

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED

Narrative by: Commander C. M. Bertholf
USS CALLAGHAN, DD 792.

This is the story of the last ship sunk in the Okinawa campaign and the last ship sunk in the war. The USS CALLAGHAN was fatally hit by a suicide plane on 29 July 1945, a few minutes before it was scheduled to leave for the States for overhaul. The survivors had the unusual experience of being sent back to the Philippines after they arrived in Ulithi. Commander Bertholf covers the highlights of the ship's experiences in an adequate manner.

Film No. 451
Recorded: 29 September 1945

Copy No. 1 of three copies.
Rough Transcript: Arienta, 8 October 1945
Smooth Transcript: Beckman, 23 October 1945

144663

FILMED

OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND LIBRARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Narrative by: Commander C. M. Berthelf
USS CALLAGHAN, DD 792.

Commander Berthelf:

This is Commander C. M. Berthelf, captain of the USS CALLAGHAN, DD 792, which was sunk by enemy action off Okinawa on 29 July 1945.

My ship was named to honor Rear Admiral Daniel J. Callaghan, who was killed in action during an engagement with the Japanese fleet in the Solomon Islands on November 13th, 1942.

The ship was built by the Bethlehem Steel Company, San Pedro, California. Her keel was laid February 21st, 1943 and she was launched August 1st, 1943. Mrs. Daniel J. Callaghan, widow of Rear Admiral Callaghan, served as sponsor at the christening ceremony. The CALLAGHAN was commissioned November 27th, 1943.

After her shakedown she left the west coast of the United States on the 5th of February '44. After that she participated in operations in the Admiralties and later in the Marianas in the summer of '44 and about September of that year, became a part of Task Force 38. She then participated in the raids off Formosa followed by the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October of '44. She later continued with strikes against Luzon at the end of the year and in early '45 made the carrier strikes on Formosa, the Philippines, the French Indo-China coast and the South China coast, in January of '45.

During the Iwo Jima operation the CALLAGHAN was part of the task force which struck Tokyo twice and, after the completion of this operation, returned to Ulithi in the Western Carolines and was then transferred to the amphibious force which was training for the capture of Okinawa.

The CALLAGHAN departed from Ulithi on the 21st of March, 1945, and headed for Okinawa, arriving there on the 25th of March. The ship did not leave sight of Okinawa for four months and four days after this date.

Before going any further, I would like to say that the CALLAGHAN's first skipper was Commander F. J. Johnson, of the class of 1929 at the

CONFIDENTIAL

Naval Academy. I relieved him in Ulithi on October 31st, 1944 and remained in command until the ship was lost.

The CALLAGHAN had been assigned shore bombardment duties for the Okinawa operation. However, prior to the initial landing on April 1st, our duties consisted chiefly of patrolling and screening the heavy ships. We had been there only two days when we were ordered to take station off Yontan airfield and bombard throughout the night. We did this and fired around 500 rounds and had no air attack that evening. However, shortly after sunrise the next morning, the lookout reported that there were three planes overhead. I mentioned this incident because it was the start of one of the *most galling* operations that the Navy has ever been involved with.

We were alone, steaming at about 10 knots. I went up to 25 knots immediately and the first of three Vals came down and dropped a bomb which missed. He then circled astern and attempted to suicide us. However, we shot him down.

The second plane then came down and, in attempting to miss him, I put my rudder full left and he overshot but his wheels cut the antenna between number one and number two smokestack and he then crashed into the water close aboard.

SANK MIDGET SUB

The third Val came down and the same procedure took place. And when he crashed we had engine cowling, wing and pilot all over the deck but no damage to the ship. Naturally, everybody was a little excited at this point and we then retired to seaward and joined with the heavy ships who were coming in from night retirement.

About an hour later somebody shouted, "Periscope." I ran out to the bridge and naturally looked a thousand or two thousand yards away and the lookout said, "No, Captain, he's alongside." And sure enough, there about 35 yards off the beam, was this periscope. All I can remember thinking of is that this can't be happening to me all in one hour. We dropped all our port depth charges and as the ship was only making about eight knots, I thought I had sunk the CALLAGHAN rather than the submarine, and I'm sure that the man in the after steering room was of the same opinion. However, the midget submarine came up and rolled over and sank, and that was the start of our four months and four days at Okinawa.

