



Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

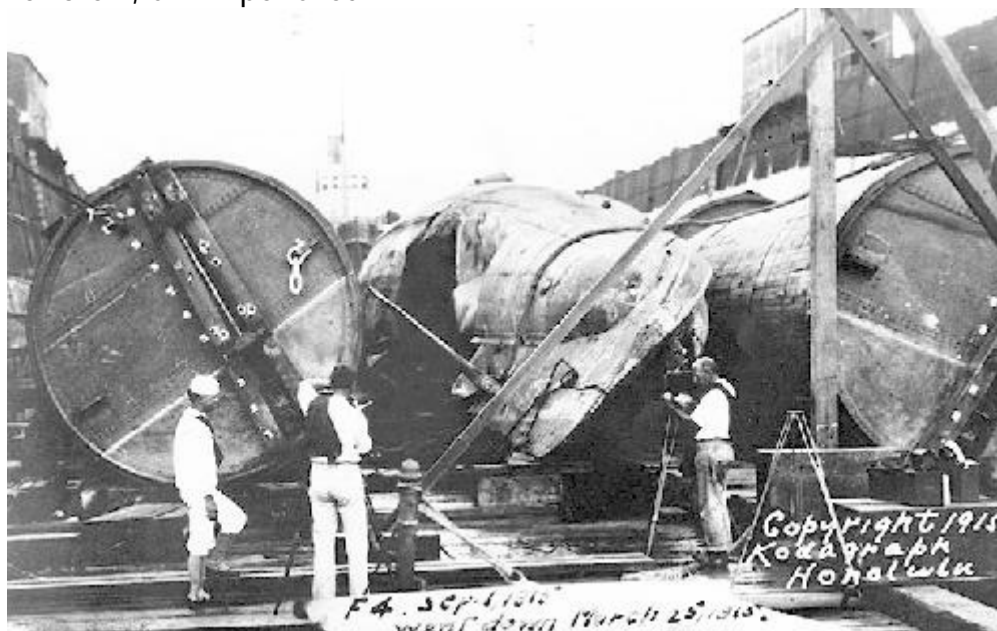
USS F-4 (SS 23)

March 25, 1915 - 21 Men Lost

- Keel laid down by Seattle Construction & Dry Dock Co., Seattle, WA, August 21, 1909;
- Launched: January 6, 1912; Sponsored by Mrs. M.F. Backus;
- Commissioned: May 3, 1913 with Lt Kirkwood H. Donavin in command;
- Lost March 25, 1915 after foundering off Honolulu, Hawaii.

USS F-4 (SS-23) was christened SKATE and was renamed F-4 on 17 November 1911.

Joining the 1st Submarine Group, Pacific Torpedo Flotilla, F-4 participated in the development operations of that group along the west coast, and from August 1914, in Hawaiian waters. During submarine maneuvers off Honolulu on 25 March 1915 she sank in 51 fathoms, 1 1/2 miles from the harbor. Despite valorous efforts of naval authorities at Honolulu to locate the missing boat and save her crew, all 21 perished.

