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Serial 088

U.S.S. TAYLOR (DD468)

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C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Representative of Commander Destroyers,
Pacific Fleet in South Pacific Area.

Subject: Detailed Resume of War Activities of the
U.S.S. TAYLOR (DD468).

Reference: (a) RepComDesPacSoPac Conf. Ltr. A16-3.
Serial 134 of 1 December 1943.

1. In compliance with reference (a), a detailed resume of war activities- of the U.S.S. TAYLOR while in the South Pacific Area is submitted herewith.

2. The TAYLOR departed from Norfolk, Virginia for the South Pacific Area via the Panama Canal, in company with Task Force THIRTEEN on 17 December 1942. While enroute, the TAYLOR escorted the HENRY T. ALLEN to Tutuila, American Samoa and from there to Noumea, New Caledonia, where both ships arrived on 20 January 1943.

3. From Noumea, the ship proceeded to Havannah, Efate and joined Task Force EIGHTEEN on 26 January. On 27 January the Task Force proceeded toward Guadalcanal to assist in covering a troop transport convoy. On the evening of 29 January, the Task Force was attacked by Japanese torpedo planes during which the CHICAGO was torpedoed. The ship assisted in the screening of the CHICAGO until the next day, when the heavy cruisers of the Task Force escorted by destroyers, including the TAYLOR, left that area for Havannah Harbor. The Task Force again departed from Havannah for sea on 1 February. On 4 February, Destroyer Squadron TWENTY ONE, which included the TAYLOR, was assigned to Task Force SIXTY SEVEN for duty. Task Force SIXTY SEVEN was subsequently redesignated as Task Force EIGHTEEN, in which force the TAYLOR remained until after the Second Battle of Kula Gulf on 12-13 July. The original Task Force EIGHTEEN was redesignated as Force NINETEEN.

4. Task Force EIGHTEEN (old 67), in February and March, operated generally at sea in the area between Espiritu Santo and the Guadalcanal Area. On the night of 15 March the NICHOLAS, RADFORD, STRONG and TAYLOR proceeded into Kula Gulf and bombarded the enemy installations at Vila-Stanmore Plantation, Kolombangara Island, after which these ships rejoined the Task Force at sea.

5. On 26 March, the TAYLOR was designated to escort the KANAWHA, the Net Tender ALOE, and six APC's from Espiritu Santo to the Guadalcanal area, where the Task Unit arrived on 29 March. While waiting at Tulagi for the KANAWHA to discharge her cargo, and to escort her back to Espiritu, the TAYLOR accompanied Task Force EIGHTEEN on sweeps up the slot for enemy surface forces on the nights of 4, 5, and 6 April. On 7 April, the Task Force Commander directed the TAYLOR to return to Tulagi and escort the KANAWHA out of the Guadalcanal area; while proceeding to Tulagi

a very heavy enemy air raid against shipping began, and the KANAWHA was hit almost immediately as she was leaving Tulagi Harbor. When it was evident that no assistance could be furnished the KANAWHA, the TAYLOR increased speed to 30 knots and departed from that area via Sealark Channel. During this raid the TAYLOR destroyed three enemy planes. After having transited Sealark Channel, the ship was directed by Commander Task Force EIGHTEEN to join a convoy of cargo ships as additional escort. The TAYLOR continued on escort duty until 20 April when she rejoined Task Force EIGHTEEN.

6. After a short tender overhaul the TAYLOR accompanied Task Force EIGHTEEN to sea on 5 May, up the slot into Vella Gulf, to act as a covering force for a group of minelayers which was to lay a minefield to the westward of Villa-Kolombangara Island. This operation was completed without incident and the Task Force returned to Espiritu on 8 May. About a week later, on 11 May, the Task Force again proceeded up the slot on a similar mission, but In addition a heavy bombardment of Vila, Bairoko Harbor, and Enogai Inlet took place simultaneously with the laying of another minefield on the eastern side of Kolombangara by the same group minelayers. Both tasks were again accomplished without incident and the Task Force returned to Espiritu on 14 May.

7. On 25 May, the TAYLOR escorted the MUNARGO to the 180th Meridian and returned to Espiritu on 30 May. Next followed another escort assignment with a troop transport convoy to Guadalcanal and return. During the night of 10 June, the ship participated in the interception and repelling of an enemy night bombing attack on this convoy south of San Cristobal. Upon completion of this escort assignment, the ship returned to Espiritu on 15 June, and had another short tender overhaul. Following this overhaul the ship was assigned as part of the anti-submarine screen for the SANGAMON which was furnishing air coverage for convoys enroute to and from the Guadalcanal area, The ship remained with the SANGAMON until 6 July when she proceeded to Tulagi and reported to Commander Task Force THIRTY ONE for duty.

