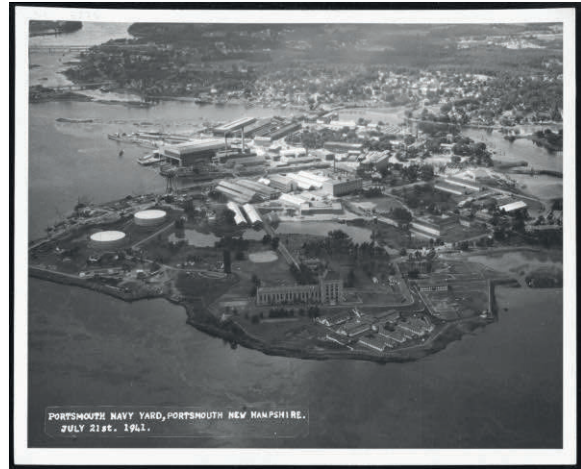


MEETING HIS MACHINE – NAVY SHIPYARD, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE/MAINE

The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, often called the Portsmouth Navy Yard, is a United States Navy shipyard in Kittery on the southern boundary of Maine near the city of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Founded in 1800, PNS is U.S. Navy's oldest continuously operating shipyard. Today, most of its work concerns the overhaul, repair, and modernization of submarines.



As of November 2021, the shipyard employed more than 6,500 federal employees.[3] As well, some of the work is performed by private corporations (e.g., Delphinus Engineering of Eddystone, Pennsylvania; Oceaneering International of Chesapeake, Virginia; Orbis Sibro of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina; and Q.E.D. Systems Inc. of Virginia Beach, Virginia).

During World War II, the Portsmouth Navy Yard played a critical role in supporting the United States' war effort as one of the largest and most important shipyards in the country. The Portsmouth Navy Yard was responsible for the construction, repair, and maintenance of numerous warships, including submarines, destroyers, and battleships. The yard also provided logistical support for naval operations, including storing and distributing ammunition, fuel, and other supplies.

The Portsmouth Navy Yard also played a key role in repairing and refitting warships damaged in battle, produced thousands of tons of munitions and other supplies, and provided training facilities for sailors and other naval personnel.

HISTORY – The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard was established on June 12, 1800, during the administration of President John Adams. It sits on a cluster of conjoined islands called Seavey's Island in the Piscataqua River, whose swift tidal current prevents ice from blocking navigation to the Atlantic Ocean.

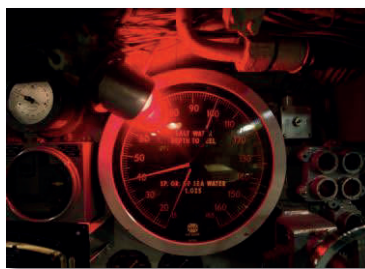


The area has a long tradition of shipbuilding. Since colonial settlement, New Hampshire and Maine forests provided lumber for wooden boat construction. HMS Falkland, considered the first British warship built in the Thirteen Colonies, was commissioned here in 1696. Perhaps the most famous vessel ever overhauled at the yard was Constitution, also called "Old Ironsides," in 1855.

During World War I, the shipyard began constructing submarines, with L-8 being the first ever built by a U. S. navy yard. Meanwhile, the base continued to overhaul and repair surface vessels. Consequently, the workforce grew to nearly 5,000 civilians. It grew to almost 25,000 civilians in World War II when over 70 submarines were constructed at the yard, with a record of 4 launched in a single day. When the war ended, the shipyard became the Navy's center for submarine design and development.

Submarine Tench-class details:

