

## UNUSUAL REMARKS

S.S. ALASKAN 11-28-42

Seabury Cook, Second Mate.

Rigging Of Lifeboat- November 30. Day starts with light rain--general southeast breeze. We rigged a sail using a section of boat covering and two oars lashed together for a mast. Two lifeboat oars were used for a boom and another oar for a gaff. Rigging was fabricated by using the lifeboat painters. At noon made sail on general westerly course in an endeavor to reach the Northern coast of South America or Trinidad. Continued on this course until 2:30 A.M. January 4th, at which time made a landing which proved to be a mangrove swamp. This spot was so mosquito ridden and desolate that we clawed off and put to sea, up the coast to the northwest. The following morning at dawn, a village was sighted, and the lifeboats stood about one half mile off shore. No boats came out to question us until a fishing boat came alongside about 10:30. The bottom was so muddy as to prevent anyone going ashore until this fishing boat took the captain and the naval gunnery officer to land. The city proved to be Cayenne, French Guiana.

No. 4 lifeboat hung up in the davits--apparently the gripe fouled and could not be cleared. No.4 was lowered into the water, but the gripe capsized it. When an attempt to salvage it was made, it would found to be leaking badly, and that some of the air tanks had broken loose. This leak is believed to have been caused by the shock of the torpedo fire.

No. 3 Lifeboat.- No, the operation of salvaging No. 3 lifeboat was a very difficult job. There was a donut raft attached to No. 3 when we were tied up to her. The life rafts started to sink the morning of the second day so we knew that we must salvage No. 3 to save our lives. We forced the donut end--her stern as deeply as possible lashed it in place while two men on No. 2 raft hove around on the stern painter, and when her gunwale cleared the surface two men broke off from the operation of adjusting the donut, and by dint of arduous bailing with the sea anchor and the pith helmet managed inspite of frequent wind and rain storms to get her gunwale above water after which all hands jumped in and bailed with shoes, hats, anything available until she was well out of water. A few rivet holes where the grab rail had carried away were plugged with wooden plugs, and the boat rendered completely water-tight and serviceable.