During the initial landing and the days following it, there were numerous air attacks, many ships were hit, many were sunk. We were fortunate enough to escape this. We then started three months of continuous firing for the Army and the Marines on the beach. Our schedule was roughly four days and four nights of firing without letup followed by the fifth day of replenishment of ammunition at Kerama Retto which was supposed to be the

CONFIDENTIAL

day of rest for the crew. However, they, of course, spent the whole day loading ammunition. During the fifth night they sometimes would let us anchor under the smoke but you usually spent half the night at general quarters anyhow.

Due to the numerous suicide attacks we did not secure our main engines for 90 days and I do not believe a day passed that general quarters was not held at least once for an air raid, although many times they were false alarms.

When the CALLAGHAN arrived at Okinawa she had approximately 800 rounds per gun. When we finished in June and the island was secured, each gun had 3,800 rounds, or, in other words, we had fired about 3,000 rounds per gun or about four times as many as we had originally fired in a year's operation.

About the 1st of July, after the island had been secured, the CALLAGHAN and the rest of the ships in Destroyer Squadron 55 were shifted to the radar picket unit, and for the first couple of weeks in July, things were relatively quiet. About this time we began to get word of the possibility of returning for Navy Yard overhaul. And naturally, after the operation at Okinawa, everybody was just about ready for home.

ORDERED TO WEST COAST

On the 28th of July we were ordered out to radar picket station, nine Able, which was located about 60 miles southwest of Point Bole on Okinawa. The screen commander told the squadron commander that inasmuch as we might leave on the 29th for the West Coast he wouldn't send us out. But Captain A. E. Jarrell, ComDesRon 55, said he preferred to go in case the orders were changed. So we proceeded to sea and that evening did receive confirmation of our orders.

The USS LAWS was instructed to be at our station about 0130 and relieve us and we would then proceed into Nakagusuku Wan for topping off and depart for the coast in the morning. I placed a call with the quartermaster for 0130 and turned in, after announcing to the crew that we were leaving for the coast in the morning.

At 0030 the officer of the deck called me and said they had a bogie about ten miles away. We immediately went to general quarters and about three minutes later commenced firing as the bogie closed the ship. He was turned away and we were then making 25 knots with the three destroyers on the picket station. However, he turned and came back in and about a thousand yards from the ship I saw his exhaust and thought that he was going to miss well astern. However, I was wrong and he crashed at number three handling room.

CONFIDENTIAL

Our rudder was jammed full right. The bomb exploded in the after engine room killing all hands immediately. It was a bright moonlight night and there were approximately anywhere from five to ten other Jap planes in the raid. The gasoline fire was tremendous and about three minutes after the plane hit the number three upper handling room some depth charges blew up. It was the biggest explosion I have ever been really close to and although I was well forward on the bridge, it knocked me across the pilothouse like I was a feather.

At the time I thought that probably half the men would be killed. The ship immediately took a 15-degree list to starboard and went down by the stern and then stopped. I had all hands immediately abandon ship after securing the engineering spaces, except for what was left of the salvage ship party and key officers. We remained aboard for about another hour but the exploding ammunition and the fire plus the continuing air raids made the situation almost hopeless and several of the more severely wounded, plus those of us who had remained aboard, left the ship via the LCS 125.

About 15 minutes after we had left, the fires went out but the air raids continued. And at 0234 I saw the CALLAGHAN's bow go up in the air and she went down by the stern about a mile away from me. Shortly after her nose went under, the depth charges exploded and it certainly made me very happy to know that all the men had had ample opportunity to get clear of the area or be picked up prior to this explosion and no one lost his life in this manner.

SENT BACK TO PHILIPPINES

We continued searching for survivors until well after daylight and then returned via destroyer, the CASSIN YOUNG and the PRICHETT to Hagushi anchorage at Okinawa and all were placed aboard the CRESCENT CITY, the casualty receiving ship.

I might mention that the LCS 125 had been alongside the CALLAGHAN for about 45 minutes and had done a wonderful job in fighting the fire and in removing the wounded. Her doctor, working in the dark with explosions and ammunition and air raids was the calmest, coolest man I had ever seen and saved several lives. The explosions and the fire made it impossible for the LCS 125 to remain alongside and that is why finally we had to cast off and the remainder of us leave the ship.

