

Memoir

**Chief Warrant
Quartermaster (W-3)
Earnest E. Parton**

**Yangtze Patrol -
USS Yorktown (CV 5)
Plankowner**



**Naval Historical Foundation
Memoir Program
2002**

MY REMINISCENCES OF TIME ON THE YANGTZE RIVER

FROM 3/13/1934 to 7/24/1936

By: Ch. Bosn. Echo 1st Repeater Parton

I departed the U.S.A. in January, 1934, on a "slow boat to China" (USS Henderson). She made 10 knots, and it took us about eight days steady steaming to make a landfall on Honolulu. We tied up to the dock and liberty commenced. We all were eager to get ashore and do what sailors are bent on doing: cool drinks to wash the salt spray out of our throats, and pretty women to get our minds off the boring days at sea of watchstanding, deck swabbing, bilge cleaning, etc.

I had returned from the Orient to the States six months earlier and had done duty on the old battle wagon USS Nevada until my enlistment was up, when the lure of the Orient, the call of the Far East ("where there ain't no Ten Commandments and the best is like the worst, and a man can raise a thirst") got the upper hand and I shipped over for a second tour of duty on the Asiatic Station.

I didn't like battle ship Navy anyhow. They spent most of their time swinging around the anchors off Long Beach, California, going out now and then for battle practice off San Clemente Island. That was dull duty for a sailor who had spent a cruise in China: Chefoo, Singtow, Shanghai, Amoy and Hong Kong, to name a few exotic ports.

The Navy had two transports making the China run, the USS Chaumont and USS Henderson. Of the two, the Henderson was the

best to ride. She was slow, but the sailors had better deck space on the Henderson. And when we were in warm climates, we could sleep on deck topside, stay cool, and get plenty of fresh air. So when I reported aboard the Henderson, I knew some of the crew, having returned from China on her only six months before. The Master at Arms said to me, "I have a good job for you on the way out." "Great. What is it?" I asked. He said, "How would you like the job of lowering and raising the movie screen?" I said, "Is that all?" He said, "That's it." I hastily replied, "I'm your man." So as we left San Francisco in our wake on a cloudy cool day in January, I thought I had it made - a slow boat to China, and nothing to do but raise and lower the movie screen once a day. Well, Shipmates, that lasted exactly two days. That's how long it took the Quartermasters to find out I was aboard. When they did, they put me on the watch list with the Crew Quartermasters, since I was qualified and had stood watches on the ship when I returned from China in the middle of 1933. I didn't mind that too much. I was a Third Class QM at the time, and I enjoyed standing underway watches. It helped pass the boring time.

After about eight days at sea, we made a landfall off Diamond-head and tied up to the Dole Pineapple dock at Honolulu. The girls in grass skirts were dancing the hula and passing out leis to the Officers and their ladies. We sailors knew where to get our leis later down on Hotel Street.

After departing from Honolulu, we set a course for Guam and picked up the ship's routine. But it wasn't all bad. We had the

nightly movies and the Henderson had an orchestra that played the popular songs of the times in the evening before the movies. Their theme song was "Blue Room."

About a week out, we had a smoker. Along with the boxing and wrestling, we had a strong man aboard who could straighten out horse shoes and bend steel bars. The smoker was great amateur entertainment, and it went over as a huge success.

A few days later, we were cruising along. The sea was so calm, it was like a millpond. The USS Henderson was like a painted ship on a painted ocean. We were miles out of the shipping lanes and the probability of seeing another ship was practically nil. The sailors stand lookout watch in the crow's nest, which on the Henderson was high up the foremast near the crossarms. An albatross landed on the crossarm near the lookout. The lookout was hidden from the bird something like a duck blind, as he was in a small enclosure with just his face looking through a foot-wide slit. So with nothing better to do, he reaches out and grabs the albatross by his feet and drags him into the crow's nest with him. Now the albatross being an independent creature resented such treatment, so he proceeded to put up a fight, and the lookout lost. He called the Bridge asking them to send up a relief so he could go to the Sick Bay for treatment of his abrasions and lacerations. The Officer of the Deck sent a man up to relieve him. The albatross had settled down in one corner of the crow's nest and looked mean, and you can bet that the relief did not bother the bird. After

he got his ruffled feathers straightened out, the albatross flew out and went about his business.

