

Office of Naval Records and History  
Ships' Histories Section  
Navy Department

### HISTORY OF USS PHELPS (DD 360)

USS PHELPS (DD 360), one of the United States' mighty destroyers, distinguished herself in the Pacific from Pearl Harbor to Saipan, and in the latter stages of World War II, transitted the Panama Canal and carried on her good work escorting convoys across the cold, wind-swept North Atlantic. Though sometimes called "Greyhounds" because of their sleek lines, these versatile ships pack a mighty punch whether fighting surface action, anti-aircraft, shore bombardment, or depth charging an enemy submarine.

USS PHELPS was built by the Bethlehem Steel Company of Quincy, Massachusetts where her keel was laid on 2 January 1934. She was launched on 18 July 1935, with Mrs. Richard A. Kearny, wife of Dr. R. A. Kearny and granddaughter of the ship's namesake, serving as sponsor. USS PHELPS was commissioned on 26 February 1936 with Commander Albert H. Rooks, USN, as first commanding officer.

USS PHELPS was named in honor of Rear Admiral Thomas Stowell Phelps, USN. Admiral Phelps was born in Buckfield, Maine, on 2 November 1822 and died in New York City, on 10 January 1901. He was appointed midshipman on 7 January 1840 and in 1856, took part in Indian wars in the Territory of Washington, Battle of Seattle on 26 January. During the Civil War he was attached to the expedition for the relief of Fort Sumter in March 1861. He commanded a division in engagements with batteries at Yorktown and Gloucester Point; at Battle of West Point, Virginia, he ascended Mattapony River and prevented the junction of a force of the enemy with the main army. While in command of the CORWIN he captured several enemy vessels.

After fitting out at Boston, PHELPS got underway for Washington, D. C. where she was inspected. During the latter part of April, she made her shakedown cruise to United States ports in the Caribbean area.

The outbreak of war on 7 December 1941, found USS PHELPS moored to USS DOBBIN at Pearl Harbor, while undergoing a tender overhaul. She was receiving steam, electricity, and water from the DOBBIN as all her machinery had been opened for repairs. At 0758 on that fateful day, the gangway watch saw bombs being dropped from planes diving on Ford Island and on ships moored near USS UTAH.

Lieutenant Trippensee, USN, the engineer officer was the senior officer on board and he lost no time in sending all hands to their battle stations and in preparing the ship for getting underway. Joe S. Harrison, EMI, USN, immediately shifted the electric load from DOBBIN to the emergency Diesel generators, thereby adding greatly to the early fighting efficiency of the ship..

Meanwhile, PHELPS' gunners mates were busily engaged on deck. Her forward 1.1 gun mounts were the first in the nest to fire but the stern guns had been dismantled for overhaul. In spite of that fact, by 0802, only four minutes after the attack began, the guns were sending their tracers toward enemy planes. The forward guns scored direct hits on one enemy torpedo plane and watched as it crashed out of sight behind the hills.

Down in the engine room, two chief watertenders were busily engaged in getting power. Number 3 and 4 boilers had been opened on the previous day for cleaning. Only a "Cold Watch" was on duty, yet, under the two chiefs' supervision PHELPS was able to get underway on two boilers by 0926. By 1250 she was steaming on all four boilers.

At 1030, she joined USS DETROIT, ST. LOUIS, PHOENIX, BENHAM, BLUE, MONAGHAN and ENTERPRISE outside the harbor and proceeded toward Nauakuli where nothing was found. The following day the force returned to Pearl Harbor, entering port about 1712. On 9 December, PHELPS again stood out to patrol outside the harbor. On 11 December she joined Task Force 12 at 0632. They returned to Pearl Harbor on 14 December.

PHELPS operated out of Pearl Harbor on patrol and training duty until 31 January 1942. On the last day of January, PHELPS stood out in company with Task Force 11 built around USS LEXINGTON. The force sailed southwestward for a point near Port Moresby, New Guinea in an effort to stop the Japanese advance toward Australia.

