

Monograph

United States Naval Hong Kong Markings

US naval postmarks struck in Hong Kong waters on mail posted onboard US Navy warships.

Philippe Orsetti

June 10, 2017

The US Navy have been patrolling the seas to protect American's interests. The Asiatic Fleet was created in 1902, based in the Philippine Islands and was involved in humanitarian and military operations that culminated in all-out war after the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941. Most of the ship had a mobile post office onboard.

According to the Naval Cover Museum: *"A **Naval Cover** is any envelope, postcard, or other postal medium that is mailed from or somehow related to a naval vessel, location, or event. Beginning in 1908, post offices were established on board U.S. Navy ships and each ship had one or more postmarks to "cancel" the stamps used on the cover. The postmark, or cancellation, would usually have the ship's name and the date that the cover was cancelled. Starting in the 1930's, covers with printed designs, called cachets, began appearing and established a large following. Many different cachets were designed and sent to various ships to be cancelled and mailed. Some cachets were designed for a specific ship while others were generic (perhaps for a holiday or commemorating an historical event) and sent to many different ships. World War II severely curtailed the creation and distribution of cachets and while covers with cachets are still created today, the phenomenon has never regained its pre-war level of enthusiasm."*

And a Cachet is *"a picture or design that is drawn, imprinted, stamped, or otherwise attached to the cover. Cachets usually are designed around a single theme such as a holiday (ie, Christmas), a ship-related event (ie, Shakedown Cruise), historical anniversary (i.e., State admission to the Union), etc."*

This Monograph is focused on the US war ships that called on Hong Kong before WWII and who used a special postmark mentioning "Hong Kong". Such covers have been used for official business (thus, usually stampless), privately, or philatelically with or without a "cachet". Examples of each categories are illustrated.

The following cachet makers may be found on the illustrated covers: M. Fay Muridge - C G Cross - Yuk Sun Chin - Pee Jay P J (PeeJay) Ickeringill - C Wright Richell.

Ships and date of call:

The ships that have displayed a Hong Kong cancel and the dates of such cancel have been recorded in the table below. It is obvious that more dates and additional ships exists. This table must be extended.

Provenance:

Ship descriptions: Descriptions have been extracted, and summarized, to emphasize Hong Kong connection, from documents found on internet links referenced below in bibliography. A full description may be found may be found on these resources.

Ship Pictures: US Navy archives.

Philatelic scans: Author collection at time of write up, unless identified otherwise.

Bibliography:

- Russell, James- Catalogue of the United States Naval Postmarks – Universal Ship Cancellation Society – 1981.

Internet Websites:

- Wikipedia (for individual ship information): www.wikipedia.org
- Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships: <http://www.hazegray.org/danfs/>
- Ships of the US Navy: <http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/ships/>
- Naval Covers Museum http://www.navalcovermuseum.org/restored/Naval_Cover_Museum.html
- Universal Ship Cancellation Society <http://www.uscs.org/>

Contact:

To contact, or to send comments to the author, please go to the “support” page of the following website www.theorsettimethod.com

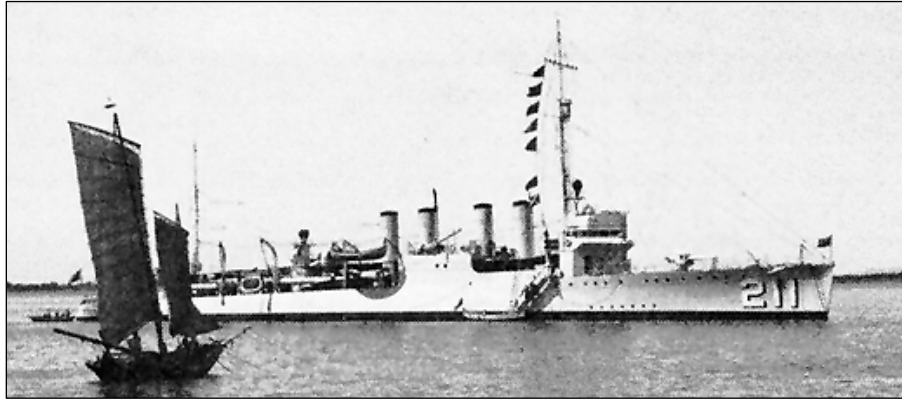
Ships and date of call recorded at the date of publication

(Non-exhaustive list, several more ships and call dates exist to be recorded)

U.S.S.	RECORDED DATE	U.S.S.	RECORDED DATE	U.S.S.	RECORDED DATE
ALDEN	04/28/40	" "	07/04/36	" "	11/22/37
ASHEVILLE	11/16/33	" "	01/09/37	" "	01/29/38
" "	06/18/34	" "	06/27/37	" "	04/18/38
" "	02/11/35	" "	11/12/37	" "	04/22/38
" "	07/30/37	" "	11/23/37	" "	03/18/39
" "	01/31/38	" "	06/05/39	" "	06/17/39
" "	05/30/38	" "	09/15/39	" "	12/11/39
" "	06/17/39	CHESTER	10/28/35	" "	03/05/41
" "	11/11/39	EDSALL	07/04/38	" "	04/15/41
" "	05/30/40	" "	06/20/38	NOA	1928
" "	08/02/40	" "	04/26/39	PAUL JONES	10/27/36
" "	07/16/40	FINCH	05/06/39	PEARY	10/03/27
ASTORIA	05/04/39	GOLD STAR	05/26/36	" "	10/01/35
AUGUSTA	03/15/35	" "	06/03/40	" "	10/10/35
" "	03/16/35	GUAM	05/02/29	PECOS	04/15/32
" "	04/12/36	" "	05/20/29	" "	11/10/36
" "	11/11/36	HELENA	10/25/29	PIGEON	10/27/38
" "	04/12/37	HENDERSON	12/17/35	PILLSBURY	07/05/39
" "	04/13/37	" "	08/10/36	" "	08/04/39
BARKER	10/04/37	" "	03/12/37	" "	03/08/29
" "	02/28/38	HERON	10/27/34	PITTSBURG	03/ /39
" "	04/24/40	" "	09/19/38	POPE	06/19/39
BEAVER	04/13/29	HOUSTON	11/25/31	SACRAMENTO	05/07/28
" "	10/31/31	" "	11/27/31	" "	05/16/28
BLACK HAWK	11/11/34	" "	11/25/32	" "	03/27/36
" "	11/12/34	HURON	11/24/26	" "	05/07/36
" "	09/27/35	ISABEL	10/27/34	" "	10/27/35
" "	11/08/36	" "	03/01/35	" "	10/27/35
" "	11/10/36	" "	03/30/35	" "	03/08/37
" "	07/18/38	JASON	04/23/30	SMITH THOMSON	/11/27
" "	06/12/39	JOHN D. EDWARDS	10/05/35	STEWART	11/11/36
BORIE	04/01/31	JOHN D. FORD	09/12/36	TULSA	04/06/39
BULMER	08/05/38	" "	06/12/39	" "	10/22/39
" "	04/04/39	" "	11/02/38	" "	12/02/39
" "	05/01/39	" "	06/18/39	" "	01/13/40
CANOPUS	10/24/31	" "	06/09/39	" "	05/18/40
" "	04/15/32	MARBLEHEAD	02/11/38	" "	05/18/40
" "	10/08/32	" "	02/14/38	" "	03/15/41
" "	04/19/34	MINDANAO	02/23/34	" "	03/15/41
" "	04/18/37	" "	03/07/34	" "	03/21/41
" "	10/27/38	" "	03/31/34	VESTAL	02/23/46
CHAUMONT	12/20/34	" "	02/22/36	WHIPPLE	10/12/35
" "	08/15/35	" "	10/22/36	" "	09/20/38
" "	04/05/36	" "	11/17/36	" "	04/01/39
" "	04/07/36	" "	03/08/37		

Destroyer USS Alden (DD-211)

Alden (Destroyer No. 211) was laid down on 24 October 1918 at Philadelphia by the William Cramp and Sons shipyard launched on 14 May 1919; and commissioned on 24 November 1919, Comdr. William Anson in command. ALDEN, chosen to replace the lost Smith Thomson, sailed on 15 July for the Asiatic Station, eventually arrived at Chefoo on 20 August 1936. Over the next six years, Alden -spent the summer operating out of Chefoo, and returned to the Philippines in the fall for further exercises and upkeep at Cavite over the winter. She carried out this routine against a backdrop of rising Sino-Japanese tension, as a resurgent China feverishly armed itself to deal with Japan. Alden was awarded three battle stars for her World War II service

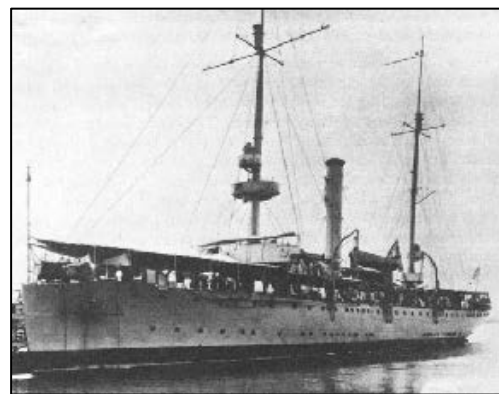


Destroyer USS Alden DD-211, in 1937

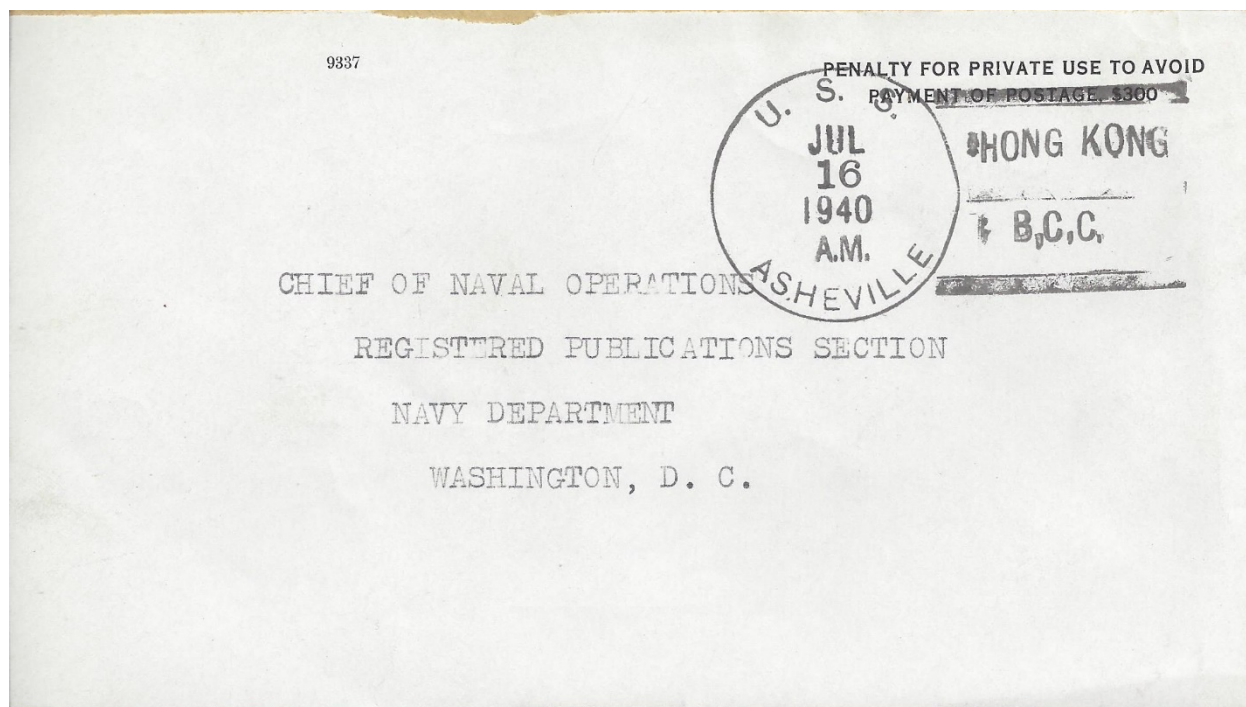


Gunboat USS Asheville (PG-21)

The first Asheville (PG-21) was launched 4 July 1918 by Charleston Navy Yard; and commissioned 6 July 1920, Lieutenant Commander E. Buckmaster in command. Her first assignment was to the Special Services Squadron in Caribbean waters during 1920--22. For the next seven years, she cruised in Asiatic waters protecting American interests. In 1929, she rejoined the Special Services Squadron in Caribbean waters, but returned to the Asiatic Fleet in 1932. From March 1932 to December 1940 Asheville operated mainly in Chinese waters. Following the Japanese attack Asheville attempted to make her way to Australia, but was intercepted and sunk by a Japanese squadron south of Java, 3 March 1942. Asheville received one battle star for her World War II service.



Gunboat USS Asheville PG-21



Cruiser USS Astoria (CL-34)

The second Astoria (CL-34) was laid down on 1 September 1930 at the Puget Sound Navy Yard; reclassified as a heavy cruiser, CA-34, on 1 July 1931; launched on 16 December 1933; and commissioned on 28 April 1934, Capt. Edmund S. Root in command. Astoria sailed for Shanghai, China, on 26 April 1939. After receiving Admiral Harry E. Yarnell Commander in Chief, Asiatic Fleet, she put to sea for Hong Kong on May 1st. She was later successfully involved in several theaters of operations, including the battle of Midway, but she was sunk off Savo Island on August 9, 1942. Astoria earned three battle stars during World War II.



Cruiser USS ASTORIA CL-34



Cruiser USS Augusta (CL-31)

The fourth Augusta (CL-31) was laid down on 2 July 1928 at Newport News Va., by Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co.; launched on 1 February 1930; and commissioned at the Norfolk Navy Yard, Portsmouth, Va., on 30 January 1931, Capt. James O. Richardson in command. In August 1931, she was reclassified a heavy cruiser CA-31. The heavy cruiser sailed for China on 20 October 1933. Augusta (CA-31) was awarded three battle stars for her World War II service.

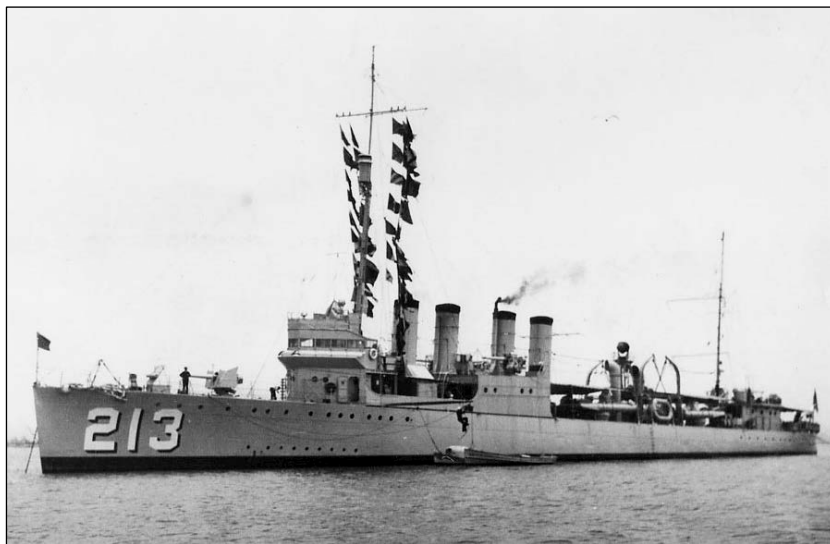


Cruiser USS Augusta CL-31



Destroyer USS Barker (DD-213)

Barker (DD-213) was launched 11 September 1919 by William Cramp and Sons Ship and Engine Building Co Philadelphia, Pa., and commissioned 27 December 1913, Lieutenant Commander C. A. Windsor in command. She sailed eastward late in 1921, to the Orient to commence her four-year tour of duty with the Asiatic Fleet. In August 1929, Barker was permanently on the Asiatic Station. During periods of disturbance in China she was engaged in protecting American interests. After being engaged in many theaters of operations, she was decommissioned 18 July 1945, and sold 30 November 1945. Barker received two battle stars for her participation in World War II.

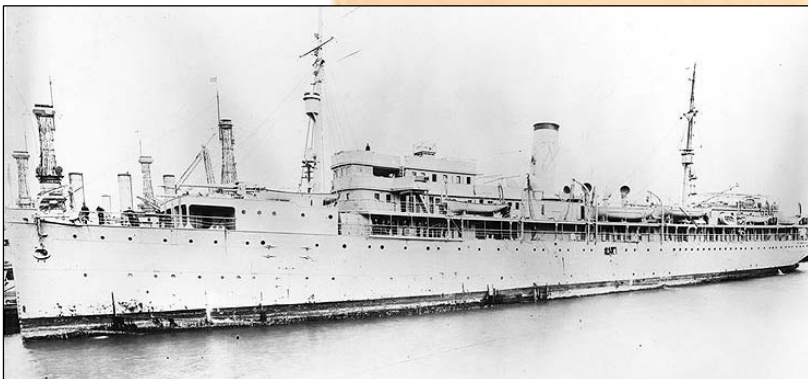


Destroyer USS Barker DD-213



Submarine Tender USS Beaver (AS-5/ARG-19)

Beaver (AS-5) was launched 27 November 1909 by Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co., Newport News, Va.; purchased by the Navy 1 July 1917; converted to a submarine tender by Mare Island Navy Yard; and commissioned 1 October 1918, Lieutenant Commander J. A Logan in command. During late 1921 and early 1922 she operated on the Asiatic Station. From 1925 to 1932 Beaver served as tender for Submarine Division 16 at Cavite, Philippine Islands and Tsingtao, China. Departing San Diego 28 August 1945, she steamed to the Far East where she remained on occupation duty until 3 May 1946.



