Junior Leader Innovation:
William Sims & Continuous Aim Fire

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HSC-28
## Junior Leader Innovation: William Sims & Continuous Aim Fire

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23
Who the hell is this guy?

- Maintenance Officer, HSC-28
- MA in Military History from Norwich
- Over 30 articles and reviews published in journals, magazines, and online.
- Regular Contributor at USNI Blog and with *Proceedings & Naval History*
Battleship Kentucky, Length 375 ft. 4\(\frac{1}{2}\) in., Breadth 72 ft. 2\(\frac{1}{2}\) in., Draft 23 ft. 10\(\frac{1}{2}\) in. Place launched Newport News, VA.

Photo # NH 52047-KN  USS Kentucky, ca. early 1900s. Postcard photo
“The Kentucky is not a battleship at all. She is the worst crime in naval construction ever perpetrated by the white race.”

– LT William S. Sims
Admiral Sir Percy Scott, Royal Navy
Photo # NH 82668  Loading ammunition on USS Kentucky
The Washington Navy Yard
Researchers have “discovered that the ability to stick with it – the technical name for this trait is *grit* – is one of the most important predictors of success.”

- Jonah Lehrer
Photo # NH 46714 Officers of USS Kentucky at Algiers, ca. January 1901
“With every fibre of my being I loathe indirection and shiftiness, and where it occurs in high place, and is used to save face at the expense of the vital interests of our great service (in which silly people place such a child-like trust), I want that man's blood and I will have it no matter what it costs me personally.”

- LT William Sims
“The rankest kind of insubordination.”

- Rear Admiral William Sims
“Give him entire charge of target practice for eighteen months; do exactly as he says. If he does not accomplish anything in that time, cut off his head and try someone else.”

- President Theodore Roosevelt
Sims to Triumph!!!

Above the turmoil of the breezes of men,
H.M.S. Majesty I sit alone,
Why ever faithful Ping continues But
Rowtows at the Portsmouth tower
Uncorrupted scenes while bending my feet,
The empty skull of Mary a smile chair,
That once defied me. In that hole of sin,
The bureau of construction and repair!

Tarot upon each mislaid target range!
I hear the burden of wild acclaim,
Strings from my own trembling fighting ship
In tribute to the glory of my name!

But grown o'er all my triumph! What is this
That comes before me and my eye beholds —
The little brave men off all the fleet,
Crying 'safe us, oh Sims!!!'

A. TRAVER, SHEL.

The war room officers
Of the U.S. Missouri beg to
Vite, Lieut. Commander W. Sims,
To a silent dinner September 1904.

At 6.30 p.m.
K.S.V.P.

Photo # NH 89489-KN LCdr. W.S. Sims cartoon. 1904
“The renaissance in gunnery which came about chiefly through the instrumentality of Commander Sims, has ... led to great improvements in ordnance.”

-- Admiral Mason,

Chief, Bureau of Ordnance
“He continued to be a thorn in the fat flesh of the naval hierarchy during his entire career.”

- The Milwaukee Journal, 1949
Lessons Observed

• Know where your expertise lies.

• Find a way to talk about your idea. But...don’t be insubordinate. It’s about the idea, not about the people.

• Find something you believe in, and demonstrate your own Grit.

• Remember that the more senior you become the more innovation is about listening.
Questions?

Photo # NH 44922  William Sims, Jr., salutes as his father, Adm. W.S. Sims, returns from Europe, April 1919