

Contributed by George Weed

*Privately printed by
Paul E. Warfield
for the officers and crew
of the U.S.S. Yokes
April 1946*

To the officers and crew of U.S.S. YOKES:

The YOKES did everything asked of her. She was a fine ship because she had a fine crew. No better crew ever handled any ship in the Navy, no matter how big.

Because I am sure that every man who served our Country in her must be proud, I have written the following short history of the ship, and am sending you this copy as a remembrance.

When I left the ship in that slick new speed boat I wasn't as happy as perhaps most of the crew thought I ought to be. I was leaving the scene of the most rewarding experience of my life. I was leaving a magnificent group of men who had given me the most loyal and understanding support that any commanding officer could have.

The whole outfit, officers, C.I.C., Radio Gang, Galley Staff, Gunners and Gun Crews, Repair Parties, Depth Charge Crew, Black Gang, the Doctors, the Signal Gang and Quartermasters, the men at my Battle Station, the Boat Crews; in short—everyone earned my lasting respect and gratitude.

When I said "Good-Bye" to you on the fantail I told you that only one person can ever be sure that a man has done a good job: the man himself. You will all put a value on yourselves. But you have all given me the proof that free Americans, working together for any decent cause will not fail.

PAUL E. WARFIELD,
Commander, USNR.

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THE U.S.S. YOKES was built as a Destroyer Escort at Pittsburgh, Pa. The hull, with most of the machinery was towed down the Mississippi River and to Orange, Texas, where she was completed by the Consolidated Steel Company as a High Speed Transport (APD-69).

The nucleus crew was assembled early in October, 1944, and reported to the Receiving Station, Orange, with the First Lieutenant, Assistant Communications Officer, Engineer Officer, Assistant Gunnery Officer, Supply Officer and the Medical Officer.

The balance of crew was assembled in the Training Station, Norfolk, Virginia, on October 20, 1944, with the Executive Officer, Gunnery Officer, Communications Officer, Assistant Engineer Officer, and the ASW-CIC officer.

On December 14, 1944, the balance of crew arrived at Orange, Texas, and on December 18, 1944, the ship was commissioned by Captain J. M. Schelling U.S.N. (ret.)

On December 30, 1944, she left Orange for sea trials which were held off Sabine Pass; and on January 1, 1945, she left Sabine Pass for two days run at sea, after which she put in at Galveston for some last adjustments. Then on 8 January, 1945, she sailed for Bermuda, via Key West for fuel, and arrived at Bermuda for first shakedown.

At Bermuda, we had a number of days' work at anti-submarine warfare, towing, gunnery, task force screening, and the detailed drills which made all hands familiar with the ship and her gear, and gave them the grasp of the ship which would enable them to operate her in the missions to which she was to be assigned. At Bermuda the most exciting moment was the passage of the Narrows in a blinding squall of hurricane violence, in which the ship was caught during her entry into port after a day's training.

We left Bermuda with a good record and with particularly good marks for anti-submarine warfare.

We went to Hampton Roads, for four days' amphibious training at Cove Point, Maryland, where we had very cold weather, but where we got in some good work with the LCVP's after being frozen up at first. The shore bombardment drill showed that our main battery crew was going to be the excellent outfit they afterward proved to be in enemy action.

Then we had some time in the Norfolk yard, doing post-shakedown repairs and alterations. When these were finished we set sail for Newport, Rhode Island, escorting the U.S.S. DUTCHESS. Leaving Newport, we escorted the DUTCHESS to the Panama Canal where we were sent onward to San Diego by ourselves.

En route to San Diego, we exercised our boat crews at sea, and they got to look like a division of destroyers in their maneuvers. We also went turtle hunting and got the material for some soup which we ate at Pearl Harbor later on.

At San Diego, we had more gunnery and amphibious training and got an "above average" send-off from the Training Group there. We worked out a new means of control for our heavy anti-aircraft guns and reported it for the use of other ships.

Then we went on the Pearl Harbor with the REDNOUR conducting training exercises at sea. When we got to Pearl Harbor, we had four days to see the sights, then we went to Maui for more amphibious work, and where our guests, part of U. D. T. #18, blew up a section of the beach while based on our ship. We also carried the drone planes for anti-aircraft practice in company with other ships, at which our gunners proved good enough to knock at least one down.

