

O. N. I. 250-G
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SERIAL NO. 10

U-606

SUNK BY POLISH DESTROYER BURZA
AND U.S.C.G. CAMPBELL 2-22-43

**POST MORTEMS
ON
ENEMY SUBMARINES**



DIVISION OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

DECLASSIFIED
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NAVY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON

SERIAL No. 10

REPORT ON THE
INTERROGATION OF SURVIVORS
FROM U-606 SUNK ON
FEBRUARY 22, 1943



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NAVY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS,
Washington, October 25, 1942.

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2. In preparing this series of pamphlets, of which it is hoped there will be many, all information considered to be of value or interest to the naval service is included. While all the material does not relate directly to enemy submarine operations and personnel, it is in effect the intelligence which has been gathered in the course of antisubmarine operations.

3. This publication, like those which are to follow, is Confidential. Many of the data were formerly classified as Secret. But, the classification has been lowered in order that the service at large may benefit from the information collected and presented herein. *While no accountability is required, attention is invited to the fact that the intelligence contained in this series must be safeguarded in accordance with the strict and literal interpretation of its classification. The information compiled in this series can be of too great assistance in our operations at sea to hazard the loss of a source at once so important and so irreplaceable.*

H. C. TRAIN,
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy,
Director of Naval Intelligence.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter I. Introductory Remarks.....	1
II. Crew of <i>U-606</i>	2
III. Early History of <i>U-606</i>	5
IV. First War Cruise.....	7
V. Second War Cruise.....	8
VI. Third War Cruise.....	10
VII. Fourth and Last War Cruise.....	14
VIII. Sinking of <i>U-606</i>	15
IX. Details of <i>U-606</i>	18
X. General Remarks on U-boats.....	20
XI. U-boat Bases.....	25
XII. U-boat Training.....	27
XIII. U-boat Flotillas.....	28
XIV. Miscellaneous.....	29
Annex A. Crew List of <i>U-606</i>	30

Chapter I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

U-606, under command of Oberleutnant Hans Döhler,* was sunk by the Polish destroyer *Burza* and the *USCG Campbell* on February 22, 1943, at about 2300Z, in approximate position 47.00 N—34.07 W.

U-606 was participating in a wolf pack attack on convoy ON 166 when she was driven off and heavily depth charged by an escort vessel. The U-boat dived to a great depth in order to escape from the destroyer. A certain amount of damage resulted from this attack, and the U-boat was forced to surface. She was drifting helplessly on the surface with her conning tower hatch jammed fast when she was sighted by the *Campbell*. Panic swept that part of the crew of *U-606* which had reached the deck when the *Campbell* opened fire, and most of the men jumped overboard and were lost. Those who remained below were later rescued. Five of them were taken off by the *Campbell*, and eight by the *Burza*. One of the men rescued by the *Burza* subsequently died.

The 12 survivors were landed at St. John's, Newfoundland, and were later brought to the United States for interrogation.

The morale of the crew of *U-606* and the relations between officers and men were the poorest yet encountered. As a result, although the crew gave evidence of having been well trained in security, with the exception of one or two of the more experienced petty officers, they responded very readily to interrogation.

*For translation of ranks and ratings in *U-606*, see Annex A.

Chapter II. CREW OF U-606

The complement of *U-606* was 48. Only three of the four officers and nine of the 44 men survived. The unusually large size of the crew was due to the fact that several extra ratings were carried for training purposes.

During the course of her history, *U-606* had had three commanding officers. The first of these was Oberleutnant zur See Hans Klatt of the 1935 naval term. While still a cadet, Klatt had an accident while riding. He fell from his horse and suffered a slight concussion. He commanded *U-606* during her working-up period and on her first brief cruise. He was forced to leave his command in early October 1942 because of stomach disorders. Shortly after he was relieved from duty, he learned that his young wife had died. Klatt was popular with the crew and seems to have looked after the interests of his men.

The second Captain of *U-606* was Kapitänleutnant Friedrich (or Dietrich (?)) von der Esch of the 1934 naval term. He commanded the U-boat for 13 days on a cruise in the Arctic while his own boat, *U-586*, lay in the harbor at Bergen. He was once in the German Air Force and is known familiarly as "Titus."

The last of the three commanders of *U-606* was Oberleutnant zur See Hans Döhler of the April 1937 naval term. He lost his life at the sinking and not a great deal could be learned about him. He was 25 years of age, a native of Augsburg where his wife still lives. He had served on other U-boats and had been awarded the Iron Cross First Class. He had been the Second Watch Officer (2.W.O.) on *U-751* under Kapitänleutnant Bigalk of the 1933 naval term, after which he was given command of *U-606* without ever having served as Executive Officer (1.W.O.). He was described by the prisoners as a rather weak character, completely dominated by his Executive Officer. The men considered him too young and inexperienced for his command and complained that he held himself aloof from them and took no interest in their welfare.

The Engineer Officer was Leutnant (Ing.) Werner Schünemann.

He is 22 years of age, was born in Wilhelmshafen but lived in Münster, i/W. for most of his life. He entered the Naval Engineering School in 1938 and served first on a cruiser. This ship was bombed by British aircraft at Wilhelmshafen on the thirty-second day of the war. Schünemann's next assignment was on the cruiser *Köln*. He entered the U-boat arm in 1940, serving first in the North Sea on a 250-ton U-boat and later on a 500-ton boat. His father had served on torpedo boats in World War I and is now a research engineer for the German State Railroads. Schünemann seems to have been no more popular with the crew than the Captain. Prisoners stated that he was an ignoramus and that his ideas on Diesel engines were laughed at by the experienced petty officers. They said that he often came to the petty officers' mess at dinner time and made them stand at attention only to annoy them. His conception of security was rather curious. He remained silent only about his own mistakes and spoke most freely on other matters.

