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Notes: Fifty-seven different names of state origin have been applied to Navy ships: three ships for the state, thirty-one for counties, seven for rivers, ten for cities and towns and twelve for native-born Nebraskans. See also article on Harold W Bauer, p 74 of this issue.

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Photos: "Keeper of the Faith" oil on canvas by John P Falter; John Austin Collett; Don O Woods; the destroyer escort Woods; chart of Ships and Craft with Nebraska Names; Byron McCandless; Bruce McCandless; John J Parle; Mr and Mrs Harry Parle June 1948

# Nebraska-Related Names of United States Navy Ships

By Frederick T. Daly

Nebraska, a semiarid landlocked state, her people, her rivers, and her towns, cities, and counties have provided a continuing presence in the United States Navy for the past 123 years. On September 12, 1872, the screw sloop USS *Omaha* was commissioned in the United States Navy at the Philadelphia Navy Yard.<sup>1</sup> She was the first navy ship to bear a name of Nebraska origin. Since then sixty-two other ships and craft have been named for Nebraska places or for native Nebraskans whose exceptional service to their country was recognized by naming a ship in their honor.

These ships with links to Nebraska use fifty-seven different names of state origin. Three ships have been named for the state, including one *Cornhusker State*; thirty-one have been named for counties; seven for rivers; ten for cities and towns; and twelve for native-born Nebraskans. Of this number five were commissioned prior to World War II, forty-six during that war, and twelve since the war. There are currently four still in service in the U.S. Navy, one in the ready reserve, one in the military sealift command, and eight serving in foreign navies under new names.

The general rules by which the navy names ships have changed over the years.<sup>2</sup> Changes are dictated by the evolving composition of the fleet, as new types of ships are introduced, and

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*Keeper of the Faith*, by Nebraska-born artist John P. Falter. Oil on canvas for *Esquire*, March 1944. Boatswain's Mate First Class Reinhard Keppler, though not a Nebraskan, helped save USS *San Francisco* during the November 12-13 Battle of Guadalcanal. He received the Medal of Honor posthumously. NSHS-10645

older classes become obsolete. A class of ships is of the same design, and the class is normally identified by the first ship built in the class. The fleet ballistic missile submarine USS *Nebraska* (SSBN-739), commissioned in 1993, is one of the *Ohio* Class. Destroyers, destroyer escorts, and frigates are named for U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard personnel, most of whom were killed in action, and for former secretaries of the navy.

Nebraska-named ships can be divided into four main types. Sixteen are surface combatants, including the screw sloop *Omaha*, the battleship (BB) *Nebraska*, the light cruiser (CL) *Omaha*,

two destroyers (DD), eight destroyer escorts (DE) or frigates (FF), one patrol frigate (PF), and two patrol craft (PC). Thirty-two are amphibious ships, including one attack cargo ship (AKA), attack transports (APA), tank landing ships (LST), medium landing ships-rocket (LSMR), and one fast transport (APD). The thirteen auxiliary ships and craft include one cargo ship (AK), one transport (AP), a light cargo ship (AKL) later converted to an environmental research ship (AGER), fleet oilers (AO), gasoline tankers (AOG), a combat stores ship (AF), a range tracking ship (AGTR), an auxiliary crane ship (A-ACS), and two harbor tugs (YTM/YTB). The two subma-

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rines are the nuclear attack submarine *Omaha* (SSN) and the nuclear fleet ballistic missile submarine *Nebraska* (SSBN), known familiarly as a "boomer."

Eleven ships are named for native Nebraskans who have been honored for their bravery under fire or for outstanding service to the navy. One harbor tug is named for Chief Red Cloud. All but two of these Nebraskans gave their lives for their country.

The careers of the ships named for native Nebraskans are as varied as others in the fleet, ranging from routine peacetime steaming and drill to the violence of war at sea.

