

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., Editor

**The U.S.S. *LANSDALE* (DD-426) in World War II:  
Documents and Photographs**

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The U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426) in World War II

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E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
April, 2003



*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.*





*Rear Admiral William T. Tarrant, USN, Commandant of the First Naval District and Mrs. Lansdale, the sponsor, at the christening ceremony for the U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426) on 20 October 1939 at the Boston Navy Yard in Charlestown, Massachusetts. Mrs. Lansdale was the widow of the late Lieutenant Philip Van Horn Lansdale, USN, who was killed on Samoa in the Pacific in 1899. (U.S. Navy Photograph.)*





U.S.S. *Lansdale* (DD-426)

Biography of Ship's Namesake\*

***Lansdale***

Philip Van Horne Lansdale, born 15 February 1858 in Washington, D.C., graduated as Passed Midshipman from the Naval Academy 18 June 1879. Commissioned ensign 1 June 1881, he served on Asiatic, North Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Pacific stations. Promoted to lieutenant 15 May 1893, he became executive officer of *Philadelphia* upon her recommissioning at San Francisco 9 July 1898.

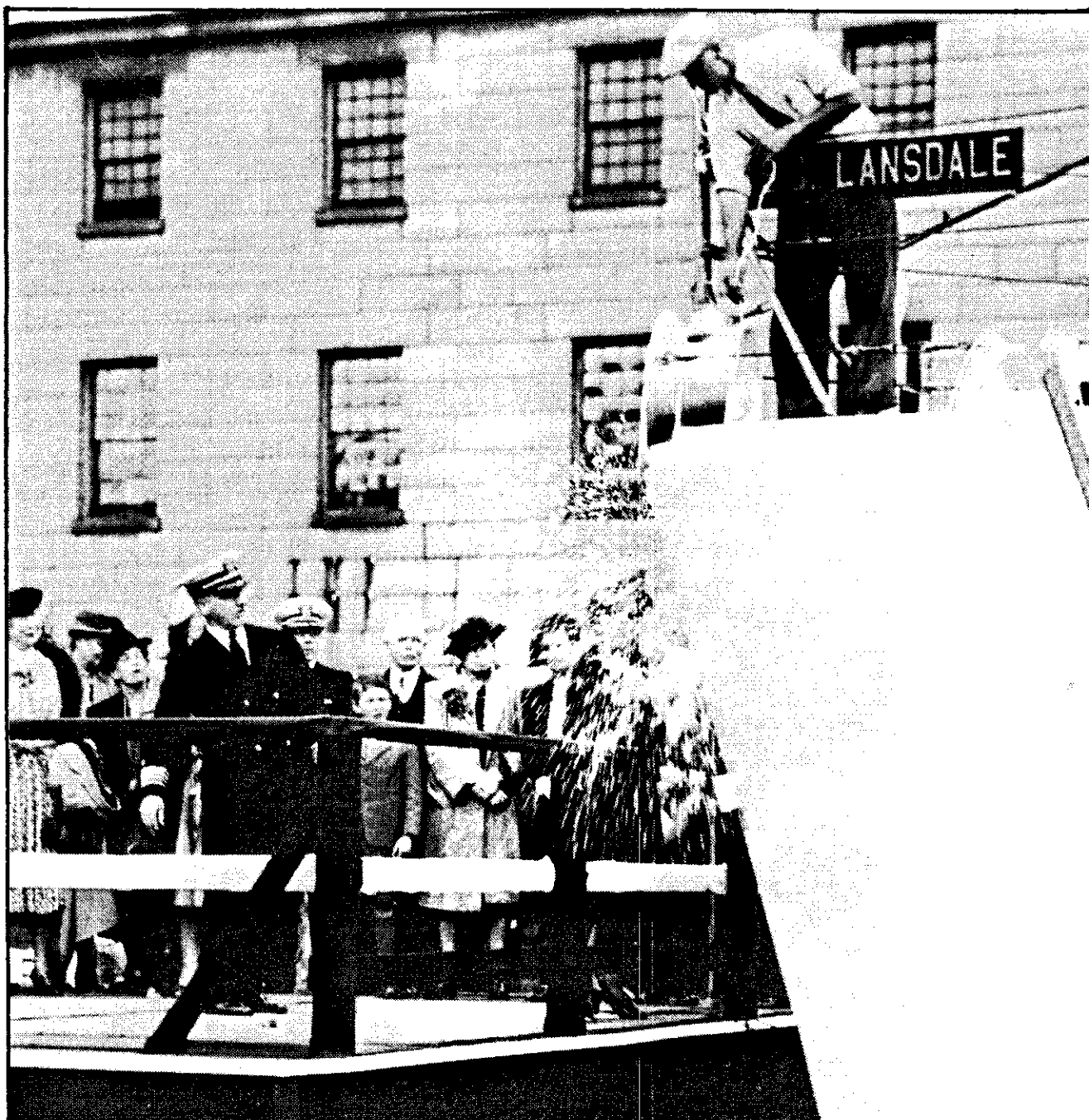
After visiting Honolulu for ceremonies which transferred the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Islands to the United States, *Philadelphia*, flagship of Rear Adm. Albert Kautz, Commander, Pacific Station, arrived Apia, Samoa, 6 March 1899. An unstable political climate, created by rival native factions and spurred on by German intrigue, erupted into open hostility during the month. A combined American and British naval force sought to keep the peace, but insurgent natives attacked American and British consulates late in March.

In retaliation a British and American landing party, supported by friendly natives, set out from Apia 1 April on a reconnaissance mission to drive off the rebels under Chief Mataafa. With Lieutenant Lansdale in command of the Americans, the expeditionary force dispersed the natives. While returning to Apia, the force was ambushed and a brisk battle ensued.

While protecting the evacuation of a mortally wounded machinegunner, Lieutenant Lansdale was seriously wounded, his right leg shattered by an enemy bullet. Aided by two enlisted men, Ensign J. R. Monaghan carried him until he dropped from exhaustion. Despite Lansdale's plea, "Monny, you leave me now, I cannot go any further," Ensign Monaghan remained beside the fallen lieutenant. With only one rifle between them, they were soon overrun by pursuing natives; both brave officers died on the spot in heroic performance of their duty.

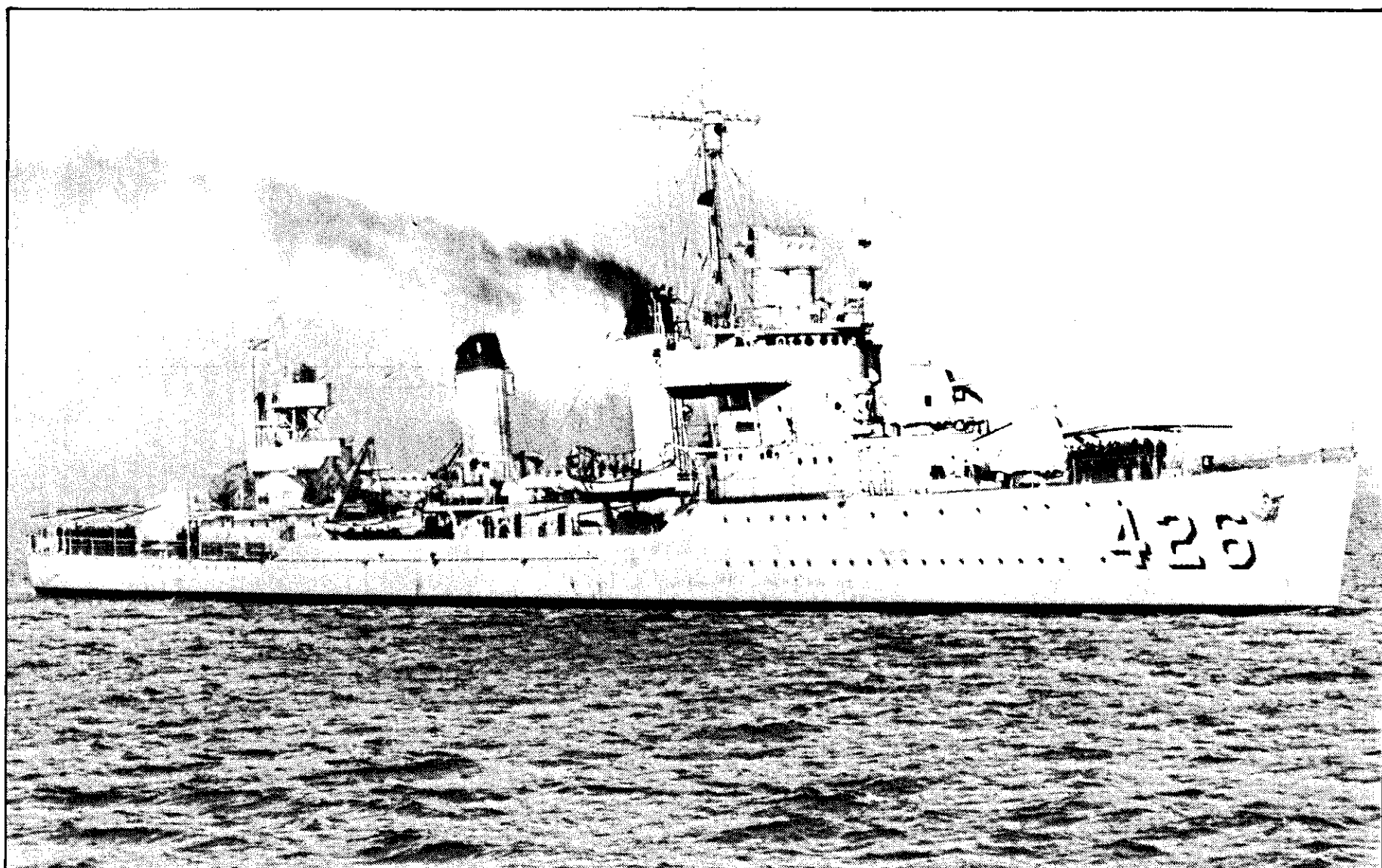
\* Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Vol. 4. Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1969.





*Mrs. Lansdale gave it her best shot when she christened the ship named after her late husband at the Boston Navy Yard on 20 October 1939. Lt. Philip Van Horne Lansdale, USN, commanded the American detachment of the joint American and British expedition on Samoa in 1899, and was killed in action while covering their retreat with a machine gun. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph.)*





*The 1,620-ton Benson-class destroyer U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426) was commissioned at the Boston Navy Yard on 17 September 1940. As shown in this prewar view she was armed with five 5-in./38 dual-purpose guns (Nos. 3 and 4 without shields), two quintuple torpedo-tube mounts and six .50-caliber machine guns for antiaircraft protection. A 36-in. searchlight was mounted atop the after superstructure. (U.S. Navy Photo.)*



Office of Naval Records and History  
Ships' Histories Section  
Navy Department

HISTORY OF USS LANSDALE (DD 426)

A flight of German planes, stealing out of the dusk on April 20, 1944, torpedoed the USS LANSDALE (DD 426), sinking her as she steamed in an anti-submarine screen ahead of a large convoy in the Mediterranean sea.

One torpedo passed harmlessly across the LANSDALE's bow but a second struck nearly amidships, splitting her almost in two. The ship started to the bottom of the sea instantly, despite the gallant damage control efforts of the crew.

Thirty torpedo planes were believed to have attempted to penetrate the anti-aircraft fire that day. Casualties suffered by the LANSDALE were comparatively light; 47 men were reported missing while 235 officers and men were rescued. Twelve hours after the torpedoing, survivors were ashore and fitted out in new clothes.

Several instances of heroism were recorded during sinking. A negro mess attendant, Marion Anthony Porter, Steward's Mate, Third Class, USNR, 19 of Spartansburg, South Carolina, was lying on the deck hanging on to one of the gun mounts at the time the order to abandon ship was given. Although his leg was broken in two places, Porter and his crew kept firing at a German bomber after the word to abandon ship was passed, shooting it down just before a wave whipped across the gun mount and threw them into the water.

Lieutenant (junior grade) George E. Haines, USNR, 24 of Greenwich, Connecticut, swam around without a life jacket for three hours encouraging the groups of men in the water. By the time the destroyer escort made the rescue, Lieutenant Haines had gone down.

In another case, Ensign Stephen P. Mallet, Jr., USNR, 24 of Farlo Road, Newton, Massachusetts, assembled a group of five men, took off his inflated life belt and his kapok jacket, and had the group hold on to the two preservers until they were picked up.

Two escorts that steamed alongside the LANSDALE, the USS NEWELL (DE 322) and USS MENGES (DE 320), performed the rescue. Survivors greatly praised the work of these two vessels who swept the waters with their searchlights for three hours, despite the fact that they made themselves clear targets for any enemy craft that might have been in the vicinity.

A veteran escort vessel, the LANSDALE had been running convoys across the Atlantic since the start of the war. She traveled as part of fast escort screens, composed primarily of Destroyer Squadron 7 with an old battleship or carrier lending added support.

During the early part of the war, the LANSDALE was assigned the New York Halifax-United Kingdom route which led her across the roughest part of the North Atlantic. In her latter months, she patrolled ahead of convoys traveling between the United Kingdom and Curacao, Netherland West Indies.





The LANSDALE's efforts up until her sinking included little combat action but she was kept busy riding herd on huge convoys as violent gales and lashing seas made straggling a constant cause of worry.

Built before the war, the LANSDALE was completed by the Boston Naval Shipyard, Boston, Massachusetts, in October, 1940. As a member of the BENSON class, the destroyer measures 348 feet in length, 36 feet in width, and has full load displacement of 2400 tons.

The vessel was christened by Mrs. Phillip Van Horne, Lansdale, widow of the ship's namesake, Lieutenant Phillip Lansdale, USN, who was killed in leading a joint American and British expedition on Samoa in 1899.

Lieutenant Commander Douglas M. Swift, USN, Anthony Road, Portsmouth, Rhode Island, commanded the LANSDALE at the time of her sinking. Lieutenant Robert M. Morgenthau, USNR, Hopewell Junction, New York, son of the former Secretary of the Treasury, served as executive officer. Both survived.

The USS LANSDALE (DD 426) earned four (4) battle stars on the ~~Asiatic-Pacific~~ Area Service Ribbon for participating in the following operations:

1 Star/Escort, antisubmarine, and special Operations.  
Convoy UCI -- 22-24 February 1943

1 Star/West Coast of Italy Operations -- 1944  
Anzio-Nettuno advanced landings -- 22 January - 1 March 1944

1 Star/Escort, antisubmarine, and special Operations  
Convoy UGS 37 -- 11-12 April 1944

1 Star/Escort, antisubmarine, and special Operations  
Convoy UGS 38 -- 20 April 1944

\* \* \* \* \*

#### STATISTICS

Overall Length	348 feet
Beam	36 feet
Displacement	1,620 tons
Speed	37 knots

\* \* \* \* \*

\* *European-African-Middle Eastern*

Stencilled May 1946  
Restencilled January 1951



Deployment Summary - 12/1/41-1/13/44

USS LANSDALE DD426

Source	Date	Departed	Arrived	Date	Remarks
LCDR J. CONNOR, USN, C.O. - On 1 HX 162,			Dec 1941, she was escorting U. S. and British convoy		
			Iceland, 9 Dec 1941		
	15 Dec 41	Hvaljordur	Boston NavyY	24 Dec	
			Availability at Boston NYard 26 Dec-1 Jan 1942.. Then training at Casco Bay, Maine 2-15 Jan 42.		
	22 Jan 42	Brooklyn	Key West	27 Jan 42	
			Escorting seven troop ships enroute.		
	28 Jan	Key West	Portland, Me.	1 Feb	
			Engaged in plane guard duty for Wasp in Casco Bay area		
			Operating off New England coast. On 13 Feb 42 LCDR E. F. Daniel USN, relieved LCDR CONNOR		
	21 Feb	Halifax, N.S.	Hvaljordur	4 Mar	
			Escorting T.F. 12		
	7 Mar	Hvaljordur	New York	25 Mar	
			26 March departed for NorVa for availability 28 Mar-7 Apr 42.		
			10 Apr-26 Apr engaged in ASW and AA training arriving New York 26 Apr.		
	2 May	New York	San Juan	8 May	
			Engaged in patrol duty off entrance San Juan Harbor &		



# SERVICE

Source	Date	Departed	Arrived	Date	Remarks
			and also engaged in ASW in general area of Puerto Rico and extending to Bermuda. Returned to NorVa 29 May 42..		
			Availability at NorVa NYard 30 May-9 June 42.		
	10 Jun	NorVa	KWest	25 June	
			Escorting naval convoy.		
	26 Jun	KW <sub>st</sub>	NorVa	29 June	
			Availability at NorVa 1-7 July 1942.		
	8 July	NorVa	Galveston, Tex	13 July	
			escorting naval convoy.		
	16 Jul	Galveston	NorVa	21 July	Escorting naval convpy
	23 Jul	NorVa	Boston	28 July	Escorting naval convoy.
			Then availability at Boston 30Jul-5Aug		
	6 Aug	Boston	Halifax	7 Aug	
	9 Aug	Halifax	Lisahally, North Ireland	19 Aug	Escoring convoy
			Engaged in training in vicinity of North Ireland and Scotland.		
	27 Aug	Greenock, Scotland	NewYork	5 Sept	Escorting naval convoy. Upkeep at New York.
			17-24 Sept 1942, engaged in training in local opArea		



SERVICE

Source	Date	Departed	Arrived	Date	Remarks
	26 Sept	NewYork	Halifax	28 Sept	Escorting convoy. Four more ships join convoy at Halifax (13 in all)
	<del>XXXXXX</del> 28 Sept	Halifax	Lisahally, North Ireland	7 Oct	
	9 Oct	Lisahally	New York	21 Oct	Voyage repairs at NY. Then training in Tactical exercises off New London, Conn. Then at Brooklyn 30 Oct in preparation for another convoy.
	2 Nov	NewYork	Safi, Fr. Morocco	18 Nov	Escorted a convoy of 25 ships enroute. 25 Nov sailed for Casablanca arriving 26 Nov 42. Then at Casablanca patrolling to protect convoys entering casablanca.
	22 Dec 42	Casablanca	NewYork	10 Jan	Overhaul at Navy Yard New York. 23 Dec 42-29 Jan 43.
	30 Jan	New York	Londonderry N.Ireland		
	(No War diaries for Feb 1943)				
	(Note: First entry in March War Diary:				
			Escorting UC-1 convoy from U.K. to Caribbean area in company with the 42nd Fr. Escort Group		
			Port-au-Spain Trinidad	6 Mar43	





# SERVICE

Source	Date	Departed	Arrived	Date	Remarks
	20 Mar	Curacao	On 8 March 1943 underway stad, Curacao, N.W.I. to Londonderry N. Ireland	1 Apr	independently for Willem- stad, Curacao, N.W.I. to rejoin 42nd Escort Grp.
	10 Apr	From rendez- vous at sea near Milford Haven, England	Curacao	23 Apr 1943	in <del>XXE</del> ASW exercises in Escorting convoy UC02, 11 ships. Part of this convoy detached <del>at</del> in Caribbean.
	26 Apr	Curacao	New York	2 May 43	
	12 May	Brooklyn	Curacao	17 May	Availability at Brooklyn, Navy Yard 4-10 May 43
	22 May	Curacao	Moville, N. Ireland	5 Jun	Escorting convoy CU-2. Then engaged in target practice in area of N.W.I.
	12 Jun	Moville	San Juan, P.R.	27 Jun	Escorting convoy UC-3 Then engaged in local escort duty bet. St. Thomas, Virgin Is. and Curacao, N.W.I.
	11 Jul	Curacao	Londonderry	23 Jul	Escorting convoy CU-3. Then engaged in ASW and shiphandling exercises in vicinity of N. Ireland.
	30 Jul	Londonderry	San Juan, P.R.	11 Aug	Escorting convoy UC-3a.