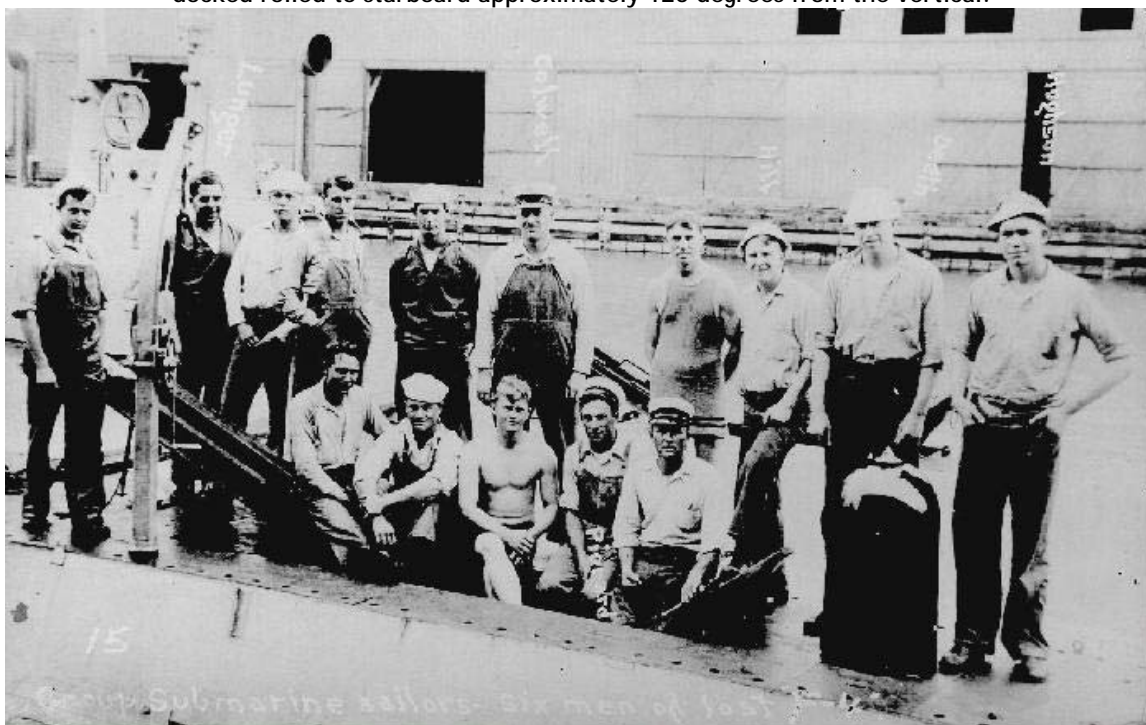


(1) USS F-4 in the Dry Dock. She is resting almost upside down. Note hole in port side of hull caused by implosion by water pressure.

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(2) View of F-4's port side name plate, taken in drydock at Honolulu, Hawaii, circa late August or early September 1915, after she had been raised from over 300 feet of water and towed into port. These figures are mounted on the submarine's port bow, and are shown upside down, as she was dry-docked rolled to starboard approximately 120 degrees from the vertical.



(3) This photo of submarine crews contains six men from the ill-fated USS F-4. The photo appears to have been taken on the deck of an "F" class submarine, possibly the F-1 since she shows an object on her deck like the one in front of George L. Deeth, EM1 second man from right. The weapons loading davit appears to be the same in shape and location as in other "F" class photos. There is another "F" class submarine in the photo just behind the men. Between Chief Colwell and the man in the old fashioned bathing suit can be seen part of a torpedo loading ramp. Behind the head of the second man from left, Archie H. Lunger, GM2, is the forward periscope fairing. The after periscope fairing is behind the man on the far left. The bridge access trunk can be seen between the two periscopes.

Photo taken prior to March 25, 1915.

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(4) Hole in hull is examined. The port bow plane can be seen in the foreground.



A diving and engineering precedent was established with the Navy's raising of the submarine on 29 August 1915. Courage and tenacity marked the efforts of divers who descended to attach cables to tow the boat into shallow water; while ingenuity and engineering skill characterized the direction of Naval Constructor J.A. Furer, Rear Admiral C.B.T. Moore, and Lt C. Smith who accomplished the feat with the aid of specially devised and constructed pontoons.

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Six F-4 Sailors on eternal patrol. Top row: (1) George L. Deeth, EM1 (2) Francis M. Hughson, MM1 (3) Archie H. Lunger, GM2. Bottom row: (1) Frank C. Pierard, GMC (2) Charles H. Wells, MM2 (3) Harley Colwell EMC