The first ship named for a Nebraska native was USS *Bruce* (DD-329), named for Lt. Frank Bruce, USN, born in Grand Island on August 20, 1870. Bruce entered the navy as a boatswain in February 1911 and was commissioned a lieutenant in July 1918. He was commanding officer of USS *Bobolink* (AMS-20) during the North Sea mine barrage sweep after World War I. Lieutenant Bruce was killed on May 17, 1919, when a mine exploded close aboard. The North Sea mine barrage was the most extensive mining operation in history and was designed to close the German U-boat route to the Atlantic between the British Isles and Norway. The field included 70,000 mines in an area 230 miles long and 15 to 25 miles wide. After the Armistice, a fleet of eighty-nine minesweepers accomplished the dangerous and difficult task of lifting the barrage by September 1919.<sup>3</sup>

USS *Bruce* was built by Bethlehem Steel Corporation, San Francisco, California. This ship was much smaller than the destroyers of World War II, displacing 1,215 tons and armed with four 4-inch and one 3-inch gun and twelve torpedo tubes. She was commissioned on September 29, 1920, Lt. Comdr. G. N. Reeves, Jr., in command. When the ship was launched on May 20, 1920, her sponsor was Mrs. Annie Bruce, Lieutenant Bruce's widow. Her career was short and fairly uneventful during the 1920s.

She served the first year in the Pacific Fleet out of San Diego, California, and in November 1921 was transferred to the Scouting Fleet home port in Boston. In 1925 and 1926 *Bruce* operated with U.S. Naval Forces Europe in cooperation with the Department of State as a stabilizing influence in troubled regions and for the security of American citizens living in these areas. She served in Atlantic



**John Austin Collett.** Special Collections and Archives Division, Nimitz Library, U.S. Naval Academy

and European waters and was decommissioned in Philadelphia on May 1, 1930. On November 6, 1931, *Bruce* was stricken from the navy list, scrapped, and her salvage metal sold in August 1932 in accordance with the 1930 London Conference agreements on the limitation and reduction of naval armament.<sup>4</sup>

USS *Collett* (DD-730), an *Allen M. Sumner* class destroyer, was launched on March 5, 1944, and commissioned on May 16, 1944.<sup>5</sup> She was named for Lt.

Comdr. John Austin Collett of Omaha, a 1929 United States Naval Academy graduate. Lieutenant Commander Collett was a naval aviator killed in action on October 26, 1942, during the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands in the Pacific, while commanding officer of Torpedo Squadron 10 in USS *Enterprise* (CV-6). The ship's first commanding officer was John Collett's younger brother, Comdr. James D. Collett, also of Omaha and a 1932 graduate of the naval academy.<sup>6</sup>

During World War II, *Collett* screened carrier task forces in the Pacific, participating in attacks on Formosa, the Chinese coast, Japan, and the invasion of Okinawa. With four other destroyers and an aircraft carrier, she helped sink the Japanese submarine I-56 in April 1945. During the Korean War *Collett* participated in the Inchon Invasion in September 1950 as a gunfire support ship and was awarded the Navy Unit Citation. She served three tours in Korean waters during the war. *Collett* participated actively in the Vietnam War from her home port in Yokosuka, Japan. She performed a variety of combat missions in the Gulf of Tonkin, including search and rescue for downed pilots, naval gunfire support against enemy gun emplacements and other targets ashore, and the sinking of thirty-two North Vietnamese waterborne logistics craft. She was finally decommissioned on December 18, 1970, after twenty-six years of active service.

In June 1974 she was sold to Argentina for spares, but was commissioned in the Argentine navy in 1977 as *Piedra Buena* (D-79). She was with the Argentine light cruiser *General Belgrano* when that ship was sunk by the British Royal Navy submarine HMS *Conqueror* on May 2, 1982, during the Falkland Islands War.<sup>7</sup>

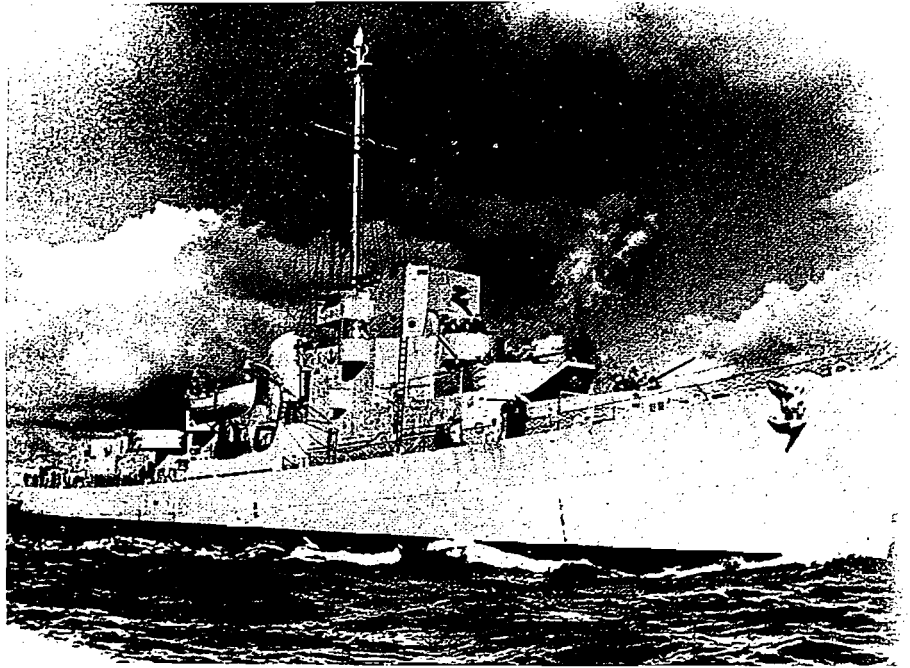
The ship named for Hospital Apprentice First Class Don Otis Woods of Wymore is still in service, in the navy of the Republic of Mexico, fifty years after she was commissioned in 1945. Don Otis Woods was born in Kearney in May



