

5101850
291-1850

A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:
WORLD WAR II VETERANS

AS VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II, YOU ARE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE BY SHARING YOUR EXPERIENCES IN THE ARMED SERVICES, AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF A STUDY, NOW UNDERWAY BY THE WILSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY. YOUR RECOLLECTION AND STORIES OF YOUR EXPERIENCES ARE NEEDED AND HIGHLY SOLICITED.

Please Provide Information As Follows:

Name: William M. Sharpe Branch of Service: Army

Service Date(s): 11-21-42

Discharge Date: 1-27-46 Place: Fort Bragg, N.C.

Entered Service: Fort Bragg, N.C. Date: 11-21-42
Wilson County Etc.

Foreign Service: New Guinea
Southwest Pacific Domestic Service _____
Countries States

Honorably Discharged: 1-27-46 Place: Fort Bragg, N.C.

Present Address: 703 Lincoln Street
Sharon, NC 27893

Tel. # (252) 243-3570

Go To Page 2.
OVER

MLB/7/20/06

Page 2. WWII Veterans

List Awards, Medals, Commendations:

*American Theater Service Medal, Asiatic Pacific Service Medal with 2
Bronze Service Stars, Good Conduct Medal, World War II Victory Medal*

What do you remember most about your service in the armed forces:

I remember the segregation. I remember going to the ~~Phil~~ Philippines - for six months or more they wouldn't let us go where the women were. The white people told people that we had tails. The children would come around us looking for the tails.

Where did you spend most of your time?

Oversaw in the Southwest Pacific.

Who were your role models, if any?

What were your most memorable experience(s)?

Being Discharged.

What organizations are you a member of?

American Legion Auxiliary

Are you familiar with the Wilson County Historical Society?

Yes / / No / ☒

Warren C Shepard

U S Navy - Quarter Master 1st C

Volunteered for service April 1943

Boat Camp training - Bainbridge Md.

James D. Hegel - Tommy Ruffin
"Others in training from Wilson"

After training went aboard new ship

U S S Kidd DE 185
New York Naval Yard

Proceeded on shake down cruise to

Bermuda - Hamilton Harbor -

Very narrow long Channel entering
harbor - ship was issued orders to
depart harbor to ride out
approaching Hurricane at sea.

Needless to say all ship mates

were sea-sick. 3 days before
we were allowed to re-enter the
harbor -

After about 10 days of training,
with other ships and various kinds
of target practice we returned to
Bayon N Jersey for check list
and loading various kinds of
ammunition -

Departed the East Coast in
December 1943 with orders to proceed
to ~~Haw~~ Pearl Harbor by way of
Panama Canal.

Upon arrival at Pearl Harbor
we were ordered to participate

With other ships in various exercises, consisting of submarine submarine warfare and surface and aerial target practice -

After a few days we received orders to depart Pearl Harbor escorting fleet tankers, supply ships, etc. to the Marshall Islands -

These were the first Islands that our forces re-captured in our March across the Pacific -

We earned 12 battle stars, more than any other ship in our class, which numbered over 500 ships

At the close of hostilities at
Okinawa, after logging some
385,000 nautical miles we were
ordered to proceed to the West Coast
for major overhaul prior to the
planned return for the invasion of
Japan.

While home on leave from West Coast
the A-Bombs were dropped - The
surrender finalized and when we
returned to the ship we were ordered
to proceed to the Norfolk Naval
yard through the Panama Canal -

We arrived just before 4 mos '1945 -
I was discharged and was home 4 mos.

USS RIDDLE, 185

DURING WORLD WAR II, AMERICAN SHIPYARDS BUILT AND LAUNCHED 563 DESTROYER ESCORTS IN LESS THAN 3 YEARS. 76 WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE ROYAL NAVY, 8 TO THE BRAZILIAN NAVY AND 6 TO THE FREE FRENCH NAVY. 94 OF THE DESTROYER ESCORTS WERE CONVERTED TO HIGH SPEED TRANSPORTS. THAT LEFT 375 DE'S TO DO THE JOB THEY WERE ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO DO. THE *USS RIDDLE, DE 185* WAS ONE OF THOSE.

WHAT DISTINGUISHES THE *RIDDLE* FROM OTHER DESTROYER ESCORTS IS THAT DURING WORLD WAR II, SHE WAS AWARDED 12 BATTLE STARS, MORE BATTLE STARS THAN ANY DESTROYER ESCORT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY. HER ENTIRE COMBAT RECORD WAS EARNED IN THE ASIATIC-PACIFIC AREA STARTING WITH THE MARSHALL ISLAND OCCUPATION, ASIATIC-PACIFIC RAIDS (PALAU, YAP, ULITHI, WOLEAI RAID AND TRUK SATAWAN, PONAPE RAID), ADMIRALTY ISLAND OCCUPATION (MANUS ISLAND, SEADLER HARBOR), NEW GUINEA (HOLLANDIA OPERATION), MARIANAS OPERATION (SAIPAN), SINKING OF A JAPANESE SUBMARINE ON INDEPENDENCE DAY 1944, TINIAN CAPTURE AND OCCUPATION, WESTERN CAROLINE ISLANDS OPERATION (CAPTURE AND OCCUPATION OF SOUTHERN PALAU ISLANDS), LEYTE OPERATION, NORTHERN LUZON AND FORMOSA ATTACKS, LUZON OPERATION - THIRD FLEET SUPPORTING OPERATIONS, (FORMOSA ATTACKS AND CHINA COAST ATTACKS, IWO JIMA OPERATION, AND FINALLY, THE ASSAULT AND OCUPATION OF OKINAWA.

THE *RIDDLE* WAS, IT SEEMED, CONSTANTLY AT SEA. DE'S ARE HUNTERS, ALWAYS SEEKING OUT THE ENEMY, ALWAYS ON ALERT. ONCE SHE PASSES THE HARBOR'S OUTER MARKING, SONAR BEGINS ITS ETERNAL SEARCH, ITS RADAR SWEEPS THE HORIZON, THE LOOKOUTS HAVE MANNED THEIR POSTS, AND OUR SEARCH FOR THE ENEMY BEGINS ONCE AGAIN. COUNTLESS DAYS OF PROTECTING CONVOYS, PATROLLING ENTRANCES TO ISLAND HARBORS, DESTROYING MINES AND OBSTRUCTIONS TO NAVIGATION. CONSTANT DAILY AND NIGHTLY BATTLE STATION DRILLS. THE BOREDOM OF WEEKS AT SEA INTERSPERSED WITH MOMENTS OF SHEER TERROR. TWO HUNDRED OFFICERS AND MEN LIVING FOR MONTHS IN CRAMPED QUARTERS IN A STEEL SHIP IN THE TROPICAL SOUTHWEST PACIFIC WITH TEMPERATURES CLOSE TO 100 DEGREES WITHOUT AIR CONDITIONING AND NO PORT HOLES WITH ONLY 3/8TH OF AN INCH OF STEEL PROTECTING ONE FROM ENCROACHMENT OF THE SEA OR ENEMY GUNFIRE.

OFTEN *RIDDLE* SAILED ON TRANQUIL SEAS AND ALMOST AS OFTEN SHE SAILED THROUGH STORMY SEAS. ONCE SHE WAS CAUGHT IN A TYPHOON WHILE OPERATING WITH THE THIRD FLEET DURING A RAID ON FORMOSA. DE'S IN A **NORMAL** SEA WILL ROLL AND PLUNGE AND BUCK AND TWIST, IN THE AIR HALF THE TIME, UNDER THE WATER THE OTHER HALF. IT IS FAIRLY COMMON TO MEASURE SHIPS ROLLS OF OVER 50 TO 60 DEGREES. THE *RIDDLE'S* SEAWORTHINESS WAS PROVEN WHEN SHE SURVIVED THE TYPHOON WHILE, UNFORTUNATELY, SEVERAL OTHER DESTROYERS CAPSIZED WITH A HEAVY LOSS OF LIVES.

RIDDLE AND IT'S CREW SURVIVED THROUGH THESE CONDITIONS. HER CREW WAS MADE UP OF YOUNG MEN FROM ALMOST EVERY STATE IN THE COUNTRY. MOST OF THEM IN THEIR TEENS, A FEW IN THEIR TWENTIES AND FEWER STILL WITH ANY COLLEGE EDUCATION. THEY WERE ALL VOLUNTEERS. ONLY A HANDFUL HAD EVER HAD SEA DUTY. INDEED, MANY HAD NEVER SEEN AN OCEAN BEFORE. YET THESE

USS RIDDLE, 185

AMERICANS WHO LOVED THEIR COUNTRY SO DEEPLY THAT THEY VOLUNTEERED TO GO TO WAR, QUICKLY LEARNED A SEAMAN'S WAYS. THE *USS RIDDLE, DE 185* BECAME A FORMIDABLE UNIT OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY, WITH A CREW WELL DRILLED IN THE ART OF WARFARE, CONFIDENT OF THEIR SHIP'S ABILITY AND OF THEMSELVES.. THIS CONFIDENCE ENABLED THE *RIDDLE* TO DESTROY AN ENEMY SUBMARINE OFF THE COAST OF SAIPAN ON NO LESS A DATE THAN OUR COUNTRIES INDEPENDENCE DAY, 4 JULY, 1944 AND TO SURVIVE TWO KAMAKAZE ATTACKS, WITH MINIMUM DAMAGE AND LOSS OF LIFE, ON 12 APRIL, 1945, THE SAME DAY AS THE DEATH OF OUR PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT. THERE WAS NEVER A DAY THAT THIS SHIP WAS NOT ABLE TO ANSWER A CALL FOR ACTION.

NOW, 59 YEARS AFTER THE END OF WORLD WAR II, THE SURVIVING CREW MEMBERS OF THIS SMALL BUT DEADLY SHIP WILL PAY HOMAGE TO OUR DECEASED SHIPMATES. A *MEMORIAL SERVICE* ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2004 AT 9:00AM WILL BE HELD ABOARD THE *USS SLATER, DE 766* NOW DOCKED IN ALBANY, NY. OUR DECEASED COMRADES WERE IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD, MEMBERS OF "THE GREATEST GENERATION", AND, HEROES IN THEIR OWN RIGHT. FOR TWO YEARS THE *RIDDLE* CREW, UNDER HARSH AND DEADLY CONDITIONS, SERVED OUR COUNTRY IN THE FAR REACHES OF THE ASIATIC-PACIFIC THEATER OF OPERATION. OUR EXPERIENCES CREATED A BOND THAT IS DIFFICULT FOR ANYONE, WHO HAS NOT HAD SIMILAR EXPERIENCES, TO UNDERSTAND. WE HAVE BECOME A "BAND OF BROTHERS". THE DECEASED MEN WE HONOR ARE, IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD, "OUR BROTHERS". WE MISS EACH AND EVERYONE OF THEM!!

