

WW2 SUBMARINE CHASING ACE

The following is a list of 7 U-boats sunk by the Royal Navy, in particular by HMS Vidette, HMS Havelock and HMS Conn.

6th May 1943

German U-boat U531 (1st patrol, no sinkings) was sunk in the North Atlantic north-east of Newfoundland by depth charges from the destroyer **HMS Vidette**

German U-boat U630 (1st patrol, sank 2 ships from convoy HX231, 5th Apr 43) was sunk in the North Atlantic north-east of Newfoundland by depth charges from the destroyer **HMS Vidette**

23rd October 1943

German U-boat U274 (2nd patrol, no sinkings) was sunk in the North Atlantic south-west of Iceland by depth charges from the destroyers **HMS Vidette** and HMS Duncan and from an RAF Liberator aircraft of 224 Sqn

29th October 1943

German U-boat U282 (1st patrol, no sinkings) was sunk in the North Atlantic south-east of Greenland by depth charges from the destroyers **HMS Vidette** and HMS Duncan and the corvette HMS Sunflower

18th June 1944

German U-boat U767 (1st patrol, sank HMS Mourne, 111 killed, 15th June 44) was sunk in the English Channel south-west of Guernsey by depth charges from the destroyers **HMS Havelock**, HMS Fame and HMS Inconstant

27th March 1945

German U-boat U905 (2nd patrol, no sinkings) was sunk in the North Minch channel west of Cape Wrath by depth charges from the frigate **HMS Conn**

30th March 1945

German U-boat U965 (7th patrol, no sinkings) was sunk in the North Minch channel south-west of Cape Wrath by depth charges from the frigates **HMS Conn** and HMS Rupert

WW2 SUBMARINE CAPTURING ACE

On 4th May 1945 the German High Command ordered all U-boats at sea to cease attacking and sinking ships and subsequently, on the 6th May they were told to surrender themselves at British ports from 8th May.

The war in Europe ended on the 8th May 1945 and between the 10th and 21st May, **33 U-boats** surrendered to the 21st Escort Group. 18 U-boats at Loch Erinbol and a further 15 escorted in from the Atlantic.



The 33 U-boats were escorted into Londonderry by the 21st Escort Group and tied up alongside the fuelling jetty at Lisahally, downriver from Londonderry as shown in the above photograph.

The 21st EG comprised HMS Conn (Senior Officer), HMS Byron, HMS Deane, HMS Rupert and HMS Fitzroy.

The common denominator between the sinking of the 7 U-boats and the surrender of 33 U-boats is that the Commanding Officer of HMS Vidette and HMS Havelock and the Senior Officer of the 21st EG in HMS Conn were the same person.

Lieutenant Commander Raymond HART, DSO, DSC and Bar.

POST-WAR ACE

After the war ended we slipped into the Cold War and Soviet submarine technology rapidly advanced with what they had learnt from, and with the help of, German boffins.

To combat this emerging Soviet threat, the Royal Navy ordered the building of a new batch of anti-submarine frigates using modern technology and incorporating all the lessons learnt in the Battle of the Atlantic.

However, these new Type-12 frigates would not be ready for a few years and so it was decided to bridge the gap by converting some of the 47 'emergency' destroyers built during the Second World War, into frigates.

In all, 23 of the R, T, U, V, W and Z class destroyers were converted into Type 15 frigates. They were stripped down to deck level and beyond, all superstructure, weaponry, masts and equipment was removed, the machinery overhauled and fuel capacity increased to improve range.

The foc'sl was extended backwards to leave only a small quarterdeck, providing much improved accommodation. The hull was increased in height to form a new single-level superstructure and incorporated a fully enclosed bridge. A sonar room and an operations room were added spanning the full width of the hull in front of the funnel. The new superstructure layout allowed the crew to fight the ship without having to expose themselves to the elements.

The first destroyer to be converted into a Type-15 frigate was commissioned in July 1951.

Effectively a brand new ship, purpose built for anti-submarine warfare the Navy needed a submarine chasing ace to command this first-of-class ship.

Step forward Commander Raymond Hart DSO, DSC and Bar.

So what was the name of ship?

HMS RELENTLESS of course.....

COMMODORE RAYMOND HART DSO, DSC and Bar, CBE

Commanding Officer of:

HMS VIDETTE - Lieutenant Commander - Dec 1943 to Mar 1944

HMS HAVELOCK - Lieutenant Commander - Mar-Sep 1944

HMS CONN - Lieutenant Commander & Senior Officer 21st Escort Group - Sep 1944 to Jun 1945

HMS RELENTLESS - Commander - May 1951 to May 1953

HMS UNDINE - Captain & Captain 'F' 6th Frigate Squadron - 1957 to 1958



Commander Raymond Hart DSO, DSC and Bar, Commanding Officer, HMS Relentless

Raymond Hart was promoted to Commander in June 1947 and to Captain in December 1953. He was promoted to Commodore in November 1960 in the post of Commodore, Naval Drafting.

Awarded the DSC in 1941, and bar 1943, the DSO in 1945 and the CBE in the 1963 New Year's Honours List, he retired shortly thereafter, on 12th January 1963.

Raymond Hart, born 22nd June 1913, died in Southampton 4th August 1999, aged 86

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