



Colahan Medals

The *USS Colahan DD-658* fought in eight campaigns from Kwajalein to Tokyo Bay during the Pacific War. Everybody aboard in 1944-45 earned five medals and a couple of ribbons. Radioman Ray Loughrige of Springfield, Missouri, won twice as many decorations because he served in both oceans before and after his tour aboard the *Colahan*. But his handsome collection includes the medals awarded to the *Colahan* sailors who served with him from beginning to end, as follows: **American Campaign** (Row 1, #2), **Asiatic-Pacific Campaign** (Row 1, #4), **World War II Victory** (Row 1, #5), **Navy Occupation Service** (Row 2, #1) and **Philippine Liberation** (Row 2, #4). The badge at the bottom represents the **Philippine Presidential Citation**. Ship's Clerk Henry S. Gaffin of Worcester, Massachusetts, a *Colahan* plank-owner like Ray, lists the same six decorations in his collection, but adds the **Combat Action** ribbon, which is not displayed by Ray. For both Hank and Ray, obtaining the Philippine awards proved a little annoying, as recounted in *The Original Tomcat* by Jackson Sellers. Both veterans made requests to the Embassy of the Philippines in Washington, D.C.. The embassy's Defense and Armed Forces Affairs Office responded politely and positively to these Americans who had helped free the oppressed Filipinos. Yes, they were entitled to the medals. The deepest appreciation and gratitude were extended for their participation in the Philippine campaign during World War II. But there was one little matter: "Please send \$7.00 to cover the cost of shipping and handling."