After making a landfall on Guam, we "layed to" off the harbor entrance and disembarked our passengers into steamer launches (the Navy had a few, but they were being phased out, replaced by motor launches). Then we set a course for Manila, P.I.

After the Henderson crossed the hundred and eightieth meridian, we looked forward to our assignments. That's when the Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Fleet sends the Henderson a message telling what ships we were to be assigned to, by rates, not names. I had been asking the Yeoman in the draft office that if a QM3/C was assigned to the Yangtze Patrol to make it me. There was another QM3/C in the draft by the name of Brandon. It was his first duty on the Asiatic Station, so since I had already done a cruise in China on the Black Hawk and Des Ron Five, I wanted duty up the mighty Yangtze and felt that I was more deserving due to my previous duty. The Yeoman never would say yes, nor would he say no. He just sat there with a smile on his face like the inscrutable sphinx. To my amazement, when the list of assignments came out, Brandon and I were both assigned to the USS Palos, so I'll never know if there had been one instead of both of us being given a billet on the Palos if it would have been me. But who knows what the sphinx was smiling about?

We finally made Manila, tied up to the pier and unloaded the greater part of the draft. Since the Asiatic Fleet was winter quartered at Manila, the few that were going to the Yangtze Patrol

stayed aboard for transportation to Shanghai (the Pearl of the Orient). Shanghai is about ten miles up the Whangpoo River from the China Sea and at the time was, and as far as I know still is, the largest seaport in China. It had what was known as the International Settlement and French Concession. The French Concession had a block where the cabarets and dance halls were located, sometimes called Blood Alley due to frequent fights between sailors of different nations - and sometimes between sailors who are supposed to be shipmates. It depended on after getting boozed up whether they wanted to fight or make love. Myself, I was "a hero of the night. I would rather make love than fight." The cabarets were filled with girls of all kinds, Russian, Chinese, Eurasian, and all beautiful as movie stars. That's what made Shanghai such a popular liberty port. But alas, I didn't get a chance to go ashore. Brandon and I reported to the station ship, and they immediately got us transportation on the Standard Oil motor vessel Mei Lu for Hankow about six hundred miles up the muddy Yangtze, where the USS Palos was berthed at that time. The Yangtze is about three thousand miles in length and flows through the middle of China. Its source is the Himalayan Mountains, and it meanders down through the fertile valleys of China to empty into the China Sea near Shanghai. About sixteen hundred miles of it is navigable, and gun boats could go up about fourteen hundred miles of it to Chungking. Actually, it's a big sewer with all kinds of flotsam and jetsam dumped into it from dead animals, dead bodies of men, women and children.

When Brandon and I reported aboard the Palos, it was noontime and we sat down to eat the noonday chow. The crew was griping about the food when Brandon spoke up and said, "If you think this is lousy food, you should have been eating with us the last month or so. Then you'd know what lousy food tastes like. I think the food is great." I seconded the motion, so everyone stowed their babbling tongues and started eating. I found out the river gunboats were very good feeders.

The Senior Quartermaster and the only other Quartermaster aboard at the time was Williams QM1/C. He was also the mail order-ly. Williams was an easy-going fellow, a little overweight, claiming he'd never had a weight problem until he got his tonsils out. That made an impression on me. And years later, when I began having sore throats and the doctor told me to come back when my swollen tonsils went down so he could send me to the hospital to have them taken out, I was afraid I would get obese like Williams, so I stayed away from the Sick Bay until my next sore throat. I still have my tonsils.

Shortly after we reported aboard the USS Palos, we did what gunboats on the Yangtze patrol were supposed to do: we started patrolling. We headed up-river to Ichang. When we arrived, we moored to the Standard Oil Company docks. At that time in Ichang, there was nothing to attract the sailors - no dancehalls, and no pretty Russian girls. We did have a nice club with tennis courts and a baseball diamond on the bank of the river. The club would serve meals and beer. It had a library and facilities for playing

cards or writing letters. Outside in the evening were the "How-ba-how girls." They were local Chinese girls who would try to make themselves attractive by dressing in Western dresses and in greeting would say "How-ba-how." I am still not sure what it meant, but I think it was a salutation like "How are you?" After that, they might say "I'm proper lo-kie, do you wanta some duhai? Come lookie see, no likee muskee." And as Kipling said, "Some times I think that I mighten and some times I know that I might, but the things that you learn from the yellow and brown will help you a lot with the white."

