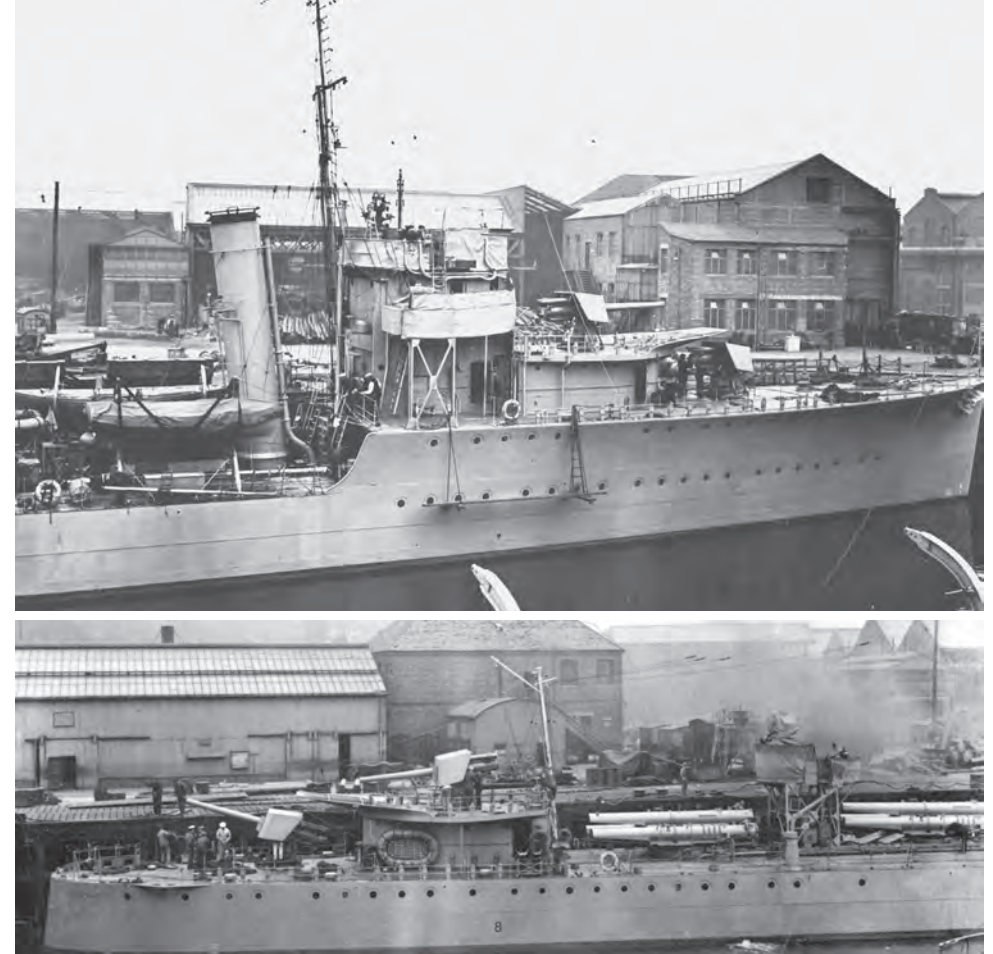


HMS Hood and HMS Venomous in the fitting-out basin at John Brown's shipyard on the Clyde. A photocopy of the original which was probably at one time in the collection of photographs of HMS Hood under construction in the National Archives of Scotland • *The publishers would like to know the present whereabouts of this photograph.*

B11 when she sank the elderly Ottoman pre-dreadnought battleship *Messudieh* in the Dardanelles on 13 December 1914. Her CO, Lt Norman Holbrook RN, was the first submariner to be awarded the VC and every crew member received an award. The ratings all received the DSM. Perry was promoted to Warrant Officer in June 1918 and joined *Venomous* on 27 July 1919.⁴

Midshipman Renfrew Gotto and Midshipman Hugh Mundy were eighteen when they joined *Venomous* on 1 June 1919 at the start of her first Commission. Despite their youth they had plenty of seetime as their education at Osborne and Dartmouth had been curtailed to allow more midshipmen to join the expanded Fleet and to replace casualties. Renfrew Gotto was sixteen when he was promoted from Cadet to Midshipman and joined the battleship HMS *King George V* on 26 September 1917. His son Brian Gotto described how:

“The despatch of large numbers of midshipmen to the Fleet at (for modern times) the tender age of 16 caused widespread flurries in the correspondence columns of the national press. In the service itself ‘Snotties’ were a despicable



Views of the bow and stern of HMS Venomous fitting-out in John Brown's shipyard on the Clyde in 1919.

• *Courtesy of Warships on Clydeside, see <http://www.clydeside.co.uk/warships/index.asp>*

form of life to be systematically harried and beaten for the good of their souls; as messengers they were the recognised ‘medium of abuse between two officers of unequal seniority’, but to the great British public they were dear little ‘Middies’ to be doted on.”⁵

Under her new commander and with a ship's company of 134 men, *Venomous* proceeded down the Clyde for acceptance trials on 4 June. The ship's log records *Venomous* weighing anchor at 0930 on 4 June 1919 and proceeding down the Clyde for Tail O' the Bank to calibrate her compass. This brand new destroyer must have made a fine sight cutting through the waters of the Clyde at a steady 12 knots. Who could have predicted the long and eventful service that this new addition to the fleet would experience in the years ahead?

