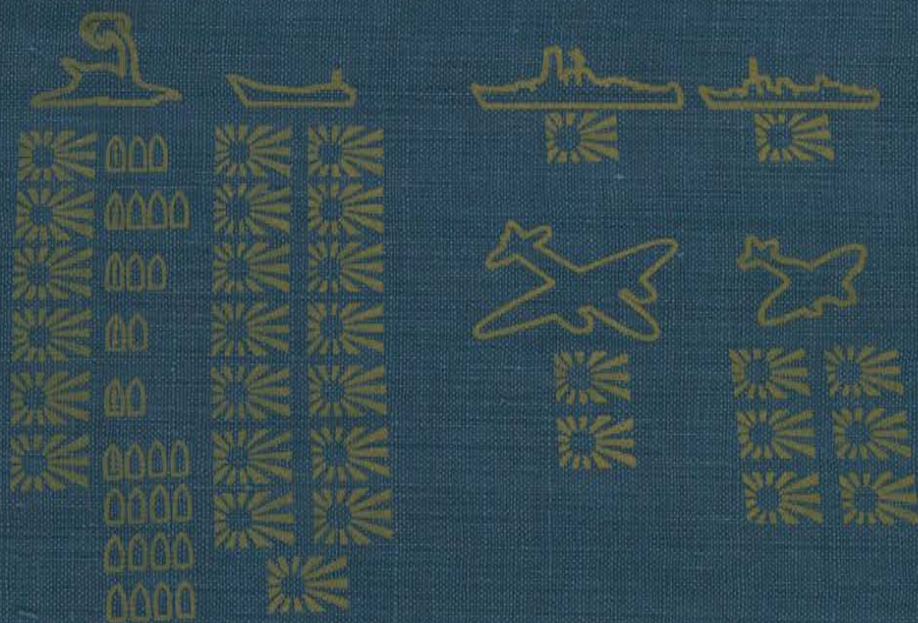


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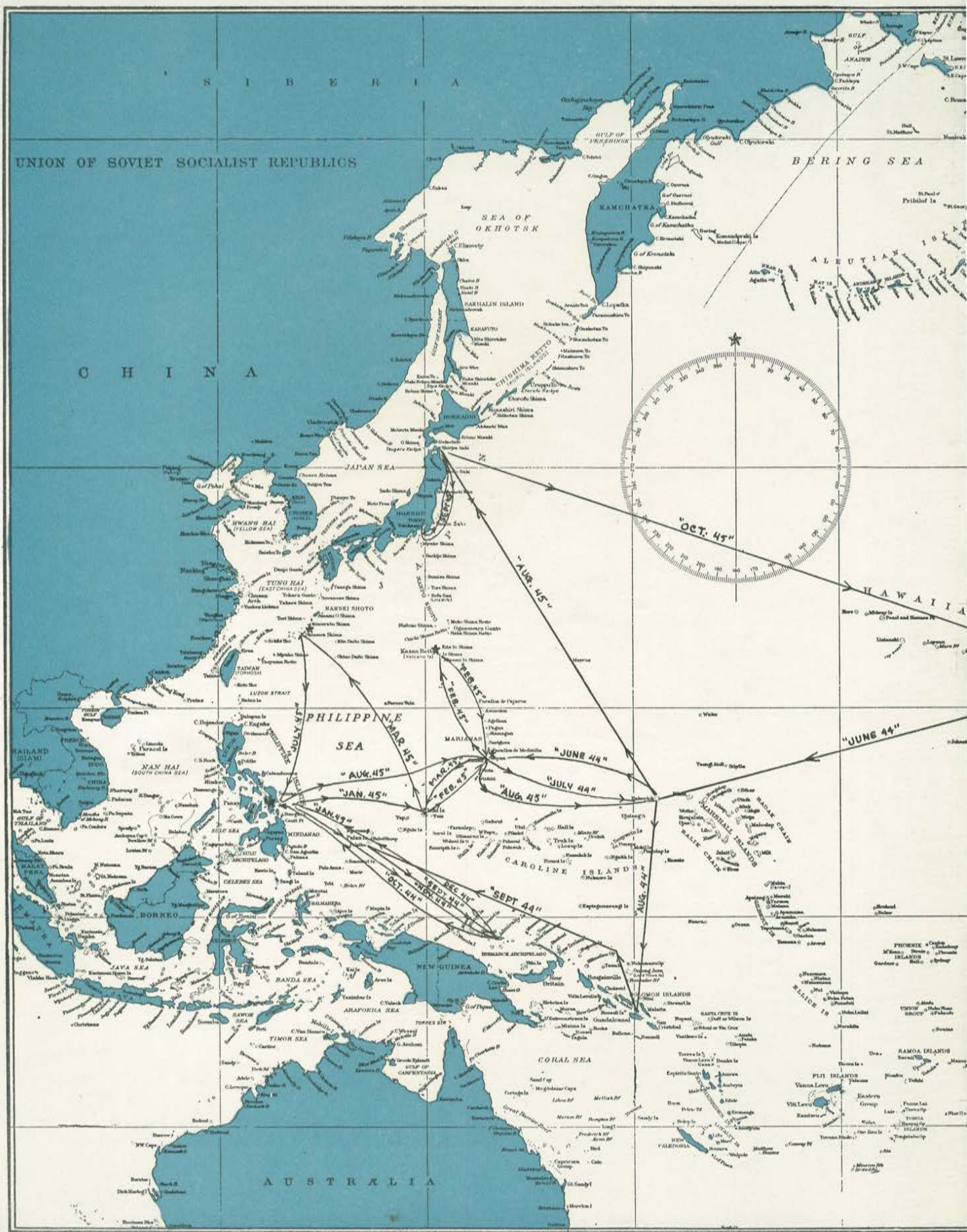
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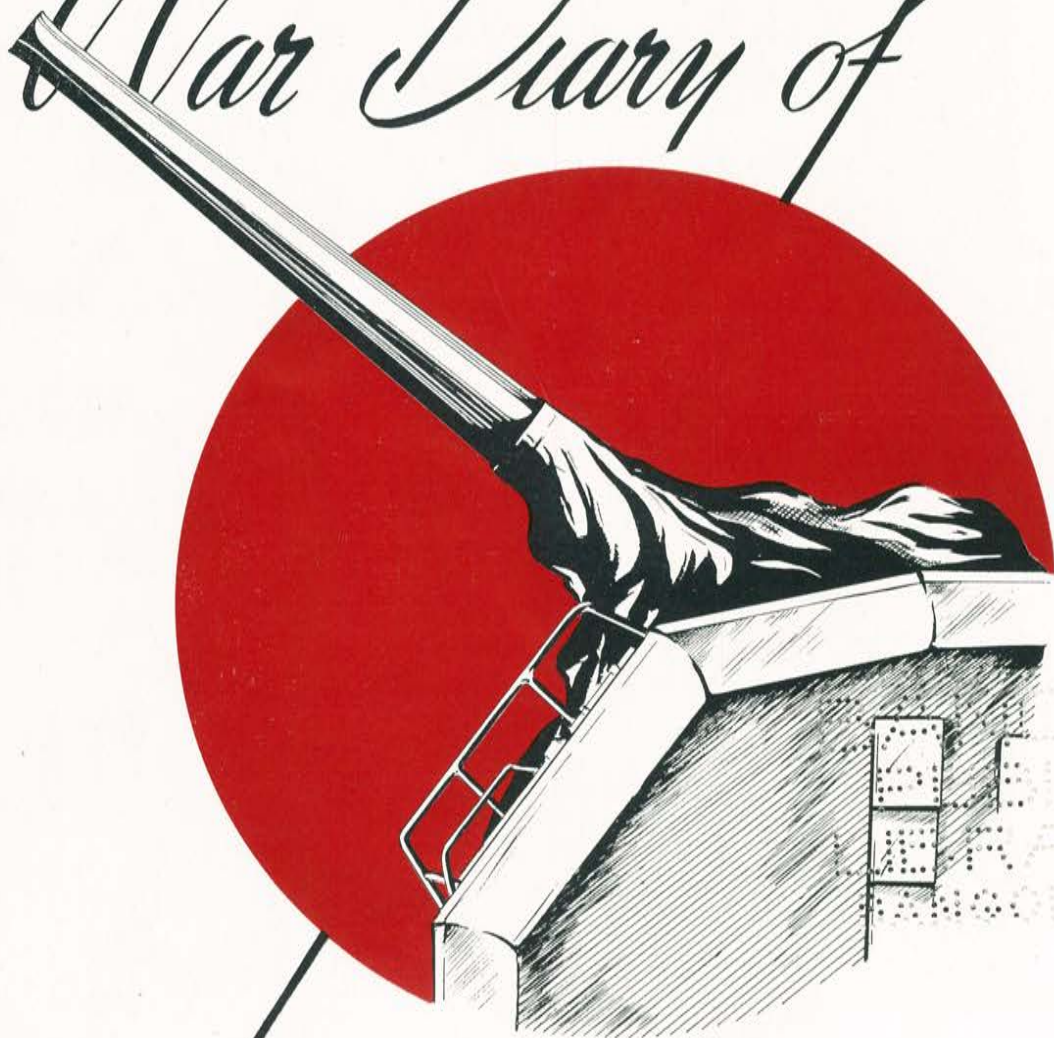
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U.S.S. H. L. Edwards



War Diary of



the **U.S.S. H.L. EDWARDS**



*LT. COMDR.
HEYWOOD L. EDWARDS*

*Commanding Officer of the USS REUBEN
JAMES, who gave his life in action against a
German submarine in the North Atlantic on
October 31, 1941*



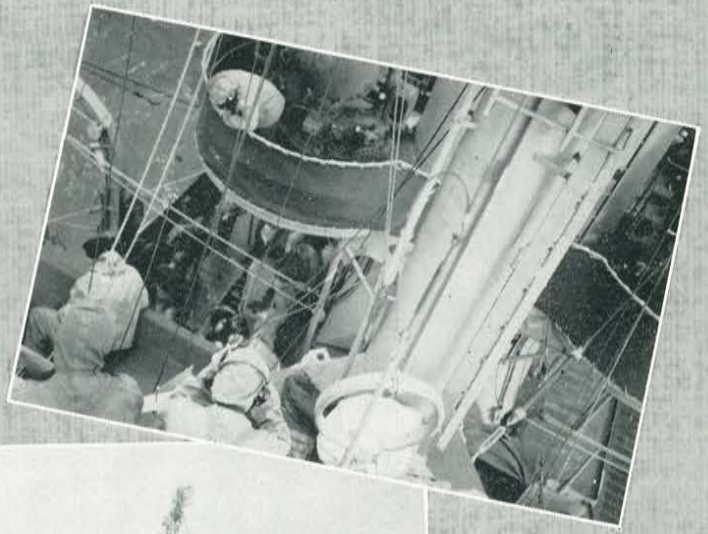
Citations and Awards

Alfred Arnett, CMM, USN, Letter of Commendation.
Lt. Albert William Beck Jr., USNR, Letter of Commendation.
Comdr. Joe Wood Boulware, USN, Navy Cross, Bronze Star.
Lt. Francis Xavier Brady, USN, Letter of Commendation.
Walter Bush, CTM, USN, Letter of Commendation.
Lt. (jg) George Robert Cain, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
Calhoun Robert Compbell, PhM3/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
Marion Cornelius Jr., S1/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
Clayton Ira Dissinger, CFC, USN, Letter of Commendation.
Lt. (j.g.) Donald Edward Easdon, USNR, Letter of Commendation (2).
Lt. William Francis Farrell, Jr., USN, Bronze Star, Letter of Commendation.
Lt. (j.g.) Robert Fleming Flott, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
Lawrence Lloyd Gellerman, Cox., USN, Letter of Commendation.
Edward Joseph Haggerty, CY, USNR, Letter of Commendation (2).
William Reid Hannah, ETM1/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
Lt. William Dickinson Hart Jr., USNR, Letter of Commendation.
John James Hoeffler, ETM1/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
Paul Christopher Holland, MoM3/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.

