E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., Editor

The U.S.S. HAMMANN (DD-412) in World War II: Documents, Photographs, Recollections

Needham, Massachusetts
Privately published by the editor
First Edition 2004
Hammann survivors and families of their shipmates:

As you can see from the "About the Editor" page at the back of my booklet, I have no connection with your ship. I chose to compile an illustrated history of the Hammann solely because a fellow naval historian suggested that your ship would be an interesting choice for another booklet in my series on destroyer-type ships sunk in World War II.

Now that I've completed my booklet I'm very grateful for my friend's suggestion. The Hammann participated in the first two "carrier" battles of the war, and with the help of archivists at the National Archives and the Naval Historical Center I was able to assemble a considerable amount of primary source material. I'm indebted also to Elmer Jones for his well-written, detailed personal account of the sinking on June 6, 1942.

My early distribution has included eight naval museums/libraries and the families of:
- RAdm. Arnold E. True, USN (2 sons)
- Lt. Ralph W. Elden, USN (son)
- Lt. Martin H. Ray, Jr., USN (3 brothers)
- George W. Kapp, Jr., Coxswain (sister and 2 brothers)
- Robert J. Ballard, Seaman 1st Class (his cousin the explorer)

I've barely started to send copies to the survivors, but I've obtained a 1998 address list from Joe Sanes (S2c in 1942) to work from. If any of you have current addresses for your shipmates please pass on that information to me. It will save me a lot of phone calls which I'll have to make to confirm an old address. Unfortunately, I don't expect to have any extra copies, but I hope you'll have copies made at a copying store for your families. (I suggest a spiral binder.)

I never charge for my booklets, but modest contributions will be appreciated to help cover my costs.

Thank you for your service,

[Signature]

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
(781) 449-0392
U.S.S. HAMMANN
DESTROYER
NAMED FOR
ENSIGN CHAS. H. HAMMANN, U.S.N.
BUILT AT Kearny, N.J.
AUTHORIZED MARCH 27, 1934.
KEEL LAID JANUARY 17, 1935.
LAUNCHED FEBRUARY 4, 1939.
FIRST COMMISSIONED AUGUST 11, 1939.
The U.S.S. Hammann (DD-412) in World War II

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85  92  TOTAL

September, 2004
Any man who may be asked what he did to make his life worthwhile can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction, "I served in the United States Navy."

- President John F. Kennedy, addressing the new class of midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy on August 1, 1963.
FOR RELEASE: After 9:00 A. M.
Saturday, February 4, 1939

KEARNY, N. J., Feb. 4 — Two Navy destroyers, the U.S.S. ANDERSON and the U.S.S. HAMMANN, figured in a "double-barrelled" launching here this morning in the yards of the Federal Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co., United States Steel subsidiary.

Both ships in this unusual ceremony were constructed on adjacent ways and were launched at high tide, the HAMMANN at 8:35 and the ANDERSON 20 minutes later.

The ANDERSON was named for the late Rear Admiral Alexander Anderson, Naval hero in the Spanish-American War, who died September 23, 1933. His widow, Mrs. Martie Loraine Anderson of Wilmington, N. C., was designated by Secretary Swanson as sponsor of the ship.

Miss Lillian Hammann, 14, of Baltimore, Md., sponsored the U.S.S. HAMMANN, named in honor of her uncle, Ensign Charles Hazeltine Hammann, U. S. Naval Reserve, who was killed in active duty June 14, 1919, at Langley Field, Virginia. A reception for the sponsors was held in the Yard Restaurant immediately after the launching ceremonies.

Both of the vessels launched today cost about $5,000,000 each, are 334 feet long, and will carry five-inch guns.

NOTE TO EDITOR: Accredited Navy passes required for reporters and news photographers attending the launching may be obtained from the Commandant of the Third Naval District, Navy Yards, New York, N. Y. Passes must be submitted to Assistant Inspector of Machinery and Assistant Superintending Constructor at Receptionist’s desk in the General Office Building of the Federal Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, Lincoln Highway, Kearny, N. J., at 8:15 A. M. Special buses will leave from Public Service Terminal in Journal Square, Jersey City, at 8:00, 8:05, and 8:10.

February 4, 1939
The Navy Department designated Miss Lillian Hammann, 14, as sponsor for the U.S.S. Hammann (DD-412) named in honor of her uncle, Ensign Charles H. Hammann, U.S.N., who was awarded the Medal of Honor during World War I for the extraordinary heroism he displayed in rescuing a fellow pilot with his seaplane. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph)
ENSIGN CHARLES HAZELTINE HAMMANN, U.S.N.R.

Ensign Charles Hazeltine Hammann was born March 15, 1892 at Baltimore, Maryland. He was appointed to the provisional rank of Ensign in Naval Reserve Flying Corps October 14, 1918, and served overseas until January 21, 1919. He was killed while on active duty June 14, 1919, at Langley Field, Va. He was awarded the Silver Medal for Military Valor by the King of Italy and the Congressional Medal of Honor with the Citation:

"For extraordinary heroism as a pilot of a seaplane on August 21, 1918, when with three other planes he took part in a patrol for dropping propaganda on Pola. They encountered and attacked a superior force of enemy land planes and in the course of an engagement which followed, the plane of Ensign George H. Ludlow was shot down and fell in the water five miles off Pola. Ensign Hammann immediately dived down and landed on the water close alongside the disabled machine where he took Ludlow on board and, although his machine was not designed for the double load to which it was subjected, and although there was danger of attack by Austrian planes, made his way to Porto Corsini."

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Source: Naval Historical Center, Ships' Histories Branch, Washington Navy Yard. (Retyped: E. A. Wilde, Jr., 7/10/03)
The Sims-class destroyer U.S.S. Hammann (DD-412) was launched at the Federal Shipbuilding & Drydock Co., Kearny, New Jersey, on February 4, 1939. The vessel was commissioned at the New York Navy Yard on August 11, 1939, Comdr. Arnold E. True, USN, in command. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph)
USS Hammann (DD-412) being towed, probably from her builder in New Jersey, to New York for her commissioning August 11, 1939. Major changes in her armament were made before she was transferred to the Pacific in 1942. As shown, she was armed with five 5-in./38 dual-purpose guns. Her Mount 3 (forward-facing) and Mount 4 were open, while Mount 5 had only a half shield with a canvas top. Later, Mount 3 was eliminated, along with the tall searchlight tower, and both after mounts had half shields with canvas tops. Also, instead of the three quadruple torpedo-tube mounts shown (with two on the main deck, port and starboard) one mount was landed and two quadruple mounts were center-lined on the deckhouse. Prior to World War II the ship's antiaircraft battery consisted of four .50-caliber water-cooled machine guns, but these were replaced with four 20-mm Oerlikon machine cannons which fired explosive shells. (U.S. Naval Institute Collection.)
In 1941 the 20-mm Oerlikon air-cooled machine gun began to replace the .50-cal. water-cooled machine gun as the Navy's standard light antiaircraft weapon. (It was also called a machine cannon because it fired explosive shells.) This early Mark 4 version with an open-ring sight required a four-man crew: the gunner, a trunnion operator (to adjust the height of the gun carriage) and two loaders. When fitted with the Mark 14 gyroscopic sight, introduced in 1943, a range setter was also required to enter range data. The Oerlikon had an effective range of 1,600 yards and fired at a rate of 450 rounds/minute. (Official USN Photo.)
HISTORY OF USS HAMMANN (DD 412)

The story of the HAMMANN is a story of a struggle for survival, merciful rescue amid a bedlam of explosion and fire, and a ship going beneath the waves as the last brave men aboard swam off her deck. Here is partly the story of the last death struggle of the LEXINGTON in the Coral Sea and the YORKTOWN in the Battle of Midway.

USS HAMMANN was authorized by an Act of Congress 27 March 1934, built at the Federal Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company of Kearny, New Jersey, and launched on 4 February 1939, with Miss Lillian Hammann of Baltimore, Maryland, serving as her sponsor. She was the niece of Ensign Charles Hazeltine Hammann who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor during World War I for extraordinary heroism, as a pilot of a seaplane, in effecting a dangerous rescue of a fellow pilot.

Commissioned on 11 August 1939, HAMMANN saw many ports on her shakedown and prewar cruises, visiting such places as Bermuda, San Diego, San Francisco, Pearl Harbor, Argentina and Iceland. She was at Iceland when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941.

January 1942 found the HAMMANN at Norfolk, Virginia. After refueling, degaussing, and effecting minor repairs to her propeller, she was underway on 6 January for Panama in company with the USS NEW MEXICO, MISSISSIPPI, PRESIDENT HAYES, and two destroyers in the anti-submarine screen, USS MORRIS and ANDERSON. After steaming through the Panama Canal the group headed for San Francisco, arriving 22 January. On 25 January, HAMMANN passed under the Golden Gate Bridge enroute to Pearl Harbor and the Pacific Theater. It was the last time HAMMANN was ever to see the shores of the United States again.

On 16 February, after undergoing various drills and preparations at Pearl Harbor, HAMMANN left with Task Force 17 enroute to the Canton Island area, and later, to New Caledonia, where the force was joined by Anzac units.

On 17 March HAMMANN anchored at Noumea, New Caledonia, and two days later rendezvoused again with Task Force 17 and engaged in exercises between New Caledonia and the New Hebrides Islands. 27 March saw her steaming in the Coral Sea with Task Force 17, screening and acting as plane guard for the purpose of rescuing pilots who landed in the water. She returned to Tongatabu on 20 April and left again for the Coral Sea on 27 April.

HAMMANN was part of the YORKTOWN screen on 4 May when three air attacks were launched against the Japs at Tulagi. Late that afternoon she was ordered to rescue two fighter pilots who were forced down at Guadalcanal, 42 miles to the north. Steaming at 30 knots, the ship arrived at dusk and spotted a white marker on the beach which proved to be a parachute tent about two miles east of Cape Henslow.

A motor whaleboat rescue party was put over the side at 1820 about 6,000 yards from the beach but could approach to within only
150 yards as the roaring breakers were too heavy to attempt a landing. Darkness and rain were of no help to Coxsain Kapp who swam through the surf with a line to the pilots. All three were hauled back to the motor shaleboat.

Since the boat officer had been instructed to destroy the planes one of the pilots attempted to return to the beach with pyrotechnic material to fire the planes. Enroute he became fouled in the line but freed himself only to have the line foul the boat propeller. Paddling hard to save the boat from beaching, the pilot was lost from view as the boat drifted along the shore. Jason, BM 2/c, dove over the side with knife and hacksaw and freed the propeller. In the meantime, the pilot managed to reach the beach where he collapsed from exhaustion. A half hour later he was located by the light of a flare, and Jason plunged into the black surf and carried a line to the beach by which both men were hauled back to the boat. Attempts to fire the plane were abandoned for lack of time and the boat returned alongside the ship at 2118.

There was good flying weather on 8 May with excellent visibility all around. Task Force 17 was knifing through the pale blue ground swells with flying fish lazily skimming away from the bow of each ship. Suddenly an announcement was received that a large group of Jap torpedo planes accompanied by fighters was approaching at 30 miles. The carriers launched intercepting planes on the double and the flying fish hustled out of the way as speed was increased to 27 knots.

Within 15 minutes enemy torpedo planes were sighted coming in for attack. LEXINGTON and other ships around her commenced firing. Two torpedo planes roared in at the YORKTOWN, and HAMMANN got in four salvoes before a torpedo was dropped. The torpedo sizzled ahead of YORKTOWN just as a torpedo plane was coming down in flames ahead of her.

HAMMANN picked up another torpedo plane flying overhead and fired four more salvoes before her range was blocked by a cruiser. Seconds later, the 20-millimeter guns forward laid a good burst into a torpedo plane close ahead, scored several hits and watched it crash with its torpedo. Just then, an explosion on the LEXINGTON indicated a torpedo hit as four more torpedo planes came within range of HAMMANN's guns. One started to smoke and crashed. These planes had already dropped their torpedoes and "cease fire" was sounded to look for loaded targets.

Several salvoes were fired at two planes racing southward, but they quickly passed out of range. Suddenly, dive bombers were sighted diving out of the sun. HAMMANN opened fire as a bomb exploded near YORKTOWN and another raised a geyser of water 200 yards off HAMMANN's starboard bow.

A five minute lull with only a dogfight visible to the south was interrupted by a second wave of dive bombers coming in from the east. The concussion and smoke of the guns started again as fire shifted from one torpedo plane to another.

LEXINGTON reported that her fires were not under control and
assistance was required. Three destroyers were detailed to stand by her. A serious explosion shook the carrier at 1535, and shortly thereafter HAMMANN was ordered to relieve PHILPS in standing by. HAMMANN took station astern of LEXINGTON, which was now out of control and making 20 knots.

By the morning of 9 May, LEXINGTON had slowed considerably and was circling with full rudder until she finally stopped dead in the water and drifted. HAMMANN circled in close and rescued men in the water with lines and cargo nets over the side. A whaleboat and gig were used to tow life floats to the nearby MINNEAPOLIS. LEXINGTON was lying in the trough of the sea drifting to leeward at a rate of 1 to 2 knots, so that large numbers of men were unable to swim clear of the ship or paddle their life boats clear. Small boats had unsuccessfully tried to tow floats clear, but they were too heavily loaded with men. HAMMANN maneuvered to go alongside of LEXINGTON but found it difficult to prevent crushing men between the ships as LEXINGTON drifted much faster than HAMMANN in this position. Although the side of the carrier was hot with smoke and flame escaping, HAMMANN picked up about 100 men from the water and from floats, including one seriously burned man who had been hung on the side in a sea bag.

When HAMMANN backed clear of LEXINGTON at 1748, it was none to soon, for a heavy explosion vented to starboard throwing flaming debris for a distance of three or four hundred yards. Some fell on HAMMANN, but there were no casualties. At this time there were still about 100 men on rafts under the carrier's port quarter. A line was shot to the LEXINGTON's Captain and Executive Officer on the flight deck and dropped to men in the water below who hung on as the line was hauled aboard.

At about 1812 there was a heavy explosion amidships on the carrier which ripped up a large section of the flight deck. Flames appeared for the first time on the topside. HAMMANN backed off a couple of hundred yards, which was well, for shortly after this, a tremendous explosion jolted the carrier. A great blossom of flame arose and with it several airplanes and quantities of debris. From then on the ship burned fiercely with a great pyrotechnic display as ammunition in ready stowage was exploded. LEXINGTON was soon burning with raging fires from end to end and was a great torch against the sky until she went down at a distance of about ten miles from HAMMANN.

The HAMMANN crew deserved much credit for the zeal with which they assisted survivors on board, making possible the rescue of 478 men. At the same time she picked up many men and took them directly to nearby cruisers. The crew also gave freely of their clothing and the use of their bunks for the welfare and comfort of the survivors.

During the night of 3 June, the radio receivers were humming with reports of enemy ships. One small group of cargo ships with escort was steaming 450 miles west of Midway. Another large group including battleships, cruisers and a carrier, was approaching 700 miles from Midway at 20 knots. Task Forces 16 and 17 were north by northeast of Midway.

On the morning of 4 June, scouting planes from Midway sighted an enemy force of 2 battleships, 2 heavy cruisers, and 4 carriers with
destroyers about 200 miles southwest of the Task Force. Air attack groups were launched and the force steamed on a closing course. About 1300 as the first planes were returning from the attack, word was received that a large group of unidentified planes was approaching at 26 miles. The planes were signaled off and set out to intercept the Japs.

There were about 18 Japs in the group and about half of them were splashed, but the rest of them pressed on through to attack YORKTOWN with two or three hits. HAMMANN opened up on the planes and shot down one as it tried to escape after dropping its bombs. She scored probable hits on other planes firing 120 rounds of 5-inch shells and 900 rounds of 20-millimeter shells.

As the smoke cleared, a friendly torpedo bomber circled the ship and dropped a message stating that one of our torpedo bombers was down 8 miles away. HAMMANN took no immediate action as YORKTOWN began to smoke heavily and slowed to a stop. There were still Jap planes in the area and YORKTOWN needed all the protection she could get.

Five minutes later another friendly plane crashed in the water 2 miles ahead of HAMMANN. Enemy planes had cleared the vicinity by this time and the pilot and radioman were pulled aboard. Sighting the rubber boat of the plane previously reported, HAMMANN went to the rescue again. The pilot was taken aboard slightly injured, but the radioman was dead.

At about 1430, enemy planes were again reported approaching from the west. YORKTOWN appeared to have her damage well under control, and by making 15 knots she was able to launch her planes. Shortly afterward, a group of 12 to 18 torpedo planes made a direct attack on YORKTOWN from her port quarter. HAMMANN was able to fire a barrage just astern of the YORKTOWN. About 6 or 8 enemy planes were shot down during their approach. She then laid her guns on a plane ahead of YORKTOWN and picked him off with a five-inch burst. The attack was pressed in to close range, and several torpedoes struck the YORKTOWN. HAMMANN shot down two or three with 20-millimeter shells as the enemy planes retired.

As the acrid smell of gunpowder cleared, YORKTOWN listed heavily and slowed to a stop. Screening vessels formed a circle around the carrier, and 3 destroyers came in close to stand by. At about 1700 YORKTOWN started to abandon ship, and as the 3 destroyers began to fill up with survivors, HAMMANN and HUGHES left the screen to assist in picking up men from the water and from life rafts around YORKTOWN. Twice during rescue operations enemy planes were reported in the vicinity but none approached. HAMMANN continued to pick up the last of the survivors, 87 in all, including Captain Buckmaster, who was transferred to the ASTORIA along with two of his officers.

The following morning, after transferring survivors to PORTLAND, HAMMANN took Captain Buckmaster aboard and along with BALCH and BENHAM set course to return to the stricken YORKTOWN. The carrier was sighted at 0400 in the morning, and after daylight HAMMANN came in close and transferred Captain Buckmaster, 29 officers and 130 men to save YORKTOWN. HAMMANN was later ordered to lie off close on the starboard
bow and provide hoses and water for fighting fire. Unable to maintain position accurately for effectiveness, she finally moored alongside YORkTOWN with her bottom resting against YORkTOWN's bilge keel with splinter mattresses and fenders dropped in between to prevent damage.

HAMMANN provided hoses for foamite systems, fire water, counter-flooding and oil suction to shift oil from one tank to another in an effort to correct the list and put out fires. Other services were furnished, including coffee and food for the salvage party. By noon the fires were under control and 3 degrees of list were removed.

All was going well until emergency signals were made by destroyers in the screen and simultaneously, four torpedo tracks were sighted 600 yards on the starboard beam. HAMMANN signalled for full speed on the inboard engine, and the 20-millimeter gun crews fore and aft fired at the tracks in the hope of exploding the torpedoes. General Quarters was sounded and many men had reached their battle stations when, seconds later, the torpedoes struck.

