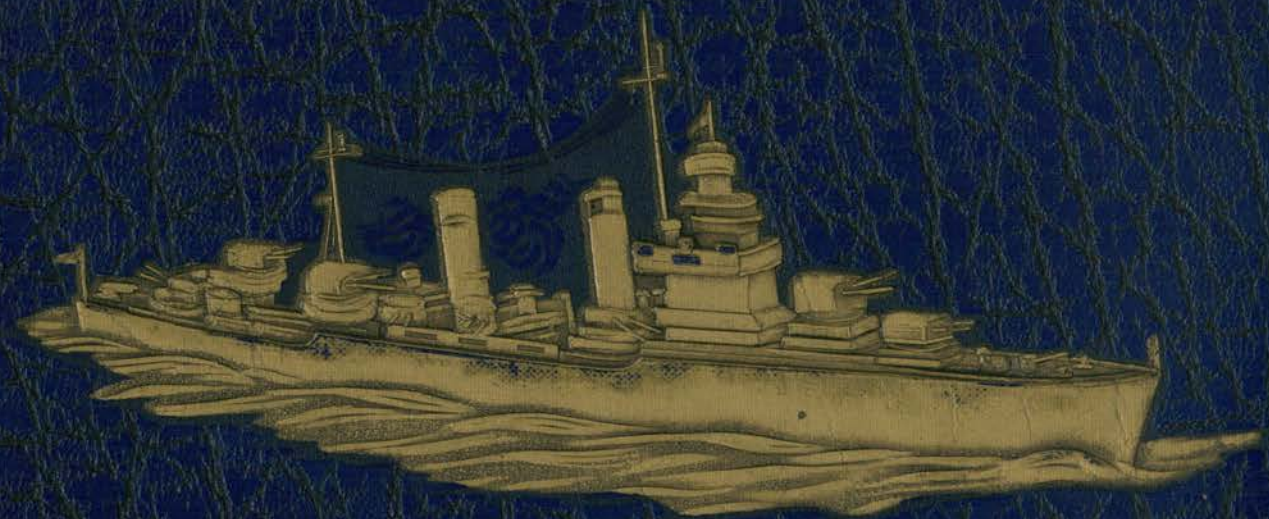


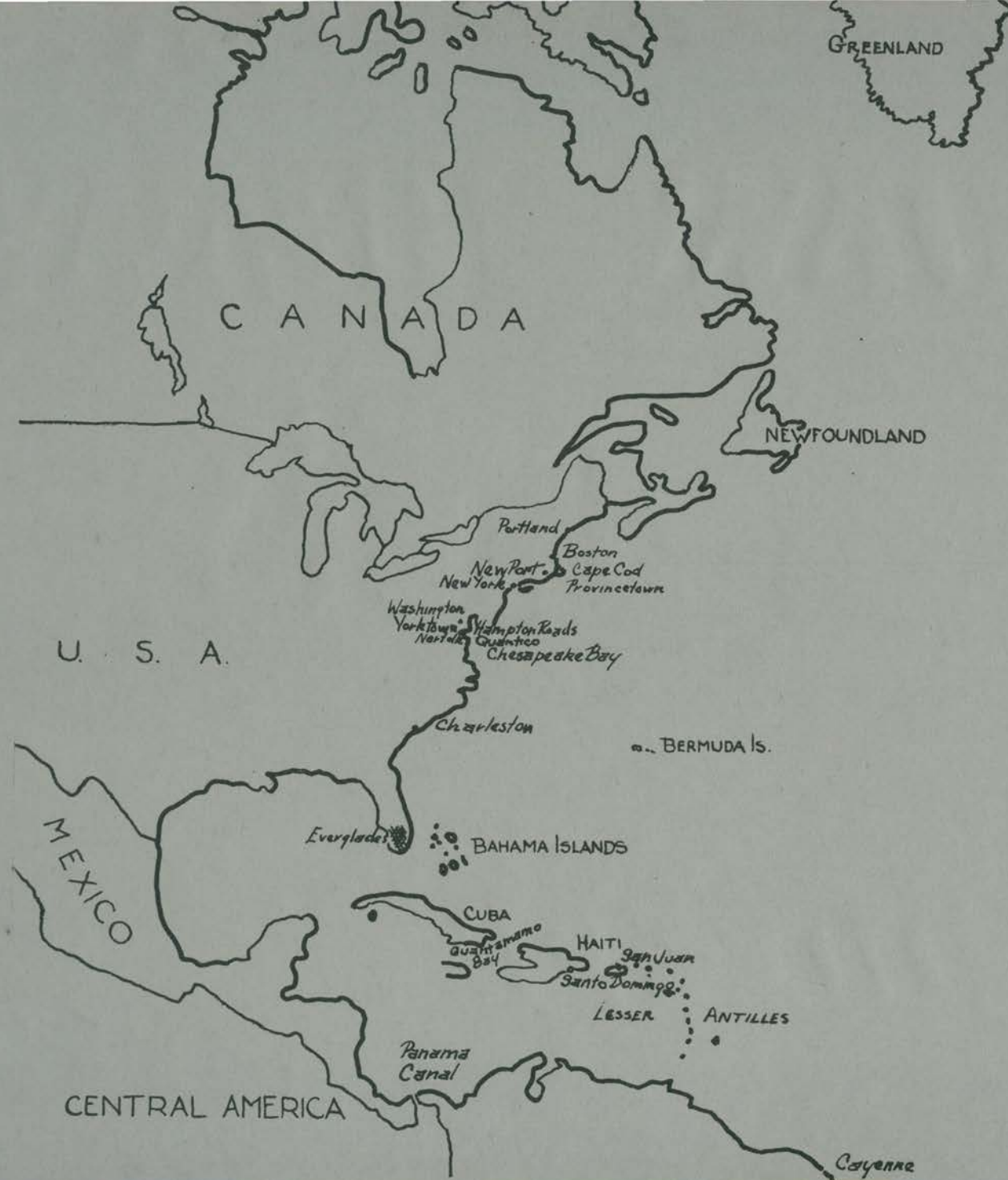
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U.S.S. BENSON



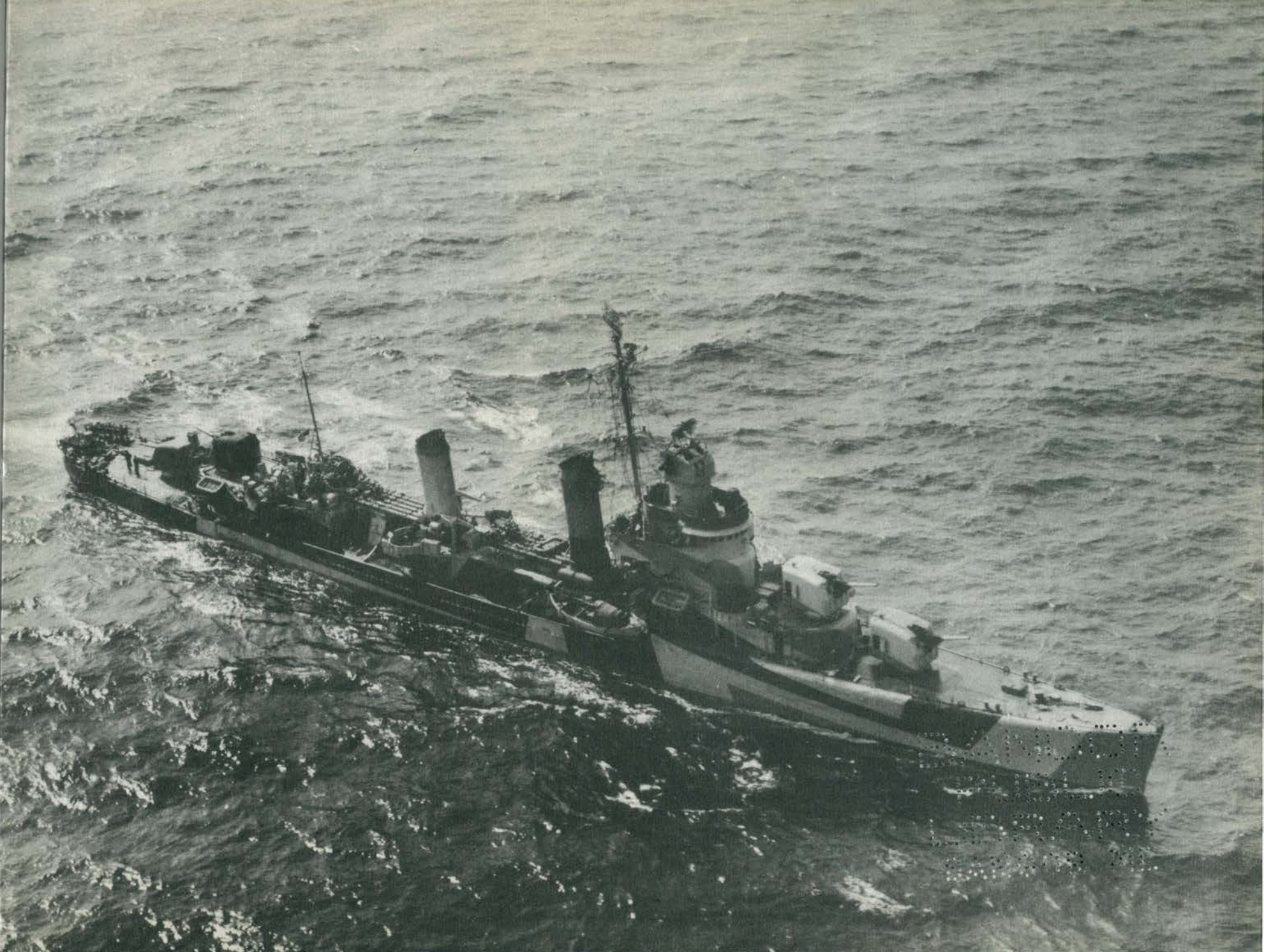
DD-421

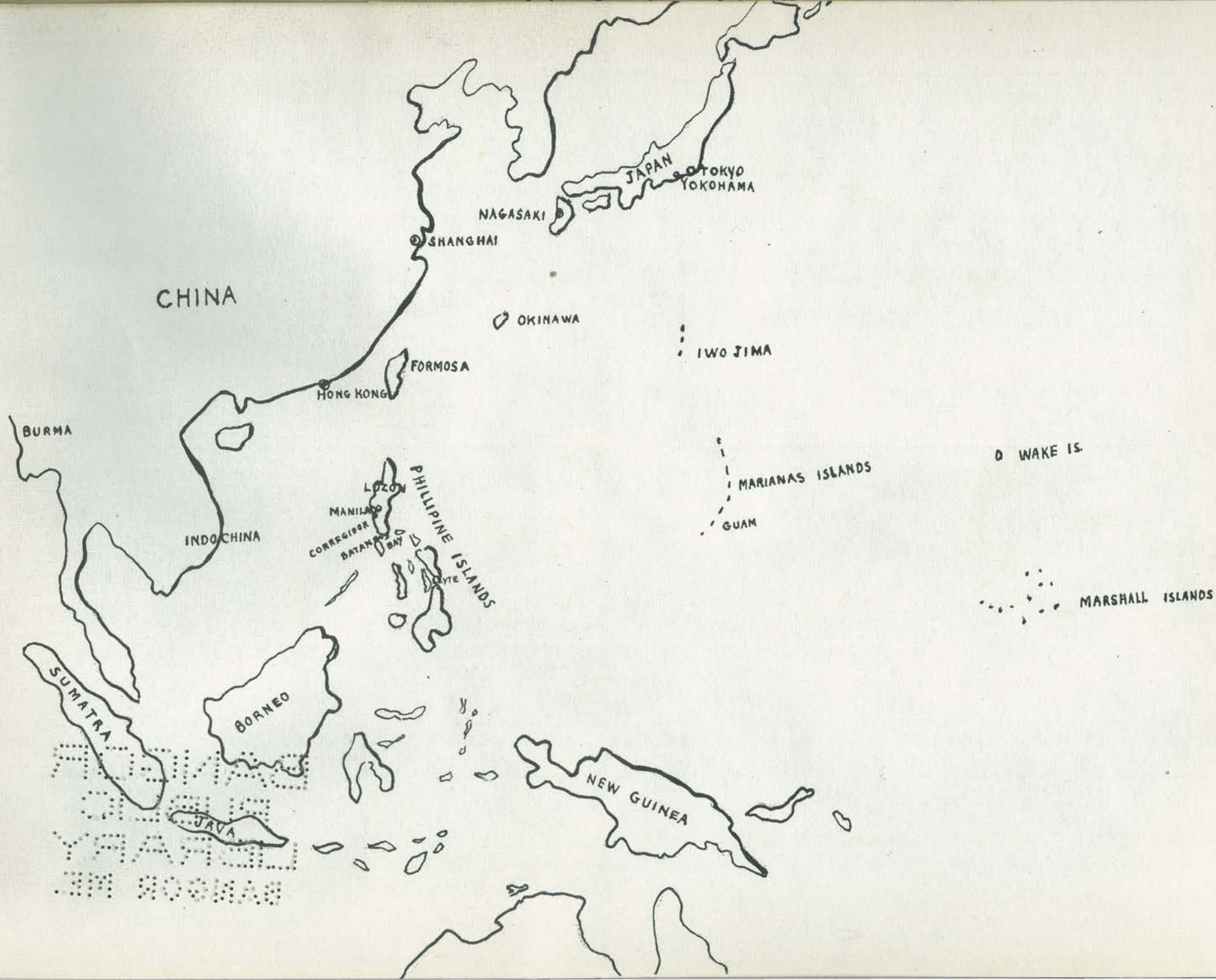
1940 1946

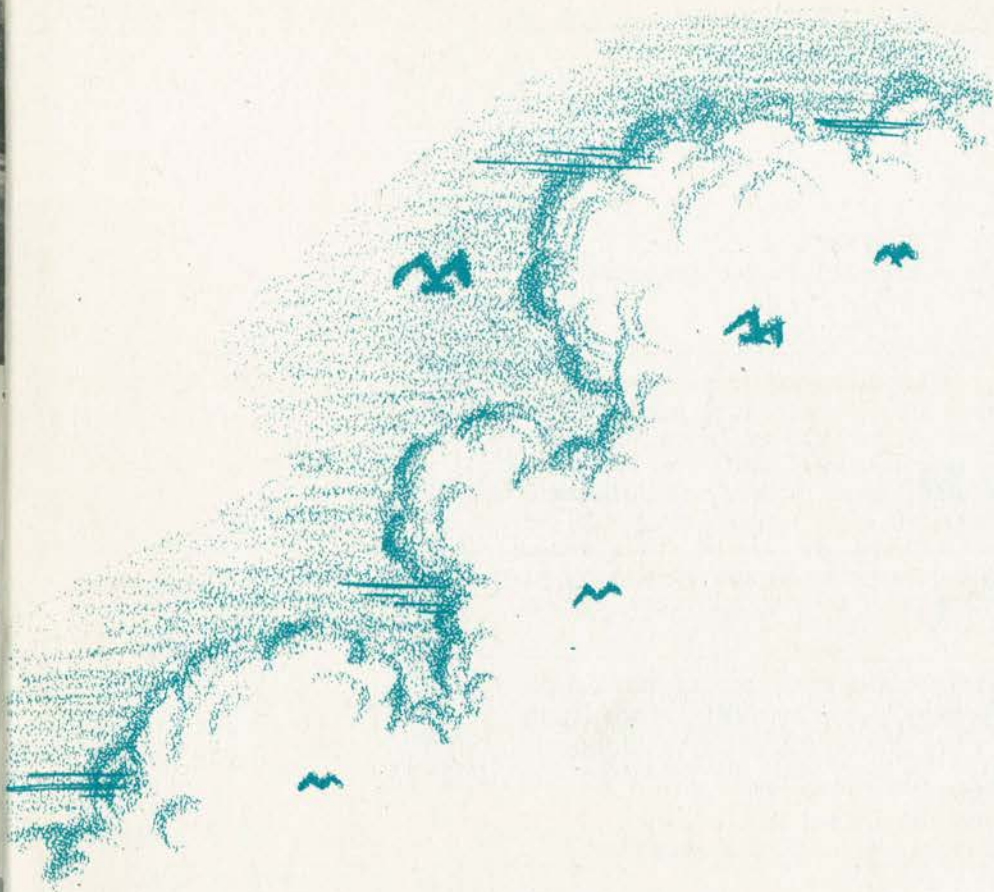


AZORES









Commander Edwin E. Lord USN — Commanding USS Benson (DD-421)

C



The Commander United States EIGHTH Fleet, in the name of the President of the United States, awards the Bronze Star Medal to

Lieutenant Commander Edwin E. Lord, U. S. NAVY

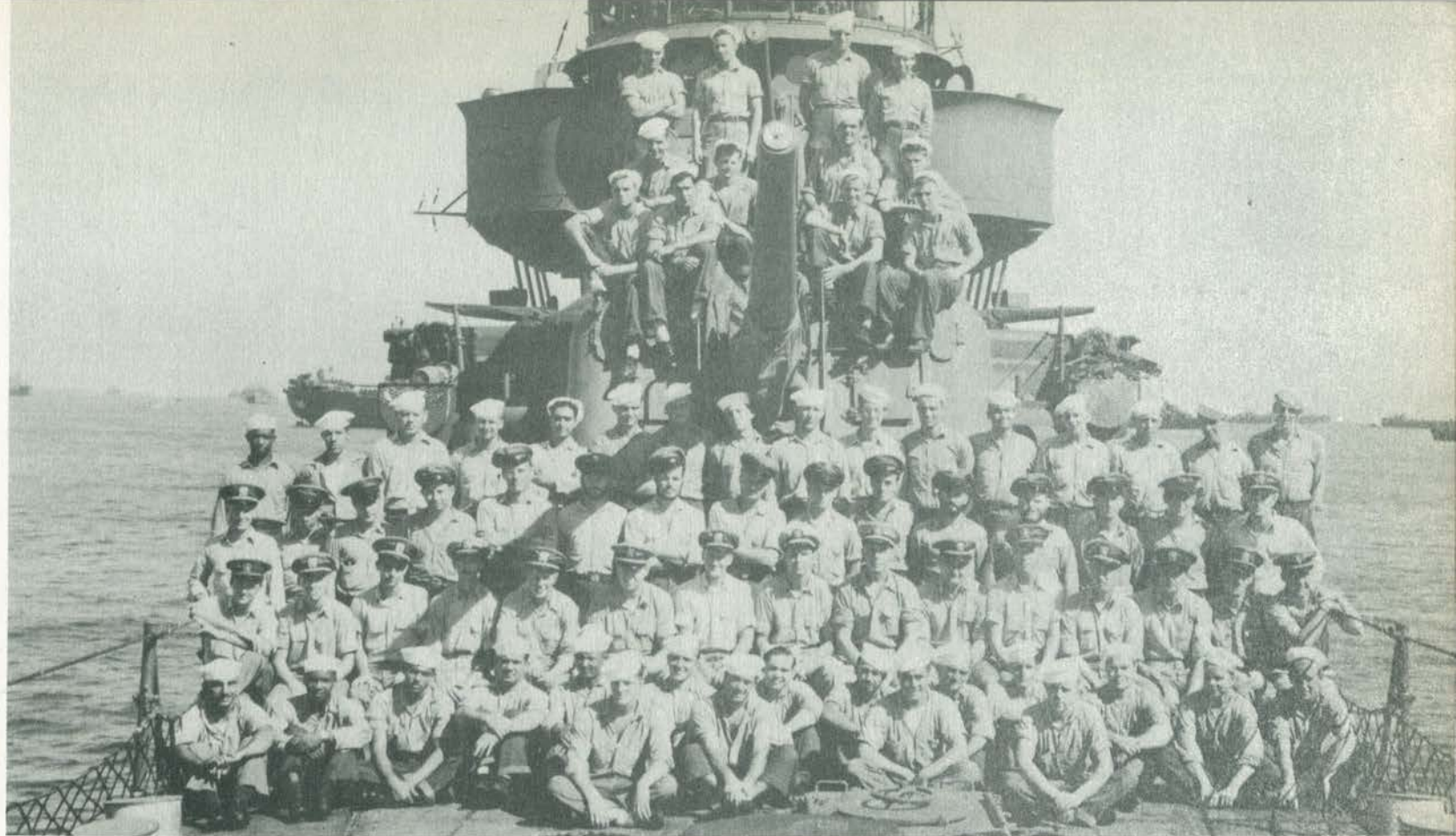
CITATION

For distinguishing himself by meritorious achievement as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. BENSON during fire support operations off the coast of the Franco-Italian Riviera in October, 1944.

Lieutenant Commander Lord exhibited great skill and resourcefulness while engaged in numerous fire support operations against enemy shore installations near the Franco-Italian border. He maneuvered his ship with such faultless seamanship that despite heavy and well-directed enemy counter-fire and the presence of known minefields in the immediate area, concentrated and accurate bombardments were effectively delivered against enemy harbor and dock facilities and self-propelled guns. Through his inspiring and resolute leadership, he was largely responsible for inflicting severe damage on hostile installations along the invasion coast, thereby contributing materially to the weakening of enemy resistance and the ensuing rapid advance of the ground forces into enemy-held territory.

The exceptional ability, aggressive leadership under fire, and outstanding devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Commander Lord reflected credit upon himself and the Naval Service.

HENRY K. HEWITT
Admiral, United States Navy;
Commander — U. S. Eighth Fleet



1st Row, L. to R.
Smiley, R. H.
Berman, A. L.
Solana, J. M.
Heckroth, R. H.

2nd Row, L. to R.
Del Torto, R.
De Berry, S. J.
Yancey, G. A.
Bocchino, J.
Gray, F. L.
Beechel, F. V.
Payne, H. W.
Giles, T. A.
Van Houten, W. F.
Mancini, L. J.
Nelson, B. J.
Davis, O.
Mahon, J. C.

3rd Row, L. to R.
Dyke, R. C.
Buckingham, F. M.
Rourke, W. E.
Sigl, P. F.
Grether, E. F.
Crawford, J. H.
Lord, E. E.
Yearley, C.
Lindberg, D. S.
Wittenberger, W. W.
May, C. E.
Matheson, N. E.
Saunders, E. W.
Wimberley, W. W.
Wigman, T.

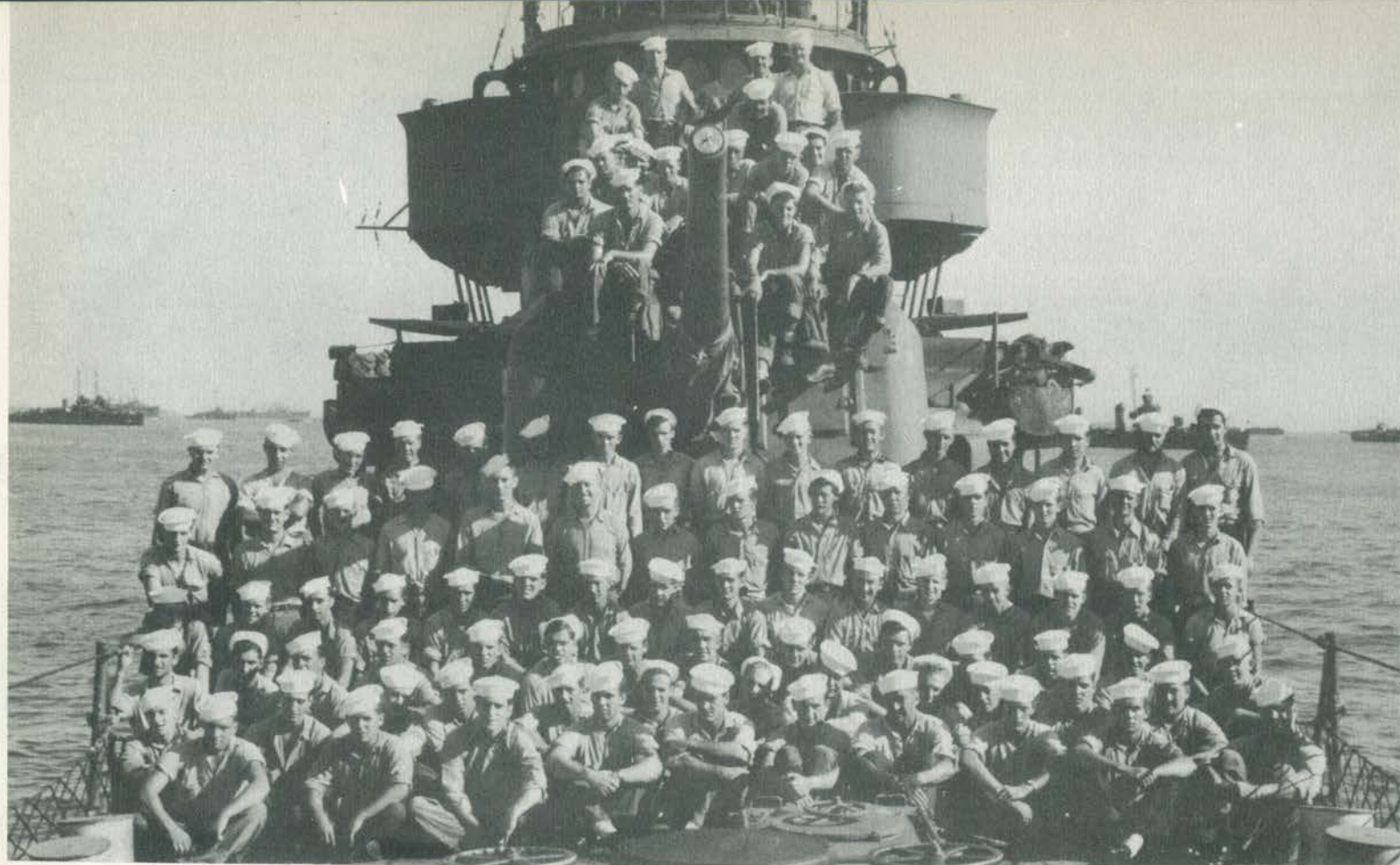
4th Row, L. to R.
Wright, G. E.
Grundy, H. L.
Eagan, J. T.
Fortner, H. W.
Felt, K. R.
Dunlop, J. T.
Brown, D. J.
Pashchak, A.
Wood, C. A.
Rockett, R. J.
Self, P. A.
Fitzsimmons, H. J.
Humphrey, B. L.
Graves, R. E.
Salveson, R. M.