THREE MEMBERS OF THE CREW OF THE *USS RIDDLE* ARE NATIVE SONS OF THE ALBANY AREA. THEY ARE: FREDERICK H. ANAMIER, S.C. 2/c OF ALBANY; ED MARKS, Mo. M. 2/c OF ALBANY; AND ROBERT O'NEILL, G.M. 2/c OF SCHENECTADY.

BATTLE STARS AWARDED TO DESTROYER-ESCORTS AND APDs

This list of battle stars awarded to 270 DEs and/or APDs has been compiled by Anne McCarthy from information found in the *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*. DESA News cannot independently verify the correctness of DANFS' information in all cases. If your ship is listed and you can verify that the number provides IS INCORRECT please send an E-Mail to anwa98@aol.com with the words "BATTLE STARS" as the subject. Here's the list of how battle stars were distributed:

Twelve stars: one ship USS RIDDLE DE 185

Eleven stars: one ship USS BANGUST DE 739

Nine stars: four ships

USS LAMONS DE 743
USS MITCHELL DE 43
USS SWEARER DE 186
USS WEAVER DE 741

Eight stars: five ships

USS COFER DE 208/APD 62
USS HILBERT DE 742
USS REYNOLDS DE 42
USS SAMUEL S. MILES DE 183
USS WATERMAN DE 740

Seven stars: six ships

USS CABANA DE 260
USS DONALDSON DE 44
USS FROST DE 144
USS LAWRENCE C. TAYLOR DE 415
USS WESSON DE 184
USS WILLIAM C. MILLER DE 259

Six stars: seven ships

USS DEEDE DE 263
USS DIONNE DE 261
USS ELDEN DE 264
USS KYNE DE 744
USS RICHARD M. ROWELL DE 403
USS WHITEHURST DE 634
USS WYMAN DE 38

Five stars: 19 ships

USS ACRE DE 167
USS CHATELAIN DE 149
USS CROWLEY DE 303
USS EDMONDS DE 406
USS FOREMAN DE 633
USS HUSE DE 145
USS JOHN C. BUTLER DE 339
USS KEPHART DE 207/APD 61
USS LEVY DE 162
USS LYMAN DE 302
USS MANLOVE DE 36
USS NEWMAN DE 205/APD 59
USS OLIVER MITCHELL DE 417
USS PILLSBURY DE 133
USS RAYMOND DE 341
USS RICHARD S. BULL DE 402
USS RICHARD W. SUESSENS DE 342
USS SEDERSTROM DE 31
USS ULVERT M. MOORE DE 442

Four stars: 31 ships

USS ABERCROMBIE DE 343
USS BOWERS DE 637/APD 40
USS BRONSTEIN DE 189
USS BURDEN R. HASTINGS DE 19
USS CANFIELD DE 262
USS DENNIS DE 405
USS EICHENBERGER DE 202
USS EMERY DE 28
USS EUGENE E. ELMORE DE 686
USS FLAHERTY DE 135
USS FLEMING DE 32
USS FREDERICK C. DAVIS DE 136
USS GOSS DE 444
USS INCH DE 146
USS JAMES E. CRAIG DE 201
USS KENDALL C. CAMPBELL DE 443

USS LERAY WILSON DE 414
USS MANNING DE 199
USS MCCOY REYNOLDS DE 440
USS MELVIN R. NAWMAN DE 416
USS O'FLAHERTY DE 340
USS PARKS DE 165
USS SANDERS DE 40
USS STADTFELD DE 29
USS TABBERER DE 418
USS THOMAS DE 102
USS TISDALE DE 33
USS WALTER C. WANN DE 412
USS WILEMAN DE 22
USS WILLIAM DE 441
USS WILLMARTH DE 638

Three stars: 43 ships

USS BARBER DE 161/APD 57
USS BARON DE 166
USS BARR DE 675/APD 39
USS BATES DE 68/APD 47
USS BLESSMAN DE 69/APD 48
USS BOSTWICK DE 103
USS BRACKETT DE 41
USS BUCKLEY DE 51
USS BULL DE 693/APD 78
USS CLOUES DE 265
USS CONKLIN DE 439
USS COOLBAUGH DE 217
USS DEMPSEY DE 26
USS FINNEGAN DE 307
USS GRADY DE 445
USS GREINER DE 37
USS GRISWOLD DE 7
USS HALLORAN DE 305
USS HARMON DE 678
USS HERBERT C. JONES DE 137
USS J. DOUGLAS BLACKWOOD DE 219
USS JOBB DE 707
USS LESLIE L. B. KNOX DE 580
USS LOUGH DE 586
USS LOVELACE DE 198
USS LOVERING DE 39
USS MCCLELLAND DE 750
USS MCCONNELL DE 163
USS METTIVIER DE 582
USS NEUENDORF DE 200
USS OBERRENDER DE 344
USS OSTERHAUS DE 164
USS POPE DE 134
USS PRIDE DE 323
USS RABY DE 698
USS RALL DE 304
USS SNOWDEN DE 246
USS STANTON DE 247
USS STERN DE 187
USS STRAUS DE 408
USS THOMASON DE 203
USS WHITMAN DE 24
USS WINTLE DE 25

Two stars: 46 ships

USS AHRENS DE 575
USS ALBERT T. HARRIS DE 447
USS BUNCH DE 694/APD 79
USS CARLSON DE 9
USS CHAFFEE DE 230
USS CHARLES R. GREER DE 23
USS CHASE DE 158/APD 54
USS CONNOLLY DE 306
USS CORBESIER DE 438
USS CURRIER DE 700
USS DANIEL A. JOY DE 585

USS DARBY DE 218
USS DAY DE 225
USS DIACHENKO DE 690/APD 123
USS DUFFY DE 27
USS EISELE DE 34
USS ENGLAND DE 635
USS EVERSOLE DE 404
USS FESSENDEN DE 142
USS FORMOE DE 509
USS GEORGE DE 697
USS GREENWOOD DE 679
USS HAROLD C. THOMAS DE 21
USS HOLT DE 706
USS HORACE A. BASS DE 691/APD 124
USS HUBBARD DE 211/APD 53
USS JACK MILLER DE 410
USS JENKS DE 665
USS KLINE DE 687/APD 120
USS LAKE DE 301
USS LEHARDY DE 20
USS LOESER DE 680
USS McNULTY DE 581
USS MENGES DE 320
USS MOSLEY DE 321
USS RILEY DE 579
USS RUDDEROW DE 224
USS SEID DE 256
USS SILVERSTEIN DE 534
USS SPANGLER DE 696
USS STAFFORD DE 411
USS STEELE DE 8
USS TATUM DE 789/APD 81
USS TINSMAN DE 589
USS VARIAN DE 798
USS WITTER DE 636

One star: 107 ships

USS AMESBURY DE 66/APD 46
USS ATHERTON DE 169
USS BAKER DE 190
USS BORUM DE 790
USS BREEMAN DE 104
USS BRIGHT DE 747
USS BROCK DE 234/APD 93
USS BURKE DE 215/APD 65
USS CARTER DE 112
USS CHARLES E. BRANNON DE 446
USS CHARLES J. KIMMEL DE 584
USS CHARLES LAWRENCE DE 53/APD 37
USS COFFMAN DE 191
USS CROSBY DE 226/APD 87
USS CROSS DE 448
USS CROUTER DE 11
USS DAMON M. CUMMINGS DE 643
USS DANIEL T. GRIFFIN DE 54/APD 38
USS DECKER DE 47
USS DOBLER DE 48
USS EDWIN A. HOWARD DE 346
USS ENRIGHT DE 216/APD 66
USS EVARTS DE 5
USS FALGOUT DE 324
USS FARQUHAR DE 139
USS FECHTELER DE 157
USS FIEBERLING DE 640
USS FISKE DE 143
USS FORSTER DE 334
USS FOWLER DE 222
USS FRAMMENT DE 677/APD 77
USS FRANCIS M. ROBINSON DE 220
USS GANDY DE 764
USS GILLIGAN DE 508
USS GILMORE DE 18

USS GOSSELIN DE 710/APD 126
USS GUSTAFSON DE 182
USS HAINES DE 792/APD 84
USS HAVERFIELD DE 393
USS HISSEM DE 400
USS HODGES DE 231
USS HOLDER DE 401
USS HOLLIS DE 794/APD 86
USS HOPPING DE 155/APD 51
USS JACCARD DE 355
USS JACK C. ROBINSON DE 671/APD 72
USS JANSSEN DE 396
USS JESSE RUTHERFORD DE 347
USS JOSEPH E. CAMPBELL DE 70/APD 49
USS JOSEPH E. CONNOLLY DE 450
USS JOYCE DE 317
USS KEITH DE 241
USS KEY DE 348
USS KINZER DE 232/APD 91
USS KNUDSON DE 591/APD 101
USS LANING DE 159/APD 55
USS LAPRADE DE 409
USS LELAND E. THOMAS DE 420
USS LOY DE 160/APD 56
USS MALOY DE 791
USS MARSH DE 699
USS MILLS DE 383
USS NEAL A. SCOTT DE 769
USS NEUNZER DE 150
USS OSMUS DE 701
USS OTTER DE 210
USS PAUL G. BAKER DE 642
USS PAVLIC DE 669/APD 70
USS PEIFFER DE 588
USS PRICE DE 332
USS RAMSDEN DE 382
USS RAYMON W. HERNDON DE 688/APD 121
USS REDNOUR DE 592/APD 102
USS REEVES DE 156/APD 52
USS REGISTER DE 233/APD 92
USS RHODES DE 384
USS RICH DE 695
USS RINGNESS DE 590/APD 100
USS ROBERT BRAZIER DE 345
USS ROBERT I. PAINE DE 578
USS ROBERTS DE 749
USS RUNELS DE 793/APD 85
USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS DE 413
USS SAVAGE DE 386
USS SCHMITT DE 676/APD 76
USS SCRIBNER DE 689/APD 122
USS SELLSTROM DE 255
USS SHELTON DE 407
USS SIMS DE 154/APD 50
USS SMARTT DE 257
USS SNYDER DE 745
USS STOCKDALE DE 399
USS STRICKLAND DE 333
USS SWASEY DE 248
USS THADDEUS PARKER DE 369
USS THOMAS F. NICKEL DE 587
USS TOLLBERG DE 593/APD 103
USS TOMICH DE 242
USS VAMMEN DE 644
USS WALTER S. BROWN DE 258
USS WANTUCK DE 692/APD 125
USS WEBER DE 675/APD 75
USS WILHOITE DE 397
USS WILLIAM C. COLE DE 641
USS WILLIS DE 395
USS WYFFELS DE 6
USS YOKES DE 668/APD 69

In the body of the E-Mail/mail, please cite any OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION that you have that shows a different number. For example, "Your list shows FOUR (4) BATTLE STARS for USS WHITMAN DE 24; Navy Dept. Bulletin 45-712, 30 June 1945 (as modified by NavPers 15,632 Operation and Engagement Stars for Ships and units) . . . states the total is THREE (3).