After a couple of days, in Pearl we again set out, this time with a big submarine tender, U.S.S. ORION which we escorted to Guam, stopping at Eniwetok on the way for fuel. We left her at Guam, and went onward to Ulithi by ourselves. From Ulithi we joined a convoy of ships including net tenders, a tow, some tankers, and supply ships, under the Commanding Officer of the YOKES as task unit commander, and went to Okinawa, where our real job began.

Upon arrival we were sent out to the "ping line" to provide anti-submarine coverage for the ships at anchor. The morning after we arrived we got our first shot at the enemy. The night before had been full of enemy air attacks, and we spent most of the night at General Quarters. The early morning was hazy, thickened by smoke from Kerema Retto. Out of this haze, right over a little Island which came to be called Woodward's Island because he saw so many bogeys coming from there, a Jill flew toward us. He made to let go a fish at us, but the accurate fire of our main battery caused him to hesitate, and when the forties opened up he thought better of making any further attack. One forty appeared to hit him, he wavered, and finally flew off. A few minutes later another ship reported a Jill had crashed, and perhaps we had accounted for one Jap for which we didn't claim any credit. We also had some shots at a Betty carrying a Baka bomb.

That day we fuelled at sea, and when our steering gear jammed we almost lost our anchor in fetching up against the tanker in a heavy following sea. But we got the hook up, when the shackle in the chain locker held, and finished fuelling. Then we spent some more days on the ping line, and on our fourth day, in the evening we took under fire another Jill which we apparently hit

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The boys on deck saw Kamikazes hit other ships, and they had plenty of chance to shoot in self protection. We all got tired from General Quarters. We were glad to follow out hospital ships from time to time and get a couple of days' rest.

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On May 27th there was a full moon, and the Japs made good use of it. We started out the evening in station B-29, a gravity station if ever there was one. We saw the REDNOUR get hit, and watched her burning; and one Jap let go two bombs at us which missed on either bow. Then we started our step-by-step passage to that famous spot, Able-39-Able off Ie Shima, where we relieved a DE which had been hit by a dud torpedo. We got there shortly after mid-night, and started ducking attacks from torpedo planes. That wonderful cloud formed over our station, and we were able to keep under it when the Japs started their runs on us, and so we escaped damage. Of course the fellows on deck didn't like the bursts from the shore based guns which were snapping around our ears, but that was better than having a Betty on the Deck.

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The next morning in the inner station we saw those two Japs swimming and had the mine sweeper pick them up, just as the big daylight attacks started. During the attacks we closed the ships off Ie Shima, and it was there we saw the Betty, chased by four Corsairs, crash on the S. S. BROWN VICTORY. We didn't have much time to watch because we got ordered away up the line to rescue survivors from a destroyer radar picket ship which had been sunk.

When we got back to Kerama Retto from the survivor trip, we were sent back to Ie Shima for a couple of nights. Then we got that nice assignment on the southern end of the Island supporting the LST which was unloading stores back of the Jap lines. We had the battle wagons shooting over our heads, assisted by the Cruisers, but that didn't stop us from catching up on our sleep. We also had a chance to get in a few shots at the Japs on that part of the Island, and our gunners all showed that they had learned their jobs well.

After taking the LST back to Hagushi, we had a few days' time to overhaul our engines, and then went back on the ping line.

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During all this time we had slick air cover. Toward the end of our stay at Okinawa, we were able to see most of the Navy-type planes the pictures of which we had in recognition classes. But all of us, at least those fellows on deck, will certainly remember best those wonderful Corsairs, flown by the Marines from Yontan, who kept going, day-and-night, nosing away the attacks from the ships, and giving assurance to the little ships on that damned "ping"

line where so many ships had been hit. No aviators will ever have more blessings than those Gyrenes got from the YOKES, and no-one, any place in the world or in any other assignment, did a finer job.

On July 4, 1945, while in charge of fuelling operations off the Island, the YOKES was asked if she was ready to depart to the "rear." We tried to keep our voice from being too eager, and answered "Affirmative." So we got sent back to Guam with a big group of LST's. During the trip we rescued the Jap landing gear and got material to make souvenirs, after the Naval Base at Guam gave us permission.

Then at Guam we got ordered back to Pearl with an Escort Carrier and from Pearl, we were sent to California with some personnel for training.

