

HMCS Stone Town and the Surrender of U-244

12 to 14 May 1945

Summary from HMCS Stone Town's Report of Proceedings (ADM 1/17635)

At 131720Z, a shore-based Sunderland aircraft [M/423 Sqn RCAF, call sign FPW2] which was in company reported that a U-Boat was on the surface 5 miles ahead of the Convoy ONS 50, although this was subsequently corrected to a distance of 13 miles. HMCS *Stone Town* [of Canadian Escort Group C-8] was immediately detailed to close the position at full speed together with HMCS *Humberstone*.

HMS *Loch Tarbert* [of RN Escort Group 12] was notified and proceeded to close from the rear of Convoy ONS 50 to take over escort of the U-Boat.

At 131840Z, HMCS *Stone Town* circled the U-Boat which was stopped on the surface and was flying the surrender flag in position 56.20N, 12.57W. The U-Boat was identified as U-244. It was then given instructions about the route to Loch Eriboll.

Weather conditions at the time were unfavourable for boarding, there being a rough cross sea running and a heavy swell.

At 131920Z, HMS *Loch Tarbert* arrived at the position and proceeded to escort the U-Boat clear of the Convoy.

HMCS *Stone Town* and HMCS *Humberstone* then rejoined Convoy ONS 50.

U-244 subsequently arrived at Loch Eriboll.

Detailed Date/Time Line

On 10 May 1945, the Royal Navy's 24th Escort Group (24 EG), comprising HMS *Loch Katrine*, HMS *Evenlode*, HMS *Ness*, HMS *Dart* and HMS *Loch Quoich*, was ordered to proceed to the SW of Ireland to patrol the "Blue" U-Boat surrender route in the SW Approaches

On 11 May, Convoy ONS 50 departed from Liverpool en route for Halifax

On 12 May, Convoy ONS 50 was joined by the Royal Canadian Navy's Ocean Escort Group C.8 (EG C8), comprising HMCS *Stone Town*, HMCS *Leaside*, HMCS *Poundmaker*, HMCS *Humberstone* and HMCS *Edmundston*

On 12 May, Convoy ONS 50 was joined by the Royal Navy's 12th Escort Group (12 EG), comprising HMS *Black Swan*, HMS *Cayman*, HMS *Loch Tarbert* and HMS *Mermaid*

On 12 May, 12 EG was ordered to patrol the "Blue" U-Boat surrender route to the west of Ireland in the NW Approaches

Early on 12 May, *U-244* surfaced and, in doing so, formally surrendered at sea in the North Atlantic about 170 miles SW of the Fastnet Rocks (to the south of Ireland)

At 120048Z, *U-244* sent its first PCS message from position 49.35N, 13.10W

In accordance with the Allies' General Surrender message, *U-244* then headed north on the "Blue" surrender route towards Loch Eriboll in NW Scotland

At 120515Z, after receiving information about *U-244*'s PCS message, EG 24 initiated action to close and intercept *U-244*

At 120741Z, EG 24 (now without HMS *Dart* and HMS *Evenlode*) reported that it was proceeding to intercept *U-244*

At 121600Z, EG 24 altered course and increased speed to overtake *U-244* which was reported by an aircraft to be in position 51.08N, 11.08W

At 130001Z, EG 24 reported that the northern limit of its search area (52.00N) had been reached without finding any trace of *U-244* which had evidently outpaced the EG

At 131715Z, a Sunderland (M/423 Sqn RCAF from Castle Archdale in N. Ireland) advised HQ No. 15 Group, RAF Coastal Command, that a submarine was offering to surrender in position 56.16N, 12.47W, course 360 degrees, speed 10 knots

At 131724Z, the Sunderland advised HMCS *Stone Town* that there was a U-Boat on the surface ahead of Convoy ONS 50, showing the black flag of surrender

At 131725Z, HMCS *Stone Town* and HMCS *Humberstone* (of EG C8) were ordered to investigate

At 131726Z, HMS *Loch Tarbert* (of 12 EG, now without HMS *Mermaid* and HMS *Black Swan*, was requested to close with the U-Boat and relieve HMCS *Stone Town* and HMCS *Humberstone*

At 131742Z, HMS *Loch Tarbert* confirmed that she would take over the U-Boat

At 131821Z, the Sunderland ordered the U-Boat to heave-to

At 131822Z, HMCS *Stone Town* advised that the U-Boat was in sight on the surface

At 131832Z, HMCS *Stone Town* was advised to ascertain the number of the U-Boat and to keep it hove to until HMS *Loch Tarbert* arrived

At 131900Z, a Wellington (M/172 Sqn RAF from Limavady, N. Ireland) on convoy escort duty sighted *U-244* in position 56.06N, 11.34W

At 131906Z, the U-Boat advised its number as *U-244*

At 131915Z, HMCS *Stone Town* advised that *U-244* was proceeding on its route to Loch Eriboll and that HMS *Loch Tarbert* would escort the U-Boat clear of the ships in the convoy.

At 131940Z, HMS *Loch Tarbert* (EG 12) reported that *U-244* was in position 56.36N, 12.35W, heading 030 deg, speed 12 knots. Surrender instructions understood. Weather unsuitable for boarding

At 141209Z, a Wellington (L/36 Sqn RAF from Benbecula, in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland) sighted *U-244* in position 58.52N, 06.41W, course 090 deg, speed 10 knots

On the late afternoon of 14 May, *U-244* arrived off Loch Eriboll and at 141830Z, the U-Boat was escorted into the anchorage by HMS *Deane* of No. 21 Escort Group (21 EG) which was operating as the resident Loch Eriboll Reception Force.

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Source Documents:

TNA Kew, ADM 1/17635 – Report of Proceedings, Convoy ONS 50, HMCS *Stone Town* (Escort Group C8) – 11 to 21 May 1945

TNA Kew, ADM 199/139 – Report of Proceedings, 12th Escort Group, HMS *Loch Tarbert* – 9 to 27 May 1945

TNA Kew, ADM 199/2102 – Report of Proceedings, Convoy ONS 50, SS *Empire Cabot* - 11 to 25 May 1945

TNA Kew, ADM 217/799 – Report of Proceedings, 24th Escort Group, HMS *Loch Katrine* – 7 to 17 May 1945

TNA Kew, ADM2317 - Admiralty War Diary – 1 to 15 May 1945

LAC Toronto – HMCS *Stone Town* Deck Log – 13 May 1945

The Website: www.convoyweb.org.uk – Convoy ONS 50

Canadian Department of National Defence, Directorate of History & Heritage – RCN Ships Movements Card, HMCS *Stone Town* – 27 Mar 44 to 14 Jul 45

The Royal Canadian Navy-related Website: www.forposterityssake.ca – HMCS *Stone Town*