Lt. (j.g.) Joseph Thomas Johnson, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 George J. Levins, S1/c, USNR, Bronze Star.
 Robert James Litts, SM3/c, USN, Letter of Commendation.
 Felix Anthony Lombardi, PhM2/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 Lt. Frank Sebastian Marino, (MC), USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 Lawrence Warren Thomas McCabe, RM3/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 John Jay Merrill, SM2/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 George Mlay, MM3/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 Charles Moody, S1/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 William Henry Moran Jr., CWT, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 Melvin Samuel Naill, CGM, USN, Letter of Commendation.
 Lt. (j.g.) Roy Eugene Nelson, USN, Letter of Commendation.
 Lt. (j.g.) Robert Gordon Orr, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 Charles Luther Parsons Jr., RdM2/c, USN, Letter of Commendation.
 Lt. Charles Michael Pellegrini, USNR, Bronze Star.
 John Daniel Peterson Jr., S2/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 Robert Bibson Pike, CEM, USN, Letter of Commendation.
 Joseph Pinker, SC3/c, USNR, Bronze Star.
 Lt. Donald Bodinar Rennie, USNR, Bronze Star, Letter of Commendation.
 Ira L. Robinson, CTM, USN, Letter of Commendation.
 Harvey Woodrow Shelton, S2/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 Comdr. Albert Lee Shepherd, USN, Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star.
 Lt. Stuart Wendell Shore, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 James Hillery Thompson, Cox., USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 William Foster Tull, RdM2/c, USNR, Letter of Commendation.
 Lt. William Fowler Vose, USN, Bronze Star, Letter of Commendation.
 Lt. (j.g.) Jack Walter Wilde, USNR, Letter of Commendation.



The Ship



War Diary

U.S.S. HEYWOOD L. EDWARDS (DD663)

1944

JANUARY...26...*Heywood L. Edwards* commissioned at 1500 at Boston Navy Yard—Commander Joe W. Boulware, U.S.N., in command.

FEBRUARY...25...Underway, enroute to Bermuda, B.W.I., for shakedown period. 27...Arrived Bermuda.

MARCH...26...Underway for Navy Yard, Boston. 27...Arrived Boston Navy Yard.

APRIL...7...Underway in company with *Miami* enroute to Casco Bay, Maine. 8...Anchored in Hussey Sound, Portland, Maine. 14...Underway with *Miami* enroute to Boston, Massachusetts. 15...Arrived Boston. 16...Underway with *Houston*, *Miami* and others enroute to Panama Canal. 22...Began transit of Panama Canal. 23...Underway with *Houston*, *Miami*, *Monssen* and *Vincennes* to San Diego, California. 30...Arrived San Diego.

MAY...1...Underway with *Kitkun Bay* and others to Pearl Harbor. 8...Arrived Pearl Harbor. 14...Attached to force under Vice Admiral Turner. Conducted fire support detail of Kaunakakai, Molokai and Keana Point. 29...Underway to Eniwetok, Marshalls, in company with *Rocky Mount* and others.

JUNE...8...Arrived Eniwetok. 11...Underway enroute to Saipan, Marianas Islands. 15...Arrived Saipan area; assumed patrol of unloading area. Enemy air attack by four "Vals" driven off. 17...Enemy air attack while fueling at sea from *Saranac*. 18-20...Performed screening duties for *Rocky Mount* and others. 22...Commenced fire support duties against positions off Garapan, Saipan, in company with *Melvin*, *Honolulu* and *Waller*. 23...Assumed fire support duties off Tanapag Harbor and Mucho Point. 24...Enemy air attack driven off over transport area. 30...Drove off 2 night attacks by single Bogies.

JULY...1...On illumination detail. Fired on 2 enemy bombers attacking beach 2-3...Harrassing fire detail. 4...Repelled air attack on ships in southeastern area of Saipan. 7...While on Fire Support mission off Tanapag Harbor, swimmers were observed off the Northern Reefs encircling harbor. Troops were of the 105th Infantry cut off from their lines. Whaleboat and Gig made four trips, recovered 44 enlisted men and a Jap prisoner. Enemy shore battery landed shells close aboard, no damage sustained. 8-13...Harrassing fire detail. Counter-battery fire encountered on 9th. 14...200 dead bodies of Japanese seen floating in vicinity. 15-17...Screened carrier force in air bombardment strikes against enemy. Friendly plane crashed in water during airborne operations; rescued pilot. Air raid driven off. 19...Destroyed several buildings, gun emplacements. Bombarded Tinian town by night. 20-21...Tinian Town still under bombardment. Relieved by *Yarnall*. Bombarded caves near airfield. 22-23...Patrolling

screening station. 24-25...Observation plane spotted targets in and nearby Tinian Town. Took direct fire on targets off northern Tinian. 28...Ship commended upon hits attained on Tinian in "Reverse Slope Firing". 29...Underway with *A. W. Grant* to Eniwetok, Marshalls.

AUGUST...1...Arrived Eniwetok. 18...Underway to Purvis Bay, Florida Islands. 20...Pollywogs converted into trusty Shellbacks as ship crossed the Equator at 1300. 22...Arrived Florida Islands. 29...Screening *Maryland*, *Honolulu* off Cape Esperanca, Guadalcanal. 30-31...Moored in Purvis Bay, Florida Islands.

SEPTEMBER...6...Underway to Palau, Western Carolines with *Louisville* and *Marcus Island*. 11...Forces dispersed for offensive against Palau Island Group. 12...Commenced bombardment of Peleliu Island. 13...Supported underwater demolition teams with fire designated upon shore targets. 15...Supported assault troops, maintained smoke screen successfully blocking enemy observation of landings. 17...Placed call fire on site of Jap counter-offensive. 18...Shore bombardment over sloping ridge. 19...In company with *Maryland* and *Portland* while under air attack by 2 single plane raids. 20-22...Call fire; patrolling; screening various units of the bombardment group. 23...Illuminating detail; Jap barges reported in lagoon west of Ngargarsuil Island. One barge sunk and others driven to beach where surprise air strike destroyed scattering barges. Direct hits made on all designated targets. 25...Underway to Kossol Passage, Palau Islands. 28...Patrolling off Ngesebus Island. 29...Underway for Seeadler Harbor, Manus Island, Admiralty Islands in company with the *Honolulu*, *Indianapolis*, and others.

OCTOBER...1...Arrived Seeadler Harbor. 12...Underway from Seeadler Harbor for bombardment and invasion of Leyte in company with units of the 7th Fleet. 18...Approached the entrance to Surigao Straits, P. I. Supported underwater demolition teams. 19...Maintained harrassing fire upon Dulag and surrounding territory. Under fire from batteries on the beach. 20...Covered initial landings in the southern beaches off Dulag. *Honolulu* hit by aerial torpedo. 21-22...Alerted by 5 separate air raid warnings. 23...Frequent air raid warnings; provided smoke screen over transport area most of the day and night. 24...Frequent alerts. Entered south Surigao Strait in battle formation preparing to meet enemy with flank composed of *Mississippi*, *West Virginia*, *California*, *Tennessee*, *Colorado*, *Pennsylvania*, and supporting destroyers. 25...0001: Enemy force was attacked by PT squadrons and destroyer squadron 54 down the strait to the south. Enemy force approached this ship at 34,000 yards; orders received for battle line to begin fire at 26,000 yards and for destroyers to begin torpedo runs at same time. 0351: Speed reached 30 knots in port attack of what appeared to be a BB. First and Second sections spent their torpedoes. Section 3 led by this ship fired at a distance of 6500 yards. *Leutze* fired half salvo; *Bennion* full salvo; this ship half salvo at 0359. Commenced retirement upon completion of firing, making funnel smoke to

conceal movements. During retirement this ship was taken under enemy fire and several enemy projectiles landed close aboard with one shell landing in our wake as retirement began. The following morning a destroyer of the *Asashio* class lay dead in the water and was immediately taken under fire by this ship and sunk with many survivors preferring death to capture. 26... Patrolled entrance to Leyte Gulf. 27... Joined group to proceed to aid escort carrier force. 31... Relieved *Ammen* on picket patrol; fired on 'Francis'. No apparent damage.

NOVEMBER...1...Joined *Mississippi*, *California*, *Pennsylvania*, *Phoenix*, *Boise*, *HMAS Shropshire*, and *Nashville*. 'Betty' made single attack attempt in what appeared to be a torpedo run on this ship but five inch battery forced plane to turn sharply. No hits scored. 2... On radar picket off Dinagat Island. Air raid of 5 planes closed formation and attacked DE on picket. One plane, a 'Val', came directly at this ship but turned away when five inch bursts landed too close for comfort. 5-9... Patrolling south Surigao Strait. No incidents. 10-15... Patrolled off Leyte Gulf. 25... Joined *Pennsylvania*, *HMAS Warramunga* enroute to Seeadler Harbor, Admiralty Islands. 29... Arrived Seeadler Harbor.

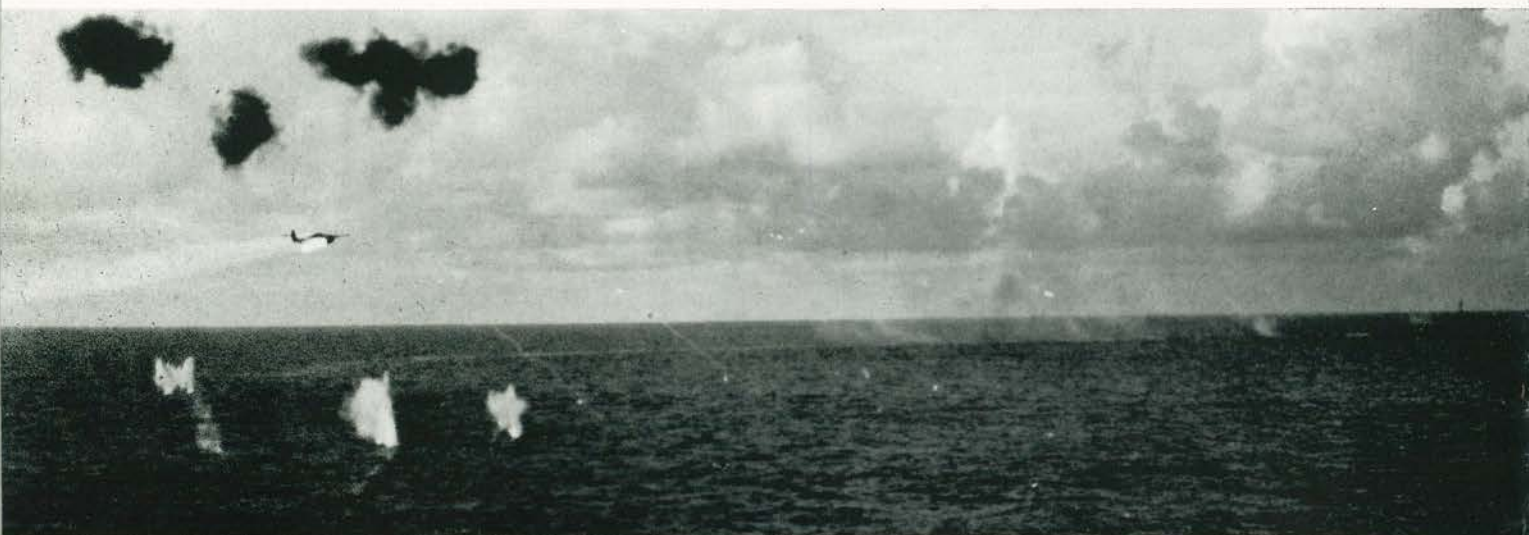
DECEMBER...15... Underway with *California* enroute Kossol Passage, Palau Islands. 18... Arrived Kossol Passage. 25... Commander A. L. Shepherd, U. S. Navy, relieved Commander J. W. Boulware, U. S. Navy, as Commanding Officer.

JANUARY...1... Underway to Leyte Gulf in company with the force of 2 BB's 2 CA's, 1 CL, 8 CVE's. 3... Entered the Mindanao sea enroute to Lingayen Gulf. 4... Formation attacked by enemy planes with several 'Vals' and 'Jakes' making suicide attacks against carriers. 6... Heaviest air attacks by Japanese suicide pilots. This ship in company with *Portland*, *Columbia*, *California*, *Pennsylvania* and *Colorado* bombarded landlocked bay area where sporadic enemy air attacks turned the area into concentrated flak. Ship assisting in splashing two enemy planes, one nicking the *R. P. Leary* on her No. 2 gun. 7... Bombarded the Agno river area and provided close fire support to the beach reconnaissance. 8... Harrassed enemy beachheads. 9... Provided left wing for assault troops that landed virtually unopposed. Provided bombardment facilities

for group moving east toward the mouth of the Dagupan River. Simultaneous suicide attacks against *Mississippi* and *HMAS Australia*. 10... Fired on suicide headed in steep dive for *Sauflly*. Plane missed and crashed into water. Retired with task force to cover beachhead and re-supply convoys. 11-16... Cruising in company with Task Group covering approaches to Lingayan Gulf. 17... Recovered pilot off *Lunga Point*. Joined *New Mexico* entering Lingayen Gulf. 22... Underway with *California*, *New Mexico*, *Barton*, *Lowry*, *Newcomb*, *Leutze*, *Ingraham*, *Bennion*, *R. P. Leary* to Ulithi in western Carolines Islands. 27... Arrived Ulithi, anchored Urushi anchorage.