Don O. Woods. *Nebraska History* (April-June 1944), 82

1922 and grew up in Wymore. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in June 1940 and was eventually assigned to the First Marine Division. During the assault of Gavutu, Solomon Islands, in August 1942, he died of wounds received while giving first aid to several wounded Marines only twenty-five yards from Japanese snipers. He was awarded the Silver Star Medal posthumously for conspicuous gallantry and intrepid conduct under fire.<sup>8</sup>

USS *Don O. Woods* (APD-118) was laid down at Dravo Corporation, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in December 1943, as a destroyer escort and launched the following February. The ship was reclassified as a high speed transport (APD) in July 1944 and towed to Consolidated Shipbuilding, Orange, Texas, for conversion. The conversion entailed enlarging the deckhouse to provide accommodations for about 160 troops and adding landing craft vehicle/personnel (LCVP) to land the troops. Her guns were retained. The ship was commissioned on May 28, 1945, and served in the Pacific Fleet until decommissioned in June



The destroyer escort *Woods*. *Nebraska History* (April-June 1944), 106

1946 and put in "mothballs." She was purchased by the Republic of Mexico in December 1963 and commissioned *Usumacinta* (B-06). She remains on active service in the Mexican navy.<sup>9</sup>

The destroyer escort USS *Hurst* (DE-250), named for Lt. Edwin William Hurst, USN, is also still in service in the Mexican navy. Lieutenant Hurst was born in Falls City in October 1910 and appointed midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy from South Dakota in 1928. He was graduated in June 1932 and after serving in surface combatant ships was qualified as a naval aviator. In May 1941 he reported for duty with Torpedo Squadron 2, on board the carrier USS *Lexington*. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroic conduct in aerial combat after successful torpedo attacks against enemy shipping off New Guinea. He was awarded the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism and courageous conduct as executive officer of Torpedo Squadron 2 in the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942. In this action, Lieutenant Hurst was directly involved in the sinking of the

Japanese carrier *Shoho* and damaging the carrier *Shokaku*. After USS *Lexington* was sunk during the Battle of the Coral Sea, Lieutenant Hurst was based at New Zealand, and was killed in June 1942 when his plane crashed near a Royal New Zealand Air Force Base.<sup>10</sup>

USS *Hurst* was built at Brown Shipbuilding Company, Houston, Texas, and commissioned in August 1943. The ship and her crew served for two years in the Atlantic Ocean as convoy escort, completing thirteen escort voyages. USS *Hurst* joined the Pacific Fleet in 1945, cruising the Pacific island groups looking for Japanese survivors after the war was over. She was decommissioned on May 1, 1946, and joined the Reserve Fleet. The ship was purchased by Mexico in October 1973 and commissioned into the navy of the Republic of Mexico as *Commodore Manuel Azueta* (A-06). She was assigned as a training ship with the Gulf Fleet Command and remains in service today.<sup>11</sup>

Thomas L. Kirkpatrick was born in Cozad in July 1887 and was appointed acting chaplain in the U.S. Navy in Feb-

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### U.S. Navy Ships and Craft with Nebraska Names