The Executive Officer (1. W. O.) was Leutnant zur See Werner Boulanger, 23 years old, and a native of Mosbach, Baden. His father was an engineer in German East Africa before the last war. Boulanger entered the German Navy as a Cadet in 1938. His first assignment was on the *Admiral Hipper* on which he served during the Norwegian campaign. He next served aboard a 500-ton Schoolboat commanded by Freiherr von Freyberg-Eisenberg-Allmendingen of the 1935 naval term. This boat, *U-52*, had once been commanded by Kapitänleutnant Otto Salmann of the 1932 naval term. Boulanger was extremely affable with the interrogators and gave the impression of being something of an exhibitionist. He was regarded with utmost hostility by several members of the crew. According to them, he was high-handed in his methods and his discipline was harsh to the point of sadism. They stated that no less than seven men were sent up for court-martial by Boulanger for stealing food. Some were sentenced to 9 months imprisonment and others were sent to the Russian front for such minor offences as stealing a can of cherries or a box of biscuits from the ship's larder. One man was sentenced to 6 months on the Russian front for stealing cigarettes. Boulanger apparently was only too glad to have an excuse to administer disciplinary punishments. His forbidding the men to smoke on the bridge did nothing to increase his popularity. Some of the men suspected him of peculiar solitary habits and one called him a "Stehgeiger" (bass-viol fiddler). One of the petty officers swore a solemn oath that when he returned to Germany after the war, he would devote

himself to the single task of killing Boulanger. At the time of the sinking of *U-606* another petty officer approached Boulanger saying, "I've waited a long time to do this." He then hit the officer in the face and jumped into the sea.

The Second Watch Officer (2. W. O.), Leutnant zur See Martin Peter Reese, is 20 years of age and a native of Hamburg. While still a cadet, Reese served on a mine sweeper. Although the youngest and least experienced of the officers, Reese was the only one to enjoy some measure of respect on board.

The crew, like the officers, were young and inexperienced. Schünemann estimated the average age of the engine-room ratings to be about 19. To balance the general inefficiency of her personnel, a few very experienced petty officers were assigned to *U-606*. Several of these had won the Iron Cross First Class, and one of them had been awarded the Spanish Cross in Gold for service in the German Navy during the Spanish civil war.

The morale of the crew of *U-606* was unusually poor. There was no *esprit de corps* and the men complained bitterly of being kept in ignorance of what was going on. The older petty officers often felt called upon to correct, as best they could, the mistakes of their officers. The arguing and bickering between officers and men often amounted to insubordination. The statement of one of the petty officers seems to characterize the general attitude of the men. He said, "What sins have I committed in my life that I should have been assigned to such a boat?" Indoctrination in security on board seems to have consisted mainly of impressing on the crew the importance of keeping secret the number of the boat and von der Esch's connection with it.

Chapter III. EARLY HISTORY OF U-606

U-606 was a 500-ton U-boat, type VII-C, built at the Blohm and Voss yard at Hamburg. She was one of the series of U-boats, *U-551* to *U-623*, assigned to Blohm and Voss.

It could not be learned when *U-606* was laid down. She was launched in December 1941 and during that month, some of the crew came to the boat to stand by during the final phases of construction. They lived on a depot ship, possibly the sailing vessel *Hein Godewind* which had previously been used by the Marine Hitler Youth organization. The engine crew was not instructed on *U-606* but on other U-boats which were more nearly completed. It was probably during December that Oberleutnant Klatt took over the command of the boat.

U-606 was commissioned on January 22, 1942. Less than a week later she sailed for Kiel for the trials of the U-boat Acceptance Command (U. A. K.). Before she could begin these trials, however, *U-606* was frozen in at the pier and remained frozen fast until March.

After a brief period of repair to damage done by the ice, *U-606* finally began her trials late in March. After completing the usual pressure dock tests and engine trials, she sailed for the Baltic for further exercises. Surface torpedo firing practice was held off Gotenhafen. The trials under the Active Service Training Group (Agru-front) took place at Hela in the company of other U-boats. The usual under-water sound tests were held off Rönne.

The tactical exercises, consisting of simulated convoy attacks, lasted 14 days. Several other U-boats participated in these exercises, and a prisoner stated that one of them was a new boat commanded by Kapitänleutnant Ernst Mengersen of the 1933 naval term. Once during the trials, when the Executive Officer had the deck, the orders became so confused that the petty officer at the hydroplane controls was unable to obey orders and at the same time keep the boat at periscope depth. Again *U-606* barely escaped being run down by a destroyer which the Executive Officer failed to see in time. In spite of these mistakes, *U-606* was seen only twice by the escort vessels

during the many simulated attacks and her performance during the exercises under Klatt's able command was considered to have been excellent.

After completing her trials, *U-606* returned to Hamburg early in July for final overhaul (Restarbeiten). New gear, including the German Search Receiver, was built in at this time. The period of final overhaul was prolonged by a serious fire in the Diesel compartment. A rivet head was burned off by a welder. Sparks set fire to the bilge oil. The whole compartment was burned out and both Diesels were badly damaged. It was also related that the support of one of the Diesels gave way so that the engine sagged and bent the propeller shaft.

It was not until the middle of August that *U-606* was ready to sail for Kiel once more. In Kiel she took on provisions, fuel, and ammunition for her first war cruise.

Chapter IV. FIRST WAR CRUISE

U-606 left Kiel about August 18 on her first war cruise. She put in first at Kristiansand where she remained for 2 days, taking on fresh provisions. On about August 22, she headed for her operational area in the North Atlantic, accompanied by an escort of patrol boats. Shortly after her escort had left, the Captain, Oberleutnant Klatt, was stricken with stomach disorders and *U-606* put about and made for Bergen after having been out less than a week.

Klatt was sent to the hospital and the crew stood by visiting him frequently while waiting for his recovery. The officers took advantage of this period of leisure to consume the liquor supply of *U-606* on mixed parties with the nurses from the hospital. One day Klatt asked for a bottle from his private stock. After various excuses and delays, the officers finally could no longer conceal from Klatt the fact that the stock had been entirely consumed. Thus Klatt discovered how his officers had been entertaining themselves. Following the reprimand by Klatt, the officers informed the crew that the doctors had forbidden their captain to have any visitors. In spite of this, a petty officer went to see Klatt who again summoned his officers. A scene of great violence ensued and Klatt forbade the officers ever to see him again. The crew, however, continued to visit him daily.

