

# Day of Infamy

by Carissa Lee



*photo from a Japanese plane shortly after the Pearl Harbor attack began*

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*World War II, which had been raging in Europe since 1939, hit home for many Americans when the Japanese launched a sneak attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.*

Richard Hansing joined the U.S. Navy in 1939, when he was 19 years old. Richard always knew he would enlist in the Navy. His grandfather, who had fought in the Civil War, had joined when he was 16.

Richard served with the Pacific Fleet based in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He served on the battleship USS *Nevada*. Richard's job was to "jump the burners," which meant that he had to heat the oil before it could be used in the ship's engine.

Richard was stationed on the *Nevada* when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. When the bombs started falling just before 8 a.m., Richard was below decks on the

*Nevada*.

A group of Japanese planes had orders to bomb the *Nevada*, which was docked at the northern end of Battleship Row, east of Ford Island. The *Nevada* was docked near the USS *Arizona*, which was heavily damaged in the attack.

Japanese bombers tried to hit the *Nevada* but had a hard time seeing the ship because of all the smoke coming from the sinking *Arizona*. The Japanese launched 21 bombs, eight of which hit the *Nevada*. The remaining 13 went into the water. A torpedo also hit the *Nevada*, opening a large hole in the ship's *port*, or left, side. The *Nevada's* crew fought many fires. Although the ship was badly damaged, it managed to steam down the channel toward the open sea. The slow-moving *Nevada* was an attractive target for the Japanese planes.

The planes dropped bombs on the moving battleship, hoping to sink it in the channel to block the entrance to Pearl Harbor. The commander of the *Nevada* beached the ship at Hospital Point, keeping the channel clear.

Although he was never injured in the war, Richard said Pearl Harbor was the worst day of the conflict. Of the *Nevada's* crew of about 1,500 men, 50 were killed. Richard's friend Glen Shape was killed.

On Nov. 30, 1942, at 11:25 p.m., two enemy torpedoes hit Richard's new ship, the USS *Northampton*. The crew abandoned the sinking ship on December 1 at 3 a.m. The water was smooth and warm. There were no sharks in the area. He was in the water for about one and a half hours. Eleven hundred men were picked up and taken back to Pearl Harbor. Once there, Richard came home on the USS *Bernet*.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. According to the passage, which of the following ships did Richard serve on first?

- A. USS *Nevada*
- B. USS *North Hampton*
- C. USS *Bernet*
- D. USS *Arizona*

2. According to the description in the passage, how many men were saved after torpedoes hit the USS *North Hampton*?

- A. 50 men
- B. 1,500 men
- C. 1,100 men
- D. 1,125 men

3. It can be inferred from the passage that

- A. Richard could not swim
- B. being in the Navy was an easy job
- C. Richard always wanted to join the Navy
- D. Richard was unsure about joining the army

4. Read this sentence from the passage:

"The Nevada was docked near the USS *Arizona*, which was heavily damaged in the attack."

As used in the passage, **damaged** means

- A. armed
- B. floating
- C. injured
- D. hidden

5. This passage is mainly about

- A. how to survive a ship that is sinking
- B. why Richard Hansing joined the U.S. Navy
- C. Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor during World War II
- D. the types of ships in the Navy during World War II

6. What ships did Richard Hansing serve on while in the U.S. Navy?

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7. Based on the passage, were the Japanese able to see the U.S.S. *Nevada* clearly when they were attacking? Why or why not?

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8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Japanese planes dropped bombs on the U.S. ships \_\_\_\_\_ they wanted to sink them.

- A. because
- B. but
- C. after
- D. although

9. Which image shows a conflict?



10. If two people agree on everything, will they have any conflicts? Why or why not?

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