Upon checking our casualties at Hagushi we found that one officer, Ensign Gilbert Paine and 46 men were missing. A few days later one other man died of wounds received. There were two officers and 71 men injured, about half of these seriously; the other half, not so seriously. However, no more died other than the ones I just mentioned.

CONFIDENTIAL

Our return to the United States was a rather confused affair because about 17 days after the CALLAGHAN was sunk, the war with Japan ended, the CALLAGHAN having been the last destroyer sunk in the war.

We finally arrived at Ulithi on the USS HYDE, an APA, commanded by Captain E. F. May of the class of 1926. We were treated royally and nothing was too good for any of us. However, when we arrived at Ulithi, all shipping in an easterly direction was stopped due to the necessity of standing by with troop ships to land in the Empire. After eight days at Ulithi we received terrible news that we were to head back to the Philippine Islands. I felt at the time that they can't do this to me, but naturally they did. And we arrived at Leyte about four days later.

I made several boat trips and contacted every officer I could think of and about two days later we were dropped off at the receiving station at Guiuan, Samar, but learned that a dispatch had been sent for the CALLAGHAN survivors to be sent home and that I was to fly immediately to Washington.

I departed the next day and the remainder of my officers and men left about two days later and finally reached Seattle, Washington in good shape and are now all on leave.

-- END --

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED

Narrative by: Commander C. M. Bertholf
USS CALLAGHAN, DD 792.

This is the story of the last ship sunk in the Okinawa campaign and the last ship sunk in the war. The USS CALLAGHAN was fatally hit by a suicide plane on 29 July 1945, a few minutes before it was scheduled to leave for the States for overhaul. The survivors had the unusual experience of being sent back to the Philippines after they arrived in Ulithi. Commander Bertholf covers the highlights of the ship's experiences in an adequate manner.

Film No. 451
Recorded: 29 September 1945

Copy No. 3 of three copies.
Rough Transcript: Arienta, 8 October 1945
Smooth Transcript: Beckman, 23 October 1945

CONFIDENTIAL

Narrative by: Commander C. M. Bertholf
USS CALLAGHAN, DD 792.

Commander Bertholf:

This is Commander C. M. Bertholf, captain of the USS CALLAGHAN, DD 792, which was sunk by enemy action off Okinawa on 29 July 1945.

My ship was named to honor Rear Admiral Daniel J. Callaghan, who was killed in action during an engagement with the Japanese fleet in the Solomon Islands on November 13th, 1942.

The ship was built by the Bethlehem Steel Company, San Pedro, California. Her keel was laid February 21st, 1943 and she was launched August 1st, 1943. Mrs. Daniel J. Callaghan, widow of Rear Admiral Callaghan, served as sponsor at the christening ceremony. The CALLAGHAN was commissioned November 27th, 1943.

After her shakedown she left the west coast of the United States on the 5th of February '44. After that she participated in operations in the Admiralties and later in the Marianas in the summer of '44 and about September of that year, became a part of Task Force 38. She then participated in the raids off Formosa followed by the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October of '44. She later continued with strikes against Luzon at the end of the year and in early '45 made the carrier strikes on Formosa, the Philippines, the French Indo-China coast and the South China coast, in January of '45.

During the Iwo Jima operation the CALLAGHAN was part of the task force which struck Tokyo twice and, after the completion of this operation, returned to Ulithi in the Western Carolines and was then transferred to the amphibious force which was training for the capture of Okinawa.

The CALLAGHAN departed from Ulithi on the 21st of March, 1945, and headed for Okinawa, arriving there on the 25th of March. The ship did not leave sight of Okinawa for four months and four days after this date.

Before going any further, I would like to say that the CALLAGHAN's first skipper was Commander F. J. Johnson, of the class of 1929 at the

CONFIDENTIAL

Naval Academy. I relieved him in Ulithi on October 31st, 1944 and remained in command until the ship was lost.

The CALLAGHAN had been assigned shore bombardment duties for the Okinawa operation. However, prior to the initial landing on April 1st, our duties consisted chiefly of patrolling and screening the heavy ships. We had been there only two days when we were ordered to take station off Yontan airfield and bombard throughout the night. We did this and fired around 500 rounds and had no air attack that evening. However, shortly after sunrise the next morning, the lookout reported that there were three planes overhead. I mentioned this incident because it was the start of one of the worst operations that the Navy has ever been involved with.