After staying in Ichang for a few months, we were ordered down river to what would eventually be Shanghai, but we had many small river towns to linger in for a while to let the China warlords know we were there, to prevent the missionaries from being pushed around, and to make sure they didn't mess with the Standard Oil Company.

The Palos was one of the two oldest gunboats on the river at that time. The Palos and the Monocacy were sister ships and coal burners. We would light off our boilers and look like a smudge of black smoke on the river. With her low freeboard and slight silhouette, there wasn't much of her to see but the smudge of smoke.

After a few months of showing the flag in various river ports whose names I have forgotten (but somewhere between Hankow and Nanking), we arrived and anchored off Nanking. There wasn't much to cheer about in Nanking as far as being a good liberty port. I went ashore once to see Sun Yet Sin's tomb, which was an imposing sight built on a hill overlooking the city. To get to it, one had

to climb numerous steps. I remember counting them but don't recall the total. One had to be in good condition to climb it without resting on the way up. We didn't mind Nanking not being a good liberty port, as our next port of call was Shanghai (the Paris of the Orient). We needed to save up our pay for Shanghai where anything could be had if one had the price. As things turned out, the day before we were to get underway for Shanghai, I was on the Bridge when a British merchant vessel came down river and dipped colors. When I ran back to the stern to answer the dip, I turned my ankle, which developed into a bad sprain. I went to the Sick Bay, where the Chief Pharmacist Mate proceeded to put my ankle in a cast. We didn't have a doctor aboard, but the Chief knew his job. Of course, I protested when the Chief said that I couldn't go ashore in Shanghai with my foot in a cast. But it didn't do any good. He said he would take the cast off in about a week or ten days, and we would still be in Shanghai as we were due for an overhaul at the Chinese shipyard.

We did head down river for Shanghai the next day. When we pulled into our berth up the Wangpoo, we moored to a pier just down river from a Japanese shipping company pier where the Darien Maru, a Japanese ship, was tied up. The next morning, the Palos granted early liberty for all who didn't have the duty, and me. I was on the binnecke list and stretched out on my cot nursing my sprained ankle. The gangway watch came up to the Bridge and said that someone was semiphoring from the Japanese ship. I hobbled over to the Pilothouse door and sure enough there was a woman

waving her arms, trying to get our attention. I took my white hat off and waved it back to let her know someone was ready to receive her semaphore, and this is what she sent: She said that her name was Olga, and that she had been living with a submarine sailor in Singtao who taught her semaphore. The signalman was transferred back to the States, and she was on her way back to Harbin, where her family and friends lived. Somewhere in the conversation she said, "Wait, I get my flags." She left the fantail rail, where she was signaling from and came back with a pair of regulation semaphore flags. Well, that lady and I kept talking with our arms until the ship pulled down river. The last thing I sent was "Bon Voyage." It made my day, talking to a smart young lady even at long distance, especially since I was in need of female companionship.

A few days after the semaphore conversation, while we were tied up to the same pier, we got some new crew members. Among them was a seaman second class named Wilson, right out of boot camp. Wilson was young in years and young in the Navy, the Palos being his first permanent duty station after completing training. Before I begin to narrate the Wilson story, I must say a few things about the plumbing on the Palos. The Palos and Monocacy, two of the oldest U.S. gunboats on the river, didn't have flush toilets for the crew. However, I think the Officers had a flush toilet head; and as we all know, rank has its privileges and one of the privileges on the Palos was a flush toilet in the Officers' head. The crew's head was a little primitive, built as an overhang over our stern.

Everything went directly into the river, so flushing was unnecessary. We had a three holer (or maybe a four holer, I'm not sure). In one corner was a shower with wooden gratings, and hot and cold running water. There was no way to heat the head as there were too many openings to the river. In the wintertime when the temperature dropped down into the twenties, there was no way to keep your buns warm and take a shower. You were fine while the shower was running, but when you stepped out to dry off, you could get goose bumps on your goose bumps. Now getting back to Wilson. He had just reported aboard, and I happened to have the mid watch when he came aboard from his first liberty in Shanghai at about 0200. He was clean and sober as he came aboard the gangway and walked aft. I was the gangway watch, and the fireman on watch in the boiler room and myself were the only two people on the Palos awake at that time of night. In a few minutes Wilson came back to the gangway, his face turned an ashen grey. He said, "Come with me. I want to show you something." I followed him back to the head. He said, "Look." I looked through the toilet hole, but didn't see anything. Wilson said, "There was a dead man down there staring up at me." I said, "He's not there now. The current must have taken him on down river. Go on to bed." Then I told him that it wasn't unusual for corpses of men, women, and sometimes children to go floating down the rivers of China.