While nearing the objective on 20 February 1942, an enemy four motored flying boat was reported shot down by friendly fighters from LEXINGTON and YORKTOWN at 1144. Another similar plane was downed at 1227 and at 1630, radar contact with enemy planes was reported. Nine planes were sighted at ten miles. The ships immediately opened fire on the remaining five planes as four had been shot down by the combat air patrol. At 1647 the last remaining plane tried to crash USS LEXINGTON and was shot down.

At 1705 eight more enemy planes came winging in and two minutes later all ships opened fire. At 1710 another enemy bomber attempted to crash LEXINGTON and was shot down. The day's total was 16 enemy planes shot down by fighters and anti-aircraft fire.

The task force remained in the area and on 10 March, after topping off the bunkers in destroyers from the carriers and cruisers, air attacks were sent against the enemy forces at Salamaua and Lae, New Guinea. The force then began retirement and put in to Pearl Harbor on 26 March 1942.

PHELPS underwent repairs until 11 April and the following day found her at sea on training duty. On 15 April she joined Task Force 11 again and stood out for the South Pacific for

operations against the enemy. On 4 May Task Force 11 received word that Task Force 17, operating off Guadalcanal, had struck severe blows at the enemy. On the following day Task Force 11 joined Task Force 17 and on 6 May PHELPS was assigned to an attack group consisting of two cruisers and three destroyers.

On 7 May PHELPS was to enter the hardest battle of her career, "The Battle of the Coral Sea". On 8 May, PHELPS was stationed 3000 yards off LEXINGTON's starboard bow. At 0943 her crew was sent to their battle stations as LEXINGTON and YORKTOWN launched their striking group. At 1056 a large group of enemy aircraft were reported coming in and at 1104 they were identified as torpedo planes accompanied by fighters. The first planes sighted by PHELPS were at 1104, about 300 feet altitude and making a long glide. Some of the enemy planes were being engaged by friendly fighters and at 1115 the ships of the force opened fire. The enemies' main attack was centered upon LEXINGTON. At about 1120 the "LEX" took a bomb hit, starting a fire on her forecandle. By 1130 she appeared to have extinguished the fire.

At 1135 a friendly plane was seen to crash some 4000 yards from PHELPS and the destroyer went to the rescue. Lieutenant (junior grade) Richard G. Crommelin, USN, attached to YORKTOWN, was rescued.

At 1741 PHELPS was ordered to assist in the rescue of LEXINGTON personnel who had been forced to abandon ship. Twenty-seven survivors were taken aboard. After making sure all survivors had been rescued PHELPS proceeded to a firing position and waited for other vessels to clear the area. She then fired three torpedoes at LEXINGTON to keep her from enemy hands. Two more torpedoes were fired later and shortly after 1952 LEXINGTON slipped beneath the surface, leaving only a small amount of smoke which cleared rapidly.

Though PHELPS did not receive any casualties from this battle, she witnessed one of the better known battles of World War II. It also served as a grim reminder to PHELPS' crew that a long, hard road to victory lay ahead.

On 11 May, PHELPS was detached from Task Force 17 and proceeded to Noumea, New Caledonia. She arrived on the 12th and transferred the remainder of her survivors and wounded to USS ASTORIA. On 13 May PHELPS stood out in company with USS MINNEAPOLIS, NEW ORLEANS, DEWEY, and WORDEN enroute to Pearl Harbor. On 16 May the force joined Task Force 16 and proceeded to Pearl Harbor, arriving on 27 May.

The following day PHELPS sortied from Pearl Harbor in company with Task Force 16. On 1 June Commander Task Force 16 sent word to all ships that an enemy task force was going to attack Midway Island. Task Forces 16 and 17 were dispatched to either

side of the expected enemy approach in order to deliver a surprise flank attack on the marauders.