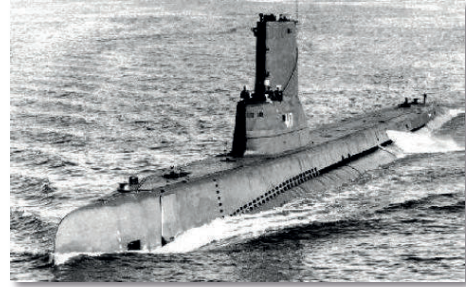
- Dimensions: The Tench-class submarines were 311 feet long, had a beam of 27 feet, and had a submerged displacement of 2,414 tons with a 17 foot draft.
- Armament: They were equipped with ten 21-inch torpedo tubes, six in the bow and four in the stern, and carried 28 torpedoes. They also had a 5-inch deck gun and various anti-aircraft guns for surface engagements.
- Propulsion: The Tench-class submarines were powered by four diesel engines that could produce a total of 5,400 horsepower when running on the surface, and four electric motors that could produce a total of 2,740 horsepower when running submerged. Surface speed 20 knots (23mph). Submerged speed 9 knots (10mph)
- Range: 16,000 nautical miles.
- Crew: The Tench-class submarines had a crew of 80 to 85 men, including officers and enlisted personnel. The ship's shop provides crews with up to seventy-five days of service.
- Service: The Tench-class submarines saw extensive service during World War II, conducting patrols and engaging in a variety of missions in the Pacific and Atlantic theaters.
- Notable missions: The USS Barb, a Tench-class submarine, is famous for sinking a train in 1945 using rocket launchers mounted on its deck. Another Tench-class submarine, the USS Tang, sank 24 Japanese ships before being lost in a friendly fire incident.





USS TENCH – SS-417

SS 417 was the first commissioned Tench-class submarine. It was built in three months from the laying of its keel on 1 April 1944 to when it was launched on 7 July 1944 at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, during the period of frantic new construction of submarines. After its launch, it underwent several months of fitting out with propulsion system, navigation equipment, communication systems, and weapons systems. Additionally, the submarine's crew quarters, galley, and other living spaces were also outfitted during this time.



Such was the building effort at Portsmouth that many vessels, the TENCH among them, were assembled in building basins - actually small drydocks, diverted from their repair work.

NAVFORM 605-B
 (Revised October 1943)
 Page 1

REPORT OF CHANGES
 of U. S. S. TENCH (SS 417)
 on commissioning
 from the month ending 6th day of October, 1944, date of sailing
 from to

1	2	3	4	5
NAMES (Alphabetically arranged without regard to rank, with surnames in the left and first name written in full)	SERVICE NUMBER (The service number must appear on application by applicant)	Rank or Rate of Last Station	Date of Enlistment	Place of Enlistment
1 BASTILLE, John George	212 66 52	Tic(SS)		
2 BLAKE, Robert Fredrick	652 64 47	TW2(SS) Y-6		
3 BOLAK, Michael	238 84 05	MoMtlc(SS)		
4 BOWLER, Robert Cornelius	802 98 48	SV Y-6		
5 BREMER, William Clinton Jr.	844 43 76	Sic(TM) USN-1		
6 BRODIE, John Ansel	267 51 87	CM2(SS)(Op)		
7 BYRNS, William Neil	381 31 98	MoMtlc(SS)		
8 CHATHAM, David Bryant III	755 86 90	Sic(TM) Y-6		
9 COUSHMAN, Harold Alexander	287 32 54	EM2(SS)(Op)		
10 COPELAND, Frank	376 67 75	EM2(SS)(Op)		
11 COTTON, James David	647 48 97	EM2(SS) Y-6		
12 DALEY, Edward James	811 01 86	Fic(TM) SV Y-6		
13 DELITTLE, Joseph	804 27 13	STLM2c SV Y-6		
14 DONOHUE, John Thomas	814 33 30	EM2c (Op)		
15 ECKERSTLEY, Benjamin Berry Jr.	207 34 88	EM2c(SS)		

6	7	8	9
Branch of Service	Special Qualification, General, Unspecialized, Chief Petty Officer, or other change of status	Date of Commencement in status	Place of enlistment, date of discharge, or other pertinent information
1 USN	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
2 USNR	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
3 USN	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
4 USNR	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
5 USN-I	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
6 USN	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
7 USNR	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
8 USNR	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
9 USN	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
10 USNR	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
11 USNR	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
12 USNR	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
13 USNR	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
14 USNR	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.
15 USN	REC	10-6-44	From USS TENCH Detail, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H.

This form to be submitted by commanding officer of ship and station, whenever any ship or station is completed or placed out of commission, on the last day of each month during the month for which submitted. Also upon sailing from one port to another, by commanding officers of port of origin and port of destination, if vessel changes its status for the month for which submitted. Also upon sailing from one port to another, by commanding officers of port of origin and port of destination, if vessel changes its status for the month for which submitted.



