

The PCs 545 and 556 took part in the Sicily and Southern France invasions, and the first was at Anzio as well, sinking an enemy motor torpedo boat. The SCs all served with the Greenland Patrol.

COAST GUARD'S NON-COMBAT MISSIONS

Most of the foregoing ships could be considered combat vessels, although many of them never fired a shot in anger. Coast Guardsmen, however, manned numerous naval vessels that were not intended to engage in combat, performing instead

essential, if less spectacular, logistical services.

Twenty-two transports were the largest of these, of which the *Wakefield* has already been mentioned.

The ship was almost lost to fire in September 1942 while in a New York-bound convoy. Naval escorts removed its passengers and crew and placed a salvage detail aboard. Towed to Halifax, it was declared a constructive total loss, but it was completely rebuilt in Boston and recommissioned by a Coast Guard crew in February 1944.

The *Wakefield* spent the remainder of the war transporting troops in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters.

Eleven of the transports were of the P-2 type, more than 600-feet long, while nine were 523-foot C-4s. All commissioned in 1944 or 1945, most had busy careers, crossing the oceans repeatedly with thousands of troops embarked, often without escort because their speed — 20 knots for the P-2s and 17 knots for the C-4s — was thought to make it difficult for an enemy submarine to get a torpedo-firing solution.

The *General William Mitchell* may serve as an example of these ships' service: In some 20 months, this P-2 transport made 10 transoceanic voyages, traversing more than

Right: Crewmembers of the USS *Moberly* relax after sinking Germany's U-853.

Below: The *Moberly*, assisted by the USS *Atherton*, sank the U-853 off Block Island in May 1945.

Below right: Crews from the *Moberly* and the *Atherton* recover a life raft and other wreckage from the U-853.