5th Row, L. to R.
Anton, F. D.
Coles, G. G.
Clark, J. A.
Lerew, J. C.
Panella, F.
Jones, J. P.
Martin, J. H.
Geffken, F.
Pettersson, K. E.
Brainard, B. C.
O'Connor, J. J.
Bergeron, R. L.
Eggert, R. W.
Childs, O. T.
Ojerholm, P. S.
Carr, N. A.

Gun 1st Row, L. to R.
Smith, G. M.
Smith, M. S.
Martinson, E.
Morrill, J. M.

Gun 2nd Row, L. to R.
Sirigos, B.
Pryor, C. M.
Whitney, D. A.
Gabriel, E. F.

Gun 3rd Row, L. to R.
Beach, H. P.
Walters, E. W.
Murphy, R. C.
Nestor, J. W.



1st Row, L. to R.
 Beach, W. E.
 Courson, L. H.
 Carlino, S.
 Douglass, R. L.
 Jordan, L. A.
 Sacharanski, F. A.
 Lamirand, W. H.
 Baxter, W. R.
 Bartley, W. G.
 Vandal, F. J.

2nd Row, L. to R.
 Teegarden, J. B.
 Cozine, C. H.
 Henry, R. R.
 Henchbarger, W. A.
 Maylor, P. L.
 Bearzi, J.
 Erickson, J. R.
 Crawford, C. J.
 Marine, F. K.
 Essenbreis, F. R.
 Maguire, K. J.
 Zandoni, J.

3rd Row, L. to R.
 Berardo, C. P.
 Lucov, M. J.
 Fusco, F. W.
 Evanylo, H.
 Combs, A. P.
 Gallant, H. F.
 Vcakes, W. P.
 Verbickey, J. P.
 Foreman, W. P.
 Blakley, J. W.
 Hoffman, E. A.
 Johnson, F. H.
 Garrison, E.
 Ernstmeyer, F. T.

4th Row, L. to R.
 Garity, N. E.
 Swift, R. S.
 Crull, A. J.
 Huffman, G. L.
 Allen, G. W.
 McCarty, J. E.
 Jenkins, F.
 Connolly, M.
 Winter, W.
 Hartikainen, E.
 Bleiler, P. W.
 Lingle, P. F.
 Wolfe, E. L.
 Follensbee, R. L.
 Schlottmann, R. C.
 Lewis, G. L.

5th Row, L. to R.
 Lombard, R. D.
 Cantrell, J. Y.
 Nelson, D. D.
 Sloan, L. A.
 Wolf, H.
 Bland, J. W.
 Fitzgerald, J.
 Bruce, F. A.
 Albert, J. A.
 Wszulkowski, H.
 Rowland, G. E.
 Daniels, C. E.
 Ivey, W.
 Lewis, G. L.

6th Row, L. to R.
 Healy, C. D.
 Greenberg, R. I.
 Lyons, G. J.
 Blake, H. B.
 Patton, J. F.
 Zarrelli, J.
 Krause, W. J.
 Thibodeau, J. W.
 Melberg, D. L.
 Davis, C. W.
 Adams, C.
 Allen, E. O.
 Gallo, F. S.
 Welsh, J.
 Swann, O.
 Smith, M. S.

Gun 1st Row, L. to R.
 Adams, J. R.
 Long, L.
 Fitzpatrick, M. J.
 Flood, P. A.

Gun 2nd Row, L. to R.
 Waggoner, C. E.
 Adams, G. F.
 Reamer, G. B.
 Bentley, L. J.
 Hayne, H. L.
 Casalino, J. A.
 Donnon, C. A.

Gun 3rd Row, L. to R.
 Zinkhan, J. E.
 Brice, G.
 Stocker, H. B.
 Wszolek, H. E.
 Finney, T. F.

1st Row, L. to R.
 Gainor, R.
 Little, H.
 Crooks, H. H.

2nd Row, L. to R.
 Allender, R.
 Rosenberger, G. P.
 Dean, H. E.
 Liebman, L.
 Lattimer, L.
 Davis, W. H.
 Mason, O. P.
 Onisko, J.
 Panapada, A. E.
 Barton, W.
 Burke, D. B.
 Finkelstein, G.

3rd Row, L. to R.
 Fleck, L. H.
 Durkin, J. P.
 Malley, J.
 Walker, E. A.
 Lareau, E. M.
 McGraw, E. W.
 Canuette, C. L.
 Borda, W. P.
 Yothers, P. C.
 Cannon, J. E.
 MacDonald, D. J.
 Skopaz, E. J.
 Care, F.

4th Row, L. to R.
 Whipple, R. A.
 Pechota, J. M.
 Angell, W. J.
 Faron, E. W.
 Cappadona, A. J.
 Broncato, N. A.
 Ilderton, A. W.
 Hathorn, W. L.
 Kossen, A. G.
 Burke, J. C.
 Mizzene, P. H.
 Donnelly, M. F.
 Tann, B.
 Neway, W. E.
 Collette, L. O.
 Verros, J. H.

5th Row, L. to R.
 Murphy, B. A.
 O'Gara, D. N.
 Friedlander, D.
 Fisher, G. H.
 Oliver, J. C.
 Dyson, E.
 Ucko, B. M.
 Carter, P. B.
 Frady, C. J.
 Grady, D. J.
 Donovan, E. J.
 Gunn, P. E.
 Murray, F. E.
 Cassaday, R. G.
 Adams, A. C.

6th Row, L. to R.
 Lymburner, J. E.
 Closta, W.
 Smith, J. J.
 Dell'Orefice, J. P.
 Walukonis, A. E.
 Kerr, E. G.
 Sauer, G. A.
 Smoot, J. R.
 Barsky, B. A.
 Boss, C. R.
 Lawrence, F. J.
 Green, R. H.
 Buchanan, D. J.
 Goodwin, D. L.
 Noga, J. F.
 Hendricksmeier, C. J.

Gun 1st Row, L. to R.
 Watts, C. D.
 Hunt, J. H.
 DiGiovanna, T. J.
 Foley, J.

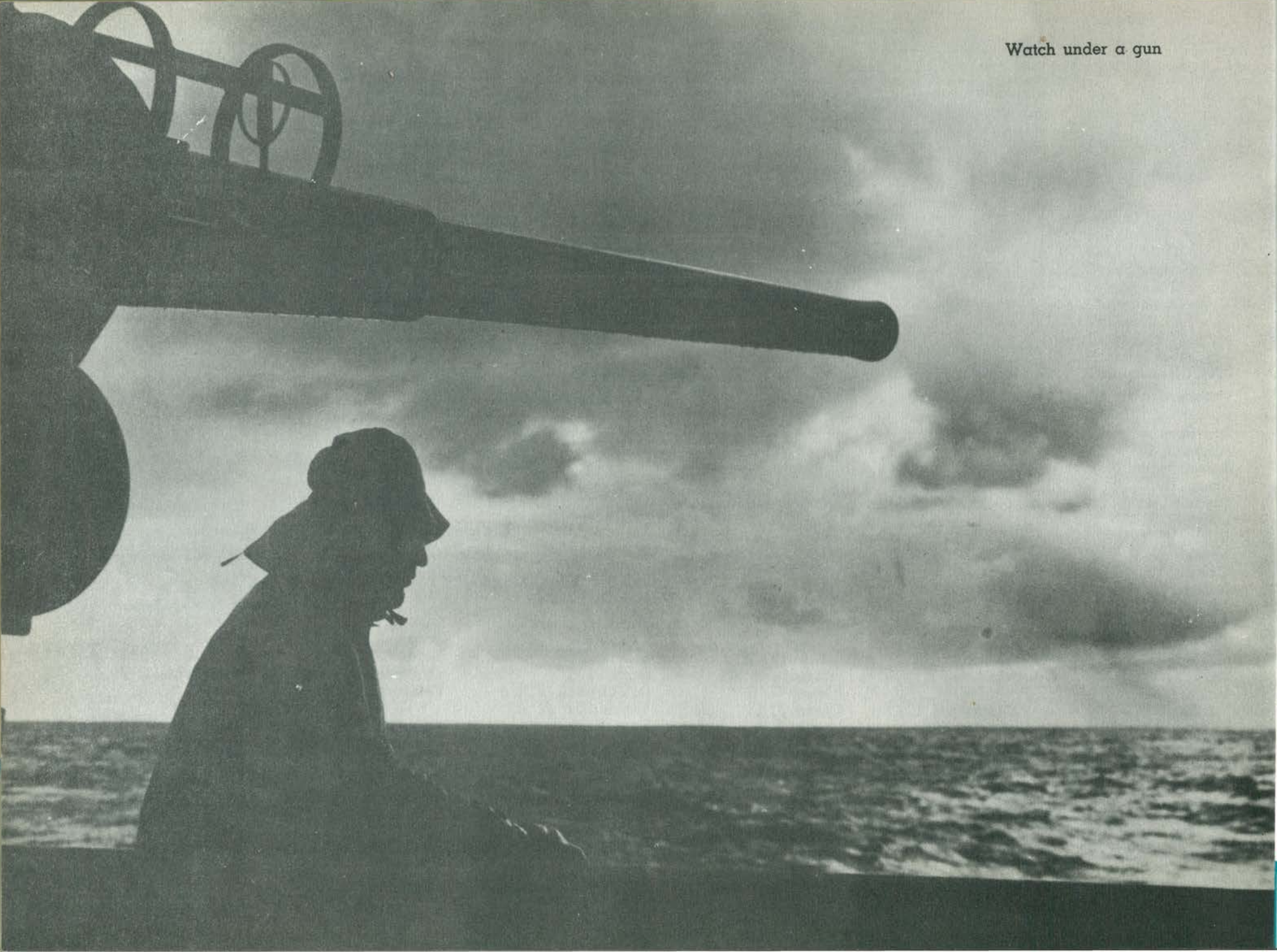
Gun 2nd Row, L. to R.
 Watts, S. E.
 McGoe, J. J.
 Wilson, R. J.
 Warner, D. G.

Gun 3rd Row, L. to R.
 Cooke, A. J.
 Van Auken, F. T.
 Goodman, J. T.
 Berger, R. W.

Gun 4th Row, L. to R.
 Riddle, W. I.
 May, C. W.
 McCoy, D. R.
 Blunck, J. L.



Watch under a gun



The Log . . .

of the U.S.S. Benson DD-421

THE U.S.S. BENSON (DD-421), is one of a class of thirty-two destroyers, known as "Benson Class of 1937-1940." The BENSON is one of thirty destroyers built to Bethlehem-prepared plans.

The BENSON is named for Admiral William S. Benson, U.S.N., and was built at the Bethlehem Steel Company Plant, Quincy, Massachusetts — authorized March 27, 1934; keel laid May 16, 1938; launched November 15, 1939 and first commissioned July 25, 1940.

Some of the characteristics of the BENSON class are: square funnel caps and bases; uneven height of stacks. Destroyers of this class are ten tons lighter and eight inches narrower than destroyers of a later class, known as the "LIVERMORE" type; otherwise they are similar. Both classes have four high-pressure boilers, geared turbines and twin screws. Cruising range exceeds 9,000 miles at 15-knots. The "BENSON" class, DD-421 to DD-428 were originally armed with five 5-inch-38's, and ten tubes. A few still carry ten tubes. Light armor protects bridges and controls in all newer destroyers.

Little has been written of the part that destroyers played in World War II, where they were called on to fulfill such a variety of missions that they were multipurpose ships, engaging in any form of

combat. Because we lacked suitable escort ships, destroyers were used to protect convoys, as well as to guard our combatant Task Forces. Destroyers were used to bombard enemy shore positions, and to carry bombs and aviation gasoline, and stores to Guadalcanal during the lean weeks, early in the campaign in those far-distant seas.

By nature as well as by name, the purpose of the destroyer is wholly offensive Bantamweights in comparison with the great battlewagons, they pack a punch out of proportion to their size. They are triple-threat weapons, built to strike at the enemy on or over or under the sea. They are the "fightingest things afloat."

"FROM GREENLAND'S ICY MOUNTAINS TO INDIA'S CORAL STRAND"

THE log of the BENSON reveals a coverage of the Seven Seas, in every known type of duty—patrol on anti-submarine duty; convoy duty from the sun-kissed shores of Bermuda to the ice-blasted coasts of Greenland and Iceland; then participation in invasion thrusts at the North African Coast; on to Sicily and Italy and to Southern France on "D-Day." Then came the final stages of the War in the Pacific, and the BENSON "continued-the-motion" in Philippine waters, in

front of Okinawa, and then the final "kill" in Tokyo Bay.

The BENSON participated in six "STAR" operations, four of them invasions; covered hundreds of thousands of miles of ocean convoy duty, and not a single BENSON-escorted ship was sunk or damaged through enemy action.

From May, 1941—six months before the entry of the United States into World War II, and until the Japanese surrendered, the BENSON sailed convoy duty in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Pacific. Scores of times she was the target of enemy attacks, and her rocky career was climaxed in the Mediterranean in 1944, when the German Air Force pounced on a convoy the BENSON was escorting. Although the ship was subjected to torpedo, horizontal and glide bombing, as well as strafing, she shot down two "Ju-88's", had another "probable", and damaged several more planes without receiving damage to ship or personnel.

The BENSON was on patrol duty between Charleston, S. C., and Boston, Mass., as early as January, 1941. Following her first patrol under wartime conditions, in the Atlantic, in May of 1941, the BENSON saw convoy duty from the United States to Iceland, Great Britain, and later to North Africa, where she took part in the invasion of the Dark Continent.

While acting as anti-aircraft screen in the assault at Gela, Sicily, the BENSON assisted in minefield operations, was under air attacks numerous times, shot down another German plane, and suffered minor damages and casualties from several "near misses." The BENSON made numerous patrols and offensive sweeps off Palermo, Italy, and supported the leapfrog landings of the SEVENTH ARMY, along the coast of Northern Italy,



giving bombardment assistance to our forces ashore. During August 1943, the BENSON took part in the first shore bombardment of the Italian mainland.

Soon after, while delivering six-inch ammunition to cruisers, under fire at Salerno, the BENSON was credited with destroying another German plane. In May of 1944, north of Oran, Algiers, the BENSON took part in an anti-submarine action which resulted in the sinking of a German U-Boat.

During the invasion of Southern France, the BENSON acted as anti-aircraft support to a Task Force, backed up landing operations, formed outgoing convoys, instructed incoming convoys, and acted as traffic control vessel for the assault.

While on patrol duty in a fire support area near Toulon, France, the BENSON blockaded enemy merchant ships in San Remo Harbor, fired on supply buildings, and retired after the targets had been destroyed. The BENSON also sup-

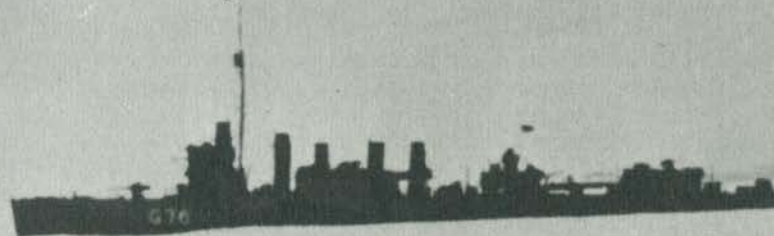
ported the French Cruisers MONTCALM and JEANNE D' ARC, during the Battle of San Remo, and was the target of enemy explosive boats when she returned to Italian waters to support United States Lines, as the German threatened to break through to the ship.

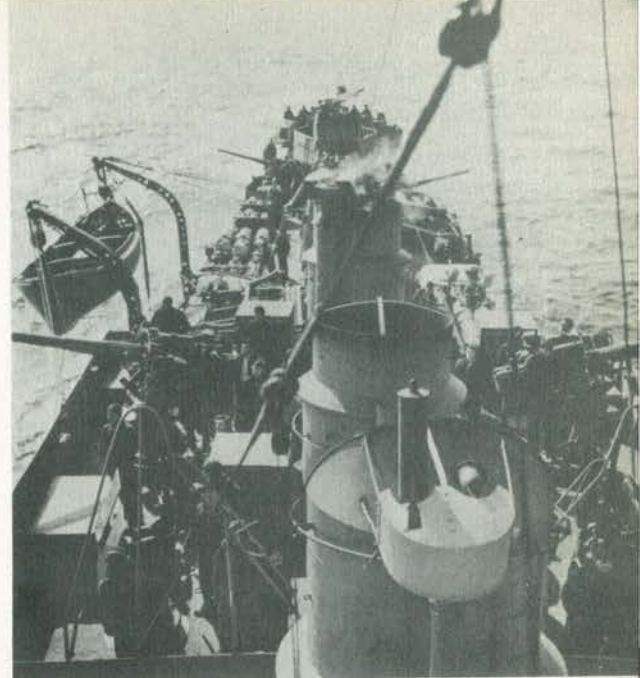
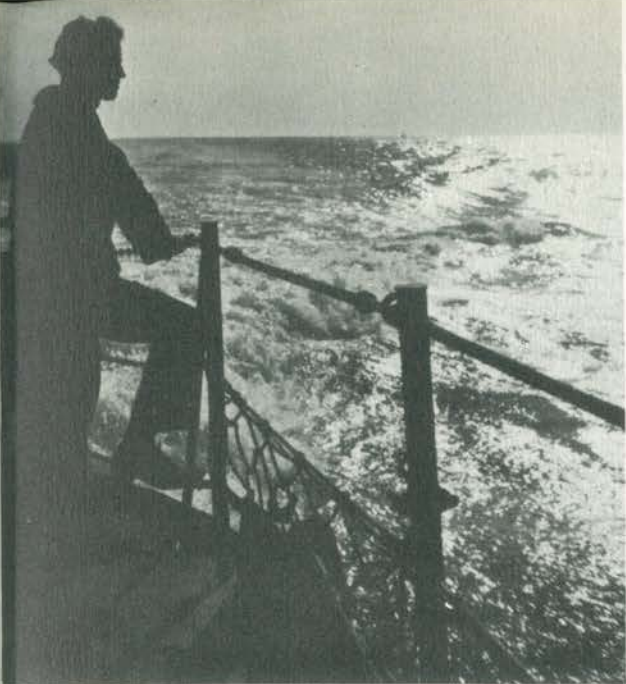
In April of 1945, the BENSON returned to the United States for overhauling and transfer to the United States Pacific Fleet. On June 20, 1945, the BENSON acted as a screening unit for the Aircraft Carriers LEXINGTON, HANCOCK and COWPENS, and participated in the bombardment of Japanese-held Wake Island.

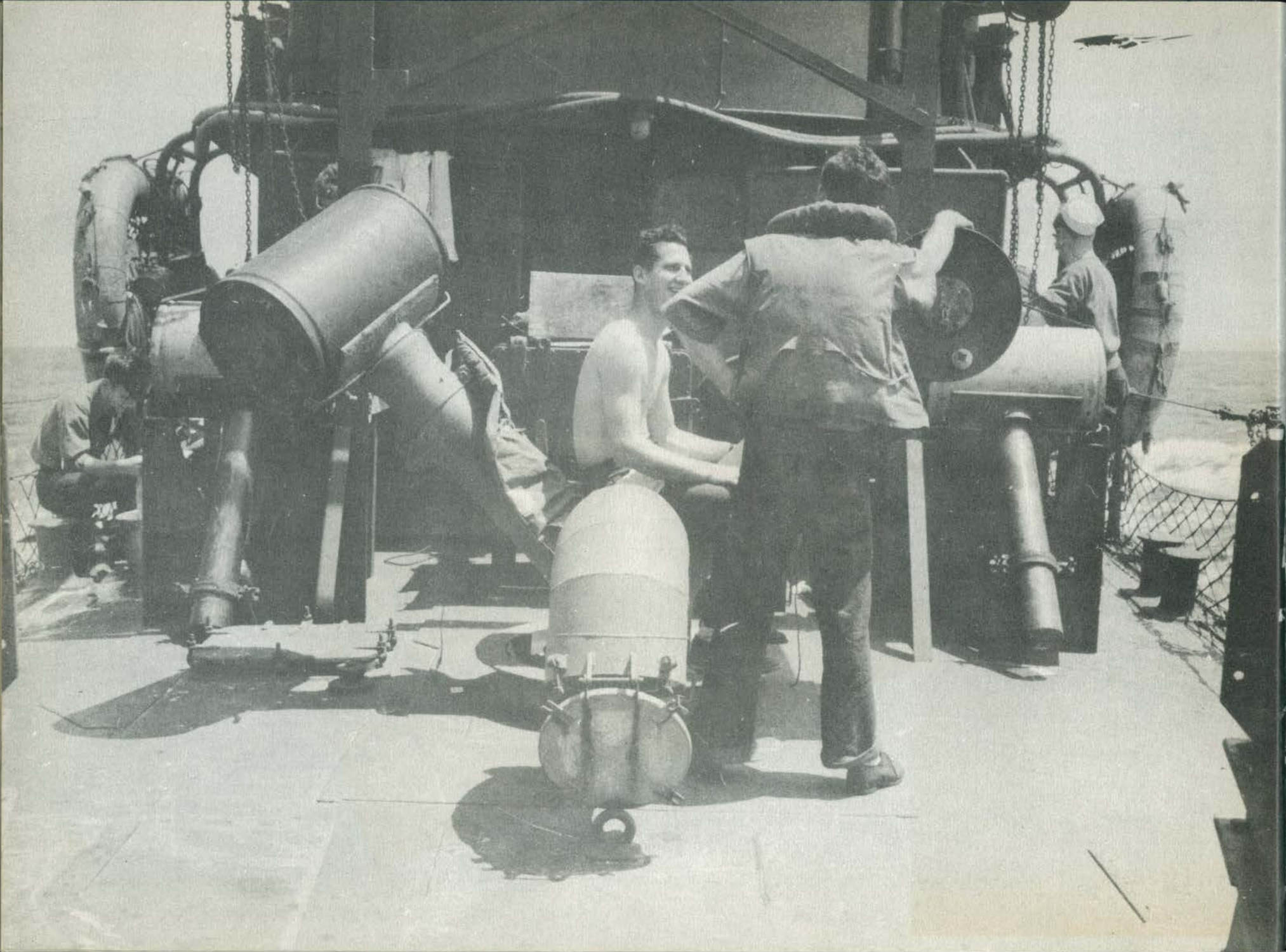
In addition, the BENSON escorted transports and tankers between Ulithi Atoll and Okinawa. One phase of the BENSON'S duties in the Pacific saw her as Flagship for Task Force 94.62 and Task Group 94.6, which command had charge of all escort and patrol duties in the Western Caroline Islands.

