



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
U. S. S. MOBILE (LKA-115)

FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO 96601

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From: Commanding Officer, USS MOBILE (LKA-115)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09B9), Washington Navy Yard, Wash.,  
D. C. 20390

Subj: Command History, USS MOBILE (LKA-115); 1970

Ref: (a) OPNAV INSTRUCTION 5750.12A

Encl: (1) 8" X 10" Photograph of USS MOBILE  
(2) Biography of Captain Samuel LORENZ, Jr., USN 360751/1100  
(3) 5" X 7" Photograph of Captain Samuel LORENZ, Jr., USN 360751/1100  
(4) Biography of Captain "J" "D" WARD, USN, 504242/1310  
(5) 8" X 10" Photograph of Captain "J" "D" WARD, USN, 504242/1310  
(6) Welcome Aboard Brochure  
(7) Change of Command Program  
(8) USS MOBILE Family Gram  
(9) Congratulatory Messages  
(10) Amphibious Force U. S. Pacific Organizational Chart  
(11) Golden Anchor Award Message and Forwarding Letter  
(12) Muster Role and Roster of Officers

1. In accordance with reference (a), the history of USS MOBILE (LKA-115) for the period of 1 January 1970 through 31 December 1970 is submitted:

a. Chronology of Highlights.

- 1 - 4 January - Leave and upkeep period in San Diego.
- 5 - 30 January - Refresher training in Southern California Operations Area.
- 2 - 6 February - Final acceptance trials.
- 13 February - 6 March - Amphibious refresher training.
- 5 March - 1 April - Commander Amphibious Squadron FIVE embarked.
- 16 - 24 April - Post shakedown availability period.
- 1 May - Underway for Western Pacific in company with USS OKINAWA (LPH-3), USS DULUTH (LPD-6), and USS ANCHORAGE (LSD-36), all units assigned to Amphibious Squadron FIVE.

1 - 7 May - Participated in Convoy Exercise 2-70, enroute to Pearl Harbor.

16 May - Changed to operational control of Commander U. S. SEVENTH Fleet.

29 May - Assigned to Amphibious Ready Group ALPHA upon arrival in Okinawa.

29 May - 2 June - Inport Okinawa. Elements of Battalion Landing Team 1/9 and their equipment loaded aboard MOBILE.

9 June - Arrived in Da Nang, loaded four LCM-8's, and departed for Vung Tau, South Vietnam.

11 June - Arrived in Vung Tau and off-loaded four LCM-8's.

1 August - Arrived in Okinawa and off-loaded Battalion Landing Team 1/9. Commenced loading Battalion Landing Team 2/9.

5 August - Captain "J" "D" WARD, USN, relieved Captain Samuel LORENZ, Jr., USN, as Commanding Officer of MOBILE at White Beach, Okinawa.

26 August - MOBILE crew members and embarked Marines of Battalion Landing Team 2/9 participated in Amphibious Squadron FIVE field day festivities on Grande Island, Subic Bay.

14 - 18 September - Inport Hong Kong.

18 September - Detached from Amphibious Squadron FIVE, underway for Da Nang.

20 September - Arrived in Da Nang and commenced loading elements of 3 squadrons of First Marine, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine and 1st Reconnaissance Battalion for return to Continental United States.

28 September - Changed to operational control of Commander U. S. FIRST Fleet.

8 October - Arrived in San Diego.

8 October - 31 December - In port San Diego for a 30 day post-deployment leave and upkeep period, and boiler repairs.

b. Basic Narrative.

The year began with MOBILE in the middle of a leave and upkeep period in her homeport of San Diego. MOBILE participated in shakedown training

which commenced on 5 January and lasted until 30 January. On 2 February, MOBILE commenced her final acceptance trials, completing same on 6 February. This was followed by amphibious refresher training during the period 13 February to 6 March. The period 16 March to 24 April found MOBILE conducting her Post Shakedown Availability and also making preparations for her first deployment with the Seventh Fleet.

