

The Boats of the S 30 type (16 in total) were employed from May, 1940 up to May, 1941, in action against the coastal traffic on the south-east coast of England, starting with attacks against the evacuation ships off Dunkirk. Their first success was a torpedo hit on the British destroyer KELLY, at that time the flagship of Captain Lord Louis Mountbatten.

The first boats belonged to the 2nd E-boat flotilla, commanded by Kapitänleutnant Rudolf Petersen, who would rise to the job of Senior Officer E-boats in April, 1942. and keep it up to the war`s end in May, 1945.

Further boats went to the 3rd E-boat flotilla, which became combat ready in the Fall of 1940 and was commanded by Kapitänleutnant Friedrich Kemnade, who would continue his carrer in the Federal German Navy and rise, twenty-five years later, to the rank of Rear Admiral in the NATO command AFNORTH.

The boats operated from IJmuiden, Ostende and Boulogne, and one of these ports is, very probably, the location where the picture was taken. On 15 August, 1940, the explosion of a torpedo depot (sabotage ?) at Ostende damaged several boats and took them out of action for months. From May, 1940 to May, 1941, the boats scored several successes, but two of them were lost to mines. In May, 1941, all boats were transferred to the Baltic to participate in the war against the Soviet Union.

To ease logistic problems, the Admiralty had decided in October 1940 to assemble all boats of S 30 type in the 3rd flotilla. In 1942, the flotilla and its remaining 14 boats went by inland waterways via the Rhine and the Rhone to the Mediterranean where they remained for the duration of the war. As these boats were one meter shorter than the more modern boats of the S 38 type, they were able to pass through the many locks of the Rhine-Rhone-canal.

From 1942 to 1945, eleven boats were lost in the Mediterranean to various causes. After the war the three remaining boats were, being worthless, scuttled off Malta in 1947.

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Sincerely Yours,

Urs Heßling