After about a week, it became apparent that Klatt would not be able to sail with his boat and he was relieved from duty. On orders from the Admiral in Command of U-boats (B. d. U.), *U-606* was made ready for an Arctic cruise. She went into dry dock where she was painted a light gray. The device of the 11th Flotilla, a polar bear and an iceberg with a U-boat nearby, was painted on her conning tower. Several new crew members were assigned to the boat at this time.

The mission of *U-606* was to intercept and attack a convoy bound for Murmansk. *U-586* had just returned from the Arctic and her Captain, Kapitänleutnant Friedrich von der Esch was temporarily assigned to *U-606* for this task. Von der Esch brought 10 of his own crew with him and an equal number of men from *U-606* were left ashore. Among von der Esch's men were seamen and petty officers, including his Obersteuermann (warrant quartermaster) Lattermann.

Chapter V. SECOND WAR CRUISE

The second war cruise of *U-606* lasted only 13 days. About the middle of September *U-606* left Bergen under command of Kapitänleutnant Friedrich von der Esch and proceeded full speed to the Arctic. After vainly pursuing Murmansk-bound convoy PQ 18 for 6 days without making contact, *U-606* sighted the west-bound convoy QP 14, which she duly reported. She was ordered to stay with the convoy as contact-keeper (Führungshalter). However, owing to efficient defense by escorts and air cover, *U-606* was unable to attack.

On Sunday, September 20, *U-606* was sighted and attacked by three destroyers which heavily depth charged her. Prisoners stated that many depth charges were dropped, all exploding above the boat in spite of the fact that she was not submerged deeply. According to officers' statements this attack would have resulted in the U-boat's sinking had it been pressed home. On the following day the boat was attacked by an aircraft described by the prisoners as a Catalina. *U-606* fought off the attack and claimed to have hit the plane which lowered her wing tip pontoons, landed on the water, and taxied toward the convoy where she was lost from sight.

U-606 returned to Bergen without having fired any of her torpedoes. Other U-boats had scored heavily against the convoy, however. Kapitänleutnant Strelow of the 1931 naval term and commander of *U-435* claimed the sinking of five freighters totalling 57,000 tons, and two destroyers. He was awarded the KCIC on November 2 for his success. (*O. N. I. Notes*.—This was convoy QP 14 from which the following losses on September 22 were reported: *Ocean Voice*, *Gray Ranger*, *Bellingham*, *Silver Sword*, *HMS Somali*, and *HMS Leader*. The convoy reached Loch Ewe on September 26.)

In Bergen, Strelow thanked von der Esch for receiving depth charges intended for himself. The wolf pack itself suffered some losses. According to the prisoners, Korvettenkapitän Hans Cohausz, Commandant of the 11th Flotilla, announced that *U-88* and one other U-boat thought by one prisoner to have a number something like 431, had been lost during the attack on convoy PQ 18. (*O. N. I. Note*.—

It seems unlikely that 431 is correct since Kapitänleutnant Dommes who is believed to command *U-431* was reported operating successfully in the Mediterranean in November 1942. It is known, however, that two U-boats were sunk during attack on convoy PQ 18 on September 14th and 16th.)

In Bergen, von der Esch returned with his men to *U-586*, and on about October 12, Oberleutnant Hans Döhler took command of *U-606*. Obermaschinengefreiter Schnabel was put ashore at this time because of venereal disease. Döhler made a short trial trip with the boat during the course of an afternoon and, a few days later, had her provisioned for her third cruise. The Executive Officer had neglected to fill out the clearance papers until shortly before the boat was ready to sail. He tried to press a petty officer into service to do this work but the man flatly refused to spend his last night of liberty doing so. The officer then worked on them all night but filled them out so inaccurately that the papers were rejected by the Flotilla Commander who forwarded them to Brest to be reworked after the third cruise.

Chapter VI. THIRD WAR CRUISE

On October 16, 1942, *U-606* sailed from Bergen under command of Oberleutnant Döhler for her third war cruise. Although she was now assigned to the flotilla at Brest and was headed for an operational area in the North Atlantic, she still wore her Arctic coat of paint.

On October 27, the U-boat sighted a convoy which she followed for some time in company with several other U-boats. At 0345Z of the following day, she made her first attack. Four torpedoes were fired at a large whale factory, two of which took effect. The tubes were hastily reloaded and some 4 hours later *U-606* fired two more torpedoes at a straggler that was observed to be already damaged. Both torpedoes scored. According to the officers of *U-606* two stragglers were proceeding in company escorted by two corvettes. The convoy was already out of sight ahead. The moon being very bright and dawn approaching, they considered their attack a daring one. When the torpedoes were fired one corvette was lost to sight on the far side of the other straggler and the second corvette was on her way to the far side of the target. After she had been hit the escorts allowed some 2 minutes to elapse before taking counteraction and firing snowflakes. The U-boat was able to escape easily undetected and the officers were particularly scornful of what they considered the poor showing of the two corvettes. The commander of the U-boat reported to the Admiral in Command of U-boats that he had sunk two ships, one of 13,600 tons and one of 6,000 tons. Fortunately his claim was unfounded, for *U-606* had torpedoed the same ship twice.

The true story of the attack was learned from the convoy action reports. *U-606* was taking part in a wolf pack attack on convoy HX212, about 600 miles southwest of Greenland. Strangely enough, the *USCG Campbell*, the ship which later was to sink *U-606*, was one of the escort vessels. *U-606* fired her first four torpedoes at 0345Z on October 28, at approximate position 55.10 N -28.10 W. Two of them struck the Norwegian whale factory, *Kosmos II*, 16,966 tons, on the starboard side. She was badly crippled by this attack and her speed was reduced to 6 knots. She was forced to drop behind the rest of the convoy and the corvette *HMCS Rosthern* stayed with her as escort. At 0722Z *U-606* again attacked the *Kosmos* with two torpedoes. She broke in two and sank rapidly, but not before she fired one round at the U-boat. The Captain of *U-606* was about to give the order to dive but was dissuaded from doing so by his far

more experienced coxswain who convinced him that the U-boat could outdistance the corvettes on the surface. The surviving officers of *U-606*, when presented with the above facts, now admit that their claim of two ships sunk may have been over optimistic but they could not account for the fact that a ship whose tonnage was originally correctly estimated at about 16,000 tons was subsequently believed to be of only 6,000 tons. On the first occasion she was identified by her silhouette as another whale factory, the *Tafelburg*, which is slightly smaller than the *Kosmos II*. (O. N. I. Note: No other ships were torpedoed at this time or under these circumstances, and it appears certain that it was *Kosmos II* which was attacked on both occasions.)

