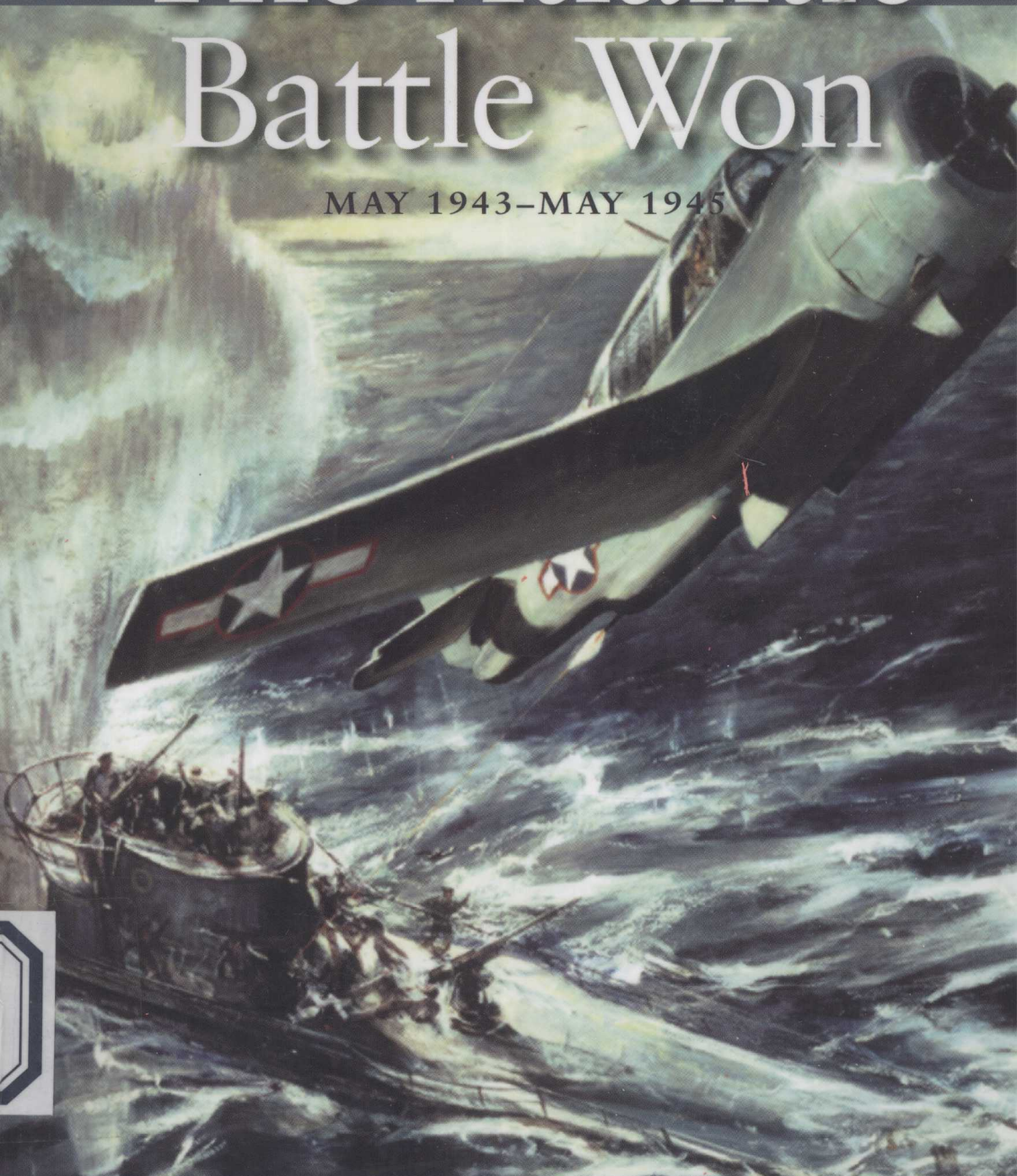


HISTORY OF UNITED STATES NAVAL OPERATIONS
IN WORLD WAR II | VOLUME 10

The Atlantic Battle Won

MAY 1943–MAY 1945



SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON

HISTORY OF UNITED STATES NAVAL
OPERATIONS IN WORLD WAR II

VOLUME X

The Atlantic Battle Won

May 1943-May 1945

BY SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

Robert Love



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To
The Memory of

JONAS HOWARD INGRAM

1886-1952

Admiral, United States Navy

. . . The only course for us to pursue is to revert to the ancient practice of convoy. This will be a purely offensive measure, because if we concentrate our shipping into convoys and protect it with our naval forces we will thereby force the enemy . . . to encounter naval forces . . . which are a great danger to the submarine.

