

World War II

75th Anniversary Commemorative Series

COMBAT NARRATIVES

The Mediterranean Convoys

1943-44



Naval History and Heritage Command
U.S. Navy





The Mediterranean Theater of Operations in World War II

Combat Narratives

The Mediterranean Convoys

1943 – 44

Office of Naval Intelligence, U.S. Navy



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Cover: A United Nations convoy steams westward across the Atlantic, bound for Africa during World War II (U.S. Naval Academy, 0680).

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AA	Antiaircraft
AK	Cargo Ship
AKA	Attack Cargo Ship
AM	Minesweeper
ASDIC	Antisubmarine Detection Investigation Committee
ASW	Antisubmarine Warfare
CinCMed	Commander in Chief, Mediterranean Fleet
CL	Light Cruiser
CTF	Commander, Task Force
CV	Aircraft Carrier
DD	Destroyer
DE	Destroyer Escort
DMS	Destroyer Minesweeper
FNS	French Navy Ship
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
HMS	His Majesty's Ship (Royal Navy)
HMT	His Majesty's Transport (Royal Navy)
LCM	Landing Craft, Mechanized
LCVP	Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel
LST	Landing Ship, Tank
NHHC	Naval History and Heritage Command
ONI	Office of Naval Intelligence
RAF	Royal Air Force
RNLN	Royal Netherlands Navy
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
SS	Merchant Steamship
TG	Task Group
TF	Task Force
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USCGC	United States Coast Guard Cutter
USN	United States Navy
USS	United States Ship
WPG	Coast Guard Patrol Gunboat

EDITOR'S PREFACE

The combat narrative program originated with a directive issued in February 1942 by Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet. It instructed the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) to prepare and disseminate combat operations narratives, which ONI accomplished through its Publications and Distribution Branch. According to the organizational chart, the Combat Narratives Office was a subsection of the Publications Section, later renamed Special Publications Section, within the Publications and Distribution Branch, under the Assistant Director, ONI.¹ The team of professionally trained writers and historians that composed the Combat Narratives Office within the Publications and Distribution Branch included noted scholars such as Carl Bridenbaugh and C. Vann Woodward. Using available primary sources and augmenting them with interviews when possible, the Combat Narratives Office put together a series of accounts classified Confidential during the war, with distribution limited primarily to commissioned officers in the Navy.² King intended the narratives to be historical overviews of operations that would serve as examples of lessons learned for officers in training.

There were several stages in the publication of a combat narrative. Gaining access to operation plans and orders, action reports, war diaries, and patrol reports often took three months or longer. In some cases, security considerations hampered the telling of the complete story while, in other cases, the lack of access to records made it difficult to tell the story at all. Research and writing normally took three or four months, editing and clearance took at minimum one month, and the Government Printing Office rarely completed the publication process in fewer than three months. From beginning to end, the process took anywhere from 10 months to a year or longer to complete.

In addition to writing and publishing narratives, the Combat Narratives Office also performed numerous other tasks. Its staff assisted the Publications Section with its projects, responded to official ONI requests for information, and assisted King with the preparation of his official reports to the Secretary of the Navy. Inundated with assignments, the office could devote only two staff members to writing combat narratives in the autumn of 1943.³ Despite such pressures, the Combat Narratives Office managed to publish 21 narratives and was in the process of completing 13 more, with other narrative compilations just beginning, when the Combat Narratives Office ceased its operations on 20 August 1945.

The efforts of the Combat Narratives Office represented the first attempt at producing official historical accounts of World War II naval operations. The lack of timely access to combat records sometimes led to the omission of important facts and caused delays in publication. On these grounds, ONI found the combat narratives unreliable. As early as July 1945, ONI director Rear Admiral Leo H. Thebaud assessed the value

1 "United States Naval Administrative Histories in World War II," vol. 26[d], 1945/46 (Appendix A, Charts 12 and 13), Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Office of Naval Intelligence, Navy Department Library, Washington, DC.

2 Charles Moran, *The Landings in North Africa, November 1942* (Washington, DC: Naval Historical Center, 1993), iii.

3 "United States Naval Administrative Histories in World War II," vol. 26[d], 1945/46 (1020-21), Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Office of Naval Intelligence, Navy Department Library, Washington, DC.

of the narratives as only “background material and documentation for future historical work.”⁴ After the war, amid an increase in requests to access the narratives, ONI began to discourage their use even as historical background. Thebaud’s successor, Rear Admiral Thomas B. Inglis, was of the view that the narratives offered “distorted and incomplete” accounts of what had happened. He suggested that researchers, many of them retired naval officers seeking to write about their wartime experiences, continue waiting for the action reports to be declassified.⁵

ONI officials began redirecting naval researchers to Samuel Eliot Morison’s *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II* well before Morison had finished the entirety of the highly anticipated multivolume work. They touted Morison’s history as “more valid and complete” than the narratives because it contained “all valid information in the narratives plus later collated information.”⁶ In 1958, as Morison neared the conclusion of his 15-volume history, ONI declassified the combat narratives and recommended the destruction of all copies except those retained for “official use” by the Office of Naval History.⁷ As a warning to researchers and with decided preference for Morison’s work, the Office of Naval History stamped its copies of combat narratives with the following disclaimer in 1964: “Combat Narratives were written to fill a temporary requirement before the appearance of official and semiofficial complete histories. Due to hastily gathered and oftentimes incomplete information, there are certain inaccuracies.”⁸ Thankfully, multiple copies survived despite ONI’s dissatisfaction with the work. Generations later, these narratives offer perceptions of naval operations as the war progressed, which in themselves are valuable to researchers. Taken together with other primary sources not available when the narratives were written, they enrich our understanding of the events they document.

The Mediterranean Convoys is one of these surviving narratives. For reasons unknown, the author, Lieutenant Commander Charles Moran, left the work unfinished. A retired Naval Reserve intelligence officer in his sixties when he was called back to active duty during World War II, Moran worked as a historian for the Combat Narratives Office from 1942 to 1945. ONI’s Publications and Distribution Branch lists Moran as the author of the published narrative *The Landings in North Africa, November 1942* and four unpublished

4 Inglis to the Secretary of the Navy, letter, 17 July 1945, box 119, Combat Narratives, World War II Command File, Records of the Office of Naval Intelligence, Record Group 38 (Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations), National Archives at College Park, MD.

5 Deputy Chief of Naval Intelligence Charles J. Rend to Inglis, memorandum, 14 January 1947, box 288, Central Administrative Correspondence, 1930–1948, Records of the Office of Naval Intelligence, Record Group 38 (Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations), National Archives at College Park, MD; Inglis, memorandum on Vice Admiral F. C. Sherman’s Request for “Combat Narratives,” 14 February 1947, box 288, Central Administrative Correspondence, 1930–1948, Records of the Office of Naval Intelligence, Record Group 38 (Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations), National Archives at College Park, MD. Rend told Sherman that the “narratives contained many inaccuracies, and that they were not proud of them.” Sherman had requested access to the narratives for a book he was planning to write in retirement.

6 Chief of Naval Operations to Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval ROTC Unit, Cornell University, letter, 7 February 1958, box 119, World War II Command File, Combat Narratives, Records of the Office of Naval Intelligence, Record Group 38 (Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations), National Archives at College Park, MD.

7 Ibid. ONI did not request reports of the destruction of Combat Narratives in the possession of other U.S. Navy offices.

8 Acting Director of Naval History F. Kent Loomis to Theda Bassett, Librarian, The Submarine Library, U.S. Naval Submarine Base New London (Groton, CT), letter, 3 December 1964, World War II Command File, Combat Narratives, Records of the Office of Naval Intelligence, Record Group 38 (Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations), National Archives at College Park, MD.

narrative manuscripts: *Pearl Harbor*; *The Landings at Salerno, September 1943*; *The Anzio-Nettuno Landings, January 1944*; and *Operations off Gaeta in Support of the Allied Fifth Army, May 1944*. It is unknown why the Publications and Distribution Branch did not include this narrative, *The Mediterranean Convoys*, in its unpublished narratives list in 1945.⁹

The Mediterranean region had fascinated Moran since childhood, when he attended school in France and Algiers. Previous articles by Moran, many of which appeared in the prominent journal on naval strategy and operations, the *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, focused on Mediterranean topics. While the unfinished status of this narrative invites speculation, Moran's familiarity with the Mediterranean and its history, along with his experience in the U.S. Navy and Naval Reserve, certainly seems to have made him the perfect choice to undertake the chore of describing Mediterranean convoy operations.

Of the 12 vignettes contained in Moran's unfinished combat narrative, five take place between the end of Operation Avalanche in mid-September 1943 and the beginning of Operation Shingle in late January 1944.¹⁰ The remaining seven take place while Operation Shingle was in progress and Allied armies were driving toward Rome. All 12 cover the period when Allied forces were winning control of the Mediterranean and beginning to take back Europe from the Axis. Moran's vignettes are important because they provide glimpses into the dangers faced by the convoys that transported men and materials to sustain the war effort. Without these convoys, the Allied military operations that led to victory would not have been possible. Moran also vividly illustrates that death and destruction came from both above and below via the Luftwaffe and the U-boats of the Kriegsmarine. This narrative offers examples of new weapons used by the enemy, such as the acoustic torpedo and the glide bomb, and shows the Allies, early in the evolution of electronic warfare, using new air and underwater detection technologies—radar and ASDIC (an acronym given to the public that stood for Anti-Submarine Detection Investigation Committee, a fictitious entity)—as well as electronic jamming devices to deny communication between enemy systems.¹¹ We see the evolution of antisubmarine warfare (ASW) tactics as the Allies find ways, through creeping attacks and swamp operations, to counter the danger from U-boats.¹² Moreover, we see the terrible price paid in ships, men, and materials to support Allied

9 "United States Naval Administrative Histories in World War II," vol. 26[d], 1945/46 (Appendix to Part X, 1–3), Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Office of Naval Intelligence, Navy Department Library, Washington, DC.

10 Here, two of the vignettes—on the sinking of *U-371* and on the sinking of *Fechtelner* (DE-157)—have been combined, since the sinkings occurred on a single westbound convoy.

11 Acoustic torpedoes targeted the sound of a ship's propellers and often disabled the ship through damage to its stern section or sank the ship outright. Germany's most advanced acoustic torpedo, the *Zaunkönig*, or T5, was even able to distinguish between the sounds produced by the propellers of naval escorts versus merchant vessels. In cases where it missed its target, the T5 would still usually explode beneath the ship's stern and cause serious damage. See Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, vol. 10, *The Atlantic Battle Won, May 1943–May 1945* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1956), 138. The German glide (or glider) bomb was a radio-controlled bomb guided to its target from a parent aircraft. More like missiles than bombs, two such weapons entered Germany's arsenal in 1943: the Henschel Hs-293 and the armor-piercing Ruhrstahl Fritz X, or FX 1400. Less effective than the aerial torpedo, the glide bombs were nonetheless deliverable from greater distances. The Allies countered the threat by placing electronic jammers on U.S. Navy destroyer escorts. On this first foray into electronic warfare, see Peter C. Smith, *The Sea Eagles: The Luftwaffe's Maritime Operations, 1939–1945* (London: Greenhill, 2001), 8, 13; Martin J. Bollinger, *Warriors and Wizards: The Development and Defeat of Radio-Controlled Glide Bombs of the Third Reich* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2010), 125–37.

12 In a creeping attack, two ships would work together to locate and drop depth charges on an enemy submarine. One ship would maintain sonar contact with the submarine and direct the attacking ship, which would proceed slowly and quietly over the target and drop its depth charges, taking the enemy by surprise. Swamp operations (or tactics) is a term referring to the relentless hunting of a

military operations across North Africa and into Italy. These insights are vital for a deeper understanding of Allied convoy operations in the Mediterranean, and although there are more complete accounts elsewhere, Moran was faithful to Admiral King's intention that the combat narratives provide a clear view of what took place. It is my hope that this narrative will provide that view to still others.

What follows is an introduction and then the reproduction of the combat narrative itself, transcribed from a type-written draft of *The Mediterranean Convoys* located at the Navy Department Library in Washington, DC, and augmented by images and introductions by the editor to each of the narrative's original sections. Formatting has been standardized with reference to other published combat narratives. Spelling, punctuation, and obvious typographical errors have been corrected silently. The author's endnotes have been maintained and incorporated into this volume's consecutively numbered footnotes. Additional, explanatory footnotes have been supplied and have been differentiated from the original notes with the signature, "—Ed."

—Randall Fortson

Histories Branch
Naval History and Heritage Command

U-boat with all available air and surface antisubmarine forces in an area. See Eric J. Grove, ed., *The Defeat of the Enemy Attack upon Shipping, 1939–1945: A Revised Edition of the Naval Staff History* (London: Routledge, 2018), 142–46.

PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL SERIES

1 March 1945

Combat narratives have been prepared by the Publications Branch of the Office of Naval Intelligence for the information of the officers of the United States Navy.

The data on which these studies are based are those official documents which are suitable for a confidential publication. This material has been collated and presented in chronological order.

In perusing these narratives, the reader should bear in mind that while they recount in considerable detail the engagements in which our forces participated, certain underlying aspects of these operations must be kept in a secret category until after the end of the war.

It should be remembered also that the observations of men in battle are sometimes at variance. As a result, the reports of commanding officers may differ although they participated in the same action and shared a common purpose. In general, combat narratives represent a reasoned interpretation of these discrepancies. In those instances where views cannot be reconciled, extracts from the conflicting evidence are reprinted.

Thus, an effort has been made to provide accurate and, within the above-mentioned limitations, complete narratives with charts covering raids, combats, joint operations, and battles in which our Fleets have engaged in the current war. It is hoped that these narratives will afford a clear view of what has occurred, and form a basis for a broader understanding which will result in ever more successful operations.



Admiral, USN
Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The events documented in *The Mediterranean Convoys* take place within the larger context of a world at war. Conflict spread to the Mediterranean on 10 June 1940, when Italy, led by an opportunistic Benito Mussolini, declared war on Britain and France. Germany's quick reduction of France, along with Mussolini's desire for French territory, emboldened Italy to enter the war on the side of Germany. A greatly weakened France provided Mussolini with the chance to assert Italy's dominance in the Mediterranean, and he availed himself of the opportunity by invading France's southeastern border to seize and annex French territory. At the same time, in anticipation of Adolf Hitler's plan to bomb and invade Britain, Mussolini began his own aerial assault of British forces at Malta.

France's separate armistices—with Germany on 22 June 1940 and Italy on 24 June 1940—formalized the new political and military reality in France. The former agreement ceded the northern and western parts of France to Germany as occupied territory and thus resulted in the fracturing of French territory into two parts: the occupation zone in the north and west and a smaller French vassal state, headquartered at Vichy, in the south. Although the German armistice left Vichy France in control of France's Mediterranean possessions in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Syria, and Lebanon, Germany mandated that the French demobilize their fleet under Axis supervision at some future time and remain neutral afterward. In the armistice agreement with Italy, France gave Mussolini the territory he had conquered along Italy's mountainous southeastern border with France.

With most of the French army occupied with the German invasion, Mussolini had been able to put into action his plan for reducing Anglo-French influence in the Mediterranean. After France's defeat, only Britain presented an obstacle to Italy's desire for conquest, and Britain was about to become preoccupied with its own self-preservation. With German troops just across the English Channel in France and the Luftwaffe planning its upcoming aerial campaign, not only British influence, but also the very fate of Britain was at stake.

The defeat and coerced neutrality of its former French ally left Britain in a precarious position in the Mediterranean. The Royal Navy still projected British superiority there, but Italy's navy, the Regia Marina, potentially presented a formidable challenge to British supply routes connecting Gibraltar, Malta, and Egypt. If Germany or Italy gained control of the French fleet, the balance of naval power in the Mediterranean could quickly tip in favor of the Axis. With the United States yet to enter the shooting war, and Mussolini already bombing Britain's colony at Malta, the British could not risk French ships falling into Axis hands. On 3 July 1940, 11 days after France signed its armistice with Germany, Britain delivered the following ultimatum to Admiral Marcel-Bruno Gensoul, commander at Mers el-Kébir, Algeria, where the most powerful concentration of French warships lay anchored: France could continue the war against Germany and Italy; it could intern its ships in a British or French Caribbean port; or it could destroy them. If none of these options were acceptable, then the Royal Navy would attack and sink French ships wherever found.¹³ Simultaneous to the ultimatum's delivery at Mers el-Kébir, armed boarding parties took control of French ships docked in Britain, and Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham of the Royal Navy persuaded his friend Admiral René-Emile

13 Evan Mawdsley, *The War for the Seas: A Maritime History of World War II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 65.

disagreed on where to attack Axis forces, Stalin pressed for a second front as soon as possible in Western Europe. However, the second front in the west would not happen until 1944.

If the British military situation at home was uncertain in 1942, it was not much better in the Mediterranean. The Royal Navy and Royal Air Force were unable to break the two-year siege of Malta by Axis air and naval forces. Again, Germany bolstered Italy, this time by directing the Luftwaffe to begin bombing operations against Malta in early 1941. Recognizing the importance of protecting supply lines to its troops in North Africa, as well as disrupting the supply lines of the enemy, Germany ordered 27 U-boats to the Mediterranean in 1941 and another 16 in 1942, and they were wreaking havoc in short order.¹⁴ Meanwhile, Axis armies had pushed British forces out of Greece and then Crete, and posed a serious threat to the British Army in Egypt.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, the United States entered the war against Germany and Italy and worked closely with Britain on a grand strategy. U.S. and British planners agreed that defeating Germany should be their first priority but had not decided on where to start. British planners wanted Allied forces to make their first move somewhere in the Mediterranean. They favored an invasion of North Africa in order to remove Axis forces from the region and to regain air and sea superiority. Once the Allies had secured North Africa, they reasoned, it could serve as the launching point for an invasion of Sicily and then the Italian peninsula, which Churchill referred to as the “soft underbelly of Europe.” U.S. planners preferred to build up Allied military forces in Great Britain for an invasion of Europe at some point in 1943. However, in the summer of 1942, partly in response to Soviet requests for a second front, and partly because of his desire for early military success, President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered U.S. military planners to defer to their British counterparts and come to an agreement. They did so promptly, and on 24 July, the Combined Chiefs of Staff put forth Agreement No. 94, committing the Allies to an operation in North Africa during the fall of 1942. Roosevelt formally gave his support to what eventually became Operation Torch on 31 July 1942, making North Africa and Italy the initial focus of Allied efforts to take back Europe in 1942 and 1943.¹⁵

The Allied push into Europe began in earnest in November 1942 as Operation Torch landed Allied forces on the Moroccan and Algerian coasts. By May 1943, these forces had expelled the Germans and Italians from North Africa and taken control of the North African ports at Arzew, Oran, Mers el-Kébir, Algiers, Philippeville, Bône, and Bizerte. These ports later provided forward basing of dry docking and repair facilities and played an important part in supporting Allied convoy operations in the Mediterranean and the forthcoming assault on Sicily and the Italian peninsula. From 1942 to 1945, U.S. and British naval forces provided transports and landing craft, naval gunfire support, antiaircraft and antisubmarine defenses, and air cover for five major amphibious operations: Operation Torch (8–16 November 1942) in North Africa,

14 Lawrence Paterson, *U-Boats in the Mediterranean, 1941–1944* (New York: Skyhorse, 2019), 186–87.

15 Alexandra Lohse and Jon Middaugh, *Operation Torch: The American Amphibious Assault on French Morocco, 1942* (Washington, DC: Naval History and Heritage Command, 2018), 3. The cross-channel attack preferred by the Americans would come in 1944.

