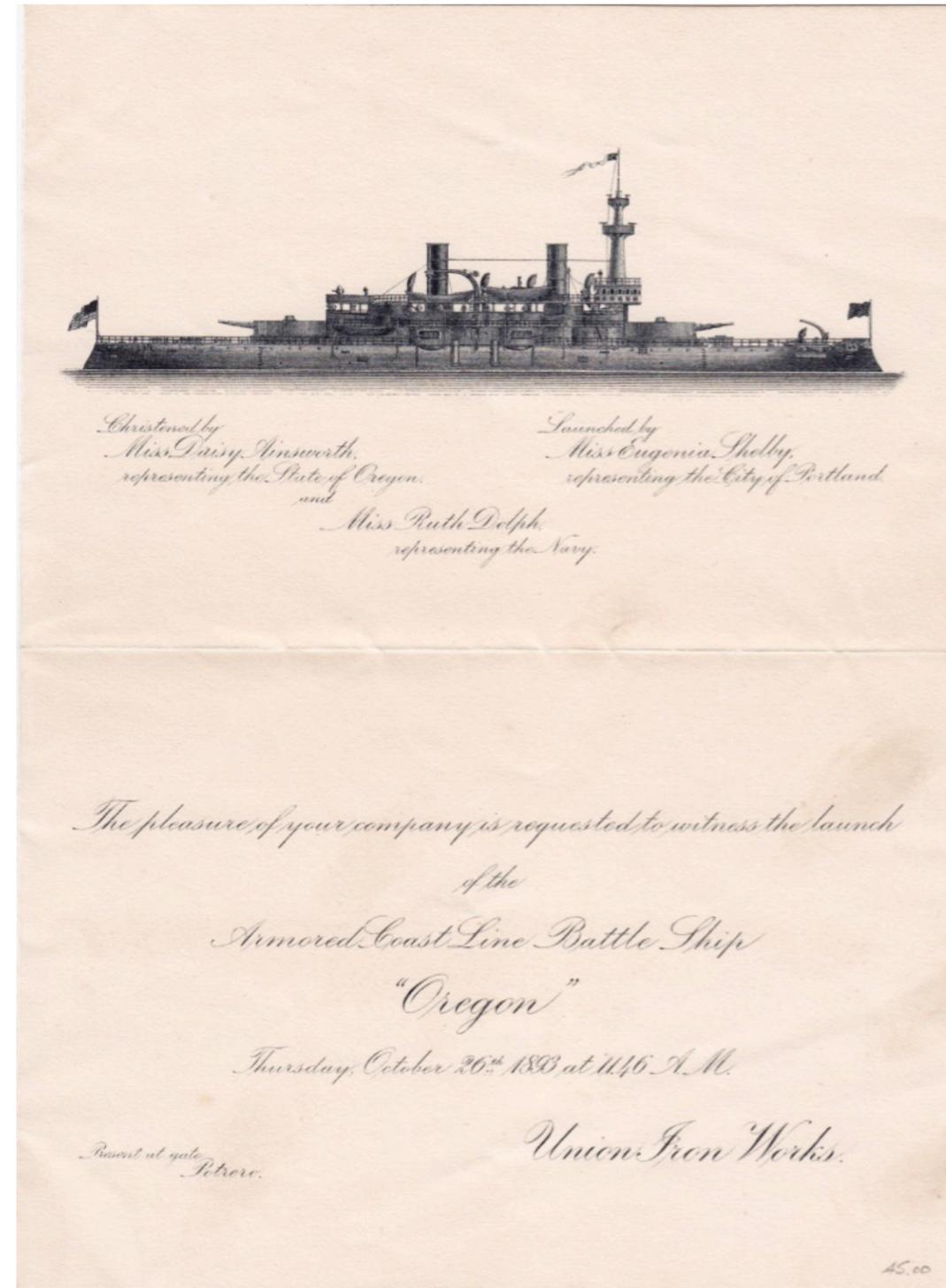
Chapter name in **Gray Box** on each page

## Launching of OREGON (1893)

**Ship History:** OREGON was the first battleship built by Union Iron Works. After the 1893 launching, it took over 2-years to finish construction.

**Mail:** N/A

### Invitation to launching of OREGON, October 26, 1893 – 1 of about 10 known



### Names appearing on Launch Invitation:



Daisy Ainsworth  
(1867-1957)



Eugenia Shelby  
(1877-1950)



Ruth Dolph  
(1876-1943)

### (Unused PC) – A Battleship Launching at Union Iron Works (where OREGON was built)



(undivided back) Edward H. Mitchell Co., c1901, probably using an 1890's image