EM 3cl John Thomas Donohue was assigned to the USS TENCH (SS 417) during the fit-out process at Portsmouth Navy Yard on the Maine/New Hampshire, border prior to being mustered with the crew when it was commissioned on 6 October 1944.

While there was less than one year before the end of World War II, by that time, he knew the ship stem to stern.

By the end of the war, it would travel 37,000 miles on three patrols sinking 22,150 tons of enemy shipping in total.

WAR HISTORY OF THE USS TENCH

Note: This history is based on the declassified report from the ship's Commanding Officer, T/Cdr. Thomas Slack Basket, written by Engineer and Electrical Officer, Lieut. A. B. Spurney, USNR at war's end on 15 October 1945. Basket replaced Commander Sieglaff who had led the first combat patrol.



Cdr Thomas Slack Basket

Pre-Commissioning and Commissioning Data:

<p style="text-align: center;">∴ MENU ∴</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Shrimp Cocktail</i></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td><i>Olives</i></td> <td><i>Sweet Pickles</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Roast Turkey</i></td> <td><i>Baked Virginia Ham</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>Candied Sweet Potatoes</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>Buttered Carrots and Peas</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Rolls</i></td> <td><i>Butter</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Peanuts</i></td> <td><i>Potato Chips</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>Submarine Cake</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Cigars</i></td> <td><i>Cigarettes</i></td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">∴ NIGHT ORDERS ∴</p> <p>2000—Battle Stations for Dinner. Andrew Jarvis, Caterer. 2100—All hands on deck for photographer. 2115—Dancing. Music by Freddie Gilbert and his Musical Statesmen. 2145—Cutting of Cake. Captain at Conning Tower. Executive as Approach Officer. 2245—Clear the deck for Action. Jitterbug Contest. 2300—Resume Speed. Dancing Continues. 2345—Disengage — Intermission. 2400—Liberty Call. — Rough weather ahead. Highballseas Running. 0100—Secure. "Til We Meet Again". 0115—Final Bus to Portsmouth and Barracks.</p>	<i>Olives</i>	<i>Sweet Pickles</i>	<i>Roast Turkey</i>	<i>Baked Virginia Ham</i>	<i>Candied Sweet Potatoes</i>		<i>Buttered Carrots and Peas</i>		<i>Rolls</i>	<i>Butter</i>	<i>Peanuts</i>	<i>Potato Chips</i>	<i>Submarine Cake</i>		<i>Cigars</i>	<i>Cigarettes</i>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); text-align: center;">COMMISSIONING PARTY</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>"The TENACIOUS TENCH"</p> </div> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; text-align: center;">U. S. S. TENCH SS 417</p> <p>The Tench, (Tinca Tinca to youse scientists), is noted for it's tenacity of life in oxygen depleted waters. The family Cyprinidae or Minnows claims the Tench as her most distinguished member. Many having attained a length of one and one-half feet and a weight of six to eight or even twelve pounds—which is "big potatoes" in the minnow world.</p> <p>Fashionable "Tillie Tench" varies her wardrobe according to the waters she inhabits. She commonly dons a dark olive green shading into black with a remarkable transparent lustre. Her come hither ensemble finds her fins flesh colored and dark spots over a golden background.</p> <p>Now all most minnows can wish. Is to grow up to be a fish. But "Tillie" is swinging on a star, And the SS 417 will soon spread her fame from here to thar.</p>
<i>Olives</i>	<i>Sweet Pickles</i>																
<i>Roast Turkey</i>	<i>Baked Virginia Ham</i>																
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<i>Submarine Cake</i>																	
<i>Cigars</i>	<i>Cigarettes</i>																