Operation Husky (9 July–17 August 1943) in Sicily, and Operations Baytown (3–16 September 1943), Avalanche (9–16 September 1943), and Shingle (22 January–5 June 1944) on the Italian peninsula. U.S. and British naval forces also supported Operation Dragoon (15 August–14 September 1944), which landed Allied forces in southern France. Throughout this period, Allied naval forces escorted convoys, cleared mines, conducted ASW patrols, carried out offensive missions against Axis shipping, and built and operated numerous supply bases, training centers, and ports.

The events described in this narrative illustrate the actions and sacrifices of the U.S. Navy and the Royal Navy, working together to enable the transfer of vital men and supplies in the Mediterranean. The account also provides a glimpse of the dangers of Allied convoy and antisubmarine operations from the autumn of 1943 into spring of 1944. The success of Allied operations at sea contributed to the Allied land operations in North Africa and Southern Europe. Each Allied victory on land, in turn, led to fewer basing options for the Luftwaffe. The development of advanced tactics and weaponry at sea, meanwhile, led to fewer U-boats in the Mediterranean. These developments and victories meant fewer dangers for Allied convoys.

Between 1941 and 1944, 63 U-boats entered the Mediterranean. None of them survived to the end of the war.¹⁶ Each Allied success resulted in more men, military equipment, and supplies headed to places where they mattered most. From the invasion and occupation of North Africa through the capture of Sicily, the Italian Campaign, and the invasion of Southern France, Allied Mediterranean convoys faced fewer obstacles with each victorious Allied operation. Victory, nonetheless, required much sacrifice. The “soft underbelly of Europe” was never quite as soft as Churchill’s assertion suggests, and the invasion of Italy was hardly a shortcut to victory. The path to victory in the Mediterranean proved to be a hard slog all the way to the end, but Mediterranean convoy operations were an important first step in the liberation of Europe. The courage, determination, and persistence displayed by those serving in Allied Mediterranean convoys played a major part in that outcome.

16 Paterson, *U-Boats in the Mediterranean*, 186–87.

THE MEDITERRANEAN CONVOYS
1943-44

THE SINKING OF USS *BRISTOL*

Bristol (DD-453), commissioned on 22 October 1941, was a battle-tested Gleaves-class destroyer, having escorted assault forces to shore and provided fire support as needed in Operations Husky and Avalanche. By early October 1943, with southern Italy under Allied control, the march toward Rome slowed down, having reached only as far north as the Volturno Line, which ran from Termoli in the east, along the Biferno River through the Apennine Mountains, to the Volturno River in the west. Although less than 20 miles from Naples, the German defensive position was more than 120 miles from Rome, which Allied forces would not enter until June 1944. Meanwhile, with Salerno in hand and the breakout of Allied forces under way, *Bristol* remained busy. At the time of her sinking on 13 October 1943, *Bristol* was escorting a fast troop convoy, SNF-5, headed west to Oran, Algeria, from Naples. At 0423, positioned off the coast of eastern Algeria, U-371, a Type VIIC U-boat, fired the T5 acoustic torpedo at *Bristol*. Breaking into two pieces, she was gone in approximately 12 minutes. *Trippe* (DD-403) and *Wainwright* (DD-419) rescued 241 men, but 52 perished as U-371 escaped undetected.¹⁷

The first serious casualty sustained by the Mediterranean convoys was the sinking of the destroyer *Bristol* (Lt. Comdr. John A. Glick) on 13 October 1943, while operating with an escort unit consisting of the *Wainwright*, *Rhind*, *Trippe*, *Benson*, *Nicholson*, and *Bristol* under command of Destroyer Squadron 8.

At 0409 the *Bristol* was patrolling at 1 1/2 knots in excess of convoy speed instead of “at least 2 knots” normally required. This speed was chosen to avoid the vibration existing on the *Bristol* between 15 and 17 knots. Her assigned station was distant approximately 4,000 yards from the nearest ship. The base course was 264° T. with the convoy zigzagging. The moon was high, bright and full; visibility excellent. The sea was moderate with a slight swell, wind from the north and about five knots. The *Bristol* was conducting a sound search 70° each side of the ship’s heading.

At 0423 (Zone A Time), in position latitude 37°19’N, longitude 06°19’E, the *Bristol* was struck by a torpedo presumably from a submerged submarine.¹⁸ The ship was struck on the port side forward of the engine room, close to the keel. The ship began breaking in two rapidly. Forty seconds after the explosion the bow took a slant of 30–50 degrees. Within three minutes the bow was about 60° in the air while the stern seemed to drift off. The order to abandon ship was promptly given. The ship settled slowly with a list to port and disappeared

¹⁷ Daniel Morgan and Bruce Taylor, *U-Boat Attack Logs: A Complete Record of Warship Sinkings from Original Sources, 1939–1945* (Barnsley, UK: Seaforth, 2011), 360–62.

¹⁸ Zone A was the time zone immediately to the east of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Fighting in the Mediterranean occurred in three time zones: GMT, Zone A (GMT +1 hours), and Zone B (GMT +2 hours).—Ed.

in about eight minutes' time. The *Trippe* recovered 17 officers and 224 men, the *Wainwright* one officer and six men. Five officers and 46 men were missing. Eight officers and 51 men were wounded.

The fact that all depth charges were set on "safe" undoubtedly prevented the casualties from being greater. The issuance of plastic whistles to the personnel facilitated the rescue of the men in the water. No boats were launched as all were either jammed or damaged. Several life rafts, however, floated clear.

THE SINKING OF SS *TIVIVES*

Just a day after the sinking of Bristol and nearly a month after the Allies secured the landing at Salerno, Convoy MKS-28, with more than 40 merchant ships and five escorts, departed Alexandria on its way to Gibraltar, via stops in Algiers and Oran. Within this convoy sailed the American freighter *Tivives* with a refrigerated cargo of 1,900 tons, mostly meat and butter, for Allied forces.¹⁹ On 21 October 1943, with the convoy 15 miles off the Algerian coast, near Cape Ténès, the Luftwaffe attacked at dusk with a force of approximately 23 planes. Most of them Junkers Ju-88s and Dornier Do-217s, they initially attacked in waves, with the first wave hitting the convoy from its stern.²⁰ The second wave of attack came from the port side, and the third and final wave turned out to be a mishmash of planes attacking from all directions. Weapons employed by the aircraft included 20mm cannon, Henschel Hs-293 glide bombs, and aerial torpedoes.

On the first pass, the planes strafed the convoy with their cannon but released neither glide bombs nor torpedoes. *Tivives* distinguished herself with fierce return fire, and the attackers took notice. On the second pass, they focused primarily on *Tivives*, which again performed well, hitting several planes and even shooting one down. (Luftwaffe pilots later claimed to have damaged two of their targets with glide bombs and another 15 by torpedo.²¹) At some point, *Tivives* took a direct torpedo hit on the port quarter. She sank in about 20 minutes with all but two of her 80 crew surviving the ordeal. HMS *La Malouine* plucked the survivors from the water and transferred them to HMS *Bryony*, which safely took them to Oran the following day. In addition to having sunk *Tivives*, the attack also resulted in the sinking of the British merchant vessel *Saltwick*, which was carrying some 900 Red Cross parcels for Allied troops.²²

On 21 October 1943, Convoy UGS-19, of 58 ships, among which was the American steamer *Tivives*, was nearing its destination, Oran, escorted by eight DDs, five DEs, two AMs, and auxiliary vessels. At 1838 (Zone minus one Time) planes were observed in the distance. The escort began laying a smoke screen and the gunners' alarm was sounded. An armed guard commanded by Lieut. Paul L. Geddes was on board the *Tivives*

19 Robert M. Browning Jr., *U.S. Merchant Vessel War Casualties of World War II* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1996), 373.

20 Junkers, Dorniers, and Heinkels were usually the preferred attack planes. The Junkers Ju-88s, Dornier Do-217s, and Heinkel He-111s and He-177s could all be used for horizontal bombing. The Ju-88s and the He-111s could also be fitted with two aerial torpedoes each, while the Do-217s and the He-177s could carry as many as three glide bombs apiece. Leonard Bridgman, *Jane's All the World's Aircraft, 1945/46*, (repr. New York: Arco, 1970), 107c–8c, 119c–22c, 127c–30c.

21 Bollinger, *Warriors and Wizards*, 64.

22 Lloyd's of London, *Lloyd's War Losses: The Second World War, 3 September 1939–14 August 1945* (London: Lloyd's, 1989), 1:714.

and had been given orders to open fire on any plane approaching within 1,500 yards. About 15 minutes after they had been sighted the enemy planes attacked in a wave of five two-motored bombers of the 88 type or Dornier 217 type. The attack was directed at the stern of the convoy. The planes scattered as they passed overhead and strafed the decks. No torpedoes were dropped and no planes were shot down, but the position of the *Tivives* was revealed by the intense fire of her guns.

The second wave came in from the port quarter, planes coming in one or two at a time from various angles and apparently concentrating on the *Tivives*. During this run one plane was shot down and exploded about the time it struck the water 150 yards from the ship. Three other planes were damaged but disappeared in the smoke screen. Several torpedoes were dropped, two missing the bow of the *Tivives*. Aerial torpedoes were also observed and one glider bomb hit an LST while another, from almost dead ahead, exploded close on the port side of the *Tivives*.

The third wave came in from all directions. One plane, coming on the port beam, banked astern of the *Tivives* and returned on the starboard beam, then, obviously unable to rise, flew low into the smoke screen burning fiercely. Its loss was later confirmed by an intercepted radio message.

At about 1900 the *Tivives* sustained a direct torpedo hit on the port quarter. The explosion of the torpedo was augmented by that of a barrage balloon which was being carried on deck. Several men were blown overboard. The ship listed heavily to starboard, then rolled back to port and started sinking rapidly. Orders were given to abandon ship. *La Malouine*²³ stood by to rescue survivors, who were later transferred to HMS *Bryony* and landed at Oran at 1200 on 22 October. Casualties fortunately were limited to one man missing.

In repelling these attacks the *Tivives* was badly handicapped by the smoke screen which prevented seeing a plane until it was right on the ship. Nevertheless, 20 rounds were fired by the 3-inch gun and about 3,200 rounds of 20mm ammunition.

23 A French destroyer serving with the British —Ed.

THE ATTACK ON CONVOY KMF-25A

Now in control of Salerno and nearby Naples, the Allied invasion forces turned their sights toward Rome. Getting there turned out to be more difficult than originally envisioned, and the invasion stalled at the Volturno Line in the fall of 1943. Meanwhile, just weeks after the successful Allied landing at Salerno during Operation Avalanche, KMF-25A, a British troop convoy, headed from Liverpool to Palermo. The convoy contained 23 U.S. and British transports protected by a mix of U.S., British, and Greek destroyers and destroyer escorts. The convoy also included the anti-aircraft cruiser HMS *Colombo*. An estimated 25 bombers and torpedo bombers attacked the convoy shortly after 1800 on 27 October 1943 as it proceeded along the Algerian Coast, near Cape Bougaroun.²⁴ A withering spray of anti-aircraft fire shot down at least six of the attacking planes and no doubt encouraged the pilots of others to drop their bombs and torpedoes at less effective distances. Still, the pilots managed to torpedo *Beatty* (DD-640) and the transport ships *Santa Elena* and *Marnix van St. Aldegonde*. All but four of the 4,889 troops and nurses on *Santa Elena* and *Marnix van St. Aldegonde* survived. Eleven aboard *Beatty* perished.²⁵ She sank later that evening, followed by the two transports as they attempted to reach Philippeville, Algeria, for repairs the next day. Despite the Luftwaffe's emerging pattern of attacking convoys late in the day with bombers high and torpedo bombers low, this attack was unique in that the Luftwaffe employed the Henschel Hs-293 glide bomb for the first time against an Allied convoy.²⁶ Fortunately for KMF-25A, none found their target in this attack. In addition to the Luftwaffe pilots' inexperience with their new weapon, the volume and accuracy of Allied anti-aircraft fire surely played a part in the glide bombs' effectiveness, as did the electronic jamming gear, which blocked the frequencies that steered the bombs to their targets, on board *Davis* (DD-395) and *Herbert C. Jones* (DE-137).²⁷ With these technologies in their infancy and both sides still learning how best to deploy them, results were uneven. Still, the use of guided bombs and electronic jamming in 1943 offered a glimpse into the future development of missiles and electronic countermeasures.

This convoy of 23 ships sailed from the United Kingdom under the command of a British commodore on 27 October 1943 bound for Palermo and Naples. On 6 November at 1630 (Zone A Time) a formation of three

²⁴ Theodore Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations in World War II* (Annapolis, MD: United States Naval Institute, 1953), 335.

²⁵ Arnold Hague, *The Allied Convoy System, 1939-1945: Its Organization, Defence and Operation* (St. Catharines, Ontario: Vanwell, 2000), 174.

²⁶ When they hit their target, glide bombs could be devastatingly effective. On 9 September 1943, as retribution for Italy's surrender to the Allies, Germany loosed a glide bomb on the Italian battleship *Roma*, sinking it and killing nearly 1,400 people. Two days later, a glide bomb killed 197 aboard USS *Savannah* (CL-42) near Salerno. In both of those attacks, the Ruhrstahl Fritz X guided bomb was used instead of the Henschel Hs-293. See Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 335.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 341.

columns was adopted preparatory to entering the Tunisian War Channel.²⁸ The escort consisted of seven United States ships, *Tillman* (DD) (Lt. Comdr. Charles S. Hutchings), *McLanahan* (DD) (Lt. Comdr. Nels C. Johnson), *Davison* (DD) (Lt. Comdr. James D. Collett), *Laub* (DD) (Lt. Comdr. Alexander G. Hay), *Mervine* (DD) (Lt. Comdr. Dale R. Frakes), *Davis* (DD) (Lt. Comdr. William A. Dunn), *Beatty* (DD) (Lt. Comdr. William Outerson), *Parker* (DD) (Lt. Comdr. John W. Bays), *Herbert C. Jones* (DE) (Lt. Comdr. Alfred W. Gardes); three British ships, *Haydon* (DD), *Croome* (DD), and *Colombo* (antiaircraft cruiser); and two Greek destroyers, *Themistokles* and *Kanaris*.²⁹

The escorting vessels were grouped in a screen in front and on either side of the three columns with the *Davison* in the lead and the *Laub*, acting as a picket, 10,000 yards ahead of the main body. The *Colombo* operated within the screen and took station immediately ahead of the SS *Strathmore*, flagship of the convoy and leading ship of the center column.

At sunset (1736 Zone A Time) the convoy was proceeding east some three miles off the North African coast between Algiers and Philippeville at 12 knots, formation not zigzagging. The sea was choppy with a heavy ground swell running from the west. The wind was north to northwest, force 1 to 2, with clouds and rain squalls. Visibility was about 8,000 yards and the estimated ceiling from 1,000 to 1,500 feet.

Shortly after 1800, in latitude 37°13'N, longitude 06°12'E, the convoy was attacked on the port flank by a mixed force of planes estimated at nine bombers and 16 torpedo planes. Five Junkers Ju-88s, three or four Dornier Do-217s and one Heinkel He-111 were identified.

The first warning of the attack came at 1803 when the radar of the *Tillman*, which was the last escort on the port side of the convoy, picked up an aircraft bearing 320° T, distant 8,000 yards. Fire was opened within a few seconds, although the range was long, thereby giving warning to the other ships. The attacking plane proved to be a Dornier 217 towing a glider bomb by a 10- to 15-foot connection. The *Tillman* maneuvered promptly to bring the parent plane on the bow, subjecting her meanwhile to a sustained fire. The glider crept forward until under the nose of the plane, then turned sharply and headed straight for the *Tillman* in a shallow glide of great speed, 400 mph according to some observers. As the glider straightened out, the parent plane turned away and disappeared. Fire on the glider was maintained at ranges of 1,000 yards diminishing to about 600 yards, at which range it went into a steeper dive, crashed out of control and exploded about 150 to 200 yards on the destroyer's port bow.

After the disposing of this attack the *Tillman*, which was by this time 1,000 to 1,500 yards off station, proceeded to regain her position when the lookouts reported another plane with glider coming in on the port

28 The Tunisian War Channel was a 200-mile-long, 2-mile-wide, mine-free path from Galita Island to Tripoli and included the Sicilian Narrows, which had been cleared by the Royal Navy in May 1943. The Channel saved 45 days each way between the United Kingdom and the Middle East and nearly as much time between the United States and the Persian Gulf. See Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations*, 10:250.—Ed.

29 After Germany's occupation of Greece in the spring of 1941, all remaining Royal Hellenic Navy ships took refuge in Alexandria. They fought with the Allies for the remainder of the war.—Ed.

beam. The main battery of the destroyer opened on the plane while the machine guns were turned on the glider. This glider passed ahead and high and was either turned back by the parent plane or veered back out of control. It soon crashed and exploded 150 yards off the *Tillman*'s starboard quarter. A segment of its wing was blown aboard the destroyer but fell overboard before it could be recovered.

The plane never approached nearer than 5,900 yards. This did not prevent it from being hit by a full salvo at 1805, just as it turned away. The plane disintegrated.

A third plane and glider were reported shortly thereafter and taken under fire by the main battery of the *Tillman*. The glider exploded 500 to 600 yards off the starboard beam of the destroyer. The aircraft escaped unhurt.

The commanding officer of the *Tillman* attributed his success in dealing with these glider attacks to the fact that he took his ship some 4,000 yards from the convoy in order in order to gain maneuvering room, in spite of the "close to convoy" doctrine³⁰ adopted for level and divebombing attacks.

