

## USS Gudgeon (SS 211)



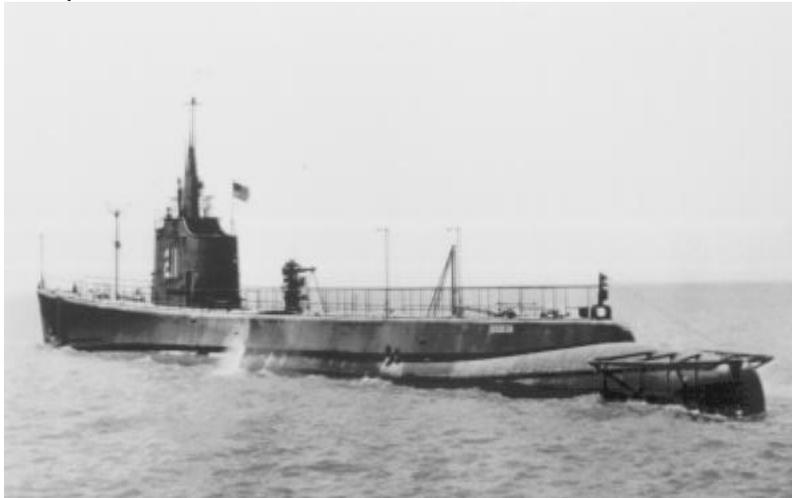
*Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet*

