

UNITED STATES NAVY
Armed Guard Detachment
S. S. Abel Parker Upshur
London, England

CONFIDENTIAL

August 17, 1943.

FROM: The Commanding Officer, Armed Guard Unit, S.S. Abel Parker
Upshur.
TO: The Vice Chief of Naval Operations.
VIA: U. S. Naval Liaison Officer.
SUBJECT: Voyage Report - S.S. Abel Parker Upshur
REFERENCE: Paragraph 4301, pp. 44-45; General Instructions for Com-
manding Officers of Naval Armed Guards on Merchant Ships,
1943.

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following voyage report
is submitted:

(a) Name: S.S. Abel Parker Upshur.
Type: Liberty.
Tonnage: Gross, 7177; Net, 4375.
Cargo: General with 1200 tons of ammunition.
Owner: International Freighting Company.
Charter: United States Lines.

(b) Port of Departure: New York City.

Date " " : July 23, 1943; sailing in Convoy.
There were approximately seventy-five (75) ships in the convoy with about
six (6) escort vessels. It was a ten (10) knot convoy. Kept convoy
station until July 30, 1943, at 0335 when engines were slowed down be-
cause tubes were leaking in one of the boilers and it could not be used.
Ship could only make seven to eight (7-8) knots on one boiler. At 0445
sent signal to Commodore explaining our trouble and that repairs could be
made by 0600 next morning. At this time we were falling astern of the con-
voy and changed our course to 045 degrees which was the Stragglers route.
Immediately increased Armed Guard lookout to Condition II.

At 0830 Corvette K-182 signaled: "From Commodore, 'If un-
able to keep up with Convoy and unable to make immediate repairs, proceed
to St. John's, Newfoundland.'" At 0835 we altered our course at 50° 44' N
and 41° 40' W from 045 to 241.5, proceeding to St. John's, Newfoundland.
At 1215 four motored plane circled ship several times dropping an unidenti-
fied object 400 yards off starboard bow and then proceeded East in direc-
tion of Convoy. At 1505 another plane circled us twice dropping two objects
and proceeded Eastward.

Boiler repaired and cut in at 1625. Full speed ahead
ordered. The next day, July 31, 1943, at 1730, the fuel oil line broke and
engines were stopped. Repairs completed and engine turning over at 1810.

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Voyage Report - S. S. Abel Parker Upshur; continued

Ship arrived at Pilot Station outside St. John's Harbor August 1, 1943, at 0648; passed through Nets at 0855; De Gaussing shut off at 0900, and at anchorage.

August 2, 1943, at 0930, contacted U. S. Naval Liaison Officer making request for D.E.M.S. officer to check armament. D.E.M.S. men came aboard to repair 5" 51 gun Gas Ejector Hose and boresight it and the 3" 50 gun.

Had not been advised of Convoy Conference here and therefore did not attend. Departed from St. John's, Newfoundland, at 1955, one of a three ship, eight knot convoy, with a Corvette and an Off Shore Tug as escorts to join Convoy from New York City. This convoy was sighted on August 5, 1943, at 1955. We joined it taking convoy station 56. August 8, 1943 the Commodore ordered us to take station 45 and on August 10, 1943, station 23. Our Port of Destination was changed from Liverpool to London, England.

August 9, 1943, at 2000 received signal; "Enemy submarines known to be in this vicinity."

August 11, 1943, at 1440 broke off from main convoy and changed course to 053. At 1600 sighted ships in the distance and at 2150 received signal to form behind them for Loch Ewe, Scotland, where we arrived August 12, 1943, at 1200. At 0500, August 13, set sail from Loch Ewe, Scotland for Methil, Scotland, in convoy, arriving August 14, at 1840. At 1000, August 15, went ashore with the Master to attend the Convoy Conference. Departed in seven and one-half knot convoy from Methil, Scotland, at 1630, August 15. At 1900 RAF staged a dummy torpedo attack on our convoy. Arrived at our port of destination, London, England, August 17, 1943.

(d) Voyage in all respects seemed to be satisfactory. Ship always maintained the various courses and speeds of the convoy and kept convoy station well. No lights were shown except when authorized.

The only factor to mar the voyage was the high strung attitude of the Captain with regard to Naval personnel. He expected and demanded the impossible of them. In turn he was very considerate of his own men. He wanted the guns fully manned twenty-four hours a day. I explained that my men also needed rest and refused to maintain a continuous Condition I watch. Condition I watches were set at Twilight and Dawn and Condition II while a straggler, also when we had received signal of enemy submarines in vicinity and from Methil, Scotland to London, England as approved by the Commodore at the convoy conference.

The Master also ordered Lawrence Robert Clark, 602-87-33 Sl/c(SM), V-6, USNR off the Bridge and replaced him with a Cadet. His reason was that he was generally unsatisfactory and talked back. I was present during the last of these incidents and can say for Clark that he did not talk back but was attempting to give the Master an explanation of why he had not come down to the Wheel House immediately when told to look up a signal that had already been understood, namely that he was executing the hoist and stowing the flags. The Master considered this "cheek" and told