

CONFIDENTIAL

File
MAY 21, 1944

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 LIAISON OFFICER, BIZERTE, TUNISIA.

SUBJECT: REPORT OF VOYAGE, S.S. ABEL STEARNS FROM NAPLES, ITALY TO
BIZERTE, TUNISIA VIA PORT AGUSTA, SICILY.

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

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

(A) TYPE OF VESSEL: FREIGHTER (LIBERTY)
TYPE OF CARGO: FLATTING, AMMUNITION
OWNER OF VESSEL: U.S. WAR SHIPPING ADMINISTRATION
CHARTERED TO: A.H. BULL & CO., OPERATORS

(B) PORT OF DEPARTURE: NAPLES, ITALY.
DATE: MAY 17, 1944.
CONVOYED.
SPEED (AVERAGE) : 8 KNOTS
ARRIVED PORT AGUSTA, SICILY. MAY 18, 1944.
LEFT PORT AGUSTA, SICILY. MAY 19, 1944.
CONVOYED.
SPEED (AVERAGE) : 7 1/2 KNOTS.
ARRIVED BIZERTE, TUNISIA. MAY 21, 1944.

NUMBER OF SHIPS IN CONVOY: OUT OF NAPLES * 36
OUT OF AGUSTA * 40
JOINED ENROUTE BY APPROXIMATELY * 30

NUMBER OF ESCORT VESSELS: OUT OF NAPLES * 5
OUT OF AGUSTA * 5 MOST SEEN
AT ANY ONE TIME.

INTERMITTENT AIR COVERAGE DURING ENTIRE VOYAGE.

LWR

PORT OF ARRIVAL: BIZERTE, TUNISIA. MAY 21, 1944.

- (C) THIS VESSEL HAD NO CONTACT NOR ACTION WITH THE ENEMY.
- (D) THE VOYAGE WAS ROUTINE THROUGHOUT.
- (E) THERE WAS NO DELAY IN PORT. UNLOADING WAS CONDUCTED IN AN EFFICIENT MANNER.
- (F) THE MERCHANT RADIO OPERATORS APPEARED TO CARRY OUT WARTIME RADIO INSTRUCTIONS PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO KEEPING INTERCEPTED MESSAGES CONFIDENTIAL.
- (G) DEFECTS IN ARMAMENT AND EQUIPMENT WERE FULLY REPORTED IN VOYAGE REPORT FILED WITH NAVAL LIAISON OFFICER NAPLES, ITALY MAY 8, 1944.
- (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.

M. J. Graham

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

U. S. NAVY PORT OFFICER
BIZERTE, TUNISIA

23 May 1944

FIRST ENDORSEMENT

From: U. S. Navy Port Officer.
To: The Chief of Naval Operations.
Via: Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Northwest African Waters.

1. Forwarded.

2. Commanding Officer of Armed Guard unit stated that the defects noted in item (g) of basic report were of a structural nature and could only be corrected in a United States port. There was no impairment of the fire power of the armament aboard the vessel.

James M. Henderson
JAMES M. HENDERSON

Second **MAY 29 1944**
ENDORSEMENT
FROM: COMNAVNAW
TO: CNO
1. FORWARDED
H.P. Swanton
H.P. SWANTON
By Direction

RECEIVED S-C FILES
Room 2055

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Date: 8 JUN 1944
File No. (36) *44-31461-10*
No. *1 of 2*
419 No. *05596*