A few days later, we pulled into the Chinese shipyard for our overhaul, getting ready for a trip up the Yangtze River all the way to Chungking. I didn't know at that time she wouldn't come

back down river, that we were making the last cruise of the Palos. That was told in the book YANGTZE PATROL by Admiral Kemp Trolley. By the time we got repaired and ready for the upper river again, we were all broke, a little jaded, and ready to go. So as I remember it, we left Shanghai in the middle of summer and the weather was very hot. The fireman would go down to the fireroom in thirty-minute shifts, and a man stayed topside to keep a watch on him in case he passed out from the heat, so they could go down and drag him out. No one passed out, but one couldn't help but admire the fireman. He went down and did his shift and when his relief came down and he came up topside, he looked like he had just been pulled out of the river. There wasn't a dry thread on him. He was dripping perspiration from his clothes, including his shoes. These men were hard-drinking and hard-fighting. They could do anything they were called on to do.

We stopped at Hangkow on our way to Chungking. Captain Settle said to make a blue penant with the word "Excellsior" in white lettering to fly at the fore mast. That's when I found out that excellsior had a meaning other than stuffing in packages to keep down breakage. It meant "ever upward," or that is what Lt. L. W. Cease told me. He was the Exec. and Navigator on the Palos.

After leaving Hangkow, we ran up our penant ("ever upward") to the fore, and headed up river for Chungking with our Chinese pilots aboard. As far as Ichang, the trip was routine. I had made this trip before. After leaving Ichang to starboard the country began

to change. The river narrowed, the country became more mountainous, the current swifter. The Navigator was very concerned about the river's height. He left instructions to log in the Quartermaster's notebook the height in feet when we passed the water marks, which were painted on rocks on the bank of the river at different locations along the river, and that got me in trouble. Well, I kept missing the water marks and Lt. Cease was giving me a "chewing out" for missing them. The only excuse I had was that I didn't see them, which was the truth. It was some years later before I found out what my problem was. I went to get my driver's license in California and the officer said, "Read the line next to the bottom of the chart." I could barely read the second line from the top and I couldn't get my driver's license until I got glasses. I got my eyes examined and it turned out I was nearsighted (8/20 and 9/20). After I got some glasses, I found a world that I had been viewing through a fog.

We eventually made it upstream through the rapids and gorges with the help of our engines and Chinese coolies heaving on lines from the shore. We made Chungking which was a good place to visit but a terrible place to spend any time. The natives were not friendly to the foreign devils, as they referred to us, and there were no places one could call pleasure palaces. However, we had a club on the bank of the river where we could drink the bar dry of rum and rye, but no "How-ba-how" girls. Sometimes some of us would take hikes through the countryside just to get away from the confines of the gunboat. Seaman Price and some shipmates were wandering

through the countryside when they must have stumbled on a restricted area. A Chinese soldier drew a forty-five pistol on them. They tried to talk to him, but he didn't understand English. Price and company didn't understand Chinese, but through gestures and friendly smiles, Price got the soldier to let him see his gun. When Price got the gun, he proceeded to take it apart. Then he gave it back to the Chinese soldier. The soldier followed them around all afternoon begging him to put his gun back together. Price wouldn't, so you can wonder what kind of an explanation that soldier had to make when he got relieved, with his gun in many pieces.

After being in Chungking a few months, we received orders to transfer certain rates down river to the USS Luzon, for assignments. Among those rates to be transferred was one Quartermaster Third Class. Since I had missed too many water marks coming up river and was on Lt. Cease's un-mention list, who got transferred? Me. The choice lay between Brandon and myself, so Brandon got stuck in Chungking while I got sent down river and got choice duty on the flagship Luzon. I reported aboard the Luzon on Friday afternoon, 12/10/1934, and was assigned a bunk and locker. The next morning being Saturday, it was personnel inspection. I went to my Division Officer and pointed out to him that since I had just reported aboard that I wasn't ready for personnel inspection. I had been living out of my seabag, and my blues were in sad shape, needing pressing. My Division Officer excused me from personnel inspection.

