

From: Ensign Lee D. Rishel DV(S) USNR
Commanding Officer, Naval Armed Guard
(c/o Armed Guard Center, Brooklyn, N.Y.)
S.S. Abel Parker Upshur Gross tons 7177

To: The Vice Chief of Naval Operations

Via: The Port Director Third Naval District

Subject: Report of Voyage S.S. Abel Parker Upshur
From Liverpool, England to New York, N.Y.

Reference: (a) General Instructions for Commanding Officers of Naval
Armed Guards on Merchant Ships, 1943 Third Edition, par 4301

Enclosure: (A)

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

(a) Type of Vessel - Cargo, Type of Cargo - Empty
Owner of Vessel - War Shipping Administration
Chartered to International Freighting Corporation

(b) Port of Departure Liverpool England, 29, March 1944

Convoyed

Speed (average)

No. of ships in convoy 60 or 61

No. of escort vessels or aircraft 7 escorts and 3 aircraft carriers

Port of arrival New York, N.Y. Date: April 16, 1944

(c) Our departure from Liverpool docks was uneventful and weather conditions were ideal.

At 1905 on 4, April 1944 a signal was received from the commodore that enemy submarines were reported in the area of latitude 46° 30' N and Longitude 24° 13' W. Immediately we secured from Condition III and set Condition II. We secured from same at 2000 and reset Condition III., but whole crew was ready for immediate action.

At 0600 on 5, April 1944 the Commodore sent up a signal for a 45 degree Emergency Turn to port and same was executed. At 0630 a 45 degree Emergency Turn was made to starboard, these turns were made at Latitude 45 degrees 12 minutes N. and Long. 25 degrees 28 minutes W. Something was detected by the escorts out ahead of the convoy explaining reason for afore mentioned Emergency Turns. While these turns were being made we were standing our Dawn Watch in Condition I.

On 10, April 1944 at about 0530 two escort planes from the carriers in the convoy shot at something in the water about 5000 yards off our port bow. Immediately we set Condition I. At 0700 we secured from Condition I and set Condition II. No further action on the part of the escort planes was assumed.

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to their office. They left the ship about 1200 and that was
the
At about 1600 on 10, April 1944 our escort dropped eight
depth charges between a hundred and three hundred yards on our
port and starboard bows, Lat. 41 degrees 55 minutes N. Long.
47 degrees 16 minutes W. Condition I was immediately set and
stood until 1800 when we secured from same and set Condition
II. We did not secure from same until 0800 11, April 1944.
No further action occurred after the dropping of the depth charges.

- (d) Nothing of an unusual nature took place during our voyage.
Some very rough weather was encountered at times making it necessary to move our bow watch back to the flying bridge. Daily Sea Routine was carried out in every respect and Progress Tests were given practically every afternoon and evening. I have six men who have been to sea for at least six months and they never completed their Seamen First Tests, All of them are now completing same. The new men that came aboard in New York and had never been to sea have completed their work. One Seaman l/c completed work for Gunners Mate 3/c and one Seaman l/c completed work for Coxswain.

Our average speed was below that set for the convoy as a whole, but weather conditions would not permit a better average.

We did not Zig Zag but if Commodore had ordered same I know our Master would have carried out the instructions verbatim.

- (e) No comment

- (f) Commercial radio operators carried out the wartime radio instructions for merchant vessels in every respect

- (g) Upon reaching Liverpool England 21, March 1944, I submitted a voyage report covering the first leg of our trip. In said report I called to the attention of the Port Naval Liaison Officer the fact that we could not train the 3"50 bow gun aboard our ship the S.S. Abel Parker Upshur. In said report I informed him of what we had done in an effort to rectify condition and what I thought should be done before the gun would again operate effectively.

One week later on Monday 27, March 1944, two men from D.E.M.S. came to look at the gun and agreed that what I had recommended in my report should be done. They said however they were not permitted to do the work but that it would require another group who had the contract to lift guns. I had also reported the firing circuits were not working on either of our broadside guns and they said that another group who had the contract to do that type of work would have to make the repairs.

I reported the whole matter to Lieut. Joggersnot in the Port Director's Office and was told that D.E.M.S. had assured him that the necessary repairs would be made before we sailed.

On Tuesday 28, March 1944, the same two D.E.M.S. men came again and waited all morning for their officer to come and examine the gun. Finally at noon a Chief P.O. and told them to return

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to their office. They left the ship about 1430 and that was the last I saw of them. The 3"50 gun was not repaired nor were the firing circuits on either of the broadside guns fixed.

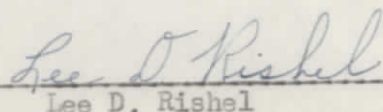
Again I reported the matter to the Port Director's Office, but nothing was done that day. The next day, Wednesday 29, March 1944, before the conference I was told by Lieut. Joggers- not that D.E.M.S. specifically told him the gun would be repaired, nothing was done.

Each day at sea I had the gun captain in charge of the 3"50 gun try to train same but he was not successful in moving same until the morning of 9, April 1944. For three days and nights we had very rough weather and especially on the night of 8 April 1944. I believe whatever was stuck or jammed was jarred loose by the violent rolling and pitching of the ship.

I would appreciate if you would have said gun lifted and a complete examination made of the roller bearings. I would also appreciate your having the firing circuits checked on both broadside guns.

During firing practice for the A.A. guns a barrel was split on #2 - 20 MM. There was no tampion in the gun because I saw the gunner check the bore of same with a ram rod before firing. A replacement barrel will be appreciated.

- (h) Master and Officers of the ship carried out Wartime Instructions for United States Merchant Vessels.
- (i) Have the United States Navy do its own repair work to armament aboard merchant ships in foreign ports.
- (j) No comment.



Lee D. Rishel