

Henry Kudzik, With Sub Crew For 2 Years, Tells Experiences

FEB 2 1945

Henry Stanley Kudzik, U. S. Navy, recently advanced to the rank of Gunner's Mate First Class, who spent the past 24 months in the South Pacific, is spending a well deserved respite visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Kudzik, 629 Frankford Street.

A former student at Bethlehem Technical High School, he entered the armed forces when he was 17 years of age, and during his leave he observed his 20th birthday.

All of his active navy career was spent aboard one of Uncle Sam's submarines, the name of the raider being withheld because of naval restrictions. Following his boot training at the Great Lakes Naval Station, he was assigned to the underwater craft, and while reluctant in relating his experiences, he made known the fact that "our ship" has taken a tremendous toll of enemy vessels.

He wears a commendation ribbon awarded by C. W. Nimitz, Admiral U. S. Navy. The citation follows:

"For meritorious service during a war patrol conducted by a United States warship when the vessel transported a Marine detachment to the Japanese-occupied Apamama Island, disembarking that unit and supporting it in its reconnaissance and subsequent occupation of that island. Although his vessel was damaged early in the operations and therefore severely handicapped, he conducted himself in a courageous, determined and aggressive manner which was in keeping with the highest traditions of the naval service."

Speaking of the incident, he said that a 5-inch Jap shell hit and stuck in the superstructure of the submarine, failing to discharge. Grabbing a crowbar he released it, thereby saving the craft from possible serious damage. In conjunc-



HENRY KUDZIK, G. M. 1-c

tion with the citation he was advanced in rank.

During the engagement of the Gilbert Islands, his submarine was hit, damaging the boat to some extent, but not putting it out of service. Following the hit, the craft submerged and after ducking "ash cans" dropped by the enemy, it was subsequently surfaced and escorted to a naval base, 2,000 miles away. A Presidential citation was awarded the crew.

Asked whether his boat got any of the Jap big ships, he smiled and said: "Yes, we got one of them. We sighted an aircraft carrier and our aim was good. It went to the bottom." He said that happened "somewhere in the South Pacific."

He participated in many of the

major engagements, including the Aleutians, Gilberts, Marshalls, Makin, Bougainville, Mindoro and Leyte.

"We got a lot of Jap boats," he said. "The big ones we go after in a big way, and the smaller ones we usually get with a well directed shot or two from our guns."

Asked whether he wouldn't rather be a member of a battleship crew, he shook his head. "I have always been on a submarine and I like it and I like the makeup of the crews. They are a bunch of swell fellows."

At the termination of his respite he will return to a South Pacific base to rejoin the other members of the crew, all of whom are enjoying a leave of absence.