The first torpedo appeared to pass under HAMMANN and exploded against the side of YORkTOWN. A second torpedo struck HAMMANN in the #2 fireroom and apparently broke the ship's back as it sagged noticeably. The forward bulkhead of the forward fireroom carried away and great quantities of oil, water and debris were blown high into the air, coming down on both YORkTOWN and HAMMANN. The ships were blown clear of each other, parting all lines and hoses. HAMMANN's Commanding Officer received a heavy blow in the solar plexus, breaking a rib as he was thrown against a desk in the pilot house. As he was temporarily unable to talk or breathe, the Executive Officer noted that the ship began to settle immediately and gave the order to abandon ship.

By the time the Commanding Officer was able to walk from the pilot house to the starboard wing of the bridge, the main deck forward was awash and the ship was settling rapidly by the head. Life rafts had been launched, and a great many men were on the rafts or in the water. With all men clear of the bridge, the Gunnery Officer, Executive Officer and the Captain climbed down the outside ladder to the forecastle deck. The ship was sinking quickly and with the deck under their feet submerged, all three swam clear.

It is estimated that the ship sank within 3 to 4 minutes from the time of the first explosion. About one minute after the ship submerged there was a heavy explosion underwater, judged to be either a depth charge or one of HAMMANN's torpedoes which was seen to be running in its tube as the ship was going down. The underwater explosion apparently killed a large number of men in the water and injured about 85 more, of whom 26 died aboard BENHAM on the way back to Pearl Harbor. Of a total of 13 officers and 228 men on board, two officers were known to be dead and seven missing with twenty-six men known to be dead and forty-five missing. Of the remainder, all were rescued by the BENHAM and returned to Pearl Harbor except the Commanding Officer and one man picked up by BALCH.

During the action, all officers and men performed their duties with coolness and efficiency. During the phase of action when survivors were being rescued from the YORkTOWN all hands exerted every effort to rescue men in the water and care for them after they were
brought aboard. The Medical Officer, Lieutenant (junior grade) J. H. Peterson and Chief Pharmacist's Mate G. L. Banks worked all night and the following day in caring for them. When HAMMANN was torpedoed the ship sank so quickly that there was little opportunity for direction or supervision by officers in abandoning ship. Life rafts were promptly launched and life jackets distributed from battle stations. There were many instances of quick thinking and commendable conduct.

B. M. Kimbrell, TM/1c was particularly outstanding at a time when many others were performing heroic acts. He remained on the stern of the ship and made a final check of depth charges to see that they were on "safe" and assisted several men over the side who had been temporarily disabled by shock. He provided life jackets to others and finally dove over the side himself without a life jacket as the stern was submerging. He was among those missing and has been recommended for a posthumous award of the Navy Cross.

Commander Arnold E. True, who was the Commanding Officer of USS HAMMANN from the day she was commissioned until she was sunk by enemy torpedoes, was awarded the Navy Cross and the Distinguished Service Medal.

* * * * *

USS HAMMANN (DD 412) earned two Battle Stars on the Asiatic-Pacific Area Service Medal, for participating in the following operations:

1 Star/Coral Sea -- 4 to 8 May 1942

1 Star/Midway -- 3 to 6 June 1942

* * * * *

STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISPLACEMENT</th>
<th>1,570 tons</th>
<th>SPEED</th>
<th>37 knots</th>
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<tr>
<td>OVERALL LENGTH</td>
<td>348 feet, 4 inches</td>
<td>BEAM</td>
<td>36 feet</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMPLEMENT</td>
<td>200 plus</td>
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* * * * *

Stencilled October 46

Retyped July 03: E. A. Wilde, Jr.
This view of the Hambone at Charleston, South Carolina, in January, 1942, shows the ship's new configuration with two quadruple torpedo mounts on the deckhouse. Her main battery of four 5-in. guns (Nos. 1 and 2 on the bow) fired 54-lb. projectiles with a maximum range of about nine miles. With a well-trained crew each gun could fire 15-20 rounds a minute. A new Mk 37 Fire-control system was introduced in these-class destroyers which incorporated a large mechanical computer, separate from the director atop the pilothouse, in a below-decks plotting room. The Hambone's Measure 12 (modified) camouflages scheme was intended to break up the ship's outline. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph.)

Standard displacement 1,570 tons
Length overall 361'6"
Beam 36'1"
Draft 17'6"

Shaft horsepower 50,000 H.P.
Rested speed 35 knots
Excerpt from *Destroyers in Action*
by Richard A. Shafter.*

"A Lovely Ship"

Destroyers! Mention the word and the layman's mind will conjure up a picture of a little ship steam ing death-defying, head-on into the fire from an enemy battleship's heavy guns. In the heavy sea the little ship is rolling like a cork, with the white water breaking high over her bows. Then suddenly she swerves hard to starboard. There are a couple of splashes on her portside and a moment later appear the bubbling wakes of the tin fish she has sent on their voyage of destruction. And a short while later there is a terrific crash. The enemy's sides and decks are clothed in sheets of smoke and flame from the explosions that tear her inwards apart. And another naval battle is won.

It is an inspiring picture that has adorned many a calendar sent by solicitous ship's chandlers and seed stores to their customers, to be remembered by for the rest of the year. The practice looks different. Whether it's even more romantic than the calendar artist envisioned, or just a draf, humdrum existence, depends very largely on the point of view of the individual man who draws a "tincan." One thing, however, can be said for it: it's most versatile. If Kipling's crack about the linter has of late found an officially sanctioned variation to describe the glamour girl of the Navy, "The Carrier, she's a Lady," then it can safely be varied once again: "The destroyer, she's a workhorse."

Pulling binder, hay rig, threshing machine or the "democrat" for the family on its way to church, it's all one to a farmer's workhorse. A Navy workhorse may be on antisubmarine patrol today; dropping depth charges in their prescribed pattern all over the spot where the cooperating Navy flier believes he has seen the underwater raider; tomorrow, she may be riding herd on a convoy of merchantmen: running breathlessly and tongue-lolling around her flock, shooing stragglers into line, and then tackling, in the manner of good and faithful sheepdogs anywhere, all enemies regardless of size and number, whether aircraft, surface squadron, or wolf pack. Or they might install a pair of steel ovaries on her decks and give her a load of ugly horned eggs to drop in waters the enemy's fleet is certain to traverse. Then again, they might give her a pair of paravanes to tow and send her out to sweep the channels leading to a new invasion beach clear of the mines which the enemy himself has sown there, and then the next day convert her into a fast transport and send her in with a deckload of Marine Raiders who are to establish the first beachhead foothold. And while weird landing craft are yet on their way with reinforcements, supplies, tanks and artillery, the destroyer that has landed them will stand by to give the Leathernecks who are digging themselves in on the narrow coral strip whatever fire support her 4- or 5-inch guns are capable of.

Then again, on duty with a task force, the destroyer is in the van and on the flanks of the capital ships, scouting, protecting, running interference and when the actual engagement begins, throwing a smoke screen around the carrier or battleship to spoil the enemy's gunnery. When disaster comes, when carrier, battleship or cruiser has received the deadly wound that causes the decks to buckle and burst with the explosion of magazines and fuel tanks, it's the destroyer that rushes in close, though the heat may blister what patches of paint are still left on her sea-bitten plates, and takes off the men still left alive after the unsuccessful battle to save their doomed ship. As the hull of the big capital ship slowly drifts down with the tide, a roaring inferno, yet still floating, it is the destroyer's job to come in and send the once proud craft to the bottom with a torpedo, to save her from the last ignominy of having her dead body defiled by the enemy's hands.

Rescue missions generally are hardly more than mere routine assignments among the manifold jobs that are a destroyer's lot. Many a flier, shot down by ack-ack, or forced down in a gale, later got back in the fight simply because some indefatigable DD would not give up the search. A quart of whiskey for her skipper and ten gallons of ice cream for her wardroom became the traditional price that any carrier gladly paid to a DD for each of its fliers delivered back aboard or safely landed in port.

"Let the DD's do it!" has almost become axiomatic with the Navy whenever there is a particularly unpleasant or difficult job under discussion. Their speed, their maneuverability, their relatively high firepower
for their size, and their comparatively low building price, have made destroyers not merely the most versatile, but ton for ton the most efficient, naval craft ever devised. They are the Navy's true "expendables."

The spirit of the little ships reflects itself in that of their crews. Destroyermen are a bit apart from the rest of our man-of-war men. On their small ships they have to do without many of the comforts the crews of carriers, battleships or even cruisers enjoy. They live in cramped quarters. There is no canteen or ship's service booth where a man might get a coke, an ice cream or western story pulp magazine. Yet the destroyerman, though he beefs about it all and swears it's a dog's life, in his innermost heart glories in the hardships his particular trade imposes upon him. He's inclined to look down on the men from the big ships as "softies." His walk is a "destroyer roll." His hat sits precariously on one eyebrow. He is the bane of the Shore Patrol.

He'll abuse his ship roundly as the most uncomfortable, leakingest, buckingest crate that ever went to sea. But let somebody else pass unfavorable comment on her and he's up in arms. Asked why he wasn't applying for a transfer after he had given a lengthy and extremely critical recital of his ship's famed action, a survivor of the Borie put it all in a nutshell. "Me? No, thanks! There's too much red tape on a big ship for me. On a destroyer you know everybody with their good sides and their faults. And everybody knows you. You can't sham on a DD. You gotta be a sailor, mister."

Destroyers get into the blood not merely of the men that serve in them, but of anybody who has been given a chance to get acquainted with them. Even a master of the hard-boiled school of writing like John Steinbeck can wax dithyrambic over a little ship. After spending part of his correspondent's tour of duty aboard a DD he wrote:

"A destroyer is a lovely ship, probably the nicest fighting ship of all. Battleships are a little like steel cities or great factories of destruction. Aircraft carriers are floating flying fields.

"Even cruisers are big pieces of machinery, but a destroyer is all boat. In the beautiful clean lines of her, in her speed and roughness, in her curious gallantry."
In the Battle of the Coral Sea the USS Lexington (CV-2) was sunk on May 8, 1942, about 425 miles southwest of Guadalcanal. Despite this loss the battle was a strategic victory for the Allies because it caused the Japanese to cancel their invasion of Port Moresby, Papua, New Guinea.

Following the Battle of Midway, the USS Yorktown (CV-5) and the USS Hammann (DD-412) were torpedoed by a Japanese submarine about 120 miles north northeast of Midway (upper right) on June 6, 1942. The Hammann sank shortly after being hit, and the Yorktown capsized the next day.
Grumman F4F "Wildcat" fighters were embarked on both USS Lexington (CV-2) and USS Yorktown (CV-5) early in World War II. The F4F-3 shown was a one-place fighter with a wingspan of 38 ft. and a maximum speed of 330 knots. It was armed with six .50-cal. machine guns and 200 lbs. of bombs on wing racks. On May 4, 1942, four days before the Battle of the Coral Sea, the Hammann's motor whaleboat crew made a daring rescue of two Wildcat pilots who had crash-landed on the southern coast of Guadalcanal. Three members of the whaleboat crew were awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal. Unfortunately, they were all killed a month later when the Hammann was sunk on June 6th, following the Battle of Midway. (U.S. Navy Photograph.)
At sea,  
May 11, 1942.

From: The Commander Destroyer Division THREE (Acting) and  
Commanding Officer, U.S.S. HAMMANN.  
To: The Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.  
Via: (1) The Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO (C.T.G. 17.4).  
(2) The Commander Task Force SEVENTEEN.  
Subject: Report of Action, May 4, 1942, near Talagi, Solomon,  
Island.  
Enclosure: (A) Report of Rescue of Yorktown Aviators from Guadalcanal  
Island.  

1. On May 4, 1942, Destroyer Division Three less Hughes was  
operating under Commander Task Force Seventeen in the Coral Sea. Commander Destroyer Division Three was Commander Task Unit 17.5.2 consisting of HAMMANN, Russell, and Walke, screen for carrier in case of separation from other units of the force or surface attack. As the force was operating as a unit on this date, vessels were operating under tactical command of Commander Destroyer Squadron Two, acting as Commander Task Group 17.4. Russell was detailed to remain as screen for Neosho at rendezvous. On the evening of May 3, CTF-17 had received intelligence of enemy movement to the vicinity of Talagi Island, in the Solomon Group. At 2030, the Task Force set course and axis 000°T, speed 27 knots, to reach a suitable attack point at daylight.  

2. The following is a chronological table of events on May 4, 1942:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G.C.T.</th>
<th>L.C.T.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>0658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>0725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>0737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>0743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>0800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2230</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2300</td>
<td>1030</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subject: Report of Action, May 4, 1942, near Talagi, Solomon Island. (Continued)

G.C.T.  L.C.T.
2330  1100  Yorktown launched air groups for second attack.
0106  1352  Yorktown recovered planes of second attack groups.
0315  1445  CV launched air groups for third attack. Changed course of disposition to South.
0510  1640  Hammann was ordered to proceed Northward to Guadalcanal Island to attempt rescue of pilots of two fighter planes which had made forced landings, due to lack of fuel, in vicinity of Cape Henslow, 42 miles to Northward. Search was to be abandoned in time to enable Hammann to rejoin task force at sun rise at Point "Corn", 325 miles south of Cape Henslow. For report of this task see enclosure (A).

3. No enemy vessels or planes were sighted by the surface vessels of the Task Force during this action. The Hammann was kept in condition of readiness while attacks were in progress.

A.E. TRUE
At sea,  
May 10, 1942

From:  
The Commanding Officer.
To:    
The Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Via:  
(1) The Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO (C.T.G. 17.4)  
(2) The Commander Task Force SEVENTEEN.

Subject:  
Report of the rescue of Yorktown aviators from Guadalcanal, Island.

Enclosure:  
(A) Suggested Citation.

1. The Hammann was released to carry out this mission at a point forty-two miles from Cape Henslow, the reported landing position of the planes, and proceeded at best speed of thirty knots. At 1810, as the ship neared the beach for the first time a white marker which later proved to be a parachute tent was sighted on the beach about two miles east of the cape between two rain squalls. Shortly thereafter the director sighted both planes at the same point. Darkness was falling, hastened by heavy overcast and intermittent rain squalls. The beach was obscured by a squall for about five minutes shortly after first sighting.

2. A motor whale boat was put over at 1820 about 6,000 yards from the beach. The crew consisted of Ensign R.P.F. Enright, USNR, in charge and HOLT, Jack Lewis, QM2c, USN, JASON, Albert Stanley, EM2c, USN, KAPP, George Wilson, Jr., Cox, USN, AMATO, Emanuel George, MM1c, USN and PERRY, Kenneth Holland, Sealo, USN. The boat arrived at the beach just as dusk, was able to approach within about 150 yards of the shore but found the beach steep-to and the breakers too heavy to attempt a landing. The water outside the breakers was too deep to anchor satisfactorily.

3. The pilots Lt.(jg) E.S. McCuskey and Ensign J.P. Adams attempted to get off in their rubber boats but were thrown back by the breakers. KAPP then carried a line in through the surf to a point at which the aviators were able to reach him and all were pulled back to the boat. The boat officer then found that the pilots had been unable to destroy the planes although they had destroyed confidential gear and papers. Since the boat officer had been instructed to destroy the planes he attempted to do so with small arms fire. This having no effect, Lt. (jg) McCuskey then attempted to return to the beach with pyrotechnic material for another try. Enroute he became fouled in the line about him and freed himself of it. The free line became fouled in the boat propellers and the boat drifted along the beach, being paddled out of the surf while Jason dived and cleared the line with knife and hacksaw. Lt. McCuskey managed to reach the beach but collapsed from exhaustion and there followed a period of a half hour when the boat crew had no knowledge of his whereabouts or safety. He was finally sighted by the light of a very star from the boat. KAPP then tried to carried a line ashore but had to give up and return. Jason then successfully made the trip, carrying in a line. Further futile attempts were made to fire the planes which were abandoned in view of the need for haste. Jason and McCuskey were safely hauled back to the boat which arrived alongside the ship at 2115.

-1-
May 10, 1942.

Subject: Report of the rescue of Yorktown aviators from Guadalcanal, Island (Continued)

4. That the men were found and recovered was due to a succession of most fortunate circumstances and to the skill and judgment with which the boat was handled by Ensign Enright. Jason and Kapp are believed to deserve special commendation for their part in swimming through heavy surf on an unknown shore in complete darkness and rain. Without their courageous and continued efforts at great risk to themselves the rescue would probably not have been effected. Both men were placed on the sick list the following day with catarrhal fever probably induced by exhaustion and exposure.

[Signature]
A.E. TRUE
U.S.S. HAMMANN (412)

May 10, 1942

ENCLOSURE "A"

SUGGESTED CITATION

Ensign R.P.P. Enright, D-V(G), U.S. Naval Reserve

As officer in charge of a boat sent in to rescue two aviators from Guadalcanal Island, on a strange coast, in darkness and squally weather, in the vicinity of enemy forces, you exercised excellent judgement, skill, initiative and perseverance in supervising and effecting a successful rescue under unusually difficult circumstances.

You are hereby commended for the leadership displayed on this occasion.

JASON, Albert Stanley, 243 62 90, BM2c, USN

As coxswain of a boat sent in to rescue two aviators forced down on Guadalcanal Island, on a strange coast, in darkness and squally weather, in the vicinity of enemy forces, you dived over board to clear a fouled propeller, you swam through heavy surf and brought off successfully an exhausted man.

You are hereby commended for your courageous and exemplary conduct on this occasion.

KAPP, George Wilson, Jr., 243 63 19, Cox, USN

As a member of a boat crew sent in to rescue two aviators forced down on Guadalcanal Island, on a strange coast, in darkness and squally weather, you swam through heavy surf to carry a line to bring off the men on shore. You later attempted to swim through the surf a second time in order to bring off an exhausted man.

You are hereby commended for your splendid courage and zeal shown on this occasion.
USS Hammann (DD-412)

NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDALS
Awarded Posthumously for the Rescue of Two Yorktown Pilots
from Guadalcanal Island, May 4, 1942*

ROBERT P. F. ENRIGHT
Ensign, U.S. Naval Reserve

CITATION:

For heroism and distinguished service in the line of his pro-
fection as Officer-in-charge of a boat sent in to rescue two avia-
tors at Guadalcanal Island on May 4, 1942. He exercised excellent
judgment, skill and leadership on a strange uncharted coast, in
darkness and squally weather, in near proximity to enemy forces
in supervising and effecting a successful rescue under unusually
difficult circumstances. His courage and perseverance were in
keeping with the highest traditions of the naval service.

* * * * * * * * * *

ALBERT STANLEY JASON
Boatswain's Mate Second Class, U.S. Navy

CITATION:

For extraordinary heroism in the line of duty as coxswain of
a boat sent to rescue two aviators forced down on Guadalcanal Is-
land on May 4, 1942. On a strange uncharted coast, in complete
darkness and squally weather, within action range of enemy forces
and in shark infested waters, he dived overboard to clear a fouled
propeller and later swam through a heavy surf to carry a line to
the beach and bring off an exhausted man. His courage and perse-
verance were in keeping with the highest traditions of the naval
service.

