

U. S. S. Noa DD-343. A year on the Atlantic Ocean on convoy duty chasing submarines, and then the ship was converted to an A.P.D.

On July 1, 1943 we left Keywest, Florida for the last time and sailed to the Norfolk Navy yard where our ship was to be converted. Everyone of the crew received a leave.

The main features of the conversion was the removal of two boilers and the addition troop facilities, boats, four higgins, and radar gear. Also, while there we received boat crews for the higgins barges.

At the end of six weeks our ship was reborned and followed successful tenday shake down crews in the Cheasapeake Bay involving a trip to Annapolis, Maryland.

October 18, 1943 we left Norfolk on a route to Pearl Harbor. Convoying a large troop transport the U.S.S. Sumter, to San Diego remaining two days and three nights in Pearl Harbor.

We were routed quickly onward. We had a few hours in Pago Pago, Tutuila, and American Samoa Islands. One night in Espirito, Santo, New Hebrides and one night in Milne Bay, New Guinea. Two days after we were patrolling in company with the Bagley A.P.D. of Fricshafen, from Norfolk, Virginia to our furthest line of advance in the Pacific direct in fifty days and no more a poly wog.

The day after Christmas 1943, we took part in the landing of Cape Gloucester, New Britian Marine Troops. Our first landing started out with a little difficulty. We were required to tow a Y.M.S. most of the way and also, about three hours prior to H Hour. The Noa's Charlie Noble caught fire, giving fourth a monstrous glow against the black night for several minitues, but the landing came off well. One of our boats was hung up for several hours and we had to leave it there. The boat and boat crew arrived several days later on a returning L.S.T.

We made a second Marine landing the next day, December 27, 1943. The day after New Years we landed Army Troops on Saidar, New Guinea. On return we were told to make preparations for a trip to Sidney, Australia for rest and recreation but the plans were changed and we sailed to Noumia, New Caledonia.

While at Noumia we were blown ashore by a tropical hurricane. Because of this grounding a P.C. boat was blown broadside across our ship bow and we nearly cut it into. Due to this unfortunate circumstance our rest in Noumia was somewhat curtained.

The first of the first of February 1944, we reported at Guadalcanal and Purvis Bay, Fla Islands near Fulagi. We picked up some New Zealanders at Vella La Villa having escorted some of the L.S.T. to Munda, New Georgia in route. Then we took part in the landing of Green Islands. We were under way for this trip

on St. Valentine's Day.

We were struck upon by Jap Snipers on the way up, our first close contact with Jap Planes. At the landing we underwent our first air attack. Although the A.P.D. weren't destroyed we did not get to do any shooting. We returned to Hathorne Sound between Colonbangaia Islands and Rice Islands and we returned to Green Islands with more New Zealanders troops, and made a second landing. After that we made a short escort trip to Pusselo Islands.

On St. Patrick's Day we were on our way to invade Emirau Island and Marines. Again a few miles north of Kaviang. This was the first landing we were covered by carrier planes. At the same time, being bombarded by battle ships, which turned out very successful. We were then ordered to proceed in Malua Bay, and preparing to take part in the invasion of Aitape. Aitape, operating with the largest forces we had ever been with, around the Admiralty Islands to the landing of Aitape, Hollandia and Tanah Merah Bay.

Our group went to Aitape and the Noa was assigned on and off lying island named Ali, as a bombardment target. This was our first experience of this sort, and we plastered it to the best of our ability. The following day we returned to the same area and made a landing on Selca. We bombarded Selca. also in connection with this had some more unusual experiences. We had commenced our bombardment of Selca when we were told that we were in the line of a fire a destroyer, bombarding a near by target, and ordered to move on. This involved our passage between the off lying reefs of selca and Ali Island. At one time we had breakers curling over the reef edges a hundred yards on each side of us. A crewser managed to drop a bombardment shell a few hundred yards from our port quarters, and a dive bomber a few hundred yards on our port bow. Thus ceasing firing and the assault waves went in shortly thereafter. We were fairly close to and off to one side of our boats and they hit the beach. Thus enabling us to get for the first time a really good view of assault troops hitting the beach. Subsequently, we picked up troops at Sador and were able to witness the development of an area that we had helped occupy.

We were ordered back to Pearl Harbor, stopping by Tuna, Fute, Ellice Island in route we almost ran aground on a floating barge. A few days at Pear Harbor May 23, to May 28, 1944 we picked up Marines at Hapuna on the Island of Hawaii and proceeded to a landing at Saipan, MaryAnnas Islands. It was decided not to land our troops as originally scheduled, and they were taken to an already secured Island- Beach on D plus one day.

On screening the U.S.S. Louisville at Magiciencoe Bay, Siapan we unconsciously had been close to danger from three directions. First, shortly, after we had left Louville she underwent a bombing attack. Second, she also discovered a floating mine. Third, several days later we learned that the Japs still had shore defense guns,--In the caves along the coast near which

we had curiously passed.

The first week or so after the landing of Siapan ther were eyening air-raids though none of the Nips planes came close to the Noa. On the night of July 5, & 6, the Noa while carrying out a harrassing mission on the Tiniana town and Harbor under went her first test of fire. While steaming at slow speed, less than two miles off the coast, we suddently had shells whistling over head and splashes with ----- in the water all about us. The usual confusion insude but we quickly speeded an open range and for the remainder of the night though Japs fired from the shore continuessly it never again came close. It is believed there were from two to four shore guns firing from three to five inch shells at us, there was also considerable smaller caliber fire but we were well out of range of that. We set fire to two canfields with our store shells, and believed some of our high capacity definitely harassed them. However, we were tired also. No casualties suffered on the Noa, other than brused knees, elbows and noses, when certain of our reactors hit the deck at the first Jap Salvo.

On July 15, we hit Guam. On Sep. 12 we hit Peliteu, Anglieu, Pella, Group, a new assignment the time 3 days before D day. With a domilstion oufit to blow up riefs, but due to an unfortunate accident the Noa was hit beyond repains. The crew had all disembarked, safely and a little later she sank

L. A. B.