Submarine Tender USS Beaver AS-5/ARG-19 in 1920

(Source: Universal ship cancellation society)

Destroyer Tender USS Black Hawk (AD-9)

USS Black Hawk served 20 years in the Far East in addition to taking part in two world wars. Initially she served as a floating base, serving as the flagship of the Mine Flotilla, then after World War II, as flagship of the Atlantic Fleet Destroyers-in-reserve. The Black Hawk was then converted into a Destroyer Tender, initially as the Flagship of the Destroyer Flotilla of the Atlantic Fleet then transferred to the Far East to tender destroyers. On Dec. 7, 1941, the Black Hawk was in Borneo at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack. She would later serve in Australian and Alaskan waters. The Black Hawk was decommissioned in 1946.



Destroyer Tender USS Black Hawk AD-9



Destroyer USS Borie (DD-215)

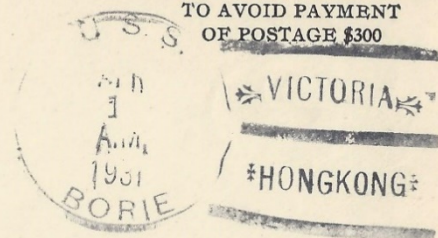
The first Borie (DD-215) was launched 4 October 1919 by William Cramp and Sons Ship and Engine Building Co., Philadelphia, Pa.; and commissioned 24 March 1920, Lieutenant Commander E. F. Clement in command. In 1921, she reported to Destroyer Division 38, Asiatic Fleet, and for the next four years alternated between the Philippine Islands, during the winter and Chefoo and Shanghai, China, during the summer. Borie remained with the Atlantic Fleet until 1929 when she began a three-year tour with the Asiatic Fleet. On 1 November 1943, during the last patrol, she rammed and sank the surfaced German submarine U-405. With 27 men lost and too badly damaged by the collision to be towed to port, Borie was sunk by Barry (DD-248) 2 November 1943. Borie (DD-215) received three battle stars for her World War II service as well as the Presidential Unit Citation for her operations in the Card group.



Destroyer USS Borie DD-215

NAVY DEPARTMENT
U. S. S. BORIE (215)
ASIATIC STATION
VIA P. M., SEATTLE, WASH.
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE
TO AVOID PAYMENT
OF POSTAGE \$300



Chief of Bureau of Navigation
Navy Department

WASHINGTON D C

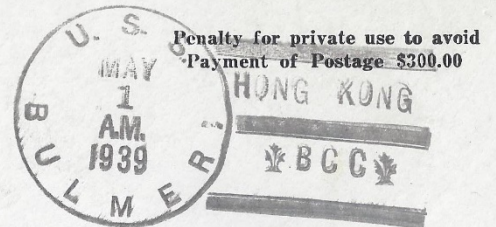
Destroyer USS Bulmer (DD-222/AG-86)

Bulmer was launched 22 January 1920 by William Cramp and Sons and commissioned on 16 August 1920, Lieutenant Commander J. C. Jennings in command. Clemson-class destroyer, she was the last warship of the Asiatic Fleet in USN commission. Alternately based in the winter at Manila and Cavite, Philippine Islands, and in the summer at Chefoo, China. Early in 1939, Bulmer was assigned to the South China Patrol and was later reassigned on Neutrality Patrol under the Commandant, 16th Naval District. In January 1941, she participated in the Asiatic Fleet Problem and then continued patrolling in the Philippines. Bulmer was decommissioned on 16 August 1946. She received two battle stars for her World War II service.

NAVY DEPARTMENT

U. S. S. BULMER (DD222)
U. S. ASIATIC FLEET
Via San Francisco, California

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



Commander Destroyer Squadron Five

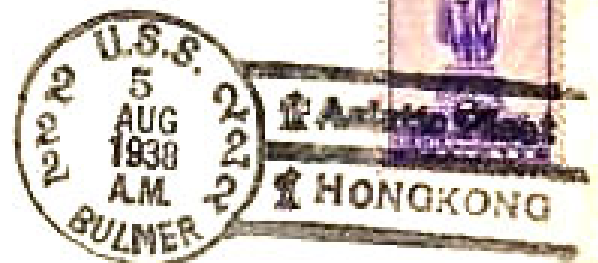
U.S.S. BLACK HAWK

% Comdt. 16th Naval District,

Navy Yard, Cavite, P.I.



Destroyer USS Bulmer (DD-222/AG-86)

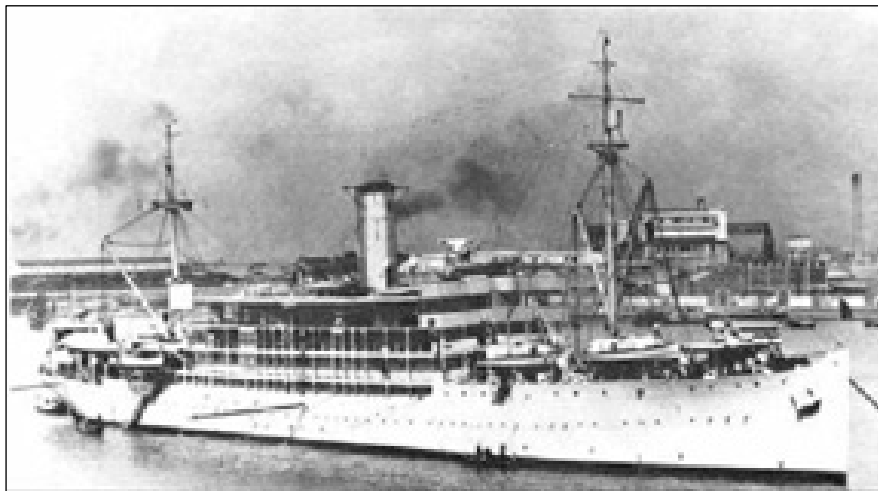


S. F. HARBERTS
P. O. BOX 611
SANTA BARBARA, CAL.

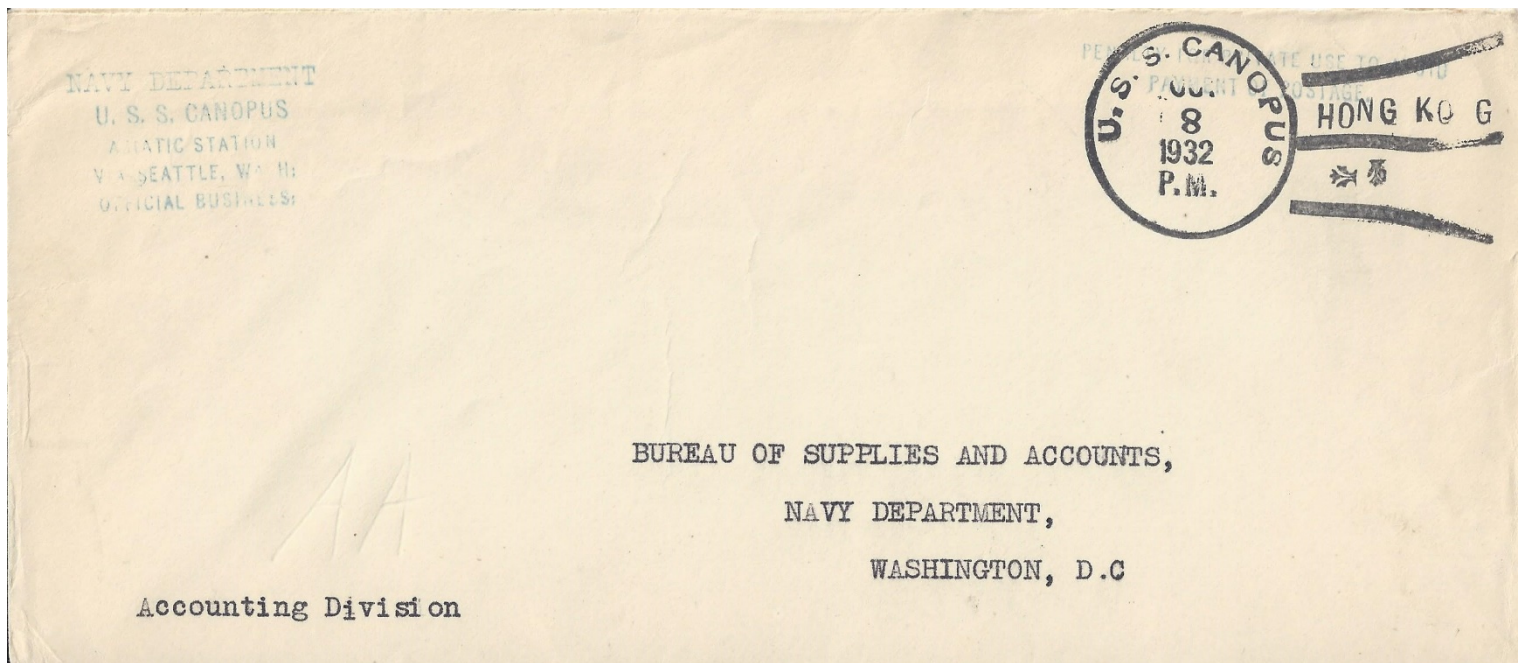
(Source Ebay)

Submarine Tender USS Canopus (AS-9)

Canopus (AS-9) was launched in 1919 by New York Shipbuilding Co., Camden, N.J., as Santa Leonora; acquired by the Navy from the Shipping Board 22 November 1921; converted to a submarine tender; commissioned at Boston 24 January 1922, Commander **A. S.** Wadsworth in command. She sailed for permanent duty with Asiatic Fleet in September 1924. Between 1927 and 1931, the tender was flagship of submarine divisions, Asiatic Fleet. On 7 December 1941, Canopus, aging but able, lay at Cavite Navy Yard, as tender to Submarine Squadron 20. In the anxious days that followed, her men worked day and night to repair ships damaged in the daily air raids as well as to keep her brood of submarines at sea. On 29 December 1941 and 1 January 1942, she received direct bomb hits which resulted in substantial damage to the ship and injuries to 13 of her men. Working at fevered pace, her men continued to care for other ships while keeping their own afloat and in operation. To prevent further Japanese attack, smoke pots were placed around the ship and the appearance of an abandoned hulk was presented by day, while the ship hummed with activity by night. But the overwhelming Japanese strength could not be held off forever, and upon the surrender of Bataan on 9 April, Canopus was ordered scuttled and sunk. Canopus received one battle star for service in World War II.



Submarine Tender USS Canopus AS-9

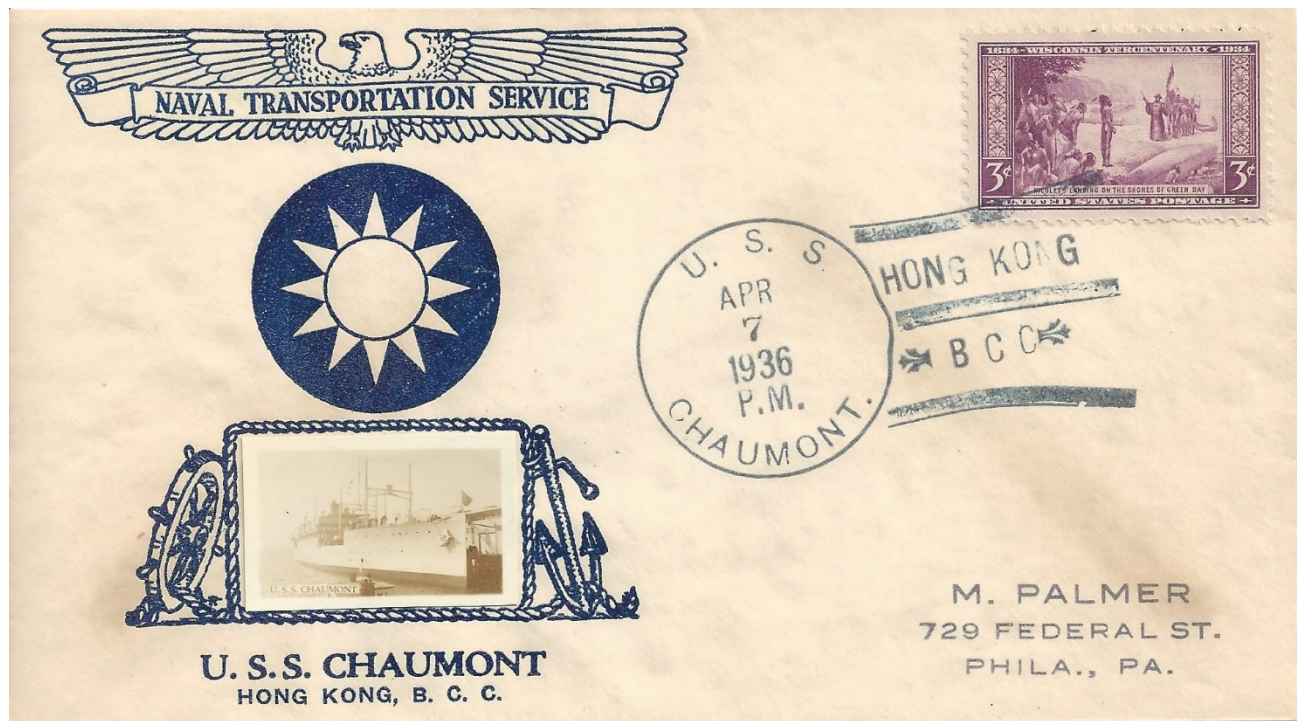


Transport Ship USS Chaumont (AP-5)

Samaritan began as Chaumont (AP-5). She was built in 1920 by American International Shipbuilding Corp., Hog Island, Pa.; requisitioned from the War Department 3 November 1921; and commissioned 22 November 1921. On 1 December 1921 Commander C.L. Arnold assumed command. Assigned to transport duty, Chaumont sailed the Atlantic, Pacific, and Caribbean throughout the twenties and thirties. She carried military supplies, Marine expeditionary forces, sailors and their dependents, and occasionally members of congressional committees on inspection tours, calling at ports from Shanghai to Bermuda. One of her most important contributions, when in the Pacific, was aiding in the collection of meteorological information used by the Weather Map Service of the Asiatic Fleet. Chaumont was decommissioned 28 August 1943 for conversion to a hospital ship, and on 2 September was renamed and reclassified Samaritan (AH-10).



Transport Ship USS Chaumont AP-5

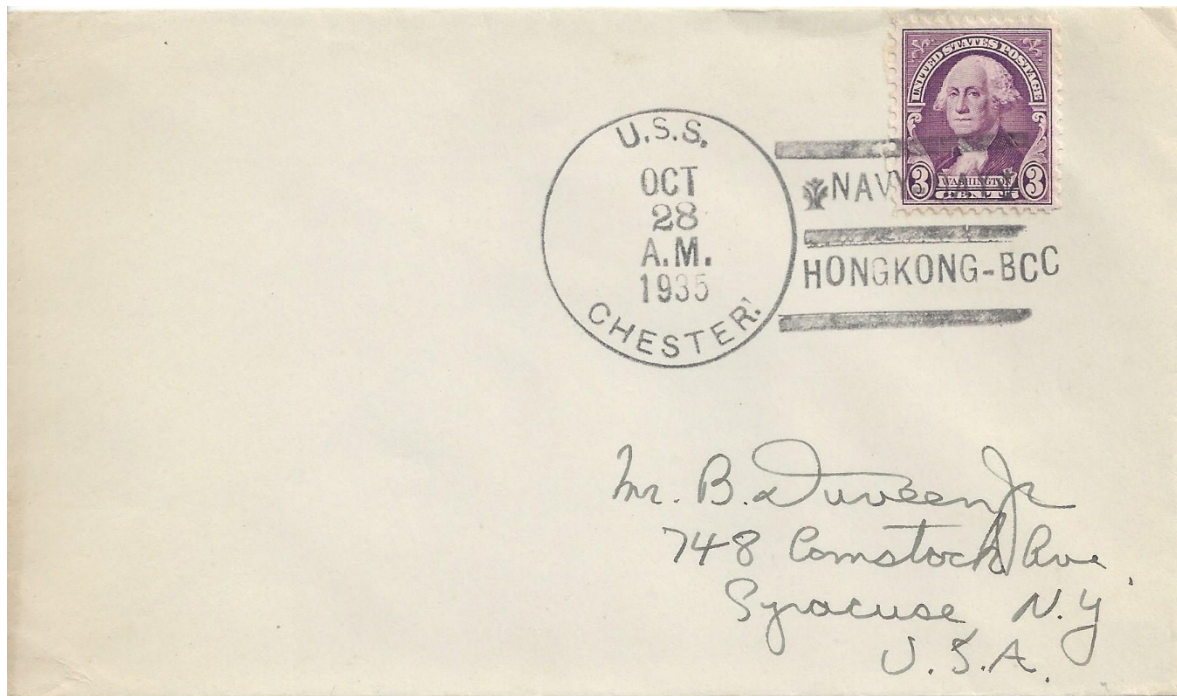


Cruiser USS Chester (CA-27)

The second CHESTER (CA-27) was launched 3 July 1929 by New York Shipbuilding Co., Camden, NJ.; commissioned 24 June 1930, Captain A. P. Fairfield in command; and reported to the Atlantic Fleet. Chester joined NORTHAMPTON (CA-26) and ENTERPRISE (CV-6) and was at sea returning from Wake Island when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. CHESTER received 11 battle stars for World War II service.



