

eight feet long in the boats; various light wood about six inches wide.

"Q. How thick?

"A. Anywhere from a half inch to three-quarters. If we had those we could have made a little flooring for the injured men. Wouldn't be any extra weight in the boat. If we didn't need them we could throw them overboard. We could have made a platform for them to lay on make it more comfortable. As it was we had to improvise one, make the best we could, make a little platform in the bow, tie their feet up. The man was injured, had a broken leg.

"Q. If you were provided with them how would you place them in the boat?

"A. Fore and aft.

"Q. What would you use for supports?

"A. I would use the thwarts of the ship.

"Q. Captain, do you consider that when anti-aircraft machine guns are mounted on decks of merchant ships they constitute a danger to men in the crows nest?

"A. The height the crows nests are on our type of ships I would say yes. Different heights in different ships, and ours is at a height where it's almost in range on that particular time we were firing at this plane.

JOHN WITHERSPOON (July 6, 1942)

"Q. Under the heading of recommendations, 1 to 5 inclusive, have you any recommendations to offer or suggestions under these five subjects?

"A. Well, I think perhaps that the number of persons allotted to each boat should be revised downward. I don't think that these boats are able to hold safely as many people as they're certified for.

Mr. Smith: I think that is a point well taken, that, in addition to the emergency stop, there should be fitted on the main condenser a valve for the purpose of breaking the vacuum at the time the main engine is to be stopped.

ALCOA RANGER (July 7, 1942)

Recommendations from the Master:

"Q. Have you any suggestions for No. 3?

"A. I found that we had canned ham, with very little salt in the ham, and that was by far the most substantial of the appetizing of all the life-boat supplies. It also seemed to give the men strength, nourishment. I think it was a canned fresh ham. There was no skin on it; it was bone and cooked. One can lasted 15 men three days. The weight of the ham was between five and six pounds.

"Q. What is the name of this canned ham, did you observe that?

"A. No, sir. I also found that malted milk tablets, while they're all right the first few days, after the system has consumed practically all the water that it has and you are rationing water, they're very hard to take that is, to put them in the mouth. The men didn't use the rations at all, not the full rations, or the malted milk tablets."

ANDREW JACKSON (July 12, 1942)

Recommendations from the Master:

Have you any recommendations to make for the betterment of the lifesaving

- equipment or for the method to be used in abandoning ship?
- "A. I recommend that the painter to the lifeboats be made fast into the bow instead of into the second thwart; instead of into the inboard side of the boat. Because you have not your complete crew on board when the lifeboat is lowered in the water and the painter, naturally, even in the slightest way, will swing the lifeboat away from the shipside causing some delay in getting lifeboat back to shipside for remainder of crew. I also recommend that some method be used in making the rafts fast to the ship that will allow them to float free when vessel sinks.
- "Q. Have you any other recommendations to make that would affect the life of the ship's crew in a disaster of this kind?
- "A. I recommend that all iron bunks, which are set in sockets shall be lashed or well secured into these sockets to prevent the explosion from throwing them out and falling on the man in the lower bunk. I also recommend that lifejackets be of a soft material so that a man may comfortably wear them lashed to him at all times.
- "Q. Other than the falls did you have any trouble in lowering your boat?
- "A. With the exception of loosening the pelican hook. Had some trouble getting that loose, knocking it loose. The strain of the boat on it and I don't know--if you get a strain on that pelican hook they are hard to loose. She was pretty secure.
- "Q. Have you any recommendations that you want to make?
- "A. Yes sir, I would like to recommend that the rudder be carried shipped at all times while at sea. I would also like to have these rafts hooked with a lever instead of a pelican hook, because after my boat was in the water I could hear the navy beating on that hook, trying to release the pelican hook."

WILLIAM DAWES (July 22, 1942)

Lieutenant, j.g. recommends:

"There should be arrangements made to make it possible to sound the alarm at all watch and lookout stations. We could sound the alarm only on the bridges.

"Navy put the Merchant Marine in the Naval Reserve, train them, then let them have their own gun crews. Convoy all ships. Install Y guns for throwing out depth charges."

GRANFORD (July 30, 1942)

Recommendations by a Boatswain:

- "Q. Have you any recommendations or suggestions for the detection and avoidance of enemy submarines?
- "A. ---if we only had some kind of detector. As it is it never surfaced or they didn't have a chance to get to the guns. The engineers shouldn't blow the tubes in the daytime as it makes too prominent a trail that a submarine might pick up and remains visible too long.