* * * * * * * * * *

GEORGE WILSON KAPP, JR.
Coxswain, U.S. Navy

CITATION:

For extraordinary heroism in the line of duty as a member of
a boat crew sent to rescue two aviators forced down on Guadalcanal
Island on May 4, 1942. On a strange uncharted coast, in complete
darkness and squally waters, he swam through heavy surf carrying a
line to bring off the men on shore. He later attempted to swim
through the surf a second time in order to bring off an exhausted
man. His courage and perseverance were in keeping with the high-
est traditions of the naval service.

* * * * * * * * * *

* These men were killed when the Hammann was sunk on June 6, 1942.
The Douglas SBD "Dauntless" scout/dive bomber was a workhorse for the U.S. Navy throughout the war. At the Battle of the Coral Sea a Dauntless pilot flying off the Yorktown, Lt. John J. Powers, USN, was killed by the explosion of his 1,000-lb. bomb as it hit an enemy carrier. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, and the destroyer escort USS John J. Powers (DE-528) was named after him. The Hammann played an indirect role in this event. The destroyer had rescued Lt. Powers in the Atlantic during flight operations with the Yorktown in 1941, before the United States had entered the war. (See Hammann's deck log for 10/30/41) In 1942 both SBD-2 and -3 models were embarked on the Yorktown. Specifications for the SBD-3:

- **Wingspan**: 41' 7"
- **Max. bombing range**: 1,345 miles
- **Engine**: Wright R-1820-52
- **Armament**: Pilot 2 Fixed .50's, Gunner* 2 Free .30's
- **Rated power**: 1,000 h.p.
- **Top speed**: 250 mph
- **Max. bomb load**: 1,200 lbs.
- **Cruise speed**: 152 mph
- **Service ceiling**: 27,100 feet

* The gunner in the -2 model had one free .30-cal. machine gun.
ENROUTE to MOMP with convoy of six cargo ships and task force 14.3, in special formation 14-D. HAMMANN in screen position #6 and assigned plane guard. Conditions III and Baker set. Ship darkened. Steaming with #1 boiler; #3 boiler in use for auxiliary purposes; at standard speed 15 knots, 138 rpm, and following zigzag diagram #19. Base course 070 T (093 psc). 0145 Ceased zigzagging and returned to base course 070 T. Right column of cargo ships continued to zigzag and, in accordance with orders from Commander 2, proceeded to direct the EMPIRE WIDGEON back into formation and screen it on the way. 0300 Changed to 3-27 Zone time. 0320 EMPIRE WIDGEON in position. Changed to base course 070 T (093 psc) and speed 15 knots (138 rpm).

04-08
Steaming as before on base course 070 T (093 psc) at standard speed 15 knots (138 rpm). 0515 SMS left formation to investigate flares reported on bearing 260 T. 0520 Boiler #3 out in on main steam line. 0530 Commenced steaming on various courses at various speeds taking station for plane launching operations. 0600 All hands to General Quarters. 0631 Commenced zigzagging according to plan #19. 0635 Completed plane launching operations resumed sound screen station. 0640 Secured from General Quarters.

08-12
Steaming as before on course 070 T and 093 psc at standard speed of 15 knots (138 rpm), zigzagging in accordance with standard instructions. 0800 Mustered crew on stations, absentees, PLUMMER, R., EN1; CRISSELUS, D.T., S2c. 0810 Left station proceeding to screen carrier preparatory to flight operations. 0900 On station as plane guard for carrier. 0906 A plane over ran the starboard side of the flight deck and crashed in the water. Pilot and observer swam clear. Stopped, picked up both man, pilot J.E. POWERS. Lieutenant, USN, observer, HILL, Z., MM2c, USN, while plane sank. 0925 Took station 1500 yards 45° on the starboard side of the carrier as screen while rejoining main body. 1252 Resumed position as station #9 in screen zigzagging as before on base course 070 T, at standard speed 15 knots (138 rpm). 1100 Proceeding again acting as screen for the carrier on various courses at 25 knots (2.6 rpm). Made daily inspection of magazine temperatures and smokeless powder samples, conditions normal. The Commanding Officer held mast this date and assigned punishments as follows: STENSLAND, W.C., OSK, USN, 4 hours leave and failure to get to General Quarters - a warning; LEIPFARNDT, C.F., FC2c, USN, 4 hours leave and failure to get to General Quarters - a warning; BROMM, L.E., SN2c, USN, 4 hours leave; a warning.

12-16
Steaming as before guarding YORKTOWN. 1220 ANDERSON and MORRIS attacked submarine sound contact 3000 yards astern of YORKTOWN. 1233 Flight operations started. 1335 Flight operations completed, regained position #9 in formation, base course 070 T, speed 15 knots (138 rpm), zigzagging in accordance with plan #40. 1407 Tested machine guns; completed 1532. 1520ceased zigzagging on base course. 1530 Changed convoy course to 090 T (115 psc). 1644 Commenced acting as plane guard for YORKTOWN.

16-18
Steaming as before on various courses at various speeds acting as plane guard during landing operations. Formation course 090 T (117 psc), at 15 knots (138 rpm). 1637 Landing operations completed, resumed sound screen station. 1655 On station; zigzagging according to plan #19 on base course 090 T at standard speed 15 knots (138 rpm). 1700 Boiler #3 cut off the main steam line, in use for auxiliary purposes.


POWERS, JOHN JAMES

Rank: Lieutenant
Service: U.S. Navy
Birthday: 13 July 1912
Place of Birth: New York, New York
Date of Death: 8 May 1942
Cemetery: A.B.M.C. Manila Cemetery (Wall of the Missing)—Manila, Philippine Islands
Entered Service at: New York
Unit: Bombing Squadron 5, U.S.S. Torktown
Served as: Pilot
Battle or Place of Action: Coral Sea
Date of Action: 4-8 April 1942
Date of Presentation: 7 September 1942
Place of Presentation: Washington, D.C., presented by Adm. Royal E. Ingersoll to his Mother

Citation: For distinguished and conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty, while pilot of a airplane of Bombing Squadron 5, Lt. Powers participated, with his squadron, in five engagements with Japanese forces in the Coral Sea area and adjacent waters during the period from 4 to 8 May 1942. Three attacks were made on enemy objectives at or near Tulagi on 4 May. In these attacks he scored a direct hit which instantly demolished a large enemy gunboat or destroyer and is credited with two close misses, one of which severely damaged a large aircraft tender, the other damaging a 20,000-ton transport. He fearlessly strafed a gunboat, firing all his ammunition into it amid intense antiaircraft fire. This gunboat was then observed to be leaving a heavy oil slick in its wake and later was seen beached on a nearby island. On 7 May, an attack was launched against an enemy airplane carrier and other units of the enemy’s invasion force. He fearlessly led his attack section of three Douglas Dauntless dive bombers, to attack the carrier. On this occasion he dived in the face of heavy antiaircraft fire, to an altitude well below the safety altitude, at the risk of his life and almost certain damage to his own plane, in order that he might positively obtain a hit in a vital part of the ship, which would insure her complete destruction. This bomb hit was noted by many pilots and observers to cause a tremendous explosion engulfing the ship in a mass of flame, smoke, and debris. The ship sank soon after. That evening, in his capacity as squadron gunnery officer, Lt. Powers gave a lecture to the squadron on point-of-aim and diving technique. During this discourse he advocated low release point in order to insure greater accuracy, yet he stressed the danger not only from enemy fire and the resultant low pull-out, but from own bomb blast and bomb fragments. Thus his low dive bombing

OVER
attacks were deliberate and premeditated, since he well knew and realized the dangers of such tactics, but went far beyond the call of duty in order to further the cause which he knew to be right. The next morning, 8 May, as the pilots of the attack group left the ready room to man planes, his indomitable spirit and leadership were well-expressed in his own words, “Remember the folks back home are counting on us. I am going to get a hit if I have to lay it on their flight deck.” He led his section of dive bombers down to the target from an altitude of 18,000 feet, through a wall of bursting antiaircraft shells and into the face of enemy fighter planes. Again, completely disregarding the safety altitude and without fear or concern for his safety, Lt. Powers courageously pressed home his attack, almost to the very deck of an enemy carrier and did not release his bomb until he was sure of a direct hit. He was last seen attempting recovery from his dive at the extremely low altitude of 200 feet, and amid a terrific barrage of shell and bomb fragments, smoke, flame, and debris from the stricken vessel.
From: The Commander Destroyer Division THREE (Acting)
The Commanding Officer, U.S.S. HAMMANN.

To: The Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Via: (1) The Commander Task Unit 17.5.4.
(2) The Commander Task Group 17.5.
(3) The Commander Task Force 17.


Enclosure: (A) Report of Executive Officer, U.S.S. HAMMANN.
(B) Suggested Citations.

1. On May 8, 1942, Destroyer Division Three was operating under Commander Task Force Seventeen. U.S.S. HUGHES was enroute Pearl Harbor to Noumea, New Caledonia escorting U.S.S. FLATTE (AO) with fuel for the Task Force. U.S.S. SIMS had been operating with U.S.S. NEOSHO (AO) as anti-submarine screen in the vicinity of Lat 16° 38' S., 158° 28' E., prior to the morning of May 7. During the forenoon of May 7, radio transmissions intercepted indicated that Sims and Neosho had been heavily bombed by enemy planes and that Sims had been sunk. Hammann and Anderson were operating in task unit 17.5.4 under the direct tactical command of Commander Destroyer Squadron Two. Other ships of the unit were MORRIS (Flagship) and RUSSELL. The task force was in anti-aircraft formation, "V", CA's on 3,000 yard circle and DD's on 4,000 yard circle. Axis 305°T. Course 125°T. Hammann was bearing 195°T from disposition center and 2,500 yards bearing 185° from Yorktown. This position relative to Yorktown was maintained throughout the action. Russell, Anderson, and Morris were adjacent, in that order, counter clockwise in the screen. Weather was clear to partly cloudy with high ceiling, good to excellent visibility, wind East force A, slight sea, good flying conditions.

2. Events of the action follow in chronological order:

G.C.T.  L.C.T.

0001  1101 OTC announced that Radar contacts indicated a large group of torpedo planes accompanied by fighters and high bombers approaching from 030°T, distance about 30 miles.

0014  1114 Own fighter planes sighted enemy planes coming in and went after them.

0015  1115 Speed signal 25 knots. Hammann increased speed to 27 knots to allow a margin for maneuvering and station keeping.

0016  1116 Sighted enemy torpedo planes coming in for attack from Northeast. Lexington and other vessels in the Northeast part of the screen opened fire.
Subject: Report of Action, May 8, 1942. (Continued)

0017 1117 Two torpedo planes came in on Yorktown from Northeast. Hammann opened fire, completing about four salvos before torpedo was dropped. No hits observed. One torpedo was seen to pass close ahead of Yorktown. One plane came down in flames ahead of Yorktown.

0018 1118 Opened fire on torpedo plane passing ahead of Hammann with guns #1 & 2, firing 3 or 4 salvos before range was fouled by adjacent cruiser, target 6,000 to 8,000 yards distant. No hits observed. Forward part 20 m.m. gun fired on a second target which passed closer, about 1,000 yards, and appeared to score several hits. The plane crashed before dropping its torpedo. A torpedo hit was observed on Lexington.

0020 1120 Shifted fire to a torpedo plane passing to West of Yorktown; no hits observed. All guns were then brought to bear successively on 3 or 4 planes passing near to west of Yorktown at ranges of about 3,000 to 4,000 yards. One of these was seen to emit smoke and crashed shortly afterward. A probable hit by Hammann, though it might have been made by another ship. These planes had already dropped torpedoes so fire was checked to look for a loaded target.

0022 1122 Fired several salvos at two planes bearing Southward, but range was too great and target maneuvering. Sighted dive bombers to East of Yorktown attacking out of sun; shifted fire to them. Fired until pointer got quite far behind in dive. Some bursts were close but no visible sign of hits. One bomb was seen to make a hit or near miss on Yorktown. One bomb landed about 200 yards on starboard bow of Hammann.

0025 1125 A short lull in the action in South sector with no targets within range excepting a fighter engaging one of our fighters to Southward. Yorktown continued maneuvering at 25 knots with full rudder turns. Practically all enemy planes of this first wave had approached from the Northeast or North side of the formation and consequently had not offered close or steady targets for south screen. Most of the 20 m.m. targets had been out of range. Lexington had seemed to stop or slow speed after the torpedo hit and had drawn off to Northward splitting the formation into two semi-circular halves. Increased speed to 30 knots to maintain position on Yorktown.

0030 1130 A second wave consisting of fewer planes came in. Fire was opened on a group of dive bombers approaching from East; no hits observed.

-2-
0032 1132 Fire shifted to a torpedo plane to SW., distant 3,000 to 4,000 yards; no hits. Shifted to another torpedo plane to SE passing close aboard Russell. Russell shot this plane down apparently with 20 m.m. before Hammann opened.

0042 1142 Yorktown reported radar contact with a large group of planes approaching, which later proved to be our own. Attack group returning.

0050 1150 Speed 25 knots. Yorktown recovered one damaged fighter.

0106 1206 Disposition course 028° T., speed 15.

0125 1225 Yorktown recovered planes of attack group.

0233 1335 Increased speed to 19 knots.

0300 1400 Speed 25 knots. Course of disposition changed to 200° T.

0305 1405 Several vessels on south side of formation opened fire on unidentified aircraft which later were identified as own aircraft.

0330 1430 Dewey was ordered to drop astern and search for one of own planes which was down.

0354 1454 Lexington reported to CTF 17 that fires on board were not under control.

0359 1459 Flag hoist made by Lexington that assistance was required.

0408 1508 Flag hoist indicating that CTF 17 was assuming tactical command. Ordered three destroyers to stand by Lexington. Nearest destroyers, Phelps, Morris, and Anderson were detailed to stand by.

0425 1525 Yorktown launched air patrol and search group. Lexington reported a serious explosion on board.

0436 1536 Hammann was ordered by CTF 17-5.4 to relieve Phelps standing by Lexington.

0440 1540 Took station astern of Lexington which was out of control making about 20 knots.

0500 0600 Took station ahead of Lexington which had now slowed and was circling with full rudder.

0522 1622 Lexington stopped and drifting. Hammann circling close aboard.
Subject: Report of Action, May 8, 1942 (Continued)

0535 1635 Morris went alongside Lexington to remove excess personnel. Relayed message to CTF 17 that fire was completely out of control, all power lost and below decks stations abandoned.

0610 1710 Lexington Personnel began abandoning ship. Men were concentrated on the forward and after ends of flight deck and on starboard side of superstructure. Hammann took station close aboard on port quarter and began taking men from water by means of lines and cargo nets over the side. Lowered whaleboat and gig to pick up men and tow life floats to Minneapolis which was close aboard on starboard quarter. Morris was still alongside starboard side and Anderson at port bow.

0620 1720 Morris left starboard side with load of men. Hammann was informed by Minneapolis that there was still a large number of men to starboard. Lexington was lying in the trough of sea and drifting to leeward at a rate of one to two knots so that men there were unable to swim clear of ship or to paddle their life floats clear. Small boats had attempted to tow life floats clear but they were so heavily loaded with men that boats could not tow them clear of the ship.

0625 1725 Hammann maneuvered to go alongside starboard side of Lexington. Movement was delayed by large numbers of men alongside in water hanging on to lines.

0635 1735 Made starboard side of Lexington abreast superstructure. Experienced considerable difficulty maneuvering to prevent crushing men between the two ships as Lexington drifted much faster than Hammann in this position. Side of the ship was very hot with considerable smoke and flame escaping. Picked up approximately 100 men from water and life floats and one seriously burned man who had been hung over the side in a sea bag.

0648 1748 Backed clear of starboard side.

0650 1750 A heavy explosion occurred in starboard side near superstructure throwing flaming debris to a distance of three or four hundred yards. Some fell on Hammann forecastle but there were no casualties.
U.S.S. HAMMANN (412)
May 12, 1942

Subject: Report of Action, May 8, 1942 (Continued)

0655 1755 Resumed previous station close aboard on port quarter picking up men from water and life floats. Passed lines to flight deck of Lexington for the purpose of hauling out life floats which were still under the counter. They were passed down by two officers who were still on deck but could not be reached by men on floats. However, a number of swimming men were pulled in by them.

0712 1812 A second heavy explosion, apparently from amidship, threw large quantities of flaming debris in all directions. By this time the entire ship was burning fiercely and planes were being blown off the flight deck. Directed Hammann gig to make a final check for survivors along starboard side of ship.

0720 1820 Backed off 100 yards to clear debris from explosion. Engine room reported both main circulating pumps out of commission and vacuum falling rapidly. Later investigation showed starboard circulator frozen - probably by lines or debris in the water end.

0735 1835 Received orders to transfer load to New Orleans. Went ahead to go alongside but decided not to attempt the landing due to complete loss of backing power.

0745 1845 Circled back to pick up boats which had continued delivering survivors to cruisers. Boats returned but had great difficulty in picking them up as starboard engines could not be stopped for more than two or three minutes at a time without loss of vacuum.

0820 1920 Last boat hoisted in. Phelps fired a torpedo into hulk.


3. During the air attack phase of this action, one enemy torpedo plane was definitely shot down by 20 m.m. gun fire, prior to launching torpedo. One probable hit was made by the 5" battery and the target plane crashed. It was estimated that thirty to forty per cent of 5" projectiles fired failed to explode. Plotting room record showed enemy planes tracked for total of 11 minutes and 38 seconds. About ten targets were fired on by 5". Ammunition expended 220 rounds of 5"/38 and 1200 rounds 20 m.m. A subsequent muster of Lexington personnel recovered during the rescue phase showed 24 officers and 454 men on board Hammann. In addition it is estimated that the two Hammann boats rescued approximately 100 officers and men including the Captain and Executive Officer and landed them on board other vessels.

-5-
Subject: Report of Action, May 3, 1942 (Continued)

4. During the entire action, every officer and man on board performed his assigned duties with alertness, zeal, and efficiency. During the rescue phase every man in the ship exerted himself to the utmost. The energy and initiative of the crew in rescuing exhausted survivors of the Lexington, undoubtedly saved many lives. Orders and directions were practically unnecessary. The two boat crews particularly distinguished themselves by initiative and courage displayed when they made repeated trips to the Lexington under a hail of flaming debris caused by exploding bombs, ammunition, and gasoline, in the burning ship. The gig made an especially dangerous trip to the lee side of the Lexington after the Hammann had backed out and brought out two injured men who had previously been overlooked. The crews of the boats were as follows:

**GIG**
- Ensign T.E. Krebski, D-V(G), USNR, - Boat Officer
  - JASON, Albert S., BM2c, USN - - - - Coxswain
  - SANDERSON, E.R., Sealc, USN - - - Bow Hock
  - SMITH, T.R., Fnc, USN, - - - - Engineer

**WHALE**
- Ensign Ralph L. Holton, USN - - - - Boat Officer
  - GILLETT, Almon F., BM2c, USN - - - Coxswain
  - RICHARDSON, Preston S., Slc, USN - Bow Hock
  - SIERES, W.L., Jr., Fnc, USN - - - Engineer

5. It is recommended that their performance be recognized by such awards as are considered suitable by higher authority. In addition it is recommended that JASON, Albert S., BM2c, USN, be promoted to BM1c.
U.S.S. HAMMANN (412)

At sea,
May 11, 1942

From: Lieutenant Ralph W. Elden, U.S. Navy.
To: The Commanding Officer, U.S.S. HAMMANN.