On 1 May, as a unit of AMPHIBIOUS SQUADRON FIVE, MOBILE departed for Western Pacific in company with USS OKINAWA (LPH-3), USS DULUTH (LPD-6), and USS ANCHORAGE (LSD-36). Enroute to Pearl Harbor, MOBILE participated in Convoy Exercise 2-70 from 1 May to 7 May, terminating upon arrival in Pearl Harbor. MOBILE departed from Pearl Harbor on 9 May enroute to Western Pacific. She arrived in Yokosuka, Japan on 19 May and remained for eight days. On 27 May, MOBILE departed Yokosuka enroute to Okinawa and was assigned to Amphibious Ready Group ALPHA on 29 May upon arrival. MOBILE remained in Okinawa until 2 June when she departed with elements of Battalion Landing Team 1/9 and their equipment aboard. She arrived at Subic Bay on 4 June, off-loaded her cargo and sailed for Da Nang. MOBILE arrived in Da Nang on 9 June, remaining only long enough to load four LCM-8's and took departure for Vung Tau South Vietnam, where the LCM-8's were off-loaded two days later. After leaving Vung Tau on 11 June, MOBILE proceeded to Subic Bay, arriving on 14 June. While in port at Subic Bay elements of Battalion Landing Team 1/9 returned aboard. On 22 June, MOBILE participated in practice landings in Subic Bay. From 23 until 28 June, MOBILE and other Amphibious Squadron FIVE ships conducted Amphibious Ready Group Operations, including air and surface gunnery exercises and an underway replenishment with USS MATTAPONI (AO-41). On 29 June Battalion Landing Team 1/9 was again off-loaded at Subic Bay. The next day MOBILE sailed for Sasebo, Japan arriving on 3 July. An underway replenishment was conducted with USS NIAGARA FALLS (AFS-4) on 1 July while enroute to Sasebo. On 15 July MOBILE departed Sasebo enroute to Subic Bay. On 19 July, in Subic Bay, elements of Battalion Landing Team 1/9 were once again loaded aboard MOBILE. On 22 July, having departed Subic on the previous day, MOBILE participated in practice landings in the Zambales Training Area and on the same day, conducted Full Power and Economy Trials. From 23 to 29 July, MOBILE and other ships of Amphibious Squadron FIVE conducted Amphibious Ready Group Operations. MOBILE departed the Subic area for Okinawa on 30 July. She arrived on 31 July, off-loaded Battalion Landing Team 1/9 and commenced loading Battalion Landing Team 2/9. On 5 August, at White Beach in Okinawa, Captain Samuel LORENZ, Jr., USN, was relieved by Captain "J" "D" WARD, USN, as Commanding Officer of the MOBILE. From 6 to 18 August, MOBILE and other ships of Amphibious Squadron FIVE conducted Amphibious Ready Group Operations; this included an underway replenishment with USS SACRAMENTO (AOE-1) on 10 August and practice landings in the Zambales Training Area on 15 and 17 August. Once again the units of Amphibious Squadron FIVE, including MOBILE, participated in Amphibious Ready Group Operations from 29 August to 3 September. MOBILE returned to port in Subic Bay on 4 September and was in transit to Hong Kong during the period 7 to 10 September; she conducted an underway replenishment with USS ASHTABULA

(AO-51) on 9 September enroute. MOBILE departed Hong Kong on 12 September in order to evade an approaching typhoon. Following passage of the typhoon, she returned to Hong Kong on 14 September. On 18 September MOBILE was detached from Amphibious Squadron FIVE and sailed for Da Nang. She commenced loading retrograde Marine equipment immediately on arrival 20 September and achieved a complete load-out in a record time of 33 hours. MOBILE departed Da Nang 21 September enroute to Okinawa, where she made a brief fueling stop on 24 September. She arrived in Pearl Harbor on 2 October for a brief stop to off-load cargo and departed for San Diego the following day. MOBILE arrived in San Diego on 8 October and commenced off-loading the remaining Marine equipment embarked at Da Nang. Concurrently, she commenced a 30 day post-deployment leave and upkeep period. Although the 30 day stand-down ended early in November, MOBILE remained inport for the remainder of 1970 for boiler repairs.

c. Special Topics.

(1) Embarked troop and cargo data: MOBILE's primary mission as an Amphibious Cargo Ship is to transport and land combat equipment and material, with attendant personnel, in amphibious assaults. In preparation for this mission in WESTPAC, MOBILE proceeded to the Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach, California on 28 April and loaded 223 short tons of ammunition (class V). This "package" constituted MOBILE's portion of the Class V LFORM (Landing Force Operational Reserve Material) loaded aboard the various ships of the Amphibious Ready Group.