On 3 June the enemy contact report came as a large force of enemy ships was sighted 700 miles west of Midway and heading in. Two enemy aircraft carriers were sighted north of Midway at 0825 and at 0900, HORNET and ENTERPRISE launched their attack groups. At 1020 a single engine enemy twin-float plane was seen and at 1027, the task force commander alerted all ships to prepare to repel an air attack.

At 1124 the ships received word that Midway had been attacked by enemy planes and at 1341 PHELPS rescued personnel from a crashed ENTERPRISE plane. At 1401, a large group of enemy planes were detected coming in from 3000 feet and again all ships were alerted. At 1403 much anti-aircraft fire was seen in the vicinity off USS YORKTOWN and planes were seen crashing into the sea and some bursting into fire in the air. Another enemy plane was seen to crash at 1409 and at 1415 YORKTOWN reported that her radar gear was out of commission. At 1420 the attack groups started returning, many making water landings due to shortage of fuel.

At 2214 a message from HORNET to ENTERPRISE was intercepted as follows:

"Our planes attacked 1 BB (battleship) 1 CA (heavy cruiser) estimate at least 4 direct hits. BB burning badly hit in stack and mainmast. CA also on fire. No air opposition encountered. All attack planes returned....

June 5 dawned bright and clear with all radar scopes clear of enemy activity. During mid-morning several rain squalls were encountered, cutting visibility down to 500 yards at times. At 1650 PHELPS sighted an aircraft life raft and proceeded to investigate. Occupants of the raft were later identified as Lieutenant Penland and Heard, RM2 of USS ENTERPRISE, whose plane had crashed during the battle of the preceding day.

At 1712 HORNET and ENTERPRISE launched 62 Dauntless dive bombers upon a report of enemy contact. The groups were recovered at 2100. On 6 June ENTERPRISE launched a search group of 18 planes and at 0905 got results when Commander Task Force 16 reported, "Enemy located. Will proceed toward him at 25 knots to attack. Send DD short of fuel to rendezvous with CIMARRON on 8 June "

By 0911 the enemy force was identified as containing 1 Cruiser and 5 destroyers. At 1000 HORNET launched an attack group of 34 planes and at 1037 a pilot reported no aircraft carrier present but 1 battleship was among the group. At 1148 a Japanese broadcast was received which stated that the Second Japanese Fleet was being bombed.

At 1230 HORNET recovered her attack group and 25 minutes later ENTERPRISE launched one. At 1313 the results of HORNET's attack group was broadcast to all ships:

"One thousand pound hit between stack and side of large ship. One thousand pound hit center of ship near stern. One thousand pound hit on another large ship. VF attack on destroyer seemed to be very effective with an additional one hundred pound hit on destroyer. Consensus of opinion is that large ship is a battleship possibly a cruiser. One of ships hit turned in uncontrolled circle to right."

Not to be outdone ENTERPRISE made her report at 1508:

"Many hits on battleship dead in water and burning. 1 cruiser burning but has way on."

At 1531 HORNET launched another attack group and at 1540 ENTERPRISE followed suit. Both of these groups were recovered at 1755 when the entire force headed for a fueling rendezvous.

At 2000, Commander Task Force 16 sent the following message to all ships:

