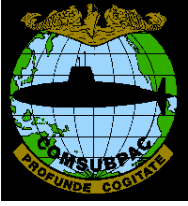


USS Trigger (SS 237)



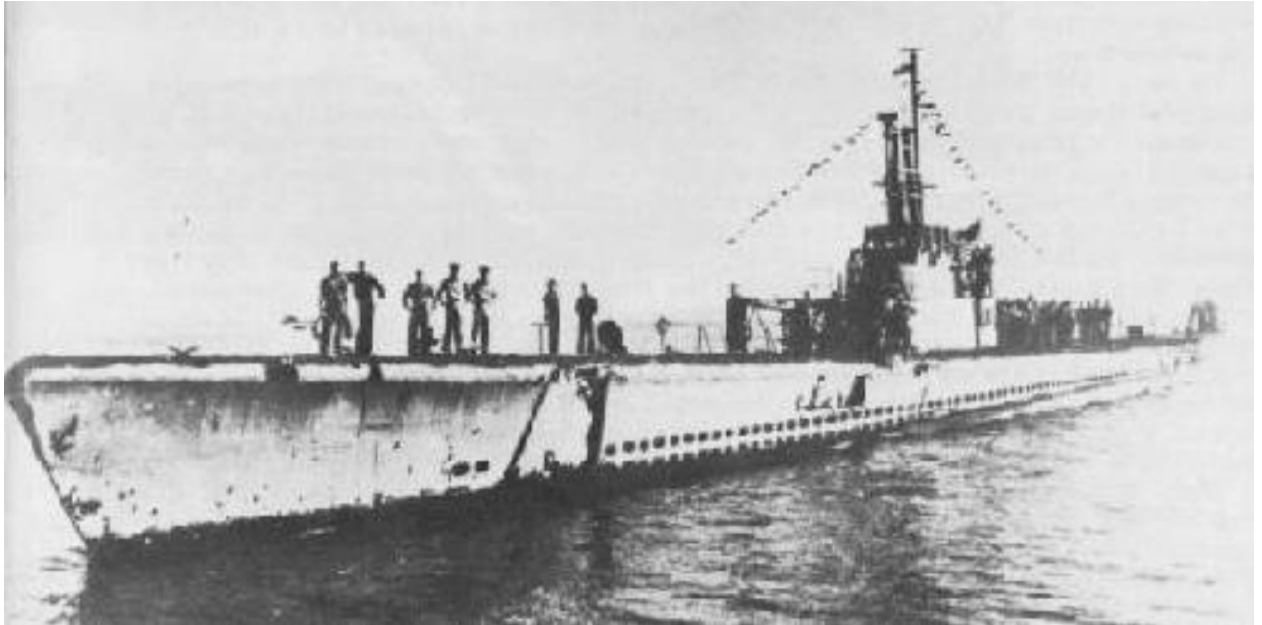
Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

USS TRIGGER (SS 237)

March 26, 1945 - 89 Men Lost

Departing Guam on March 11, 1945, TRIGGER, under the command of Cmdr. D.R. Connole, headed for the Nansei Shoto area to conduct her twelfth war patrol. She was to provide rescue services for carrier based aircraft, as well as to carry out a normal offensive patrol.

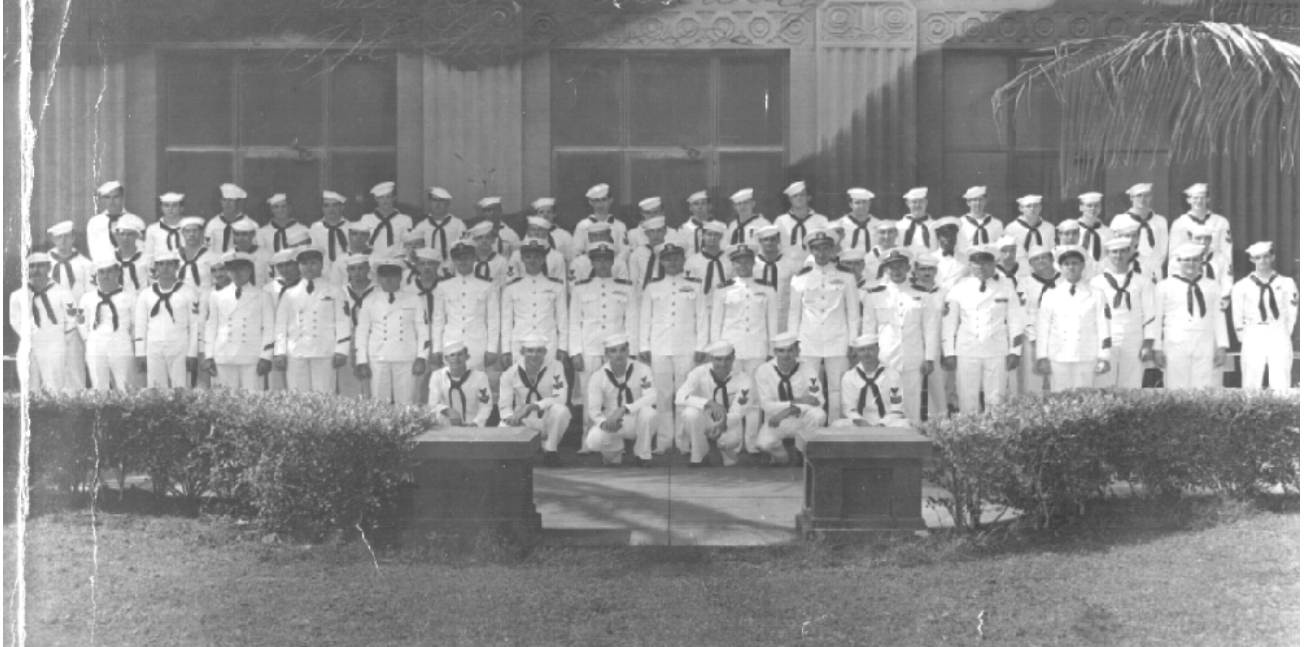
After having sent several routine messages en route to her area, TRIGGER reported her first action on March 18th. She stated that she had made a seventeen-hour end around on a convoy she had previously reported, and had attacked. She sank one freighter and damaged another. The other two merchantmen of the convoy and four escorts proceed west.