The glider attacks were followed by torpedo attacks. At 1814 the *Tillman* picked up a group of low flying planes at 325° T, 7,000 yards distant, and closing slowly. These planes soon turned toward the ship and increased speed. The main battery of the *Tillman* opened fire at about 5,000 yards when the aircraft became visible. At 3,000 yards machine guns were turned on the planes, which soon veered to their right and launched torpedoes at 2,200 yards. The *Tillman* swung hard left. At 1818 two torpedo wakes passed down her starboard side about 60 and 100 feet respectively from the ship. About 20 seconds thereafter a heavy explosion, probably due to an exploding torpedo, rocked the ship.³¹

While the *Tillman* was engaged as described, other vessels of the convoy and escort group were being subjected to determined attacks. At 1805 the *Beatty*, the last escort on the starboard side of the convoy, was torpedoed. She remained afloat until 2304, when she broke in two and sank. Her casualties amounted to one man killed and eleven missing. At about the same time the SS *Santa Elena*, the fourth ship in column one, and the *Marnix van St. Aldegonde*, the ninth and last ship in column three, were torpedoed. Both ships sank the following day while endeavoring to make Philippeville. Casualties were light, as the transports *Ruys* and *Monterey*, assisted by the *Parker*, *Mervine*, *Laub*, *Tillman* and HMS *Croome* stood by to take off survivors.

The rescue of the personnel of the *Santa Elena* was the occasion for a display of courage and calmness by a group of Canadian nurses on board. A heavy sea was running. In spite of the swell that prevented a close approach of the rescuing vessels, one nurse made a phenomenal leap from the transport to the *Laub*. The

30 Convoy escorts positioned themselves on the periphery of the convoy to provide a screen of protection from submarines. To get at the convoy, a U-boat had to put itself at risk in order to pass through the screen undetected or fire a torpedo long-range from beyond the screen. On the other hand, if an escort was stationed too far out, the better the chance of penetrating the screen and successfully attacking the convoy. Lieutenant Commander Hutchings's strategy gave his ship more room for the erratic movements needed to evade bombs and aerial torpedoes while lessening the danger of collision. However, by taking his ship out of position, he opened a gap in the screen and potentially endangered the convoy. Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 66–67—Ed.

31 A total of 24 explosions were heard on the sound gear of the *Tillman* —Ed.

sudden breaking in two of the *Beatty* compelled her crew to go over the side. Two hundred and thirty-nine officers and men were picked up from the water or from rafts and boats by the *Laub*.

Six enemy planes were definitely shot down during the day's operations, the *Davison*, *Tillman*, *Parker*, *Herbert C. Jones*, and HMS *Haydon* each claiming one. One of the convoy, the SS *Almanzora*, accounted for one plane, the wreckage of which landed on her forecastle. The USS *Andromeda* (AKA) claimed two planes, which she had engaged, probably some of the planes claimed by the destroyers. HMS *Colombo* assisted in the destruction of at least two of the planes. In repelling the German planes, our vessels were frequently handicapped by their own smoke screens.

The attack on this convoy followed the general lines of previous German actions of this nature: a medium-level bombing followed by a low-level torpedo attack. The inclusion of a glider bombing attack in a convoy raid was an innovation.

THE ATTACK ON CONVOY KMF-26

On 26 November 1943, 20 days after the attack on KMF-25A, KMF-26 was proceeding eastward along the Algerian coast en route to Bizerte, Tunisia, and eventually to Port Said, Egypt, before transiting the Suez Canal to India. Around mid-afternoon, *Portent* (AM-106) spotted Allied fighters engaging enemy aircraft, the vanguard of what proved to be approximately 30 German bombers. Eight Allied fighters on routine patrol opposed them, but reinforcements nearly equal to the number of bombers quickly arrived.³² As the first wave of German bombers made it through the fighter screen, they began dropping bombs from a height of around 10,000 feet. Included in the attacking force were 14 Heinkel He-177 bombers, each carrying two Henschel Hs-293 glide bombs. When vertical bombing proved ineffective, the Heinkel He-177s began deploying their new glide bombs. The continued harassment by Allied fighters and the attempted jamming of radio frequencies by *Herbert C. Jones* made that deployment more difficult. German pilots first targeted the antiaircraft cruiser *HMS Colombo*, which managed to avoid five of the radio-controlled bombs. One of the Hs-293s hit the troop transport *HMT Rohna*, killing 1,015 U.S. Soldiers and 134 British officers, Australian officers, and Indian crewmen. This was the only one of the more than two dozen glide bombs to hit its target.³³ The entire attack lasted just under half an hour, with *Pioneer* (AM-105) rescuing 606 survivors.

Shortly after the attack just described, two of our ships had another opportunity to study German glider bomb operations.

On 26 November 1943, Convoy KMF-26, en route to Bizerte, was proceeding east in the Gulf of Bougie six-and-three-fourths miles northeast of Cape Carbon. The convoy and escort were predominantly British in make-up but among the latter were the USS *Pioneer* (AM) (Lieut. Leroy E. Rogers Jr.), *Portent* (AM) (Lieut. Howard C. Plummer), and the *Herbert C. Jones* (DE) (Lt. Comdr. Alfred W. Gardes Jr.).

At 1545 GCT the *Portent* observed off her port quarter three enemy bombers being engaged by fighter planes. General quarters was sounded. The initial attack was made by a wave of three planes separated by approximately 2,000 yards and flying at a height of about 10,000 feet. When about 6,000 yards astern of the convoy, they came around to the convoy's base course and approached from dead astern.

Early in the action one of the transports, the *HMT Rohna* was torpedoed and ultimately sank.³⁴ The *Pioneer* was detailed to stand by. She rescued 606 persons, mainly Army personnel, and landed them at Philippeville

32 Carlton Jackson, *Allied Secret: The Sinking of the HMT Rohna* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 26, 35–36.

33 Ibid., xviii. An additional 35 U.S. Soldiers later died as a result of the attack, bringing the total of U.S. soldiers killed to 1,050. The sinking of *HMT Rohna* represents the greatest loss of troops at sea in a single ship due to enemy action in U.S. history.

34 A Henschel Hs-293 glide bomb, not a torpedo, hit *HMT Rohna* and sank her. See Bollinger, *Warriors and Wizards*, 82–84.—Ed.

on the morning of the 27th. The other two United States vessels continued with the convoy and participated in the antiaircraft action.

The *Portent* engaged the enemy plane, which was coming up 500 yards to the right of the starboard edge of the convoy. Fire was opened with two 40mm and four 20mm guns. While [the plane was] still out of range of the latter, a red glow appeared on the enemy and what looked like a small aircraft crept out ahead of the bomber, leaving a visible trail of smoke. The newcomer traveled on the same course and level as the bomber for about 700 yards then curved over to port and struck the water astern of the convoy. After releasing its missile the bomber made a large circle to port, which took it some seven miles from the convoy. It soon returned, however, at about 45° off the convoy's starboard bow, at an altitude of about 5,000 feet. At approximately 3,000 yards from the convoy, it turned, taking a reverse course to that of the convoy, and released a second missile. This behaved as its predecessor had. It curved over and landed just inside the starboard column of ships.

The second wave was practically a repetition of the first. The starboard bomber of this wave released a bomb from approximately the same position as that released by the first wave. It exploded between the ships of the convoy. On its return run the plane came down to about 5,000 feet, where it came under the fire of the *Portent* and of HMS *Cleveland*. Two fighters meantime had come up 3,000 yards astern of the bomber. The enemy released his missile, which again went out 700 yards ahead. At this point the bomber was seen to be smoking heavily in its starboard engine and the bomb went into a tailspin, landing about 200 yards outboard of the *Portent*. The bomber, losing altitude rapidly, disappeared astern with one fighter in pursuit.

The next two waves followed the same pattern. The bombers on the starboard side released bombs at about 4,000 yards from the after starboard quarter of the convoy. One landed and exploded between the *Portent* and the convoy, the other between the second and third ships of the starboard row. In the meantime the attacking planes were being engaged by fighter planes, which affected their operations. The only bomb released on the return run of the third wave fell well to the starboard of the *Portent*. The starboard bomber of the fourth wave came in very low, about 50 feet, taking advantage of the growing obscurity. He disappeared astern after sustaining numerous hits from 20mm fire. Here dusk put an end to the action.

In all, about 25 Hs-293 glider bombs were dropped. The *Portent* claimed the destruction of two planes. The total number of enemy planes encountered was estimated at 25, of which 15 were probably He-177s.

The *Herbert C. Jones* was attacked mainly with torpedo and bombing planes, one of which may have carried a glider bomb. Two positive destructions are claimed by this ship, one in the early phase of the action and one toward the close. Both planes were seen to crash into the sea in flames.

The commanding officer of both the *Portent* and the *Jones* in their reports stress the fact that the German planes showed a preference for attacks from astern and recommend that the rear sector be considered the primary danger point.

THE DESTRUCTION OF U-73

U-73 torpedoed and badly damaged the Liberty ship John S. Copley off Cape Falcon, Algeria, as she transported five LCMs (Landing Craft, Mechanized) westward from Port Said as part of Convoy GUS-24. U-73, a Type VIIB U-boat operating in the Mediterranean since January 1942, had previously sunk several ships, including the Liberty ship Arthur Middleton and the aircraft carrier HMS Eagle. In the aftermath of this attack, the destroyers Niblack (DD-424) and Ludlow (DD-438), along with two floatplanes from the cruiser Brooklyn (CL-40), in nearby Oran, searched for the submarine until Woolsey (DD-437), Trippe, and Edison (DD-439) arrived later that evening to continue the effort. Within 45 minutes of their arrival, Woolsey's sonar located the U-boat and began a depth charge attack. Forced to surface, U-73 attempted to make its escape under cover of darkness, but Woolsey and Trippe soon trained their searchlights on her. U-73 fired upon its pursuers, and Woolsey and Trippe returned fire, sending U-73 to her demise.³⁵

At about 1530 (Zone A Time) on 16 December 1943, the *Woolsey* (Lt. Comdr. Henry R. Weir) received orders from Commander Destroyer Squadron 13 to proceed with *Trippe* (Lieut. Russell C. Williams, Jr.) and *Edison* (Lieut. Hepburn A. Pearce) to investigate the torpedoing of SS *John S. Copley*. At 1715 these vessels arrived in the vicinity of the torpedoing and began an antisubmarine search in line abreast. The *Woolsey* was in the center, the *Edison* to port, the *Trippe* to starboard. Planes from the *Brooklyn* arrived on the area and remained until dark when RAF planes relieved them.

At about 1815 the *Woolsey* obtained a sound contact which did not develop. The course was thereupon reversed from northeast to southwest with the result that a second contact was developed at 1837, which led to the dropping of depth charges three minutes later. The ship went to general quarters. Two subsequent contacts were made but did not develop sufficiently to warrant attack. The *Woolsey* continued to search. At 1927 a radar contact was made dead ahead on a bearing 0000° T, distance 1,900 yards. The ship was immediately swung to the right to unmask battery while the target was illuminated by searchlight. It proved to be a submarine, later identified as the *U-73*. The enemy opened fire with what appeared to be 20mm machineguns. The *Woolsey* at once returned the fire with 5-inch, 40mm, and 20mm batteries. The *Trippe* likewise opened fire. At 1935, in latitude 36°09'N, longitude 00°54'W, the *U-73* sank, going down by the stern until she was vertical with about 25 percent of her hull out of water, from which position she disappeared in about one minute. Twenty-three survivors out of a complement of 50 were picked up by the *Woolsey* and *Edison*. At 2210 the American destroyers proceeded independently to Mers el-Kébir.

35 Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 336–38.

THE TORPEDOING AND SALVAGING OF SS *JARED INGERSOLL*

UGS-36 was a large convoy with a large escort—so large that detection by the enemy was almost certain. The convoy contained 72 merchant ships and 18 ocean-going LSTs (Landing Ship, Tank). Accompanying it were the 16 warships of Task Force (TF) 64. Headed to Bizerte from Hampton Roads, Virginia, UGS-36 came under attack late in the evening of 31 March 1944. *Tomich* (DE-242) picked up a sonar contact indicating an enemy submarine, but after taking appropriate countermeasures, nothing more came of it. Early the next morning, around 0400, the Luftwaffe attacked with some 20 bombers and torpedo bombers. The convoy returned a vigorous fire, shooting down two of the attacking planes, possibly as many as four. One plane was able to get a clear enough view to drop an aerial torpedo, and it struck *Jared Ingersoll*, a Liberty ship carrying Army stores, but did not sink her. The attack was over shortly after 0500, and at 0550 a fire fighting party from *Mills* (DE-383) boarded *Jared Ingersoll* and continued putting out fires until the afternoon. With the fires finally under control, *Jared Ingersoll's* crew coaxed the vessel to Algiers Bay and beached her there for salvage.³⁶

During the night of 31 March–1 April 1944, convoy UGS-36 was proceeding along the coast of North Africa bound for Bizerte. The convoy was a large one consisting of 72 merchantmen and 18 LSTs, disposed in 13 columns. A correspondingly large escort had been provided: 8 DEs, 4 DDs, 2 Dutch gunboats, 4 British and 1 French patrol craft and 1 British antiaircraft cruiser.³⁷ Among the escort was the USS *Mills* which had been assigned a station on the starboard quarter of the convoy.

The night was dark, a half-moon having set at 0218, and a surface haze limited visibility to about five miles. A wind, force 3, from the west and a fairly calm sea prevailed. Shortly before twilight, at 0400, the convoy was subjected to an air raid delivered by a small force estimated at not over 20 planes, most of which, if not all, were believed to be torpedo planes. The initial approach was from the south, where land made detection difficult. The action continued spasmodically until 0505, the enemy targets being generally low. Two planes were shot down, one jointly by the *Ramsden* (Lt. Comdr. Sherman T. Baketel, USCGR) and the *Tomich* (Lieut. Charles B. Brown) and one by the SS *Lawrence D. Tyson*. Two other planes were hit and possibly destroyed. The action took place approximately 56 miles west of Algiers.

The only casualty was the torpedoing of the SS *Jared Ingersoll*, which had been hit in the No. 1 hold and was reported on fire astern of the convoy. The *Mills* (Lt. Comdr. James S. Muzzy, USCG) was directed to go to her assistance and reached the burning vessel shortly after the action had been broken off. Assisted by

³⁶ Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 365–66.

³⁷ Having fled to various countries upon Germany's invasion of the Netherlands in 1940, the Royal Netherlands Navy fought alongside its Allied hosts for the remainder of the war. Meanwhile, the Free French Naval Forces continued the fight under Charles De Gaulle. Many of the ships manned by the Free French had escaped to British-controlled ports after the fall of France —Ed.

HMS *Mindful* (tug), the *Mills* rescued four boatloads of survivors, after which a conference was held with the master of the vessel as to the type of cargo adjacent to the fire. It proved to be the magazine of 3-inch ammunition. It was decided, nevertheless, to risk going alongside and extinguish the fire.

At 0550 one line was secured and the fire-fighting party boarded the *Ingersoll*. The fire was shortly brought under control by removing cargo, [by] directing solid streams into the hold and by injecting fog through holes cut by a portable acetylene outfit. At 0615 the crew of the transport was returned on board. One hour later the *Mills* departed, the fire being considered extinguished except for one small section which was still smoking, and the *Mindful* began towing the vessel toward Algiers Beach. Meanwhile the *Ingersoll* had raised steam and had one hose in operation. The magazine had been flooded as well.

The *Ingersoll*, however, was slowly settling by the head and at 0848 her Master requested the *Mills* to remove the crew. This was done, important gear and valuable Army documents being taken off as well. At 0920 the *Mills* resumed her position in the screen. The fire soon broke out again, however, and at 1029 the *Mills* was called alongside for the third time. Between 1029 and late afternoon seven pumps were continually in use. The fire-fighting equipment of the *Mills* proved excellent. The cargo consisted mainly of such inflammable articles as cardboard and waxed paper containers, wooden crates, etc. Acetylene torches, masks, fog-nozzles and applicators were extensively used without any failure of equipment being noted.

Whether to attempt to make Algiers harbor or to beach the vessel now became a problem. The anchors were jettisoned to prevent further settling by the head. The *Ingersoll* was finally beached in Algiers Bay at about 1830, when British and United States salvage authorities took charge. The *Mills* stood by in order to furnish power for the pumps and electricity throughout the night and did not rejoin the convoy until 1000 of the following morning.

THE ATTACK ON CONVOY UGS-37

Convoy UGS-37 consisted of 60 merchant ships and traveled alongside TF 65, which included six LSTs, eight destroyer escorts, five destroyers, two rescue tugs, and an anti-aircraft cruiser. They were eastbound in the Mediterranean when attacked about seven miles off Cape Bengut, Algeria, late in the evening on 11 April 1944 by an estimated 15 to 26 planes—Dornier Do-217s and Junkers Ju-88s. During the fight, *Lansdale* (DD-426) reported evidence of glide bomb use. The attack lasted about an hour. *Holder* (DE-401) received serious damage to her power plant from an aerial torpedo that also killed 16 and critically injured 12 of her crew. The British tug HMS *Mindful* towed *Holder* to Algiers. Her hull repaired but still dead in the water on 24 May, she was towed out of port to join another convoy returning to the United States. There, it would be determined that her damage was too extensive for overhaul.³⁸ UGS-37 was again attacked before reaching Port Said when U-407 torpedoed the Liberty ships *Meyer London* and *Thomas G. Masaryk* off the Libyan coast on 16 April. *Meyer London* sank in just over an hour while *Thomas G. Masaryk* was towed toward the Libyan coast and scuttled.³⁹

During the night of 11–12 April 1944, convoy UGS-37, consisting of 60 merchant ships and 6 LSTs, was proceeding east along the North African coast and approaching Cape Bengut. The formation was in 12 columns, distance between ships 500 yards, interval between columns 1,000 yards. The escort consisted of 11 American destroyers and 2 DE's, 1 British AA cruiser, 2 escort vessels and 2 tugs, under the command of Capt. William R. Headden, USN (CTF 65).

At about 2330 (Zone minus 2) of the 11th the convoy was attacked by German Dornier Do-217s and Junkers Ju-88s, estimated 15 to 26 in number. The action lasted until about 0030 of the 12th. The attack had been foreseen and covered by carefully drawn instructions. The neighborhood was known to be a focal point of German air attacks. The most likely times for such enemy action, based on previous experience, had been set at (a) evening twilight, (b) the dark period between sunset (2018) and moonrise (2302), and (c) shortly after moonrise. The last-named period was the one in which the attack developed.

The approach began with the dropping of flares about five miles ahead of the convoy. The Task Force Commander broadcast the order to all ships to open fire as soon as the enemy came within range. Designated escorts began making smoke. At 2334 numerous flares were dropped over the convoy and shortly thereafter a heavy barrage was opened. At 2342 the USS *Holder* (DE) reported that she had been hit on the port side by

38 Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 366–68.