Russell put *Venomous* through engineering, gunnery, torpedo, and operational exercises, including supplying shells and cartridges to the guns, to ensure the ship met fleet standards and bring the ship's company up to operational proficiency. The drills and exercises detailed in the ship's log were intermingled with such mundane entries



In 1924 the Army won the annual polo match against the Navy by 2 goals to 1.

• Courtesy of Timothy McQuoid-Mason

The British-born Queen of Romania presented the Cup to the Army.

From left standing: Lt Cdr Donal Scott McGrath RN, Major Burney Gordon Highlanders, Lt Warburton-Lee RN and Major Ryan, RGA. Seated from left: Major Mellard, RAVC, Capt. the Hon. Barry Bingham VC, RN, the Queen of Romania, Col White RE and Lt Thompson RN • Courtesy of Timothy McQuoid-Mason



‘Moved again under the 150 ton crane to lift torpedo tubes.’ Saturday, 10 January: ‘Lying alongside the *Swan*.’¹⁵ Sunday, 11 January: ‘Entered Malta Dockyard.’ Monday, 12 January: ‘*Valiant* went in dock.’¹⁶ Friday, 23 January: ‘Taking out bearings and stripping it down.’ Tuesday, 27 January: ‘Got own ship’s galley in use again.’ Thursday, 29 January: ‘Malta dockyard. Lifted our starboard turbine. Several blades are broken. Lovely day, but three more tubes were taken out of boiler.’ Friday, 30 January: ‘More tubes out of boiler.’ Saturday, 31 January: ‘Lifted the turbine rotor this morning.’ Monday, 2 February: ‘Came out of dry dock. Went alongside gun mounting wharf. Got the last of the tubes out of boiler, but had to cut out one extra.’ Tuesday, 3 February: ‘Finished my job on boiler. Dockyard boiler makers taking over. Went and saw tubes cut up and pricked.’”

On 23 October, there was a change of command aboard *Venomous* when Lt Cdr Donal S. McGrath RN succeeded Gardner.¹⁷ McGrath, a younger son of a wealthy plantation owner in Jamaica, served throughout the Great War and was mentioned in dispatches (MID) for attacking an enemy submarine “with great determination” in December 1917 while commanding HMS *Foxhound*, a torpedo-boat destroyer (TBD). McGrath’s previous command had been the S Class destroyer HMS *Sportive*.

On 2 November, the ship’s log recorded that every available officer and man was landed for inspection by the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet, Sir Osmond de Beauvoir Brock, but apart from exercises with the 4th Battle Squadron at the end of the month, the year drew to an uneventful close with *Venomous* moored in the Grand Harbour over the Christmas and New Year’s holiday. Despite the holiday revelry and the arrival of letters and Christmas packages, our stoker would have had a lonely time away from his wife and children.

New Year’s Day 1924 passed quietly for *Venomous* and the 4th Flotilla but January brought a series of exercises to bring the ship and her squadron mates back up to fighting proficiency. As our stoker recalled in his diary “Torpedo and gunnery exercises commence with gunnery live fire.”

Exercises did not always come without cost; our stoker wrote on 24 January, “On manoeuvres with HMS *Stuart* and *Veteran*. *Stuart* enters dry dock after collision.” Collisions at sea during formation exercises were common occurrences.

With ship workups and squadron exercises completed, *Venomous* and the flotilla departed on 2 February for a fourteen-day cruise along the east coast of Sardinia, stopping off at Arania Bay and the Gulf of Terranova, and returning to Malta on the 16th.

McGrath was a keen polo player and had the income to support this expensive sport. He was a member of the Malta Polo Club, had his own pony and represented the Navy in their annual game against the Army as reported in the society magazine, *The Tatler*, on 19 March. McGrath’s team include Capt. the Hon. Barry Bingham



MAY 1940

given the task of destroying Dutch fuel reserves at Amsterdam (code named XD Operations) to prevent them falling into German hands, plus a naval demolition party sent to destroy the port facilities and block the harbour entrance at IJmuiden, the gateway to Amsterdam. Both units were under the overall command of Cdr M.G. Goodenough RN.

They had left Dover aboard HMS *Whitshed* for IJmuiden on 10 May and had a rough crossing. *Whitshed's* X Gun and its crew were blown overboard when she was attacked by JU 88 bombers outside IJmuiden harbour. The KFRE demo team went by a specially laid on single carriage train to Amsterdam and after delicate drawn out negotiations with the Dutch were given the go ahead to destroy the fuel reserves on 13 May. There was no destroyer waiting for them when they returned to IJmuiden. *Atjeh* was helping the auxiliary mine sweeper M3 tow the SS *Jan Pieterszoon Coen* into position to block the harbour entrance and both teams left for England aboard her on 14 May accompanied by officers of the Royal Netherlands Navy (RNN) including Cdr C. Hellingman, the naval commander at IJmuiden.⁷

AB Knapton was given command of the Dutch lifeboat but in the fevered atmosphere of the time navigation was the least of his problems:

"I was put in charge of the lifeboat and another AB and Stoker were sent to join me in the boat. The Captain called me from the bridge and asked me if I knew where Ramsgate was. I pointed in the general direction of England and said 'Yes Sir'. The Captain then said 'take her there and rejoin the ship at Dover the following day'.

