



THESE ARE THE KIND OF MEN WHO ARE FIGHTING UNCLE SAM'S BATTLES—Typical American "gobs" are Fred Reynolds, Hans Petersen, Clifford McAuliffe, Eugene Prairie and Richard Kresge, left to right, above, survivors of the sinking of the U. S. S. Vincennes. The first four were guest of Kresge at the home of his parents here and told something of the great sea battle in which their ship went down in the flaming sea and they jumped for their lives into the shark-infested waters. —Globe-Times photo

## QUINTET OF SAILORS TELLS ABOUT BATTLE

Survivors of Sinking of U. S. S.  
Vincennes in Solomons  
Visit City.

Five smiling gobs, survivors of the U. S. S. Vincennes which was recently sent to the bottom under Japanese fire in the Solomons, explained Monday evening in their brief visit here how it feels to operate their stations under shell-fire, jump from a burning boat, and then float around in shark-infested waters for several hours waiting to be rescued.

The five sailors related their story at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. Ralph Kresge, 403 East Broad Street, where they stopped for dinner. Richard Kresge, quartermaster, second class, a hero in that battle, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Kresge. The four fellow-seamen he entertained were Eugene Prairie, New York City, seaman first class; Clifford McAuliffe, Cambridge, Mass., seaman first class; Hans Petersen, Medford, Mass., quartermaster, third class, and Fred Reynolds, Fairhaven, Mass., quartermaster third class.

"We were shelling the beach so the Marines could land," Quartermaster Reynolds started the story. "Man, it really started to get hot, the air was full of attackers, and there was plenty of shrapnel flying loose.

"It was 2:30 a. m., August 9, when the Japs rammed in the shot that counted. We were stationed at different parts of the ship when it hit. I happened to be three decks below, and I knew we were directly hit when a guy came down and told me to evacuate. Well, I folded my clothes neatly, went on deck and stepped over. Two hours later I was picked up by a life raft."

The others related nearly similar stories. There was no panic, the "gobs" pointed out. Instead many calmly went about putting life jackets on injured and tossing them into the sea. Seaman Petersen ran about the decks delivering communications by word of mouth after the communication system failed. Many sailors lighted cigarettes as soon as the ship was struck. Within seven hours, the five were picked up either by life rafts or destroyers.

Evidently, the sharks in the vicinity of the Solomons are enjoying prosperous times, especially in the yellow meat line. While the sailors were still serving aboard the Vincennes, they noted many Japanese bodies, both dead and alive, floating in the ocean. The majority of them were shot from airplanes.

"We picked up a few Japs that were floating around," Seaman Kresge related. "I got a kick out of one guy; he said he had seventeen kids back home." That, one of the gobs joked, is serving your country all around. Another prisoner was a graduate of the University of Oregon. Most of the captives, although appearing scared, talked very little.

Unfortunately, the sailors said, the Japs do not treat the American prisoners the way the Americans do. In fact, it is a common sight to see Japanese airplanes strafing American survivors that may be drifting in the sea.

No signs whatever of the ordeal could be found in the smiling faces of the five gobs. The boys regretted to lose the pay each had in his locker, and Seaman Kresge suffered a shrapnel wound in the leg.

Although already veterans of the Coral Seas and the Midway battles in addition to the Solomons conflict, the sailors appeared anxious to get back into the fight. They have been assigned to a new ship, "Santa Fe," and are earnestly hoping that the first voyage heads right to the thick of the battle.

Asked what their immediate plans are, the sailors were quick to remark, "Why worry. Say, Dick, where did you say these girls lived?"

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