1. My station during this action was in Secondary Control Station on the after deck house. Since I had no duties unless damage was received or in case it was necessary to take control aft, I assisted in manning number four 20 m.m. machine gun.

2. After going to General Quarter at 0943 I was kept informed by the bridge of radar contacts made and reports from our planes. At 1110 I received a report that a large group of enemy planes were coming in from the Northward. At the beginning of the action the Hammann was on the starboard side of the formation about on Yorktown beam with that vessel bearing about 000°T. LEXINGTON was on the other side away from us. After the attack began I was not able to observe maneuvers of the formation.

3. At about 1115 enemy planes appeared, the first that I observed being torpedo planes coming in from the other side of the formation. The sky immediately became a confusion of bursts and tracers. The first enemy plane which I observed to come through the formation burst into flames and crashed about 1500 yards aseam to port. A short time later I saw another plane similarly fall astern. I did not observe any other planes go down. After firing four or five magazines at as many targets the gun failed. I elected to change barrels, later proved to have been correct action, since an un-fired cartridge was very tightly stuck in the chamber. Entering the new barrel took some time due to the anti-double-loading device being stuck down. Fortunately, however, this appeared to occur during a partial lull in the attack. After testing the gun and finding it satisfactory, dive bombers were observed coming out of the sun (on the port quarter) and diving across our stern at Yorktown. These were taken under fire by the after machine guns. After the dive bomber attack enemy planes disappeared, the whole action having lasted about 10 minutes.

4. I do not know whether our fire resulted in the destruction of any planes. I would say that in general targets were outside of best 20 m.m. range. At the end of the action I observed one of our own fighters under fire from one of our machine guns. This fire was broken off after a burst and I do not believe that it took effect. I consider that some firing on our planes is unavoidable in such an action if our planes come low over the formation. A gunner under such stress cannot always be expected to identify a plane beyond the shadow of a doubt.

5. Men coming under my observation during the action performed their duties most commendably.
May 11, 1942

Subject: Report of action May 8, 1942, Lieutenant Ralph W. Elden, USN, Executive Officer, U.S.S. HAMMANN (Continued)

I particularly noted that STEWART, Carol, GM3c, USN, was collected during the difficulty of barrel shifting and able to correctly apply his knowledge of the gun. On one occasion I noted and corrected a tendency of the gun crew to "Watch the show" instead of the servicing of the gun.

At about 1530 Lexington signaled that she had had a serious explosion and required assistance. At 1536 Hammann, having been detailed to assist, steamed close aboard Lexington. The carrier gradually lost speed and then steering control. Cargo nets and fenders were put over our sides and all available lines made ready for rescue use. Experienced boat crews were detailed with Ensign Holton in charge of the whole boat, Ensign Krepski in charge of the gig.

At 1710 Lexington was dead in the water and began to abandon ship, her crew sliding down lines from the flight deck. She drifted broadside to starboard and many men were soon strung out upwind of her. At 1715 both of our boats were lowered as we approached Lexington's port quarter. The boat officers were instructed to concentrate on rescuing men who did not appear to be in position to be picked up directly by the ship. A great many survivors were picked up by the ship in this position, coming aboard on both sides by means of nets, ladders and bowlines. Our crew displayed great energy and initiative in rapidly taking survivors on board.

At about 1725 the ship backed off and went alongside Lexington's starboard side. Here there were many men on rafts who, as Lexington was set down on us were in danger of being crushed between the two ships. Our large fender, over to port probably saved some of them, but by frenzied effort all, to the beat of my knowledge, were taken safely on board.

As survivors came on board they were immediately sent below, undressed and put into bunks. Doctor John H. Peterson, MC-V(G), USNR, continuously patrolled the deck, inspecting men with injuries and directing their disposition. Badly wounded men were taken to the mess hall which became a temporary sick bay. Lieutenant E.E. Keeton (MC), USN, was among the survivors, and immediately upon arriving on board he proceeded to assist with the injured, refusing even dry clothing.

At 1748 the ship was backed clear, and none too soon, for a heavy explosion vented to starboard just as we cleared. Again we lay off the port quarter and continued the rescue. At this time there were perhaps a hundred men on rafts under Lexington's port quarter. In spite of repeated instructions they continued to hold themselves there by means of lines to the flight deck instead of trying to push out towards help. A line was then shot to the flight deck which was hauled in by the Lexington's Captain and Executive Officer. These officers dropped the line to men in the water below but the latter did not get it to the rafts. Some men were hauled in by means of the line, however.

-2-
Subject: Report of action May 8, 1942, Lieutenant Ralph W. Elden, USN, Executive Officer, U.S.S. HAMMANN (Continued)

At about 1812 there was a heavy explosion amidships on the carrier, ripping up a section of the flight deck. Large flames appeared for the first time on the top side. Hammann backed off a couple of hundred yards, which was well, for shortly thereafter a tremendous explosion occurred on the carrier. A great blossom of flame arose and with it several airplanes and quantities of debris. From then on the ship burned fiercely with a great pyrotechnic display as ammunition in ready stowages was exploded.

Our crew deserves great credit for the zeal with which they assisted survivors on board, making possible the rescue of 478 men. At the same time our boats picked up a great many men and carried them directly to nearby cruisers. Our crew also gave freely of their clothing and the use of their bunks for the welfare and comfort of the survivors.

Lexington was soon burning from end to end and was a great torch against the sky until she went down at a distance of about ten miles from us.

Ralph W. Elden
U.S.S. HAMMANN (412)

At sea,
May 12, 1942

Enclosure "B"

SUGGESTED CITATIONS

Ensign Theodore E. Krepski, D-V(G), USNR

As officer in charge of a boat detailed to rescue survivors from a burning ship, you made repeated trips to the ships side under a hail of flaming debris caused by exploding bombs, ammunition, and gasoline, without consideration for your own safety, thereby saving many lives.

You are hereby commended for the splendid courage and perseverance shown on this occasion.

JASON, Albert S., 245 62 90, EM2c, USN

As coxswain of a boat detailed to rescue survivors from a burning ship, you made repeated trips to the ship's side under a hail of flaming debris caused by exploding bombs, ammunition, and gasoline. When the boat propeller became fouled by floating lines, you dived over the side, cleared it expeditiously and continued the rescue work, thus saving many lives.

You are hereby commended for the courage, skill and efficiency displayed on this occasion.

SANDERSON, Earl R., 356 24 52, Slc, USN, and (Bow hook)
SMITH, Thomas H., 272 41 64, Flc, USN (Engineer)

As members of the crew of a boat detailed to rescue survivors from a burning ship, you made repeated trips to the ship's side under a hail of flaming debris caused by exploding bombs, ammunition, and gasoline. You performed your duties with coolness, courage, and efficiency under very trying circumstances.

You are hereby commended for your courageous and exemplary conduct on this occasion.

Ensign Ralph L. Holton, U.S. Navy

As officer in charge of a boat detailed to rescue survivors from a burning ship, you took your boat into waters made dangerous by frequent explosions of bombs and shells. You also exercised excellent judgement and initiative in picking up personnel who had drifted clear of the area worked by other boats and might otherwise have been lost in the increasing darkness.

You are hereby commended for your courageous and energetic performance of duty on this occasion.
U.S.S. HAMMANN (412)

At sea,
May 12, 1942

Enclosure "B"

SUGGESTED CITATIONS

GILLETTE, Almon F., 393 22 93, BM2c, USN (Coxswain)
RICHARDSON, Preston S., 258 27 75, Slc, USN (Bow hook)
SIKES, William L., Jr., 268 54 82, Ffc, USN (Engineer)

As members of the crew of a boat detailed to rescue survivors from a burning ship, you individually and collectively performed your duties with coolness, energy, and perseverence, in waters made dangerous by frequent explosions of bombs and shells. Your strenuous efforts resulted in the saving of many lives.

You are hereby commended for your courageous and exemplary conduct on this occasion.
USS Hammann (DD-412)

Medals Awarded for the Rescue of Lexington Survivors, 5/8/42*

RALPH LEE HOLTON
Ensign, U.S. Navy

NAVY CROSS

CITATION: "For extraordinary heroism and distinguished service in the line of his profession in the Coral Sea on May 8, 1942. As Officer-in-Charge of a boat detailed to rescue work during the burning of the U.S.S. LEXINGTON, he made repeated trips to the ship's side under a hail of flaming debris caused by exploding bombs, ammunition and gasoline with complete disregard for his own safety, thereby effecting the rescue and the saving of many lives. His courage and judgement, and perseverance were in keeping with the highest traditions of the naval service."

* * * * * * *

ALBERT STANLEY JASON
Boatswain's Mate Second Class, U.S. Navy

NAVY CROSS

CITATION: "For extraordinary heroism and distinguished service in the line of his profession in the Coral Sea on May 8, 1942. As Coxswain of a boat detailed to rescue survivors from the burning USS LEXINGTON, he made repeated trips to the ship's side under a hail of flaming debris caused by exploding bombs, ammunition and gasoline with complete disregard for his own safety. When the boat propeller became fouled by floating lines, he dived over the side, cleared it expeditiously and continued the rescue work, thus saving many lives. His courage, quick thinking and determination were in keeping with the highest traditions of the naval service."

* * * * * * *

THEODORE E. KREPSKI
Lieutenant Junior Grade, U.S. Naval Reserve

NAVY CROSS

CITATION: "For extraordinary heroism and distinguished service in the line of his profession in the Coral Sea on May 8, 1942. As Officer-in-Charge of a boat detailed to rescue work during the burning of the U.S.S. LEXINGTON he made repeated trips to the ship's side under a hail of flaming debris caused by exploding bombs, ammunition and gasoline with complete disregard for his own safety, thereby effecting the rescue and the saving of many lives. His courage, judgement and perseverance were in keeping with the highest traditions of the naval service."

* * * * * * *
NAVY CROSS

Awarded to COMMANDER ARNOLD ELLSWORTH TRUE, UNITED STATES NAVY.

CITATION:

"For extraordinary heroism in the line of his profession as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. HAMMANN during the rescue of survivors from the U.S.S. LEXINGTON in the battle of Coral Sea. While still in danger of another attack by enemy planes and while the LEXINGTON was being shaken by violent explosions and was being gutted by raging fires, Commander True in total disregard for his own safety placed his ship alongside the LEXINGTON and took off a large number of survivors. His courage and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval service."

* * * * * * * * *
Four SILVER STAR MEDALS
with identical citations:

PRESTON STEPHAN RICHARDSON
Seaman First Class, U.S. Navy

EARL REX SANDESON
Coxswain, U.S. Navy

WILLIAM LEE SIKES, JR.¹
Fireman First Class, U.S. Navy

THOMAS HAROLD SMITH
Machinist’s Mate Second Class, U.S. Navy

CITATION: "For gallantry and distinguished service in the line of
       duty in the Coral Sea on May 8, 1942. As a member of a boat crew
detailed to rescue survivors from the burning U.S.S. LEXINGTON,
he made repeated trips to the side of the burning ship under a
hail of flaming debris caused by exploding bombs, ammunition and
gasoline. He performed strenuous rescue work in pulling men from
the water with coolness, energy and perseverance under difficult
and dangerous conditions, thus contributing to the saving of many
lives. His conduct throughout was in keeping with the highest
traditions of the naval service."

* * * * * * * * *

Note: GILLETTE, Almon Fleming, Boatswain’s Mate Second Class,
USN, was also probably awarded a SILVER STAR MEDAL, but the
archivist at the Naval Historical Center could not find a
citation card for him. See the last page (pg. 6) of Cdr.
True’s action report dated May 12, 1942.

* The following draft citations are from an index card file at
Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy
Yard. The formal citations may have been reworded.

¹ Killed when Hammann was sunk a month later (6/6/42), so the
award was posthumous.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
September, 2004
Fortunately, **Hammann** (bow at far left) had just backed clear of the USS **Lexington** (CV-2) on May 8, 1942, after the Battle of the Coral Sea, when this huge explosion threw flaming debris in all directions. The destroyer rescued 478 men from the carrier, and her two whaleboats rescued about 100 more, including the Captain and Executive Officer, and transferred them to other ships. The **Lexington**'s abandonment was deliberate and orderly. Nobody who went overboard was drowned. Despite the torpedo and bomb hits and the massive explosions which followed, only 216 men went down with the ship. The destroyers **Hammann**, **Morris** and **Anderson** rescued 2,735 survivors.

(Official U.S. Navy Photograph)
A starboard quarter view of USS Lexington (CV-2) on May 8, 1942, showing her crew abandoning ship by sliding down ropes and being picked up by whaleboats from other ships in Task Force 17. The destroyer Hornet at right, partially obscured by smoke, is tacking off the wounded. After the Lexington was abandoned she remained afloat until the destroyer Hancock was ordered to sink her with torpedoes. The "Lady Lex" was the first U.S. carrier lost due to enemy action in World War II, and the other carrier in TF-17, the Enterprise (CV-6), became the second when she was sunk a month later. (U.S. Naval Institute)
From: The Commanding Officer.  
To: The Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.  
Subject: Anti-aircraft action by surface ships.  
1. Enclosure (A) is forwarded herewith.

cc: Cincpac

FILMED
ANTI-AIRCRAFT ACTION BY SURFACE SHIPS

LOCATION OF SHIP - Coral Sea Lat. 14° 45' S Long. 165° 75' E

U.S.S. HAMMERS May 8, 1942

HAMMERS with Task Force Seventeen.

1. SURPRISE ATTACK - No.

2. METHOD PICKING PLANE UP - Naked eye
   Reported from carrier radar at 30 miles
   Own radar at 15 miles

3. RANGE PLANE WAS PICKED UP - Less than 5

4. NUMBER, OF PLANES - 50 (estimate only)

5. TYPE OF PLANE-Torpedo
   TYPE OF ATTACK - Torpedo
   Dive Bomber
   Dive Bomb

6. SPEED & ALTITUDE - Torpedo planes low and fast; estimate speed 200
   knots after torpedo release.

7. GUNS FIRING Size 5"/38 Number - Four
   Method of control - Director
   Method spotting Direct

8. AMMUNITION EXPENDED - 210 - 5"/38 1200 - 20 m.m.

9. PERCENT SERVICE ALLOWANCE EXPENDED 11% 20 M.M. Machine
   guns also firing

10. APPROXIMATE TIME TRACKING TO FIRST SHOT

11. APPROXIMATE TIME OF FIRST HITS

12. APPROXIMATE TIME FIRST SHOT TO LAST SHOT - 16 minutes

13. APPROXIMATE POSITION ANGLE OPEN FIRE - 2°

14. APPROXIMATE POSITION CHASE FIRE - Fired at 10 to 12 targets in rapid
    succession.

15. APPROXIMATE BEARING FIRST SHOT - 290° Relative

16. APPROXIMATE BEARING LAST SHOT

17. APPROXIMATE RANGE FIRST SHOT - 2500 Yards

18. APPROXIMATE RANGE LAST SHOT
20. APPROXIMATE ALTITUDE OF BOMB RELEASE

21. HITS ON SHIP - None WAS SHIP STRAIGHT - No SIZE-GUN

22. NUMBER NEAR BOMB MISSES - None CASUALTIES FROM NEAR MISSES - None

23. PLANES SHOT DOWN - Sure 1 by 20 m.m. Possible 1 by 5"/38 Damaged

24. DETAILS OF DAMAGE TO TARGET BY GUNFIRE IF AVAILABLE

One plane shot down by 20 m.m. fire from one gun - range about 1000 yards.

25. PERFORMANCE OF AMMUNITION 5"/38 poor, 20 m.m. excellent

26. PATTERN SIZES (Large, small extensive)

* About 40% Duds

(a) Indicate direction of attack relative to ship's head
(b) Show relative position of sun.
(c) Indicate own maneuvers

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Formation followed movements of CV's, zigzagging radically in General SE'ly direction

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ACTION REPORT

U.S.S. HAMMANN	DD412

ACTION REPORT: 4-6 JUNE 1942. [BATTLE OF MIDWAY]

SERIAL 2
JUNE 16, 1942.

OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND LIBRARY
From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.
Via: (1) ComTaskGroup 17.4 (Comdesron Two).
     (2) ComTaskFor 17.
Subject: Action Report; 4-6 June, 1942.

1. In view of the fact that the HAMMANN was sunk about
   1600 on June 6, with total loss of all records, this report
   must be made entirely from memory. Consequently, no record of
   the ship's track is included and times and locations given are only
   approximate. However, the HAMMANN was at all times in company with
   other vessels and comparison of this report with their records
   should indicate times and places accurately. The HAMMANN was
   operating under Commander Taskforce 17 consisting of YORKTOWN,
   ASTORIA, PORTLAND, MORRIS, RUSSELL, HAMMANN, ANDERSON, AND HUGHES.
   The destroyers were designated as Task Group 17.4 under admin-
   istration and tactical command of Commander Destroyer Squadron Two.

2. On the night of June 3, reports were received by
   radio of scouting plane contact with two AKs accompanied by two
   small vessels 450 miles West of Midway and a group of eleven or
   twelve ships containing two or three BBs, two or three CAs, one
   CV, and destroyers 760 miles west of Midway on course 090, speed
   20. Taskforce 17 at this time was about 300 miles NNE of Midway.
   Taskforce 16 was in the same area. During the night both task-
   forces moved in a Southeasterly direction.

3. On the morning of June 4, contact was made by scouts
   from Midway with another enemy force containing two BBs, two CAs
   and 4 CV with destroyers located about 200 miles SW of the task-
   forces. Taskforce 16 flew off air attack groups about 0900 (LWT)
   and taskforce 17 launched air attack groups about 1000. Taskforce
   17 then took a closing course. The taskforce took antiaircraft
   disposition "V" with the two cruisers twenty-five hundred yards
   on relative bearings 060 and 300 and DDs on relative bearings
   020, 120, 180, 240, and 340. HAMMANN was on 020. About 1300 the
   first planes of returning attack group approached and two or three
   fighters landed. At this time the OTC broadcast over TBS that a
   large group of unidentified planes was approaching from Westward,
   distant 26 miles. Planes in the landing circle were signaled off
   and preparations made to repel attack.
Serial 2

June 16, 1942

Subject: Action Report; 4-6 June, 1942.