Anyhow, we arrived at Oceanside, and went to the yard in San Pedro for overhaul. Most of the crew got leave.

In Pedro we got the news that the War was over, and we started to relax a bit. That was when the YOKES showed her mettle. We had a minimum of trouble, the ship lost no morale, and her crew demonstrated what a fine gang they were.

Upon completion of our overhaul, the ship left Pedro for Oceanside where, immediately upon arrival, I was relieved of command by Lieutenant Commander George H. Weed, USNR, who had been my loyal colleague and advisor.

The later history of the ship is known to me only by report. The reports have all been good. She continued, after the War's end, her efficient work for the United States. She was hard working. She was finally laid up in San Diego, and almost the last signal she received was a compliment on the smart appearance of the ship and her crew.

OFFICERS AND CREW

Lieut. Comdr. Paul E. Warfield, USNR
Commanding Officer

Lieut. Comdr. George H. Weed, USNR
Executive Officer

Lieutenant Albert B. Fay, USNR
Lieutenant William Piper, USNR
Lieutenant James A. Dickinson, USNR
Lieutenant (j.g.) William H. Shure, USNR
Lieutenant (j.g.) Cloyd D. Van Hook, (MC) USNR
Lieutenant (j.g.) George B. Case (SC) USNR
Lieutenant (j.g.) Frederick M. Harris, Jr., USNR
Lieutenant (j.g.) Chad L. Wiley, USNR
Ensign Oswald H. Thomas, Jr., USNR
Ensign Charles H. Warfield, USNR
Ensign Albert C. Colaguori, USNR

Marcus H. Brockman, C.G.M.
Albert M. Jurinjak, CRM
Jan. E. Konopka, CBM

Larry J. Martin, CMM
Ira L. Mullis, CQM
Roland R. Riley, CMM

Roy M. Sigman, CEM

Roland D. Audette, SC1c
Sydney D. Campbell, RM1c
Everett H. Colburn, RM1c
Carl R. Elander, SK1c
Floyd L. Haines, EM1c
Roy T. Kirk, Y1c
Saul Kushner, RT1c

Henry H. McEwen, MM1c
Charles E. McWhirter, MM1c
James E. Parkerson, EM1c
Robert M. Peltier, PhM1c
Sam Silovich, SM1c
George J. Smyth, EM1c
Thomas P. Somers, MM1c

Emory F. Tilley, CM1c

Harry Alabaster, SKD2c
Marcus H. Aycock, B2c
Ewald T. Bartsch, MM2c
Richard J. Brazil, MM2c
William L. Catogni, SC2c
Elmer A. Colclough, Y2c
Lon F. Curbello, Jr., WT2c
Jack C. De Sando, EM2c
Wilbur T. Domain, GM2c
Roland A. Lucker, WT2c
Harry D. Marlatt, MoM2c
Walter E. McQuillen, GM2c
Kenneth P. Nichols, WT2c

Bronislaw Ochwat, BM2c
Jack A. Rubcic, RM2c
Charles G. Schaefer, MM2c
Glenn A. Sisco, SM2c
Carl A. Smith, SF2c
Kenneth M. Sparkman, WT2c
Clarence E. Watson, MM2c
Charles N. Webb, EM2c
Ray H. Welch, EM2c
Lloyd E. Wentz, FC2c
Gene C. Whisnant, SoM2c
Roy E. Wilson, Y2c
Clifford I. Woodside, GM2c

Robert G. Boulrice, QM3c
John O. Brooking, GM3c
Elsworth J. Dean, Cox.
Wilbur R. Delap, Cox.
Alfred B. Dunham, WT3c
Earl A. Elkins, MoMM3c
William F. Ellis, BKr3c
Donald E. Elswick, GM3c
James P. Graves, MoMM3c
Michael Grossman, M3c
Raymond W. Henderson, Y3c
Billy L. Houston, WT3c

Andrew J. Jones, EM3c
Thomas M. Kaney, SoM3c
Edwin D. Keller, RdM3c
James B. Kelly, RM3c
William H. Kirkland, GM3c
Jaharias A. Kratsas, MM3c
George Kulanda, CM3c
Glenn M. Land, SM3c
Harold H. Lane, WT3c
Harry L. Land, RM3c
Dolphus C. Lavallee, EM3c
Marion B. Logan, MM3c

