

Old Tom

A Fletcher Destroyer in War and Peace

by Jackson Sellers



HOW IS THE ORIGINAL OLD TOM HIMSELF?

— Vice Admiral John S. McCain in a 1945 message to the *USS Colahan*

The *USS Colahan* (DD-658), a *Fletcher*-class destroyer built during World War II, fought her way across the Western Pacific in 1944-45, winning eight battle stars in the face of the Imperial Japanese Navy. Her Pacific War story was told in *The Original Tomcat*, published in four limited editions in 1994-97. Here is the sequel, in which the *Colahan* gains five more battle stars off Korea and serves staunchly in the Cold War before settling, at the end, into a watery grave.

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Cover and Title Page Photo

Courtesy of Herb Messinger of Starrucca, Pennsylvania, who served aboard the *USS Colahan* in the early Fifties. The destroyer is shown coming into San Diego Harbor no earlier than the fall of 1952. In the summer of that year, the *Colahan* received her tripod mast in a shipyard overhaul. She had carried a flagpole mast during her Pacific War service, 1943-45, and also during her first Korean War tour, 1951-52. The "Tomcat" was now "Old Tom." She would look like this for the rest of her life.

The Story Continues . . .

Old Tom is a sequel to *The Original Tomcat: A Fletcher Destroyer Goes to War*, © 1995, Library of Congress Catalog Control Number 95092735.

Dedicated to

Yvonne Keiko Sellers
1967-1996

who loved her daddy's stories



"Plank-Owners" of Old Tom, First Edition, December 1997

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