We arrived at Margate where we had a bit of trouble with identification as we were still flying the Dutch flag. We were then re-directed down the coast to Ramsgate. Again, we took a little time convincing the shore personnel that we were English – not German. As they had us covered with Lewis guns and rifles we were uncomfortable for a while and if our answers to their challenge had not carried credibility we were convinced they would open fire. However, we were well looked after and rejoined our ship the following day."

Venomous put back into Dover at 1800, disembarked her passengers, and reached her buoy at just before midnight. The Dutch refugees on the *Zeemanshoop* were helped by the Netherlands Emergency Committee, the Jews from Germany were interned as enemy aliens on the Isle of Man and the four students enlisted in the Dutch armed forces.⁸

Venomous had spent four exhausting days on the North Goodwin Patrol. With her oil fuel down to twenty-five percent she spent the next day in harbour – a well-deserved rest for her crew. The night of the 17-18 May was spent back on the North Goodwin Patrol. *Venomous* returned to port late in the morning of the 18th and her

Desperate times aboard HMS *Venomous* under Lt Cdr J.E.H. McBeath DSO RN



Lt Angus "Bloody" MacKenzie & Lt Cdr John McBeath



Warrant Engineer A.E. Parkes RN



AB Roy Stallard DSM



Lt Peter Kershaw RNVR



AB Sydney Compston



CPO Hugh McGeeney DSM



Mr R.K. Thompson (left) & Sub Lt A.F. Esson RNR

safes, jet cabins, etc. and even the jets from the spinning machines, uncleaned and full of viscose, were thrown as they were in a sack, which should be easy to identify for viscose was oozing out of it all the way to London.

On arrival at the dock I contacted Lt Taylor, the Officer I/C docks, and arrangements were made with the CO of *Venomous* for the transfer on board of four sacks, containing the jets. It was quite a small load for all that money – £1.25 million – the Captain gave me a tin hat and a pistol in exchange."

Engine Room Artificer (ERA) Jim Irlam was ordered to take charge of the four sacks, and when told later what they contained, observed: "This is the only time I have sat on a million and I knew nothing about it!"

The task was completed by 1430. AB Edward Jennings, a member of the forecandle party, remembered: "casting off the forward hawser as the dockyard shed on my left blew up, presumably from a bomb, and then making a dash and a jump to board ship as the Captain took *Venomous* astern." At 1452 a signal was received from Vice Admiral Ramsay at his headquarters in Dover Castle congratulating *Venomous* on a successful mission and instructing McBeath to land the refugees at Folkestone before returning to Dover.¹⁵

Within the hour the ship was speeding by Dover at nearly 30 knots, before pulling into Folkestone. Giselle Ratcliffe was impressed:

"The organisation on the other side of the channel was marvellous. The authorities were ready to receive us. There were questions to be answered and passports to be checked. The WVS (Woman's Voluntary Service) was of course there. These splendid middle class English ladies were dishing out tea and food. They all smelled of lavender!"

The reaction of John Esslemont was: "Amazement at finding everything so quiet and to see everybody going about as it was in Calais only a few days before." Immediately after disembarkation McBeath brought *Venomous* back to Dover where she anchored at 1800 – a difficult and dangerous task safely accomplished.

Only then was it realised that one of the ship's company was missing – the ship's butcher. Happily, he returned to the ship a few days later. Apparently, whilst helping unload to quayside he took shelter during the bombing and when a lull occurred he discovered that the ship had sailed. He found shelter this time in a cellar with plenty of liquid refreshment and when he had recovered from his hangover he found some companions (not from *Venomous*) and together they took an abandoned boat out of harbour and so made their way back across the Channel.

The situation in northern France continued to deteriorate rapidly and by 21 May Panzer Forces under General von Kleist were advancing northwards virtually unopposed



Distant view of Dunkirk skyline. • Photographed by Lt Peter Kershaw RNVR



Giant plume of smoke over Dunkirk from exploding oil tanks as *Venomous* leaves Dunkirk for the last time.
• Photographed by Lt Peter Kershaw RNVR.

is staged for tonight and the nation looks to the navy to see this through. I want every ship to report as soon as possible whether she is fit & ready to meet the call which has been made on our courage and endurance.”

Having passed the daylight hours of the 3rd back in harbour, McBeath set *Venomous* on her final sortie toward Dunkirk at 2030 leading HMS *Sabre* whose compass had been damaged by a shell splinter. There was again a fresh northerly wind and berthing conditions were very difficult until the tide turned at 2330 and no ship was able to berth at the east mole until then, leaving only three hours available for embarkation. The harbour entrance got very congested. It was some three hours before *Venomous* was finally able to pull alongside the mole shortly before 0200 on Tuesday 4 June. It was during this time that she sustained her only significant damage, being rammed by a tug in the harbour entrance. The collision resulted in a deep dent in her port side, breaking the steam pipe casting to the port dynamo. Enveloped in steam, her stokers were able to affect temporary repairs to the ruptured steam pipe.

