

TEXAS

U. S. S. T E X A S

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FIGHTING

VETERAN OF TWO WORLD WARS

TEXAS

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF
U.S.S. TEXAS WAR RECORD

1. Her operations against the enemy have consisted of the following:

- (a) 16 Neutrality Patrol and convoy operations in the North Atlantic.
- (b) Invasion of North Africa
- (c) Invasion of Normandy and battle of Cherbourg.
- (d) Invasion of Southern France.
- (e) Capture and occupation of Iwo Jima.
- (f) Capture and occupation of Okinawa.

2. She has spent the following number of days in operation against the enemy (apart from normal cruising):

(a) Patrols and convoys -----	362 days
(b) North Africa -----	28 days
(c) Normandy -----	15 days
(d) Southern France -----	3 days
(e) Iwo Jima -----	20 days
(f) Okinawa -----	50 days
TOTAL-----	478 days

3. She has been out of the United States since 3 December 1944, and she has been west of Pearl Harbor since January 9, 1945.

4. In this war she has steamed the following number of miles operating against the enemy:

1941-----	14,400 miles
1942-----	34,200 miles
1943-----	36,000 miles
1944-----	25,900 miles
1945-----	<u>25,000 miles</u>
TOTAL -----	121,000 miles

5. The TEXAS has been damaged only once in action when the German shore batteries at Cherbourg, France hit her with two 290mm. Projectiles on June 25th 1944.

6. She has shot down one Japanese aircraft, and assisted in the shooting down of at least two others.

7. Following is a list of the ammunition she has expended against the enemy:

MAIN BATTERY -- (14 inch/45 caliber.)

Port Lyautey, North Africa-----	273 rounds.
Normandy-----	891 rounds.
Southern France-----	172 rounds.
Iwo Jima-----	923 rounds.
Okinawa-----	2019 rounds.
TOTAL-----	4,278 rounds.

SECONDARY BATTERY -- (5 inch/51 caliber.)

Port Lyautey, North Africa-----	6 rounds.
Normandy-----	272 rounds.
Southern France-----	0 rounds.
Iwo Jima-----	967 rounds.
Okinawa-----	2640 rounds.
TOTAL-----	3,885 rounds.

A.A. BATTERY -- (3 inch/50 caliber.)

Southern France-----	90 rounds.
Iwo Jima-----	4 rounds.
Okinawa-----	490 rounds.
TOTAL -----	584 rounds.

MACHINE GUN BATTERY -- 40MM.

Normandy-----	192 rounds.
Southern France-----	429 rounds.
Okinawa-----	3100 rounds.
TOTAL-----	3,721 rounds.

MACHINE GUN BATTERY -- (20MM).

Okinawa-----	2,275 rounds.
TOTAL-----	2,275 rounds.

8. The personnel casualties on this ship have been very small:

Killed in action-----	1 (25 June 1944)
Wounded in action-----	13 (25 June 1944)
Wounded in action-----	1 (25 April 1945)
TOTAL CASUALTIES-----	15

9. This vessel entered her war career when she steamed on neutrality patrol in the North Atlantic into the German-declared war zone in the summer of 1941.

10. She is the only battleship in this war to have engaged the enemy in definite planned operations off the coasts of Africa, Northern and Southern Europe, and in Pacific, wherever this war has been, she has been:

11. Her war-time Commanding Officers have been:

Capt. Clarence N. Hinkamp, USN
Capt. Louis W. Comstock, USN
Capt. Lawrence Wild, USN
Capt. Roy Pfaff, USN
Capt. Charles a. Baker, USN
Capt. Gerald L. Schetky, USN

12. Her war-time Executive Officers have been:

Comdr. Thomas B. Inglis, USN
Comdr. John J. Twomey, USN
Comdr. William E. Hennigar, USN
Comdr. Jose M. Cabanillas, USN
Comdr. George D. Dickey, USN
Comdr. Charles W. Truxall, USN

13. Since 1941 she has flown the flags of the following flag Officers:

Admiral Ernest J. King, USN
Vice Admiral Alexander Sharp, USN
Rear Admiral Monroe Kelly, USN
Rear Admiral David McD. Le Breton, USN
Rear Admiral Carleton F. Bryant, USN
Rear Admiral Ingram C. Sowell, USN
Rear Admiral Peter K. Fischler, USN
Rear Admiral Calvin H. Cobb, USN
Rear Admiral Oliver M. Read, USN

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE U.S.S. TEXAS

Bred out of Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company by the best Naval architecture minds of the era, this old war horse was commissioned to charge the open seas on March 12th 1914. She was a two stacked, cage masted triumph and the pride of the fleet. Her twin gunned, fourteen inch turrets were of the latest design, and she had what was reputed to be the largest and most efficient set of reciprocating main engines afloat.

The TEXAS was commissioned in Norfolk Navy Yard, and then proceeded on her maiden voyage to New York. This passage was without incident, and after fueling and provisioning there, she sailed South to join the fleet without a preliminary shake down cruise. She was to shake down with the fleet.