For some time, Allied forces had been aware of a large Japanese restricted area west of the Nansei Shoto in the East China Sea. The area had been marked "restricted" in captured enemy notices to mariners, and Allied forces were obliged to accept that the area was mined, and to keep out of it. Submarines had been warned of its presence and given its position, and were in the habit of proceeding around it to the north when

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patrolling the Formosa Strait and the adjacent China Coast. The convoy, which had been attacked by TRIGGER, was heading for this restricted area. It had always been strongly suspected that there were gaps in the mine lines, since the area was too big to be at once completely and effectively mined.



Immediately after receipt of TRIGGER's report of the attack she had made, ComSubPac told her to give as much information as possible concerning the subsequent movements of the convoy, in order to help establish the existence of a safe passage through the restricted area. On March 20th, TRIGGER reported that the attack she had made on the convoy had taken place northeast and that she had been held down for three hours by escorts following the attack. When last seen or heard the convoy was heading for the restricted area, but TRIGGER had been unable to regain contact when she was able to surface.

On March 24th, TRIGGER was given further orders. On March 25th she was to move west and patrol, remaining clear of restricted areas and outside the 100-fathom curve. On March 26th TRIGGER was told to proceed at best speed to form a coordinated attack group, known as Earl's Eliminators, with SEADOG and THREADFIN. The group was to be commanded by Cmdr. E.T. Hydeman in SEADOG. This message to TRIGGER required an acknowledgement, but on the same day she sent a weather report which did not contain an acknowledgement, and she never was heard from again. On March 28th, SEADOG reported that she had been unable to communicate with TRIGGER since the formation of the wolf pack. To clarify the situation for the other submarines, TRIGGER was given another assignment and told to acknowledge, and the wolf pack was disbanded on 30 March.

After many attempts to contact her by radio had failed, TRIGGER was ordered on April 4th to proceed to Midway. When she failed to arrive by May 1, 1945, she was reported as

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presumed lost in enemy water on her twelfth patrol, after a long and illustrious career.



News article describing the six Thompson brothers who served in World War II. Nathaniel Elton Thompson departed USS Tullibee prior to their sinking, but was lost on USS Trigger. His five brothers survived the war.

Since she knew the position of the enemy restricted area containing mines, and had been told to keep clear of it, it is extremely doubtful that TRIGGER's loss was due to a mine. On the afternoon of March 28th, a two-hour long depth charge attack was conducted by Japanese planes in cooperation with other ships. Other U.S. submarines in the area heard the attack. Hour later, THREADFIN reports, "Many distant strings of depth charges and several heavy explosions heard from what was believed to be the eastward. (In the opposite direction from the location of our attacks). It sounded as though someone was getting quite a drubbing." No other submarine in the vicinity reported having been attacked, although all reported hearing many explosions.

The Japanese report of the above attack states, "Detected a submarine over eight times and bombed it. Ships also detected it - depth charged. Found oil pool of 1 x 5 miles in size the following day." Since it is extremely doubtful that THREADFIN received sufficient damage to have left the oil pool described by the Japanese, it must be presumed that TRIGGER was lost in this action. That it occurred two days after TRIGGER had been told to acknowledge a message, and none was ever received is not considered unusual. Conditions often forced submarines to delay transmissions for considerable periods of time.

