

= USS Maryland (BB @-@ 46) =

USS Maryland (BB @-@ 46) , also known as " Old Mary " or " Fighting Mary " to her crewmates , was a Colorado @-@ class battleship . She was the third ship of the United States Navy to be named in honor of the seventh state . She was commissioned in 1921 and , serving as the flagship of the fleet , cruised to Australia , New Zealand and Brazil .

She is most notable for her service in World War II . She was present on Battleship Row during the Attack on Pearl Harbor , and was lightly damaged by Japanese bombs . Returning to duty in 1942 , she saw service in the Pacific War , first supporting the rest of the fleet at the Battle of Midway , and then patrolling the Fiji Islands to guard against Japanese incursion . Next , she went on the offensive , commencing shore bombardments in the Battle of Tarawa and later in the Battle of Kwajalein . During the Battle of Saipan she took torpedo damage to her bow , necessitating repairs and refits . She then participated in the Battle of Leyte Gulf where she was hit by a kamikaze . She took another kamikaze hit at the Battle of Okinawa , and was under repair at the end of World War II .

After service in Operation Magic Carpet , she was decommissioned in 1947 and sold for scrap in 1959 . She received seven battle stars for World War II service .

= = Construction = =

Maryland was one of four dreadnought battleships of the Colorado class to be constructed . Her keel was laid down on 24 April 1917 by Newport News Shipbuilding Company of Newport News , Virginia . She was launched on 20 March 1920 , and sponsored by Mrs. E. Brook Lee daughter @-@ in @-@ law of U.S. Senator from Maryland Blair Lee ; she was commissioned on 21 July 1921 , with Captain C.F. Preston in command . She was the third ship named for the state of Maryland , the first Maryland was a sloop commissioned in 1799 and the second Maryland was an armored cruiser commissioned in 1905 .

Maryland had an overall length of 624 feet (190 m) . She had an extreme beam of 97 @. @ 5 feet (29 @. @ 7 m) and a mean draft of 30 @. @ 5 feet (9 @. @ 3 m) . She displaced 32 @, @ 000 tonnes (31 @, @ 000 long tons ; 35 @, @ 000 short tons) . Her armor was 18 inches (460 mm) at its maximum thickness . Her designed speed was 21 knots . Her crew complement consisted of 58 officers and 1 @, @ 022 men .

Maryland 's main battery consisted of eight 16 @-@ inch (406 mm) / 45 caliber Mark 1 guns in four double turrets (two in a superfiring pair forward , two in a superfiring pair mounted aft of the main superstructure) that were capable of firing 2 @, @ 110 pounds (960 kg) armor @-@ piercing (AP) Mark 3 shells , later upgraded to 2 @, @ 240 pounds (1 @, @ 020 kg) Mark 5 . Her secondary battery consisted of twelve 5 @-@ inch (127 mm) / 51 caliber guns as well as four 3 @-@ inch (76 mm) / 23 caliber guns . She was also armed with a pair of 21 @-@ inch (533 mm) submerged torpedo tubes . She was outfitted with a new type of seaplane catapult and the first 16 in (410 mm) guns mounted on a U.S. ship .

= = Service history = =

= = = Inter @-@ war period = = =

Following her commissioning , Maryland undertook an East Coast shakedown cruise . Shortly thereafter , Maryland was made flagship of Admiral Hilary P. Jones . Maryland found herself in great demand for special occasions . She appeared at Annapolis , Maryland , for the 1922 United States Naval Academy graduation and at Boston , Massachusetts , for the anniversary of the battle of Bunker Hill and the Fourth of July . From 18 August to 25 September , she paid her first visit to a foreign port transporting Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes to Rio de Janeiro for Brazil 's Centennial Exposition . The next year , after fleet exercises off the Panama Canal Zone , Maryland transited the canal in the latter part of June to join the battle fleet stationed on the west coast . She

continued to be a flagship until 1923 when the flag was shifted to Pennsylvania .