The Fleet was at Vera Cruz, and upon joining, the TEXAS was immediately detached to an area off the lonely coast of Mexico, North-Northwest of Vera Cruz, near a place called Cape Rojo. Here she drilled and trained her crew and cleaned house. The latter always being necessary on any new ship or any ship fresh out of the hands of Navy Yard workers.

In mid-summer of 1914 she steamed north to New York for her post shake down Navy Yard check, and then running of her speed trials. In her speed trials, she made her designed speed of 21 knots with no apparent strain, and was able to maintain that speed for four hours, which was all that was required. While at New York she had one other job of importance to complete, and that was the firing her first gunnery practice. In this she made an excellent score, and laid the foundation for her permanent reputation as one of the finest gunnery ships in the Navy.

In October she rejoined the fleet and remained with it, operating where it operated and totally living the life of a man-of-war of the U.S. NAVY.

1917 saw her only serious accident, and during the mid-watch on 27th of September of that year she ran aground on Block Island. She was hard aground, and the engines alone were unable to pull her free. Her crew worked for three days lightening ship by moving all weights aft, putting them aboard other vessels, or jettisoning them over the side. On the morning of the 30th with tugs alongside to assist and her main engines going full astern, another attempt was made to clear her. She would not budge, and as the minutes wore on it appeared that she was grounded permanently and hope began to wane in more than one seaman's heart.

The NEW YORK, who was lying to close aboard, then gave birth to and was to be accepted by all hands who ever served on her, the TEXAS' battle cry. All hands on the NEW YORK were watching the operation and when it appeared that the "T" would not move they commenced to cheer in unison "Come on, TEXAS". No sooner had this cheering started that the TEXAS started to quiver, and almost imperceptibly to move, and suddenly she was backing cleanly and smoothly clear of the island. Since that day "Come on, TEXAS" has been the motto of this ship, and has followed her throughout her Naval career. Many times during action, in the present war, we have received messages from old hands aboard the TEXAS, now serving on other ships, wishing us luck and admonishing us with "COME ON, TEXAS".

The damage incurred to her bottom prevented the "Mighty T" from proceeding to Europe with the other battleships of the U.S. Fleet, but as soon as she was ready, on January 30, 1918, she became a unit of the SIXTH BATTLE SQUADRON together with the NEW YORK, WYOMING, FLORIDA, and DELAWARE.

On her fifth day with the Grand Fleet the ship fired her first shot of aggression and was fired at, by the enemy, for the only time in the war. The Grand Fleet was at sea to hunt down the German Fleet on a rumor that it had put out to sea. The TEXAS sighted a submarine and fired a shot at it with its 120 five inch gun. The shot landed in the water at the spot where the submarine had only a moment before submerged. A few seconds later a torpedo wake was sighted aimed for the TEXAS. The ship was swung hard right and the torpedo passed harmlessly alongside.

With the war over and no further need for the battleships in the European theater, the SIXTH BATTLE SQUADRON reverted to the U.S. Fleet and steamed out of Scapa Flow on the 1st of December 1918 enroute to the United States.

The summer of 1919 saw the TEXAS join the Pacific Fleet and start her career as a member of the battle line in peace time. Her peace time activities were more or less run of the mill, except that she maintained her reputation as an excellent gunnery and engineering ship. In 1921 she led the fleet in gunnery, and there were very few years that she did not have an "E" painted on her stack, and innumerable "E's" on her turrets and five inch guns.

Modernized in 1925-26, at Bremerton, Wash. she rejoined the Fleet, and served at times as the fleet flagship, carrying aboard her many now-famous personages.

The outbreak of this war in Europe in 1939 found the TEXAS as flagship of the ATLANTIC TRAINING SQUADRON, making training

cruises with the Midshipmen from the Naval Academy, reserve units, and the Fleet Marine Force. She remained on this duty until late 1940 when she became the flagship of Admiral Ernest J. King, USN, the Commander In Chief of the Atlantic Fleet.

In April of 1941 she returned from the Caribbean area to Norfolk Navy Yard and started preparing for war. The first item on the preparation list was to strip ship of all unessential gear. Wood-work, linoleum, excess paint, and all the extra comforts of peace-time Navy went over the side.

May, June, and July of '41 saw her making the long and tedious neutrality patrols out of Newport, Rhode Island, across the stormy North Atlantic, and North into the German-declared war zone. Her crews were at gun watches, and she was ready for instant action then, six months before the entry of the U.S. into the war.

After a brief overhaul period she went to Argentia, Newfoundland, and stayed there for three months on very short steaming notice, to protect the convoy lines from enemy surface raiders.

On the fateful day of December 7th, 1941, the TEXAS was in Portland, Maine, having just arrived there to give the crew some recreation after three months in the barrenness of Newfoundland. Shortly thereafter she returned to her watch-dog post, and stood by "on call" until the middle of January 1942.