<p style="text-align: center;">The Officers and Crew of the U.S.S. Tench</p> <p style="text-align: center;">cordially invite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">to their Commissioning Party</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday Evening, October 4, 1944</p> <p style="text-align: center;">at the Club Pannaway, Portsmouth, N. H.</p> <p>Guest of.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please present this card at the door.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chartered Bus Service Leaving Portsmouth Square at 7:30 - 7:45 - 8:00 and 8:30 p. m. Leaving Club Pannaway at 12:00 - 12:30 - 1:00 and 1:15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">OFFICERS</p> <p>Commander W. B. Sieglaff, U.S.N. Lieutenant Commander A. R. Strow, U.S.N. Lieutenant T. Turner, U.S.N. Lieutenant J. E. Wright, U.S.N.R. Lieutenant A. B. Spurney, U.S.N.R. Lieutenant (jg) F. M. D'Angelo, U.S.N.R. Ensign R. F. O'Connell, U.S.N.R. Ensign S. Martaux, U.S.N.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS</p> <p>Edmondson, O. T., Chief of Boat</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Brodie, J. A., CEM</td> <td>Morrison, D. R., CPhM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Harwood, G. S., CMM</td> <td>Rader, L. E., CMM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Krzeminski, F. J., GRM</td> <td>Rowley, G. E., CMM</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">CREW</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Bastille, J. G., Y1c</td> <td>LaFreniere, J. C., MoMM3c</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Blake, R. F., TM2c</td> <td>Lawhon, N. H., F1c</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bolak, M., MoMM1c</td> <td>Little, J. E., RM3c</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bowler, R. C., F1c</td> <td>Mackler, S., S1c</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brewer, W. C., Jr., S1c</td> <td>Majors, W. M., CK1c</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Byers, W. N., MoMM1c</td> <td>Maguire, P. J., TM2c</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cheatham, D. B., Jr., S1c</td> <td>Malone, F. L., SC2c</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Colburn, H. A., EM1c</td> <td>Manning, J. 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... On 7 July 1944 the Tench was christened by Mrs. Lyndon Johnson, wife of the United States representative from Texas, but with no great pomp and circumstance – there was no great slide down the building ways nor knifing into the churned waters of the Piscataqua. When the Tench was launched, the basin was simply allowed to flood, the caissons opened, and the new submarine floated to her moorings. Somehow it seemed a more natural, accustomed entrance into her element.



The fitting-out proceeded until, on 6 October 1944, the Tench was ready for action and placed in commission; Rear Admiral T. Withers, USN, Commandant of the Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N.H., delivered her to Commander W. B. Sieglaff, USN, who assumed command.

Captain Sieglaff brought with him the spirit of the “Terrible Tog”, the U.S.S. Tautog, which has since received the Navy Unit Commendation for patrols made under his command. A nucleus of the Tench complement also were veterans of the Tautog. Lieut. (now Lt. - Cmdr.) Tom Turner, USN, Torpedo and Gunnery Officer; J. G. Bastille, YI/c (now CY), USN, Ship’s Yeoman; Ward Majors, StMI/c, Officers’ Steward were a few of these.

Lieutenant-Commander A. R. Strow, USN, was Executive Officer and Navigator, having previously been “Second” on the U.S.S. Gudgeon, subsequently lost on patrol but even now high on the list reckoning enemy tonnage sent to the bottom. Then from the U.S.S. R-15 came Lieut. J. E. Wright, USN, Engineer and Electrical Officer. Lieut. A. B. Spurney, USNR, was Communications Officer. Lt. (jg) (now Lieut.) F. M. D’Angelo, USNR, was Assistant Engineer. Ensign (now Lt. (jg))R. F. V. O’Connell, USNR, was Assistant Torpedo and Gunnery Officer. Ensign (now Lt.(jg)) S. Martauz, USN, brought the experience of nine war patrols on the U.S.S. Sea Dragon to his post as First Lieutenant.

Pre-War-Patrol Period:

The Tench commenced training operations shortly after going into commission. This was a period of anxiety and expectation, for the Tench was the first submarine of a new class whose design incorporated the experience gleaned from two years of tough but highly successful submarine warfare. There was more horsepower, faster and deeper diving, longer cruising, more shooting with a bigger deck-gun, and additional torpedoes to destroy the diminishing Japanese tonnage at sea.