Cruiser USS Chester CA-27



Destroyer USS Edsall (DD-219)

The first Edsall (DD-219) was launched 29 July 1920 by William Cramp and Sons, Philadelphia, Pa, and commissioned 26 November 1920, Commander A.H. Rice in command. Edsall received two battle stars for World War II service.



Destroyer USS Edsall DD-219

NAVY DEPARTMENT

U. S. S. EDSALL (DD219)
U. S. ASIATIC FLEET
Via San Francisco, California

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Penalty for private use to avoid
Payment of Postage \$300.00



ASIATIC
STATION

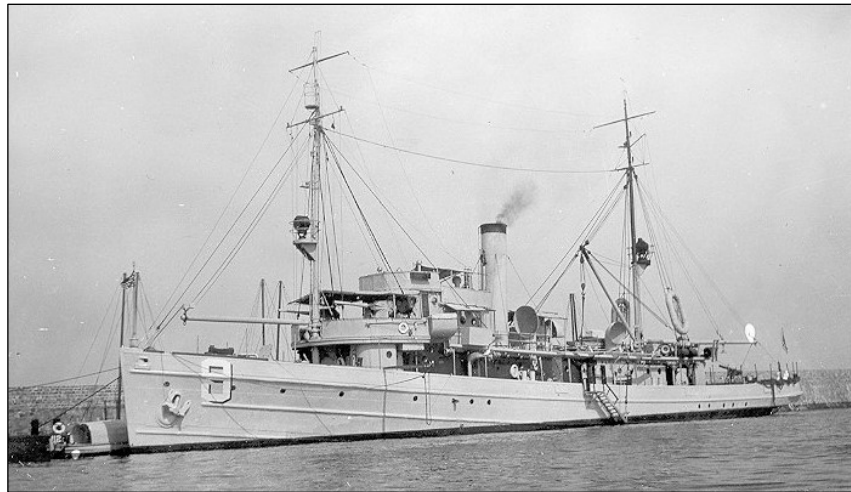
THONGKONG

BCC

*Supply Officer
U.S.S. Black Hawk
Manila, P.I.*

Minesweeper USS Finch (AM-9)

USS Finch (AM-9) was a *Lapwing*-class minesweeper acquired by the U.S. Navy for the dangerous task of removing mines from minefields laid in the water to prevent ships from passing. *Finch* was launched 30 March 1918 by Standard Shipbuilding Co., New York; and commissioned 10 September 1918, with Lieutenant J. C. Lindberg in command. Modernized, she sailed from San Francisco on 20 August 1921 for duty with the Asiatic Fleet, and for the next 20 years, served in the Philippines in the winter and out of the China base at Chefoo in the summer. Her duties were varied, and included towing and salvage work, as well as participation in the Yangtze River Patrol. Hyman G. Rickover, commanded *Finch* from 17 July to 5 October 1937, when the ship was primarily operating at Shanghai, China, to protect American interests during the Battle of Shanghai, the first of 22 major engagements fought between the Chinese and Japanese during the Second Sino-Japanese War.



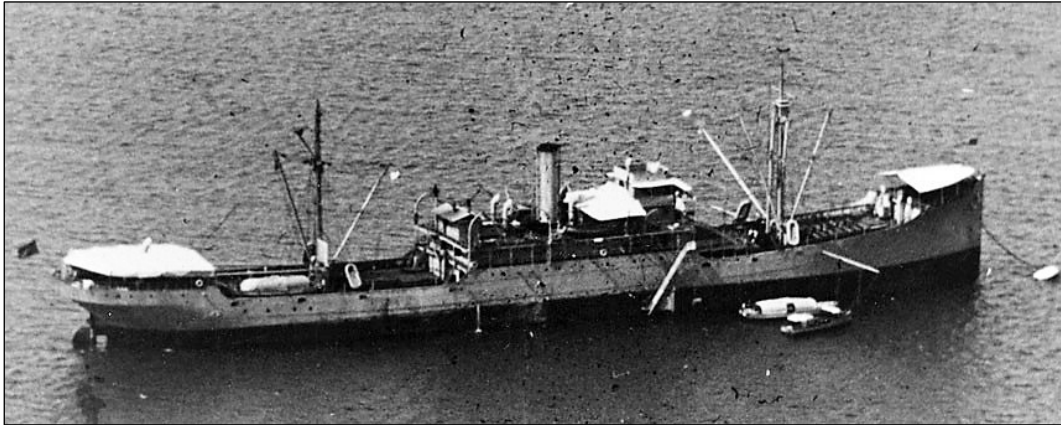
Minesweeper USS Finch AM-9



Auxiliary Ship USS Gold Star (AK-12)

Gold Star (AK-12) was built in 1920 by Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corp., Wilmington, Del.; taken over by the Navy as Arcturus from the USSB 8 November 1921; commissioned as Arcturus (AK-12) 1 February 1922 at Philadelphia and 5 days later was renamed Gold Star (AK-12). The ship was reclassified AG-12, 12 May 1922. During the 1920's and 1930's Gold Star became a familiar sight in the far-flung ports of Asia.

While conducting cargo operations at Morotai, Gold Star was attacked by enemy aircraft but sustained no damage. After supporting occupation forces in Japan, Gold Star sailed to Seattle in February 1946 and decommissioned there 17 April 1946. She had served over 21 years in the Western Pacific without once returning to the United States, and had carried countless tons of supplies, items large and small, for the warships of the fleet. The old ship was sold for scrap 1 December 1947. Gold Star received one battle star for World War II service.

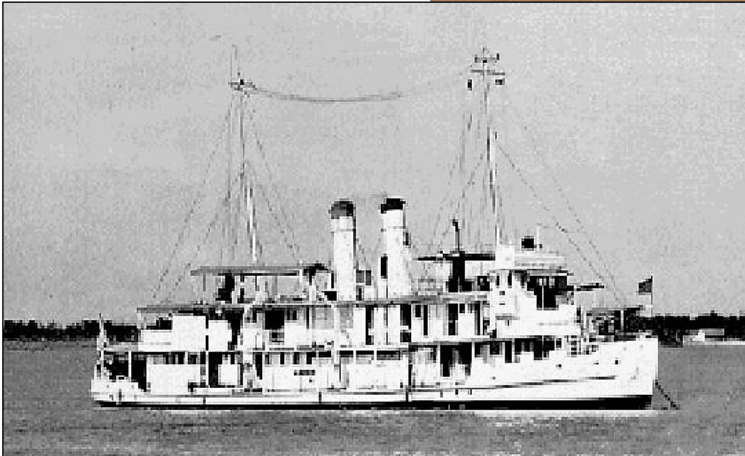


Auxiliary Ship USS Gold Star AK-12



Gunboat USS Guam (PG-43)

Guam (PG-43) was launched 28 May 1927 by the Kiangnan Dock and Engineering Works, Shanghai, China; and commissioned 28 December 1927, Lt. Comdr. S.G. Moore in command. One of six new river gunboats built to replace old gunboats on the Yangtze for a year, Guam was then assigned to the South China patrol. She was reclassified PR-3 there on 15 June 1928; and, after a year, she returned to duty along the Yangtze. The China through which Guam sailed was racked by war from the day she commissioned--first, civil war as Communists battled Nationalists for control of the ancient nation; and then, total war as Japanese forces sought to win and control China. In January 1941 she was renamed Wake, When the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor sent America in to the Pacific war, Shanghai immediately fell to the enemy. After her reservist crew failed in their attempts to scuttle her, Wake was surrendered to the overwhelming Japanese force, the only U.S. ship to do so in the entire war.



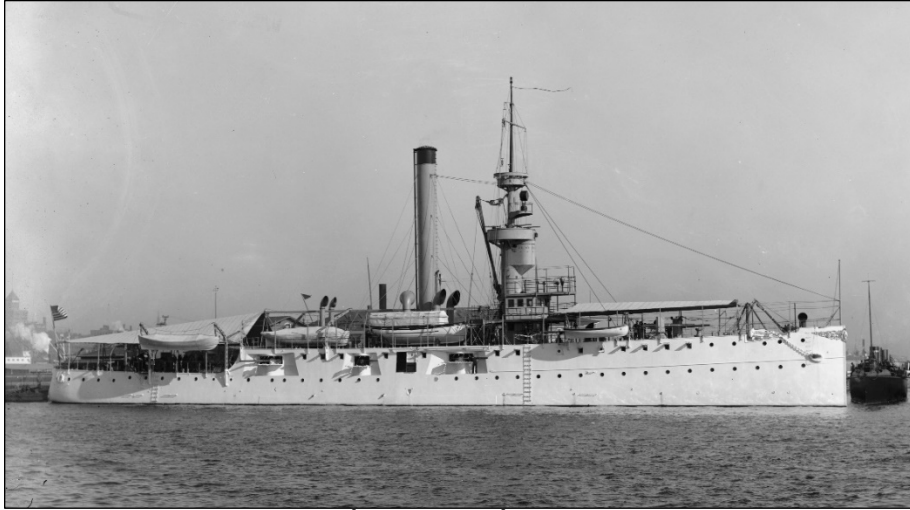
Gunboat USS Guam PG-43



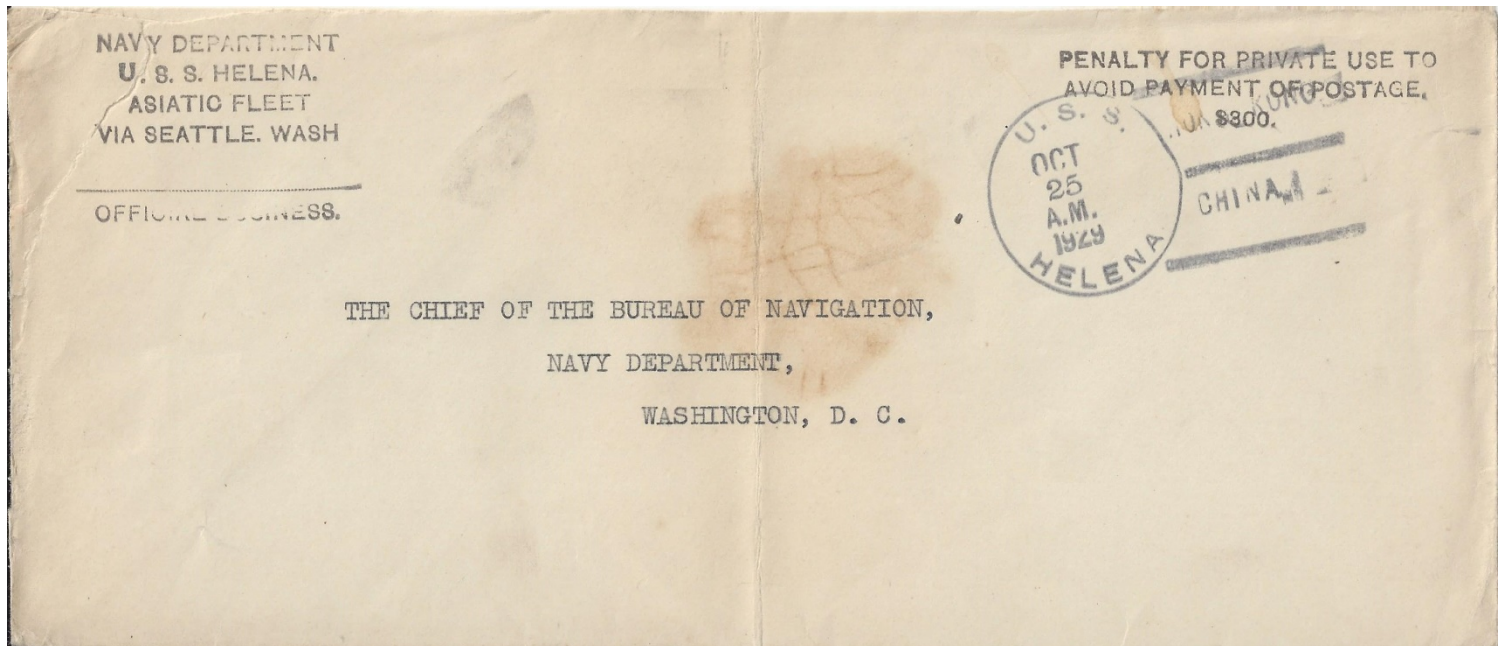
EARLE S. NASON
18 HIGH STREET
WEST SOMERVILLE MASS.
U.S.A.

Gunboat USS Helena (PG-9)

The first of 3 Helena, the gunboat USS Helena was in service from 1896 to 1932. She saw action in Cuban waters during the Spanish–American War and later joined the Asiatic squadron for the Philippine Insurrection and was part of the Yangtze and South China patrols.

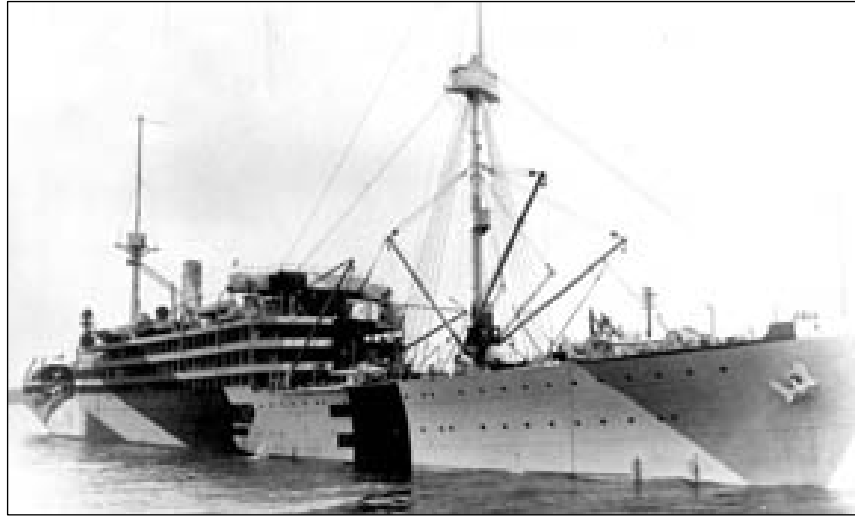


Gunboat USS Helena PG9



Naval Transport USS Henderson (AP-1)

Built at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, with designation "Naval Transport Number One", the USS Henderson was designed as an advance floating Marine base and was commissioned on 24 May. Under command of Lt. C.W. Steel, USN, the USS Henderson sailed on her maiden voyage for France, laden with troops and supplies, on 24 May 1917. She participated in early amphibious exercises in Panama in 1924, in the second Nicaraguan Campaign between 1926 and 1933, and carried Marines to Shanghai, China in 1927 where she remained in a supporting role for six months. She was constantly engaged in carrying replacements for the fleet including troops to and from the various trouble spots in China until 1941. She was decommissioned in 1943, renamed the USS Bountiful and served out the rest of the war as a hospital ship. She was decommissioned for the final time in September 1946.

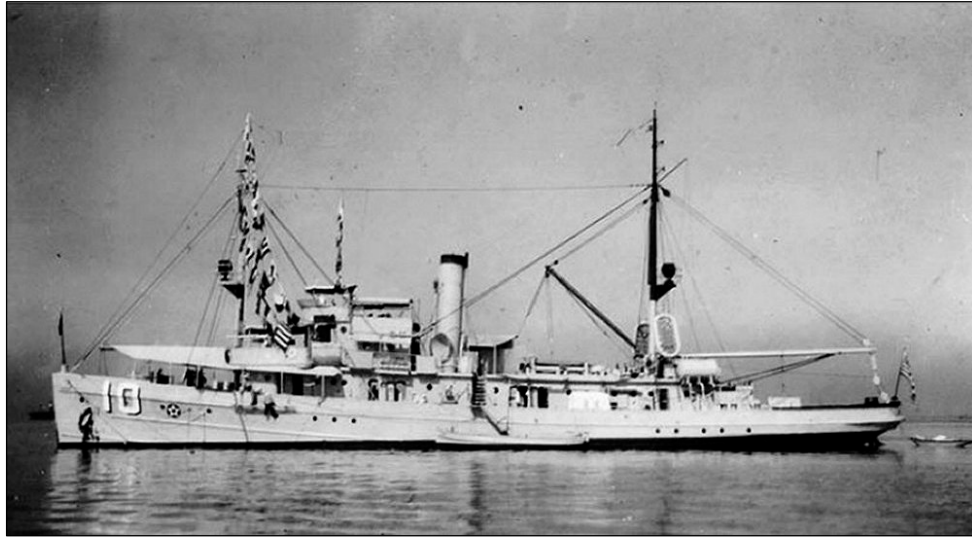


Naval Transport USS Henderson AP-1



Seaplane tender USS Heron / Minesweeper No. 10 (AM-10 /AVP-2)

Heron (AM-10) was launched 18 May 1918 by the Standard Shipbuilding Co.; and commissioned 30 October 1918 Lt. K. Rundquist in command. Departing Boston 17 November 1918. Heron reached San Diego 27 January 1920 to report for duty with the Pacific Minesweeper Division. She sailed for Pearl Harbor to join the Asiatic Fleet. She reported to the Aircraft Squadron, Asiatic Fleet for duty as a seaplane tender, operating principally in Chinese and Philippine waters. Heron was reclassified AVP-2 on 27 January 1936 and continued to play an important role in protecting American citizens and interests in the Far East. Heron again returned to the Philippines in April 1945 to participate in the wrap-up of the war in that quarter, and remained there through the end of World War II. She decommissioned at Subic Bay, Philippines 12 February 1946 and was transferred to the State Department (Foreign Liquidation commission) in July 1947 for disposal. Heron earned four battle stars for WW II service.

