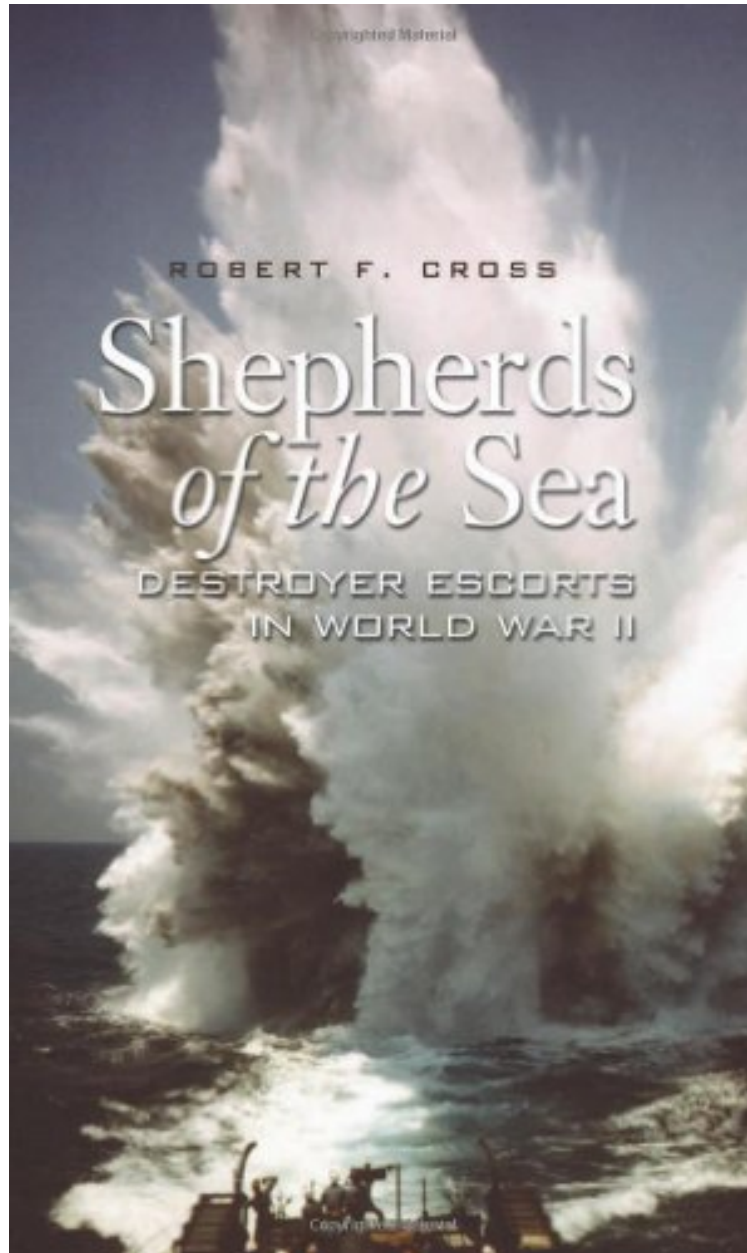


## Shepherds of the Sea: Destroyer Escorts in World War II

*Robert F. Cross*

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**Robert F. Cross : Shepherds of the Sea: Destroyer Escorts in World War II** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shepherds of the Sea: Destroyer Escorts in World War II:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Destroyer Escort WWII History By F. S Virden Robert F. Cross,

SHEPHERDS OF THE SEA--Destroyer Escorts in World War II. Underappreciated by history, hastily designed and built, manned largely by inexperienced young reserve officers and teenaged crews, these small ships became crucial to victory in the Battle of the Atlantic and in the Pacific Theater, where they even took on the world's largest battleship. Robert Cross is an experienced professional writer who currently serves as commissioner of the Port of Albany NY and water commissioner of that city. He also is a trustee of the USS SLATER (DE-766) museum ship, a fully restored WWII DE at Albany, and the only such ship still afloat in the U.S. Mr. Cross compiled his book from numerous personal interviews of and documents from DE veterans, as well as considerable official records and other historical accounts. It is well indexed and annotated. If you want to know what really happened, this is the book for you. Unfortunately, Mr. Cross' work is sullied by numerous technical gaffs, such as "3in 50mm guns" (s/b 3in/50cal) and "Iowa Jima" repeated a number of times. Without the normal space breaks, his narrative shifts from one person or incident to another in breathtaking confusion. He could have used a far more competent editor. Nevertheless, it otherwise reads well and he does progress with some logic through the initial conception, then hiatus, then construction and crew training, to the Atlantic and finally the Pacific--including a number of first-hand accounts. An epilog briefly describes the SLATER museum and its history. If you're a naval history buff, you will enjoy it and overlook its unfortunate faults. Your wife, in all probability, will not be interested. Frank S. Virden, Captain, USN (Ret) Member, Destroyer Escort Sailors Association

