

SHIP:

MV CAPE ST. ELIAS

FLAG:

OPERATOR:

Waterman Steamship Corporation, N. Y.

UNION:

SOURCE OF COMPLAINT: Postal Censorship, Office of Censorship, Record MI-192112
Table 305/3 Examiner S/S 4752 D.A.C. 3904, Examined 122-43

PLACE: Havana, Cuba

DATE REFERRED TO THE COAST GUARD: March 25, 1943
Headquarters:

DATE REFERRED TO UNION: March 26, 1943

SHIP: MV CAPE ST ELIAS

DATE OF OCCURRENCE: January 6, 1943

DATE OF ORIGINAL COMPLAINT: January 27, 1943

CREW INVOLVED: Jack O. Smith, Seaman

CHARGE: In a letter dated January 6, 1943 to a group of employees of Swift Plant Sales Department, Swift & Co., Fort Worth, Texas, this seaman gives a detailed account of ship formation and movement, description of vessel, speed, and cargoes carried. He writes:

"In a convoy, one ship follows another, about 200 yds. astern, and there are several lines of ships each line about 200 yards apart. Course is changed about every 20 minutes. On each wing of our convoy are several subchasers. Leading us in the center is a destroyer as well as one following in the same position. They of course, swing and circle the heavier ships every so often. And how those chasers pitch and roll! Ask Lee. We have 24 Navy boys and an ensign manning the guns. Most of them are just out of 'boot camp.' There is plenty of fire-power on this ship, with lots of spare ammunition. Our cargo is rice, beans, flour, lard - Rath's??? salt, paper and battery cases. However the convoy is predominately oil-tankers - we should spread out further!!"

The writer spoke of having left Port Arthur with a small convoy which would most likely become larger. He described his ship as "a new Diesel job capable of making 15 knots but the convoy is only making eight."

Presumably the ship had already reached its destination when the letter was intercepted, and it has been released. The letter was Postmarked Havana, Cuba.