39 Sources disagree on whether U-407 torpedoed both ships. In *The Liberty Ships from A (A.B. Hammond) to Z (Zona Gale)* (Palo Alto, CA: Glencannon, 2004), 109, 123, Walter W. Jaffee credits *Meyer London* to U-407 but says an aerial torpedo damaged *Thomas G. Masaryk*. He also points out that Captain Arthur R. Moore, in *A Careless Word . . . a Needless Sinking* (Kings Point, NY: American Merchant Marine Museum, 2006), credited U-510 with the sinkings. In *U-Boats in the Mediterranean, 1941–1944* (New York: Skyhorse, 2019), 165, Lawrence Paterson credits both *Meyer London* and *Thomas G. Masaryk* to U-407 —Ed.

a torpedo. A few minutes later the USS *Lansdale* reported indications of radio-controlled missiles. The attack continued uninterrupted for 20 minutes, then tapered off.

The only casualty suffered by the convoy was that of the USS *Holder*. Sixteen of her personnel (including the Engineer Officer) were killed and 13 seriously wounded. The British tug HMS *Mindful* took the damaged vessel in tow and brought her safely to Algiers. The enemy losses could not be ascertained. One plane was seen to crash on the African coast in flames and several others were believed to have been hit.

THE ATTACK ON CONVOY UGS-38

UGS-38, composed of 85 merchant ships, two Navy tankers, and USCGC *Duane* (WPG-33), steamed on an eastward heading along the Algerian coast toward Port Said. TF 66 served as the escort and included 12 destroyer escorts; one destroyer, *Lansdale*; two minesweepers; one Dutch anti-aircraft cruiser, *Jacob van Heemskerck*; one British tug; and the task force flagship, USCGC *Taney* (WPG-37). *Lansdale*, *Sustain* (AM-119), and *Speed* (AM-116) carried electronic jamming equipment.⁴⁰ About a half hour after sunset on 20 April 1944, as the convoy neared Cape Bengut, the first of three waves of low-flying German torpedo bombers attacked. The first wave of nine Junkers Ju-88s torpedoed *Paul Hamilton* and *Samite*. Although extensively damaged, *Samite* stayed afloat and received a tow to Algiers the following morning for repairs. *Paul Hamilton*, however, was not as fortunate. Carrying high explosives and 580 men, including 498 members of the U.S. Army Air Force, the ship exploded with violent force, killing everyone onboard. The second wave of seven more Junkers Ju-88s torpedoed the merchantmen *Stephen F. Austin* and *Royal Star*. The former managed to make the port at Algiers under its own power, but *Royal Star* sank the following day. The third wave—Heinkel He-111s—continued the onslaught and struck *Lansdale* with a torpedo.⁴¹ Within 30 minutes, she broke in half and sank, taking 47 of her crew with her.⁴² Five-minute intervals separated the three attack waves, with each engaging only long enough to launch its torpedoes. With the last wave flying off into the night, the assault ceased as quickly as it had begun. In exchange for the losses of *Royal Star* and *Lansdale*, estimated enemy aircraft losses were six planes shot down and five more damaged.⁴³

At sunset of 20 April 1944, convoy UGS-38 was proceeding east at 7.5 knots in 10 columns with the southerly column about two miles from the North African coast, bound for Bizerte. An outer screen of 3 DEs—the USS *Pride* (Lieut. Renwick E. Curry), *Joseph E. Campbell* (Lt. Comdr. James M. Robertson), and *Lowe* (Comdr. Reginald H. French, USCG)—preceded the main body by about eight miles. The other vessels of the escort, consisting of one DD, the USS *Lansdale* (Lt. Comdr. Douglas M. Swift); 10 DEs, the USS *Fechteler* (Lieut. Calvert B. Gill), *Mosley* (Comdr. James A. Alger, Jr.), *Laning* (Lieut. Edwin A. Shuman, Jr.), *Falgout* (Comdr. Henry A. Meyer, USCG), *Fiske* (Lieut. John A. Comly), *Newell* (Comdr. Russell J. Roberts, USCG), *Menges* (Lieut. Francis J. M. McCabe), *Fessenden* (Lieut. William A. Dobbs), *Chase* (Lieut. George O. Knapp II); two AMs, the USS *Speed* (Lt. Comdr. Raymond C. Dryer) and *Sustain* (Lieut. James A. Lindeman, Jr.); and one Coast Guard Cutter, the *Taney* (Comdr. Henry J. Wuensch, USCG), were disposed in an inner screen around

40 Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 368.

41 Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations*, 10:268.

42 Ibid.

43 Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 369.

the two Navy tankers and fifty odd merchant vessels being convoyed.⁴⁴ Six of these escorts were stationed one mile ahead of the main body, three on either flank, and one in the rear. The Netherlands cruiser *Jacob van Heemskerck* (Capt. R. Harmsen, S.O.P.) acted as fighter director and as such was given considerable latitude in her movements. Three British submarines and HMS *Vagrant* (tug) were in column on the port beam of the leader of the seventh column.

At 1947 (Zone B Time) an alert was received from Algiers. Similar warnings were repeated at frequent intervals for over an hour so that the convoy was in readiness when the attack materialized. The submarines had meanwhile been disposed in a screen between the convoy and the outer screen. At 1950 the *Sustain* intercepted enemy aircraft radar transmission. At 2046 the *Speed* observed and jammed three definite glider bomb signals, which were confirmed by the *Sustain* and the *Lansdale*. At 2101 the *Lowe*, an escort of the outer screen, reported a radar contact on five enemy aircraft, distant 12 miles dead ahead. Two minutes later that ship sighted five enemy planes flying low over the water, distant 4,000 yards. Two to four other planes were following. At about the same time the *Speed* observed on her radar six low-flying planes, distant five miles and closing rapidly, and observed them visually shortly thereafter flying within 10 to 30 feet of the water, about two miles distant.

The ensuing attack, which developed at about 2105 as the inner screen was approximately due north of Cape Bengut, was apparently based on accurate reconnaissance and skillfully planned to use the shore background. It was delivered in three waves separated by five-minute intervals.

The first wave, which consisted of about nine Junkers Ju-88s, made a head-on approach. It was during this phase of the engagement that the SS *Paul Hamilton*, the second ship in the fourth column, was struck by a torpedo. The ship, being loaded with explosives, at once burst into flames and sank with all hands. Shortly thereafter the SS *Samite*, the leading ship in the port column, was damaged in the bow by a torpedo. She was taken in tow by the *Vagrant* and made Algiers early in the morning of the 21st.

The second wave consisted of seven Junkers Ju-88s. This wave skirted the starboard flank of the convoy, then veered north. It was responsible for the damaging of the SS *Stephen F. Austin*, the last ship in the ninth column, and the SS *Royal Star*, the fifth ship of the starboard column. The *Austin* reached Algiers the following morning unassisted. The *Royal Star*, which had been torpedoed aft, sank the following day in spite of the efforts of the tug *Athlete* to get her to Algiers. Planes from the second wave left their formation to launch torpedo attacks at the *Lowe*, the starboard ship of the outer screen, and the *Taney*, the center ship of the inner screen. Wakes were observed, but the torpedoes went wide of their marks.

The third wave consisted of about five Heinkel He-111s. It concentrated on the port bow of the convoy, where one of the planes succeeded in torpedoing the USS *Lansdale*. This destroyer was hit at 2106 and immediately took a list of 12 degrees. The steering gear of the ship became jammed and she described a complete circle. The list gradually increased until 2120, when the ship took a lurch to 45 degrees. Two minutes later the order

⁴⁴ Although referenced as a Coast Guard cutter, *Taney* had been modified into a gun ship before joining TF 66 as its flagship.—Ed.

to abandon ship was given. At 2135 the *Lansdale* broke in two and sank. The USS *Menges* rescued 130 survivors, including two German aviators.

The distinctive feature of the German attack was the low level at which the planes flew. In some cases they had to gain altitude in order to launch their torpedoes. These tactics rendered detection difficult and as a result few of the enemy planes were hit. The *Lansdale*, *Fechteler* and *Moseley* each shot down one enemy aircraft and six others may have been damaged. There is no evidence that any form of attack other than torpedoes was employed, although radar reconnaissance and wireless interception indicated the presence of bombers and gliders. No fighter protection was forthcoming during the action, with the exception of one fighter engaged near the *Lansdale*, according to the report of the *Menges*. No concerted use of smoke was resorted to by the convoy or its escorts. After the attack the enemy withdrew rapidly, aided by the increasing dusk.

THE SINKING OF *U-371* AND USS *FECHTELER*

After escorting Convoy UGS-38 as far east as Bizerte, with losses of five ships and more than 600 lives, TF 66 received orders to reverse course and escort GUS-38, a convoy of 107 merchant vessels, westward. Again, the escort included 12 destroyer escorts, as well as a large Coast Guard cutter and the Royal Navy's anti-aircraft cruiser *Delphi*. At 0118 on 3 May 1944, an enemy torpedo struck *Menges* (DE-320) but did not sink her. The strike tore away the rudder and propellers, leaving the ship disabled. Casualties numbered 31 killed and 25 wounded. Captain William Duvall, the Task Force Commander, ordered *Pride* (DE-323) and *Joseph E. Campbell* (DE-70) to assist *Menges* and then to hunt her attacker. HMS *Aspirant* towed *Menges* to Bougie, Algeria, for repairs. *U-371*, the U-boat that had attacked *Menges*, happened to be the same U-boat that had sunk the destroyer *Bristol* the previous October.

Pride and *Joseph E. Campbell* soon located *U-371* in proximity to *Menges*. Escorts dropped depth charges without effect as the U-boat's commander had gone deep. *Pride* and *Joseph E. Campbell* then initiated a series of creeping attacks, which continued without success until 1030. *U-371* attempted to wait out its pursuers on the bottom. The British destroyer escort *Blankney* joined the search before noon, and *Sustain* (AM-119), along with two French destroyers, *L'Alcyon* and *Sénégalais*, followed at 1225. Together with *Pride* and *Joseph E. Campbell*, they continued their search throughout the rest of the afternoon and into the evening. Unable to remain submerged for more than 24 hours, *U-371* surfaced at 0315 on 4 May. *Sénégalais* made radar contact with the surfaced U-boat and immediately fired upon it. The U-boat submerged again at 0359 and, as it went down, fired a torpedo at *Sénégalais*.

Under fire, *U-371*'s crew had decided to scuttle their boat but, in a final act of defiance, fired a torpedo at their nemesis before abandoning ship.⁴⁵ The torpedo destroyed the French vessel's stern, killing 49 of her crew. *Sénégalais*, disabled but still afloat, received tow to Bougie for repairs.⁴⁶

GUS-38's troubles were not yet over. Continuing west toward Gibraltar early in the morning on 5 May 1944, near Alboran Island, *Laning* (DE-159) detected *U-967* at 0315. The convoy changed its course, hoping to avoid possible danger. Despite the maneuver,

45 Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 370–71.

46 Robert F. Cross, *Shepherds of the Sea: Destroyer Escorts in World War II* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2010), 33.

U-967 torpedoed *Fechteler* (DE-157) at 0345. The resulting explosion killed 29. The order to abandon ship came at 0415, and *Fechteler* exploded and sank around 0500.⁴⁷

TF 66 had run the gauntlet by escorting Convoy UGS-38 eastward and then, almost immediately, returned westward with Convoy GUS-38. Morison called the loss of life and ships caused by the attack on UGS-38 the Luftwaffe's high-water mark against Mediterranean convoys.⁴⁸ Taken together, these back-to-back escorts suffered two warships sunk and two damaged, two merchant ships sunk and two damaged, and the loss of more than 700 lives. *U-967*, meanwhile, would not meet her end on the high seas. Instead, her crew scuttled her at the U-boat base in Toulon on 6 August 1944, just nine days before the Allied landings in southern France. The havoc she wrought on TF 66 forced the Allies to try a new approach to clearing the waters between Spain and Algeria. That effort required the full use of all resources at hand to find and fix the enemy. To that end, the Commander in Chief, Mediterranean (CinCMed), unleashed Operation Monstrous, one of the largest U-boat hunts ever staged in the Mediterranean Sea.⁴⁹

THE SINKING OF THE *U-371*

On 3 May 1944, the Coast Guard Cutter *Menges* (Comdr. Frank M. McCabe) was patrolling astern of convoy GUS-38 en route to Bizerte. At 0025 (Zone minus 2) a radar contact six miles astern was obtained. As the contact was closed it turned and started away. By 0112 it had disappeared but about the same time three others were made in the same area. At 0118 the *Menges* was hit in the center of her stern which was carried away together with rudder and propellers. Her position at the time was 37°03'N, 05°08'E. Thirty-one men were lost and 25 wounded. The HMS *Aspirant* towed the *Menges* to Bougie.

Commander Lewis M. Markham, Jr., was ordered to leave his station in the convoy screen and to conduct a search for the submarine with the USS *Joseph E. Campbell* (Lieut. James M. Robertson), the *Pride* (Lt. Comdr. Ralph R. Curry, USCG), and HMS *Blankney*. At 1225 the USS *Sustain* (Lieut. James E. Lindeman, Jr.) joined, followed shortly by the French escort vessels *Sénégalais* and *L'Alcyon*.

At about 0210 the *Campbell* and the *Pride* arrived in the vicinity of the *Menges* and began a sound search. At 0255 the *Pride* reported a contact and dropped one charge. Contact was lost but regained at 0319 when a second charge was dropped. The contact was lost and regained twice more. By this time the range had narrowed to 800 yards. The losing of it again indicated that the submarine was very deep.

At 0407 the two American vessels began a creeping attack. At 0423 the *Campbell* dropped a magnetic charge without apparent result. The *Pride* maintained contact while the *Campbell* approached for a second run.

⁴⁷ Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 371.

⁴⁸ Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations*, 10:268.

⁴⁹ Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 371.

Contact was lost, however, before a charge could be dropped. Another contact was made at 0505 and again a creeping attack was begun. At 0600 a pattern was dropped and again at 0627. This time air bubbles were seen to rise to the surface. Another pattern of magnetic mines at 0741 again caused bubbles to rise. At 0807 another creeping attack was launched and at 0833 another pattern of magnetic depth charges was dropped. During all this time the submarine “fishtailed” and maneuvered radically until contact was lost.

It was thought the submarine was lying on the bottom. To prevent any possible escape, a systematic search was begun, in which HMS *Blankney*, the French destroyers *Sénégalais* and *L'Alcyon*, and the USS *Sustain* joined.

At 0315 of 4 May the *Sénégalais* reported radar contact with a surfaced submarine and five minutes later opened fire, [after] having [provided] illuminat[ion] with star shells. The submarine retired to the southwest and submerged. The Allied vessels hurried to the scene. At 0400 the *Sénégalais* reported that she had been hit by a torpedo in the stern but that she was in floating condition. On arriving at the scene at 0419 HMS *Blankney* dropped depth charges at a stationary target. Eleven minutes later the *Sustain* did likewise. Soon thereafter survivors appeared in the water. In all 41 men and 7 officers out of a complement of 53 were rescued. The Germans reported that they had abandoned ship ten minutes before the depth charge attack of the *Blankney*. After being submerged 27 hours her battery was exhausted and her air foul. She therefore emerged to save her crew and then was scuttled.

THE SINKING OF THE USS *FECHTELER*

On 5 May 1944, the USS *Fechtelor* was patrolling on the port flank of Convoy 38, bound for the United States. The convoy was in 16 columns of seven ships each, speed 8.5 knots.

At about 0315 (Zone minus 1) the USS *Laning*, on station in the van of the convoy, reported a radar surface contact at 13 miles and shortly thereafter reported that the target had submerged in sight. General quarters were sounded at 0330 and the convoy executed a 45 degree turn to the right and began to zigzag. The *Fechtelor* maneuvered at 12 knots to cover area between the position of the target, as reported by the *Laning*, and the convoy. The base course was 324° T.

At about 0345, while coming right to a new course with 15° rudder a violent explosion jarred the vessel. Her position at the time was 36° 07'N, 02°40'W. An inspection showed the deck plates cracked amidships, nos. 1 and 2 engine room flooded, and no. 2 fireroom flooded. Watertight integrity was preserved fore and aft, but the bow and stern were slowly rising while the midship section was submerging. The order to abandon ship was given, the *Laning* and HMS *Hengist* (tug) assisting. Shortly thereafter the bow and stern came together assuming a perpendicular position. For about five minutes the two fragments projected about 125 feet out of the water [and] then, after a violent explosion, slowly settled in the water.

THE ATTACK ON CONVOY UGS-40

After the losses sustained by GUS-38, UGS-39 was able to make its passage east along the North African coast without incident. UGS-40, however, came under heavy attack but without losing a ship, thanks primarily to Captain Jesse C. Sowell, commanding officer of USCGC *Campbell* (WPG-32) and escort commander (CTF 61). Together with Thomas H. Taylor, the convoy commodore, Sowell came up with an air defense plan and practiced it and other training exercises as the convoy crossed the Atlantic. Passing through the Strait of Gibraltar on 9 May 1944, the convoy was strengthened by the addition of the antiaircraft cruiser HMS *Caledon*, *Wilhoite* (DE-397), *Benson* (DD-421), the minesweepers *Steady* (AM-118) and *Sustain* (AM-119), and the salvage tug HMS *Hengist*. *Steady* and *Sustain* were fitted with electronic jamming equipment.⁵⁰ The addition increased the size of the escort to one Coast Guard cutter, four destroyers, seven destroyer escorts, two specially equipped minesweepers, a French destroyer escort and patrol craft, and two Royal Navy ships—one an antiaircraft cruiser and the other a tug. These vessels escorted the 65 merchant ships designated UGS-40.⁵¹

German planes shadowed UGS-40 for two days but declined to engage it. Along the Algerian coast on 11 May, where the Luftwaffe had attacked previous convoys, Sowell admonished his ships to be ready for attack. At 2025, they received their first alert from shore-based radar that planes were en route. Just after sunset, with no moon and under cloudy conditions, the convoy deployed a smoke screen. With the enemy nearly upon them at 2106, Sowell ordered *Caledon* to begin the barrage. The escort and armed guard crews on the merchant ships held their fire for those planes that made it through the wall of flak put up by *Caledon*. Merchant ships maintained regular convoy speed while the escorts maneuvered wildly for position.

A number of torpedo bombers did make it through the antiaircraft fire but were unable to find a target because of the smoke and gunfire. None of the bombs dropped by the Dorniers hit their mark, and the convoy evaded both of the glide bombs deployed. The attack ended at 2140. In the span of a little over 30 minutes, the convoy had faced three waves of aerial attack, and shot down 19 of the 62 planes it faced without the loss of a single ship.⁵²

50 Bollinger, *Warriors and Wizards*, 142.

51 Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations*, 10:269, 10:380.

52 *Ibid.*, 10:269–72.

Sowell's preparation and execution of his plan of defense was an unqualified success, for which he received the Legion of Merit with Combat V.

