

H-3 Mr. DeGard

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

ADDRESS REPLY TO
DISTRICT COAST GUARD OFFICER (o)
TENTH NAVAL DISTRICT
REFER TO FILE: CG-601

1947 JUN 27 PM 12 47
20 June, 1947

MERCHANT MARINE
INSPECTION DIVISION

FOR VICTORY
BUY UNITED STATES WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

U.S. COAST GUARD DISTRICTS
MAIL & FILES SECTION

RECEIVED JUN 27 1947 (1)

From: Commander, 10th Coast Guard District
To: Commandant (MVI)

Subj: Oil Pollution, Report of Investigation at Charlotte Amalie Harbor, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

Copies of the subject report and letter of transmittal to the District Engineer, Antilles Department, U. S. Army, are submitted herewith for Headquarters information.

G. C. Carlstedt
G. C. CARLSTEDT
Acting

- Incl: 1. Ltr. fr Comdr., 10th CGD to Dist. Engineer, Antilles District, Corps of Engineers, Miami, Florida.
2. Ltr. fr Office of COTP, St. Thomas, V.I., to Comdr., 10th CGD.

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[Signature]
L. J. LEVINE
LAW (12) 1947

3 June, 1947

Commanding Officer Coast Guard Group, St. Thomas, V.I.
12 June, 1947
Commander, 10th Coast Guard District

District Engineer
Antilles District
Corps of Engineers
APO 851, c/1 PM
Miami, Florida

Dear Sir:

Forwarded herewith for your information is the report of an investigation of oil pollution of the waters of the Harbor of Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, V.I. on or about 4 June, 1947. Oil samples taken are being forwarded under separate cover. Photographs taken were unsatisfactory but are forwarded as received.

Very truly yours,
W. H. BARTON
Commodore, USCG
Commander, 10th CG District

Incl: (1) Ltr. fr. Office of COTF St. Thomas, V.I. to Comdr., 10th CGD and supporting photographs.

L. A. Levine
L. A. LEVINE

Certified to be a true copy.
Lt.(jg) A.B. Peters Lt.(jg) USCGR ded the vessel and informed the captain of the Saps Horn Marcus J. Fegan, of all the circumstances. Captain Fegan claimed no prior knowledge of the oil pollution circumstances in this case and was very cooperative. Chief engineer Mr. Robert J. O'Brien was contacted and made a verbal statement that upon completion of fueling operations 3 June, 1947, a crew member of the engineering department assigned to close a stop valve upon the rise of the oil to a specified level in the tank being filled had failed to close the valve at the proper time thus permitting the oil to overflow from a filter through a vented discharge into port side of the vessel overboard. The amount spilled is estimated approximately one barrel or one half barrel of oil was lost by accident.

CG-661

5 June, 1947

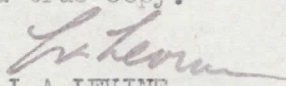
From: Commanding Officer Coast Guard Group, & Office for the COTP St. Thomas, V.I.
To: Commander, 10th Coast Guard District
Subj: Oil pollution Charlotte Amalie Harbor, St. Thomas, V.I.