If you must use regular postal mail to report what information you have, please send to: Anne McCarthy, Battle Stars, 26 Vernon St., Tewksbury, MA 01876. But if you have a relative, friend, or anyone who will send a short E-Mail for you, that method is preferable since it immediately opens a door to a fast two-way exchange of information.

This is important historical information and DESA News and the DESA web site (desausa.org) want to report it accurately and for that we need the help of our members. So if you have official paperwork (don't send it, merely cite the source as we did above in the case of USS WHITMAN) and Mrs. McCarthy and DESA News will weigh the information and make changes (if necessary).

Please Report Any Broken Links Or Trouble You Might Come Across To The [Webmaster](#)
Please Take A Moment To Let Us Know So That We Can Correct Any Problems And Make Your Visit As Enjoyable And As Informative As Possible.

NavSource Online: Destroyer Escort Photo Archive

DE- 185 USS RIDDLE

CLASS - Cannon

Displacement 1,240 Tons, Dimensions, 306' (oa) x 36' 7" x 11' 8" (Max)
Armament 3 x 3"/50, 2x 40mmAA, 10x 20mm AA, 3 x 21" TT, 1 Hedgehog, 8 DCT's 2 DC racks.
Machinery, 6,000 BHP; 4 GM Model 16-278A Diesel Engines with electric drive, 2 screws
Speed, 21 Knots, Crew 186.

Operational and Building Data

Laid down by Federal Shipbuilding, Port Newark on July 29 1943.

Launched October 17 1943.

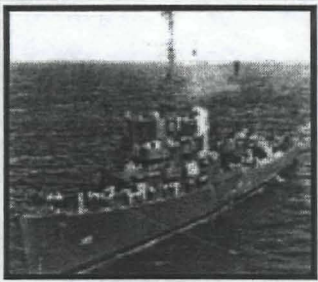
Commissioned November 17 1943.

Decommissioned June 8 1946.

Stricken September 26 1950.

Fate To France August 12 1950.

Renamed Kabyle, Stricken and broken up in 1959.

Click On Image For Full Size Image	Size	Image Description	Contributed By And/Or Copyright
	131k	Riddle appears to be passing a line to another ship. Date/location unknown.	Patrick Clancey, HyperWar.

USS RIDDLE DE- 185 History

View This Vessels [DANFS History Entry](#)

(Located On The Hazegray & Underway Web Site, This Is The Main Archive For The DANFS Online Project.)

Crew Contact And Reunion Information

NONE LOCATED

Contact Name: NONE

Address: NONE

Phone:NONE
E-mail:NONE

Note About Contacts.

The contact listed, Was the contact at the time for this ship when located. If another person now is the contact, E-mail me and I will update this entry. These contacts are compiled from various sources over a long period of time and may or may not be correct. Every effort has been made to list the newest contact if more than one contact was found.

Additional Resources **Destroyer Escort Sailors Association**

Back To The Main Photo Index	Back To The Destroyer Escort Photo Index Page
----------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------

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USS RIDDLE DE 185

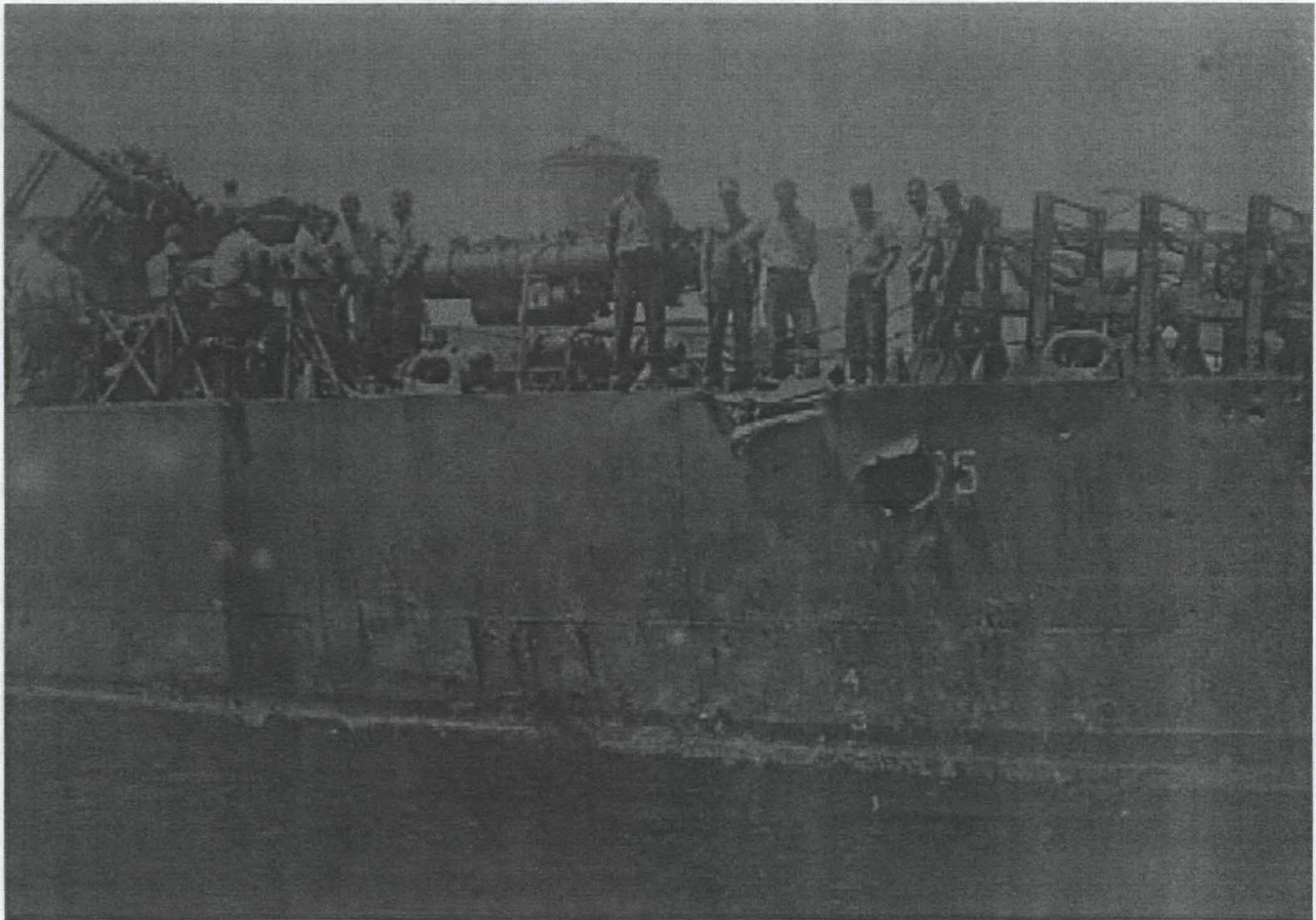
Showing damage following a kamikaze attack on 12 April 1944
Notice the crewmember in the hole

[Photo 1](#) | [Photo 2](#) | [Photo 3](#) | [Photo 4](#) | [Photo 5](#) | [Photo 6](#) | [Photo](#)

Photo submitted by Donald R. Stegall

[◀ Back](#)

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USS RIDDLE DE 185

Showing damage following a kamikaze attack on 12 April 1945

[Photo 1](#) | [Photo 2](#) | [Photo 3](#) | [Photo 4](#) | [Photo 5](#) | [Photo 6](#) | [Photo 7](#) | [Photo 8](#)

Photo courtesy of Al Gregg

Ship History

Riddle (DE-185) was laid down by the Federal Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co., Newark, N.J., 29 July 1943, launched 1943; sponsored by Mrs. Anna B. Riddle; and commissioned 17 November 1943, Lt. Comdr. Roland H. Cramer, U.S.N., in command.

Following shakedown off Bermuda, Riddle sailed for Pearl Harbor via the Panama Canal, arriving 1 February 1944. Upon arrival, she got underway as an escort vessel with Task Unit 16.11.6, bound for the Marshall Islands. Upon arrival, she conducted antisubmarine patrols in the Roi-Kwajalein-Majuro Atoll area until steaming for Pearl Harbor 15 March.

After serving as an escort to Majuro Atoll and Manus Island and back, Riddle was active in the Marshall and Mariana Islands area June 1944. On 4 July, while screening fueling operations with TG 50.17, with David W. Taylor (DD-551), she successfully attacked a submerged Japanese submarine, I-10.

Riddle continued screening operations in the Marshall-Marianas area until 1 September when she anchored at Manus Island. On 4 September she got underway as part of an escort group to screen the sortie of TU 38.8.16, a carrier and fueling group.

Seeadler Harbor for the Philippine Invasion. Riddle returned to Manus after the task unit was on its way and operated in the Admiralty and western Caroline area until early January 1945. On the 14th of January she arrived at Leyte Gulf, Philippines, after which she returned to the Marianas and western Carolines on routine screening and patrol duties.