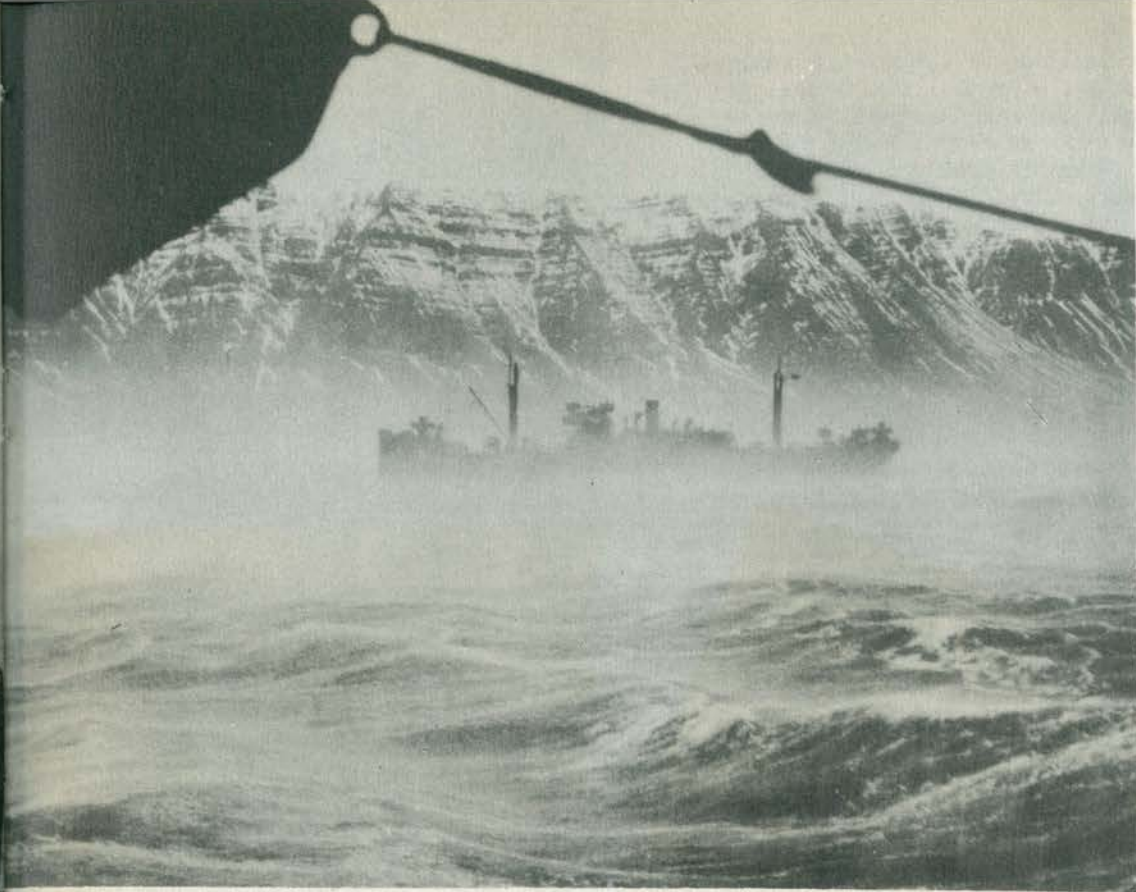
In the two months following the sur-

Convoy









Iceland



render of Japan, the BENSON escorted five different groups of convoys between the Philippines and Tokyo Bay. As Flagship for the screening force of Task Force 33, the BENSON played a very important part on September 2, 1945. These duties were carried out during typhoon season, and in spite of difficult weather conditions the BENSON carried out each operation successfully.

As one of the ships participating in the operations along the Coast of Southern France and Northern Italy, the BENSON received the following commendation from Rear Admiral P. Jaujard, Commander of the French Flank Force:

MARINE NATIONALE

F. S. GLOIRE, Flagship Flank Force,
4 May 1945 Staff Order.

ORDER OF THE DAY

On May second, the enemy forces in Italy surrendered. I express to the Naval officers and enlisted seamen who have been placed under my command my complete satisfaction.

In a struggle which has been so gloriously ended, the FLANK FORCE has played an important part. Shore bombardments, raids on the Italian ports, constant patrols and attacks against ships whenever the occasion arose, have been brought to bear on an enemy on the surface of a sea, which all in all, they controlled.

When circumstances required of you a constant vigil, in the course of scouting missions which were most unpleasant, you have shown a high quality of endurance, but when your encounters with the enemy tested your military qualities, you have given all that I expected of you. You have been rewarded with brilliant success.

During these months, American, British and French seamen have lived fra-

U. S. notables at Casablanca conference, Jan. 14 to 24, 1943. Seated, left to right: General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff; President Roosevelt; Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Fleet, and Chief of Naval Operations. Standing, left to right: Harry L. Hopkins, Lt. General Harry H. Arnold, Army Air Forces Commander; General Somervell; W. Averill Harriman, U. S. defense expediter in London.



ternally united in the labors and dangers of the sea. The bonds of friendship and comradeship which were shown will never disappear. I am confident that after having played a role, which was never small, in the conduct of the war, the FLANK FORCE may yet, in this way, make its contribution in the construction of the peace.

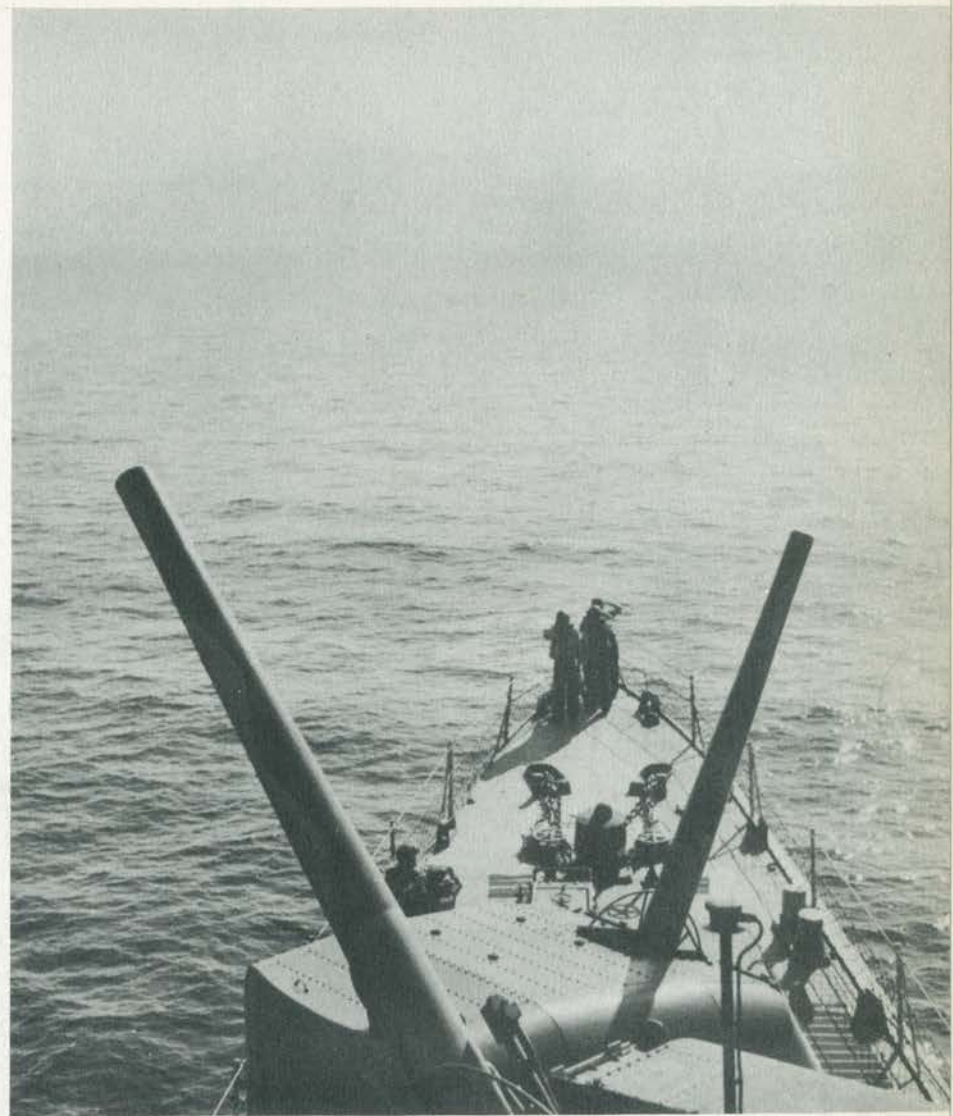
This hope lessens the regret which I have in separating myself from the ships and their crews who have given me nothing but the occasion of being proud of them.

Real Admiral P. Jaujard,
Commander of the FOURTH Cruiser
Division and the FLANK FORCE



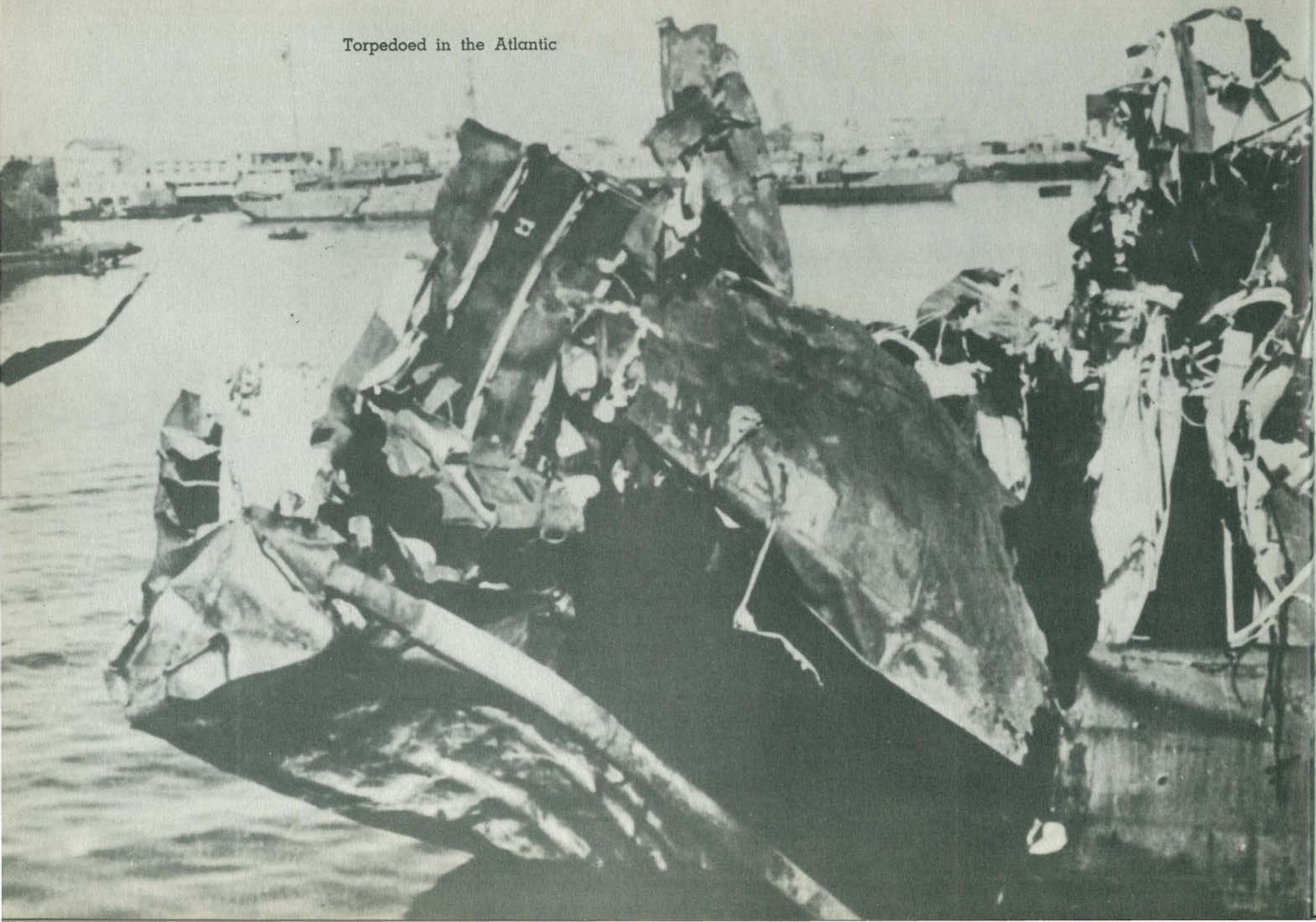


Adopted—Icelanders



Land Ho!

Torpedoed in the Atlantic





PURPLE HEART

A Purple Heart medal, which is a heart-shaped medal with a circular center featuring a figure, and a ribbon at the top.

TO OFFICERS AND
ENLISTED MEN
U.S.S. BENSON



Commander Edwin E. Lord

WOUNDED IN ACTION

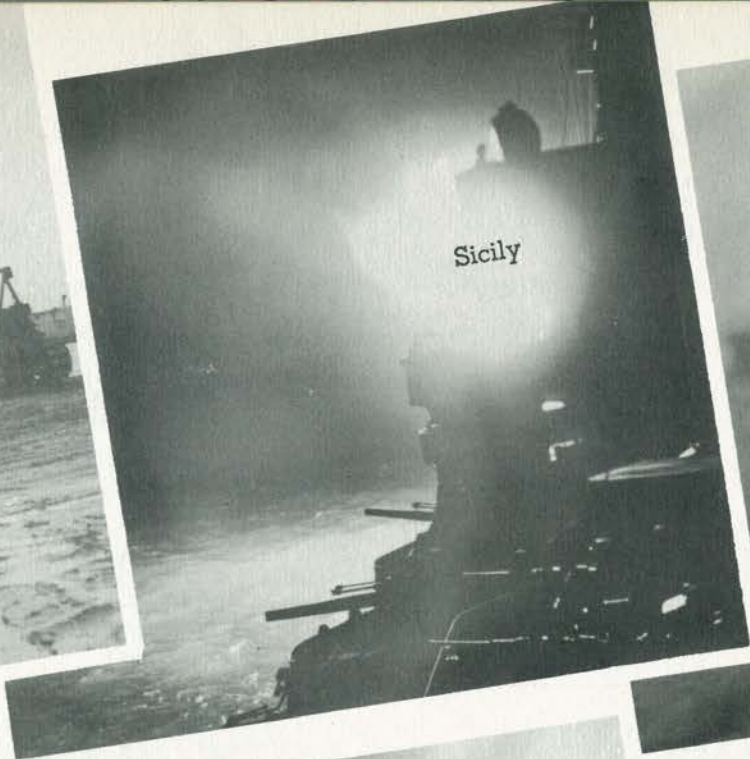
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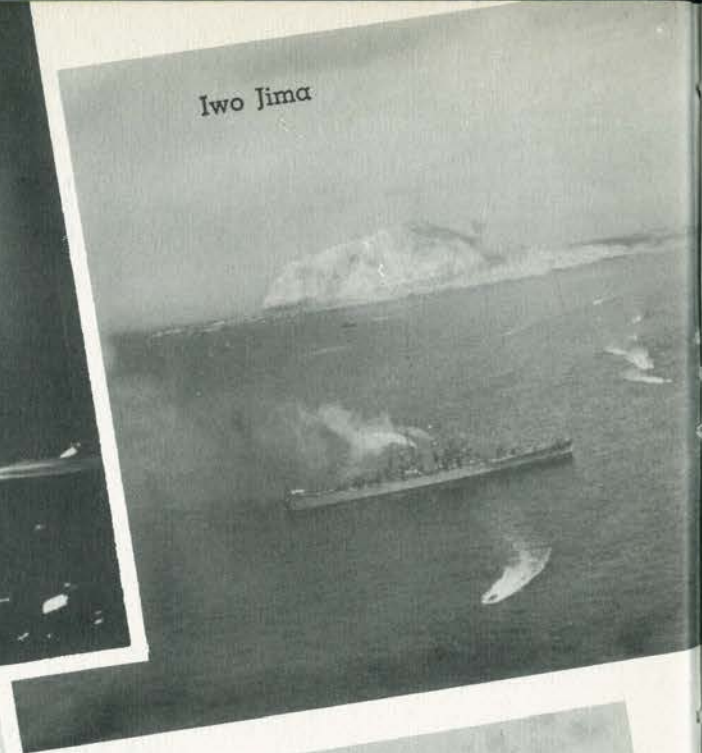
Ansio



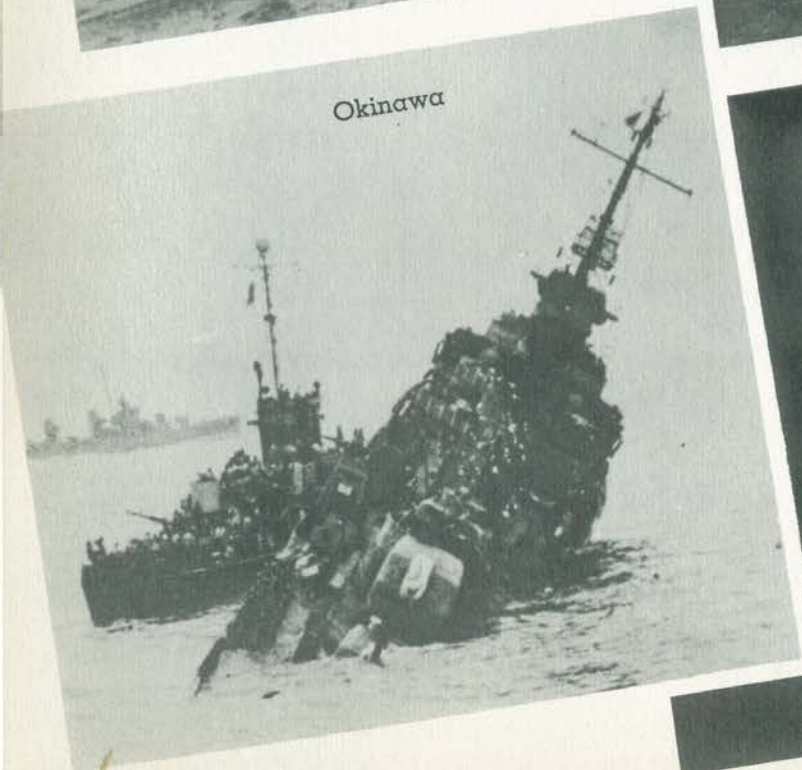
Sicily



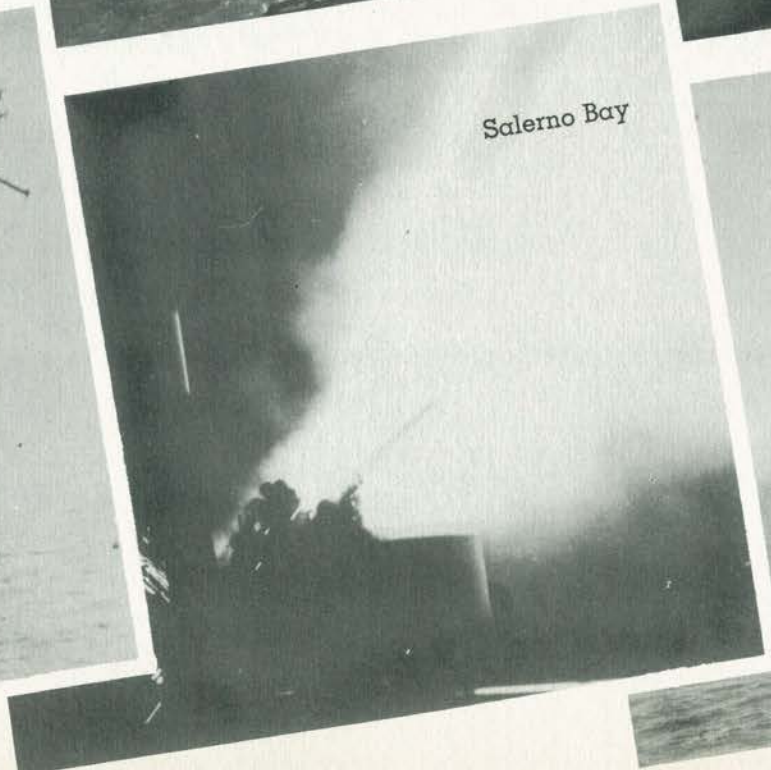
Iwo Jima



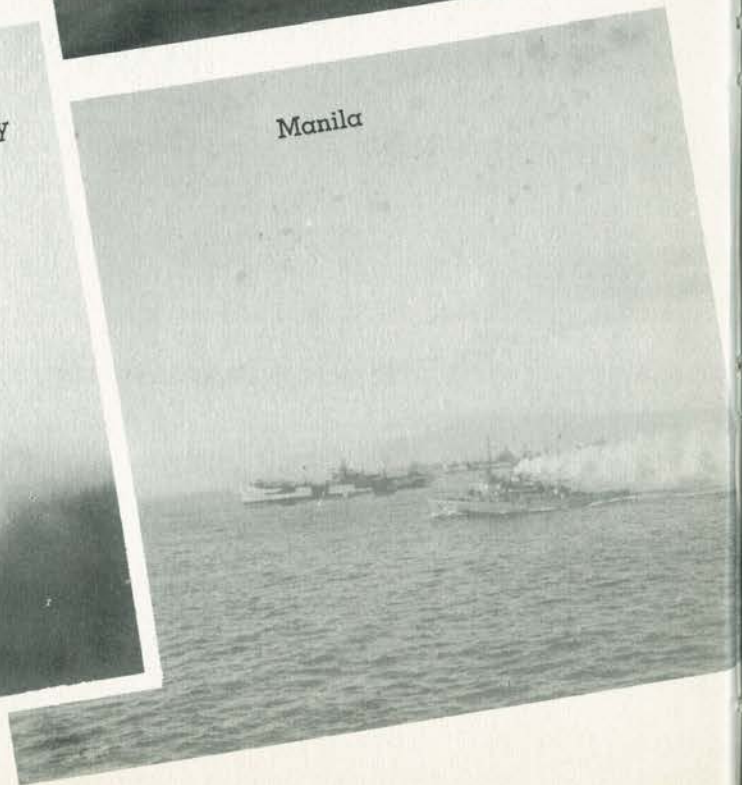
Okinawa

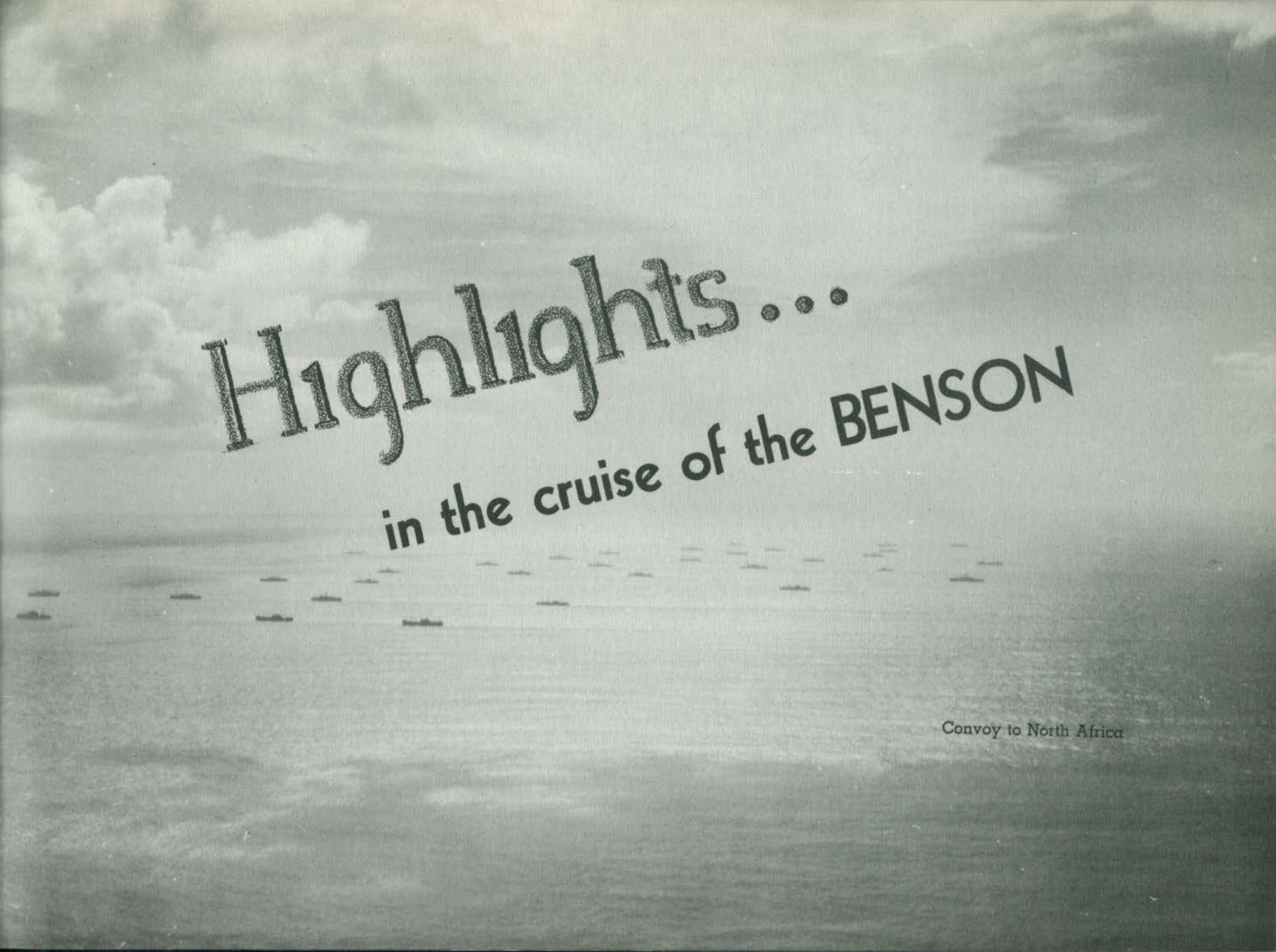


Salerno Bay



Manila





Highlights...

in the cruise of the BENSON

Convoy to North Africa

1940

JULY

Commissioned July 25, 1940.
At Boston Navy Yard for upkeep.

AUGUST

Underway to Provincetown, Mass.; to Portland, Maine; to Boston, Mass.; to Newport, R. I.; to Yorktown, Va.; to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

SEPTEMBER

At Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; under way to Washington, D. C.; to Norfolk, Va.; to Cayenne, French Guiana; to Ille de Saint, French Guiana, with Governor of French Guiana and party of officials; to Paramambo, French Guiana.