We were alone, steaming at about 10 knots. I went up to 25 knots immediately and the first of three Vals came down and dropped a bomb which missed. He then circled astern and attempted to suicide us. However, we shot him down.

The second plane then came down and, in attempting to miss him, I put my rudder full left and he overshot but his wheels cut the antenna between number one and number two smokestack and he then crashed into the water close aboard.

SANK MIDGET SUB

The third Val came down and the same procedure took place. And when he crashed we had engine cowling, wing and pilot all over the deck but no damage to the ship. Naturally, everybody was a little excited at this point and we then retired to seaward and joined with the heavy ships who were coming in from night retirement.

About an hour later somebody shouted, "Periscope." I ran out to the bridge and naturally looked a thousand or two thousand yards away and the lookout said, "No, Captain, he's alongside." And sure enough, there about 35 yards off the beam, was this periscope. All I can remember thinking of is that this can't be happening to me all in one hour. We dropped all our port depth charges and as the ship was only making about eight knots, I thought I had sunk the CALLAGHAN rather than the submarine, and I'm sure that the man in the after steering room was of the same opinion. However, the midget submarine came up and rolled over and sank, and that was the start of our four months and four days at Okinawa.

During the initial landing and the days following it, there were numerous air attacks, many ships were hit, many were sunk. We were fortunate enough to escape this. We then started three months of continuous firing for the Army and the Marines on the beach. Our schedule was roughly four days and four nights of firing without letup followed by the fifth day of replenishment of ammunition at Kerama Retto which was supposed to be the

CONFIDENTIAL

day of rest for the crew. However, they, of course, spent the whole day loading ammunition. During the fifth night they sometimes would let us anchor under the smoke but you usually spent half the night at general quarters anyhow.

Due to the numerous suicide attacks we did not secure our main engines for 90 days and I do not believe a day passed that general quarters was not held at least once for an air raid, although many times they were false alarms.

When the CALLAGHAN arrived at Okinawa she had approximately 800 rounds per gun. When we finished in June and the island was secured, each gun had 3,800 rounds, or, in other words, we had fired about 3,000 rounds per gun or about four times as many as we had originally fired in a year's operation.

About the 1st of July, after the island had been secured, the CALLAGHAN and the rest of the ships in Destroyer Squadron 55 were shifted to the radar picket unit, and for the first couple of weeks in July, things were relatively quiet. About this time we began to get word of the possibility of returning for Navy Yard overhaul. And naturally, after the operation at Okinawa, everybody was just about ready for home.

ORDERED TO WEST COAST

On the 28th of July we were ordered out to radar picket station, nine Able, which was located about 60 miles southwest of Point Bole on Okinawa. The screen commander told the squadron commander that inasmuch as we might leave on the 29th for the West Coast he wouldn't send us out. But Captain A. E. Jarrell, ComDesRon 55, said he preferred to go in case the orders were changed. So we proceeded to sea and that evening did receive confirmation of our orders.

The USS LAWS was instructed to be at our station about 0130 and relieve us and we would then proceed into Nakagusuku Wan for topping off and depart for the coast in the morning. I placed a call with the quartermaster for 0130 and turned in, after announcing to the crew that we were leaving for the coast in the morning.

At 0030 the officer of the deck called me and said they had a bogie about ten miles away. We immediately went to general quarters and about three minutes later commenced firing as the bogie closed the ship. He was turned away and we were then making 25 knots with the three destroyers on the picket station. However, he turned and came back in and about a thousand yards from the ship I saw his exhaust and thought that he was going to miss well astern. However, I was wrong and he crashed at number three handling room.

CONFIDENTIAL

Our rudder was jammed full right. The bomb exploded in the after engine room killing all hands immediately. It was a bright moonlight night and there were approximately anywhere from five to ten other Jap planes in the raid. The gasoline fire was tremendous and about three minutes after the plane hit the number three upper handling room some depth charges blew up. It was the biggest explosion I have ever been really close to and although I was well forward on the bridge, it knocked me across the pilehouse like I was a feather.

At the time I thought that probably half the men would be killed. The ship immediately took a 15-degree list to starboard and went down by the stern and then stopped. I had all hands immediately abandon ship after securing the engineering spaces, except for what was left of the salvage ship party and key officers. We remained aboard for about another hour but the exploding ammunition and the fire plus the continuing air raids made the situation almost hopeless and several of the more severely wounded, plus those of us who had remained aboard, left the ship via the LCS 125.

