

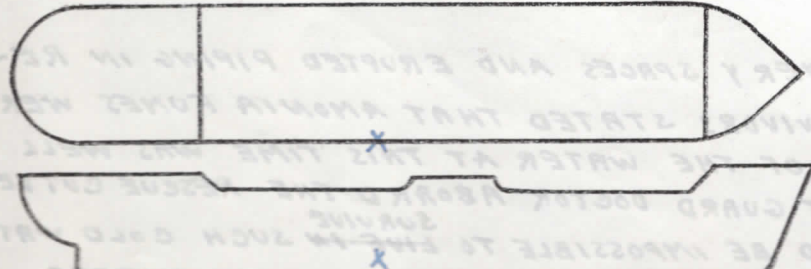
CONFIDENTIAL

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
REPORT ON U. S. MERCHANT VESSEL WAR ACTION CASUALTY

(P) 8

To: Commandant, U. S. Coast Guard, Washington, D. C.
 Ship S/S DORCHESTER Service OCEAN PASSENGER-FREIGHT
 Owner MERCHANTS & MINERS TRANS. CO. Operator AGWI LINES INC - U.S.A.T.
 Information furnished by 2nd MATE Date 12 SEPTEMBER, 1944

LINE No.	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1	Year built and propulsion	Built <u>1926</u> Propulsion <u>STEAM</u>
2	Tonnage	Gross <u>5649</u> Net <u>3456</u>
3	Draft loaded (maximum allowed)	Fwd <u>20' (M)</u> Aft _____
4	Draft when attacked	Fwd <u>20' (M)</u> Aft _____
5	Cargo on board (any deck)	Nature <u>LUMBER</u> Tons <u>1000</u>
6	Voyage	From <u>ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND</u> To <u>NARSARSSUAK, GREENLAND.</u>
7	Were routing orders followed	<u>YES</u>
8	Any criticism of orders	<u>NO.</u>
9	Weather at time of attack	Weather <u>CLOUDY</u> Sea <u>CHOPPY</u>
10	Was enemy sighted? When	<u>NO</u>
11	Any friendly ships in sight	<u>YES; CONVOY.</u>
12	Were navigation lights on	<u>NO.</u>
13	Date and time of attack	Date <u>2/3/43</u> Time <u>0055</u>
14	Position	Latitude <u>59° 22' N</u> Longitude <u>48° 42' W</u>
15	Nature of attack (Give data)	<u>TORPEDED</u>
16	Number of hits	<u>1</u>
17	Location of hits (Mark diagram)	<u>1-MACH. 5</u>
18	Effect of hits	<u>SANK SHIP.</u>
19	Was ship armed? What type	<u>YES</u>
20	Was armament used? State result	<u>NO.</u>
21	Any explosions or fires*	Ship <u>NO.</u> Cargo <u>NO.</u>
22	Was deck ruptured	<u>NO</u>
23	Did ship break in two	<u>NO</u>
24	Was SOS sent	<u>NO</u>
25	Ship's speed	Normal <u>12.0</u> When attacked <u>10.0</u> When abandoned <u>STOP</u>
26	Time abandoned, sunk	Abandoned <u>0110 (15 min.)</u> Sunk <u>0115 (20 min.)</u>
27	Was ship reboarded	By whom <u>NO</u> When _____
28	Was ship brought in	How <u>NO</u> Approximate damage <u>SUNK.</u>



*Fill in this diagram to show attack hits, fires, etc.

29	Lifeboats	Number carried	2	Which used	2
30	Lifeboats	Number lost	12	How	9 - SWAMPED 3 - TORPEDO EXPLOSION
31	Life rafts	Number carried	8	Which used	3
32	Life rafts	Number lost	5	How	UNKNOWN.
33	Life floats	Number carried	35	Which used	UN.
34	Life floats	Number lost	UN	How	UN.
35	Lifesaving suits	Number carried	0	Number used	0
36	Were boats, etc., attacked	Attacked	NO	Casualties	0
37	Time in each boat, raft, etc.	2 Boat	3 HRS, 30 MIN.	2 Raft	3 HRS-30 MIN
		1 Boat		1 Raft	5 HRS.
38	Rescued by and where	By	ALLIED SHIPS	Where	AT SCENE
39	Number of gun crew carried (military)	Officers	1	Enlisted men	23
40	Number ship's crew carried	Officers	7	Radiomen	3
41	Number passengers and others carried	Passengers	750	Others	0
42	Total on board		904		
43	Number gun crew injured (military)	Officers	UN.	Enlisted men	UN.
44	Number ship's crew injured	Officers	1	Radiomen	0
45	Number passengers and others injured	Passengers	61	Others	0
46	Number gun crew lost (military)	Officers	0	Enlisted men	15
47	Number ship's crew lost	Officers	4	Radiomen	3
48	Number passengers and others lost	Passengers	558	Others	0
49	Total casualties	Injured	73	Lost	675
50	Persons lost by (Specify)	Drowning	UN	Fire	UN
		Other causes	671 (UNKNOWN)	Shell or torpedo	4
51	Total rescued	Gun crew	9	Officers	3
		Unlicensed	25	Passengers	192
52	Persons saved by	Boats	92	Rafts	381
		Preservers	0	Other means	0
53	Engineering watch below	Number on watch below	4	Number lost below	4
54	Number of look-outs		29		
55	Any defective material		NO		
56	Any personnel fault		NO		

COMMENTS, CRITICISMS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The comments, criticisms, or recommendations of survivors with respect to safety of seamen and ships involved in war actions are earnestly solicited by Headquarters in order that the fullest provision possible may be made for the safety of American ships and seamen.

NOTE ① - TORPEDO HIT MACHINERY SPACES AND ERUPTED PIPING IN REFRIGERATING SPACES; SURVIVORS STATED THAT AMONIA FUMES WERE SEVERE. THE TEMPERATURE OF THE WATER AT THIS TIME WAS WELL BELOW FREEZING. THE COAST GUARD DOCTOR ABOARD THE RESCUE CUTTER MAINTAINED THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO SURVIVE IN SUCH COLD WATER FOR ANY CONSIDERABLE LENGTH OF TIME. THERE WERE NO RUBBER SUITS AND MOST SURVIVORS WERE VERY SCANTILY CLAD. THEREFORE, IT IS PRESUMED THAT 671 DEATHS WERE DUE TO SMOOTHERING FROM THE FUMES AND EXPOSURE IN THE COLD WATER.