TRIGGER is credited with one freighter sunk and another damaged on her final patrol. This makes a total of 27 ships sunk, for 180,600 tons, and 13 ships damaged, for 102,900 tons, during the ship's entire career. In her second patrol to Empire in the area south of Honshu, TRIGGER sent a freighter to the bottom, and damaged two large tankers and a freighter. TRIGGER's third patrol was a mining mission as well as an offensive patrol; it, too, was in the Empire. She saw a large freighter blow up and sink when it hit a mine she had laid, and also sank two freighters by torpedo attacks. Also on January 10, 1943, TRIGGER torpedoed and sank the Japanese destroyer OKIKAZE near Honshu. TRIGGER covered the Palau-Wewak (New Guinea) traffic lanes on her fourth patrol and succeeded in sinking one freighter and damaging two more. Again in the area south of Honshu, TRIGGER on her fifth patrol sank a large freighter and damaged an aircraft carrier and a

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tanker.

Her sixth and seventh patrols were in the East China Sea. On her sixth she sank three good-sized tankers and a freighter, doing damage to another freighter. Her seventh resulted in the sinking of four good-sized freighters, one tanker, and one large transport. The eighth patrol of this vessel was made in the Carolines on the Truk-Guam route, and she sank a large freighter-transport and an escort vessel. She sank four freighter- transports as well as a patrol vessel near Palau on her ninth patrol; she also damaged a large tanker, two freighters and a sampan. TRIGGER's tenth patrol, as her last did, covered the Northern Nansei Shoto area. She received partial credit for sinking a small tanker, which was sunk cooperatively with SALMON. TRIGGER's eleventh patrol was in the Empire, but resulted in disappointingly few enemy contacts and no attack opportunities. This ship was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for her fifth sixth and seventh patrols.

Sailors Lost On USS TRIGGER (SS-237) 3-26-1945

Absher, N. A. FC3	Arsenault, E. A. S1	Backer, D. G., Jr. EM3	Ball, R. B. MOMM1
Barry, J. V. F1	Beranek, R. C. EM3	Bird, J. B. MOMM1	Boeding, J. M. TM3
Bolz, K. W. SM2	Butts, H. S1	Cain, V. W. F1	Carter, A. J. STM1
Coles, H. MOMM1	Connole, D. R. CDR	Craig, W. C., Jr. MOMM3	Crutcher, B. E. F1
Curry, P. P. TM1	DeLone, M. V., Jr. MOMM3	Derrick, C. A. QM3	Dodane, R. L. LCDR
Dorries, R. J. F1	Dow, W. E. S1	Dunnam, J. W. FCS2	Dusko, J. P. BKR2
Emmons, W. L., Jr. S1	Engle, R. E. EM3	Fisher, J. P. EM3	Fiste, H. L. CEMA
Foster, R. M. TM3	Franks, J. A. MOMM3	Gleason, H. R. LTJG	Greenwell, R. H. LT
Hambright, R. E., Jr. MOMM2	Hampton, G. T. MOMM3	Harrison, R. J. RT2	Householder, J. R. EM1
Iovino, V. T. EM3	Irish, C. B., Jr. LT	Johanson, L. A. RT2	Johnson, S. G. LTJG
Johnston, R. F. TM2	Kelly, R. M. EM2	Kemarsky, R. N. RT1	Kimmel, M. S1
Livingston, E. A. EM3	Maben, C. G., Jr. RM2	MacVane, A. L. SM2	McDonough "G" "W" RM1
McHugh, L. J., Jr. TM3	Melton, R. H. CMOMMA	Misner, D. E. LTJG	Morgan, H. P. S1
Morin, R. C. F1	Murray, R. W. S1	Niles, F. L. F1	Olson, D. T. Y1
Oster, L. SC1	Palmer, G. E. TM2	Payne, L. R. TM1	Pollack, R. C. EM1
Pross, J. S. QM1	Rae, W. H. TM3	Reed, J. A. MOMM1	Roberts, C. J. LTJG

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Robertson, C. C. MOMM1	Rondeau, N. N. RM2	Scheidegger, C. H. QM3	Schenck, C. E. MOMM2
Sincavich, J. W. LT	Sheperd, J. E., III LCDR	Smith, D. L. S1	Stakich, D. R. MOMM2
Stewart, J. N. EM1	Stock, M. N. S1	Targosz, G. S. GM3	Thompson, N. E. CK2
Thompson, W. C. EM2	Thornberry, C. G. S1	Turner, H. J. EM2	Watson, B. J. SC3
Weeks, J. R. CTMA	Welch, C. A., Jr. MOMM2	Widdekind, F. H. F1	Willey, J. T. GM1
Wilkins, D. L. S1	Wilkins, L. W. S1	Williams, C. A. CMOMMA	Worrells, C. M., Jr. MOMM2
Ugecic, W. M. CPHMAZ			