



# With Utmost Spirit: Allied Naval Operations in the Mediterranean, 1942-1945

*Tomblin*

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Nineteen months before the D-day invasion of Normandy, Allied assault forces landed in North Africa in Operation TORCH, the first major amphibious operation of the war in Europe. Under the direction of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, AUS, Adm. Andrew B. Cunningham, RN, Admiral H. Kent Hewitt, USN, and others, the Allies kept pressure on the Axis by attacking what Winston Churchill dubbed "the soft underbelly of Europe." The Allies seized the island of Sicily, landed at Salerno and Anzio, and established a presence along the coast of southern France.

*With Utmost Spirit* takes a fresh look at this crucial naval theater of the Second World War. Barbara Brooks Tomblin tells of the U.S. Navy's and the Royal Navy's struggles to wrest control of the Mediterranean Sea from Axis submarines and aircraft, to lift the siege of Malta, and to open a through convoy route to Suez while providing ships, carrier air support, and landing craft for five successful amphibious operations. Examining official action reports, diaries, interviews, and oral histories, Tomblin describes each of these operations in terms of ship to shore movements, air and naval gunfire support, logistics, countermine measures, antisubmarine warfare, and the establishment of ports and training bases in the Mediterranean. Firsthand accounts from the young officers and men who manned the ships provide essential details about Mediterranean operations and draw a vivid picture of the war at sea and off the beaches.

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