

Official War Time History of USS Hobson DD-464. Transcribed by CDR Houston H. Stokes from US Navy Records 4/7/2000 from documents dated 16 December 1948  
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#### HISTORY OF USS HOBSON (DMS 26) ex-(DD 464)

Built by the U. S. Navy Yard, Charleston, South Carolina, USS HOBSON's keel was laid on 14 November 1940. The destroyer was launched as DD-464 on 8 September 1941, sponsored by Mrs. Richmond P. Hobson, of New York, New York, widow of Rear Admiral Hobson, USN, in whose honor the ship was named. Admiral Hobson, who died on 16 March 1937, received the Medal of Honor in 1933, "For distinguishing himself conspicuously by extraordinary courage and intrepidity at risk of his life and beyond the call of duty on 3 June 1898, by entering the fortified harbor of Santiago, Cuba, and sinking the partially dismantled collier MERRIMAC in the channel under persistent fire from the enemy fleet and fortifications on shore" during the Spanish-American War.

HOBSON was commissioned on 22 January 1942 with Lieutenant Command R. N. McFarlane, USN, as first commanding officer. She held her shakedown off Casco Bay, Maine from 23 April to 3 May 1942.

During the war she took part in the following campaigns and engagements: Allied landings at Casablanca, French Morocco - 8 November 1942; carrier strike at Bodo, Norway - October 1943; she sank German submarine (U-575) -13 March 1944; the Allied landings in Normandy, France - 6 June 1944; the Allied landings on Southern France - 15 August 1944; and the American landings on Okinawa - April 1945.

HOBSON was converted to Destroyer-Minesweeper-26, while at the Charleston Navy Yard, Charleston, South Carolina during an availability period from 10 November to 18 December 1944.

She received the Presidential Unit Citation for her participation in anti-submarine patrol in the Atlantic. The citation reads:

"For extraordinary heroism in action against enemy submarines in the Atlantic Area in 1943 and 1944. Carrying out powerful and sustained offensive action during a period of heavy German undersea concentrations threatening our uninterrupted flow of supplies to the European theater of operations, these Six Anti-Submarine Task Groups (of which HOBSON was a member) tracked the enemy packs relentlessly and, by the unwavering vigilance and persistent aggressiveness of all units involved sank a notable number of hostile U-boats. The gallantry and superb teamwork of the officers and men who fought the embarked planes and who manned the BOGUE and her escort vessels were largely

instrumental in forcing the complete withdrawal of enemy submarines from supply routes essential to the maintenance of our established military supremacy."

HOBSON received her real test at Okinawa, where she was one of the minesweepers assigned to that campaign. Eight days before the invasion, she reported to the area and carried out the preliminary minesweeping plan without loss of equipment or personnel. After invasion of the island was underway, HOBSON was given screening, fire support and radar picket duties. On 16 April the ship was operating as a picket with the destroyer PRINGLE, and two landing ships in support. At 0840, the group was attacked by enemy aircraft estimated at ten to fifteen in number. The smaller ships were ordered to take cover while HOBSON and PRINGLE fired upon the planes.

One enemy plane had been shot down by the two ships combined but one of the other attackers managed to get through the curtain of gunfire and crash on PRINGLE, striking her amidships, causing a terrific explosion. When the smoke cleared, it was seen that the ship had broken in two and was sinking rapidly.

HOBSON was left without assistance to defend herself against the attacks coming from all sides by other low flying suicide planes. While the ship was firing on one to port, another appeared on the starboard quarter. Batteries were shifted to this target and the ship came hard right. The plane was shot down close aboard, but the bomb it was carrying dropped on the main deck and exploded in the forward engine room. The engine of the shot-down plane struck the deckhouse and the boiler uptakes. The fires which broke out on the main deck were extinguished immediately, however in this attack four men were killed and five wounded. The attacks continued with groups of planes circling the ship. Two more were shot down and the others were turned away by her gunfire.

At 1015 the enemy planes had been driven off, so HOBSON returned to the scene of PRINGLE's sinking to assist the landing craft in rescuing survivors.

After remaining overnight in the transport area, HOBSON returned to an advanced base for temporary repairs made by USS NESTOR, a battle damage repair ship.

In the hour of action after PRINGLE had been sunk, personnel of HOBSON performed splendidly. At one of the gun mounts a gunners mate jammed the foot firing pedal closed and kept it closed by inserting a flashlight in the mechanism. One of the operators stayed at his station until a plane crashed almost at his feet. When lights were knocked out temporarily in the forward engine room, the men there carried on with flashlights. In one of the firerooms, the crew worked at their stations in rescue breathing apparatus when that station was otherwise untenable. After the ship had been hit, damage control parties kept the ship mobile and maintained power to the gun batteries by running emergency cables so that the use of the guns was never interrupted. The bomb which exploded in the forward engine room did considerable damage to the machinery, but within ten minutes the damage control party had completed measures to remedy it.

HOBSON returned to Norfolk Navy Yard, Norfolk, Virginia for repairs and replacements on 15 June 1945. The war's end came while the ship was undergoing repairs and on 27 November 1945, repairs completed, the ship commenced post-availability shakedown. She operated off the Virginia coast and on 1 March 1946, she was at anchor at Hampton Roads, Virginia.

During the remainder of 1946 till 15 March 1948 HOBSON operated along the East Coast between Norfolk, Virginia and the Caribbean. On 15 March 1948 she got underway from Norfolk, Virginia enroute to Argentia, Newfoundland and then stopped off at Halifax, Canada before returning to Charleston, South Carolina on 21 November 1948.

#### BATTLES:

- (1) Allied landing at Casablanca, French Morocco - 8 November 1942.
- (2) Carrier strike at Bodo, Norway - October 1943.
- (3) Sank German submarine (U-575) - 13 March 1944.
- (4) Allied landing in Normandy, France - 6 June 1944.
- (5) Allied landing - Southern France - 15 August 1944.
- (6) American landing in Okinawa - April 1945.

#### SUCCESSIVE COMMANDING OFFICERS:

- (1) Lieutenant Commander R.. McFarlane, USN 22 January 1942 - 15 June 1942.
- (2) Commander K. Loveland, USN, 15 June 1942 - 22 November 1944.
- (3) Commander J. I. Manning, USN, 22 November 1944 - 22 February 1946.
- (4) Commander H. S. Graves, USN, 22 February 1946.