Once alongside, *Venomous* took aboard, with considerable difficulty, hundreds of French troops. McGeeney remembered:



Venomous and sister ships wait to berth at Dover after the last trip to Dunkirk.
• Photographed by Lt Peter Kershaw RNVR

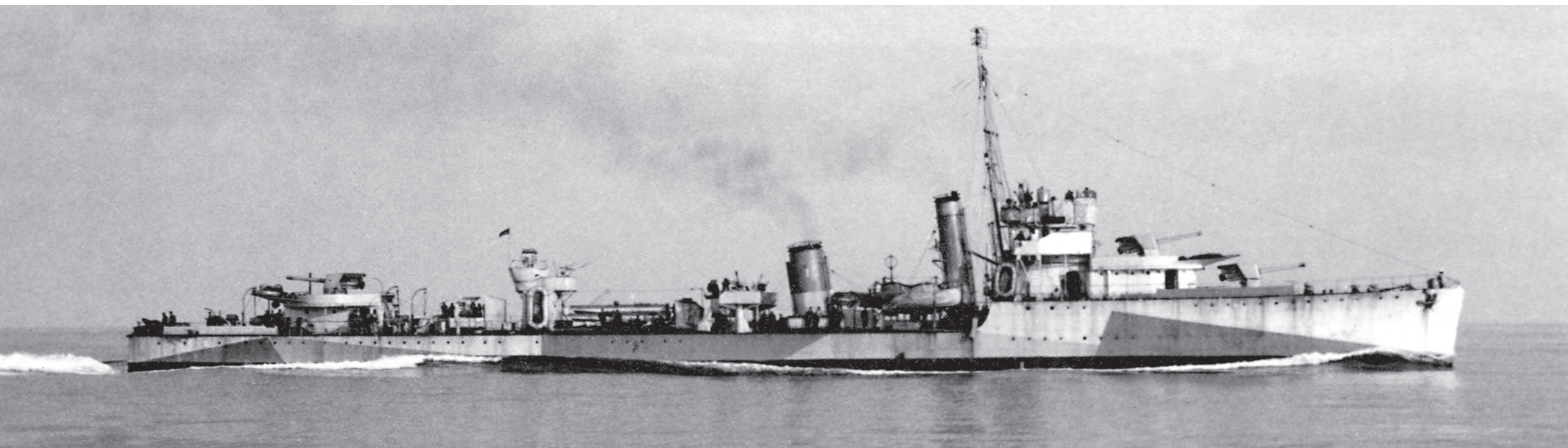
French troops disembarking at Dover from *Venomous*, 2 June 1940. • Photographed by Lt Peter Kershaw RNVR





The destroyer depot ship HMS *Hecla* in Hvalfjord, Iceland, with escorts moored alongside, 1941.
Including HMCS *Collingwood* (K180) and HMCS *Baddeck* (K147), Canadian Navy Flower Class Corvettes
• Photographed by George Male

HMS *Venomous* with Atlantic camouflage and minus “Y” Gun at stern.
• Photographed by Lt Peter Kershaw RNVR



capture was kept secret but by the end of June the code breakers at Bletchley Park were able to decipher the messages sent by Dönitz to his U-boat commanders and from then on convoys could be ordered to change course to avoid interception.

On 19 May with repairs completed Henderson received orders to depart for Aultbea on Loch Ewe, to join Convoy OB.323 of 35 ships from Liverpool. Because of the improved programme of warship construction the number of escorts for this convoy had increased to fourteen, of which no fewer than six were destroyers. Once again the cover provided was effective with only one ship lost and this after the escorts had departed.

After leaving Convoy OB.323 *Venomous* and her consorts entered Hvalfjord on 21 May and secured alongside the destroyer Depot Ship, HMS *Hecla*, to refuel and recover. There were usually three or four destroyers moored alongside *Hecla*. Her displacement of 12,000 tons was more than ten times that of *Venomous* and her sister ships and her workshops could carry out most repairs. *Venomous* was notoriously unreliable and she was a regular visitor. Her crew made new friends on *Hecla* and enjoyed the space aboard the large ship, the freshly baked bread (the bakery could bake 6,000 lb of bread a day), the laundry and medical facilities (including an operating theatre). Canadian escorts moored alongside had foods unobtainable in England. Fred Thomas, the RDF operator on *Venomous*, was asked by a friend on *Hecla* to post food parcels to his family when he returned to Londonderry. This was strictly forbidden but “Freddo” was happy to oblige and was rewarded with fresh baked rolls from the ship’s bakery which made him very popular with his mess mates. Despite this *Hecla* was not popular with the destroyer crews who lost out on shore leave while their ships were being repaired in Londonderry or on the Clyde.¹⁵

