



THEIR GUNS WERE ALWAYS READY

PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE MIGHTY IOWA-CLASS BATTLESHIPS — THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL WARSHIPS. THIS IS THE THIRD INSTALLMENT ON THE USS NEW JERSEY — PART EIGHT

BY JAMES THOMPSON



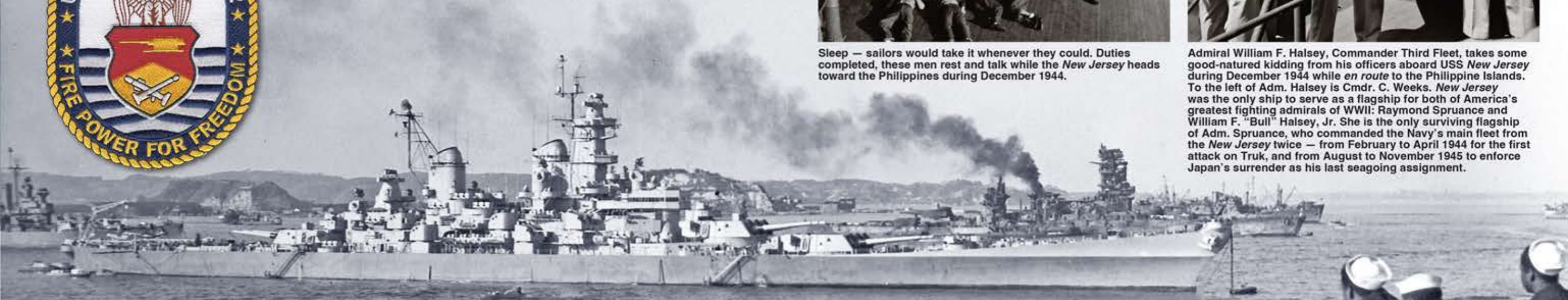
Probably something the Imperial Japanese Navy never envisioned — USS *New Jersey* in at anchor in Tokyo Bay. The Japanese battleship *Nagato* can be seen in the right background. The *New Jersey* rendered more active service than any other *Iowa*-class ship. Launched on the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor, she fought in WWII, was the first battleship activated for the Korean War, and the only battleship to serve in the Vietnam War, and the first battleship reactivated to end the Cold War. USS *New Jersey* was in active service for over 21.5 years — 2.5 years more than *Iowa*, five years more than *Missouri*, and 8.5 years more than *Wisconsin*. For several years — more than her three sisters combined — she was the world's only operational battleship.



Sleep — sailors would take it whenever they could. Duties completed, these men rest and talk while the *New Jersey* heads toward the Philippines during December 1944.



Admiral William F. Halsey, Commander Third Fleet, takes some good-natured kidding from his officers aboard USS *New Jersey* during December 1944 while en route to the Philippine Islands. To the left of Adm. Halsey is Cmdr. C. Weeks. *New Jersey* was the only ship to serve as a flagship for both of America's greatest fighting admirals of WWII: Raymond Spruance and William F. "Bull" Halsey, Jr. She is the only surviving flagship of Adm. Spruance, who commanded the Navy's main fleet from the *New Jersey* twice — from February to April 1944 for the first attack on Truk, and from August to November 1945 to enforce Japan's surrender as his last seagoing assignment.



US Navy seapower at its best. Photographed on 25 April 1944 at Majuro, ships of the Pacific Fleet prepare to head out to attack Truk. USS *Enterprise* is on the right with four *Essex*-class carriers beyond her. Battleships at left include USS *Iowa* (BB-61) and USS *New Jersey* (BB-62). There are three other "fast" battleships and three light carriers present as well as several older battleships, cruisers, and auxiliaries in this remarkable photo.



During August 1945, VAdm. John Henry Towers was given command of the 2nd Carrier Task Force and Task Force 38, Pacific Fleet. He broke his flag on the *New Jersey* as Commander, 5th Fleet. *New Jersey* engaged in more shore bombardments than the other *Iowa*-class ships. In 14 months during WWII, she bombarded Japanese bases and landing beaches in Saipan, Tinian, Okinawa, Wake, and other Japanese-held islands in the Marshalls and the Carolines to pave the way for the American march across the Pacific.