8. During July the TAYLOR operated generally In the New Georgia Occupation, and specifically in the following operations:

- (a) Lending supplies and marine forces and evacuation of wounded personnel at Rice Anchorage, Kula Gulf, 11–12 July.
- (b) Destruction of an RC57–59 Class Japanese submarine in Kula Gulf, morning of 12 July.
- (c) Rescue of U.S.S. HELENA survivors from two places on Vella LaVella Island, night of 15-16 July.
- (d) Landing of supplies for marine forces and evacuation of wounded personnel, at Enogai Inlet, Kula Gulf, night of 17–18 July.
- (e) Landing of supplies for marine forces, evacuation of wounded personnel at Enogai Inlet, Kula Gulf, and the bombardment of Bairoko Harbor, Kula Gulf, night of 23–24 July.
- (f) Bombardment of Munda, morning of 25 July.

9. The TAYLOR temporarily rejoined Task Force EIGHTEEN on the afternoon of 12 July, and proceeded up the slot with the Task Force to intercept Japanese surface forces. A surface engagement, the Second Battle of Kula Gulf, took place that evening, 12–13 July, during which engagement the TAYLOR, in coordination with other destroyers in the van made a torpedo attack and engaged the enemy with guns. At least four enemy ships were destroyed and two others damaged and retired during this engagement.

10. On 30 July, the ship departed from the Guadalcanal area as one of the escorts for a troop transport convoy proceeding to Noumea. While enroute, the TAYLOR was directed to enter Havannah Harbor and to report to Commander Task Force THIRTY SEVEN for duty. Other vessels of Destroyer Squadron TWENTY ONE also assembled In Havannah for duty with this Task Force.

11. On 11 August Destroyer Division FORTY ONE, consisting of the NICHOLAS, O'BANNON, TAYLOR and CHEVALIER was directed to return to Guadalcanal and report to Commander Task Force THIRTY ONE for duty. The division operated generally with Task Force THIRTY CNE and took part in the following specific operations:

- (a) Occupation of Barakoma, Vella LaVella Island, on 15 August.
- (b) Interception and routing of enemy surface forces and barges east of Vella LaVella Island on the night of 17 August, resulting in the destruction of at least two enemy destroyers, damage to a third enemy destroyer, and the destruction of four large barges and an undetermined number of smaller ones.
- (c) Search for possible enemy surface units and barges on the night of 19 August on the west and north coasts of Vella LaVella Island and the west coast of Kolombangara Island. The division underwent heavy bombing attacks from enemy planes throughout the entire evening.
- (d) Acted as covering group for minelayers which laid a minefield on the west coast of Kolombangara Island.
- (e) During the period from 15–26 August Destroyer Division FORTY ONE made ten night trips up the slot.

12. On 25 August the TAYLOR was detached from Task Force THIRTY ONE and escorted the TITANIA from Guadalcanal to Noumea. While enroute, the ship obtained a radar contact on an unidentified object, and closed to develop it. The object disappeared from the radar screen and a pattern of five depth charges was dropped on a good sound contact. The contact was lost and was not regained.

13. The ship had a ten day tender overhaul, followed by a recreation period in Sydney, and on 26 September departed from Noumea for Guadalcanal as one of the escorts for a troop transport convoy. From 30 September until 17 October the TAYLOR again operated generally with Task Force THIRTY ONE out of Purvis Bay and Tulagi, in the supplying of our forces on Vella La Vella Island and specifically in the following operations:

- (a) On 2 October the TAYLOR in company with RALPH TALBOT and TERRY proceeded up the slot to destroy enemy forces attempting to evacuate from Vella LaVella and Kolombangara Islands. On the night of 2–3 October the ship participated in the engagement with enemy surface forces and barges between Kolombangara and Choiseul Islands, resulting in the destruction of at least one enemy ship and numerous enemy barges.
- (b) On 6 October, the RALPH TALBOT, TAYLOR and LAVALLETTE, while screening an echelon enroute to Vella LaVella, were directed to join O'BANNON, CHEVALIER and SELFRIDGE west of Vella LaVella and to destroy enemy forces encountered. These last three ships had already engaged the enemy and the action was over. The SELFRIDGE had been torpedoed and the TAYLOR went alongside to take off wounded personnel and other personnel not needed in the operation of that ship. The TAYLOR assisted in escorting the SELFRIDGE to port.

14. On 17 October Destroyer Division FORTY ONE departed the Guadalcanal area and escorted a troop transport convoy to Efate and reported to Commander Task Force THIRTY SEVEN for duty. On 23 October the TAYLOR escorted the LASSEN to Noumea and the LASSEN and the ALDEBARAN from Noumea to Efate, on 26 October.

15. On 31 October Destroyer Squadron TWENTY ONE was detached from duty in the South Pacific Force and reported for duty with Commander Task Force FIFTY of the Central Pacific Force. While on duty with the latter force the ship took part in the occupation of the Gilbert Islands during 19–24 November and the raid on the Marshall Islands on 4 December.

16. Twelve officers and men from crashed planes were rescued in the course of all of the preceding operations. One enlisted man fell overboard at night from the SUWANEE and was rescued.

17. A total of 4,955 five inch, 765 forty millimeter, 2 640 twenty millimeter ammunition, twenty torpedoes, and twenty depth charges was expended during the period that the TAYLOR was a unit of the South Pacific Force.

18. There were no personnel casualties and no major material casualties as a result of the foregoing actions against the enemy.


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