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Heroic Shepherds of the Sea: Destroyer Escorts By Dale Boulton The author made the prose come alive with quotes from personnel who were in the middle of the action. The photos interspersed in the writing add to the definition of the destroyer escorts. The DE sailor lived in a dangerous environment in the Atlantic from German U-boat technologies, the Mediterranean Sea from German aircraft bombings including glide bombs, and the Pacific from Japanese Kamikazes and Japanese capital warships. The text is face paced and interspersed with some of the history of the DE. The heroism of the crew of the Samuel B. Roberts against the Japanese fleet off the isle of Samar is nothing short of incredible. Imagine a 1200 ton DE exchanging gunfire with the world's largest battleship at nearly 60,000 tons. That is two 5" 38 caliber guns against nine 18.1 inch guns which could throw a 2500 pound shell over 20 miles. Although the Roberts went down, many of her crew survived the battle and were rescued by US ships with the arrival of Halsey and the 3rd fleet.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. WW II DEs By N. Chandler My dad served on a DE during the war. When he left the ship, the crew presented him with a model of the ship they had made for him and boxed in a diorama. I came across this book while preparing to pass on the model to my son and grandson. It is a wonderful accompanymnet.

This compelling tale of courage, heroism, and terror is told in the words of ninety-one sailors and officers interviewed by the author about their World War II service aboard fifty-six destroyer escorts. They reveal many never-before-told details of life at sea during wartime and, along with information found in secretly kept war diaries and previously unpublished personal photographs, add important dimensions to the official record. Unseasoned teenage recruits when they first went to sea, these sailors were led by inexperienced college boys more accustomed to yachts than warships. Their ships were untested vessels, designed by a man with no formal training in ship design, and which many viewed as a waste of money. Yet, as Cross points out, these men are credited with helping turn the tide of the war in the Atlantic as they singlehandedly sank some seventy U-boats and captured U-505, the only German submarine taken during the war and the first enemy vessel captured by Americans at sea since the War of 1812. In the Pacific, the destroyer escorts fought in every major battle, side-by-side with Allied battleships and destroyers. But this story is not just about battles. It is also about American genius, hard work, honor and growing up in the Great Depression. The author provides eyewitness details about the historic first step taken to end racial discrimination in the military as African-Americans stepped aboard the destroyer escort USS Mason as full-fledged sailors for the first time and earned a Navy commendation of heroism in the Battle of the Atlantic presented to the surviving crewmen fifty-one years later. Readers also learn about an ingenious invention when a sailor breaks his silence about a secret weapon tested aboard his destroyer escort that rendered a new German radio-controlled glide bomb useless.

"Shepherds of the Sea is well researched...this book is recommended to naval historians and to general readers interested in the maritime aspects of World War II." ?Journal of Military History"...The former news correspondent does an excellent job of weaving together the memories of sailors and describing in vivid detail what life was like for small ships in combat." ? International Journal of Maritime History "The first full-scale history of American destroyer escorts...the book itself can and should drop anchor in any World War II naval collection." ? Booklist"Author Robert F. Cross tells their whole story for the first time...this is a well-written and extensively researched book." ? Steamship Historical Society of America"This is the definitive story of the ships and their crew." ? Soundings magazine"Just when it seems that nothing new can be said about World War II, along comes Shepherds of the Sea, Bob Cross's well-told tale of a diminutive but decisive weapon in the naval battle, the Destroyer Escort. Cross's gift is to create a sense of "being there," with the President who first envisioned this vessel and among the young men, often just teenagers, whose first glimpse of the sea was often from the deck of their DEs. A great read and an important chapter in our naval

history. "--Joseph E. Persico, author of *Roosevelt's Secret War*"Robert Cross has brought about nothing less than a moving and thrilling story consistently focused on the people involved and almost miraculously evoking the special character of the destroyer escorts...He has told their stories with eloquence and, sometimes, in graphic detail, portraying the pain, the injury, and yes, the blood and gore that are a necessary part of war. It is a story of the heart and soul of our country and we as its people...and comes at a critical time in U.S. history. "--From the Foreword by Christopher DuPont Roosevelt, Grandson of President Franklin D. Roosevelt"*Shepherds of the Sea* is a wonderful and well-written study of the noble role U.S. Destroyer Escorts played in winning the Second World War. The amount of original research Robert Cross performed is stunning. Highly recommended! "--Douglas Brinkley, Professor of History at Rice University and author of *The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America* "...The former news correspondent does an excellent job of weaving together the memories of sailors and describing in vivid detail what life was like for small ships in combat."*International Journal of Maritime History* "...An informative yet entertaining narrative which is as well connected a patchwork as a fine quilt...will hold the readers attention from start to finish." National Association of Destroyer Veterans