## SERVICE

Source	Date	Departed	Arrived	Date	Remarks
			Upon arrival in Carib. engaged in gunnery training enroute to St. Thomas and Curacao.		
	26 Aug	Curacao	Moville, N.Ireland	8 Aug	Escorting convoy GU-4
	15 Sep	Moville	Curacao	27 Sept	Escorting convoy UC-4. Then on 2 Oct departed Curacao escorting convoy UC-4 to New York arriving 6 Oct 1943. Availability at N.Y. 10-21 Oct 43.
	23 Oct	New York	New London Conn. Engaged in ASW training in vicinity of Casco Bay, Maine.	23 Oct	
	3 Nov	NorVa	Casablanca North Africa	21 Nov	Escorting convoy UGS-23
	29 Nov	Casablanca	New York	17 Dec	Escorting convoy GUS-22. Availability at Navy Yard New York, 18-31 Dec 43. BUAER camera party making training movie on duties of OOD 3-5 Jan 44.
			ASW and AA training exercises 7-11 Jan 44.		
	13 Jan LOST 20	NorVa Apr 1944.	escorting UGS 30 to Med.		(diaries end)



**STANDARD FORM NO. 64**

**Abstract**

*T. J. Greene*  
T. J. GREENE,  
Lieutenant, U.S. Navy,



U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426)<sup>1</sup>

Muster Roll of the Crew, 31 December 1941  
(Enlisted Complement: 194)

AHLERS, Robert	S1c	GLINDEMAN, Harold L.	S1c
ALLEN, Harvey S.	RM2c	GOURSAU, Edmund J.	MM1c
ANDERSON, Clarence R.	CM1c	GRIFFIN, Joe L.	MM1c
ANDERSON, John A.	S1c	GULLIKSEN, Wendell C.	CWT
ANDREWS, Sherman A.	F1c	HACKER, Frank G.	GM3c
ARMSTRONG, Ralph H., Jr.	F3c	HADLEY, Harlan E.	S1c
BALLOCK, Andrew E.	F2c	HART, John S.	CCstd
BARBIERI, Carmine L.	SC3c	HARVANEK, Frank A.	SK1c
BARCLAY, Karyes	Matt2c	HAYNES, Marshall G.	F1c
BAUBY, Charles W.	MM1c	HEATON, William M.	FC3c
BENTZ, Reuben L.	CMM	HELMS, Howard C.	WT2c
BERGER, Glenn C.	BM1c	HENSLEY, Ralph B.	CQM
BIRD, Henry J.	Bmkr2c	HINMAN, Charles L.	S2c
BLOEDOW, Rudolph F.	CRM	HOBBY, William L.	EM2c
BLUM, Charles H.	S1c	HOBDAY, Robert T.	OS2c
CALANTONI, Louis J.	S1c	GOSSER, Allen	Matt2
CARLEY, Donald B.	S1c	HOLLY, George J., Jr.	S1c
CARR, Joseph L.	S1c	HORNE, Robert H.	S2c
CHOUINARD, Leopold	S1c	HORNSBY, John F.	F1c
CLARKE, John O.	Cox	HORODESKY, Michael	SF3c
CLAUSEN, Guy M.	S1c	HUNGERFORD, Jean A.	F1c
COATES, Ralph	MM1c	INMAN, Thomas J.	F2c
COFFIN, Theron T.	F2c	JAMAKO, Joseph J.	SM1c
COKER, Edward E.	Y3c	JENNINGS, James J.	F2c
COLVIN, Sydney D.	CWT	KEITH, Andre R.	F1c
CORMIER, Edward H.	F3c	KEITH, John A.	F3c
CWALINA, Joseph J.	MM1c	KEMERY, Donald E.	RM2c
D'AMICO, Arthur	F3c	KETCHIE, Harold E.	WT1c
DARBY, Joseph M.	GM2c	KINNA, William B.	BM2c
DARDEN, Hurke T.	F1c	KNEIDINGER, August O.	F2c
DE BURST, Leroy	Matt3c	KOUNS, Donald L.	S2c
DELWORTH, Lawrence L.	EM1c	KOWITZ, George J.	S2c
DE MOLA, Frank	S2c	KOZLOWSKI, Charles C.	TM3c
DUDASH, Samuel	S1c	KROM, Floyd M.	A.S.
DUFF, Ernest Winters	SC1c	LADZINSKI, Reginald A.	A.S.
DYORICH, Mike	F3c	LA FLAMME, Bernard P.	F1c
EDEN, John Lewis	EM3c	LAMBERT, John M.	S2c
EDWARDS, Morton G., Jr.	S1c	LAMBERT, Maurice J.	A.S.
ELDRED, Aaron C.	WT2c	LANAHAN, Charles H.	A.S.
FIRST, George	S1c	LAHLEIN, Curtis F.	BM3c
FITZPATRICK, John W.	TM2c	LA PELOSA, Angelo J.	A.S.
FLACK, William W.	MM1c	LEE, Clarence H.	S1c
FLEAGLE, John R.	EM1c	LEE, Frank R.	S2c
FLIPPIN, Richard R.	S2c	LEE, Richard W.	F1c
FOOSHE, Thomas R., Jr.	TM1c	LOVERN, Thomas N.	S2c
FRENCH, Robert "M"	GM2c	LUZZARO, Frank A.	SK3c
GAJEWSKI, Constantine	Msmth1	LYTKOWSKI, Michael G.	SC1c
GALLIGAN, John F.	MM1c	MACKLIN, Albert L.	RM3c
GEIGER, Raleigh	GM1c	MALAGO, Frank	S1c
GERMER, Henry H.	CFC	MANNIN, Jesse A.	F1c
GIACALONE, Andrew J.	S1c	MARCIANO, Daniel P.	F1c
GIUSTI, Julius J.	SF1c	MARTIN, Everett	F2c





MAYR, Charles G.	QM3c	SINCLAIR, George T., Jr.	Y3c
McCORKLE, James R.	GM3c	SLAUGHTER, Walter W.	S1c
McHUGH, Thomas I.	S1c	SLONE, Ora V.	S1c
McKISIC, Stark B.	PhM1c	SMITH, Charles G.	Bmkr1
McMURRAY, Norman F.	EM3c	SMITH, Edward A.	F1c
McNAMEE, James W.	RM3c	SMITH, Edward A.	WT1c
MENTZER, Charles J.	S1c	SPECTOR, Stanley M.	S1c
METZ, Felix R., Jr.	WT2c	STAIE, Reginald F.	F1c
MIKULA, John C.	RM3c	STERMER, Albert V.	S1c
MILES, William R., Jr.	F1c	STIER, Raymond	EM1c
MILLER, Raymond A.	S1c	STOESSEL, George J.	S2c
MILLER, William C.	F2c	STONE, Kenneth F.	MM1c
MIRDIK, Andy, Jr.	S1c	STORHAUG, Marcus B.	S2c
MITCHELL, Charles W.	Matt3c	STOUT, Robert H.	CMM
MITZEL, Mason S.	F2c	STUDDARD, Holland A., Jr.	FC2c
MONROE, Louis	S1c	STURGILL, William H.	TM2c
MOYER, Truman	S1c	THOMISON, Maurice	MM2c
MULHERN, Arthur F.	S2c	THURMAN, Charles M.	MM1c
MURPHY, Josh	Matt3c	TIGE, Douglas	CTM
NEAL, David E.	SM1c	TINO, Anthony G.	F1c
NEWMAN, Sander	BM1c	TINO, Peter J.	S1c
OLIVIERI, Frank	F3c	TINSLEY, Leroy E.	F1c
PAGAC, William	SF3c	TOLKACZ, John C.	F2c
PAQUETTE, Joseph A. B.	S1c	TRAFFLEY, John W.	MM2c
PARTLOW, George W.	S1c	TRIPOLI, Cosmo M.	S1c
PASKO, Charles P.	QM1c	TURNER, Lewis E.	S2c
PAYNE, David L.	MM1c	TURNER, "O" "A"	Cox.
PETERSON, Warner E.	CFC	URBAN, Leo R.	GM2c
PIFER, Forest S.	FC3c	VINCI, Carl M.	S1c
POWELL, Laurel F.	MM2c	WARD, Eugene C.	MM2c
REED, Elbert	OC2c	WASNICK, Anthony	F1c
REEDSTRUM, Wayne B.	FC3c	WEBB, Charlie "B"	Matt1
REYNOLDS, Raymond	GEM	WESTGATE, Daley R.	S2c
RICHARDSON, Albert K.	S1c	WHEELER, Aquell H.	S1c
RICHARDSON, Walter M.	F1c	WILEY, Marvin M.	S2c
RILEY, Morris B.	S1c	WILLIAMS, Artis R.	PhM2c
RING, William P.	RM1c	WILSON, Charles D.	MM1c
ROBERTS, John H.	S1c	WOODS, Joseph C.	S2c
ROUS, Vaclav S., Jr.	MM1c	WOOSLEY, Ralph B.	S1c
ROUSH, Osman D.	F1c	WORRELLS, Albert M.	F1c
SABIECKY, Joseph A.	MM1c	WROBLEWSKI, Anthony J., Jr.	S2c
SANDERS, Howard E.	SM2c	WYMOND, John H., Jr.	S1c
SEBESTYEN, John C., Jr.	SC1c	WYKO, William	TM3c
SHAW, William H.	WT1c	YOUNG, George L.	BM1c
SIMON, Ludwig J.	S1c	YOUNKMAN, Leroy E.	MM2c

\* \* \* \* \*

1 Source: The ship's personnel diary on microfilm at the National Archives.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
March, 1999



U.S.S. *Lansdale* (DD-426)

Summary of Commanding Officers

Lt. Comdr. <u>John Connor</u> , USN	09/17/40 - 02/13/42
Lt. Comdr. <u>E. F. Daniel</u>	02/13/42 - 04/02/42
Lt. Comdr. <u>Donald C. Varian</u> , USN	04/02/42 - 09/15/42
Lt. Comdr. <u>Valery Harvard, Jr.</u>	09/15/42 - 12/20/43
Lt. Comdr. <u>Douglas M. Swift</u> , USN	12/20/43 - 04/20/44

\* \* \* \* \*

Source: *The ship's deck logs at the National Archives.*

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
February, 1999



*Obituary for RAdm. Douglas M. Swift, USN (Ret.)  
(Died on 17 October 1988)*

*Commanding Officer, USS Lansdale (DD-426)  
20 December 1943 - 20 April 1944*

**DOUGLAS MCKEAN SWIFT '34**



RAdm. Douglas M. Swift USN (Ret.) died in a Meriden, Connecticut, nursing home on 17 October 1988. Memorial services were held at Grace Episcopal Church in Windsor on the 21st and interment was in Arlington National Cemetery on the 27th.

On graduation from Windsor High School Admiral Swift enlisted in the Navy and was appointed to the Naval Academy in 1930. Following graduation in 1934 he served in a battleship, destroyer and cruiser. Early World War II service was in the destroyers MCCOOK, DALLAS, COLE and JEFFERS, all in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. In December of 1943 he took command of USS LANSDALE, which shot down four German torpedo bombers off Anzio in 1944 but suffered a fatal hit in the process. The remainder of the war he spent in BuPers, including service as Secretary to the Holloway Board to determine the future path of officer education in the Navy.

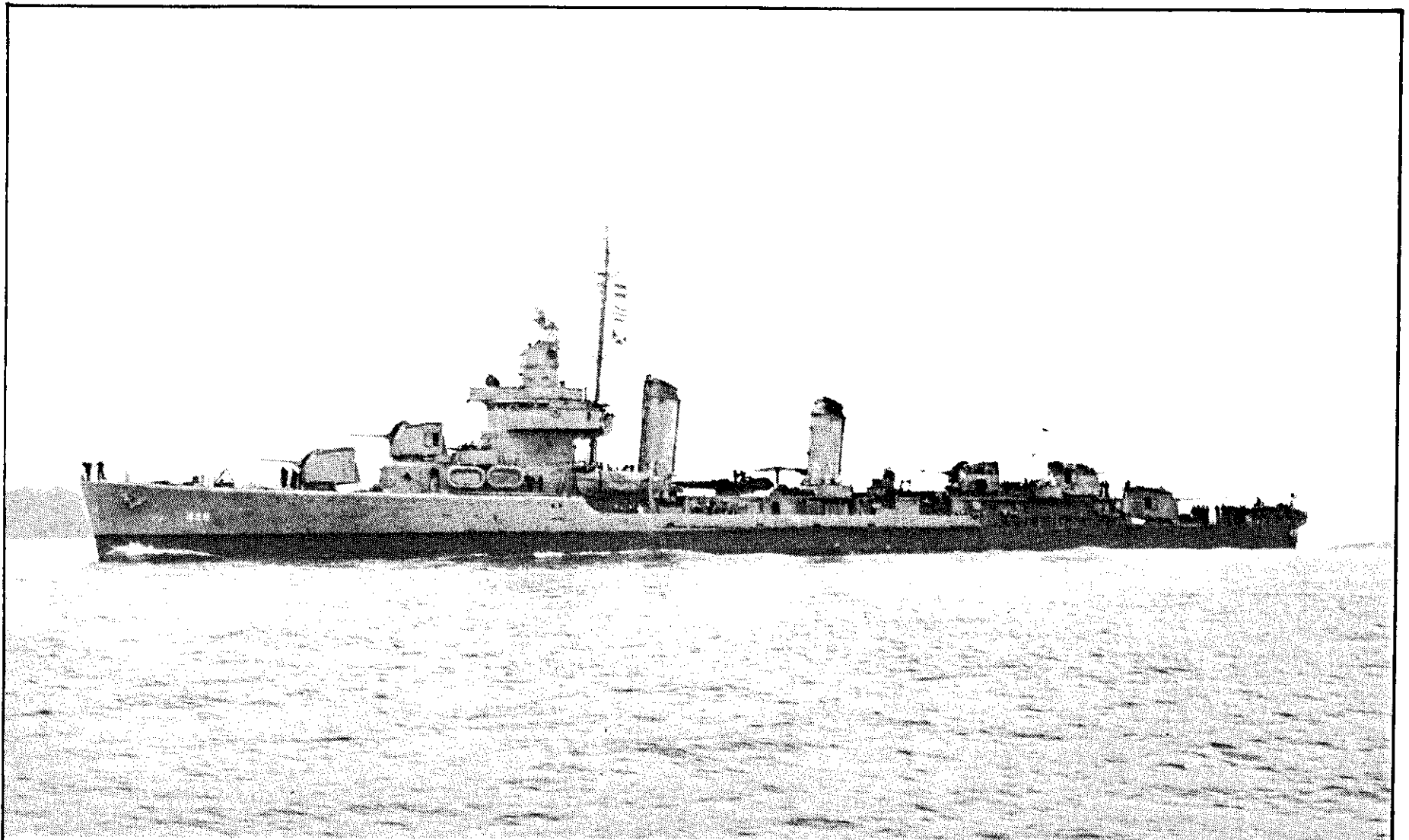
In 1947 Admiral Swift went back to sea, commanding yet another destroyer, USS PUTNAM, in the Atlantic Fleet. That tour was followed by three more years in BuPers, command of DesDiv 601 at Key West, attendance at the Naval War College, and physical retirement in 1954. He then returned to his home town of Windsor, earned an MA in Education from Trinity College at Hartford, and taught science at Bloomfield Junior High for five years. From then on he devoted his time to local affairs, hunting and fishing, and care of his ailing wife.

The admiral was a member of Grace Episcopal Church, Elks Lodge, Musical Hatters, and the Rotary Club in Windsor and of the Naval Academy Alumni Association. His wartime service earned the Silver Star and two Purple Hearts.

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth (Westfield Manor, Westfield Street, Meriden, Conn. 06450) and three sons: Douglas, Jr. of Berryville, Virginia; Charles, of Glen Burnie, Maryland; and David, of Cheshire, Connecticut.

The family suggests gifts to the Naval Academy Alumni Association in lieu of flowers or other memorial contributions.





*This wartime view of the U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426), taken prior to her 1943 refit, shows that her after torpedo-tube mount and after superstructure have been removed. The 36-inch searchlight is now mounted where these torpedo tubes were, and half-shields with canvas tops have been provided for Mounts Nos. 3 and 4. Antiaircraft protection has been improved by the addition of six 20-mm Oerlikon machine cannons; two below the bridge, two abreast the after stack and two in new sponsons between Mounts Nos. 3 and 4.*

*(Official U.S. Navy Photograph.)*





*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 steaming death-defying, head-on into the fire from an enemy battlewagon's heavy guns. In the heavy seaway the little ship is tossing 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 drab, humdrum existence, depends very largely on the point of view of the individual man who crews a "tin can." One thing, however, can be said for it: it's most versatile. If Kipling's crack about the liner 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, shooin' 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 reenforcements, supplies, tanks and artillery, the destroyer that has landed them will stand by to give the Leather-necks 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 battlewagon 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."

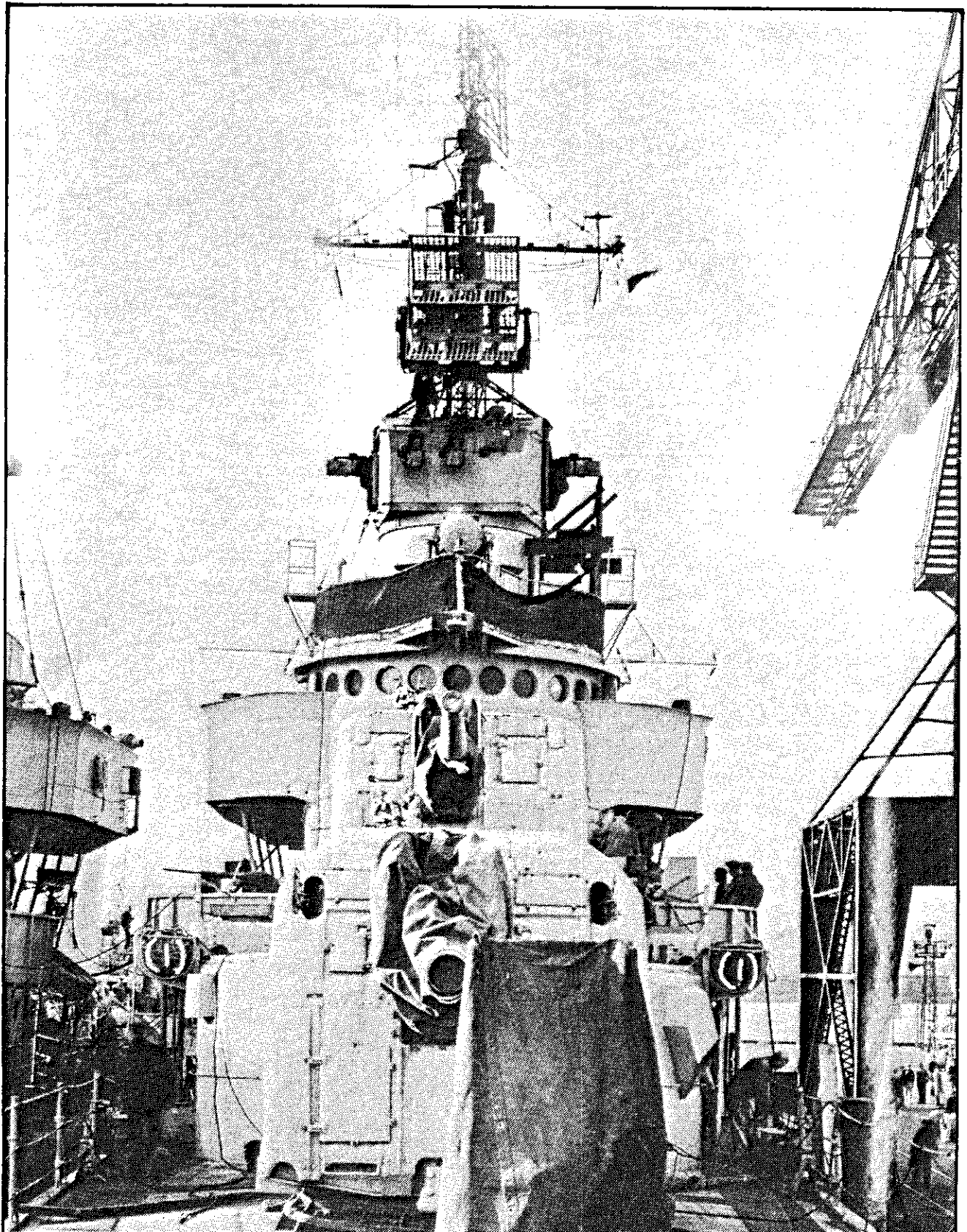
The spirit of the little ships reflects itself in that of their crews. Destroyermen are a bit apart from the rest of our man-of-war men. On their small ships they have to do without many of the comforts the crews of carriers, battleships or even cruisers enjoy. They live in cramped quarters. There is no canteen or ship's service booth where a man might get a coke, an ice cream or western story pulp magazine. Yet the destroyer man, 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:

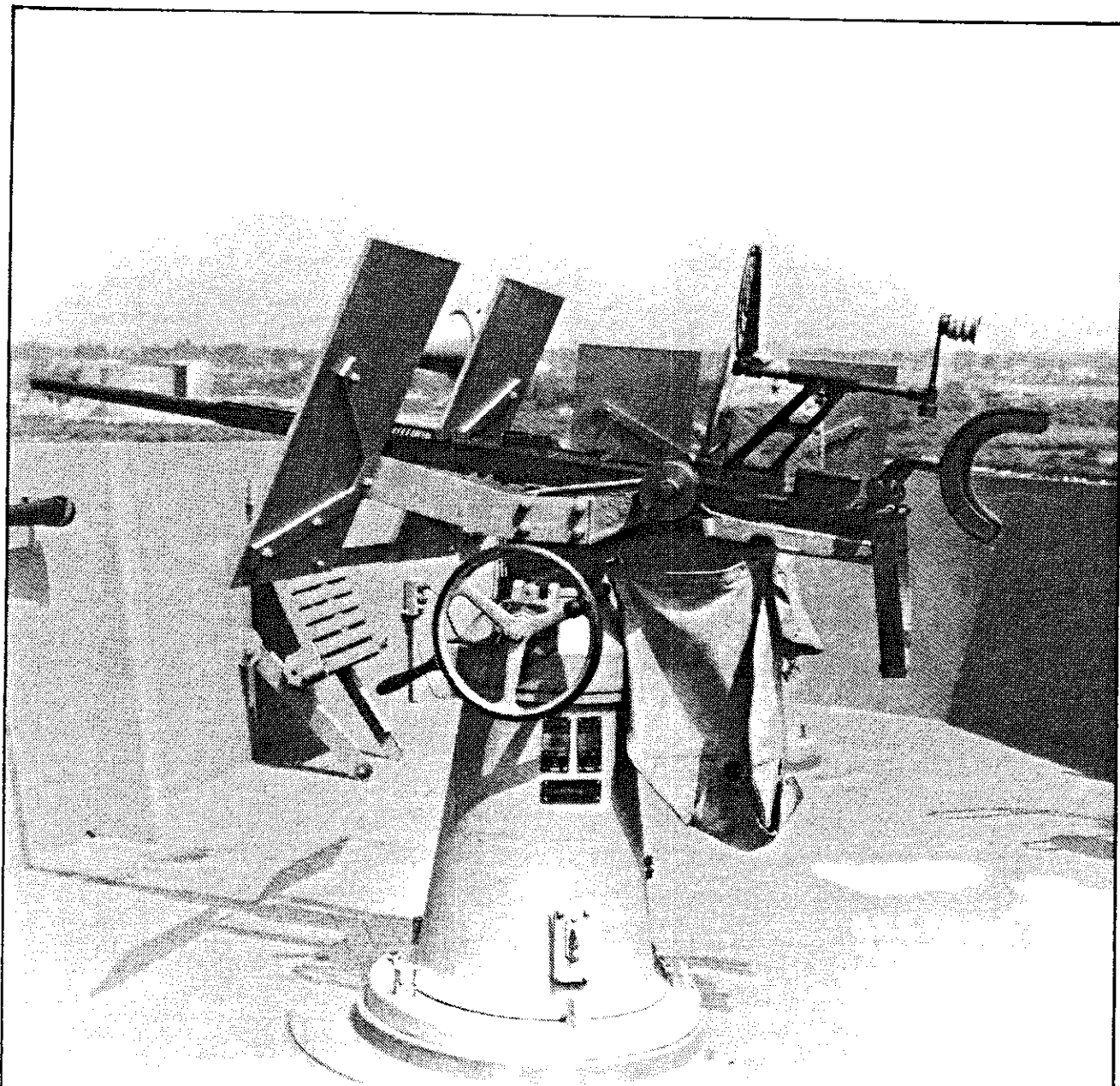
"A destroyer is a lovely ship, probably the nicest fighting ship of all. Battleships are a little like steel cities or great factories of destruction. Aircraft carriers are floating flying fields.

