



Inferno: The Epic Life and Death Struggle of the USS Franklin in World War II

Joseph A. Springer

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March 19, 1945 – Off the coast of Japan, the USS Franklin had just launched its aircraft in an attack of the shipping industry in Kobe Harbor when a single enemy aircraft pierced the cloud cover and made a low level run on the ship known as “Big Ben.”

In a matter of seconds, the aircraft’s 250kg bomb would strike the Franklin, piercing the deck and setting off a chain reaction of exploding ordnance and aviation fuel. Afire, listing heavily to starboard, and with over 1,000 killed or wounded, it appeared as if the USS Franklin would find her end among the waters of the Pacific. The events that followed, however, would make the story of Big Ben one of the most dramatic and inspiring in naval history.

Now available in paperback from historian Joseph Springer, *Inferno: The Epic Life and Death Struggle of the USS Franklin in World War II* tells the heroic tale of the near-miraculous efforts that went into saving the USS Franklin—from the selfless contributions of the hundreds of officers and enlisted men who voluntarily remained onboard to the assistance of the USS Santa Fe in rescuing crewmen from the sea, fighting the fires, and closing in alongside the Franklin to take off the numerous wounded and nonessential personnel.

Told in the survivors’ words, the story of the legendary ship’s arduous journey from Okinawa to the Brooklyn Navy Yard unfolds in harrowing detail. It is a tremendous tale of endurance and seamanship, and unlike any in the proud history of the U.S. Navy.

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