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SERIAL PDNYF 017021

1st Endorsement
17 Battery Place, New York, N.Y.
14 February 1944.

From: The Port Director, Third Naval District.
To: The Chief of Naval Operations.

Subj: Voyage Report of SS ABEL PARKER UPSHUR.

1. Forwarded.
2. All repairs necessary in Paragraph G, will be effected.

F. G. REINICKE

BY

Paterson Bond



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Room 2055

17 FEB 1944

ROUTE No. 23

Op File No. (SC) AH-3

Doc. No.

Copy No. 1 of 1

3295-254

*abel Parker
Upshur*

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gpr

7177

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UNITED STATES NAVY
Armed Guard Detachment
s. s. Abel Parker Upshur

11 February 1944

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FROM: Lt.(jg), Edward R. GOLOB, Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval
Armed Guard Detachment, (c/o Armed Guard Center, Brooklyn,
N. Y.); s.s. Abel Parker Upshur (Gross Tons 7177).
TO: The Chief of Naval Operations.
VIA: The Port Director, New York, N. Y.
SUBJECT: Report of Voyage Inward, s.s. Abel Parker Upshur (Gross Tons
7177), from LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND, to NEW YORK, N. Y.
REFERENCE: (a) Paragraph 4301, pages 44-45; General Instructions for
Commanding Officers of Naval Armed Guards on Merchant Ships,
1943, 3rd ed.
(b) Armed Guard Bulletin 11-43.

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following information
is submitted for the inward passage. A report of the outward passage was
made to the U. S. Naval Liaison Office, in Liverpool, England, on 6 Jan-
uary 1944.

(a) Name and Class: s.s. Abel Parker Upshur.
Type: - - - - Liberty.
Tonnage: - - - Gross, 7177; Net 4375.
Cargo: - - - - River Sand Ballast.
Owner: - - - - International Freighting Corp., Inc.
Charter: - - - United States Lines.

(b) Port of Departure: Liverpool, England, 24 January 1944.
Arrived New York, N. Y. 11 February 1944; a total of 3,566 knots at an
average speed of 8.10 knots per hour.

Away from the dock - W. Alexandria - Liverpool, England, at
1400 on 22 January 1944 on way to anchorage where convoy was forming.
Did not get to anchorage but anchored inside lock to Mersey river overnight.
At 0900 on 23 January started through lock into the river Mersey when at
0910 were in receipt of radio message to our convoy, "STOP repeat STOP".
We proceeded to the anchorage and dropped anchor with the other ships of
our convoy. At 1106 on 24 January 1944 we received another radio message
to the convoy, "PROCEED repeat PROCEED". In the mean time, before this
last message, we had received a message to the convoy that the Vice Commo-
dore should take charge. We weighed anchor immediatel upon receipt of the
"proceed" message; sailing in convoy. Sea was very rough causing the con-
voy to be poorly organized for two days. In view of the rough sea, and re-
sulting inability of the Liberty ships to take it, laboring hard and engines
racing, several had to drop out of convoy for minor repairs. Ours was one of
these. On two separate days - 25th and 27th of January - we had to drop out
to repair our steering gear telemotor, the damage being caused by the pound-

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ing from the sea as a result of the speed ordered by the Commodore. However, we were able to remain with the convoy until the night of 1 February 1944, when, because of the rough sea and a gale of wind, we could not maintain the course. Several ships around us were showing their NOT UNDER COMMAND lights and were falling astern. At 2130 we had to show our NOT UNDER COMMAND lights and became separated from the convoy. That night and next day we had to heave to several times. However, we kept coming back onto the course and attempting to make the various rendezvous and finally sighted the convoy again - what was left of it - at 0530 on 5 February 1944, having been a straggler for three and one-half days. Originally, we had counted 61 ships and five escort vessels and when we rejoined the convoy we could count only 48 ships and five escort vessels. Since that date and time we have continued with the convoy.

(c) There were no contacts with the enemy. However, on 28 January 1944 we received a signal that submarines of the enemy were known to be in the vicinity. This was at 1025. At 1330 two Liberators flew over the convoy and at 1345 we received the signal "Submarine Sunk". On the 29 January 1944 at 1730 we again received the signal "Enemy submarines known to be in the vicinity" but nothing further. Then on 8 February 1944 at 1830 two snowflakes were fired by the escort off our Port bow and at 1835 four more were fired off our Port beam. From the light of the flares we saw three escort vessels circling over a spot dropping astern as we went ahead and at 1900 we heard and felt a depth charge far astern. Guns had been manned during this incident. The next morning, 9 February 1944, all the escorts were back on their regular stations until 0915 when the escort ahead on our starboard bow let go two depth charges and started down through the convoy. At about 0930 it let go a pattern of four depth charges. This last was only about one point forward of the beam. About one-half hour several patterns of depth charges were let go at about the same spot as the earlier ones but this was now astern of the convoy.

(d) None except as ordered by the Commodore or in the interests of the safety of the ship.

(e) No delay but facilities for discharging the cargo was awkward and inconvenient. Grain elevator barge broke down frequently.

(f) Radio Operator carries out Wartime Instructions.

(g) The efficiency of the work of the Signalmen could be greatly improved with several alterations to the present arrangement of their equipment. The flag bag should be relocated from its present position to a spot outside the railing of the Flying Bridge next to #4 20MM gun. The areials should be removed from their present positions because they interfere with the hoisting and lowering of the signal flags when there is a breeze and cut the flags to bits if they have to be let flying any length of time. Flags also wrap themselves around these wires so that much time

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is lost breaking them lose. On this trip alone two sets of flags were worn out as a result of this hard use. We also need another large signal light and a new shutter for the old signal light. The need for another signal light is in the interest of the safety of the signalman and to increase the efficiency of their work as well as to prevent the possibility of being without a large signal light. Under the present arrangements it is necessary to carry the large signal light from one side of the Flying Bridge to the other which is difficult under favorable conditions because of the weight of the light but is dangerous when the ship is rolling. Once the signalman hurt himself when the roll of the ship threw him while he was carrying the light and to protect the light he let it fall on himself. The other bad feature is that it is located on the railing of the wings of the Flying Bridge causing the signalman to climb the rail and hang over it while signaling. Also the railings of the bridge should be covered with canvas to give some protection from the weather and wind. We should also like to raise the question of having a yardarm placed on the mainmast for signaling purposes. The shoring up angle irons in the 3" magazine should be moved out an inch or two so that the ammunition can be properly secured. A new top is needed on the 3" Port Ready Box because of a hole in the top of it from rust.

(h) To the best of my knowledge and belief, the Master and Officers have carried out the Wartime Instructions.

(i) None.

(j) None.

Edward A. Golob