FEBRUARY...10... Underway for Saipan, Marianas Islands. 12... Arrived Saipan. 14... Underway, enroute to Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands. 16... Took position off heavy ships for bombardment of Iwo Jima. 18... Plane from Chichi Jima closed this ship astern and dropped bomb alongside *Chandler* (DMS-9). No firing was possible. Another plane glided in past this ship low on water and struck the *Gamble*. 19... Marines hit beach. Enemy mortar fire straddled bow of this ship. Landings made at great cost as enemy emplacements bogged down landing craft. 20... Provided call fire for beach parties. 22-24... Provided call fire and picket duty for Northwest sector of Iwo. On 24th of February, *Bryant* (DD665) rammed this ship on starboard quarter opening a hole 3 feet wide, 12 feet fore and aft. 25... Provided harrassing fire until ordered to repair hull damage. 27... Completed temporary repairs and took departure from Iwo Jima to Saipan for hull repairs.

MARCH...2... Arrived Garapan Harbor, Saipan—ordered to Tanapag Harbor for repairs. 9... Departed for Ulithi Atoll in Western Caroline Islands. 21... Underway with task force enroute Okinawa, Ryukus Islands. 25... Supported underwater demolition teams and beach reconnaissance in offensive against Kerama Retto. Expended almost 2000 rounds during operation of initial landings on islands southwest of Okinawa, harrassing enemy positions. 27... Fired on 'Val' that later crashed into *Nevada*. Fired on 'Francis' which crashed 1500 yards astern of this ship. Picked up pilot. 28... Patrolled Ie Shima. Assisted destroyer under attack by enemy suicide boat. 29... Harrassed Ie



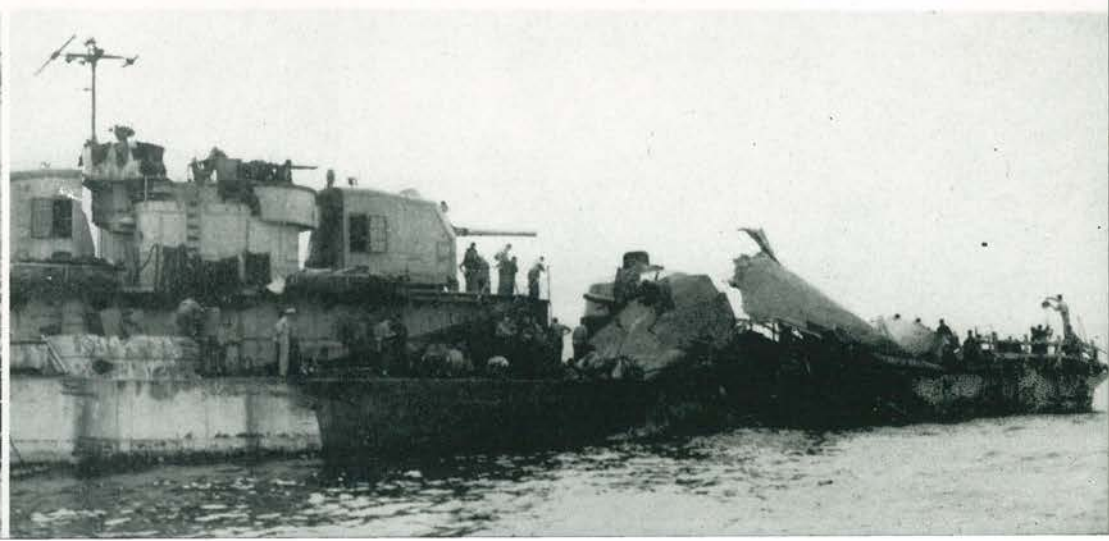
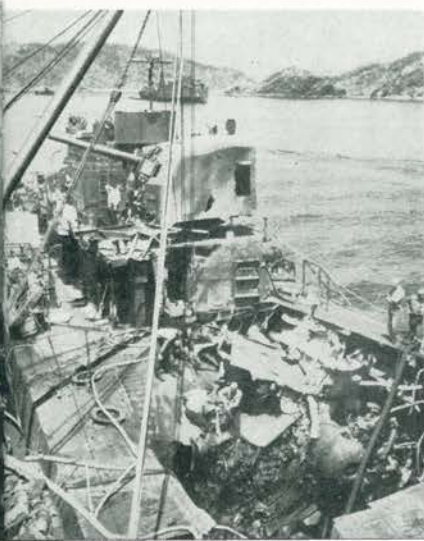
Shima airfield. Attacked by single plane which was splashed. 30...Destroyed mine which was in center of patrol area taken by this ship during the night patrol. Bombarded Naha town and airfield with hits credited on 4 grounded planes. 31...Harrassed Okinawa Island and retired with group.

APRIL...1...Two enemy planes heckled formation and this ship fired on one. Joined task unit to form pre-landing bombardment. Beach parties swarmed ashore on Yontan airfield. 2...Plane closed formation and passed port side rather close, made a suicide run on *Lindsay* but crashed 500 yards astern of this ship. 3...Harrassed Naha town, and Matubu Peninsula. 5...Screened *Mobile* off Nago Wan for fire support duties. 6...Violent air attacks developed on all portions of Okinawa as 4 different raids rained bombs to the north and several radar pickets were hit. *Pringle* was sunk seconds after the *Stanley* received the first low attack of a Baka bomb. Fire support discontinued to meet violent air attacks now closing to immediate locality. Four 'Judy's' approached dead ahead and the *Leutze* opened fire. Planes continued to close this ship and within 90 seconds after this ship opened fire, all 4 planes were splashed. Opened fire on low flying plane that almost immediately found its mark on the *Newcomb*. Shifted fire onto another that suicided another destroyer and noted *Newcomb* disappearing in pall of a violent explosion, emerging some time later dead in the water smoking heavily. *Leutze* went to the *Newcomb's* assistance and then this ship fired on another plane that successfully hit both the *Leutze* and the *Newcomb*. 7...*San Francisco* escaped torpedo fired at her by Kamikaze who hit the cruiser himself. Continued screening *West Virginia*. Commenced fire upon low flying plane that crashed into *Maryland*. 8...Screened *St. Louis* in bombarding Naha town. 9...Screened *Minneapolis* in deep fire support mission. 10...Harrassed Naha in company with *Leary*. 11...Relieved *William D. Porter* on harrassing mission on Naha. 12...Commenced call fire with *Biloxi* despite annoying air attacks in vicinity. 13...Call fire with *Portland*. 14...Assigned close fire support with *Birmingham* and *Portland* in operation against Ie Shima. Heckler raids throughout the night. 15...Joined Ie Shima group and during

night fired at 'Zeke' that closed this ship. Plane was hit and crashed immediately. Bombarded Ie Shima prior to landings and sporadic air attacks developed. 17...Detached from Ie Shima operation and bombarded Kezu Point. Joined *San Francisco*. 19...Relieved *Picking* on bombardment of Nakagasaki Wan (Buckner Bay) in Yonabaru area in preparation for troop push to the south. 20...Call fire with *W. D. Porter*, *St. Louis*, and *Hutchins*. 23...*Barton* and *Irwin* made sonar contacts on either side of us and we were directed to assist *Irwin*. *Irwin* and *Barton* dropped charges. 25...Relieved *New Orleans* on fire support duties. 27...Screened *Tennessee* in fire support mission. Heckler raids kept area alive with possible raids on different section of island. 30...Escorted *Tennessee* and *Wichita* to Nakagasaki Wan (Buckner Bay).

MAY...1...Harrassed enemy lines from Nakagasaki Wan supporting forces ashore. 2-3...Continued harrassing enemy lines. 4-5...Suicide boats made determined attack on ships in Nakagasaki Wan and explosions were seen when boats were hit by concentrated 40MM fire. Night snooper raids kept area alive all night. 7...Fired at enemy installations in company with *Leary* and *Arkansas* in Nakagasaki Wan. 8...At noon all ships in Okinawa area fire a full salvo in celebration of V-E Day. Patrolled S. W. portion of Okinawa harrassing enemy lines. 9...Relieved *Longshaw* for day firing. 11...Held up firing in company with *Colorado* and *Beale* because of expected heavy air raid that was handled courageously by the picket line to the north. Resumed fire on Naha. 15...Provided call fire for beach parties. 16-17...Fired in support of artillery barrage on Naha. 18...At 0740 *Longshaw* (DD559) reported she had gone aground on a reef southwest of Naha airfield. Jap shore battery opened up on the *Longshaw* and she immediately commenced counter-fire. After taking several hits the *Longshaw* blew up violently. 9 Men blown off *Longshaw* were treated for injuries aboard this ship. 19-20...Harrassed and bombarded Naha. 21...Relieved by *Vincennes* and commenced fire in Nakagasaki Wan over Yonobaru village. 23...Fired with *Vicksburg* over Yonobaru. 24...Fired against southern Okinawa. 25...During Chinen Peninsula. 5...Two bogies reported in the 25th enemy planes continued to hit area. 31...

THEY COULDN'T BE SUNK



Firing mission in Nakagasuku Wan over Yonobaru.

JUNE...1... Fired in company with *Laws*, *Portland* and *West Virginia* on Chinen Saki. 2-3... In company with *Vincennes*, *Barton* and *Rooks* bombarding Chinen Peninsula. 5... Two bogies reported in area close to Okinawa; suicided into *Louisville* and *Mississippi* who were 8 miles south of this ship. 6-11... Harrassed enemy lines in company with spotting plane. Destroyed caves in southern portion of Chinen Peninsula. 12... Call fire on Naha. 13... Provided aerial cover for task group south of Senaga Shima. 14... First quiet night in over a month was spent at Hagushi anchorage. 15... Performed flycatcher duty with *Twiggs* and *Callaghan*. 16... Flycatcher duty east of southern part of island. 17... Fired on 200 Jap troops which an LCI could observe moving on the beach. 19... Usual night illumination with harrassing fire on troops ashore. 23... Accompanied *Guest* for night mission, illuminating. 24... LCI 549 rammed this vessel at bow denting bullnose but no serious damage sustained. 26... Steaming in company with *Compston*, *Gainard*, 3 LST's, and accompanying minesweepers to Kume Shima for bombardment of Zental town. 27... In company with *Fullam* and *Claxton* to relieve *Ausburne* on radar picket guarding planes from Saki Shima.

JULY...2... *Cunningham* relieved this ship on radar picket. 24... Left in company with *Leary* and *Aulick* to assume duties on radar picket. Two planes of our combat patrol crashed nearby and *Leary* proceeded to rescue survivors. 27... Relieved by *Laws*, *Dyson*, and *Callaghan* on radar picket. 28... Proceeded with *Cabildo* and *Leary* to Leyte Island. *Callaghan* sunk during evening raid on picket station we left. 31... Entered Surigao Strait and San Pedro anchorage in Leyte Gulf.

AUGUST...1... Crew had liberty at Osmena Center on Samar Island for first time since departure from Ulithi on March 21. Ship has spent 128 days on the

forward area in direct contact with the enemy every day. 2... Enroute Saipan with *Leary*. 10-14... In inner Apra Harbor installing new gun barrels. 15... President Truman broadcast that the Japanese had agreed to surrender under the Potsdam Declaration. 16... Proceeded with *President Polk* from Guam to Eniwetok Island in the Marshalls. 19... Arrived Eniwetok. Ship is to proceed to Adak in the Aleutians to join the 9th Fleet. 20... Orders cancelled. Instead this ship escorts the *Chandeleur* to the 29th. 29... Underway with *Chandeleur* to the Ominato Naval Base on the island of Honshu in Japan. Occupation with the 9th Fleet operating in the northern portion of the Japanese home islands.

SEPTEMBER...2... Heard broadcast of the official capitulation of Japan in Tokyo Bay aboard the *U. S. S. Missouri*. This ship still enroute Ominato Naval Base for occupation of area. 7-11... Patrolling eastern entrance to Tsugaru Strait between Japanese home islands of Hokkaido and Honshu. 12... Entered the straits at noon with *Leary*, *Benion* and *Wainwright*. Anchored in Ominato Ko. 19... Underway with Japanese convoy escorting them to Tokyo. 22... Arrived Tokyo, disposed of convoy. 23... Departed Tokyo escorting *Tippecanoe* back to Ominato Naval Base. 26... Arrived Ominato Bay. 29... First official flag raising ceremonies in northern Honshu made by Rear Admiral Denebrink.

OCTOBER...1-7... Patrolling Tsugaru Straits. 8... Relieved as entrance patrol. Proceeded to anchorage at Ominato. 11... Typhoon that ravaged Okinawa hit northern-most portion of Japan. 13... Departed for Hachinohe, Japan, to dispose of Jap ammo. 14... Arrived Hachinohe. 19... Relieved by *A. W. Grant*. Proceeded to Ominato. 22... Departed from Ominato for Pearl Harbor, T. H. 31... Arrived Pearl Harbor.

NOVEMBER...3... Departed Pearl Harbor enroute Seattle, Washington. 10... Arrived Seattle, Washington.

