

CONFIDENTIAL

SEPT. 9, 1944.

FROM: LT. (JG) MERLE JAMES GRAHAM, USNR.  
COMMANDING OFFICER, NAVAL ARMED GUARD.  
(C/O ARMED GUARD CENTER, S. BROOKLYN, N.Y.)  
S.S. ABEL STEARNS, GROSS TONS 7176, J.J. BROWNE, MASTER.

TO: THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS.

VIA: THE PORT DIRECTOR, NEW YORK N.Y.

SUBJECT: REPORT OF THE VOYAGE S.S. ABEL STEARNS FROM NAPLES, ITALY  
TO LEGHORN, ITALY VIA PIAMBINO, ITALY AND RETURN.

REFERENCE: (a) GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMMANDING OFFICERS OF NAVAL  
ARMED GUARDS ON MERCHANT SHIPS, PARAG. 4301 THRU 4308.

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFERENCE (a) THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION  
IS SUBMITTED:

- (A) TYPE OF VESSEL: FREIGHTER (LIBERTY)  
TYPE OF CARGO: ARMY GENERAL AND ARMY PERSONNEL.  
OWNER OF VESSEL: U.S. WAR SHIPPING ADMINISTRATION  
CHARTERED TO A.H. BULL & CO. OPERATORS
- (B) PORT OF DEPARTURE: NAPLES, ITALY.  
DATE: AUGUST 31, 1944.  
CONVOYED  
SPEED (AVERAGE) 9 KNOTS  
ARRIVED PIAMBINO, ITALY 1345 SEPT. 1, 1944.  
DEPARTED PIAMBINO, ITALY 0658 SEPT. 2, 1944.  
CONVOYED  
SPEED (AVERAGE) 9 KNOTS  
ARRIVED LEGHORN, ITALY 1300 SEPT. 2, 1944.  
DEPARTED LEGHORN, ITALY 0745 SEPT. 7, 1944.  
CONVOYED AS FAR AS PIAMBINO AND FROM THERE TRAVELED INDEPENDENTLY.  
SPEED (AVERAGE) 10 KNOTS.  
ARRIVED NAPLES, ITALY 1230 SEPT. 8, 1944.
- NUMBER OF SHIPS IN CONVOY: OUT OF NAPLES #5  
OUT OF PIAMBINO #2  
OUT OF LEGHORN #1

NUMBER OF ESCORT VESSELS: OUT OF NAPLES #2  
OUT OF PIAMBINO #1  
OUT OF LEGHORN #1  
OUT OF PIAMBIANO #0

- (C) THIS VESSEL HAD NO CONTACT NOR ACTION WITH THE ENEMY.
- (D) THE VOYAGE WAS ROUTINE THROUGHOUT.
- (E) THE CARGO WAS EFFECIENTLY HANDLED BY SOLDIERS OF THE 480TH PORT BATTALION UNDER COMMAND OF LT. VENSKE.
- (F) THE MERCHANT RADIO OPERATORS APPEARED TO CARRY OUT WARTIME RADIO INSTRUCTIONS PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO KEEPING INTERCEPTED MESSAGES CONFIDENTIAL.
- (G) THERE ARE NO DEFECTS IN ARMAMENT OR EQUIPMENT REQUIRING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.
- (H) THE MASTER AND OFFICERS OF THE SHIP WERE DILIGENT ABOUT CARRYING OUT " WARTIME INSTRUCTIONS FOR U.S. MERCHANT SHIPS".
- (I) THERE ARE NO RECOMMENDATIONS.
- (J) NO IMPROPER PROCEU RE ON THE PART OF FRIENDLY AIRCRAFT APPROACHING THIS VESSEL WAS NOTED.
- (K) WHILE AT SEA AND IN PORT FREQUENT GUN DRILLS WERE HELD AS WELL AS A DAILY CLASS IN SIGNALING AND ~~FIRST~~ SEAMENSHIP. SMALL ARMS INSTRUCTION AND PRACTICE ARE CONDUCTED WHENEVER CONDITIONS PERMIT.

*Merle J. Graham*  
MERLE J. GRAHAM  
LT. (JG) D-V(S) USNR.