

Serial 041

U.S. No.

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

**CONFIDENTIAL**

(b) At 2226 21 March U.S.S. MACKENZIE reported underwater contact bearing 244°(T), distant 2300 yards from PHILADELPHIA; sounded submarine emergency. U.S.S. MACKENZIE and U.S.S. KEARNY conducted search and former dropped three depth charges over contact. No apparent result but an oil drum with a line attached was discovered nearby. Motor whaleboat from this vessel dropped numerous 1¼ lb. depth charges around ship. At 0119A/22 secured from submarine emergency.

(c) On 22 March heavy clouds of volcanic dust were emitted by MOUNT VESUVIUS. At 1300A/23 large quantities of volcanic dust interspersed with rain commenced covering the ship; after rain ceased particles of very fine dust continued to decrease visibility and covered topside. This volcanic dust became so heavy that at 1256A/24 PHILADELPHIA got underway and anchored off FORT DELL'OVO in the Bay of NAPLES, which area was free of dust cloud.

(d) On 28 March got underway at 1325 for anti-aircraft practices in the East-West swept channel south of NAPLES. Conducted 5", 40 mm and 20 mm practices at towed sleeve. 1536 Completed A.A. practices and anchored in previously assigned berth.

(e) During this entire period numerous alerts were sounded over the harbor circuit. No enemy attacks developed. At no time were enemy planes reported over the immediate vicinity.

### 31 March

(a) At 0903 in company with U.S.S. KENDRICK and U.S.S. MACKENZIE (as screen) departed NAPLES, ITALY enroute to MERS-EL-KEBIR, ALGERIA in accordance with Commanding Officer, U.S.S. PHILADELPHIA movement order No. B/44. Maneuvered at various courses and speeds, zig-zagging in accordance with diagram #11, BR 248 at ½ time intervals. 1718 Anchored in Gulf of PALERMO, SICILY.

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