THE LONGEST NIGHT

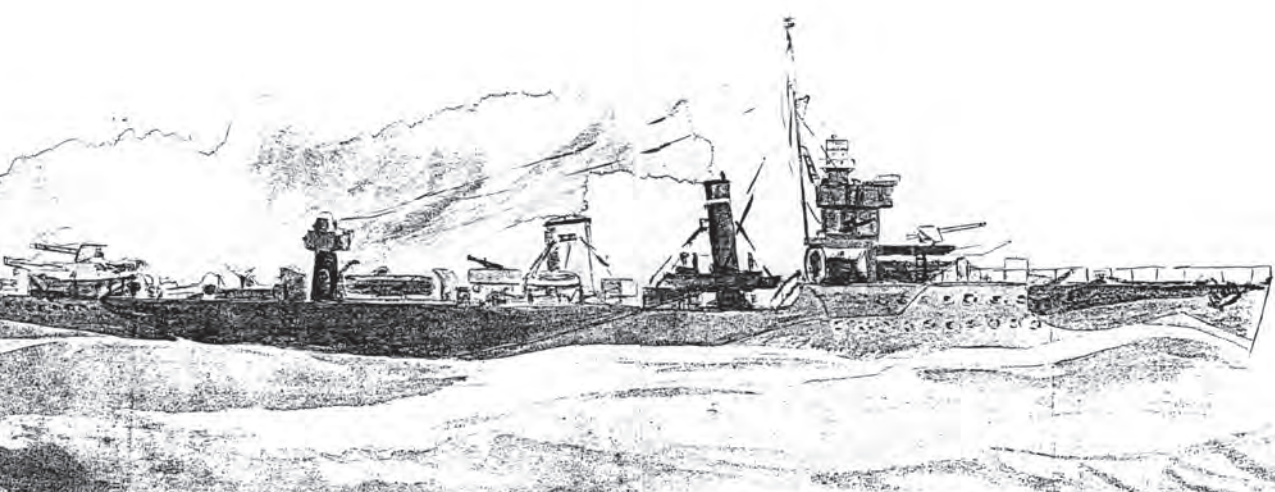


"As I swam away from the ship I took a last look at her. This is the picture that was photographed on my mind – I will never forget it. The huge hole made by the two torpedoes appeared to be just below my cabin – the armoured deck saved me."



"After the stern of the destroyer blew up, the cordite magazine caught fire. As I swam away from this new danger I saw our ship, brilliantly illuminated by the flames heeling over to port and sinking slowly by the stern. Hundreds of men were in the water."

A photocopy of a sketch of HMS *Venomous* by Herbert McWilliams found in the papers of Bob Moore



Left: Exhausted survivors of HMS *Hecla*.

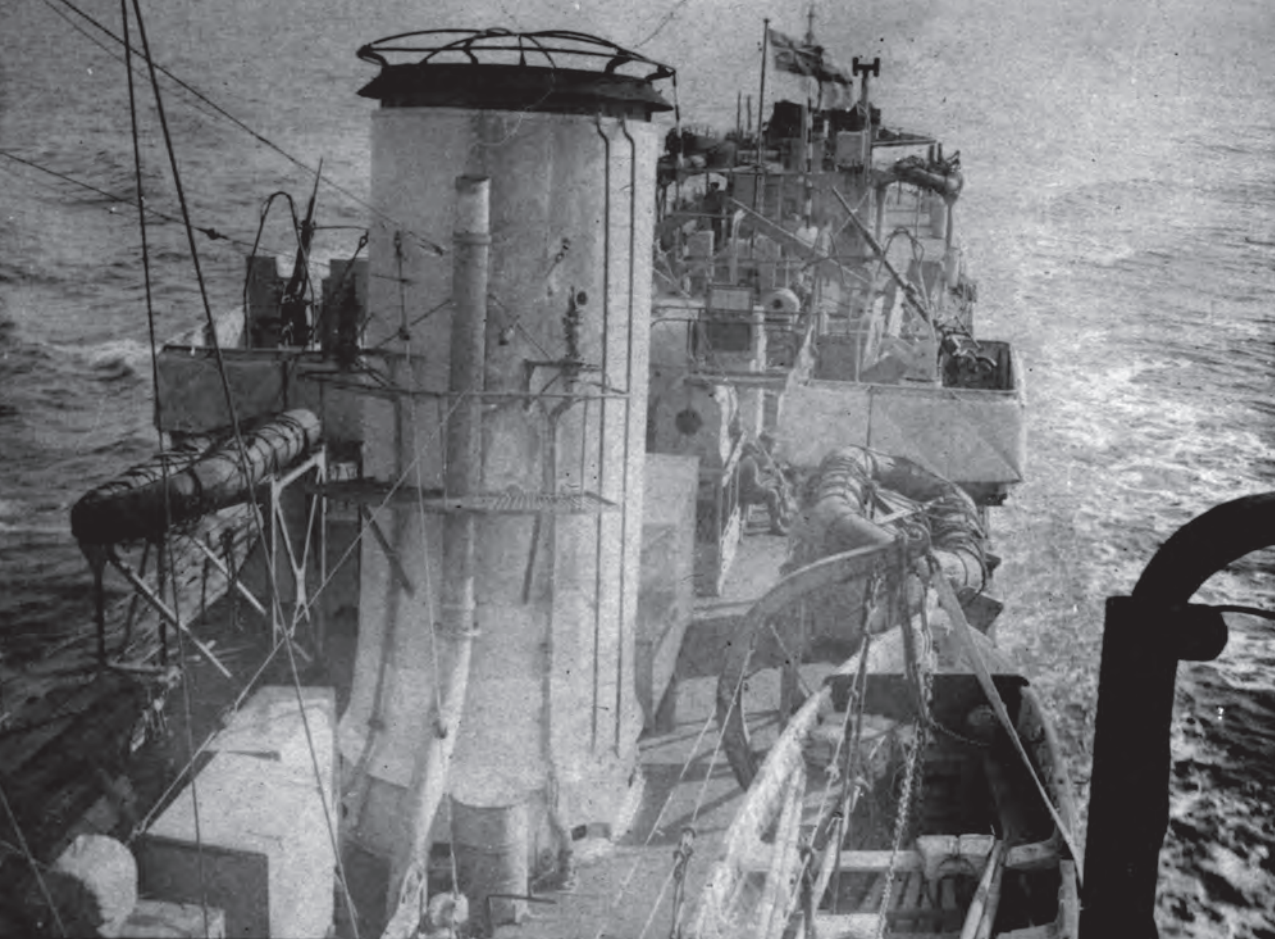
View from funnels looking towards the stern (note whaler and pom pom gun) • Photographed by Lt Leslie Eaton RNVR