Riddle operated in the Iwo Jima area in February 1945, acting as anti-aircraft and anti-submarine patrol as well as escorting various

fleet units in their operations in that bloody battle area. On the 5th of March, she anchored at Saipan and the following day sailed

for Leyte Gulf in company with Hyman. After remaining in San Pedro Bay, Leyte Gulf, until the 18th of March, Riddle got underway as part of the escort group for TU 51.7.1, en route to Kerama Retto, Okinawa.

Upon arrival at Kerama Retto on 26 March 1945, Riddle operated with various screening units, patrol sections, and other groups in those waters. April 12th found the vessel off Okinawa on a patrolling station, with TF 51, under enemy attack. Japanese kamikazes attacked Riddle. The first was shot down, just clearing the ship, and the second crashed into the ship, killing

one man and causing considerable damage. After transfer of wounded and repair to her battle damage at Kerama Retto, Riddle got underway 16 April as an escort to Saipan.

Riddle arrived at Okinawa once more 1 May 1945, and assumed patrol and escort duties there until 15 June when she got underway for Leyte Gulf. She arrived 18 June and anchored there in San Pedro Bay, until 1 July. From 2 to 4 July, Riddle participated in firing exercises with Salt Lake City and on the 5th got underway as escort for Shamrock Flay (CVE-10) to Guam and Hawaii, arriving Pearl Harbor 19 July.

Riddle proceeded on to San Pedro, Calif., for overhaul which lasted through the end of hostilities. On 13 November 1945 she got underway for the Panama Canal and arrived Norfolk on the 29th. On 31 December 1945 she reported to Command Group, 16th Fleet, for inactivation, and decommissioned 8 June 1946. Riddle was transferred to France 12 August 1946, to participate in the Military Assistance Program and was struck from the Navy list 26 September 1950.

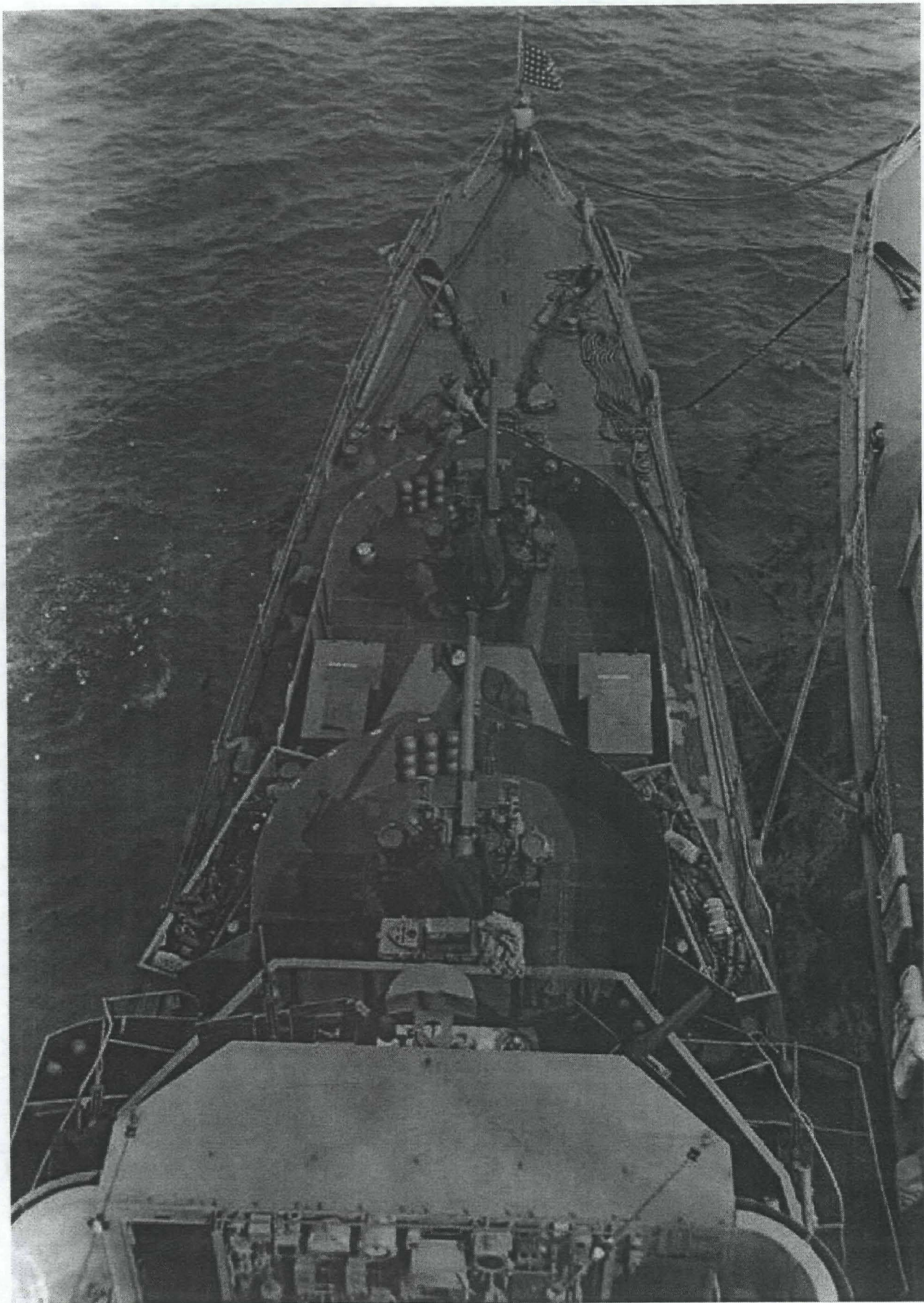
Riddle earned 12 battle stars for World War II service.

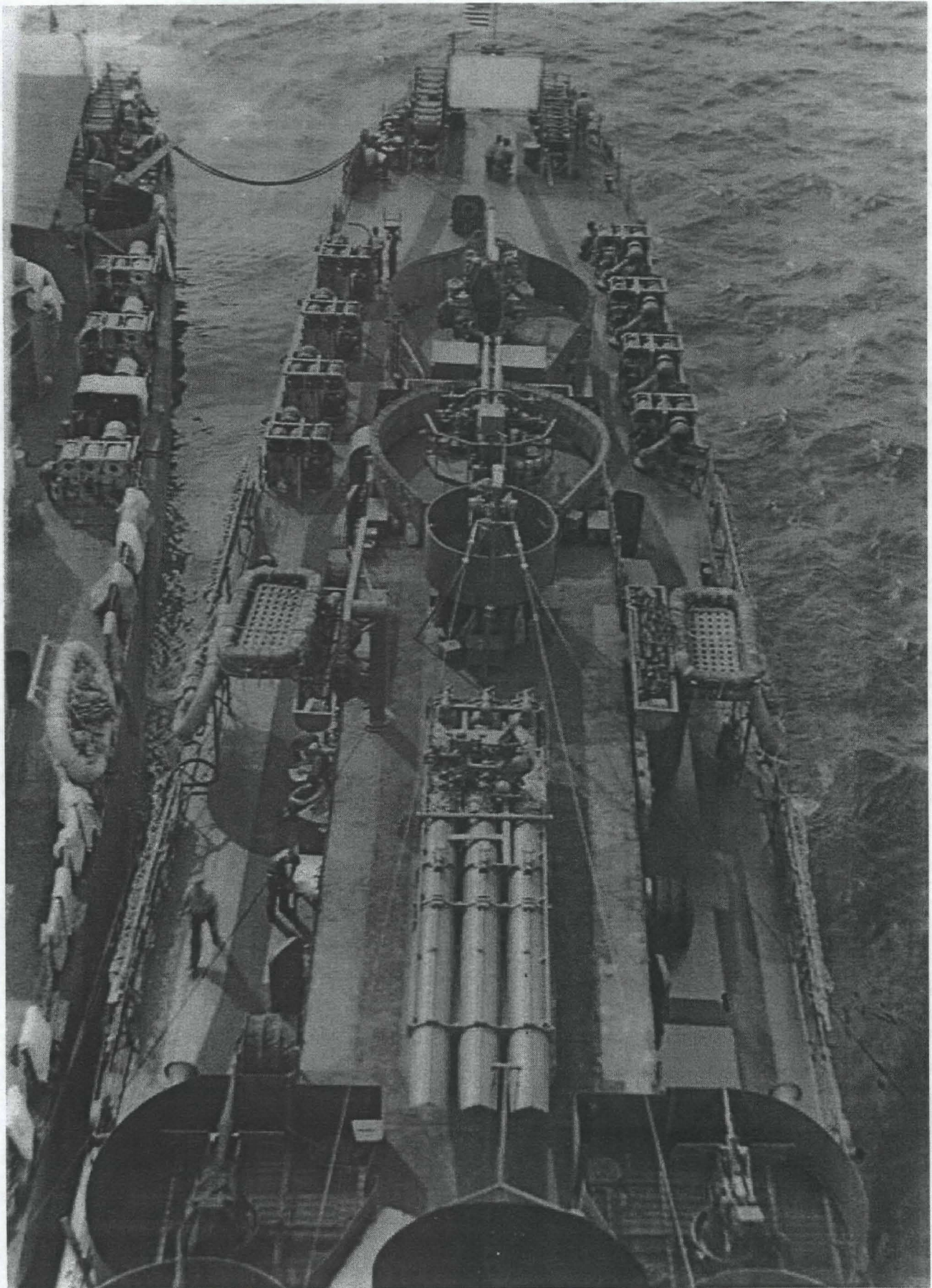
History courtesy of the [Hyperwar Website](http://www.hyperwar.com) and transcribed and formatted for HTML by Patrick Clancey.

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P.O. Box 3448
Deland, FL 32721-3448
(386) 738-6900
fax: (386) 738-2299





SUCCESSIVE LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICERS

Lieutenant Commander Roland H. Cramer, USNR. . . .Commissioning to 12
12 August 1944.

Lieutenant Commander Francis P. Steel, USNR. . . .12 August 1944 to 1
January 1946.

Lieutenant (j. g.) Robert T. Swengel, USNR1 January 1946 to
Decommissioning.

