



Towed back to New York, the *Menges* had its stern replaced with that of another torpedo-damaged DE and returned to service in the autumn of 1944.

Together with its division mates *Moseley*, *Pride* and *Lowe*, the *Menges* spent two weeks during the spring of 1945 in search of

a U-boat reported to be operating off Newfoundland. The *Lowe* made the initial depth charge attack March 18, and the other ships followed with hedgehog and depth charge patterns.

Postwar analysis indicated that the *Lowe* had destroyed the *U-855*. Thereafter, the four DEs joined naval vessels in countering the final German U-boat offensive in the western Atlantic.

Most of the Coast Guard-manned DEs continued to escort convoys to and from Europe or Africa until the war ended in May 1945. Then, after overhaul and further training, 23 of the ships were ordered to the Pacific. Only the six sent to Adak in the Aleutians had any opportunity for active service before Japan's surrender, however; they escorted convoys in the North Pacific and served with the 9th Fleet in its campaign against the Kurile Islands.

The apparently insatiable demand for anti-submarine vessels in 1942 led the Navy to utilize merchant shipyards for their construction. These yards were not thought capable of building ships such as DEs to naval standards, so the British River-class frigate design, similar to the DEs, was modified for American construction techniques. Shipyards in California and on the Great Lakes

Above: The crew from LST-21 unloads British tanks and trucks onto a "rhino barge" during the Normandy Invasion in June 1944.

nally picked up 28 survivors; 171 men, including all of the *Leopold's* officers, died with their ship.

The *Leopold's* assailant escaped, but its division mates *Joyce* and *Peterson*, together with a Navy DE, avenged the *Leopold* a few weeks later. The first picked up 31 survivors from a blazing tanker April 16, and soon afterward its sonar-men detected a submerged submarine. The *Joyce's* depth charges forced the *U-550* to the surface; the three DEs opened fire and the Navy ship rammed the U-boat, whereupon it was scuttled by its own men.

WAR CASUALTY

The *USS Menges* became the next torpedo victim. It detected a submarine nearing its convoy May 3, 1944 and steered to attack, only to have its stern blown off by the *U-371's* acoustic torpedo.

Thirty-one of its men were killed and 25 wounded, but its commanding officer refused to order the ship abandoned. Meanwhile, the Coast Guard-manned *USS Pride* and other escort vessels tracked the *U-371* relentlessly. The submarine surfaced the next day and damaged a French DE with another acoustic torpedo before being scuttled by its crew.