

Congress's authorization began the IOWA's story May 25, 1939. Her keel was laid at New York Navy Yard, Brooklyn N.Y., on June 27, 1940, and twenty-six months later, on August 27, 1942, she was christened and launched the U.S.S. IOWA, battleship No. 61, first of her class. In the words of the Secretary of Navy, Frank Knox, spoken at her commissioning on the 162nd anniversary of George Washington, February 22, 1943, "The greatest ship ever launched by the American Nation."

On March 24, 1943, she put to sea on her shakedown cruise with some 3,000 officers and men, many of whom had never been to sea before. During the next several months her crew molded into a fighting team with training that carried her along the Atlantic coast, into the Chesapeake Bay, the Gulf of Maine and Casco Bay. On August 27, 1943, one year from the date of launching, the ship set sail for Argentina, Newfoundland, on her first duty, that was commonly known at the time as the "Tirpitz Watch", neutralizing the threat of Germany's mighty battleship poised in Norwegian waters.

The "Tirpitz Watch" ended by a call to what is considered the highlight of the IOWA's early career, assignment to carry the late President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, to North Africa for the historic conference with Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin at Teheran Iran, in November, 1943. Threat of German glider bombs caused the IOWA to retire to Bahia, Brazil. While making this run the IOWA first crossed the equator, November 27, 1943, and conducted the ceremony of converting the pollywogs into shellbacks. When needed for the President's return trip the IOWA sailed back to North Africa first to Freetown and then to Dakar where the Commander in Chief embarked from a French destroyer, having been taken aboard in ancient fashion with eight side boys hoisting the boatswain's chair.

#### IOWA LEAVES FOR PACIFIC

On January 2, 1944, the IOWA, as flagship for Rear Admiral O.M. Hustvedt, Commander Battleship Division 7, departed the U.S. for the Pacific. She joined Admiral Raymond A. Spruance's Fifth Fleet in Task Force 58, during the Marshall Islands campaign supporting air strikes which were made against Kwajalein Atoll (Marshall Is.) on January 29, 1944, and which hit Eniwetok the next week. On February 16th and 17th, 1944, the IOWA was part of a striking force that swept around Truk, netting several Japanese ships while the first carrier air bombardment of the war fell upon that Japanese Atoll. On February 22, the ship operating as a support unit was part of Admiral Marc A. Mitscher's fast carrier forces that moved up to strike Tinian.

On March 18, 1944, the IOWA, acting as flagship for a group under Vice Admiral W.A. Lee, Jr., sortied from Majuro Island and helped bombard Mille Atoll (Marshall Is.). There she received her only damage of the war, two 4.7" Japanese projectiles struck her, one bursting on the deck near turret two with small damage and the other holing the ship's side, bursting in an empty compartment where damage was negligible. Casualties amounted to one man with a cut face.

The next operation, the Marianas Campaign, culminating in the invasion of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam, found the IOWA in the support forces of Task Force 58 carrying on air strikes against those islands and in the bombardment group, again under Rear Admiral Hustvedt, that blasted Tinian on June 13th. There followed during June 19th to 21st the First Battle of the Philippine Sea, often called the "Marianas Turkey Shoot" by Navy Flyers who shot down nearly 500 planes and inflicted severe damage on Japanese carrier and fleet units. The IOWA was in the forces that joined in pursuit of the Japanese Fleet and when attacked by enemy planes she accounted for one torpedo plane and helped down another out of the eight shot down by the surface units. July, 1944 was spent with Task Force 58 in Marianas' waters supporting operations on Saipan and Guam and carrying out an air strike on Palau (Caroline Is.) on the 24th. Support by air attacks on Guam carried on into August, but early in that month the force retired to Eniwetok for replenishment.

Underway again early in September, now a part of the Third Fleet, in a Task Unit under Rear Admiral Hustvedt, the IOWA was in the support forces of the fast carriers as they arrived in position for launching attacks by air on the middle Philippine Islands (Visayas) on September 17th in support of the landing operations on Peleliu Islands. Four days later, in position 80 miles off shore, air strikes were made against Luzon. Moving southward, on the 24th the Visayas Islands were again targets for the carrier planes, followed by retirement of the force to Saipan and then to Ulithi Atoll.