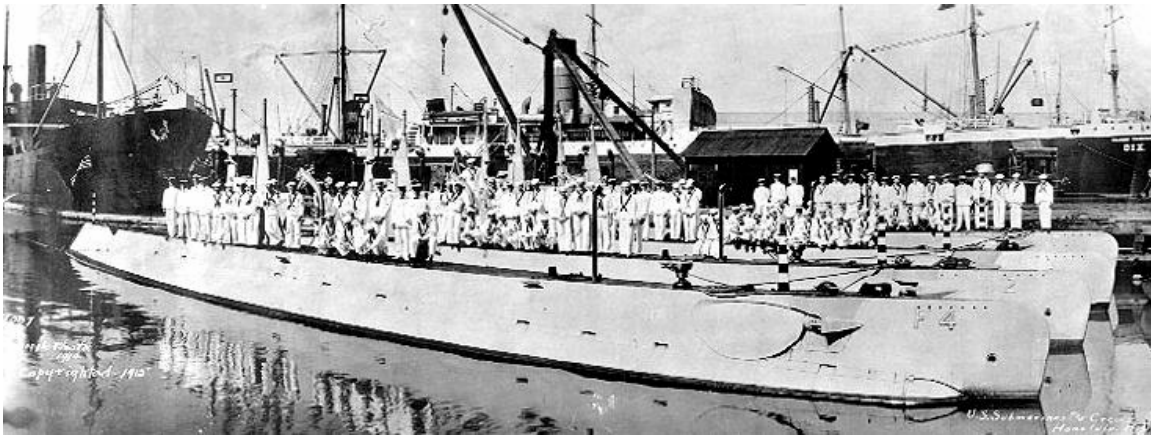
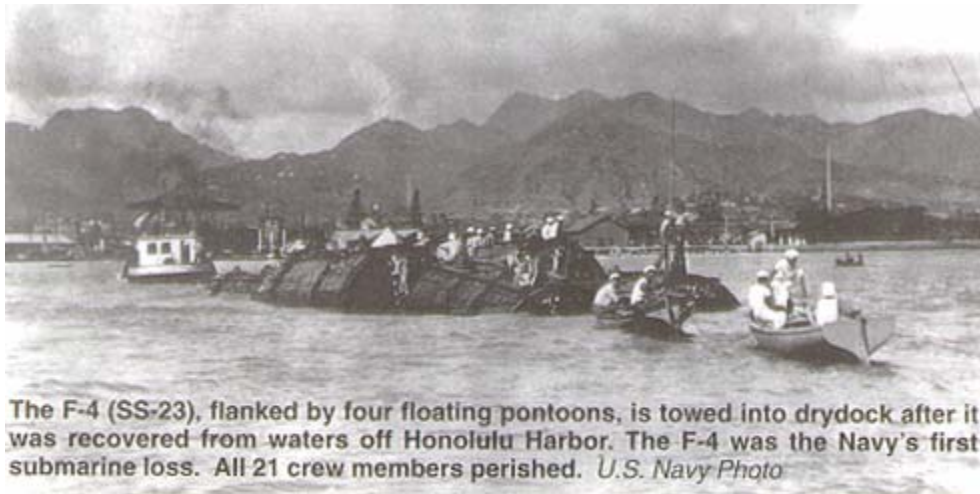
The investigating board subsequently conjectured that corrosion of the lead lining of the battery tank had permitted seepage of sea water into the battery compartment and thereby caused the commanding officer to lose control on a submerged run.

F-4 was struck from the Navy List on 31 August 1915.

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Shipmates on Eternal Patrol in USS F-4 (SS-23):

George T. Ashcroft, GM1 / Clark G. Buck, GM2 / Ernest C. Cauvin, MM2 / Harley Colwell, EMC / Walter F. Covington, MM1 / George L. Deeth, EM1 / Alfred L. Ede, LT(CO) / Frederick Gilman, GM1 / Aliston H. Grindle, EMC / Frank N. Herzog, EM2 / Edwin S. Hill, MM1 / Francis M. Hughson, MM1 / Albert F. Jennie, EM2 / Archie H. Lunger, GM2 / Ivan L. Mahan, MM1 / Horace L. Moore, GM1 / William S. Nelson, MMC / Timothy A. Parker, ENS(XO) / Frank C. Pierard, GMC / Charles H. Wells, MM2 / Henry A. Withers, GM1



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