—REAR ADMIRAL SIMS to Secretary Daniels
28 June 1917 (*Victory at Sea* p. 388)

You were right about the predominant place which submarine warfare should have in our plans. There is no question in my mind but that the German submarine menace is the most dangerous thing we have to face in our efforts at victory over Hitler.

—SECRETARY KNOX to Admiral Stark
27 November 1942

The “tonnage war” is the main task for the submariners, probably the decisive contribution of submarines to winning the war. This war on merchant shipping must be carried out where the greatest successes can be achieved with the smallest losses.

—GROSSADMIRAL DOENITZ in B.d.U. War Diary
31 December 1942

Tough as the submarine situation is I feel there is no cause for discouragement, though God knows there is none for congratulating ourselves. However, we will win this struggle.

—ADMIRAL STARK to Admiral King
24 April 1943

Preface

VOLUME X is the continuation of Volume I of this series, entitled *The Battle of the Atlantic, September 1939–May 1943*, which appeared in 1947, and in a new and revised edition in 1954.

The Battle of the Atlantic in the period covered by this volume includes only one surface action, that of the sinking of *Scharnhorst*. Many amphibious operations have already been related in Volumes II and IX; the account of those in the invasion of France has been postponed to Volume XI. Consequently the theme of this book is the war on enemy submarines.

Antisubmarine warfare in the Atlantic is perhaps the most absorbing and interesting aspect of naval warfare in World War II. It was unremitting, subject to constant ups and downs, and fought on three levels — on the surface of the ocean, under the sea, and in the air; a war fought by scientists, inventors, naval construction and ordnance experts, as well as by sailors and aviators. In this conflict the United States Navy, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine, the Royal Canadian Navy and Air Force, the Royal Navy and Air Force, and the British Merchant Navy were closely integrated. It was an exceedingly complicated war, fascinating to technicians and professional sailormen; but exceedingly difficult to narrate in the scope of two volumes. I cannot neglect the superb work performed in this theater by our Allied Navies and Air Forces, although it is obviously impossible to relate them in the same detail as our own. And in all areas of Anglo-Canadian responsibility, such as the Northern Transatlantic and North Russian convoy routes and the Indian Ocean, a large number of American merchant ships with United States Naval Armed Guards participated.

First drafts of Chapters II–IV, VI, VIII–X were written between 1944 and 1946. At that time, my assistants were Lieutenant Commander Henry Salomon USNR, who visited Recife, Bermuda and other bases in search of information, Lieutenant Commander Henry D. Reck USNR,

who visited the Mediterranean theater, Chief Yeoman Donald R. Martin USNR, and Wave Yeoman 1st Class Antha E. Card. The last two, as civilians, are still with me. Mr. Martin compiled the task organizations in the Appendices and Miss Card did some valuable text revision as well as accurately typing my frequently rewritten and corrected drafts.

In 1950 I obtained the services of Lieutenant Philip K. Lundeberg USNR, one of the three officers who survived the sinking of *Frederick C. Davis* by *U-546*. Mr. Lundeberg performed several laborious tasks such as combing the records in the Division of Naval History for every significant antisubmarine action in which the United States Navy participated, and comparing these with captured German documents to determine which U-boat did what, and how the German submarines were deployed. He prepared a very detailed and accurate ms., "American Antisubmarine Operations in the Atlantic May 1943–May 1945," about four times the length of the present volume. This, indexed by Mr. Martin and Mr. Roger Pineau, will be deposited in the Division of Naval History, Navy Department, and will be an indispensable source of information for future historians of the United States Navy.

Beginning in 1953 Mr. Pineau, who has been assisting me since 1947, has done the most thorough research possible for anyone to do on very many questions that came up. Rear Admiral Bern Anderson (Ret.) who has been assisting me since he took a Ph.D. at Harvard after the war, did the spadework for Chapters V and XIV, besides bringing his long naval experience, historical training and passion for accuracy to bear on almost every action that has been described. Yeoman 1st Class Roger F. Schofield also helped with the typing.

In addition, I have obtained oral information from scores of United States and British naval officers who participated in the Atlantic war. Rear Admiral Roger Bellairs of the Historical Section of the Admiralty and members of his staff placed their historical records at my disposal, read my draft of this volume, and made numerous suggestions and corrections. Captain Stephen W. Roskill RN, who is writing the volumes on "The War at Sea" for the overall British War History, performed the same service for this volume and allowed me to read an advance typescript of his volume which covers in part the same period. Konteradmiral Eberhard Godt, formerly the operations officer of Grossadmiral

Doenitz, and Dr. Jürgen Rohwer of Frankfort-on-Main, who is writing the history of the U-boats, have given me valuable information orally and in writing. And I have received constant support, welcome advice and much information from successive Chiefs of Naval Operations, Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries of the Navy, and from Rear Admiral John B. Heffernan, Director of Naval History. Miss Loretta MacCrindle, head of the Historical Records Branch, has been unfailingly patient and helpful. The charts were prepared in the drafting room of the United States Naval War College under the direction of Mr. John Lawton and drafted by Mr. Joseph A. Domingoes Jr. and Mr. Frederick J. Wagner.