#### ADMIRAL BADGERSTAKES OVER

On October 6, 1944, Rear Admiral O.C. Badger, USN, relieved Rear Admiral Hustvedt as Commander Battleship Division 7, and Commander of the Support Units of a Third Fleet Task Group with the IOWA as his flagship. This unit with others of Task Group 38 arrived in launching position off Okinawa Gunto on October 10th and began a series of air strikes against the Ryukyus and Formosa that continued for six days amid sporadic enemy attacks that damaged several of our units. On October 18th, aircraft were launched from a position north of Luzon for attack on that island in preparation for the Leyte invasion. Those air strikes were continued and were moved south against the Visayas Islands for the next six days. At the beginning of the Second Battle of the Philippine Sea, the IOWA steamed in toward the Central Philippines with her Task Group launching aircraft which attacked the Japanese Central Forces headed for San Bernardino Straits. When the Northern Japanese Force was reported, as a part of Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet, the ship moved northward to meet this threat. Later when the Japanese broke through San Bernardino Straits into our escort carriers, the IOWA, a part of a fast Battleship Striking Force under Rear Admiral O.C. Badger, turned to the southward at a maximum speed in hopes of intercepting the enemy. Some of the light forces of the group discovered and promptly sank an enemy cruiser while the IOWA continued to search for bigger game which barely eluded her and sneaked through the San Bernardino Straits. During the remainder of October and through November the forces of which the ship was a part continued to give air support in the Philippines area with repeated strikes. On November 25th while in position for launching one of these attacks, the IOWA shot down 3 planes and hit 3 others of the enemy that attacked the force and which damaged the INTREPID and CABOT. Air attacks from the fast carriers were continued through December on various dates, but the IOWA suffered shaft trouble and was detached and ordered to the States for a period of Navy Yard overhaul, departing December 23rd and proceeding via Manus and Pearl Harbor on January, 1945. At Pearl Harbor on January 7, 1945, the crew had their first liberty in one years duty overseas.

In October, 1944, the IOWA commenced serving as press ship for the Fleet. From her modern Radio Broadcasting Booth, teletype and wirephoto facilities, the leading newspapermen and radio commentators of the United States and Allied nations transmitted the first hand news of the war at sea. She continued this service until her return to the United States after the initial occupation of Japan.

### RETURN TO FRONT LINE

The IOWA left Hunter's Point Drydocks, San Francisco on March 19, 1945. After a period of training at San Pedro, and calling at Pearl Harbor and Eniwetok enroute, the ship joined its old Task Force 58 off Okinawa Gunto. There the IOWA participated in operations furnishing air coverage over Okinawa. This was a time of bitter struggle with suicide aircraft, but none of the ships in the IOWA's group were hit. Those planes coming within range of her guns were either shot down or driven off. On May 12th the force retired briefly to Ulithi, but returned under the Third Fleet in Vice Admiral McCain's Task Force 38 to the area off the Ryukyus and struck southern Kyushu repeatedly with air strikes. About June 13th, retirement was made to Leyte for replenishment.

### BOMBARDMENT SPEARHEAD

Departing Leyte, July 1st, the Third Fleet, with the IOWA again in the support force, Rear Admiral O.C. Badger commanding and embarked in the IOWA as his flagship, moved into position off Japan for sustained air attacks upon the Jap homeland which continued intermittently until August 15th. The first air strikes were made on Tokyo on July 10th. The next was against Northern Honshu and Hokkaido on the 14th. That day, with the IOWA as flagship, Rear Admiral O.C. Badger was directed to form a group for the bombardment of Muroran, Hokkaido. On July 15th, the IOWA did her part in blasting the steel mills and other targets at that city. On the 17th, Rear Admiral Badger was directed to form another group, including the IOWA as his flagship, and bombarded Hitachi, Honshu. The IOWA fired more than 600 tons of ammunition in these two bombardments. Rejoining the carriers again, the latter struck Tokyo on the 18th. The attacks continued throughout the remaining days of July and included the Nagoya and Tokyo Areas. Early August found the forces replenishing northwest of Iwo Jima, returning to the air attacks on August 9th, a day on which 10 enemy planes were shot down by ship's guns. On the 13th, the force was in position for launching additional strikes. Twenty-two planes were splashed by Combat Air Patrol that day. On August 15th word of the Japanese surrender stayed additional air attacks prepared for the Tokyo and Nagoya areas.

### OCCUPY YOKOSUKA

Following Admiral Halsey's announcement to the Third Fleet of the cessation of hostilities on August 15th, there was a period of gathering of forces in preparation for landing and occupying certain portions of Japan. This responsibility was given to Rear Admiral Badger who formed a Task Force for the Occupation of Yokosuka. At the beginning of this operation the IOWA served as his flagship as Commander Task Force 31. On August 27th, three years to the day since her launching, with her pit log reading 190,313 miles the IOWA, her A.A. batteries alerted against any treachery, dropped anchor in Sagami Wan, an open bay, 30 miles southwest of Tokyo. While in Sagami Wan, Rear Admiral Badger shifted his flag to the SAN DIEGO, but the IOWA continued as a part of his forces. On August 29th she moved into Tokyo Bay and there acted as one of the support ships for the first landings on the Japanese home islands on August 30th.

