

## 2 SHIPS' SURVIVORS REACH FIJI ISLANDS

7, Only Men Left of Crew of  
Donerail, Were at Sea in  
Boat for 38 Days

### SHELL KILLED PASSENGERS

Eleven From the Prusa Battled  
Storms for 31½ Days in  
a Well-Stocked Craft

SUVA, Fiji Islands, March 18 (AP) —Another heroic wartime saga of the seas, of dangerous days and nights in storm-tossed lifeboats, was related today by survivors of two vessels torpedoed by Japanese submarines last December.

One group of seven were the only survivors of the Donerail, the former Danish motorship freighter Nordhval, which was torpedoed the night of Dec. 9 while en route from Suva to Vancouver, B. C.

Eleven others survived the tanker Prusa, torpedoed in Hawaiian waters Dec. 17. A twelfth man in this group died at sea, raising the Prusa loss of life to ten. Nine had been killed by the explosion of the torpedo.

For thirty-eight days the Donerail survivors braved the hardships of the sea and the constant danger of another enemy attack. Finally they reached land at Tarawa [on Cook Island] in the Gilbert group. The Donerail, they related, almost rammed a surface submarine at night. The submarine crash-dived, but later it came to the surface and shelled the vessel.

#### Eight Passengers Killed in Boat

Twenty-four of the forty-eight persons on the Donerail were killed by seven shells fired by the raider. Eight passengers—two women, five men and an 18-month-old child—were killed when a shell hit the lifeboat, swung out for lowering, in which they were sitting.

The remaining twenty-four, all members of the crew, got away safely in a steel boat badly punctured by shell fragments. The craft's air tanks kept it afloat, said M. Chambers of Sydney, one of the survivors.

For a week the castaways battled a gale while trying to make one of the Hawaiian islands. The storm won out and they charted a course for Tarawa. For 2,000 miles they fought west and south toward safety.

One by one their numbers diminished. The captain was washed overboard. Sixteen died of exposure and starvation. Food and water was ruined by immersion. They lived on flying fish they caught, on biscuits soaked by salt water but edible, on vitamin tablets and tinned milk and rain water caught with a sail.

Seven, all Danes except Chambers, reached Tarawa. There they found a Japanese party had come and gone. In two groups they made their way to Nanouti, thence to Suva.

The group from the Prusa likewise had been at sea many days in an open boat. Their vessel, a tanker with a crew of thirty-four, was torpedoed without warning in Hawaiian waters. Nine were killed by the torpedo and the remaining twenty-five got away in two boats. The group that arrived here, originally numbering twelve but reduced to eleven by a death at sea, did not know that the other lifeboat had been rescued late in December and that its thirteen occupants had landed at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

#### Boat Had Ample Food

For thirty-one and a half days the Prusa group dodged danger and fought extremely adverse weather as they edged ever toward the southwest and the islands they knew would bring safety. They experienced no hardships of food and water; their boat was amply stocked. After 2,500 miles of sailing they reached land in the Gilbert group.

The eleven from the Prusa who now have reached Suva were listed by the Tampa Inter-ocean Steamship Company, at the time they reached the Gilberts, as Captain C. H. Boy, Houston, Texas; Frank H. Stewart, Wilmington, Del.; James H. Darlin, Houston; Bernard Baker, Jeferson, Iowa; Floyd Mc. Williams, Smyrna, Ga.; Carl Knee, Hammond, Ind.; Thomas Bartlett, Elizabeth City, N. C.; J. P. Higgins, Philadelphia; George Bercy, New Orleans, and Alfred A. Smith and Eric J. Williams, both of New York.