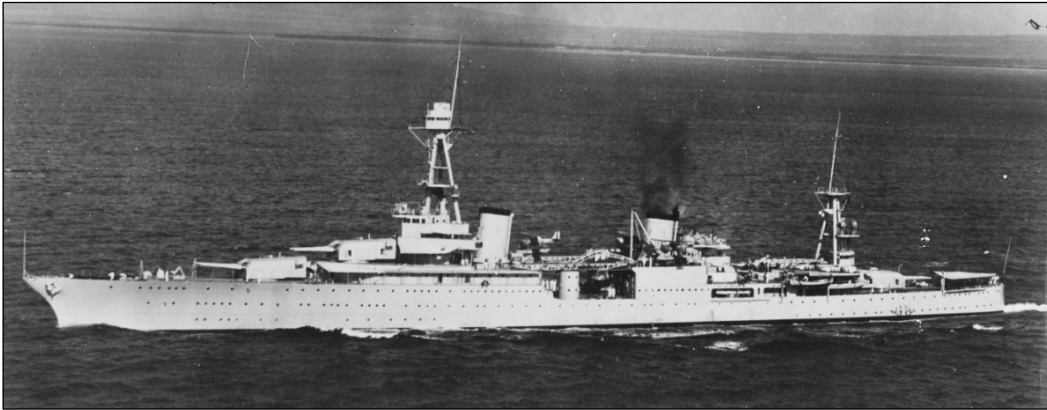


Seaplane tender USS Heron Minesweeper No. 10 / AM-10 /AVP-2



Cruiser USS Houston (CA-30)

The second HOUSTON (CA-30) was launched by Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co., Newport News, Va., 7 September 1929; and commissioned as CL-30 17 June 1930, Captain J. B. Gay commanding. Her designation was changed to CA-30, 1 July 1931. Arriving Manila 19 November 1940, she became flagship of Admiral Hart, Commander Asiatic Fleet. Sailing 26 February, he met the Japanese support force under Admiral Takagi consisting of 4 cruisers and 13 destroyers. After sinking few Japanese ships and having fought gallantly, she took a torpedo and began to lose headway. but suffered three more torpedo explosions in quick succession and few minutes later rolled over and sank. The full story of her courageous fight was not fully told until after the war. Captain Rooks received posthumously the Medal of Honor for this extraordinary heroism. In addition to two battle stars, HOUSTON was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.



Cruiser USS Houston CA-30

NAVY DEPARTMENT

U. S. S. HOUSTON
(ASIATIC STATION)
VIA POSTMASTER
SEATTLE, WASH.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

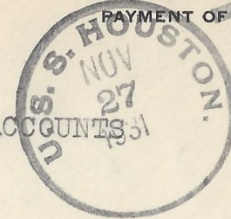
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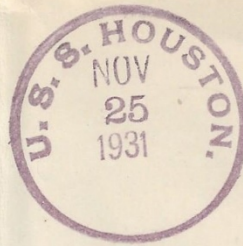
NAVY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Audit Division

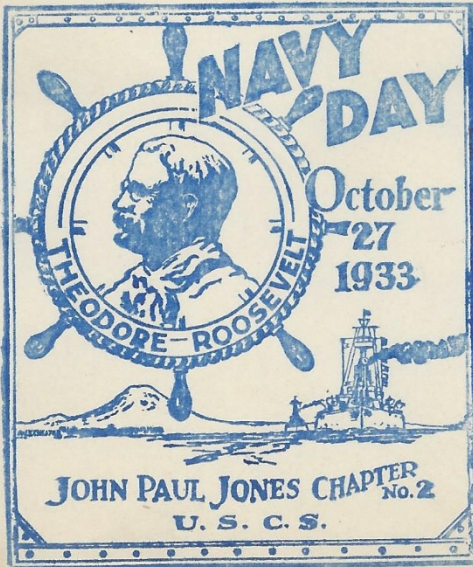
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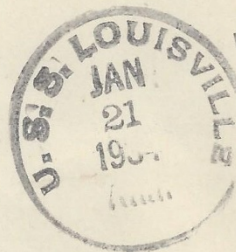


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Morris Silverman
1550 No. Commerce St.
Stockton
California



Missent to USS Houston
Hong-Kong China
101 Days



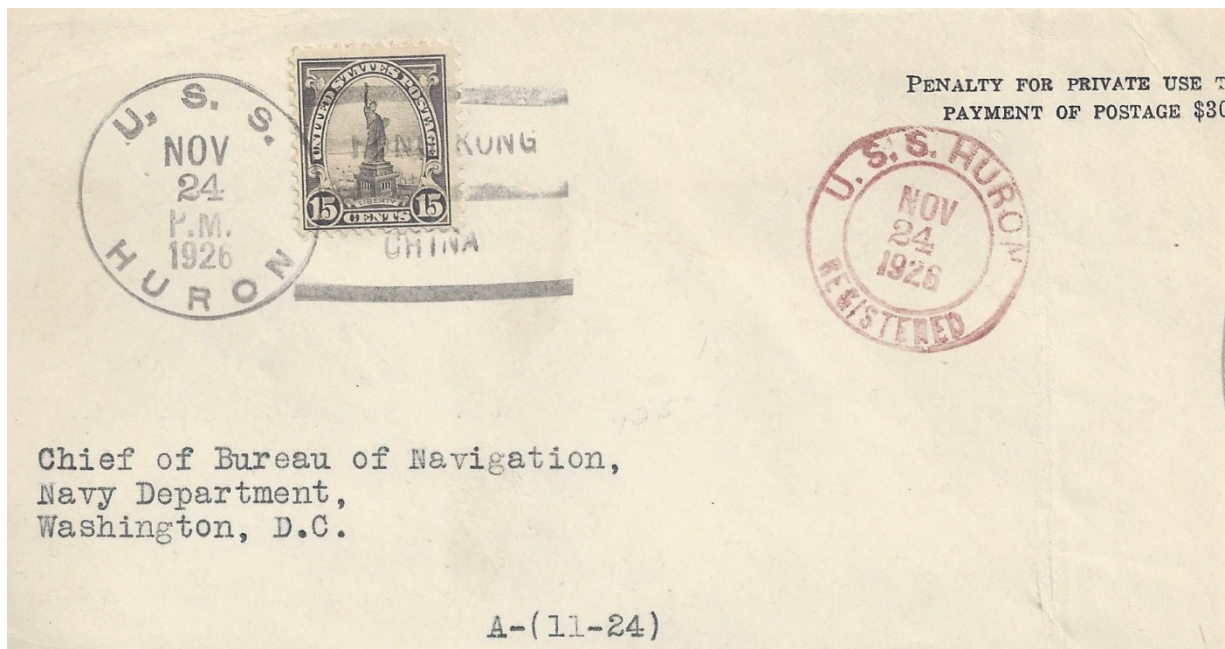
Ken. G. Branch
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Cruiser USS Huron (CA-9)

The first South Dakota (Armored Cruiser No. 9) was launched on 21 July 1904 by the Union Iron Works, San Francisco, Calif and commissioned on 27 January 1908, Capt. James T. Smith in command. Assigned to the Armored Cruiser Squadron, Pacific Fleet, South Dakota cruised off the west coast of the United States through August 1908. South Dakota was renamed Huron on 7 June 1920 and was designated CA-9 on 17 July 1920. She served in the Asiatic Fleet for the next seven years, operating in Philippine waters during the winter and out of Shanghai and Chefoo during the summer. She was decommissioned on 17 June 1927 and remained in reserve until she was struck from the Navy list on 15 November 1929. She was sold on 11 February 1930 for scrapping in accordance with the provisions of the London Treaty for the limitation and reduction of naval armament.

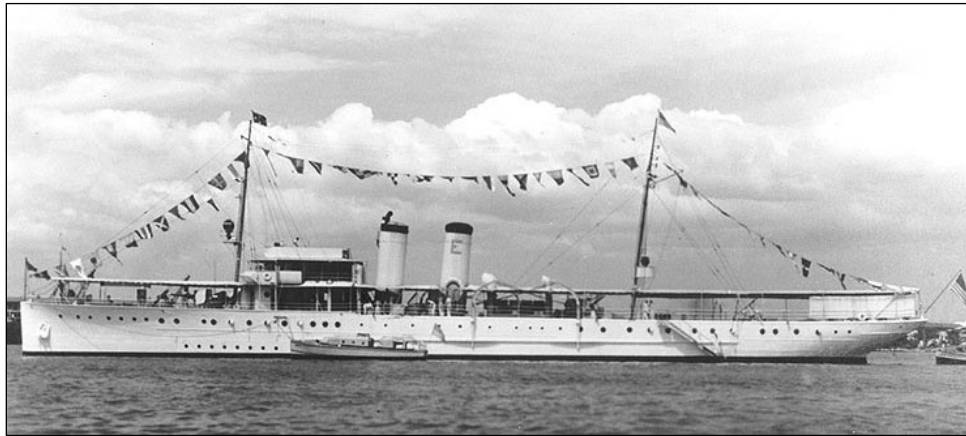


Cruiser USS Huron CA-9 in 1924

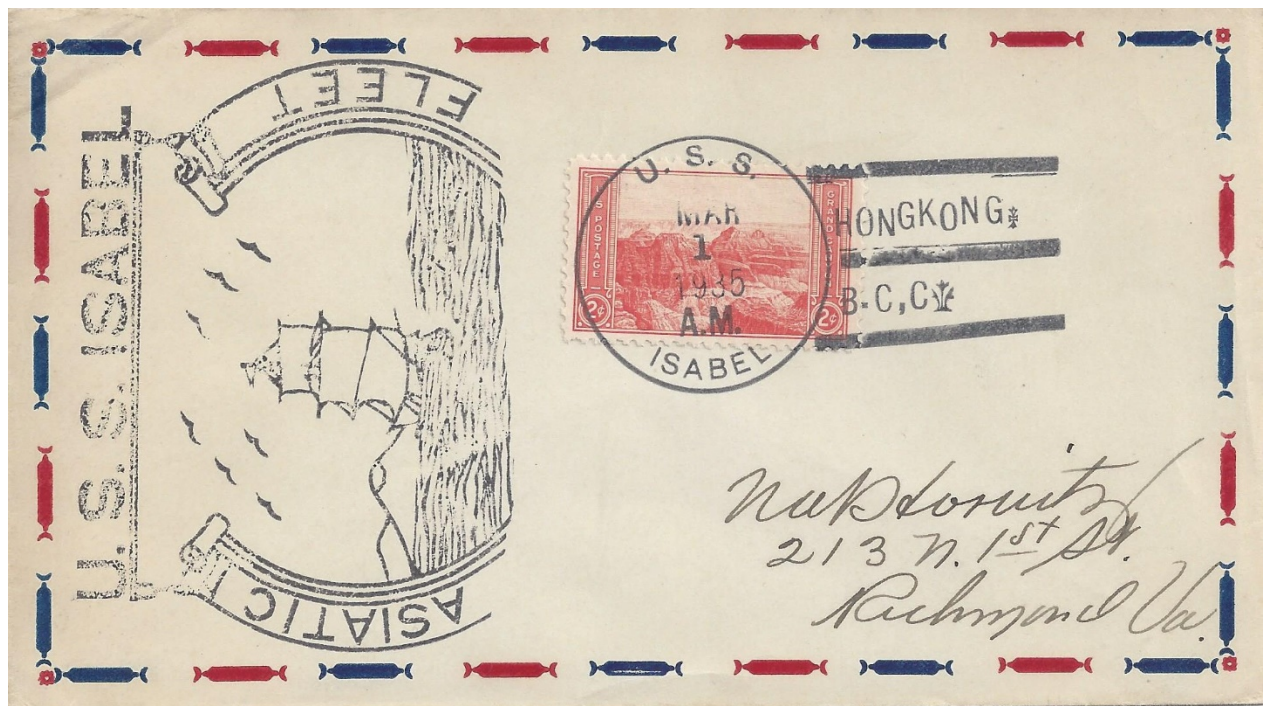


Patrol Yacht Isabel (PY-10)

Isabel was launched 7 June 1917; purchased 3 July 1917 before completion and numbered SP-521. Her torpedo tubes were later removed and she was designated as an armed yacht (PY-10) on 17 July 1920. Isabel spent the 1930s with the Asiatic Fleet in the Philippines and China, much of the time as flagship at Manila. Japanese planes raided Clark Field and Manila on 10 December 1941. At Cavite Navy Yard eight bombs, all duds, ringed Isabel's fantail; she brought down one of the attackers. Isabel received one battle star for World War II service.

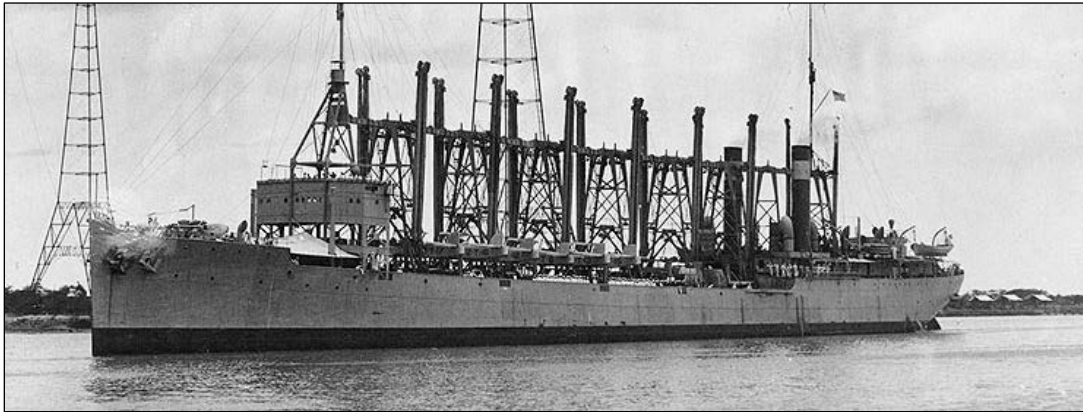


Patrol Yacht Isabel PY-10

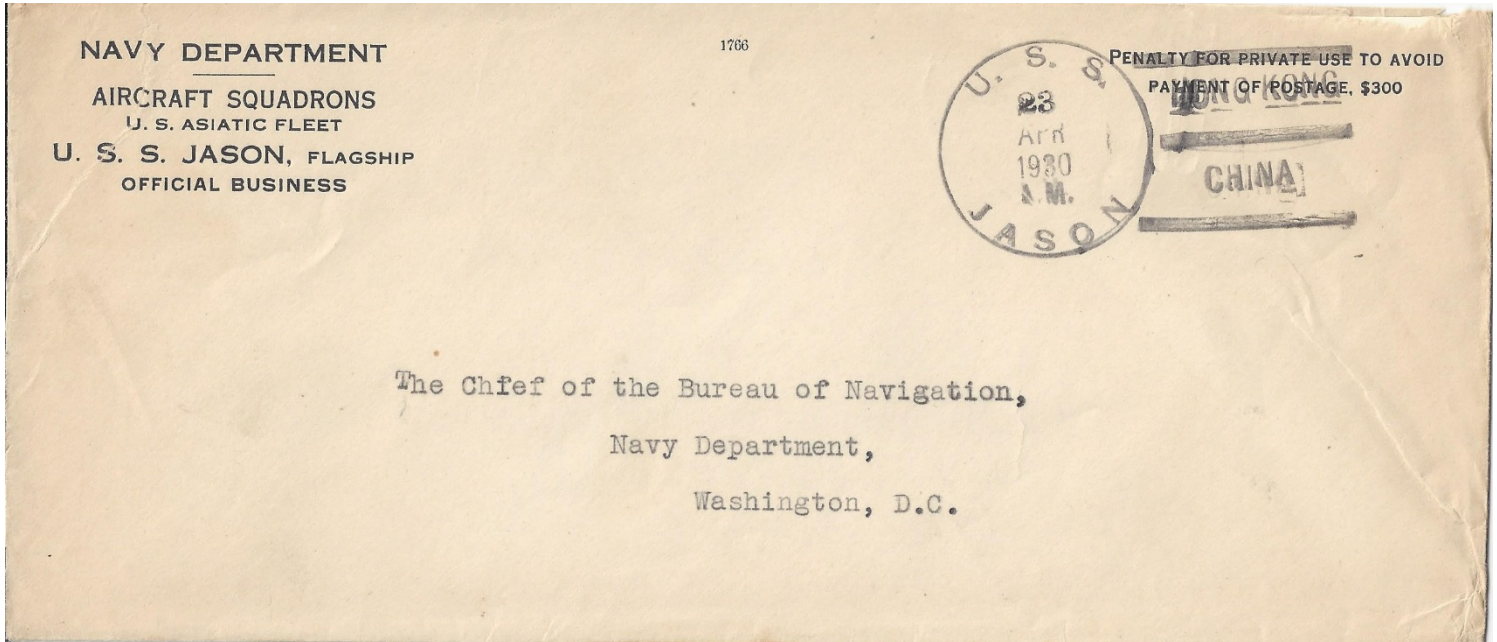


Service Ship USS Jason (AC-12 / AV-2)

The first Jason (AC-12) was laid down 26 March 1912; launched 16 November 1912 by Maryland Steel Co., Sparrows Point, Md.; and commissioned 26 June 1913, Captain A. M. Whitton in command. From 1925 to 1932 Jason operated in the Far East, engaging in transport duties supporting the air squadron. Peace in China was constantly jeopardized by warlike factions within and aggression from without, Jason and the other members of the Asiatic Fleet kept the situation in hand by making the presence of America's naval strength felt. Jason was reclassified AV-2 on 21 January 1930. She returned to San Diego 13 May 1932, and decommissioned at Bremerton Navy Yard 30 June 1932.