"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."



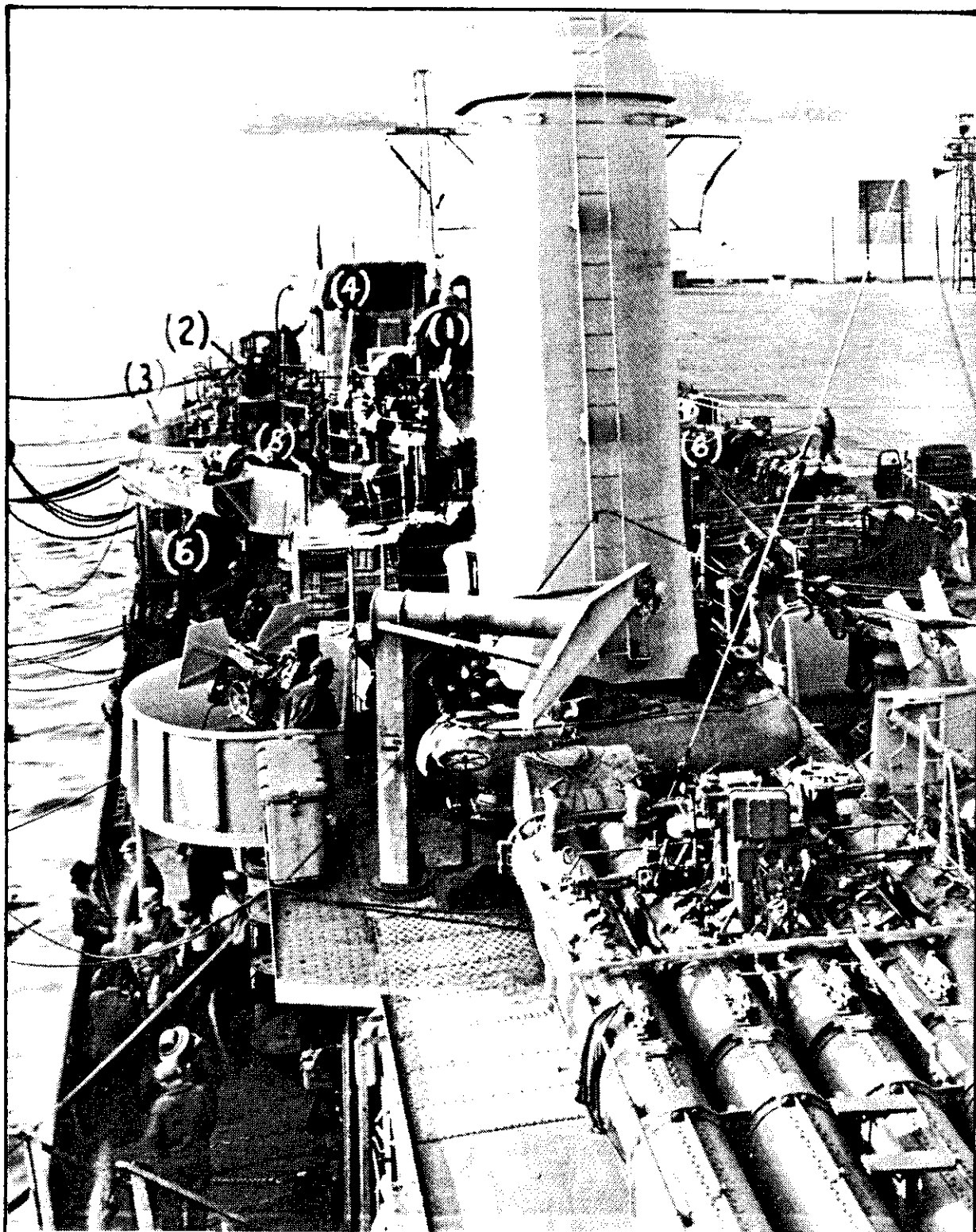
*This uncensored bow view of the U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426) in the New York Navy Yard in October, 1943, shows her two forward 5-inch/38 gun mounts, two 20-mm. machine cannons, a searchlight, a Mk 37 gun director with its Mk 12 fire-control radar antenna, an SG surface-search radar antenna and an SC-1 air-search radar antenna at the top of her foremast. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)*





*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.)*

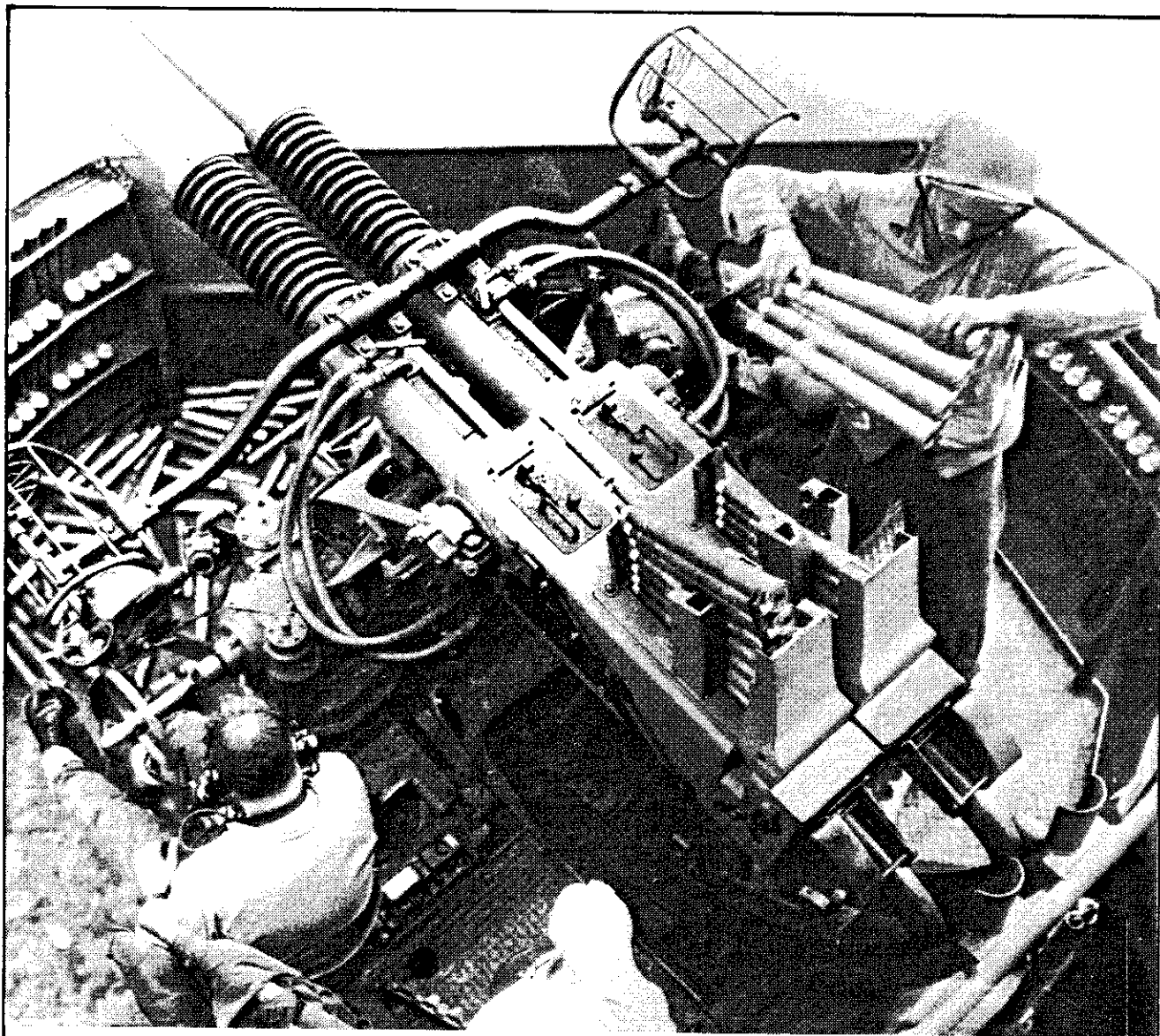




The Lansdale in the New York Navy Yard on 21 October 1943. This forward view of the after stack shows some of the changes made during her refit: (1) Top of after deckhouse modified by removal of #3 5-in. gun and addition of 36-in. searchlight platform. (2) 2 twin 40-mm. gun mounts added. (3) Brackets for 40-mm. ammunition clips fitted to the inside surface of splinter shields. (4) Ladders and rails provided for director platform. (5) Life lines in way of 40-mm. guns modified. (6) Floater life net bins installed, port and starboard. A quintuple torpedo-tube mount is in the foreground (lower right), and two Oerlikon 20-mm. machine cannons can be seen abreast of the stack. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph.)



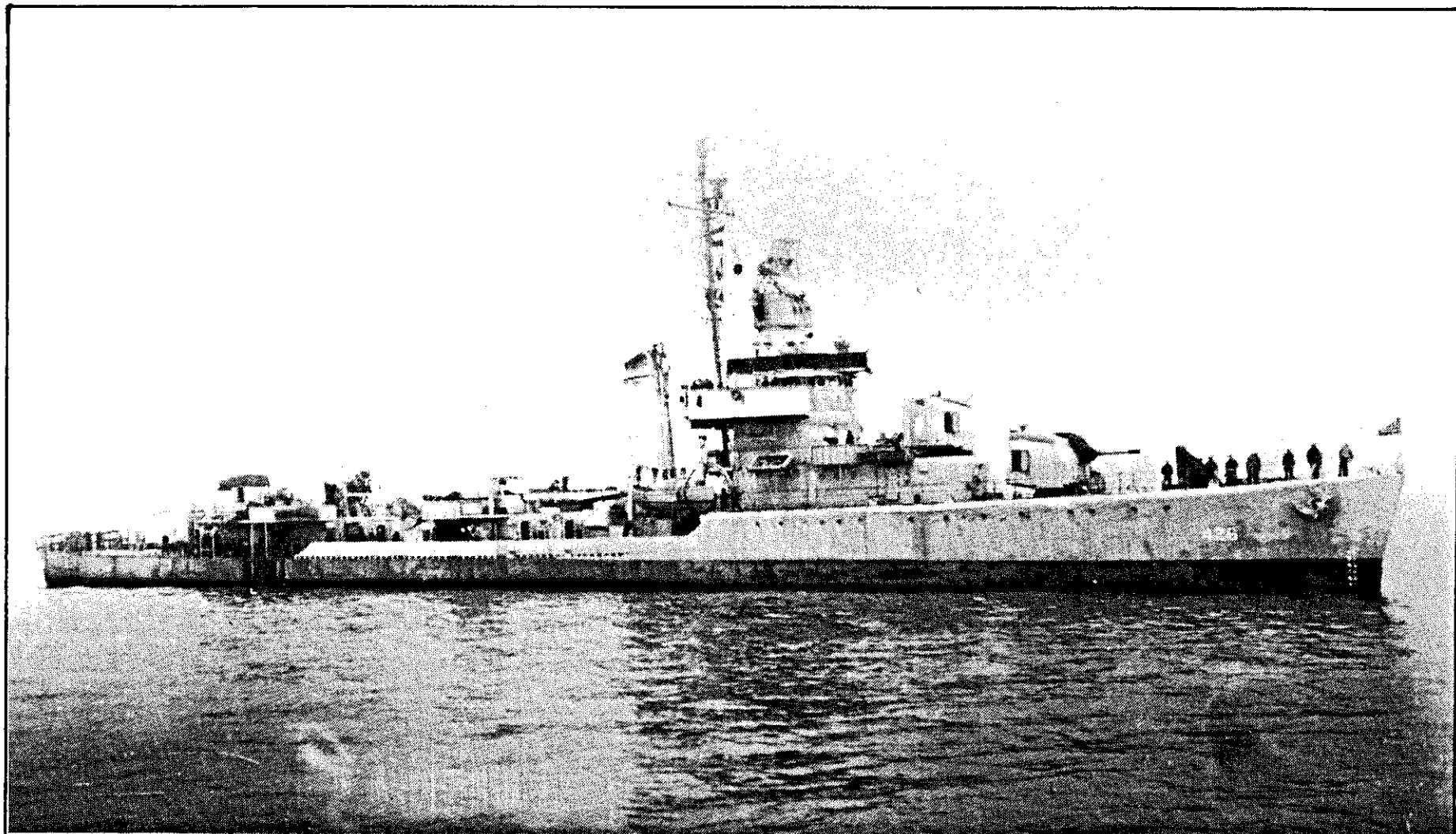




The 40-mm Bofors gun fired a two-pound explosive shell with an effective range of about 2,800 yards. It was primarily an antiaircraft weapon, but destroyers also used their 40-mm's against enemy strongpoints when they provided close-in gunfire support during landings. The gun crew for a twin mount consisted of a pointer, a trainer, a gun captain and four loaders (two for each barrel). The Bofors was capable of firing about 160 rounds/barrel/minute, but the number of rounds actually fired depended on the ability of the loaders to provide an uninterrupted supply of ammunition.

(Official U.S. Navy photograph.)

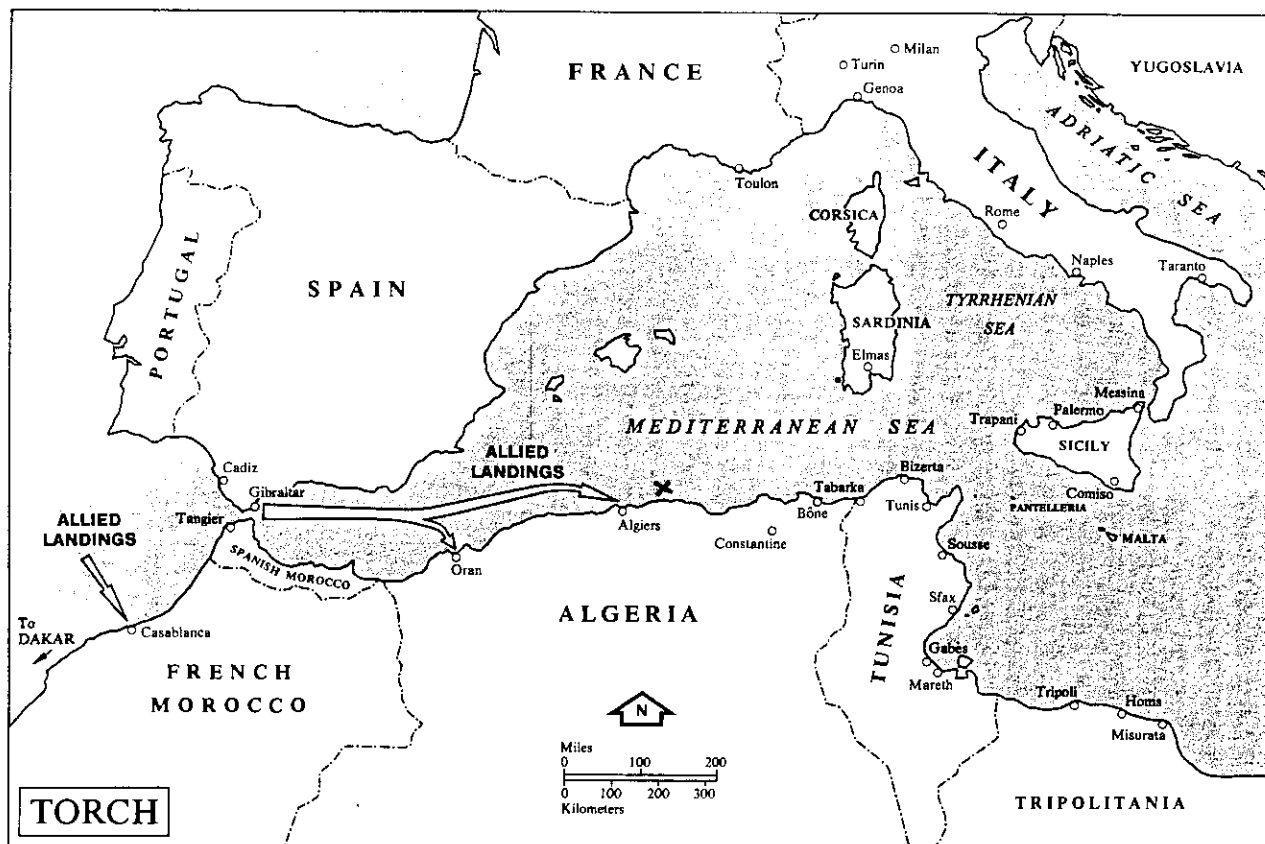




The U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426) at the New York Navy Yard on 22 October 1943, upon completion of her refit with two twin 40-mm. mounts replacing her forward-facing 5-in./38 Mount No. 3. Note that her Mount No. 4 still has a canvas top to reduce weight. The 36-in. searchlight can be seen on its new platform forward of the new 40-mm sponsons. It is very fortunate that the life net bins were added during this refit, because when the ship went down six months later these floater nets saved many lives. (USN Photo)



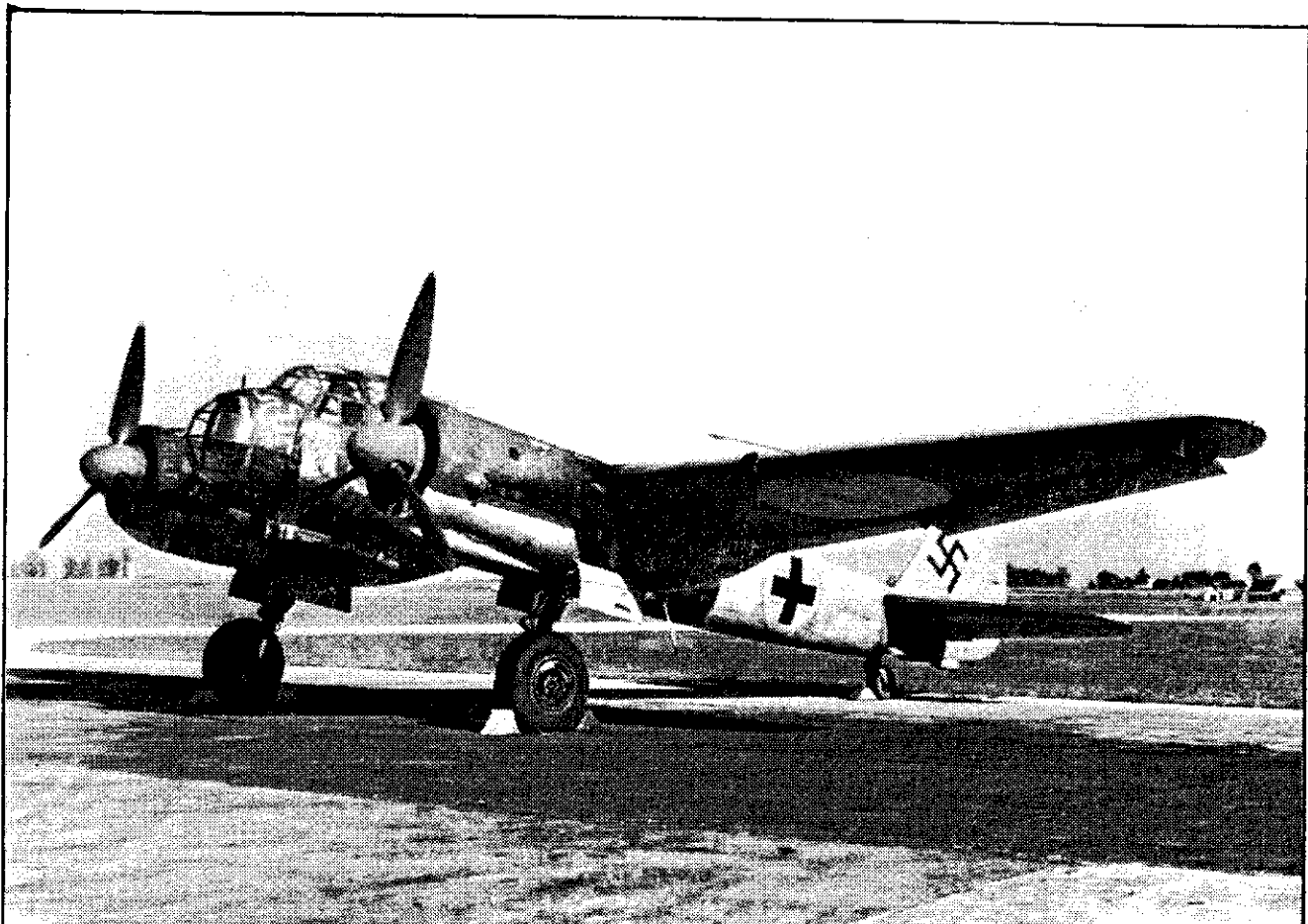
Map Showing Where the USS Lansdale (DD-426) Was Sunk ( )  
Off the Algerian Coast On 20 April 1944



The Lansdale was torpedoed shortly after dusk by German planes about 65 miles east of Algiers while escorting Convoy UGS-38 bound for Bizerte, Tunisia. The ship had successfully dodged several torpedoes before she was hit in the forward fireroom and almost split in half. At 2122, after her port list had increased to 45 degrees, the commanding officer, Lt. Comdr. Douglas M. Swift, USN, ordered the ship abandoned. Casualties were 49 killed or missing and 76 wounded. Two U.S. destroyer escorts rescued the 234 survivors.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
March, 1999





