

Jack Doyle

U.S. Navy
U.S.S. Tennessee



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I had been in the U.S. Navy two years before World War II began and was stationed aboard the battleship U.S.S. Tennessee. On the morning of December 7, 1941, I arose early and went topside. No one else was around and I stood looking over the harbor. Suddenly there was a group of planes flying alongside battleship row. They were very close and very low. I could see their faces and could see that they were of Asian descent. After a few seconds, I heard a loud explosion and saw dirt and debris fly hundreds of feet into the air. It was only then I realized that we were being attacked. After bombing the airfield, they began dropping torpedoes, swooping over the ships and machine gunning us before beginning another run. Looking up I could see high-level bombers releasing their bombs and knew they were going to hit the ships. Two of those bombs hit my ship sending shrapnel in every direction. One

large piece of shrapnel flew over and hit the Captain of the U.S.S. West Virginia. He fell to the deck and died within a few minutes. The U.S.S. Arizona was immediately behind my ship and was hit by a bomb. The flames from the Arizona set my ship on fire when a bomb went through their decks to the bottom of the ship where thousands of rounds of ammunition and 1.5 million gallons of fuel oil was stored. Over eleven hundred men died and hundreds were wounded that "day that will live in infamy." For days after the sound of men with wrenches, knocking on the inside of the sunken ships could be heard.

After my ship was repaired, I took part in many battles and invasion of many islands across the Pacific. But that surprise attack on Pearl Harbor is most remembered. And today, when Pearl Harbor is mentioned, most people think of it as an event, not a place.

Jack Doyle
Taylorville, Il