Right: *Venomous* on her way to Gibraltar with *Hecla* survivors. • Courtesy of Mervyn Mansell

The darkness of that long night still cast a pall over *Venomous*. On her return passage to Gibraltar the bodies of four men who died after rescue were buried at sea, sewn in hammocks weighted at the foot. The survivors crowded round as Lt Cdr Alexander, the most senior officer to be rescued by *Venomous*, read the last rites "and reminded the congregation that I was also reading the service for all the other brave men, several hundred of them, who had been lost in the last few days". The bodies were slid into the sea from boards resting on the depth charges at the stern. Warrant Officer H.J.B. Button, the Anti-Submarine Boatswain to whom many *Hecla* survivors owed their lives, had been totally exhausted by his efforts and retired to his bunk, but despite being unwell he was present as the dead were committed to the deep. Cyril Hely photographed the scene. Their burial was noted as 34° 30' North / 7° 30' West. Most of the 273 on *Hecla* who died (out of a total ship's complement of 838) were recorded as "missing presumed killed".⁶⁴

On arrival at Gibraltar they found the badly damaged *Marne* in the harbour. After temporary repairs she was towed to Britain where a new stern structure was fitted. The *Hecla* survivors on HMS *Marne* and *Venomous* were passed from one



HMS *Venomous* after conversion to an Air Target Ship. The upper works were painted white to make her more easily identifiable as an Air Target Ship • Photographed by Lt Cdr Derek Lawson RNVR

The officers for *Venomous*' last commission, August 1944.

From left: Lt(E) W.R. Forster RNR, Sub. Lt. T.V. Thorp RNVR, Sub. Lt. Martin RNVR, Sub. Lt. D.W. Caudle RNVR, Lt. Cdr. D. Lawson RNVR, Lt. F.S.H. Greenaway RNR, Mid. W. Beckerman RNVR



his new ship and was sitting in the Wardroom with the two officers drinking a gin and tonic when she was startled to see a rat on an overhead girder. Forster told her to have another drink and it would go away.

Greenaway continued his account:

“We felt that things were at last beginning to move - but no – within a week of finishing the hull work and emerging from Dry Dock it transpired that the apparent speeding up of things was only to get us out of the Dry Dock for Falmouth had been allocated to the Yankees as a USN Port for building up to D-Day! And we were moved to a mud berth.”

With the ship turned-out of dock, Greenaway left to serve as a liaison officer (L.O.) to a squadron of US Navy PT Boats operating from the Helford River. The ship's chief engineer, Lt William R. Forster RNR, returned to HMS *Forte*, the shore base at Falmouth, and was given a pier head posting to an escort for a convoy to Archangel in northern Russia. Both officers would return once *Venomous* re-entered dry dock to effect her conversion.

The last great German bombing raid on Falmouth hit a one and a quarter million gallon fuel storage tank at Swanvale on 30 May 1944. Burning fuel flowing down a stream threatened to destroy the village. Fortunately, two US servicemen used bulldozers to divert its flow. Twenty-four hours later the battle which involved 28 pumps, 200 firemen and 500 American soldiers and sailors was over. The hotels on the seafront where WRNS were billeted were bombed and strafed in the same raid and many killed.¹¹

Work on converting *Venomous* resumed only after the dramatic success of the Normandy Campaign and the rapid advance by the Anglo-American-Canadian Armies across France. When work finally restarted on *Venomous* she began to take on a new look. She lost her forward boiler and her characteristic thin forward funnel. She was stripped of all her anti-submarine armament: her Hedgehog, torpedo tubes and depth charge throwers and support equipment were removed and stowage space provided between the funnel and after superstructure for twelve practice torpedoes. Her depth charge and Hedgehog magazines were converted to other uses or left as voids. Her gun armament was further reduced by the removal of the 3-inch H.A. gun. *Venomous* retained her two 4.7-inch guns in “B” and “X” position and her 20-mm guns positioned on either side of the bridge. She also lost both of her radars.

There were also significant changes in the officers and ship's company. None of the officers on the previous commission and very few of the ratings returned to *Venomous*. They were almost entirely reserves (RNR), volunteer reserves (RNVR) and Hostilities Only (H.O.) Ratings. Only Greenaway and Forster returned to the ship and resumed their respective duties. As the Executive Officer, Greenaway was responsible for

ON OTHER DUTIES ASSIGNED

underpowered. Attacks began from 12,000 ft but the torpedo had to be released at 100 ft to prevent it skipping or breaking. “Youngman flaps”, huge aerofoils which doubled as air brakes and were known by the pilots as “barn doors”, were used to pull out of a near-vertical descent. The pilots had to trim back immediately to avoid diving straight into the sea. The target ships were also on hand as “crash boats” to rescue the crew if the difficult-to-fly Barracuda had to ditch.²³

During the exercises, *Venomous*' duties were determined by the Fleet Air Arm staff at HMS *Urley*. As navigation officer, Sub Lt Caudle would be in charge during the exercises. He not only had to ensure that *Venomous* was present at the correct exercise area and on time, but would also be involved with tracking the attacking aircraft, registering hits and radio communication between his ship, and the air station. The practice torpedoes were picked up by a fleet of RN Torpedo Recovery Vessels which returned them to the RNAS where they were stripped down, refurbished and reassembled for further use. No doubt *Venomous* assisted in this process which was difficult if the seas began to pick up.