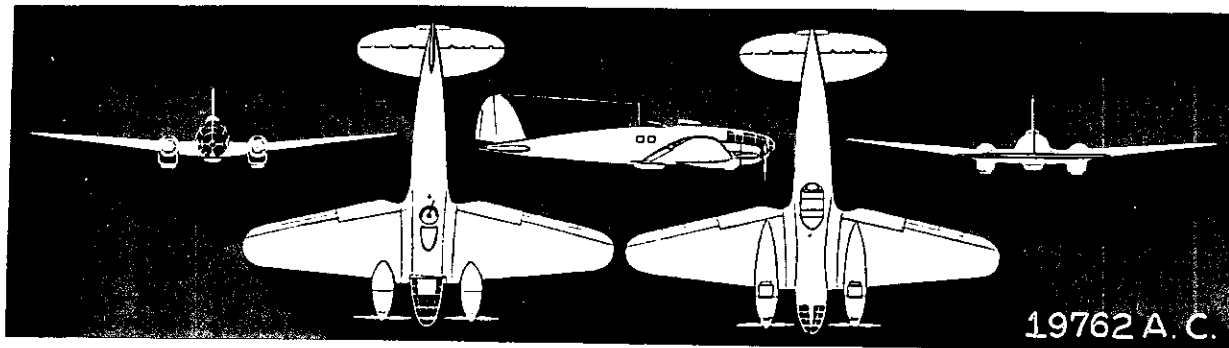
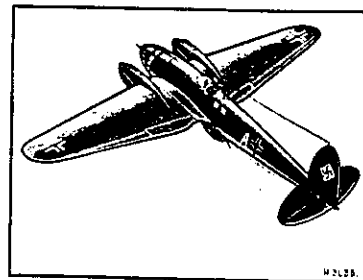
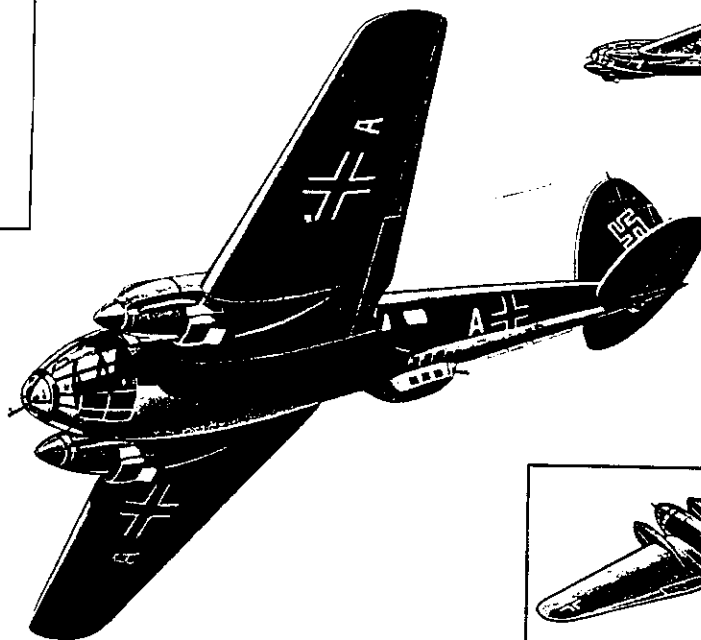
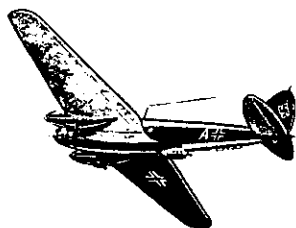
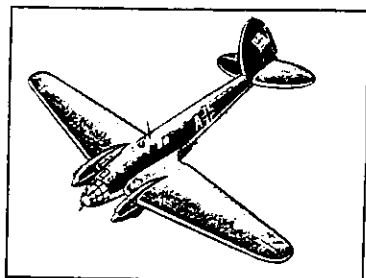
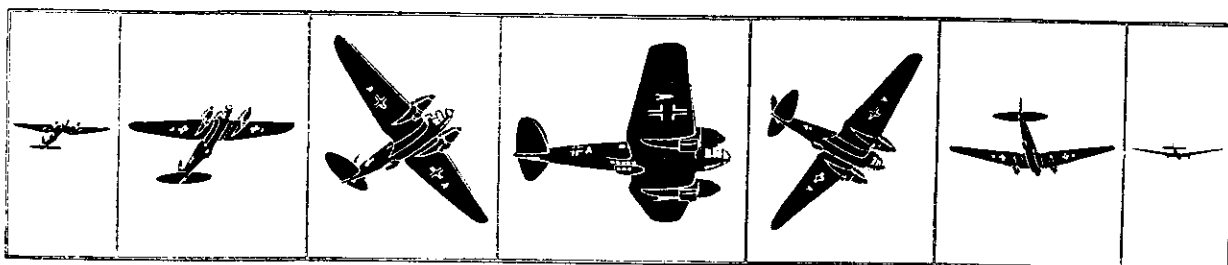
A torpedo-bomber model of this Junkers 88 (the Ju 88A-17) launched the torpedo which sank the Lansdale on April 20, 1944. This versatile bomber/night fighter was 47'1" long and had a wingspan of 65'10". Maximum speed at 18,040 feet: 293 mph. Several of these planes were splashed during the attack by the Lansdale's accurate antiaircraft fire. Earlier, two torpedoes launched by Heinkel He 111's (see next page) just missed the ship. (National Archives)





# IDENTIFICATION OF GERMAN AIRCRAFT

## I.—The Heinkel He 111K Mk. V<sub>A</sub> Bomber



19762 A. C.

A GERMAN LONG-RANGE BOMBER.—The Heinkel He 111K Mk. V<sub>A</sub> (two Junkers Jumo 211A 12-cylinder inverted Vee motors; 1,200 h.p. each for take-off. Two-speed superchargers. Rated at 940 h.p. each at 13,800 ft.). All-metal stressed-skin construction. Crew, four. Colour, upper surfaces and sides black, under surfaces grey-blue. Span, 74 ft. 3 in.; length, 60 ft. 0 in.; height, 13 ft. 9 in.; wing area, 942 sq. ft.; empty weight, 14,100 lb.; max. overload weight, 27,400 lb.; max. speed, 274 m.p.h. at 12,300 ft.; max. overload range, 2,640 miles at 225 m.p.h. at 13,800 ft. Duration, 12 hours. Initial climb, 890 ft. per min. Service ceiling, 26,200 ft.



U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426)

*The Attack on Eastbound Convoy UGS-38 Off the Algerian Coast,  
20 April 1944\**

Attacking as twilight faded, the enemy planes, flying close to shore and low over the water, evaded radar detection until they were almost upon the convoy. Some 18 to 24 Junkers and Heinkel bombers struck in three waves, minutes after *Joseph E. Campbell* (DE-70) of the outer screen reported, "they are all around me . . . they are enemy, they are enemy."

The first wave of about nine JU-88s attacked from dead ahead. Their torpedoes damaged SS *Samite* and detonated high explosives on board SS *Paul Hamilton*, blowing her out of the water and killing all 580 men on board. The second wave of about seven Junkers hit the starboard flank of the convoy and damaged two more merchant ships, one fatally. And the third, consisting of about five HE-111s, bore down on the convoy's port bow, *Lansdale's* station.

Silhouetted by the explosion of *Paul Hamilton* at 2104, *Lansdale* was attacked from both port and starboard by planes from two and possibly three waves. As Heinkels approached on the port bow and launched two torpedoes that missed, *Lansdale* turned to starboard to repel five JU-88s which had veered seaward from the convoy. Her guns hit one as it passed down the starboard side; but, as it splashed well astern, another launched a torpedo 500 yards on the starboard beam before passing over the forecastle under heavy fire and splashing on the port quarter.

The torpedo struck the starboard side forward about 2106, wrecking the forward fireroom and opening both sides to the sea. Almost split in two, *Lansdale* immediately took a 12° list to port. Her rudder jammed 22° right, and she steamed at 13 knots in a clockwise circle.

At 2112 she again came under attack. Two bombers launched torpedoes on the beam and broad on the bow to port but both missed the still-turning ship. Despite the increasing list, her guns splashed one of the planes as it turned away from the ship.

At 2120 the course of the ship straightened out, but the list increased steadily. Within 2 minutes it reached 45° despite the vallant efforts of her crew to control the battle damage. Her skipper, Lt. Comdr. D. M. Swift, ordered her abandoned when he feared the stricken ship might roll "completely over." By 2130 the list had increased to 80° and the destroyer began to break up. Five minutes later she broke in half, and the stern section quickly sank. The forward section sank 20 minutes later as *Menges* (DE-320) and *Newell* (DE-322) began rescue operations.

The two destroyer escorts swept the water from 2155 until 0330 the next morning searching for survivors. *Menges* picked up 115 men, including two German fliers who were shot down either by *Lansdale* or *Newell*. *Newell* rescued 119 survivors, including Lieutenant Commander Swift. Forty-seven officers and men were carried down with *Lansdale*.

\* Excerpt from the Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Vol. 4. Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1969.



CONFIDENTIAL  
DECLASSIFIED

ACTION REPORT

USS LANSDALE  
SERIAL 019

DECLASSIFIED - DOD DIR. 5200.9

of 27 Sep 58

BY 916

DATE 11-16-68

DD 426

MAY 13 1944

USS LANSDALE (DD426); REPORT OF LOSS OF.

[TORPEDOED AND SUNK WHILE ESCORTING  
CONVOY UGS38 IN THE MEDITERRANEAN  
AREA, 20 APRIL 1944.]

OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND LIBRARY



DD426/L11-1  
Serial 019

U.S.S. LANSDALE (DD426)  
c/o Fleet Post Office,  
New York, N.Y.,  
13 May 1944.

~~C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L~~

**DECLASSIFIED**

From: The Commanding Officer.  
To : The Secretary of the Navy.  
Via : (1) Commander Destroyer Squadron SEVEN.  
(2) Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Northwest African Waters.  
(3) Commander-in-Chief, U.S. ATLANTIC FLEET.  
(4) Commander-in-Chief, U.S. FLEET.

Subject: U.S.S. LANSDALE (DD426); Report of Loss of.

Reference: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, Arts. 841, and 908.  
(b) C.O. LANSDALE secret ltr DD426/A12-1, Serial 003 of 2 May 1944 to COMINCH.  
(c) COMNAVHAW despatch 2108083 and 2414208 of April 1944, to COMINCH.  
(d) C.O. LANSDALE despatch 241444 of April 1944, as corrected, to SECNAV.  
(e) C.O. LANSDALE secret ltr DD426/JJ56, Serial 002 of 27 April 1944, to HUSMA.  
(f) C.O. LANSDALE conf. ltr DD426/A10, Serial 015 of 24 April 1944, to CNO.

1. In compliance with reference (a) the report of the loss of the U.S.S. LANSDALE (DD426) on the night of 20 April 1944 in Lat. 37-03 N., Long. 03-51 E. is herewith submitted. This report amplifies Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Northwest African Waters despatch 2108083 and 2414033, both of April 1944, and is in addition to C.O. LANSDALE'S action report to the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. FLEET, and C.O. LANSDALE war damage report to the Chief of Bureau of Ships.

2. In C.O. LANSDALE secret despatch 241444 of April 1944 as corrected, a report of casualties was made to the Secretary of the Navy in compliance with U.S. Navy Regulations, Article 908.

3. In C.O. LANSDALE confidential letter of 24 April 1944 a report of disposition of secret and confidential publications was made in compliance with RPS 4(a), Article 511.

4. In C.O. LANSDALE secret ltr DD426/JJ56, Serial 002 of 27 April 1944, a request for release from financial obligation of title "D" equipment and provisions charged to the Commanding Officer was requested.

~~DECLASSIFIED~~ 13 May 1944.  
~~C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L~~

Subject: U.S.S. LANSDALE (DD426); Report of Loss of.  
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5. A detailed report of the air action up to the time of the order to abandon ship is given in the C.O. LANSDALE action report to COMINCH. This report is herewith briefly summarized.

(a) While LANSDALE was temporarily operating as special Mediterranean Escort of Task Force 66 in support of USS 38, this convoy was subject to enemy air attack by about thirty torpedo planes commencing at 2103 20 April 1944. LANSDALE had been at general quarters since 1930 with material condition alarm set and was on the alert for an expected attack. At this time LANSDALE was assigned station six in the A/S screen of the convoy bearing 280° relative to the base course from the convoy guide, distant 10,000 yards. This resulted in placing the ship bearing 230° relative distant about 4,000 yards from pennant 11 of the convoy proper. The LANSDALE patrolled this station during the entire period the ship remained with the Task Force.

(b) At shortly before 2105 firing commenced in the starboard side of the convoy. At about 2104 a low flying plane was reported on the starboard bow. This plane was taken under fire by the 40mm guns and seconds later a ship believed to be pennant 1.1 was hit with a resulting explosion and flame which illuminated area, silhouetting LANSDALE to planes coming in from northeast sector, and disclosing 4 additional low flying planes coming in from southeast. Remaining light in western sky outlined this ship to planes coming from southeast. At this time a coordinated torpedo attack from both port and starboard was directed against LANSDALE with two torpedoes being fired from port and two or three from starboard. Ship was hit by one of starboard torpedoes in forward fireroom at about frame 73 at 2105. About six or seven minutes later a second attack developed from port with two planes coming in, each dropping torpedoes. One of these torpedoes passed about 15 feet ahead, the other astern.

(c) When LANSDALE was hit she immediately took a list of 12 - 15° to port. Rudder was jammed at 22° right rudder, and ship was making about 13 knots thru the water on port engine. For perhaps ten minutes it appeared that the ship could be kept afloat. Immediate steps were initiated to jettison topside weights and to shift below decks weights to starboard. Control of flooding forward by pumping was impossible due to loss of power. During this period the ship was settling but list was not increasing rapidly. At about 2120 succeeded in bringing rudder amidship by hand steering, but almost immediately the list to port began to increase rapidly, until at about 2122, with the inclinometer on the bridge reading 45° and list continually



Serial 019

~~DECLASSIFIED~~

~~C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L~~

Subject: U.S.S. LANSDALE (DD426); Report of Loss of.

increasing, the Commanding Officer was of the opinion that the ship was in danger of rolling completely over, and therefore gave the word to abandon ship.

6. Since there was no communication with the after part of the ship, personnel aft did not get the word to abandon ship immediately and started to abandon only when they saw personnel forward abandoning. The after fireroom was not abandoned until water started coming down the escape hatch on the machine gun deck, then both boilers were secured. The after engine room was abandoned when water started coming down the main deck hatch on the starboard (high) side. This was very shortly after the fireroom crew abandoned. The machine gun crew abandoned at about the same time, when the port crews were standing in water on the machine gun deck and starboard battery could no longer bring their guns to bear. The port single 40mm crew on the main deck had had to abandon earlier when their gun was submerged.

7. The bridge personnel went over the starboard wing windshield and climbed down the side gaining first the superstructure deck and then the forecastle deck. Efforts to launch the starboard forward life raft were unsuccessful as it was thoroughly jammed. The Commanding Officer remained at the fore-castle deck and looked around carefully before entering the water. When it appeared to him that everyone else forward had entered the water he walked down the starboard side of the ship and entered the water. At this time he could hear the sounds of the midships section breaking up and a small fire was in progress at the break of the deck on the starboard side. This appeared to be of electrical origin as it was sparkling and smoking without much of a flame.

8. On entering the water the Commanding Officer noticed that there were still men on the after main deck and hollered to them to abandon. They probably did not hear these instructions but on observing people forward leaving the ship, and since it was no longer possible to fight the guns or take any further measures to save the ship, orders were given by the officers aft to abandon.

9. When the ship had been abandoned it appeared to lay on its side for a considerable period then gradually broke up amidships, both ends rising out of the water as the central sections sank, but the bow section remained stem up with about twenty feet out of the water for quite a while longer. The times of the final breakup and sinking are unknown to the Commanding Officer but is recorded in the log of the U.S.S. NEWELL.

FIED

Subject: U.S.S. LANSDALE (DD426); Report of Loss of.

10. Many heroic acts occurred among the survivors in the water. On first leaving the ship the word was passed and carried from man to man to remain on their backs until it was certain there would be no depth charge explosions and to get as high out of the water as possible. It had been possible to get only a few of the rafts and floater nets clear of the ship due to jamming of release gear and the tangled wreckage. Those who could get to the nets and rafts, but probably over half of the personnel had to depend on their life jackets. Every man on the ship had been equipped with a rubber life belt and each man was required to have his belt on in order to get into the messhall for meals. This proved an effective means of keeping the belts on the men. A few men however entered the water without belts, probably because they had blown off. Fortunately it was a ship's procedure to require exposed personnel to wear kapok life jackets during general quarters and in most cases these had been put on in addition to the rubber belts. This resulted in extra belts to outfit those men who found themselves without any belt or life saving equipment. Many men, either as a result of shock or lack of swimming ability found themselves in difficulties. These men were kept afloat by other officers and men, and those who began to get discouraged were encouraged and assisted in remaining afloat.

11. The U.S.S. NEWELL and U.S.S. MENGES were prompt in coming to assistance, and did an excellent job of rescuing survivors. Disregarding the resulting dangers, they proceeded rapidly with their work, lying to in the vicinity of various groups for long periods, and occasionally using their searchlights when it was necessary. Even so, the last survivors to be taken aboard had been in the water for over four hours. For over an hour and a half the NEWELL had at least two of its own men in the water helping those who were exhausted to reach the ship. Others manned every available line and rescue net, and men from the rescue ship went down the nets to give the survivors much needed help.

12. A total of two hundred thirty five officers and men were recovered from the water by the U.S.S. NEWELL and the U.S.S. MENGES. Of those one officer, Boatswain Newton T. WESTHILL, and one enlisted man died just before or just after being rescued. There were forty seven men missing in action, of which the bodies of five were recovered within the following week. It was impossible to save any of the records or equipment of the ship due to darkness, and the quickness with which it finally broke up and sank. NEILSON, William F. M., QM3c., carried the quartermaster's notebook into the water with him, but lost it during the three and one half hours he was in the water.

Advance copy to: SECNAV.  
FILE.

D. M. SWIFT

August 9, 1944

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER DOUGLAS McKEAN SWIFT, U.S. NAVY

Lieutenant Commander Swift assumed command of the U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426) on December 20, 1943. He was in command of that destroyer when she was sunk by German torpedo planes in the Mediterranean on April 20, 1944. For service in this command he was awarded the Silver Star Medal with the following citation:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. LANSDALE in action against enemy aircraft off the Coast of Algeria on the night of April 20, 1944. When the convoy in which his ship was serving as an escort was fiercely attacked by hostile bombers, Lieutenant Commander Swift maneuvered the vessel with expert tactical skill to avoid the torpedoes fired at close range and, controlling the vigorous fire of his guns accurately and effectively repelled a determined enemy approach to the convoy, destroying three, and probably four, of the hostile planes before his ship was finally struck. After all valiant efforts to save the vessel had failed he supervised the abandon-ship operations and was responsible for the successful recovery of an exceptionally large number of his crew. Subsequently awaiting rescue in the water, he offered encouragement and assistance to other survivors and unselfishly sustained a semiconscious crew member who otherwise would have drowned. The inspiring leadership and tenacious devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Commander Swift and the indomitable fighting spirit of his command throughout this extremely perilous engagement were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

VICE ADMIRAL HENRY K. HEWITT, U.S. NAVY  
COMMANDER UNITED STATES NAVAL FORCES,  
NORTHWEST AFRICAN WATERS



NAVY DEPARTMENT

IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
PRESS AND RADIO

JULY 27, 1944

BRONZE STAR MEDAL AWARDED  
LIEUTENANT ROBERT M. MORGENTHAU, USNR

Lieutenant Robert M. Morgenthau, U.S. Naval Reserve, 24, son of Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his contribution to the USS LANSDALE's skillful and persistent protection of her convoy against attacking planes.

Wording of the citation which accompanies the decoration is:

"For distinguishing himself by meritorious achievement while serving as Executive Officer of the USS LANSDALE prior to and following an attack by enemy aircraft off the coast of Algeria on the night of April 20, 1944.

"Lieutenant Morgenthau was in large measure responsible for the excellent state of training and battle efficiency which enabled the USS LANSDALE to effectively engage the attacking enemy planes and prevent serious damage to a valuable merchant convoy. Throughout the action even though the ship was damaged and sinking, his skill and untiring energy contributed materially to the aggressive manner in which the ship continued to fight the enemy and to the thorough and persistent, though unsuccessful, measures made to control damage and save the ship from sinking. After it became necessary to abandon ship, he, with complete disregard for his own safety, was active in rendering aid to men in the water for a period of over two hours until finally rescued.

"The extraordinary ability, exemplary conduct, and outstanding devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Morgenthau reflected credit upon himself and the Naval Service."



U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426)

Medals Awarded for Action on 20 April 1944:\*

Lieutenant (jg) George E. Haines, USNR

SILVER STAR MEDAL

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while attached to the U.S.S. LANSDALE during and following an attack by enemy aircraft off the coast of Algeria on the night of 20 April 1944.

Lieutenant (junior grade) Haines, as Gunnery Officer, skillfully and fearlessly controlled the ship's main battery in directing accurate and vigorous fire against the attacking torpedo planes. After the ship had been torpedoed, all power to the main battery lost, and communications severed, he personally coordinated the action of the guns insofar as possible and continued firing right up to the time when a heavy list and the rising water as the ship sank stopped further action. This effective fire accounted for the destruction of three of the attacking planes and prevented the enemy from penetrating the screen with full strength to attack a valuable convoy. After abandoning ship, Lieutenant (junior grade) Haines is known to have given assistance to several men in the water who needed help, and although he is reported missing in action, he contributed materially to the probable saving of life.

The exceptional courage, fearless leadership under enemy fire, and outstanding devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant (junior grade) Haines were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval Service."