About a week after the convoy attack *U-606* sighted an unescorted refrigerator ship which was proceeding at a speed of about 12 knots. The U-boat followed her for several hours waiting for darkness to make her attack. The officers suddenly discovered that a second U-boat was stalking their prey and they became highly indignant. *U-606* was on a course almost parallel to that of her target. She fired one torpedo which missed. The U-boat then altered her course, turning 30° toward. Forgetting this change of course, the Executive Officer gave the wrong bearing to the petty officer in charge of the torpedo data-computing machine. A salvo of two torpedoes were then fired but they also missed. The refrigerator ship was seen to stop, go astern and start off on a new course at 18 knots. The second U-boat fired eight torpedoes but due to the clever maneuvering of the merchant vessel she had no more success than *U-606*. According to the Executive Officer the vessel which was on a westerly course made a signal in clear stating that she was being attacked by an enemy submarine and giving her call letters, which were those of the British *SS Clan Macaulay*. He was most impressed by the fine way in which the ship was handled and stated that her sudden burst of speed made any attempt at pursuit useless. (O. N. I. Note.—Although there is no record available of *Clan Macaulay* having made a report of this incident since she was bound for the Indian Ocean, it is probable that the identification was correct. After leaving a British port she is known to have sailed westward until 0700 on November 5, when, in position $42^{\circ}55' N.$, $33^{\circ}00' W.$, she altered course to 185° .) The two U-boat commanders who participated so ignominiously in this attack were later given a severe dressing down for wasting so many torpedoes and on *U-606* there was much bickering between officers and men as to where the fault lay. *U-606* was forced to take down a

torpedo from her upper deck containers, at best, a difficult and hazardous task.

Some days after the attack on the refrigerator ship, *U-606* sighted another convoy. She reported to the Admiral in Command of U-boats who ordered her to act as contact-keeper (Fühlungshalter). She followed the convoy for 3 or 4 days but was prevented from attacking by heavy seas. Eventually she was driven off by a destroyer. Quartermaster Alfred Schmidt, who was in charge of the watch, gave the alarm, closed the hatch, but failed to give the order to flood the tanks. He kept shouting, "Dive, dive, go deeper." In spite of his confused orders the boat managed to escape beneath the surface, thanks to the presence of mind of a machinist's mate who flooded the tanks on his own initiative.

Some time before the end of the cruise *U-606* was met by a supply U-boat. The sea was heavy and the two boats stood by for some time before supplies could be transferred.

When *U-606* was on her way back to her base two cylinder heads on the starboard Diesel cracked and water spurted from the cooling jackets. The U-boat submerged and the engine-room crew attempted repairs. They worked for about 11 hours and succeeded in replacing one head and getting the engine to run on four cylinders. The warrant machinist was later awarded the Iron Cross First Class for his part in this operation. For the remainder of the cruise, however, *U-606* was forced to run Diesel-electric. She submerged only in the Bay of Biscay shortly before making port.

U-606 limped into Brest on December 5, after having been out just 50 days. She was towed to a pier by two tugs and later put into a U-boat shelter.

U-606 remained in Brest for about a month. Some of the crew were given leave and several new men joined the boat. The crew lived in barracks which they described as converted private dwellings on the east side of the river. The boat went into a dry dock shelter for overhaul and painting. At this time the 9th Flotilla device of two sailfish was painted on her conning tower.

On New Year's Eve, several petty officers went to the officers' quarters to wish their commander a Happy New Year. When they opened the door an amazing spectacle greeted their eyes. The officers, in a highly disheveled condition, were entertaining a number of wholly and partially disrobed women, many of them nurses from the local hospital. An extensive assortment of wine and liquors lined

the wall. The men were so shocked at the sight that they withdrew, but not before one of them uttered a short but vulgar expletive and slammed the door. The next day Döhler announced his intention of calling the men concerned before the mast. The petty officers, however, insisted on a court-martial, hoping to make public the shameful behavior of their officers when "German soldiers were bleeding and dying at the front." One of them burst into copious weeping when relating the story, so moved was he at the thought of such behavior on the part of German officers. Their flotilla commander who had participated in this debauch finally succeeded in hushing up the whole affair.

The crew of *U-606* was in a tense and hostile frame of mind as the men made their boat ready for her fourth cruise. The torpedoes were taken aboard on Sunday, January 3, 1943, and on the following day, *U-606* set sail.

Chapter VII. FOURTH AND LAST WAR CRUISE

U-606 sailed from Brest on her fourth and last cruise on January 4, 1943. As she left the harbor she was escorted by two mine sweepers. Her operational area was again in the North Atlantic. During this cruise, the U-boat came within striking distance of her enemies several times. Once she sighted a destroyer on a foggy day and *U-606* was able to escape on the surface without being seen. A few days later a second destroyer was seen, close-to, on a converging course. Heavy seas were running and the destroyer failed to see *U-606*, which dived and got away without sustaining an attack. Early in February, *U-606* was sighted by an aircraft. Three bombs were dropped but no damage resulted. The U-boat crash-dived before a second attack could be made.

About February 14, *U-606* was met by a supply boat. The sea was calm and the sky clear. The two U-boats lay alongside for 2 or 3 hours while supplies were transferred. They did not make fast, but made steerage way and held their positions, keeping steady with their rudders. *U-606* took on fuel oil through a hose, and potatoes, bread, and other provisions were loaded.

