

= USS Blakeley (DD @-@ 150) =

The second USS Blakeley (DD ? 150) was a Wickes @-@ class destroyer in the United States Navy , named for Captain Johnston Blakeley .

Built in 1918 , she saw patrol duty along the East Coast of the United States during the interwar era . Decommissioned for several years , she returned to duty at the outset of World War II . She spent much of the war on convoy patrol duty in the Caribbean . On 25 May 1942 , while on patrol , she was struck by a torpedo fired by German submarine U @-@ 156 , which blew off her forward 60 feet (18 m) . Fitted with temporary measures , she steamed to Philadelphia Naval Yard where she was fitted with the forward section of sister ship USS Taylor . She spent much of the rest of the war on convoy patrol duty before being sold for scrap in 1945 .

= = Design and construction = =

Blakeley was one of 111 Wickes @-@ class destroyers built by the United States Navy between 1917 and 1919 . She , along with 20 of her sisters , were constructed at William Cramp and Sons shipyards in Philadelphia using specifications and detail designs drawn up by Bath Iron Works .

She had a standard displacement of 1 @, @ 154 tonnes (1 @, @ 136 long tons ; 1 @, @ 272 short tons) an overall length of 314 feet 5 inches (95 @. @ 83 m) , a beam of 31 feet 8 inches (9 @. @ 65 m) and a draught of 9 feet (2 @. @ 7 m) . On trials , Blakeley reached a speed of 35 knots (65 km / h ; 40 mph) . She was armed with four 4 " / 50 caliber guns , two 3 " / 23 caliber gun , and twelve 21 @-@ inch torpedo tubes . She had a regular crew complement of 122 officers and enlisted men . She was driven by two Curtis steam turbines powered by four Yarrow boilers .

Specifics on Blakeley 's performance are not known , but she was one of the group of Wickes @-@ class destroyers known unofficially as the ' Liberty Type ' to differentiate them from the destroyers constructed from detail designs drawn up by Bethlehem Steel , which used Parsons or Westinghouse turbines . The ' Liberty ' type destroyers deteriorated badly in service , and in 1929 all 60 of this group were retired by the Navy . Actual performance of these ships was far below intended specifications especially in fuel economy , with most only able to make 2 @, @ 300 nautical miles (4 @, @ 300 km ; 2 @, @ 600 mi) at 15 knots (28 km / h ; 17 mph) instead of the design standard of 3 @, @ 100 nautical miles (5 @, @ 700 km ; 3 @, @ 600 mi) at 20 knots (37 km / h ; 23 mph) . The class also suffered problems with turning and weight .

She was the second ship to be named for Johnston Blakeley , the first was a torpedo boat commissioned in 1904 . A subsequent USS Blakeley would be commissioned , this one a Knox @-@ class frigate . This third ship would also be named for Charles Adams Blakeley .

= = History = =

Blakeley was launched 19 September 1918 by William Cramp and Sons Ship and Engine Building Company in Philadelphia and sponsored by the wife of Charles Adams Blakeley . The ship was commissioned 8 May 1919 , under the command of Commander W. Brown , Jr . She immediately joined the Atlantic Fleet . Blakeley patrolled along the East Coast of the United States until she was decommissioned on 29 June 1922 , and returned to Philadelphia . She was recommissioned from 1932 to 1937 to serve with the Scouting Fleet , and then was again decommissioned in Philadelphia . Low military budgets were the cause of these periods of inactivity , as the Navy did not have the funds or manpower to maintain a number of ships , including Blakeley .

Blakeley was again commissioned on 16 October 1939 . She then joined the Neutrality Patrol until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entrance into World War II . She then began convoy duty in the Caribbean , including a February 1942 mission to guard a convoy carrying troops to garrison Curaçao in the Netherlands West Indies .

On 25 May 1942 , Blakeley was on a patrol off Martinique , inspecting all incoming ships for evidence of activities by Vichy French collaborators alongside her sister USS Ellis . At 08 : 30 a.m. , she altered course to pursue a sound ping on her sonar . Nothing was found at the site of the ping ,

and the crew assumed it was caused by a school of blackfish . As the ship turned to resume its course , it was struck by a torpedo fired by the unnoticed German submarine U @-@ 156 under the command of Werner Hartenstein . The torpedo struck between frames 18 and 24 at about 4 feet (1 @.@ 2 m) below her water line . The force of the impact blew off 60 feet (18 m) of her forward bow and forecastle . After several minutes , the crew determined they could still operate the ship , and it was brought back under control and sailed for Fort @-@ de @-@ France . The ship was steered with a combination of rudder and varying shaft speeds , and four hours after the attack , she was moored in Fort @-@ de @-@ France . Six men died and twenty one were wounded during the attack . Hartstein radioed a U @-@ boat headquarters in Lorient requesting permission to finish Blakeley off , but permission was denied . Destroyers Breckinridge , Greer , Tarbell and two PBY Catalina planes from VP @-@ 53 were scrambled to assist the stricken Blakeley .

At Fort @-@ de @-@ France , she was fitted with a wooden bulkhead to cover the area blown off by the torpedo , and an anchor was improvised out of a truck 's axle and differential housing . She then sailed under her own power to San Juan , Puerto Rico where a steel stub bow was attached . From there , she steamed for Philadelphia Naval Yard for permanent repairs . During mid @-@ 1942 , Blakeley was fitted with the forward section of her decommissioned sister ship , Taylor . She was also fitted with newer weapons and electronics systems , such as updated radar . Repairs were completed in September 1942 and she resumed her convoy duties in the Caribbean .

Blakeley spent most of the rest of the war on convoy escort duty in the Caribbean Sea Frontier , except for two short deployments in the Atlantic Ocean . On 1 January to 23 February 1943 she was assigned to hunter @-@ killer duty with Task Group 21 @.@ 13 in the North Atlantic , and from 24 March to 11 May 1943 , she escorted a convoy to Bizerte , Tunisia . From 18 March to 13 June 1945 , she was stationed in New London , Connecticut , training U.S. submarines in Long Island Sound to avoid destroyers .

Following this duty , Blakeley was decommissioned at Philadelphia Naval Yard on 21 July 1945 and sold for scrap on 30 November 1945 . She received one battle star for her wartime convoy duty .