

The Philadelphia Experiment: A Ship Outside Its Logbook

STR-SECRET-005 / REV A / 2026.09.08

A destroyer supposedly vanished and crossed miles in an instant. The Philadelphia Experiment legend collides with a less spectacular but unusually useful witness: the ship's surviving wartime movements and records.

STATUS	Naval legend unsupported by ship records
CLASSIFICATION	STR
MATERIAL	Philadelphia and Norfolk, United States
DISPOSITION	PUBLIC / SOURCED STORY
CATEGORY	Strange Files
RECORD TYPE	Secrets & conspiracies
STORY HISTORY	Alleged 1943; story circulated from the 1950s

THE ACCOUNT

The story gives USS Eldridge an impossible assignment: disappear in Philadelphia, materialize in Norfolk, and return bearing terrible consequences for its crew. Its familiar shape emerged through correspondence sent to UFO writer Morris K. Jessup after his 1955 book. The correspondent, using the name Carlos Allende, claimed to have witnessed the experiment. A secret wartime technology and an alleged eyewitness gave the account the ingredients of a maritime nightmare.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

Naval historians searched for supporting records and reviewed Eldridge's deck log and war diary. The recorded itinerary does not support the alleged episode. The Navy also distinguishes the legend from degaussing, a real technique that reduces a ship's magnetic signature to help protect it from mines. Magnetic concealment is not optical invisibility, and no verified naval teleportation experiment emerges from these records.

WHY IT STAYS WITH US

The most effective ingredient is the slip between two meanings of invisible. A technical defense against a sensor becomes the disappearance of an entire vessel. The legend invites a listener to look beyond the official logbook; the logbook invites that listener to ask when and where the extraordinary event could actually have taken place.

WHERE THIS TELLING COMES FROM

Philadelphia Experiment

Naval History and Heritage Command

<https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/p/philadelphia-experiment.html>

Philadelphia Experiment: Office of Naval Research Information Sheet

Office of Naval Research

<https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/p/philadelphia-experiment/philadelphia-experiment-onr-info-sheet.html>

RETURN TO THE STORY

The Philadelphia Experiment: A Ship Outside Its Logbook

Visit the record for its illustrations and further reading.

<https://u225x.com/record/STR-SECRET-005>