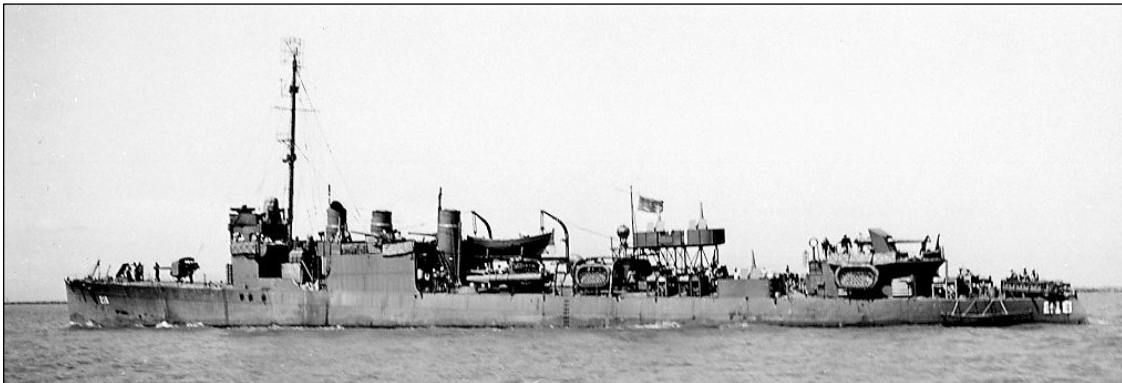


Service Ship USS Jason AC-12 / AV-2

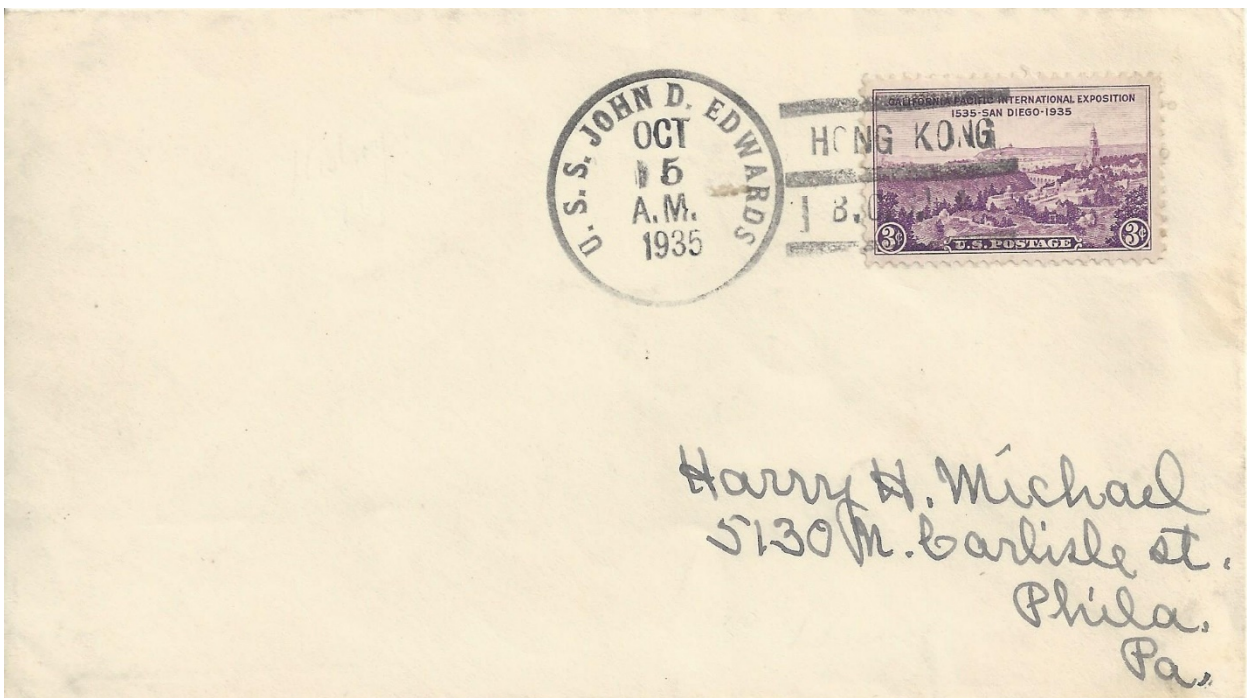


Destroyer USS John D. Edwards (DD-216)

John D. Edwards (DD-216) was laid down 21 May 1919 by William Cramp & Sons, Philadelphia, Pa. launched 18 October 1919; and commissioned 1 April 1920, Comdr. Alexander Sharp in command. She sailed 2 May 1921 for duty with the Asiatic Squadron. Upon arrival at Cavite, P.I., 29 June. John D. Edwards immediately began patrols to protect American interests in the Far East. She was to remain there for 4 years operating out of the Philippines in the winter and China during the summer. Continuing the Navy's long and distinguished record of missions of mercy, she gave vital aid to victims of the Japanese earthquake in 1923 and carried food and rescue workers to Yokohama. As the Chinese Civil War flared in 1924, the destroyer was on station to protect the rights of the foreigners in China. She departed the Far East 18 May 1925, arriving New York 13 July. After 1929, John D. Edwards became a permanent and important unit of the Asiatic Fleet. Operating out of the Philippines along the Chinese Coast and off Japan, she maintained American strength and prestige in that key area of the world and guarded our interests during the Sino-Japanese War in the late 1930's. Upon the commencement of hostilities with Japan 7 December 1941, she departed Balikpapan, Borneo, to search for survivors of HMS Prince of Wales. For the next 2 months, she engaged in patrol, escort, and ASW operations to halt the southward advance of powerful Japanese forces from the Philippines into the Netherlands East Indies. Following the end of the conflict in Europe the destroyer arrived Philadelphia 15 June 1945 and decommissioned there 28 July 1945. John D. Edwards was sold to Boston Metal Co. Baltimore, Md., January 1946. John D. Edwards received three battle stars for World War II service.



Destroyer USS John D. Edwards DD-216



Destroyer USS John D. Ford (DD-228)

John D. Ford (DD-228) was laid down by William Cramp & Sons Ship & Engine Building Co., Philadelphia, Pa., 11 November 1919; launched 2 September 1920, and commissioned 30 December 1920, Prior to the outbreak of World War II, John D. Ford operated out of Manila, cruising Asiatic waters from southern China to northern Japan. During April and May 1924, she helped establish temporary air bases on the Japanese Kurile and Hokaido Islands in support of the pioneer, global flight between 9 April and 28 September by the U.S. Air Service. On 6 June she deployed to Shanghai, China, to protect American lives and interests which were threatened by Chinese civil strife. After renewal of the Chinese Civil War in May 1926, she patrolled the Chinese coast to protect convoys from roving bands of bandits. On 24 March 1927, she supported the evacuation of American and foreign nationals, who were fleeing from mob violence at Nanking. However, Sino-Japanese relations deteriorated, requiring John D. Ford to remain in China. Following Japanese aggression in northern China during July 1937, she evacuated Americans from Peiping as Japanese ships prepared to blockade the Chinese coast. John D. Ford received four battle stars for World War II service.



Destroyer USS John D. Ford (DD-228)

NAVY DEPARTMENT
U. S. S. JOHN D. FORD (DD228)
U. S. ASIATIC FLEET
Via San Francisco, California
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

U. S. S. Black Hawk
U.S.S. JOHN D. FORD, 228.
15th. DIVISION.
SOUTH CHINA PATROL.
HONG KONG, BRITISH CROWN COLONY.

U. S. S.
2
NOV
AM
1938
JOHN D. FORD

Penalty for private use to avoid
HONG KONG of Postage \$300.00
B, C, C,

Cruiser USS Marblehead (CL-12)

The third Marblehead (CL-12) was laid down 4 August 1920 by William Cramp & Son, Philadelphia, Pa.; launched 9 October 1923 and commissioned 8 September 1924, Capt. Chauncey Shackford in command. After commissioning, Marblehead next sailed for Pearl Harbor, and headed for Shanghai, China. Upon arrival, there she contributed to the show of force aimed at the protection of American and other foreign nationals of Shanghai's international settlement during operations against that city through the summer of 1927 in China's civil war. In addition to her stay at Shanghai, Marblehead spent 2 months up the Yangtze River at Hankow, and visited several Japanese ports before leaving the Far East in March 1928. In January 1938, she was temporarily assigned to the Asiatic Fleet, receiving permanent assignment there. On 8 December, she received the message "Japan started hostilities; govern yourselves accordingly." Marblehead and other American warships then joined with those of the Royal Netherlands Navy and the Royal Australian Navy to patrol the waters surrounding the Netherlands East Indies. Her missions complete she returned to the United States, where she decommissioned 1 November 1945, her hulk was scrapped 27 February 1946. MARBLEHEAD received two battle stars for World War II service.

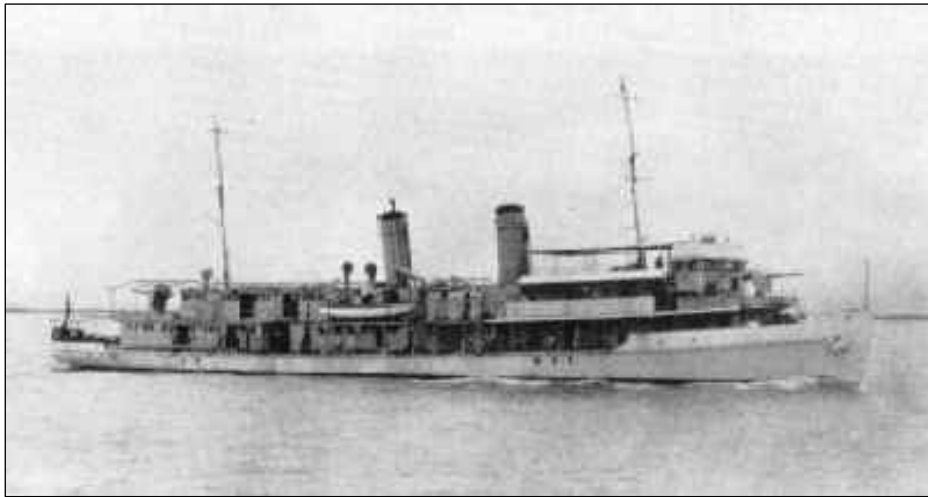


Cruiser USS Marblehead CL-12

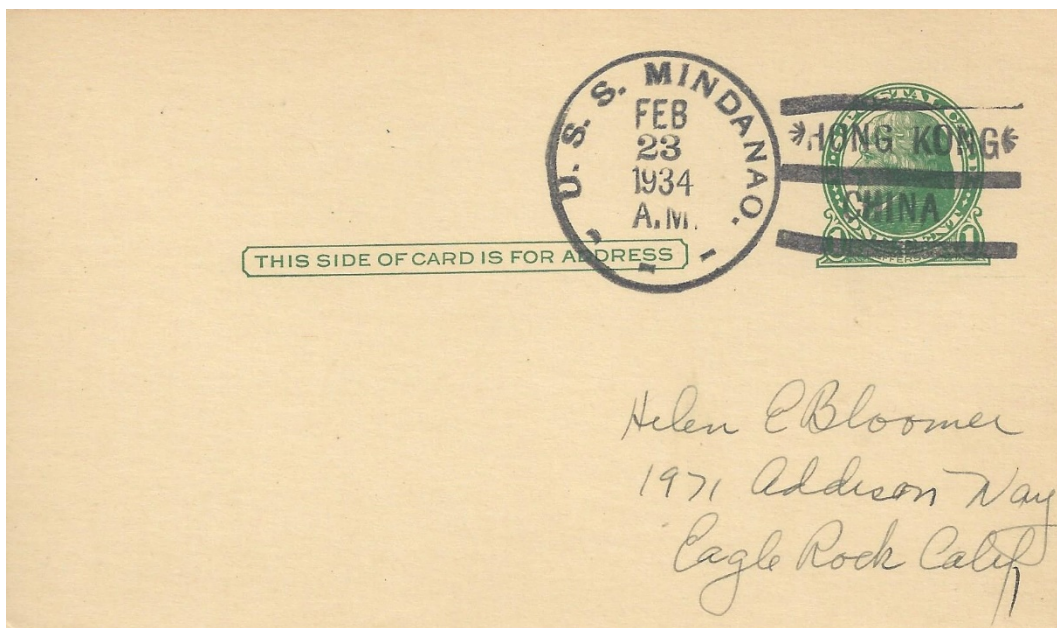


Gunboat USS Mindanao (PR-8)

The first Mindanao (PR-8), a river gunboat, was laid down 20 November 1926 by Kiangnan Dock & Engineering Works, Shanghai, China; launched 28 September 1927; and commissioned at Shanghai 10 July 1928, Lt. Comdr. A. W. Ashbrook in command. Departing Shanghai 28 July 1928, Mindanao conducted shakedown up the Yangtze Kiang. On 2 May, 1929 the warship sailed for Hong Kong and thence to Canton, arriving 14 June where she became flagship of the South China Patrol Force, U.S. Asiatic Fleet. For the next 12 1/2 years, Mindanao cruised the southern coast of China, based alternately at Hong Kong and Canton, protecting American and Allied interests in China and suppressing piracy. On 2 December 1941 the gunboat received orders to sail to the Philippines. Though designed only for river travel, the valiant craft put to sea from Hong Kong and concluded this dangerous and eventful voyage upon arrival at Manila Bay the next day. Mindanao harassed enemy artillery east of Bataan 6 April. The same day, the gunboat helped rescue some 60 American soldiers from both shore artillery and enemy aircraft. The ship repeatedly closed the beach to support small boats embarking the soldiers. When the naval situation in Manila Bay appeared hopeless, Mindanao's crew was ordered ashore 10 April to help defend Fort Hugheson. Hit by shell fire the same day, the gunboat was stripped of all useful gear. On 2 May, after suffering an aerial bomb hit in the engine room, she was sunk to prevent capture. Mindanao received one battle star for World War II service.



Gunboat USS Mindanao PR-8

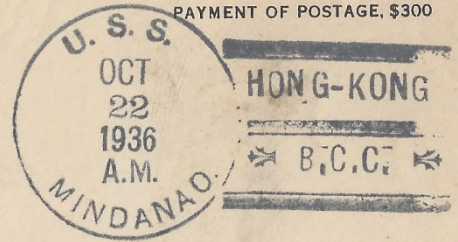


NAVY DEPARTMENT

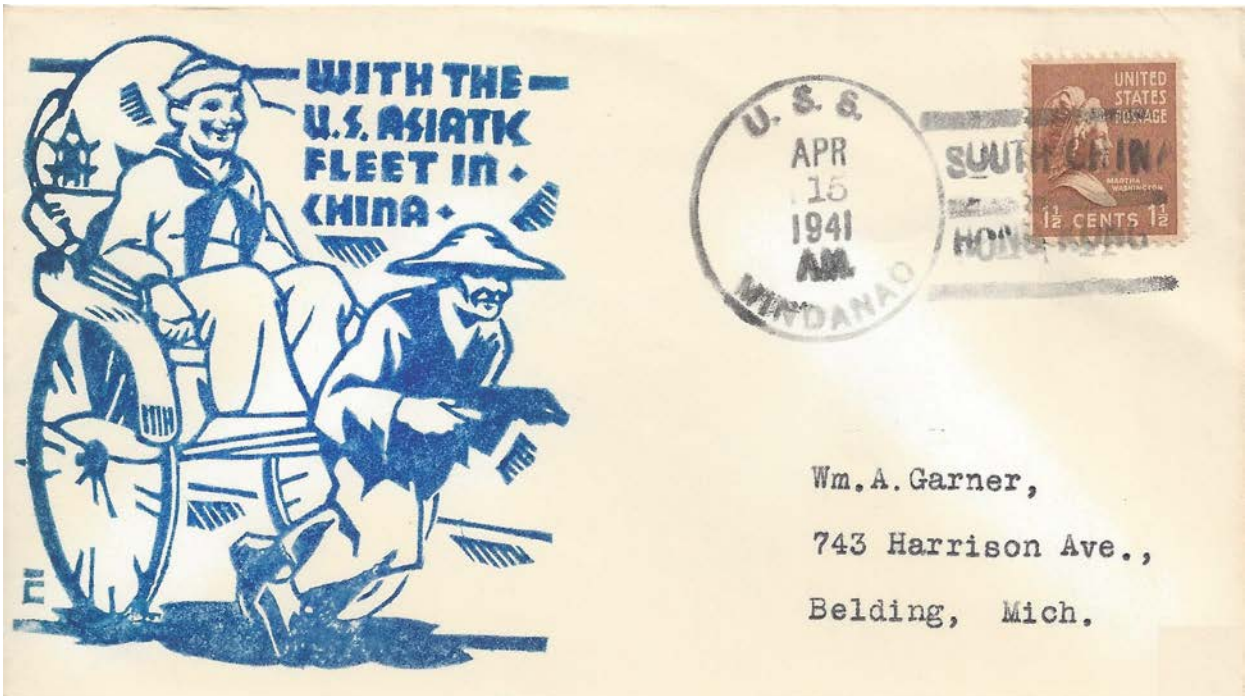
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PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
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UNITED STATES ASIATIC FLEET
SOUTH CHINA PATROL
U. S. S. MINDANAO, FLAGSHIP
c/o POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.
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The Commandant, Sixteenth Naval District
CAVITE,
Philippine Islands

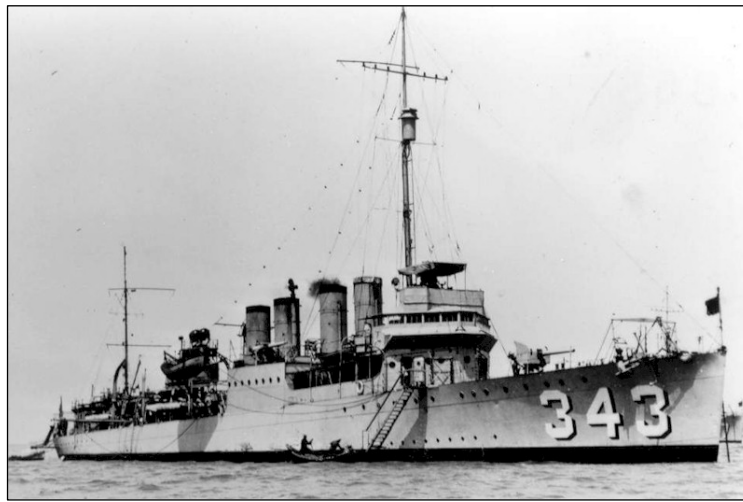


Wm. A. Garner,
743 Harrison Ave.,
Belding, Mich.

