

BATTLE OF BELL ISLAND

HOW TWO DARING U-BOAT COMMANDERS DECIDED TO ATTACK THE SHIPS AND VITAL ORE FACILITIES ON THE SMALL BELL ISLAND IN NEWFOUNDLAND. TODAY, MUCH OF THE WRECKAGE IS STILL IN PLACE AND IS A TIME CAPSULE FROM THE TUMULTUOUS TIMES

BY ADAM STANTON



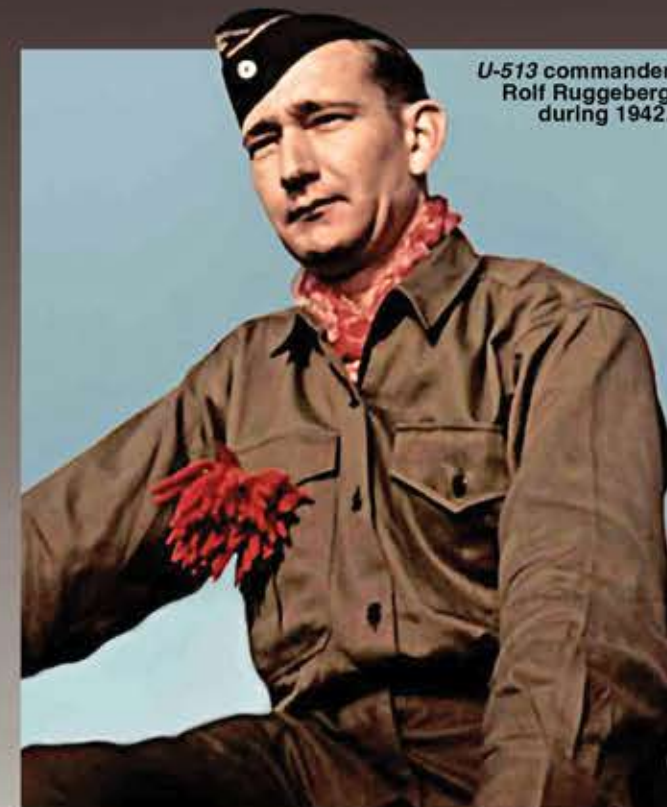
The Viking ship insignia carried by U-513.

A grim smile crossed the face of Rolf Ruggeberg as he stared through the periscope of U-513. The veteran mariner had joined the *Reichsmarine* in 1926 and had held numerous posts including Assistant Naval Attache in Madrid, Spain, and then Acting Naval Attache at Lisbon, Portugal, a position he held until March 1941. However, Rolf wanted something more than the life of embassy parties mixed in with a bit of spying. In April 1941, he decided to join the U-Boat force.

After standard U-Boat training that concluded in August 1941, he went aboard the U-107 as *Kommandantenschuler* (U-Boat commander-in-training). His performance was such that in December 1941, he was sent to *Deutsche Werft AG* in Hamburg for *baubelehrung* (U-Boat construction familiarization) and this meant he would be getting his own boat.

The new vessel was U-513, a Type IXC U-Boat that commissioned on 10 January 1942.

Ruggeberg commenced training in the new submarine as part of the 4th U-Boat Flotilla. Once that was completed on 31 August 1942, she was ready for war and assigned to the 10th U-Boat Flotilla. This unit was founded on 15 January 1942 at Lorient, France, under the command of *Korvettenkapitan*



U-513 commander Rolf Ruggeberg during 1942.



Formation of U-518 and U-180. On 2 November 1942, U-518 would slip into Conception Bay completely undetected and successfully torpedo the *Rose Castle*, the *Scotia* loading pier, and *PLM 27*, a Free French ship. U-518 then sailed out on the surface and headed to Canada to drop off a spy.