COMDESRON 56

CAPTAIN H. F. STOUT



COMMODORE H. N. SMOOT







The Battle of Surigao Straits

IN THE epic battle of Surigao Straits in the Philippines the destroyers had their day. And, they made the most of it.

The *USS Heywood L. Edwards* was part of the United States Naval task force which sailed South in the Leyte Gulf on the night of October 24, 1944, to oppose entry of a powerful Japanese striking force. In company with other destroyers, several cruisers and so-called "old" battleships, the *Heywood L. Edwards* took her station in the battle disposition and began the long night's vigil.

Officers and men were familiar with the relative strength and proximity of the Japanese—and many envisioned a master squeeze play by the enemy. Nevertheless, it seemed there were few men aboard the *Heywood L. Edwards* that night who actually believed the Japanese would sail blithely into an almost obvious trap—one presenting such perfect tactical situations for the Americans.

Few men could believe that, despite claims of the Tokyo Radio, the Japanese command could be so misinformed as to dispatch such a force as they were sending against the American units in Leyte Gulf. Even persistent air attacks during preceding days had failed to diminish to any appreciable degree the combat efficiency of the United States forces.

So the *Edwards* lay silent in the inky night, watched and waited. If they came—they hadn't at Saipan or Palau—the ship would probably achieve that dream of all destroyers—a torpedo run on the enemy battle line. It was with mixed feeling, then, that she waited. Her men had healthy respect for Japanese guns—and preliminary reports from PT boats indicated that at least two and possibly three battleships were in the enemy disposition.

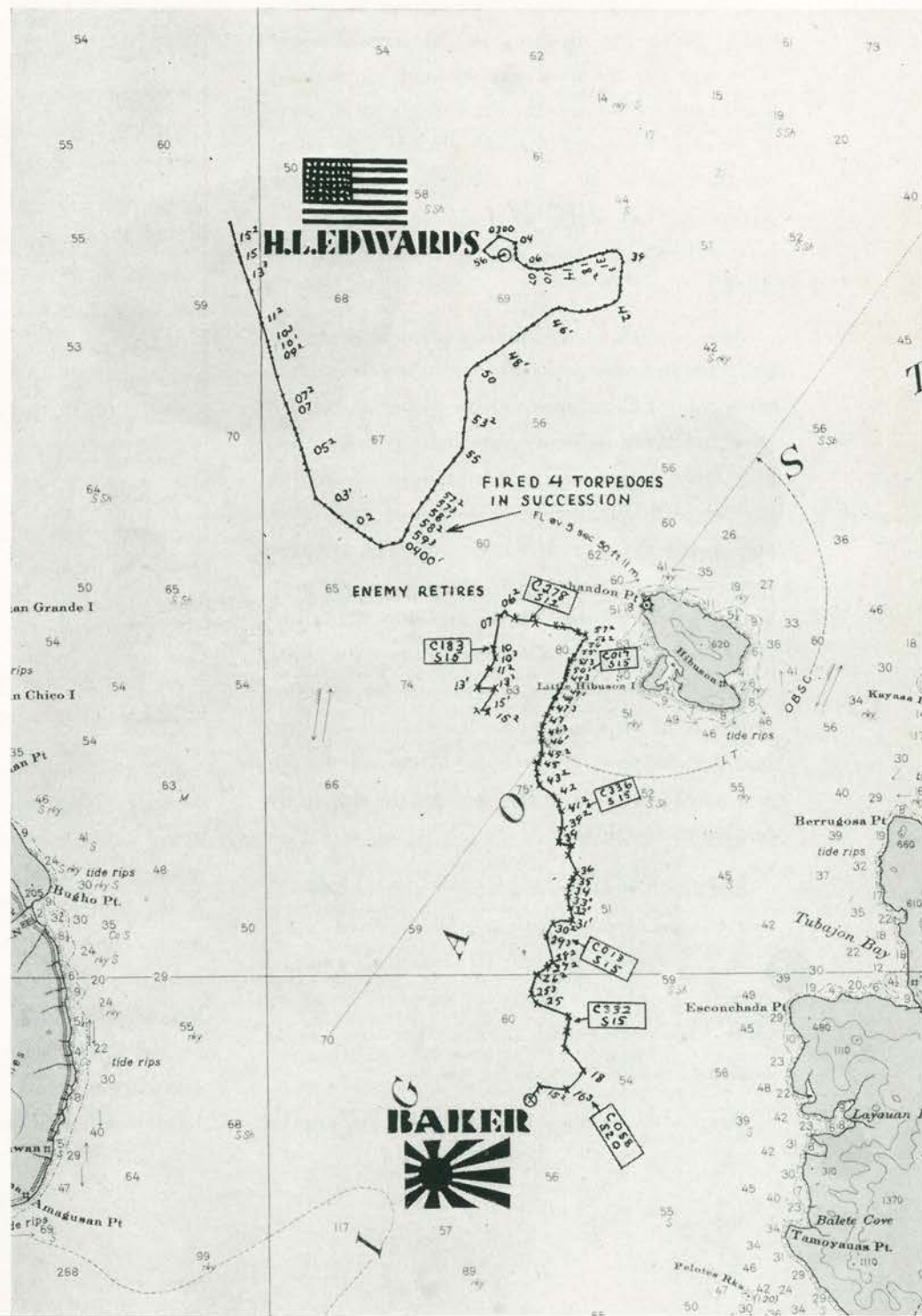
Just before midnight on the 24th, the task force commander ordered all ships of the battle force to man their battle stations. The Japs were still coming

and coming strong, despite rapier thrusts by American PT boats. Up ahead of where the *Heywood L. Edwards* lay to in her station, other destroyers reported contact with unidentified forces, and early on the morning of the 25th, some destroyers were ordered to move in and launch a torpedo attack.

On the *Edwards* tension mounted as she monitored radio reports from these attacking destroyers. The first two ships in against the enemy reported certain

and possible torpedo hits and told of at least two very large enemy warships in company with lesser craft.

Then the *Heywood L. Edwards* detected leading enemy units. By this time the ship's lookouts were reporting huge orange flares on the horizon, where American torpedoes were driven home into Japanese hulls. It began to look as though the *Edwards* and her sisters would miss out on the opportunity to take



active part in what was obviously developing into one of the great surface battles of this war.

But even as this scuttlebut was making the rounds, the Commander picked up his transmitting microphone and said quietly: "This is what we've been waiting for," and the ship was on her way.

The *Heywood L. Edwards* moved out in front to develop an attack on the enemy's left flank. The speed mounted and so did the tight breathlessness throughout the ship.

"Just like in the movies," an operator croaked—and he had to clear his throat twice before the words came out. But the most obvious and yet unusual factor of the attack was the dead silence in all parts of the ship. Even the intercom circuits were silent and the roar of the water along the hull and the increasing howl of the wind all but drowned out quiet orders to the helm and the engine room telegraph.

Speed was increased; the ship quivered as she led the other destroyers slightly to the right into the firing course. The range came in—closer and closer. Overhead there suddenly rumbled the first salvos from huge, sixteen-inch guns behind the *Edwards* as the "obsolete" battleships—veterans of Pearl Harbor—began their murderous revenge. The Japanese were prompt to reply and sent answering salvos overhead searching for the United States ships but falling short. And still, on the *Edwards* the range dwindled, and now the only sounds were curt maneuvering orders as the torpedoes swung their blunt snouts out into the darkness. The muzzles of the gun barrels rose and fell silently as they pointed the way to the leading enemy ships.

And then it was time. A destroyer with the *Edwards* softly asked permission to fire. She received it. Another destroyer astern of the *Edwards* made a similar request. Back aft a destroyer reported torpedoes away—and sixty seconds later another destroyer announced her "fish" were in the water.

Twenty-two minutes from the time the original

attack order was given, the *Heywood L. Edwards* fired—and they didn't go. A split second later, however, sweating torpedomen "kicked out" the recalcitrant "fish," and the ship cheered.

Now there was time to think and the first and only thought was unanimously "to get the hell out of here."

As her torpedoes leaped into the sea, the *Edwards* began to turn toward the North, toward sanctuary. Already salvos from the Japanese were coming close. As she leaned into her sharp right-hand turn a heavy shell lit directly in her wake. Moments later another near miss smashed into the sea off her bow—and they felt the spray from that one topside. There was no mistaking it, the Japanese were "on," and the *Edwards* seemed to feel that she had spent enough time toying with battleships, guns, Japanese guns wounded and angry.

As she raced Northward the *Edwards* checked her tiny flock. Just astern a destroyer reported "all secure—no casualties." Still further in our wake another came in, "all fine and happy; all we had to do was follow, and that was easy with you leading."

Not one of the ships had sustained so much as a scratch. Scot free, they bore on northward, and now the speed began to drop. As the knots came off, the tension of the last half-hour eased all over the ship. Voices became natural again; the "double take" set in. Lighting a cigarette was a serious problem—because your hand shook. No man aboard denied that he had been frightened.

But now in the darkness on the bridge, back on the spray dampened fantail, in the gun mounts, and down in the simmering engineering spaces, men grinned and wiped the perspiration from their faces. In one forward handling room a mess boy suddenly discovered he'd been holding a five-inch projectile in his arms throughout the entire run. He didn't know it until the attack was over, and it suddenly felt heavier than any shell he'd ever handled. The intercom circuits became alive again—and crackled with jubilant information.

Lookouts reported a huge orange flash just minutes after the destroyer's torpedoes went into the water. Then the crew sighted a Jap ship and tentatively identified it as a "Fuso" class battleship. That identification, incidentally, was later verified. The ship gave the *Heywood L. Edwards'* men a sight they will never forget—the towering superstructure of a "Fuso" silhouetted in a lurid orange halo of destruction.

And then she was back, and her speed dropped to zero, and she lay to and listened to the battle on her radios again.

On the horizon the *Edwards'* lookouts now saw many fires—four, five, six, and again the bizarre outline of a "Fuso"-type battleship. And with the dawn a few minutes later, six or more columns of smoke rose quietly into the overcast and there was nothing more.

The *Heywood L. Edwards* led destroyers into the forward screen and stood south again as the light increased. Silently the powerful array of warships steamed down the Strait—their guns trained and searching for the first sign of enemy activity. The columns of smoke disappeared, snuffed out by the light blue waters of the gulf. Then the lookouts reported a ship, definitely enemy, dead in the water—"a light cruiser, or perhaps just a can, down by the stern, bow shot off, one stack gone, or did she ever have two?"

Closer and closer, still in silence, the American units moved. The water was placid and only the ripples of the ship's wake disturbed the surface.

Then at a command the leading ships opened fire on the battered Japanese cripple. The *Heywood L. Edwards* saw her shells straddle and then drive home. Smoke and flame leaped from the enemy craft—and then suddenly she was gone. The *Edwards* swung out and ahead of the formation and stood over toward the oil-covered water where the enemy had gone down. Survivors appeared, fifty—a hundred—sev-

eral hundred—floating in a grotesque posture of death, or swimming without purpose or direction around two bobbing motor launches.

There was little debris—a swamped whaleboat floated with its gunwhales awash, and silent survivors clung to its sides. As the *Edwards* poked her bow into the cluster of Japanese they turned in the water and stared back at her. There was no sound on the ship or in the water. Muzzles of small guns moved gently as the ship rolled in the slight swell, their gunners squinting under helmet visors at the bland-faced Japanese.

Then on the port side, fifteen yards from her bridge, a large moon-faced Jap began to struggle with another survivor—a young Japanese who was one of the few survivors equipped with a life belt. At first the watchers on the *Heywood L. Edwards* thought they were fighting for possession of the life jacket.

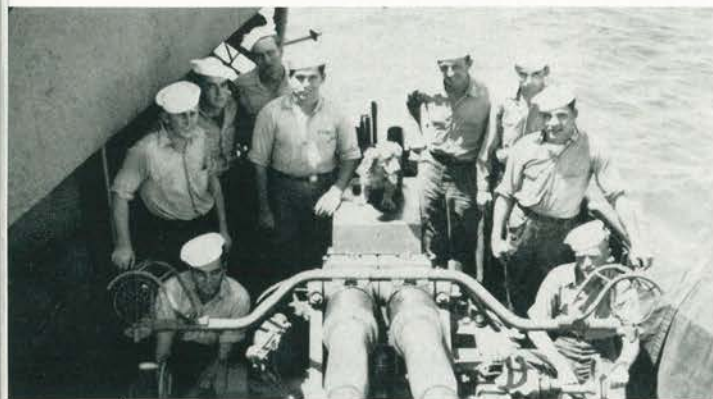
Abruptly the true realization of what they saw dawned on the shocked American officers and men. The larger Jap was quickly but effectively killing his fellow in arms. His right hand enclosed a small double edged knife, which he slashed back and forth across the other's throat. And the incredible part of it was that the Jap seemed eager for the dubious honor. The job done, the larger man shoved the other roughly away and brandished his stained knife at the *Heywood L. Edwards'* steel sides. His voice screamed words not understood.

