

### FIGHTING SHIP ABANDONED, THEN SAVED

The story of the fighting Destroyer, The USS MULLANY, one of the few ships ever abandoned and later brought into port under her own power, has been told by the Navy.

Here's the action log of the MULLANY, a typical war-constructed American ship manned by a cross-section wartime crew of ex-salesmen and mechanics, school teachers, and farmers, who rapidly became battle-hardened during the many engagements their ship fought since she was commissioned in April, 1943.

First action was in the occupation of Kiska Island in the Aleutians in August, 1943. In December, the MULLANY was in action screening bombardment forces during occupation of Cape Gloucester, New Britain. For the next six months the little Destroyer was always on the go, banging away at different objectives on New Guinea and serving as a part of various task forces on raids and strikes against the Jap-held Island.

In July, 1944, the MULLANY screened occupation forces during the invasion of Dutch New Guinea, and from there went north to Leyte as part of the seventh fleet. To the little Destroyer went the honor of screening the flagship of the invasion forces, the ship carrying General Douglas MacArthur and other top operation commanders. During the invasion of Leyte the MULLANY was under almost continuous air attack for nine days, and she knocked down her first Jap plane which attempted a suicide dive on her fantail.

Following the Leyte operation, the MULLANY came back to the United States for a regular overhaul and then shoved off again for the Pacific, arriving off Iwo Jima for the initial bombardments and landings. The Destroyer was at Iwo Jima from February 16 to 20, 1945, and then went to a rendezvous where the invasion forces for Okinawa were assembling.

From April 1 to 6 the MULLANY was standing picket (scouting) duty off Okinawa. On April 6, at 4 P.M., a large number of Japanese suicide planes headed for the MULLANY'S group of Destroyers. After more than an hour's intense fighting, one plane managed to penetrate the MULLANY'S anti-aircraft screen, and crash aft of the deck house between two gun turrets.

Despite explosions of depth charges and large fires, plus the explosion of the Kamikaze's bomb and gas tanks, the gallant Destroyer kept all her remaining guns firing and knocked down two more Jap suicide planes with her forward guns.

By 6:30 P.M. the fires were raging uncontrollably and the magazines were in imminent danger of exploding. The order to abandon ship was given. The wounded were lowered over the side into a Gig. Other survivors simply dropped into the water, inflated their life belts and awaited rescue by other ships standing by.

Another Destroyer came alongside the stricken MULLANY and fought her fires, and by the following morning, with the little ship still afloat, the crew was able to return aboard and begin a long struggle to bring her home to the United States.

For 20 days the MULLANY stayed at anchorage off Okinawa, remaining at General Quarters for hours on end as other fanatical Jap pilots sought to send her to the bottom.

Finally the MULLANY was ordered to an advanced base for temporary repairs, from where she sailed to Pearl Harbor and then to the United States.

The Okinawa action cost the lives of 22 members of the MULLANY'S Crew. Nine were reported missing and 33 were wounded. A number of members of the ship's company were recommended by the Commanding Officer, Commander Albert O. Momm, USN, of Belmont, Massachusetts, for commendations.