

= USS Leary ( DD @-@ 158 ) =

USS Leary ( DD @-@ 158 ) was a Wickes @-@ class destroyer in the United States Navy during World War II . She was named for Lieutenant Clarence F. Leary , posthumously awarded the Navy Cross in World War I.

Commissioned in 1919 , she saw a number of fleet exercises and training cruises , as well as a brief period of decommissioning from 1922 to 1930 . She was the first U.S. Navy ship to be equipped with sonar , and the first to detect a German ship with it . With the outbreak of World War II , she escorted a number of convoys to Iceland , the Caribbean , and west Africa to support the war effort , later being upgraded to serve as an antisubmarine warfare vessel . On 24 December 1943 , while escorting Card through rough seas in the North Atlantic , she was torpedoed three times by German submarine U @-@ 275 and sank with the loss of 98 men .

= = Design and construction = =

Leary was one of 111 Wickes @-@ class destroyers built by the United States Navy between 1917 and 1919 . She , along with nine of her sisters , were constructed at New York Shipbuilding Corporation shipyards in Camden , New Jersey using specifications and detail designs drawn up by Bethlehem Steel .

She had a standard displacement of 1 @, @ 090 tonnes ( 1 @, @ 070 long tons ; 1 @, @ 200 short tons ) an overall length of 314 feet ( 96 m ) , a beam of 30 feet 6 inches ( 9 @. @ 30 m ) and a draught of 12 feet ( 3 @. @ 7 m ) . On trials , Leary reached a speed of 35 knots ( 65 km / h ; 40 mph ) . She was armed with four 4 " / 50 caliber guns , two 3 " / 23 caliber guns , and twelve 21 @-@ inch torpedo tubes . She had a regular crew complement of 176 officers and enlisted men . She was driven by two Curtis steam turbines powered by four Yarrow boilers .

Specifics on Leary '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 Bath Iron Works , 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 first ship to be named for Clarence F. Leary . A subsequent USS Leary would be commissioned , this one a Gearing @-@ class destroyer completed in 1945 .

= = Service history = =

Leary was laid down on 6 March 1918 and launched on 18 December 1918 . She was sponsored by Mrs. Anne Leary , the mother of Clarence F. Leary . She was commissioned on 5 December 1919 under the command of Commander F. C. Martin .

She departed Boston on 28 January 1920 , underwent her shakedown cruise in the Caribbean and then conducted training operations along the East Coast of the United States . In January 1921 , she joined the Pacific Battle Fleet , and through February took part in a large @-@ scale battle exercise off the coast of Peru . In March , Leary transited the Panama Canal and reported to the commander of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay , Cuba . She then was on station during bombing tests conducted by the U.S. Army Air Forces against naval targets , overseen by Billy Mitchell . She resumed her training exercises off the Caribbean until June 1922 , when in accordance with the Washington Naval Conference , she was decommissioned at the Philadelphia Naval Yard .

Recommissioned on 1 May 1930 with a home port in Newport , Rhode Island , Leary alternated between the Pacific Fleet and the Atlantic Fleet , carrying out training maneuvers and taking part in several fleet problems . After 1935 , most of her time was taken up conducting training cruises for

reserves and midshipmen . In April 1937 , she underwent a shipyard overhaul , including being equipped with a radar . Leary was the first U.S. navy vessel to be equipped with the device . In September 1939 , Leary and Hamilton established a continuous patrol off the coast of New England against German U @-@ Boats . On 9 September 1941 , she began escort missions to Iceland . She was also the first to make contact with a German U @-@ Boat , while escorting a British convoy in the North Atlantic on 9 November 1941 .

With the entry of the United States into World War II following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor , Leary undertook regular convoy escort duties . After 26 February 1942 , she spent a year escorting convoys from a mid @-@ ocean meeting point to Icelandic ports . On 7 February 1943 , she left for Boston and reassignment . During this time , she was given a shipyard overhaul at Boston Navy Yard and converted into an anti @-@ submarine warfare ship . On 1 March , she left Boston for Guantanamo Bay , and undertook anti @-@ submarine exercises with R @-@ 5 . She then resumed escort duty , and made several trips to Trinidad and several Caribbean ports . Returning to New York on 25 June , she began escorting transatlantic convoys , and successfully escorted two of them through Aruba and to Algiers and Casablanca . She later joined Task Group 21 @.@ 41 under the command of Captain Arnold J. Isbell and escorting Card .

On 24 December 1943 , the task group was caught in a storm in the North Atlantic when at 01 : 58 in the morning , Leary made a ping on a U @-@ Boat off her starboard bow . After her commander , James E. Kyes , ordered her to battle stations but before the destroyer could react , she was struck by a G7es torpedo fired by German submarine U @-@ 275 . The torpedo struck her starboard side and detonated in the after engine room , killing all of the men there and damaging both propeller shafts . She quickly developed a 20 degree list to starboard , and was unable to move in the heavy seas . Unbeknownst to the task group , a second German submarine , U @-@ 382 fired at Leary but missed . Soon after , Kyes ordered the crew to abandon ship . Two additional torpedoes from U @-@ 275 rocked the ship , and it rapidly sank , stern first . She took 98 men with her , including Kyes . Survivors were picked up by her sister ship , Schenck .

Three or four minutes after the second torpedo hit , the executive officer , Lt. R. B. Watson , concluded a quick inspection of the ship , during which he found a thick , gooey substance covering the deck . He was astonished to see two seamen sitting on a torpedo tube , calmly eating Boston cream pie . The cook had just baked a batch , the explosion spattering most of it on the deck .

Leary received one battle star for her service in World War II . For his actions in ensuring the safety of his crew , Kyes was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross . The Gearing @-@ class destroyer James E. Kyes was later named for him .

= = Convoys escorted = =

= = Resources = =