The *Heywood L. Edwards* stood by to take aboard any Japanese willing to come. She was prepared to rescue and give medical aid to wounded enemy survivors, but the enemy showed no inclination to be hauled aboard and made prisoner; he seemed to prefer possible capture and probable starvation on one of the nearby islands. So, in response to a radio command, the *Edwards* slowly backed clear, swung on her fantail, and stood back North to rejoin the battle force.



THE SKIPPER

The Team



GUN NO. 42



AFTER FIRE ROOM



GUN NO. 5



GUN NO. 45



BRIDGE GANG



GUN NO. 4



FORWARD FIRE ROOM



TORPEDO GANG



SKY NO. 1



RADIO GANG



GUN NO. 2



GUN NO. 1



GUN NO. 41



FORWARD ENGINE ROOM



REPAIR NO. 3



COMBAT



FIRE CONTROL GANG



REPAIR NO. 2



REPAIR NO. 1



20 MM. GUN CREWS



GUN NO. 44



AFTER ENGINE ROOM

The Ship's Roster

COMMANDING OFFICERS

COMDR. JOE W. BOULWARE, USN
COMDR. ALBERT L. SHEPHERD, USN
COMDR. RALPH L. R. JOHNSON, USNR

Arnold, Jr. Erving T., Ens., USNR
Beck, Jr. Albert W., Lt., USNR
Berry, Fred T., Ens., USN
Berry, H. A., Lt. Comdr., USN
Brady, Francis R., Lt., USN
Cray, Paul S., Lt. (jg), USNR
Cain, George R., Lt. (jg), USNR
Easdon, Donald S., Lt. (jg), USNR
Edwards, Eugene H., Lt. (jg), USNR
Farrell, Jr. William F., Lt., USN
Flott, Robert F., Lt. (jg), USNR
Hart, Jr. William D., Lt., USNR

Hooban, Joseph M., Lt. (jg), USNR
Ingling, Francis W., Lt. Comdr., USN
Jackson, William W., Ens., USNR
Johnson, Joseph T., Lt. (jg), USNR
Marino, Frank S., Lt., USNR
Morgen, Leon E., Lt. (jg), USNR
Martin, Perry L., Ens., USNR
Nelson, Roy E., Lt. (jg), USN
Notis, Leonard I., Ens., USNR
Orr, Robert G., Lt. (jg), USNR
Patton, William C., Chief Bos'n, USN

Pellegrini, Peter M., Lt., USNR
Pick, Daniel R., Lt. (jg), USNR
Rennie, Donald B., Lt., USNR
Rensenik, Victor, Carpenter, USN
Rolling, Ralph L., Ens., USNR
Shore, Stuart W., Lt., USNR
Strong, William W., Lt. (jg), USN
Vose, William F., Lt., USN
Wilde, Jack W., Lt. (jg), USNR
Winkin, Jr. John W., Lt., USN
Zabchin, John, Carpenter, USN
Zimmerman, Milton A., Lt. Comdr., USNR

Adams, A. C., Y1/C
Allbright, J. E., CPhM
Allen, K. E., S1/C
Anderson, C. S., S1/C
Anderson, V. L., S2/C
Andrew, F. R., GM3/C
Arnett, A., CMM
Asta, C. N., S1/C
Augustyniak, T., CWT
Bailey, E. J., EM3/C
Baker, D. E., CWT
Batson, M. D., RM2/C
Barger, P. D., S2/C
Baylor, J. B. A., StM2/C
Bayzek, J. J., MM3/C
Beard, E. L., TM3/C
Beaman, L. B., RdM3/C
Beatty, E. J., GM3/C
Beck, R. E. L., S2/C
Benson, E. A., WT1/C
Berecek, G. P., S1/C
Bergquist, E. E., GM2/C
Berndt, R. H., GM2/C
Bertolino, T., WT3/C
Bice, C. M., MaM3/C
Blasser, N. L., RM2/C
Bononia, F. E., EM2/C
Boulware, T. R., StM1/C
Borinstein, J., TM2/C
Bowerly, T. E., TM2/C
Bradshaw, Jr. H. L., TM3/C
Brady, P. L., SoM3/C
Brenneman, R. E., BM2/C
Bresciani, A. J., MM3/C

Brilliant, L. L., S2/C
Brooks, C. L., MM3/C
Brooks, H. W., TM3/C
Brooks, J. M., F1/C
Broome, M. M., F1/C
Brown, L. E., SM3/C
Brown, L. K., SM3/C
Bullard, C. E., ScM2/C
Burton, C. W., S1/C
Bullard, J. C., BM1/C
Bush, W., CTM
Byron, A. J., RM2/C
Callahan, E., PhM1/C
Canupp, N. O., S1/C
Campbell, C. H., PhM3/C
Caranci, L. P., PhM3/C
Carlan, M. D., TM3/C
Carlson, A. G., TM2/C
Carlson, F. D., FC2/C
Carter, L. R., CQM
Carter, J. P.
Casper, T. C., SC3/C
Chamberlin, R. R., RMI/C
Chancellor, N. S.
Chantler, R. H., SoM3/C
Cheatwood, R. L., S1/C
Chesnut, W. R., GM2/C
Cirino, A. E., F1/C
Clark, F., CCS
Clooman, Jr. R. E., S2/C
Cobb, H. E., B3/C
Colby, C. R., WT3/C
Coles, W. S., GM2/C

Condon, D. R., MM1/C
Cook, Jr. C. O., F1/C
Cook, J. A., S1/C
Cooley, L. A., MM1/C
Cooper, R. K., EM1/C
Corbett, A. R., MM1/C
Cornelius, Jr. M., S1/C
Cox, C. H., FC2/C
Craighead, J. L., SSM(L)3/C
Crampey, L. E., S1/C
Crawford, R. S., BM2/C
Creel, Q. G., SoM3/C
Crisp, F. W., S1/C
Crowley, J. A., F1/C
Culbreth, Jr. W. B., WT3/C
Currier, O. H., CMM
Dahm, R. F., BM2/C
Darnell, B. E., CSK
De Grazia, G. P., WT3/C
Delello, B. E., S1/C
Dement, B. E., FC3/C
Depka, J. L., FC2/C
DiBlasi, J. S., MM3/C
Dioso, M., CCK
Dick, D. F., FC2/C
Di Francesca, J. J., MM3/C
Dissinger, C. I., CFC
Donovan, W. V., GM2/C
Douglas, C. E., SM1/C
Dowdalls, Jr. J. J., S2/C
Driscoll, A. S., S1/C
Drouen, G., CMM
Dybas, R. S., S1/C

Dytrych, R. G., RM3/C
Eckenroth, J. M., Cox.
Edwards, Jr. A. L., S1/C
Ekholm, W. E., S2/C
Ellerbee, E. L., F1/C
Eslinger, J. L., MM3/C
Evans, D. L., SM3/C
Evans, W. C., F1/C
Ever, F. R., SC3/C
Fahey, J. F., S1/C
Fitzgerald, R. W., FC2/C
Fitzgerald, Jr. C. M., WT1/C
Fitzsimmons, E. L., F1/C
Flanagan, J. W., EM2/C
Fockler, A. G., MM1/C
Forsman, E. W., SM2/C
Frampton, J. A., GM2/C
Freeman, M. G., FC2/C
Frederick, R. E., QM1/C
Furtado, M. G., S1/C
Gallant, J. P., F1/C
Garrett, J. W., S1/C
Garthe, Jr. A., S1/C
Gillerman, L. L., BM2/C
Gelvin, J. L., EM2/C
Geyer, Jr. M. W., WT1/C
Gibson, Jr. J. L., WT2/C
Gingrich, R. P., MM3/C
Gorham, L. L., F1/C
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Graham, C. F., S1/C
Gray, W., S1/C
Greeny, J. A., RM2/C
Greibel, A. F., Y2/C