On the morning of February 22, *U-606* sighted the first convoy of the cruise, ON 166. She followed it astern all day, keeping the masts in sight. After dark she closed for attack on the surface. At least five and possibly as many as nine other U-boats were in the same wolf pack. *U-606* fired her first torpedo at a range of 600 yards and scored a hit. Her second torpedo missed but the third and fourth were hits. The prisoners believed that they sank two ships out of the convoy and possibly a third which was seen burning. The officers later claimed the sinking of three ships for a total of 16,000 tons. There seems to have been much confusion in the convoy as other U-boats were attacking from other quarters.

After pressing home her attack, *U-606* turned hard to port to make good her escape. Such was not to be the case, however. An escort vessel had gained a contact on the U-boat and quickly closed for the kill.

Chapter VIII. SINKING OF U-606

The escort vessel which caused *U-606* to make her last and fatal dive was probably the Polish destroyer *Burza*. In order to escape her fierce attack, *U-606* submerged to a great depth. The prisoners stated that they watched the depth gauges register up to 200 meters and that the U-boat must have gone as much as 240 meters beneath the surface. A great many depth charges were dropped and the prisoners estimated the number variously from 18 to 50. One of the charges exploded just above the bridge, damaging the railing and conning tower housing, and bending the 2 cm. gun out of shape. Near misses caused the U-boat to shake so that an oil line in the petty officers' quarters broke. Prisoners said that the boat creaked and groaned in a terrifying manner due to the great pressure.

The Engineer Officer and the warrant machinist made a hurried inspection of the boat. They discovered the beginning of a crack in the pressure hull near the after diving tank which they attributed either to faulty material or poor workmanship. The Engineer Officer, becoming panicky, rushed to the Captain saying that in his opinion the boat could remain afloat only 30 minutes. The boat had been submerged for less than an hour, but, according to the prisoners, the air was becoming bad. Some of them stated that there was chlorine in the boat while others positively denied its presence. The tanks were blown, but only after using all of the air in the high pressure air flasks. *U-606* shot to the surface at a sharp angle. On the way to the surface the Executive Officer ran amuck and attempted to escape through the galley hatch. He was forcibly restrained from doing so by his Commanding Officer.

On reaching the surface an inspection was made of *U-606*. The Diesels and motors were functioning, and the lights were still on. Being somewhat calmer, the Engineer Officer revised his estimate and decided that the boat could live for about 2 hours. It was soon discovered, however, that the listening devices were no longer in working order and that the high water pressure had caused the conning tower hatch to become jammed fast. *U-606* was running blindly on the surface when she was discovered by the *USCG Campbell*.

About 1930Z on February 22, the *Campbell* sighted star shells and flashes of gun fire from a convoy, ON 166, bearing 340°, distance about 10 miles. At 1950 she was on course 320°, attempting to close with the convoy. Almost immediately thereafter the first radar contact on *U-606* was obtained, bearing 010° at 4,200 yards. The *Campbell* changed her course to follow the contact and general alarm was rung. A sound contact was then obtained at 040°, 1,200 yards. The *Campbell* came right to follow the sound contact which was lost at 800 yards. The cutter first sighted the U-boat about 40 yards off the starboard beam. The U-boat was on course 315° relative as the *Campbell* was coming full right. *U-606* struck the cutter a glancing blow just under the starboard bridge wing. The hydroplanes of the U-boat cut a hole in the *Campbell's* hull, causing the engine room to flood. (*O. N. I. Note.*—There is some evidence which seems to point to the fact that the U-boat which collided with the *USCG Campbell* was not *U-606*. The radar contact and sound contact obtained by the cutter had slightly different bearings. This might indicate that there were two U-boats in the immediate neighborhood. Moreover, the prisoners from *U-606* were unanimous in declaring that they felt no collision at the time. The officers of the *Campbell*, on the other hand, describe the collision as a violent one and state that they saw the U-boat bounce away as a result of it.) Immediately after the collision the *Campbell* dropped two 600-pound depth charges which exploded very close to the U-boat, causing her to lift slightly in the water. The *Campbell* then let loose with her 3-inch guns, her 20-mm. guns, and even Thompson submachine guns. A searchlight picked out the target and when the power failed, tracers from the 20-mm. guns gave light enough for accurate fire. The fire continued for less than 10 minutes and many hits were scored on the deck and the conning tower. Thirty-two rounds were fired by the 3-inch guns and about 20 drums of ammunition by the 20-mm. machine guns.

Meanwhile, on *U-606* the Captain had reached the deck via the forward torpedo hatch and with the assistance of those inside succeeded in opening the conning tower hatch. Döhler exhorted his men to remain calm and most of them joined him on deck. A heavy list to starboard prevented them from launching their life raft. Their flashlights drew more fire from the *Campbell* until one of them flashed the distress signal. Suddenly the men discovered that their Captain had disappeared, probably killed by gunfire. The other officers had remained below and the warrant quartermaster found himself in charge of the men on deck. Fear seized him and he gave the order

to abandon ship. The men jumped into the sea and were not seen again.

The officers and men who remained below fared better. After some time had elapsed and no more gunfire was heard, they decided that it was safe to go above. The Engineer Officer, feeling that discretion was the better part of valor, decided not to set the scuttling charges. He claims to have opened the vents of the ballast tanks before joining the others on the bridge, leaving one rating below to open the main flood vent and to fetch the photographs of his girl friend from the officers' quarters. The men on deck, having fortified themselves against the cold with sausages and bottles of rum and champagne, waited in comfort for their rescuers.

At about 2100Z a boat pulled over to the U-boat from the *Campbell* and the officer-in-charge ordered the crew of *U-606* into the water. Five of them were picked up by him. The remaining seven were taken off by a boat from the *Burza*. As the prisoners boarded the Polish destroyer one of them turned and saw the conning tower of the U-boat, still clearly visible. At midnight it still was above water.

Chapter IX. DETAILS OF *U-606*

Tonnage.

500 tons.

Type.

VII C.

Building yard.