OCTOBER

To Cayenne, French Guiana; to San Juan, Porto Rico; to Norfolk, Va.; to Hampton Roads, Va.

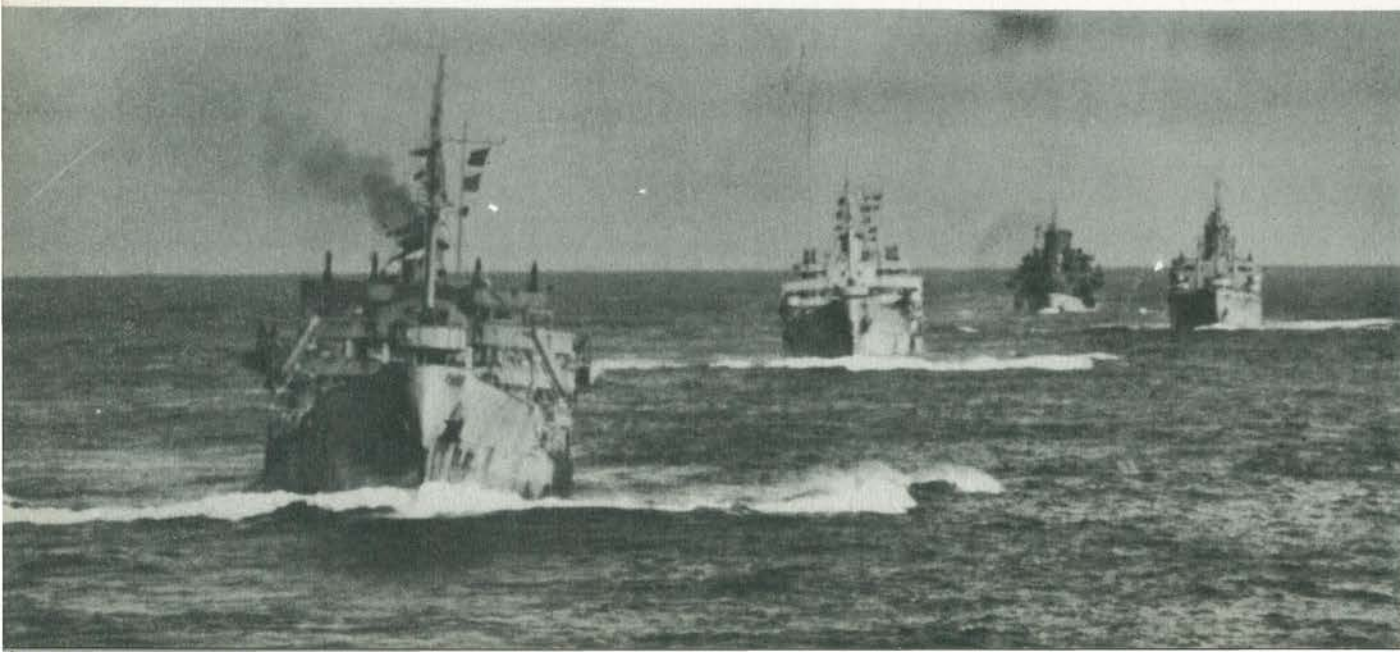
NOVEMBER

At Hampton Roads, Va.; under way with U.S.S. DAHLGREN, to act as plane guard for the U.S.S. WASP, and to conduct exercises off Virginia Coast; under way to Lynnhaven Roads, Va.; to Norfolk, Va.

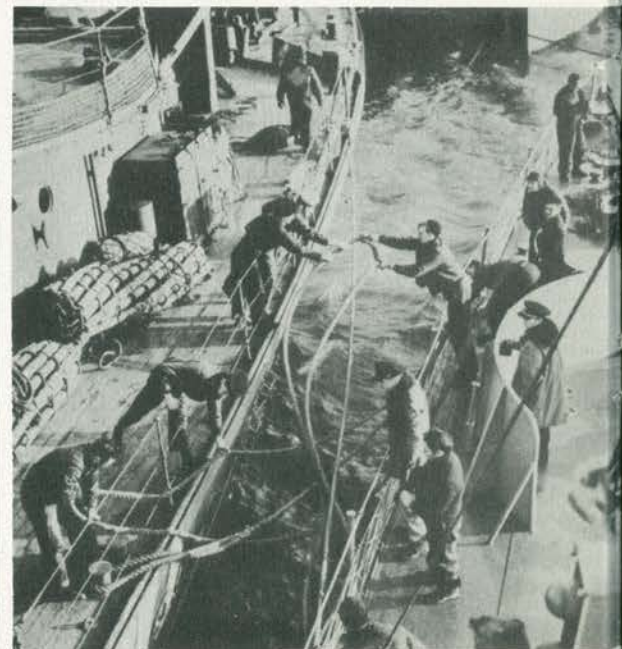
DECEMBER

At Norfolk, Va.; under way to Newport, R. I.; to Cape Cod Canal, Mass.; to Provincetown, Mass.; to Boston—there for the holidays.

Convoy



Watch at wheel



Alongside a conette

A destroyer moves along in the early morning at sea



1941

JANUARY

Cruising between Boston, Mass. and Charleston, S. C.; to Navy Yard Boston, Mass. for repairs; cruising, Boston to Newport to Argentia, Newfoundland; to Newport; to Norfolk for overhaul.

FEBRUARY

To Charleston, S. C.; underway to Everglades, Florida; to Norfolk, Va. for overhaul.

MARCH

At Everglades, Florida; cruising off The Bahamas, with the President of the United States; to Norfolk, Va.

APRIL

At Norfolk, Va.; cruising in Chesapeake Bay and Newport, R. I. areas.

MAY

First Patrol under wartime conditions in Atlantic Ocean, in company with the U.S.S. TEXAS, and other battleships and cruisers, in area from Greenland to The Azores, in search of German Raider "Bis-

marck", which sortied from Norway, May 21, and was sunk May 27th. To Boston, for overhaul.

JUNE

First convoy from Boston to Iceland.

JULY

Convoy duty, United States to Iceland.

AUGUST

To Boston for overhaul; exercises in Casco Bay.

SEPTEMBER

Convoy duty, Boston to Iceland.

OCTOBER

Convoy and escort duty; to Boston for overhaul.

NOVEMBER

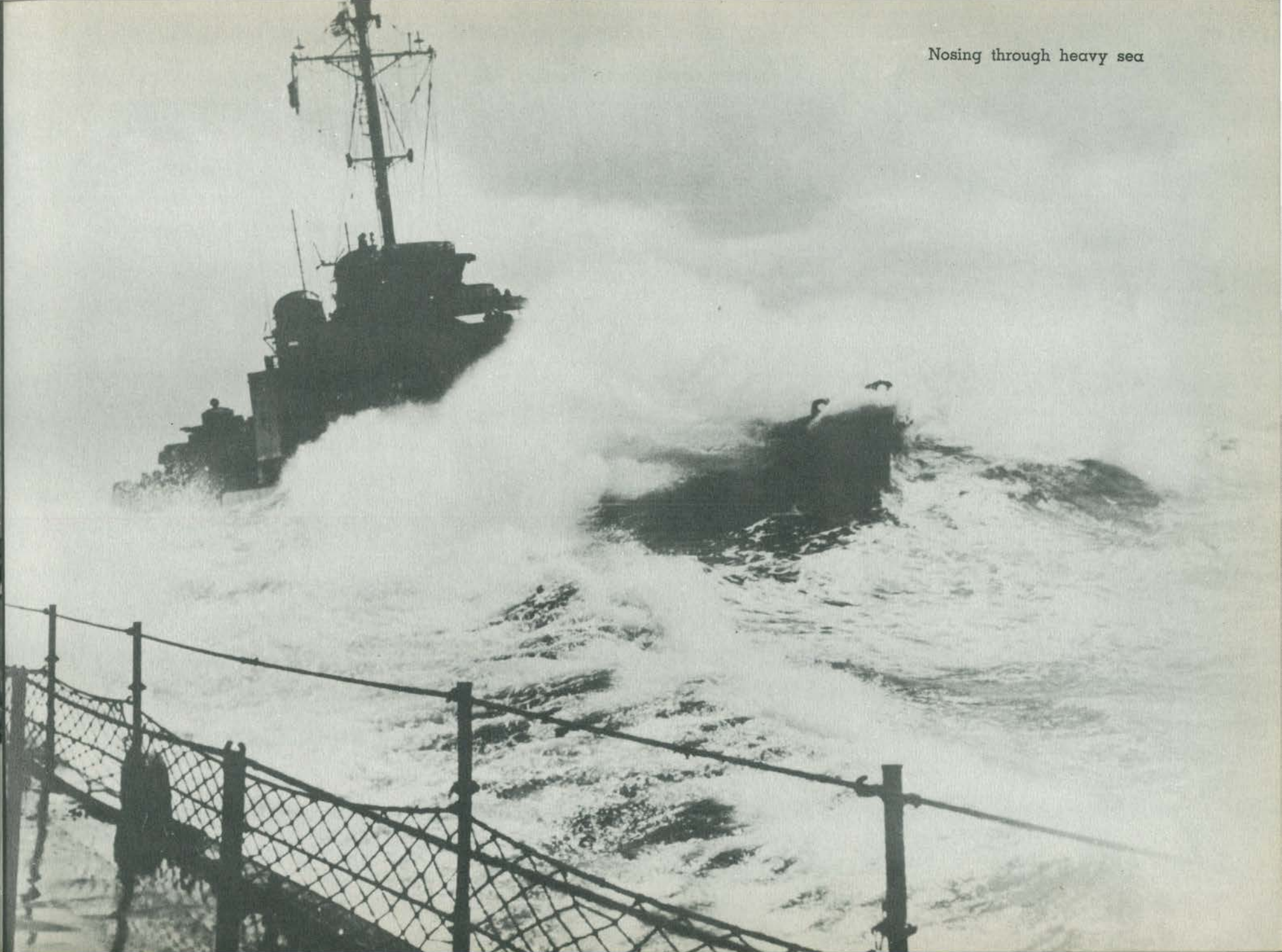
Convoy duty, Boston to Iceland.

DECEMBER

Escort duty, Boston to Iceland; to Boston for overhaul.



Nosing through heavy sea



1942



The watch on flying Bridge



Spuds for chow

JANUARY

Patrol off Boston Harbor; to Boston for repairs.

FEBRUARY

Convoy duty, United States to Iceland.

MARCH

To Boston for overhaul; convoy duty, Londonderry and return.

APRIL

Convoy duty, Londonderry run.

MAY

Boston, for overhaul; Patrol off East Coast of United States, between Boston and The Bermudas; to New York for overhaul.

JUNE

Convoy duty, United States and Panama.

JULY

Escort duty, United States and the British Isles.

AUGUST

Escort duty, United States and the British Isles.

SEPTEMBER

New York Navy Yard for overhaul. Convoy duty between United States and the British Isles.

OCTOBER

Exercises off New London, Conn.; convoy duty, New York to Casablanca; convoy duty, U. S. to British Isles.

NOVEMBER

Convoy duty, U. S. to Casablanca, and U. S. to British Isles.

DECEMBER

Miscellaneous duties in Navy Yard, New York, and training exercises Casco Bay, Maine Area.

Gunnery practice at sea



Battle stations





Destroyer cutting through wake of Aircraft carrier



1943

JANUARY

Escorting convoy to Casablanca with Task Force 30.

FEBRUARY

Escort duty, Gibraltar to Casablanca and return. Miscellaneous training front of Casablanca. Convoy duty from Casablanca to New York with Task Force 38.

MARCH

Training exercises and escort duties, east coast U. S.

APRIL

Training exercises.

MAY

Convoy duty, Norfolk, to Oran, Algiers, with Task Force 60; training exercises off Oran; en route to Gibraltar.

JUNE

Escort duty, Gibraltar to Oran. Patrols off Oran. Escorted Task Groups 81.5 and 81.6 from Algiers to Oran. Escorted HMS. DELTA from Oran to Bizerte and returned to Oran.

JULY

Submarine patrols off Oran; dropped depth charge patterns on July 1; no

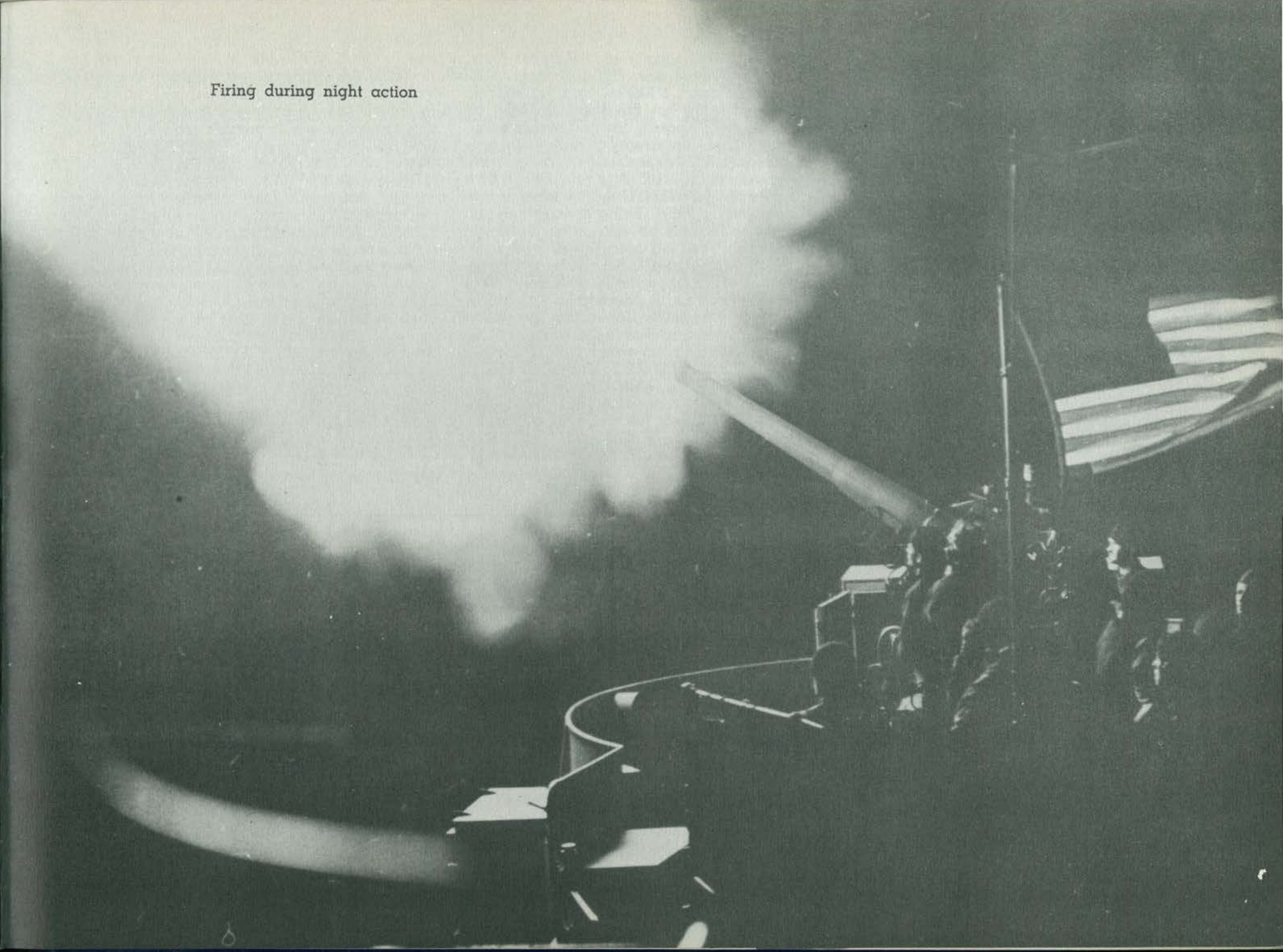
results observed. Escort duty NCS-1, from Oran to assault area at Gela, Sicily. Acted as anti-aircraft screen in operations in assault area at Gela, Sicily; assisted in minefield operations. Under air attack and suffered minor damages and casualties from several "near misses." Escorted French Cruiser BETELOEUSE from Gela to Algiers. Escorted U.S.S. BROOKLYN to assault area, Licata, Sicily and returned to Algiers. Escorted U.S.S. BIRMINGHAM from Algiers to Oran. Escorted U.S.S. BIRMINGHAM and U.S.S. BROOKLYN, from Algiers to Oran. Escorted merchant convoy from Oran to Palermo.

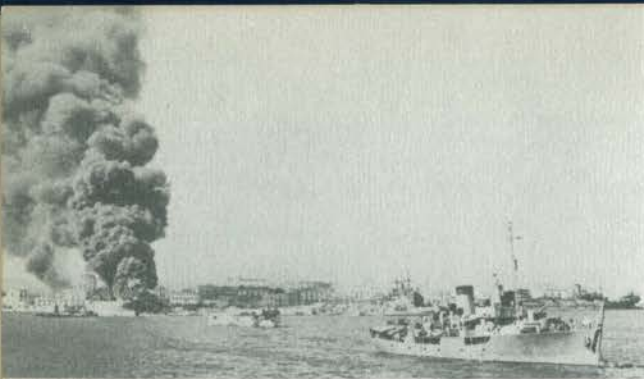
AUGUST

On anti-aircraft and anti-submarine patrol off Palermo, Sicily. Under air at-



Firing during night action





Sicily 1943



Sicily 1943



Another Kraut

tacks on 1 August and 4 August. Probably destroyed one "FW-190" during attack. Escorted NAUSET and SHUBRICK in tow, to Malta. Fired on BRANDT at night on 10 August, due to breakdown of recognition procedures. Returned to Palermo, Sicily. Numerous patrols and offensive sweeps off Palermo. Supporting advance of SEVENTH ARMY along coast of Northern Italy. Giving shore bombardment assistance as necessary. Made offensive sweep off Marine Del Patti with U.S.S. BOISE and U.S.S. ROWAN. Fired on targets of opportunity at Milasso, Sicily. Dropped depth charges on submarine contact, no results. Conducted first shore bombardment of Italian Mainland on 18 August in company with U.S.S. NIBLACK, U.S.S. PLUNKETT, U.S.S. GLEAVES, U.S.S. PHILADELPHIA, and U.S.S. BOISE, at Cioja, Italy. Escort duty, Palermo to Bizerte. Patrol duty off Oran and Algiers. Escorted U.S.S. BOISE and U.S.S. SAVANNAH, to Oran. Training exercises off Oran.

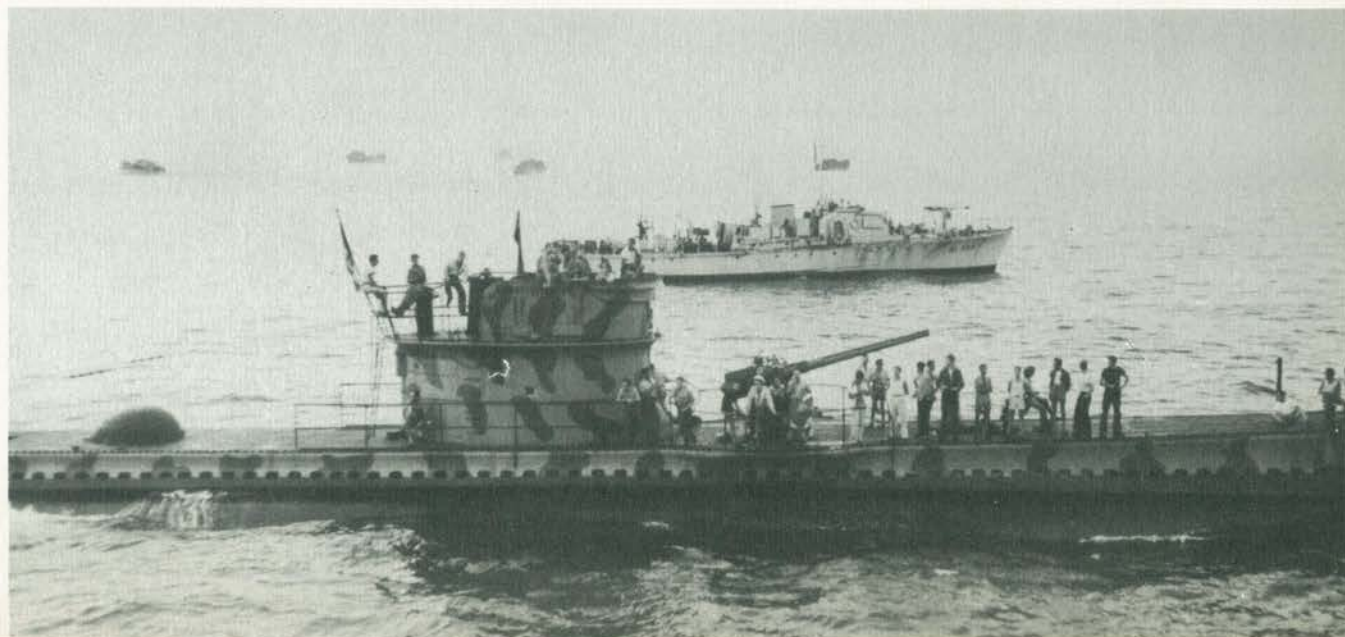
SEPTEMBER

With Task Force 81, escorting convoy NSF-1 from Oran to assault area off Salerno, Italy. Under air attacks while acting as anti-aircraft screen in assault area. With U.S.S. PLUNKETT, MAYO, NIBLACK, escorted the U.S.S. (damaged) PHILADELPHIA and SAVANNAH, to Malta. Returned with U.S.S. NIBLACK to Salerno. Under numerous air attacks in assault area. Escorted ANCON to Palermo. Returned to Salerno with 6-inch ammunition for cruisers and delivered same under fire. Shot down one "FW-190" in morning attack. Under numerous air attacks in this area. Acting as anti-aircraft support ship for U.S.S. PHILADELPHIA. Made numerous sweeps with U.S.S. NIBLACK and PHILADELPHIA and BOISE on various shore bombardment and other missions. In company with U.S.S. GLEAVES, escorting ANCON to Palermo.

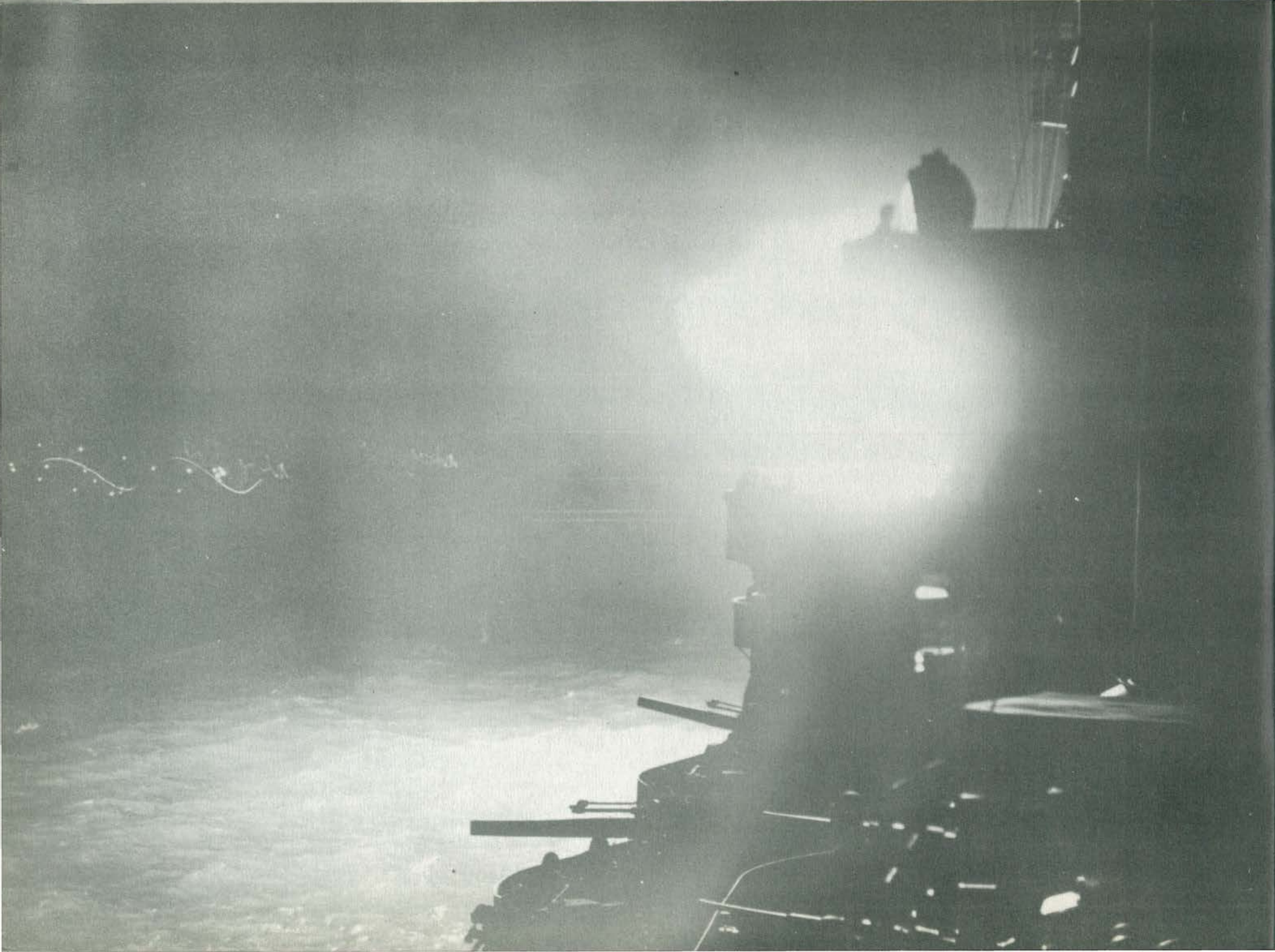
OCTOBER

With U.S.S. NICHOLSON, escorting ANCON to Algiers. Rescued survivors

Italian Sub surrenders







General quarters!
Depth charges are armed and fired





Admiral Sir Andrew Browne Cunningham, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Vice Admiral H. K. Hewitt and Maj. Gen. W. B. S. Smith.