* * *

The USS RIDDLE (DE 185) earned twelve (12) battle stars on the Asiatic-Pacific Area Service Ribbon for participating in the following operations:

ONE STAR--Marshall Islands Operation:

Occupation of Eniwetok Atoll.17 February to 2
March 1944

ONE STAR--Asiatic-Pacific Raids:.1944

Palau, Yap, Ulithi, Woleai Raid30 March to 1 April
1944

Truk, Satawan, Ponape Raid.29 April to 1 May
1944

ONE STAR--Hollandia Operation (Aitape-Humboldt

Bay-Tanahmerah Bay):.21 April to 1 June
1944

ONE STAR--Marianas Operation:

Capture and Occupation of Saipan:11 June to 10
August 1944

ONE STAR--Anti-Submarine Assessment:.4 July 1944

ONE STAR--Tinian Capture and Occupation:.24 July to 4
August 1944

ONE STAR--Western Caroline Islands Operation:

Capture and Occupation of Southern
Palau Islands6 September to 14
October 1944

Assaults on the Philippine Islands. . . .9 to 24 September
1944

ONE STAR--Leyte Operation:

Northern Luzon and Formosa Attacks. . . .11 to 14 October
1944

Luzon Attacks15, 17-19 October
1944; 5-6, 13-14,
19-25 November
1944; 14-16
December 1944

ONE STAR--Luzon Operation -- THIRD Fleet

Supporting Operations:

Formosa Attacks.3-4, 9, 15, 21
January 1945
China Coast Attacks.12, 16 January 1945

ONE STAR--Iwo Jima Operation:

Assault and Occupation of Iwo Jima . . .15 February to 16
March 1945

ONE STAR--Okinawa Gunto Operation:

Assault and Occupation of Okinawa
Gunto.24 March to 30 June
1945

* * * *

S T A T I S T I C S

OVERALL LENGTH306 feet
BEAM36 feet, 7 inches
DISPLACEMENT1,240 tons
SPEED.20 knots plus

Compiled: April 1950
Stencilled: 25 April 1950

HISTORY OF USS RIDDLE (DE 185)

The USS RIDDLE (DE 185), a destroyer escort vessel of the CANNON class which was to earn eleven battle stars in the Asiatic-Pacific area during World War II, was built in the yards of the Federal Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, Newark, New Jersey. The ship's keel was laid on July 29, 1943 and approximately three months later, on October 17th, she was launched.

Mrs. Anna B. Riddle, mother of the namesake of the vessel, christened the ship in the Newark Yards. The DE 185 was named in honor of Ensign Joseph Riddle, a Naval aviator with an escorting squadron, who was killed in action in the Pacific area February 4, 1943. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (posthumously) "For heroism and extraordinary achievement as member of a flight of bombers during an attack upon twenty enemy Japanese destroyers north of New Georgia Island, Solomon Islands." Ignoring the withering blasts of anti-aircraft fire, Ensign Riddle skillfully maneuvered his plane within striking distance of the destroyers and by his outstanding courage and expert marksmanship scored a direct hit on one of the hostile ships. While retiring from the scene of action, he was attacked by seven enemy fighters and after one hostile aircraft had been destroyed, his turret was put out of commission. With his plane rendered virtually helpless in the face of overwhelming enemy forces, Ensign Riddle was finally shot down.

The USS RIDDLE was placed in commission at the New York Navy Yard on November 17, 1943, with Lieutenant Commander Roland H. Cramer, USNR, as commanding officer.

After commissioning, the RIDDLE underwent her post-commissioning fitting out period and trials; and on December 4, 1943 weighed anchor for waters off Bermuda, British West Indies, for her shakedown cruise. Upon completion of training in the Bermuda area the RIDDLE returned to the Navy Yard, New York, where "kinks" which appear in most new vessels were ironed out.

On January 10, 1944, with her yard period ended, the DE 185 got underway for Norfolk, Virginia, arriving there the following day. She then sailed for Pearl Harbor, T. H., via the Panama Canal, and arrived in Hawaiian waters on February 1st, where she reported to Commander Task Force 16 for duty. In early February she participated in training exercises in the Oahu area and on the 10th got underway as an escort vessel with Task Unit 16.11.6, bound for the Marshall Islands.

On February 18, 1944 the RIDDLE left Task Unit 16.11.6 to escort Task Unit 16.11.4 to Roi Island, Marshall Islands, and upon arrival conducted anti-submarine patrols in that vicinity. She remained in the Roi-Kwajalein-Majuro Atoll (Marshall Islands) area through early March and on the 15th of that month returned to Pearl Harbor.

The ship next acted as escort enroute to the Marshall Islands, leaving Hawaii on March 21st and arriving at Majuro atoll on the 30th. She thence departed for Manus Island of the Admiralty group as part of the escort of Task Group 50.17, composed of fueling units. With this voyage uneventfully completed, the RIDDLE returned to Pearl Harbor where she underwent availability at the repair docks through the major part of May.

The RIDDLE was active in the Marshall and Marianas Islands areas through June 1944 and on July 4th, while screening fueling operations with Task Group 50.17, gained a contact with a submarine. A depth charge attack was immediately made after which the contact was lost. It was regained, however, within a short time and the RIDDLE with USS DAVID W. TAYLOR both dropped additional charges. Soon after the TAYLOR's last attack an underwater explosion was felt and the latter ship subsequently reported an oil slick and floating debris. After a thorough search of the attack area and no further contacts made with the undersea craft, it was assumed that it had been destroyed and each ship was given half credit for the kill.

The RIDDLE continued screening operations in the Marshall-Marianas area until the 1st of September when she anchored at Manus Island, Admiralty Islands. After sundry operations in those waters through September, the "DE" got underway as part of an escort group on October 4, to screen the sortie of Task Unit 38.8.16, a carrier and fueling group, from Seeadler Harbor, Manus. After the task unit was safely started on its way to the Philippine invasion, the RIDDLE returned to Manus.

On October 10th, the escort task unit was dissolved and the RIDDLE was assigned duties which kept her in the Admiralty and Western Caroline area until early January 1945. On the 14th of January she arrived at Leyte Gulf, Philippine Islands, after which she returned to her former haunts in the Marianas and Western Carolines on routine screening and patrol duties.

The ship operated in the Iwo Jima area in February 1945, acting as anti-aircraft and anti-submarine patrol as well as escorting various fleet units in their operations in that bloody battle area.

On the 5th of March she anchored at Saipan and the following day sailed for Leyte Gulf in company with the USS HYMAN. After remaining in San Pedro Bay, Leyte Gulf, until the 18th of March, the RIDDLE got underway as part of the escort group for Task Unit 51.7.1 enroute to Kerama Retto, Okinawa.

Upon arrival at Kerama Retto on March 26, 1945, the DE 185 operated with various screening units, patrol sections, and retirement groups in those waters. April 12th found the vessel off Okinawa on a patrolling station, with Task Force 51 under enemy air attack.

During the heavy air raid, Japanese planes broke through the protecting screen of the task force, two of them heading for the RIDDLE. The Japs roared out of the sun and the fighting little destroyer escort turned all guns, which would bear, on the lead plane.

It was hit repeatedly and caught fire but continued its Kamikaze dive; passed over the ship, just clearing the 40 millimeter director by a few feet, and crashed into the water a few yards off the port beam. The RIDDLE was in a tight turn at about half speed during this attack and fire was immediately shifted to the second plane which was already in his dive from ahead. It too was hit many times and began to burn but its dive continued. The RIDDLE was not so fortunate this time, for the Jap struck the 40 millimeter director, the 40 millimeter gun, then the after 3-inch gun, port depth charge rack, and then the main deck on the port quarter. Part of the plane pierced the main deck, passed through the carpenter shop and out the side of the ship. The remainder of the plane crashed into the water a few yards away, where the bomb exploded. Besides sustaining considerable materiel damage in this attack, one man was found missing and six were seriously injured.

The RIDDLE immediately left for the anchorage area west of the Okinawa landing beach for medical assistance and, after taking a doctor and two pharmacist's mates aboard from USS PCE(R) 855, proceeded to Kerama Retto for transfer of wounded and repair to her battle damage.

With her damage partially repaired, on April 16th the DE 185 got underway as part of escort in Task Unit 51.29.6 bound for Japan. She arrived there on the 20th where she spent three days in further damage repairs.

She arrived at Okinawa once more on May 1, 1945, and assumed patrol and escort duties there until the 15th of June when she got underway for Leyte Gulf as commander of Task Unit 31.29.9. The RIDDLE arrived in San Pedro Bay, Leyte Gulf, on June 18th and there she anchored until July 1st. From July 2-4 she participated in firing with the USS SALT LAKE CITY and on the 5th got underway as escort for the USS SHAMROCK BAY (CVE 84) enroute Guam. The ships moored at Guam on July 9th and the following day got underway for Pearl Harbor, T.H. Arriving at the Hawaiian base on July 19th, the RIDDLE in company with USS SWEARER (DE 186) weighed anchor for the United States the next day.

After her arrival at San Pedro, California, on July 27, 1945, the RIDDLE transferred her ammunition and then went into the yards of the South Coast Company, Newport Beach, California, for overhaul. She was in the overhaul stage when news was received of the capitulation of the Japanese and the end of hostilities.

On the 13th of November the RIDDLE got underway for Panama, C. Z., steaming singly, and after transiting the Panama Canal on November 22, arrived at Norfolk, Virginia, on the 29th. She underwent pre-decommissioning December 4-17 and then got underway for Green Cove Springs, Florida, with the USS O'NEILL (DE 188) on the 28th. Two days later she arrived at Commodore Point, Jacksonville, Florida, and the next day reported to Commander Florida Group, 16th Fleet, for inactivation. The RIDDLE went to the Inactive Fleet Berthing Area at Green Cove Springs on January 25, 1946 and by Directive dated March 1946 was to be disposed of as surplus to Navy needs.

CHANDLER made sound contact with the target, and dropped an 8-charge pattern. Up came a pungent oil slick and a mess of debris. Spelling each other off, NEWCOMB and CHANDLER depth-charged the water which was spewing this oily rubbish. At 1144, after a last attack by CHANDLER, there was a final deep-sea explosion.

"Debris in area of attack included cork slabs, wood, Diesel oil, and human entrails."

The end had come for Imperial Navy submarine I-185.

She was the sixth submarine downed by American destroyermen in the Pacific during the month of June, 1944. With July coming up on the calendar, the A/S campaign went ahead in high gear.

