

TRANSLATION OF G.9X, DAS LEBEN EINES U-BOOTMANNS

(Page 1)

THE LIFE OF A U-BOAT MAN

[Picture of Laboe memorial]

Caption reads:

The Naval Memorial at Laboe near Kiel, in memory of the men of the U-boat Service killed in 1914-1918.

(Pages 2 & 3)

The following is a typical account of the life of a U-boat sailor; short and adventurous.

Picture 1

U-BOAT VOLUNTEERS WANTED

[Picture of a young man in a carpenter's shop reading a copy of *Angriff*]

The carpenter's apprentice, Günther Hartmuth, 18 years old, reads in *Angriff* that the Navy wants volunteers for the U-boat Service. Good pay is promised: RM 140 a month, including undersea and active service allowance.

Picture 2

“THE FÜHRER NEEDS ME”

[Picture of Günther talking to his mother in her kitchen]

Günther: “And you see, Mother, the Führer needs me. Everyone says the Battle of the Atlantic is enormously important. And I can win the U-boat badge and the Iron Cross”.

Picture 3

TRAINING AT THE SCHIFFSST AMMABTEILUNG

(ship's recruitment section)

[Picture of Günther being bullied by the Recruits' Corporal. He is sitting crouched on his steel helmet, on top of his Spind (a tall, narrow wardrobe). The Corporal stands in front of him, leaning forward with his hands on his hips.]

Recruits' Corporal: “Up the trees, you monkeys! The air up there's good for you. I'll get you, you lazy louts!”

Picture 4

AFTER THE FIRST PRACTICE CRUISE IN THE BALTIC

[Picture of Günther in uniform, on the quay being embraced by a girl]

Günther: “I was a bit nervous at first – but everything went fine. It's a grand life!”

Girl: “How nice you look in your new uniform!”

Picture 5

THE FIRST NIGHT IN KIEL – IN AN AIR RAID SHELTER

[Picture of Günther in an air-raid shelter, talking to an elderly workman]

Worker: “They’re going for the Germania-Werft again. Last week they smashed two U-boats in construction... Well, we workers don’t care. We loathe building these swimming coffins for German youth.”

Picture 6

REPORTING FOR SERVICE AT LORIENT

[Picture of Günther saluting his new Commander. The U-boat is under a camouflage net]

Kapitänleutnant: “How much training have you had, Hartmuth?”

Günther: Ten weeks, Kaleunt.

Picture 7

IN THE ATLANTIC

[Picture of Günther being seasick into a bucket strapped round his neck, while a Petty Officer curses him]

Petty Officer: “Another of them who cannot get used to the sea! The devil knows why they are sending us such blasted greenhorns nowadays, and we have got to go into action with things like that!”

Picture 8

AN AMERICAN VICTIM

[Picture of Günther, an officer and another rating in the conning tower of the U-boat, watching men swimming in the water and clambering on a raft. Heavy sea. Sinking merchant vessel in the distance]

Günther: (to the other rating) “Poor devils – pity we can’t pick them up... They’re 700 miles from the American coast.”

Picture 9

SPOTTED BY AN AMERICAN RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT

[Picture of an American observer looking down from a Catalina bomber at a dark cigar-shaped outline]

Observer: “There’s the Jerry! Signal the patrol!”

Picture 10

DEPTH CHARGES

[Picture of the control tower of the U-boat violently canted cover. Engineer Officer reporting to the Commander, who shouts orders]

Engineer Officer: “E-motors dead. Boat falling.”

Commander: “Put on your Davies apparatus! Blow the tanks!”

Picture 11

RAMMED!

[Picture of the U-boat on the surface, being rammed by a destroyer.
The Commander is emerging from the conning tower]

Damaged by depth-charges from the Atlantic Patrol, the U-boat surfaces and is rammed by a British destroyer. Its inner structure is ripped open.

Picture 12

SOME ARE SAVED...

[Picture of the men being picked up by a British ship's boat]

The Commander and a few others, who were in the conning tower, have taken to the water and are picked up by a British rescue boat.

Picture 13

...BUT OTHERS NOT

[Picture of Günther trapped below, with water flooding in]

But Günther and the rest of the crew are caught below. The water pours through the gash and through the conning tower.

Picture 14

FOUR MONTHS LATER – A TELEGRAM

[Picture of a woman holding telegram]

“Günther Hartmuth died the hero's death for Führer and Fatherland, B.d.U.” The German Admiralty has withheld the news for four months.

Picture 15

THE FÜHRER SPEAKS

[Picture of Hitler in the Reichstag, with his mouth wide open, and the
Deputies shooting their arms out in “Sieg Heil”]

On January 30th, 1942, Adolf Hitler boasts in the Reichstag that he will make more and more U-boats, more and more swimming coffins for the young men like Günther Hartmuth.

VOLUNTEERS FORWARD FOR THE U-BOAT SERVICE

The Führer urgently needs volunteers for the U-boat Service.

Reasons why:

- 1) 2,000 German U-boat men are now prisoners of war in England. These men are the lucky survivors. For every two German U-boat men who are rescued and taken prisoner by the British Navy, five men are drowned.
- 2) Because of the shortage of crews, the period of training for U-boat men has been reduced to ten weeks. This is below the minimum necessary for the safety of the boat and crew.
- 3) Today German U-boat crews are therefore largely composed of ill-trained novices. Consequently the rate of German U-boat losses is continually mounting.
- 4) Last spring life insurance companies in neutral countries estimated the average life of a German U-boat sailor on active service at 62 days. The need of replacement was then already urgent.
- 5) Since then, the British and Allied Navies, now reinforced by the American and Russian Navies, have greatly strengthened their methods of U-boat hunting: more destroyers and corvettes, better detection apparatus, more powerful depth charges. The average life of a U-boat sailor is therefore even shorter than it was last spring.
- 6) Hitler, however, promised on January 30th that he would build ever more U-boats. More and more young Germans are therefore urgently needed to man these "swimming coffins", as they are called by the dockyard workers on the Wasserkante.

YOUNG GERMANS
YOUR FÜHRER NEEDS YOU!