## THE IOWA CUTS QUITE A FIGURE

The IOWA is a mighty floating fortress, fully laden weighing more than 52,000 tons. The area of all decks and platforms comprises about nine and one-half acres. She is over 887 feet in length and her extreme breadth measures 108 feet - 3 inches. Her length is about 12 feet less than 3 football fields laid end to end. At the highest point of her superstructure she towers 185 feet above her keel, 150 feet above the waterline in 19 separate levels or stories. Her fuel oil capacity is great enough to float a liberty ship. During the war she gave 6,720,000 gallons of fuel to 240 destroyers. The capacity of her electric generators is sufficient to handle the industrial and domestic load of a city of 20,000 population. In her construction there are over 800 miles of welding and 1,350,000 driven rivets. The total length of shafting used to drive the vessel is 1,074 feet. The length of piping throughout the ship would make one length of 80 miles, 17 miles of which is used for refrigeration and cooling purposes. The operation of the ship involves 900 motors, 5,300 lighting fixtures, and 1,091 telephones.

The IOWA's main battery is composed of nine 16"50 cal. guns. Each gun's length is 66' 8" with a maximum range of 24 miles. An armor piercing projectile weighs over 1 ton, a high capacity projectile nearly as much. One projectile cost \$929.00, a powder charge \$165.00. The two bombardments of the Jap homeland cost \$5,809.14 per minute, almost \$100.00 per second.

The secondary battery consists of 20-5"/38 cal. guns in 2 gun mounts. Each gun is 15' 10" long, the maximum range 10½ miles. Each projectile weighs 55.2 lbs. and costs \$25.00. The powder charge costs \$9.00.

There are, also, several 44 MM guns in 4 gun quads. Each gun is 8 feet long and the quad weighs 11½ tons. The projectile travels at 2,790 feet per second, the maximum range being 6 4/5 miles. Each projectile weighs 2.2 lbs. and costs 99 cents. 20 MM guns are in single mounts. Each gun is 4' 10" long and the mount weighs 1,815 lbs. The projectile travels 2,725 feet per second, weighs 0.4 lbs. and costs 39 cents.

In the IOWA, there live over 2,500 men who enjoy many of the conveniences of any town of similar population. 2,500 men consume 7 tons of food per day costing \$1,600.00. Of the seven tons, 1½ tons are of fresh foods, 2 tons of frozen and 3½ tons of dry. In the huge storerooms, 100 tons of fresh fruit and vegetables can be stored, 84 tons of frozen meats, 650 tons of dry stores, totalling 834 tons of food, sufficient to last for 119 days. In addition, the soda fountain produces 9,600 gallons of ice cream each month.

In the modern laundry, 540,000 lbs of clothes are laundered, 3,600 officer's and chief's uniforms are laundered and pressed, and 12,000 lbs. of linen washed every month. In the 8 chair barber shop, the barbers turn out 7,400 haircuts per month, and in the cobbler shop, 650 pairs of heels are replaced and 250 pairs of soles monthly.

Holidays mean an extra special dinner for all hands. The Fourth of July Menu, 1945, cost \$1.05 per man. The following is the menu and quantities of food consumed.

Cream of tomato soup	240 gallons.
Saltines	240 lbs.
Roast Young Tom Turkey	2,849 lbs.
Cranberry Sauce	18 lbs. (dehydrated)
Sage Dressing	6 lbs.
Cream whipped potatoes	1,500 lbs.
Buttered peas	480 lbs.
Hot Parker House Rolls	4,500.
Ripe Olives	20 gallons.
Sweet Pickles	20 gallons.
Cherry Pie	1,200 lbs. of cherries. 2,800 pieces.
Cigraettes	2,800 packages.
Mixed Candy	2,800 packages.
Ice Cream	200 gallons.
Iced Lemonade	640 gallons.

### MEN FROM EVERY STATE

Aboard the IOWA, every state in the Union, Canada, and the Philippines are represented. In June, 1945, it was disclosed that about three-fourths of the crew were from territory east of the Mississippi, and one-fourth west. New York came first with 292, Pennsylvania followed with 268, Ohio with 193, Massachusetts with 62, Chicago and Philadelphia with 60, Brooklyn with 49, and Detroit with 36.

The U.S. Armed Forces Institute offered correspondence courses to men overseas, and several hundred men took advantage of the opportunity to get ahead in their schooling while fighting the war. The IOWA ship's company entered into all "extra cash" war bond sales. In the Independence Day sale of 1944, the IOWA led the Pacific Fleet in gross sales of over \$100,000.

The IOWA represented a powerful threat to the enemy in Europe and Asia. Her performance during the war demonstrated the value of the battleship in task force operations. She was the first of her class, four of which played an active part in the prosecution of the war, the U.S.S. IOWA, U.S.S. NEW JERSEY, U.S.S. MISSOURI, and the U.S.S. WISCONSIN. She has lived up to the Navy Secretary's Commissioning words, "THE GREATEST SHIP EVER LAUNCHED BY THE AMERICAN NATION."

"GLAD TO HAVE HAD YOU ABOARD!"

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