

ACTION OF ENEMY**CONFIDENTIAL**

Name of Ship
Date of Casualty

CARLTON
7-5-42

"After the sinking of the ship we were drifting around in the rafts and about 20 men in the lifeboat. We were keeping close together and debating what to do next, and we decided to lash the boat and rafts together and wait for developments. In about 8 hours time a German sea plane landed on the water close to one of the rafts and advised us he could take two men ashore, and two men jumped off the raft and were immediately picked up by the sea plane and carried ashore. Later a large sea plane came along and I requested that he take all injured men ashore, which he did. Some time later another large plane came along and took myself and 15 more members of the crew to Pirkenes, Norway. In the morning of July 6 another two men were brought ashore by the plane. That left 15 men in the lifeboat. These men could not be found, according to the information given by the German authorities. About 4 days later myself and another American Captain were taken to Oslo by German plane for transportation to the camp in Germany. The crew was later on transported to Germany by German steamer. 19 days after the sinking of the ship the lifeboat landed on the coast of Norway, and the entire crew were taken prisoners and transported to Germany. During this 19 days one man died of exposure. His name was George Pyne, First Assistant Engineer, of the ship. So about the first of September the entire crew was lodged in camp Milag--marine intern camp." - Master

The following is from an ONI Report on the SS CARLTON

"A few minutes after abandoning ship, when the lifeboat and rafts had drifted considerably astern, the submarine was seen to surface to starboard of the vessel about a ship's length away. Owing to the haze no description of the sub is possible. The submarine disappeared from sight within one-half hour. No attempt was made by the submarine to communicate with survivors.

At 1230 a German two-motored torpedo seaplane, believed to be a Heinkel-1 although of possible smaller wing span, landed on the water and picked up two survivors. At 1400 a German flying boat, identified as a three-motored Dornier-24 landed alongside and asked for U. S. Naval survivors. Nine Armed Guard and one merchant survivor were placed aboard. At 1930 another Dornier-24 landed alongside and picked up twelve more men and handed out rocket flares. At 0700 6 July another torpedo plane similar to the first, picked up two more merchant crew. All planes landed survivors at Kirkness (Norway) Seaplane Base where they were transferred to barracks in a closed truck. Survivors noted several six-motored flying boats, many four-motored flying boats and a large number of seaplanes in the harbor. On 24 July this group of survivors was transferred to Oslo by SS HAN LEONHARDT, arriving on 29 July. On 31 July they boarded the German transport WURI, said to be 10,000 G.T., arriving at Aalborg, Denmark, on 1 August and were put aboard a freight car which arrived at Wilhelmshaven on 3 August. By 17 September all had been transferred to P.O.W. camp at Marlag (Naval) and Milag (Marine, Merchant) Nord at Westertimke near Bremen. Intelligence questioning which occurred at various times and places, was thorough, concerning movements of the ship, cargo; destination, convoy procedure and routing, escorts and moral of the merchant crews. Particular emphasis was placed on reasons for U. S. aid to Russia and sympathies of crew in this respect. No mistreatment was reported.

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The 17 survivors who were not flown off were all transferred to the lifeboat, and the rafts were cut adrift. The Second Mate, who was in command, had brought a sextant and charts and set a course for the nearest Russian territory. On 9 July a British plane dropped a rubber life suit and some canned food. On 13 July a surfaced submarine was attracted by flares and came alongside. The submarine was newly painted white, of medium size, without identifying marking, and generally answers the description of the 517 tons home-operational type (ON1220). The commanding officer, who appeared to be about 25 to 26 years old, and said that he had lived on the U. S. west coast for some time, spoke good English. He regretted that he could not take them aboard, stating that he was 'still outbound on patrol'. He offered medical aid, which was refused as not being needed, and gave them a compass, charts, position, time, and course and the distance to the nearest Norwegian coast, also biscuits, cigarettes, water and blankets. Most of this gear was of U. S. manufacture. The German stated that he had torpedoed the SS HOOSIER, a few days before and later boarded her after the crew had been removed by a Russian DD (This statement conflicts with the Summary of Statements by Survivors of the SS HOOSIER, which states that vessel was disabled by near misses of aerial bombs and later sunk by gunfire from HMS POPPY). The submarine captain also stated that 42 submarines were hunting vessels from the disperseded convoy.

On 18 July the 1st Asst. Engineer died of exposure. On the same day course was changed for the nearest Norwegian Coast. On 24 July the remaining 16 survivors landed at Tufford, Norway, near North Cape. On the same day they were transported by motor torpedo boat to Halmorfest, thence to Tromsø the next day. On 13 August they arrived at Bergen aboard SS RAABANT and were placed aboard train for Oslo. On 16 August, they departed Oslo aboard the MUNI which was mined at approximately 1010 L.A.T. 17 August, a few miles off Aalborg Channel with a rumored loss of 300 German troops. A large crack appeared in the hull, port side, opposite #2 hatch, extending from the waterline to the main deck and across the deck. The vessel settled aground by the bow which was under water to the break of the bridge. It was not know whether the vessel was salvageable. The 17 merchant crew survivors were rescued by Danish trawlers and eventually arrived at Hilag Nord on 27 August, 1942.

27 Merchant crew survivors arrived at New York on 21 February 1945 aboard the SS CHIPSOLM. Four are still in Hilag Nord. The 11 Armed Guard survivors are in Halag Nord."
