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JULY, 28, 1944.

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

TO: THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

VIA: THE NAVAL PORT OFFICER, NAPLES, ITALY.

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

REFERENCE: (a) GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMMANDING OFFICERS OF NAVAL  
 ARMED GUARDS ON MERCHANT SHIPS, PARAG. 4301 TO 4307.

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

- (A) TYPE OF VESSEL: FREIGHTER (LIBERTY)  
 TYPE OF CARGO: AMMUNITION AND ARMY GENERAL  
 OWNER OF VESSEL: U.S. WAR SHIPPING ADMINISTRATION  
 CHARTERED TO: A.H. BULL & CO., OPERATORS
- (B) PORT OF DEPARTURE: NAPLES, ITALY.  
 DATE: JULY, 3, 1944.  
 CONVOYED.  
 SPEED (AVERAGE) 9 KNOTS.  
 ARRIVED CIVITAVECCHIA, ITALY. JULY, 4, 1944.  
 LEFT CIVITAVECCHIA, ITALY JULY, 6, 1944.  
 CONVOYED.  
 SPEED (AVERAGE) 9.5 KNOTS  
 ARRIVED PIAMBINO, ITALY. 2200 JULY, 6, 1944.  
 DEPARTED PIAMBINO, ITALY. 0700 JULY, 12, 1944.  
 CONVOYED.  
 SPEED (AVERAGE) 10 KNOTS  
 ARRIVED CIVITAVECCHIA, ITALY 1630 JULY 12, 1944.  
 LEFT CIVITAVECCHIA, ITALY. 1900 JULY, 13, 1944.  
 CONVOYED.  
 SPEED (AVERAGE) 8 KNOTS.  
 ARRIVED, NAPLES, ITALY. 1700 JULY, 14, 1944.

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NUMBER OF SHIPS IN CONVOY: OUT OF NAPLES \* 5  
OUT OF CIVITAVECCHIA \* 4  
OUT OF PIAMBINO \* 2  
OUT OF CIVITAVECCHIA \* 9

NUMBER OF ESCORT VESSELS: OUT OF NAPLES \* 3  
OUT OF CIVITAVECCHIA \* 3  
OUT OF PIAMBINO \* 2  
OUT OF CIVITAVECCHIA \* 2

INTERMITTENT AIR COVERAGE DURING ENTIRE VOYAGE.

- (C) THIS VESSEL HAD NO CONTACT NOR ACTION WITH THE ENEMY.
- (D) THE VOYAGE WAS ROUTINE THROUGHOUT. VESSEL ZIG ZAGED WHEN INSTRUCTED.
- (E) THE CARGO WAS VERY EFFICIENTLY HANDLED BY SOLDIERS OF THE 384TH PORT BATTALION CO. D UNDER THE COMMAND OF CAPT. HARPER AND LT. GOODSPEED.
- (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 PROCEDURE 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 SIGNAL CLASS FOR ALL HANDS AND A WEEKLY CLASS ON SEAMAN FIRST CLASS REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL SEAMEN FIRST PROBATIONARY. ALL SI/C P ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE ONE PROGRESS TEST WEEKLY. SMALL AFMS INSTRUCTION AND PRACTICE IS HELD WHENEVER CONDITIONS PERMIT.

*Merle J. Graham*  
MERLE J. GRAHAM,  
LT. (JG) D-V(S) U.S.N.R.  
ARMED GUARD COMMANDER