"Yesterdays attack by ENTERPRISE, HORNET and YORKTOWN bombers on defeated and fleeing enemy completed an air action covering three full days. Estimate enemy losses as result of action by Task Forces 16 and 17 on Thursday 3 carriers sunk one carrier on fire and badly damaged, one battleship or large armored ship and one cruiser damaged. Of three carriers sunk one was AKAGI one was of HIRYU class one probably KAGA. Damaged carrier probably one of KIRYU class was last sighted by plane forenoon Friday on northwesterly course still burning. Our attack groups failed to sight her on 250 mile flight late Friday afternoon. She may have escaped or she may have been abandoned and sunk. Our attack group sighted only two small ships probably destroyers. Yesterday, Saturday our search picked up two small enemy forces bound for home. First was 2 cruisers and 2 destroyers headed southwest bombed during forenoon with hits reported on both cruisers. Second group was 2 cruisers three destroyers headed west. Of these one cruiser of MOGAMI class was wrecked and abandoned other smaller cruiser received bomb hits one destroyer sunk others strafed by fighter planes. Our carrier air groups have done a magnificent job in spite of heavy losses suffered on Thursday forenoon in the initial attack which decided the fate of the Battle of Midway. Their follow up blitz on our retreating enemy were carried out with great determination. The Japs state of morale at the end of the battle was indicated by abandoning to their fate the crew of the MOGAMI class cruiser when the other ships of that group left without effecting rescue of personnel. The performance of our ships during this period leaves nothing to be desired. Task forces 16 and 17 have again helped to make history. Well done to all hands."

On 9 June PHELPS was detached along with two other destroyers and two tankers to proceed to Pearl Harbor. They arrived without incident on 12 June 1942.

On 7 July PHELPS got underway in company with Task Force 11 built around USS SARATOGA. Gunnery drills were held daily and on 8 July, PHELPS rescued two crewmen from a VINCENNES scouting plane that crashed. On 20 July a fighter plane from SARATOGA crashed during recovery operations and PHELPS rescued the pilot. On 30 July another rescue mission occurred when a torpedo bomber crashed from SARATOGA.

On 7 August 1942, Task Force 11 arrived within striking distance of Guadalcanal and at 0530, SARATOGA commenced launching planes. At 0552 one of the carrier planes crashed but a search by PHELPS failed to locate any survivors. Later, at 0639 PHELPS located the pilot and made the rescue.

By 0700 the third attack group commenced taking off and at 0750 reports of the damage inflicted started coming in. It was learned that WASP's fighter sweep had destroyed 9 enemy float planes. At 0905 the surface bombardment force was heard over radios as they commenced firing with planes spotting. At 0920 the first troops were landed against light opposition.

At 1312 all ships received a warning that the three groups of enemy planes, each group consisting of nine planes, were headed in from the north. At 1338 SARATOGA launched fighters to protect Tulagi and at 1340 with the air support from SARATOGA in sight, the enemy bombers jettisoned their bombs and "high-tailed" it toward home even though they had fighter escorts.

On 8 August the first enemy air opposition came at 1038 when about 40 twin engined planes were detected north of Bougainville. At 1140 fighter planes were launched to support Tulagi and Guadalcanal fighting and at 1417 Commander Task Force 61 broadcast a summary of the situation ashore.

The approach had been a complete surprise to the enemy and the light opposition met had been silenced by planes and the bombardment. The Guadalcanal-Tulagi area was occupied and light enemy resistance was still in progress on Tanambigo, though the latter was then being bombed. No serious damage had been inflicted on the United States forces and 30 to 40 enemy planes had been downed.

At 1525 a fighter pilot crashed his plane and MACDONOUGH recovered the pilot. On 10 August 1942 the force withdrew to fuel after which they returned to the area. On 21 August a report came in that two enemy ships were attempting a landing at Guadalcanal. However, by the time the sun passed its Zenith so had the Japs as the situation was reported under control. By 2155 the enemy force that had consisted of 700 troops had been destroyed.

At 1325 on 24 August, PHELPS' crew was treated to a ringside seat to a dogfight in which a Jap torpedo plane was shot down by friendly fighters. At 1450 all ships were alerted to impending air attack. The ensuing action showed the following score: The SARATOGA air group attacked the small Japanese carrier and attained hits which left her smoking. She was later sighted dead in the water. On the same attack a destroyer was sunk and a cruiser hit by a torpedo. The next attack brought one torpedo hit on a cruiser and a one thousand pound bomb hit on a battleship.