She made another voyage to a foreign port in 1925 , this time to Australia and New Zealand . Several years later , in 1928 , she transported President @-@ elect Herbert Hoover on the Pacific leg of his tour of Latin America . She was overhauled in 1928 ? 1929 , and the eight 3 in (76 mm) anti @-@ aircraft guns were replaced by eight 5 in (130 mm) / 25 cal guns . Throughout these years and the 1930s , she served as a mainstay of fleet readiness through tireless training operations . She conducted numerous patrols in the 1930s .

In 1940 , Maryland and the other battleships of the battle force changed their bases of operations to Pearl Harbor . She was present at Battleship Row along Ford Island during the Japanese attack on 7 December 1941 .

= = = Attack on Pearl Harbor = = =

On the morning of 7 December , Maryland was moored along Ford Island , with Oklahoma to port , connected by lines and a gangway . To her fore was California , while Tennessee and West Virginia were astern . Further aft were Nevada and Arizona . The seven battleships , in what is now known as " Battleship Row , " had recently returned from maneuvers . Many of Maryland 's crew were preparing for shore leave at 09 : 00 or eating breakfast when the Japanese attack began . As the first Japanese aircraft appeared and explosions rocked the outboard battleships , Maryland ' s bugler blew general quarters .

Seaman Leslie Short ? addressing Christmas cards near his machine gun ? brought the first of his ship 's guns into play , shooting down one of two torpedo bombers that had just released against Oklahoma . Inboard of Oklahoma , and thus protected from the initial torpedo attack , Maryland managed to bring all her antiaircraft (AA) batteries into action . The devastating initial attack sank Oklahoma , and she capsized quickly , with many of her surviving men climbing aboard Maryland to assist her with anti @-@ aircraft defenses .

Maryland was struck by two armor @-@ piercing bombs which detonated low on her hull . The first struck the forecastle awning and made a hole about 12 ft (3 @.@ 7 m) by 20 ft (6 @.@ 1 m) . The second exploded after entering the hull at the 22 ft (6 @.@ 7 m) water level at Frame 10 . The latter hit caused flooding and increased the draft forward by 5 ft (1 @.@ 5 m) . Maryland continued to fire and , after the attack , sent firefighting parties to assist her compatriots , especially attempting to rescue survivors from the capsized Oklahoma . The men continued to muster the AA defenses in case the Japanese returned to attack . In all , two officers and two men were killed in the attack .

The Japanese erroneously announced that Maryland had been sunk , but on 30 December , the damaged ship entered Puget Sound Navy Yard for repairs just behind Tennessee . Two of the original twelve 5 in / 51 cal guns were removed and the 5 in / 25 cal guns were replaced by an equal number of 5 in / 38 cal dual purpose guns . Over the course of several months , she was repaired and overhauled , receiving new fighting equipment . Repairs were complete on 26 February 1942 . She then underwent a series of shakedown cruises to West Coast ports and the Christmas Islands . She was sent back into action in June 1942 , the first ship damaged at Pearl Harbor to return to duty .

= = = Supporting patrols = = =

During the important Battle of Midway , Maryland played a supporting role . Like the other older battleships , she was not fast enough to accompany the aircraft carriers , so she operated with a backup fleet . Maryland stood by on security , awaiting call from other ships if she was needed , until the end of the battle . At the end of the action around Midway , Maryland was sent to San Francisco .

Thereafter , Maryland engaged in almost constant training exercises with Battleship Division 2 , Battleship Division 3 , and Battleship Division 4 until 1 August , when she returned to Pearl Harbor for repairs , her first time in the harbor since the Japanese attack . She departed Pearl Harbor in early November with Colorado , bound for the forward area . On 12 November , the pig mascot King

Neptune came aboard Maryland to initiate her " pollywogs " for the line @-@ crossing ceremony . Maryland steamed for the Fiji Islands where she patrolled against Japanese incursion . The two battleships acted as sentinels to guard against Japanese advance to prevent Japanese forces from threatening Australia . During this duty , the two battleships conducted frequent sweeps for Japanese forces .