During her transit to WESTPAC, MOBILE also had aboard a vast array of items destined for out less fortunate friends across the sea under the "Project Handclasp" Program. Among the items were hospital beds, wheel chairs and incubators destined for Vietnam; clothing, blankets, sporting equipment and sundrie supplies for Japan and Taiwan. In addition to the Handclasp material, MOBILE also transported vehicles for use by the Marine Corps in Okinawa and Vietnam. Seven Marines accompanied the equipment enroute. At Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, various types of office equipment and more "Project Handclasp" material were loaded aboard for transportation overseas. At Yokosuka, Japan on 20 May, all of the "Project Handclasp" material was off-loaded.

Upon arrival at White Beach in Buckner Bay, on 29 May, MOBILE moored at the Army Pier and commenced loading the remaining portion of her LFORM which consisted of Class III (Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants) and Class IV (Fortification Materials). The total weight of this "Package" was 112.7 short tons, with a volume of 6848 cubic feet. She then commenced embarkation of her first combat load with the elements of Battalion Landing Team 1/9. The load was composed of personnel and equipment from H&S Company, 1st Battalion, Ninth Marines; Third Medical Battalion; Third Motor Transport Battalion; Communication Company, HgBn., 3rd Marine Division and Medium Helicopter Squadron 164. The total organization comprised the Logistical Support Unit for Battalion Landing Team 1/9 and was led by 1st Lt. Hugh

CAUMARTIN, USMC. Although MOBILE did not realize her potential with this load, she nevertheless carried 85 personnel, 59 vehicles, and in excess of 1000 lifts of various supplies. The total load amounted to 1132 measurement tons, with a weight of 838 short tons and 5389 square feet taken up by vehicles.

MOBILE's next stop at Buckner Bay, on 1 August, found the Marines and equipment of Battalion Landing Team 1/9 being off-loaded and the Logistical Support Unit of Battalion Landing Team 2/9 led by 1st Lt. Francis STEC, USMC, being embarked. The Logistical Support Unit consisted of personnel and equipment from H&S Company, 2nd Battalion, Ninth Marines; Third Medical Battalion, Third Motor Transport Battalion; Communication Company, HgBn, Third Marine Division and Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 164. Once again, MOBILE carried a combat load of Marine Corps personnel and equipment prepared to go ashore and provide support for the Leather-necks of Battalion Landing Team 2/9. As in her previous load, MOBILE was not loaded to her full capacity, but had embarked 103 personnel, 802 short tons of cargo and vehicles for a total of 1004 measurement tons.

Battalion Landing Team 2/9 was to leave sooner than anticipated as MOBILE had been selected to participate in the return to the United States of a large amount of Marine equipment and several Marine personnel. This was destined to be a "First" for MOBILE, as she was about to fill her holds to capacity for the first time, and thus establish a single lift record among the "Gators" of the Pacific Fleet. So, on 20 September on the occasion of her first birthday, at Da Nang, Republic of Vietnam, MOBILE commenced loading the men, supplies and equipment of Marine Corps units leaving Vietnam for home. After approximately 32.5 hours of continuous loading the job was complete - on board were 100 personnel; 407 vehicles with a total of 29,317 square feet, weighing 1454 short tons, and 667 short tons of bulk cargo occupying 99520 cubic feet. This load was destined for Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and San Diego, California, and was to complete MOBILE's fleet employment for 1970.

(2) Engineering Equipment: Engineering equipment is unique in that standard equipment has been assembled to provide a completely automatic engineroom and fireroom operation with the engine control on the bridge. The operation of this arrangement has proven highly satisfactory. Additionally, all winches are motor driven with a static circuit control system to provide greater speed, control and dependability. The suitability of this installation has proven quite satisfactory.

Two major problems, in addition to training personnel in the operation and maintenance of these complicated systems, are the ships service turbo-generators (SSTG) and variable resistors in winch control systems. The SSTG's fluctuate erratically at varying intervals of time and after exhausting all possible causes, no definite cause has been determined. Variable resistors in winch control systems failed repeatedly during operations in

hot humid weather. Non-availability of these resistors as standard replacement items made them a critical item due to cost and lead time of manufacture. The ships force found a suitable substitute for approximately 10% of the cost.

(3) Communications: During the year, MOBILE originated 1189 messages. She also received 16,892 messages for a total of 18,981 messages handled during the year. No major problems with communications equipment were noted.