H-hour Salerno

from Wellington Bomber Crew. Patrol duty off Oran. Escort duty to Naples, Italy. Escort duty, Naples to Oran. U.S.S. BRISTOL sunk from station astern on 13 October. Carried ammunition for U.S.S. BOISE to Algiers. Escorted U.S.S. BROOKLYN to Naples. Under heavy air attacks in Naples Harbor. Made night sweeps with U.S.S. NIBLACK and BROOKLYN. Made shore bombardment with U.S.S. NIBLACK and BROOKLYN in Gulf of Gaeta, Italy. Escorted U.S.S. BROOKLYN to Palermo. Escorted Convoy SNF-6, from Palermo to Oran.

NOVEMBER

In company with U.S.S. LUDLOW,

MAYO, and others, escorted U.S.S. PHILADELPHIA, and TRANSPORT DIVISION 5, from Oran to Gibraltar and returned to Oran. Patrol operations off Oran. Upkeep period in Oran. Escort duty to Naples, Italy.

DECEMBER

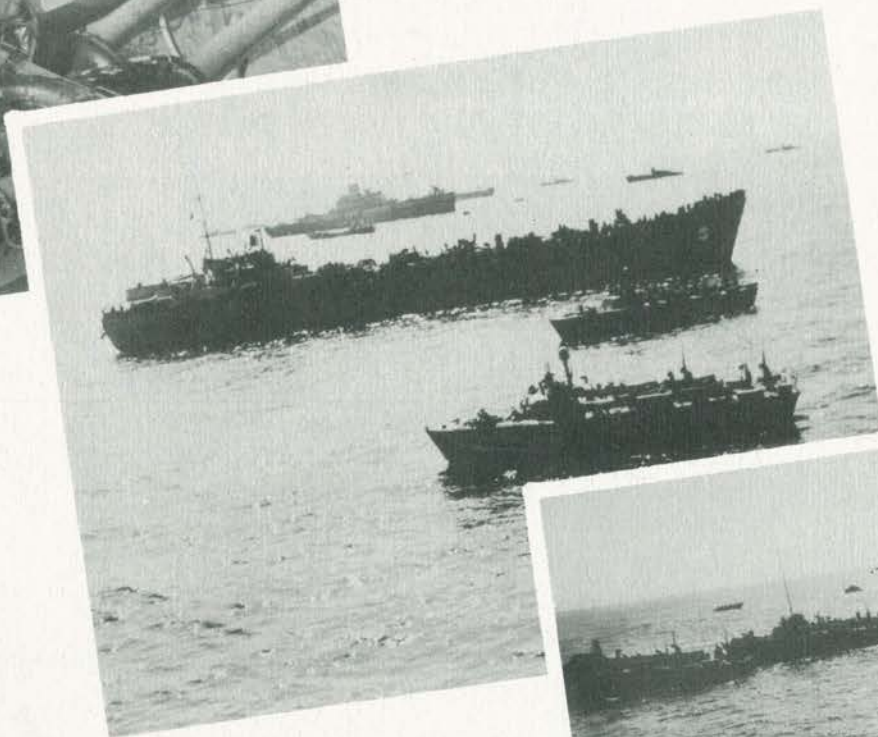
Escort duty, Naples to Oran. Gun-nery exercises off Oran. Annual Military Inspection. Anti-submarine search off Algiers. Dry-docked in Algiers. Escorted Convoy NSF-10 to Naples. Escort duty, Naples to Oran. Upkeep period in Oran; escort duty, Oran to Naples and return.

Supplies Salerno beachhead

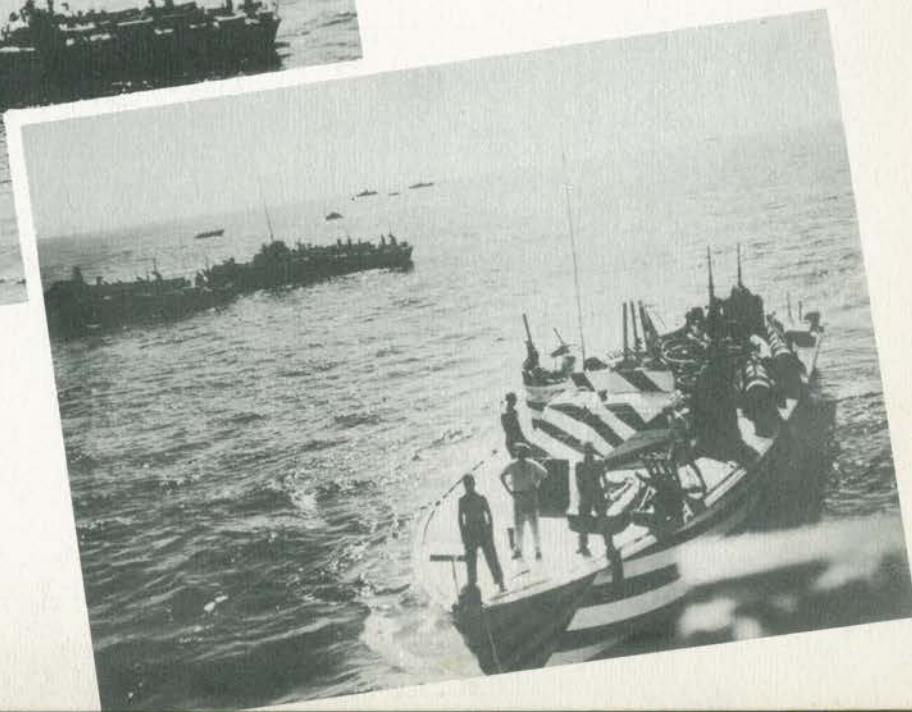




Bomb hit

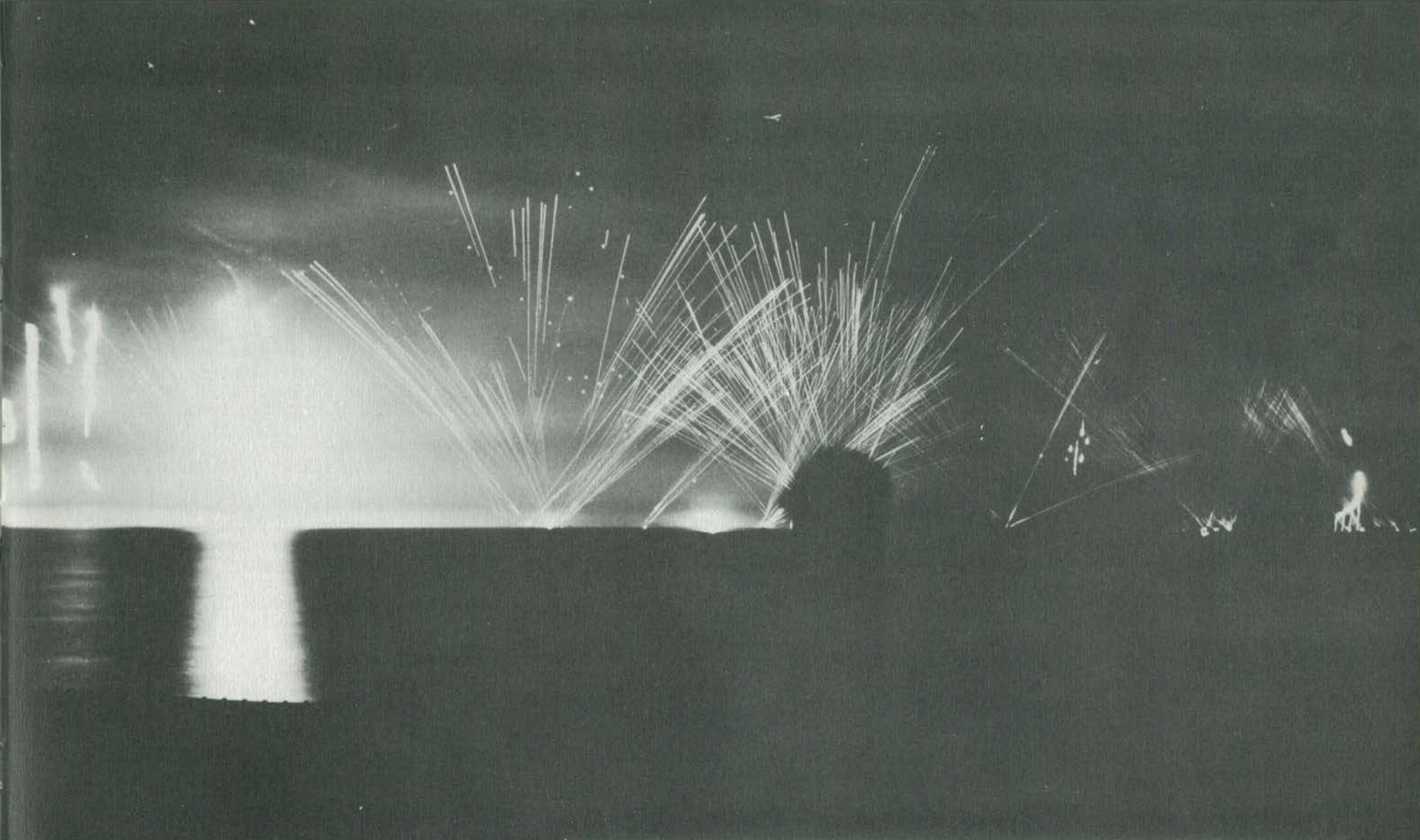


Battle Salerno



PT'S





Night-Blooming Ack-Ack — War supplies its own "False dawns" in the tremendous cannonades of illuminated shells hurled by warships during night air raids. This "study in black and white" was made in Salerno after the opening of the battle for the mainland. Allied ships segment the darkness with interwoven fire to prevent point-blank bombing.

1944

JANUARY

Anti-submarine search off Coast of Spain. Escorting merchant ship convoy from Oran to Naples; relieved at Bizerte and returned to Oran. Proceeded from Oran to Casablanca. As CTF-62, escorted GUS 28 from Casablanca to New York.

FEBRUARY

Yard overhaul and training exercises on East Coast of U. S.

MARCH

Same as February.

APRIL

With Task Force 27.4, made sweeps across Atlantic to Oran.

MAY

Upkeep in Oran. Escorting convoy UES-40 en route from Gibraltar to Bizerte. Underwent glide-bomb, torpedo attack from about 30 German planes on 11 May, east of Algiers. Shot down 2 "JU-88's", probably destroyed another and damaged several others. No ships damaged

or lost. Commanding Officer awarded SILVER STAR MEDAL for his action in battle. Returned to Oran. Gunnery exercises off Oran. Upkeep period in Oran. Anti-submarine operations north of Oran with U.S.S. LUDLOW and NIBLACK, resulting in sinking of German Submarine U-960. Upkeep period in Oran.

JUNE

Escorted convoy to Bizerte, Palermo, Naples and Algiers, and returned to Oran. Escorted BISCAYNE and CATOCTIN to Algiers, and BISCAYNE to Naples.

JULY

Escort duty, Oran to Naples. Escorted SAMARIA from Naples to Oran. With Task Force 60, escorted convoy USF-12 to Naples. En route to upkeep at Gibraltar. Escorted MARIPOSA with LUDLOW to Oran. Escorted Convoy KMF-33 to Naples. At Naples Harbor.

AUGUST

As a unit of Task Group 80.6 acted



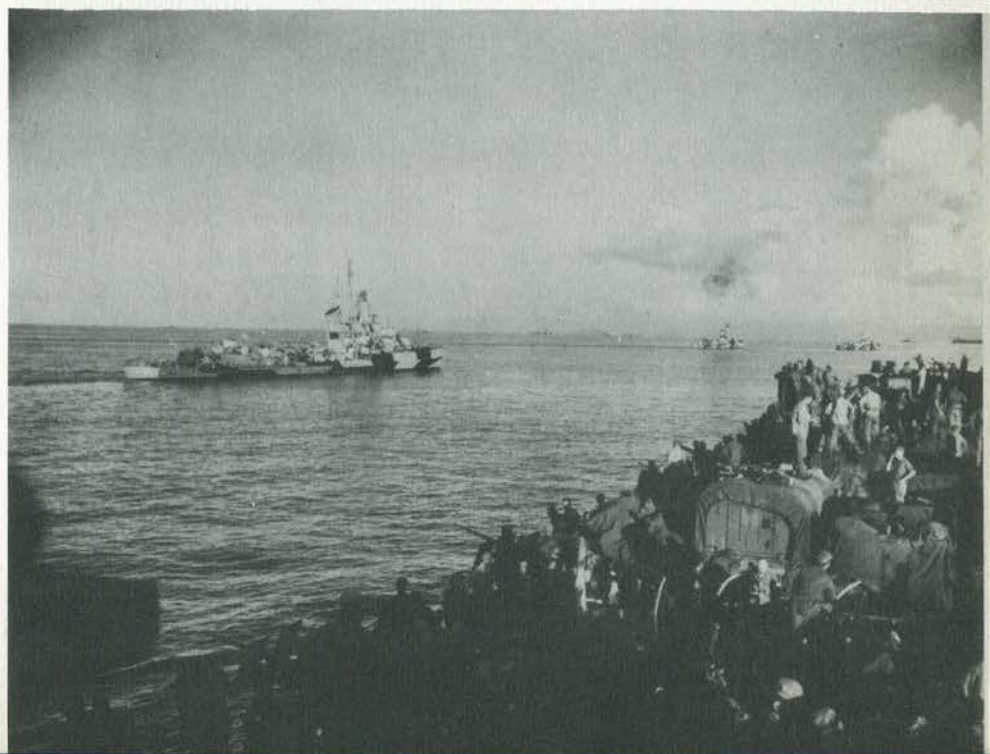
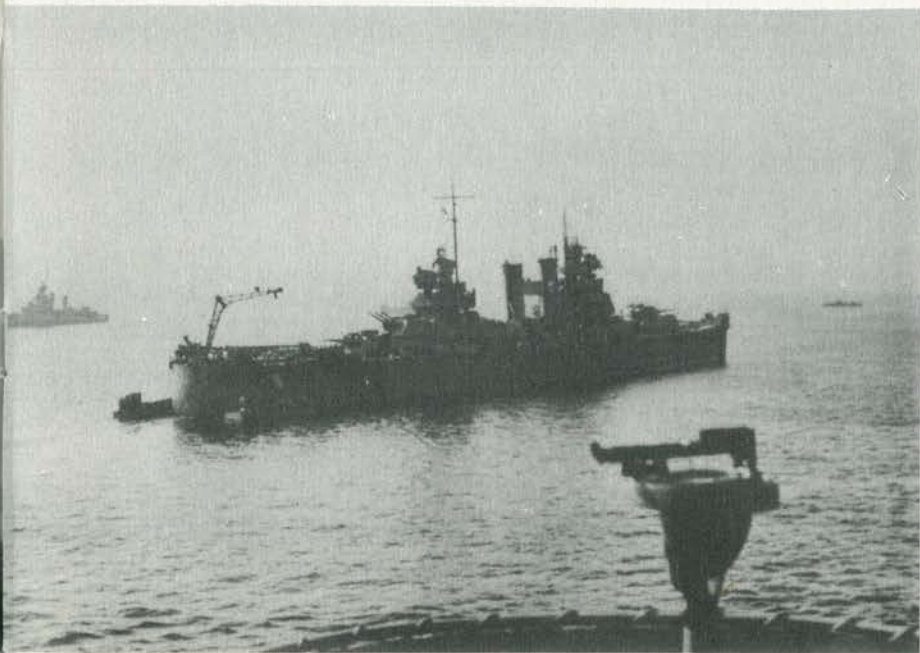
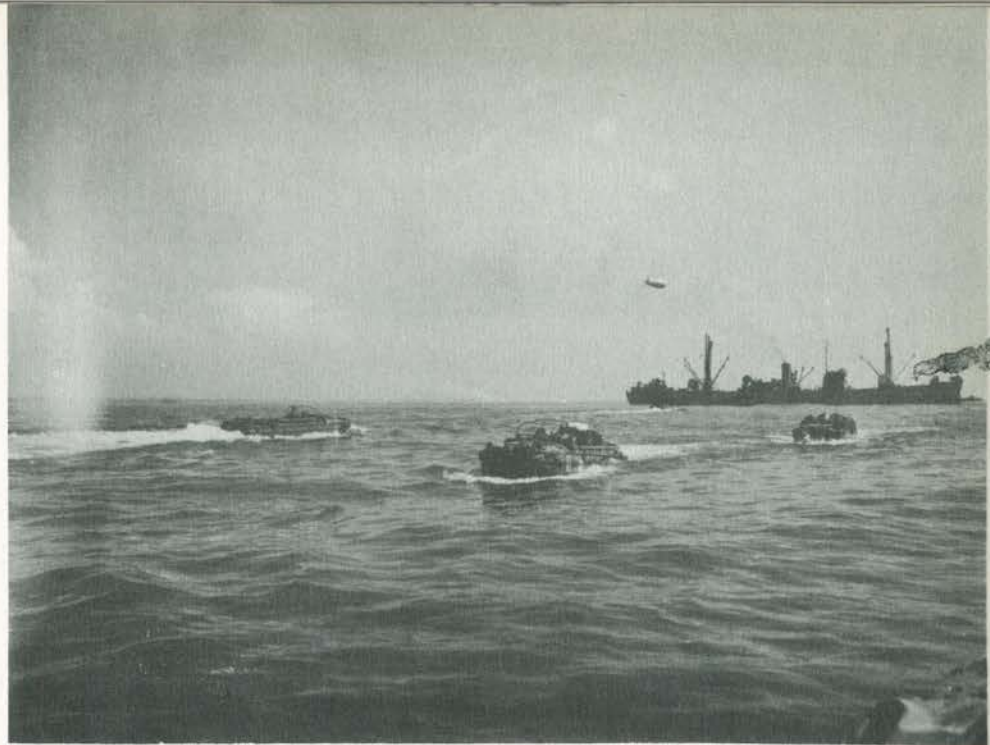
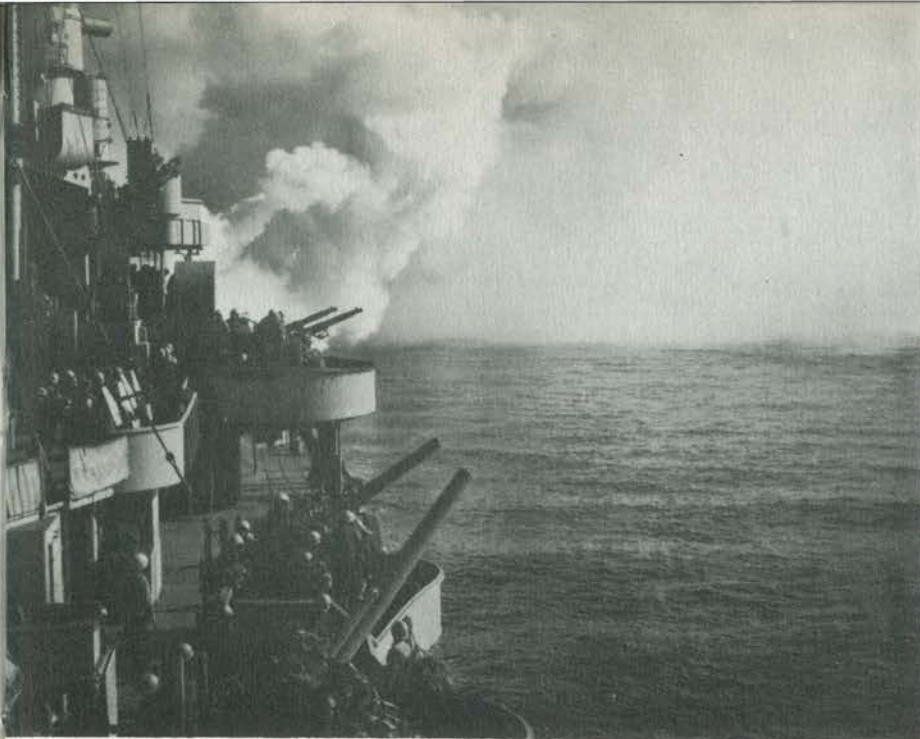
Anzio beachhead



