

USS SIERRA (AD 18) painted with camouflage colors, just after commissioning at Tampa Shipbuilding, Tampa, Florida, March 1944.

SHIP'S HISTORY

The second USS SIERRA's keel was laid down on 31 December 1941 by the Tampa Shipbuilding Company, Tampa, Fla. She was launched on 23 February 1943, sponsored by Mrs. F.M. Earle. SIERRA was commissioned into active naval service on 20 March 1944. Captain P.B. Koonce in command.

SIERRA completed fitting out at Tampa and on 13 April, sailed for Hampton Roads, Va., via Key West, arriving there on 18 April.

On 18 May, SIERRA stood out of Norfolk enroute to her new homeport of San Diego. Her trip to the West Coast took SIERRA through the Panama Canal Zone. She was in San Diego for five days and, on 7 June, departed for Pearl Harbor. The destroyer tender rendered services to destroyers and destroyer escorts at Pearl Harbor from 13 June to 3 September 1944.

With the need for fleet repair units at advanced bases to support the forthcoming invasion of the Philippine Islands, SIERRA proceeded to Seadler Har-

bor, Manus Island, Admiralty Islands. She was attached to the 3rd Fleet and serviced its ships until February 1945. Her most outstanding accomplishments were the replacement of a 5-inch gun mount on USS California (BB 44) and rebuilding the starboard stern of USS Claxton (DD 571) which had been severely damaged by a kamikaze in Leyte Gulf.

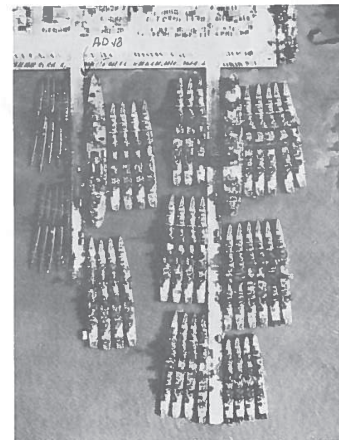
SIERRA was underway from Seadler Harbor on 18 February en route to Purvis Bay, Solomon Islands. She repaired a fleet of LST's in preparation for the assault on Iwo Jima and then proceeded on 15 March, to Ulithi, Caroline Islands. She served units of the 5th Fleet there until 25 May when she departed for San Pedro Bay, Leyte Gulf, Philippine Islands.

SIERRA repaired landing craft support ships and destroyers for the anticipated strikes against the Japanese mainland, but the end of hostilities with Japan ended the assignment. The ship sailed from the Philippine Islands on 6 September for Buckner Bay, Okinawa; Jinsen, Korea; and Shanghai, China. She arrived at Shanghai on 12 October 1945 and re-

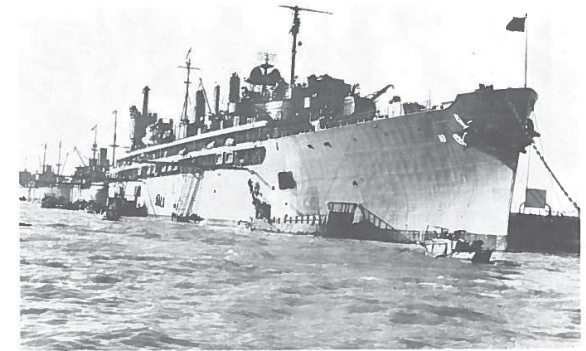
mained there until 6 February 1946 when she sailed to San Francisco for a yard availability.

SIERRA deployed to China two more times in the next three years. Her last assignment terminated at San Diego on 8 April 1949, and, two months later, she sailed for her new homeport of Norfolk, Va., arriving there on 29 July 1949. She serviced ships there until 6 January 1950 when she was deployed to the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean as relief of USS Shenandoah (AD 26); returning to Norfolk on 24 June. SIERRA deployed to the 6th Fleet again from 12 June to 6 November 1951.

Upon her return to Norfolk, SIERRA moored at Pier 21, Convoy Escort Piers. On 7 November 1951, she was designated flagship of Commander, Destroyer



During the 1950's and 1960's, SIERRA serviced ships of the Atlantic Fleet from the Destroyer and Submarine Piers, Naval Base Norfolk, Virginia.



After the end of World War II, USS SIERRA spent many months supporting American interests in Shanghai and Tsingtao, China. Here SIERRA lies at anchor in Shanghai Harbor, 1945.

Flotilla FOUR and retained this honor until 1 July 1962. From 1951 to mid-June 1959, SIERRA remained in Norfolk, ably coping with the heavy demand by destroyers for repairs, which was her primary duty. For other than local operations, the longest period of time that she was away from the Convoy Escort Piers was when her service was required in the Caribbean for Operation "Springboard" from 6 January to 2 March and again from 9 November to 4 December 1953.

SIERRA sailed for the Mediterranean on 30 June 1959 for her third deployment with the 6th Fleet and returned to Norfolk on 13 December to continue her work as destroyer tender. She was deployed to Guantanamo Bay from 23 October to 14 December 1961 to tend the reserve training ships recalled to active duty during the Lebanon Crisis. She entered the Norfolk Naval Shipyard on 27 March 1962 for conversion under the FRAM II program. SIERRA was out of the yard and able to resume her normal work routine on 15 September. From 1963 through December 1973, SIERRA serviced ships of the fleet at ports along the East Coast of the United States but, primarily, at Norfolk. On 5 January 1974, SIERRA changed homeports to Charleston, S.C.

Since arriving in Charleston. SIERRA has deployed