# **USS GUDGEON (SS 211)**

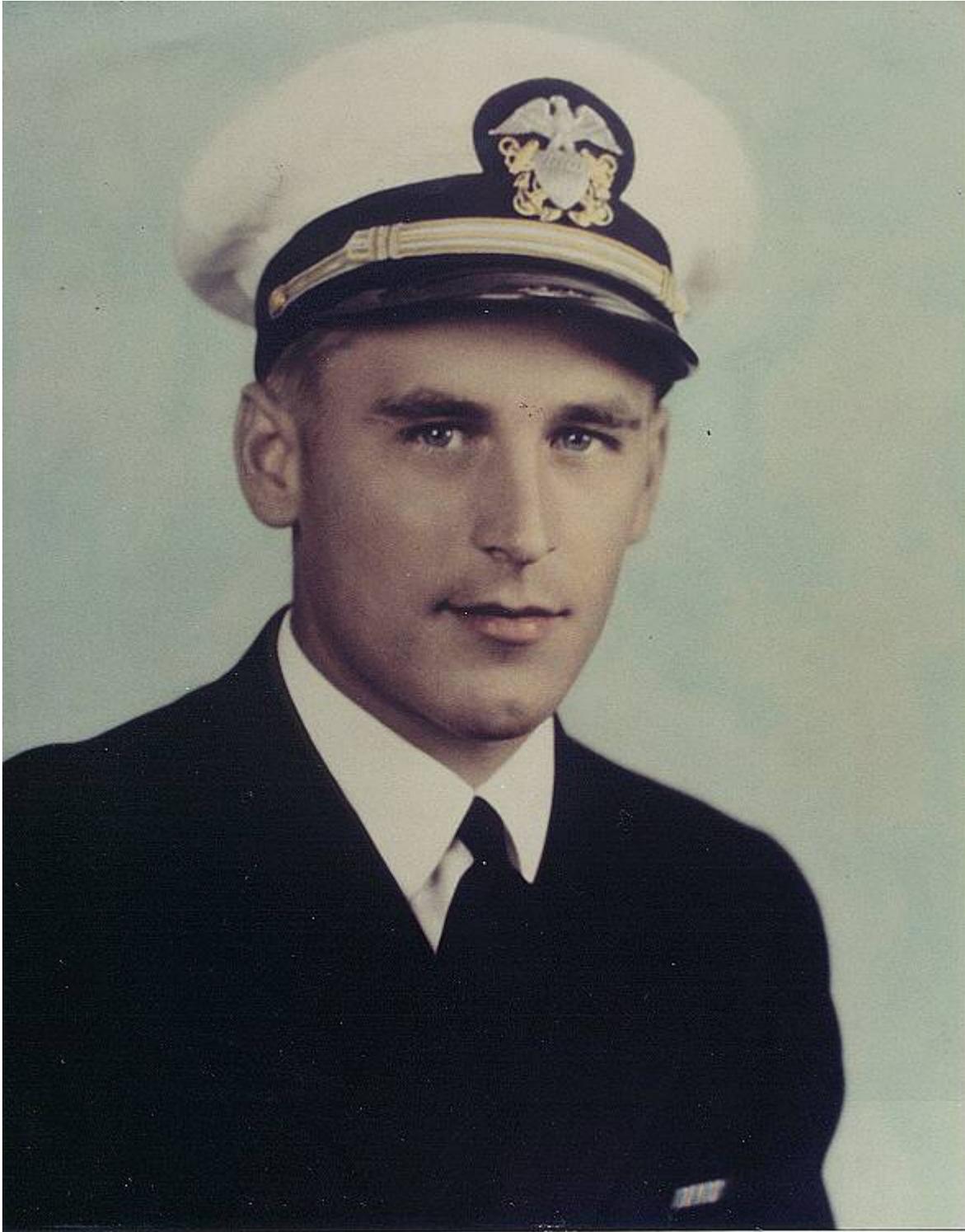
## **June 7, 1944 - 79 Men Lost**

Armed with the pride born of her successes on eleven previous war patrols, GUDGEON, under Lt. Cmdr. R.A. Bonin, sailed from Pearl Harbor on April 4, 1944 to conduct her twelfth patrol in an open area in the northern Marianas. She left Johnston Island on April 7, 1944, after having topped off with fuel, and was never heard from again.

Originally scheduled to leave her area on 16 May, she was ordered on May 11th to depart her area in time to take station for a special assignment. An acknowledgment for this message was required and when none was received, it was asked for again on May 12th. On May 14th, her special assignment was given to another submarine, and GUDGEON was told to return to Midway. She should have arrived at Midway about May 23rd, but failed to do so and on June 7th she was reported as presumed lost.



USS Gudgeon (SS 211)



GUDGEON was assigned to patrol a specific area, but if she arrived earlier than April 22, 1944, she was to patrol an area to the northeast. Using normal cruising speed, she would have arrived in the area assigned about April 16th.

## USS Gudgeon (SS 211)

Assuming that nothing irregular happened en route, she might be expected to have been in the northern area from April 16-22. On April 18th, enemy planes claimed that they dropped bombs on a submarine. "The first bomb hit a bow, the second bomb direct on bridge. The center of the submarine burst open and oil pillars rose." The position given for this attack is 166 miles from "Yuoh" Island. No island approaching the spelling or sound of this word can be found in the Pacific, and it is assumed that a mistake has been made either by the Japanese or in translation of the position. If the island referred to could be Maug, the position given would be in the middle of the area in which GUDGEON should have been at the time specified. The attack described cannot be correlated with any known attack on an U.S. submarine near this time, but it is felt that the possible errors in assuming that this attack sank GUDGEON are too great to list as anything but a possibility.

On May 12, 1944, a number of submarines patrolling the Marianas reported that the enemy engaged in intensive antisubmarine tactics. Early that afternoon, SAND LANCE states, "while patrolling off Saipan looking for convoy, we heard about forty depth charges eight to ten miles away." Later SAND LANCE met three bombs and twenty-one depth charges herself. SILVERSIDES heard both the first attack and the one made on SAND LANCE. TUNNY heard depth charging during the afternoon. No submarine returning from the area reported having been attacked on May 12th but SAND LANCE. Japanese date for the attack give little information save that it was made by planes in cooperation with ships. With so many submarines in the vicinity, and the enemy conscious of their presence, as they undoubtedly were, the attack which was not on SAND LANCE might easily have been on a false contact.

The probability as to the cause for GUDGEON's loss is that she was depth-charged, bombed, or both. The attack on May 12 occurred slightly south of GUDGEON's area, but it was not unusual for submarines to leave their areas temporarily for tactical reason. Since the antisubmarine measures in the Marianas were so intense, it is not unlikely that GUDGEON would be unable to transmit a receipt for the message of May 10th for several days. All of these conclusions are presumptive, and there is a great likelihood that GUDGEON was lost during an unrecorded enemy attack.

During her first eleven patrols, GUDGEON was a most active submarine. She sank 25 ships, for 166,400 tons, and damaged 8 more, for 41,900 tons. She started for the Empire but four days after the attack at Pearl Harbor, and there sank a freighter and a submarine. By sinking the Japanese submarine I-73 on January 27, 1942, GUDGEON became the first United States submarine in history to sink an enemy combatant's ship. She patrolled the South China Sea in her second war run and sank a large freighter-transport and a medium freighter. Her third patrol was as a member of the forces fighting the Battle of Midway. She inflicted no damage in the battle. Passing from Pearl Harbor to Fremantle, Western Australia, for her fourth patrol, GUDGEON patrolled the

## USS Gudgeon (SS 211)

Truk area en route. Here she sank three freighters and a freighter- transport, all of fairly large size. Her fifth patrol was in the Bismarck Archipelago, and resulted in the sinking of three freighters and damage to another.