The enemy attack group consisted of 80 planes and friendly aircraft downed 57 while anti-aircraft fire was splashing 24 planes. USS ENTERPRISE was hit by three bombs causing several personnel losses and putting her forward elevator out of commission and causing the after spaces to flood. On 6 September the task force entered Tongatabu harbor and anchored.

On 12 September Task Force 11 stood out for Pearl Harbor and arrived on the 21st. On 28 September PHELPS joined Task Unit 1.1.2 and sailed for San Francisco. The group arrived on 5 October and remained there through November for repairs and supplies.

On 11 December PHELPS sailed for San Diego and arrived on the 13th. Training exercises followed until 26 December when PHELPS sailed for Port Wilson, Washington. There she joined USS IDAHO and escorted her back to Los Angeles Harbor, California, arriving on 2 January 1943.

On 15 January PHELPS returned to San Diego where she entered dry-dock. On 18 January PHELPS got underway for Los Angeles again where gunnery drills were held with heavy fleet units for the following three days. PHELPS participated in various training exercises in the San Diego, Los Angeles area until 7 April 1943.

On 7 April PHELPS stood out of Los Angeles enroute to Adak, Alaska where she arrived on 16 April. On the following day PHELPS stood out again enroute to Cold Bay where she anchored on 30 April. On 3 May PHELPS departed in company with Task Force 51 enroute to Attu.

PHELPS was ordered to transport area 1 and at 0927 on 11 May she proceeded in as control vessel leading 8 landing boats. On 12 May the battleships of the task force began their bombardment and at 1507 PHELPS opened fire. Eleven minutes later friendly fighters obscured the target area in a bombing and strafing attack. One friendly P-38 crashed astern of PHELPS and the pilot was recovered by the destroyer.

At 1842 PHELPS got underway as screen for USS PENNSYLVANIA and at 1937 the destroyer made a sound contact. Two minutes later two depth charges were dropped after which the contact was lost.

Another sound contact was made at 1510 on 13 May and two depth charges were dropped. At 1530 contact was regained and 5 six-hundred pound depth charges and 4 three-hundred pounders were dropped. The shore fire control party then sent PHELPS an urgent call for fire support immediately after the second attack was made and the versatile destroyer raced back to assist.

PHELPS continued on her fire support missions until 22 May. At 1550 on 22 June a group of enemy planes attacked PHELPS with torpedoes and by strafing. At least three torpedoes passed under her keel though none exploded. One of the planes was shot down and crashed some 3 miles away.

At 1040 on 28 May PHELPS received orders from her fire control party to bombard enemy installations in Chichagof Harbor. At 1103 she opened fire and expended 44 rounds of 5-inch ammunition until 1145. At 2330 PHELPS observed an enemy battery firing on Chichagof beach and after firing one full salvo at the enemy, the battery was silenced. At 2352 PHELPS began firing starshells over the harbor area. At 0110 an enemy battery again fired on the harbor area and PHELPS again let go a salvo to eliminate the enemy gun. At 1100 on 1 June the Army no longer needed naval gun fire support.

PHELPS remained in the Aleutians without incident until 2 August 1943, when she was assigned an anti-submarine screen for battleships and cruisers during the bombardment of Kiska with bombardment as secondary duty. At 1610 the destroyers were ordered to open fire also and PHELPS commenced firing. 28 salvos were fired before she passed out of range. After completion of the bombardment, PHELPS returned to Sweepers Cove, Adak Island on 4 August. On 13 August the destroyer again returned to Kiska for a bombardment mission though she met no opposition and the bombardment went along smoothly.

