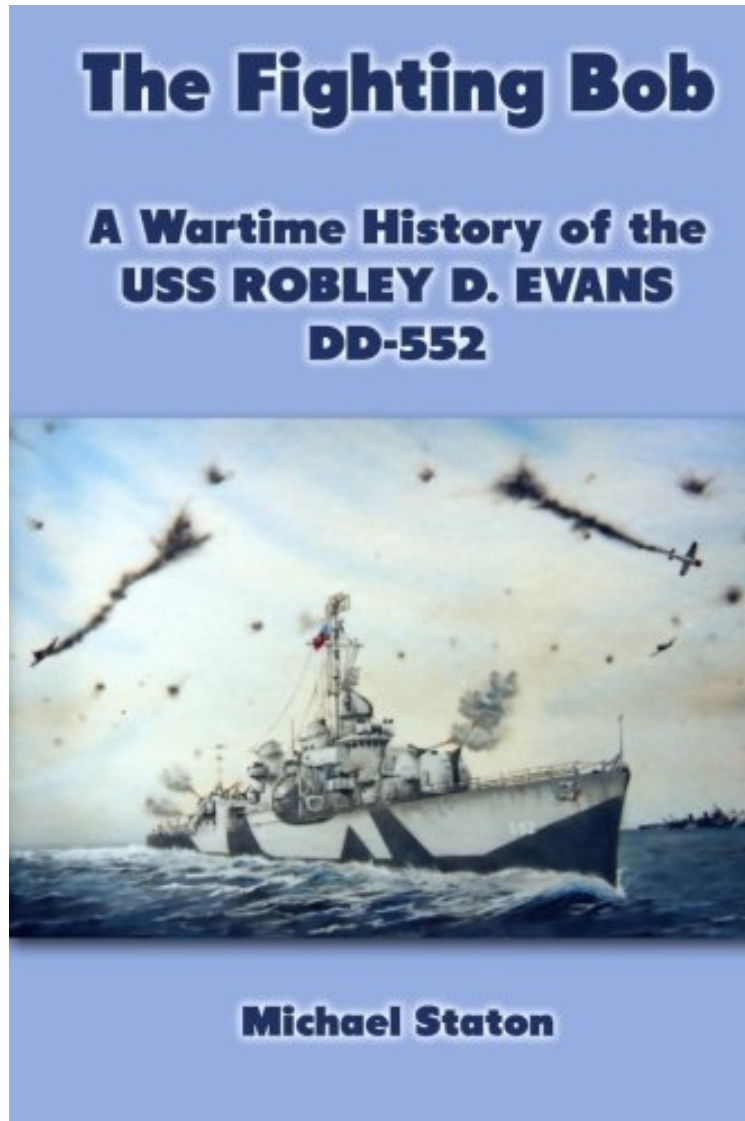


The Fighting Bob: A Wartime History of the USS Robley D. Evans DD-552

Michael Staton

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Michael Staton : The Fighting Bob: A Wartime History of the USS Robley D. Evans DD-552 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fighting Bob: A Wartime History of the USS Robley D. Evans DD-552:

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Merriam Press Military Monograph 72. Third Edition (February 2012). Although there have been many individual accounts written about the USS Robley D. Evans (DD-552), a Fletcher class destroyer launched on 4 October 1942, no one had compiled a complete and detailed history of the ship and her men in one book. Author Michael Staton, son of one the crew members of the Evans, set out to collect any data available about this remarkable ship and its incredible men. After three years of research and writing, finally their story can be told. The ship was named after a Naval officer who began his service as an ensign during the Civil War, Robley D. Evans, also known as "Fighting Bob," and he commanded one of the Navy's newest battleships when the Spanish Fleet attempted their escape from Santiago Harbor during the Spanish-American War. He had attained the rank of rear admiral by the time of his passing in 1912. The destroyer Evans rendered invaluable service during World War II, including logistic support for carrier strike forces at Saipan, logistic support for the Third Fleet fast carrier task force in the Palau and the Philippines, fire support shore bombardment for the 4th Marine Division on Iwo Jima, and escorting Third Fleet carrier forces and performing radar picket duty at Okinawa. She is credited with destroying 26 enemy planes, and rescuing six downed American aviators. The Evans received the Presidential Unit Citation, the Philippine Defense Medal, the Philippine Liberation Medal, the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation, and the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Ribbon with five stars. It was at Okinawa where the Evans gained immortality as a radar picket. On 11 May 1945 more than 200 Japanese planes were launched from Kyushu to attack the American naval forces off Okinawa. Along with the USS Hadley, another destroyer on picket duty, the Evans fought off numerous bombing, torpedo and suicide attacks. They had both set records for ships of their class in downing enemy aircraft during a single action. The Evans was credited with twenty-three which included the three which crashed aboard, four assists with the Hadley and one with the CAP. The Hadley received credit for 23 also which included three that suicided into her, the four with Evans and one assist with the combat air patrol. The Evans was saved though tragically 28 men were killed and 67 were injured. Admiral Chester W. Nimitz put it best when he said, "So long as the American people can build ships like the Evans and produce sons like the officers and men who man her the country is secure." This book was written to honor the men who served aboard the Evans, and for the family of these men, that they can have a permanent record of what their husband, father, or grandfather did to help keep this country free. CONTENTS: Introduction; Prologue; Birth of a Warship; Patrolling the Marshalls; Saipan: Herding Tankers; Mailmen of Palau; The Philippines; The Marines Take Iwo Jima; Okinawa—The Final Showdown; Sea Pawns; Long Road Home; Death of a Warship; Friendships Forged by Fire; Bibliographical Notes; Appendices; General Data; United States Air Victories, 11 May 1945; Japanese Units of Kikusui No. 6; USS Evans Roster; Life on the Evans: Drawings by crew member Ken Beals; 91 BW photos; 10 illustrations; two-view plan drawing; 2 maps; 4 appendices. Review by E.J. Freisleben: In reading my copy of this informative history, as a crew member of the Evans from 15 May 1943 until 19 September 1945, I was pleased to learn of events that I put out of my memory bank for over 60 years. Thanks to Michael Staton for an interesting ship's history, made more interesting because I was a part of it from before commissioning until the decision to decommission was made.