

Commander Becton Call for Shipyard Workers 1945

P.S.N.Y. 5-26-45 25M

The U. S. S. LAFFEY (DD724)

COMMANDER FREDERICK J. BECTON, U.S.N.
Officer in Command

Built by the Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine, the Laffey was commissioned at the Boston Navy Yard on February 8, 1944. The shakedown cruise took her into Bermuda waters where she rescued nineteen survivors of a Navy plane which had crashed twenty-four hours earlier. After the usual post shakedown alterations she steamed from New York harbor on May 14th as part of a convoy screen destined for the United Kingdom.

Assigned to a task force she became part of the assault screen at Baie de la Seine, France, on D-Day. During June 6, 7, 8 and 9, the Laffey fired 985 rounds of 5-inch anti-aircraft ammunition at shore defenses. Assigned directed shore fire she silenced two pill boxes and 88mm and machine gun emplacements. On June 25th she became part of the task force bombarding the Cherbourg defenses. After this action she returned to Boston, where she received certain alterations and improvements.

Late in July, 1944, she was shifted to the Pacific, reaching Pearl Harbor in September. Here she was again used as a screening ship attached to a task force. During the last part of November, 1944, she was given patrol duty in the Leyte Gulf. With several other destroyers she headed for Oromoc Bay, Leyte, on December 6th as a screen and fire support ship. While in this assault area on December 7 the Laffey carried out prelanding bombardment, silenced a shore battery and placed enemy troop concentrations under fire. On the 10th of December she helped a sister ship hit by a suicide plane. From the 12th to the 17th she participated in the Mindoro operations serving as a fire director ship.

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After the Mindoro action she moved on to Lingayen Gulf and Iwo Jima. Such in brief is the story of the Laffey up to the Okinawa action, during the course of which she was attacked by twenty-two Jap suicide planes. Nine of these Kamikazi planes were shot down but seven crashed on the Laffey. She received four bomb hits and a dive bomber accidentally crashed into her.

Thirty-two of the crew gave their lives. The rest of the crew made temporary repairs and brought their ship to Seattle to be made ready for further action against the heart of the Japanese Empire. The damage caused by this fight will require the services of five hundred experienced ship repair men for fifty-five days of skilled work to make the Laffey once more a fighting ship of the United States Navy.

Already the repair yards are crowded with damaged ships and the Laffey must wait her turn because of lack of men needed to speed the work.

PUGET SOUND NAVY YARD is the principal repair yard on the West Coast. It has all the tools, machinery, equipment, and the know-how capable of saving many fighting days for ships like the LAFLEY if the men to use them can be found. This War isn't over for LAFLEY, just as it isn't over for any real American until the last Jap surrenders unconditionally or is dead. DELAY COSTS AMERICAN LIVES. Regardless of your past experience the Navy Yard has a job for you. Ask the PUGET SOUND NAVY YARD employee at the information desk for details.

Men with the skills listed below are most urgently needed, while men without a trade can learn one while helping repair fighting ships:

Electricians, Sheetmetal Workers, Riggers, Machinists, Copersmiths and Pipefitters. Helpers in all trades are needed.

DON'T WAIT! APPLY NOW at the Navy Civilian Employment Office, 823 Second Avenue, in the Exchange Building. Or go directly to the Puget Sound Navy Yard, Bremerton. Full information is also available at the United States Civil Service Commission and the United States Employment Service.