Riddle and David W. Taylor Kill I-10

Independence Day, 1944, was a dark day for Japanese submarine I-10. She was keeping her head down that evening, but not down far enough when Task Group 50.17 (a fuelling group consisting of six oilers and an escort-carrier) cruised by. Screening units in this group were destroyer-escort RIDDLE (Lieutenant Commander R. H. Cramer, U.S.N.R.) and destroyer DAVID W. TAYLOR (Commander W. H. Johnsen). The ships were minding their business in waters off the Marianas when RIDDLE, at 1707, made sonar contact with the I-boat at 6,000 yards.

While the formation maneuvered to avoid the "skunk," the DE dropped an embarrassing barrage of depth charges. At 1732 she let fly with hedgehog. Three minutes later the TAYLOR was sent by ComDesRon 51 to assist. While the DD was heading for the scene of action, RIDDLE fired two more hedgehog salvos, and followed through with a depth-charge run.

TAYLOR had sonar contact at 1822, and dropped an 11-charge pattern four minutes later. All charges exploded boisterously. At 1828 both ships heard and felt a stupendous undersea blast. A flock of bubbles rose to the surface, and TAYLOR came upon a large pond of oil and flotsam. The ships continued the search for about 20 hours, but they could find nothing more.

And they had found enough. On the sea bottom, her pressure hull burst and her compartments probably flooded, lay the I-10. Evidently she was downed by the old one-two—staggered by RIDDLE, and floored by DAVID W. TAYLOR.

William C. Miller Kills I-6

At 2120 in the evening of July 13, 1944, an A/S plane spotted a Jap sub submerging about 78 miles west of Rorogattan Point, Saipan. Dispatched on hunter-killer mission by ComDesRon 56, Commander

of the Saipan Transport Area Screen, destroyer-escort WILLIAM C. MILLER (Lieutenant Commander D. F. Francis, U.S.N.R.) and high-speed transport GILMER arrived on the scene at 0022 in the morning of the 14th.

The two ships searched until well after sunrise before the target was located. Then at 0720 the MILLER made sonar contact at 1,700 yards. Her skipper conned the DE in for a run, and she laid 13 charges in a neat pattern across the seascape. Lieutenant Commander Francis opened the range; contact was regained at 1,500 yards; another 13-charge pattern was fired. The MILLER started a third attack, but broke off the approach when the lookouts saw chunks of wood popping to the surface. A moment later the destroyermen heard a series of underwater booms. The sea churned and boiled. Thirteen charges were dropped into the swirl. Much debris rose with a spew of oil.

The destroyermen fished up a fur-lined cap with Jap naval insignia attached. Also fished up were several bits of something which appeared to be human lung tissue. These were the last earthly remains of the crew which manned the Imperial Navy's I-6.

Wyman Kills RO-48

Destroyer-escort WYMAN (Lieutenant Commander E. P. Parker, U.S.N.R.) was one of four DE's screening HOGGATT BAY. The hunter-killer group was on the prowl for bear along the convoy routes between Eniwetok and Saipan. On July 19, 1944, they had good hunting.

At 0024 WYMAN peeled off to track down a surface target picked up by radar at eight miles range. Twenty minutes later the "pip" flickered out on the radar screen, and WYMAN's sound crew immediately reported sonar contact. This was the familiar submarine affair, and WYMAN gave it an ending equally familiar. By 0051 Lieutenant Commander Parker had the ship in attack position, and she fired a full pattern of hedgehogs. The projectiles missed. Thirty-one minutes later the hedgehogs were flying again. A crackle of explosions assured the destroyermen they had found the mark.

At 0130 a number of deafening explosions roared into the DE's sound gear. Lost in the wake of this bombilation, contact could not be recovered. WYMAN was presently joined by destroyer-escort REYNOLDS (flagship of ComCortDiv 49), and the two ships ran the legs of a retiring-search plan. After daylight they picked up oil samples and specimens of debris. While WYMAN's whaleboat was combing through the flotsam, the little craft was attacked by eager aircraft from HOGGATT BAY, the airmen mistaking the boat

American submarines met practically no opposition. But the destroyer forces on the "Iceberg" front were in there fighting for days and weeks on end. The "small boys" got the man-size job at Okinawa. And they put up a giant-size effort to accomplish that job. The DD's and DE's which were engaged in that effort are listed on this page.

Most of the destroyers and destroyer-escorts on the "Iceberg" front worked as radar pickets or patrol vessels in the area screen. Covering the approaches to Okinawa, they mounted guard at radar picket stations positioned in a ring encircling the island, or patrolled the convoy approaches and served as A/S and anti-aircraft guards on a perimeter which embraced the transport area. These picket and patrol ships constituted Task Flotilla 5, under command of a veteran destroyerman, Commodore Frederick Moosbrugger.

The "Iceberg" mission of the DD's and DE's in Task Flotilla 5 is best detailed in the words of Commodore Moosbrugger, whose official summarization is quoted herewith:

(A) Radar Pickets and Supports.

Distant radar pickets were stationed between 40 and 70 miles from the transport area in the direction of the approach of enemy aircraft from the Japanese Island chain, China bases, and Formosa. Close radar pickets were stationed 20 to 25 miles from the transport area. In addition, stations in the outer and inner anti-submarine screen were designated as radar picket stations. Their special duty consisted of detecting, tracking, and reporting on aircraft in the vicinity of the transport area.

The function of the distant radar pickets was to give early warning of enemy air raids and surface craft, and to perform the duties of fighter direction. Specially equipped fighter-director destroyers with fighter-director teams embarked were used as fighter-director ships. These fighter-director destroyers controlled such units of the CAP as were assigned them by the central fighter-director unit embarked in the EL DORADO or other headquarters ship. Initially a radar picket group was composed of one FD (fighter-director) destroyer and two LCS supports. Each LCS was stationed one third the distance to an adjacent radar picket station to increase the probability of detection of low-flying planes and barge or other surface movement along the island chain. In case of attack the supports closed the radar picket for mutual protection. This formation was later changed, and the LCS's were stationed with the picket as close supports.

DESTROYERS AND DESTROYER-ESCORTS AT OKINAWA

(MARCH 26-JUNE 21, 1945)

Destroyers

AMMEN	GREGORY	PAUL HAMILTON
ANTHONY	GUEST	PICKING
AULICK	HALL	PORTERFIELD
BACHE	HARRY E. HUBBARD	PRESTON
BEALE	HART	PRICHETT
BENNETT	HERNDON	PRINGLE
BENNION	HEYWOOD L. EDWARDS	PURDY
BOYD	HOWORTH	PUTNAM
BRADFORD	HUDSON	RALPH TALBOT
BRAINE	HUGH W. HADLEY	ROOKS
BROWN	HUTCHINS	ROWE
BRYANT	HYMAN	RUSSELL
BUSH	INGERSOLL	SHUBRICK
CAPERTON	INGRAHAM	SMALLEY
CASSIN YOUNG	IRWIN	SPROSTON
CHARLES AUSBURNE	ISHERWOOD	STACK
CHARLES J. BADGER	KIMBERLY	STANLY
CLAXTON	KNAPP	STERETT
COGSWELL	LAFFEY	STODDARD
COLHOUN	LANG	STORMES
COMPTON	LANSDOWNE	THATCHER
CONVERSE	LAWS	TWIGGS
COWELL	LITTLE	VAN VALKENBURGH
DALY	LOWRY	WADSWORTH
DOUGLAS H. FOX	LUCE	WALKE
DREXLER	MANNERT L. ABELE	WATTS
DYSON	MASSEY	WICKES
EVANS	METCALF	WILKES
FARENHOLT	MOALE	WILLARD KEITH
FULLAM	MORRIS	WILSON
FOOTE	MORRISON	WM. D. PORTER
GAINARD	MULLANY	WREN
	MUSTIN	

Destroyer-Escorts

ABERCROMBIE	GENDREAU	RIDDLE ✓
BEBAS	GILLIGAN	SAMUEL S. MILES
BOWERS	GRADY	SEDERSTROM
BRIGHT	GRISWOLD	SEID
CARLSON	HALLORAN	SNYDER
CONNOLLY	HEMMINGER	STERN
CROSS	HENRY A. WILEY	SWEARER
CROUTER	LA PRADE	TILLS
D. M. CUMMINGS	LE RAY WILSON	TISDALE
EDMONDS	MANLOVE	VAMMEN
EISELE	MCCLELLAND	WALTER C. WANN
ENGLAND	METIVIER	WESSON
FAIR	OBERRENDER	WHITEHURST
FIEBERLING	O'NEILL	WILLMARTH
FINNEGAN	PAUL G. BAKER	WITTER
FLEMING	RALL	WM. C. COLE
FOREMAN	R. W. SUESENS	WM. SEIVERTLING

zines. COLHOUN was still afloat when the ship she had tried to save went under.

About five hours later COLHOUN, herself, went under. Wilson fought to save her as he had fought to save CHEVALIER. But the battle proved hopeless. After the fourth crash, Wilson had decided to abandon ship except for a skeleton crew. When CASSIN YOUNG approached, she was told that COLHOUN could hold on for a time, and she was urged to hunt for BUSH survivors. LCS-84 stood by COLHOUN to remove some of the crew. Then YOUNG tried to tow, but the line parted. Electrical fires broke out. By 2300 the sea was sizzling over the redhot griddle of the main deck, and the ship had listed heavily to starboard. Leaving the charred and mangled bodies of slain shipmates to man her to the last, the COLHOUN party finally went overside.

Rescue vessels were waiting. The darkness closed in around the abandoned destroyer. CASSIN YOUNG stood off to bury her with gunfire. About 2330 the hull broke up, and COLHOUN went down, wrapped in a shroud of steam. Down with her she took the bodies of one officer and 34 men. Some 295 of the crew, including 21 wounded, survived the sinking.

Endorsing Commander Wilson's Action Report, Captain Moosbrugger wrote: "*The entire performance of COLHOUN during her last action, including 'shooting,' damage control, and handling of personnel to minimize losses, is an outstanding example of fighting spirit and combat efficiency.*"

Loss of U.S.S. Mannert L. Abele

Death stalked destroyer MANNERT L. ABELE in the afternoon of April 12, 1945, while the ship stood radar picket duty at her post off Okinawa.

That was the day Franklin D. Roosevelt died, and the enemy thought to make capital of the tragedy which stunned the Allied world. *Banzai!* A great blitz by the Special Attack Corps while the American nation was in mourning. A monster suicide assault to celebrate the death of the American President.