On 11 May 1944, an unsuccessful attack was made on convoy UGS-40, bound for Bizerte. At the time of the attack this convoy consisted of 65 ships, under the command of Capt. Thomas H. Taylor, divided into eight columns with the odd ship in the eighth column. The interval between columns was 1,000 yards and the distance between ships 500 yards. The escort, commanded by Cmdr. Jesse C. Sowell (CTF 61), was composed of one Coast Guard cutter, five DDs, seven DEs, two AMs, two French escort vessels, one British AA ship and one tug from Gibraltar. These units were disposed in the usual formation around the convoy.

During the crossing of the Atlantic frequent drills were held and all commanding officers and convoy captains carefully briefed as to the doctrine to be observed in case of air attack.

On 10 May, while the convoy was proceeding at nine knots between Gibraltar and Algiers, it was shadowed. Word was passed to all units to expect an air attack at sunset by torpedo planes and bombers. If that attack did not materialize, the next most probable time to expect it was given as between 1100 and 2030 (Zone A Time). Beginning at 1315 of the 11th, frequent warnings were received from Algiers. The attack that developed was delivered about eight miles north of Cape Bengut, in approximately the same position as the attack made on Convoy 38.

At 1948 the units went to general quarters awaiting attack. The sun set at 2043 and shortly thereafter, designated ships in the escort began making smoke, placing the screen directly before the convoy van by steering north for 10 minutes and reversing course for 150° T. At about 2106, the attack began. It was launched in three waves.

The first wave came in from the northeast to within 21,000 yards and then broke into two groups of about eight planes each, the right-hand group coming in slightly ahead of the left-hand group. Both groups attempted to pass down between the columns. They appeared to be Junkers Ju-88 torpedo planes. All were flying very low.

The second wave came in from the north about two minutes later. Like the previous one, it split into two groups. It was, however, flying much higher, about 200 to 300 feet. Its objective was apparently the van of the convoy.

Three minutes later the third wave came in on a southwesterly course and attempted to attack the port after beam and quarter.

The number of planes engaged in the attack is not known. The enemy strength in planes in the region was, however, believed to be approximately 30 bombers, six horizontal low-level bombers, and four miscellaneous [aircraft], including gliders.

Although visibility was poor, the enemy was taken under fire by all guns as soon as in range. Between waves the escorts continued to lay white smoke, maneuvering radically and zigzagging at 25 knots. The results of the

AA fire were excellent. Radar contact was established at 15 miles but subsequently jammed. It was cleared at 21,000 yards and followed through to 6,000 yards. Most of the enemy planes were driven off before reaching the convoy. At least one half of the attacking force vainly skirted the barrage looking for a “soft spot.” Only one succeeded in crossing the formation. Twelve planes were definitely accounted for by the escort as destroyed. Ten others were seen to crash by ships of the convoy. The number brought down by the fighters is not known. Even allowing for possible duplications, the enemy losses were heavy. No convoy ship or escort was lost or even damaged.

The following Allied units took part in the above operation:

Lieut. James M. Robertson⁵³ (CTF 61)

USS *Dallas*, Lieut. Norman C. Smith

USS *Evarts*, Lt. Comdr. Francis A. Harding

USS *Smartt*, Lieut. Edward R. Wepman

USS *Dobler*, Lieut. E. F. Butler

USS *Walter S. Brown*, Lieut. E. C. Burdett, Jr.

USS *Decker*, Lieut. Hiram S. Cody, Jr.

USS *Wyffels*, Lieut. Stanley N. Gleis

USS *Bernadou*, Lieut. William C. Meredith, Jr.

USS *Ellis*, Lieut. Philip Cutler

USS *Wilhoite*, Lieut. Eli B. Roth

FNS *Tunisien*

FNS *Cimeterre*

HMS *Hengist* reported for duty off Gibraltar as salvage tug 091500.

The following vessels joined at 100200 off Albatore Island:

USS *Benson*, Comdr. Robert J. Williams (jammer duty)

USS *Steady*, Lt. Comdr. Frederick W. Naennle (jammer duty)

USS *Sustain*, Lieut. James E. Lindeman, Jr. (detection and investigation)

HMS *Caledon* joined at 101603 off Cran as “AA” ship.

⁵³ Moran misidentifies this ship as USCGC *Joseph E. Campbell* commanded by Lieut. James M. Robertson. The correct ship is USCGC *Campbell* (WPG-32) commanded by Capt. Jesse Sowell —Ed.

THE SINKING OF *U-616*

U-616 torpedoed a British tanker and a Liberty ship in Convoy GUS-39 off the Algerian coast near Cape Ténès in the pre-dawn hours of 14 May 1944.⁵⁴ Both ships, however, were able to make port under their own power. Four destroyers of the convoy's escort group, including *Hilary P. Jones* (DD-427), stayed on-site to hunt the attacker, while the remainder of the convoy continued moving westward toward Gibraltar. For eight hours, *Hilary P. Jones* searched for the U-boat, finally making sonar contact shortly after noon, but her two depth charge attacks did not produce the desired result.

The damage inflicted on GUS-38 by a U-boat on 3 May 1944, and the further damage inflicted on the 14th, motivated the Allied Naval Commander, Mediterranean, to deploy a search and destroy mission called Operation Swamp. The operation's tactics involved hunting to exhaustion a submarine and using a combination of air and surface antisubmarine forces. The technique forced a U-boat to dive and hide while Allied ships remained in the area and waited for the submarine to reveal its location by moving or surfacing. Initially employed in October 1943, the Allies used the technique on 13 subsequent occasions with about a 38 percent kill rate.⁵⁵

CinCMed activated Operation Swamp on 14 May to deal with *U-616* and detailed two U.S. Navy hunter-killer groups to conduct it. The first group of four destroyers, under the command of Captain Adelbert F. Converse, arrived as *Hilary P. Jones* was attacking and included *Ellyson* (DD-454), *Rodman* (DD-456), *Hambleton* (DD-455), and *Emmons* (DD-457). Converse took charge of the search and released all the GUS-39 escorts back to their convoy except *Hilary P. Jones*. By mid-afternoon the second group of three more destroyers, *Gleaves* (DD-423), *Nields* (DD-616), and *Macomb* (DD-458), under Commander George C. Wright, joined the first group, and all eight ships began Operation Swamp. Coastal patrol planes of Royal Air Force Squadron 36, many equipped with Leigh Lights, provided air assets and joined the operation overhead.

At 2300 that evening, one of the patrol planes spotted *U-616* on the surface and attacked it with depth charges, forcing it to submerge. Alerted to the U-boat's location, 30 miles north of where it had attacked GUS-39, *Ellyson* picked up the sonar contact and continued dropping depth charges at 2138. Afterward, *Ellyson* lost contact but discovered on the morning of 15 May a 10-mile long oil slick indicating damage to the U-boat's fuel oil tank. *U-616* remained submerged for most of the day but surfaced around midnight in an effort to replenish its air supply and charge its batteries. Patrol planes reacquired the U-boat on radar

54 Ships referenced are the tanker *G. S. Walden* and Liberty ship *Fort Fidler*.

55 Grove, *Defeat of the Enemy Attack*, 143.

and attacked, forcing it to submerge again. Eventually, it surfaced and charged its batteries long enough to remain submerged most of the day on 16 May. Needing fresh air and its battery recharged again, *U-616* surfaced late on the 17th, around 2100, but the Allies spotted it on radar.

Patrol planes again dropped depth charges, forcing the *U-616* to dive once more. After midnight, it made one final attempt to surface, but *Macomb* spotted the U-boat and began firing. *U-616* crash-dived to escape as *Macomb* and *Gleaves* began dropping depth charges. The remaining five destroyers from the two groups quickly joined in the depth charge barrage. By 0800, they had forced the *U-616* to surface again, whereupon they engaged the enemy with their guns.

Unable to dive a fifth time to escape, the U-boat commander scuttled his submarine and abandoned ship. *Ellyson* and *Rodman* rescued the entire crew of six officers and 47 enlisted men. From start to finish, the operation lasted 76 hours, thought to be the longest continuous submarine hunt at that time.⁵⁶

As the two hunter-killer groups returned to Mers el-Kébir, *Ellyson* reported three torpedo near misses as the ship was nearing the port. It was later determined that *U-960* had fired them. As a result, *Benson*, *Ludlow*, *Madison* (DD-425), *Niblack*, and *Woolsey* departed on another Operation Swamp search-and-destroy mission. Early on 18 May, a patrol plane spotted *U-960* on the surface, forcing it to dive. All five destroyers soon converged on the spot and hunted the rest of the day without success. *U-960* surfaced a second time, at 0130 on 19 May, only to find a patrol plane circling directly overhead. Again, the submarine made a rapid dive, but this time the patrol plane dropped lighted buoys that marked the location for the approaching destroyers *Ludlow* and *Niblack*. For the next four hours, they dropped depth charges that forced *U-960* to the surface for a third and final time. While under fire from the destroyers, the U-boat's commanding officer ordered the boat scuttled and abandoned. This time the hunter-killer group managed to rescue only 20 of the 51 crew. From the time of *Ellyson's* near miss to the destruction of *U-960*, this second operation successfully concluded in only 42 hours.⁵⁷ The find-and-fix techniques employed in Operation Swamp missions helped end the U-boat menace in the Mediterranean.

On the afternoon of 13 May 1944, at 1840 (Zone minus 2), the destroyers *Gleaves* (Comdr. Byron L. Gurnette), *Nields* (Comdr. Albert R. Hecky) and *Macomb* (Lt. Comdr. George Hutchinson) were ordered by Commander Destroyers Eighth Fleet to proceed to latitude 35°46'N, longitude 2°31'W, to hunt for a

⁵⁶ Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations*, 371–73. See also Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations*, 10:257–59; Paterson, *U-Boats in the Mediterranean*, 168–69.

⁵⁷ Clay Blair, *Hitler's U-Boat War: The Hunted, 1942–1945* (New York: Random House, 1998), 525–26.

submarine that was being held down near Alboran Island by the USS *Hilary P. Jones*, *Vance* and *Bostwick* and two British escort vessels. At 1540 of the 14th the destroyers *Ellyson* (Comdr. Ernest W. Longton), *Hambleton* (Comdr. Henry A. Renkin), *Rodman* (Comdr. Joseph F. Foley) and *Emmons* (Comdr. Ed B. Billingsley) joined the operation. The force was under the command of Capt. George C. Wright.

While en route from Oran, word was received from the British vessel that contact had been lost and that they were rejoining their convoy. British aircraft, however, remained and rendered valuable assistance. At 1640 of the 14th one of their number reported a radar contact.

Information received from CinCMed on the 15th indicated that the submarine was endeavoring to make Toulon. The American force adopted a formation that would intercept the submarine, should she attempt to pass north of the Balearic Isles. At 2100 the destroyers began patrolling south of Majorca.

At 0200 of the 16th another British plane reported the submarine apparently heading for the passage between Ibiza and Spain. The *Gleaves* proceeded to intercept. At 2237 a British plane reported having encountered flak fire from a submarine proceeding north and at 2355 the *Gleaves* and *Macomb* established contact.

Shortly thereafter the submarine surfaced for a brief period, during which she was illuminated by the *Macomb* and engaged at 4,500 yards. After the target had submerged, both the *Gleaves* and the *Macomb* dropped depth charges. At 0244 of the 17th a creeping attack was begun. At 0807 the submarine surfaced again and was promptly engaged by five destroyers. The range, as estimated by the *Gleaves*, was 7,000 yards. Six minutes later the submarine sank. A heavy underwater explosion followed. The *Ellyson* and *Rodman* rescued some survivors.

This submarine hunt is believed to have been the longest on record, having lasted uninterruptedly for 76 hours.

Before leaving the area of this operation the *Gleaves* and the *Nields* joined in another hunt for a submarine that had been reported in the neighborhood. At 1545 they were relieved and proceeded to rejoin their convoy. The submarine was brought to action south of Cabo de Palos, Spain, by the USS *Niblack* and *Ludlow* on 19 May and sunk at 0720. She proved to be the *U-960*.

APPENDIX: SHIPS AND OTHER VESSELS

U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard

Name: *Andromeda* (AKA-15)

Laid down: 22 September 1942

Launched: 22 December 1942

Commissioned: 2 April 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Originally designated as simply a transport cargo ship, *Andromeda* (AK-64) was modified to an attack cargo ship (AKA-15) on 1 February 1943 to carry LCMs and LCVPs, and armed for both anti-air defense and shore bombardment. She sailed in KMF-25A. *Andromeda* earned five battle stars during World War II.

Name: *Beatty* (DD-640)

Laid down: 1 May 1941

Launched: 20 December 1941

Commissioned: 7 May 1942

Fate: Sunk by German aircraft on 6 November 1943

Notes: *Beatty* was a *Gleaves*-class destroyer and was escorting Convoy 25 A when she was hit by an aerial torpedo and sunk. She received three battle stars for her World War II service.

Name: *Benson* (DD-421)

Laid down: 16 May 1938

Launched: 15 November 1939

Commissioned: 25 July 1940

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Benson* was the first of the *Benson*-class destroyers. She participated in shore bombardment operations during Operation Torch and provided antiaircraft screening for the invasions of Sicily and Salerno. *Benson* also took part in the hunting and killing of *U-960* and in the invasion of southern France by providing coastal bombardment of German positions ashore. She transferred to the Pacific in June 1944 and was there at war's end. *Benson* earned four battle stars for her World War II service.

Name: *Bernadou* (DD-153)

Laid down: 4 June 1918

Launched: 7 November 1918

Commissioned: 19 May 1919

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Bernadou* was a *Wickes*-class destroyer decommissioned twice before being reactivated a third time on 16 October 1939 to serve in the neutrality patrol. After the spring of 1941, *Bernadou* served primarily as a convoy escort, including for UGS-40. *Bernadou* was decommissioned a third and final time on 17 July 1945. She earned five battle stars and the Presidential Unit Citation during her World War II service.

Name: *Bostwick* (DE-103)

Laid down: 6 February 1943

Launched: 30 August 1943

Commissioned: 1 December 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Bostwick* was a *Cannon*-class destroyer escort with antisubmarine capabilities. She participated in the hunting and killing of *U-616* and earned two battle stars for her World War II service.

Name: *Bristol* (DD-453)

Laid down: 20 December 1940

Launched: 25 July 1941

Commissioned: 22 October 1941

Fate: Sunk

Notes: After commissioning, *Bristol* served primarily as a patrol and convoy escort ship in the North Atlantic. She took part in the landings in French Morocco in 1942 and spent most of 1943 in the Mediterranean, where she participated in both the invasion of Sicily and the Salerno landings. *U-371* torpedoed *Bristol*, which sank with the loss of 52 of her crew, on 13 October 1943 while she was escorting a convoy to Oran, Algeria. *Bristol* received three battle stars for her World War II service.

Name: *Brooklyn* (CL-40)

Laid down: 12 March 1935

Launched: 30 November 1936

Commissioned: 30 September 1937

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Brooklyn* performed Atlantic convoy escort operations from 1941 to 1942. In 1942 she took part in the landings in French Morocco and then convoy escort operations in the Atlantic. Floatplanes from *Brooklyn* participated in the hunting of *U-73*. In 1943, she participated in the invasion of Sicily, and in 1944 she took part in the Anzio-Nettuno landings. *Brooklyn* received four battle stars for her World War II service.

Name: *Campbell* (WPG-32)

Laid down: 1 May 1935

Launched: 3 June 1936

Commissioned: 16 June 1936

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Campbell* transferred to the U. S. Navy on 1 July 1941 and began convoy duties the following November. She acquitted herself well in combat with enemy U-boats, at one point, in February 1943, even damaging her own hull by ramming *U-606* and having to be towed to port for repairs. *Campbell* served as the flag ship for Task Force 61 while escorting UGS-40, and was commanded by Jesse C. Sowell, under whose leadership the task force downed 17 enemy planes while suffering not a single loss. In 1945, she was converted to an amphibious command ship and designated as an APC. She spent the remainder of the war in the Pacific and served until decommissioned in 1982. *Campbell* received 10 battle stars for her World War II service.

Name: *Chase* (DE-158)

Laid down: 16 March 1943

Launched: 24 April 1943

Commissioned: 18 July 1943

Fate: Decommissioned after a kamikaze attack

Notes: Between 14 September 1943 and 23 November 1944, *Chase* escorted six transatlantic convoys between the United States and ports in North Africa. Reclassified as APD-54 on 24 November 1944, she returned to duty in the Pacific theater on 4 February 1945. Her service ended when she was badly damaged by kamikaze attack on 20 May 1945. *Chase* received two battle stars for her World War II service.

Name: *Dallas* (DD-199)

Laid down: 25 November 1918

Launched: 31 May 1919

Commissioned: 29 October 1920

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: In addition to convoy duty, *Dallas* took part in the landings at Sicily and Salerno. *Dallas* was also a part of the escort for UGS-40. She received four battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Davis* (DD-395)

Laid down: 28 July 1936

Launched: 30 July 1938

Commissioned: 9 November 1938

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Davis* was equipped with electronic jamming equipment. She was part of the escort for KMF-25A. While on patrol on 21 June 1944, *Davis* hit a mine and did not return to convoy escort duty until 26 December 1944. She received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Davison* (DD-618)

Laid down: 26 February 1942
Launched: 19 July 1942
Commissioned: 11 September 1942
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Davison* made several voyages to North Africa and the Mediterranean on convoy duty, including with KMF-25A. She took part in the invasion of Sicily and received three battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Decker* (DE-47)

Laid down: 1 April 1942
Launched: 24 July 1942
Commissioned: 28 August 1945
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Decker* escorted convoys, including UGS-40, in the Mediterranean between 26 August 1943 and 26 April 1945. She received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Dobler* (DE-48)

Laid down: 1 April 1942
Launched: 24 July 1942
Commissioned: 17 May 1943
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: From 27 August 1943 to 14 June 1945, *Dobler* made 11 voyages from Boston, New York, and Norfolk, Virginia, to Bizerte, Tunisia; Oran, Algeria; and Palermo, Sicily. She was a part of the escort for UGS-40 and received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Edison* (DD-439)

Laid down: 18 March 1940
Launched: 23 November 1940
Commissioned: 31 January 1941
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: From July 1943 to February 1944, *Edison* served in the Mediterranean, where she provided fire support for the troops landing at Sicily, escorted convoys from Algiers and Bizerte, Tunisia, and took part in the landings at Salerno and Anzio. She was part of the hunting and killing of *U-70* in December 1943. In August 1944, she participated in the invasion of southern France. *Edison* received six battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Evarts* (DE-5)

Laid down: 17 October 1942
Launched: 7 December 1942
Commissioned: 15 April 1943
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Between 1944 and 1945, *Evarts* served as an escort to convoys bound for Casablanca and Bizerte, Tunisia, including UGS-40. *Evarts* received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Ellis* (DD-154)

Laid down: 8 July 1918
Launched: 30 November 1918
Commissioned: 7 June 1919
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Ellis* escorted tanker convoys and guarded escort carriers ferrying Army planes in the Mediterranean in 1943 before returning to North African convoy duty in 1944. She served as part of the escort for UGS-40 and received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Ellyson* (DD-454)

Laid down: 8 July 1918
Launched: 20 December 1940
Commissioned: 20 December 1940
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Ellyson* was part of an intensive coordinated submarine hunt that resulted in the sinking of *U-616*. She received seven stars for World War II service.