Blohm & Voss, Hamburg.

Flotilla.

U-606 was assigned to the 11th Flotilla at Bergen during her Arctic cruise. During her third and fourth cruises, she was assigned to the 9th Flotilla at Brest.

Diesel engines.

G-W (Germania Werft, Krupp), 6-cylinder, 4-cycle, single acting, developing 1,400 horsepower. An engine-room rating stated that at extreme emergency speed (3 x A. K.) the engines turned up 460 to 470 r. p. m. One spare cylinder head was carried.

Electric motors.

Brown Boveri Co.

Device.

While attached to the 11th Flotilla *U-606* had as a flotilla device a polar bear below which was an iceberg with a U-boat nearby. When in the 9th Flotilla her flotilla device was two sailfish. Her own device was a map of England with an axe buried in it and the words "Hack, Hack" beneath. This was said to symbolize the desire to hack away England's shipping.

Paint.

U-606 was given a light gray coat of paint for the Arctic cruise.

S. B. T.

Prisoners were unanimous in stating that S. B. T. was not fitted.

G. S. R.

Fitted on the periscope housing. Prisoners said that it was used both night and day, even when visibility was good. The gear had to be dismantled before diving.

Torpedoes.

Capacity 14. The detonating pistols were carried in the forward compartment and in the control room.

G. H. G. and K. D. B.

(Listening gear) Both fitted.

Fresh water.

The cook was allowed 100 liters of fresh water a day but seldom used as much as this.

Watches.

Watches and meals were run by local time. The officers stated that it was a matter for the discretion of the commanding officer as to whether watches were run on German time or local time.

Nicknames.

The electric motors were called "Anita" and "Anni." The cannon was called "Hedy."

Chapter X. GENERAL REMARKS ON U-BOATS

Diesels.

The Engineer Officer of *U-606* spoke freely about the engines of the 500-ton, type VII-C U-boat. He stated that this type of boat had become standard in Germany and that only very minor changes were made in its design and equipment from time to time. He said that the improved series of G-W Diesel engines is equipped with foolproof interlocking controls (*Geblockte Steuerung*). Starting, stopping, or reversing is impossible until all individual controls such as oil and cooling water circulation, fuel pump and valves, direction of rotation, starting air, etc., have been set. The prisoner intimated that this had been installed because of the youth, inexperience, and inadequate training of the present engine-room crews. He indicated a trend toward even more automatic operation to compensate for the lower quality of the personnel.

The improved G-W Diesels, according to the Engineer Officer, represent a compromise in weight. He stated that at the outset of the intensive U-boat building campaign, the German naval authorities asked engine manufacturers to submit designs based on such general specifications as height, length, number of cylinders and, presumably, horsepower. MAN (*Maschinenbau Augsburg Nürnberg*) submitted a light weight design meeting the set requirements. G-W's design was satisfactory except for excessive weight. G-W was asked to redesign the engine with an eye to weight reduction. The prisoner felt that this was done in a somewhat arbitrary manner, with the result that the engine went to pieces due to the weakness of various parts. He implied that aluminum pistons were used to reduce weight but that they had proved unsatisfactory. Speaking on the general subject of weight reduction in U-boat Diesels, the prisoner stated that it was unimportant since ballast was necessary at all times. He said that in addition to the desired buoyancy, fore and aft trim and, to a lesser degree, athwartships trim were the controlling factors.

The same prisoner said that G-W Diesels use removable cylinder sleeves (*Laufbüchsen*). The water in the cooling jackets immediately

surrounds the outside of the sleeve. The prisoner felt that the sleeves proved to be very satisfactory, even as to their infrequent replacement. (See section on "Repairs at Sea" for a discussion of replacement.)

When discussing the respective merits of MAN and G-W Diesels, the prisoner compared MAN to a fine horse and G-W to a mule. The former, he said, is somewhat delicate, finely engineered and spirited, requiring intelligent handling by qualified personnel. The latter is sturdy and capable of standing much abuse. Its operation and repair are made easy by accessibility. He stated that a G-W engine could be started cold and immediately thrown to full speed (A. K.). He said, however, that if this were done about 40 times, the engine would be ruined. In speaking of the type of fuel consumed by the G-W, the prisoner stated in levity that it would "eat just about everything shoved into it, including broomsticks." Apparently this Diesel is adaptable to the use of fuels of a rather wide range of characteristics.

Auxiliaries and equipment.

The chief machinist's mate of *U-606* said that the supercharger was of the "Kapselgebläse" type, which is said to consist of two eccentric pieces turning at the same speed, forcing air in one side of the shaft and out of the other. According to the Engineer Officer, however, the 500-ton, type VII-C U-boats all use the "Büchigebläse" which is an exhaust turbo-supercharger. The prisoner stated that the vanes on the exhaust turbine were made of alloys which resisted burning out for a long time. He was unaware of the use of ceramics in vanes but admitted the possibility of research having been done in this field.

The prisoner considered that the use of friction disk clutches was more satisfactory than mechanical clutches and drives. When questioned about hydraulic clutches and drives, particularly the "Vulkankupplung" and "Vulkangetriebe", he stated that experience with these was extremely satisfactory. He was noncommittal as to their application to present 500-ton U-boats and to large multi-motored U-boats said to be in use or under construction.

The Engineer Officer said that the early difficulties with the Junkers crankless compressor had been overcome. The chief trouble had been with back pressure building up as a result of waves breaking into the out-board exhaust pipe. Due to defective check-valves in the exhaust line, sea water occasionally entered the Diesel cylinder, causing the piston to freeze, forming steam, and resulting in other damage to the mechanism. To overcome this, the exhaust pipe had

been shielded and curved downward in a 180° bend. The Junkers compressor now used on U-boats is of the four-stage type.

Batteries.

The Engineer Officer stated that batteries were light in weight but of the acid-lead rather than the alkaline-nickel type. The cases were made of hard rubber. The presence of a floating check valve to prevent spilling was confirmed by him. He considered the maximum safe diving angle, from the point of view of battery spill, to be 25°. He stated that they would certainly spill at a 45° angle and he considered the critical angle to be between 25° and 45°. He stated that the diving angle indicator was graduated only to 25°.