In early 1943 , with the success of the Solomon Islands campaign , Allied forces went on the offensive . In February 1943 , Maryland and Colorado moved to New Hebrides , operating off of Efate . Intense heat there proved difficult and unpleasant for the crew . She then moved to Espiritu Santo to guard against Japanese incursion , but heat and heavy rains plagued this tour of duty . Maryland and Colorado stood out of Aore Island Harbor in August . During a five @-@ week overhaul at Pearl Harbor 's shipyard , several 40 millimetres (1 @.@ 6 in) AA guns were installed on the top decks and foremast as protection against anticipated Japanese air raids in future operations .

= = = Battle of Tarawa = = =

Departing the Hawaiian Islands on 20 October 1943 for the South Pacific , Maryland became flagship for Rear Admiral Harry W. Hill 's V Amphibious Force and Southern Attack Force in the Gilbert Islands Invasion . Also aboard her were Major General Julian C. Smith , commander of 2nd Marine Division , General " Howling Mad " Smith , commander of the Marine landing forces , and Colonel Evans Carlson , commander of Carlson 's Raiders . Maryland returned to Efate Island staging area , where she joined a large task force preparing for an assault on Tarawa .

The battle of Tarawa commenced on 20 November . In her first offensive action of the war , Maryland 's guns opened fire at 05 : 00 , destroying a shore battery with five salvos on the southwestern point of Betio Island in the Tarawa Atoll . At 06 : 00 she commenced a scheduled shore bombardment to soften up Japanese defenses ahead of the landings . Maryland moved closer to shore to attract Japanese fire and locate artillery emplacements , in the process raking Japanese gun emplacements , control stations , pillboxes and any Japanese installations she could spot . At 09 : 00 as Marine landing forces encountered heavy Japanese resistance and began taking casualties to emplaced crossfire , Maryland provided covering fire to eliminate several Japanese machine gun nests . Her scouting plane then began to cover the progress of the Marines ' assault , with Maryland providing artillery support . The plane was damaged and pilot wounded in this action .

After three days of covering the offensive on Betio Island , she moved to Apamama Island to guard Marine landings there . Marines met with only light resistance from 30 Japanese soldiers there , and two prisoners were brought to Maryland . On 7 December , Maryland left Apamama Island for Pearl Harbor . After a brief stopover there , Maryland left for San Francisco for repairs .

= = = Battle of Kwajalein Atoll = = =

Maryland steamed from San Pedro , California on 13 January 1944 , rendezvoused with Task Force 53 at Lahaina Roads for two days of loading ammunition , refueling , and provisioning ahead of a new operation supporting the Marshall Islands campaign . On 30 January 1944 , she moved to support landings on Roi Island , along with Santa Fe , Biloxi , and Indianapolis , which formed the Northern Support Group of TF 35 .

In the predawn hours of 31 January , the ships began a bombardment of Kwajalein Atoll , the opening moves of the battle of Kwajalein . Maryland destroyed numerous Japanese stationary guns and pillboxes . In the course of the battle , she fired so much that she split the liners in the guns of Turret No. 1 , putting it out of action for the rest of the day . On 1 February , she continued her attack on Japanese positions as the U.S. landing forces advanced . She became the flagship for Admiral Connally for the next two weeks , resupplying and refueling many of the smaller ships in the operation until she departed with a task unit of carriers and destroyers on 15 February 1944 , steaming for Bremerton Navy Yard , where she underwent another overhaul , with her guns being

replaced .