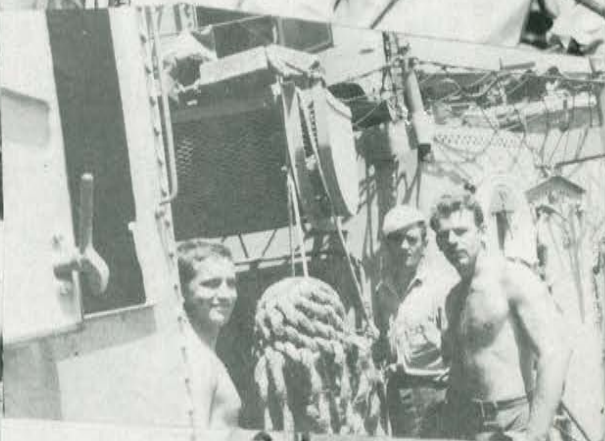
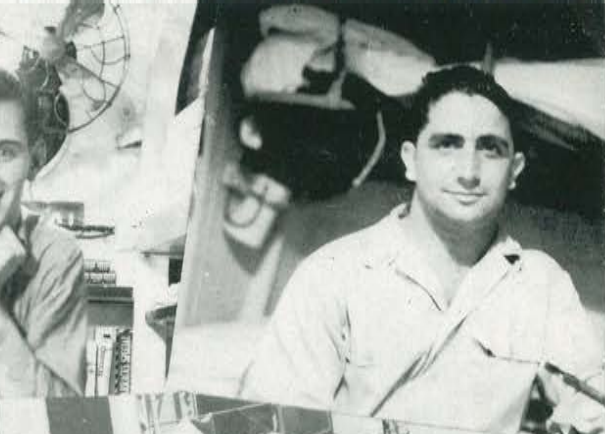
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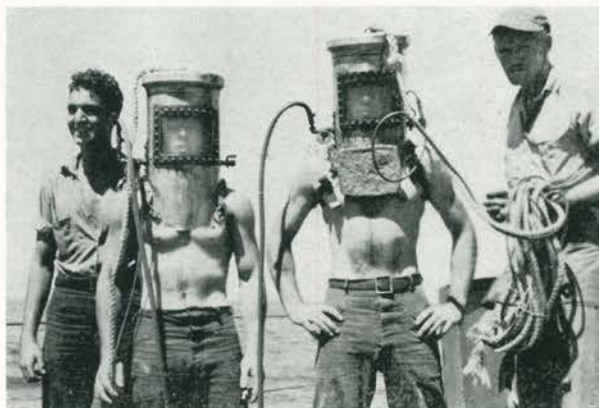
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 Greenwald, Jr. H. A., SM3/C
 Gregor, M. W., F1/C
 Griffin, S., Ck1/C
 Guerra, G., F1/C
 Gotzon, J. J., MM3/C
 Haggerty, E. J., Y1/C
 Hale, W. H., F1/C
 Hale, W. O., S1/C
 Ham, M., Cox.
 Hannah, W. R., ETM1/C
 Hardesty, C. F., SM2/C
 Harris, E. S., MM3/C
 Harris, R., CK2/C
 Harders, R. E., EM3/C
 Hassett, W. D., F1/C
 Hazlett, H. L., F1/C
 Haynes, K. V., F1/C
 Heath, H., S1/C
 Heaton, D. C., S1/C
 Helms, R. F., S1/C
 Helvik, H. H., CM3/C
 Hegdon, T. B., F1/C
 Henley, S. E., CCS
 Henry, A., Cox.
 Herbert, R. F., S1/C
 Hester, C. L., F1/C
 Hickman, C. E., F1/C
 Hoefer, J. C., ETM1/C
 Holcomb, R. P., MM3/C
 Holland, P. C., F1/C
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 Hood, H. H., QM3/C
 Hookey, J. C., F1/C
 Hoots, L., S1/C
 Hornsby, J. F., MM1/C
 Horomanski, E. A., WT3/C
 Houts, J. L., MM2/C
 Hovey, R. E., CWT
 Howell, H. H., F1/C
 Hrabal, B. J., S1/C
 Humphrey, W. C., S1/C
 Hulse, Jr. C. W., SoM3/C
 Hyatt, C. C., S1/C
 Hyer, C. J., SM1/C
 Ippolito, J., F1/C
 Jacobs, W. O., S1/C
 Jackson, E. F., S1/C
 James, J. L., MM1/C
 Johnnides, J. D., FC3/C
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 Jones, Jr., J. E., S1/C
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 Jones, W. F., S1 C
 Killgrove, J. C., WT3/C
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 Kelly, H. W., S1/C
 Kelly, Jr. L. T., Cox.
 Kendrick, W. R., BM2/C
 Kerger, C. R., F1/C
 Ketzner, C., F1/C
 Kienle, A. C., TM2/C
 Killingsworth, J. C. Jr., SC2/C
 Kliendienst, R. S. Jr., SoM3/C
 Koch, F. G. Jr., WT2/C
 Kopp, W. C., Cox.
 Krikorian, A., F1/C
 La Bella, M. A., S1/C
 La Gassa, G. E., SM2/C
 Lappin, J. A., WT1/C
 Larson, R. U., ETM2/C
 Larson, C., Bkr2/C
 Lawson, R. L., SK1/C
 Leary, C. G., MM1/C
 Lebeau, L. W., FC3/C
 Legge, F., TM3/C
 Levins, G. J., S1/C
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 Little, R. L., F1/C
 Litts, R. J., SM3/C
 Lombardi, Jr. F. A., PhM2/C
 Long, J. L., S2/C
 Loos, W. A., EM2/C
 Lovell, F. J., SM3/C
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 Neville, R. J., RM3/C
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 Nicovich, J. B., RdM3/C
 Nixon, T. B., BM2/C
 Nolan, B. T., S1/C
 Nunley, H. R., BM2/C
 Odom, R. J., S1/C
 Olson, E. M., CY
 Osthus, G. O., SM3/C
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 Paladino, G., SC2/C
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 Pattengale, C. E., MM2/C
 Pender, W. J. Jr., S1/C
 Pentek, L. C.
 Perkins, H., S1/C
 Perrella, J. P., S1/C
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 Perry, W. E., SM1/C
 Peszimenti, J., F2/C
 Peterson, C. W., RM3/C
 Peterson, J. D. Jr., F1/C
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 Petkov, J., S1/C
 Petka, M. M., F1/C
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 Pevear, F. B., S1/C
 Phillips, F. J., SK3/C
 Piccerill, M. A., S2/C
 Pickard, T., F1/C
 Piczko, J. S., S1/C
 Pigeon, Jr. A. J., S1/C
 Pike, R. G., CEM
 Pilibosian, G. K., S1/C
 Pillar, R. A., F1/C
 Pinchook, G. P., S1/C
 Pinker, J., SC3/C
 Pinski, S. P., S1/C
 Piotrowski, W. F., F1/C
 Pisacane, S., S1/C
 Pish, M. E.,
 Pleasant, D. R., S1/C
 Plumb, S. W., TM2/C
 Poliskey, S. J., WT3/C
 Prescott, F., S1/C
 Priolli, R. A., MM1/C
 Price, J., SC3/C
 Prue, G. J., S2/C
 Raczkowski, A. L., F1/C
 Remolino, W., RdM2/C
 Rida, P. J., S1/C
 Ritter, H. L., SF3/C
 Roberts, B. A., GM3/C
 Roberts, G. K., RdM2/C
 Roberts, V. D., GM3/C
 Robinson, I. L., CTM
 Robinson, L. H., RdM3/C
 Robinson, T. W., S1/C
 Rock, H., Cox.
 Rodriguez, M. H., Cox.
 Rogers, N. N., SM3/C
 Ronne, R. G., MM1/C
 Ross, E. V., SF2/C
 Ross, J. Jr., S1/C
 Roth, M. H., ETM3/C
 Rouen, H. J., S1/C
 Rowe, G. A., Y2/C
 Rowse, J. L., S1/C
 Rudisill, J. E. Jr., FC3/C
 Ruhs, W. C., TM3/C
 Rutledge, D. E., TM3/C
 Ryan, J., GM2/C
 Sabalja, T., CM2/C
 Sabo, W. A., GM2/C
 Salazar, J. C., SoM2/C
 Sampson, W. R., CRM
 Saunderlin, J. H., S1/C
 Savage, L. L., S1/C
 Saxman, D. L., CCS
 Schetter, J. F., EM3/C
 Schimel, H. K., QM3/C
 Schmidt, N. J., GM3/C
 Schnebbe, R., F1/C
 Schrier, W. C., TM2/C
 Scully, E. F. Jr., WT3/C
 Seewald, J. E., SM3/C
 Senak, M. Jr., F1/C
 Sharpe, E. J., SM2/C
 Shaw, H. M., S1/C
 Shea, P. F., MM1/C
 Shelton, H. W., S1/C
 Sheppard, B. C., F1/C
 Sheppard, J. E., F1/C
 Sherer, L. S., S1/C
 Shipp, W. G., F1/C
 Shirk, R. G., F1/C
 Shiver, L. B., S1/C
 Schockey, R. D., Bkr3/C
 Short, J., M1/C
 Shultz, W. H., FC1/C
 Signorelli, O. J., GM1/C
 Silva, A. V., S1/C
 Simon, D. J., SM3/C
 Slaughter, Z. D., CBM
 Smith, G. E., SF3/C
 Smith, H., SM3/C
 Smith, H. O., SM1/C
 Smith, L., S1/C
 Smith, R. R., GM3/C
 Solomon, H. K., GM3/C
 Starr, M. I., F1/C
 Sterrinburg, L. M., CM1/C
 Steilow, M. J., WT3/C
 Stone, Jr. A. J., S1/C
 Streit, E. F., MM3/C
 Stevens, C. E., M3/C
 Storms, Jr. F. A., FC3/C
 Stowe, W. A., SM3/C
 Spiewak, F. J., S1/C
 Spiliner, C. F., SC3/C
 Sweeney, H. J., FC3/C
 Tabler, L. E., SoM2/C
 Tadlock, E. R., S1/C
 Tarter, H. D.
 Tate, F. R., EM1/C
 Thomas, G. Jr., RdM2/C
 Thomas, R. W., SC2/C
 Thompson, H. M. Jr., S1/C
 Thompson, J. B., MM3/C
 Thompson, J. H., Cox.
 Thompson, T. E., SM2/C
 Tobin, C. R., SM2/C
 Tolbert, E., SM1/C
 Torak, L. A., SK3/C
 Towne, E. R., EM3/C
 Tranchina, N. J., F1/C
 Tringale, A. R., RdM2/C
 Trocki, N. J., WT3/C
 Tucker, Jr. R. R., SF3/C
 Tull, W. F., RdM2/C
 Turchon, S., SM3/C
 Vail, C. R., S1/C
 Vlasatik, C., GM3/C
 Voss, E., SK2/C
 Wagenblast, C. R., WT3/C
 Wagner, E. E., OM1/C
 Wanchick, G., FC1/C
 Wassenberg, L. N., EM3/C
 Weiss, I., WT3/C
 Wheeler, W. R., BM2/C
 Wills, E. M., GM3/C
 White, H. A., GM2/C
 White, O. M., S1/C
 White, R. E., SoM2/C
 Whiting, H. E. Jr., TM1/C
 Wilde, E. W., SM3/C
 Wilcox, H. E., TM1/C
 Wilem, H. J., TM1/C
 Willey, D. A., Cox.
 Williams, R. E., S2/C
 Winfield, J. F., S2/C
 Winters, W. E., F1/C
 Woronka, E. C., S1/C
 Yankus, E. J., S1/C
 Zagala, L. W., CCK
 Zinck, H. L., FC3/C
 Zoya, E. M., SM3/C





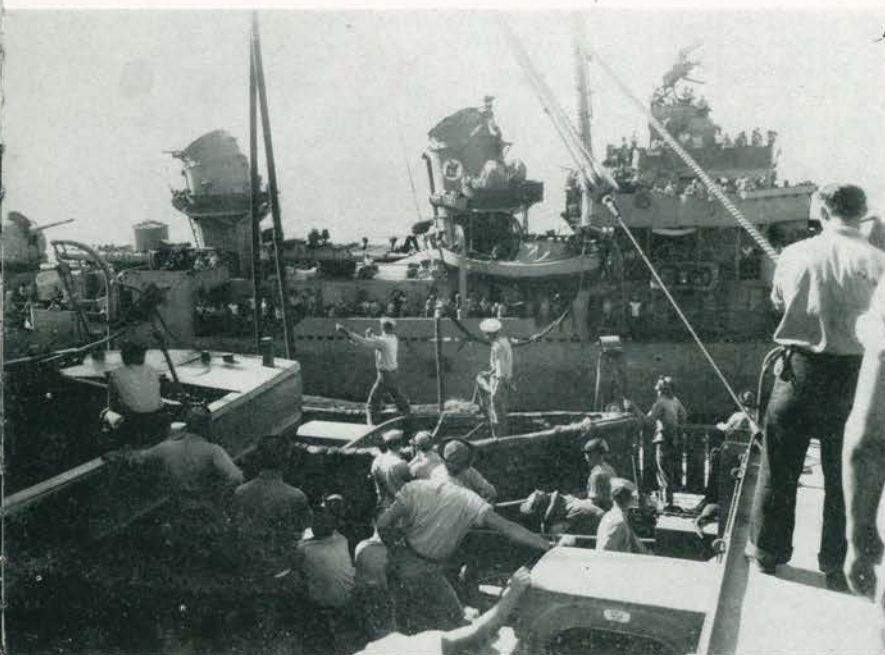
All In a Day's Work!



MEN FROM MARS?



WE FUEL FROM THE IDAHO



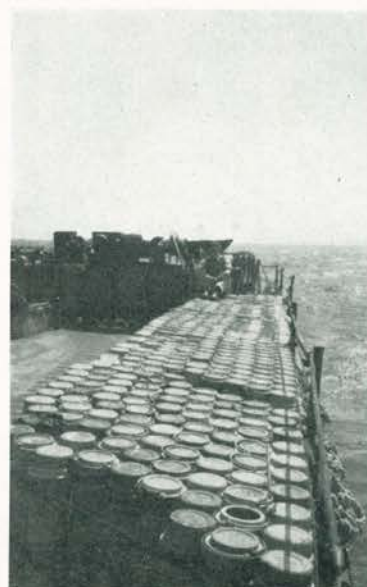
WE TAKE MAIL AND
FUEL FROM THE CHANDELEUR



"ALL HANDS LAY AFT TO
HANDLE STORES"
... AND FOR ONCE BY DAY



WE RECEIVE VISITORS AT LINGAYEN



ROUNDS EXPENDED



Crossing



The Islands

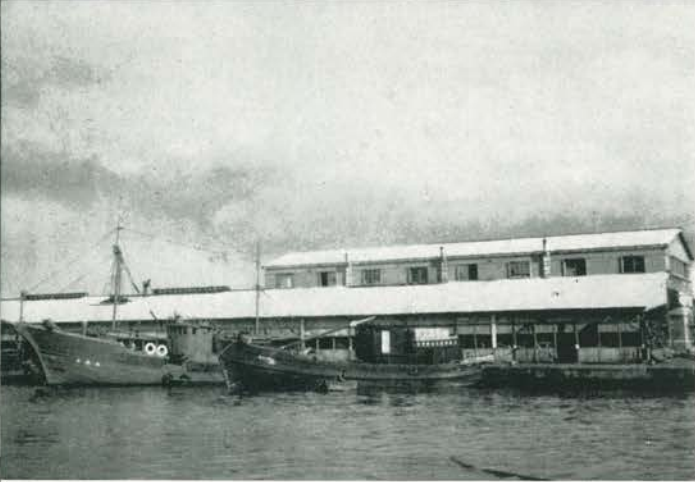




THE BELLE OF KERAMA RETTO



NIPPON *and*



HACHINOHE, HONSHU, JAPAN



THE LOCAL OFFICIALS OF HACHINOHE WHO ASSIST, PERHAPS A BIT WISTFULLY, IN THE DISPOSAL OF A ONCE GREAT ARSENAL



INNOCENT BYSTANDERS



THE JAP IS MADE TO CLEAN HOUSE

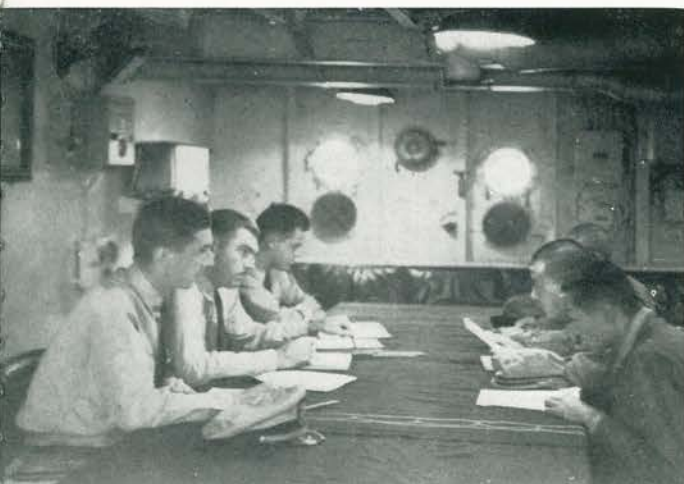


SMILES . . . OF VICTORY AND DEFEAT



JAP AMMO HEADING FOR THE "DEEP SIX"

NIPPONESE



WE GIVE SAILING DIRECTIONS TO A SEGMENT
OF THE IMPERIAL NAVY



THE RELUCTANT DRAGON



THE JAP PASSENGER COMES ABOARD



LITTLE OAKIES



DRYING SQUID



SHARK FOR DINNER . . . IF YOU CAN STAND
THE SMELL

Recommendation for the Navy Unit Commendation

FROM : Commander Destroyer Squadron FIFTY-SIX.
TO : The Secretary of the Navy.
VIA : Official Channels.
SUBJECT: Recommendation for Award of Navy Unit Commendation to *U.S.S. Heywood L. Edwards* (DD663) and *U.S.S. Richard P. Leary* (DD664).

