

Serial 017

1 March 1944

Subject: War Diary for the month of February, 1944.

CONFIDENTIAL -----

Maximum speed 17 knots.

(b). Steamed at various courses and speeds off ANZIO, awaiting call from BNLO. At 1250 on advice of British Naval Liason Officer VI Corps departed from ANZIO area, proceeded at 22 knots to POZZUOLI. 1537 Sighted planes flying low over the water, believed to be a JU-88; sounded General Quarters. No attack developed. 1733 Anchored POZZUOLI, ITALY.

(c). During afternoon conducted test firing of 40 mm and 20 mm batteries. Expended 40 rounds 40 mm and 90 rounds 20 mm ammunition.

27 February

(a). Underway at 0403 for ANZIO fire support area in accordance with despatch orders of CCS 15. U.S.S. Hilary P. JONES and U.S.S. LANSDALE acting as screen. Steamed on various courses and speeds to arrive in fire support area by 1000. Conducted test firing of 5" and 20 mm batteries. At 0940 entered fire support area off ANZIO. Conditions at this time were: sea - 2-3 from southeast, sky - overcast with general ceiling about 4,000 feet and large cloud formations as low as 2,000 feet, clouds - mainly cumulus nimbus, visibility - fair, barometer - 29.40, temperature 55°F, wind 17 knots from 163°(T).

(b). U.S.S. Hilary P. JONES and U.S.S. LANSDALE led formation through swept channel. At 1000 established communications with Forward Observation Post (MIQ) and set up for firing shore bombardment. Maneuvered on various courses and speeds furnishing fire support as requested by shore fire control parties, (7 missions, enemy artillery on left flank, 407 rounds). Targets fired upon, number of rounds expended and effects of firings as indicated on enclosed sheets. At 1230 enemy broke in on 2716 kcs. (warning circuit) and declared in English that heavy guns were being moved up to deal with that American cruiser.

(c). At 1400 visibility decreased to such a degree that shore fire control parties reported inability to spot. Secured from shore bombardment and General Quarters and left area X-ray at 1505, proceeded to NAPLES in accordance with despatch orders CCS 15. At 2059 anchored NAPLES, ITALY. Placed on four hours' notice for full speed by CCS 15.

(d). 1309 Noted shell bursts in water bearing 060°(T), distance 3,000 yards. Total of three shells seen to have landed in water, approximate coordinates recorded to be 778198.

28 and 29 February

(a). U.S.S. Hilary P. JONES attempted to fuel this vessel during the forenoon of 28th but plans cancelled due to rough seas.

(b). Anti-aircraft batteries ashore conducted test firings during evening of 28 February.