Howard A. Marchak, FC03c
James J. Mathis, SoM3c
James P. Maynard, FC3c
Samuel H. McCann, PhM3c
James A. McGraw, SoM3c
Wilfred L. McIntosh, GM3c
John E. Melvin, RM3c
Guy E. Mersch, MM3c
Michael A. Nikita, Cox.
Nicholas W. Minitich, SoM3c
Charles A. Naef, RT3c
John Neskey, Cox.
Ernest G. Nydegger, WT3c
Jesus J. Ortega, GM3c
Richard A. Parker, EM3c

William E. Woodward, RdM3c

Donald B. Pizie, RM3c
George M. Plank, MoMM3c
Eldridge C. Radtke, SC3c
William E. Riggsbee, EM3c
Edward W. Sansom, SC3c
Norman D. Schank, Cox.
Rudolph M. Schneemeyer, EM3c
Thomas A. Shannon, RdM3c
Roy L. Smock, Cox.
Leonard E. Spitler, RdM3c
David Taylor, CK3c
Charles W. Toohey, SSLM3c
Roger A. Walker, EM3c
Harry E. Walsh, RdM3c
Chester H. Waltemath, SC3c

Henry J. Adam, Flc
Edward F. Atkinson, Slc
Holton V. Austin, Flc
Francis W. Baker, Slc
Anthony A. Bartolo, Slc
Ralph R. Beadles, Flc
Henry E. Beaver, Flc
Charles A. Beraud, Flc
Charles S. Besozzi, Flc
Benjamin F. Blevins, Flc
Leo I. Blum, Slc
Ralph H. Brannon, Flc
Roland R. Branshaw, Slc
Jack Brown, StMlc
Alfred L. Brym, Flc
Garland C. Burt, Slc
James W. Cameron, Slc
James Coleman, StMlc
George H. Collins
James L. Combs
Glen L. Cowger, Flc
John W. Davis, Slc
Louis N. Davis, StMlc
Edgar Erwine, Slc
Alvin W. Feller, Slc
Francis H. Fritch, Flc
Frank R. Givens, Slc
Guy F. Haines, Slc. (RM)
Harold W. Haltom, Flc
Robert K. Hendrie, Flc (WT)
George J. Hickman, Flc (WT)
Clement Homick, Slc
Clarence W. Howell, Flc
Elmer T. Hulbert, Slc (Y)

John W. Ivory, Jr., Flc
Burl L. Jones, StMlc
Woodrow W. Keel, Sr., Flc
Eugene C. Kleinschmidt, Flc
J. H. Luckey, Slc
Samuel J. Luke, Slc
Charles E. Mueller, Slc
George J. Neumann, Flc
Frank W. Owens, Flc
Harold E. Owens, Slc
Thomas J. Raykes, Slc
Harry R. Reed, Slc
Wayne E. Richardson, Slc
Leonard Ruth, Flc
Ralph S. Santoro, Slc
Louis A. Shepherd, Slc
Charles E. Simpkins, Slc
John J. Skerston, Flc
Everett D. Smith, Slc
Earnest P. Smith, Slc
Sterling J. Smith, Slc
Michael Spero, Slc
Anthony J. Stugus, Slc
Andrew J. Susko, Slc
William F. Veasey, Slc
Joseph C. Venezia, Slc
Elmer A. Walker, Slc
Sylvester D. Walmsley, Slc
Chester H. Walter, Slc
Francis J. Welch, Slc
Clinton H. Whittington, Slc
Elton O. Wolcox, Slc
Richard A. Wiley, Slc
Clifford L. Wilson, Slc

Warren J. Anderson, S2c
James A. Bowles, S2c
Douglas Brainard, S2c
Edwin L. Durham, S2c
Paul Habera, S2c
Walter G. Hunter, S2c
Joseph B. Keenan, S2c
George D. Ketchum, S2c
Willard G. Maynard, S2c
R. E. Phillips, S2c

Jesse C. Pigg, S2c
Ernest Redmon, S2c
John G. Rommes, S2c
David L. Schaeffer, S2c
Wayne E. Shaw, F2c
Calvin W. Sheeler, S2c
Albert E. Shenko, S2c
David A. Showalter, S2c
Frank J. Snock, S2c
Warren Swartz, S2c
Bernard T. Vorderbrueggen, S2c