Destroyer USS Noa (DD-343/APD-24)

The first USS Noa (DD-343/APD-24) was a *Clemson*-class destroyer built by the Norfolk Navy Yard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Authorized 6 October 1917, she was laid down 18 November 1918. She was launched on 28 June 1919, and commissioned 15 February 1921. In late May 1922, she sailed for duty on the Asiatic Station. On 27 February 1927, the Noa arrived at Nanjing, China, relieving USS *Simpson* as the ship stationed there "to protect American lives and property." On 24 March 1927, with her sister ship, USS *William B. Preston*, and Royal Navy light cruiser HMS *Emerald*, she helped to rescue foreigners from Nanjing. The three ships used their main batteries to lay down a barrage of shrapnel and high explosive on Socony Hill, driving back hostile Chinese forces and also halting sniping along the Nanjing Bund and a sortie by Kuomintang gunboats. She was decommissioned 11 November 1934, and was placed in reserve.

Recommissioned at Philadelphia on 1 April 1940 and was fitted with a seaplane. Noa steamed for Pearl Harbor 4 November, arriving 10 November. She steamed for the Palau Islands to conduct underwater demolition activities. While en route, she was rammed by Fullam (DD-474). Order to abandon ship was given and the old ship sank by the stern with no loss of life. The commanding officer of Fullam was court-martialed in November 1944 in San Francisco, California. Noa received the Yangtze Service Medal for China service in 1927 and five battle stars for World War II service.



Destroyer USS Noa (DD-343/APD-24)

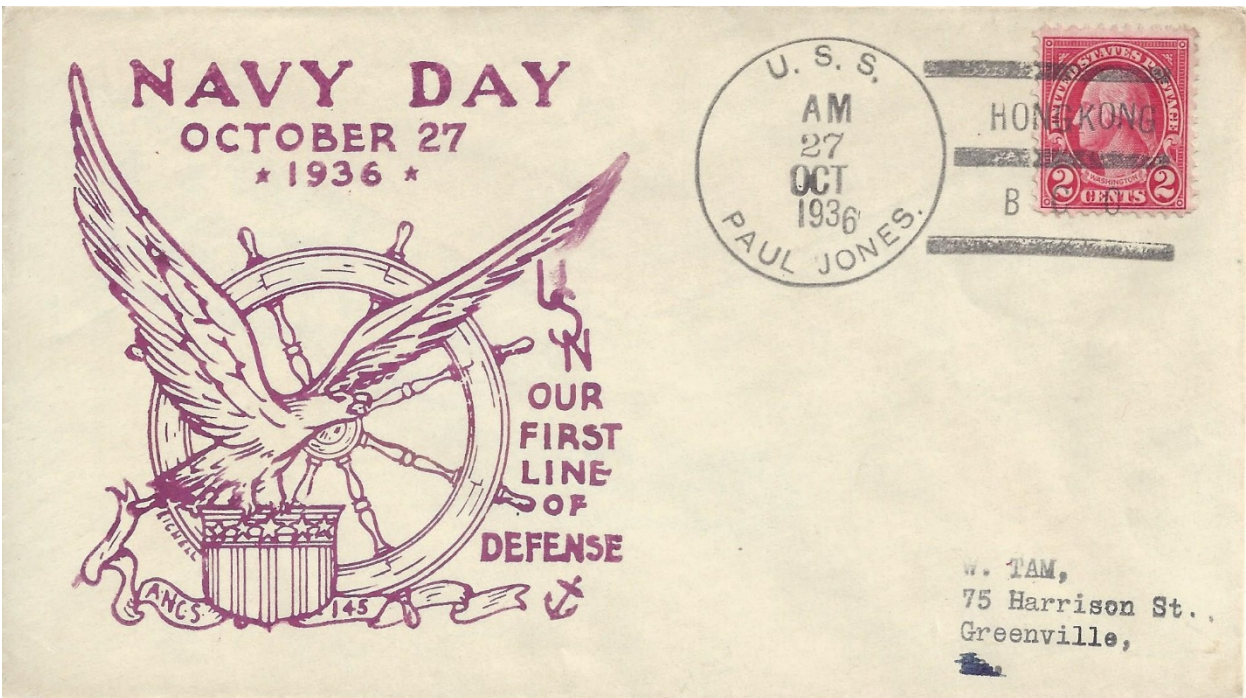


Destroyer USS Paul Jones (DD-230)

The third Paul Jones (DD-230), was laid down 23 December 1919 by Wm. Cramp & Sons, Philadelphia, Pa.; launched 30 September 1920; and commissioned 19 April 1921. After shakedown Paul Jones joined the Atlantic Fleet for maneuvers, training, and coastal operations until transferred to the Pacific in 1923. She crossed the Pacific and joined the Asiatic Fleet in protecting American interest in the troubled Far East. Paul Jones participated in the Yangtze River patrol and was assigned other patrol duties along the China coast, while making occasional voyages to and from Manila. As flagship of Destroyer Squadron 29, Asiatic Fleet, she received the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor 8 December 1941, at Tarakan, Borneo, and immediately stripped for action. She was Reclassified as a miscellaneous auxiliary (AG-120) as of 30 June 1945.

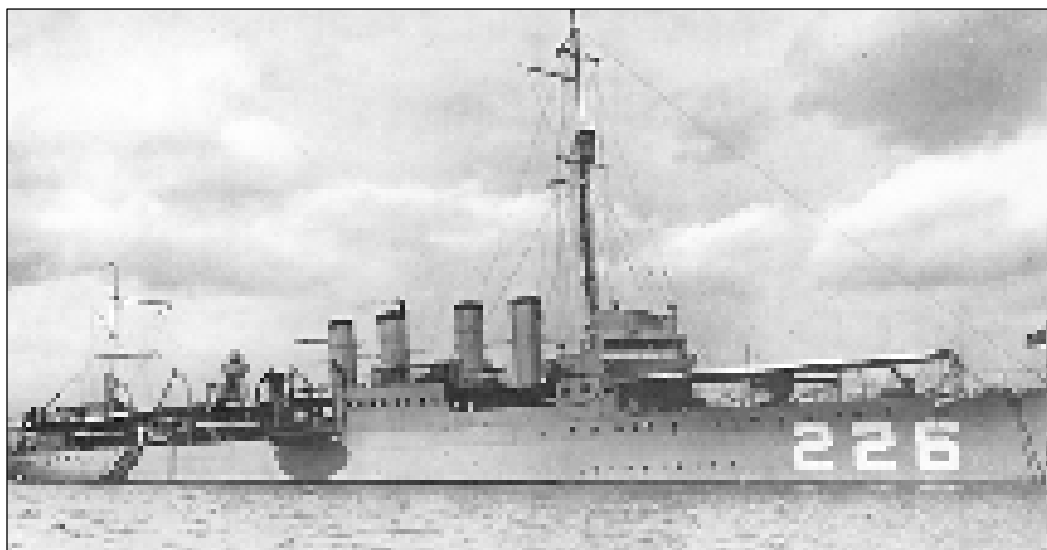


Destroyer USS Paul Jones DD-230



Destroyer USS Peary (DD-226)

Peary (DD-226) was laid down by William Cramp and Sons Philadelphia, Penn., 9 September 1919, launched 6 April 1920; commissioned 22 October 1920. Peary was moored at Cavite, P.I., when news of the Pearl Harbor raid reached her and was caught in the raid on the Cavite Navy Yard, Philippines, two days later. At about 10:45 a.m. on 19 February 1942 Peary was attacked by single-motored Japanese dive bombers and suffered 80 men killed and 13 wounded. The first bomb exploded on the fantail, the second, an incendiary on the galley deck house; the third did not explode; the fourth hit forward and set off the forward ammunition magazines; the fifth, another incendiary, exploded in the after-engine room. A .30 caliber machine gun on the after-deck house and a .50 caliber machine gun on the galley deck house fired until the last enemy plane flew away. Peary sank stem first at about 1 00 p.m. She was struck from the Navy List 8 May 1942. Peary received one battle star for World War II service.

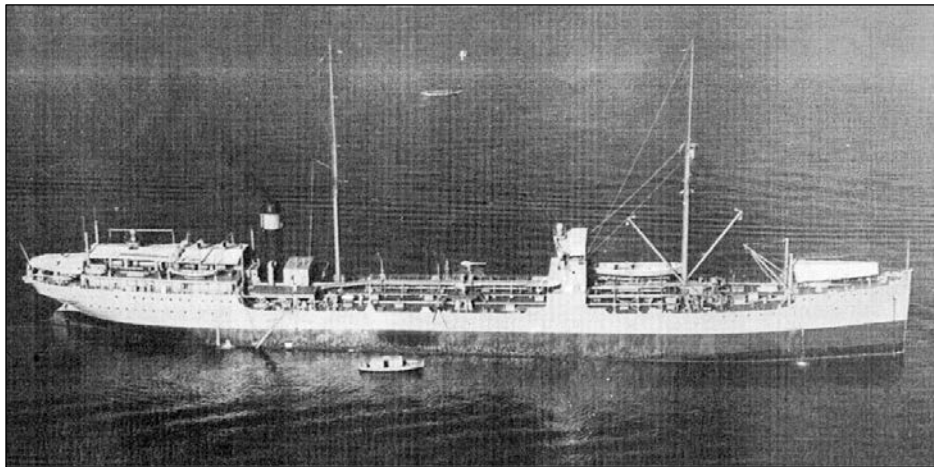


Destroyer USS Peary DD-226



Fleet Oiler USS Pecos (A0-6)

The first Pecos (A0-6) was laid down as Fuel Ship No. 18 on 2 June 1920 by the Navy Yard, Boston, Mass.; reclassified A0-6 on 17 July 1920; launched 23 April 1921; and commissioned 25 August 1921. During the two decades before the United States entered World War II, Pecos carried fuel to ships of the fleet wherever needed, operating in both Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Pecos was in the Philippines supporting the ships of the Asiatic Fleet. On the 27 February 1942, off Christmas Island, when the oiler was about to take survivors of Langley from destroyers Whipple and Edsall, land based planes attacked the three ships. After fighting off the raiders, the American ships steamed south out of range and completed the transfer 1 March. At noon that day, planes from Japanese carrier Soryu attacked Pecos and struck again an hour later. Finally, at midafternoon, a third strike sent the veteran oiler to the bottom. Whipple raced to the scene and rescued 232 survivors.

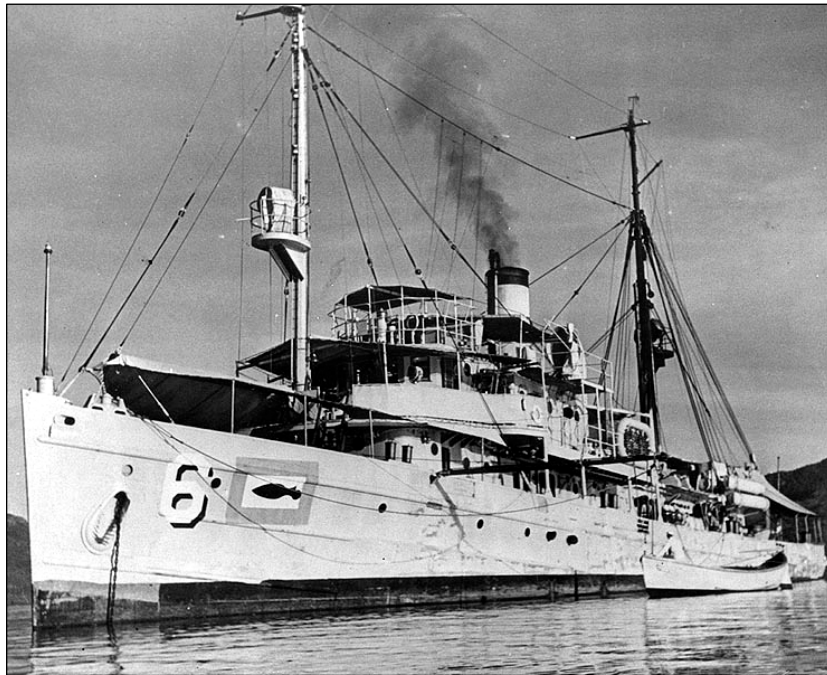


Fleet Oiler USS Pecos A0-6

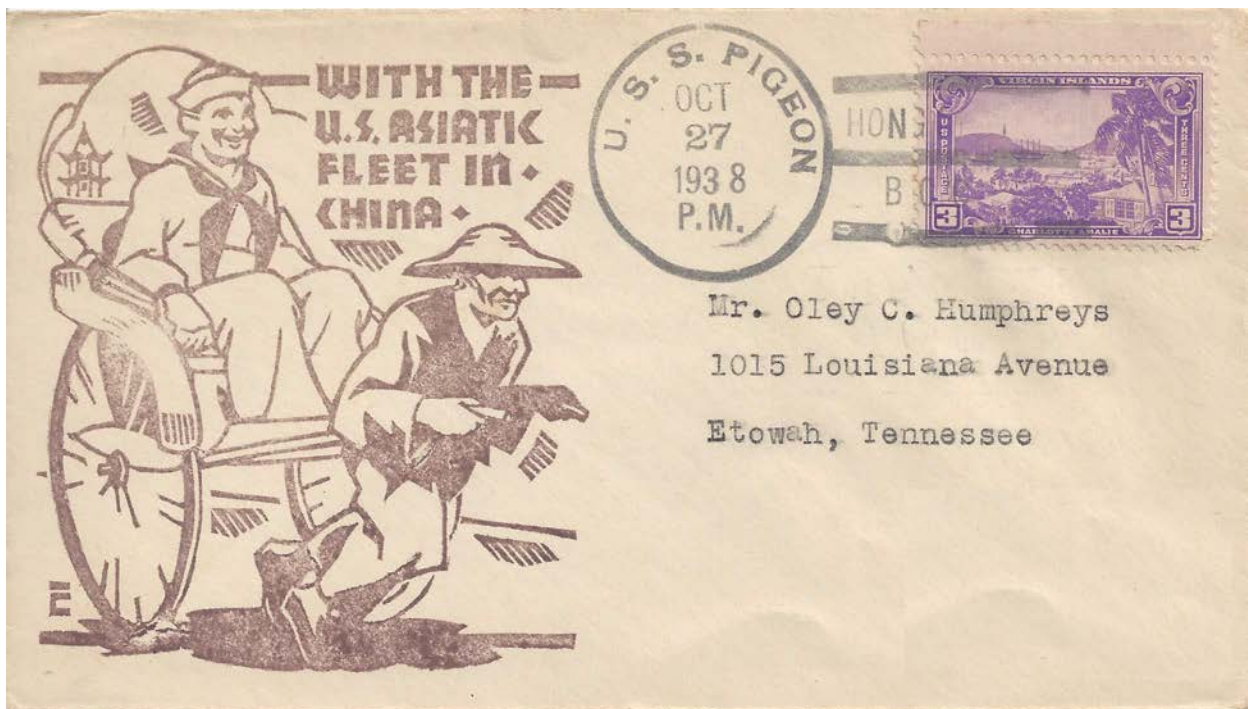


Submarine Rescue Ship USS Pigeon (ASR-6)

Lapwing Class Minesweeper: Laid down at Baltimore Dry Dock and Shipbuilding Co., Baltimore, Md.; Launched 29 January 1919; Commissioned USS Pigeon, Minesweeper No. 47, 15 July 1919; Designated (AM-47), 17 July 1920; Decommissioned, 25 April 1922 at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Recommissioned, 13 October 1923; Reclassified a Submarine Rescue Ship (ASR-6), 12 September 1929; sunk by a Japanese dive bomber in the Philippines 4 May 1942. As a Submarine Rescue Vessel, Pigeon's primary mission was to salvage and aid submarines in distress. Pigeon received one battle star and two Presidential Unit Citations for service during World War II.