1. In accordance with Current Directives it is recommended that the Navy Unit Commendation be awarded to the U. S. S. *Heywood L. Edwards* (DD663) and the U. S. S. *Richard P. Leary* (DD664) for outstanding performance in combat against enemy Japanese forces ashore, afloat and in the air in the Pacific War Area from 29 May 1944 to 28 July 1945 for the H. L. Edwards and from 9 July 1944 to 28 July 1945 for the R. P. Leary.

2. During these periods the subject ships participated in the six major amphibious assaults and landings in the Marianas, at Palau, Leyte Gulf, Lingayen Gulf, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. In each of these difficult engagements the two ships were the first to arrive in the area and in almost every instance among the last to leave. During this period the *H. L. Edwards* fired a total of rounds equivalent to four times the normal life of the guns. Both ships have been repeatedly commended for their accurate and devastating fire, and have accounted for the timely demise of many Japanese. During these operations both ships have been under fire from shore batteries and under repeated and heavy air attack. Both ships have made attacks on submarines, and both have claimed probable sinkings of one submarine each, though official assessments have not been received. The *H. L. Edwards* on 24 September 1944 destroyed a large group of small enemy surface craft, attempting to reinforce the garrison of an enemy held island in the Palau with the loss of a large number of enemy troops.

3. Both ships participated in the Battle of Surigao Straits and were with this squadron when it delivered a coordinated torpedo attack on a Jap battleship which no doubt contributed to its loss. Both ships were under heavy enemy fire but escaped without injury.

4. During the Okinawa campaign both ships were among the mainstays of the fire support group. When the originator requested Commander, Amphibious Force, Pacific Fleet to give these two particular ships a breather, he was told, "Those will be the last ships to be relieved, because they are so good that we cannot spare them. We can always rely on the *Edwards* and the *Leary* to produce in the tight places."

5. The remarkable thing about these two ships, and the thing which the originator wishes to emphasize, is that in spite of these long and arduous duties, neither ship has been hit by the enemy, either from ashore, surface or the air. In view of the fact that six of the other ships of the squadron, participating in the same actions, have been hit and damaged, this record cannot be passed off as mere luck. Rather, it is the writer's opinion that this fine record is due to outstanding performance of duty by all officers and men of both ships, and is one of the principal bases for this recommendation. Many of the officers and men have been decorated for their individual acts, but it is the earnest desire of the squadron commander to see every man receive recognition for the outstanding performance mentioned herein.

6. While neither ship has participated in any action of the spectacular nature which draws the attention of the press and radio to it individually, it is desired to point out that to the writer's knowledge no other destroyers in the Navy, except the other ships in this squadron have participated in all six of the above named major operations as a part of the bombardment and fire support group. This record the writer believes to be of such an outstanding nature as to warrant the award of the Navy Unit Commendation.

H. F. STOUT.

The Ship's History

**COMMISSIONING,
BOSTON'S CAPT.
BOULWARE ACCEPTS A
TOKEN OF
PROVIDENCE**



By LT. WILLIAM J. COLILAN, JR., U.S.N.R.

THIS is the history of a ship with the instinct for survival. As it is written the homeward-bound pennant flutters above the stacks and trails out over the fantail.

An instinct for survival—not the usual prominent quality in a ship. Ships are ladies, or little girls, or trollops. You love them or you hate them; you have an affectionate name for them, or a funny name, or one in which the Anglo-Saxon predominates. They have personalities. This ship had no personality—she was a robot of war; a lady robot, if you like, but a robot.

Ships are female—they are made to find their glory in pain. To die while swimming men look on in dumb, throat-constricted misery, more conscious of the ship's agony than their own. They are made to fight proudly and gloriously...to win (sometimes to lose) and come home, smiling through the hurt. That is why men love a ship. When they are hurt in body, she is hurt in body; and they believe that when they suffer within through loneliness and fear, she must suffer so.

But this ship wasn't like that. She came through eighteen months of hell unmarked. Every man who ever served in her walked away. Her instinct for survival was so strong it included her crew.

Of course, she had a nickname. But not a funny one. Not even an affectionately insulting one. Hers was businesslike and grim. They called her "Task Force 663". She was a war machine.

The 2100 ton destroyer is legion. To describe it to a sailor is to describe a particular seagull, or a certain palm tree.

DD663 was conceived on the Fourth of July 1943, when her keel was laid at the Navy Yard at Boston.

On 6 October 1943 she was christened and launched. Her name was the USS *Heywood L. Edwards*, in honor of Lt. Comdr. Heywood Lane Edwards, U. S. N. . . . commanding officer of the U. S. S. *Reuben James* sunk during action with a German submarine in the North Atlantic on the last day of October, 1941, a month and a week before Pearl Harbor.

On January 26, 1944, DD663 was commissioned, with Commander Joe W. Boolware, U.S.N. for her



TAKING IN THE SLACK WHILE FUELING

first captain. Five months and twenty-two days from keel-laying to commissioning. DD663 was a war baby.

On 22 April 1944, after three months of fitting out and shaking down, DD663 transited the Panama Canal to enter the Pacific. Knowing her, it is unlikely that she was nervous or even moved on this occasion.

On 10 November 1945, DD663 touched the United States again at Puget Sound Navy Yard to be put in reserve status. The elapsed time was one year, six months, and nineteen days. It is improbable she was much excited at this, either. During the interval considerable had happened.

It is the purpose of this history, subjecting the names and emotions of men to the will of a ship so strong that she made them all strong, so impregnable that she made them invulnerable, so aloof that she detached them from themselves and made them think only of their mission—it is the purpose of this history to tell the story of those nineteen months.

SAIPAN-TINIAN 15 June 44 — 29 July 44

On 29 May, 1944, as part of Task Group 52. 15, DD663 sortied from Pearl Harbor for the Marianas Operation which was to provide B-29 bases against the Jap mainland. She arrived off the coast of Saipan on "D" Day, 15 June, and stayed sixty-odd days, until the conquest of Saipan and Tinian was complete. This was DD663's first time under fire and the first time she had fired a shot in what has been euphemistically termed, anger. Her performance was cool and competent as she moved about on her initial assignment, shore bombardment. This operation as sea-borne field artillery was almost a specialty and her crews became practised in what must have seemed impossible initially, sleeping while the main battery fired five inch salvos at regular intervals. For days and sometimes for weeks, the fire support ships stayed within easy range of the enemy positions, moving in long before the first wave, and following or leading the advance until the last point of resistance was destroyed. Sometimes they fired steadily for almost a week, the crew alternating at the guns.

At Saipan, DD663 worked in coordination with the Army, knocking out gun emplacements, troop concentrations; sealing caves; and reducing machine gun nests to a tangle of shattered ordnance and enemy dead.

On July 7th, DD663 had a chance for individual action. During a last desperate attack, a portion of the 105th U. S. Infantry was cut off and driven out into the sea to a point where the limit of retreat was reached at the height of a tired soldier's mouth. DD663 put over her whaleboats and sent them in over the treacherous reefs to the rescue.

Net proceeds were 44 Americans and one Jap, who had adopted the novel expedient of deserting during an attack.

Saipan was DD663's first time under fire. In her career she had the dubious distinction, which would willingly have been vacated in favor of any claimant, of being attacked by the enemy a full dozen ways.

DD663 beat off or destroyed the Jap every way he came after her—and he came in battleships and cruisers . . . and destroyers . . . and submarines . . . and PT boats . . . and suicide boats . . . He swam the water with demolition charges tied to his back. He flew in dive bombers . . . and Kamikaze planes . . . and piloted baka bombs . . . He strewed mines liberally in her path and he fired at her with shore batteries. It is probable even that he prayed against her . . . or cursed her according to all the gods of Shinto.

None of these methods had any effect.

PALAU Peleliu 11 Sept. 44 — 29 Sept. 44

After Saipan, came a few days of logistics at Eniwetok, and two weeks of battle practise in the Solomons. Then, as part of Task Force 32, DD663 set a course for her second major invasion: Peleliu, whose airfields straddled the sea road to Manila.

This time she arrived before "D" Day. On D minus 3, to be exact. Once more her major assignment was bombardment. On "D" Day itself, she fired a thousand rounds at the fortified gun positions on Bloody Nose Ridge, and destroyed an enemy supply depot holding five tanks and twelve trucks, and an ammunition depot. After "D" Day, there were caves to be sealed and pinpoint fire to be delivered in support of the ground troops.

Again at Peleliu, DD663 showed a talent for individual action in shoal water. On the night of Sept. 23-24, while patrolling, her radar picked up some targets in behind the reef, close to the beach. It was a column of Jap barges, attempting passage from Koror to Peleliu. The first shell was on its way in seconds. When the last had smashed its target, a total of fifteen barges were on the bottom. A P.O.W. reported the DD663's score as one ammunition barge, and fourteen personnel barges, containing 700 troops.

First-to-come, last-to-go DD663 steamed away from Peleliu on 29 September. The islands were secured, there was another assault to get ready for. In her record was a commendation from Admiral Oldendorf for the entire operation, with special reference to her detection and destruction of the barges.

If attacked in more ways than one, DD663 retaliated in kind. At the end of her career she had accounted for eight enemy planes, two ships, fifteen barges and had launched torpedoes in a squadron attack on a battleship. On the terrestrial side, she had one oil dump, one train, five tanks, twelve trucks, an ammunition depot, a score or more of gun em-



MANUS, ADMIRALTY ISLANDS

placements, an odd gross of caves and a great variety of other targets to her credit. Included were at least 1000 of the enemy.

LEYTE 17 Oct. 44 — 25 Nov. 44

DD663 departed Peleliu in company with the Honolulu, three other cruisers, and eight other destroyers of DesRon. 56. Destination: Manus, Admiralty Islands.

But Manus was only a short stopover on the Grand Excursion ticket for the Pacific Isles. After 10 days of refueling, refitting, rearming, reorganizing, and rest DD663 went to sea again. This time it was as part of Task Group 77.2 and to some of her company the excursion ticket looked like a one-way to LEYTE. Here was the keystone in the master strategic plan, the Philippines, gateway to Asia and Japan itself.

In Leyte Gulf on 17 Oct., or D minus 3 Day, DD663 drew another shoal water assignment; supporting the demolition teams under direct fire of the Jap shore batteries. The operation was successful, the batteries were not, and DD663 withdrew to waters more navigationally safe to spend the next six days in bombardment and fighting off aircraft attacks.

Then came the word that the Jap fleet was at sea.

HALFWAY . . .



CHANGE OF COMMAND





SURIBACHI: HELL ON EARTH

WE DENT A FENDER AT IWO



And on 24 October DD663 took her place in the left flank of the battle disposition covering the entrance to South Surigao Strait from Mindanao Sea. It was her first major action between ships—and characteristically she picked a good one. For at 0338 on 25 Oct., flank speed was rung up on her telegraphs and she led the third section of DesRon 56 straight at the Jap battle line. The approach was made under a double arch of fire, from the battleships and cruisers astern and the Japs ahead. At 6500 yards torpedoes were launched and DD663 zigzagged her way through exploding Jap shells to safety behind the smoke screen. This torpedo attack by the ships of



"MAKE SMOKE" . . . AT LEYTE

DesRon 56 resulted in the sinking of a Jap battleship.

At daybreak 25 Oct., five columns of smoke and one crippled Jap destroyer were all that remained of the opposing force. The destroyer was taken under fire by DD663 and others and quickly sunk. 400 or more survivors refused assistance, killing their comrades and themselves rather than be picked up. To prevent their getting ashore in the Philippines, DD663 destroyed their boats. She was then sent with others to the aid of a group of escort carriers under attack to the northward. This action, broken off before DD663 arrived, was the Battle of Samar.

The rest of the operation DD663 spent in her old role as fire support ship, appearing also in a new one as a radar picket. On 25 November she departed Leyte with HMAS Warramunga, screening the Pennsylvania enroute to Manus in the Admiralties. On Christmas Day, 1944, at Kossel Roads, the Palaus, Commander A. L. Shepherd, U.S.N. relieved Commander Joe W. Boulware, U.S.N. of command of DD663.