Since this was Saturday, liberty started at 1300 hours, so I got out my blues, dusted them off, and decided that they were good

enough for a liberty. Inspection was for perfection; liberty was for the pursuit of happiness. So, I donned my dress blues and proceeded ashore. I don't remember about the liberty, except for the fact that Monday morning the Bos'n Mate came up to me and said, "The Captain wants to see you." Since I had just reported aboard, I wondered just why the Captain wanted to see me. I didn't have long to worry about it. I went on deck with the Bos'n Mate and the Captain was standing there with my records in his hand. He asked me if I had been on Sanka Oui Street at about 1400 hours Saturday afternoon, to which I answered in the affirmative, as I had gone ashore about 1330 and if he was there I must have been there also, although I didn't know one street from another. The next question was, "Why didn't you salute me?" Since I didn't make personnel inspection Saturday morning, this was the first time I had seen the Captain. I asked the Captain, "Were you in uniform or civilian clothes?" The Captain said, "Civilian clothes." So I said, "Sir, I didn't recognize you. I just reported aboard." He said, "I know. I have your records here, and your record is not too good. But you are on my ship now. It's how you conduct yourself on the Luzon that counts with me." That was my welcome aboard. I knew how I stood on the Luzon. It was up to me to keep my nose clean, walk that straight and narrow to reach my goal, which was to stay on the flagship Luzon, since the Luzon spent more time in Hangkow than any other gunboat, and Hangkow was the best port on the river.

Actually, my duty on the Luzon was pleasant. My boss was Chief Quartermaster (Baldy) Alldred, and Baldy was a good man to

work for. He had been on the river for years and had no interest in going back to the States. We Quartermasters would like for Baldy to come on the Bridge especially on field day. We would be polishing bright work, and one of us would ask Baldy how it was on the river years before. He would start telling stories about the river and its ports. The stories were interesting, but while Baldy was talking, he would grab a rag and some bright work polish and work as hard as the rest of us. We would have the pleasure of hearing a good story and getting some help in our work at the same time. Baldy was a good athlete; he coached the basketball team and played on the baseball team.

Baldy being the Senior Quartermaster, his special sea detail was helmsman when making a mooring such as tying up to the pontoon Standard Oil docks. Any time it required an expert helmsman, Baldy took the helm. Being on the river as long as he had, he knew the river currents like the back of his hand. Captains would come, and Captains would go, but Baldy was on the wheel when needed. I have been on watch on the Bridge when the Captain would be conning the Luzon in to pontoon at Hangkow, and Baldy would be at the wheel. The Captain would say, "Right twenty degrees rudder." Baldy would answer, "Rudder twenty degrees right." I would glance down at the rudder angle indicator and he might have fifteen degrees left rudder on. Since the Captain had his attention on other things, he assumed he got the rudder angle he called for. And since he always made a perfect mooring, no difficulties arose. The Captain looked good, and Baldy used his expertise to bring the Luzon in to a perfect mooring again.

Some months after reporting aboard the Luzon, a chance came up to go back up river. A Standard Oil boat was going up to Chungking and needed an armed guard. I put in to be a member of that guard and was chosen, along with four seamen and a Lieutenant (I don't remember his name) who was in charge. We had a nice uneventful trip up to Chungking. I visited aboard the Palos and got to talk to my shipmates. They were having a party that night at the club. I was invited to attend but regretfully had to turn it down, since the Palos was across the river from the Standard Oil Company boat, and when the party was over I might have trouble getting a boat across the river.

The next day, we started down river, got through the gorges and rapids and found a place to anchor for the night. During the evening, at about 2000 hours, the Chinese Bos'n turned on a searchlight. There was an open boat approaching us loaded down with Chinese soldiers. There must have been about thirty of them, all armed with what looked like Springfield WW1 vintage rifles. I stationed the armed guard by the rail of the upper deck with our B.A.R. and tommy machine guns trained down on the open boat. Then I went forward to the Officers' Wardroom or lounge (whatever it's called on a civilian craft) to notify the Lieutenant in charge what was going on. By the time we got back on the stern, the Chinese boat had come alongside and a Chinese officer and one soldier had scrambled aboard. The Chinese officer looked real young. He must have been a "shave tail" lieutenant. Anyway, the armed guard