== Battle of Saipan ==

Two months later , Maryland sailed westward on 5 May , joining Task Force 52 headed for Saipan . Vice Admiral Richmond K. Turner allotted TF 52 three days to soften up the island 's defenses ahead of the assault . Firing commenced at 05 : 45 on 14 June . They quickly destroyed two coastal guns , then began bombarding Garapan , destroying ammunition dumps , gun positions , small boats , storage tanks , blockhouses and buildings . She then turned her guns to Tanapag , leveling it in heavy bombardment . The invasion commenced 15 June , and Maryland provided fire support for the landing forces .

The Japanese attempted to counter the battleships through the air . On 18 June , the ship 's guns shot down their first Japanese aircraft , but on 22 June , a Mitsubishi G4M3 " Betty " medium bomber flew low over the still @-@ contested Saipan hills and found Maryland and Pennsylvania . The Japanese plane dropped a torpedo , opening a large hole in Maryland 's portside bow . The attack caused light casualties , and in 15 minutes she was underway for Eniwetok , and from there she steamed for the repair yards at Pearl Harbor (in reverse the whole time so as not to do further damage to her bow) , escorted by two destroyers . Two men were killed in the attack .

With an around @-@ the @-@ clock effort by the shipyard workers , Maryland was repaired in 34 days , departing on 13 August . She then embarked for the Solomon Islands with a large task force , anchoring in Purvis Bay off Florida Island for two weeks before steaming for the Palau Islands on 6 September . She then joined Rear Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf 's Western Fire Support Group (Task Group 32 @.@ 5 ; TG 32 @.@ 5) . Firing first on 12 September to cover minesweeping operations and underwater demolition teams at the opening of the Battle of Peleliu , Maryland again conducted shore bombardment supporting the landing craft as they approached the beaches on 15 September . Four days later , organized resistance collapsed , permitting the fire support ships to retire to the Admiralty Islands at the end of the month .

== Battle of Leyte Gulf ==

Maryland steamed for Seeadler Harbor , Manus where she was assigned to the 7th Fleet under Admiral Kincaid . The fleet sortied 12 October and Maryland joined Task Group 77 @.@ 2 , which was the gunfire and covering force for the invasion of Leyte . She , along with four other battleships and numerous cruisers and destroyers , steamed into Leyte Gulf on the morning of 18 October . Maryland took position between Red and White Beaches and began bombarding them ahead of the invasion , which began at 10 : 00 20 October . Securing the beaches quickly , Maryland then took up a sentinel position in Leyte Gulf to guard the beaches against Japanese counterattack by sea .

For the next several days , Japanese forces launched air raids to counter the incursion . These included the first widespread use of the kamikaze suicide attack . Several days later , U.S. submarines in the South China Sea spotted two Japanese forces on approach : five battleships steaming toward San Bernardino Strait , and another force of four Japanese carriers in northern Luzon .

On 24 October , Maryland , West Virginia , Mississippi , Tennessee , California , and Pennsylvania sailed to the southern end of Leyte Gulf to protect Surigao Strait with several cruisers , destroyers , and PT Boats . Early on 25 October , during the Battle of Surigao Strait , Japanese battleships Fus? and Yamashiro , with their screens , led the Japanese advance into the Strait . At 03 : 55 , the waiting Americans ships launched an ambush of the two Japanese battleships , pounding them with torpedoes and main guns . Torpedoes from the destroyers sunk Fus? . Continued attacks by the task force also claimed Yamashiro . A few of the remaining Japanese ships then fled to the Mindanao Sea , pursued by Allied aircraft .

Following the victory , Maryland patrolled the southern approaches to Surigao Strait until 29 October ; she then steamed for the Admiralty Isles for brief replenishment and resumed patrol duty around Leyte on 16 November , protecting the landing forces from continued Japanese air attacks .

On 29 November , during another Japanese air attack , a kamikaze aircraft surprised and struck Maryland . The aircraft crashed into Maryland between Turrets No. 1 and 2 , piercing the forecastle , main , and armored decks and blowing a hole in the 4 inch steel , causing extensive damage and starting fires . In all , 31 men were killed and 30 wounded in the attack , and the medical department was destroyed but still functional .

