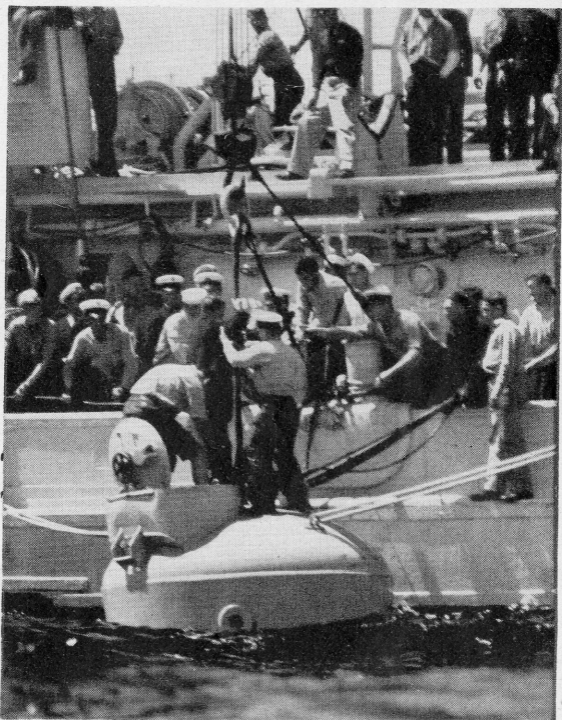


The biggest spot news of last week was, as the biggest news too often is, a disaster. Sunk off Portsmouth, N. H., 240 ft. below the surface, lay the Navy's new submarine *Squalus*. Down with it went 59 men. Up from it came 33 men, miraculously rescued. The other 26 were drowned. Yet, sad as this event was, it gave America reason to be proud. To pride in human heroism was added pride in the 9-ton steel diving bell, developed with care and foresight by the U. S. Navy, which accomplished the rescue at a record depth. Without this product of American resource and ingenuity, the men saved from the *Squalus* might still be lying in its sunken black hull.

On May 23, early in the morning, the *Squalus* slid out to sea to test fast dives. She dived once and did not come up. What apparently happened was that, through some mischance, the induction valve which sucked in surface air for ventilation and engine use did not close. Water poured into the aft compartments. Brave work shut the forward sections off and kept water from flooding the whole hull.

Nosing down, the *Squalus* settled in sticky blue mud. She sent up a smoke bomb. A sister submarine sighted it. Immediately the whole efforts of the Navy and the eyes of the country were focused on this spot. The weather was ominous but by noon next day the sky cleared. Through the night the men below lay cold and fearful with the faint smell of deadly chlorine tickling their throats. By morning, the *Falcon* carrying the rescue bell on its aft deck, anchored above the *Squalus* (see opposite page). Divers [dropped overboard. The rescue bell followed. In the murk below, it was fastened to the submarine's escape hatch and the men climbed up into it.

It took four trips and 13 hours before the bell brought up the last survivor. President Roosevelt spoke for the nation when he exclaimed: "A great job!" Even the German press called the rescue "one of the most inspiring actions of the American Navy." With the praise of America in its ears, the Navy settled down to the delicate job of raising the *Squalus* and the 26 who still remained in its flooded hull.



RESCUE BELL BRINGS UP FIRST SURVIVORS

*Life Magazine, 1939*