officer told the Chinese officer that the boat he was on was a United States vessel and that he could not search it and that he couldn't get any "cumshaw", as the United States had quit paying tribute many years before. Of course the Chinese officer couldn't understand the spoken language unless it was spoken in the heathen Chinese. The armed guard officer didn't understand the spoken language unless it was in English, so we had to call for the Chinese Bos'n who was fluent in Chinese and somewhat less fluent in English. But, he was fluent enough to inform the Chinese officer to get back into his boat and head back to where he came from, that this was a United States ship and in the words of James Lawrence ("Don't give up the ship") we didn't intend to give this one up. So with a little gentle persuasion and a gentle but firm push to the ship's side, the young Chinese officer got back in his boat and departed. We and the armed guard went back to our card playing. We arrived back at Hangkow without any further incident.

Some time later, the date is not important, the Luzon got underway and set a course for Tung Ting Lake, to get in a little battle practice. We anchored a target in the lake, and opened fire on it with our secondary battery B.A.R.'s. After battle practice, we anchored overnight and as I remember it, it was a bright moonlight night. The moon was near its full phase and we got caught in a rice fly invasion. We called them rice flies for lack of a better name. The moonlight reflected off the white paint of the Luzon, which attracted the flies, and they landed on us by the

thousands, or maybe ten thousands. There wasn't a place on the exposed hull where there wasn't a fly. They landed, but wouldn't take off. So the next morning all hands got foxtails and dustpans and started sweeping flies off the bulkheads, putting them in trash baskets, and throwing them over the side. After about two hours, we got the Luzon cleared of rice flies, got underway, and headed back down river to the great port of Hangkow and tied up to our regular berth alongside the pontoon on the bund. We called the fly episode the Great Rice Fly Epidemic.

Time was running out for me in China. It was the summer of 1936 and my thirty months were coming to a close. It was time to extend my tour or get replaced. I wanted to stay on the China station, especially on the Luzon, but my mother was in poor health. I felt that if I wanted to see her again, I had better go back to a greener, cleaner land, the U.S.A. I went back down river like I came up on the Mei Lu and was fortunate enough to get the USS Henderson. After getting back to the States, I put in for new construction and was ordered to the pre-commissioning crew of the USS Yorktown, and therein lies another story.

**The Memoirs
of a
Yorktown
“Plank Owner”**

**By Earnest E. Parton,
U.S.N. (Ret.)**

To: MY DAUGHTER
PAMELA, AND TIM,
AND HELP IN PREPARING
BOOK IS NUMERABLE.
Earnest E. Parton

THE MEMOIRS
OF A
YORKTOWN
"PLANK OWNER"

by
Earnest E. Parton, U.S.N. (Ret.)



*Earnest E. Parton
April 5, 1956*

Y is for Yorktown the Queen of the Fleet
O is for Overall She's more than Eight Hundred Feet
R is for Republic She was built to Defend
K is for Krew She's full of Stout Men
T is for Terrific, Oh Boy She's a WOW
O is for Oceans Through Which She Will Plow
W is for Wholesome She's Clean and She's Neat
N is for New Year May She Soon Join The Fleet

Preface

This book is in dedication to all who believe in peace and freedom enough to fight and, perhaps, die for it. It is especially dedicated to all my shipmates who served with me on the *Yorktown CV-5*.

whenever we had our pay record squared away. Gordy and I took advantage of this opportunity and Spud fixed us up with uniforms. Then he walked that extra mile and knowing we didn't have any money he invited us to his house for dinner and drinks. He did this not once, but a number of times. While at his house he also let a number of the fellas call the States and get in touch with their families on his telephone and at his expense. Spud went all out to be helpful.

After staying at Camp Andrews about 10 days a draft of about twenty men consisting of Signalmen, Radiomen and myself were transferred to Pearl to await the arrival of the *USS Hornet*. We were then transferred to Admiral Noise's staff. It was a big disappointment to all of us as we had hoped to get back to the States for a little while and see our families.

This concludes my memories of that part of World War II when I was a part of the grand 'ol war time machine known as the *USS Yorktown*. She was a great ship in a battle that changed the whole course of the Pacific war. Because of the victorious results of the battle of Midway the Japanese had to cancel their ambitious plans for conquest. Midway was the point at which the Japanese went from the offensive to take on a defensive role.

I am proud to have been a part of the excellent team on board the *USS Yorktown*.