My beloved wife, Priscilla B. Morison, who has accompanied me on research missions to Washington, London and Germany, has been of assistance in ways too numerous to mention.

My own limited experience of escort-of-convoy began in 1942 when I was a temporary member of the staff of Captain Heffernan, Comdesron 13, in U.S.S. *Buck*. Late in 1944 I crossed the Atlantic again as a temporary member of the staff of Captain W. A. P. Martin when escorting a convoy in U.S.C.G.C. *Campbell*. Brief as these experiences were, they gave me an insight into the constant and unremitting vigilance required in antisubmarine warfare that could never be acquired from books. Many of my shipmates were lost in the war. Others too have since departed to the place where brave sailormen go. They became my warm friends; I have done my best to fulfill their expectations, and those of our shipmates who survived.

In order to avoid an excessive number of footnotes, I shall here describe the principal sources which have been drawn upon for this volume.

*1. Action Reports and other Primary Records, in Division of
Naval History, Navy Department*

Action Reports of task force and task group commanders, of squadron and division commanders, of C.O.s of individual ships and pilots of in-

dividual aircraft. Those by the pilots are called "Aircraft A/S Action Reports." Thus, for every important antisubmarine attack by an Escort Carrier Group there are Action Reports by the task group commander, the screen commander, the air group commander, the C.O. of each ship, and the pilot of each plane which participated.

War Diaries of task force commanders, of shore commands such as Eastern Sea Frontier and Fourth Fleet, and of individual ships.

Convoy Files of Convoy and Routing Section, Tenth Fleet, in Division of Naval History. Indispensable for the histories of convoys.

Interviews about important actions with officers concerned, on tape-recordings or microfilm, in the same Division of Naval History.

Tenth Fleet Antisubmarine Incidents, several thousand in number, compiled at Tenth Fleet headquarters from every reported attack on or by an enemy submarine, no matter how insignificant.

2. *Reference Works and Compilation of Facts*

Chief of Naval Operations *German, Japanese, and Italian Submarine Losses World War II* (1946), commonly known as "The Yellow Book." This joint work of the Admiralty and C.N.O. Assessment of Damage Committees, compiled and printed immediately after the war, gives the date, position, and agent of every enemy submarine sunk during the war. It is on the whole very accurate and I have referred to it only on occasions when it is in error.

U.S. Fleet Antisubmarine Warfare Bulletin, published monthly from June 1943 to June 1945 inclusive. Familiarly known during the war as "The Yellow Peril," this restricted periodical contains a large variety of information.

Administrative History of the Atlantic Fleet, 11 volumes, by a variety of authors. Bound typescripts deposited in the Division of Naval History. Particularly useful are Vol. I on Cinclant, Vol. XI on Fourth Fleet, and an unnumbered first draft called "History of the Antisubmarine Measures Division of Tenth Fleet." Cominch Headquarters compiled in May 1945 a similar "History of Convoy and Routing," a most useful compendium of convoy information.

C. M. Sternhell & A. M. Thorndike, *Antisubmarine Warfare in World War II* (Ops. Evaluation Group Report No. 51, Washington 1946). A valuable analysis by two men of science.

A number of naval commands and ships compiled their own *War Histories*.

3. "Survivor" Documents

Office of Naval Intelligence *Summaries of Interrogations* of (1) survivors of sunk American merchant vessels; (2) survivors of sunk or captured enemy submarines.

Naval Armed Guard Reports by C.O.s or senior survivors, in the form of letters to Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Armed Guard files, Division of Naval History.

A separate collection of pamphlets called the "250 Series," with the general title *Post Mortems on Enemy Submarines*, issued by the Office of Naval Intelligence during the war.

4. United States Army Air Force Documents

Assistant Chief of Air Staff Intelligence Historical Division *The Anti-submarine Command*, a 307-pp. typescript prepared in April 1945.

Three Historical Essays relating to Army Antisubmarine Activities prepared by 1st Lt. Henry Grattan USA, April 1944.

These two are indispensable for presenting the A.A.F. point of view on antisubmarine warfare and for the claims and achievements of the Army A/S Command. Both in Army Air Force Archives, Washington.

The Official History of the South Atlantic Division Army Air Forces Air Transport Command (2 vols., 1945) is one of several such command histories that contain items relevant to naval history.