Ship	Named For
<b>State of Nebraska</b>	
<i>Cornhusker State</i> (T-ACS-6)	State Nickname
USS <i>Nebraska</i> (BB-14)	State
USS <i>Nebraska</i> (SSBN-739)	State
<b>Native Nebraskans</b>	
USS <i>Bruce</i> (DD-329)	Lt. Frank Bruce, USN, Grand Island
USS <i>Collett</i> (DD-730)	Lt. Comdr. John Austin Collett, USN, Omaha
USS <i>Don O. Woods</i> (APD-118)	Don Otis Woods, HA1, USN, Kearney
USS <i>Hurst</i> (DE-250)	Lt. Edwin William Hurst, USN, Falls City
USS <i>Kirkpatrick</i> (DER-318)	Capt. Thomas L. Kirkpatrick, Chaplain Corps, USN, Cozad
USS <i>Kyne</i> (DE-744)	Ens. Elden Francis Kyne, USN, Ringgold
USS <i>Marts</i> (DE-174)	Alvin Lee Marts, F2c, USN, Wilsonville
USS <i>McCandless</i> (FF-1084)	Cmdre. Byron McCandless, USN, Endicott
USS <i>Parle</i> (DE-708)	Ens. John Joseph Parle, USNR, Omaha
<i>Red Cloud</i> (YTM-268)	Chief Red Cloud, Nebraska Territory
USS <i>Reynolds</i> (DE-42)	Ens. Dudley Louis Reynolds, USN, Blair
USS <i>Walter S. Brown</i> (DE-258)	Walter Scott Brown, AMM2, USN, North Loup
<b>Cities and Towns</b>	
USS <i>Chadron</i> (PC-564)	Chadron, Nebraska
USS <i>Concord</i> (AFS-5)	Concord, Nebraska, and fourteen other towns
USS <i>Grand Island</i> (PF-14)	Grand Island, Nebraska
USS <i>Minden</i> (PC-1176)	Minden, Nebraska
USS <i>Omaha</i> (Screw Sloop)	Omaha, Nebraska
USS <i>Omaha</i> (CL-4)	Omaha, Nebraska
USS <i>Omaha</i> (SSN-692)	Omaha, Nebraska
<i>Oshkosh</i> (YTB-757)	Oshkosh, Nebraska, and Wisconsin
USS <i>Oxford</i> (APA-189)	Oxford, Nebraska, and towns and counties in twenty-two other states
USS <i>Oxford</i> (AGTR-1)	Oxford, Nebraska, and towns and counties in twenty-two other states
<b>Counties</b>	
USS <i>Banner</i> (APA-60)	Banner County, Nebraska
USS <i>Banner</i> (AKL-25)/(AGER-1)	Banner County, Nebraska
USS <i>Clay</i> (APA-39)	Clay County, Nebraska, and counties in seventeen other states
USS <i>Custer</i> (APA-40)	Custer County, Nebraska, and counties in five other states
USS <i>Dawson</i> (APA-79)	Dawson County, Nebraska, and counties in five other states
USS <i>Deuel</i> (APA-160)	Deuel County, Nebraska, and South Dakota
USS <i>Fillmore</i> (APA-83)	Fillmore County, Nebraska, and Minnesota
USS <i>Gage</i> (APA-168)	Gage County, Nebraska
USS <i>Gosper</i> (AOA-170)	Gosper County, Nebraska
USS <i>Knox</i> (APA-46)	Knox County, Nebraska, and counties in eight other states

ruary 1918. He served afloat and ashore for more than twenty years, and reported to USS *Arizona* in September 1940. He was promoted to the rank of captain in the Chaplain Corps July 1, 1941, and died on December 7 in *Arizona* during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The ship named for him, USS *Kirkpatrick* (DER-318), a radar picket destroyer escort, was built at Consolidated Shipbuilding, Orange, Texas, and commissioned in October 1943. She served on escort duty in the Atlantic from January 1944 to May 1945, and in the Pacific Fleet through December 1945. She was decommissioned in February 1946 and put in the Reserve Fleet. *Kirkpatrick* was commissioned for the second time in February 1952 during the Korean War, and served as a radar picket ship in the North Atlantic as part of the Continental Air Defense Command until decommissioned again in June 1960.<sup>12</sup>

The heroism of Ens. Elden Francis Kyne, USN, of Tryon, was honored in April 1944 with the christening of USS *Kyne* (DE-744), a destroyer escort. Ensign Kyne was born in Ringgold, Nebraska, in June 1910 and enlisted in the navy in February 1929. He was appointed warrant officer machinist in April 1942 and reported to USS *Astoria*, a heavy cruiser, the following August. He was commissioned ensign in June 1942. During the Battle of Savo Island on August 9, 1942, off Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, *Astoria* was sunk by Japanese gunfire and Ensign Kyne was killed.<sup>13</sup>

