



# USS MISSOURI BATTLESHIP (BB-63)

## USS Missouri History 1950-1984

### REFERENCES:

- A. DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN NAVAL FIGHTING SHIPS, Vol. IV, pp. 393-95.
- B. Paul Stillwell's "BATTLESHIP MISSOURI"
- C. Navy Historical Center webpage: <http://www.history.navy.mil/ndex.html>

### KEY TERMS:

Bremerton	Hamhung	Puget Sound
Captain Edsall	Hungnam	Samchok Korea
Chaho	Inchon	Sasebo Japan
Chaho-Tanchon	Kojo	Tanchon-Sonjin
Chongjin	Korea	Wonsan

### 1. February 1950.

*Missouri* was proceeding seaward on a training mission from Hampton Roads early 17 January. While running the deguassing range she ran aground at a point 1.6 miles from Thimble Shoals Light, near Old Point Comfort. She traversed shoal water a distance of three ship lengths from the main channel. Lifted some 7 feet above waterline, she struck hard and fast. With the aid of tugs, pontoons, and an incoming tide, she was refloated 1 February. The Commanding Officer, Captain Brown was court martialled and placed on shore duty where he would retire.

From mid-February until 15 August *Missouri* conducted midshipman and reserve training cruises out of Norfolk.

### 2. Korean War

She departed Norfolk 1950 August to support U.N. forces in their fight against Communist aggression in Korea. *Missouri* joined the U.N. just west of Kyushu 14 September, becoming flagship of Rear Adm. A. E. Smith. The first American battleship to reach Korean waters, she bombarded Samchok 15 September in a diversionary move coordinated with the Inchon landings. In company with cruiser *Helena* and two destroyers, she helped prepare the way for the 8th Army offensive.

*Missouri* arrived off Inchon 19 September, and 10 October became flagship of Rear Adm. J. M. Higgins, commander, Cruiser Division 5. She arrived in Sasebo 14 October, where she became flagship of Vice Adm. A. D. Struble, Commander, 7th Fleet. After screening carrier *Valley Forge* along the east coast of Korea, she conducted bombardment missions 12 to 26 October in the Chonjin and Tanchon areas, and at Wonsan. After again screening carriers eastward of Wonsan she moved into Hungnam 23 December to provide gunfire support about the Hungnam defense perimeter until the last U.N. troops, the U.S. 3d Infantry Division, were evacuated by way of the sea on Christmas Eve.

*Missouri* conducted additional operations with carriers and systematic shore bombardments off the east coast of Korea until 19 March 1951. She arrived Yokosuka 24 March, and 4 days later was relieved of duty in the Far East. She departed Yokosuka 28 March, and upon arrival Norfolk 27 April became flagship of Rear Adm. J. L. Holloway, Jr., commander, Cruiser Force, Atlantic Fleet. During the summer of 1951 she engaged in two midshipman training cruises to northern Europe. *Missouri* entered Norfolk Naval Shipyard on the 18th of October for overhaul until 30 January 1952.

### 3. Back to WAR

Following winter and spring training out of Guantanamo Bay, *Missouri* visited New York, then set course from Norfolk 9 June for another midshipman cruise. She returned to Norfolk 4 August and entered Norfolk Naval Shipyard to prepare for a second tour in the Korean Combat Zone.

*Missouri* stood out of Hampton Roads 11 September and arrived Yokosuka 17 October 1952. She broke the flag of Vice Adm. J. J. Clark, commander of the 7th Fleet, 19 October. Her primary mission was to provide seagoing artillery support by bombarding enemy targets in the Chaho-Tanchon area, at Chongjin, in the Tanchon-Sonjin area, and at Chaho, Wonsan, Hamhung, and Hungnam during the period 15 October through 2 January 1953.

*Missouri* put in to Inchon January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1953 and sailed thence to Sasebo, Japan. Gen. Mark Clark, Commander in Chief, U.N. Command, and Adm. Sir Guy Russell, RN, commander of the British Far East Station, visited the battleship 23 January. In the following weeks, *Missouri* resumed "Cobra" patrol along the east coast of Korea in direct support of troops ashore. Repeated strikes against Wonsan, Tanchon, Hungnam, and Kojo destroyed main supply routes along the eastern seaboard.

