



With Stars and Stripes aloft, U-505 begins long voyage to America.

U-Boat!

last-ditch Nazis were below. The sub might be mined or booby-trapped with high explosives, but the boarding party went to work. And not one of them had ever been aboard a sub before!

Through darkness, the rush of water, the grinding noise of their boat against the sub's side, and the drunken wallowing of the stricken U-505, the nine men frantically searched for sea-valves the Germans left open or explosives they might have planted.

During the search, the sub's motors were stopped, but as it lost way, the U-505 began to settle deeper in the sea. Hastily the motors were restarted, but the batteries powering them were dangerously low, and the flooded diesels could not function.

It was touch and go whether the sub would stay afloat. Obviously, she would have to be towed. But when the *Pillsbury* hove alongside to pass a line to the sub, two forward compartments of the destroyer were pierced by the sub's underwater diving planes. The destroyer had to pull off for emergency repairs, and the task force faced loss of their prize after having it in their grasp.

Now the carrier's boarding party arrived with a line from the *Guadalcanal*. Slowly the tow line tightened, then held. A cheer went up from the boarders as the sub gained speed through the rolling seas. Still sluggish and weighted by her flooded compartments, the U-505 rose slightly in the water as the tow pulled taut. The task force heaved a collective sigh; it looked as if they had made naval history.

And they had.

Although they were only 100 miles off the African coast, the task force headed for Bermuda, 1,700 miles to the west. African ports were infested with spies, and this capture had to be kept an absolute secret. The 3,000 members of the task force were sworn to secrecy, and not a word leaked out.

The Germans not only failed to sink their sub, but they left their codebooks aboard. The U.S. Navy had the key to German naval communications and a powerful weapon to protect our supply lines. Not until after the war ended was the capture made public.

Admiral Gallery, in his book about the Atlantic submarine war, "Twenty Million Tons Under the Sea," calls the capture of the codebooks "the greatest intelligence windfall of the war."

Ten years after its capture, the U-505 was towed thousands of miles from salt water to Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, where it now stands as a vivid memorial to the 55,000 American fighting men who died at sea.

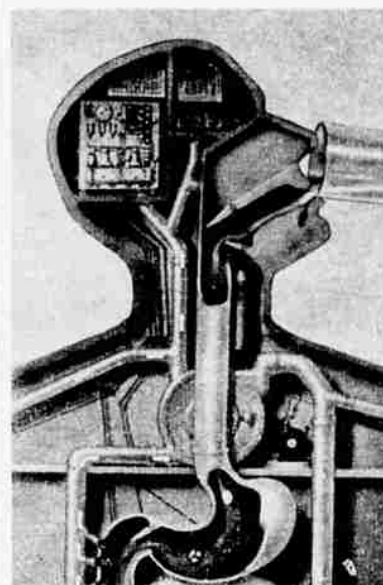


U-505, mammoth war trophy, now rests peacefully at Chicago museum.

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