Name: *Emmons* (DD-457)

Laid down: 14 November 1940
Launched: 20 December 1940
Commissioned: 23 August 1941
Fate: Sunk

Notes: *Emmons* arrived in the Mediterranean on 1 May 1944 for antisubmarine patrols. On 17 May, her group teamed with British aircraft to sink *U-616*. Converted to a high-speed minesweeper in late 1944, *Emmons* also saw duty in the Pacific in 1945, where she suffered five nearly simultaneous kamikaze hits. She was scuttled on 7 April 1945 to prevent her falling into enemy hands. In addition to her Navy Unit Commendation, *Emmons* received four battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Falgout* (DE-324)

Laid down: 24 May 1943
Launched: 24 July 1943
Commissioned: 15 November 1943
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Falgout* served on Atlantic convoy escort duty out of New York and Norfolk, Virginia, to North African ports, including for UGS-38. She made eight such voyages between 3 February 1944 and 2 June 1945. *Falgout* received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Fechteler* (DE-157)

Laid down: 7 February 1943
Launched: 22 April 1943
Commissioned: 1 July 1943
Fate: Sunk

Notes: *Fechteler* served as part of the escort for UGS-38. *U-967* torpedoed *Fechteler* on 5 May 1944 in the western Mediterranean as she headed to Hampton Roads, Virginia, from Bizerte, Tunisia. She received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Fessenden* (DE-142)

Laid down: 4 January 1943
Launched: 9 March 1943
Commissioned: 25 August 1943
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: From November 1943 to March 1944, *Fessenden* escorted convoys, including UGS-38, to Casablanca and Bizerte, Tunisia. She received two battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Fiske* (DE-143)

Laid down: 4 January 1943
Launched: 14 March 1943
Commissioned: 25 August 1943
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Served as part of the escort for UGS-38. On 2 August, while on patrol in the Atlantic with the TG 22.6, *Fiske* was torpedoed by *U-804*. *Fiske* received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Gleaves* (DD-423)

Laid down: 16 May 1938
Launched: 9 December 1939
Commissioned: 14 June 1940
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Gleaves* escorted convoys in the Mediterranean and participated in the landings at Sicily, Salerno, and Anzio. She also participated in the hunting and killing of *U-616* and *U-960*. *Gleaves* received five battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Hambleton* (DD-455)

Laid down: 16 December 1940
Launched: 26 September 1941
Commissioned: 22 December 1941
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Operating in the western Mediterranean with scout planes and other destroyers, *Hambleton* took part in the hunting and killing of *U-616* on 17 May 1944. She escorted a large convoy of LSTs to the Normandy landing areas on 7 June 1944 and participated in the shore bombardment of the southern coast of France prior to Operation Anvil. *Hambleton* received seven battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Herbert C. Jones* (DE-137)

Laid down: 30 November 1942

Launched: 19 January 1943

Commissioned: 21 July 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Along the North African coast, *Herbert C. Jones* experimented with electronic jamming techniques to counteract or misdirect radio-directed glide bombs. She served as part of the escort for KMF-25A and KMF-26 and put her newfound capability to work at Anzio and during Operation Anvil. For her participation in World War II, *Herbert C. Jones* received three battle stars.

Name: *Holder* (DE-401)

Laid down: 6 October 1943

Launched: 27 November 1943

Commissioned: 18 January 1944

Fate: Badly damaged by aerial torpedo on 11 April 1944 and taken out of commission

Notes: On her first Mediterranean convoy, UGS-37, a German aerial torpedo struck *Holder*, badly damaging and making her unfit for repair. *Holder* received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Joseph E. Campbell* (DE-70)

Laid down: 29 March 1943

Launched: 26 June 1943

Commissioned: 23 September 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Between 31 December 1943 and 8 October 1944, *Joseph E. Campbell* made three convoy escort voyages, including UGS-38 to French North Africa. She participated in the hunting and killing of *U-371*. Afterward, she was converted to a high-speed transport and spent the remainder of the war in the Pacific. *Joseph E. Campbell* received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Hilary P. Jones* (DD-427)

Laid down: 16 November 1938

Launched: 14 December 1939

Commissioned: 6 September 1940

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Hilary P. Jones* served as a convoy escort in the Mediterranean and participated in the hunting and killing of *U-616*. She also provided battery and electronic jamming support for the invasion of southern France and was in the Pacific at war's end. She received four battle stars for World War II service, in addition to her Navy Unit Commendation.

Name: *Laning* (DE-159)

Laid down: 23 April 1943

Launched: 4 July 1943

Commissioned: 1 August 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Laning* made escort runs with high-speed tankers between Aruba, Algiers, and Bizerte, Tunisia, from late 1943 to early 1944. After additional training, she resumed escort duty for transport and supply convoys. She was part of the escort for UGS-38 and assisted in the rescue of survivors from *Fechtelor* (DE-157). *Laning* received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Lansdale* (DD-426)

Laid down: 19 December 1938

Launched: 30 October 1939

Commissioned: 30 October 1939

Fate: Sunk

Notes: *Lansdale* served as a convoy escort (including UGS-37 and UGS-38) to North Africa and on routes within the Mediterranean. She participated in operations at Anzio and also performed jamming operations against radio-controlled bombs. On 20 April 1944, while serving as an escort for UGS-38, *Lansdale* was struck by an aerial torpedo and sank off the Algerian coast. She received four battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Laub* (DD-613)

Laid down: 1 May 1941

Launched: 28 April '42

Commissioned: 24 October 1942

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Laub* made several convoy runs to North Africa and the United Kingdom and supported Allied operations in the Mediterranean. She participated in the invasion of Sicily and was part of the escort for KMF-25A. She assisted in the rescue of survivors from *Santa Elena*, *Aldegonde*, and *Beatty* (DD-640). *Laub* received four battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Lowe* (DE-325)

Laid down: 24 May 1943

Launched: 28 July 1943

Commissioned: 22 November 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Lowe* made 12 Atlantic crossings as a convoy escort and barely evaded torpedoes during the attack on UGS-38. On 5 March 1945, she joined TG 22.14, which hunted and destroyed *U-866* off the coast of Newfoundland on 18 March. *Lowe* received two battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Ludlow* (DD-438)

Laid down: 18 December 1939

Launched: 11 November 1940

Commissioned: 5 March 1941

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Ludlow* participated in the invasion of North Africa and afterward returned to New York to repair battle damage. She then made convoy runs to Casablanca and participated in the invasion of Sicily and Salerno, where she was damaged a second time. Upon her second repair, she returned to the Mediterranean and took part in the hunting and sinking of *U-73* and *U-960*. *Ludlow* went on to participate in the invasion of southern France. She received six battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Macomb* (DD-458)

Laid down: 3 September 1940

Launched: 23 September 1941

Commissioned: 26 January 1942

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Macomb* participated in the invasion of North Africa and antisubmarine operations in the Mediterranean, including the hunting and killing of *U-616* off the Algerian coast on 17 May 1944. Afterward *Macomb* continued to operate in the Mediterranean and took part in the invasion of southern France. In late 1944 she was converted to a destroyer minesweeper and re-designated DMS-23. *Macomb* spent the remainder of the war in the Pacific and received five battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *McLanahan* (DD-615)

Laid down: 29 May 1941
Launched: 2 September 1942
Commissioned: 19 January 1942
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *McLanahan*'s first transatlantic convoy was to Algeria on 28 April 1943. Her second mission was also to North Africa, where she prepared to participate in the invasion of Sicily. Afterward, she returned to escort duty in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. *McLanahan* was part of the escort for KMF-25A. *McLanahan* also took part in the invasions of both Anzio and Southern France. She earned four battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Menges* (DE-320)

Laid down: 22 March 1943
Launched: 15 June 1943
Commissioned: 26 October 1943
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Menges* participated in the escorts of UGS-38 and GUS-38. On 20 April 1944, while on escort duty with GUS-38 off the coast of Algeria, *U-371* torpedoed *Menges* but did not sink her. After repairs, *Menges* joined TG 22.14 and on 18 March 1945 assisted *Lowe* (DE-325) in sinking *U-866*. She continued antisubmarine sweep and patrol operations until the end of the war in Europe. *Menges* received two battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Mervine* (DD-489)

Laid down: 3 November 1941
Launched: 3 May 1942
Commissioned: 17 June 1942
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Mervine* participated in the invasion of North Africa in 1942 and of Sicily in 1943. She was part of the escort for KMF-25A. Reconfigured as a destroyer minesweeper and reclassified as DMS-31 on 30 May 1945, *Mervine* spent the remainder of the war in the Pacific. She received three battle stars for her World War II service.

Name: *Mills* (DE-383)

Laid down: 26 March 1943
Launched: 26 May 1943
Commissioned: 12 October 1943
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Mills* began transatlantic convoy escort duty on 10 January 1944. *Mills* was part of the escort for UGS-36 when it was attacked on 1 April 1944 by German torpedo bombers, which severely damaged the Liberty ship *Jared Ingersoll*. *Mills* and the British tug *Mindful* towed *Jared Ingersoll* to Algiers for repairs. *Mills* received one praise for her firefighting skill and one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Mosley* (DE-321)

Laid down: 6 April 1943

Launched: 26 May 1943

Commissioned: 30 October 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Mosley's* initial convoy duty to the Mediterranean was in early 1944 when she screened a UGS and GUS convoys to and from North Africa between 31 January and 18 March. On 4 April she sailed with the ill-fated convoy UGS-38, which was attacked (20 April) on the way to Bizerte, Tunisia, and again on the way back to New York. In the first attack, *Mosley* shot down one German plane and damaged another. In the second attack, *Mosley* briefly assisted in the search for *U-967*. *Mosley* completed two more round trips to Bizerte, Tunisia, and two to Oran, Algeria, before joining TG 22.14, a submarine hunter-killer group that included *Pride* (DE-323), *Menges* (DE-320), and *Lowe* (DE-325). For the remainder of the war, she patrolled the North Atlantic. *Mosley* received two battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Newell* (DE-322)

Laid down: 5 April 1943

Launched: 29 June 1943

Commissioned: 30 October 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: On *Newell's* second transatlantic voyage, with UGS-38, her convoy was attacked by German planes on 20 April 1944. This attack resulted in the sinking of *Lansdale* (DD-426). *Newell* and *Menges* (DE-320) picked up survivors. *Newell* received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Niblack* (DD-424)

Laid down: 8 August 1943

Launched: 18 May 1940

Commissioned: 1 August 1940

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Niblack*, in escort duty for eastbound transatlantic convoy HX-156, performed rescue operations on 31 October 1941 after the sinking of *Reuben James* (DD-245). In November 1942 *Niblack* escorted the first support convoy to Casablanca. In 1943, she escorted troopships and screened minelaying operations during the invasion of Sicily. *Niblack* also bombarded the Italian coast in support of the invasion of Salerno and screened the landings at Anzio. In 1944, she participated in the hunting and killing of *U-960*. *Niblack* earned five battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Nicholson* (DD-442)

Laid down: 1 November 1939

Launched: 31 May 1940

Commissioned: 3 June 1941

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Nicholson* escorted convoys through the North Atlantic until fall 1942. In 1943, she took part in the Bizerte, Tunisia, campaign and the initial assaults on Salerno. She participated in the escort of SNF-5 in October 1943. For the remainder of the war, she served in the Pacific. *Nicholson* received 10 battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Nields* (DD-616)

Laid down: 15 June 1942

Launched: 1 October 1942

Commissioned: 15 January 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: For nearly a year, beginning 28 April 1943, *Nields* performed escort duty for convoys to the Mediterranean and Great Britain. In March 1944 she trained in antisubmarine warfare techniques. Assigned to TG 21.5, she stationed in Oran in April. In May, she participated in the hunting of *U-616*, and for the remainder of her time in the Mediterranean, *Nields* escorted ships between North Africa and Italy, participated in Operation Dragoon, and patrolled the French coast. Returning to the United States in September for training and repairs, *Nields* was reassigned to transatlantic escort duty to the Mediterranean later that autumn. In 1945, she was assigned to occupation duty in Japan, where she served until 31 August 1945. She was decommissioned on 25 March 1946. *Nields* earned three battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Parker* (DD-604)

Laid down: 9 June 1941

Launched: 12 May 1942

Commissioned: 31 August 1942

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Parker* served as a convoy escort in the invasion of North Africa in 1942 and on five other occasions in 1943. She served as part of the escort for KMF-25A, bound for Palermo and Naples in 1943. In 1944, she participated in bombardment operations at Anzio and in support of the invasion of southern France. In 1945, she continued escort duties in the Mediterranean until mid-July, when she departed for the Pacific. *Parker* received four battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Pioneer* (AM-105)

Laid down: 30 October 1941

Launched: 26 July 1942

Commissioned: 27 February 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Pioneer* escorted ships to North African ports in 1943. When German aircraft attacked KMF-26 on 26 November 1943 and a glide bomb sank HMT *Rohna*, *Pioneer* rescued survivors. She continued escort duty until assigned to the assault force at Anzio in early 1944, when she provided mine clearing and fire support duties. In late May 1944, *Pioneer* returned to escort duty in the Mediterranean and continued escort duty there until 12 August, when she once again provided mine-clearing operations for the invasion of southern France. She spent the remainder of the war in the Pacific and received four battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Portent* (AM-106)

Laid down: 15 November 1941

Launched: 16 August 1942

Commissioned: 3 April 1943

Fate: Sunk by mine in Italian waters

Notes: From May to November 1943, *Portent* escorted convoys between New York and Casablanca. She served as part of the escort for KMF-26 in November 1943. Assigned to the invasion forces of Anzio on 19 December, *Portent* struck a mine and sank near the Italian coast on 22 January 1944. *Portent* received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Pride* (DE-323)

Laid down: 12 April 1943

Launched: 3 July 1943

Commissioned: 13 November 1943

Fate: Survived the wa

Notes: *Pride* escorted six convoys into the Mediterranean in a 12-month period in 1943–44. She was part of UGS-38, which lost five ships when the convoy was attacked by German planes on 20 April 1944. On the return voyage (GUS-38), *Pride*, along with *Joseph E. Campbell* (DE-70), FNS *Sénégalais*, and HMS *Blankney*, tracked and sank *U-371* on 4 May 1944. On 1 March 1945 she was assigned to a submarine hunter-killer group and spent the remainder of the war on ASW patrol. *Pride* earned three battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Pride Ramsden* (DE-382)

Laid down: 26 March 1943

Launched: 24 May 1943

Commissioned: 19 October 1943

Fate: Survived the wa

Notes: *Ramsden*'s first convoy to the Mediterranean commenced on 11 January 1944 with UGS-30 from New York to Casablanca. On 1 April, while *Ramsden* headed for Bizerte, Tunisia, with UGS-36, German bombers and torpedo planes attacked the convoy, damaging one merchant ship but losing five aircraft, one of them shot down by *Ramsden*. After the surrender of Germany in 1945, she transferred to the Pacific, where she stayed for the remainder of the war. *Ramsden* earned one battle star during World War II.

Name: *Rhind* (DD-404)

Laid down: 22 September 1937

Launched: 28 July 1938

Commissioned: 10 November 1939

Fate: Survived the wa

Notes: **Notes:** On 8 November 1942, *Rhind* shelled Vichy vessels that threatened the Allied invasion of North Africa. Afterward, she escorted transatlantic convoys to the Mediterranean until the invasion of Sicily, when she screened the mine and patrol craft clearing the harbor and provided antiaircraft defense and fire support. She also served as an escort for SNF-5. In 1943, *Rhind* suffered several near misses from German air attacks. She returned to transatlantic convoy duty in July 1944, and in April 1945 she transferred to the Pacific, where she stayed for the remainder of the war. *Rhind* earned four battle stars during World War II.