His namesake was built at Western Pipe and Steel Company, San Pedro, California, and christened on August 15, 1943. His widow, Mrs. Alma Kyne, was the sponsor, and Mrs. Nora Keeler of Tryon, Ensign Kyne's sister, was the matron of honor. *Kyne* was commissioned on April 4, 1944, and saw intense action in the Pacific in World War II. She earned six battle stars, including the amphibious invasions of the Palau Islands in September 1944, the invasion of Iwo Jima in February and March 1945, the

Okinawa invasion in April 1945 on screen and patrol duties, and the invasion of Borneo the following June.<sup>14</sup>

*Kyne* was decommissioned in June 1946, and served as a reserve training ship from her home port in Fort Schuyler, New York, from 1947 to 1950. The ship was recommissioned in November 1950 and served another ten years as a naval reserve training ship.<sup>15</sup>

USS *Marts* (DE-174) was a destroyer escort named for Alvin Lee Marts, fireman second class, USN, who was born in Wilsonville and soon moved with his family to Colorado. He enlisted in the navy in July 1941 after graduating from high school.<sup>16</sup> He served first in USS *Yorktown* (CV-5) and survived the sinking of his ship at the Battle of Midway. In August 1943 he was transferred to the cruiser USS *New Orleans* (CA-32). During the Battle of Tassafaronga in the Solomon Islands on November 30, 1942, *New Orleans* was torpedoed in her port bow, and two ammunition magazines exploded. Fireman Marts was a member of the forward repair party, and was severely wounded. In spite of his injuries, he carried an injured medical officer to the midships dressing station before collapsing and dying of his wounds. He was awarded the Navy Cross, posthumously.<sup>17</sup>

Fireman Second Class Marts was one of the youngest heroes of World War II to have a ship named for him, as he died scarcely past his nineteenth birthday. His sister, Betty Marts of Delta, Colorado, was the ship's sponsor. USS *Marts* was laid down at Federal Shipyard, Newark, New Jersey, in April 1943, launched in August, and commissioned in September, Lt. Carl M. Fellows commanding.<sup>18</sup> She served during the war on Atlantic convoy escort, and on patrol with USS *Omaha* in the South Atlantic. Most of her service was off the Brazilian coast, including antisubmarine warfare hunter-killer groups. She was decommissioned on March 20, 1945, at Natal, Brazil, and immediately commissioned in the Brazilian navy as *Bocaina* (D-22).

The latest surface combatant ship to

U.S. Navy Ships and Craft with Nebraska Names continued

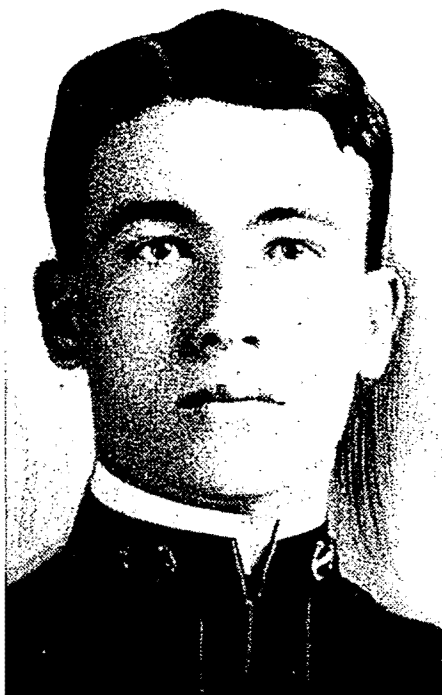
Ship	Named For
<b>Counties</b>	
USS <i>Lancaster</i> (AK-193)	Lancaster County, Nebraska, and counties in three other states
USS <i>Logan</i> (APA-196)	Logan County, Nebraska, and counties in eight other states
USS <i>Merrick</i> (AKA-97)	Merrick County, Nebraska
USS <i>Pierce</i> (APA-50)	Pierce County, Nebraska, and counties in four other states
USS <i>Sheridan</i> (APA-51)	Sheridan County, Nebraska, and counties in four other states
USS <i>Thurston</i> (AP-77)	Thurston County, Nebraska, and Washington
USS <i>Wayne</i> (APA-54)	Wayne County, Nebraska
USS <i>Boone County</i> (LST-389)	Boone County, Nebraska, and counties in seven other states
USS <i>Chase County</i> (LST-389)	Chase County, Nebraska, and Kansas
USS <i>Dodge County</i> (LST-722)	Dodge County, Nebraska, and counties in three other states
USS <i>Douglas County</i> (LST-731)	Douglas County, Nebraska, and counties in eleven other states
USS <i>Garfield County</i> (LST-784)	Garfield County, Nebraska, and counties in five other states
USS <i>Grant County</i> (LST-1174)	Grant County, Nebraska, and counties in fourteen other states
USS <i>Hamilton County</i> (LST-802)	Hamilton County, Nebraska, and counties in nine other states
USS <i>Harlan County</i> (LST-1196)	Harlan County, Nebraska, and Kentucky
USS <i>Jefferson County</i> (LST-845)	Jefferson County, Nebraska, and counties in twenty-four other states
USS <i>Johnson County</i> (LST-849)	Johnson County, Nebraska, and counties in eleven other states
USS <i>Lincoln County</i> (LST-898)	Lincoln County, Nebraska, and counties in twenty-three other states
USS <i>Polk County</i> (LST-1084)	Polk County, Nebraska, and counties in eleven other states
USS <i>Saline County</i> (LST-1101)	Saline County, Nebraska, and counties in four other states
USS <i>York County</i> (LST-1175)	York County, Nebraska, and counties in four other states
<b>Rivers</b>	
USS <i>Calamus</i> (AOG-25)	Calamus River, Nebraska
USS <i>Elkhorn</i> (AOG-7)	Elkhorn River, Nebraska
USS <i>Niobrara</i> (AO-72)	Niobrara River, Nebraska
USS <i>Platte</i> (AO-72)	Platte River, Nebraska
USS <i>Platte</i> (AO-186)	Platte River, Nebraska
<i>Republican River</i> (LSMR-523)	Republican River, Nebraska, and Kansas
USS <i>White River</i> (LSMR-536)	White River in Nebraska, South Dakota, Arkansas, Colorado, Indiana, Vermont, and Washington