5. British Admiralty Documents

These are very numerous and most important for the Atlantic War.

6. German Documents

Ms. "Befehlshaber der Untersee-Booten Kriegstagebuch"; the English translation abbreviated as B.d.U. War Diary. The official day-by-day record kept by the staff of Grossadmiral Doenitz. A comprehensive, reliable, and indispensable source for German naval strategy and movements of U-boats.

War Diaries of individual U-boat commands, especially of Fuehrer der U-Booten, Norwegen (*F.d.U. Norway*) for Arctic operations, and *F.d.U. Italy* for the Mediterranean.

War Diaries of individual U-boats. Microfilms of over a thousand, captured at the close of the war, are in the Tambach Collection, Division of Naval History. The originals are in London.

Karl Doenitz "The Conduct of the War at Sea," dictated to General Jodl in 1945; translation published by Navy Department.

Office of Naval Intelligence *Fuehrer Conferences on Matters Dealing with the German Navy, 1939-1945* (7 vols., Washington 1946-1947). Also printed in *Brassey's Naval Annual 1948* with introduction by Rear Admiral H. G. Thursfield RN.

7. Published Books and Articles

Besides the leading and well-known works by Fleet Admiral King and Walter Whitehill, Sir Winston Churchill, Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham, Hon. Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, and by Dr. J. Phinney Baxter, the following are useful in greater or less degree: —

British Admiralty *The Battle of the Atlantic* (London 1946), 104 pp.

Kurt Assmann *Deutsche Schicksalsjahre* (Wiesbaden 1950). The first serious attempt to present the war as a whole to the German people, by a leading German naval historian.

Rear Admiral R. M. Bellairs RN "Historical Survey of Trade Defense since 1914," *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* XCIV (1954) 359-77.

Rear Admiral W. S. Chalmers *Max Horton and the Western Approaches* (London 1954). Best account of the antisubmarine war from the British point of view.

W. F. Craven and J. L. Cate *The Army Air Forces in World War*. Vol. II (Chicago 1949) contains a good account of A.A.F. antisubmarine activities.

Wolfgang Frank *The Sea Wolves* (London 1954); a partial translation of his *Die Wölfe und der Admiral, der Roman der U-Boote* (Hamburg 1953). Best popular German account of the U-boats but unreliable as to details.

Rear Admiral D. V. Gallery *Clear the Decks!* (1951). By the C.O. of *Guadalcanal*.

Erich Gröner *Die Schiffe der Deutschen Kriegsmarine u. Luftwaffe 1939-45* (Munich 1954), the best reference book on the German Navy.

Rear Admiral Emory S. Land *The U.S. Merchant Marine at War* (1946).

Frederick C. Lane *Ships for Victory, A History of Shipbuilding under the U.S. Maritime Commission in World War II* (1951).

Denis Richards and Hilary St. G. Saunders *Royal Air Force 1939-1945*, Vol. II *The Fight Avails*; Vol. III *The Fight is Won* (by Saunders only); both London 1954. This work presents the thesis of the still unpublished "Despatch" by Air Chief Marshal Sir John Slessor.

Herbert Rosinski "Strategy and Propaganda in German Naval Thought," *Brassey's Naval Annual 1945*, 125-56.

Captain S. W. Roskill RN *The War at Sea*, Vol. I *The Defensive* (London 1954). This, first of three volumes on the Maritime War in the official *United Kingdom Military Series* edited by J. R. M. Butler, includes the years 1939-1941 only. Volume II will continue the story through May 1943.

Vizeadmiral Friedrich Ruge *Der Seekrieg 1939-1945* (Stuttgart 1954). The best general account of the Naval War from the German side that has yet appeared.

Gilbert N. Tucker *The Naval Service of Canada, Its Official History* (2 vols., Ottawa 1952). The third and operational volume of this series is Joseph Schull *The Far Distant Ships* (Ottawa 1950).

D. E. G. Wemyss *Walker's Groups in the Western Approaches* (Liverpool 1948). Spirited account of the work of Captain Frederick J. Walker, the Royal Navy's No. 1 U-boat killer.

This volume is dedicated to the memory of Admiral Jonas H. Ingram, Commander Fourth Fleet and subsequently Commander in Chief

Atlantic Fleet. Burly, colorful and aggressive, "Jonas" was one of the most popular flag officers in the Navy. Always mindful of the officers and men in his command, he won their affection and complete loyalty by praising where praise was due, and by stimulating the indolent or the unsuccessful to do better. He refused to be guided by precedent and protocol, yet became an excellent unofficial ambassador to Brazil; and, more than any other fleet commander, he used the services of antisubmarine scientists attached to his staff.

SAMUEL E. MORISON

WASHINGTON, D.C.

July 1955

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