Fighters picked up the enemy bombers about 5 miles out and shot down a large number, eight or ten as a rough estimate. It seems probable that there were 16 planes in the attack group. The remainder came on through and attacked the YORKTOWN, obtaining two or three hits. This vessel definitely shot down one enemy plane with 20mm as he was escaping after dropping his bomb and got probably hits on others. The entire attack lasted only a few minutes. HAMMANN fired 120 rounds of 5" and about 900 rounds of 20mm. YORKTOWN began smoking heavily and slowed to a stop. DDs and cruisers in screen began circling. This continued for about ten minutes while YORKTOWN was fighting fire. At this time one of our own bombers returning circled close aboard the HAMMANN and threw a note on deck stating that one of our torpedo bombers was down 8 miles distant, bearing 240°. Did not take any action as it appeared there were still some unidentified planes in the vicinity and YORKTOWN required full support. About 5 minutes later another plane crashed in the water about 2 miles ahead of HAMMANN. As there were now no further indications of enemy planes in the vicinity, proceeded to pick up pilot and radioman from this plane, slightly injured. Plane proved to be from ENTERPRISE. Upon completion, sighted the rubber board of the torpedo bomber previously reported to us about five miles Southward and proceeded at 30 knots to pick them up. Pilot was rescued only slightly injured but radioman was dead. Returned at 30 knots and rejoined YORKTOWN screen. YORKTOWN shortly increased speed to ten knots and then to fifteen.

4. About 1430 enemy planes were reported approaching from the West. YORKTOWN appeared to have damage well under control, making 15 knots, and launched all fighters on deck. Shortly afterward a group of 12 to 18 torpedo planes made a direct attack on YORKTOWN from her port quarter. HAMMANN was able to fire a barrage on a line passing just astern of YORKTOWN to path of incoming planes. It appeared that six or eight enemy planes were shot down during their approach but it could not be determined by whom. HAMMANN shifted fire to a plane on YORKTOWN's bow and definitely shot him down with 5". The attack was pressed in to close range and several torpedoes struck the YORKTOWN. Several more enemy planes were shot down by gunfire at close range after torpedoes were dropped. HAMMANN shot down two definitely and possibly three with 20mm as they were retiring.
5. After the torpedo attack YORKTOWN listed heavily and slowed gradually to a stop. Screening vessels formed a circling screen. Three destroyers were ordered to stand by YORKTOWN. About 1700 YORKTOWN began abandoning ship. As the first three destroyers began to fill up with survivors, HUGHES and HAMMANN were ordered by Comdesron Two to leave screen and assist in picking up survivors from the water and life rafts in vicinity of YORKTOWN. Twice during the rescue operations, unidentified planes were reported in the vicinity but no enemy planes were sighted. HAMMANN went close astern of YORKTOWN and picked up the last of the survivors including the commanding officer, Captain BUCKMASTER. Total survivors rescued by HAMMANN was 87.

6. Upon completion of rescue work, cruisers formed column, screened by destroyers. HAMMANN went alongside ASTORIA, as directed by CTF-17, and transferred Captain BUCKMASTER and two of his officers. Resumed station in cruising disposition on Eastern courses. HUGHES was directed by CTF-17 to return and standby YORKTOWN. The two cruisers from Taskforce 16 left the disposition to rejoin their taskforce. At sunrise the following morning, destroyers were directed to transfer all YORKTOWN survivors to PORTLAND and to fuel from PORTLAND during the transfer. While BALCH and BENHAM were transferring survivors, HAMMANN went alongside ASTORIA, as directed by CTF-17, and received Captain BUCKMASTER and a salvage party of YORKTOWN officers and men. About 1500, HAMMANN followed ANDERSON alongside PORTLAND. Transferred YORKTOWN survivors to PORTLAND and received additional YORKTOWN officers and men for salvage party. Fueled to 90% capacity. Upon completion, HAMMANN, BALCH, and BENHAM, designated as Taskgroup 17.5, Captain BUCKMASTER, set course 280°T, speed 16 kn at return to YORKTOWN.

7. About 0400 sighted YORKTOWN, screened by HUGHES, GWIN and MONAGHAN, about 8 miles on starboard beam. Changed course to join this screen and continue screening till daylight. At 0515, HAMMANN went close aboard YORKTOWN and transferred salvage party consisting of Captain BUCKMASTER, 29 officers, and 130 men to YORKTOWN. HAMMANN rejoined screen. About 0800, CTF-17.5 directed HAMMANN to lie off, close on starboard bow and provide hoses and water for fighting fire.
Subject: Action Report; 4-6 June, 1942.

It was found impossible to lie clear of YORKTOWN and maintain position accurately enough to permit effective assistance, so HAMMANN came in and moored alongside YORKTOWN forward. The ship rested against YORKTOWN's bilge keel but splinter mattresses and large fenders dropped between prevented any damage other than to bottom paint. While coming alongside, a piece of Manila line was sucked into the port main circulation pump freezing the pump. This engine was secured temporarily while the circulator was opened and the line removed. Two hoses were led to YORKTOWN with foamite and one water hose led to flight deck to attach to YORKTOWN's foamite system to fight fire. One hose was rigged aft to pump in salt water for counterflooding and an oil suction hose to remove oil from YORKTOWN's port tanks to correct list. Other services were furnished as practicable, including coffee and food for the salvage party. By noon, the fire was reported under control and two or three degrees of list had been removed.

8. About 1536 (Zone plus ten time) emergency signals were made by destroyers in the screening circle and simultaneously four torpedo tracks were sighted about 600 yards on starboard beam. HAMMANN signalled for full speed astern on inboard engine in the hope of pulling clear but apparently the torpedoes struck as the signal was being answered. Both forward and after 20mm guns fired at the tracks as the torpedoes had been seen to breach some distance from the ship and they hoped to explode them. General Quarters was sounded when the tracks were first sighted, and though less than one minute lapsed before the torpedoes arrived. Many men reached their battle stations. The first torpedo appeared to pass under the HAMMANN in the vicinity of No. 2 gun and exploded against the side of the YORKTOWN. The second torpedo struck the HAMMANN in #2 fire room. This torpedo apparently broke the ship's back as a pronounced sag was noted in this vicinity. The forward bulkhead of forward engine room was carried away. Large quantities of oil, water, and debris were blown high into the air coming down on both HAMMANN and YORKTOWN. The HAMMANN was blown out from the YORKTOWN and aft paring all mooring lines and hoses. The commanding officer received a heavy blow in the solar plexus by being thrown against a desk in the pilot house, which rendered him temporarily unable to breathe or speak and later proved to have broken a rib. The ship began to settle immediately and the Executive Officer, who was on the bridge passed the work "All hands abandon ship." By the time the Commanding Officer was able to walk from the Pilot House to the starboard
wing of the bridge, the main deck forward was awash and the ship was settling rapidly by the head. Life rafts had been launched and a great number of men were on the rafts or in the water. As soon as all personnel were clear of the bridge, the Gunnery Officer, Executive Officer and Commanding Officer climbed down the outside ladder to the forecastle deck. The forecastle deck was just submerging and all three swam clear of the ship. It is estimated that the ship sunk within three to four minutes from the time of the first torpedo explosion. Based upon interviews with survivors, it is believed that not more than a total of twelve to fifteen men failed to get clear of the ship and into the water. About one minute after the ship submerged there was a heavy explosion underwater, judged to be either a depth charge or one of the HAMMANN's torpedoes. The cause of this explosion is unknown. All depth charges had been set on safe when the HAMMANN went alongside YORKTOWN in the forenoon, and all safety forks were in place. The safety settings of depth charges had been checked again by Ensign C. C. ELMS, JR. and James W. THOMAS, Metalsmith first class about half an hour before the ship was torpedoed. At least two survivors noted a torpedo apparently running in it's tube as the ship was sinking.

9. The underwater explosion apparently killed a large number of men in the water and injured about eighty five more of whom twenty six died on board U.S.S. HENHAM enroute to Pearl Harbor. Of a total of 13 officers and 228 men on board, two officers were known dead and seven missing, twenty five men were known dead and forty seven missing. Of the remainder all were rescued by U.S.S. BENHAM and returned to Pearl Harbor excepting the Commanding Officer and one man picked up by U.S.S. BALCH and later transferred to U.S.S. GWIN for transportation to Pearl Harbor.

10. During the action with enemy aircraft, all officers and men of the HAMMANN performed their duties with coolness, calmness, and efficiency. Every man's conduct was above reproach. One of the enemy torpedo planes strafed the ship with .30 cal. machine gun but no personnel were hit. Several machine gun bullets passed through ventilators into the fire room and were preserved but were later lost with the ship. The strafing plane was shot down by 20 mm gun crews. During the phase when survivors were being removed from the YORKTOWN, all hands exerted themselves to the utmost in getting the men on board and in caring for them after they were on board.
The survivors included about twenty wounded and injured men. The Medical Officer, Lt. (jg) J. H. PETERSON and CPhM C. L. BANKS, worked all night and the following day caring for them. When the HAMMANN was torpedoed, the ship sank so quickly that there was little opportunity for direction or supervision by officers in the process of abandoning ship. All life rafts were launched promptly and life jackets distributed from battle stations. Interviews with survivors indicate that there were many instances of quick thinking, and commendable conduct. One instance that was particularly outstanding was the conduct of B. M. KIMBRELL, TMic, USN who remained on the stern of the ship and made a final check of depth charges to see that they were on "Safe," assisted several men over the side who had been temporarily disabled by shock, providing them with life jackets and then dived overboard himself without a life jacket just as the stern was submerging. He was among those missing and is being recommended in separate correspondence for a posthumous award of the Navy Cross.

A. B. TRUE.

Copy to:
Comdesron 2.
ComTaskFor 17.
ComdesPacflt.
Chief Opnav.
USS Yorktown (CV-5) listing heavily to port and being abandoned at the Battle of Midway on June 4, 1942. Hammann, one of the last destroyers ordered in to rescue survivors, picked up 87, including the Commanding Officer, Captain Elliott Buckmaster, USN. Although the Yorktown had been hit by three bombs and two aerial torpedoes she remained afloat, so a salvage operation was mounted the next day. The Porter-class destroyer USS Balch (DD-363) (Lt. Cdr. Harold H. Tiemroth, USN) is standing by at right. After participating in this rescue effort Balch assisted in rescuing Hammann survivors two days later. She recovered the bodies of two crewmen and picked up Hammann's skipper, Cdr. True. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph)
ACTION REPORT

USS HAMMANN DD-412

SERIAL NONE

18 JUNE 1942

WAR DAMAGE - USS HAMMANN - 6 JUNE 1942 - REPORT OF.

REPORT COVERS DAMAGE RECEIVED AT 1530 WHICH RESULTED IN THE SINKING OF THE USS HAMMANN DURING BATTLE OF MIDWAY. WAS SUNK BY ENEMY TORPEDO FIRE WHILE PREPARING TO ASSIST IN SALVAGING THE DAMAGED USS YORKTOWN (C.O. CDR. A. E. TRUE, USN).

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION
The U.S.S. HALSEY was sunk by enemy torpedo fire on June 6, 1942, about 120 miles NNE of Midway Island. Depth of water was over 1,000 fathoms. Weather fair, sea smooth with slight easterly swell, visibility good with gentle to moderate easterly winds. Draft before sinking was about 13 feet. The ship went down with a slight starboard list sinking by the head. Before damage the HALSEY was on course 120°T, speed under one knot, was not maneuvering.

At 0300 on June 6, the U.S.S. HALSEY went alongside the U.S.S. YORKTOWN which had been damaged by bomb and torpedo fire in the Midway Action, in order to provide power, water and other facilities for salvaging the YORKTOWN. At this time the YORKTOWN was being towed by the tug VIRG by a speed of about one knot. The HALSEY was alongside starboard side forward. About 1530 four torpedo tracks were sighted striking toward the YORKTOWN. One torpedo passed under the HALSEY striking the YORKTOWN and exploding against her side. The HALSEY was severely damaged by this torpedo. About two seconds later a second torpedo made a direct hit on the HALSEY in the vicinity of No. 2 fireroom which appeared to break the ship in two. All communications were knocked out. No. 2 gun appeared to be knocked off its roller path and could not be trained. It is probable that other guns were also damaged but effects on them are not definitely known. Immediately after the first hit the ship settled considerably by the head, estimated about 5 or 6 feet. After the second hit the vessel started in the water. Deck plates were torn open, the bulkhead of No. 2 fire room and forward engine room was blown in, the steam lines in the forward engine room were broken, generators stopped and main switchboard was knocked down. Damage to No. 2 fire room is not known. One man in this fire room was picked up by the inrush of sea water and carried across the fire room. He managed to grasp an escape ladder and get clear of the fire room with severe steam burns over his entire body. The loading machine was knocked loose from its bearings and
U.S.S. HAMMANN
June 18, 1942.

Subject: War Damage - U.S.S. HAMMANN.

Blown some distance into the air. Within three or four minutes after
the first explosion the ship had disappeared, going down by the head
with the stern going high into the air. At the time of disappearance
it is estimated that the fore and aft angle was about 45 to 50 degrees.
Due to the rapidity of sinking observation of detail damage was impos-
sible.

D. ---------------

C. UNDERWATER EXPLOSION.

Size and weight of exploder in the torpedo is not known. It is
known however, that they were fired by a large submarine which later
was observed on the surface making speeds between 17 and 20 knots and
which was reported to be of the type that might have carried an air-
plane. The first explosion apparently opened oil tanks in both the
HAMMANN and YUKON and threw tremendous quantities of oil, as well
as other debris, to a height of 75 to 100 feet. Noise of the explo-
sion was sharp and loud and produced heavy shock throughout the entire
ship, throwing personnel to the deck but producing relatively few seri-
sous injuries. No flash or flame was noticed and there was no evi-
dence of fires on board. There was some flexural vibration of the
ship, especially from the direct hit in the fireroom. The buming
appeared to be both vertical and horizontal, in some instances mater-
ial and personnel were thrown vertically into the air and other in-
stances were thrown horizontally across the deck. Dimensions of the
hole in the ship's hull is not known, but, it did extend above the
waterline. There was no opportunity to observe details of distortion
of deck and bulkheads other than mentioned above, except that the deck
of No. 2 fireroom was badly torn up and plating torn loose. It is be-
lieved that immediate flooding took place in both firerooms and forward
engine room as well as in storerooms in the forward part of the ship.
The ship was in Condition BAKER prior to sighting the torpedoes. Gen-
eral Quarters was immediately sounded upon which signal Condition AFIRM
is normally set. Not more than 60 seconds elapsed from the time of
sounding General Quarters until the striking of the torpedo. Some
hatches were closed but it is impossible to say how many. From the
nature of the damage it is believed that there would have been no
appreciable difference in the result if Condition AFIRM had been set.

D. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DESIRED IN CASE A MAGNETIC,
ACOUSTIC OR OTHER INFLUENCE WEAPONS IS SUSPECTED.

It is not believed that the torpedoes were fitted with any
magnetic or acoustic exploding devices.

Copy to: HUGHY.
            COMUNCH.
            CINC Pac.
            COMDERSPAC.
            COMDERSON TWO.

DECLASSIFIED A. E. TRUE.

Authorized [ JD 9833]
By: NARA Date 11/11/19
The stern of the destroyer USS Hammann (DD-412) making its final plunge as seen looking aft from the forecastle of the USS Yorktown (CV-5) on June 6, 1942. While tied alongside the carrier, assisting in her salvage, Hammann was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine. She sank about four minutes later. Although almost all of the crew were able to get clear of the ship and into the water, a large underwater explosion about one minute after the ship went down killed many survivors and wounded many more. One of the knotted lines used when the Yorktown was abandoned two days earlier can be seen in the foreground. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph)
UNITED STATES SHIP BENHAM Saturday June 6, 1942

ZONE DESCRIPTION Plus 10

REMARKS

Underway in company with ComTaskGroup 17.5 (SOPA and OTC) in U.S.S. HAMMANN, and U.S.S. BALZIE, on course 285° (T&C), 259° (PSC), steaming at 10 knots (148 RPM); in scouting line bearing 185° (T), distance 2,000 yards, U.S.S. HAMMANN guide; searching for the U.S.S. YORKTOWN. Boiler #2 steaming. Ship darkened and in Material Condition of Readiness II. Personnel in Condition of readiness II. 0016 Submarine sound-signal went to General Quarters. Lighted fires under #1 boiler. 0050 Submarine contact proved to be false. Set Personnel Condition of Readiness II. 0230 Commenced zig-zagging in accordance with plan #6.

A. P. Colvin, Lieutenant (jg), U.S. Navy.

04 to 06


R. G. Merrill, Lieutenant (jg), U.S. Navy.

06 to 12

Underway as before, steering various courses, screening U.S.S. YORKTOWN, distance 2,000 yards, at 12 knots (108 RPM). 0900 Mustered crew on stations, no absence. 0930 U.S.S. HAMMANN went alongside U.S.S. YORKTOWN, port side to. Made daily inspection of magazines and powder samples, conditions normal.


12 to 16


R. G. Merrill, Lieutenant (jg), U.S. Navy.

16 to 20

HAMMANN.

Stopped as before, rescuing survivors of U.S.S. HAMMANN. Main circulator picked up line in propeller which reduced banking power of starboard engine to one-third. A number of men went over the side, and swam with lines to rafts, to pull them to the ship. 1710 Completed rescue of survivors of U.S.S. HAMMANN, having picked up the following survivors: 11 officers, 184 enlisted men, plus 15 bodies from the U.S.S. HAMMANN; three officers and 19 enlisted men from the U.S.S. YORKTOWN. 1800 Lieutenant (jg). Edward L. Lee (MC), USNR, reported aboard for temporary duty with 2 Pharmacists' Mates and additional medical supplies. 1816 Resumed screening station on U.S.S. YORKTOWN. 1927 Held funeral services for officers and enlisted men with appropriate military honors: Ensign Ray Wallingford Purvis, USNR; Ensign William Benson Levering, USNR; Richardson, Robert C., other data unknown; DeBlancs, Albert James, 225 05 10, USN; Wright, Malcolm Carlisle, 315 66 78, USN; Flock, John Frederick, 321 38 80, USN; Belcher, K. R., B.M.C, USN; Hunstein, Carl John, 337 22 63, USN; Reeh, Sea 2d, USN; Largent, C. C., Sea 2c, USN; DeBacco, Vincent Joseph, Sea 2d, USN; Carlsson, Daniel W., OWM (PA), USN; Gesell, Walter Alfred, Sea 1c, USN; Morton, Ted B., Sea 2c, USN; Owens, Glenn, Franklin, 020 09 95, Sea 2c, USNR; Rowan, Frank, B.M., USN; 1938: U.S.S.

Approved: W. M. Worthington, Examiners: Lieutenant Commander U.S. Navy, Commanding Officer.
18 to 20
Steaming as before, circling in anti-submarine screen, YORKTOWN and rescue group.
1823 Sighted 3 men in the water; maneuvered to recover. 1832 Recovered the follow-
ing named men: Robert John BALLARD, #360 12 10, rate unknown, USN; George Wilson
KAPP, Jr., #243 65 19, rate unknown, USN; and Commander Arnold Elsworth True, USN.
Robert John BALLARD and George Wilson KAPP, Jr., were given artificial respira-
tion for about two hours and then were pronounced dead. Commander Arnold Elsworth True,
USN, was treated for shock and submersion. 1930 Secured from general quarters, set
condition of readiness II, darkened ship. 1937 Made sound contact bearing 250° T.,
distant 1200 yards; attacked with depth charges. 1942 Completed attack, expended
four thousand pound depth charges and six hundred pound charges. 1955
BERNH made contact in same area that BALCH made attack. 1958 Continued to develop
sound contact. Average steam 400; average rpm. 123.7.