So the *Kamikazes* came, about 200 strong. With them they brought the *Oka*—the madman's idiot little brother. The noonday sky was blue, and sunshine flecked the sea with gold. Then, all in a breath, the sky was spattered with shrapnel bursts and the seascape was gouged by explosions, smudged with smoke, streaked with oil, and cluttered with debris.

Seventeen times the suiciders struck. Seventeen raids in which crazed *Kamikazes* and idiot *Okas* flung themselves upon the American ships off the Okinawa shore. In that fiery tempest battleship TENNESSEE was struck. So was battleship IDAHO. So were smaller vessels working near the beach. As usual,

destroyers were in the vortex of this *Kamikaze* tornado.

Destroyer-escort WHITEHURST was hit. Destroyer STANLY was hit by a demented "*Baka*." Destroyer-escort RIDDLE was hit. Destroyer CASSIN YOUNG was hit. Destroyer-escort RALL was hit. Destroyer PURDY was hit. And one of the first to be struck was destroyer MANNERT L. ABELE.

She was hit by two suiciders. The first, a *Kamikaze*, came screaming at her about 1445. Plunging through fusillades of AA fire, the plane smashed into the destroyer's starboard side. The blast wiped out the after engine-room, hurling men and machinery skyward. Sixty seconds later, what was believed to be a "*Baka*" smashed into the ship's starboard side, forward, blowing up the forward fireroom.

The double blasting broke the ship's back, and with her starboard side smashed in, she was soon swamped. ABELE's captain, Commander A. E. Parker, had the satisfaction of knowing that the destroyer's guns had shot down two of the attacking *Kamikazes*. But that was slim recompense for the loss of a new destroyer. The vessel's main deck was awash almost immediately after the *Oka* smash. Three minutes later she went under.

In those three minutes Lieutenant George L. Way packed enough action for a lifetime. Blown overside by the "*Baka*" blast, Way caught a line and clambered back on board the sinking ship. One minute gone. He spent the next sixty seconds rounding up all able hands forward, and setting them to work cutting loose and launching life rafts. Two minutes gone. A fraction of the third minute he spent in opening the hatch above the passageway to the plotting room—an exit for the men in that cubicle. Then he flung himself at the port hatch of the forward engine-room. A dog was jammed. Somewhere Way snatched a crowbar—a hammer—something. Pounding and wrenching, he succeeded in breaking off the dog. Time was ticking; the main deck was awash. Way swung open the hatch as wavelets lapped and splashed at the combing. Out of the prisoned darkness below, and onto the current-swept deck came pale, grease-smearing men—ten who had been trapped—ten who were released from death. Time was up. But three minutes were enough for Lieutenant George L. Way.

A Jap plane dropped a bomb squarely in the center of a large group of swimming survivors, and those who lived through this blasting found themselves struggling in a sludge of oil and blood. Lieutenant (jg) John E. Hertner, ship's Medical Officer, worked valiantly over the wounded on the rafts and in the water. Seventy-three of the destroyer's crew were lost in the sinking; the fatalities would have been con-

to a bewildering free-for-all of aerial dogfights and ash-dive attacks. At 1759 NEWCOMB's radar spotted nearing enemy. A moment later the destroyer's lookouts saw the aircraft skimming in across the water. The AA guns roared; fragments of metal were flicked from the plane; but the aircraft came on like a streaking shadow, and smashed into the destroyer's after stack. The ship slowed rapidly as steam whistled from ruptured boilers. Fire broke out in the upper handling room of a 5-inch battery.

As NEWCOMB's crew was fighting battle damage, a second Jap plane came in on the starboard bow. This menace was shot down at a range of 6,000 yards. Then a third plane, which had followed the first one in from the west, crashed the destroyer amidships near the torpedo workshop. The explosion stopped the destroyer dead in the sea. Both engine-rooms and the after fireroom were blown into scrap. The after stack, both torpedo mounts, all of the amidship superstructure, 40 mm. mounts, and magazines disintegrated in crimson eruption. And at that critical moment a fourth *Kamikaze* slammed into the forward stack, showering the molten wreckage with gasoline.

Within 11 short minutes NEWCOMB had been reduced from a warship to a furnace, a wallowing

crematorium. But her captain, Commander I. E. McMillian, and his equally stout crew hung on. With them hung Captain R. N. Smoot, ComDesRon 56, bent on saving his shattered flagship.

Destroyer LEUTZE (Lieutenant L. Grabowsky) immediately steamed to NEWCOMB's aid, boldly going alongside the burning wreck. Hoses were passed forward, and preparations were being made to pass them aft when a fifth *Kamikaze* hurtled down from the sky. An accurate VT projectile burst under the plane's left wing and tilted it just enough to send it skidding across LEUTZE's fantail, where it exploded with a huge detonation. The ship immediately lost steering control, and her torn stern settled in the water. Able to make about five knots, she succeeded in getting clear of NEWCOMB, and standing off to fight her own damage. Topside weights were hastily jettisoned, but by 1830 LEUTZE's fantail was awash. "*Am in serious danger of sinking,*" she signalled NEWCOMB, "*am pulling away.*" Torpedoes went overside. Depth charges went overside. Fuel went overside. And by 1900 the crew had won the battle for buoyancy. Minesweeper DEFENSE towed Grabowsky's ship into Kerama Retto. She was not the first lifesaver to come within an inch of losing her life while playing Good Samaritan.

While LEUTZE was limping away, destroyer BEALE

★

DESTROYER AND DESTROYER-ESCORTS DAMAGED AT OKINAWA

Ship	Commanding Officer	Date	Damage	Casualties	
				Killed	Wounded
KIMBERLY (DD)	Comdr. J. D. Whitfield	March 26	Major	4	57
PORTERFIELD (DD)	Comdr. D. W. Wulzen	March 27	Minor	—	1
MURRAY (DD)	Comdr. P. L. de Vos	March 27	Major	1	4
O'BRIEN (DD)	Comdr. W. W. Outerbridge	March 27	Major	50	76
FOREMAN (DE)	Lt. Comdr. W. J. Carey, Jr.	March 27	Minor	—	1
		April 3	Major	—	—
FRANKS (DD)	Comdr. D. R. Stephan	April 2	Major	—	2
			(Captain fatally wounded)		
PRICHETT (DD)	Comdr. C. E. Bowley	April 3	Major	—	—
		July 29	Minor	2	1
NEWCOMB (DD)	Comdr. I. E. McMillian	April 6	Major	40	51
LEUTZE (DD)	Lt. L. Grabowsky	April 6	Major	8	30
MULLANY (DD)	Comdr. A. O. Momm	April 6	Major	30	36
HOWORTH (DD)	Comdr. E. S. Burns	April 6	Major	9	14
HYMAN (DD)	Comdr. R. N. Norgaard	April 6	Major	11	41
MORRIS (DD)	Lt. Comdr. R. V. Wheeler	April 6	Major	12	45
HARRISON (DD)	Comdr. W. V. Combs	April 6	Minor	—	—
HAYNSWORTH (DD)	Comdr. S. N. Tackney	April 6	Major	12	27
FIEBERLING (DE)	Comdr. E. E. Lull	April 6	Minor	—	—

From:
U.S. Destroyer Operations in World War II
by Theodore Roosevelt Association, U.S. Navy, and the War Relocation Authority

DESTROYERS AND DESTROYER-ESCORTS DAMAGED AT OKINAWA (Continued)

Ship	Commanding Officer	Date	Damage	Casualties	
				Killed	Wounded
WESSON (DE)	Lt. Comdr. H. Sears, U.S.N.R.	April 7	Major	8	25
BENNETT (DD)	Comdr. J. N. McDonald	April 7	Major	3	18
GREGORY (DD)	Comdr. Bruce McCandless	April 8	Major	-	2
CHARLES J. BADGER (DD)	Comdr. J. H. Cotten	April 9	Major	-	-
MANLOVE (DE)	Lt. Comdr. E. P. Foster, Jr., U.S.N.R.	April 11	Minor	1	10
KIDD (DD)	Comdr. H. G. Moore	April 11	Major	38	55
HANK (DD)	Comdr. G. M. Chambers	April 11	Minor	3	1
HALE (DD)	Comdr. D. W. Wilson	April 11	Minor	-	2
WHITEHURST (DE)	Lt. J. C. Horton, U.S.N.R.	April 12	Major	37	37
BENNION (DD)	Comdr. R. H. Holmes	April 12	Minor	1	6
		April 30	Minor	-	-
STANLY (DD)	Lt. Comdr. R. S. Harlan	April 12	Medium	-	3
✓ RIDDLE (DE)	Lt. Comdr. F. P. Steele, U.S.N.R.	April 12	Medium	1	9
CASSIN YOUNG (DD)	Comdr. J. W. Ailes, III	April 12	Major	1	59
RALL (DE)	Lt. Comdr. C. B. Taylor, U.S.N.R.	April 12	Major	21	38
PURDY (DD)	Comdr. F. L. Johnson	April 12	Major	13	58
SIGSBEE (DD)	Comdr. G. P. Chunghoon	April 14	Major	3	75
MCDERMUT (DD)	Comdr. C. B. Jennings	April 16	Major	2	33
LAFFEY (DD)	Comdr. F. J. Becton	April 16	Major	32	71
BOWERS (DE)	Lt. Comdr. C. F. Highfield, U.S.N.R.	April 16	Major	48	59
				(many fatally)	
BRYANT (DD)	Comdr. G. C. Seay	April 16	Major	34	33
WADSWORTH (DD)	Comdr. R. D. Fusselman	April 22	Minor	-	1
AMMEN (DD)	Comdr. J. H. Brown	April 21	Minor	-	8
ISHERWOOD (DD)	Comdr. L. E. Schmidt	April 27	Major	42	41
HUTCHINS (DD)	Lt. Comdr. A. R. Olsen	April 6	Minor	1	3
		April 27	Major	-	18
RALPH TALBOT (DD)	Comdr. W. S. Brown, U.S.N.R.	April 27	Major	5	9
DALY (DD)	Comdr. R. R. Bradley, Jr.	April 28	Minor	3	33
TWIGGS (DD)	Comdr. G. Philip, Jr.	April 28	Major	No data	
HAGGARD (DD)	Lt. Comdr. V. J. Soballe	April 29	Major	11	40
HAZLEWOOD (DD)	Comdr. V. P. Douw	April 29	Major	46	26
				(Including Captain)	
HUDSON (DD)	Comdr. R. R. Pratt	April 22	Minor	-	1
		May 4	Major	-	-
ENGLAND (DE)	Lt. J. A. Williamson, U.S.N.R.	May 9	Major	34	30
EVANS (DD)	Comdr. R. J. Archer	May 11	Major	31	29
HUGH W. HADLEY (DD)	Comdr. B. J. Mullaney	May 11	Major	28	67
BACHE (DD)	Lt. Comdr. A. R. McFarland	May 13	Major	41	32
JOHN C. BUTLER (DE)	Lt. Cmdr. J. E. Pace	May 20	Medium	-	3
DOUGLAS H. FOX (DD)	Comdr. R. M. Pitts	May 17	Major	9	35
COWELL (DD)	Comdr. C. L. Werts	May 25	Minor	-	2
STORMES (DD)	Comdr. W. N. Wylie	May 25	Major	21	16
ANTHONY (DD)	Comdr. C. J. VanArsdall, Jr.	May 27	Minor	-	-
		June 7	Minor	-	5
BRAINE (DD)	Comdr. W. W. Fitts	May 27	Major	50	78
SHUBRICK (DD)	Lt. Comdr. J. C. Jolly	May 29	Major	32	28