About 15 minutes after we had left, the fires went out but the air raids continued. And at 0234 I saw the CALLAGHAN's bow go up in the air and she went down by the stern about a mile away from me. Shortly after her nose went under, the depth charges exploded and it certainly made me very happy to know that all the men had had ample opportunity to get clear of the area or be picked up prior to this explosion and no one lost his life in this manner.

SENT BACK TO PHILIPPINES

We continued searching for survivors until well after daylight and then returned via destroyer, the CASSIN YOUNG and the PRICHETT to Hagushi anchorage at Okinawa and all were placed aboard the CRESCENT CITY, the casualty receiving ship.

I might mention that the LCS 125 had been alongside the CALLAGHAN for about 45 minutes and had done a wonderful job in fighting the fire and in removing the wounded. Her doctor, working in the dark with explosions and ammunition and air raids was the calmest, coolest man I had ever seen and saved several lives. The explosions and the fire made it impossible for the LCS 125 to remain alongside and that is why finally we had to cast off and the remainder of us leave the ship.

Upon checking our casualties at Hagushi we found that one officer, Ensign Gilbert Paine and 46 men were missing. A few days later one other man died of wounds received. There were two officers and 71 men injured, about half of these seriously; the other half, not so seriously. However, no more died other than the ones I just mentioned.

CONFIDENTIAL

Our return to the United States was a rather confused affair because about 17 days after the CALLAGHAN was sunk, the war with Japan ended, the CALLAGHAN having been the last destroyer sunk in the war.

We finally arrived at Ulithi on the USS HYDE, an APA, commanded by Captain E. F. May of the class of 1926. We were treated royally and nothing was too good for any of us. However, when we arrived at Ulithi, all shipping in an easterly direction was stopped due to the necessity of standing by with troop ships to land in the Empire. After eight days at Ulithi we received terrible news that we were to head back to the Philippine Islands. I felt at the time that they can't do this to me, but naturally they did. And we arrived at Leyte about four days later.

I made several boat trips and contacted every officer I could think of and about two days later we were dropped off at the receiving station at Quiuan, Samar, but learned that a dispatch had been sent for the CALLAGHAN survivors to be sent home and that I was to fly immediately to Washington.

I departed the next day and the remainder of my officers and men left about two days later and finally reached Seattle, Washington in good shape and are now all on leave.

-- END --

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED

corrected copy

Narrative by: Commander C.M. Bertholf
 USS CALLAGHAN, DD ~~792~~ 792

Recorded: 29 Sept. 1945
 Film No: 451
 Rough Transcript: Arienta, Y 2/c
 8 Oct. 1945

ROUGH DRAFT

Commander Bertholf:

This is Commander C.M. Bertholf, captain of the USS CALLAGHAN, DD792, which was sunk by enemy action off Okinawa on 29 July 1945.

My ship was named to honor Rear Admiral Daniel J. Callaghan, who was killed in action during an engagement with the Japanese fleet in the Solomon Islands on November 13th, 1942.

The ship was built by the Bethlehem Steel Company, San Pedro, California. Her keel was laid February 21st, 1943 and she was launched August 1st, 1943. Mrs. Daniel J. Callaghan, widow of Rear Admiral Callaghan, served as sponsor at the christening ceremony. The CALLAGHAN was commissioned November 27th, 1943.

After her shakedown she left the west coast of the United States on the 5th of February '44. After that she participated in the operations in the Admiralties and later in the Marianas in the summer of '44 and about September of that year, became a part of Task Force ³⁸ ~~32~~. She then participated in the raids off Formosa followed by ~~the engagement with~~ the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October of '44. She later continued with strikes against Luzon, the end of the year and in early '45 made the

OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND LIBRARY

lat

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

carrier strikes on Formosa, the Philippines, the French Indo-China coast and the South China coast, in January of '45.

During the Iwo Jima operation the CALLAGHAN was part of the task force which struck Tokyo twice and, after the completion of this operation, returned to Ulithi in the Western Carolines and was then transferred to the amphibious force which was training for the capture of Okinawa.