T. F. SAUNDERS,
Lieutenant(jg), U. S. Naval Reserve.

20 to 24
Steaming as before trying to re-establish submarine contact. 2039 Investigated
reported sound contact; contact report proved false. 2043 Began approach to VIROQ.
2049 Smoke sighted on the horizon. MONAGHAN and HUGHES were directed to investigate
smoke on horizon bearing 235° T., distant 8 miles from carrier. HUGHES reported
submarine on surface. 2049 Came alongside port side of VIROQ. 2055 Began receiving
members of YORKTOWN salvage crew. 2055 Received 23 officers, including Captain
E. Buckmaster, USN, Commanding Officer of YORKTOWN; and 119 men. Cast off from
VIROQ. 2105 HUGHES opened fire on submarine with 5" battery. 2115 MONAGHAN opened
fire on submarine with 5" battery. 2110 All hands to general quarters, darkened
ship. Sighted unidentified plane. 2200 Secured from general quarters, set condi-
tion of readiness II. 2203 Secured boilers #1 and 3. Average steam 400; average
rpm. 132.8.

J. D. BALLARD
Ensign, U. S. Navy.

Approved:  
H. H. TENERGTH,  
Lieutenant Commander, U. S. Navy,  
Commanding.

Examined:  
R. C. PEDEN,  
Lieutenant Commander,  
U. S. N., Navigator.
09 to 10 (Continued)
0955 Completed transferring personnel, having transferred 23 officers and 119 men from the YORKTOWN and one officer from the HAMMANN. 1015 The following officers and men returned on board from the BENHAM: Lt. (jg) O. M. Lee (MG) USN; Ensign W. G. Weber, USN; D'AMBROSIO, R. H. USN; PIPKIN, J. N., PhM2c, USN; PICKENS, J. U., Fnc, USN; BLANCHARD, H. E., Wmthlc, USN; BARNES, J. C., Gt, USN; and SIMPSON, C. C., PhM3c, USN, all of this ship's company. 1022 Formed scouting line on base course and axis 295° T., and pgs., 226° psc., at 15 knots, in company with the HUGHES and MONAGHAN. 1038 Commenced steering zigzag plan #1. 1155 Ceased zigzagging, changed course and axis to 270° T., and pgs., 259 psc. Average steam 400; average rpm 134.5.

J. D. RAYMOND
Ensign, U.S. Navy.

12 to 16
Steaming as before on base course and axis 270° T., and pgs., 254° psc., speed 15 knots. 1200 Commenced zigzagging in accordance with plan one. 1219 MONAGHAN investigating large oil slick on surface. 1223 Ceased zigzagging. 1226 Commenced zigzagging in accordance with plan one. MONAGHAN rejoined formation. Made daily inspection of smokeless powder samples and magazines, conditions normal. 1255 Ceased zigzagging and resumed base course 270° T., and pgs., 259° psc. 1300 Changed base course left to 190° T and pgs., 188° psc. 1319 Changed base course left to 090° T, and pgs., 098° psc. 1325 Commenced zigzagging in accordance with plan one. 1445 Ceased zigzagging and resumed base course 090° T, and pgs., 082° psc. 1450 Changed base course to 150° T, and pgs., 162° psc. 1500 Half masted colors for burial at sea services by commanding officer. Gave unto the deep the remains of BALLARD, Robert John, rate unknown, #360 21 10, USN; and KAPE, George Wilson, Jr., rate unknown, #843 63 19, USN. 1515 Two blocked colors. 1515 Commenced zigzagging in accordance with plan one. Average steam 400; average rpm 142.

W. H. WEBER
Ensign, U.S. Navy.

16 to 18
Steaming as before on base course 270° T., and pgs., 254° psc., speed 15 knots, zigzagging in accordance with plan one. 1629 Ceased zigzagging and resumed base course. 1640 Changed scouting course left to 114° T, and pgs., 105° psc. 1655 Commenced zigzagging in accordance with plan one. Average steam 400; average rpm 142.

T. F. SAUNDERS
Lieutenant (jg), U.S. Naval Reserve.

18 to 20
Steaming as before on base course 114° T., and pgs., 165° psc., at 15 knots, zigzagging in accordance with zigzag plan one. Average steam 400; average rpm 142.

W. R. MITCHELL
Ensign, U.S. Naval Reserve.

20 to 24
Steaming as before on base course 114° T., and pgs., 105° psc., at 15 knots, 142 rpm, zigzagging according to plan one. 2030 Half masted colors following movements of HUGHES. 2038 Two blocked colors. 2045 All hands to general quarters, darkened ship, executed sunset. 2150 Ceased zigzagging resumed base course. 2155 Secured from general quarters, set condition III in ship's batteries. 2200 Changed course to 024° T, and pgs., 015° psc. 2250 Changed scouting course to 016° T, and pgs., 038° psc. Average steam 400; average rpm 142.

R. H. ALLEN
Ensign, U.S. Navy.

Approved: W. F. COCHRAN
Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy, Commanding.

Examined: R. C. WEDER
Lieutenant Commander, U.S.N., Navigator.

(This page to be sent to Bureau of Navigation monthly with Log sheets)
USS Benham (DD-397) (Lt. Cdr. J. M. Worthington, USN) putting ashore 153 USS Hogaenah (DD-412) survivors at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on June 9, 1942, three days after their destroyer was sunk following the Battle of Midway. Note the open sights on Benham's after 5-inch/38 gun (No. 4) and the cluster of smoke generator tanks outboard on the stern.  (U.S. Navy Photograph)
The destroyer USS Benham (DD-397) (Lt. Cdr. J. M. Worthington, USN), name ship for her class, is shown in May, 1942, with heavy cruisers of Task Force 16 (Admiral Raymond A. Spruance). The ship is returning to her screening station after acting as plane guard for USS Enterprise (CV-6) during flight operations. Two of Benham's four quadruple 21-in. torpedo tube mounts can be seen on the main deck aft of the stack. Other armaments: four 5-inch/38 dual-purpose guns, four water-cooled .50-cal. machine guns and two stern depth charge racks with ten 600-lb. charges. Benham was heavily damaged on November 15, 1942, by a torpedo in the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. She was abandoned in the afternoon without the loss of a single life, and sunk with gunfire by USS Gwin (DD-433). (Official U.S. Navy Photograph)
Commander Arnold E. True, USN, commanding officer of USS Hammann (DD-412) when that destroyer was sunk on June 6, 1942, being awarded both the Navy Cross and the Distinguished Service Medal for heroism during a rescue operation for survivors of the USS Lexington (CV-2) and for "heroic conduct and especially meritorious service" during salvage operations for the USS Yorktown (CV-5). The medals were presented to Capt. True by Admiral W. M. Halsey in an impressive double ceremony aboard a destroyer in a South Pacific port on December 29, 1942. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph)
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

Awarded to COMMANDER ARNOLD ELLSWORTH TRUE, UNITED STATES NAVY

CITATION:

"For heroic conduct and especially meritorious service in duty of great responsibility as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. HAMMANN engaged in salvaging of the U.S.S. YORKTOWN on June 8, 1942. Commander True placed his ship alongside the YORKTOWN which was listed heavily to port as a result of torpedo hits sustained in battle on June 4, 1942, in order to furnish water for fighting fire and for flooding empty tanks, and to furnish electric power for operating salvage pumps. Knowing that the YORKTOWN would be the target of enemy submarine and air attacks which might be made against our forces in the vicinity, that several enemy submarines had been reported nearby, and that he would probably be unable to get his ship out of the way of any submarine or air attack directed at the YORKTOWN until the attack should hit, he maintained his ship in that position for an extended period; by means of the water pressure and power he furnished, a fire which had been burning since the YORKTOWN was hit by bombs on June 4th was extinguished, and sufficient water had been transferred within the ship to remove 2 degrees of her dangerous list. In midafternoon an enemy submarine made a successful torpedo attack against the YORKTOWN. The first torpedo hit and sank the U.S.S. HAMMANN. Two other torpedoes exploded against the side of the YORKTOWN sufficiently close to the HAMMANN to have sunk her if she had not already been hit. Nine of the twelve officers in the HAMMANN were killed, as was a large percentage of her crew. Commander True, when rescued some two hours later, was found to be supporting two enlisted men, one on each arm. He himself was so stunned and exhausted that he did not realize that the two men he had rescued had died. Commander True's distinguished heroism and intrepid performance of duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval Service."

* * * * * * *

Source: A copy of a news release dated December 29, 1942, at the Naval Historical Center, Ships' Histories Branch, Washington Navy Yard.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
Comm. ARNOLD E. TRUE

NAVY OFFICER GETS 2 HERO AWARDS
Aided Rescue when U. S. Carriers Sank; Honors for Haddonfield Man

By The Associated Press
Washington, Dec. 29.—Commander Arnold Ellsworth True, 41, of Corinth, Ky., has been awarded both the Navy Cross and the Distinguished Service Medal for great heroism displayed as skipper of the destroyer Hammann in aiding rescues and damage control work when the aircraft carriers Lexington and Yorktown were lost in the Pacific.

The Lexington went down in the battle of the Coral Sea last May and the Yorktown was sunk later during the Battle of Midway.

The destructor Hammann also was lost at Midway, while standing by the stricken Yorktown, and Commander True himself was rescued from the water.

Supported Two Dead Men

His citation for the Midway action said that when he was rescued about two hours after the Hammann was sunk by torpedoes from a Japanese submarine he “was found to be supporting two enlisted men, one on each arm. He himself was so stunned and exhausted that he did not realize that the two men he had rescued had died.”

Commander True, whose wife, Mrs. Corine True, lives at San Carlos, Cal., received the Navy Cross for his heroism in connection with the sinking of the Lexington when his job was to rescue survivors from the vessel before it finally went down.

“While still in danger of another attack by enemy planes and while the Lexington was being shaken by violent explosions and being guttered by raging fires,” the citation said, “Commander True, in total disregard for his own safety, placed his ship alongside the Lexington and took off a large number of survivors. His courage and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the naval service.”

Supplied Water for Fire

The citation accompanying the Distinguished Service Medal awarded to Commander True’s part in efforts to save the Yorktown, reported that he placed the Hammann alongside the carrier in order to furnish water for fighting fire and for flooding empty tanks and to supply electrical power for operating salvage pumps.

“Knowing that the Yorktown would be the target of enemy submarine and air attacks which might be made against our forces in that vicinity, that several enemy submarines had been reported nearby, and that he would probably be un-able to get his ship out of the way of any submarine or air attack directed at the Yorktown until the attack should hit,” the citation said, “he maintained his ship in that position for an extended period, by means of the water pressure and power furnished, a fire which had been burning since the Yorktown was hit by bombs on June 4 was extinguished, and sufficient water had been transferred within the ship to remove two degrees of her dangerous list.”

Sunk by First Torpedo

“In mid-afternoon an enemy submarine made a successful torpedo attack against the Yorktown. The first torpedo hit and sank the U. S. S. Hammann. Two other torpedoes exploded against the side of the Yorktown sufficiently close to the Hammann to have sunk her if she had not already been hit.”

“Nine of the 12 officers in the Hammann were killed, as was a large percentage of her crew.”

Commander True, when rescued some two hours later, was found to be supporting two enlisted men, one on each arm. He himself was so stunned and exhausted that he did not realize that the two men he had rescued had died.”

The medals were presented to Commander True by Admiral William F. Halsey, commander of the South Pacific area and the South Pacific force.

New Honor for Pilot

Other officers decorated included Lieutenant (jg) Walter A. Haas, 25, of 420 Woodland av., Haddonfield, N. J., whose wife, Mrs. Marion Ruth Haas, lives at 622 Grant av., West Collingswood, N. J. A fighter pilot at Midway, he was awarded the Gold Star in lieu of a second Navy Cross, having received his first Navy Cross for service in the Battle of the Coral Sea.
U.S.S. HAMMANN (DD-412)

Obituary for Rear Admiral Arnold Ellsworth True, USN (Ret.)
(1901-1979)

Commanding Officer, 11 August 1939 to 6 June 1942

ARNOLD ELLSWORTH TRUE '21

RAdm. Arnold Ellsworth True USN (Ret.)
died on 11 December 1979 in Palo Alto,
California. Memorial services were held on 18
December at the Ft. Myer Chapel with inter-
ment in Arlington National Cemetery.

Appointed to the Naval Academy from the
State of Kentucky, he was graduated with the
Class of 1921 on 3 June 1920. Sea duty fol-
lowed and he also was a graduate of the Naval
War College and earned a master's degree in
meteorology at the Massachusetts Institute of
Technology.

In 1939 (then) Cdr. True was ordered to
command the destroyer HAMMANN, newly
commissioned in Kearny, New Jersey. Operat-
ing in the Atlantic for two years, the ship was in
Iceland on 7 December 1941, then ordered to
duty in the South Pacific, where, in April 1942,
she made her first impact on the war effort by
rescuing two fighter pilots downed on Guadal-
canal by enemy action. Four days later she
was taking part in the Battle of the Coral Sea,
the first naval engagement fought entirely on
both sides between aircraft and ships. The air-
craft carrier LEXINGTON was mortally wounded
in this engagement, and HAMMANN picked up
nearly 500 men from the water before the car-
rrier was sunk. HAMMANN thereupon steamed at
high speed for Pearl Harbor for urgent repairs
and replenishment, then three days later was
underway to take part in one of the decisive
battles of history, Midway. Once again HAM-
mann was called upon to assist when the car-
rrier YORKTOWN took two torpedo hits and had
to be abandoned. HAMMANN picked up sur-
vivors in the water, including YORKTOWN's skip-
ero, the late VAdm. (then Capt.) Elliott
Buckmaster USN '12. The next day HAMMANN
returned to the stricken ship to transfer a dam-
age control party, then lay alongside, providing
hoses and water for firefighting, power and
other services while tied up alongside YORKTOWN. The salvage party was making ex-
cellent progress when a Japanese submarine
penetrated the protective screen, fired four
torpedoes and struck HAMMANN with one,
breaking her back. The ship sank in four min-
utes, and over eighty members of the crew
were lost, including nine of the twelve officers
on board. Cdr. True was blown overboard and
when rescued two hours later was found to be
supporting two enlisted men, one on each arm.
He himself was so stunned and exhausted that
he did not realize that the two men he had res-
cued were dead. He was awarded the Distan-
tinguished Service Medal for his heroism in this
action, having already received the Navy
Cross for his courage in the Battle of the Coral
Sea.

He finished the war as a staff officer with the
Atlantic Fleet, after commanding a destroyer
division in the Pacific. Other decorations in-
cluded the Bronze Star Medal, the Navy
Commendation Medal, and the Purple Heart.
He was transferred to the retired list in 1946.

Always close to the crew of HAMMANN,
RAdm. True had attended every reunion that
the crew had held since the end of the war. He
was a trustee of the Ben Lomond Quaker Cen-
ter in California and had been an outspoken
opponent of the war in Vietnam. In 1947 he es-
tablished the department of meteorology at San
Jose State College and retired from this post in
1968 as professor emeritus. He later operated a
cattle ranch in the Santa Cruz Mountains and
traveled extensively.

He is survived by his widow Corinne, 425
Grant Ave., Apt. 29, Palo Alto CA 94301; two
sons, a brother and a sister.

1 Shipmate magazine (U.S. Naval Academy), March, 1980
USS Hammann (DD-412)

SILVER STAR MEDAL

BERLYN MARCONI KIMBREL
Torpedoman First Class, United States Navy

CITATION:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving on board the USS HAMMANN during action with the enemy in the vicinity of Midway Island on June 6, 1942, when that vessel was struck by torpedoes fired by a Japanese submarine. Following the explosion of the enemy torpedoes and with the ship sinking rapidly, he checked all depth charges and reported them on 'SAFE.' Thereafter he remained on the stern of the ship supplying life jackets and assisting stunned and injured personnel over the side until the stern was completely submerged. He floated off without having a chance to get a life jacket for himself, and a few seconds later was killed as the result of an underwater explosion. He gallantly gave up his life in the service of his country."

* * * * * * * * *

1 Awarded posthumously. This draft citation, on an index card at the Operational Archives Branch of the Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, may have been reworded before it was formally issued.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
March, 2004
The Evarts-class destroyer escort USS Elden (DE-264) was launched at the Boston Navy Yard, April 6, 1943. The ship was christened by Mrs. Margaret Newton Elden, widow of Lieutenant Ralph Waldo Elden, USN. Lt. Elden was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism as Executive Officer of the USS Hammann (DD-412) on June 6th, 1942, following the Battle of Midway. When the Commanding Officer was disabled, Lt. Elden took charge and coolly directed the abandon ship operation until the decks were completely awash. He was killed shortly thereafter by an underwater explosion. (Courtesy of Lt. Elden's son, Thomas Elden.)
The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY CROSS posthumously to

LIEUTENANT RALPH W. ELDEN, UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For extraordinary heroism and extreme disregard of personal safety as Executive Officer of the U.S.S. HAMMANN during action against enemy Japanese forces near Midway Island on June 6, 1942. When the Commanding Officer was temporarily disabled, Lieutenant Elden immediately took charge and, with cool courage and unfailing presence of mind, continued to direct abandon ship operations aboard the rapidly sinking vessel until the decks were completely awash and he went down into the sea. A few seconds thereafter he was killed by an underwater explosion. While faithfully and efficiently performing his duties he gallantly gave up his life in the service of his country."

For the President,

[Signature]

Secretary of the Navy.
USS Martin H. Ray (DE-338) rips through the Atlantic escorting a convoy to Europe in 1944. This Edsall-class destroyer escort was named after an officer who died when the destroyer USS Hammann (DD-412) was sunk on June 6, 1942, following the Battle of Midway. Lieutenant Martin H. Ray, Jr., USN, was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for "extraordinary heroism and extreme disregard of personal safety" after his ship was hit by enemy torpedoes.

(U.S. Naval Institute Collection)
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY CROSS to

LIEUTENANT MARTIN H. RAY, JR., UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For extraordinary heroism and extreme disregard of personal safety as Engineer Officer of the U.S.S. HAMMANN during action against enemy Japanese forces near Midway Island on June 6, 1942. After the vessel had been struck by enemy torpedoes, Lieutenant Ray capably and efficiently directed efforts at damage control, supervised evacuation of spaces below decks and assisted other personnel in leaving the ship. Despite the ever-increasing danger of remaining aboard the rapidly sinking vessel, he carried on, with unfailing courage and conscientious devotion to duty, until he died as the result of an underwater explosion. He gallantly gave up his life in the service of his country."

For the President,

[Signature]

Secretary of the Navy.
Destroyer Took Blow Aimed at Yorktown, Survivors Relate

Two Crewmen Tell How Sailor Went Down With Ship to Save Others

By the Associated Press.

