



Koiner, 1951

DE-331; WDE-431

James Duval Koiner was born on 16 February 1919 in Waynesboro, South River, Virginia. He entered the Naval Reserve as Ensign on 31 December 1940. He reported for active duty on 17 March 1941, under instruction at the Supply Corps, Naval Medical Center, Washington, D.C. Koiner reported to the 3d Naval District on 17 October 1941 for duty on board USS *Atlanta* (CL-51) upon her commissioning. After serving in the light cruiser during the Midway and Solomon Islands campaigns, Koiner was promoted to Lieutenant (j.g.) on 1 October 1942. He was killed in action on 13 November 1942, on board *Atlanta*, during the Battle of Guadalcanal.

Edsall-Class Destroyer Escort

Radio Call Sign: NHEC

Commissioned: 27 December 1943 (USN); 20 June 1951 (USCG)

Decommissioned: 4 October 1946 (USN); 14 May 1954 (USCG); 1968 (USN)

Disposition: Sold for scrap in 1969

Displacement: 1,253 tons standard

Length: 306'

Beam: 36' 7"

Draft: 10' 5' full load

Machinery: 4 Fairbanks-Morse Mod. 38d81/8 geared diesel engines, 4 diesel-generators, 6000 shp, 2 propellers

Range: 10,800 nautical miles at 12 knots

Top Speed: 21 knots

Complement: 186

Armament: 3 x 3"/50 Mk22 (1x3), 1 twin 40mm, 8 x 20mm Mk 4 AA, 3 x 21" Mk 15 torpedo tubes, 1 x Mk 10 Hedgehog projector, 8 x Mk 6 depth charge projectors, 2 x Mk 9 depth charge tracks (1943); 2 x 3"/50 Mk 22-0; 1 x 3"/50 Mk 22-2; 1 40mm Mk 2-18; 2 x 40mm Mk 1-2; 2 x 20mm Mk 24-5; 1 Mk 10 Hedgehog depth charge projector; 8 x Mk 6-2 depth charge projectors; 2 x Mk 9 depth charge tracks;

Electronics: QCS-1 sonar; SC-5 detection radar; 3 x Mk 26-1 fire control radar (1952)

History:

Koiner (DE-331) was laid down on 26 July 1943 by the Consolidated Steel Corporation in Orange, Texas. She was launched on 5 September 1943 and was sponsored by Mrs. Mae H. Koiner, the mother of LTJG Koiner; and commissioned 27 December 1943 under the command of LCDR C. S. Judson, Jr., USN.

After shakedown off Bermuda, *Koiner* cleared Charleston, South Carolina, 28 February 1944, to join a convoy at Willemstad, Curacao, and escort tankers to Mediterranean ports. For the next 6 months she remained on convoy-escort duty in the Atlantic, making four roundtrip cruises from Curacao to North Africa and Naples. Completing her final Mediterranean cruise 31 August, *Koiner* commenced escort duty for United Kingdom bound ships. From 20 September 1944 to 1 May 1945 the destroyer escort sailed with five convoys to British ports and upon cessation of hostilities in Europe she began preparations for Pacific duty.

Koiner arrived Pearl Harbor 25 June commencing training operations with *Corregidor* (CVS-58) and exercises with submarines. Departing Pearl Harbor 4 August, she was en route to Leyte when President Truman announced the end of hostilities with Japan. The destroyer escort remained in the Far East as part of

the occupation forces on escort and patrol duty until 1 April 1946. Clearing Hong Kong she sailed by way of the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, and arrived Charleston, 30 May. *Koiner* decommissioned and joined the Atlantic Reserve Fleet 4 October 1946, at Green Cove Springs, Florida.

