



# USS *Mosley* (DE-321)

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**DE-321**

**Edsall Class** Destroyer Escort

Displacement: 1,253 tons standard; 1,102 tons full load

Length: 306' oa

Beam: 36'7"

Draft: 10' 5' full load

Machinery: 2-shaft Fairbanks Morse diesels, 6,000 bhp

Range: 10,800 nm at 12 knots

Top Speed: 21 knots

Complement: 186

Armament: 3-3"/50; 2-40mm; 8-20mm; 3-21" torpedo tubes; 2 depth charge tracks; 8 depth charge projectors; 1 hedge hog.

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MOSLEY Walter Harold Mosley, born in Waco, Tex., 17 January 1916, enlisted in the Navy 12 February 1940. Appointed an aviation cadet 21 June 1940, he completed flight training at Pensacola and was commissioned ensign 11 March 1941. Assigned to Patrol Squadron 22, he was based at Ford Field during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor 7 December. In January 1942, he flew with his squadron to Darwin, Australia, to support the Allied attempt to halt the Japanese advance through Southeast Asia. Based on seaplane tender WILLIAM B. PRESTON (AVD-7), Mosley flew patrols north of Australia into the Java Sea and surrounding waters plotting the movements of the Japanese. As co-pilot of a PBV-5, he departed for a patrol south of Amboina, Moluccas, 19 February. With Lt. Thomas H. Moorner (later admiral and Chief of Naval Operations) as pilot, the patrol plane spotted a merchant ship off Melville Island, Australia, and turned to investigate. About 0920, nine Japanese fighters, part of a 70-plane force en route to bomb Darwin, jumped the PBV. Soon, the plane was in flames, its port engine

out and fuel streaming along the fuselage. Despite the attacking fighters, Lieutenant Moorer and Ensign Mosley skillfully landed the plane. In Lieutenant Moorer's words, Mosley assisted by handling the throttle "although dazed and bleeding profusely from a wound in the head." FLORENCE D., an American merchant ship carrying ammunition to the Philippines, rescued the crew. Later that day, Japanese carrier planes attacked the unarmed ship with 500-pound bombs. Survivors, including Mosley, made Bathurst Island in two lifeboats about midnight, and a RAAF patrol plane spotted them on the 21st. The next morning, HMAS WARRANAMBOOL, an Australian sub-chaser, rescued them and carried them to Darwin 23 February. Early in March, Mosley returned to the United States where he joined VP-44 for operations out of Pearl Harbor. Late in May, he flew search patrols out of Midway in anticipation of an enemy attack. During the first air attack against the island 4 June, Mosley was serving as co-pilot in 44-P-12. His patrolling PBV-5A was attacked by two Japanese seaplanes, and the bomber was shot down in flames. Ensign Mosley was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for "extremely gallant and intrepid conduct" during the air action of 19 February 1942.

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USS MOSLEY (DE-321) was laid down by Consolidated Steel Corp., Orange, Tex., 6 April 1943; launched 26 June 1943; sponsored by Mrs. A. G. Mosley; and commissioned at Orange 30 October 1943, Lt. Comdr. James A. Alger, Jr., USCG, in command. After shakedown off Bermuda, MOSLEY escorted a convoy out of Norfolk, Va., to Texas Gulf ports and back. Thence, on 28 January 1944, she sailed to New York for escort duty with CortDiv 46. Between 31 January and 18 March, she screened a UGS-GUS convoy to north Africa and back; thence, following ASW training off Block Island, she reached Norfolk 1 April for further escort duty.

Three days later, MOSLEY sailed with convoy UGS-38 bound for the Mediterranean. The ships passed Gibraltar 18 April, thence closed the coast of north Africa. As the convoy hugged the Algerian coast 20 April, the ships came under an intensive Luftwaffe attack shortly after 2100. Junkers and Heinkel bombers struck in three waves. The first attack blew the troop-loaded merchantman PAUL HAMILTON out of the water, killing 580 men; the next wave hit two more merchant ships; and the final strike sank screening escort LANSDALE (DD-426) with a single torpedo which split open the unlucky destroyer. MOSLEY laid covering smoke and opened up with anti-air fire during the strikes. Her guns splashed one JU-88 and damaged another German bomber during the first strike. MOSLEY reached Bizerte, Tunisia, 22 April, thence departed 1 May as escort for west-bound GUS-38.