Name: *Smartt* (DE-257)

Laid down: 10 January 1943

Launched: 22 February 1943

Commissioned: 18 June 1943

Fate: Survived the wa

Notes: *Smartt*'s first convoy to North Africa departed Norfolk, Virginia, on 27 August 1943. Between 25 October 1943 and 20 April 1944, *Smartt* escorted three convoys from New York to Casablanca and back. As an escort for convoy UGS-40, headed to Bizerte, Tunisia, *Smartt* was attacked near Algiers on 11 May 1943 by German planes and performed very well, hitting and damaging four planes and downing two. Between 4 July 1944 and 14 June 1945, she made six convoy escort voyages from the United States to the Mediterranean and back. *Smartt* received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Speed* (AM-116)

Laid down: 17 November 1941

Launched: 18 April 1942

Commissioned: 15 October 1942

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Speed* first arrived in the Mediterranean in April 1943 and conducted patrols off the coast of Algeria for the next two months. She participated in the invasion of Sicily and afterward swept the waters around the island and along the Italian peninsula. For most of the next year, *Speed* screened and reinforced convoys between North Africa, Sicily, and Italy, and alternated those duties with minesweeping and ASW patrols. She was part of UGS-38 when it was attacked on 20 April 1944 and went on to perform electronic jamming and ASW duties during the invasion of southern France on 15 August. Following the amphibious landings there, she swept channels and cleared harbors along the French coast. *Speed* returned to Norfolk, Virginia, on 11 December 1944 for overhaul, and departed the following March for minesweeping duty in the Pacific. She continued operations there until the end of the war. *Speed* received seven battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Steady* (AM-118)

Laid down: 17 November 1941

Launched: 6 June 1942

Commissioned: 16 November 1942

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Steady's* first assignment was to Algerian waters. Then, at Sicily, she performed sweeping operations ahead of the invasion force on 10 July 1943. She continued sweeping and escort operations in the Mediterranean for much of the rest of 1943. After overhaul at Bizerte, Tunisia, in December of 1943, *Steady* took part in the Anzio landings in January 1944. In May 1944, she performed escort duties for UGS-40 and the following August took part in Operation Dragoon. Afterward, she again resumed sweeping and escort duties in the Mediterranean. She returned to Norfolk, Virginia, for a second overhaul on 11 December 1944. On 15 February 1945, she transferred to the Pacific and performed sweeping and ASW duties there for the remainder of the war. *Steady* received eight battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Sustain* (AM-119)

Laid down: 17 November 1941

Launched: 23 June 1942

Commissioned: 9 November 1942

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Sustain* and *Steady* (AM-118) proceeded ahead of the invasion force for Sicily, clearing mines for prospective landing areas. After the Salerno landings, *Sustain* continued sweeping operations along the Italian coast and occasionally performed escort duty between Salerno and Bizerte, Tunisia. On the morning of 22 January 1944, she escorted landing craft to the beaches at Anzio and afterward performed ASW and E-boat (fast torpedo boats) patrol duties outside the harbor. *Sustain* was part of GUS-38 on 4 May 1944 and worked in concert with *Pride* (DE-323), *Joseph E. Campbell* (DE-70), and HMS *Blankney* to locate and sink *U-371*. *Sustain* also provided escort for UGS-40. She contributed her sweeping and patrol capabilities to the invasion of southern France and returned to Norfolk, Virginia, on 11 December 1944. After refitting, she headed to the Pacific on 15 February 1945 and spent the remainder of the war in service there. *Sustain* received eight battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Taney* (WPG-37)

Laid down: 1 May 1935

Launched: 3 June 1936

Commissioned: 24 October 1936

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Commissioned as *Roger B. Taney*, *Taney* was renamed and transferred to the Navy on 25 July 1941. *Taney* was at Honolulu harbor on 7 December 1941 but escaped damage. She continued to operate out of Honolulu until early 1944, when the vessel was redesignated as a Coast Guard patrol gunboat (WPG) and assigned to the East Coast. Before reporting, *Taney* acquired refit with four single-mount, 5-inch guns, making her the only ship in her class with this modification. Between April and October 1944, she escorted convoys between Norfolk, Virginia, and the Mediterranean, including the ill-fated UGS-38, which was attacked on 20 April 1944. Afterward, *Taney* converted to an amphibious command ship, received the designation WAGC-37, and transferred back to the Pacific, where she stayed until the end of the war. *Taney* received three battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Tillman* (DD-641)

Laid down: 1 May 1941

Launched: 20 December 1941

Commissioned: 4 June 1942

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Tillman* screened ships in the convoy bound for the invasion of North Africa and successfully engaged enemy ships. She continued escort operations in the Atlantic and Mediterranean into early 1943 and provided fire support and patrol duties the following July during the invasion of Sicily. For the remainder of 1943 and throughout 1944, *Tillman* stayed on convoy escort duty. On 6 November 1943, she helped repel a German air attack on KMF-25A, which was carrying troops and supplies for the Italian campaign. In March 1945, *Tillman* transferred to the Pacific, where she performed ASW duties for the remainder of the war. *Tillman* received three battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Tomich* (DE-242)

Laid down: 15 September 1942

Launched: 28 December 1942

Commissioned: 27 July 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Tomich* performed escort duties from late 1943 to the middle of 1944 and was part of the escort for UGS-36. She was assigned to antisubmarine hunter-killer group training on 7 November 1944. Following overhaul in the summer of 1945, she transferred to the Pacific and operated there for the remainder of the war. *Tomich* received one battle star for her World War II service.

Name: *Trippe* (DD-403)

Laid down: 15 April 1937

Launched: 14 May 1938

Commissioned: 1 November 1939

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Trippe* began escorting convoys to the Mediterranean in the spring of 1943. She participated in both the invasion of Sicily and the invasions of the Italian peninsula that summer and fall by screening ships and provided fire support for landing troops. On 13 October 1943, with *Trippe* escorting SNF-5, *U-371* attacked and sank *Bristol* (DD-453). On 16 December 1943, *Trippe*, in concert with *Edison* (DD-439) and *Woolsey* (DD-437), attacked and sank *U-73*. In January 1944, she provided fire support for the landings at Anzio. In late March of 1945 *Trippe* was assigned escort duties in the Pacific and remained there until the end of the war. *Trippe* earned six battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Vance* (DE-387)

Laid down: 30 April 1943

Launched: 16 July 1943

Commissioned: 1 November 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Vance* made eight round-trip voyages as a convoy escort from the United States to the western Mediterranean. She participated in the hunting and killing of *U-616* and on 11 May 1945, after Germany's official surrender, obtained the surrender of *U-873* without incident. After alterations to her antiaircraft armament, *Vance* received assignment to the Pacific, where she spent the remainder of the war.

Name: *Wainwright* (DD-419)

Laid down: 7 June 1938

Launched: 1 June 1939

Commissioned: 15 April 1940

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Until Operation Torch in November 1942, *Wainwright* participated in convoy operations between Iceland, the Orkneys, and northern Russia. On 8 November 1942, she engaged and repulsed Vichy ships and planes based at Casablanca. In the six months that followed, *Wainwright* protected merchant ships headed to ports along the North African coast. She also protected transports from enemy air and submarine activity during the invasion of Sicily in 1943 and afterward continued convoy duty between North Africa and Sicily. On 13 December 1943, off the coast of Algiers, along with *Niblack* (DD-424), *Benson* (DD-421), and HMS *Calpe*, she attacked *U-593* and sank it. In January 1944, *Wainwright* provided support for the landings at Anzio and Nettuno. After overhaul in February 1944, she received escort and training duty along the East Coast of the United States. In the spring of 1945, she transferred to the Pacific for the remainder of the war. *Wainwright* earned seven battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Walter S. Brown* (DE-258)

Laid down: 10 January 1943

Launched: 22 February 1943

Commissioned: 25 June 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: After shakedown, *Walter S. Brown* immediately began escorting convoys from the East Coast of the United States to ports in North Africa and had completed four such round-trip voyages by the spring of 1944. As part of the escort for UGS-40, *Walter S. Brown* received praise for her performance against a German air attack on 11 May 1944, which resulted in heavy losses of enemy planes and no Allied losses. For the remainder of the war, she continued escorting ships from the east coast to North Africa. *Walter S. Brown* received one battle star for her World War II service.

Name: *Wilhoite* (DE-397)

Laid down: 4 August 1943

Launched: 5 October 1943

Commissioned: 16 December 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Wilhoite* completed her initial escort assignment with UGS-34 to Gibraltar in early 1944 without incident. She received her first taste of combat on her next escort assignment guarding UGS-40 on 11 May 1944. On that day the Allies won a decisive victory with convoy escorts and Allied aircraft, downing an estimated 17 enemy planes without suffering the loss of a single plane or ship themselves. Before returning to the United States with UGS-40, *Wilhoite* towed the stricken *Barr* (DE-576), which had been torpedoed, to Casablanca. For both her performance in the German aerial attack and her rescue of *Barr*, *Wilhoite* received two Navy Unit Commendations. Before departing Casablanca, she received assignment to TG 22.3, a hunter-killer task group based around an escort carrier. In the spring of 1945, she deployed to the Pacific and finished the war there. *Wilhoite*, along with the other units of TG 22.3, later received the Presidential Unit Citation for the group's submarine-hunting activities. She also received one battle star for World War II service.

Name: *Woolsey* (DD-437)

Laid down: 9 October 1939

Launched: 12 February 1941

Commissioned: 7 May 1941

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Woolsey* was assigned to antisubmarine duty for the invasion of North Africa and worked with *Swanson* (DD-443) and *Quick* (DD-490) to destroy *U-173* on 16 November 1942. From January to April 1943, *Woolsey* provided transatlantic convoy escorts between the East Coast of the United States and North Africa. She provided fire support for the invasions of Sicily and Salerno in 1943 and Anzio in 1944. She participated in the hunting and killing of *U-73* on 16 December 1943 and *U-960* on 19 May 1944. During the invasion of southern France in August 1944, *Woolsey* again provided fire support. In mid-July of 1945, she transferred to the Pacific to begin preparations for the invasion of Japan. With Japan's surrender, *Woolsey* escorted a convoy of occupation troops in late August 1945 before arriving back on the East Coast in December. *Woolsey* received seven battle stars for World War II service.

Name: *Wyffels* (DE-6)

Laid down: 17 October 1942

Launched: 7 December 1942

Commissioned: 15 April 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Wyffels* escorted 11 convoys across the Atlantic to Mediterranean ports and spent the entire war as an Atlantic convoy escort. Her only actual combat experience occurred on 11 May 1944 when, as an escort for UGS-40, she successfully fought off a German aerial attack without loss. *Wyffels* received one battle star for World War II service.

Royal Navy

Name: *Aspirant*

Laid down: 10 October 1942

Transferred: 3 May 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Originally designed as BATR-42 but not placed in service until transferred to Britain, *Aspirant*, a *Favourite*-class rescue tug, came to the Royal Navy under Lend-Lease. After the attack on GUS-38 in 1944, *Aspirant* towed *Menges* (DE-320) to port for repairs.

Name: *Athlete*

Laid down: 18 May 1943

Transferred: 15 November 1943

Fate: Sunk

Notes: The Royal Navy received *Athlete* under Lend-Lease as a *Favourite*-class rescue tug serving in the Mediterranean. *Athlete* unsuccessfully attempted to tow British transport *Royal Star* to port in Algiers on 21 April 1944. *Athlete* hit a mine and sank near the port city of Leghorn, Italy, on 17 July 1945.

Name: *Blankney*

Laid down: 17 May 1940
Launched: 19 December 1940
Commissioned: 11 April 1941
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Blankney* was a *Hunt*-class destroyer escort and veteran U-boat hunter. She participated in the hunting and killing of *U-371*.

Name: *Bryony*

Laid down: 16 November 1940
Launched: 15 March 1941
Commissioned: 4 April 1942
Fate: Sunk, then raised and put back into service

Notes: *Bryony* was a *Flower*-class frigate (corvette) sunk by German aircraft, raised and repaired, and then recommissioned on 4 June 1941. She served primarily as a minesweeper. On 22 October 1943, *Bryony* transported the survivors of the sinking of U.S. troop and cargo transport *Tivives* to Oran, Algeria.

Name: *Caledon*

Laid down: 17 March 1916
Launched: 25 November 1916
Commissioned: 7 March 1917
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: A World War I-era light cruiser, *Caledon* was refitted with antiaircraft armaments in December 1943. She served as part of the escort for UGS-40.

Name: *Cleveland*

Laid down: 7 July 1939
Launched: 24 April 1940
Commissioned: 18 September 1940
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Cleveland* was a *Hunt*-class destroyer escort assigned to the Mediterranean from 1943 to 1945. She took part in Operation Husky and Operation Avalanche and served as part of the escort for KMF-26.

Name: *Colombo*

Laid down: 8 December 1917
Launched: 18 December 1918
Commissioned: 18 June 1919
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: A *Carlisle*-class light cruiser, *Colombo* was refitted for service as an antiaircraft cruiser in 1943. She served as part of the escort for KMF-25A and KMF-26.

Name: *Croome*

Laid down: 7 June 1940
Launched: 30 January 1941
Commissioned: 29 June 1941
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Croome* was a *Hunt*-class destroyer escort. She served as part of the escort for KMF-25A and assisted with the rescue of survivors from *Beatty* (DD-640) and U.S. troop transport ships *Santa Elena* and *Marnix van St. Aldegonde*.

Name: *Haydon*

Laid down: 1 May 1941
Launched: 2 April 1942
Commissioned: 24 October 1942
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Haydon* was a *Hunt*-class destroyer escort that took part in the Atlantic convoys, Operation Husky, and Operation Dragoon. *Haydon* served as an escort for KMF-25A.

Name: *Hengist*

Laid down: 27 August 1941
Launched: 20 December 1941
Commissioned: 30 July 1942
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Hengist* was an *Assurance*-class rescue tug. She was part of the escort for UGS-40 and assisted *Fechteler* (DE-157) by rescuing survivors.

Name: *La Malouine*

Laid down: 13 November 1939

Launched: 21 March 1940

Commissioned: 29 May 1940

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *La Malouine* was a *Flower*-class corvette built by the British for the French Navy. After the fall of France in 1940, Britain seized and commissioned *La Malouine* into the Royal Navy, where she became a veteran convoy escort ship. *La Malouine* served as part of the escort for MKS-28 and assisted in rescuing survivors of the sinking of the U.S. transport ship *Tivives*.

Name: *Mindful*

Launched: 7 February 1943

Commissioned: 31 August 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Mindful* was a *Favourite*-class rescue tug. On separate occasions, she towed *Holder* (DE-401) and Liberty ship *Jared Ingersoll* to Algiers for repairs.

Name: *Vagrant*

Launched: 1 March 1943

Transferred: 2 October 1943

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Vagrant* was a *Favourite*-class rescue tug transferred to Britain under Lend-Lease. As part of the escort for UGS-38, she towed the Liberty ship *Samite* to Algiers for repair.

Free French Naval Forces

Name: *Cimeterre*

Laid down: 14 August 1943

Launched: 18 December 1943

Transferred: 4 February 1944

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Originally named PC-1250, *Cimeterre* began as a PC-461-class U.S. patrol craft but was transferred to the Free French Naval Forces upon completion under Lend-Lease and renamed on 9 March 1944. Fitted as a sub-chaser, *Cimeterre* was part of the escort for UGS-40.

Name: *L'Alcyon*

Laid down: May 1925

Completed: 15 July 1929

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *L'Alcyon* was a *L'Adroit*-class destroyer. She participated in the hunting and killing of *U-371*.

Name: *Sénégalais*

Laid down: 24 April 1943

Launched: 11 November 1943

Transferred: 2 January 1944

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Originally a *Cannon*-class destroyer escort, *Corbesier* (DE-106) had her name canceled and reassigned upon transfer under Lend-Lease to the Free French Naval Forces on 2 January 1944. She participated in the hunting and killing of *U-371*, which torpedoed but did not sink her.

Name: *Tunisien*

Laid down: 23 June 1943
Launched: 17 December 1943
Transferred: 11 February 1944
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Originally built as *Crosley* (DE-108), a *Cannon*-class destroyer escort, she became a Free French Naval Forces vessel under Lend-Lease on 11 February 1944 and was renamed *Tunisien*. She was part of the escort for UGS-40.

Royal Hellenic Navy

Name: *Kanaris*

Laid down: 12 December 1940
Launched: 29 January 1942
Commissioned: 10 August 1942
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Originally built as the *Hunt*-class destroyer escort HMS *Hatherleigh*, she transferred to Greece before completion and became *Kanaris*. She served as part of the escort for KMF-25A.

Name: *Themistoklis*

Laid down: 7 April 1941
Launched: 18 December 1941
Commissioned: 16 June 1942
Transferred: March 1943
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Originally commissioned as the destroyer escort HMS *Bramham*, she was transferred by Britain to Greece in 1943, whereupon she was renamed *Themistoklis*. She served as part of the escort for KMF-25A.

Royal Netherlands Navy

Name: *Jacob van Heemskerck*

Laid down: 31 October 1938
Launched: 16 September 1939
Commissioned: 10 May 1940
Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Jacob van Heemskerck* was a *Tromp*-class light cruiser of the Royal Netherlands Navy, refitted in the United Kingdom to include additional armament for the air defense of convoys. She served as part of the escort for UGS-38.

German Navy

Name: *U-73*

Launched: 27 July 1940
Commissioned: 30 September 1940
Fate: Sunk

Notes: *U-73* was a Type VIIB U-boat that torpedoed the Liberty ships *Arthur Middleton* in UGS-3 and *John S. Copley* in GUS-24. *Woolsey* (DD-437), *Trippe* (DD-403), and *Edison* (DD-439) hunted and destroyed *U-73* by depth charge and gunfire on 16 December 1943.

Name: *U-371*

Launched: 27 January 1941
Commissioned: 15 March 1941
Fate: Sunk

Notes: *U-371* was a Type VIIC U-boat that torpedoed the *Menges* (DE-320). She was subsequently hunted and damaged by depth charge attack. Forced to surface, *U-371* was hit multiple times by gunfire before firing a torpedo at FNS *Sénégalais* and being scuttled on 4 May 1944. She also sank *Bristol* (DD-453) on 13 October 1943.

Name: *U-407*

Launched: 16 August 1941
Commissioned: 118 December 1941
Fate: Sunk

Notes: On 19 September 1944, Polish destroyer *Garland*, along with British destroyers *Troubridge*, *Terpsichore*, *Brecon*, and *Zetland*, sank *U-407* with multiple depth charge attacks.

Name: *U-616*

Launched: 8 February 1942
Commissioned: 2 April 1942
Fate: Sunk

Notes: *U-616* was a Type VIIC U-boat that torpedoed and damaged two merchant ships in GUS-39 on 13–14 May 1944. Consequently, *U-616* was hunted and destroyed by depth charges and gunfire on 17 May 1944.

Name: *U-866*

Launched: 29 July 1943
Commissioned: 17 November 1943
Fate: Sunk

Notes: *U-866* was a Type IXC/40 U-boat sunk on 18 March 1945 by *Lowe* (DE-325), *Menges* (DE-320), *Mosley* (DE-321), and *Pride* (DE-323). *U-866* was on her third patrol and had yet to sink a ship.

Name: *U-960*

Launched: 3 December 1942
Commissioned: 28 January 1943
Fate: Sunk

Notes: *U-960* was a Type VIIC U-boat destroyed with depth charges on 19 May 1944 by *Ludlow* (DD-438) and *Niblack* (DD-424).

Name: *U-967*

Launched: 4 February 1943
Commissioned: 11 March 1943
Fate: Sunk

Notes: *U-967* was a Type VIIC U-boat. On 5 May 1944, *U-967* torpedoed *Fechteler* (DE-157) as she sailed with GUS-38. The submarine was scuttled at Toulon on 11 August 1944, just days before the start of Operation Dragoon.

Requisitioned Ships

Name: *Almanzora*

Built: 1914

Type: British troop transport

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Almanzora* served as a training ship for troop landings and took part in Operation Torch. She was also part of KMF-25A.

Name: *Arthur Middleton*

Built: 1942

Type: Liberty ship freighter

Fate: Sunk

Notes: *Arthur Middleton*, on her way to Oran, Algeria, was hauling explosives as part of UGS-3 when she was torpedoed only three miles from her destination by *U-73* on 1 January 1943.

Name: *Jared Ingersoll*

Built: 1942

Type: Liberty ship freighter

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Jared Ingersoll* was a Liberty ship loaded with Army stores and sailing with UGS-36 when she was torpedoed on 1 April 1944. The attack caused an explosion and fire but did not sink her. She was towed to Algiers and beached before being moved again to Oran, Algeria, where she received repairs, and then returned to service.

Name: *John S. Copley*

Built: 1942

Type: Liberty ship freighter

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *John S. Copley* was carrying sand ballast and landing craft when attacked and damaged by torpedo from *U-73* on 16 December 1943. She received repair and eventually returned to service.

Name: *Lawrence D. Tyson*

Built: 1943

Type: Liberty ship freighter

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Tyson* was part of UGS-36.

