

OCTOBER 22, 1943

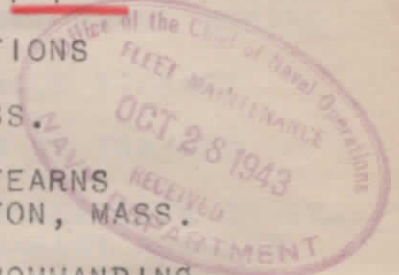
FROM: ENSIGN EDWIN ANTHONY GEHRING, U.S.N.R.,
COMMANDING OFFICER, NAVAL ARMED GUARD,
(C/O ARMED GUARD CENTER, BROOKLYN, N.Y.)
S.S. ABEL STEARNS, GROSS TONS 7176

TO: THE VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

VIA: THE PORT DIRECTOR, BOSTON, MASS.

SUBJECT: REPORT OF VOYAGE, S.S. ABEL STEARNS
FROM GLASGOW, SCOTLAND TO BOSTON, MASS.

REFERENCE: (A) GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMMANDING
OFFICERS OF NAVAL ARMED GUARDS ON MERCHANT
SHIPS, 1943, PARAGRAPH 4301.



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

(A) TYPE OF VESSEL: FREIGHTER (LIBERTY)
TYPE OF CARGO: BALLAST
OWNER OF VESSEL: U.S. WAR SHIPPING ADMINISTRATION
CHARTERED TO: OPERATORS - A.H. BULL & CO.
GENERAL AGENTS - U.S. LINES
SUB-AGENTS - ANCHOR LINE

(B) PORT OF DEPARTURE: GLASGOW, SCOTLAND
DATE: OCTOBER 5, 1943
CONVOYED

SPEED (AVERAGE) - 8 1/2 KNOTS

NUMBER OF SHIPS IN ESCORT: MOST SEEN AT ANY
TIME - 9, 2 TUGS,
RESCUE SHIP.

PATROL AIRCRAFT SEEN
ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

NUMBER OF SHIPS IN CONVOY: 77 ACCORDING TO
CRUISING PLAN

PORT OF ARRIVAL: BOSTON, MASS.

DATE OF ARRIVAL: OCTOBER 22, 1943

(C) THIS VESSEL HAD NO CONTACT NOR ACTION WITH THE ENEMY.

(D) THE VOYAGE WAS ROUTINE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE FOLLOWING:

1) STORM, OCTOBER 7 TO 14; SEAS REACHED MOUNTAINOUS HEIGHT, WIND 70 TO 75 KNOTS; SHIP PITCHED AND ROLLED TO EXTREME; DECK PLATES CRACKED IN THREE PLACES (TO PRESENT KNOWLEDGE); VIBRATION OF SCREW OUT OF WATER SPLIT BASE OF 4"50 READY BOX, GALE RUINED ALL GUN COVERS.

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(E) THE COMMERCIAL RADIO OPERATOR APPEARED TO CARRY OUT WARTIME RADIO INSTRUCTIONS FOR MERCHANT VESSELS, PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO KEEPING INTERCEPTED MESSAGES CONFIDENTIAL.

(F) 1. VENTILATION OF THE FORWARD MAGAZINE IS INADEQUATE TO KEEP THE TEMPERATURE WITHIN A SAFE RANGE DURING WARM WEATHER.

2. QUARTERS, LOCKERS AND ESPECIALLY STORAGE SPACE ARE CROWDED.

3. FOUR OF THE OERLIKON GUNS CAN BE TRAINED ON PARTS OF THE SHIP.

4. STOPS ON THE 3"50 GUN PREVENT ADEQUATE COVERAGE OF THE AIR (DEPRESSION RAILS WOULD CORRECT NUMBERS 3 AND 4).

5. THE ARMED GUARD PERSONNEL DOES NOT INCLUDE A RADIOMAN. ADEQUATE RADIO COVERAGE BY THE COMMERCIAL RADIO OPERATOR IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT.

6. THE INBOARD READY SERVICE BOXES AT NUMBER 3 AND 4 OERLIKON GUNS ARE SITUATED SO CLOSE TO "MONKEY ISLAND" THAT THEY SERIOUSLY INTERFERE WITH THE PASSAGE OF THE MATES AND CAPTAIN ACROSS THE UPPER BRIDGE.

7. THE NEED IS FEELT FOR A LOCKER FOR SIGNALING EQUIPMENT (E.G. ALDIS AND MULTI-PURPOSE KIT) ON THE UPPER BRIDGE. ALSO THERE IS NO PYROTECHNIC LOCKER ABOARD.

8. TWO TARGET PRACTICE ROCKETS (RECEIVED IN GLASGOW FROM D.E.M.S. ON OCTOBER 1, 1943) WERE FIRED AS TESTS; THE FIRST STRUCK THE WATER IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE SHIP'S SIDE; THE SECOND CROSSED THE SHIP OVER NUMBER FOUR HATCH AND STRUCK THE WATER IMMEDIATELY ON THE OTHER SIDE.

(G) THE MASTER AND OFFICERS OF THE SHIP CARRIED OUT "WARTIME INSTRUCTIONS FOR UNITED STATES MERCHANT SHIPS". BLACKOUT REGULATIONS WERE RIGIDLY OBSERVED.

RECEIVED SC FILES

Room 2055

27 OCT 1943

ROUTE TO: 23

Op File No. (SC) 443/abel

Edwin A. Gehring

EDWIN A. GEHRING,
ENSIGN, U.S.N.R.
ARMED GUARD COMMANDER

for you 8. LSCC Lgm

QS ABEL STRAUS No.
ND1/PD (LAK:mas) No. 1 of 1
FIRST ENDORSEMENT
PRN 723192

Headquarters, First Naval District
150 Causeway Street, Boston, Mass.
25 October 1943.

From: The Port Director, N.T.S., Boston, Mass.
To: The Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

1. Forwarded.
2. Necessary action will be taken on item (F).

M. Milne

M. MILNE
Captain, USN(Ret.)