

FARNSWORTH, ROLLAND KING
1918-1944

Word was received this week from Franklin Farnsworth, former Wheatland resident now living in Bluffton, Ohio, that he was officially notified on January 10 by the war department that his brother Rolland King Farnsworth CM 1/c was killed in action in the Pacific war theatre. He was a fireman control man first class, and his general quarters were in the plotting room below the water line.

He was the son of the late Mrs. Ida Farnsworth and was born and reared in this community, where he attended the Wheatland schools and entered the Navy in May of 1937.

Mr. Farnsworth sent the Times a clipping from the Cleveland Plain Dealer of January 5, telling of the destroyer "Cooper" on which his brother served. It read as follows:

"Commander Mell A. Peterson, Algona, Iowa, skipper on the destroyer Cooper related tonight how Catalina flying boats landed on Japanese-held Ormoc Bay in daylight to rescue survivors of his ship which was sunk by an under-water explosion, probably a torpedo.

"One of the two-engined Catalinas carried 64 persons on one of its rescue missions. This was a world's record. The plane's load was 3000 pounds heavier than the designer said the craft could carry. Another Catalina carried 56 of the Cooper's personnel and still another rescued 24.

"The Cooper went down in less than a minute after the explosion split her in two. A total of 158 officers and men, approximately one half the ship's complement, were rescued. Some of the survivors floated in the water for 15 hours.

"The Cooper had been sent with two other destroyers on the night of December 3 to seek out Japanese shipping which was trying to reinforce the garrison on Leyte. The Cooper sank two Jap merchantmen before it was shattered by the explosion.

"Commander Peterson said the performance of the crew was remarkable, and not a cry was heard."