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be named for a native Nebraskan was the frigate USS *McCandless* (FF-1084), honoring Cmdre. Byron McCandless, USN, of Endicott, and his son, Rear Adm. Bruce McCandless, USN. The McCandless family represents a proud U.S. Navy tradition, as Commodore McCandless and Admiral McCandless were awarded the Navy Cross and Medal of Honor, respectively, for heroic performance of duty. In addition, Bruce McCandless's son, Bruce, Jr., was a naval aviator who was selected as a NASA astronaut.<sup>19</sup>

Byron McCandless was born in Endicott on September 5, 1881, and subsequently moved to Colorado, where he attended high school and the University of Colorado. He was graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in January 1905. His early duties were concentrated in battleships, and he served as aide to the chief of naval operations and the secretary of the navy just prior to World War I. He commanded the destroyer USS *Caldwell* from 1917 to 1920, and was awarded the Navy Cross, the navy's highest award, for service against the Germans in the Atlantic and in European waters. Commodore McCandless was transferred to the retired list of the U.S. Navy on June 30, 1940, but remained on active duty with the rank of commodore through World War II. He was awarded the Legion of Merit for his service as commandant, Naval Repair Base, San Diego, and was cited for his "foresight, initiative, brilliant leadership and steadfast devotion to duty."<sup>20</sup>

His son, Bruce, had an equally brilliant record, and was awarded the Medal of Honor for taking command of the heavy cruiser *San Francisco* in the Battle of Guadalcanal in November 1942 after all the senior officers and the embarked admiral had been killed. He not only commanded the ship, but directed the operations of the task force although severely wounded. In April 1945 Commander McCandless commanded the destroyer *Gregory* during the invasion of Okinawa in April 1945. His ship shot down six enemy aircraft, and he was



Byron McCandless (above). Journal-Star Printing Company

Bruce McCandless (below). Journal-Star Printing Company



awarded the Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry. *Gregory* was hit by a Japanese kamikaze on April 8, 1945, but Commander McCandless and his crew contained the damage. The ship was routed to San Diego, California, and was repaired under the supervision of Commander McCandless's father, Cmdre. Byron McCandless.<sup>21</sup>

USS *McCandless* was built by Avondale Shipyards and commissioned at Boston in March 1972 as an "ocean escort" (DE-1084). The type designation for this class of ships was changed to "frigate" (FF) in June 1975. *McCandless* served in the Atlantic Fleet and in European waters. She was transferred from the active fleet to the Naval Reserve Force (NRF) on December 31, 1991, and redesignated FFT-1084.<sup>22</sup> The ship was finally decommissioned in May 1994.