GUDGEON patrolled Davao Gulf, Ambon Island and Timor Island on her sixth patrol. She made no attacks on this patrol, but did reconnoiter the latter two islands. In the Java Sea and Strait of Makassar on her seventh patrol, GUDGEON sank two tankers and two freighters and damaged a third freighter. Her eighth patrol covered a passage from Fremantle to Pearl Harbor with principal patrol in the Philippine areas. She sank the largest (17,500-ton) transport ship the Japanese had, a small freighter-transport, a trawler, and damaged a freighter. GUDGEON patrolled Saipan and Rota on her ninth run, and sank a freighter and damaged another freighter and patrol craft. The East China Sea north of Formosa was GUDGEON's area during her tenth war patrol. She sank a large transport, a small freighter, and the coastal defense vessel WAKAMIYA on November 23, 1943. She also damaged a large tanker. In the same area for her eleventh patrol, this vessel sank a large transport and a sampan, and damaged a second sampan. GUDGEON was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for the period covering her first eight patrols.

### *Sailors Lost On USS GUDGEON (SS-211) 4-7-1944*

Abbott, O. A. TM3  
Ankeny, W. QM3  
Ball, J. R. S1  
Barrett, M. P. GM3  
Birchfield, B. H. MOMM3  
Blessing, J. H. TM1  
Bonin, R. A. LCDR  
Bossong, J. G. EM2  
Carney, J. R. SM3  
Christian, R. O. TM3  
Coghlan, J. W. S. LTJG  
Collins, R. C. LT  
Copeland, C. B., Jr. EM2  
Crandall, G. E. EM2  
Dickenson, B. W. ENS  
Dodson, E. H. EM3  
Donovan, J. P. TM3  
Evans, J. W. MOMM1  
Everhart, A. R. Y3  
Feikert, W. E. MOMM1  
Fernandez, A. STM2  
Fournier, J. A. EM3  
Garrett, H. O. EM2  
Gaughan, E. C. MOMM2

USS Gudgeon (SS 211)

Hammond, K. L. MOMM3  
Hegerfeld, L. G. TM2  
Henry, W. R. F1  
Hensley, E. C. MOMM2  
Heyes, B. L. LTJG  
Hitt, R. M. GM3  
Hugart, R. E. TM2  
Keller, D. W. RM3  
Keller, N. C. S2  
Kohut, S. CMOMMA  
Krueger, K. P. RM2  
Langdale, L. A. SC2  
Lefferts, G. W., Jr. MOMM3  
Lewis, R. J. S1  
McCorquodale, D. B. LTJG  
McKenna, J. R. TM3  
McLallen, J. W. TM3  
McNicol, W. F. RM3  
Metzger, L. L. TM1  
Midgley, D. R. LT  
Morris, E. MOMM3  
Murphy, W. J. EM3  
Nickel, H. C. MOMM1  
Norris, M. P. EM3  
Orfila, H. F. QM3  
[Ostlund, W. C. LTJG](#)  
Patriquin, H. F. SC2  
Patterson, T. E. CEM  
Pieniadz, F. J. RT2  
[Piller, J. A. S1](#)  
Pinkley, A. D. LTJG  
Powles, J. M. CPHMA  
Remaley, W. D. RM1  
Rice, J. R. TM3  
Sennewald, W. J. MOMM3  
Sewell, M. A. S2  
Shults, L. MOMM2  
Simons, R. P. TM2  
Sponheimer, W. H. S1  
Sullivan, O. J. MOMM1  
Taylor, R. H. F2  
Taylor, S. H. S1  
Thomas, C. F. MOMM3  
Updike, H. E. TM3  
Vance, N. S1  
VanNorden, F. E. EM2

USS Gudgeon (SS 211)

Walker, J. M., Jr. RM2  
Waters, H. A. MOMM2  
Watson, G. J. EM3  
Webster, E. A., Jr. F1  
White, T.J. FC3  
Whitelow, J. MOMM2  
Worthington, W. W., Jr. EM2  
Zimmerman, C. A., Jr. GM3