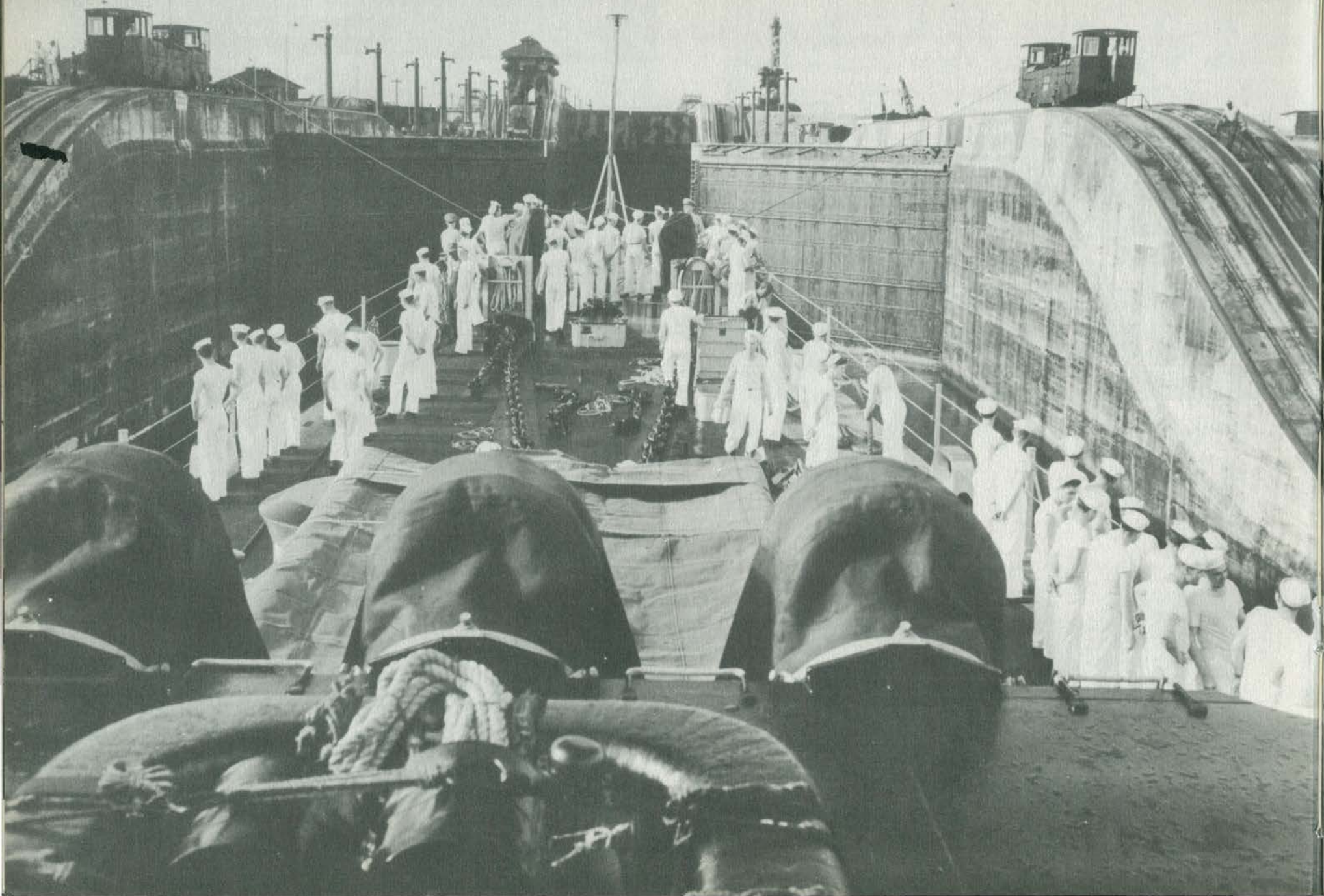
Anzio

Hospital ships off Anzio

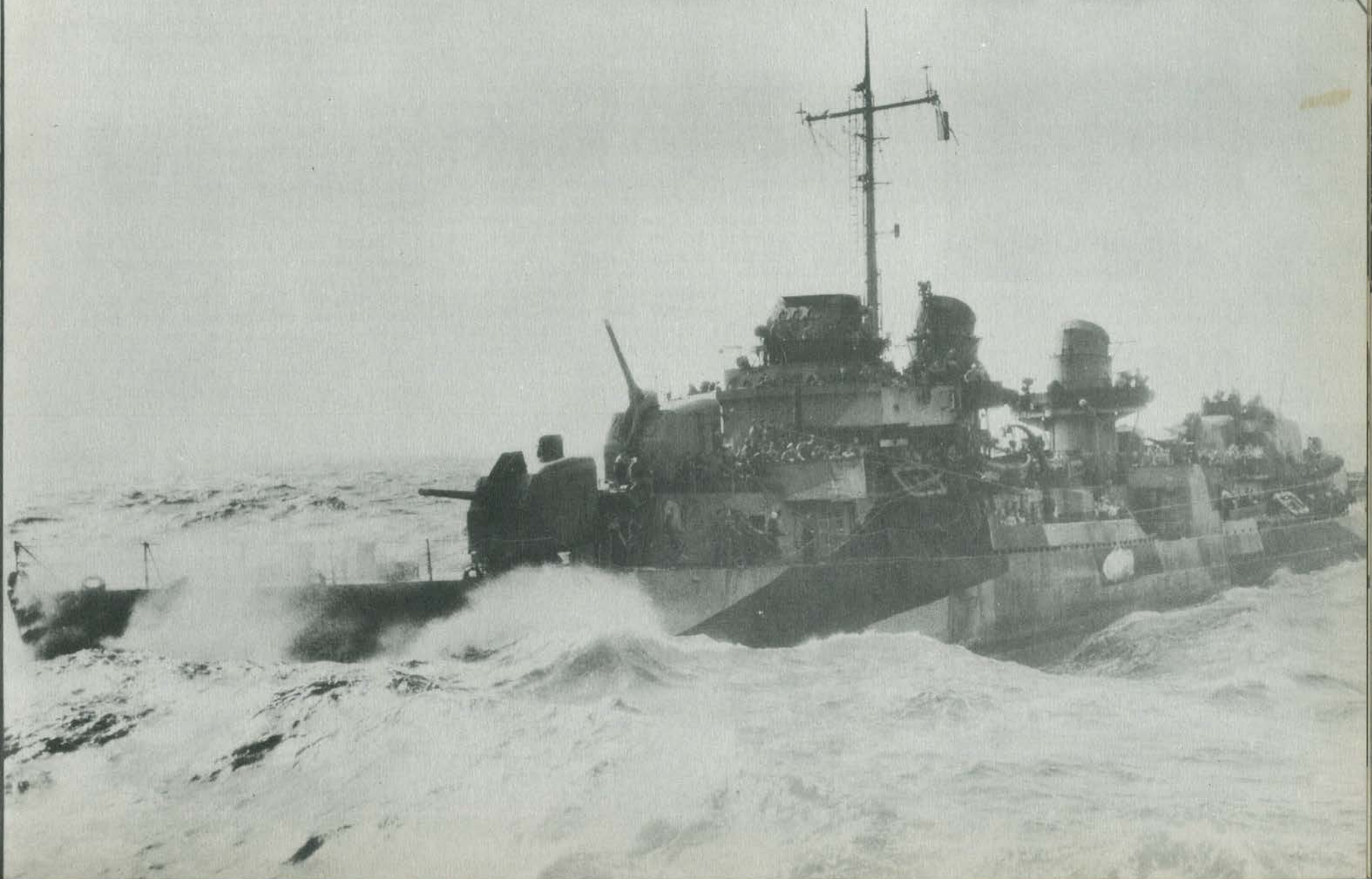


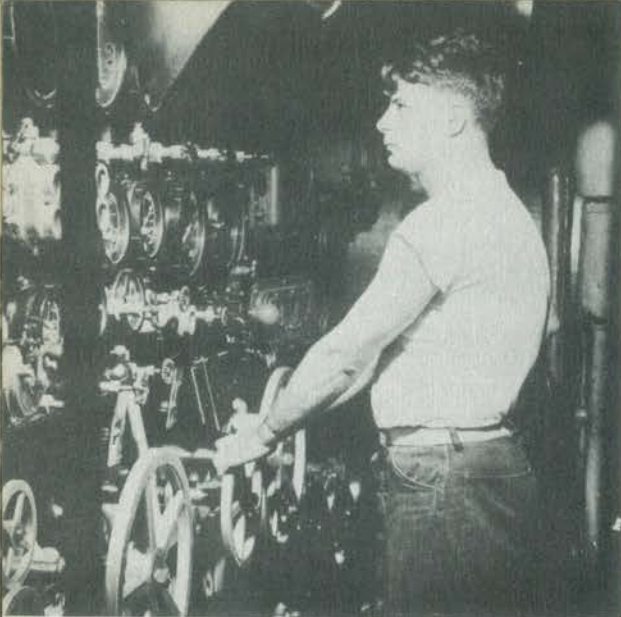


The Big Ditch



Sister ships alongside





Watch in the engine room



Chow

as anti-aircraft support, support force for assault area screen in invasion of Southern France. Formed outgoing convoys, instructed incoming convoys, and acted as traffic control for the invasion. Overhaul in Ajaccio, Corsica, alongside DENEBO-LA.

SEPTEMBER

Escorted DENEBO-LA to St. Tropaz, France. Patrol duty as "jig" ship, off Marseilles. Proceeded to Gulf of Juan, France, to join FLANK FORCE for shore bombardment and patrol in support of the advance of the FIRST AIRBORNE TASK FORCE, U. S. ARMY, along the Riviera. On patrol duty in shore bombardment off Franco-Italian Border. Fired two missions; one on vehicle concentration, and another on self-propelled gun positions. Received many near misses from return fire from German shore batteries. Withdrew under cover of smoke screen. Received two minor personnel casualties from shrapnel. Fired mission at night on enemy troop concentrations.

OCTOBER

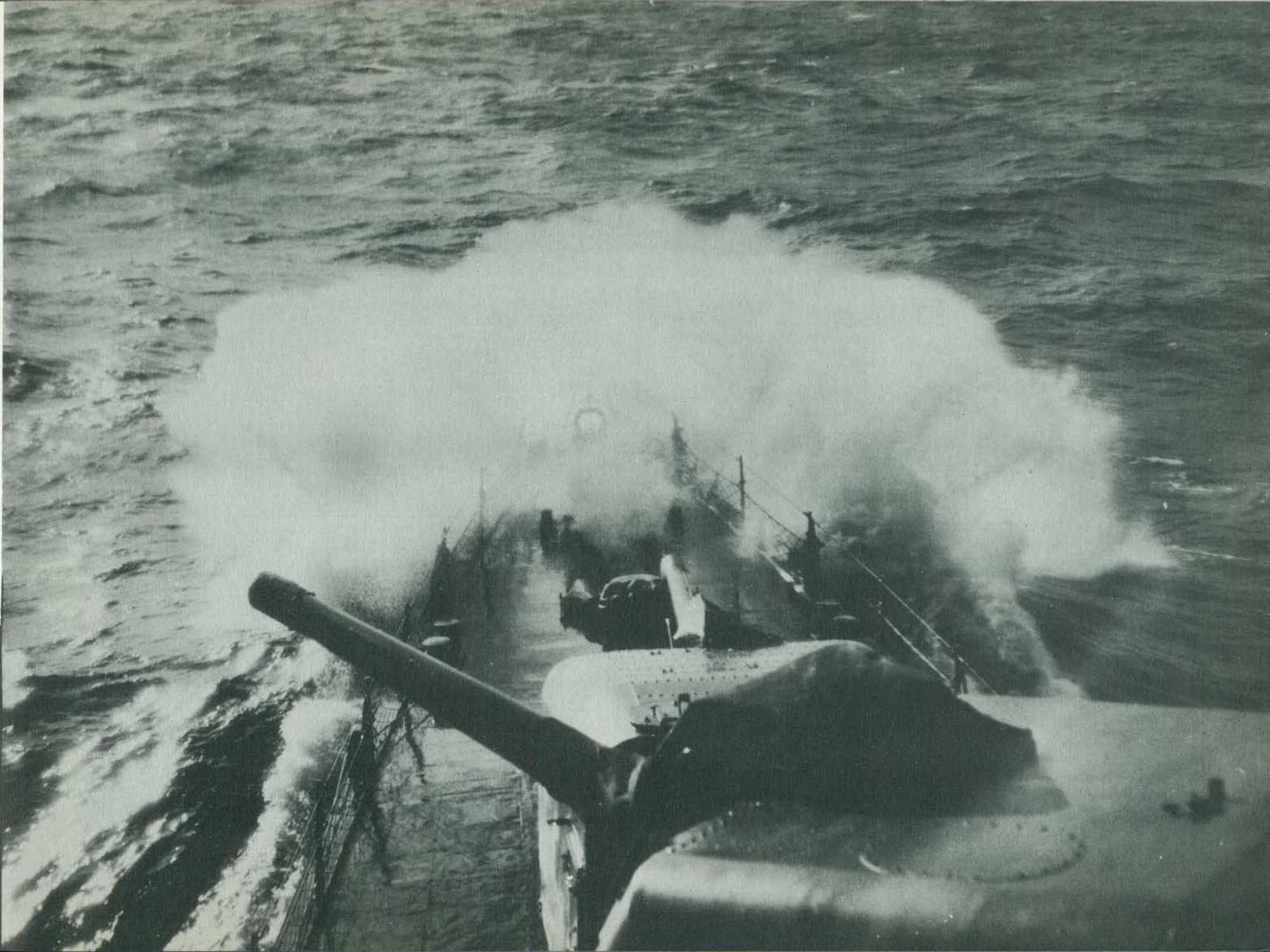
Patrol off fire support area; fired on

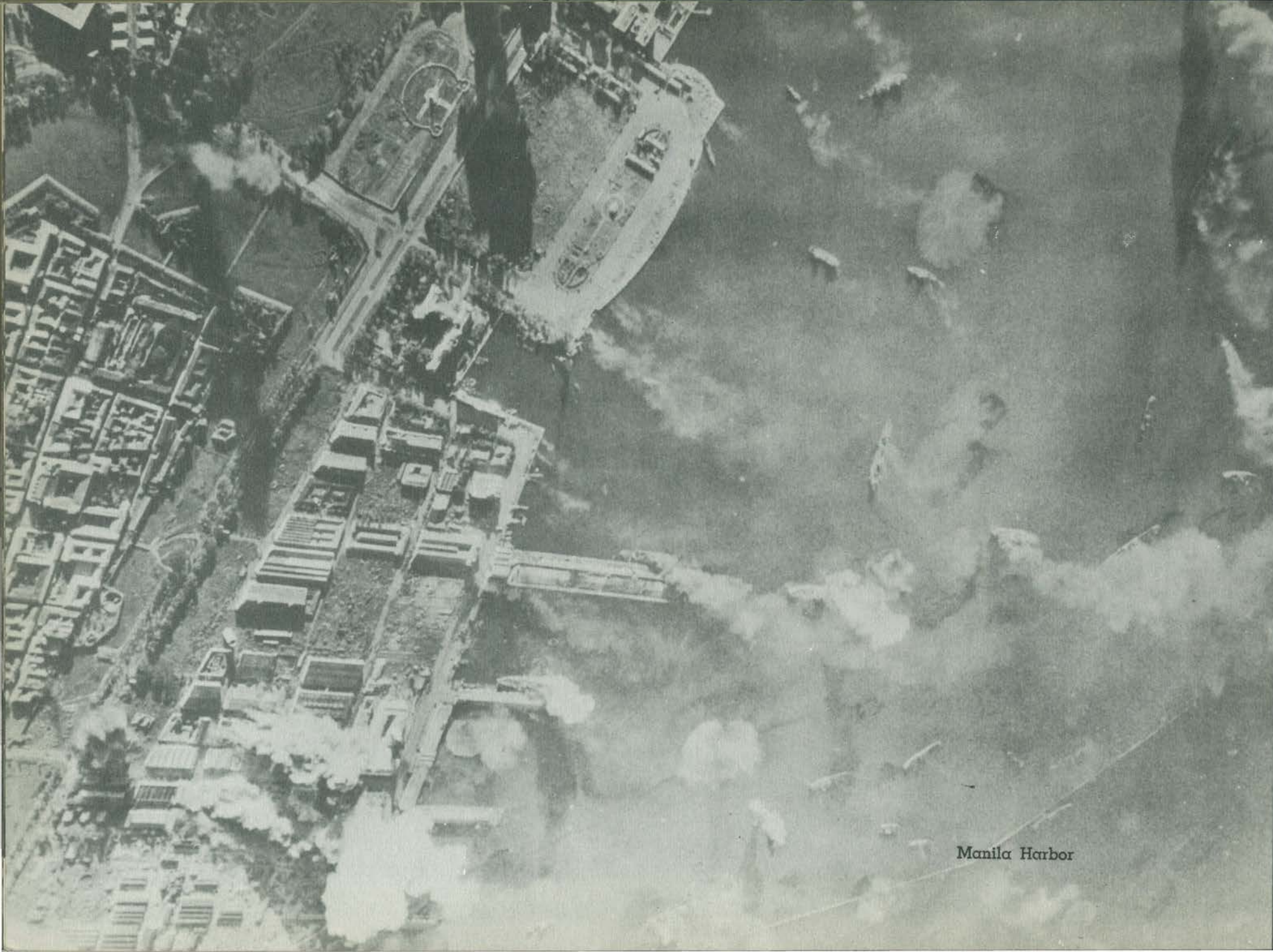
enemy gun positions; target destroyed. Fired on two enemy MAS Boats alongside dock in San Remo with cruiser plane spotting; both boats and dock destroyed. Observed explosions at night; result of self-destruction of enemy explosive boats astern U.S.S. GLEAVES, sister patrolling ship. Fired on railway tunnels in enemy territory; experienced heavy return fire from enemy shore batteries; withdrew from enemy shore batteries under smoke screen. MISSION ACCOMPLISHED. In Toulon Harbor, France, for fuel, ammunition and upkeep. Escorted U.S.S. BROOKLYN to St. Tropaz; patrol in mined area off fire support area. In Oran for upkeep.

NOVEMBER

Patrol duty off fire support area; escorting U. S. Minesweepers; under fire of enemy shore batteries; withdrew with Minesweepers. Fired mission on troop concentration and barracks; heavy return fire; withdrew under smoke screen. Target area well covered. In Toulon, France, for upkeep. Patrol duty off fire support area. Blockade of enemy mer-







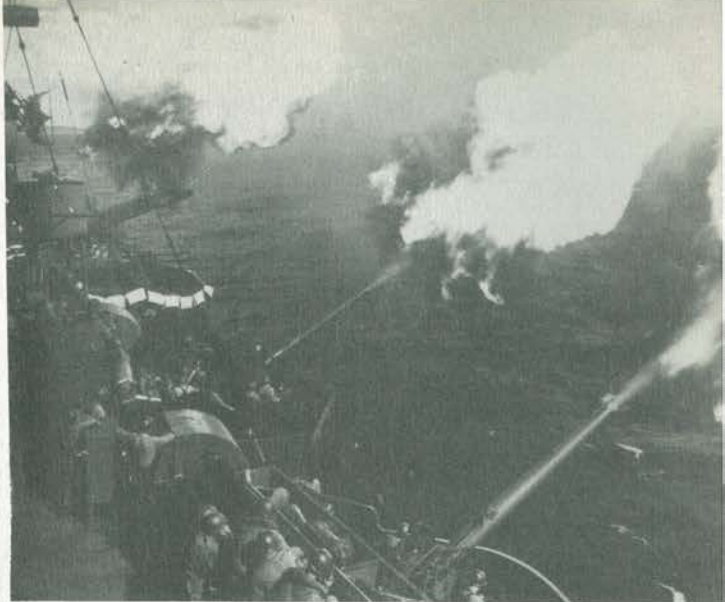
Manila Harbor

chant shipping in San Remo Harbor; fired on enemy supply buildings; return fire experienced; withdrew under smoke screen; target destroyed. Supported Cruiser MONTCALM for bombardment of San Remo. Patrol off mined waters. Screened French Cruiser JEANNE D' ARC for firing missions. In Toulon, France, for upkeep.

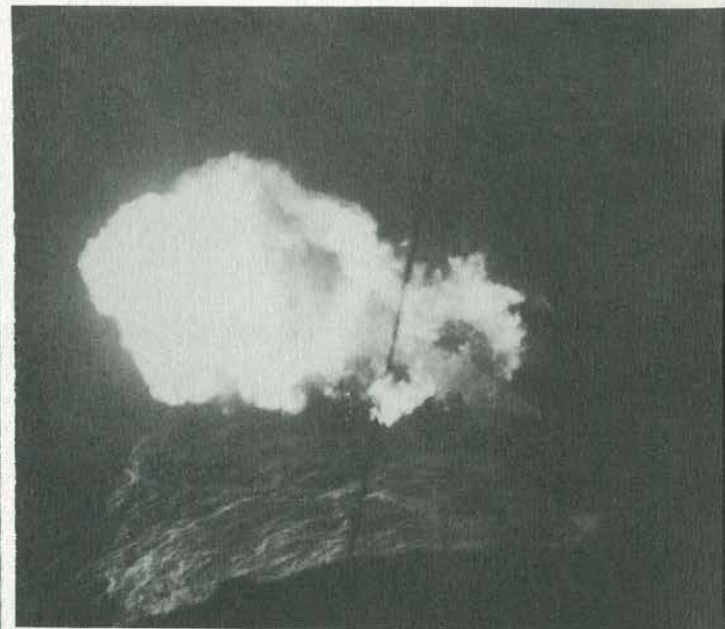
DECEMBER

Patrol in fire support area; fired mission on bridge on enemy supply route; area well covered. Heavy return fire;

withdrew under smoke screen. En route to Oran. Tender availability alongside U.S.S. VULCAN. Patrol in fire-support area; fired on gun emplacement; mission accomplished; fired on railway station; area well covered; target directly hit; heavy return fire; withdrew under smoke screen. Fired mission on second gun emplacement; fired mission on enemy supply buildings; proceeded to Leghorn, Italy, to provide Naval gun fire support for threatened German breakthrough on United States lines in North Italy.

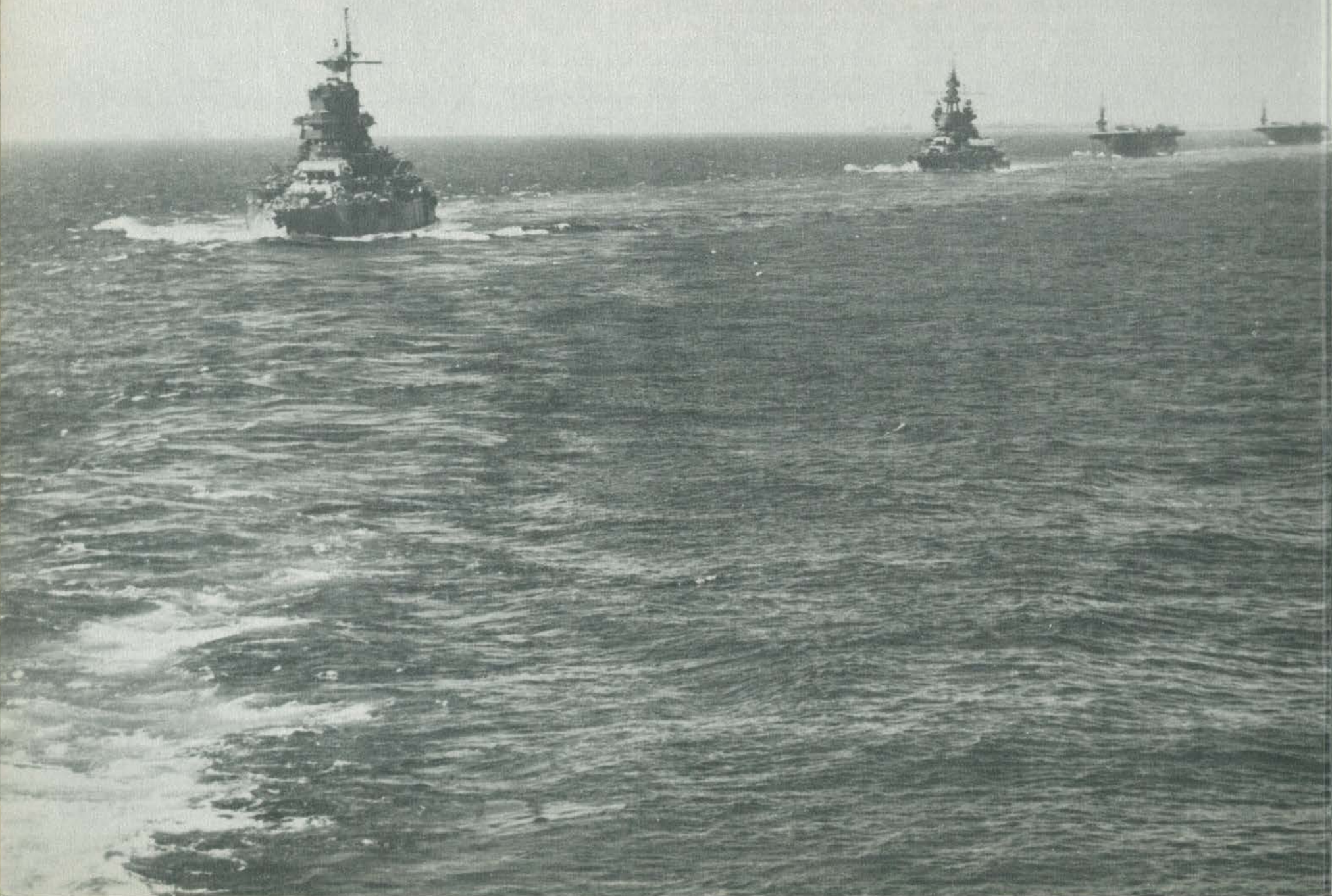


Supporting landing operations



Luzon

Task Force



1945

JANUARY

En route to Gulf of Juan, Toulon, for fuel. Patrol off fire support area; attacked by enemy explosive boats; escorted French Cruiser GEORGE LEYGUES in firing mission on enemy shipyards at Pietra, Italy, and proceeded to Leghorn. Patrolled off North Italian Coast in vicinity of German Lines. Returned to Gulf of Juan. Moored in Oran, Algiers, having been detached from Flank Force. During this period in assault area and and fire support area, destroyed 46 float-

ing mines with machine gun fire. Commanding Officer received BRONZE STAR MEDAL for operations in fire support area. COMDESRONSEVEN shifted pennant to BENSON; escorted GUF-19 to United States. Yard overhaul and training on East Coast of U. S.

FEBRUARY

At Navy Yard, New York.

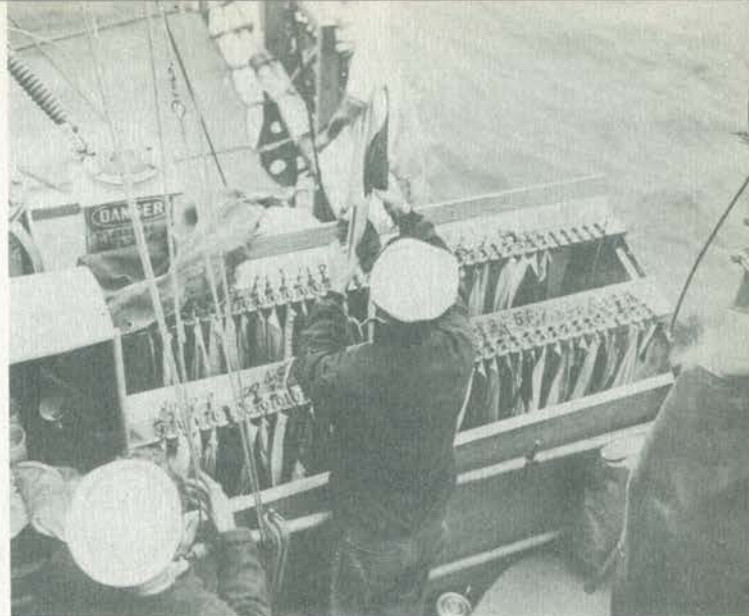
MARCH

At Navy Yard, New York.