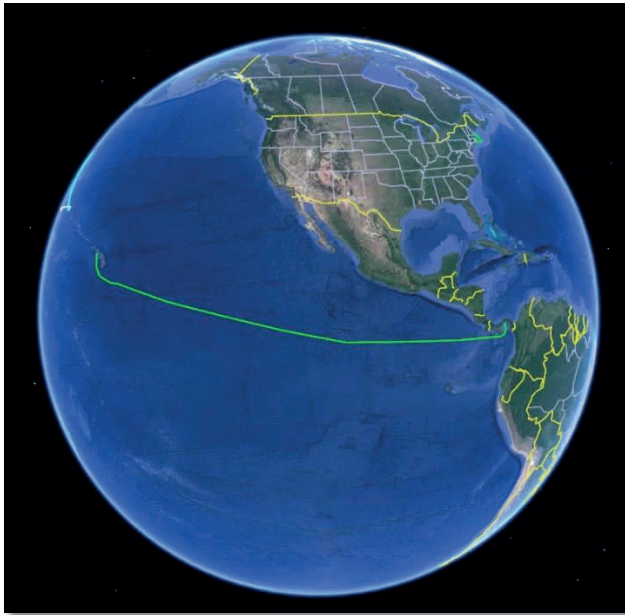
Over and above this, for a month the Tench was assigned to the testing of a new SONAR installation. This typified the program then directing the science which had perfected their anti-submarine warfare to the improvement of their pro-submarine warfare. (See Appendix VI)



The Tench arrived at the Panama Canal on New Year's Eve – another holiday at sea. There were a large number of supply and warships in transition at the time so part of the transit was the traditional military “hurry up and wait.” Another short training period would occur on the Pacific side of the Canal at Balboa with the waiting and one-day transition completed. By 8-Jan-45, Tench embarked on the 5,375 mile leg of its journey to Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii. She would arrive three weeks later on 24-Jan-1945 for refueling, provisioning and more training while awaiting her first patrol orders.



Balboa, C.Z.

