

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON CLUB TALKS
BEFORE 2330 B.S.T. ON MARCH 30, 1944 (i.e. FOR FRIDAY MORNING PAPERS).
NOT TO BE BROADCAST IN THE MIDNIGHT NEWS OF MARCH 30/31.

THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING
ANY MESSAGES FILLED WITH THE EMBARGO

TRAWLER'S REVENGE

His Majesty's trawler, ST. KILDA, took quick revenge for the deliberate bombing of three British hospital ships, one of which was sunk off the Anzio beachhead.

When the attack developed, the ST. KILDA was about five miles away, escorting a convoy of landing craft. Around her, destroyers were dashing in to the rescue of the helpless Red Cross ships.

One bomb fell within a hundred feet of the trawler, and then an enemy aircraft was seen in the light of the flares. The ST. KILDA's forward gun immediately opened fire - and the aircraft plunged in flames into the sea.

Some days earlier, when the destroyer, H.M.S. JANUS was lost, the ST. KILDA engaged the attacking aircraft. Of that incident, Skipper-Lieutenant R.G. Utting, R.N.R., of Gorleston, Commanding Officer of the trawler, says:

"The JANUS, who was a few hundred yards from us, had broken in two after the bombing. But even while her stern half was sinking, the Oerlikon gunners on it were still firing at the aircraft."

The ANZIO run, on which the ST. KILDA made about twenty trips in the first seven weeks of the campaign, is her second big operation off Italy's western coast. She was 19 days off Salerno during the landings there, sometimes sweeping a mile and a half off shore. She replenished provisions by going alongside cruisers whenever there was a lull in the bigger warships' bombardments.

Once Skipper-Lieutenant Utting sent his boat ashore with four men to collect fruit. While Second-Hand R. Hall, of Hull; Leading-Seaman G. Patterson, of Wallasey; Able-Seaman G. Steers, of London; and Able-Seaman V. Hairsine, of Hull, who comprised the party, were ashore a storm blew up, and for four days they could not return to the ship.

After Leading-Seaman Patterson had had a narrow escape from a German sniper's bullet, they reached the harbour and a trawler came in to take them off to the ship.