DESTROYER ESCORT	DATE COMMISSIONED	FIRST COMMANDING OFFICER	DESTROYER ESCORT	DATE COMMISSIONED	FIRST COMMANDING OFFICER
FECHTELER	July 1, 1943	Lt. Cdr. C. R. Simmers	THOMASON	Dec. 10, 1943	Lt. Cdr. C. B. Henriques, U.S.N.R.
CHASE	July 18, 1943	Lt. Cdr. V. B. Staedecker, U.S.N.R.	JORDAN	Dec. 17, 1943	Lt. Cdr. Fred C. Billing, U.S.N.R.
LANING	Aug. 1, 1943	Lt. Cdr. E. C. Woodward	NEWMAN	Nov. 26, 1943	Lt. Cdr. W. C. Meyer, U.S.N.R.
LOY	Sept. 12, 1943	Lt. Cdr. James V. Bewick	LIDDLE	Dec. 6, 1943	Lt. Cdr. R. M. Hinckley, Jr., U.S.N.R.
BARRIER	Oct. 10, 1943	Lt. E. T. B. Sullivan	KEPHART	Jan. 7, 1944	Lt. Cdr. I. H. Cammarn, U.S.N.R.
LEVY	May 13, 1943	Cdr. Frank W. Schmidt	COFER	Jan. 19, 1944	Lt. A. P. Chester, U.S.N.R.
MCCONNELL	May 28, 1943	Cdr. Dennis D. Humphreys, U.S.N.R.	LLOYD	Feb. 11, 1944	Lt. Cdr. P. N. Gammelgard, U.S.N.R.
OSTERHAUS	June 12, 1943	Cdr. R. H. Groff, U.S.N.R.	OTTER	Feb. 21, 1944	Lt. Cdr. D. M. Kerr, U.S.N.R.
PARKS	June 22, 1943	Lt. Cdr. M. McQuilkin, U.S.N.R.	HUBBARD	Mar. 6, 1944	Lt. Cdr. L. C. Mabley, U.S.N.R.
BARON	July 5, 1943	Lt. Cdr. Donald McVickar, U.S.N.R.	HAYTER	Mar. 16, 1944	Lt. Cdr. H. J. Theriault, U.S.N.R.
ACREE	July 19, 1943	Lt. Cdr. W. H. Siegmund, U.S.N.R.	WILLIAM T. POWELL	Mar. 28, 1944	Lt. J. L. Davenport, U.S.N.R.
AMICK	July 26, 1943	Lt. Cdr. F. C. McCune	SCOTT	July 20, 1943	Lt. Cdr. C. S. Kirkpatrick, U.S.N.R.
ATHERTON	Aug. 29, 1943	Lt. Paul L. Mansell, Jr., U.S.N.R.	BURKE	Aug. 20, 1943	Lt. Cdr. Edwin K. Winn, U.S.N.R.
BOOTH	Sept. 19, 1943	Lt. Cdr. Donald W. Todd	ENRIGHT	Sept. 21, 1943	Lt. Cdr. A. Wildner
CARROLL	Oct. 24, 1943	Lt. Cdr. Frederick W. Kuhn	COOLBAUGH	Oct. 15, 1943	Lt. Cdr. L. S. Kintberger
COONER	Aug. 21, 1943	Lt. Cdr. J. M. Stuart	DARBY	Nov. 15, 1943	Cdr. D. D. Humphreys, U.S.N.R.
ELDRIDGE	Aug. 27, 1943	Lt. Charles R. Hamilton, U.S.N.R.	J. DOUGLAS BLACK- WOOD	Jan. 15, 1943	Cdr. R. B. Randolph, U.S.N.R.
*MARTS	Sept. 3, 1943	Lt. C. M. Fellows, U.S.N.R.	FRANCIS M. ROBIN- SON	Jan. 15, 1944	Lt. J. E. Johansen, U.S.N.R.
*PENNEWILL	Sept. 15, 1943	Lt. J. E. Allen, U.S.N.R.	SOLAR	Feb. 15, 1944	Lt. Cdr. H. A. Hull, U.S.N.R.
MICKA	Sept. 23, 1943	Lt. John C. Spencer	FOWLER	Mar. 15, 1944	Lt. Cdr. G. S. J. Forde, U.S.N.R.
*REYBOLD	Sept. 29, 1943	Lt. Cdr. A. B. Bradley, Jr., U.S.N.R.	SPANGENBERG	April 15, 1944	Lt. T. H. P. Whitney, U.S.N.R.
*HERZOG	Oct. 6, 1943	Lt. Cdr. J. C. Toft, Jr., U.S.N.R.	RUDDEROW	May 15, 1944	Lt. Cdr. M. W. Greenough, U.S.N.R.
*MCANN	Oct. 11, 1943	Cdr. G. F. Hooper, U.S.N.R.	DAY	June 10, 1944	Lt. Cdr. K. E. Read, U.S.N.R.
TRUMPETER	Oct. 16, 1943	Cdr. J. R. Litchfield, U.S.N.R.	CHAFFEE	May 9, 1944	Lt. Cdr. A. C. Jones, U.S.N.R.
STRAUB	Oct. 25, 1943	Lt. Cdr. J. T. Kilbreth, Jr., U.S.N.R.	HODGES	May 27, 1944	Lt. Cdr. V. B. Staedecker, U.S.N.R.
GUSTAFSON	Nov. 1, 1943	Cdr. Herman Reich, U.S.N.R.	STEWART	May 31, 1943	Lt. Cdr. B. C. Turner, U.S.N.R.
SAMUEL S. MILES	Nov. 4, 1943	Lt. Cdr. G. B. Coale, U.S.N.R.	STURTEVANT	June 16, 1943	Lt. Cdr. Frederic W. Hawes
WESSON	Nov. 11, 1943	Lt. Cdr. C. F. Havermeier, U.S.N.R.	MOORE	July 1, 1943	Lt. Cdr. Henry P. Michiels, U.S.N.R.
✓ RIDDLE	Nov. 17, 1943	Lt. Cdr. Ronald H. Cramer, U.S.N.R.	KEITH	July 19, 1943	Lt. Drayton Cochran, U.S.N.R.
SWEARER	Nov. 24, 1943	Lt. K. N. Hannan, U.S.N.R.	TOMICH	July 26, 1943	Lt. Hadlai A. Hull, U.S.N.R.
STERN	Dec. 1, 1943	Lt. Cdr. J. R. Hinton, Jr., U.S.N.R.	J. RICHARD WARD	July 5, 1943	Lt. D. A. Smith, U.S.N.R.
O'NEILL	Dec. 6, 1943	Lt. D. S. Bill, Jr.	OTTERSTETTER	Aug. 6, 1943	Lt. Cdr. W. B. Porter
BRONSTEIN	Dec. 13, 1943	Lt. Sheldon H. Kinney	SLOAT	Aug. 16, 1943	Lt. Cdr. E. E. Garcia
BAKER	Dec. 23, 1943	Lt. Cdr. L. B. Lockwood, U.S.N.R.	SNOWDEN	Aug. 23, 1943	Lt. Cdr. A. Jackson, Jr., U.S.N.R.
COFFMAN	Dec. 27, 1943	Lt. Cdr. W. H. Putnam, U.S.N.R.	STANTON	Aug. 7, 1943	Lt. Cdr. C. S. Barker, Jr.
EISNER	Jan. 1, 1944	Lt. Cdr. Donald McVickar, U.S.N.R.	SWASEY	Aug. 31, 1943	Lt. H. M. Godsey, U.S.N.R.
GARFIELD THOMAS	Jan. 24, 1944	Lt. Cdr. R. G. Werner, U.S.N.R.	MARCHAND	Sept. 8, 1943	Lt. Cdr. G. I. Lynch, U.S.C.G.
WINGFIELD	Jan. 28, 1944	Lt. Cdr. Howard E. Purdy, U.S.N.R.	HURST	Aug. 30, 1943	Lt. Cdr. Bret H. Brallier, U.S.C.G.
THORNHILL	Feb. 1, 1944	Lt. J. B. Shumway, U.S.N.R.	CAMP	Sept. 16, 1943	Cdr. P. B. Mavor, U.S.C.G.
RINEHART	Feb. 12, 1944	Lt. P. W. Crouch, Jr.	HOWARD D. CROW	Sept. 27, 1943	Lt. Cdr. D. T. Adams, U.S.C.G.
ROCHE	Feb. 21, 1944	Lt. R. E. Parker, U.S.N.R.			
LOVELACE	Nov. 7, 1943	Cdr. R. D. DeKey, U.S.N.R.			
MANNING	Oct. 1, 1943	Lt. J. I. Mingey, U.S.N.R.			
NEUENDORF	Oct. 18, 1943	Lt. Cdr. J. N. McDonald			
JAMES E. CRAIG	Nov. 1, 1943	Lt. Cdr. H. M. Ericsson			
EICHENBERGER	Nov. 17, 1943	Lt. Cdr. N. Hertell			