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 1.—Two survivors of the Destroyer Hamb- mann told today how their warship was sunk in the Midway battle by Japanese torpedoes designed for the Aircraft Carrier Yorktown.

Seaman R. J. Shafer of St. Clair, Pa., and W. F. Lambert, ship's cook 1st class, of Staten Island, N. Y., related stories of high heroism by their shipmates.

The two, both 22 years old, talked warmly of Comdr. Arnold E. True, attempt to rescue two seamen, and of a torpedoman, B. N. Kimbrell, who went down with the ship, trying to save others from death.

Lambert, reunited here with his wife, Evelyn, said the Hamb- mann had been hit by Japanese attacks for two days when it pulled up alongside the stricken Yorktown on June 7 to aid in putting out fires and to see what could be done to help.

(The Navy has announced officially that the Yorktown was put out of action in the Midway engagement.)

Wrist Watch Torn Off.

"I was down in my bunk asleep when the first torpedo struck us," he related. "I got up, dressed, and started for my battle station. The torpedo hit a little forward of the quarterdeck, and the concussion tore my wrist watch off my hand. The ship lifted about five feet in the air."

A second torpedo hit left, the ship sinking fast, and it's fo'c'sle was setting under water when Lambert jumped into the water and got on a life raft.

Shafer said nearly all the fatalities and injuries resulted not from the torpedoes, but from an under-surface explosion while the men were trying to swim or paddle away on rafts.

Shafer was aft on the super-structure of the Hamb- mann when "abandon ship" orders came.

Explosion Was "Terrifying."

Wearing a life-jacket, he managed to swim 60 feet from the doomed destroyer before a "terrifying explosion" occurred.

"The explosion could have been caused by depth charges on board, or by torpedoes," he said. "The sea was black with men, and the blast threw some of them out of the water and sucked some of them down."

"It was so heavy that cigarette lighter and cases in the pockets of the men were crushed. It paralyzed my legs—it was just like a steam roller going over me."

Shafer said Torpedoman Kimbrell stayed aboard the sinking Hamb- mann to set safety devices on the depth charges so that they would not explode and possibly endanger the Yorktown or lives of the destroyer's crew.

Kimbrell apparently became entangled in the depth charge rack, and after he lost his buddies saw of him, he was caught in the suction as the Hamb- mann settled.

As for Comdr. True, Shafer said: "I don't think there's a man on the ship who wouldn't give his right arm for the captain. The officer was seen in the water with two men, one under each arm. One of them was dead, already, they learned later, and the fate of the second has not been determined."
The Battle of Midway Roundtable
Veterans Stories: Elmer Jones and the USS Hammann

Elmer Jones was a fireman aboard the destroyer USS Hammann, which was torpedoed and sunk on 6 June 1942 while assisting in salvage operations for the USS Yorktown. This is Elmer’s story of the Hammann.

1. A DESTROYER BY CHOICE

I did not enjoy boot camp. Although I did not particularly hate it, I certainly did not like getting up at 0400 to take down my hammock and go to the basement and scrub it. We had to do this once a week. After I got aboard ship, I recognized how important cleanliness was. When you have that many men in close proximity, it’s a primary concern to all. If memory serves me right, we had twelve weeks training, and then transferred to the outgoing unit. They put a list of the ships available on the bulletin board and lined us up alphabetically and told us to pick what ship we wanted. There was four of us who had become good friends and wanted to stay together. Three wanted to go on a big ship, but I wanted a destroyer. So I said if there is a big ship left when we get up there, I’ll take it with you, but if there isn’t you’ll all pick the Hammann. I won.

In May 1940 we were sent to the Norfolk Navy Yard to meet our ship. We had to take a ferry across the bay, and when we got off as we were waiting for the bus I told Marshall Jones "Let’s get off this floating dock." He looked at me and said "What’s wrong with you? This is a concrete pier". It felt to me like I was just floating up and down, and by the time we got to the base I was so seasick I could not eat supper. I thought, my god, I signed up for six years of this?

When we got aboard ship, my first watch was lookout on the bridge, and I stood there with the sea air striking me in the face and thinking this is not too bad after all. And then I suddenly vomited!. I turned my face seaward and it went all over the boat that was just below. I bet the seaman who had that boat as a cleaning station would have killed me if he had known who did it. After that I had very little seasickness.

2. THE BLACK GANG

Our first foreign port was Guantanamo, Cuba. In peacetime navy rigged awnings over the deck in the tropics. The bos’n’s mate wanted to teach us recruits who was boss and he was giving us all a bad time. I looked back aft and there was a bunch of men flaked out under the awnings we had put up. I asked one of the old men, "who are those guys laying down back there?" He told me that they were the black gang – the engineers do not work in the tropics except in emergency. That night I met an old Chief Machinist Mate on deck and asked him how to get into the black gang. He told me I was talking to the right man. He wanted four recruits to transfer in, so I got my three buddies and we all went to the engine room and fire room. (Understand, I am not lazy. I just didn’t like to rig awnings.)

3. THE NORTH ATLANTIC

http://www.lodinet.com/rruss/midway/vets_stories_jones.htm

5/13/03
The north Atlantic was the most horrendous physical duty of my six years in the navy. Also, it was the only time I ever considered missing the ship intentionally. When they told us we had to make another trip to Iceland, most of us would have given anything to not have gone. Anything you did on topside, you risked your life. You could not eat or sleep in a normal manner. You had to strap yourself in your bunk. On the mess deck, they sometimes just strapped large pans of boiled potatoes, beef, and bread on the tables, and we walked by to grab some bread and meat for a sandwich, plus a cold potato to go. You then looked for some place to brace yourself while you ate.

In the engine room on the center line of the ship is an instrument that records the ship's roll. Once we went over to 69 degrees. When we got back to the Boston navy yard, they noticed the 69-degree reading and said that it was impossible. If you did that, you'd never get back up. We did. The men in the fire room said we dipped water in the stack. It was certainly not a pleasure cruise.

Few people knew that we were engaged in a sea war with German submarines at that time. Under the "rules" at that time, we could take convoys over to England, but as long as we did not go within a set distance from shore the German subs would not fire at our Navy ships. But when we got to Iceland, I believe it was the USS Kearny I saw there with a hole in her side from a torpedo.

4. INTO THE PACIFIC

Everyone was rather apprehensive about entering the war zone in the Pacific. It was certainly a new experience for all of us. It was like on-the-job training, but if you didn't do your job right you might all die. I really thought we would go right out, hunt down the enemy and slug it out. I had no conception of how much jockeying for a favorable position they had to do, and how important that would be for the pilots who had to find the enemy and then wonder if they had enough gas to make it back. It seemed like we sailed around day after day doing nothing but drills and staying alert. We set a record for 117 continuous days underway.

We would take oil from a tanker at sea and sometimes we'd even get mail. I was glad when we would go along side a British supply ship, because they would usually give us honey. The cooks would then make biscuits; a real treat. But when they gave us a bunch of mutton I could have shot them! There was even a story going around that General MacArthur had a sheep ranch in Australia and we were required to use so much mutton. When the cooks made mutton stew, I'd usually grab some Spam and bread and take it to the engine room.

5. THE BATTLE OF THE CORAL SEA

My battle station was on the lower deck on pump watch. I saw nothing that went on topside. It's hard to be a coward on a ship. A destroyer is only 327 feet long so you can't run anywhere, you just stay on your station and sweat a lot more than usual. You soon developed an attitude that the only thing you can do is your particular job and you hope everyone else does his. If any man fails to do his task, it can cost the ship and many lives.

After the battle was over I went down and went to bed. The Lexington had been badly damaged, but they made some repairs and I believe were making 15 knots. I had just gotten to sleep when someone woke me up and asked me if I wanted to see the Lexington go down. I thought he was kidding, but went topside and there it was, a mass of flames. They were abandoning
ship, and we had a boat in the water to pick up survivors. If I remember right, we lost that boat and
its crew. The destroyer Morris was in close to the carrier, and when planes started exploding they
backed out so fast it
tore a section of the bridge off. The Hammann then moved in close and continued to pick up
survivors.

After the battle we were all low on oil and the Japs had sunk our tanker, so
we had to lay in port at the Tonga Islands to wait for another tanker. After we had refueled and
headed for Pearl, we knew the YORKTOWN had been badly damaged so we figured we would all get
a nice long rest. However, we thought it odd that they brought some engineers out to meet the
Yorktown while it was still underway for Pearl. Midway was beckoning.

6. MIDWAY

We were reluctant about going out to the Midway area. We knew something big was about to
happen but they didn’t tell us what it was until after we got underway. It was still like on-the-job
training for us. The Japs had done some of this before, but we had not. It seemed to me that one of
the most tragic mistakes was not really testing our torpedoes. I remember we would put a dummy
warhead on them, and then we’d retrieve them with a boat after they were fired. We never really gave
them a true test. I believe
at the time they said they cost $12,500 dollars. That would have been a pittance compared to the
value of a real test.

At my battle station below decks, the only thing that made you aware of the battle was the
frenzy of speed. If their bombs missed the carrier and we had a near miss, you might feel the jar. We
were elated when we heard the results of the battle. I was on the 1JV phones, which was the
communication between the bridge and the engine room, and what little I could hear during the battle
was rather discouraging. But it was hard to believe the final reports.

When they passed the word on Yorktown to abandon ship, we pulled in close to pick up the
survivors. I understand that the carrier’s skipper, Captain Buckmaster caught a lot of criticism for
abandoning ship too soon. Monday morning quarterbacking is awfully easy, but with the number of
lives involved and the condition of the ship, I thought he made the right decision. After all, less than a
month before we saw what developed with the Lexington, which according to what I’d seen, was
abandoned in better shape than the Yorktown.

Commander True, Hammann’s skipper, gathered some of the Yorktown’s men that we’d
picked up to go back aboard the carrier to see if they could save it. Hammann tied up to the injured
ship so we could furnish electric power and fire hoses to fight the fires that were still burning. When
the Hammann was torpedoed, that’s why we sank so fast: with all those cables and hoses passing
through open hatches and doors, we had no watertight integrity whatever. I have read that we sank
anywhere from 90 seconds to 4 minutes. I have always said it was Navy peacetime regulations that
sank the Hammann. The Navy had a regulation that if you were dead in the water for so long and it
was not practical to jack the main engines by hand, then you must close the main bulkhead steam stop
and engage the mechanical jacking gear. Now this was fine in peacetime so that you didn’t warp the
main turbines, but it should have been ignored at Midway. I still say if Hammann had been on that
picket line, we would have picked up that submarine. Our sonar men were really good. I have not
heard to this day a satisfactory explanation why it was not detected. We never knew the sub was there
until they saw the wake of the torpedoes. I have read where the Jap commander said he got inside the
picket line, was too close and had to go out and come in again. I will have to give the Jap commander 
"G" for guts. It should never have happened.

All morning I had manned the foam generator to fight fire on the Yorktown. We had a twin 
cartridge unit in order to switch back and forth to replace one cartridge while the other was being 
expended. The crew on the 8-12 morning watch was there and I remember the Chief of the Watch 
was just pacing back and forth with an agitated look on his face, and I saw something hard to believe. 
Enlisted men were never to touch a commissioned officer and vice-versa, but the engineer, Mr. Ray, 
walked around in front of the chief, took him by the shoulders, looked him right in the eye and said 
"Chief, settle down. There is nothing to worry about. If anything should happen we have a tug out 
here that can pull us out of here at a moment’s notice." I do not believe Mr. Ray saw me there or he 
would have called the chief to one side first. The chief did not want to close that bulkhead steam 
stop. I thought Mr. Ray was correct. I felt just as safe as if I was standing out in the middle of a 
Kansas wheat field. Within six hours Mr. Ray was dead. The next time I saw the chief he was sitting 
in a bar called "The Lodge" at the corner of Turk and Larkin street in San Francisco and he was 
wearing a Warrant Officer’s uniform.

7. LOSS OF THE HAMMANN

I had the 1600 to 2000 watch and had been on pump watch on the lower deck about 10 
minutes when I heard the 20 mm guns firing and thought, my god, is it an air raid? I thought sure 
there were no more enemy carriers in the area. The bridge rang up emergency astern but of course 
there was no steam. At that moment a torpedo hit and things flew everywhere. It was instant 
darkness, the generators were probably thrown out of alignment and stopped immediately. I am sure 
there was a second torpedo hit, or one that went off underneath Hammann and that’s probably what 
broke the keel. I don’t remember hearing abandon ship; it was obvious that we’d have to. They 
always said wear your life jacket at all times, but few if any did. I always hung mine on the hand rail 
and said I would grab it as I go up the ladder. Didn’t happen. When I got topside it suddenly 
ocurred to me I had no life jacket. I saw a great big black lump on the deck and it dawned on me 
that it was the life jackets that the Yorktown survivors had left there. They were completely covered 
with old black oil from our ruptured the fuel oil tanks. I rammed my hand into the mess as far as I 
could and pulled one out. Saints be praised, it was a good one.

I started aft and went from port to starboard at mid ship, and this put me directly under our 
nest of torpedo tubes. Now, I knew next to nothing about them but there was a cable that ran from 
the torpedo back to the tube. I asked a torpedoman what that was for, and he told me that when a 
torpedo is fired, the cable pulls a metal strip out of the torpedo, which arms it. All the cables had been 
pulled. The torpedo motors were running wide open and made a hell of a noise, and I thought if they 
had magnetic warheads they could go off any time.

I ran for the stern and it was already rising out of the water. I saw a torpedoman who was 
checking the safety settings on the depth charges. I jumped. I will never be able to describe the 
feeling at that time. If you jump in the ocean, the ship could suck you down or if it blew up it would 
probably kill you, but if you ride the ship down you knew damn well you were dead. It did not take 
long to decide. Four of us jumped at the same time. The ship had started sliding bow first and we all 
yelled for the torpedoman to jump, but it was too late. At about that instant there was a terrific 
explosion. Great walls of water and fuel oil rolled over us and about the time you caught your breath 
and wiped the oil out of your eyes another wave would hit you. I nearly drowned. I remember saying 
to myself “Mildred your little brother will never be 22.” Mildred was my older sister. My birthday
was June 7th, and someone was trying to kill me on the 6th.

8. RESCUE

One of the men near me in the water said that I had blood running out of my nose, ears, and mouth. I told him, “so what, you have too.” I finally got ahold of a raft and hung on until the USS Benham picked us up. The Benham had rigged cargo nets over the side for us to climb aboard. Now, a rope cargo net is not the easiest thing to climb when you’re in good condition, which I obviously wasn’t. I made it almost to the top and just gave out. Another Hammann fireman, Carl Hunstein, pulled me aboard and laid me down by the fire room hatch, then sat down on the other side. The next day I asked someone where Carl was, and they told me he was dead. I said that I knew better, because he’d saved me from falling back into the ocean while trying to get aboard. Apparently, immediately after that he had just sat down and died of his injuries.

I was placed on a stretcher, and noticed that the Benham’s crew dumping dead bodies over the side. When they were ready to send one over, they would blow a whistle and everyone was supposed to come to attention. My stretcher bearers set me down right in line with the dead bodies. I let them know I was still alive!

When the Benham started for Pearl Harbor they went up to flank speed, and when you do that on a destroyer the crews’ quarters really shakes. They thought the main thing was to get us to the hospital, but finally a doctor asked the Benham’s captain to slow down because the vibration was killing the men. The doctors had no experience with the kinds of injuries we had sustained, so they opened up one of the dead men in order to see what they were dealing with. They said their intestines looked like they had been shot with buckshot and were full of holes. One of the injured men gave his keys to another sailor and told him if they didn’t do something for him soon, he was going to jump over the side. The next morning at roll call, he wasn’t there.

9. A DESTROYER BY CHOICE

When we got to Pearl, Admiral Nimitz was there to greet us. They sent me up to a mobile hospital called the Red Hill, and I was there about two weeks. Then, it was back to Treasure Island (San Francisco Bay) for reassignment. There was a new ship ready to go into commission, and they said all who wanted to stay together could go aboard. Our new ship was the USS Gansevoort, DD 608

http://www.lodinet.com/rruss/midway/vets_stories_jones.htm

5/13/03
U.S.S. Hammann (DD-412)

List of Officers, June 6, 1942

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>File #</th>
<th>Primary Duty</th>
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<tr>
<td>TRUE, Arnold Ellsworth</td>
<td>CDR</td>
<td>USN</td>
<td>056888</td>
<td>Commanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELDEN, Ralph Waldo</td>
<td>LT</td>
<td>USN</td>
<td>070255</td>
<td>X.O./Navigator</td>
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<td>RAY, Martin Hasset, Jr.</td>
<td>LT</td>
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<td>073598</td>
<td>Engineer Off.</td>
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<td>Gunnery Off.</td>
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<td>ELMES, Clyde Collsmore, Jr.</td>
<td>ENS</td>
<td>USN</td>
<td>100360</td>
<td>Asst. Gunnery</td>
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<td>LOVERING, William Bacon</td>
<td>ENS</td>
<td>USNR</td>
<td>096085</td>
<td>Communications</td>
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<td>ENRIGHT, Robert</td>
<td>ENS</td>
<td>USNR</td>
<td>096592</td>
<td>1st Lieutenant</td>
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<td>DAVIS, Marvin Burton</td>
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1 Compiled from a list of casualties (see below) and the Benham's deck log for 6/9/42 which lists the Hammann survivors put ashore at Pearl Harbor. Primary duty assignments were obtained from the List of Officers for March, 1942, included with the Hammann's deck logs and correspondence in the ship's Casualty Assistance Branch folder at Archives II, College Park, Maryland (Record Group 24).

