

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution  
Proudly "Spotlights" our December 2011  
Patriot of the Month



**Robert L. Westfall**

Sponsored by:

Armstrong Chapter  
Armstrong, Missouri



Robert Westfall attended Higbee High School and was drafted into the Navy on February 11, 1943. He went to boot camp at Farragut, Idaho. His first assignment was aboard a destroyer ship the *USS Thompson*. The *USS Thompson* sailed through the Panama Canal into the Atlantic Ocean then went to New York. During Robert's assignment on the *USS Thompson* he made three trips across the Atlantic escorting cargo ships to Casablanca and occasionally was into the Mediterranean. After the Atlantic mission, Robert was transferred to the destroyer *USS Collett*, in the Pacific. He was a part of the "shakedown cruise" in Hawaii while aboard the *USS Colett*. Robert's ship was assigned to the 5th fleet in the Pacific, which escorted aircraft carriers. He also saw duty in the Philippines.

One story Robert shared was that one morning about 3:00 a.m. the Japanese planes came over them and dropped flares lighting up the ships. They dropped several bombs and hit one American aircraft carrier, but only slightly damaged it. The United States Fleet shot down about 30 Japanese planes from about 3:00 a.m. until noon

that day.

Robert also told about eight destroyers going into Tokyo Harbor. Each ship shot two torpedoes and due to those torpedoes, three Japanese ships were sunk. Robert was off the coast of Tokyo when the war ended in September 1945. Robert was on the *USS Missouri* and witnessed the signing of the peace treaty.

Robert was discharged January 31, 1946 at Great Lakes Naval Station in Chicago with the rank of Seaman First Class. He returned home by train to Higbee, Missouri.

His medals and citations include:

- Philippine Liberation Medal w/1 star
- Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal w/6 stars
- World War II Victory Medal
- American Campaign Medal
- European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal

After returning home, Robert bought a farm and married Evelyn Orton of Higbee on March 28, 1946 and had six children. They are grandparents of fourteen grandchildren. Robert and Evelyn moved to the farm and have lived there for over sixty-five years.

Robert worked in construction in Moberly for thirty-one years in addition to being a lifelong farmer. He farmed after work and on weekends, raising cattle until he became unable to continue to do so. Robert attends his local Baptist Church and has a lifetime membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He enjoys watching television, especially Cardinal baseball games.