



**Donald  
Sims**

*Navy*

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**Mar 11, 1925 - Oct 26, 1999**

**BIRTHPLACE: Oakley,KS**

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### **SOLDIER DETAILS**

**DIVISION: Navy, USS Grumium (AK112)**

**THEATER OF OPERATION: Pacific**

**HONORED BY: Pauline Sims, wife, and children**

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### **BIOGRAPHY**

A letter from James Forrestal to Mr. Donald Sims dated 14 January 1946: My dear Mr. Sims: I have address this letter to reach you after all the formalities of your separation from active service are completed. I have done so because, without formality but as clearly as I know how to say it, I want the Navy's pride in you, which it is my privilege to express, to reach into your civil life and remain with you always. You have served in the greatest Navy in the world. It crushed two enemy fleets at once, receiving their surrenders only four months apart. It brought our land-based airpower within bombing range of the enemy, and set our ground armies on the beachheads of final victory. It performed the multitude of tasks necessary to support these military operations. No other Navy at any time has done so much. For your part in these achievements you deserve to be proud as long as you live. The Nation which you served at a time of crisis will remember you with gratitude. The best wishes of the Navy go with you into civilian life. Good luck. Sincerely yours, James Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy. A letter written by Arthur Capper, United States Senate on 30 June 1945: Dear Mrs. Sims: Although you were previously officially notified, I have just learned with deep regret that your husband, Donald Ross Sims, has been wounded in enemy action while defending his country. I realize that any expression of mine will be wholly inadequate to assuage your grief and anxiety, yet I want you to know that you and the other members of his family have my thoughts at such time. This performance of his duty has come in connection with his desire to help preserve in every way possible the rights of free men and the ideals upon which our Nation is founded. It is my wish, as I know it is yours, that his recuperation may be both speedy and complete. Sincerely your friend, Arthur Capper, United States Senator, Kansas. A poem by Pauline C. Sims, 'A Young Sailor's Fear'. We are anchored in a cavernous but serene Okinawa Bay in the Ryuka Islands awaiting an invitation to be a part of the privileged party that will at last close the doors of the now affluent ammunition plants, ship yards and plane factories. I am scared - I pray. The bay is a potpourri of navy muscle. Aircraft carriers, cargo ships, cruisers, battle wagons, sea plane tenders, destroyers, hospital ships - all lay penned in this pseudo - secure haven surrounded by low, sturdy mountains that sneak down to dip their humid toes in the nervous Pacific Ocean. I am scared - I pray. I stand guard again this morning, my white T-shirt soaked with sweat, the sweat of fear mixed with the sweat of the hot, sultry day that is about to present itself. Each second

closer to daylight brings the bile from my churning stomach nearer to my tightening throat. My heart begins a rapid thump - a thumping not unlike the thumping tom-toms my ancestors savagely beat in a pre-battle frenzy. I am scared - I pray. I have been rehearsed, drilled, lectured to and whipped through our assigned paces more times than I want to remember. I know my part and I have remembered my lines for haven't I played this scene and role time and time again in the past two and a half years - a little more than one tenth of my life? I know what to expect, I know what to do - but still - I am scared - I pray. I stand here in my own puddle of sweat, my hand on the gun and I pray! - but God is preoccupied for just as the orange ball of sunrise pops over the Okinawa Mountains - screaming, single-minded, sacrificial Kamikaze planes accompany it. Each indiscriminately scavenging for any luckless U.S. frigate - any war wearied, battle scarred ship that can be targeted to be the crypt for their flying caskets. I am scared - I pray. Donald R. Sims reached the rank of Boatswain's mate, second class.