USS *Parle* (DE-708) had the distinction of being the last World War II destroyer escort on active service. She was named for Ens. John J. Parle, USNR, of Omaha. Ensign Parle enlisted in the navy in January 1942 and was commissioned ensign in January 1943. After amphibious training he was assigned to LST-375. During the invasion of Sicily in July 1943, a landing craft loaded with explosives was tied up alongside *Parle's* LST when a smoke pot in the unoccupied boat accidentally ignited. Parle jumped into the boat and extinguished the fuse. The pot was still spurting flames, and he finally was able to throw it over the side into the water. Had the explosives in the boat ignited, the entire LST would have been destroyed and enemy troops on the shore would have been warned of the pending invasion.

Ensign Parle died one week later from smoke and fumes he inhaled. He was awarded the Medal of Honor, posthumously. The award citation simply stated, "His heroic self-sacrifice prevented grave danger to the ship and personnel and insured the security of a vital mission. He gallantly gave his life in the service of his country."<sup>23</sup>

His namesake, USS *Parle*, was laid down at Defoe Shipbuilding Company,



John J. Parle. *Omaha World-Herald*



Mr. and Mrs. Harry Parle at their son's funeral in Omaha in June 1948. John Savage Collection, Western Heritage Museum

Bay City, Michigan, in January 1944, launched in March, and commissioned in July, Lt. Comdr. James C. Toft, Jr., USNR, commanding. She served in the Atlantic Fleet as a convoy escort in 1944, and with the Seventh Fleet in the Pacific during the invasions of the Philippines, New Guinea, Okinawa, and Ulithi. The ship was decommissioned in July 1946, and recommissioned in March 1951 for the Korean War. She served in the Atlantic Fleet through 1958, and was assigned as a naval reserve training ship in the Fifth Naval District on January 1, 1959. In June 1959, Parle was honored with a visit by Mr. and Mrs. Harry V. Parle, Ens. John Parle's parents. The Parles had never been on the ship before, although Mrs. Parle sponsored and christened her.<sup>24</sup>

Parle was finally decommissioned in July 1962 and reverted to inactive status as a reserve training ship in Chicago until July 1970. She was stricken from the navy list and used as a target the following October.

USS *Reynolds* (DE-42) was a World War II destroyer escort, named for Ens. Dudley Louis Reynolds of Blair. Ensign Reynolds enlisted in the navy in 1928, was warranted machinist in 1938, and commissioned ensign in July 1942. He was killed in the cruiser USS *Pensacola* during the Battle of Tassafaronga in the Solomon Islands on November 30, 1942. *Reynolds* was laid down by the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in January 1943, launched in August when she was christened by Ensign Reynolds's widow, and commissioned on November 1, Lt. Comdr. Edward P. Adams commanding.<sup>25</sup>

*Reynolds* earned eight battle stars in the Pacific as an escort for carrier task groups. In July 1944 she assisted another destroyer escort in sinking the Japanese submarine I-55. She was decommissioned on December 5, 1945.<sup>26</sup>

Walter S. Brown of North Loup was an aircraft machinist mate second class who was killed in action when the Japanese attacked the Hawaiian Islands on December 7, 1941. Petty Officer Brown

was assigned to Patrol Squadron 24 at Kaneohe Bay, maintaining *Catalina* sea planes, when Japanese carrier aircraft attacked the base. He took prompt and efficient action in participating in the defense of the base, disregarding his own life. Brown was commended for selfless bravery by his commanding officer. Walter S. Brown was born in March 1916 and enlisted in the navy in January 1940.

The destroyer escort USS *Walter S. Brown* (DE-258) was built at the Boston Navy Yard in 1943. She took less than six months to build from the laying of the keel to commissioning in June. The ship served in the Atlantic Fleet as a convoy escort, and survived heavy air attacks near the Straits of Gibraltar in May 1944 while defending Convoy UGS 40. No allied losses resulted from the engagement, during which the ship took six enemy planes under fire in a seven-minute period. The escort commander praised *Walter S. Brown's* performance, saying in his report that "her perfor-



## Nebraska and Navy Ships

mance, when coordinated with the other forces present, broke up the enemy's attack, disrupted his plans, and resulted in no allied losses; whereas the enemy suffered a heavy loss of planes." *Walter S. Brown* was decommissioned in October 1945 and sold for scrap three years later.<sup>27</sup>