1. At approximately 1000 4 June, 1947 this office was informed by telephone that a heavy oily substance was floating near the east side of Hassel island in Charlotte Amalie harbor on the surface of the water over a large area. The informer did not disclose his identity.
2. The CG 25057 with ADAMS, Jack P. (242-078) BM2c in charge was immediately dispatched to the scene and on arrival found a large patch of oil floating on the surface of the water near the shore of Hassel Island in Charlotte Amalie harbor with a large amount of the oil having already drifted to the shores having been carried there by the current and the N.E. trade winds which at this time was blowing at a force of about twelve miles per hour. An oil slick on the water indicated the oil may have come from a vessel moored at the docks of the Indian Company. Samples of the oil on the water were taken at the scene immediately at approximately 1010 4 June, 1947.
3. The CG 25057 then proceeded the vessel Cape Horn moored starboard side to the docks of the West Indian Company, Charlotte Amalie harbor. Upon arrival Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson, USCG who had arrived by automobile, was contacted and in company with Mr. Frank Curray a resident of Charlotte Amalie and Jack P. Adams BM2c USCG; an inspection of the ships sides all outlets, scuppers, drains etc. were checked. The docks and surrounding waters were checked for the possible source from which the oil may have come. It was noted that oil was escaping from an oil outlet in the side of the vessel Cape Horn, near the surface of the water. A sample of this oil was taken by Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson USCG. It was further noted that fresh oil was sticking to the sides of the vessel at several places along the ships sides near the water line and the oil outlet as far as could be seen inside the opening showed signs of having passed a large amount of oil a short time prior to the inspection. Inasmuch as the whole visible circumference of the inside area of the outlet pipe was completely covered with fresh oil. A camera was obtained from Mr. Leopold Eberssen of the U.S.P.H.S. and in company with Mr. Eberssen and Mr. Curry, pictures of the port side of the vessel Cape Horn and of the outlet from which oil escaped was immediately taken at approximately 1030 4 June, 1947.
4. Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson then boarded the vessel and informed the captain of the Cape Horn Marcus J. Fegan, of all the circumstances. Captain Fegan claimed no prior knowledge of the oil pollution circumstances in this case and was very cooperative. The chief engineer Mr. Robert J. O'Brien was contacted and made a verbal statement that upon completion of fueling operations 3 June, 1947, a crew member of the engineering department assigned to close a stop valve upon the rise of the oil to a specified level in the tank being filled had failed to close the valve at the proper time thus permitting the oil to overflow from a filter through the previous mentioned discharge into the port side of the vessel overboard. Mr. O'Brien stated he estimated approximately one barrel or one half barrel of fuel oil had been lost by accident.

5. Mr. E. Medias Jr. third mate was shown by the ships log as the deck officer on watch from 2000 to 2400 3 June, 1947. Mr. Medias stated he had no knowledge of any oil overboard. Mr. J.A. Seibert third assistance engineer lost overboard. Other officers and personnel of the vessel Cape Horn questioned professed no knowledge of any oil lost. An oil sample was taken from the ships fuel tanks.
6. The drain where oil spillage at the rate of approximately one half gallon per hour was taking place at the time of this investigation, was brought to the attention of the chief engineer who stated measures to correct the spillage would be taken. All officers and personnel of the ships company were very cooperative throughout the investigation.
7. Personnel of the West Indian Company in charge of the fueling operations 3 June, 1947 professed no knowledge of any oil spillage. Inspection of fuel oil filler hoses of the West Indian Company showed no indication of any oil loss from the filler hoses.
8. The captain of the Cape Horn Mr. E. Medias stated the vessel is owned by the U.S. Maritime Commission and operated by the Mississippi Shipping Co. of New Orleans, Louisiana, and the vessels home port is Wilmington, Delaware, U.S.A.
9. Records of the West Indian Company docks office show the Cape Horn as starting fueling operations at 1855 3 June, 1947 taking on 1847 barrels of bunker fuel during this fueling operation. The Cape Horn arrived at 1900 3 June, 1947 and departed 1130 4 June, 1947 for Santos Brazil.
10. Records of the West Indian Company disclosed the another vessel operated by the Mississippi Shipping Co. of New Orleans, Louisiana, the SS Del Aires arrived at 1030 3 June and departed at 0400 on June 4, 1947 after having taken on 1193 barrels of bunker C fuel with no loss. Records of the West Indian Co. indicated the above mentioned vessels are the only vessels that entered or departed this port between 31 May and time of this investigation.
11. Oil samples taken during this investigation are being forwarded under separate cover. Photographs taken are enclosed with this report.
12. A thorough harbor check showed no leakage of oil into the harbor from any other source. Upon departing the harbor the above vessel was observed dumping garbage near the harbor entrance.
13. In view of the enclosed evidence it is the opinion of this office that the oil pollution of Charlotte Amalie harbor, St. Thomas, V.I. 4 June 1947 was caused by oil loss from the SS Cape Horn.

/s/ A.B. Peterson, Lt.(jg) USCG

Certified to be a true copy.


L.A. LEVINE
Lt.(jg) USCGR