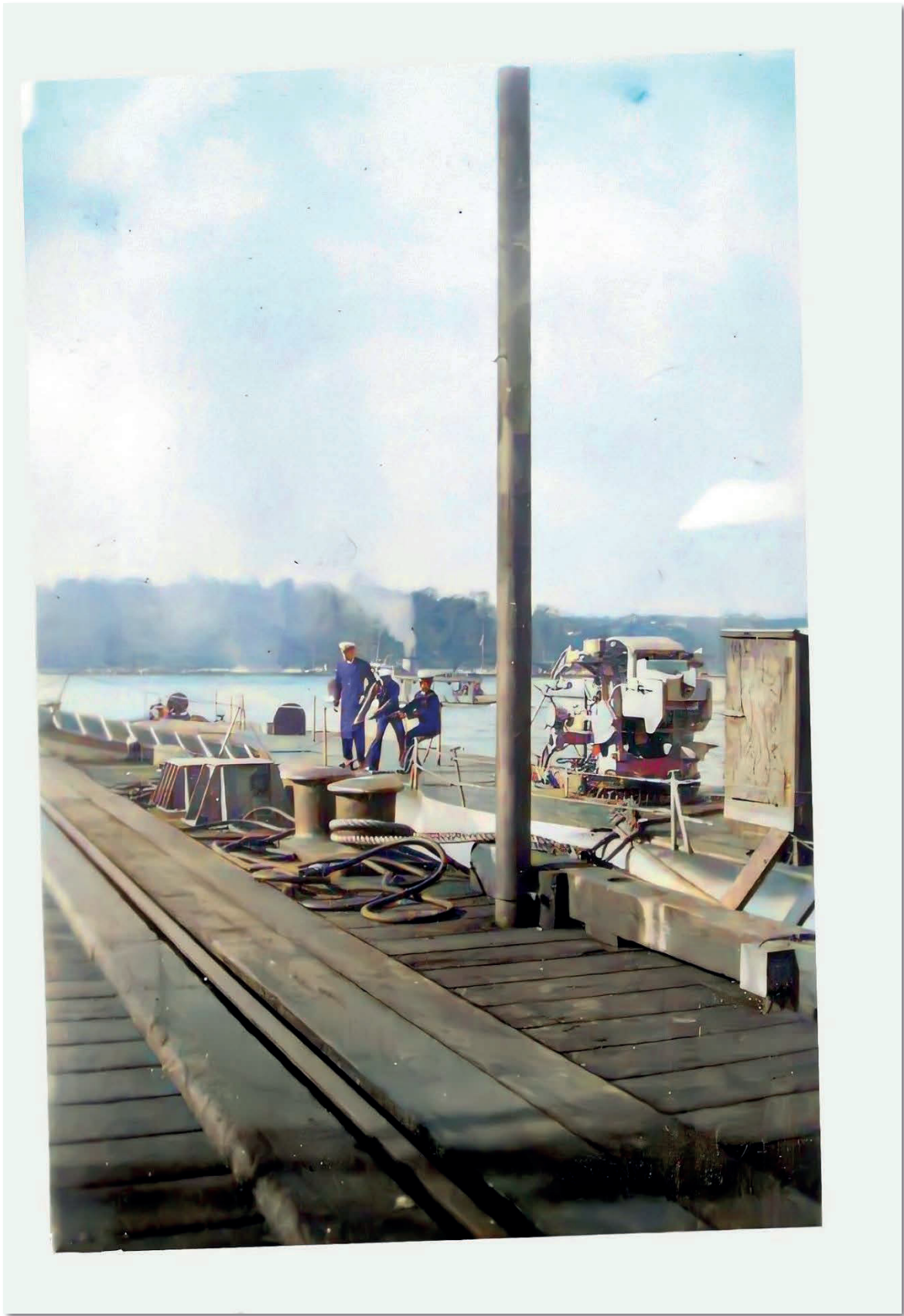


Pearl Harbor

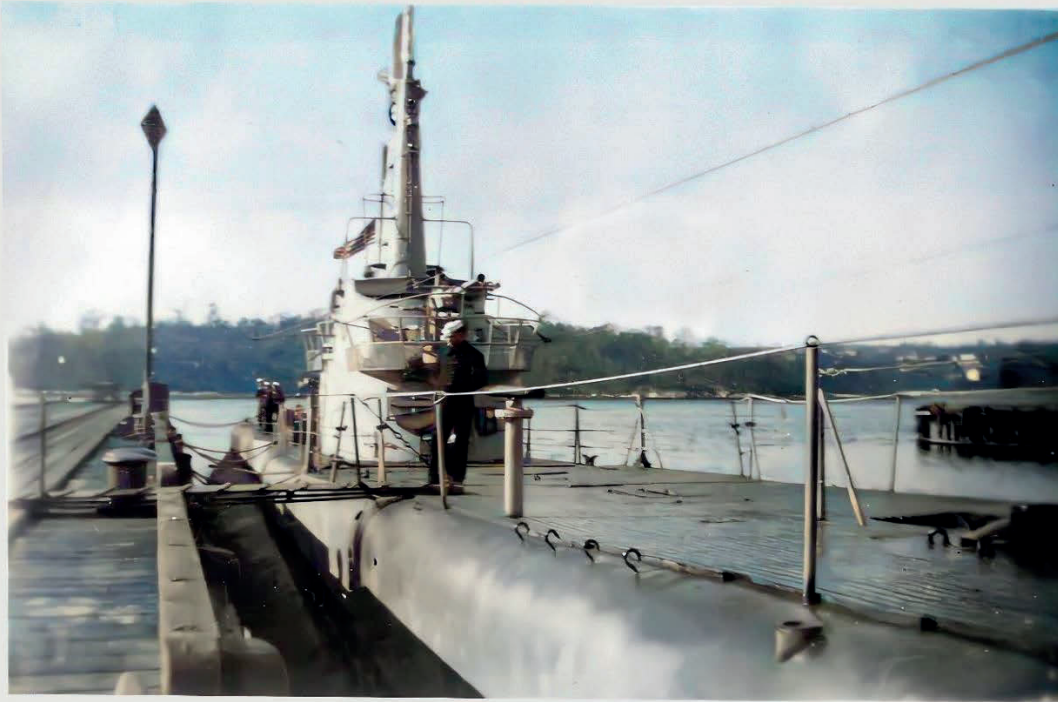
The USS Tench was ready for war-patrol; already she had made 172 dives, 109 practice attacks, fired 66 torpedoes and three gunnery practices. The crew was trained to a high degree of perfection, their morale high, their new loyalty a thing to behold. The dictionary states that the Tench is a fish very tenacious of life, being capable of prolonged existence in the most arduous environments. And so, she became Tillie, the Tenacious Tench.













Commander Sieglaff & a senior officer is on their way to Japanese waters
"Good Hunting & Godspeed"