On 5 September PHELPS sailed from the Aleutians enroute to the Hawaiian Islands where she arrived on 15 September 1943. After a brief repair and training period, PHELPS sailed for Midway Island on 24 September, arriving on the 27th. On the 29th, PHELPS stood out for Pearl Harbor and arrived on 3 October. There she held training exercises until 10 November when she sailed with Task Force 52 for an attack and the capture of Makin Island. The force arrived on 20 November and at 0530 PHELPS left the formation to screen transports in transport area one. At 0558 the transports began unloading troops and sunrise found friendly carrier planes bombing and strafing enemy positions on Makin. At 0640 the fire support groups commenced shore bombardment and at 0725 PHELPS took her station as control vessel for landing boats from USS CALVERT.

At 0900 with all boat waves sent in, PHELPS and USS MACDONOUGH steamed into Makin Lagoon for shore bombardment, following USS REVENGE with her paravanes streamed and sweeping ahead for mines.

At 1000 USS REVENGE commenced shore bombardment as many shells from other bombardment units landed nearby. Five minutes later PHELPS commenced firing at her assigned target areas. Many large fires were seen on the beach. Twenty-five minutes later, PHELPS ceased firing and at 1032, as the first wave of landing boats landed at the beach inside the lagoon, much opposition from enemy machineguns was reported.

At 0610 on 22 November, PHELPS was again ordered into the lagoon to give fire support if called for. At 0900 frinedly tank units followed by infantry were seen advancing through a wooded area and across a tank trap. Snipers were mopped up in an enemy radar tower and other places of concealment. At 1350 PHELPS steamed out of the lagoon.

At 0538 on 23 November 1943, USS LISCOME BAY was torpedoed and sunk. At 0620 PHELPS was sent to transport area 2 for anti-submarine duty. Upon completion of the Makin campaign PHELPS returned to Pearl Harbor arriving on 5 December 1943.

On 14 December 1943, Lieutenant Commander Martineau, USN, relieved Commander J. E. Edwards, USN, as commanding officer of USS PHELPS.

On 15 December 1943 USS PHELPS stood out of Pearl Harbor enroute to San Francisco, She passed under the Golden Gate bridge on 21 December and moored at Oakland on the same day.

PHELPS underwent an overhaul before sailing for San Diego on 29 December.

January 1, 1944 found PHELPS undergoing repairs at San Diego, Following the repairs, the ship participated in training exercises preparatory to the Marshall Islands operation. With all training and emergency repairs completed, PHELPS sailed for San Pedro where she was to rendezvous with the remainder of the Northern Support Group. She arrived the following day and effected rendezvous on schedule, then sailed for the Marshall Islands. PHELPS put into Pearl Harbor on 21 January where her officers attended their last conferences prior to the Marshall Islands operations.

On 22 January, Task Force 53 sailed for the Marshall Islands and arrived on 30 January, D-1 day. At 0500 on 31 January PHELPS arrived in her assigned area some 3,000 yards from Ennuebing and Mellu Islands to render close fire support. At dawn about 0645, general bombardment of the islands was begun. PHELPS neutralized Ennuebing Island and made direct hits on enemy batteries on Roi. Enemy resistance was negligible and wholly ineffective. Landing waves had landed and firmly established themselves on Ennuebing and Mellu Islands well before noon, thus completing the first stage of D-day for PHELPS.

PHELPS then proceeded to enter the lagoon as fire support ship for the minesweepers. Prior to dark, Ennumennet, Ennubirr, and Ennugarret Islands had been successfully assaulted and captured by United States forces. All preparations proceeded for the main attack on Roi and Namur Islands the following day. PHELPS was later joined by LAVALLETTE, and both vessels remained at anchor in the lagoon to render necessary assistance.

At daylight, PHELPS shifted anchorage to mark the lines of departure 4,000 yards from Roi and Namur. Targets of opportunity on Namur were taken under fire and an attempted enemy counterattack from Namur reported by friendly troops on Ennugarret was broken up and the area cleared.