Two days later, the convoy ran into trouble from lurking U-boats. Early on 3 May, MENGES (DE-320), a sister destroyer escort, detected U-371 astern of the convoy. As she closed to attack she was damaged by an acoustic torpedo. The

sub escaped only to be hunted down and destroyed by searching escorts the next day. As the convoy neared Gibraltar early 5 May, a second U-boat, U-967, harassed the screen. A single torpedo fatally damaged destroyer escort FECHTELER (DE-157). MOSLEY, after aiding the search for the elusive sub, rejoined the convoy later that day in the Straits of Gibraltar. She reached New York via Norfolk 22 May. MOSLEY resumed convoy escort duty out of Norfolk 11 June.

During the next 8 months, she completed four round trips to north Africa and back. She made two runs to Bizerte and two to Oran, returning from her final Mediterranean convoy 11 February 1945. After completing availability at New York, she joined a hunter-killer group at New London 23 February. Designated TG 22.14, MOSLEY and sister escorts, PRIDE (DE-323), LOWE (DE-325) and MENGES trained off Block Island before steaming to Casco Bay 4 March. The next day, they sailed to search out and destroy an enemy submarine reported off Newfoundland north of Flemish Cap. They made first contact 13 March and during the next 5 days, carried out persistent search and destroy operations. On 18 March, in waters west of treacherous Sable Island, day-long hedgehog and depth charge attacks brought "air bubbles, wreckage, and large quantities of oil" to the surface. A violent underwater explosion at 1622 marked the end of U-866, and the hunter-killer group returned to Casco Bay 20 March.

MOSLEY resumed ASW patrols in the Gulf of Maine 24 March; thence, until 4 April she searched the stormy North Atlantic south and west of Flemish Cap. On 10 April, TG 22.14 rendezvoused at sea with a hunter-killer group built around escort carrier MISSION BAY (CVE-59) and began barrier patrols along the 30th meridian north of latitude 48d 30m. One of four CVE-DE groups, MISSION BAY and her escorts comprised the northern force of the First Barrier Force. Divided into two barrier forces, the hunter-killer group formed two lines of defense against a harassing blitz by German snorkel submarines dubbed Group "Seewo1f." Between 10 and 16 April, MOSLEY carried out 10-mile patrols in her assigned barrier station.

During the night of 15 and 16 April, escorts to the south of her blasted U-1235 and U-880 in heavy seas. Her war diary on 16 April at 0200 noted: "Lots of fun going on in southern part of barrier." That evening the barrier patrol shifted westward to the 38th meridian and MOSLEY resumed patrols across the 45th parallel. Late on the 21st, MOSLEY, in company with LOWE and J. R. Y. BLAKELY (DE-140) made radar contact with a surfaced submarine, probably U-805. The contact disappeared at a range of 9,100 yards, and MOSLEY closed for attack. Bucking "short and steep" seas, MOSLEY fired hedgehogs, but without effect. The three escorts continued hedgehog and creeper attacks against the deep-running submarine. Shortly after 0200 on 22 April, soundmen detected underwater explosions which were probably evasive tactics of the U-boat. At about the same time as MOSLEY first made contact, destroyer escorts CARTER

(DE-112) and NEAL A. SCOTT (DE-769) attacked and sank U-518 some 100 miles southward along the barrier.

The hunter-killer group returned to Argentia 27 April for replenishment; thence, MOSLEY resumed surface barrier patrols 2 May. She was patrolling the North Atlantic about 300 miles south of Cape Race, Newfoundland, as President Truman announced the German surrender 8 May. She returned to New York 14 May where she remained until 16 June, "removing the stains of North Atlantic duty." She sailed to Port Everglades, Fla., and on 25 June began duty with the Atlantic Fleet's Antisubmarine Development Detachment. She carried out ASW test and development exercises with submarines and other escorts until 7 September. After completing overhaul at Charleston, she steamed to Green Cove Springs, 3 November. MOSLEY decommissioned at Green Cove Springs 15 March 1946 and entered the Atlantic Reserve Fleet.

MOSLEY received two battle stars for World War II service.

Stricken from the Navy Register on 2 January 1971, MOSLEY was sold for scrap on 22 August 1973.

From the *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, (1969) Vol. 4, pp.441-442.

