



USS Wiley (DD-597)

Kermit Franklin Miller
Water Tender 3/C U.S. Navy
9 May 1944 – 20 January 1946

Kermit was born on 4 February 1911 in Minesite in Lower Macungie Township. He attended grade school in Minesite and subsequently attended Business School in Bookkeeping for 18 months in Allentown, Pennsylvania. In 1932, he went to work at Mack Trucks, Inc. in Allentown as a Sheet Metal Assembler. On 13 July 1940, he married **Helen Kathryn Harig** (21 September 1908 – 13 May 1998) at St. Paul's Church in Trexlertown, Pennsylvania, where he was a member. They made their home in Wescosville, Pennsylvania. Kermit was drafted into the Navy as a Seaman Recruit on 9 May 1944. After recruit training at Williamsburg, Virginia, he received advanced training in Shipboard Engineering at Gulfport, Mississippi, and then at Treasure Island, near San Francisco, California. While at Treasure Island, Helen visited Kermit for seven weeks. After he was detached from Treasure Island, he returned home for a short period of leave, and left home on 3 January 1945 for Puget Sound Naval Base at Bremerton, Washington, for assignment aboard Destroyer *USS Wiley (DD-597)*, which was in the final phase of construction. *USS Wiley* was commissioned on 22 February 1945, and underwent shakedown operations out of San Diego, California. She completed shakedown at the end of April 1945, and returned to Port Angeles, Washington, to prepare for duty in the Pacific. *USS Wiley* left for Hawaii on 19 May 1945, where she conducted training operations until 13 June 1945, and then left for the Philippine Islands. She escorted Aircraft Carrier *USS Cape Gloucester (CVE-109)* across the Pacific, arriving at Leyte mid-July 1945. She then operated out of the Philippines on training exercises until 9 August 1945, when she departed Subic Bay to escort a small group of tankers to Okinawa in the Ryukyus Islands. While at Okinawa, *USS Wiley* came under attack by Japanese aircraft on the day before the Japanese surrendered. After the war, *USS Wiley* operated off the coast of China, entered several Chinese ports to destroy floating mines by gunfire, and covered the landings of American peacekeeping troops at Inchon, Korea. In December 1945, she departed the Western Pacific for the States, arriving at Mare Island near San Francisco on 3 January 1946. Kermit left *USS Wiley* and was discharged as a Water Tender 3/C at Bainbridge, Maryland, on 20 January 1946. He returned home to Wescosville. In 1949 he started a 28-year career as Tax Collector for Lower Macungie Township. He also raised turkeys for sale. Kermit and Helen had no children. Kermit died on 13 February 1979 in Allentown & Sacred Heart Hospital Center, and is buried at St. Paul's Church alongside Helen. He was a past President of Western Lehigh Lions Club in Fogelsville, Pennsylvania; Player, Manager, and Booster of Wescosville Athletic Club; and a member of Wescosville Fire Company, Breinigsville VFW Post, Wescosville Union Sunday School, and Lakeview Hunting Lodge. He also was a founder of the Wescosville Playground Association and chaired the committee to erect the World War II Monument in Wescosville. Kermit's parents were **Edwin Woodrow Miller** (14 September 1883 – 18 December 1965) and **Dillah Elvina Kuhns** (2 November 1889 – 10 September 1965). Kermit's brother, **Donald Anthony Miller**, also served in the Army during World War II.