

WW1: Was the U-boat a death trap?

Presented by Dr Matthew Seligmann

Step 3: Treacherous tin can: video transcript

Because of the wet weather and the high running seas, the deck hatches were closed most of the time. The diesel engines pumped hot, humid air throughout the boat. Sweat ran down the bulkheads and water leaked around loose rivets.

The drinking water tasted like diesel and every meal the cook cooked had a layer of oil across the top. As we approached the American coast, Captain Koenig ordered the crew to say nothing to anyone about the strains we'd undergone during the trip and to especially avoid mentioning our seasickness.