Name: *Marnix van St. Aldegonde*

Built: 1930

Type: Troop transport

Fate: Sunk

Notes: Originally a Dutch passenger and cargo liner, *Marnix van St. Aldegonde* carried Allied troops for Operation Torch, Operation Husky, and Operation Avalanche. As part of KMF-25A, she was hit by a torpedo on 6 November 1943 and sank the following day while in tow.

Name: *Meyer London*

Built: 1944

Type: Liberty ship freighter

Fate: Sunk

Notes: *Meyer London* was a part of UGS-37 when torpedoed by *U-407* on 16 April 1944.

Name: *Monterey*

Built: 1932

Type: U.S. Army troop transport

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: Originally a passenger ship, *Monterey* refitted to accommodate 3,500 troops as a U.S. Army transport. As part of KMF-25A, she rescued 1,675 from US troop transport *Santa Elena* off the coast of North Africa on 6 November 1943.

Name: *Paul Hamilton*

Built: 1942

Type: Liberty ship, Limited troop transport

Fate: Sunk

Notes: *Paul Hamilton* was part of UGS-38 on 20 April 1944 when she was hit by an aerial torpedo, which ignited high explosives in her hold, destroying the ship and killing all 581 men on board.

Name: *Rohna*

Built: 1926

Type: British troop transport

Fate: Sunk

Notes: *Rohna* participated in the invasions of North Africa, Sicily, and Italy. She was part of Convoy KMF-26 when she was attacked by a German glide bomb on 26 November 1943. One thousand fifty U.S. soldiers and 134 British officers, Australian officers, and Indian crewmen died in the attack.

Name: *Royal Star*

Built: 1919

Type: British refrigerated cargo transport

Fate: Sunk

Notes: *Royal Star* was part of Convoy UGS-38, headed to Malta, Taranto, and Alexandria, when she was attacked by German aircraft on 20 April 1944.

Name: *Ruys*

Built: 1938

Type: British troop transport

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Ruys* was sailing with KMF-25A on its way to Palermo and Naples when the convoy came under German air attack on 6 November 1943. With no room on board for survivors, and with other ships nearby, *Ruys* left all of her lifeboats in the water for survivors of the sinking troop transport *Marnix van St. Aldegonde*, saving all 3,000 aboard.

Name: *Samite*

Built: 1943

Type: Liberty ship

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: An aerial torpedo struck *Samite* on 20 April 1944 as she sailed with UGS-38. Too damaged to continue, she was towed to Algiers the following morning for repair.

Name: *Santa Elena*

Built: 1933

Type: U.S. Army troop transport

Fate: Sunk

Notes: *Santa Elena* was a commercial ship refitted for Army service. She took part in the invasion of North Africa in November 1942 and was bound for Naples with KMF-25A when she was attacked on 7 November 1943. *Santa Elena* was damaged by an aerial torpedo and sank the following day while in tow, after colliding with the troop transport *Marnix van St. Aldegonde*.

Name: *Stephen F. Austin*

Built: 1942

Type: U.S. Army troop transport

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: A German air attack damaged *Stephen F. Austin* as she traveled with UGS-38 along the Algerian coast on 26 April 1944. She managed to make it to the port at Algiers unassisted.

Name: *Strathmore*

Built: 1935

Type: British troop transport

Fate: Survived the war

Notes: *Strathmore* was a British passenger liner requisitioned by the Royal Navy. She was a part of KMF-25A.

Name: *Thomas G. Masaryk*

Built: 1943

Type: Liberty ship freighter

Fate: Sunk

Notes: *U-407* torpedoed and sank *Thomas G. Masaryk* just off the Libyan coast on 16 April 1944 while en route with UGS-37 to Port Said, Egypt.

Name: *Tivives*

Built: 1911

Type: U.S. troop and refrigerated cargo transport

Fate: Sunk

Notes: German aircraft torpedoed and sank *Tivives* on 21 October 1943 as she sailed with MKS-28 on its way along the Algerian coast from Algiers to Oran.

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PHOTO SECTION



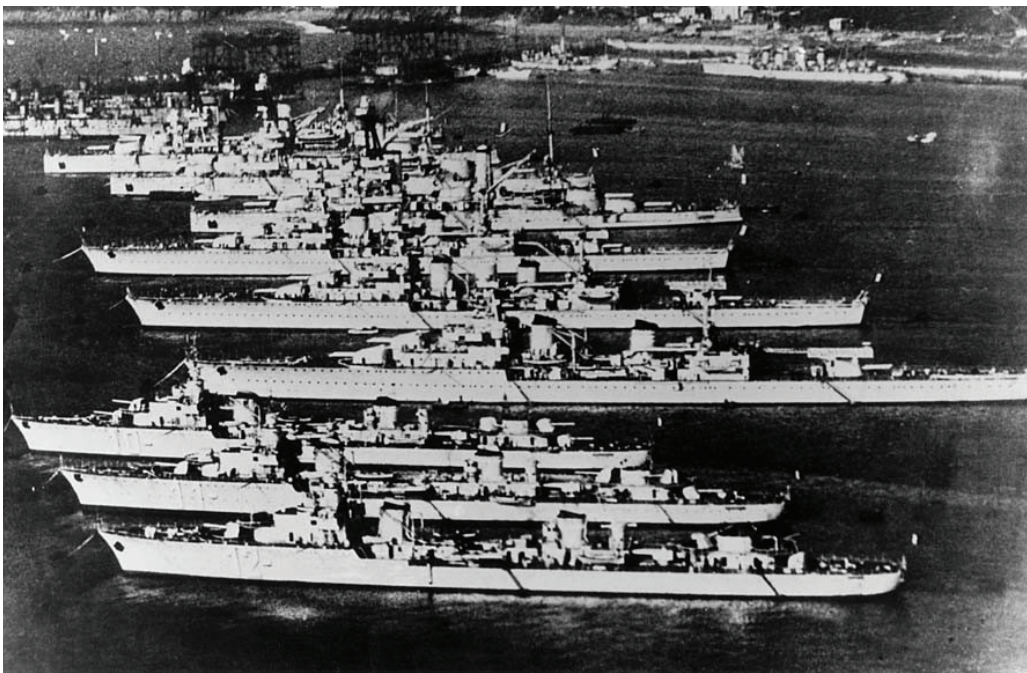
Admiral Ernest J. King envisioned combat narratives as historical overviews of operations and a way to incorporate lessons learned into officer training (National Archives, 80-G-K-16224).



Samuel Eliot Morison received a commission to write a history of U.S. naval operations in World War II. His work would eventually eclipse that of the Combat Narratives Office (National Archives, 80-G-434764).



A cargo ship burns in the harbor at Malta. Italy had attacked Malta on 11 June 1940, and the Axis siege of the island would not end until 20 November 1942 (© Imperial War Museum, A-9499).



A large fleet of modern warships comprised France's Marine Nationale at the beginning of World War II (NHHC, NH-90001).



The harbor at Mers el-Kébir, Algeria, circa 1943–44. When Admiral Marcel-Bruno Gensoul refused Britain's ultimatum, the Royal Navy attacked, killing nearly 1,300 French sailors. The city of Oran is in the distance, left. After its capture by the Allies in 1942, the Navy used Oran as a supply depot and repair station (National Archives, 80-G-K-637).



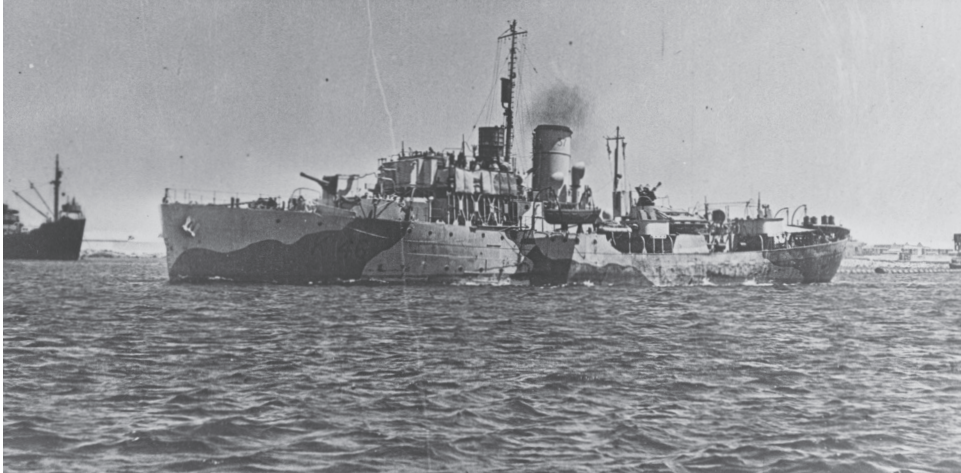
Admiral René-Emile Godfroy agreed to comply with Britain's ultimatum and interned his ships, including the battleship FNS Lorraine, in Alexandria Harbor (© Imperial War Museum, A-9853).



Photo reconnaissance of sunken and disabled Italian warships in Taranto harbor, Italy, the morning after the Royal Navy's overnight attack of 11–12 November 1940 (© Imperial War Museum, CM-164).



Bristol (DD-453) refueling off Licata, Sicily, during the invasion of Sicily in July 1943. U-371 torpedoed Bristol on 13 October 1943 (National Archives, 80-G-52974).



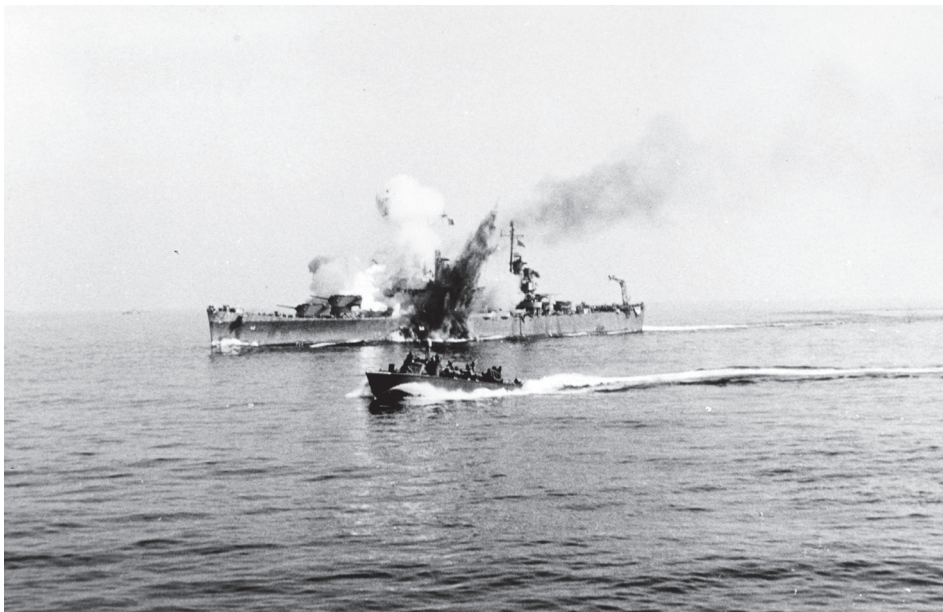
Built in Britain as a French destroyer, La Malouine was never delivered to the Marine Nationale. Instead, she was seized by Britain after the fall of France, and served with the Royal Navy for the duration of the war. La Malouine assisted in the rescue of survivors from Tivives and Meyer London (NHHC, NH-81782).



Newly commissioned Herbert C. Jones (DE-137) carried electronic jamming equipment to counter the Luftwaffe's glide bombs (National Archives and NHHC, 19-N-77794).



The Luftwaffe first used the Ruhrstahl Fritz X guided bomb in combat in 1943 during the Allied landings in Sicily. Fritz X guided bombs sank Savannah (CL-42) and the Italian battleship Roma (courtesy of the Pima Air & Space Museum).



A Ruhrstahl Fritz X guided bomb struck Savannah (CL-42) during the Salerno operation on 11 September 1943, killing 197 (NHHC, NH-95562).



On 26 November 1943, a Henschel Hs-293 glide bomb destroyed the troop transport HMT Rohna, killing 1,184, including 1,050 U.S. Soldiers (© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, P15255).



Still from a captured German film showing a Heinkel He-111 releasing a Henschel Hs-293 glide bomb (National Archives, 78193).



Woolsey (DD-437) was a search and destroy veteran. Together with Trippe (DD-403), she sank U-73 and then proceeded to hunt U-960 until its commander scuttled his boat (courtesy of the U.S. Naval Institute).



Trippe (DD-403) helped rescue Bristol's (DD-453) survivors and two months later helped locate and sink U-73 (National Archives and NHHC, 80-G-415474).



Edison (DD-439) escorted convoys from Algiers and Bizerte, Tunisia, took part in the landings at Salerno and Anzio, and assisted in the hunting and killing of U-73 (NHHC, NH-107290).



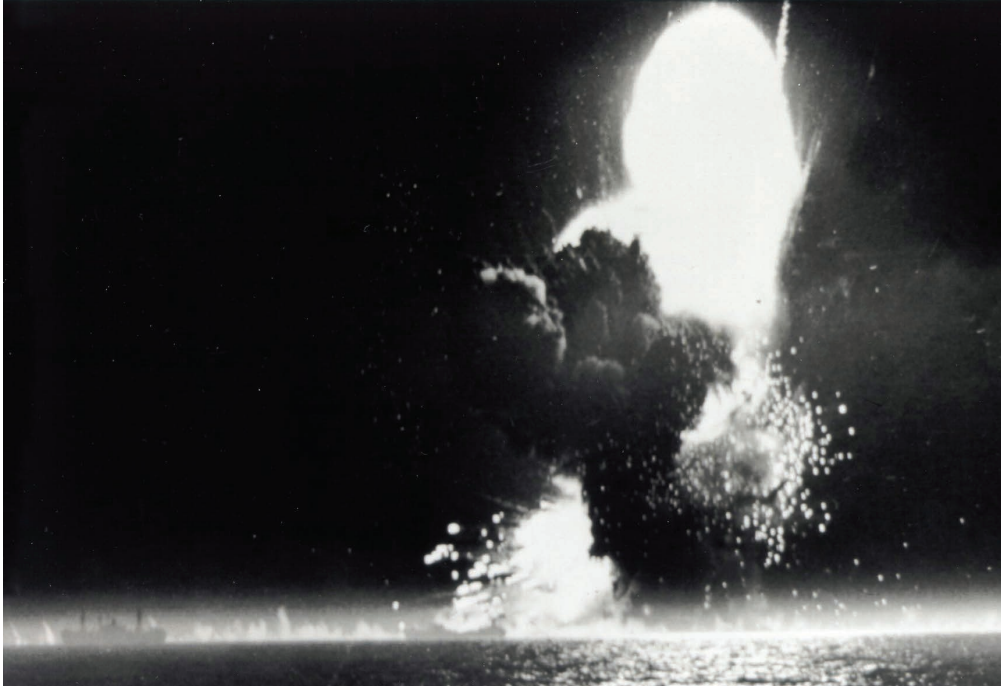
A formation of Heinkel He-111 bombers headed to their target (© Imperial War Museum, GER-530).



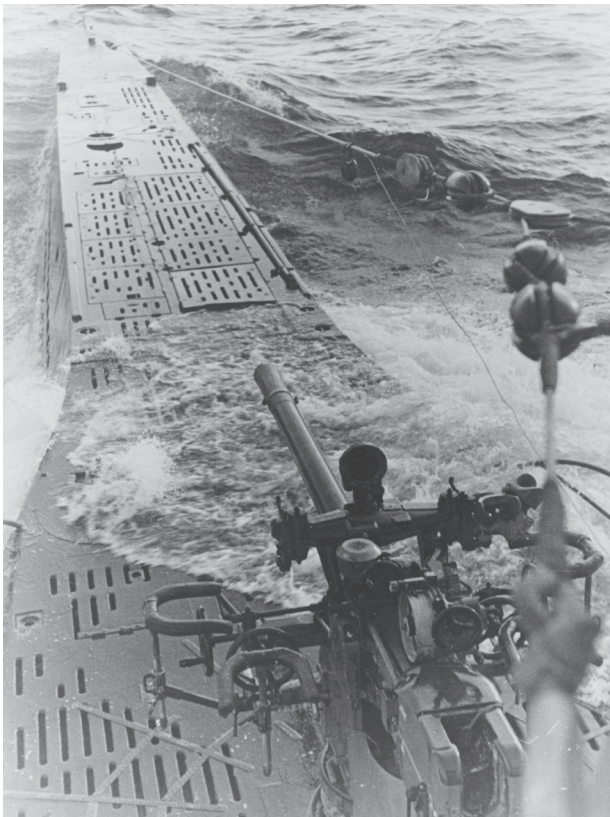
On 20 April 1944, a torpedo struck Lansdale (DD-426), killing 47 of her crew (NHHC, NH-107272).



The Liberty ship Paul Hamilton (United States Coast Guard photograph).



On 20 April 1944, an aerial torpedo from a Junkers Ju-88 struck Paul Hamilton as she transported high explosives and 580 men of the U.S. Army Air Forces to Italy. There were no survivors (United States Coast Guard photograph).



A Type VIIC U-boat on patrol. Between 1941 and 1944, 63 U-boats entered the Mediterranean. None of them survived (NHHC, NH-71410).



A French sailor painting a submarine kill symbol on the smokestack of FNS Sénégalais, formerly USS Corbesier (DE-106), following the sinking of U-371 off the Algerian coast on 4 May 1944. In a final act of defiance, U-371 had fired a torpedo at Sénégalais, disabling her and killing 49 of her crew (National Archives and NHHC, NH-80-G-K-1606).



USS Fechteler (DE-157), torpedoed by U-967 on 5 May 1944. Fechteler's sinking would unleash one of the largest U-boat hunts, in terms of air and sea resources, staged in the Mediterranean up to that time (NHHC, NH-67718).



Jesse Sowell's Lucky Bag portrait, 1925. As commanding officer of USCGC Campbell (WPG-32) and escort commander (CTF 61), Sowell came up with an air defense plan and practiced it as his convoy crossed the Atlantic (Lucky Bag, Annapolis, MD: United States Naval Academy, 1925).



A lookout at his post on Campbell (WPG-32), a U.S. Coast Guard cutter (NHHC, NH-100092-KN).



As part of Captain Sowell's air defense plan for UGS-40, anti-aircraft cruiser HMS Caledon played a major role in the convoy's success against Axis planes on 11 May 1944 (© Imperial War Museum, FL-5354).



Emmons (DD-457) was part of the two hunter-killer groups that pursued U-616 until its commander scuttled her (NHHC, NH-107417).



A convoy to the Mediterranean forming off Hampton Roads, Virginia, on 22 August 1944 (National Archives, 336-H-20-U9396).



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