

# FORGOTTEN WRECKS

## PAINTING THE WAR AT SEA

### HMS Nubian

HMS *Nubian* was a *Tribal* class destroyer, one of twelve such warships built between 1905 and 1908. All twelve *Tribals* saw service in the war, but *Nubian*, part of the Dover Patrol, would see service in more ways than one.

On the night of October 26th 1916, the German Flanders Flotilla despatched a large fleet of torpedo boats to attack the Dover Barrage: an elaborate network of patrol boats, nets and mines that obstructed U-boat access through the Dover Strait.

In the ensuing battle 15 miles east of Dover, a torpedo struck *Nubian* in the bow, blowing off the entire front section of the ship. Incredibly, the stern section remained afloat and was slowly towed back to Dover as the battle raged nearby. Unfortunately, the tows broke and in the morning *Nubian* was washed up under the White Cliffs of Dover.

By a strange coincidence, another *Tribal* class destroyer, HMS *Zulu*, had her stern blown off by a mine the following month. The remains of both vessels were taken to Chatham dockyard, where they were successfully joined together. The resulting ship was commissioned as HMS *Zubian* in June 1917 and went on to sink a U-boat near Dungeness in 1918.



### Indian City

On the 12th March 1915, the U-boat SM U-29 stopped the *Indian City*, a brand new British cargo steamer, 10 miles south of the Isles of Scilly. The submarine commander, Otto Weddigen, hailed the steamer and gave the crew 20 minutes to abandon ship. Once the crew had got clear in the ship's boats, U-29 torpedoed the *Indian City*, which caught fire and sank several hours later.

Weddigen then manoeuvred his U-boat alongside the ship's boats and took them in tow. The captain of *Indian City* was even invited on board the U-boat for a glass of wine, which he accepted! The crew were towed toward the Isles of Scilly and eventually cast off when Royal Navy patrol boats came out of harbour to attack the submarine.

U-29 encountered another two steamers that afternoon. Despite the crew's attempts to escape, the submarine was able to overhaul them and, after allowing the crews time to abandon ship, sink them both.

Despite the dangers to which they had been exposed, Otto Weddigen's gentlemanly conduct in allowing the crews time to abandon ship meant that no lives were lost in any of the sinkings. He and his crew were not quite so lucky though. On the 18th March the U-boat was rammed by HMS *Dreadnought* and Weddigen and his entire crew were lost.



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