\* \* \* \* \*

Ensign Stephen P. Mallet, Jr., USNR

BRONZE STAR MEDAL

"For action aboard his torpedoed ship on the night of 20 April 1944. When all communications with Bridge and Gun Control had been broken he took control and maintained discipline over the after 20mm battery of six guns. As a result of his leadership this battery was kept manned and operating against enemy aircraft until the ship had listed 70 degrees to port and his men were ordered to abandon ship."

\* \* \* \* \*

\* These draft citations, on file at Operational Archives/Washington Navy Yard, may have been reworded before they were issued in their final form.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
February, 1999





Lieutenant (junior grade) Marshall E. Geller, USNR

BRONZE STAR MEDAL

"For distinguishing himself by meritorious achievement while attached to the U.S.S. LANSDALE during and following an attack by enemy aircraft off the coast of Algeria on the night of 20 April 1944.

"Following the torpedoing and sinking of the U.S.S. LANSDALE by enemy torpedo planes, Lieutenant (junior grade) Geller demonstrated courage and cool headed leadership in assembling survivors in a group to facilitate their recovery by rescue vessels. In a number of instances, at great risk of drowning, he nevertheless swam to the assistance of many injured men who were struggling to remain afloat. Over a period of two hours he continuously rendered physical and moral aid to all who needed it in his immediate vicinity, and as a direct result of his resolute action several lives were saved.

"The extraordinary courage, perseverance, and outstanding devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant (junior grade) Geller reflected credit upon himself and the Naval Service."

\* \* \* \* \*

Marion A. Porter, Steward's Mate Third Class, USNR

SILVER STAR MEDAL

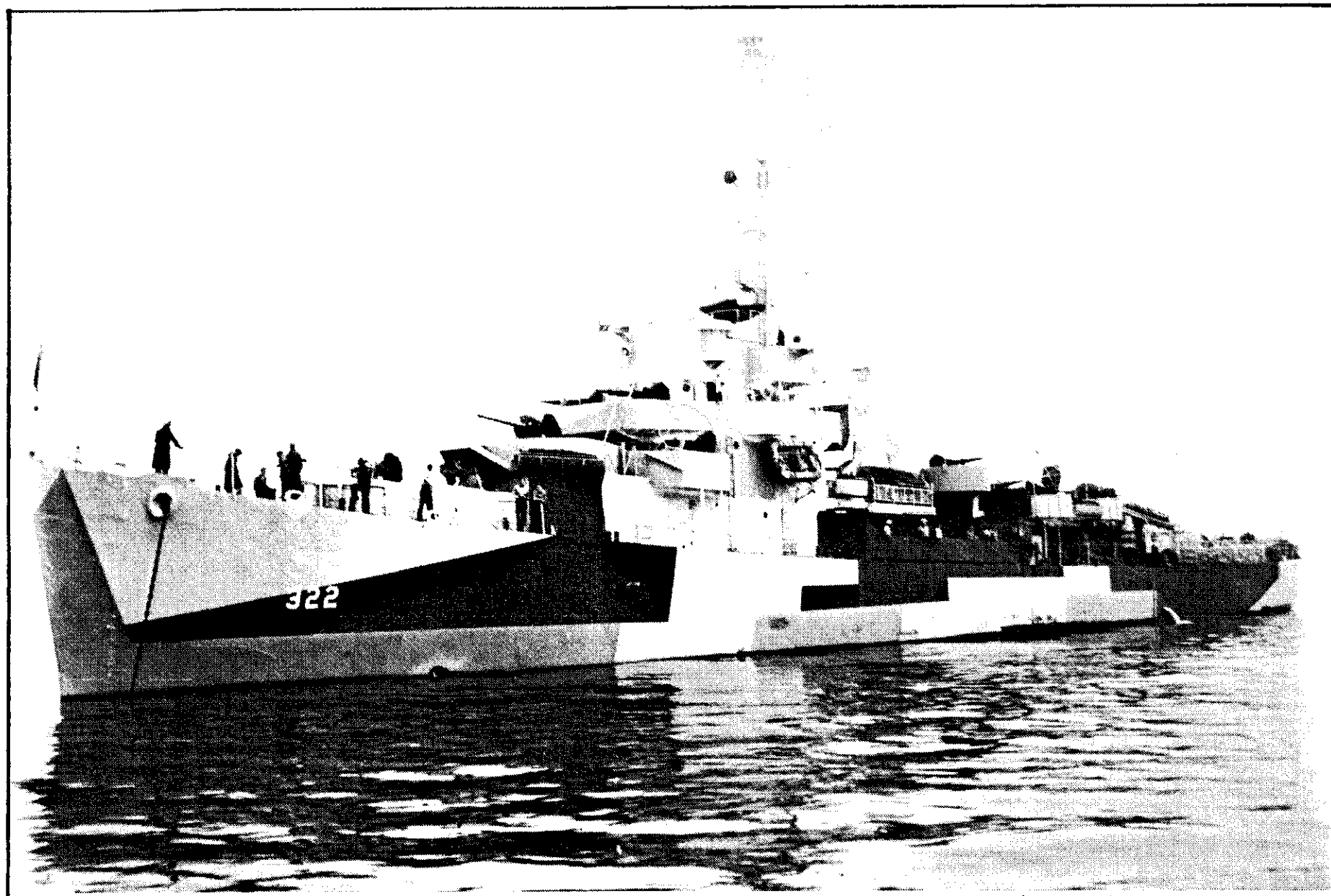
"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while attached to the U.S.S. LANSDALE during and following an attack by enemy aircraft off the coast of Algeria on the night of 20 April 1944.

"When the U.S.S. LANSDALE was fatally torpedoed by enemy torpedo planes Marion A. Porter suffered a broken leg from the force of the initial explosion. Notwithstanding this injury, he remained at his station as gunner of an antiaircraft gun and continued, with the utmost fortitude, to direct effective fire against the attacking planes. When the severity of his injuries made it impossible for him to carry out his duties any longer and he had to be relieved by the battery officer, he dragged himself clear of the immediate vicinity without assistance though suffering great pain in order not to interfere with the operation of the gun. After abandoning ship he remained in the water for over three hours before being rescued, bearing his intense pain in silence and showing admirable spirit throughout.

"The exceptional courage, complete disregard for his own safety, and outstanding devotion to duty displayed by Marion A. Porter were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval Service."

\* \* \* \* \*





When the Lansdale went down on 20 April 1944, the destroyer escort U.S.S. Newell (DE-322) rescued 119 survivors, and her sister ship, the U.S.S. Menges (DE-320), picked up about 100. Both were Edsall-class destroyer escorts manned entirely by U.S. Coast Guard personnel. The Newell's crew won commendation by their tireless rescue efforts. Many crew members went over the side to bring aboard those who were too weak to swim to the ship, including one officer and four enlisted men. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph.)



~~ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS~~  
OPERATIONAL REMARKS  
(WAR DIARY).

2000-2400 (continued).

approaching convoy bearing 023° True, 21 miles distance. 2018-Aircraft now at a distance of 7 miles and identified as enemy. 2105-Enemy torpedo bombers, flying very low, began attacking convoy; increased speed to 22 knots and took position on port quarter of convoy about 4500 yards from nearest vessel. 2110-Reduced speed to 21 knots. 2111-SS PAUL HAMILTON, loaded with demolition charges was struck by a torpedo which caused a tremendous explosion. 2112-USS LANSDALE (DD 426) was struck by a torpedo while in position about 3 miles to the eastward of this vessel. 2115-Opened fire with all five starboard 20 MM guns and twin 40 MM gun on a plane that was crossing line of fire at a slight angle at a range of about 1400 yards. The plane was in tracer stream almost continually for a period of about 15 seconds, the fire from the 40 MM being particularly accurate. Several observers saw the plane smoke and wing over. Some 20 MM guns fired a few rounds on a plane astern of the aforementioned one but results could not be determined. Expended 299 rounds of 20 MM ammunition and 60 rounds of 40MM. 2115-Enemy aircraft reported attacking convoy from the eastward. 2117-USS LANSDALE was reported sinking about 2½ miles to the eastward. 2125-Enemy planes reported attacking the convoy from the West. 2130-Enemy planes departed this vicinity having sunk one destroyer and one merchant ship and having damaged 3 other merchant ships. Reduced speed to 15 knots and commenced searching for survivors. 2132-Sighted red flare and flashing white light about a half-mile to the northwest which on closing was found to be from a pneumatic life raft. 2140-Took aboard two slightly injured German aviators together with this raft and all its equipment and provisions. The prisoners, a pilot and a radio operator, were identified as ARNDT FEDDERS, U.F.F.Z. and PETER GERLICH, O.O.F.W. They were immediately stripped, given first aid and placed in bunks. Two armed guards were assigned to guard the prisoners. 2155-Resumed search for survivors. 2200-Maneuvered alongside SS DOROTHY LUCKENBACK which had been hit by a torpedo and was down by the head due to flooding of two forward holds. She was in no immediate damage and a tug was standing by to take her in tow. 2205-Continued to search for survivors. 2212-Located a large number of survivors swimming in the water by hearing their yelling, and after closing commenced hoisting them aboard. Put ship's boat in the water which along with this vessel continued to search for and pick up survivors. 2330-By order of ComCortDiv 46 who was in charge of the three ships assigned to rescue survivors, MENGES began screening USS NEWELL (DE 322) which continued to pick up survivors in the same area. During this time the MENGES' boat remained in the area and continued to pick up survivors, having put 15 survivors aboard the USS NEWELL during this time. 2350-Ceased screening, the U.S.S. CHASE having relieved this vessel of the assignment and maneuvered to resume rescuing of survivors. 2354-Secured from battle stations and set war cruising watch, which allowed more men to go over the side and attach bowlines to survivors, and also allowed more men to render first aid and place the survivors in bunks with dry clothes. Rescue operations continued throughout the watch.

*L. G. McCabe*  
L. G. McCABE, Lieut. (J.G.).

Approved:

*F. M. McCabe*  
F. M. McCABE, Lt. Comdr., USCG  
Commanding Officer.

Examined:

*Leroy Van Nostrand Jr.*  
LEROY VAN NOSTRAND, JR., Lieut. USCGR  
Navigator.



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PART II I

DECLASSIFIED

Authority

By

NARA Date

Page 24

UNITED STATES SHIP MANGES (DE 320)

Friday

21

April 1944

(Day)

(Date)

(Month)

~~ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS~~

## OPERATIONAL REMARKS

0000-0400 (Zone - 2 Time)

Underway at various courses and speeds searching for and picking up survivors from vessels torpedoed by enemy aerial attack on UGS-38. During this period ship and ship's boat continued searching for survivors. 0220 - ship's boat transferred to this vessel six merchant seaman from U.S.S. CHASE (DE 158). 0225 - hoisted boat aboard and proceeded at various speeds on course 253° T searching for survivors en route to Algeria. 0330 - increased speed to 20 knots having completed rescue operations. The following survivors and bodies were brought aboard in addition to the 24 survivors rescued by the ship's boat and put aboard the USS NEWELL (DE 322):-

ACKLEY, C.A., Ensign, 287 751	JOHNSON, H. W., Flc,
APPEL, H.E., CCS, 279 11 83	KING, Jos. D., MM2c, 552 07 77
BARSI, Daniel E. SC2c	KOSMAC, Edmund, GM3c, 614 20 40
BARATONE, John L., CPHM	KOUNS, D. L., BM2c, 266 33 93
BEVER, J.E., Lieut.(j.g.), 224 232	KROM, Floyd, GM3c, 224 44 86
BREWER, W.D., Y2c, 640 59 07	KULPON, John, Slc, 707 30 76
BROWN, Jos. F., Slc, 837 54 91	KUNST, Edmund, GM3c, 614 20 40
BROWN, Marvin, S2c, 575 32 04	KWIATKOWSKI, A. T., Slc
CALLOWAY, David J., S2c, 855 43 17	LANAHAN, Charles, SC2c, 224 45 30
CAMPBELL, Elias, S2c, 930 49 74	LEWIS, Albert, MM3c, 634 18 ??
CANTOR, J.J., Som3c, 814 24 88	LOADHOLT, James M., StM2c, 814 13 26
CARLEY, D.B., FC2c, 223 75 05	LUSTER, C. L., StM2c, 814 13 26
DACEY, F.E., RM3c, 626 39 75	MARTIN, Victor, S2c, 634 56 13
DALEY, J.B., CM3c, 650 48 56	MATHEWS, Charles F., WT2c, 615 18 68
DAMIANO, John R., Slc, 821 08 14	McPHILLIPS, M. J., Slc, 664 23 20
DAVIDSON, J., S2c	MELVIN, J. F., 833 55 06
DE MOTT, G.R., Slc, 710 72 89	MILLER, R. A., GMlc, 279 69 44
DEUEL, James M., F2c, 711 80 52	MISCANNON, Leonard M., Slc, 205 43 46
DEVINE, Walter T., Flc, 815 69 ??	MITCHELL, C. W., StMlc, 272 74 48
DI MEO, Frank J., F2c, 808 15 13	MOLBOGAT, P. M., MM2c, 618 11 99
DODGE, William E., GM3c, 622 57 65	MORGAN, Vane, MM2c.
DOTT, Robert H., Slc	MORSE, L. L., Slc, 552 30 94
DYORICH, M., RM3c, 250 59 66	NEAL, W. B., Lieut. (M.C.)
EDQUIST, T.C., Ensign, 269 605	OPRISU, John, Slc, 652 53 01
ENOS, Frank M., Flc, 886 00 21	PALOMARES, R. M., Slc, 381 73 54
FIRST, George, BMLc, 283 13 66	PINDAR, H. E., Flc, 223 90 88
FRITZEL, G.R., RT2c, 633 24 38	PIPER, L. H., Slc, 238 72 20
FROHITTER, Wm., J., S2c	RAGLAND, Thomas E., F2c, 837 56 03
GAJEWSKI, Constantine, CMS, 243 52 24	REBOUL, H. C., RM2c.
GARLAND, Wilson W., QM3c, 617 45 64	REDFERN, Edwin R., Slc, 801 23 83
GEHLMANN, Frederick, Lieut.(j.g.) 187 745	REMMY, Louis, Flc, 642 14 55
GLINDEMAN, H.L., Slc, 234 66 21	REUM, Charles F., EM3c, 825 27 85
GOODWIN, R.W., FC2c, 622 17 66	RINELLI, Anthony M., Slc, 646 38 42
GREENE, J.A., FC3c, 223 66 21	ROBERTS, James R., Cox., 283 68 93
GUSTAFSON, Harold, MM3c, 608- 78 94	ROBENSTEIN, E., Som2c, 646 38 42
HACKER, Frank G., CGM, 300 13 00	RYAN, Joseph B. S2c, 629 71 83
HALL, Wilbur, MM3c, 615 70 44	SANS, Charles, Molder 3c, 867 55 48
HANSON, Don R., SM2c, 648 38 02	SARICH, Paul, MM3c, 857 92 61
HANSON, Howard E. WT3c, 621 68 54	SEDIVA, Joe, SM3c, 244 10 33
HARSON, I. D., WT3c, 202 81 ??	SHANABROUGH, G. E., Cox, 650 30 69
HART, C. R., MM3c, 627 83 34	SHEER, Roger C., Y3c, 614 69 22
HAYNES, M., MMLc, 262 40 19	SIMPSON, John L., Flc, 822 50 97
HEAFNER, Dennis, Slc, 834 65 19	SIMPSON, J. L., WT3c, 680 70 72
HESSON, J. H., RM2c, 633 47 18	SINCLAIR, George T., CY 262 54 60
HICKS, Willie, StMlc.	SOCKS, S. B., 819 81 41
HOLT, Gault H., S2c, 726 36 60	STAIE, Reginald F., MMLc, 300 06 56
HOOVER, Frank C., SK2c, 652-63-85	ST. CLAIR, Sidney, Slc, 552 53 66
HORR, H., EM3c, 812 95 30.	ST. LAURENT, E. E., Slc, 666 41 26
JACOBSON, Robert D., WT3c, 730 79 15	STEINER, George, S2c, 810 68 27
JAY, Joseph F., Ylc, 622-04-53	STONE, K. F., CMM, 207 12 36
	SULLIVAN, J. P., RdM2c, 642 29 86





UNITED STATES SHIP MENGES (DE 320)

Friday, 21 April, 1944  
 (Day) (Date) (Month)

~~ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS~~  
 OPERATIONAL REMARKS

0000 - 0400 (Zone -2 time)

(Continued)

SWIFT, D., S2c, 753 26 21  
 SWINDELL, James L., GM3c, 607 16 57  
 TOMPKINS, Cox., 651 04 65  
 TOTTEN, D., S2c, 809 49 93  
 TRIMBLE, Willie A., MM1c, 668 68 08  
 UTECHETT, Melvin, Flo, 668 69 36

VELASQUES, David P., Slc.  
 VINCENT, William F., S2c, 627 09 39  
 WHITELATCH, Clinton, SC3c.  
 WILLIAMS, H. J., WT3c.  
 WILLIS, Vincent P., Slc, 930 49 96.  
 WRIGHT, N., MM3c, 560 16 66

The following men were from the "STEVEN AUSTIN":

MARRARA, Peter J., Slc, 653 37 93  
 VICKNAVI, Walmond, Slc, 274 78 94

The following men were from the "ROYAL STAR":

E. F. WHITEHILL  
 G. W. HUMPHRIES  
 E. L. McEACHRAN  
 A. L. WRIGHTSON

The following prisoners were picked up:

Uffz. Arndt FEDDERS  
 OFFW Peter GERLICH

The following bodies were picked up:

CRONIN, James Patrick, Cox.  
 WESTLAND, Boatswain.

0400 - 0800

Underway as before on various courses at 20 knots, enroute to Algiers, Algeria, to land survivors and prisoners from UGS-38. 0608 - Entered swept channel at various speeds. 0645 - Harbor pilot came aboard. 0732 - Moored port side to USS NEWELL, Mole 46, Algiers, Algeria.

*J. S. Currier*  
 J. S. CURRIER, Lt. (j.g.).

0800 - 1200

Moored as before. 0805 - Two German prisoners departed under guard of representatives of C.S.D.I.C., Allied Force Headquarters, Algiers, 0813 - Survivors listed during 0000 - 0400 watch of this date landed, to be taken to Army Field Hospital. 0822 - Two bodies mentioned in above log landed. 0837 - Unmoored and stood out of Algiers Harbor at various courses and speeds. 0900 - Made daily inspection of magazines and smokeless powder samples; conditions normal. 0915 - Set course 076°T at 20 knots. 1100 - Changed course to 090°T.. Position at end of watch: Lat. 37-00 N; Long. 04-19 E.

*E. M. Nash, Jr.*  
 E. M. NASH, Jr., Ensign



U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426)

Medal Awarded to Commanding Officer, USS Menges (DE-320)\*  
(Rescued 113 Lansdale survivors on 4/20/44)

Lieutenant Commander Frank M. McCabe, USCG

LEGION OF MERIT

"For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services on 20 April and 3 May 1944, while serving as Commanding Officer of the USS MENGES off the Algerian Coast. When a United States destroyer on convoy escort duty was attacked and sunk by enemy planes, the USS MENGES proceeded to the rescue of survivors. Lt. Cdr. McCabe displayed great skill and exceptional seamanship in so expertly maneuvering his ship that more than one hundred exhausted and injured survivors of the stricken ship were saved. Later, when the USS MENGES was torpedoed in action with an enemy submarine, he so skillfully directed the operation of his ship that, although seriously damaged, it was saved and brought into port. The extraordinary ability, able leadership, and prompt and decisive action displayed by Lt. Cdr. F. M. McCabe, United States Coast Guard, reflected great credit upon himself and the Naval Service."

Combat "V" is authorized.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* This draft citation, on file at Operational Archives/Washington Navy Yard, may have been reworded before it was issued in its final form.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
April, 2003





Pharmacist's mates aboard the Coast Guard-manned destroyer escort USS Mendocino (DE-320) remove fuel oil from Lanadale survivor Edwin H. Madfern, Seaman 1st Class. Seventy-six of the survivors required treatment for their wounds, but many others, like Seaman Madfern, needed to be cleaned up and examined for shock. Fuel oil was removed with diesel oil, which could then be washed off with soap and water. (U.S. Navy Photo.)

