

## **Lewis Chester Dodds**

March 30, 1920 - 1945

Calloway County's Lewis Chester Dodds' death was among the first in a long trail of tragic World War II announcements that came home. Military officials telegraphed a message to Paducah that was then relayed to Calloway County Sheriff Carl Kingins, who delivered the news.

A 22-year-old seaman, Dodds, died in the aftermath of a war battle that sunk the U.S.S. Houston in the Java Sea on February 27, 1942. The ship encountered a large Japanese naval force that evening and was among Allied ships; five were lost in the battle. The day after the seven-hour sea battle, Japanese forces were able to begin their invasion of the island of Java.

Officially, Dodds had been listed as missing in action since March 1, 1942. Navy officials notified his parents, Moss and Vernie (Banks) Dodds of Almo, in January 1946.

Dodds volunteered for service in May 1940 and went on sea duty later that year. He worked for the Tennessee Valley Authority before his military service. He was survived by three brothers, two of whom also served — S-Sgt. Cecil W. Dodds and A-S John Wesley Dodds.

Kristin Taylor