(4) Gunnery: In the year of 1970, the guns and fire control systems of MOBILE performed reliably in surface, anti-air, and shore bombardment exercises. No major problems in maintenance or performance were encountered. During the year, MOBILE fired 605 rounds in anti-air exercises and 225 rounds in surface and shore bombardment exercises for a total expenditure of 830 rounds.

(5) Medical Casualties: On 2 June, MOBILE was moored at White Beach, Okinawa. At 2000 an unidentified man was found lying unconscious on the beach. The man was brought to MOBILE, and when seen by the Medical Officer, [REDACTED] the man had stopped breathing and his pulse was very weak and shallow. The man was given mouth-to-mouth resuscitation for approximately one hour and forty-five minutes. He was taken to Kue Army Hospital and treated for an overdose of drugs. The man recovered from the incident.

On 22 June, as MOBILE was engaging in a predawn exercise, [REDACTED] fell from an LCM-6 and sustained fractures of the right femur, left humerus, the left clavicle, and lacerations of the face and head. [REDACTED] was treated and evacuated to U. S. Naval Hospital, Subic.

September 6 was to be one of the memorably sad days in MOBILE's short existence, as it noted the occasion of MOBILE's first death on board. [REDACTED] was brought on board at 2150, 5 September, at Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, in an apparently intoxicated condition. The duty corpsman was notified that [REDACTED] had passed out. The corpsman examined him and found his vital signs to be normal, and placed him on the ward to "sleep it off". In the morning, upon being informed that [REDACTED] was on the ward, ~~Chief Hospital Corpsman James D. DEW~~ went back to check him. He was found without pulse and the Medical Officer was notified. LT Kenneth ~~WILHELM, MC~~, examined [REDACTED] and pronounced him dead at 11:50, 6 September, 1970. His death was caused by an overdose of drugs taken in conjunction with alcohol.

Overall, MOBILE's Medical Department not only attended to the above-mentioned major casualties in a tremendously professional manner, but also treated numerous minor medical problems in a very competent fashion.

(6) Personnel and Legal: During MOBILE's first full year of commissioned service, she was the recipient of the Golden Anchor Award for the highest Pacific Fleet enlistment ratio for an LKA. During the year, 24 reenlistments were effected, 8 of which were first term reenlistments. During that period, MOBILE had a high of 356 personnel on board, a low of 310, and an overall monthly average of 335.

During the year, 101 cases of non-judicial punishment were handled. In addition, three Special Courts-Martial were assigned.

(7) Chaplains Activities: During the period of MOBILE's WESTPAC deployment, Roman Catholic and Protestant Chaplains from Commander Amphibious Squadron FIVE Staff rode all the ships of the squadron. Whenever steaming in company on a Sunday, these Chaplains rotated to all the ships in the squadron by helicopter to conduct religious services. In addition, these Chaplains were always available for counseling, confession, or any other individual needs.

(8) Reservist Training: During 1970 MOBILE trained a total of 8 first class midshipmen. During the period from 6 June to 20 July, MOBILE embarked Red E. Rogers, Thomas H. Hough, and Richard H. Brownley for an afloat training cruise that included a 10 day port visit to Sasebo, Japan. During the period of 20 July to 5 September a second group of midshipmen were on board for training. This group included: Marc A. Helgeson, Robert H. Freund, David W. Chew, Charles D. Wheatley, and Edward R. Schendt.

(9) Community Relations: During the year, MOBILE was active in local civic projects to the maximum that her schedule would permit. In addition to sponsoring numerous tours of the ship for various children's organizations, MOBILE also hosted the San Diego County Executive Council of the Boy Scouts of America for their monthly luncheon and meeting on 10 December. On 18 December MOBILE hosted a Christmas Party for the Children of the Hillcrest Receiving Home located in San Diego. Thirty-seven children attended the party and tour of the ship and had the opportunity to meet and talk with "Uncle Russ" of channel 10, TV, in San Diego. The children were all wards of the county and came from problem and broken homes. In addition to each child receiving a gift at the party, numerous gifts were taken to Hillcrest for the children who could not attend, plus additional gifts for use by all the children.

(10) Awards: During the year, MOBILE was the recipient of CINCPACFLT'S Golden Anchor Award for her high retention rate. The MOBILE was also awarded a Good Conduct Plaque from the Servicemen's Guides Association of Hong Kong for exceptional behavior of the crew while the ship was in Hong Kong.

  
"J" "D" WARD

Copy to: (w/o encl's)  
CINCPACFLT  
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