About The Author

On August 1, 1928, a seventeen year old, 118 pound, Georgia-Boy enlisted in the Navy. In order to enlist he'd had to procure his parents signatures. His mother was very reluctant to give her permission: as she knew the service would take her youngest son (he was an identical twin born 5 minutes after his brother) far away from the little town of Valdosta, Georgia. Her premonition proved correct. For indeed it was over 5 years before he got home on a visit; and Georgia was never again to be his home.

E. E. Parton's rating on enlistment in 1928 was, A. S. His rating upon retirement in 1957 was CWO w/3. During that 30 year span he touched the lives of many. Ed Parton is now living in Callahan, Florida, with his wife (the former Hazel Nichols of Jacksonville, Florida). Among his immediate family is his daughter, Pamela K. Keyser (Maryland), and his three stepsons: Richard Wayne Jarvis (Miami, Florida), Nicholas Partin (Jacksonville, Florida), and Thomas E. Carley (San Francisco, California). In addition to these he is also blessed with ^{NINE} seven grandchildren: Kyle & Kristi (Keyser), David, Robert & Janice (Jarvis), and Fawn & Lorielle (Carley).

Mr. and Mrs. Parton are faithful attenders of the First Baptist Church of Callahan, Florida. They also enjoy Christian fellowship at many different churches when they are on the road. Ed Parton, and his wife, are avid travelers with a motor home. He also enjoys membership in the Yangtze River Patrol, Coral Sea Association and the Yorktown Association.

During Mr. Parton's approximately thirty years in the service he received the following:

- Asia Pacific Area W/3 stars
- American Theatre with 1 star
- Korean Service Medal
- WW II Victory Medal
- National Defense
- Battle Citation - Coral Sea (personal)

Omitted in error - Debby Jarvis & Kelly Parsons
Callahan, Fla.



Earnest Parton (left) pictured with twin.

The following are listings of E. E. Parton's sea and shore duty:

August 1928 - November 1928	Boot Training NAS Hampton Roads, Virginia
December 1928 - June 1930	Vestal (Sea Duty - Yangtze)
August 1930 - May 1933	Black Hawk (Sea Duty - Yangtze)
June 1933 - June 1933	Rec. station, San Francisco, Calif.
July 1933 - December 1933	Nevada (Sea Duty - Yangtze)
Jan. 1934 - 3 days	Rec. station, San Francisco, Calif.
January 1934	Boarded Henderson for Asiatic Stat.
March 1934 - December 1934	Palos (Sea Duty - Yangtze)
December 1934 - August 1936	Luzon then to Rec. Stat., San Francisco, Calif.
Oct. 8, 1936 - Oct. 23, 1936	Rec. Stat., Norfolk, Virginia on Comdetail of Yorktown
April 1937	Arkansas NAS Rec.
September 30, 1937	Yorktown Comm. aboard
June 6, 1942	Ship sunk, ret. to Rec. Stat. Calif.
October 1942 - May 1943	Advent
June 1943 - September 1943	Rec. Ship., San Fran., Calif.
September 1943 - October 1943	Champion
October 1943 -	Rec. Ship., California
December 1943 - February 1944	Oak Hill commission
February 1944 - June 1946	Bagaduse (War over)
September 1946	Green Cove Springs, Fl. Att. Res. Fleet
September 1948 - September 1949	U. S. S. Mahopoc
September 1949 - January 1950	U. S. S. Rendova CVE
January 1950 - April 1953	Nashevena
April 1953 - April 1955	Mine Craft Base, Charleston, S. C.
May 1955 - September 1956	Oversea shore duty, Phillippines
September 1956 - September 1957	San Francisco, Calif.
September 1, 1957	Retired from Naval Service

By: P. K. Keyser

EARNEST EDISON PARTON,
CHIEF QUARTERMASTER, U. S. NAVY

CITATION

"For outstanding performance of duty in the line of his profession as assistant to the Commanding Officer of the U. S. S. Yorktown in action against Japanese forces in the Coral Sea on May 8th, 1942. During the attack on the Yorktown by enemy carrier aircraft, he was stationed at the alidade on the port wing of the bridge for the purpose of reporting to the Captain true bearings of attacking aircraft and approaching torpedoes. He performed his duties under fire in a calm and capable manner, rendering invaluable assistance to the Captain in avoiding aerial bombs and torpedoes."

E. BUCKMASTER
Captain, U. S. Navy.

CLASSIFIED CITATION

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