The medium harbor tug *Red Cloud* (YTM-268), named for the Oglala Sioux Chief Red Cloud, was one of two service craft with names of Nebraska origin, the other being the large harbor tug *Oshkosh* (YTB-757). *Red Cloud* was born about 1822 in what became Nebraska Territory and died at Pine Ridge, South Dakota, on December 10, 1909. He was a great Sioux war leader, who reached the height of his powers from 1866 to 1868 in successfully stopping completion of the Bozeman Road from Fort Laramie, Wyoming Territory, to the gold mines in Montana. *Red Cloud* did not participate actively in the Sioux War of 1876 nor in the Ghost Dance of 1890-91. He was a delegate to Washington, D.C., on several occasions. The tug *Red Cloud* was built by Birchfield Boiler, Inc., of Tacoma, Washington, and served the navy for over forty years from 1943 to the mid-1980s.<sup>28</sup>

Although the state of Nebraska has no maritime traditions except a long list of honorific admirals of the Great Navy of the State of Nebraska, people from the state and ships with Nebraska names have served with honor in the

United States Navy for more than a century. Four ships with Nebraska names are currently active in the fleet today. In addition to these fine ships, Nebraska's sons and daughters serve in the fleet with pride and distinction. This short account recognizes their service to the nation, and the dedication and sacrifice of those who have gone before them.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Naval History Division, *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, V (Washington: Navy Dept., 1970), 153.

<sup>2</sup> Keith Frazier Somerville and Harriette W. B. Smith, *Ships of the United States Navy and Their Sponsors, 1950-1958* (Annapolis, Md.: The United States Naval Institute Press, 1959), xix-xx.

<sup>3</sup> E. B. Potter, ed., *The United States and World Sea Power* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), 558, 560.

<sup>4</sup> *Dictionary*, I, 165; Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as Naval Historical Center), file copy on USS *Bruce*, no date.

<sup>5</sup> *Dictionary*, II, 142-43.

<sup>6</sup> Kristen Vickerman, Records Department, U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association to author, May 31, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Secretary of State for Defense, *The Falklands Campaign: The Lessons* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, Cmnd. 8758, Dec. 1982), 7.

<sup>8</sup> Murlin Spencer, "Nebraskans Everywhere," *Nebraska History* 25 (April-June, 1944): 106-7.

<sup>9</sup> *Dictionary*, II, 287; Richard Sharp, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships, 1994-95* (Coulson, Surrey, U.K.: Jane's Information Group, Ltd., 1994), 426.

<sup>10</sup> Naval Historical Center (OP 09B9), Ship His-

tory Section, "History of USS *Hurst* (DE 250)," Aug. 27, 1959.

<sup>11</sup> *Dictionary*, III, 400; Norman Friedman, *U.S. Destroyers: An Illustrated Design History* (Annapolis, Md.: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1982), 463.

<sup>12</sup> *Dictionary*, III, 657.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 679.

<sup>14</sup> *The Tryon Graphic*, Aug. 26, 1943; *Dictionary*, III, 679-80.

<sup>15</sup> Friedman, *U.S. Destroyers*, 472.

<sup>16</sup> *Wilsonville Review*, Jan. 28, 1943.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, May 6, 1943.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 12, 1943; *Dictionary*, IV, 254-55.

<sup>19</sup> *Sunday Journal-Star* (Lincoln), Mar. 19, 1992, Section IB, 2.

<sup>20</sup> Naval Historical Center, biography, "Commodore Byron McCandless, United States Navy," Nov. 24, 1947.

<sup>21</sup> Naval Historical Center (OP-09B9), Ship History Section, "History of USS *McCandless*" (DE-1084), Sept. 8, 1970.

<sup>22</sup> Sharp, *Jane's Fighting Ships, 1988-89*, 734; U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Annapolis, Md., June 1992, 97.

<sup>23</sup> *Nebraska History* 25 (January-March, 1944): 11-12.

<sup>24</sup> *Dictionary*, V, 216; Commanding Officer, USS *Parle* (DE-708), letter 2000, ser. 191 of Apr. 3, 1962; subj: current ship's history and photograph, submission of.

<sup>25</sup> *Dictionary*, VI, 88-89.

<sup>26</sup> Friedman, *U.S. Destroyers*, 457.

<sup>27</sup> Naval Historical Center, Ship History Section, summary for *Walter S. Brown*, June 2, 1950; *Dictionary*, VIII, 79-80.

<sup>28</sup> James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 137-40; *Dictionary*, VI, 50.