The battleship continued her patrols until relieved on 2 December , when she sailed with two heavily damaged destroyers for repairs . She reached Pearl Harbor on 18 December , and was extensively repaired and refitted over the next several months .

= = = Battle of Okinawa = = =

After refresher training , Maryland headed for the western Pacific on 4 March 1945 , arriving Ulithi on 16 March . There she joined the 5th Fleet and Rear Admiral Morton Deyo 's Task Force 54 (TF 54) , which was preparing for the invasion of Okinawa . The fleet departed on 21 March , bound for Okinawa .

Maryland was assigned targets on the southern coast of Okinawa to support a diversionary landing , which would distract Japanese forces away from the main landing on the west coast . Japanese forces responded with several air raids , with two of Maryland 's radar picket destroyers being struck by kamikaze planes , with Luce sinking . On 3 April , she was moved to the west coast invasion beaches to assist Minneapolis in destroying several shore batteries . Following the land invasion , she remained with the support force off Bolo Point providing artillery support for the invading troops .

Maryland continued fire support duty until 7 April , when she steamed north to intercept a Japanese surface force with TF 54 . The Japanese ships , including the Yamato , came under constant U.S. air attacks that day , and planes of the Fast Carrier Task Force sank six of the 10 ships in the force . At dusk , a kamikaze loaded with a 551 lb (250 kg) bomb crashed the top of Turret No. 3 from starboard . The explosion wiped out the 20 mm mounts and caused a large fire . The 20mm ammunition ignited from the heat , causing further casualties . In all , 10 were killed , 37 injured and 6 missing following this attack . Maryland remained on station for the next week and continued her artillery support mission through several more air raids . Turret No. 3 , damaged but usable , remained silent for the remainder of this mission .

On 14 April , Maryland left the firing line at Okinawa and escorted several retiring transports . They steamed via the Mariana Islands and Guam to Pearl Harbor , and she reached the Puget Sound Navy Yard at Bremerton on 7 May for extensive overhaul . All of her 5 in guns were removed and replaced by sixteen 5 inch / 38 cal guns in new twin mounts . Turret No. 3 was repaired and the crew quarters were improved . She completed repairs in August , leaving for tests and training runs just as Japan surrendered , ending the war .

She next entered Operation Magic Carpet fleet . During the remaining months of 1945 , Maryland made five voyages between the west coast and Pearl Harbor , returning more than 8 @, @ 000 servicemen to the United States .

= = = Post @-@ war = = =

Arriving at Seattle , Washington on 17 December , Maryland completed her Operation Magic Carpet duty . She entered Puget Sound Naval Shipyard on 15 April 1946 , and was placed in commission in inactive reserve on 16 July . She was decommissioned at Bremerton on 3 April 1947 , and remained there as a unit of the Pacific Reserve Fleet . Maryland was sold for scrapping to Learner Company of Oakland , California on 8 July 1959 .

On 2 June 1961 , Governor of Maryland J. Millard Tawes , dedicated a monument to the memory of Maryland and her men . Built of granite and bronze and incorporating the bell of " Fighting Mary " , this monument is located on the grounds of the State House in Annapolis , Maryland .

= = Awards = =

American Defense Service Medal with " FLEET " clasp

American Campaign Medal

Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with seven battle stars

World War II Victory Medal

The Maryland received seven battle stars for World War II service .

Pearl Harbor @-@ Midway : 7 December 1941

Gilbert Islands operation : 13 November ? 8 December 1943

Marshall Islands operation : Occupation of Kwajalein and Majuro Islands : 28 January ? 8 February 1944

Marianas operation : Capture and occupation of Saipan : 11 June ? 10 August 1944

Western Caroline Islands operations : Capture and occupation of southern Palau Island : 6 September ? 14 October 1944

Leyte operation : Leyte landings : 1 October ? 29 November 1944

Okinawa Gunto operation : Assault and occupation of Okinawa Gunto : 24 March ? 30 June 1945