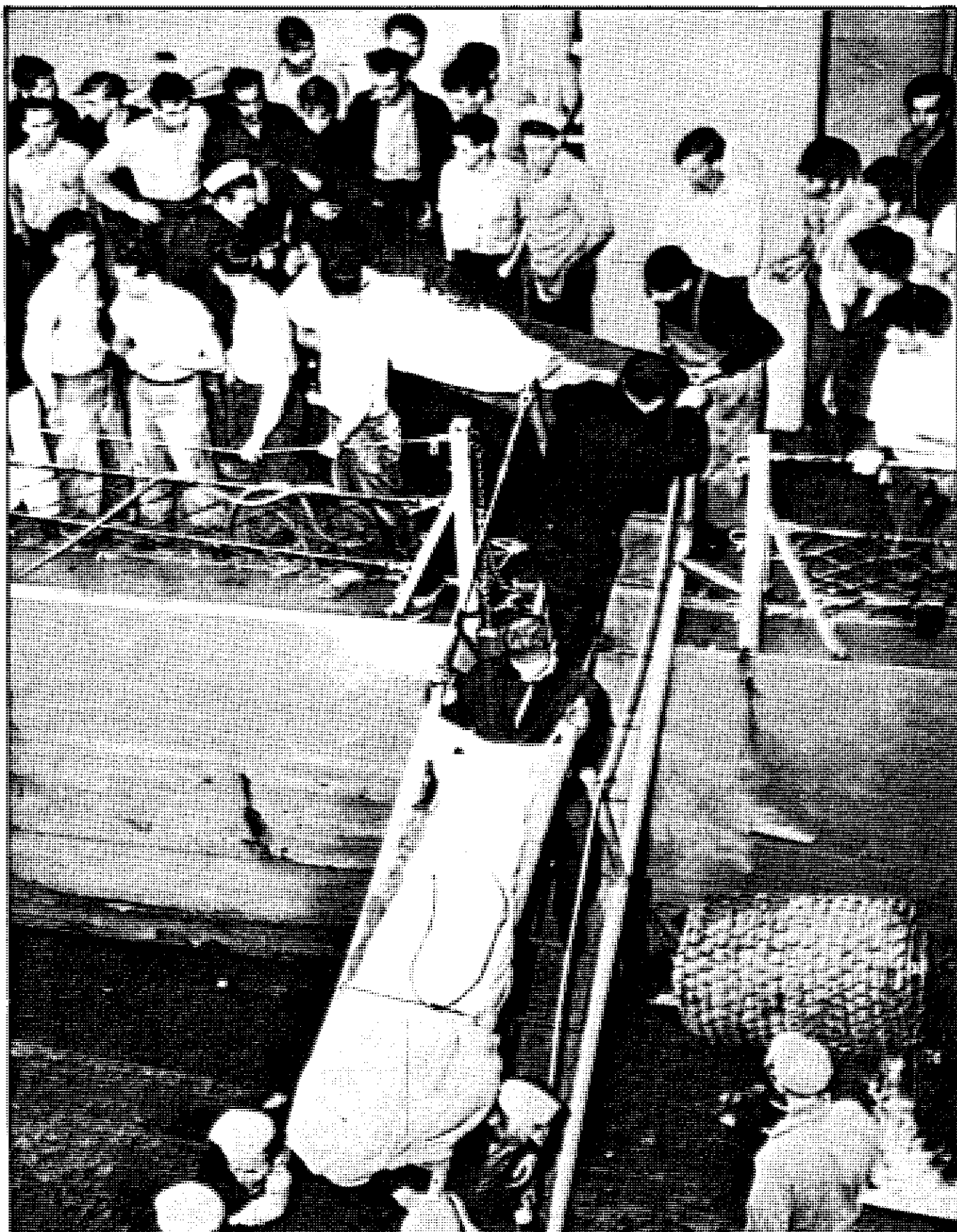




April may be a good time to visit Paris, but it is a bad time to abandon ship in the Mediterranean as the Lanadale survivors discovered when their ship went down on 20 April 1944. One survivor reported that his teeth began chattering as soon as his toes hit the water. Crew members aboard the U.S.S. Hedges (DE-320) were told to hug the survivors just like they were their best girls so as to warm them up as fast as possible with their body heat. It was messy hugging, because all of the Lanadale men were coated with oil. (Official U.S. Navy Photograph.)

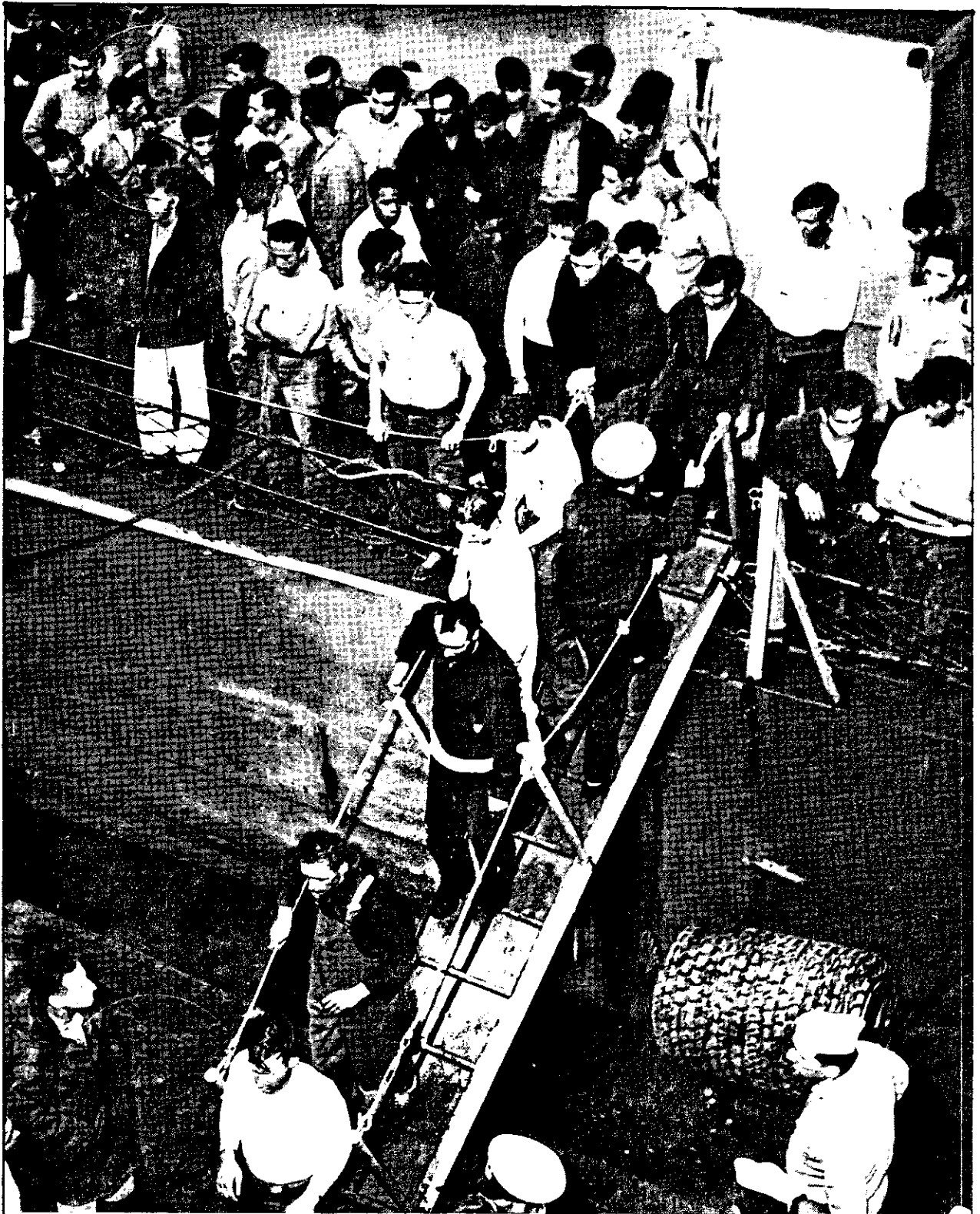






The bodies of the two Lansdale crewmembers who died before they were taken aboard the destroyer escort USS Mendocino (DE-350) (Lt. Cdr. F. H. McCabe, USCG) being carried off at Algiers on April 21, 1944. Forty-seven other crewmembers were killed when the Lansdale broke up and sank about 15 minutes after being hit by an aerial torpedo the day before. (Naval Historical Center Collection)





The Lansdale's executive officer, Lt. Robert M. Morgenthau, USNR, (lower left) greets the 113 survivors rescued by the destroyer escort Menges as they debark at Algiers on April 21, 1944. All of these survivors, along with those who had been rescued by the Newell, were then sent to an Army Field Hospital for a checkup. After abandoning ship Lt. Morgenthau rendered aid to his shipmates in the cold water for over two hours until he was rescued. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his "... exemplary conduct and devotion to duty . . ." (Official U.S. Navy photograph)





Landing survivors being issued temporary clothing at a camp for Italian P.O.W.'s. Sam Variaz, Gunner's Mate 3rd Class, (center, with a beard and a big smile) appears to be in good spirits after his ordeal. Some of the survivors were in the water for over four hours and were so weak that they were unable to board their rescue ship without assistance. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)

DECLASSIFIED

IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
PRESS AND RADIO

MAY 10, 1944

## SURVIVORS TELL OF LOSS OF DESTROYER LANSDALE

It was dusk on the 20th of April. The crew of the USS LANSDALE was at battle stations, scanning the gathering darkness for signs of German planes.

The Mediterranean was calm, the weather ideal. But on board the LANSDALE all was tense.

Then from out of the dusk came German torpedo planes. One torpedo passed harmlessly across the LANSDALE'S bow, but the second one caught her nearly amidships, tearing her almost in two. The LANSDALE sank fast.

Twelve hours later the rescued were ashore and being fitted with new clothes. Officers and men looked alike in camphor-smelling khaki. They huddled in small groups as if it were still an effort to keep warm. In one corner of the room a table was set with sandwiches and coffee.

One of the officers was talking. "I was on the bridge with the exec. He's Lieutenant Robert Morgenthau. Yes, the son of the Secretary of the Treasury."

Lieutenant Robert M. Morgenthau, U.S.N.R., 24, of Hopewell Junction, New York, a veteran of three years in the destroyer service, through the North Atlantic runs and Mediterranean, was among the survivors.

Lieutenant (junior grade) James E. Bever, U.S.N.R., 23, of 614 Ivy Street, Bellingham, Washington, continued: "I was the assistant communications officer on board and was at my battle station. Suddenly we saw two planes coming in from starboard, about 15 feet off the water, a torpedo whizzed past our bow -- and a second later another one hit."

"The lights went out. I bounced against the rail, then back and my head hit the bulkhead. The lights came on again. Then there was a second explosion and the lights went out. This time, for good.

"The ship started to settle. Then the skipper's voice -- he's Lieutenant Commander Douglas M. Swift, U.S.N., 33, from Anthony Road, Portsmouth, Rhode Island -- was saying 'Prepare to abandon ship.' And believe me, he sounded as calm as ....

"Yeah, I know everybody says the same thing who has been on a deal like this, but I mean it. He was calm and so was everybody else. There wasn't any commotion or anything. Why, all this time those fellows on deck were shooting at the planes. They got the first one -- the one that missed us with a torpedo. Did I tell that -- that they got the first plane? And another one, too. We had colored mess attendants firing from one antiaircraft gun and they were firing while the decks were awash. Why, they were firing until they were ordered over the side."

Lieutenant (junior grade) Bever called: "Fred....Fred....tell how

those fellows shot a plane down even when the deck was awash. Fred, tell about those guys on the A.A. guns."

Lieutenant (junior grade) Frederick Gehlmann, U.S.N.R., 24, of 538 Bonnie Brae Street, River Forest, Illinois, took up the story. "Well, they just listened to the Captain saying 'abandon ship,' sort of half-mumbled, 'yes sir' and went right on shooting, that's all. Porter (Marion Anthony Porter, Steward's Mate, Third Class, U.S.N.R., 19, of 337 Bacmon Street, Spartansburg, South Carolina, was lying on the deck hanging on to one of the gun mounts -- I didn't know then that the explosion had thrown him against a bulkhead and broken his leg in two places -- and as I tried to get around him, he said 'pardon me' and then got up again to aim that 40 millimeter gun. Not that he could direct it much anyway. You see you got to remember how that ship was sitting by then."

Gehlmann then reached for a book. He spread the leaves of the book so that one cover rested on the table and the other hung over the side.

"Now this back-binding is where the starboard rail of the ship was. See -- the guns on the portside -- and that's where Porter's crew was -- were almost in the water -- that's the water off the table. But that's the direction that Jerry plane took, so that gun was directed just off the top of the waves and kept firing until that bomber kissed the water for the last time. After that, Porter and his crew went over the starboard side.

"Over the starboard side," he went on, "you see we had a terrific list to port and so we had to clamber down the starboard side. And don't let anybody ever claim the Mediterranean is warm in April. The 'warm' Mediterranean -- ha! My teeth chattered when my toes hit the first wave, and I'm not warm yet.

"About fifteen of us hit the water together. There were Mike Dyorich, Gunner's Mate, Third Class, U.S.N., 23, of Mine 42, Windber, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and Robert H. Dott, Jr., Seaman, First Class, U.S.N.R., 19, of 740 East Madison Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Reginald F. Staie, Machinist's Mate, Second Class, U.S.N., 22, of 1706 North 25th Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Dott didn't have a life belt so I gave him one. I had a kapok, Mae West style, and then I had hold of one of those kind you wear around the waist and inflate when you hit the water. I gave him the one you have to inflate.

"We all got around a life net and hung on. We sang some. I guess we were singing the Battle Hymn of the Republic, but when I try to think of the words now, I can't remember. It's funny, isn't it?"

"Everybody on the ship was swell," said Lieutenant (junior grade) Bever. "When that first explosion hit, the doctor, Lieutenant William B. Neal, Jr., Medical Corps, U.S.N.R., 26, of 800 Columbia Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois, was standing on the catwalk just aft of the forecandle, and the next thing he knew he was on the bridge with me. I asked him this morning how he got there, and he says he can't remember.

"I remember grabbing my tin hat after the skipper said 'abandon ship' and going over the side and I remember asking Lieutenant Morgenthau if he was coming and he said: 'Later.' Then I scrambled over.



"Later when most of the boys were off, Lieutenant Morgenthau yelled down that he was coming in. He did. He jumped over the side right on top of my helmet. Somebody else jumped and landed on my helmet. I took it off then and started to swim away from the ship."

"You know one of the funniest things in my life happened when I was swimming away from the ship," commented Joseph Frank Jay, Yeoman, Second Class, U.S.N.R., 29, of 9362 Peterson Street, Detroit, Michigan. "My battle station was at a 40 millimeter gun. When that order came to abandon ship, I got over the side all right, and started to swim away. That's when this funny thing happened. I bumped into Sam Varlis (Gunner's Mate, Third Class, U.S.N.R., 21, of 208 Birch Avenue, Moundsville, West Virginia) and I didn't know what to say in a case like that so I said 'Hello.'

"Sam said: 'Hello' and I said, 'going my way?' And Sam said: 'No, I'm staying here.' So I swam away."

Lieutenant (junior grade) Bever took up the story again:

"I was in about three and a half hours before a Coast Guard destroyer escort picked me up. And what service! Why one member of that crew jumped over the side as soon as he saw us. He swam around and pulled us over to the side of the ship and the rest of the crew hauled us aboard. Some of the other men on the Coast Guard ship lowered themselves over the side on nets and pulled our boys aboard."

"And how about Lieutenant Haines?" one of the boys added.

"He swam around without a life preserver for almost three hours encouraging everybody in the water. By the time the destroyers did come along he wasn't around. He just did too much, I guess."

Lieutenant (junior grade) George E. Haines, U.S.N.R., 24, of Bingle Town Road, Greenwich, Connecticut, Gunnery Officer of the LANSDALE, was among those lost.

Another lad told how Ensign Stephen P. Mallett, Jr., U.S.N.R., 24, of 129 Farlow Road, Newton, Massachusetts, assembled a group of five men, took off his inflated life belt and his kapok jacket and had the group hold on to the two preservatives until they were picked up.

From every side there were words of praise for the officers and crews of the rescuing Coast Guard destroyer escorts. For three hours the vessels swept the waters with their searchlights, as beacons for the swimming members of the LANSDALE'S crew. The lights made them perfect targets for any enemy craft but they stuck to the job and made the pickups -- then steamed to port and landed the survivors.

DECLASSIFIED





## ***Nazi Fliers Sink U. S. Destroyer; Morgenthau's Son Is a Survivor***

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, May 10 — The September, 1940, was the 159th 1,630-ton United States destroyer Lansdale was sunk in the Mediterranean April 20 by German torpedo planes, which blasted her nearly in two, the Navy revealed today. Lieut. Robert Morris Morgenthau, 24 years old, son of Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr., was one of the survivors.

The destroyer sank quickly after a sudden attack by German planes, but some of her heroic gunners, "deaf" to the captain's orders to "abandon ship," kept on shooting even after the deck was awash and brought down two of the enemy aircraft, the Navy reported.

The Lansdale, in service since

September, 1940, was the 159th Navy ship, including forty-three destroyers, lost since the beginning of the war.

The plane attack came at dusk, while the Lansdale was riding a calm sea. One "tin fish" from a plane skimmed harmlessly across her bow, but a second one from the next plane caught the destroyer amidships, "tearing her almost in two."

The skipper, Lieut. Comdr. Douglas M. Swift, 33, of Portsmouth, R. I., also listed among the survivors, gave the order to abandon ship. But, as Lieut. (j. g.) Frederick Gehlmann, 24, of River Forest, Ill., told the story, the gunners

Continued on Page 5

"sort of half-mumbled 'yes, sir' and went right on shooting."

One man, Marion Anthony Porter, a 19-year-old steward's mate, was lying on the deck with a leg broken in two places after the explosion. He dragged himself up and returned to his post at a 40-mm. anti-aircraft gun. It was Porter's crew that got the first Nazi plane—the one that had missed with the first torpedo. Another was shot down before the water rose too high on the stricken destroyer.

Lieutenant Morgenthau, a native of New York, now a resident of Hopewell Junction, N. Y., had been executive officer of the Lansdale since August, 1943. As second in command he was among the last to leave the ship and when he jumped overboard he landed on the head of Lieut. (j. g.) James E. Bever of Bellingham, Wash., who was trying to swim with his helmet on. A few seconds later someone else jumped on Lieutenant Bever's helmet, whereupon the 28-year-old officer disgustedly took the thing off, threw it away and started to swim fast.

Among those lost with the Lansdale was Lieut. (j. g.) George E. Haines, 24, Greenwich, Conn., gunnery officer.

Coast Guard destroyer escorts came to the rescue. Disregarding danger of enemy attack, they swept the water with their searchlights for three hours, picking up survivors and steaming to a nearby port. A Navy spokesman said the loss of life was "moderate."



Washington, D.C.

Times-Herald; May 19, 1944.

## Morgenthau's Shipmates Tell Of Heroes at Sea

One bearded and two smooth shaven survivors of the 1620-ton fighting destroyer Lansdale which almost carried Lieut. Robert M. Morgenthau, son of the Secretary of Treasury, to his doom when it was torpedoed and sunk April 20, stopped off in Washington yesterday on the way home the same day that young Morgenthau arrived here.

The Secretary's son, who last night said he was "glad to be home," remembered the three shipmates well: Seaman 1/c D. R. Hanson (with beard) of Flanders, S. D.; Gunner's Mate 3/c M. E. Heck of Canton, Ohio; and Seaman 1/c V. W. Martin of Jeffersonville, Ind.

### Argument Over Beard

Lieutenant Morgenthau declared they did a "damned good job" and recalled that after the sinking the veterans swam around saving shipmates from drowning.

The trio, all wearing the Purple Heart and three campaign ribbons with stars, was found by a Times-Herald reporter in a neighborhood restaurant where two were making a final plea to the third to get rid of his beard before seeing his family.

Hanson turned a deaf ear, saying that he had "come too far" to weaken now.

Heck and Martin, who previously had been on another destroyer that was put out of action by torpedoes, had been transferred to the Lansdale with some of the more experienced survivors only to "get it" again.

### Good Marksmanship

The latter two talked with pride about the marksmanship of their shipmates on the first destroyer, which fired more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition and knocked out 24 German tanks several hundred yards away on the Italian shore in one afternoon.

Hanson interrupted to remark that nothing could beat the marksmanship of the Lansdale gunners, who downed an enemy airplane whizzing by at 400 miles an hour with a single hit. (Heck and Marvin, having been among the gunners, did not argue the point.)

That brought the conversation around to other planes shot down by the Lansdale—two planes plus three "possibles"—and to some of their buddies who were lost in the gallant fight.

### Tribute to Companions

The young men, with a depth of feeling in their eyes far beyond their meager years, spoke particularly warmly of their red-bearded shipmate, John Cronin, who had survived the torpedoing of the first destroyer but was suffocated by oil after the Lansdale went down.

Hanson recalled how Cronin, Gunner's Mate Sam Varlis (another bearded survivor) and he had a singing engagement, beards and all, to entertain soldiers in Red Cross quarters the very day of the tragedy.

The three were high in their praise of Lieutenant Morgenthau, executive officer of the destroyer, and remarked on the trouble he took to move about without mentioning his famous name.

Orlando, Florida

The Sentinel; May 26, 1944.

## Orlandoan Victor In Fight for Life As Warship Sinks

A floating net, detaching itself from a sinking U. S. warship in the cold, blue waters of the Mediterranean, is credited with saving the life of several survivors of an attack by German torpedo planes by Coxswain Ivan Woods of Orlando, one of those saved.

In an interview with the Sentinel, Coxswain Woods said the U.S.S. Lansdale, veteran of many Atlantic crossings, was making its maiden voyage in the Mediterranean when German torpedo planes, they were JU 88's, opened the attack.

His ship, the sailor explained, was the only destroyer accompanying a convoy of Allied materiel, and the planes picked it out as their objective. The remainder of the convoy escaped.

"Our ship and several DE's were escorting tankers," Woods said.

"At about 9 o'clock, a few minutes after sunset, 'general quarters' sounded, and we knew we were under attack. We did not have time to man our battle stations before we were hit."

Although wounded by the torpedo hit, he said, the Lansdale fought back furiously, knocking down three German planes before the order to abandon ship was given.

"Those two JU's came directly at us, and were just over the surface of the sea," he said.

"We were hit and hit bad, squarely in the center of the ship. Those of us who hit the water safely hung for several hours to the floating net, a net which disconnects from the ship when it sinks to a certain level in the water.

"At first we found the water cool, but before rescue it was decidedly cold.

"We managed to swim off a few yards from the crippled ship and watched it go down. The air whistled as it was forced out of the ship," Woods said.

After three hours in the water, the men were picked up, and with them were two pilots of German planes. These two Nazis had survived their crash landing.

Coxswain Woods is here with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Woods, and will report to Miami for duty June 16.



COXSWAIN IVAN WOODS  
... net saves men

Boston, Massachusetts

Boston Herald; June 18, 1944.

## RESCUERS HUGGED SURVIVORS OF WARSHIP TO RESTORE HEAT

"Our surgeon and his pharmacist mates wanted the survivors warmed up fast so they told us to grab the uninjured men and hug them just like they were our best girls so we could give them some of our body heat," Motor Machinist's Mate Frank Keating, 29, of Washington street, Roslindale, said yesterday in describing the rescue of survivors of the Navy destroyer, Lansdale, sunk in Mediterranean action.

"The Lansdale's men sure made messy hugging because all of them were heavily coated in fuel oil," continued Keating, a member of a Coast Guard DE crew which made the rescues. "We wrapped up together in blankets like love birds," Keating added.

"Two of the survivors died," continued Keating; "but our doc and his assistants pulled all the others through in fine shape.

