

ARMED GUARD UNIT  
S. S. ABBOT L. MILLS  
ARMED GUARD CENTER (ATLANTIC)  
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

12 January 1945

CONFIDENTIAL

From: ERICKSON, Carl Edward, 317348, D-L, USNR.,  
Commanding Officer, Naval Armed Guard.  
(c/o Armed Guard Center Atlantic)  
S. S. ABBOT L. MILLS Gross tons: 7176

To: The Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

Via: The Port Director, Marseilles, France.

Subject: Report of Voyage, S. S. ABBOT L. MILLS  
From Oran, North Africa, to Marseilles, France.

Reference: (a) General Instructions for Commanding Officers  
of Naval Armed Guards on Merchant Vessels, Paragraph  
4301.

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following information  
is submitted.

(a) Type of vessel: Steam Screw. Type of Cargo: ammunition,  
Grenades, Smoke Flares,  
Trucks, Mail.  
Owner of vessel: U.S.A. War Shipping Administration.  
Chartered to: Coastwise Pacific Far East Lines. Ralph  
Leman Master.

(b) Port of Departure: Oran, North Africa, 8 January 1945.  
Port of Arrival: Marseilles, France 12 January 1945.  
Convoyed or Independent: Convoyed 8 January 1945 to  
0530 11 January 1945. Independent 0530 11 January  
1945 to 12 January 1945.  
Speed (Average) in Convoy 9.0  
Number of Ships in Convoy 16  
Number of escort vessels or aircraft:  
F/S COMMANDANT BORY (SO), AND F/S

(c) Contacts and action with enemy: None.

*Lgm*

(d) General resume of the voyage: All Navy hands manned their Battle Stations at dawn and dusk during the entire voyage. All ships burned side lights and fore steaming light at full brilliance until reaching 42 degrees north, while in convoy.

9 January 1945 1000 Target Practice was held and all guns were fired. This ship has a reduced gun crew, therefore, the merchant crew manned most of the guns and did a creditable job.

10 January 1945 Sea beginning to get rough.

11 January 1945 0520 Commodore signalled with lights, red, green, red for ships bound for Toulon to break off. There was not a complete understanding as to what the signal meant. 0530 convoy separated, traveled independently from that point. Due to heavy weather had to hove to all day, sea quieted down in the night.

12 January 1945 0800 found ourself to be in Golfe De Fos, turned around and headed for Marseilles, France.

This is the second convoy this ship has left since 11 December 1944.

(e) Did not unload any cargo at Oran, North Africa, therefore no report of port Facilities. Arrived at Oran, North Africa 5 January 1945, anchored outside breakwater until 8 January 1945 awaiting convoy to France.

(f) The commercial radio operators appeared to carry out wartime instructions for merchant vessels and kept all intercepted messages confidential. Radio silence was broken once while traveling independently. All encoding and decoding of messages was done by the master and the gunnery officer.

Radio silence was broken 11 January 1945 1705 Sent a coded message to FUC giving name, bearing, distance from X and requested instruction.

(g) The following defects and deficiencies were brought to the attention of the port director Norfolk, Va. but due to lack of time were not repaired.

Damaged splinter on bow 3"50.

Smoke Floats racks all damaged unable to carry floats.

(h) The master and officers of the ship carried out Wartime Instructions for United States Merchant Vessels. Blackout regulations were strictly observed, bilges and waste materials were emptied at nightfall, routing instructions were obeyed as sea permitted, codes and signals were kept as classified, etc.

(i) Recommendations: Portable pump supplied all ships for emergency purposes.

(j) There was no improper procedure on the part of friendly aircraft approaching the convoy.

(k) Training at sea: Lectures have been given on the following subjects: Orientation, Small Arms Instructions, Articles for the Government of the Navy, Abandon Ship, Liberty Instruction, Venereal (Health) Cargo Pilferage, Censorship, First Aid, Safety Precautions, Gas Mask Drills, Life Jackets, Recognition. This ship is operating with a reduced gun crew.

TO: (1) This report is forwarded from abroad.  
FROM: COMMANDING OFFICER, U. S. NAVAL DEPARTMENT

U. S. NAVAL DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

*Carl E. Erickson*  
Carl E. Erickson  
Ensign, D-L USNR

TO: (5) COMMANDING OFFICER (UNCLASSIFIED)  
FROM: THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
U. S. NAVAL DEPARTMENT

U. S. NAVAL DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

TO: (1) COMMANDING OFFICER, U. S. NAVAL DEPARTMENT  
FROM: THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
U. S. NAVAL DEPARTMENT

U. S. NAVAL DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

1st Endorsement

U. S. NAVY PORT OFFICE, MARSEILLE, FRANCE.  
16 January 1945

From: U. S. Navy Port Officer.  
To: The Chief of Naval Operations.  
Via: (1) Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval Detachment.  
(2) Commander EIGHTH Fleet (USNAVPOMED)

1. Forwarded.
2. Condition I properly observed and indicated in log.
3. With reference to sub-paragraph (g), a survey was made of the repairs requested but it was not possible to take action on them due to lack of sufficient time and facilities. The Armed Guard Officer was directed to bring these items to the attention of the proper authorities upon the vessel's return to a U. S. Port.

*Thomas C. Platt*

THOMAS C. PLATT,  
Lieut., USNR.

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2nd Endorsement

U. S. NAVAL DETACHMENT, MARSEILLE, FRANCE.  
16 January 1945

From: Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval Detachment.  
To: (1) The Chief of Naval Operations.  
Via: Commander EIGHTH Fleet (USNAVPOMED).

1. Forwarded.

*R. E. Carr*  
R. E. CARR,  
Comdr., USNR

JAN 26 1945

3rd ENDORSEMENT

FROM: COMNAVNAW  
TO: CNO

1. FORWARDED.

*W. E. G. Erskine*  
W. E. G. ERSKINE

By Direction



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