Fire extinguishers.

The prisoner stated that in some U-boats the built-in controls of the carbon dioxide fire extinguishers were in the battery compartment, while in others they were in the control room. He considered the present extinguisher system to be a closely guarded secret.

Oils.

The Engineer Officer stated that Diesel oil was taken on in bulk and that the specifications of oil were uniform. Samples of all oil received are submitted to the flotilla laboratory where it is tested for 23 check-off points. It is then certified.

Lubricating oil is received in sealed drums which are designated by numbers only, without any indication as to type or specifications. U-boats use light lubricating oils in cold waters or in winter, and heavier oils in warm water or in summer. The necessary changes can be made at sea.

Centrifugal oil cleaners are standard equipment in all U-boats.

Air purifiers.

The Engineer Officer said that he did not know whether alkalis or lithium were used as air purifying agents. He stated that the charges were received in canisters bearing trade names. The material contained in them, he said, was a gray-white powder, or small lumps similar to carbide in appearance.

Repairs at sea.

The Engineer Officer described how a Diesel cylinder sleeve can be replaced at sea. The head is loosened from the stud bolts, hoisted against the overhead where it is secured by nuts to bolts previously fitted to receive it. The sleeve is then removed with screw type

pulling gear, a replacement inserted, and the process reversed. The prisoner admitted replacing a cracked cylinder head in a similar manner although the operation was difficult because of the slight clearance.

The prisoner spoke of an incident on an unidentified U-boat in which there was an explosion in the crankcase. One Diesel was wrecked and pieces of the crankcase were driven into the opposite engine by the force of the explosion. During the course of 72 hours, the Engineering Officer took down both engines and reassembled the undamaged parts into one workable Diesel. During the operation, the boat dived to the bottom and surfaced several times. The only source of power for maintaining pressure in the high pressure air flasks was the Junkers compressor. When repairs were completed, the boat ran on Diesel-electric for several days on one engine and dived only upon approaching her base. The batteries went dead on arrival and the U-boat was berthed by tugs. The Engineer Officer of this boat received the Iron Cross First Class for this feat.

The Engineer Officer of *U-606* confirmed a recent report regarding repairs to a U-boat engine having been made with muslin bandage and a putty. On the boat in question, a cylinder head casting forming a chamber over an exhaust valve and having hot exhaust gases on one side and cooling water on the other, cracked. Repairs were made by patching with "Eisenkitt" (literally, "Iron Putty") and then wrapping with bandages. The Diesel was said to have run satisfactorily for the 2 weeks necessary for the boat to reach her base. The prisoner said that he personally had never used "Eisenkitt" but others had recommended it very highly, as it was water, heat, and oil resistant. He believes that it has an asbestos base and contains a petroleum solvent which evaporates during setting. The preparation is said to set in about 20 minutes, either in air or under water.

The Engineer Officer stated that direct current welders are carried aboard all U-boats. A coated electrode of soft Swedish steel is said to be used. The prisoner considered the outfit to be very satisfactory except when used on heavy cast iron. He said that normally the seams welded by it were so hard that it is practically impossible to cut them even with a pneumatic chisel.

For making repairs outboard, a self-contained diving suit is carried on all U-boats. The suit carries oxygen flasks and potash air purifying cartridges. Diving is attempted only in a calm sea.

Repairs of a major character can be effected when a supply U-boat is met. These vessels carry such spare parts as cylinder heads, sleeves,

stocks of shafting, pipe and other fittings. Cylinder blocks are not carried as these can be installed on a U-boat only at a base. Fairly complete machine shops are to be found on supply U-boats, and their equipment includes lathes, drills, grinders, and power thread-cutters.

Torpedoes.

One of the most experienced of the petty officers said that on all U-boats on which he had served, the pistols were kept in sealed (plombiert) containers and that when these were mounted on the torpedoes, all enlisted men were ordered out of the compartment. The pistols, he said, were set by officers only, in order to preserve the secrecy of the mechanism. This statement was vigorously denied by the officers, however. The prisoner also said that torpedoes must run for 200 meters before they arm and that U-boats were not permitted to approach nearer than 300 meters to their target when firing a torpedo. Another prisoner stated that practice torpedoes are painted with two red rings

Officers.

One prisoner stated that the transfer of surface ship officers to the U-boat arm was not proving successful. He said that throughout the U-boat service it was considered that surface ship officers, especially those who had been on larger units, did not make successful U-boat officers.

Booby-traps.

The Engineer Officer stated that booby-traps against boarding parties had been set in all U-boats as a result of the capture of *U-570* (*HMS Graph*). When disturbed, the device will cause torpedoes to explode. There seems to be some evidence to show that the lead to the charge is attached to the main bilge pump control. The prisoner warned the interrogators against boarding any German U-boat.

Hatches.

Although it is against orders to screw down hatches any tighter when diving to great depths, this is usually done during a depth charge attack for greater security.

Chapter XI. U-BOAT BASES

Brest.

A prisoner said that in Brest torpedoes are loaded on U-boats from supply ships which come alongside.

The approved brothels for enlisted men in Brest are numbered 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. Number 4 is missing.

The Commanding Officer of the training company at Brest is Kapitänleutnant Wein.

Gotenhafen.

Prisoners stated that the depot ship *Oceana* serves as quarters for the men of the 5th, 8th, and 9th companies of the U-boat school. The Commanding Officer of the 3rd company is Kapitänleutnant Stein. (Information as of March, 1942.) (*O. N. I. Note.*—Previous information indicated that Stein commanded the 4th company.)

It was said that Kapitänleutnant zur See Burkart of the 1934 naval term is in charge of the petty officers school and lives on the depot ship *Hansa*. Korvettenkapitän Schmidt, described as a department (*Abteilung*) commander, also lives on the *Hansa*. (Information as of Summer, 1941.)

Italian workers are said to be stationed at Gotenhafen. A prisoner said that if a German girl is seen with an Italian this is regarded as a major disgrace.