Submarine Rescue Ship USS Pigeon ASR-6



Destroyer USS Pillsbury (DD-227)

The first Pillsbury (DD-227) was laid down by William Cramp and Sons, Philadelphia, Pa. 23 October 1919, launched 3 August 1920, and commissioned 15 December 1920, Lt. H. W. Barnes in command. Pillsbury served for many years with the Asiatic Fleet. On 27 November 1941, by order of the Commander Asiatic Fleet Admiral T. C. Hart, Pillsbury departed from Manila together with other units of the fleet. For some time, she operated near Borneo, and was in that area when the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor 7 December 1941. There are no logs or battle reports giving the details of the action in which Pillsbury, Asheville (PG-21) and Edsall (DD-219) were sunk between the 1st and 4th of March 1942. Pillsbury received two battle stars for World War II service.

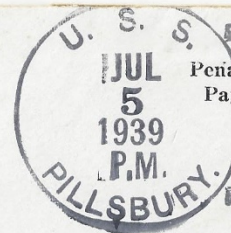


Destroyer USS Pillsbury DD-227 circa 1927

NAVY DEPARTMENT

U. S. ASIATIC FLEET
U. S. S. PILLSBURY (DD227)
Via San Francisco, California

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B. C. C.

COMMANDER IN CHIEF ASIATIC FLEET

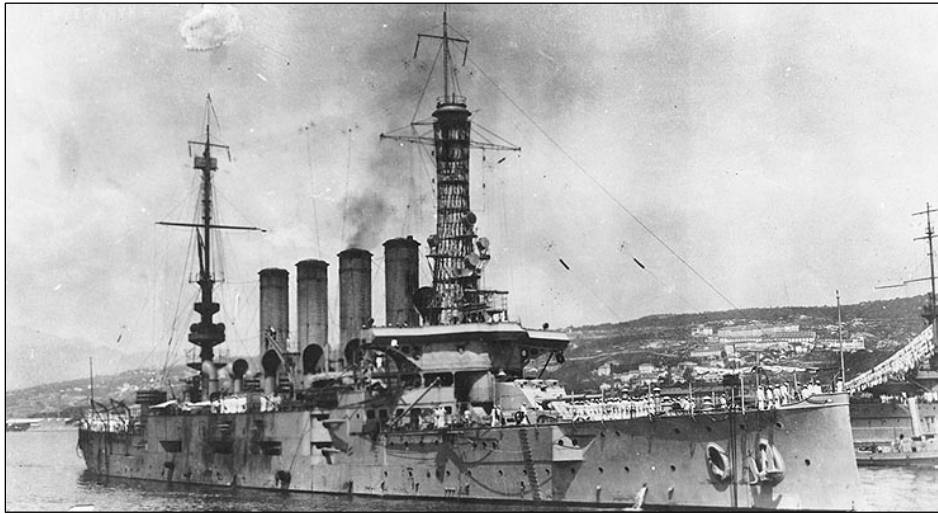
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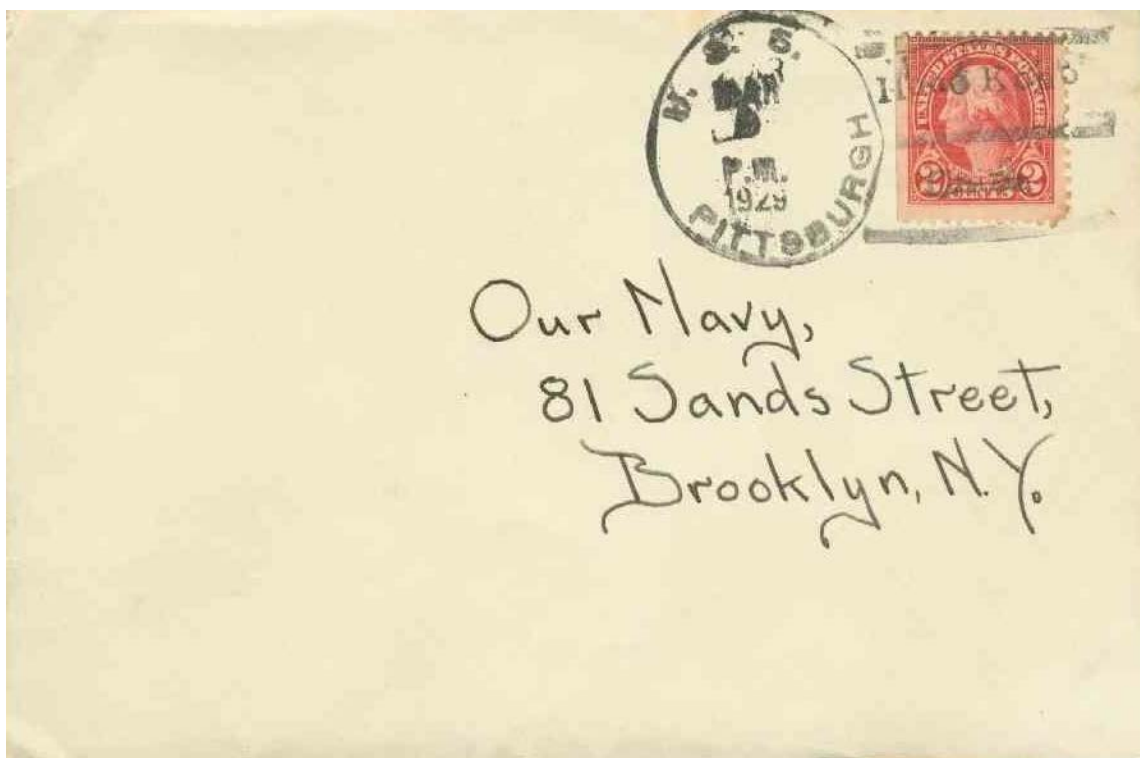
SHANGHAI, CHINA

Cruiser USS Pittsburgh (CA-4)

USS Pennsylvania (Renamed Pittsburgh in 1912. Armored Cruiser 4) was laid down 7 August 1901 by William Cramp and Sons, Philadelphia; launched 22 August 1903; and commissioned 9 March 1905, Capt. Thomas C. McLean in command. She operated on the East Coast and in the Caribbean until 8 September 1906 when she cleared Newport for the Asiatic Station. She was renamed PITTSBURGH 27 August 1912 to free the name Pennsylvania for a new battleship. Recommissioned 2 October 1922, PITTSBURGH returned to European and Mediterranean waters as flagship of Naval Forces in Europe, then arrived New York 17 July 1926 to prepare for flagship duty with the Asiatic Fleet. She sailed 16 October for Chefoo, arriving 23 December. Early in January 1927, she landed sailors and Marines to protect Americans and other foreigners in Shanghai from the turmoil and fighting of the Chinese power struggle. When Chiang Kai-shek's Cantonese Army won control of Shanghai in March, PITTSBURGH resumed operations on patrol and exercises with the Asiatic Fleet. Decommissioning 10 July 1931, she was sold for scrapping under the terms of the London Treaty to Union Shipbuilding, Baltimore, Md., 21 December 1931.



Cruiser USS Pittsburgh CA-4



(Source: Ebay)

Destroyer USS Pope (DD-225)

The first Pope (DD-225) was laid down 9 September 1919 by William Cramp and Sons Ship & Engine Building Co., Philadelphia, Pa., launched 23 March 1920, and commissioned 27 October 1920 at Philadelphia, Comdr. Richard S. Galloway in command. In 1921, Pope joined Squadron 15 Division 43 of the Asiatic Fleet at Chefoo, China 26 August and participated in fleet exercises off Chefoo. She first served with the Yangtze Patrol Force 9 September-9 October 1923 and continued to make her presence known through repeated patrols until 1931. Increased tension on China's northern borders due to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria made it necessary for Pope to evacuate Americans from northern Chinese ports. Pope was stationed off Swatow and Pehtaiho 14 June 19 August observing the Japanese Fleet en route to Swatow and the subsequent bombing and occupation of the city. She remained in this area until her return to Manila 12 October for neutrality patrol off the Philippines. On the evening of 28 February 1942, the heavy cruiser and two destroyers left Soerabaja and proceeded north. Midway between Java and Borneo enemy surface and air forces launched an attack the next morning. The three Allied ships fought four Japanese heavy cruisers and four destroyers throughout a fierce three-hour action and succeeded in damaging a number of enemy ships. Shortly before noon 1 March the two British ships were destroyed by gunfire, and an hour later Pope was attacked and sunk by 12 dive-bombers after sustaining many direct hits. She was struck from the Navy List 8 May 1942. Pope received two battle stars and a Presidential Unit Citation for her World War II service.

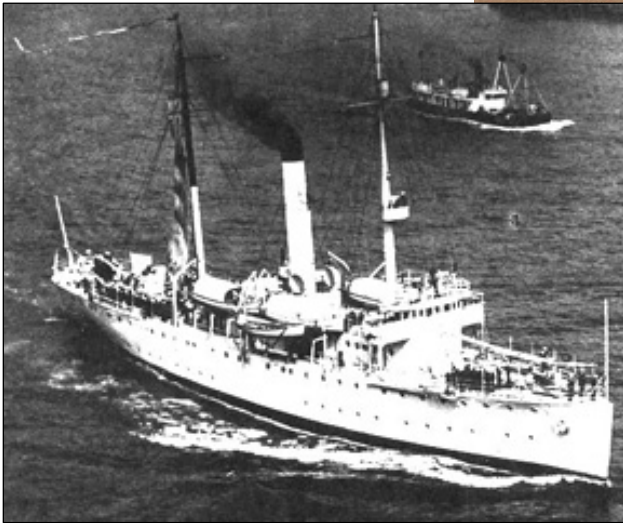


Destroyer USS Pope DD-225 circa 1920



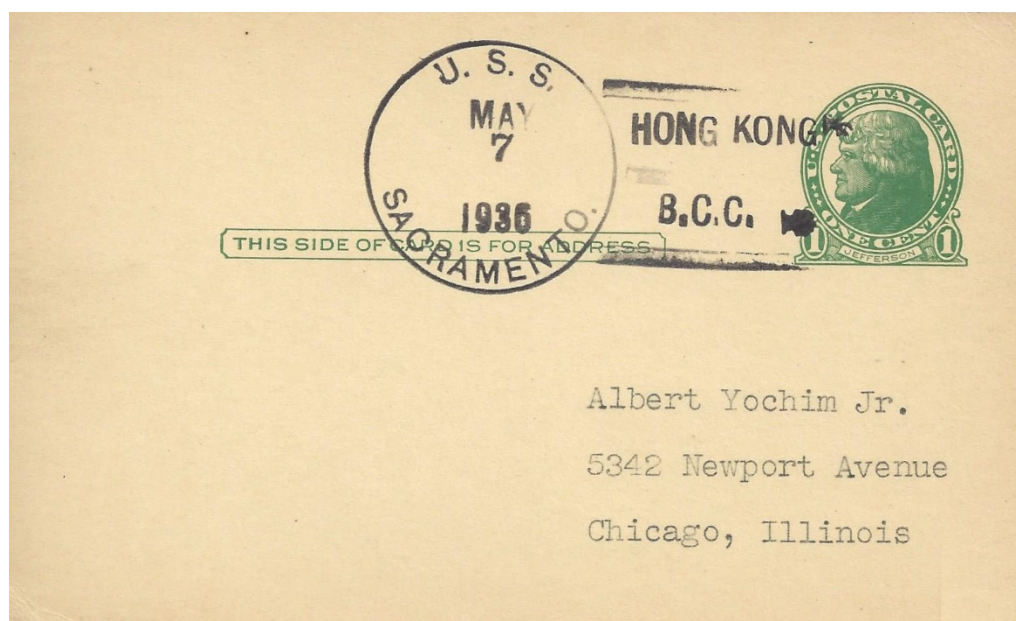
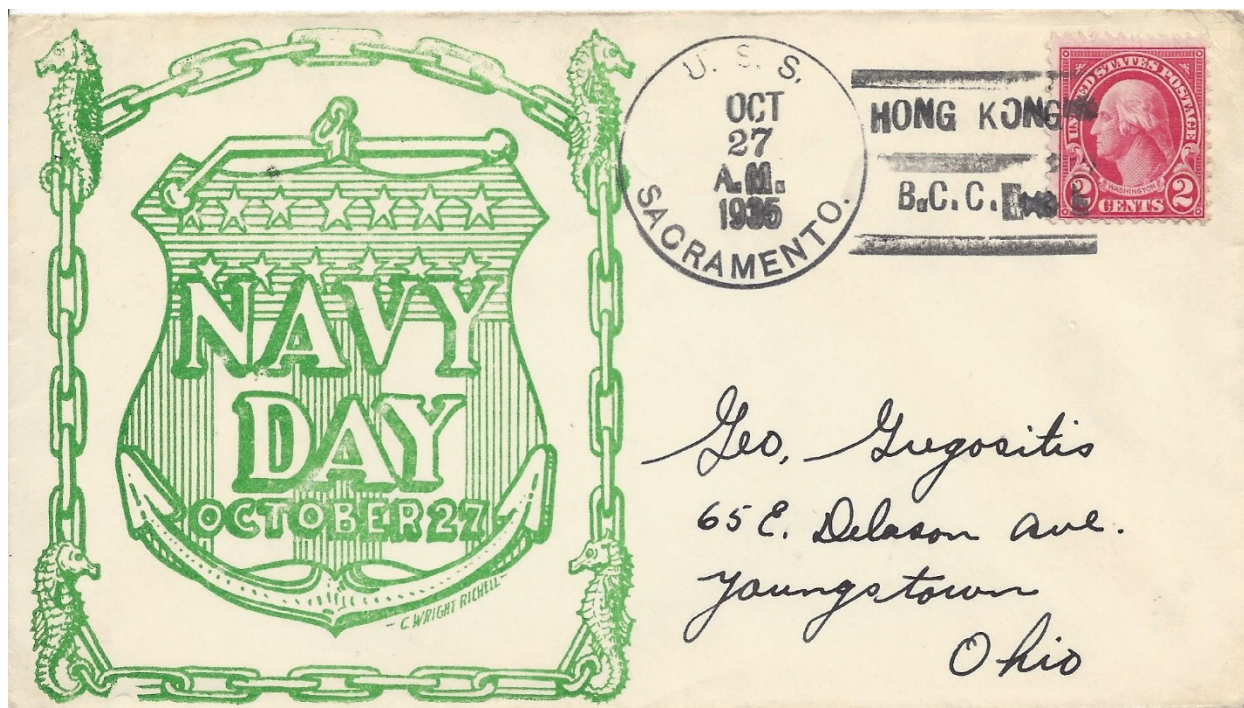
Gunboat USS Sacramento (PG-19)

Sacramento Class Gunboat: Laid down at William Cramp and Sons Shipbuilding Co., Philadelphia, PA; Launched, 21 February 1914; Commissioned USS Sacramento (Gunboat No.19), 26 April 1914; Re-designated (PG-19), 17 July 1920; Sacramento served with the Asiatic Fleet. As hostilities worsened between China and Japan she arrived at Shanghai, China, on 1 April 1932 and remained in adjacent waters throughout the gradually worsening crisis, just short of war, during the rest of the 30's. Entering Pearl Harbor on 15 August 1941, she formed part of the local defense of the Navy Yard at the time of the Japanese attack on 7 December 1941. Sacramento's gun crews opened fire on Japanese aircraft attacking "battleship row" off Ford Island. Her batteries assisted in destroying one enemy plane which crossed her bow 200 yards ahead and later helped down another which was pressing home an attack on Nevada. Her boat crews participated in rescue and salvage operations throughout the aftermath of the battle. Sacramento was awarded one battle star for World War II service.