The CALLAGHAN departed from Ulithi on the 21st of March 1945 and headed for Okinawa, arriving there on the 25th of March. The ship did not leave sight of Okinawa for four months and four days after this date.

Before going any further, I would like to say that the CALLAGHAN's first skipper was ^{of} Commander F.J. Johnson, the class of 1929 at the Naval Academy. I relieved him in Ulithi on October 31st, 1944 and remained in command until the ship was lost.

The CALLAGHAN had been assigned shore bombardment duties for the Okinawa operation. However, prior to the initial landing on April 1st, our duties consisted chiefly of patrolling and screening the heavy ships. We had been there only two days when we were ordered to take station off ^{of} Yontan airfield and bombard ~~at~~ throughout the night. We did this and fired around 500 rounds and had no air attack

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

that evening. However, shortly after sunrise the next morning, the lookout reported that there were three planes overhead. I mentioned this incident because it was the start of one of the worst operations that the Navy has ever been involved with.

We were alone, steaming at about 10 knots. I went up to 25 knots immediately and the first of three ^{Vals} ~~valves~~ came down and dropped a bomb which missed. He then circled astern and attempted to suicide us. However, we shot him down. The second plane then came down and, in attempting to miss him, I put my rudder full left and he over shot but his wheels cut the antenna between number one and number two smokestack and he then crashed into the water close aboard. *Sank Midget Sub (S)* The ~~last~~ third Val came down and the same procedure took place. And when he crashed we had engine cowling, wing and pilot all over the deck but no damage to the ship. Naturally, everybody was a little excited at this point and we then retired to seaward and joined with the heavy ships who were coming in from night retirement. About an hour later somebody shouted "Periscope." I ran out to the bridge and naturally ~~and~~ looked a thousand or two thousand yards away and the lookout said, "No, captain, he's alongside." And sure enough, there about 35 yards off the beam, was this periscope. All I can remember thinking of is that this can't be happening to me all in one hour. We dropped all our port depth charges and as the ship was only making about (8) knots, I thought I

CONFIDENTIAL

- 4 -

had sunk the CALLAGHAN rather than the submarine, and I'm sure that the man in the after steering room was of the same ~~my~~ opinion. However, the midget submarine came up and rolled over and sank and that was the start of our four months and four days at Okinawa.

During the initial landing and ~~the days preceding it and the days following~~ ~~it~~ it, there were numerous air attacks, many ships were hit, many were sunk. We were fortunate enough to escape this. We then started three months of continuous firing for the Army and ^{the} Marines on the beach. Our schedule was roughly four days and four nights of firing without letup followed by the (5th) day of replenishment of ammunition at Kerama Retto which was supposed to be the day of rest for the crew. However, they, of course, spent the whole day loading ammunition. During the ~~the~~ fifth night they sometimes would let us anchor under the smoke but you usually spent half the night at general quarters anyhow.

Due to the numerous suicide attacks we did not secure our main engines for 90 days and I do not believe a day passed that general quarters was not held at least once for an air raid, although many times they were false alarms.

When the CALLAGHAN arrived at Okinawa she had approximately 800 rounds per gun. When we finished in June and the island was secured, each gun had 3800 rounds, ~~or~~,

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

in other words, we had fired about 3,000 rounds per gun or about four times as many as we had originally fired in a year's operation.

About the 1st of July, after the island had been secured, the CALLAGHAN and the rest of the ships in Destroyer Squadron 55 were shifted to the radar picket unit, and for the first couple of weeks in July, things were relatively ~~quite~~ quiet. About this time we ~~we~~ began to get word of the possibility of returning for Navy Yard overhaul. And ~~we~~ naturally, after the operation at Okinawa, everybody was just about ready for home.

Ordered To West Coast (2)

On the 28th of July we were ordered out to radar picket station, ^A nine ~~able~~, which was located about 60 miles southwest of Point Bolo on Okinawa. The screen commander

told the squadron commander that in as much as we might leave on the 29th for the

^{W/C} West coast he wouldn't send us out. But Captain *A.E. Jarrill*, ~~ComDesRon~~ ComDesRon 55,

said he preferred to go in case the orders were changed. So we proceeded to sea

and that evening did receive confirmation of our orders. The USS ~~LAW~~ ^L was instructed

to be at our station about 0130 and ~~relieve~~ ^{relieve} us and we would then proceed into ~~Naga-~~