**The last shore bombardment mission by *Missouri* was against the Kojo area 25 March 1953.**

#### 4. Casualty Onboard

Might MO sustained a grievous casualty March 26 1953, when her commanding officer Capt. Warner R. Edsall suffered a fatal heart attack while conning her through the submarine net at Sasebo. She was relieved as 7th Fleet flagship 6 April by battleship *New Jersey*.

*Missouri* departed Yokosuka 7 April and arrived Norfolk 4 May, to become flagship for Rear Adm. E. T. Woolridge, commander, Battleship-Cruisers, Atlantic Fleet, 14 May. She departed 8 June on a midshipman training cruise, returned to Norfolk 4 August, and was overhauled in Norfolk Naval Shipyard 20 November to 2 April 1954.

Now the flagship of Rear Adm. R. E. Kirby, who had relieved Admiral Woolridge, *Missouri* departed Norfolk 7 June as flagship of the midshipman training cruise to Lisbon and Cherbourg. She returned Norfolk August 3<sup>rd</sup> and departed the 23<sup>rd</sup> for inactivation on the west coast. After calls at Long Beach and San Francisco, *Missouri* arrived Seattle 15 September.

#### 5. Decommissioned

Three days later she entered Puget Sound Naval Shipyard where she decommissioned 26 February 1955, entering the Bremerton group, Pacific Reserve Fleet where she would remain for the next 29 years. "Mighty Mo" remained very much a part of the Navy and was a popular center of attention at Bremerton. Each year approximately 100,000 visitors boarded her. Since her opening in January 1999 over 1 million visitors have walked her decks.

### SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 17 January 1950 ~ USS Missouri ran aground due to navigational error
- 1 February 1950 ~ USS Missouri refloated; ready for Korean War service
- 17 January 1950 ~ USS Missouri ran aground at Hampton Roads
- 15 September 1950 ~ First strike for Mo in Korean War at Samchok
- 25 March 1953 ~ USS Missouri last strike in Korean War at Kojo
- 26 March 1953 ~ MO's Captain Edsall dies on board
- 26 February 1955 ~ 1<sup>st</sup> decommission at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard

**\*\* *Missouri* received three battle stars for World War II service and five for Korean service.**

### NOTES:

**SUMMARY & REVIEW:**

1. USS Missouri run aground off \_\_\_\_ while running the deguassing range on the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. New York -- January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1951
  - b. Norfolk -- January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1950
  - c. Hampton Roads -- January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1950
  - d. She has never run aground.
  
2. Who was the Captain of Missouri when she ran aground?
  - a. Captain Callaghan
  - b. Captain Murray
  - c. Captain Brown
  - d. Captain Edsall
  
3. Where did Missouri conduct her first and last strike missions in the Korean War?
  - a. Kojo - Samchok
  - b. Samchok - Kojo
  - c. Sasebo - Singapore
  - d. Hangu - Wonsan
  
4. How many tours of duty did Mighty MO serve in Korea?
  - a. 1
  - b. 2
  - c. 3
  - d. 4
  
5. Circle four places USS Missouri conducted attacks in Korea.
 

Singapore	Chaho	Chongjin	Hong Kong
Hamhung	Inchon	Kojo	Wonsan
  
6. \_\_\_\_\_ died onboard while navigating into Sasebo of a heart attack.
  - a. Captain Callaghan
  - b. Captain Murray
  - c. Captain Brown
  - d. Captain Edsall
  
7. How many Battle Stars did Missouri receive for Korea?
  - a. 2
  - b. 3
  - c. 4
  - d. 5
  
8. USS Missouri was decommissioned in \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Bremerton -- January 26<sup>th</sup>, 1955
  - b. Puget Sound Naval Shipyard -- February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1955
  - c. Long Beach Naval Shipyard -- January 26<sup>th</sup>, 1955
  - d. San Francisco, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1955