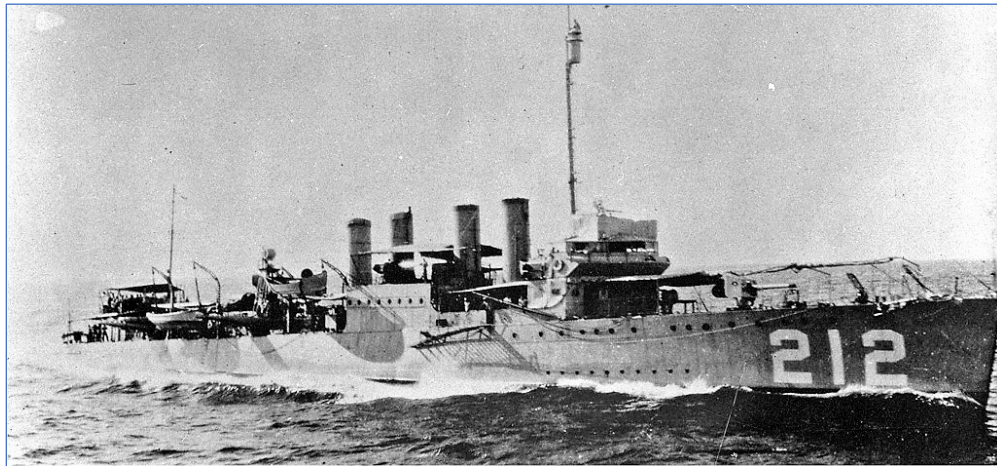
Gunboat USS Sacramento PG-19



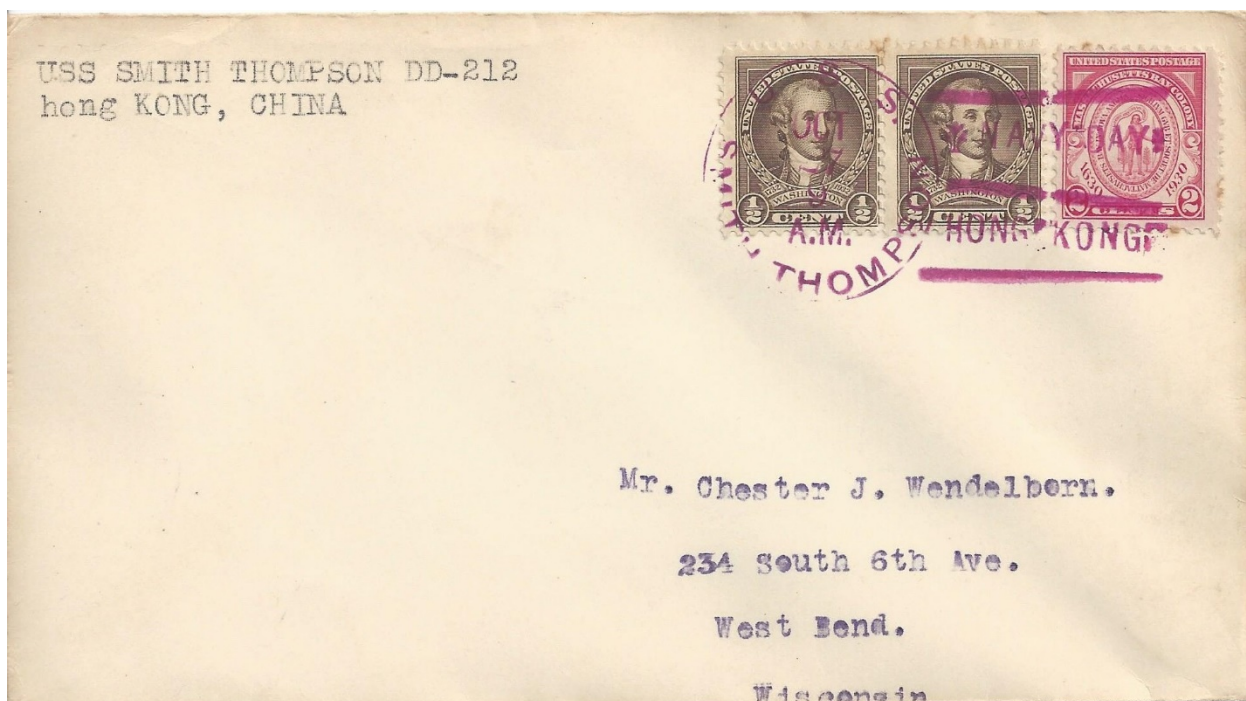


Destroyer USS Smith Thompson (DD-212)

Clemson-class destroyer, *Smith Thompson* was laid down on 24 March 1919 by William Cramp and Sons, Philadelphia; launched on 14 July 1919; and commissioned on 10 December 1919, Commander B.G. Barthalow in command. On 2 May 1921, *Smith Thompson* sailed from Constantinople with her division for the Asiatic Station. For the next four years, she cruised among the Philippine Islands, along the coast of China, and in Japanese waters, protecting American lives and property. In early September 1923, when he learned that Tokyo and Yokohama had been nearly destroyed by an earthquake, tsunami, and fire on 30 and 31 August, Admiral Edwin Anderson, Jr., Commander in Chief of the Asiatic Fleet, immediately sent *Smith Thompson* and her destroyer division with medical supplies to render assistance. On 1 February 1932, she, with other units of the Asiatic Fleet, was rushed to Shanghai to protect the international settlement there after the Japanese launched an air and sea attack on the Chinese portion of the city. On 14 April 1936, *Smith Thompson*, while en route from Manila to Shanghai, was rammed amidships by *Whipple* (DD-217). There was no loss of life, but *Smith Thompson* was seriously damaged and had to be towed back to the Philippines by *Barker* (DD-213). Inspection showed the ship not worth repair, and *Smith Thompson* was decommissioned at Olongapo on 15 May, struck from the Navy list on 19 May, and sunk at sea off Subic Bay on 25 July 1936.



Destroyer USS Smith Thompson (DD-212)



Destroyer USS Stewart (DD-224)

The second Stewart (DD-224) was laid down on 9 September 1919 by William Cramp and Sons, Philadelphia, Pa.; launched on 4 March 1920; and commissioned on 15 September 1920, Lt. S. G. Lamb in command. On 20 June 1922, she proceeded to the Philippines for service in the Asiatic Fleet. She was destined not to return home for 23 years. Between 1924 and 1928, unrest in China came to a head with the outbreak of anti-foreign disturbances at Shanghai and Canton. Stewart spent periods augmenting the normal gunboat patrols on the Yangtze River and on the coast near Canton. During 1941, she remained in the Philippines. She survived numerous air attacks but she came under extremely accurate fire from Japanese destroyers and received crippling shot below her water line she entered the floating drydock at Surabaya. However, she was inadequately supported in the dock, and, as the dock rose, the ship fell off the keel blocks onto her side bending her propeller shafts and causing further hull damage. Subsequently, demolition charges were set off within the ship, a Japanese bomb hit amidships further damaged her; and, before the port was evacuated, the drydock containing her was scuttled. Her name was struck from the Navy list on 25 March 1942. Later in the war, American pilots began reporting an American warship operating far within enemy waters. After almost a year under water, Stewart had been raised by the Japanese in February 1943. On 28 April 1945, she was bombed and damaged by US Army aircraft at Mokpo, Korea. She was transferred to the control of the Kure Navy District; and, in August 1945, was found by American occupation forces laid up in Hiro Bay near Kure. The old ship was recommissioned in the US Navy. She arrived at San Francisco in early March 1946 and was struck from the Navy list on 17 April 1946, decommissioned on 23 May 1946, and sunk off San Francisco as a target for aircraft. She received two battle stars for her World War II service.



Destroyer USS Stewart DD-224



Gunboat USS Tulsa (PG-22)

Tulsa (PG-22) was laid down on 9 December 1919 at Charleston, S.C., by the Charleston Navy Yard; launched on 25 August 1922; and commissioned there on 3 December 1923, Lt. Comdr. Robert M. Doyle, Jr in command. Designated flagship of the South China Patrol on 1 April 1929, Tulsa operated out of Hong Kong, and Canton, China, for cruises up the Pearl River and along the south China coast. At Canton in May 1929, she witnessed the bombing of Chinese naval vessels by airplanes of the opposing faction in a Chinese civil war flaring at the time. Relieved in June by Mindanao (PR-8) as flagship of the South China Patrol, she steamed up the coast to Shanghai, beginning a two-week deployment with the Yangtze Patrol in which she cruised as far upriver as Hankow. Assigned new duties as station ship at Tientsin in north China, Tulsa headed north in July 1929 to serve as a mobile source of information for the Commander in Chief, Asiatic Fleet (CINCAF). She continued under the direct operational control of CINCAF into the 1930's, being later reassigned to the South China Patrol and observing conditions along the south China coast during the period following the outbreak of the undeclared Sino-Japanese war in July 1937. On 10 December 1941, two days after the outbreak of war in the Philippines, a heavy Japanese air attack devastated Cavite, the base of the Asiatic Fleet, near Manila. Tulsa anchored off the burning base as the last Japanese planes departed, she called away all of her boats and sent fire and rescue parties ashore to bring off what wounded could be rescued from the holocaust. At 1900, she recalled all hands that were ashore; and within hours, Tulsa, Asheville (PG-21), Lark (AM-21), and Whippoorwill (AM-35) retired toward Balikpapan, Borneo. Tulsa received two battle stars for her World War II service.

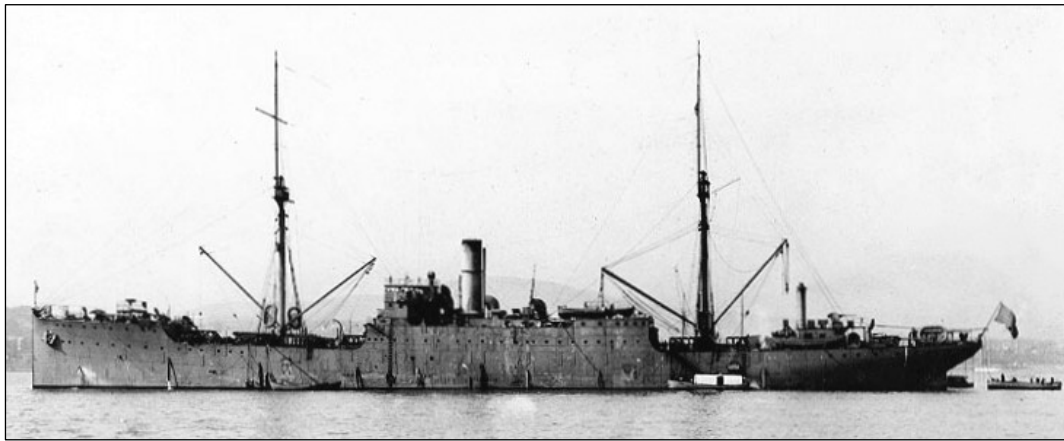


Gunboat USS Tulsa PG-22

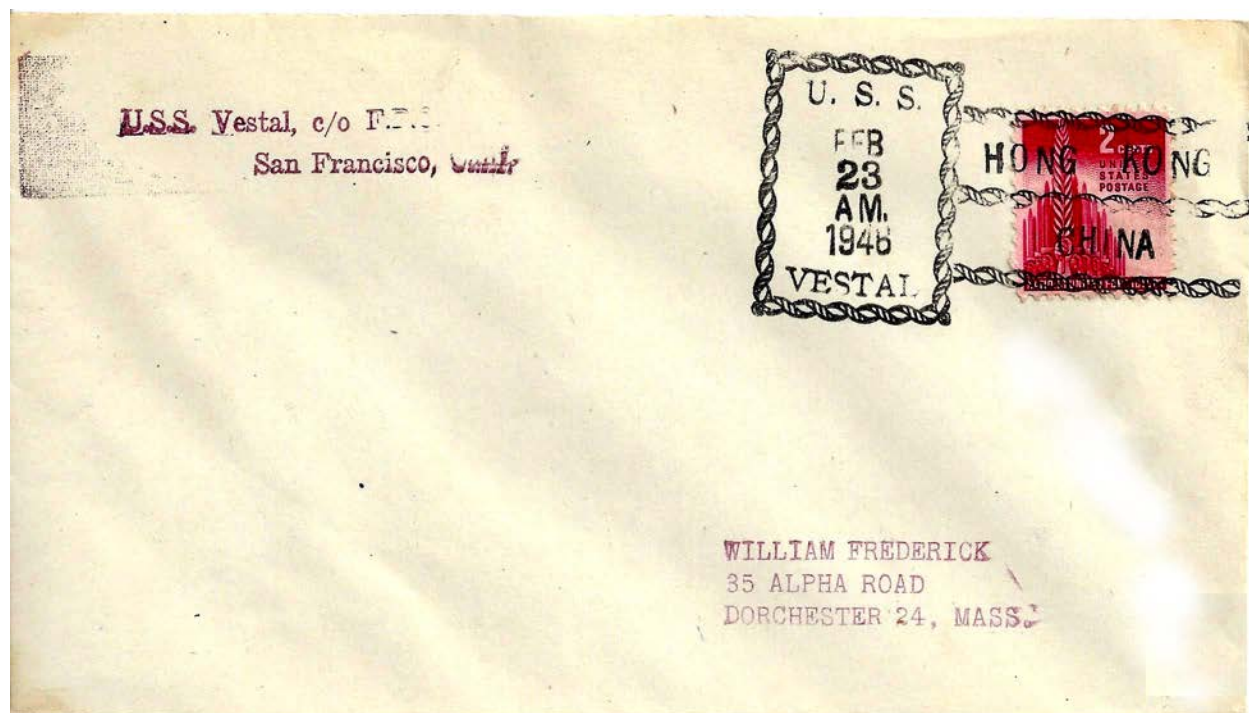


Fleet Repair Ship USS Vestal (AR-4)

USS Vestal, first of a class of two 12,585-ton colliers, was built at the New York Navy Yard. Placed in service with a civilian crew in October 1909, she spent the next three years in the Atlantic providing coal to the ships of the fleet. Taken out of service in October 1912, Vestal was converted by the Boston Navy Yard into a repair ship (later receiving the hull number AR-4) and placed in commission in that role in September 1913. Into 1917. She was modernized in 1925, and shifted her base from the Atlantic to the Pacific in 1927. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, Vestal was moored outboard of the battleship Arizona. She was hit by two bombs and further damaged when Arizona's forward magazines exploded. Repaired over the next few months, she was transferred to the South Pacific in August 1942, where she mended many combat-damaged ships. Shifting to Central Pacific early in 1944 and to the Okinawa area in May 1945, Vestal continued to support the combat fleet to the end of World War II, and beyond. After assisting with the occupation of Japan and China, she steamed home to the U.S. and helped with the work of decommissioning ships that were not needed for the post-war fleet. She was herself placed out of commission in August 1946. Vestal was sold for scrapping in July 1950.



Fleet Repair Ship USS Vestal AR-4, circa 1920

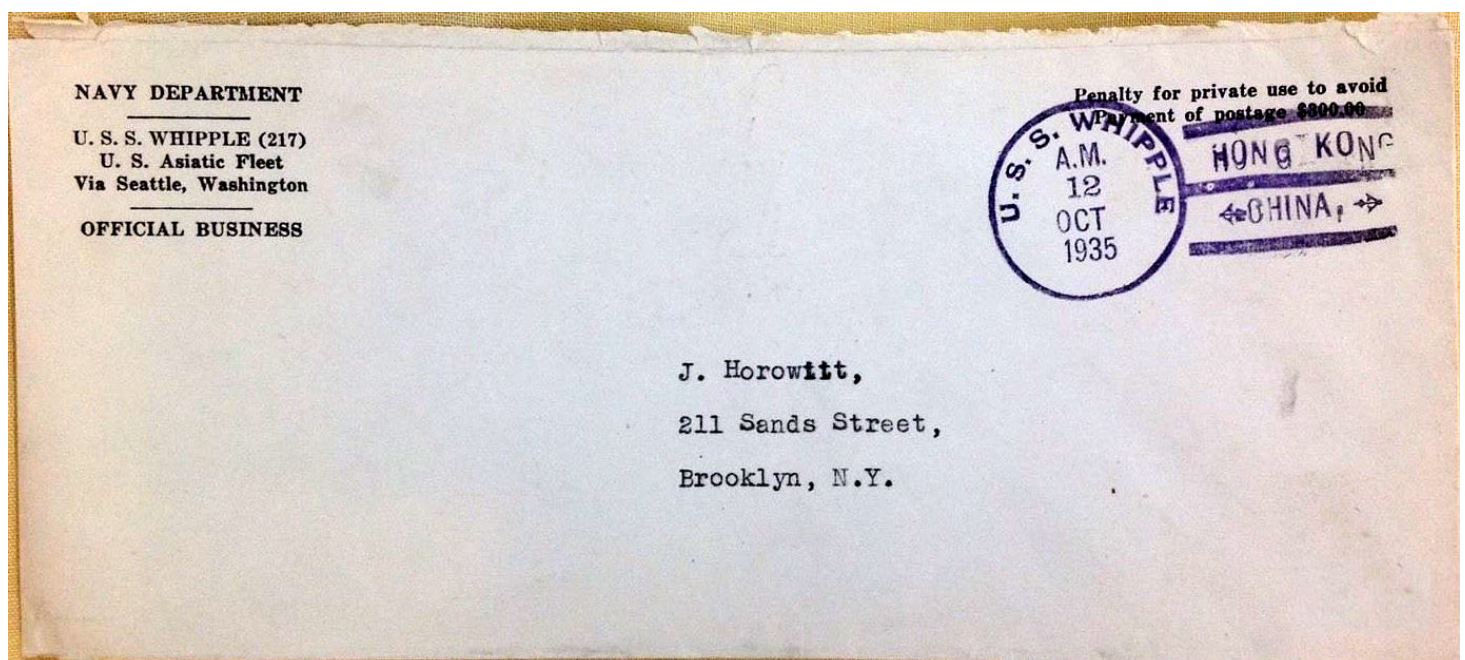


Destroyer USS Whipple (DD-217)

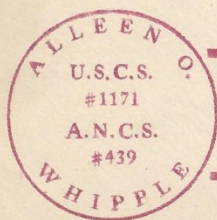
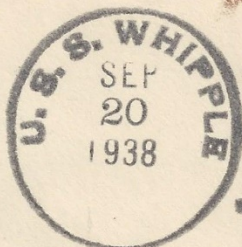
The second Whipple (Destroyer No. 217) was laid down on 12 June 1919 at Philadelphia, Pa., by William Cramp and Sons; launched on 6 November 1919 and commissioned on 23 April 1920, Lt. Simmering in command. Antagonisms between China and Japan erupted in fighting near Peking on 7 July 1937 which soon became an all-out war in the vicinity. The Fleet continued its mission of observing the conflict, standing ready to evacuate Americans from Chinese ports should the occasion arise. By mid-1938, when the war had moved inland and up the Yangtze, the Fleet resumed its former routine. Whipple and her division mates, in company with squadron tender Black Hawk (AD-9), visited Bangkok, Siam, in June 1938. As the Japanese war machine continued to devour China, the Nipponese captured most of the major coastal cities and ports and those along the lower Yangtze. Whipple operated on neutrality patrol off the Philippines into 1941. On 25 November 1941, two days in advance of the "war warning" which predicted that hostile Japanese action in the Pacific was imminent, Admiral Thomas C. Hart dispatched Whipple's Destroyer Division, along with the tender Black Hawk, to Balikpapan, Borneo, to disperse the surface ships of his fleet from their vulnerable position within the confines of Manila Bay. On 6 June 1945, Whipple was re-designated an auxiliary, AG-117. Whipple received two battle stars for her World War II service.



Destroyer USS Whipple DD-217



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