On 1 February, following the capture of the main islands, PHELPS stood out of the lagoon and established an anti-submarine patrol covering the northwestern approaches to Kwajalein Atoll. On 6 February PHELPS was ordered to escort Task Group 53.5 to Majuro. She arrived the following day and on 8 February went alongside the ammunition ship Mauna Loa to replenish her ammunition. On 10 February DD 360 steamed back to Kwajalein Island and arrived the following day.

On 13 February PHELPS was ordered to screen carrier division 24 and, late that afternoon, a small amount of U. S. Mail was received aboard, the first in more than a month. On 15 February PHELPS stood out with the southern group of the Eniwetok expeditionary force.

Arriving off Eniwetok early on 17 February, PHELPS took a small freighter under fire after it had been beached. Other targets ashore were also taken under fire. PHELPS continued delivering call fire support until the atoll was declared secure.

On 3 March PHELPS sailed for Majuro Atoll and arrived on the 5th. She remained there until 17 March undergoing repairs by the ship's force and training exercises.

On 17 March she got underway to screen a group of battleships and carriers in a strike on Milli Atoll. The strike was carried out on 18 March with considerable enemy fire falling near. IOWA took two hits from an enemy shore battery with no serious damage done. The group returned to Majuro on 19 March.

On 21 March PHELPS prepared for the strikes against Palau Island. The giant force sortied from Majuro on 22 March and steamed for a point just north of New Guinea. On 26 March PHELPS was reassigned to the support group and taken from the attack group due to a machinery casualty the day before. Thus, knocked from her position with the heavy ships, PHELPS settled down to the drudgery of screening tankers while the main task force made their strikes on Palau. The support force and attack force returned to Majuro on 6 April.

Thus with all of Task Force 58 anchored at Majuro within sight of any one ship was arrayed the most impressive fleet the world had ever known.

On 10 April PHELPS received orders to sail for Pearl Harbor for further routing to the Mare Island Navy Yard for an overhaul. She arrived at Pearl Harbor on 19 April and found that her Navy Yard availability had been postponed until the following summer due to lack of material. Navy Yard planners at Pearl Harbor began making repairs to boilers and necessary machinery. Then, with all repairs completed, PHELPS got underway for rehearsal training in the Hawaiian area, on 20 May.

On 29 May PHELPS sailed for Kwajalein where she was to join Task Force 52 for the assault on Saipan, Tinian and Guam. She arrived on 9 June and continued on for Eniwetok the same day. On 11 June PHELPS stood out enroute to Saipan. By 14 June Saipan was sighted and flashes could be seen in the vicinity of the Island. On the following day PHELPS was assigned to a night harrassing group which remained in the transport area overnight.

PHELPS was called on to deliver fire support on 16 June and shortly after delivering the fire, narrowly escaped colliding with USS BIRMINGHAM. With daybreak and the return of the transports to the loading area, PHELPS was again assigned to anti-submarine duty. Later that day a lone Jap survivor, found swimming in the water without the aid of even a lifejacket was picked up and transferred to USS O'HARA.

June 17 found PHELPS delivering fire support again. At 0540 on 18 June PHELPS was suddenly taken under accurate fire by an enemy shore battery. Two direct hits wounded 18 men and there were scattered fires in the wardroom and the number 2 fireroom had been knocked out and abandoned. However, PHELPS was to get even more revenge when the task group commander sent the battleship MARYLAND a message to close the area and fire at short range. The enemy battery was literally obliterated with 16 rounds of 16-inch gunfire from the battleship with PHELPS standing by to watch.

PHELPS then retired to the transport area where she moored to the stern of USS PHAON for repairs. By both ships dropping their anchors, PHELPS remained broadside to the beach and could still give close in fire support even while being repaired. She proved her worth while being repaired by expending 842 rounds of 5-inch ammunition, all to good advantage.

On 21 June an enemy small craft mounting 40 millimeter guns closed PHELPS to 2,000 yards. Several 40 millimeter hits were scored by PHELPS on the enemy. However, there was no doubt about the disposition of the enemy craft when a two gun salvo from PHELPS's five-inch guns made a direct hit.