A 35-minute film of the training programme for Barracuda pilots made by the Admiralty Film Unit shows the young pilots moving from classroom training to practicing attacks on an air target ship without torpedoes but with wing-mounted cameras recording their approach to determine whether they got the bearing, range and sighting right. They then moved on to dropping dummy concrete torpedoes which changed the way the plane handled. The most interesting reel shows the trainee pilots launching “runners”, real torpedoes without explosive heads, at an old American “four stacker”, HMS *Newport* (G54). The target ship is shown flying a black flag on entering the target zone, establishing telegraphic communication with the air station, watches are synchronised, the “recorders” closed up to their stations and lookouts posted to register hits. The Barracuda aircraft attacked from ahead across the bow of the target ship, launching their torpedoes at an angle to the moving target which varied according to their position in the formation. A spotter aircraft filmed the target ship from above, showing the course of the aircraft and the tracks of the torpedoes through the water. The pilots return to base, are debriefed and shown where they went wrong. The heads of the practice torpedoes were of the blowing type that expelled water making them buoyant so that they floated head upwards like a buoy. They were painted red or yellow to make location easier and a lifting lug on the head assisted their recovery for return to the air station.²⁴

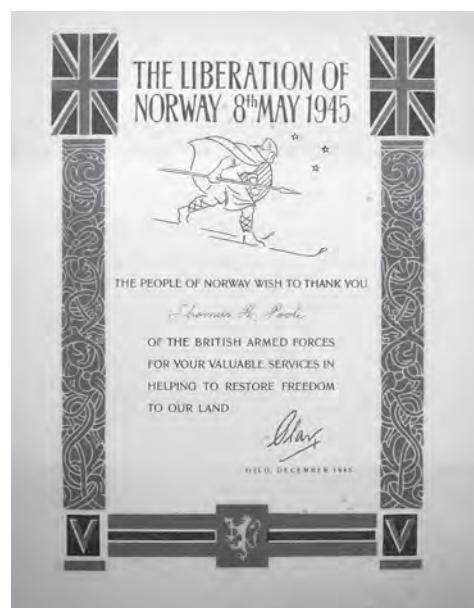
At the time it was thought that the Barracuda would play a major role in the fight against the Imperial Japanese Navy. Despite the success of the aircraft and its crews in neutralising the battleship *Tirpitz* during the spring and summer of 1944, the Barracuda was shown to be inadequate in the Pacific. The aircraft was unforgiving of pilot error and had a high accident rate. It was also slow and its range was limited.



HMS *Venomous* as an Air Target Ship in the Irish Sea in 1944. Probably photographed from a Barracuda Torpedo Bomber • *Courtesy of Caroline Turner*

Barracuda Mk 2 carrying a torpedo with lifting lug in the nose to aid recovery from the sea. Note the bubble windows in the fuselage for the Observer. Photographed from the observer's cockpit of a Barracuda with the port 'Youngman' flap and wing tip visible in foreground • *David Hobbs Collection*





Left: Thomas Henry Poole K62202 (1899-1987) served in HMS *Venomous* from 1939-45.

• Courtesy of Christine Smith, grand daughter of Thomas Henry Poole

Right: A commemorative scroll signed by King Olaf was presented to each member of the crew of HMS *Venomous*. • Courtesy of Christine Smith, grand daughter of Thomas Henry Poole

Beckerman left his old ship the following morning after a “terrific party and I got very drunk and sick”.

Later that year everybody who had participated in the liberation of Norway received a certificate of appreciation from the people of Norway.

Thomas Henry Poole was born at Tiverton, Devon, in 1899 and joined the Navy as a boy sailor on 2 June 1915. He was a boy signalman in HMS *Revenge* at the Battle of Jutland in 1916 and was welcomed home as a hero. His proud parents had a large photograph of him with the ribbon of HMS *Revenge* on his cap, tinted, mounted on card and framed. When he was 18 in December 1917 he signed on for 12 years. He joined HMS *Venomous* as a stoker on 31 July 1939 and left on 7 July 1945 when she was decommissioned. He had neat handwriting and, according to his family, was also the Ship's Writer during his five years in *Venomous*. Only three men served in *Venomous* throughout the war: Stoker Thomas Henry Poole (K.62202), Chief Stoker Charles B. Weekes (K.54729) and Leading Seaman Henry W. Ingram (J.107377). Charles Weekes was born at Kingsbridge, Devon, in 1900 and Peter Ingram at Birmingham in 1907. They joined as boy sailors, signed on for 12 years when they were 18 and were recalled at the outbreak of war. Thomas Henry Poole was discharged from the Royal Fleet Reserve on 12 September 1946 and died in 1987.²⁶

After this “last hurrah” it was by now all too obvious that there was no future for *Venomous* other than the breaker's yard.

