

Basic Detail Report



00020626

Title

HMS PHOENIX moored at Garden Island

Date

February 1939

Primary Maker

Samuel J Hood Studio

Medium

Cellulose nitrate negative, black and white

Name

Nitrate negative

History

The Parthian class submarine or P class was a class of six submarines built for the Royal Navy in the late 1920s. They were designed as long-range patrol submarines for the Far East. PHOENIX was built at the Cammell Laird Shipyard, Birkenhead, UK; laid down 23 July 1928; and launched on 3 October 1929. After completion in 1930 it was deployed on the China Station in the British 4th Submarine Flotilla. During this service PHOENIX visited Sydney (in 1939) and was photographed by Sam Hood. In 1940 the Flotilla was transferred from Hong Kong to the Mediterranean where they arrived in May of that year. The first patrols were out of Alexandria to cover the major Italian fleet bases. PHOENIX was ordered to screen a supply convoy heading for Alexandria from Malta when it successfully sighted and reported the Italian battlefleet. On 8 July 1940 PHOENIX (LT CDR G H Nowell, RN) fired torpedoes at the Italian battleships *GIULIO CESARE* and *CONTE DI CAVOUR* some 200 nautical miles east of Malta in position 35°40'N, 18°20'E. The torpedoes however missed their targets. HMS PHOENIX left Malta for a patrol of the Sicilian coast in July 1940. Nothing was heard from the submarine after a wireless message transmitted on the night of 14th/15th July. On 16 July the submarine fired torpedoes at the Italian torpedo boat *ALBATROS* off Augusta, south-east Sicily. The torpedoes again missed their target and it is believed *ALBATROS* sank PHOENIX during a depth charge counter attack (position 37°15'N, 15°15'E). Motto - Resurgam - I shall rise again

Technical details of HMS PHOENIX include Length: 289 ft (88 m) Beam: 30 ft (9.1 m) Draught: 16 ft (4.9 m) Propulsion: Diesel-electric; 2 × Admiralty diesel engines, 4,640 hp; 2 × electric motors, 1,635 hp; 2 shafts Speed: 17.5 knots (20.1 mph; 32.4 km/h) surfaced 8.6 kn (9.9 mph; 15.9 km/h) submerged Complement: 53 Armament included 8 × 21 in (530 mm) torpedo tubes (6 bow, 2 stern) with 14 reloads; 1 × QF 4-inch (101.6 mm) Mk XII deck gun And the class was equipped to lay mines through the torpedo tubes PHOENIX was the 18th Royal Navy warship to carry the name, introduced in 1546 for a 20-gun ship bought in Scotland and last used for a 1911 destroyer lost in 1918. It had never been previously been used for a submarine. After this boat was lost in August 1940 the name was used for an RN Air Station in Egypt and in

1949 by the RN Damage Control School at Portsmouth. Ships carrying this name had been awarded 12 Battle Honours. Those who died on the submarine were: AYRES, Frederick R H, Petty Officer Cook BARKLEY, Kenneth, Act/Lieutenant BARNES, Eric B, Leading Signaller BARTON, Sydney W C, Able Seaman BEDFORD, William R, Able Seaman BENNETT, Clifford F, Stoker Petty Officer BUNKER, Wilfred S, Stoker Petty Officer CADOGAN, Timothy, Act/Leading Stoker CLARK, George L, Petty Officer CLIFT, Albert E, Stoker 1c COCKLE, Austin W, Telegraphist COOPER, William, Leading Stoker DAVIES, Walter J, Act/Petty Officer DEE, James C, Stoker 1c DIGGENS, George J, Petty Officer Telegraphist FAIRHOLM, Matthew R, Act/Leading Stoker FARLOW, Charles A J, Able Seaman GREAVES, Cyril E, Engine Room Artificer 2c GREAVES, Stewart M, Act/Leading Seaman HADFIELD, Eric R, Act/Petty Officer HALL, Kenneth G, Able Seaman HANNA, William J, Able Seaman HARRIS, Edwin R, Telegraphist HENDERSON, Malcolm G, Lieutenant HIGDON, Reginald T, Able Seaman HIGGINS, Alfred G, Stoker 1c HOLLINGWORTH, George A, Petty Officer HOWELL, Norman L E, Engine Room Artificer 3c HUMPHREY, James E, Leading Seaman JAMES, Albert E, Leading Seaman LEONARD, Francis, Leading Seaman LIVERSIDGE, Grenville A, Lieutenant MATTHEWS, Robert, Stoker 1c MORTON, Thomas W, Leading Stoker NOWELL, Gilbert H, Lieutenant Commander OLIVER, Aubrey G, Engine Room Artificer 3c PARKER, Christopher, Engine Room Artificer 4c PARRY, Oswald, Leading Seaman PAXFORD, Frank J, Stoker Petty Officer PEGLER, Frank, Warrant Engineer PHILLIPS, Albert D, Telegraphist POWELL, John H, Act/Leading Seaman RANDELL, Victor C, Chief Petty Officer RELF, Jack H, Stoker ROBINSON, Herbert, Act/Leading Seaman SMYTHE, Harold A, Leading Telegraphist SPOUSE, Abraham, Leading Stoker STAVELEY, John R, Able Seaman SUMMERS, James, Stoker THOMPSON, Stephen W, Stoker 1c WARREN, George E, Engine Room Artificer 2c WILLIAMS, Christopher, Stoker WILTSHIRE, Morgan R, Stoker 1c WINGRAVE, George C, Leading Seaman (Source: naval-history.net)