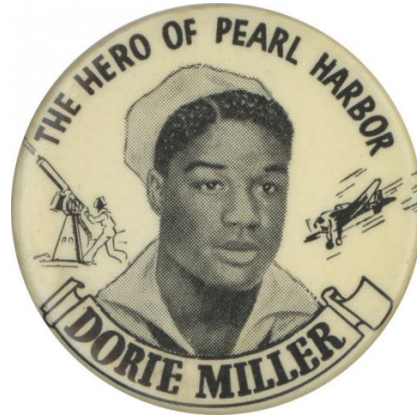




0. DORIE MILLER - Story Preface

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18. WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN...

Whitehead Hoag created a pin honoring Dorie Miller's bravery on December 7, 1941. This illustration depicts the images on that vintage pin.

Doris ("Dorie") Miller's normal job on the West Virginia was serving as a Messman.** But he did not give normal job responsibilities a second thought on the morning of December 7.

Leading the Japanese torpedo raid, Lt. Murata's target was Dorie's ship. Although a dud bomb was later found on board, Murata scored a direct hit on the West Virginia. With Captain Bennion mortally wounded and the ship burning, Dorie Miller did what so many men did that morning.



Totally disregarding his own safety, he initially helped the captain and then manned one of the ship's machine guns until he was ordered off the bridge. The West Virginia was sinking. Dorie could do no more.

But the country did something for Dorie. He was awarded the Navy Cross for valor "above and beyond the call of duty." On May 27, 1942 Admiral Nimitz pinned the Navy Cross on Dorie. The accompanying citation summarizes his heroism:

For distinguished devotion to duty, extraordinary courage and disregard for his own personal safety during the attack on the Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii, by Japanese forces on December 7, 1941. While at the side of his Captain on the bridge, Miller, despite enemy strafing and bombing and in the face of a serious fire, assisted in moving his Captain, who had been mortally wounded, to a place of greater safety, and later manned and operated a machine gun directed at enemy Japanese attacking aircraft until ordered to leave the bridge.



Dorie, however, did not receive a Medal of Honor for his heroism. No African-American, no matter how brave his actions, received the Medal of Honor during World War II. It was later, in 1997, when President Clinton bestowed the nation's highest military honor on seven African-American WWII veterans.

Only one of the seven honorees - Vernon Baker - was still alive in 1997.

Recently, the *West Virginia* has once again made news. A new interpretation of old evidence has caused historians and scientists to believe the *West Virginia* suffered from more than Murata's strike.

Japanese 2-man mini-submarines were in the harbor. Experts, using today's technology to examine a photo taken by a Japanese pilot, believe one of those midget subs is just barely visible above water.

Some of the torpedo wake in the picture may have been caused by that midget sub. And, it is believed, at least one of her torpedoes struck the *West Virginia*. (It is also believed that a mini-sub was the first Pearl Harbor casualty.)

No Japanese torpedo or bomb struck the American oil supply on Oahu. The electrical grid was also spared. Because they were undamaged, the United States was not as crippled as the Imperial government had hoped.



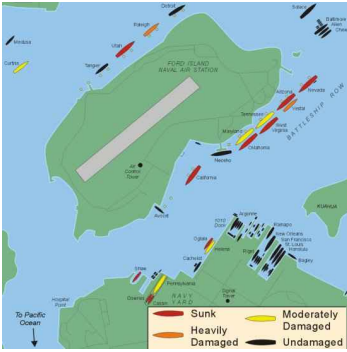
Photo # 80-G-408456 Dorie Miller wearing Navy Cross

Dorie Miller - Pearl Harbor Hero

Official U.S. Navy Photograph, National Archives Collection.

PD

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Dorie-Miller-Pearl-Harbor-Hero>



Pearl Harbor Map of Damaged Ships

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/>



Dorie Miller on the West Virginia

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Dorie Miller

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Dorie Miller's Ship - USS West Virginia

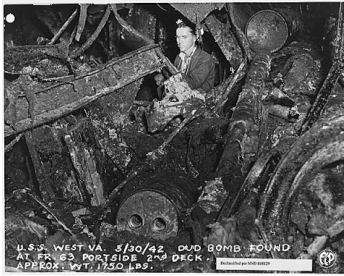
Quoted passages, about the *West Virginia*, from the Naval Historical Center.

Image online, courtesy U.S. Navy.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Dorie-Miller-s-Ship-USS-West-Virginia>



Dud Bomb Found - USS West Virginia

Official U.S. Navy Photograph, National Archives Collection.

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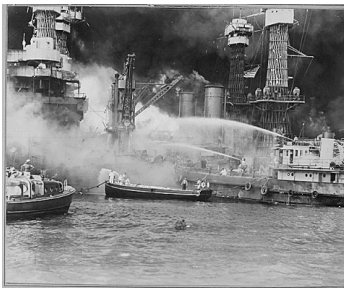
Capt. Mervyn Bennion - Commander, West Virginia

U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph.

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View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Capt.-Mervyn-Bennion-Commander-West-Virginia>



West Virginia - Burning Battleship, December 7

Department of the Navy. Naval Photographic Center. Photo NWDNS-80-G-19947, taken December 7, 1941

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Heroic Action by Dorie Miller - West Virginia Defender

Office of War Information poster NWDNS-208-COM-43.

Online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.

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West Virginia - Sinking at Pearl Harbor

Official U.S. Navy Photograph, Naval History & Heritage Command Collection

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Navy Cross - Awarded to Dorie Miller

"Above and Beyond the Call of Duty - Dorie Miller Receives the Navy Cross at Pearl Harbor, May 27, 1942." Color offset poster, no. 68. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1943.

Online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Navy-Cross-Awarded-to-Dorie-Miller>



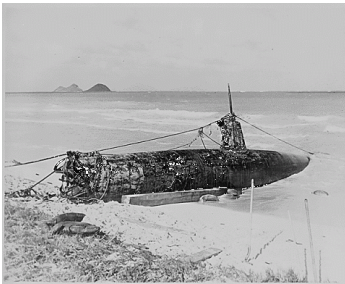
Navy Cross - Nimitz Pins on Dorie Miller

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Navy-Cross-Nimitz-Pins-on-Dorie-Miller>



Wreckage - Japanese Mini-Submarine

Official U.S. Navy Photograph - NRHS-21-DCHIHHC-HC298-298REXH14(21) - National Archives Collection.

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View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Wreckage-Japanese-Mini-Submarine>



Photo # NH 50931 Japanese torpedo attack on "Battleship Row", Pearl Harbor, 7 Dec. 1941

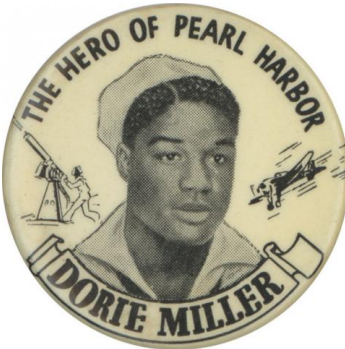
Pearl Harbor Attack - Disaster En Route to Ships

Image online, courtesy U.S. Naval Heritage & Command.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Pearl-Harbor-Attack-Disaster-En-Route-to-Ships>



DORIE MILLER

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