"After seeing the Lansdale survivors, some of our boys were all for throwing the Nazis back into the sea. At least, they argued, the mechanic ought to be thrown back, but they were just making talk and the Germans were as carefully attended as our own boys." The Germans had been in one of the Nazi planes shot down by the DE gunners.

Keating, who has been temporarily assigned to the Boston district of the Coast Guard, told of the battle, during the Lansdale's sinking, with a bunch of Heinkels.

Johnstown, Pa., Newspaper

May 12, 1944.

## Portage Sailor on Ship Sunk in Mediterranean

Seaman Regis Killinger, son of Mrs. Anna Killinger, Portage, who has been listed as missing in action since Apr. 20, was a member of the ill-fated Destroyer Lansdale which was sunk by German torpedo planes in the Mediterranean last month.



R. Killinger

Mrs. Killinger knew that her son was aboard the Destroyer Lansdale but the information could not be made public until it was released by the Navy Dept. The warship was sunk when hit amid-

ship by a torpedo from a German

plane. Several members of the crew, including a sailor from Mine 42, Windber, were rescued by other American warships. Mrs. Killinger has received no further word regarding the welfare of her son. She is hoping to be notified soon that he was one of those rescued when the ship went down.

Seaman Killinger entered the Navy in July, 1943, and received his boot training in Sampson, N. Y. The sailor served on shore duty in North Africa for about three months before being assigned to the Lansdale. He is a graduate of Portage High School. A brother, Pfc. Charles, is stationed with the Army in England. The father of the servicemen, John Killinger, died about eight years

Detroit, Michigan

The Detroit News; May 26, 1944.

## Skipper's Quick Thinking Saves Many on Doomed Ship

How German torpedo bombers ended seven action-packed months for the destroyer USS Lansdale was told today by Max Pecherer, 32-year-old radarman second class, who spent four-and-a-half hours in the Mediterranean towing a wounded man, before rescuers arrived.

Pecherer, now at home on leave with his wife, Ruth, at 2605 Elmhurst avenue, was on the flying bridge in the sky-lap out's chair, when the attackers came in a little after 8 p. m. "They were flying very close to the water," Pecherer said.



Pecherer

### PICK ON DESTROYERS

"They were after destroyers because we carried equipment to detect their radio-controlled bombs.

"The Lansdale was escorting a convoy, and the first ship to be hit was a Navy tanker, dead on our starboard beam, which went up in flames that lighted the sea for miles.

"When our skipper spotted the planes, he ordered full right rudder, sending our course into the body of the convoy, but just as the ship began to turn the first torpedo hit.

"The chair I was sitting in was lifted off the deck, just as though it hadn't been bolted down, and the next thing I knew I was floating through the air.

"After I hit the deck, I got to my feet, and the order came to abandon ship.

### SHIP LISTS BADLY

"We had some survivors aboard from another destroyer that had been hit but managed to make shore, so I thought I'd try to stick on board as long as I could, just in case she didn't go down.

"When I tried to get down to the wheelhouse, I found the ladders blown away, and then the ship began to list so to port that the deck made almost a right angle with the water.

"While I was trying to scramble up to jump off the starboard side, I slipped and practically fell into the water.

"The next thing I knew, I saw the ship coming over on top of me and I started to swim as fast as I could.

### HEARS CALL FOR HELP

"After I had been swimming a little while, I heard some one calling for help. I called back and it was a man I knew who had an

engineer named Roberts, who also came from Detroit, badly hurt.

"The other sailor and I hooked Roberts to our life jackets and started swimming toward a ship we could see on the horizon.

"We didn't get any closer to the ship, so we stopped swimming, waiting to see if it was looking for us.

"After a few hours we heard the public address system from the ship calling for all survivors to swim toward her. We started to swim again, but we didn't make much headway. Then we began to yell, and pretty soon the rescue ship, a destroyer escort, put out a boat, and they finally picked us up.

### 50 MEN ARE LOST

"We must have been hit by two torpedoes, but if the captain hadn't made that emergency turn I think at least four would have got us, and I guess none of us would be here now. As it was we lost about 50 men, and the skipper said he thought we set a kind of record for number of men to be rescued from a torpedoed destroyer."

Pecherer, who was an instru-

mental teacher in the Detroit high schools before his enlistment, has a bachelor's degree from Wayne University, and is graduate of Northwestern High School. His parents are Mr. and Mrs. Jack Pecherer, 3310 Rochester avenue.

## Survivor of Lansdale Sinking Visits Family



**WELCOMED HOME**—Ensign Ted Edquist, who survived sinking of U. S. destroyer Lansdale, by torpedo bombers in the Mediterranean, is greeted by his wife on his arrival in Seattle last night.

—(Post-Intelligencer Photo.)

### Ensign Ted Edquist Looks None the Worse for Sea Ordeal

By George McDowell

Ensign Ted Edquist, first survivor of the U. S. destroyer Lansdale to arrive in Seattle, came home last night with memories of his harrowing experiences still fresh in his mind, but looking none the worse for his four-hour swim in the Mediterranean before being rescued.

Ensign Edquist, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul E. Edquist, 3206 62d Ave. S. W., was assistant communications officer on the Lansdale when she was sunk by German torpedo planes April 20.

#### 2 PLANES DOWNED

"The crew put up a terrific battle, even after they knew the destroyer was going down," he said. "They brought down two of the German planes.

"I was below when the attack came and missed a lot of the action, but I got to the deck in

time to see one of the enemy planes plunge into the sea."

Ensign Edquist said the first he knew of the Lansdale being hit was when a piece of radio equipment struck his head. He spent four days in a hospital in North Africa, he said, but the injury was not serious.

#### LIFE JACKETS USED

The men didn't have time to get into life boats, he said, but took to the water with their life jackets. It was four hours after the Lansdale sank that a coast guard boat picked them up.

"I've seen lots of action before," he said, "but the attack that sank the Lansdale was the hottest yet."

In addition to his parents, Ensign Edquist was met at King St. Station by his younger brother, Chuck, and his wife, whom he met while a student at Linfield College. They were married last fall.

He has been in the navy for about 12 months but has been on active duty only since the first of the year, and is now waiting reassignment.



## LOCAL SAILOR IN SINKING OF U.S.S. LANSDALE

**William F. Frohwitter Is  
Picked Up By Destroyer  
Escort**

Unnerved by the experience he underwent in the sinking of the U.S.S. Lansdale in the Mediterranean one month ago tomorrow, **W**illiam F. Frohwitter, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Frohwitter, 925 Patton avenue, returned to Springfield today for a 30 day leave. He was the only local sailor aboard W.F. Frohwitter the ship. Frohwitter, a graduate of Cathedral High school with the class of 1940, was serving with a 20 millimeter gun crew when the torpedo hit the destroyer and an aerial bomb finished her. More than 275 men were aboard the ship, including Lt. Henry Morgenthau, son of the secretary of the treasury. Of the crew, 53 men were killed or drowned in the incident.



The local youth reported he paddled around in the ocean for nearly four hours before a destroyer escort picked up the survivors and took them to a North African port for further transfer to a naval transport and return to the United States. He said the survivors were put at regular tasks aboard the transport and worked in army clothes provided them in North Africa and only replaced the khaki with navy blue when the ship reached the east coast naval base last Monday.

The sailor, in service since April 15, 1943, said only one other central Illinois man was assigned to the Lansdale. "He was Lt. Hunter of Pana in the communications office—but I don't know where he is now that we've got back to the states," Frohwitter said. The loss of the 53 men hit Frohwitter hard he said inasmuch as "aboard a destroyer we get better acquainted with the crew."

Prior to entering service the sailor was employed by the Davey Tree Surgery Co., in Kansas City, Mo., and while a student in school here carried the Illinois State Journal. He will attend an advanced cooks' and bakers' school upon completion of his leave.

Syracuse, New York

The Herald-Journal; May 23, 1944.

## Sunk Twice, Syracuse Navy Man Gets 'Survivor's Leave'

**Simons Swam for 4 Hours  
After Torpedoing of  
Lansdale**

Sunk twice in his year's service in the U. S. Navy, Water Tender 3/c Joseph J. Simons, Jr., 19, is home on a 30-day "survivor's leave," visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Simons of Mattydale. The young sailor was a member of the crew of the U.S.S. Lansdale which was sunk in the Mediterranean on April 20 by a swarm of Nazi planes, while it was performing convoy duty for a fleet of merchant ships between Gibraltar and Bizerte.

He swam for four hours in the ocean on the night of April 20 before being picked up by a destroyer escort and taken to Algiers. Just missing a raft on which some other members of the crew saved themselves, Simons and four other sailors paddled around in the water in the dark, keeping up one another's morale until they were rescued.

His ship had been making regular Sunday visits to the Anzio beachhead before it was sunk, the sailor said. It stood off shore and bombarded the mountains in which the Nazis were entrenched and its fire was answered by long range enemy artillery which churned the waters around them.

On the day they were sunk, the destroyer was plowing through the water about dusk when a group of some 30 Nazi fighters attacked the convoy. One plane headed for the Lansdale and appeared to be an Allied plane since it flashed its recognition lights. Suddenly it swooped low and fired a torpedo which tore a fatal hole in the ship.

The crew shot down that plane and two others in the ensuing fight as their ship listed. Besides these, two more Nazi planes were shot down and another was hit and probably destroyed. Fifteen minutes after being hit, the order was given to abandon ship in the darkness and the men climbed over the sides and plunged into the water.



SEAMAN JOSEPH J. SIMONS, JR.

From Algiers, where they were taken by the rescuing destroyer escort, they were transferred to Oran where they boarded a transport for Norfolk, Va., and were given leave.

Last October Simons was a member of the crew of another destroyer which rammed a U. S. tanker. Half of that craft was sunk in the accident but the crew did not have to take to the water before being rescued.

Simons is a graduate of Christian Brothers Academy where he was active in football, baseball and basketball and sang in the glee club. He enlisted in the Navy July 2, 1943, and trained at Sampson. All his sea duty has been in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. He received a 15-day leave last December after arriving home from the ramming of his ship.

His father, Joseph J. Simons, operates a service station at Erie Boulevard East and South Crouse Avenue.

Columbus, Ohio

The Citizen; May 30, 1944.

## Columbus Sailor Escaped 5 Ship Sinkings But Fate Caught Him on USS Lansdale

### Harry Appel Had Long String of Luck

Fate finally caught up with Seaman Harry Appel, 925 Mt. Pleasant-av, who has followed the sea for 19 years.

Five ships on which he has sailed at various times since the war started have been sunk. Each time, however, he "missed the excitement" because he was on leave, or had been just transferred to another ship.

But the spell was broken on April 20 when he was on the destroyer Lansdale which was sunk in the Mediterranean Sea near Algiers.

It was dark when German planes attacked the destroyer on which Seaman Appel was serving as chief commissary steward. The crew barely had time to "abandon ship" when it went down. Before it sank, however, crew members had downed the three German planes and taken two of the pilots prisoners.

#### Help Arrived

The men remained in the water for several hours before help arrived. In the momentary lulls which occurred between the firing of guns from the battle at sea could be heard a rhythmical murmur of voices. The men were praying in unison.

"And boy, I certainly did a lot of praying right along with the rest of the men out there," said the husky sailor who is now "just resting" at the home of his mother, Mrs. Bessie Singer, of the Mt. Pleasant-av address. "There wasn't an atheist in that crowd floating around that night, I can vouch for that."

It was four hours before Seaman Appel was picked up by a destroyer which came to the men's rescue.

#### Helped Comrades

Seaman Appel spent most of those four hours trying to keep



Seaman Appel

up two of the men who were having trouble with their life preservers. Then he "passed out."

### Nazi Planes Hit Destroyer Off Algiers

When he came too he was on a life raft. Crew members had found room for him when they saw he was not going to be able to help himself any longer.

It was when all had been accounted for at the landing place that Seaman Appel missed "Stumpy" his 20-year-old buddy. "He was just a kid but the best natured one I have ever met," said Seaman Appel. "All he talked about for weeks was when the ship would get into port again for he was going to have a leave and get married."

Until a few weeks ago, when Seaman Appel called his mother and sister, Mrs. Irene Paugh, 1001 Summit-st, from Norfolk, Va., the two had heard nothing from him since the sinking. They had seen the announcement in the paper and Mrs. Paugh had called The Citizen to inquire if a list of the casualties were available.

At the end of his leave, Seaman Appel hopes he'll get on a large battleship or carrier this time. "I'm getting too old and too big for small ships," he grins.

May, 1944.

## 10 Minutes Meant Life Aboard Sinking Ship

Ten minutes can be the longest period of time in a lifetime—when all escapeways are warped shut and water is seeping fast into the engine room of a sinking ship.

Lt. (j. g.) Alvin S. Caplan, USNR, 2138 Robert St., was at home today remembering the sinking of the destroyer, Landsdale, on which he served as engineering officer. "Below decks, in the engine room," he explained, the first we know of a torpedo plane attack is when the bridge tells us by phone. You can't hear the planes come over down there. It was about dusk of April 20, in the Mediterranean, when we were informed that Nazi torpedo planes were attacking.

"There was an awfully long silence—actually about five minutes. Then there was a tremendous crash and jolt, by which we knew this was it. The ship's decks buckled, and all hatches were warped shut.

"We tried them all and finally found an escape hatch that the men figured could be pried. It took them 10 minutes, working with crowbars, coolly but fast. By that time, we were sloshing around in about four feet of water. We had to leave, one at a time, and if there had been any panic, not one would have made it. But the men were as calm as anyone could ask."

On deck, they could see that the ship had almost split in two. There was no communication between the forward and aft sections. But the Landsdale got four out of about 20 attacking planes before she sank. The men abandoned ship in half an hour, Lt. Caplan said.

He was in the water for about four hours before being picked up, but passed out, much to his disgust, after two hours.

Below decks, he said, the viewpoint you get of an action is entirely different. "You can hear the bombs fall. They make a dull thud and there's a jolt that lifts you right off your feet. If it's a shell- ing, you listen for the splash. But a torpedo you can't hear at all— unless it hits."

Lt. Caplan has been in the Navy for about a year and a half. Before joining the service, he was assistant superintendent of the Lane Cotton Mills. For most of last year he was on duty in the North Atlantic.

The ship was stationed in the Mediterranean from the first of this year until the date of its sinking—doing "a little bit of everything" from Gibraltar to the Anzio beachhead. Lt. Caplan is at home now on a 30-day leave, with his wife and two-year-old son, Ryck. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry B. Caplan, 2138 Robert St.



LT. (J. G.) A. S. CAPLAN

## Wedding And Reunion Follow Torpedoeing, Rescue Of Sailors

BY NELL BURKS

Rescued from the Mediterranean after their ship was torn in two and sunk by an aerial torpedo, on hand for the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, sightseeing in Arabia, England, Ireland, South America, Scotland, in the islands of the Caribbean, South and North Africa, on deck for the invasions of Sicily and Italy—Harry Lake Sims, 21, and William "Skeets" Stanton, 24, arrived home in Birmingham late Thursday just in time to meet "Skeets" wife at the train Friday afternoon and to prepare for the wedding Friday evening of Harry to Miss Margaret Nations.

And June 16, when their furloughs end, these two buddies, who have been through a lifetime of experiences together, will be separated for the first time since they went aboard the U. S. S. Landsdale, last week announced sunk in the Mediterranean.

If they could have their wish, it was agreed Friday, they would go to sea under their old skipper, Lt. Comdr. D. M. Swift, of Portsmouth, Mass., whom they praised highly. Their executive officer was Lt. Robert M. Morgenthau, son of the secretary of the treasury.

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WHEN THE ATTACK CAME, Larry, a torpedoman, second class petty officer, was at his battle station at a gun while Skeets, a radioman and also a second class petty officer, was at communications controls. The attack was heavy, they said, and an aerial torpedo struck the destroyer amidships, causing it to split in two.

Communications on the ship had been put out of commission, said Skeets, and the order to abandon ship was passed by word of mouth.

"I was at my station," said Harry taking up the tale, "and all the fellows began to joke. 'How's the water?' one would ask and someone already in the drink would yell 'fine, warm, stick in your toe.'"

"Well, the fellows down my way were yelling '30 days leave,'" said Skeets, "and this joking is pretty important when you know you're going to be in the water—probably for hours—and maybe never picked up."

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BUT THE U. S. COAST GUARD came to the scene, they said, and did a magnificent job of picking up the survivors.

"I had on my lifebelt," said Harry, "and swam away from the ship before the suction of the sinking vessel was strong. When I reached a floater net I asked if anybody had seen Skeets, and there he was—just waiting for me." They were in the water three hours.

Asked to describe a floater net, Harry said it is a net about 20 feet square to which hooks are attached. It is easy to hang onto and keep the men together, he explained.

"And the skipper gave his lifebelt to a seaman," related Skeets, "and struck out for himself even though he was wounded. He was picked up about a half hour after

we were," he continued, "and arrived home safely although he was on crutches quite some time, I understand," he said.

Both the Navy men declared themselves to be very lucky because the quantities of oil on the water did not ignite, and said they felt themselves fortunate to come through the harrowing experience unscathed.

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"OF COURSE, WE LOST ALL our belongings," said Harry, "but the Navy replaced our clothing and the American Red Cross did everything they could to make us comfortable."

Skeets, too, was particularly strong in his praise of the Red Cross.

"They provided us with everything we needed, and you can't imagine what a lot you need until you're shipwrecked and find yourself without a single belonging," he said.

The speed, quality and quantity of German "E" boats particularly impressed the men in battle. They were described as similar to the U. S. PT boats, "a little larger and plenty fast," described Harry.

"But let us tell you about Mount Vesuvius," interrupted Skeets. "At three one afternoon we witnessed the most amazing sight of nature imaginable," he said. "First there was a puff of white smoke; then you could see the lava pouring down the mountain."

"We were in the harbor right under the erupting mountain," he continued.

They left port before the mountain reportedly was at its height of action, "but we saw plenty," they said.

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"BUT ALL THIS ISN'T really important today," broke in Harry, "because I'm to be married tonight at 6:30 and Skeets' wife is coming in on the train. He hasn't seen her since he left the states, and they were married last October," he explained.

Harry had been Skeets' best man, and Friday night it was turn about. Skeets was best man for Harry's wedding while Mrs. Stanton, who arrived from the home of her parents in New York just a few hours before the ceremony, was matron of honor. Miss Margaret Nations, the bride, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Nations, 426 Second Street, Ensley.

And there will be another reunion this week. Mr. and Mrs. Stanton will go to Linden, Ala., to visit his mother, Mrs. Eloise Stanton. In Birmingham, where he worked for Black Diamond Coal Mining Company before volunteering for navy service, Skeets makes his home at 1102 Graymont Avenue.

Harry, who works for Republic Steel, is in Birmingham, where he is with the Seabees some- on an island in the Pacific.

In the reunion picture this were Harry's parents, brother and sisters. One brother, W. J. Sims, 29, is serving with the Navy in the South Pacific, and another brother, W. R. Sims, Jr., lives in Birmingham.

His parents are Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Sims, of 413 44th Street, Fairfield, and his sisters are Mrs. Wilma Dovern, Anniston, Ala.; Mrs. David Bark, Mrs. Morris Pitts and Mrs. James O'Henry, all of Fairfield. Harry, a former T. C. I. employe, is a graduate of Fairfield High School.

*U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426)*

*List of Officers, 20 April 1944<sup>1</sup>*

SWIFT, Douglas M.	LGDR	USN	Commanding Officer
MORGENTHAU, Robert M.	LT	USNR	Executive Officer
**HAINES, George E.	LT(jg)	USNR	Gunnery Officer
EUBANKS, Marvin M.	LT(jg)	USNR	Communications Officer
*CAPLAN, Alvin S.	LT(jg)	USNR	Engineering Officer
**EWING, David M.	LT(jg)	USNR	1st Lieutenant
GELLER, Marshall E.,	LT(jg)	USNR	Ass't. 1st Lieutenant
GEHLMANN, Frederick	LT(jg)	USNR	(Deck Department)
*BEVER, James E.	LT(jg)	USNR	Ass't. Communications
LAKE, William A.	LT(jg)	USNR	Ass't. Engineering Off.
WALES, Charles C.	Ensign	USN	Torpedo/Commissary Off.
*MALLET, Stephen P., Jr.	Ensign	USNR	
EDQUIST, Theodore C.	Ensign	USNR	Ass't. Communications
HUNTER, William J.	Ensign	USNR	Ass't. Communications
WALDRON, Philip	Ensign	USNR	
**WHITEHEAD, Frederick C.	Ensign	USNR	(Deck Department)
*ACKLEY, Carl D.	Ensign	USNR	
NEAL, William B., Jr.	LT (MC)	USNR	Medical Officer
**WESTHILL, Newton T.	W.O.	USN	Boatswain

\* \* \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> Compiled from various reports and with the help of Anne Marie Allison of the ship association. Unfortunately, the deck log of the USS Newell (DE-322) does not name 9 of the 10 officers rescued by that ship. Also, since there is no updated List of Officers with the Lansdale's deck logs at the National Archives, I had to rely on the memories of several officers for first names and primary duties.

