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NINE TIMES ROUND THE WORLD

H.M.S. FORESTER has just completed 200,000 miles' steaming since the beginning of the war. She claims to be the first destroyer to reach this remarkable total, equal to nine times round the world.

Her achievements include a share in sinking the second U-boat of the war in September 1939. To her credit there is also one U-boat probably damaged in the same month and another sunk in June, 1941.

She has served in the Mediterranean and in the Arctic, taking convoys to Malta and to Russia. Only once have her engines stopped at sea, and that was due to enemy action when she received a hit in the boiler rooms. In spite of escaping steam and damaged machinery, the engine-room staff got the destroyer moving again in forty minutes. In this action her Commanding Officer was killed, so the First Lieutenant took over, and brought the ship safely home. He was awarded a D.S.O.

The FORESTER has had her share of bad weather, and in her log-book is recorded a roll of forty-eight degrees. Her ship's company thought she was about to turn turtle, but she recovered.

Her officers estimated that on several occasions in the Arctic there has been as much as 100 tons of ice on the upper deck. Guns were covered with ice, and ropes were frozen solid. The Commanding Officer says that even his beard was frozen. As fast as the ice was hacked from the deck it formed again.

In one gale off Iceland, men working aft were trapped in the after compartments, while those forward were caught there. For 24 hours the heavy seas breaking over the ship would have made it suicide to go on deck.

Recently H.M.S. FORESTER has been in Russia. While she was there Russians lent skates to her crew and taught them to skate on a frozen lake.

Now H.M.S. FORESTER is at sea again - on to a quarter of a million miles steaming!

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NAVAL AFFAIRS