



Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

USS S-28 (SS 133)

July 4, 1944 - 49 Men Lost

On June 20, 1944, LCDR J.G. Campbell assumed command of S-28, his first command. The ship had finished a normal upkeep period on June 12 and continued on her assigned duty of training enlisted personnel and engaging in sonar exercises with ships under control of COMDESPAC.

On July 3, S-28, in accordance with orders from COMDESPAC, got underway from the Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, to conduct a week's normal operations. During the day on July 3, S-28 acted as a target for anti-submarine warfare vessels until about 1700 local time. At that time she made two practice torpedo approaches on the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter RELIANCE. On July 4 S-28 again carried out sonar exercises as on the previous day, and at 1730 again undertook a practice approach on RELIANCE.

At 1730 S-28 dived about four miles distant from RELIANCE. At about 1805 RELIANCE made sound contact with S-28 at a range of 1700 yards. The range decreased to about 1500 yards and then steadily increased, as the bearing drifted aft. Although sound contact was temporarily lost by RELIANCE at 3,000 yards, she picked up the submarine again at 3,300 yards. At 1820, with range 4,700 yards, RELIANCE permanently lost sound contact with S-28. At no time during the approach or the ensuing sound search were distress signals from S-28 seen or heard, nor was any sound heard which indicated an explosion in S-28.

When by 1830, S-28 had not surfaced or sent any signals, RELIANCE retraced her course and tried to establish communication with her. Although previous tests had showed that no difficulty would be experienced in exchanging messages by sound gear at ranges up to 2,000 yards, RELIANCE was unable to contact S-28. The Coast Guard vessel called in other vessels from Pearl Harbor at 2000, and a thorough search of the area was instituted, lasting until the afternoon of July 6, 1944. A slick, which was unmistakably made by diesel oil, was the only sign of S-28.

The Court of Inquiry which investigated the sinking determined that S-28 sank shortly after 1820 on July 4, 1944 in 1400 fathoms of water. Because of the depth of the water, salvage operations were impossible. The Court recorded its opinion

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that S-28 lost depth control "from either a material casualty or an operating error of personnel, or both, and that depth control was never regained. The exact cause of the loss of S-28 cannot be determined." The Court found, further, that, "the material condition of S-28 was as good or better than that of other ships of her class performing similar duty," and that "the officers and crew on board S-28 at the time of her loss were competent to operate the ship submerged in the performance of her assigned duties."

It was stated that the loss of S-28 was not caused by negligence or inefficiency of any person or persons.



Sailors Lost On USS S-28 7-4-1944

Anderson, E. F. F2, Appling, J. I. EM2, Bennett, J. K., Jr. GM3, Brown, J. F. MOMM2, Bullard, H. M. TM2, [Buzek, R. F. EM3](#), Campbell, J. G. LCDR, Chapman, A. G. MOMM3, Connell, J. L. F1, Covington, C. W., Jr. LT, Cox, G. A. EM3, Durant, J. F. F2, Durkee, D. A. F1, Gardner, F. W. QM3, Garza, J. D. MOMM2, Gerbensky, C. H. MOMM3, Gresswell, J., Jr. MOMM3, Haney, J. R. MOMM1, Harsma, R. F. ENS, Hester, H. L. ENS, Highfill, L. E. S2, Hizer, N. J. W. MOMM1, Johnson, N. K. MOMM3, Keirn, K. MOMM3, Kunkel. "A" "J", Jr. S1, Likevich, S., Jr. PHM1, Madsen, R. B. ENS, McGuinness, J. F. PHM2, McMillan, M. R. RM3, McNeela, R. T. RT3, Moffitt, C. M. SM1, Morrison, E. J. F1, Nelson, C. E. LT, Nottage, O. GM3, Ouderkirk, D. M. MOMM3, Peet, G. V. MOMM2, Purcell, J. F. EM1, [Runnels, G. R. S1](#), Salerno, J. J. EM3, Schreier, E. C. MOMM2, Smith, F. "S" SC2, Spradley, J. W. S2, Spurlock, J. CK3, Vaughan, E. S1, Weis, W. J. MOMM1, Whitted, W. T. MOMM2, Wolf, A. W. RM3, Wurtz, K. A. F1, [Ejaype, Paulino OS1](#)