Nakagusuku Wan

~~station~~ for topping off and depart for the coast in the morning. I placed a call with

the quartermaster for 0130 and turned in, after announcing to the crew that we were

CONFIDENTIAL

- 6 -

leaving for the coast in the morning.) At 0030 the officer of the deck called me and said they had a Bogie about ten miles away. We immediately went to ~~general~~ general quarters and about three minutes later commenced firing as the Bogie closed the ship. He was turned away and we were then making 25 knots with the three destroyers on the picket station. However, he turned and came back in and about a thousand yards from the ship I saw his exhaust and thought that he was going to miss well astern. However, I was wrong and he crashed at number three handling room. Our rudder was jammed full right. The bomb exploded in the after engine room killing all hands immediately.

It was a bright moonlight night and there were approximately anywhere from (5) to (10)

Jap other/planes in the raid. ^{The} Gasoline fire was tremendous and ^{about} three minutes after the plane hit the number three ^{upper} handling room some depth charges blew up. It was the

biggest explosion I have ever been really close to ~~xxxxxxx~~ and although I was well forward on the bridge, it knocked me across the pilot house like I was a feather.

At the time I thought that probably half the men would be killed. The ship immediately took a 15 degree list to starboard and went down by the stern and then stopped.

I had all hands immediately abandon ship after securing the engineering spaces, except for what was left of the ^{salvage} ship party and key officers. We remained aboard for about another hour but the exploding ammunition and the fire plus the continuing

CONFIDENTIAL

- 7 -

air raids made the situation almost hopeless and several of the more severely wounded plus those ~~of~~ of us who had remained aboard, left the ship via the LCS 125.

About x 15 minutes after we had left, the fires went out but ~~the~~ the air raids continued. And at 0234 I saw the CALLAGHAN's bow go up in the air and she went down by the stern about a mile away from me. Shortly after her nose went under, the depth charges exploded and it certainly made me very happy to know that all the men had had ample opportunity to get clear of the area or be picked up prior to this explosion, and no one lost his life in this manner.

Sent Back To Philippines @

We continued searching for survivors until well after daylight and then returned via destroyer, the CASSIN YOUNG ~~xx~~ and the ~~FRITCHETT~~ ^{FRICHETTI} to Hagushi anchorage at Okinawa, and all were placed aboard the CRESCENT CITY, the casualty receiving ship.

I might mention that the LCS 125 had been alongside the CALLAGHAN for about 45 minutes and had done a wonderful job in fighting the fire and in removing the wounded. Her doctor, working in the dark with explosions and ammunition and air raids, was the calmest, coolest man I had ever seen, and saved several lives. The explosions and the fire made it impossible for the LCS 125 to remain ~~alongside~~ alongside and that is why we had to finally cast off and the remainder of us leave the ship.

CONFIDENTIAL

- 8 -

Upon checking our casualties at Hagushi we found that one ~~1~~ officer, Ensign Gilbert Paine, and 46 men were missing. A few days later one other man died of wounds received. There were two officers and 71 men injured, about half of these seriously; the other~~x~~ half, not so seriously. However, no more died other than the one^s/I just mentioned.

Our return to the United States was a rather confused affair because about 17 days after the CALLAGHAN was sunk, the war with Japan ended, the CALLAGHAN having been the last destroyer sunk in the war.

We finally arrived at Ulithi on the ~~USS~~ HYDE, an APA, commanded by Captain E.F. May of the class of 1926. We~~x~~ were treated royally and nothing was too good for any of us. However, when we arrived at Ulithi, all shipping in an easterly direction was stopped ~~to~~ due to the necessity of standing by with troop~~s~~ ships to land in the Empire. After eight days at Ulithi we received the terrible news that we were to head back to the Philippine Islands. I felt at the time that they can't do this to me, but naturally, they did. And we arrived at Leyte about four days later.

I made several boat trips and contacted every officer I could think of and about two days later we were dropped off at the receiving station at ~~Keyuan~~ ^{Guinan}, Samar, but learned that a dispatch had been sent ~~that~~ the CALLAGHAN survivors to be sent home

CONFIDENTIAL

- 9 -

and that I was to fly immediately to Washington.) I departed the next day and the remainder of my officers and men left about two days later and finally reached Seattle, Washington, in good shape and are now all on leave.

END