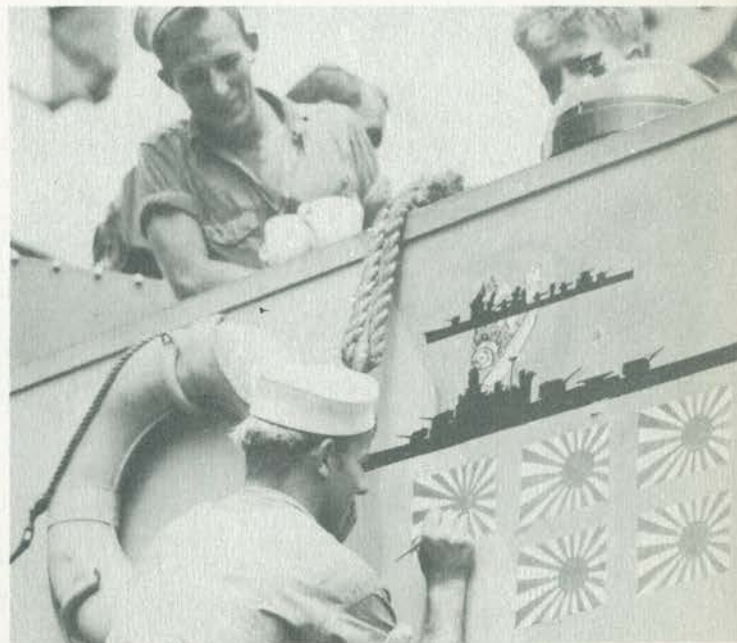
APRIL

With CTG 63.1 in BENSON, proceed-

Dear Mom



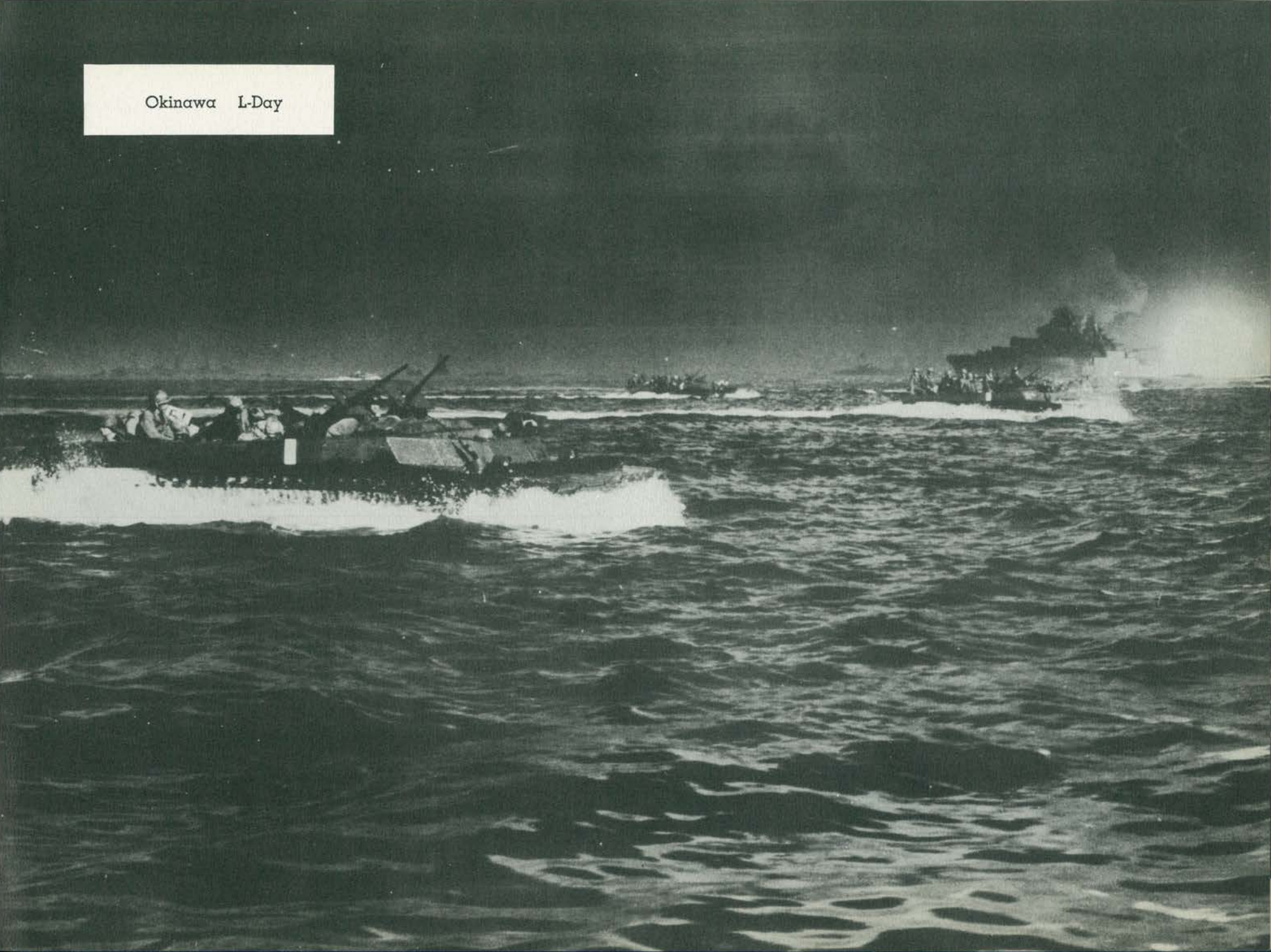
Running them up



Another victim



Okinawa L-Day





Ie Shima



Over Oki

ed to Plymouth, England, and returned with LST Convoy 4. Due to sonar casualty, drydocked in Plymouth one day for repairs; dropped pattern on possible submarine contact on return trip.

MAY

Navy Yard availability. Proceeded from New York to Canal Zone to report to COMDESPAC for duty. In Balboa Harbor, Canal Zone, for fuel and upkeep. To San Diego, California. To Pearl Harbor, T.H., to report to COMDESPAC for duty. Various gunnery, radar and navigation exercises during this period.

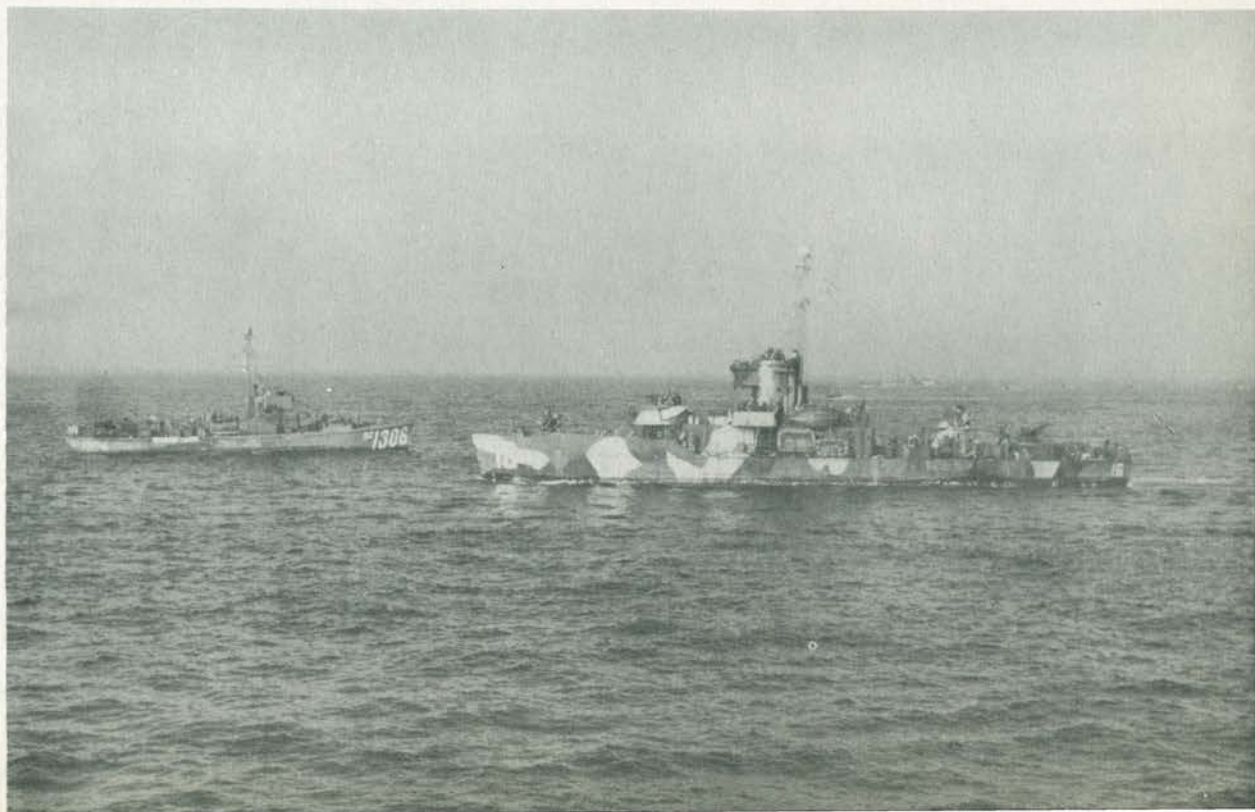
JUNE

Gunnery, Radar and Navigation exercises, etc. Proceeded as part of Task Force 12.4.2 to act as escort for U.S.S. LEXINGTON, U.S.S. COWPENS, and U.S.S. HANCOCK. Screened aircraft car-

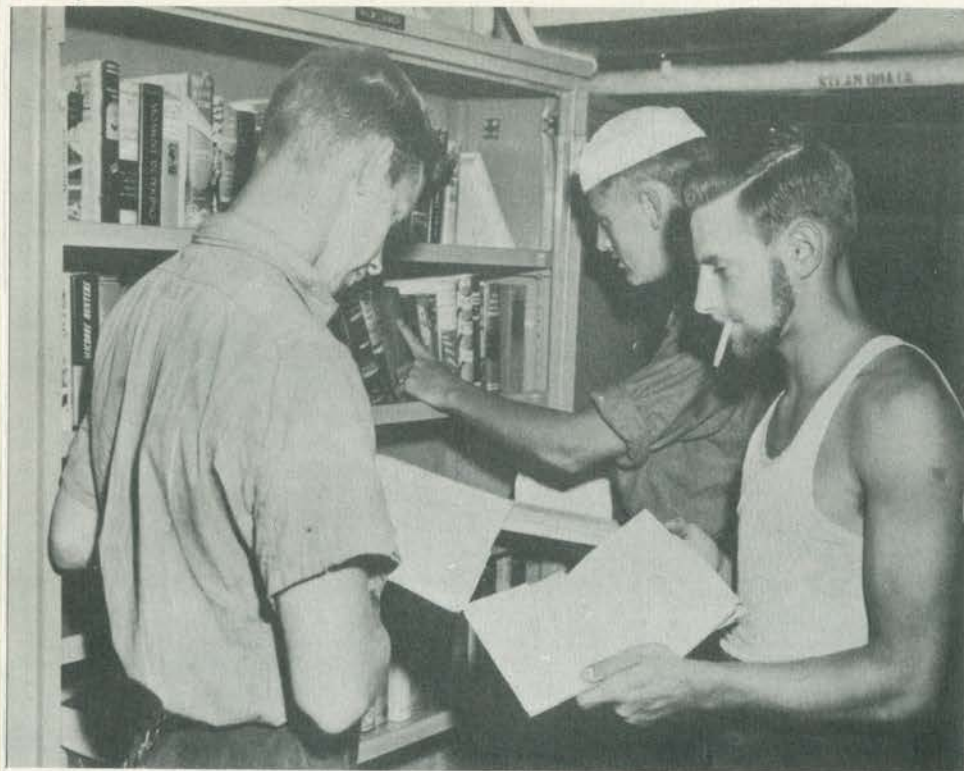
riers while their planes bombed and machine-gunned strategic points on Japanese-held Wake Island. Escorting Task Force 12.4.2 to Leyte, Philippine Islands. To Ulithi Islands.

JULY

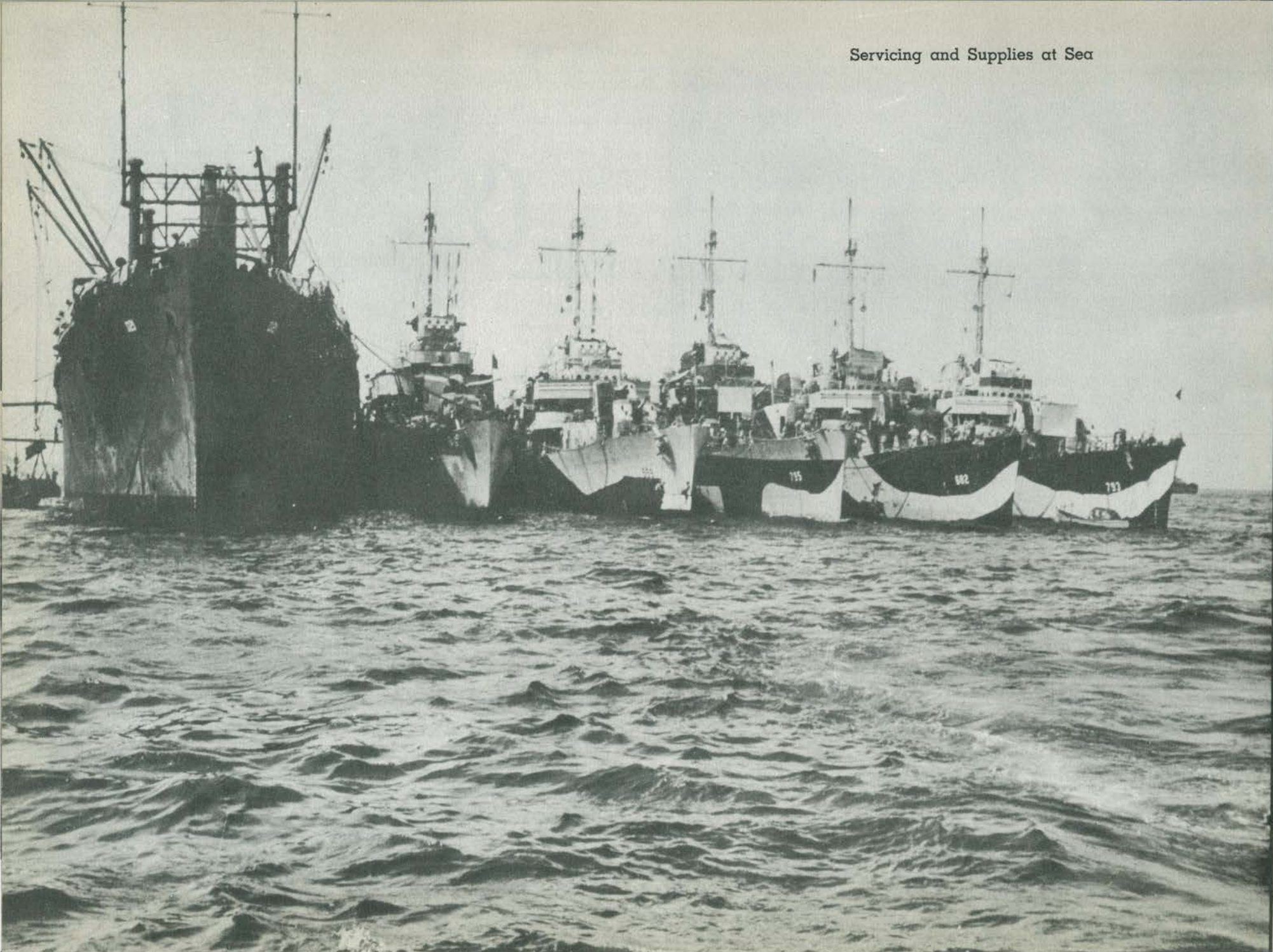
Proceeded to Fais Island transporting Ulithi Atoll Commander and Staff, Port Director, Ulithi Commander Task Group 94.6 and Task Unit 94.6.2 (Commander Destroyer Squadron Seven), for purpose of trading with natives, treating those requiring medical attention, and to ascertain if any Japanese had returned to Island. Escorting troop ships to Buckner Bay, Okinawa. Returned to Ulithi Atoll, escorting OKU-13. COMDESRON 7 shifted pennant to BENSON. Commander Destroyer Squadron 7 in charge of TG 94.6 and TU 94.6.2. BENSON moored to



Off Duty



Servicing and Supplies at Sea



Telephone Buoy, Ulithi Islands, all this later period.

AUGUST

Commander Destroyer Squadron 7 shifted to HUGHES, with pennant. Proceeded with all of Division 13 to rendezvous with TRANSRON 16, off Northern Luzon, for escort duty to Tokyo Bay, Japan. Rendezvous with TRANSRON 16, and proceeded to Tokyo Bay, Japan, with the first occupation troops.

SEPTEMBER

Screening ships of TRANSRON 16 while landing occupation troops in Yokohoma section. In Yokohoma for fuel and upkeep. In company with U.S.S. MADISON and MAYO, escorted Task Group 33.1 to Leyte, Philippine Islands. In company with U.S.S. MADISON and MAYO, proceeded to Manila, Philippine Islands. Underway to Batangas Bay, P.I. Under-

way escorting LST Flotilla 6 to Yokohoma, Japan.

OCTOBER

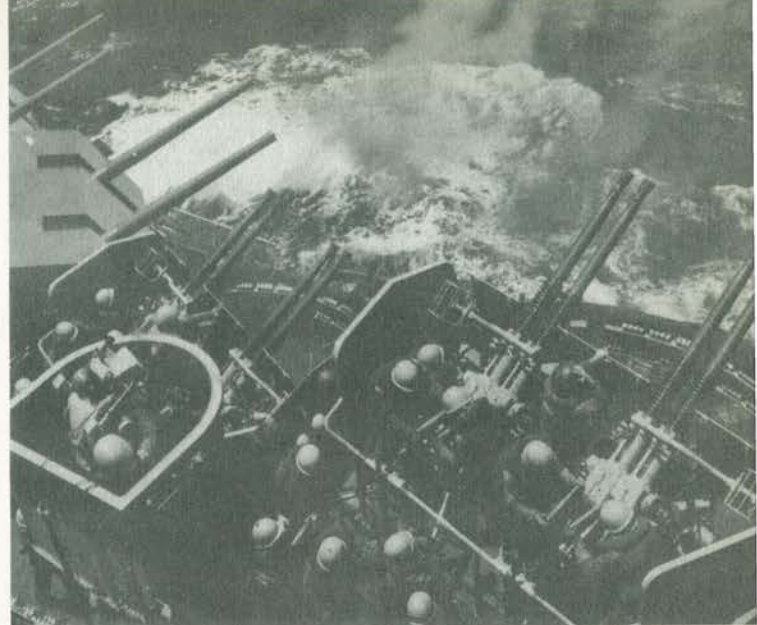
Underway escorting LST Flotilla 6 to Manila. Returned to Yokohoma with LST FLOT 6, due to bad weather. Underway again with LST Flotilla 6 to Manila. Underway with LST FLT 6 to Yokohoma.

NOVEMBER

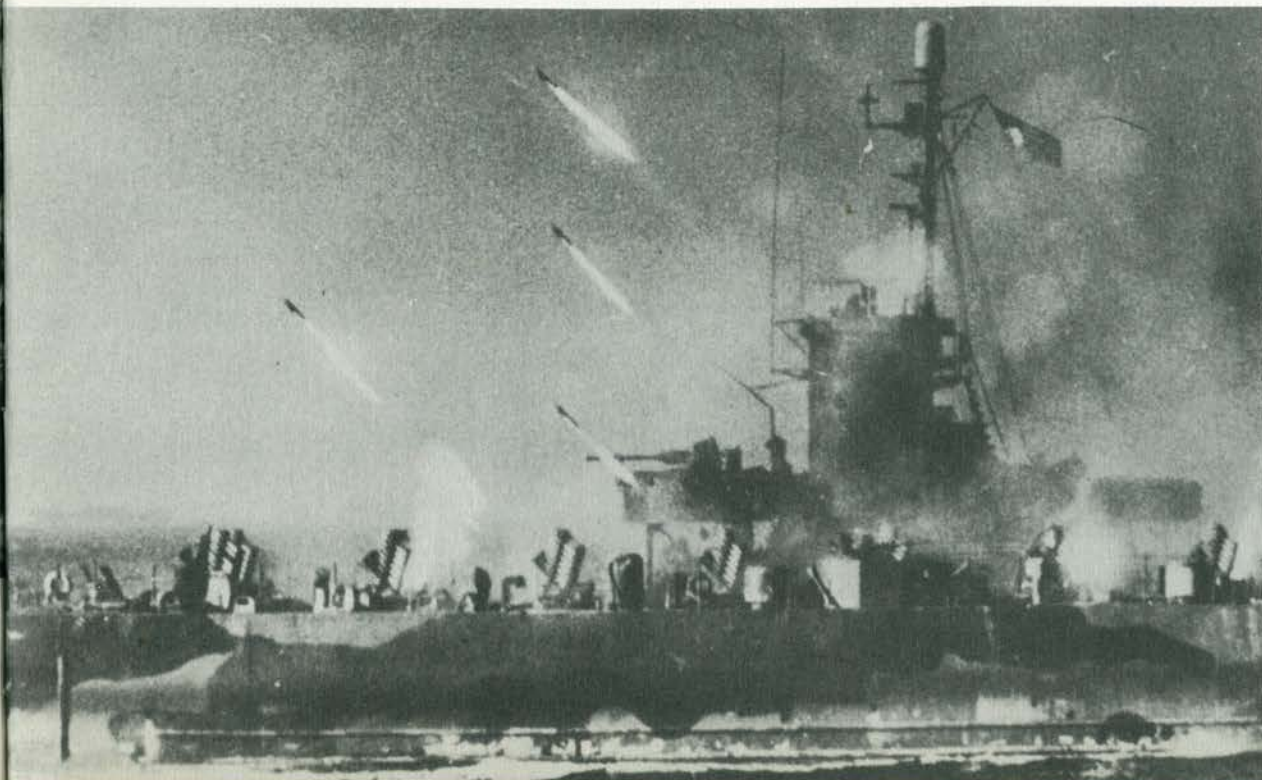
In Yokohoma, Japan, for fuel and upkeep. Underway with DESDIV 13 for Pearl Harbor, T. H.; detached from PAC FLT and proceeded with Destroyer Division 13 to San Diego, California. Proceeded to Coco Solo, R. P., with Destroyer Squadron 13. Passed through the Panama Canal.

DECEMBER

Underway with Destroyer Division 13, for Navy Yard, Charleston, S. C. At Charleston, S. C., for deactivation.