January 1942, and the commencement of a long series of troop convoys across the sub-infested waters of the Atlantic. Two days before the TEXAS was to leave New York with the first convoy, which, incidentally was the first convoy of American troops to go to the British Isles, a merchant man had been sunk just off Ambrose Lightship, at the entrance to New York Harbor. Needless to say, all hands were aware that this was hot, and the following duties of the TEXAS would never constitute, a pleasure cruise.

During that year she convoyed to Europe, to Africa, and to the Panama Canal Zone. She spent a month in Iceland, and received a terrific battering from an 11 day storm on the return trip.

At Mehdiya-PortLyautey, North Africa, the TEXAS poured her fourteen inch projectiles into ammunition dumps, and into armed columns moving up to the aid of the enemy. Here she stayed for eight days supporting the ground troops, and providing protection for the transports.

In 1943 the "OLD GIRL" resumed her convoy escort duties and made trips to Casa Blanca, Morocco, Gibraltar, Scotland, and Ireland.

April of 1944 found her escorting a convoy to Scotland, and upon arrival in the European theater, was ordered to remain there and prepare for the invasion of Normandy. This she did, training with the combined forces of the United Nations. Operating out of Belfast, North Ireland, she became proficient in functioning with British, Free French, and Polish units.

At Normandy the TEXAS approached Pont du Hoe, a promontory just east of Grand Camp, France, in the early hours of the morning of June 6, and anchored about twelve thousand yards off shore to deliver her pre-invasion bombardment. On Pont du Hoe, as intelligence reports indicated, were six 155mm coast defense batteries. The mighty "T's" dawn bombardment threw the entire promontory. The rest of her main battery ammunition was expended within the next three days in support of the ground forces.

After a brief interval of approximately 48 hours, in which she returned to Plymouth, England to rearm, the ship returned to the Normandy coast and for ten days continued her support to ground troops until they had advanced farther than her effective run range.

On the 25th of June, 1944 the TEXAS was tagged by the enemy for the first time in her 30 years of life. She had steamed across the English channel in company with the NEVADA, ARKANSAS, and a small cruiser force to engage the coast defense batteries at Cherbourg. There during a three-hour gun duel with the German guns, in which she was straddled at least thirty times, she was hit by two 290mm projectiles. One struck the top of the conning tower and exploded, wiping out the navigation bridge, killing one man, and wounding thirteen others. The other struck the side of the ship and penetrated to an officer's stateroom, there to lie as a dud, and causing no damage except an above-the-water line hole in the side.

After having been patched up by the Navy Yard at Plymouth, England the TEXAS departed the British Isles late in July and proceeded to the Mediterranean for the invasion of Southern France. The Invasion of Southern France was of little import as far as outstanding events were concerned, however, the TEXAS did add to her laurels in that operation. Her accurate gunnery, the reputation for which she has always had and will never lose, under the most difficult navigational, and direct-fire conditions won the personal praise of Vice Admiral H.K. Hewitt, USN, who was in command of the operation.

The need for battleships in the European theater having come to an end, the TEXAS returned to New York on the 14th of Sept. and after 35 days for repairs, steamed to the Pacific to fight our Nipponese enemy.

One month was granted the TEXAS in Hawaiian waters to practice and get used to working with the Pacific Fleet, and she was sent post-haste to the forward areas. Ulithi was her first forward area port, and she arrived there just in time to prepare for the invasion and capture of Iwo Jima.

At Iwo Jima she conducted herself with the usual high standards of performance, and blasted the enemy installations with every round of ammunition allotted her. She was present at the now famous flag raising on Mount Surbachi and all hands top-side witnessed it, cheering with uncontrollable enthusiasm one of the most morale lifting scenes of this war.

After a brief rest at Ulithi, the ship participated in the invasion of Okinawa. Arriving there a full week before the landings, her task unit made preliminary bombardments, supported mine-sweeping operations, and in general harassed the enemy.

While at Okinawa the TEXAS fired four complete ship loads of ammunition in her preliminary bombardment and in support of the ground operations. She shot down one "kamikaze" plane unassisted and assisted in the shooting down of three others. Her crew set a near record by remaining at their battle stations for a period of fifty days, sleeping at their posts and beside their guns, and chowing down at odd hours. This, as much as anything else, aided her in coming through that, one of the toughest Naval operations in history, unscratched.

After receiving a "well done" for her job at Okinawa, the "TEE" retired to Leyte Gulf in the Philippines for a well earned rest and readiness period. After 93 days at Leyte she returned to Okinawa where she remained 30 days before receiving her homeward bound orders.

Anything that can happen to her from now on will be anticlimatic. She is past the retirement age, and has little active life left in her. When she goes, like all old sailors, to pass on finally to "Snug Harbor", we know that the fighting heroes of the Alamo, could they voice their opinions, would be just as proud of her as are the fighting men who have sailed her.