PHELPS remained on fire support duty until 22 June when she was ordered to escort a group of transports to Pearl Harbor. She arrived on 3 July 1944.

On 6 July PHELPS sailed for San Diego independently and on 8 July a despatch was received directing her alterations and repairs to be made by the Charleston Navy Yard. PHELPS arrived at San Diego on 12 July 1944 and on 18 July sailed for the Canal Zone. Departing from Colon, Canal Zone, on 27 July, she sailed for Charleston, South Carolina where she arrived on 2 August.

On 26 August 1944, Lieutenant Commander Robert B. Erly, USN, relieved Lieutenant Commander Martineau, USN, as commanding officer of PHELPS.

PHELPS remained at Charleston undergoing overhaul and armament alterations until 30 October when she stood out for full power trials. However, the trials were unsuccessful due to boiler deficiencies. She put back into the navy yard that afternoon to install new fuel oil nozzles on her boilers.

On 2 November PHELPS successfully completed her full power runs and began calibrating her compasses. On 7 November the ship put into Norfolk, Virginia where Commander Task Force 60 came aboard to make PHELPS his flagship.

On 11 November PHELPS stood out escorting convoy UGS 60 for Mediterranean ports. The voyage was uneventful except for an emergency appendectomy performed aboard PHELPS. The convoy arrived at Mers-El-Kebir, Algeria on 27 November 1944. Convoy GUS 60 formed and on 2 December PHELPS stood out as screen command ship. The return voyage was uneventful and PHELPS put into the New York Navy Yard for voyage repairs on 21 December 1944.

Rehearsal training off the Rhode Island coast followed after which PHELPS returned to Norfolk. Three more convoy escort voyages to Mediterranean ports followed in 1945. PHELPS returned to New York on 10 June following the third voyage.

The entire month of July was spent undergoing overhaul and armament alterations and August and September was spent in refresher training at Newport, Rhode Island and in training cruiser precommissioning details in the use of 5-inch, 38 caliber twin-mount gun crews.

On 29 September PHELPS reported to Commander THIRD Naval District for disposal as directed by the Chief of Naval Operations. On 6 November 1945 USS PHELPS was decommissioned.

USS PHELPS earned twelve Battle Stars on the Asiatic-Pacific Area Service Medal for participating in the following operations:

- 1 Star/Pearl Harbor-Midway -- 7 December 1941
- 1 Star/Pacific Raids -- 1942
  - Air action off Bougainville -- 20 February 1942
  - Salemaua-Lae raid -- 10 March 1942
- 1 Star/Coral Sea -- 4-8 May 1942
- 1 Star/Midway -- 3-6 June 1942
- 1 Star/Guadalcanal-Tulagi landings (including First Savo) --  
7-9 August 1942
- 1 Star/Eastern Solomons (Stewart Island) -- 23-25 August 1942
- 1 Star/Aleutians Operation
  - Attu Occupation -- 11 May to 2 June 1943
- 1 Star/Gilbert Islands Operation -- 20 November to 8 December 1943
- 1 Star/Marshall Islands Operation
  - Occupation of Kwajalein and Majuro Atolls -- 31 January  
to 5 February 1944
  - Occupation of Eniwetok Atoll -- 17 February to 2 March  
1944
  - Mille Atoll -- 18 March 1944
- 1 Star/Asiatic-Pacific Raids -- 1944
  - Palau, Yap, Ulithi, Woleai raid -- 30 March to 1 April  
1944
- 1 Star/Marianas Operation
  - Capture and Occupation of Saipan -- 15 to 22 June 1944
- 1 Star/Antisubmarine assessment, Pacific -- 16 February 1944
- 1 Good Conduct Medal

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#### STATISTICS

LENGTH	381 feet
BEAM	37 feet
SPEED	36 knots
DISPLACEMENT	1,805 tons

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