From 20 June 1951 to 14 May 1954, *Koiner* was on loan to the Coast Guard where she was commissioned as WDE-431. She was acquired along with 11 other destroyer escorts to augment the limited Coast Guard fleet during the buildup for the Korean War when the service was tasked with operating an increased number of ocean stations in the Pacific. Each had "100" added to their Navy hull numbers to avoid confusion with the WAVPs. *Koiner* was accepted for the Coast Guard by the commanding officer of the Coast Guard Reactivation Detachment on 30 June 1954 and was ordered to her new home port of Seattle, Washington, after modifications including the installation of a weather balloon hanger and the addition of a motor surf boat. Her crew then underwent a period of extensive shakedown training under Navy supervision.

The advent of the Korean War had created a need for a greater number of new ocean stations in the Pacific. Although most equipment and supplies for the war effort were transported by sea, most troops were carried to the operational area by air. To help protect these troops, the Coast Guard established new ocean station positions throughout the Pacific along with SAR air detachments strategically placed at Guam and the Philippines. The cutters assigned to the ocean stations typically provided weather observations, served as aids to navigation by providing check points for military and commercial aircraft flying transoceanic routes, communication facilities for enroute aircraft, and as search and rescue platforms for both surface vessels and aircraft if needed. In order to keep each ocean station occupied, eight to nine ships (mostly WDEs) had to be in constant rotation. For example, one typical tour called for three weeks SAR-standby at Midway Island, three weeks on Ocean Station Victor, three weeks on SAR standby at Guam, less than one week of "R and R" in Japan, three weeks on Ocean Station Sugar, and three weeks on SAR standby at Adak and then home.

Koiner arrived in Seattle on 5 February 1952 under the command of CDR Frank V. Helmer, USCG after first assisting the tanker *Bulkfuel* on 19 and 20 December 1951 after the tanker suffered a main engine fuel pump casualty. *Koiner* and CGC *Blackhaw* escorted the tanker to safety. She began serving her first tour on an ocean station when she arrived at Ocean Nan on 16 March 1952. She remained on station until 7 April 1952. She next served on Ocean Station Victor from 7 to 28 June 1952. From 11 October to 3 November 1952 she served on Ocean Station Queen. From 24 to 25 December 1952, along with CGC *Winona*, she assisted the M/V *Maple Cove*. From 15 February to 8 March 1953 she served on Ocean Station Nan. From 12 May to 2 June 1953 she served on

Ocean Station Victor. From 13 July to 2 August she served on Ocean Station Sugar. From 27 to 29 July 1953 she diverted to Attu Island due to a medical emergency. From 14 to 20 November 1953 she assisted the M/V *Margo*, which had lost a propeller and was taken under tow by the tug *Agnes Foss*. From 28 November to 6 December 1953 she served on Ocean Station Queen.

She was decommissioned on 14 May 1954 and returned to the Navy. She was then converted to a radar picket escort vessel and reclassified DER-331 on 28 September 1954. Recommissioned 26 August 1955, LCDR V. W. Tracy, USN, in command, *Koiner* joined the Continental Air Defense System in the Pacific Barrier. From 1956 into 1965 *Koiner* operated on picket stations off the Washington and California coast to provide early warning in the event of enemy air attack. On 1 July 1965 *Koiner* departed Alamada, California, for her new homeport, Guam, arriving 28 July after a stopover at Pearl Harbor. On 6 August she left for the first of three "Market Time" patrols ending in December. The experience *Koiner* had gained during her patrols off the West Coast enabled the radar picket escort ship to contribute greatly to the surveillance tactics necessary to prevent the flow of supplies by sea to the Viet Cong. During 1966 *Koiner* was again deployed for further "Market Time" operations off Vietnam. A 7-month West-Pac cruise began late in February. Between patrols the ship visited Hong Kong; Bangkok; Manila; and Kaoshi-ung, Formosa.

In late January 1967 *Koiner* participated in a gunfire mission after a brief in-port period in Japan. She then resumed her regular duties. The important work radar picket escort and her sister ships is an example of the diversified roles which the Navy must play in defending the nation and encouraging peace abroad. She was decommissioned in 1968 and was sold for scrap the following year.

Sources:

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