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Turning the Tide: How a Small Band of Allied Sailors Defeated the U-boats and Won the Battle of the Atlantic

By Ed Offley



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The United States experienced its most harrowing military disaster of World War II not in 1941 at Pearl Harbor but in the period from 1942 to 1943, in Atlantic coastal waters from Newfoundland to the Caribbean. Sinking merchant ships with impunity, German U-boats threatened the lifeline between the United States and Britain, very nearly denying the Allies their springboard onto the European Continent--a loss that would have effectively cost the Allies the war.

In *Turning the Tide*, author Ed Offley tells the gripping story of how, during a twelve-week period in the spring of 1943, a handful of battle-hardened American, British, and Canadian sailors turned the tide in the Atlantic. Using extensive archival research and interviews with key survivors, Offley places the reader at the heart of the most decisive maritime battle of World War II.



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Editorial Review

Review

“Turning the Tide is a dramatic contribution to understanding of a long-running and geographically huge confrontation that may have mattered more to the outcome of World War II than more commented-on campaigns.... As important and engaging as the sweep and generalities of the largest naval campaign in history are, the bulk of this book, and Offley’s signal contribution, is his first-hand, blow-by-blow descriptions of some of the deadliest and most game-changing encounters of the Atlantic war.... Offley skillfully blends history and statistics and analysis as well as heart-pounding narratives of sea-battles that have the immediacy of a good novel, only they tell of real people and real events. *Turning the Tide*...belongs on the bookshelves of professional historians or of general readers attempting to understand a central campaign in the most horrific war in human history.”

Marc Milner, University of New Brunswick, author of *North Atlantic Run* and *The Battle of the Atlantic*

“Offley tackles a complex and difficult campaign spanning months across a vast ocean and involving a myriad of actors, and turns it into a compelling piece of writing. In a field where the outcomes of battles are often treated as mere statistics—of tonnages sunk or shipping safely escorted—or as evidence of the impact of technology, Offley’s Atlantic tale is full of people wrestling with the sea, the enemy and their fate. In the end, *Turning the Tide* captures the human dimension of the crisis of the Atlantic War in the spring of 1943 in a way no one has for nearly forty years. And it is a welcome reminder that the Atlantic war lay at the heart of Allied victory in World War II.”

Kirkus

“Offley meticulously re-creates the terrifying U-boat assaults during this pivotal spring...and explains how the Allies turned the tide of the years-long battle.... An intensely focused account that cuts through the battle’s sprawl and duration, supplying the general reader with an appreciation of its character and importance.”

Sherry Sontag, co-author *Blind Man’s Bluff*

“Through the eyes of their prey, Ed Offley tells the constant terror of German hunter-killer wolf packs going after ships and their military escorts. To win, the allies needed just to survive, to carry desperately needed supplies to Europe. The miracle is these ships do far more. They turn the tide and pummel their tormentors in a moment of history that makes one hell of a story.”

David Poyer, author of *Ghosting* and *The Crisis*

“What’s left to add to the oft-told tale of the Battle of the Atlantic? Ed Offley manages to invest the story of the convoys with renewed drama. Buttressed with statistics and details of tactics and ordnance, *Turning the Tide* is worth a place on the shelf with the best maritime nonfiction.”

Michael Gannon, author of *Operation Drumbeat* and *Black May*

“In this volume the author has selected a series of stories that both explicate and dramatize the most fateful months of the Allied-German battle for control of the North Atlantic in World War II. I am confident that the reader will find, as I did, his stories to be both engagingly written and compelling in effect.”

Washington Times

“Ed Offley presents us with masterly military writing.... Offley, in careful detail that shows his knowledge of the subject, tells how Allied strategists and tacticians devised ways of leveling the playing field.”

Florida Times-Union

“Offley’s story...has all the guts and glory of the best World War II novels. Here, the heroes are real in this most important battle.... From the admirals to the ordinary seamen, Offley gives us the whole story, but he also manages to capture the intimate danger of pushing a small ship through treacherous seas while someone is shooting at you.”

Open Letters Monthly

Publishers Weekly

“The author focuses on individual combatants, from the lowest ranks to the highest, emphasizing the human elements and making for an extremely readable text that should appeal to neophytes as well as professionals.”

Library Journal

“This is an account of the crucial convoy battles of March to May 1943 that saw Allied naval escorts and air power finally subdue the deadly Kriegsmarine subs. Offley...shows how the battle was very much a mind game, each side trying to outfox the other. The author’s emphasis is on the harrowing experiences of the men on both sides.”