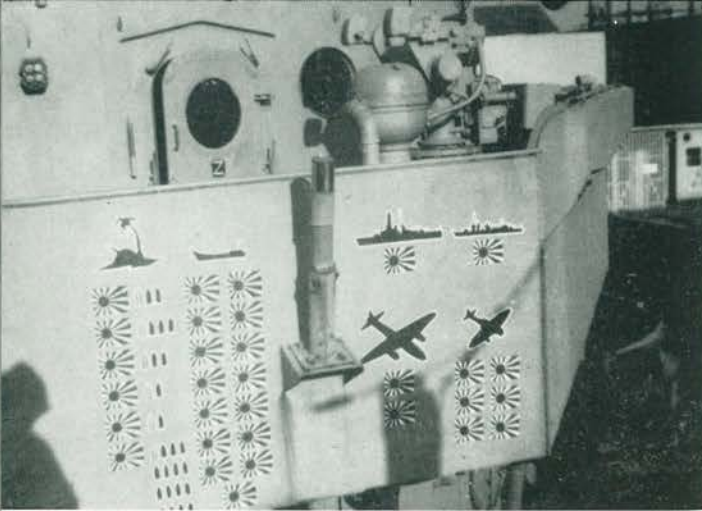
At this time DD663 was approximately one-half way along the 100,000 mile road which brought her at long last to Tokio Bay. Considerable effect of hardship and strain might have been detected in her officers and men. In the ship herself there were no symptoms, she was shipshape and unperturbed as when she went into commission.

LINGUAYAN GULF 6 Jan. 45 — 22 Jan. 45

On New Year's Day, 1945, in company with Task Group 7.2, DD663 sortied from Palau. Once more she was under Admiral Oldendorf. Once more she was headed for a major assault—her fourth to date.

On Jan. 4, the formation had its first taste of the Jap's tactic of desperation—the Kamikaze suicide plane. The first was beaten off at the price of the carrier Ormaney Bay. Again on the afternoon of the fifth, the formation came under air attack. The Louisville and HMAS Arunta were hit.

On the afternoon of 6 Jan., while steaming into Lingayen Gulf through a narrow swept channel,



THE SCOREBOARD

fanaticism claimed more victims. Since early morning the attacks had been severe, with suicide planes diving right into the muzzles of the guns. Now a Jill made an unexpected low level approach, evaded the fire of DD663 and others, and smashed spectacularly into the USS California. At the same time other planes made successful dives into the Columbia, Louisville, and other ships of the formation. Conditions were ideal . . . low clouds and a dazzling setting sun. A plane dove from nowhere to appear almost on top of the ships . . . DD663 splashed him

. . . another . . . and the same ship's guns were quick and sure on the target.

Night was a succession of alerts and taut anticipation of the big day ahead. At dawn DD663 was on the way in to give her usual good performance in her old role—blasting the beaches. On “D” Day, Jan. 9, she supported the landing and on 22 Jan., when the Army had secured the beachhead and moved inland, she set a course for Ulithi. For another major action was brewing and the invulnerable ship was needed.

In no sense did DD663 serve her officers and men. Rather they served her.

In no sense did any one of them ever dominate her . . . so that his name deserved to be written in greater letters. No single man ever saved her. She saved them all.

It was not that those who worked and fought in her were without distinction—sixty-five of them have received or been recommended for medals and commendations. But always the one who emerged from the smoke of battle, head and shoulders above all others, was the ship herself, proud and indomitable.

LEYTE: THE SURF IS MARKED BY DIFFERENT WAVES



IWO JIMA 16 Feb. 45 — 27 Feb. 45

Back in the fleet again, DD663 left Ulithi on 10 Feb., rendezvousing with Task Group 52.19 at Saipan. She was on the way to her fifth major assault—Iwo Jima—looking, except for minor deficiencies in paint, as she had on the way to her first. In the grand strategy Iwo Jima was needed for a fighter base to protect the B-29s.

On “D” Day minus three she was close to shore again, ready for her practised task of bombardment, knocking out guns and closing caves with nonchalant efficiency. On “D” Day she prepared the way for the marine landing craft, then covered the assault from a position just off the beach itself, giving almost point blank attention to the guns firing from the beach. The Jap fire was accurate, several times she was straddled. Adept salvo chasing gave her time to return the fire. One gun, in a concrete emplacement was almost on the landing beach itself. It was necessary to fire right through the ports of the fortification. In a few minutes the defenders ran out to be chased up and over the hill by five-inch shells.

Day and night she continued, now harrassing, now illuminating, until the 27th of February when she was ordered to Saipan to prepare for invasion number six.

DD663 was a war machine . . . and expected her crew to be the same.

They spent over a year and a half in the most forward areas . . . had little rest or recreation. Of course, some lucky souls did see Carol Landis in a USO show during a rain squall in the Solomons. Once there was a Navy nurse on the deck of a hospital ship at Leyte. And once four Red Cross girls surrounded by that many hundred sailors on the beach at Guam.

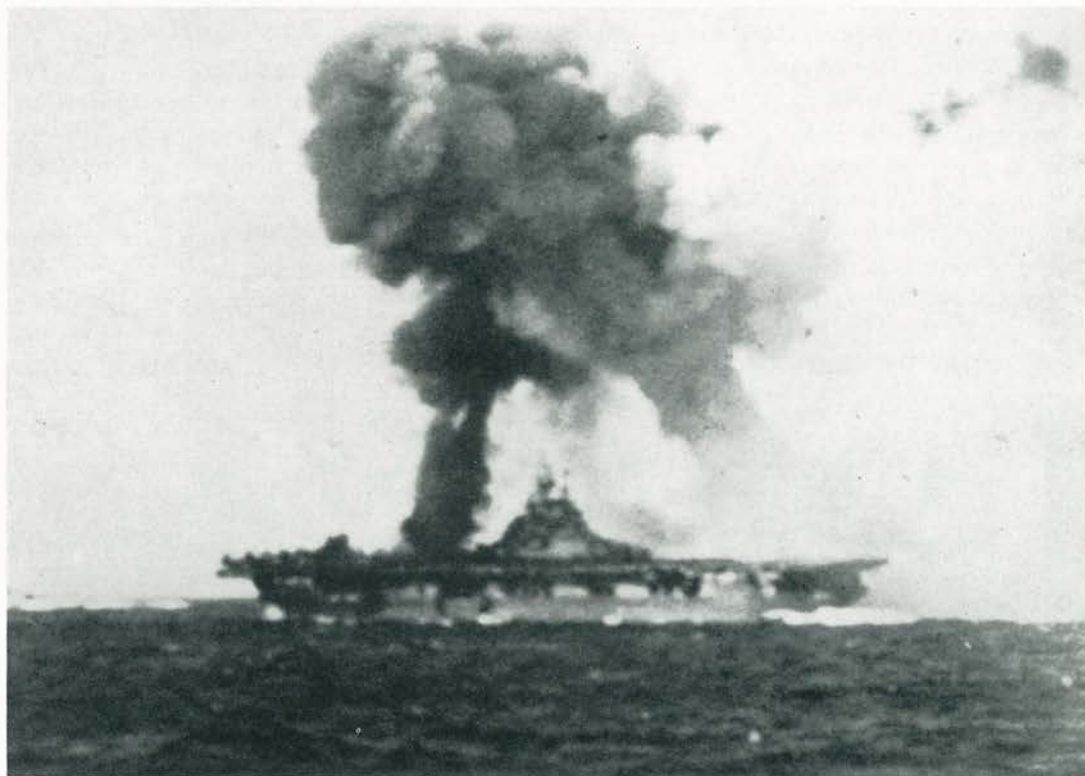
And once—during a grueling five months of operating they had a liberty on a sand spit. Four hours . . . two cans of warm beer.

Perhaps DD663 knew how short her life was to be . . . perhaps she realized that once the war was over, there'd be nothing for her but red lead row. Anyway, she must have been determined to get in all the fights she could, for she never missed a one. To do so she worked with five separate fleets.

OKINAWA 21 Mar. 45 — 28 July 45

After a repair period at Saipan and logistics at Ulithi, DD663 put to sea on 21 March, in company with Task Group 54.2. Her destination was Okinawa—the Wagnerian climax of the mighty opera of war, with flames and destruction beyond man's capacity to

ONE GOT THROUGH





GUARDIAN ANGELS

dream. This was the first attack on the Jap homeland.

Two days out, DD663 dropped a pattern of charges on a submarine contact. The result was a slick of oil but no more tangible evidence.

On 24 March, DD663 moved in close to Kerama Retto, supporting the underwater demolition teams. From then on Kamikaze planes swarmed like hornets from China, Formosa and the homeland.

On 6 April, in four hours, two hundred tried to attack the formation, many evading the overworked air cover. Four Judies, flying low came on DD663.

In 90 seconds she splashed them all. The feat needs no touting, indeed to do so would be to detract from it. In all 60 destroyers were hit, 12 of them sunk, during the Okinawa operation.

DD663 was at Okinawa longer than any ship of the original attack force. In 128 days of fighting, of bombarding, of radar picketing, she shot down eight enemy planes, smashed shore targets without number.

On 18 May, the Longshaw, another fire-support destroyer, aground on a reef, was demolished forward by Jap shore batteries. DD663 moved in, low-

THE JAP COMES ABOARD DEAD . . .



. . . AND ALIVE





TWO SKALOOKIES ARE SPLASHED

ered her boats for the rescue. The battery on the beach opened fire, and was taken under return fire. Soon it was knocked out. With the aid of other vessels in the area, many survivors of the Longshaw were rescued.

On 29 July, with the islands of Okinawa, Kerama Retto, Ie Shima, and Kume Shima secured, DD663 was ordered to Leyte.

While primarily a fire support vessel, DD663 also doubled as radar picket. While equally hazardous, this was a relief to her bridge gang who usually

navigated with only a few feet of water under the keel. While on picket duty she was attacked twice and shot down both planes.

As a fire support ship she starred, delivering an immense volume of well aimed fire. In fact, during the Okinawa bombardment DD663 alone fired more five-inch shells than the whole Allied fleet off Omaha beach at Normandy, one and one-half times as many to be exact.

When finally DD663 left Okinawa her guns were completely worn out and had to be replaced.

WE RESCUE SURVIVORS

FROM THE NEWCOMB . . .

. . . AND THE LONGSHAW





OKINAWA AT TWILIGHT

THE ROAD BACK 29 July 45 — 10 Nov. 45

While plans were being whispered for the next invasion and the fleet was softening up the Japan coast, while the minesweepers were plying their trade in the East China Sea, while her crew still wondered when there would be an end—DD663 seemed to sense that the war was over.

For once almost helpless, she went to Leyte, thence to Guam for new guns from which she never fired a shot in anger. Thence to Eniwetok and finally to Ominato in Northern Honshu to join the North Pacific Force. There she was assisted in the occupation of Hachinohe, escorted Jap naval vessels to Tokyo, patrolled Tsugaru Straits.

On 22 October she departed Ominato, stopping briefly at Pearl Harbor on her way to Seattle and oblivion.

DesRon 56—nine ships in all—fought a long, hard amphibious war. It is noteworthy that Navy Crosses were awarded to commanding officers at a rate somewhat higher than one to a ship . . . that both squadron commanders detached during the war were advanced to flag rank.

Of the ships of DesRon 56, eight were damaged by enemy action. DD663 was the ninth.

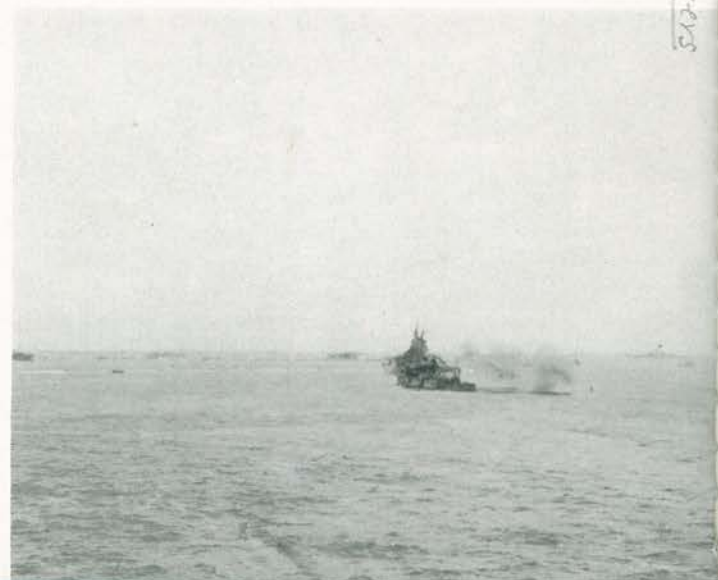
The writer of this history, neither an historian nor a member of the ship's company, has tried to

make it an exercise in objectivity. Yet, in reading the logs and action reports, he has come to a certain feeling and conclusion.

It is that the performance and accomplishment of DD663 may be directly linked to the performance and accomplishment of all her crew . . . rather than to individual heroes. That her men unconsciously felt this may be seen in the name they called her with pride and a little awe.

She was "Task Force 663"—a coordinated machine. To all who served in her, let that be high praise . . . for DD663 herself let it be an epitaph.

WE FIRE AT IWO



U.S. Navy Dept. Destroyers