* Wounded (** Killed) when Hammann was sunk on June 6, 1942, according to a machine-generated list of casualties at Archives II in the "Battle Books" (RG 24) prepared by BuPers after the war listing casualties by battle/campaign by ship.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
March, 2004
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<tr>
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<td><strong>ALBRECHT, Charlie Martin</strong></td>
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*FUGATE, Woodrow Wilson    287-26-64    RM1c
FUSSELMAN, Paul Truman     320-23-87    SC1c
*GARDNER, Charles Leslie   368-51-47    S2c
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GILLETTE, Almon Fleming    393-22-93    BM2c
GUGELMAN, Alvin LeRoy      342-18-17    F1c
*HARBERTS, Merlin Mattill  342-43-51    S1c
**HARVEY, Harold Milburn   356-39-40    S1c
**HAWKING, Sidney Percy    382-28-21    F2c
**HENDRICKS, Jesse I.     670-03-25    S2c
HENDRICKS, John Rodney     320-53-16    CTM
**HENDRIX, Walter Powell   624-19-69    S2c
**HERRMANN, Clarence Albert 393-50-43    S2c
HILL, James Hughlon        261-65-41    GEM
**HIRZY, Joseph Frank      337-57-29    F3c
HOLCOMB, Jerimiah Columbus 383-08-90    S2c
*HOLT, Jack Lewis          368-35-56    QM2c
*HOLTZ, Charles Leonard    300-41-50    S2c
*HOUWEL, Dorman Alfred    360-55-42    S2c
**HUNSTEIN, Carl John     337-22-64    F1c
*HUNTER, Jack Lentsus      616-11-54    S2c
HURLEY, Floyd Martin       321-68-62    F2c
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**JAYSON, David           403-49-03    RM2c
*JEFFRIES, George Elvert   295-10-57    GEM
*JELENSKANY, Robert George 283-26-20    QM2c
*JENDA, John Alexander     283-26-68    MM2c
*JENSEN, Albert Julius     316-09-32    CRM
**JOHNSON, Ernest Ralph    368-09-87    WT1c
*JOHNSON, Herman Stoddard 368-61-59    QM3c
*JONES, Edgar Elmo        337-57-38    F2c
*JONES, Elmer Lyle         342-18-25    F1c
**JONES, Marshall William 337-25-94    B2c
**KAATZ, Albert Henry      624-19-77    S2c
*KALAR, Norman Banks, Jr. 243-49-54    MM2c
**KAPP, George Wilson, Jr. 243-63-19    Cox
KEIPER, Carl Harold       283-53-65    S1c
*KIGER, Luther Willard     311-69-06    S1c
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*KINSLOW, Robert Alexander 356-73-53    S2c
KLINE, Jeremiah Edward John 311-31-29    MM2c
*KLINE, Lawrence J.       311-47-30    F2c
KLUG, Delmer Howard       411-15-59    S2c
KNIGHT, William Weldon    616-11-49    S2c
**KNUTH, Donald           337-50-83    S2c
KOGER, Carl Raymond       616-16-04    S2c
*KOLLAR, Michael John     283-53-62    S2c
**KORMAN, Frank           266-04-87    FCM3c
KUENZIGER, Edward Arthur  300-41-72    S1c
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**LAND, Harold Clifford   356-73-49    AS
LANE, Maurice Eugene      401-41-53    PhM3c
*LAURENDEAU, Wilfred      380-32-31    CQM
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**LEGRANT, Charles Clinton 616-14-12 S2c
LEIGH, Robert Blair 618-10-59 S1c
LEIPPRANDT, Carl Fred 311-14-31 FC1c
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**LONGTIN, Alfred Junior 628-16-26 S2c
**LYON, Thomas Frank 670-08-19 F3c
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MATHER, Francis Marion 250-48-78 SM3c
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**MC GEELAN, Forrest Glen 393-51-43 S1c
**MC COY, Joseph Chester 412-09-85 Y2c
MC LAREN, Walter Gordon 300-61-97 F3c
**MC MAHON, Kenneth Eugene 648-04-06 S2c
MC MAHON, Leon Leslie 258-07-05 WT1c
**MC SHANE, Willard Gorner 648-04-11 S2c
MERGER, Clyde Leon 385-85-26 MA1c
MERGIER, Arnold Julian 207-23-14 MM2c
**MIESZKOWSKI, Joseph James 300-61-96 F3c
**MITCHELL, Harold 368-61-19 F2c
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**MORTON, Seldon Edward 376-49-81 S2c
**MULHAIR, James Joseph 316-84-55 F3c
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NELSON, Roy Thomas 662-20-89 S2c
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**RICHARDSON, Warren Jay  321-71-51  S2c
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ROLLINS, Edward G.  356-18-25  F1c
**ROSE, Paul Raymond  326-37-81  MM1c
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SHROOCK, Harold Eugene  337-73-91  S2c
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**SMITH, Jack  285-62-73  F3c
*SMITH, Thomas Harold  272-41-64  F1c
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STACY, Samuel  250-66-72  S2c
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**STORM, John Victor  376-49-84  S2c
STREIT, Kurt Paul  256-19-94  EM3c
STRIZZI, Anthony Nickolas  614-04-72  F2c
**STUKEY, Bertie McLellan  342-55-52  S2c
**STURGEON, Robert L.  279-88-80  S2c
SUTHERLAND, Paul Wayne  668-05-11  S1c
SWAIN, Gordon Leroy  614-04-66  S2c
**SWAN, George Washington  610-09-81  F3c
**SWANEK, Bernard Adam  648-04-08  S2c
TEER, Jesse Lewis  356-52-31  S1c
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THOMPSON, Derrill C.
**TILCHMAN, Henry Edward**
**TROTTER, Neal Junior**
**VANDRIEL, Jack**
**VOLLUM, Ole Christopher**
WALTERS, Stanley Vinson
WELSH, Charles Edward
**WEST, George Willis**
**WHEALTON, Kenneth Earl**
WHEELER, William Albert
**WHIPPLE, Merle Ralph**
**WILLET, Edward George**
WILSON, Maurice Eugene, Jr.
**WIMES, Roosevelt**
**WINE, Edward Lee, Jr.**
**WRIGHT, Malcolm Carlisle**
YOUNG, Henry Bernard

* * * * * * * * *

1 Because there is no muster roll for Hammann on microfilm at Archives II/College Park, Maryland, later than September, 1941, the sources for this muster roll are a list of casualties (see below), Benham's deck log for 6/9/42 listing Hammann survivors put ashore at Pearl Harbor and records in the ship's Casualty Assistance Branch folder at Archives II (Record Group 24), viz, an unofficial muster roll dated 4/27/42 and a partial list of survivors dated 6/12/42. Due to the conditions under which these listings were prepared the muster roll I've compiled may not be completely accurate.

*Wounded (**Killed**) when Hammann was sunk on June 6, 1942, according to a machine-generated list of casualties at Archives II in the "Battle Books" (RG 24) prepared by BuPers after the war listing casualties by battle/campaign by ship.

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E. A. Wilde, Jr.
March, 2004
USS Hammann (DD-412)

Sources Used by the Editor to Identify the 160 Survivors Included on His Muster Roll for 6/6/42:

A  Benham's deck log for 6/9/42 listing Hammann survivors put ashore at Pearl Harbor
    Total listed
    Less names duplicated
    Less survivor who died of wounds
    REGGIOUS, Kenneth M. (shown as "Killed")
    Survivors
    156
    (3)  152

* B  Reported wounded on the machine-generated list of Hammann's casualties at Archives but were not on Benham:
    JENOA, John A.
    MURDOCK, Levi
    TRUE, Arnold E. (C.O.; rescued by Balch)
    Survivors
    3

* C  Included on a partial list of Hammann survivors dated 6/12/42 in the ship's Casualty Assistance Branch folder at Archives II but were not on Benham:
    DYER, Marvin E.
    LAMBERT, William F., Jr.
    PFEIFER, Walter
    SHRIOCK, Harold E.
    WELSH, Charles E.
    Survivors
    5
    Total Survivors (Wounded/Not Wounded)
    160

* The editor was not able to identify the rescue ship for the 7 enlisted men shown.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
March, 2004
"They fought together as brothers in arms; they died together and now they sleep side by side. To them we have a solemn obligation - the obligation to insure that their sacrifice will help make this a better and safer world in which to live."

- Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN, at The Surrender on board the U.S.S. Missouri (BB-63) in Tokyo Bay, 2 September 1945.
# The U.S.S. Hammann (DD-412) in World War II

## Photograph Credits

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<td>Sponsor, Miss Lillian Hammann</td>
<td>NA 19-N-20794</td>
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<td>Launching, Kearny, NJ, February 4, 1939</td>
<td>NA 19-N-20791</td>
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<td>Stbd. beam, being towed, August, 1939</td>
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<td>20-mm Oerlikon machine cannon</td>
<td>NA 19-N-31965</td>
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<td>Port bow, by pier, Charleston, SC 1942</td>
<td>NA 19-N-26590</td>
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<td>Grumman F4F-3 &quot;Wildcat&quot; fighter</td>
<td>NA 80-G-217098</td>
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<td>Douglas SBD Dauntless scout/dive bomber</td>
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<td>RW N-253</td>
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<td>USS <em>Lexington</em> being abandoned</td>
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<td>NA 80-G-17061</td>
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<td>Hammann’s fantail, final plunge, 6/6/42</td>
<td>NA 80-G-21320</td>
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<td>Survivors/USS <em>Benham</em>, P. Harbor, 6/9/42</td>
<td>NA 80-G-312064</td>
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<td>USS <em>Benham</em> (DD-397), stbd. beam, 1942</td>
<td>NA 80-G-19265</td>
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<td>Cdr. Arnold E. True being awarded medals</td>
<td>NA 80-G-40170</td>
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<td>USS <em>Elden</em> (DE-264), christening, 4/6/43</td>
<td>(Tom Elden)</td>
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<tr>
<td>USS <em>Martin H. Ray</em> (DE-338), bow, 1944</td>
<td>NI Order with photocopy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to Sources:**

- **NA** National Archives
  8601 Adelphi Road
  College Park, MD 20740-6001
  Still Picture ref.: (301) 713-6625, EXT. 234
  (Request addresses/price lists of private vendors)

- **NI** U.S. Naval Institute Photo Service
  291 Wood Road
  Annapolis, MD 21402
  Phone (410) 295-1022; FAX (410) 269-7940

- **RW** Real War Photos
  P.O. Box 728
  Hammond, IN 46325
  Phone/Fax. (219) 931-3359

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
September, 2004
The U.S.S. Hammann (DD-412) in World War II

Bibliography/Sources

Books:


Miscellaneous:

- Archives, Nimitz Library, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland.
- Action reports, Hammann, National Archives II (Record Group 38, Boxes 95 & 1016), College Park, Maryland.
- BuPers Casualty Assistance Branch 1941-1945, Hammann folder, Archives II (RG 24), College Park, Maryland.
- Citations file, WWII, Operational Archives Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard.
- Deck logs: Balch (DD-363), Benham (DD-397), Hammann (DD-412); Archives II (RG 24), College Park, Maryland.
- List of casualties by campaign at Archives II (RG 24) in the "Battle Books," machine-generated by BuPers after the war.
- Ships' Historians Branch, Hammann folder, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
September, 2004
### Historical Compilations by the Editor:

(Destroyer/Destroyer Escort Hulls in World War II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United States Ship</th>
<th>Date Sunk/ (Damaged)</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Killed/ wounded</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aaron Ward (DD-483)</td>
<td>04/07/43</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>42/139*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barton (DD-599)</td>
<td>11/13/42</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>164/32</td>
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<td>Borie (DD-215)</td>
<td>11/01/43</td>
<td>North Atlantic</td>
<td>27/00</td>
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<td>Colhoun (APD-2)</td>
<td>08/30/42</td>
<td>Tulagi</td>
<td>51/18</td>
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<td>Corry (DD-463)</td>
<td>06/06/44</td>
<td>Normandy</td>
<td>24/55</td>
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<td>Cushing (DD-376)</td>
<td>11/13/42</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>72/67</td>
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<td>DeHaven (DD-459)</td>
<td>02/01/43</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>168/40</td>
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<td>Douglas H. Fox (DD-779)</td>
<td>05/17/45</td>
<td>Okinawa</td>
<td>10/36</td>
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<td>Drexler (DD-741)</td>
<td>05/28/45</td>
<td>Okinawa</td>
<td>156/54</td>
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<td>Duncan (DD-465)</td>
<td>10/12/42</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>48/35</td>
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<td>Emmons (DMS-22)</td>
<td>04/06/45</td>
<td>Okinawa</td>
<td>60/78</td>
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<td>Fiske (DE-143)</td>
<td>08/02/44</td>
<td>North Atlantic</td>
<td>33/65</td>
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<td>Glennon (DD-620)</td>
<td>06/10/44</td>
<td>Normandy</td>
<td>25/49*</td>
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<td>Halligan (DD-584)</td>
<td>03/26/45</td>
<td>Okinawa</td>
<td>160/43</td>
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<td>Hammann (DD-412)</td>
<td>06/06/42</td>
<td>Midway</td>
<td>84/53</td>
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<td>Laffey (DD-459)</td>
<td>11/13/42</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>55/114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansdale (DD-426)</td>
<td>04/20/44</td>
<td>Mediterranean</td>
<td>49/76</td>
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<tr>
<td>McFarland (AVD-14)</td>
<td>(10/16/42)</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>12/13</td>
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<td>Meredith (DD-726)</td>
<td>06/09/44</td>
<td>Normandy</td>
<td>35/28</td>
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<td>Monssen (DD-436)</td>
<td>11/13/42</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>145/37</td>
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<td>Perry (DMS-17)</td>
<td>09/13/44</td>
<td>Angaur/Peleliu</td>
<td>8/17</td>
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<td>Preston (DD-379)</td>
<td>11/15/42</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>117/26</td>
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<td>Spence (DD-512)</td>
<td>12/18/44</td>
<td>Luzon, P.I.</td>
<td>315/24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong (DD-467)</td>
<td>07/05/43</td>
<td>Cent. Solomons</td>
<td>45/61</td>
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<td>Walker (DD-416)</td>
<td>11/15/42</td>
<td>Guadalcanal</td>
<td>62/48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

* Total for two engagements with the enemy

1 Including those presumed dead more than a year subsequent to the date they were reported missing either due to enemy action or by drowning.

---

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
Commander, USNR (Ret.)
June, 2005
Locations Where Historical Compilations by the Editor Are Available For Researchers

1 Air Zoo, Guadalcanal Campaign Collection, Potage, Michigan
   EGU Manuscript Collection, Joyner Library, Greenville, NC
   Louisiana Naval War Memorial Library, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

2 Maine Maritime Museum Library, Bath, Maine
   Mariners' Museum Research Library, Newport News, Virginia
   Mystic Seaport's G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic, Connecticut

3 National Archives II Library, College Park, Maryland
   National D-Day Museum Library Collection, New Orleans, LA
   National Museum of Pacific War, War Studies, Fredericksburg, TX

   Naval Historical Center, Navy Dept. Library, Washington Navy Yard
   Operational Archives Branch, Washington Navy Yard
   Ships' Histories Branch, Washington Navy Yard

   Naval War College, Naval Historical Collection, Newport, RI
   N.Y. Public Library, 42nd & 5th Ave., Room 315, New York, N.Y.

2 Portland Public Library, Portland Room, Portland, Maine

4 Tin Can Sailors, Inc., Research Library, Somerset, Massachusetts
   US Naval Academy, Nimitz Library Special Collections, Annapolis
   U.S. Naval Institute, History Division, Beach Hall, Annapolis, MD

   U.S. Navy Memorial's Research Library, Washington, D.C.
   USS Slater (DE-766) Library, Albany, New York

* * * * * * * *

Notes:
1 Only ships which participated in the Guadalcanal Campaign:
   Aaron Ward, Barton, Colhoun, Cushing, DeHaven, Duncan, Laffey,
   McFarland, Monsen, Preston, Walke.

2 Only Bath-built ships: DeHaven, Drexler, Emmons, Meredith,
   Spence, Strong

3 Only ships sunk off the Normandy Beachhead: Corry, Glennon,
   Meredith

4 By appointment only: (508) 677-0515

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
June, 2006
Record 14 of 25  
Record:  Prev Next  

Call #        JFF 05-2323  
Title        The U.S.S. Hammann (DD-412) in World War II : documents, photographs, recollections / E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., editor.  

<table>
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<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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Location        Humanities- General Research- Rm315  
Edition         1st ed.  
Descript        1 v. (various pagings) : ill., map, ports. ; 29 cm.  
Note            Cover title.  
Includes bibliographical references.  
Subject         Hammann (Destroyer : DD-412)  
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Add'l name       Wilde, E. Andrew.  
Hammann (Destroyer : DD-412)  
Alt title       U.S.S. Hammann (DD-412) in World War Two  
USS Hammann (DD-412) in World War II  
United States Ship Hammann in World War II  

Record 14 of 25  
Record:  Prev Next  


http://catnyp.nypl.org/search/awilde+e/awilde+e/1,15,62,B/frameset&FF=awilde+e+andr...  10/13/2005
1210 Greendale Ave., Apt. E3
Needham, MA 02492-4622
October 4, 2004

Jeffrey W. Hunt, Curator
Admiral Nimitz National Museum Of the Pacific War
P.O. Box 777
Fredricksburg, Texas 78624

Dear Mr. Hunt,

My booklet on USS Hammann (DD-412) has only one first-hand account, but it's a very detailed and emotional one by Elmer L. Jones, Fireman 1st Class, which is also on the Internet.

The Hammann's story merits reading because the ship participated in both the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Battle of Midway before she was sunk by a Japanese submarine. Many medals were awarded to her whaleboat crews for their rescue operations of Lexington survivors and, earlier, of two F4F Wildcat pilots who had crash-landed on Guadalcanal after running out of fuel.

Copies of my booklet are being sent to the explorer Dr. Robert D. Ballard (his cousin was among those killed) and to the family of George W. Kapp, Jr., Coxswain, a whaleboat crewman who was posthumously awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal. Unfortunately, not many Hammann survivors will receive my booklet because their association no longer exists and their most recent address list is ten years old!

I'm happy to read about your museum's expansion and proud that my booklets on destroyers sunk/damaged in World War II are a part of it.

Sincerely,

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
Commander, USNR (Ret.)
14 October 2004

Commander Andrew Wilde, Jr.
1210 Greendale Ave. Apt. E3
Needham, MA 02492-4622

Dear Commander,

It was a nice surprise to receive your latest booklet in the mail the other day. The story of the USS Hammann is indeed an historic one and her loss one of the most incidents of the battle of Midway. This booklet is a welcome addition to our research material in the Center For Pacific War Studies, where it will rest alongside the other excellent research pieces you have donated to us.

I hope all is well in your part of the country. If there is any way that I might be of assistance to you always feel free to contact me. We look forward to having more of your work at the museum. As always thanks for your support of our efforts.

Best Regards,

Jeffrey Wm Hunt
Curator
Admiral Nimitz National Museum
Of the Pacific War
November 29, 2004

E. Andrew, Wilde, Jr.
1210 Greendale Avenue, Apt. E3
Needham, MA 02492-4622

Dear Andrew,

I want to thank you for your kind copy of the story of the HAMMANN. I only wish I had found her when we were searching for the YORKTOWN. I am sure we were close to her on several of our passes through the area, but we simply ran out of time.

I hope someone finds her in the future.

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert D. Ballard, President
Institute for Exploration
14 May 2005

Cdr. E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., USNR
1210 Greendale Ave., Apt. E3
Needham, MA 02492-4622

Dear Commander Wilde,

It has been my pleasure to read through your booklet “The USS Hammann (DD-412) in World War II: Documents, Photographs, Recollections.” You have done a great service to the history of the U.S. Navy with your efforts. Well done; well done indeed!

Patriots Point Museum is in the incipient stage of organizing a Research Library. Plans call for a new state-of-the-art facility on board Yorktown and your research effort will be preserved therein. Although I am retiring, our Collections Manager, E. L. Wimett, is the best in the business and she will ensure your work is set aside for inclusion.

Again, thank you for your contribution to naval history, to Patriots Point Museum, and for sharing your work with me.

Respectfully yours,

Steve Ewing