Booklist

“This sound, readable WWII naval history focuses on a crucial period of the Battle of the Atlantic, one Offley argues was the turning point in the campaign.... Equally strong in writing, research, and backgrounding, this is a fine addition to material on the epic Battle of the Atlantic.”

Navy News (London)

“*Turning the Tide*...is good narrative history which gives the reader a flavour of what it was like to fight in the Battle of the Atlantic at its climax. It was a struggle of unremitting strain and terror for friend and foe alike.”

Panama City News Herald

Proceedings

“[A] thorough and scrupulous operational history.... *Turning the Tide* ably sketches in the background and then sends the reader out on board two convoys in March 1943.... Offley recounts the struggle of ONS5 meticulously. We follow each merchant vessel and each U-boat and understand what they are up to; but we also get a sense of what it must have been like for the submariner in his dank little world and the watchman

on his sleet-flailed bridge.... [A] valuable book.”

Philadelphia Inquirer

“When we think of World War II, we tend to think of two theaters of war: the European continent and North Africa, and the Pacific.... Far less attention has been paid to a third theater, the brutally cold, gale-slashed North Atlantic, where the British and American navies struggled against German U-boats to protect the supply lifeline that made the eventual Allied victory in Europe possible. Ed Offley’s well researched, tautly written account does its part to even the scales.”

Carl LaVO, author of *Back from the Deep*, *Slade Cutter*, and *The Galloping Ghost*

“Long before there was D-Day, there was D-Day in the North Atlantic Ocean for England. In *Turning the Tide*, Ed Offley delivers the definitive bible of how the Allies in March and May of 1943 turned defeat into victory against an armada of German U-boats determined to strangle resupply lines to England. The book delivers high suspense on the storm-tossed North Atlantic by taking readers inside the U-boats and the Allied convoys as well as American, English and German high commands racing for technological advantage at sea. In the end, Offley’s masterful account not only probes what gave each side an edge but reveals the bravado it took for a rather small group of Allied and German sailors to fight to the death in one of history’s great naval struggles.”

“Ed Offley’s new book *Turning the Tide* is a story few know in the history of World War II. The cat-and-mouse tale played out in the book in dark seas, during treacherous storms has first-hand accounts told by those [who] saw the battles up close and personal with real life-and-death consequences.”

Virginian-Pilot

“[A]s Ed Offley shows in this detailed and compelling book, a combination of technology and tactics enabled the Allies to turn the tide in the longest and most deadly naval battles ever fought.... He brings his naval expertise to bear in describing each side’s actions and perspectives during those pivotal encounters. Moreover, he does a masterful job of detailing the horrors of battle as brave men fought each other with fire and steel and also fought the ferocious and frigid waves in which many of them drowned.”

Virginia Gazette

“[An] excellent new book.... Offley describes in clear and wonderful detail how the Allies did it.... [His] writing is superb, and his research in the text and in the appendices are clear and to the point.”

The American Spectator

About the Author

Ed Offley has been a military reporting specialist since 1981. He has worked for five separate newspapers and online publications. A graduate of the University of Virginia, Offley served in the U.S. Navy during Vietnam. He and his wife, Karen, live in Panama City Beach, Florida.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Laura Burke:

What do you regarding book? It is not important to you? Or just adding material when you really need something to explain what the one you have problem? How about your time? Or are you busy individual? If you don't have spare time to do others business, it is make one feel bored faster. And you have extra time? What did you do? All people has many questions above. They have to answer that question simply because just their can do which. It said that about book. Book is familiar on every person. Yes, it is appropriate. Because start from on kindergarten until university need this Turning the Tide: How a Small Band of Allied Sailors Defeated the U-boats and Won the Battle of the Atlantic to read.

Aaron Thomsen:

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Robert Mangino:

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them household or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity this is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun for yourself. If you enjoy the book that you just read you can spent all day every day to reading a guide. The book Turning the Tide: How a Small Band of Allied Sailors Defeated the U-boats and Won the Battle of the Atlantic it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. In case you did not have enough space to develop this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore quickly to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book offers high quality.

Anna Hart:

What is your hobby? Have you heard in which question when you got college students? We believe that that question was given by teacher to the students. Many kinds of hobby, Every individual has different hobby. And you also know that little person similar to reading or as studying become their hobby. You must know that reading is very important and also book as to be the point. Book is important thing to incorporate you knowledge, except your current teacher or lecturer. You see good news or update in relation to something by book. Different categories of books that can you go onto be your object. One of them is niagra Turning the Tide: How a Small Band of Allied Sailors Defeated the U-boats and Won the Battle of the Atlantic.

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