Stettin.

The depot ship *Usambara* serves as quarters for the U-boat replacement company (*Durchgangskompanie*) as well as for the crews of the 750-ton U-boats belonging to the 4th Flotilla. (Information as of Fall, 1941.)

It was stated that in August, 1942, at the Oderwerke at Stettin, there were nine U-boats on the ways. Progress was slow as the yard was used largely for repair work and workers were frequently shifted from new construction to emergency repairs.

Stralsund.

The Commandant of the 9th Ship's Manning Division at Stralsund is Kapitänleutnant Parow of the 1937 naval term. The Commanding Officer of the 2nd company of this division is Leutnant Müller. (Information as of August, 1942.)

Pillau.

It was confirmed that Korvettenkapitän Otto Schuhart of the 1929 naval term is on the staff of the 21st Flotilla at Pillau.

Chapter XII. U-BOAT TRAINING

According to a prisoner from *U-606*, more and more men at the U-boat school at Gotenhafen are being trained on mine sweepers because of the scarcity of schoolboats. He said that during the time he attended the school (February, March, and April, 1942) his class was divided into two parts, one of which trained on schoolboats, the other on mine sweepers. The prisoner was in the mine sweeper section and spent only one hour a week, in the evenings, on a U-boat.

Another prisoner spent eight weeks in 1941 training on a 60-ton converted trawler. The boat belonged to a group of seven or eight similar craft which had been organized into a training flotilla under command of Kapitänleutnant Strauss, a 50-year-old World War veteran. The boats were all used for training purposes, the course consisting largely of marlinspike seamanship. The prisoner insisted that all the men on these boats were training for service in the U-boat arm.

The officers of *U-606* were critical of the value of the tactical exercises in the Baltic. They said that conditions in the Atlantic differed to such a degree from those in the Baltic that the exercises were hardly worth while.

Chapter XIII. U-BOAT FLOTILLAS

It was stated that the 9th Flotilla at Brest was first founded in April 1942, and that Korvettenkapitän Henrich Lehmann-Willenbrock of the 1931 naval term has been its Commanding Officer since the beginning.

A prisoner stated that a permanent flotilla of 750-ton U-boats was based at Stettin. He said that the flotilla headquarters were located on the depot ship *Usambara*. (*O. N. I. Note*.—This is probably the 4th Flotilla believed based on Stettin and commanded by Korvettenkapitän Heinz Fischer.)

Chapter XIV. MISCELLANEOUS

A prisoner stated that the crew of *U-606* was instructed to carry side arms in France, even when they were on leave.

The prisoners complained of the coldness of their reception in Norway by the Norwegian people. They said that if a Norwegian girl associates with a German she is ostracized by her people.

Several prisoners stated that civilians in Germany were allowed only three cigarettes a day.

One prisoner told of a large prisoner of war camp located at Erfurt. It was occupied by French prisoners of war who worked on farms and in nearby factories. They were not guarded during the day but only by night.

Annex A. CREW LIST OF U-606

Name	Rank	U. S. N. equivalent	Age
Döhler, Hans	Oberleutnant zur See	Lieutenant (j. g.)	
Boulanger, Werner ¹	Leutnant zur See	Ensign	23
Reese, Martin Peter ¹	Leutnant zur See	Ensign	20
Schünemann, Werner ¹	Leutnant (Ing.)	Ensign, Engineering duties only	22
Schmidt, Alfred	Obersteuermann	Warrant quartermaster	
Mette, Joseph ¹	Obermaschinist	Warrant machinist	28
Zeugner, Heinrich	Obermaschinist	Warrant machinist	
Delor, Richard ¹	Bootsmaat	Coxswain	23
Henninger, Alfred ¹	Bootsmaat	Coxswain	25
Himmeler, Fritz	Bootsmaat	Coxswain	
Salberg, Heinz	Funkmaat	Radioman, 3cl	
Steimann, Paul	Funkmaat	Radioman, 3cl	
Bracke, Gerhardt	Maschinenmaat	Fireman, 1cl	
Kamöthke, Josef	Maschinenmaat	Fireman, 1cl	
Limpert, Helmut	Maschinenmaat	Fireman, 1cl	
Paege, Karl	Maschinenmaat	Fireman, 1cl	
Schneel, Oskar	Maschinenmaat	Fireman, 1cl	
Westbomke, Wilhelm	Maschinenmaat	Fireman, 1cl	
Hartmann, Erich	Torp. Mechanikermat	Torpedoman's mate, 2cl	
Goos, Eko	Matrosenobergefreiter	Seaman, 1cl	
Van Lask, Heinrich	Matrosenobergefreiter	Seaman, 1cl	
Wolfgarten, Fritz ¹	Matrosenobergefreiter	Seaman, 1cl	20
Krause, Gustav	Mechanikobergefreiter	Seaman, 1cl	
Lenke, Fritz	Mechanikergefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	
Kazenmeier	Funkgefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	
Schlichting	Funkgefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	
Egger, Adalbert	Matrosengefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	
Kaufmann, Bernhardt ¹	Matrosengefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	20
Kubitschek, Konrad	Matrosengefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	
Marczinczik, Fritz	Matrosengefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	
Mühlenbeck	Matrosengefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	
Pliz, Alfred	Matrosengefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	
Sutter	Matrosengefreiter	Seaman, 2cl	
Arndt, Otto	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Brehl, Heinrich	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Eickelmann	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Ernst, Hans	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Helfricht, Günther	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Prottengeier, Hans	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Reetsch, Friedrich	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Schroeter, Wilhelm ¹	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	19
Simon, Richard ¹	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	20
Stracke, Paul	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Tschölnisch, Rudolf	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Wengenrodt, Hermann	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Zahner, Rudolf	Maschinengefreiter	Fireman, 3cl	
Loesche, Ernst Günther ¹	Matrose	Apprentice Seaman	19
Moshage, Herbert ¹	Matrose	Apprentice Seaman	19

¹ Denotes survivors.

Summary of crew

Officers	4
Petty officers	15
Other ranks	29
Total	48