\* Wounded (\*\* Killed) when the ship was sunk on 4/20/44 according to a machine-generated casualty report at the National Archives prepared by the Bureau of Naval Personnel in 1946.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
April, 1999



U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426)

Muster Roll Of The Crew, 20 April 1944<sup>1</sup>

ABBOTT, James M.	832-00-36	StM2c
ABRAMS, Alva A.	605-73-24	S2c
*APPEL, Harry E.	279-11-83	CCS
**BALLOCK, Andrew E.	250-55-29	WT3c
BARATONE, John L.	662-98-65	CPhM
**BARCLAY, Karyes	272-40-21	CK2c
BARSI, Daniel A.	646-10-73	SG2c
*BEVAN, Cyrus V.	895-88-54	EM3c
*BORESON, James J.	647-48-48	WT3c
*BRACKEN, Donald J.	321-50-03	SK1c
BREWER, William D.	640-59-07	Y2c
BROCKES, Edward S.	244-73-95	RM3c
*BROWN, Joe F.	837-54-91	S1c
BURKHEIMER, William J.	306-29-96	S1c
CALLAWAY, David J.	855-43-17	S2c
**CAMDEN, Lewis E.	930-52-76	S2c
*CAMPBELL, Elias I.	930-49-74	S2c
*CANFIELD, Burt M.	554-05-22	WT2c
*CARACCIO, Philip J.	815-98-46	S2c
CARLEY, Donald B.	223-75-05	FC2c
CARLSON, George W., Jr.	761-81-16	S1c
*CARR, Joseph L.	201-83-56	SF2c
**CAVANAUGH, Daniel E.	620-52-10	S1c
COFFEY, James R.	931-41-63	S2c
COGGINS, John J.	651-71-01	S1c
*CRAWFORD, Russell J.	802-34-49	S2c
**CRONIN, John P.	611-79-56	S1c
CUMBERLEDGE, George C.	283-72-44	FC3c
DAFFRON, Homer C.	626-30-14	FC3c
DAGEY, Floyd E., Jr.	626-39-75	RM3c
DAILEY, John B.	650-48-56	CM3c
DALY, William A.	393-77-02	F1c
*DAMIANO, John R.	821-08-14	S1c
D'AMICO, Arthur	201-83-51	WT1c
DANIELS, Wilbur R.	279-97-90	Cox
DAVIDSON, John A.	837-39-84	S2c
**DE MOLA, Frank	238-71-35	SF2c
DEMOPULOS, Theodore J.	651-71-24	Bkr3c
DE MOTT, George A.	701-72-89	S1c
**DESIBIO, Orlando	251-06-86	S2c
DEUEL, James M.	711-80-52	F2c
DEVINE, Walter T.	815-61-95	F2c
DILLON, John J.	202-29-90	S1c
DI MEO, Frank J.	808-15-13	F2c
DI PAOLO, Rocco A.	706-55-62	S1c
DODGE, William E.	622-57-65	GM3c
**DODSON, Buford E.	636-35-94	MM1c
DOTT, Robert H., Jr.	651-69-56	S1c





*DUNN, Curtis D.	875-49-42	S2c
*DUNN, Theodore Y., Jr.	410-98-82	RT1c
DYORICH, Mike	250-59-66	GM3c
**EARLY, James M., Jr.	617-36-87	WT2c
EDEN, John L.	295-67-24	CEM
*EDINGER, Ralph J.	820-09-48	F2c
EDISON, Rex R.	287-61-64	GM2c
*ELLSWORTH, William C.	622-77-37	M2c
*ENOS, Frank M.	886-00-21	F1c
FAIRLEY, George J., Jr.	602-94-97	S1c
*FARRELL, Godfrey	311-95-43	S1c
FINNEN, James H.	604-49-31	S1c
FIRST, George	283-13-66	BM1c
*FOLEY, Eugene R.	662-73-21	TM2c
FORSYTHE, Harold R.	857-26-34	S2c
FRENGEL, Michael J.	250-64-03	QM2c
*FRITZEL, George R.	633-24-38	RT2c
FROHWITTER, William J.	875-56-64	S2c
*GAJEWSKI, Constantine	243-52-24	CM
GARLAND, Wilson W.	617-45-64	QM3c
*GARRISON, Bill R.	860-66-17	S1c
**GILL, Spencer T.	609-25-28	S1c
GIUSTI, Julius J.	201-50-68	CSF
GLINDEMAN, Harold L.	234-25-60	SM1c
**GLUSKO, Michael	600-01-98	MM1c
**GOODWIN, Douglas L.	564-55-97	S1c
*GOODWIN, Ralph W.	622-17-66	FRC2c
GREEN, Elbert L.	818-82-78	StM2c
GREENE, Justin A.	223-66-21	FC3c
GUSTAFSON, Harold G.	608-78-94	MM3c
HACKER, Frank G.	300-13-00	CGM
HAGLER, George D.	657-58-92	MM2c
HALL, Wilbur	615-70-44	MM3c
HALLMAN, Theodore, Jr.	306-17-75	WT3c
*HANSON, Donald R.	648-38-02	SM2c
*HANSON, Howard E.	621-68-54	WT3c
*HARSON, Ryder D., Jr.	202-81-04	MM3c
*HART, Charles R.	627-83-34	MM3c
HAWKINS, Linwood W., Jr.	256-42-55	RM3c
HAYNES, Marshall G.	262-40-92	MM1c
HEAFNER, Dennis C.	834-65-49	S1c
*HECK, Max E.	283-33-12	S1c
HESSON, James H.	622-47-18	RM2c
**HICKMAN, Carlos A.	614-56-95	FC3c
HICKS, Willie W.	832-05-18	StM1c
HOLT, Gault H.	726-36-60	S2c
*HOOVER, Frank C.	652-63-85	SK2c
**HORNE, Robert H.	291-70-72	SC3c
HORR, Harold	812-95-30	EM3c
**HUSTEAD, Charles H.	552-94-24	WT3c
**JACKSON, David A.	560-03-02	FC3c



JACOBS, Ardash K.	208-84-01	SOM3c
JACOBSON, Robert D.	730-79-15	WT3c
JACYNYK, Stephen	224-76-60	RM2c
JAY, Joseph F.	622-04-53	Y1c
**JOHNSON, Clarence E.	639-30-15	WT2c
*JOHNSON, Ernest L.	305-58-04	MM3c
JOHNSON, Harry W.	634-47-95	F1c
**JOHNSTON, Thomas, Jr.	614-66-56	SC3c
JONES, Robert E.	620-29-27	FC3c
KANTOR, Jerry J.	814-24-88	SOM3c
**KILLINGER, Regis L.	822-65-46	S2c
*KING, Joseph D.	552-07-77	MM2c
KINNA, William B.	279-44-72	CBM
KOSMAC, Ivan J.	614-20-40	GM3c
KOUNS, Donald L.	266-33-93	BM2c
*KOZLOWSKI, Charles C.	243-72-28	TM1c
KROM, Floyd M.	224-44-86	GM3c
KULPON, John	707-30-76	S1c
KUNST, Lawrence H.	622-32-15	GM2c
KWIATKOWSKI, Anthony T.	722-54-76	S1c
**LADZINSKI, Reginald A.	224-44-79	TM3c
**LA FLAMME, Bernard P.	212-56-72	MM1c
LAMBERT, Maurice J.	243-99-91	EM1c
LANAHAN, Charles H.	224-45-30	SC2c
*LANEY, Clarence Y.	657-59-91	S1c
LEWIS, Elbert J.	634-42-31	MM3c
LOADHOLT, James M.	814-13-26	StM2c
LUSTER, Charles	857-75-81	StM2c
*MALCOMSON, Norman A.	238-85-57	MM3c
*MAPES, John A.	618-15-71	WT2c
**MARCIANO, Daniel P.	234-23-95	B1c
*MARR, Joseph G.	258-56-33	S2c
*MARTIN, Victor W.	634-56-13	S2c
MATTHEWS, Charles F.	618-15-68	WT2c
MAY, Howard S.	250-72-73	GM2c
McBRIDE, James T.	205-50-99	S1c
McCLOSKEY, Charles E., Jr.	202-35-07	S1c
McDONALD, Charles M.	647-57-73	S2c
**McNEIL, Irvn L.	656-97-29	S1c
*McPHILLIPS, Michael J.	664-23-20	S1c
**McQUAIG, Daniel E.	556-03-29	EM2c
*MELVIN, James F.	833-55-06	S2c
MENTZER, Charles J.	250-56-01	CM1c
*MERLI, Charles	618-15-29	WT2c
**MILLER, Homer D.	618-16-45	MM2c
MILLER, Raymond A.	279-69-44	GM1c
**MILLER, William C.	243-72-27	WT1c
MISCANNON, Leonard M.	205-43-46	S1c
MITCHELL, Charles W.	272-74-48	StM1c
*MOLBOGAT, Philip M.	618-11-99	MM2c
MONTENEGRO, Benjamin "P"	202-06-00	GM2c



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*MORAVEC, Vincent P.	822-43-51	S1 c
MORGAN, Vane	608-02-66	MM2c
MORSE, Lonnie L.	552-30-94	S1 c
MOSCATI, Patsy V.	224-49-01	TM2c
MULLEN, Phillip H.	666-04-83	PhM2c
*MUNOZ, Louis	372-43-84	MM2c
**MURPHY, Bernard A., Jr.	602-38-08	RdM3c
*MURRAY, Donald J.	646-17-20	MM2c
*NEILSON, William F. M.	212-74-78	QM3c
NESKEY, John	801-33-71	S1 c
**NEUMAN, Clinton K.	608-02-83	RM2c
**NIELSEN, Alfred O.	646-15-80	EM1 c
**NIELSEN, Andrew E.	244-00-88	S1 c
NILES, Harry O., Jr.	824-90-88	S1 c
NOLAN, Frank J.	646-15-81	TM2c
**NORMANDY, William F.	801-35-04	F1 c
ODOM, Frank A.	261-89-07	CFC
OPRISU, John	652-53-01	S1 c
PALOMARES, Robert M.	381-73-54	S1 c
**PAQUETTE, Joseph A. B.	212-56-64	TM2c
PARTLOW, George W.	283-35-32	SOM2c
*PECHERER, Max	861-50-54	S1 c
*PELLETIER, Joseph R.	202-04-01	GM2c
PENNINGTON, Arzo	867-63-58	S1 c
PIFER, Forest S.	283-35-40	FC1 c
*PINDAR, Harold E.	223-90-88	S1 c
PIPER, Leland H.	238-72-20	S1 c
*PORTER, Marion A.	552-01-51	ST3c
PRZEWLOCKI, Edward T.	608-14-77	GM2c
PYPEC, Karol J.	202-94-90	S1 c
*QUIRION, Raymond R.	822-90-74	S1 c
*RAGLAND, Thomas E.	837-56-03	S2c
REBOUL, Harvey C.	644-06-28	RM2c
REDFERN, Edwin R.	801-23-83	S1 c
*REMMEY, Lewis E.	642-14-55	F1 c
*REUM, Charles F.	825-27-85	EM3c
RINELLI, Anthony M.	646-37-46	S1 c
*RIZZO, Salvatore C.	725-43-58	F1 c
**ROBBINS, Roy A.	642-22-26	WT3c
ROBERTS, James R.	283-68-90	Cox
*ROBERTS, John H.	810-76-01	MMS3c
**ROTH, Charles R.	650-67-09	MM2c
*RUBINSTEIN, Edward	646-38-42	SOM2c
**RUGGIERO, John J.	646-37-47	S1 c
*RYAN, Joseph B., Jr.	629-71-83	S2c
SABIECKY, Joseph A.	250-37-24	CMM
*SANS, Charles H.	867-55-48	Mldr3c
*SARICH, Paul	857-92-61	MM3c
SCHAEGER, Orval L. W.	864-34-19	MoMM3c
SEDIVI, Joseph L.	244-10-33	SM3c
**SESSIONS, Fred D.	268-21-84	CWT



SHANABROUGH, George E.	650-30-69	Cox
**SHAPIRO, Bernard M.	690-52-14	RT1c
*SHEER, Roger C.	614-69-22	Y3c
*SHENE, Howard A.	666-18-84	SM2c
**SHEPARD, Carlyle W.	234-40-11	S1c
SHOOP, William C.	250-90-83	F1c
*SIMON, Ludwig J.	223-97-38	SC1c
SIMONS, Joseph J., Jr.	800-39-64	F1c
SIMPSON, John L.	822-50-97	F1c
SIMPSON, Junior J.	628-70-72	WT3c
*SIMS, Harry L.	272-89-80	TM3c
SINCLAIR, George T., Jr.	262-54-60	CY
SOCKS, Samuel B.	819-81-41	F1c
SOLER, Peter J.	815-29-54	F1c
*STAIE, Reginald F.	300-00-56	MM1c
STANTON, William V.	604-05-73	RM3c
ST CLAIR, Sidney	552-53-66	S1c
STEINEL, George H.	810-68-27	S2c
*STERMER, Albert V.	234-30-34	FC2c
STEVENSON, Alexander	810-74-66	StM2c
ST LAURENT, Dolon J.	607-10-23	RdM3c
*ST LAURENT, Elmer E.	666-41-26	S1c
STONE, Kenneth F.	207-12-36	CMM
*SULLIVAN, James P.	642-29-86	RdM2c
SUSEN, Lawrence J.	706-02-73	SOM3c
*SUTTON, Floyd H.	650-80-73	S1c
*SWEENEY, Harold J.	666-38-55	SC3c
*SWIFT, Duane F.	573-26-21	S2c
SWINDELL, James A.	607-16-57	GM3c
TELLER, Joseph A.	725-65-86	SOM2c
**TOLKACZ, John C.	234-24-53	MM2c
TOMPKINS, William F.	651-04-65	Cox
TOTTEN, Donald V. H.	809-49-93	S2c
TRAFFLEY, John W.	258-03-30	CMM
*TRIMBLE, Willie A.	668-68-08	MM1c
TUELLS, Lawrence H.	801-59-78	S1c
TURBEVILLE, Aubrey M.	837-50-91	S1c
TURNAN, Robert C.	801-45-99	S1c
TURNER, Louis E.	342-41-34	GM2c
*TWEEDIE, John S.	761-61-56	S1c
TYLER, Charles M.	209-06-28	S2c
UTECHTT, Melvin L.	668-69-36	F1c
**VAN VOORN, John E.	669-30-84	MM1c
VARLAS, Sam	560-16-73	GM3c
*VELASQUEZ, David P.	563-00-38	S1c
VINCENT, William M.	627-09-39	S2c
**VINCI, Carl M.	234-30-29	MM2c
VOGEL, William W.	634-28-62	GM2c
WEIN, Albert	243-42-27	CRM
WHEAT, William B.	560-16-75	EM3c
WHITELATCH, Clinton, Jr.	560-16-91	SC3c





**WILLIAMS, Carl F.	560-53-46	S1c
WILLIAMS, Herman J.	556-17-91	WT3c
WILLIS, Vincent P.	930-49-96	S2c
WINFIELD, Bertram M.	711-16-02	S1c
*WOOD, Ivan D.	556-17-96	Cox
WOODS, Francis E.	810-01-38	QM3c
**WOODS, Joseph C.	300-43-23	WT2c
WRIGHT, Norman L.	560-16-66	MM3c
WROBLEWSKI, Anthony J., Jr.	300-40-23	RM3c
**ZAIONTZ, John A.	624-31-39	WT2c
ZIMMERMAN, Frank A.	243-88-56	SOM3c

\* \* \* \* \*

1 Source: The muster roll for 3/31/44 on microfilm at the National Archives updated to reflect men received, transfers and changes in rate included on Report Of Changes sheets through 4/18/44.

\* Wounded (\*\* Killed) when the ship was torpedoed and sunk by a German torpedo plane off the Algerian coast on 20 April 1944 according to a machine-generated casualty report at the National Archives prepared by the Bureau of Naval Personnel after the war.

Summary of Casualties:

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Not Wounded</u>	<u>Complement on 4/20/44</u>
Officer	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>19</u>
Enlisted	<u>45</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>147</u>	<u>264</u>
TOTALS	<u>49</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>283</u>

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
July, 2000



*"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. Lansdale (DD-426) in World War II

Photograph Credits

<u>Description</u>	<u>Source Code/Ident. No.</u>
Sponsor, widow of Lt. Lansdale	NP Order with photocopy
Christening, Boston Navy Yd., 10/20/39	NA 19-N-22889
Starboard bow, under way, 9/17/40	NI Order with photocopy
Port beam, under way, circa 1943	NI Order with photocopy
Bridge superstructure, 10/43 refit	RW N-4565
Single 20-mm Oerlikon mount	NA 19-N-31965
Midships, looking aft, 10/43 refit	RW N-4564
Twin 40-mm Bofors gun mount	RW N-6569A
Starboard beam 10/22/43, after refit	RW N-4566
German Junkers 88 bomber	NA 18-WP-194884, Box 34
USS <u>Newell</u> (DE-322), port bow, 6/2/44	NH NH 91565
Survivor E. R. Redfern, S1c, on <u>Menges</u>	RW N-4567B
Survivors aboard USS <u>Menges</u> (DE-320)	RW N-4567
Bodies being carried off at Algiers	NH NH 75615
Survivors debarking from USS <u>Menges</u>	NA 80-G-227936
Survivors being issued clothing	NA 80-G-23045

\* \* \* \* \*

Key to Sources:

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

NH Naval Historical Center (CUP)  
805 Kidder Breeze St., SE  
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5060  
(202) 433-2765

NP National Park Service, Boston National Historical Park  
Charlestown Navy Yard, Building 107  
Boston, MA 02129-4543; (617) 242-5620, Archivist Phil Hunt

RW Real War Photos, P.O. Box 728, Hammond, IN 46325

NI U.S. Naval Institute Photo Service, Beach Hall  
291 Wood Road, Annapolis, MD 21402-5034  
Voice: (410) 268-6110; FAX: (410) 269-7940

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
April, 2003



The U.S.S. Lansdale (DD-426) in World War II

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Books:

- Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Vol 4. Mooney, J. L. Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1969.  
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Magazines:

- The Aeroplane, February 9, 1940 (Heinkel He-111 illustration)  
Shipmate, U.S. Naval Academy (Obituaries)

Ships' Logs: (National Archives, Record Group 24)

- USS Lansdale (DD-426)  
USS Menges (DE-320)  
USS Newell (DE-322)

Miscellaneous:

- Action Reports, USS Lansdale (DD-426) (National Archives, RG 38)  
Casualty report for Lansdale in the "Battle Books" machine-generated by BuPers c. 1946. (National Archives, RG 24)  
Conversations/correspondence with officer survivors Charles C. Wales and Marshall E. Geller.  
Muster rolls, USS Lansdale, on microfilm; National Archives RG 24  
News Releases file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center/Washington Navy Yard.  
Ships' Histories Branch file, USS Lansdale, Naval Historical Center/Washington Navy Yard.  
War Diary, USS Menges (DE-320) (National Archives, RG 38)  
WWII Citations file, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center/Washington Navy Yard.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
April, 2003





### About The Editor

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., Commander, USNR (Ret.), received his commission through the NROTC Program at Dartmouth College in 1950. Following graduation he saw action off Korea aboard the USS Douglas H. Fox (DD-779) when this destroyer dueled with numerous North Korean shore batteries in the Sea of Japan. Many of the photographs he took during this period have been donated to the Naval Historical Foundation, and two of them appeared in the coffee-table book, The Navy, published by the Foundation in 2000. After completing three years of active duty he began a civilian career in public accounting and later in management positions at Raytheon Company in Waltham, Massachusetts.

In 1993 he developed a strong interest in naval history and began editing a series of illustrated ships' histories primarily of U.S. destroyers sunk in World War II. Primary source documents such as action reports, ships' war diaries, medal citations and muster rolls are included in these histories as well as many firsthand accounts. His booklets are not for sale, but he sends complimentary copies to the survivors and to the families of crewmembers killed on these vessels.

Commander Wilde is a life member of the Naval Historical Foundation and the U.S. Naval Institute.



Historical Compilations by the Editor:

(Destroyer/Destroyer Escort Hulls in World War II)

<u>United States Ship</u>	<u>Date Sunk/ (Damaged)</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Killed/ Wounded<sup>1</sup></u>
<u>Aaron Ward</u> (DD-483)	04/07/43	Guadalcanal	42/139*
<u>Barton</u> (DD-599)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	164/32
<u>Borie</u> (DD-215)	11/01/43	North Atlantic	27/00
<u>Colhoun</u> (APD-2)	08/30/42	Tulagi	51/18
<u>Corry</u> (DD-463)	06/06/44	Normandy	24/55
<u>Cushing</u> (DD-376)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	72/67
<u>DeHaven</u> (DD-469)	02/01/43	Guadalcanal	168/40
<u>Douglas H. Fox</u> (DD-779)	(05/17/45)	Okinawa	10/36
<u>Drexler</u> (DD-741)	05/28/45	Okinawa	158/54
<u>Duncan</u> (DD-485)	10/12/42	Guadalcanal	48/35
<u>Emmons</u> (DMS-22)	04/06/45	Okinawa	60/78
<u>Fiske</u> (DE-143)	08/02/44	North Atlantic	33/65
<u>Glennon</u> (DD-620)	06/10/44	Normandy	25/49*
<u>Halligan</u> (DD-584)	03/26/45	Okinawa	160/43
<u>Hammann</u> (DD-412)	06/06/42	Midway	84/63
<u>Laffey</u> (DD-459)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	59/114
<u>Lansdale</u> (DD-426)	04/20/44	Mediterranean	49/76
<u>McFarland</u> (AVD-14)	(10/16/42)	Guadalcanal	12/13
<u>Meredith</u> (DD-726)	06/09/44	Normandy	35/28
<u>Monssen</u> (DD-436)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	145/37
<u>Perry</u> (DMS-17)	09/13/44	Angaur/Peleliu	8/17
<u>Preston</u> (DD-379)	11/15/42	Guadalcanal	117/26
<u>Spence</u> (DD-512)	12/18/44	Luzon, P.I.	315/24
<u>Strong</u> (DD-467)	07/05/43	Cent. Solomons	45/61
<u>Walke</u> (DD-416)	11/15/42	Guadalcanal	82/48

\* \* \* \* \*

Notes:

\* Total for two engagements with the enemy

<sup>1</sup> 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





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\* \* \* \* \*

Notes:

- <sup>1</sup> Only ships which participated in the Guadalcanal Campaign:  
Aaron Ward, Barton, Colhoun, Cushina, DeHaven, Duncan, Laffey,  
McFarland, Monssen, Preston, Walke.
- <sup>2</sup> Only Bath-built ships: DeHaven, Drexler, Emmons, Meredith,  
Spence, Strong
- <sup>3</sup> Only ships sunk off the Normandy Beachhead: Corry, Glennon,  
Meredith
- <sup>4</sup> By appointment only: (508) 677-0515

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
June, 2006