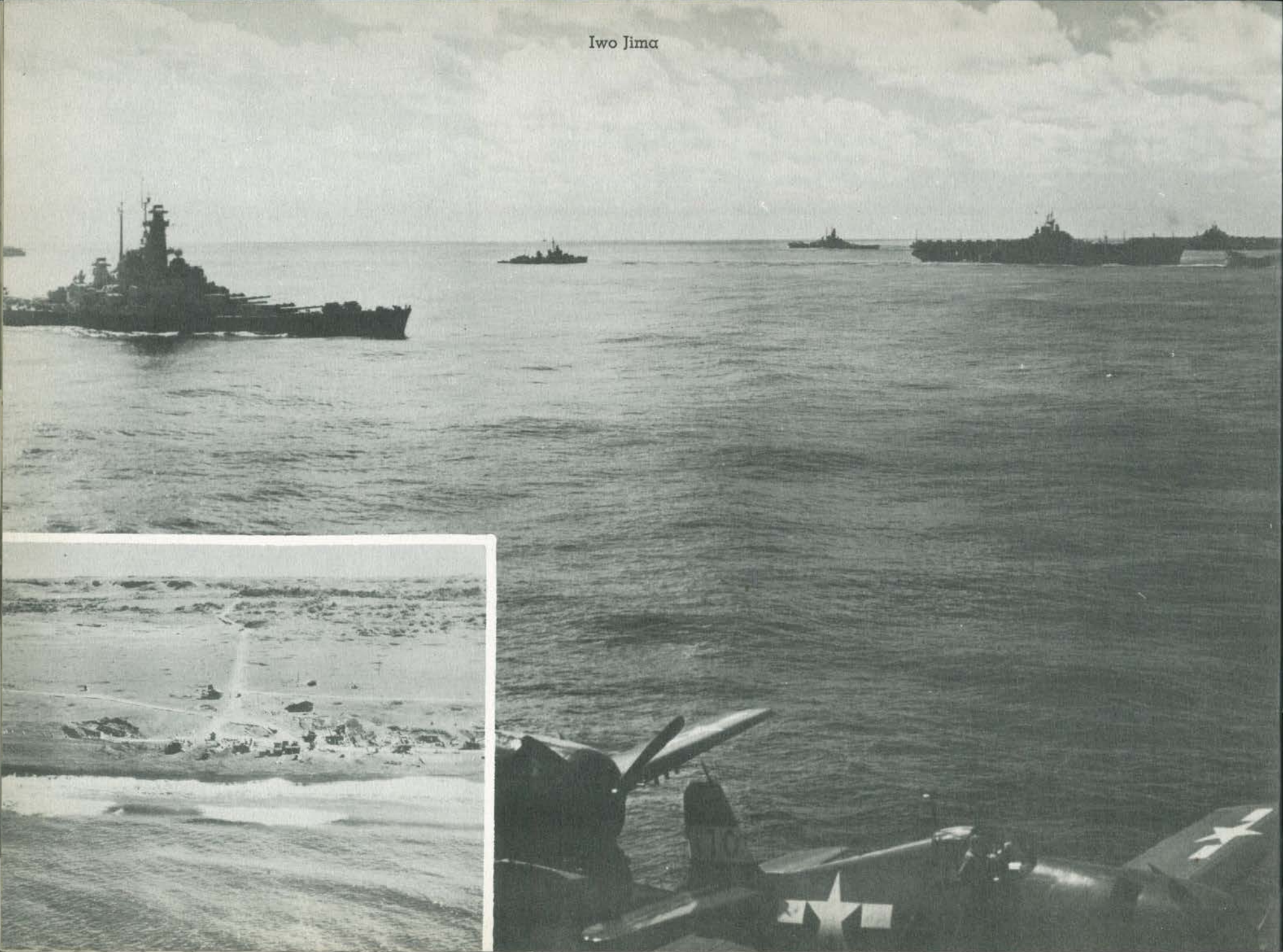


Anti-Aircraft-Battery



Beachhead supplies

Iwo Jima



Awaiting the signal



Battle Wagons

Okinawa



- - And Results



L-Day

Okinawa

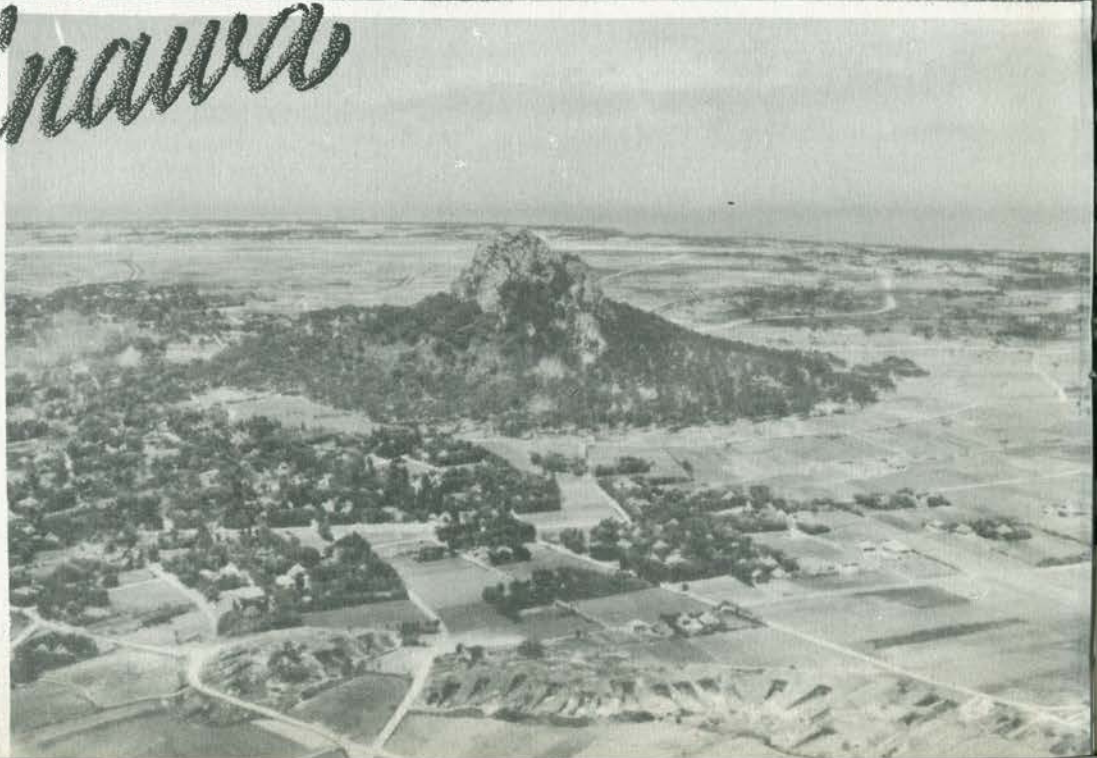


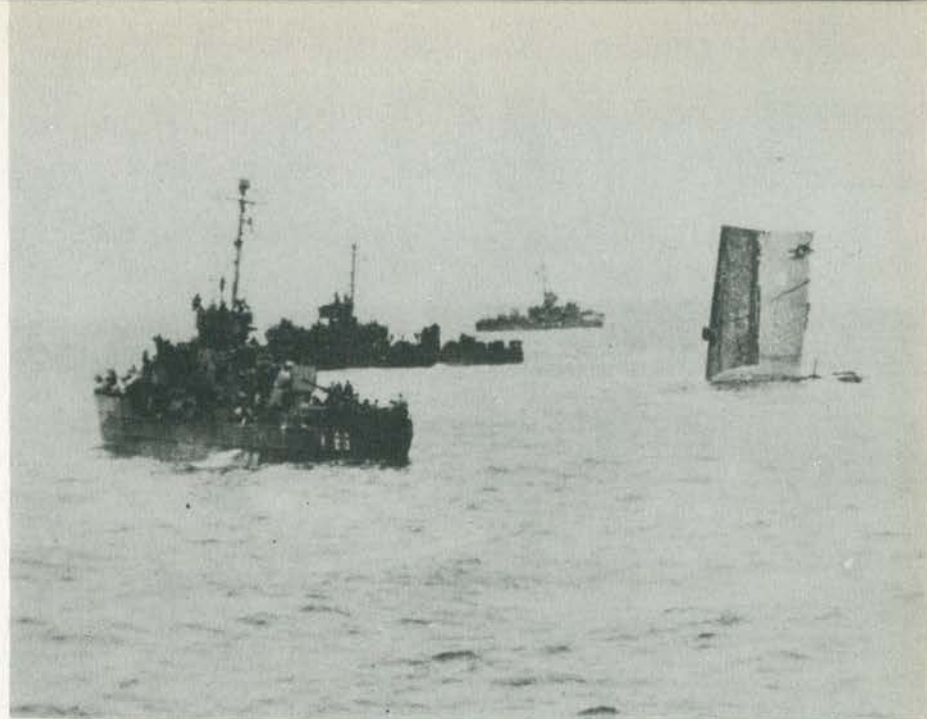
Action off Okinawa





Okinawa





1946

The last "Skipper" to command the U.S.S. BENSON (DD-421), Commander Edwin E. Lord, U.S.N., issued a "Memorandum to all hands" dated 29 August 1945, and gave his "Well Done" salutation to every man that served aboard this ship:

U.S.S. BENSON (DD-421),
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California,
29 August 1945.

MEMORANDUM TO ALL HANDS:

"YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO VICTORY"

The Commanding Officer takes great pleasure in congratulating all members of the ship's company of this command for their part in bringing about the total defeat of our enemies. I am very proud to have had the opportunity of serving with each and all of you.

The Navy's part in this war has never been insignificant; likewise, the BENSON has played no small role in contributing to the victory that is today ours. In this struggle, which has ended so gloriously, you have played an important part. In all encounters with the enemy you have given all that could be expected of you, and you have always been rewarded with brilliant success.

Since May, 1941, the BENSON has been actively engaged in this war, operating six months before Pearl Harbor against the German Navy in the Atlantic and affording protection to convoys in the heaviest of North Atlantic weather in constant danger of U-Boat attacks. Probably your greatest achievements, however, were attained during the long tours of duty in the Mediterranean, where the

JANUARY
At Charleston, S. C., for deactivation.
FEBRUARY
At Charleston, S. C., for deactivation.

ship participated so commendably in the Invasion of Sicily, the North Sicilian Operations, the Invasion of Italy at Salerno, the Invasion of Southern France, a long period of close-range shore bombardment of German batteries and other installations along the Italian coasts, and numerous aircraft and submarine attacks. Your ship was credited with the destruction of at least three German aircraft, probably two others, and the damaging of several others; participation in the sinking of a German submarine; the destruction of two German or Italian M.A.S. boats; many direct hits on all types of enemy shore installations in the Mediterranean; and not the least of your achievements, the sinking in a very short period of time with your own gunfire of approximately fifty enemy floating mines. Men serving in the BENSON were awarded twenty-five Purple Hearts; her Commanding Officers were awarded the Silver Star Medal, the Bronze Star Medal, and a Letter of Commendation from Commander, U. S. EIGHTH Fleet. The BENSON has been awarded five "Battle Stars," and was recommended for the Navy Unit Commendation as a result of our exploits off the shores of North Africa, Sicily, Italy and France.

We have not yet served in the Pacific for a comparable length of time, but we have already escorted a large carrier task group during heavy aircraft strike on Japanese-held Wake Island, and have escorted large fleet units and valuable convoys to the Philippine Islands and to Okinawa.

During participation in this war, the BENSON has steamed approximately 275,000 miles, and has withstood without serious damage practically every type of attack that the enemy has been able to mount. During operations in the Atlantic,

MARCH
Decommissioned and transferred to
INACTIVE FLEET.

Mediterranean and Pacific Theatres, the Navy and Country as a whole can well point with pride to the fact that no BENSON-escorted ship has ever been sunk or damaged as a result of enemy action, even though this vessel has escorted some of the largest and most valuable of convoys through enemy waters and at times under the most unfavorable of conditions.

I say again that I am proud to have served with all of you, and am equally as proud to have served in this destroyer which has distinguished itself against the enemy so long and so effectively.

All hands are permitted to include in their personal correspondence material about any of the operations mentioned in this letter. This is not an official Navy press release, but all hands are given permission to forward this brief resume of the deeds of your gallant destroyer to your homes and to your home town newspapers for publication as you may deem proper.

Many of the men of this command will become eligible for discharge within a short time. Return to our homes and families means much to all of us, and to you who will be leaving, I want to give you all a hearty "Well Done," and "Smooth sailing in the future." I should be very pleased to have the opportunity of serving with you again at any time. To the men who will remain on board, I know that you will continue to carry on the high standards of this vessel and the United States Navy as you have in the past. To you I also say, "Well Done." No matter what the future holds in store, I know that the proud spirit of the BENSON will continue to guide your actions.

E. E. LORD,
Lieutenant Commander, U. S. Navy,
Commanding.

Tokyo Bay — Sept. 1945



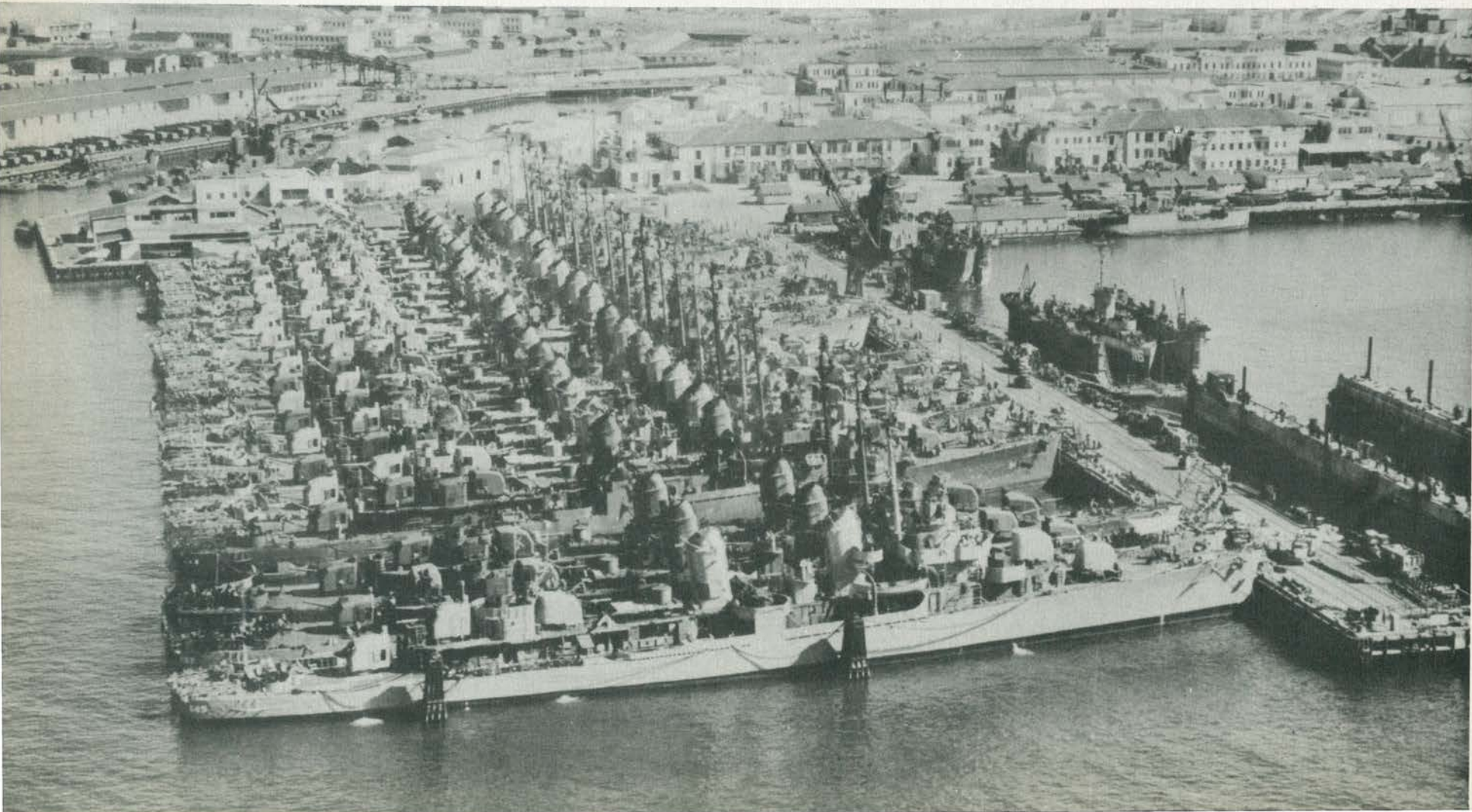
And so, in March of 1946, the BENSON came HOME. As the last shrill notes of the Boatswain's whistle piped "All Hands to Muster", the BENSON'S signal flags were lowered, and her Commission Pennant stowed away.

A friendly, puffing Navy Yard Tug came 'longside—made fast her lines, and the BENSON slid gracefully away from the dock. As both ships nosed slowly up-stream, a group of sailors stood quietly at attention, flanked by the last "Skipper" to Command the BENSON, Commander Edwin E. Lord,

U.S.N. There, on the dock, the last crew to trod the decks of the BENSON, paid their respects.

The BENSON now swings with the tide, in a friendly stream, far-removed from the chilly blasts of Arctic storms and tropical winds; far-removed from the wrath of war; safe at last in the land of birth of those who trod her decks.

The log of the BENSON is worthy of all honor and glory that has come to our arms; her story another contribution to best traditions of the United States Navy.



The BENSON shall not grow old;
Time shall not weary Her, nor the years condemn;
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,
Her crew will remember Her.



"ETERNAL FATHER, STRONG TO SAVE"

1.

Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm doth bind the restless wave,
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep;
O hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea.

2.

O Saviour, whose almighty word
The winds and waves submissive heard,
Who walked'st on the foaming deep,
And calm amidst its rage didst sleep;
O hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea.

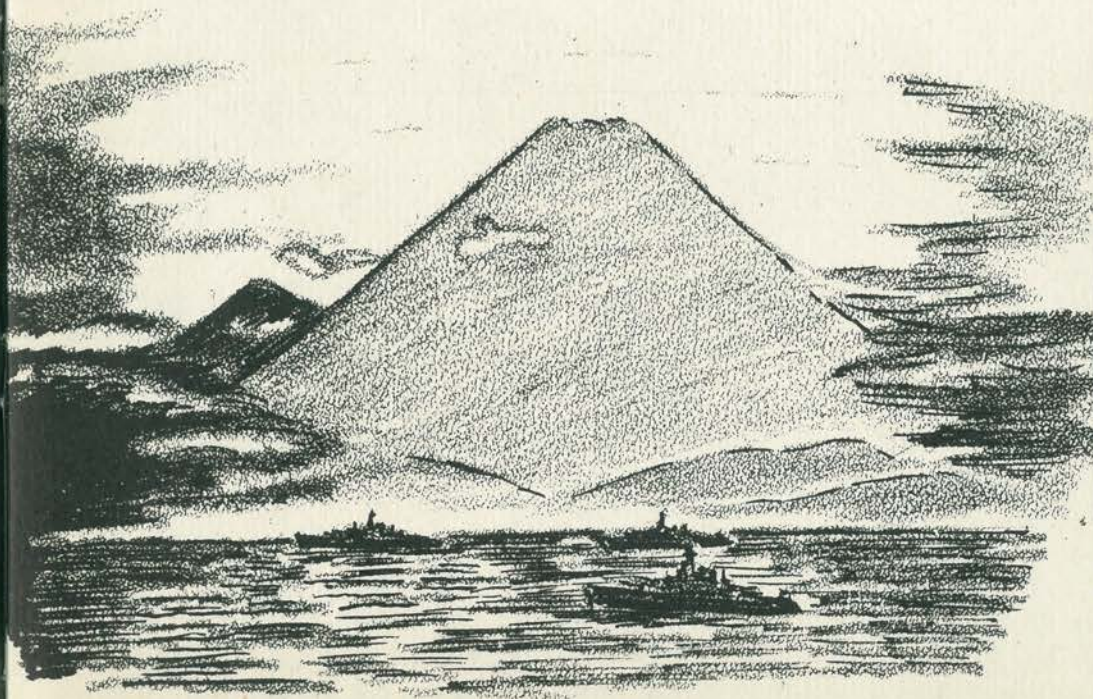
3.

O Sacred Spirit, who did'st brood
Upon the chaos dark and rude,
Who bad'st its angry tumult cease,
And gavest light and life and peace;
O hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea.

4.

O Trinity of love and power,
Our brethren shield in danger's hour;
From rock and tempest, fire and foe,
Protect them where-so-e'er they go,
Thus ever let there rise to Thee,
Glad hymns of praise from land and air and sea.

Surrender

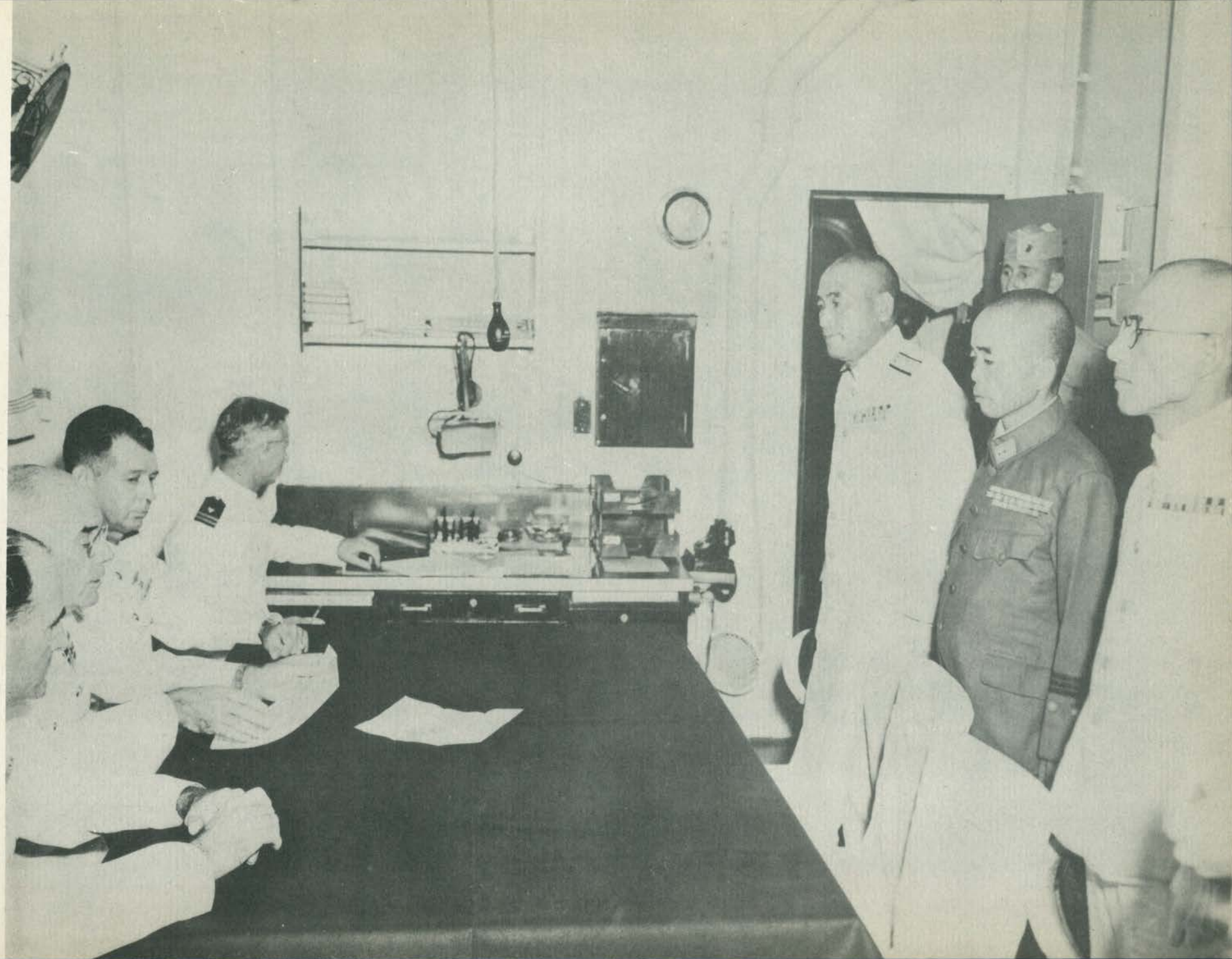


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THE NAVY AND ARMY OF U.S.A
AND THE ALLIED FORCES

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Commander R. Woodman, USN



Home Sweet Home

U.S. Navy, San Francisco

Wm.



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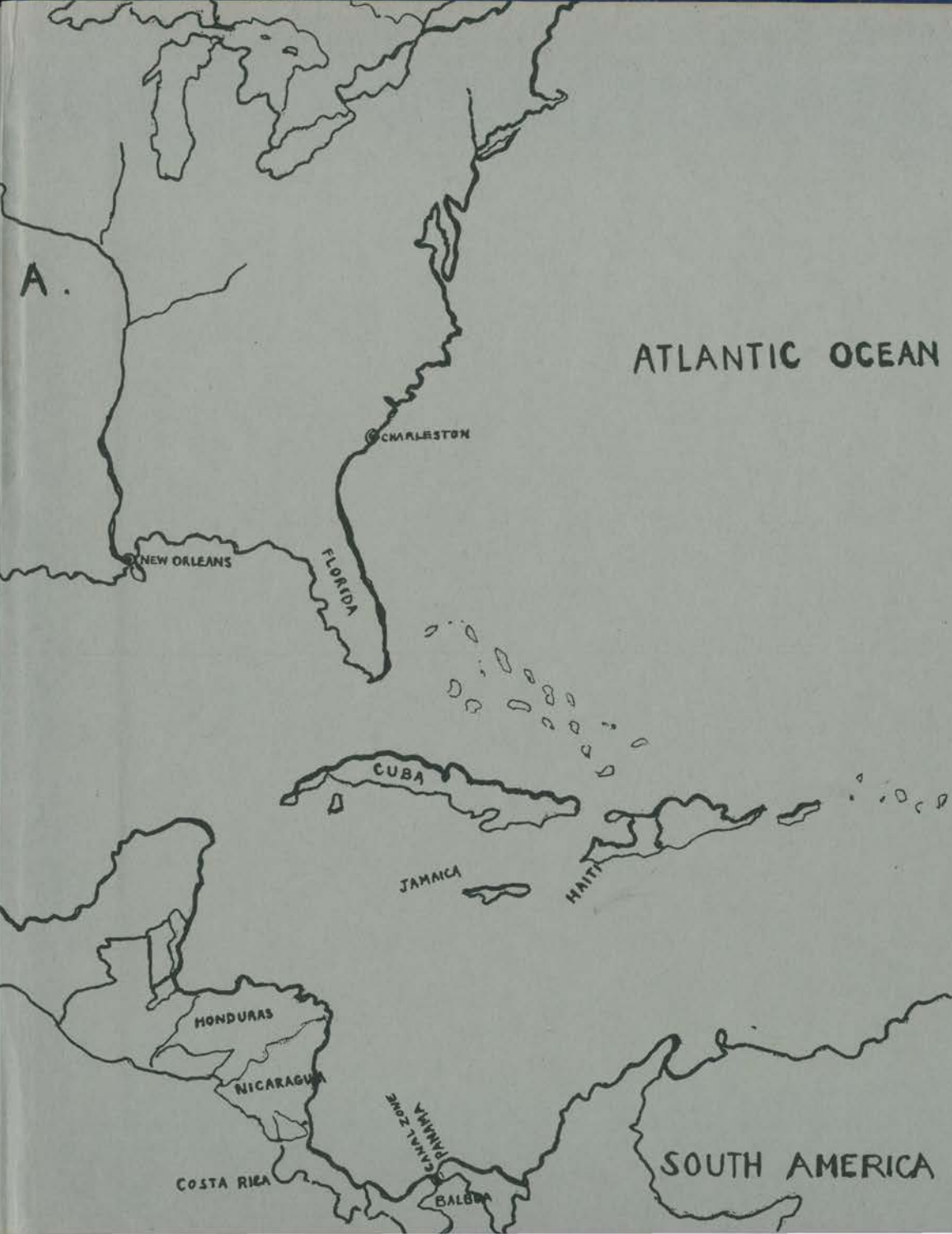
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