Notes

These notes can also be seen on the publisher's website with live links to cited websites and publications: http://www.holywellhousepublishing.co.uk/3rdEdition/Chapter_Sixteen.html

- From a scroll presented by the Norwegian Government to all those British servicemen that participated in the liberation of Norway from German occupation.
- The Illustrious Class carriers, *Illustrious*, *Victorious*, *Formidable* and *Indomitable*, together with the Implacable Class carriers, *Implacable* and *Indefatigable*, formed the centrepiece of the British Pacific Fleet's (BPF) fast carrier force. The carriers' FAA pilots flew Barracuda TBR as well as US Corsairs and Avengers.
- The Norwegian force came from Sweden.
- Events at each of the entry ports are being researched and recorded by the name of the destroyer on the website of the V & W Destroyer Association. Events at Bergen are described here: http://www.vandwdestroyerassociation.org.uk/HMS_Woolston/Bergen.html
- John Henry Ruck-Keene (1902-67) was Captain of the Rosyth Escort Force, October 1944 – May 1945, http://www.unithistories.com/officers/RN_officersR4.html#Ruck-Keene_JH His elder brother, Philip Ruck-Keene (1897-1977), was Commanding Officer HMS *Ferrett*, December 1940 – March 1942. See http://www.unithistories.com/officers/RN_officersR4.html#Ruck-Keene_P
- In November 1943, while First Lieutenant in HMS *Beaufort*, Prideaux was MID for his part in the evacuation from Leros in the Deodcanese. See his memoir in the Royal Navy Museum, Portsmouth (Ref. 1997.55) and the account of his life on the publisher's website, <http://www.holywellhousepublishing.co.uk/Prideaux.html>
- As a junior officer, Cdr Dennis was awarded his DSC for his part in the heroic action that resulted in Britain obtaining the key that broke the Germans' famous 'Enigma' encryption system. Cdr Dennis DSC, RN (Ret.) died in July 2008 at the age of ninety and his unpublished memoir is in the Imperial War Museum (IWM Ref. 3129 95/5/1).
- German Navigational Information – Norwegian Waters. Supplied by German representatives of the German CinC Norway to the Chief of Staff, CinC Rosyth, at a meeting held HMS *Renown*, 11 May 1945 (NA ADM 1/18665).
- For a first-hand description see *The Liberation of Oslo and Copenhagen: a Midshipman's memoir* by C.B. Koester; *The Northern Mariner / Le Marin du Nord* 1993 3 (October) 48-60. http://www.cnrs-scrn.org/northern_mariner/vol03/tm_3_4_49-60.pdf
- From Russell's account of his time on *Venomous* on the BBC's WW2 People's War website, www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar/stories/80/a7275080.shtml.
- Op cit.* Prideaux, 6.
- The *Batterie Vara* (Marvik Fort) is now the Kristiansand Cannon Museum.
- Op cit.* Russell, 10.
- Gunnar Arnfinn Gundersen (1908-88) is almost certainly the Gundersen described by David Howarth in *The Shetland Bus* (Thomas Nelson, 1951) as “a cheerful merchant service man who had travelled the world and spoke English with a delightful Hollywood accent.” He had lost four fingers from his left hand and always carried a Colt revolver in a holster made for him. Read more about him on the publisher's website at <http://www.holywellhousepublishing.co.uk/Kristiansand.html#Garforth>
- From Collister's account of his time on *Venomous* written in December 2006.
- Christian Bogh-Tobiassen would later become a Captain in the Royal Norwegian Navy. His account of the liberation of his hometown was taken from his letters to Robert Moore.
- Christianstands Tidende* 1945 63(6) Tuesday 15 May.
- From the unpublished memoir of Cdr Dennis in the Imperial War Museum (IWM Ref. 3129 95/5/1).
- Ibid.*
- War Diary of 2/19 Civil Affairs Unit (Christiansand Sub-Zone) from 10 May 45 to 30 May 45 with Appendices A to O (NA Ref. WO 171/8449).
- This information was supplied by Captain Peter Monte, German Navy, a volunteer researcher at the Horst Bredow Deutsches U-Boot Museum in Cuxhaven, Germany. The Museum and Archive was founded by Horst Bredow (1924-2015) who served in U-288 and was a school teacher after the war. For more about the German Naval Command in Norway see <http://www.axishistory.com/axis-nations/6072-kommandierender-admiral-der-norwegischen-westk%C3%BCste>
- From Lord Teynham's naval signal to CiC Rosyth, 16 May. U-2529 was given to the Soviet Union and remained in service until September 1972 when she was broken up for scrap. The only Type XXI boat to survive intact is *Wilhelm Bauer* (ex U-2540) at Bremerhaven.
- From Russell's account of his time on *Venomous* on the BBC's WW2 People's War website, www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar/stories/80/a7275080.shtml.
- The photographs of the parade on Norway's National Day, 17 May, are from *Sør Norge i krig og fred, 1940 - 45; en billedbok fra Kristiansand* by Erik Lauritzen (Kristiansand: Forlag Prolibro, 1988). For more about HMS *Valorous* see: <http://www.holywellhousepublishing.co.uk/Kristiansand.html>
- Air Commodore Derek Waller has been researching the fate of all the U-boats surrendered at the end of the war for fifty years. The results of his research have been published in a series of articles on uboat.net at: <http://www.uboa.net/articles/>
- The information about Thomas Henry Poole were supplied to the publisher by his daughter, Joyce Smith, grand daughter Christine Smith and grandson, Trevor Hodges.