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Ind-1
25 August, 1945

To: The Commandant (OMI)

Via: DCGO, 11th ND

Subj: S.S. EDWIN D. HOWARD; oil spill

Forwarded, approved.

Lloyd B. Kennedy
LLOYD B. KENNEDY
Acting Officer in Charge
Marine Inspection

8-7
2-17
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Ind-2
DCGO, 11ND (1)

MIN C-1355

12 September, 1945

To: The Commandant (OMI)

Subj: Oil spill, SS EDWIN D. HOWARD; preliminary investigation.

Forwarded, approved.

W. F. Towle
W. F. TOWLE

RECOMMENDATION

12. It is recommended that the case be closed.

James C. Hurley
JAMES C. HURLEY
Lieutenant Commander, USCGR
Boarding Officer

25 August, 1945

Richard S. Elliot
RICHARD S. ELLIOT
Lieutenant Commander, USCGR
Senior Boarding Officer

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

LONG BEACH 2, CALIF.



ADDRESS REPLY TO:

DISTRICT COAST GUARD OFFICER (omi)

ELEVENTH NAVAL DISTRICT

REFER TO FILE: MIN C-1355

25 August, 1945

To: The Commandant (OMI)

Via: 1. Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection, Long Beach
2. DCGO, 11th ND

Subj: S.S. EDWIN D. HOWARD; oil spill

1. Pursuant to notification by the Captain of the Port, Los Angeles, California that an oil spill had occurred on 23 August, 1945 from the S.S. EDWIN D. HOWARD at Berth 232-D, Terminal Island, California, this Examining Officer boarded the vessel on the same date and at the same place, and made an investigation to determine the facts.

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

2. Mr. P. S. Warren, chief engineer;
Mr. H. G. Martell, first assistant engineer;
Mr. C. C. Morris, second assistant engineer; and
Mr. P. Krupa, third assistant engineer.

FINDINGS OF FACT

3. The S.S. EDWIN D. HOWARD is a liberty-type freight vessel. Official number 247375. The vessel is operated by the McCormick Steamship Company, Wilmington, California, for the War Shipping Administration.

4. On 23 August, 1945 the S.S. EDWIN D. HOWARD was at Berth 232-D, Terminal Island, California. A General Petroleum Company oil barge was moored to the port side of the S.S. EDWIN D. HOWARD and was delivering fuel to the vessel.

5. At approximately 5:30 P.M. on 23 August, 1945, fuel oil spouted out of the vent pipe on No. 1 double bottom tank and resulted in an oil spill of approximately three barrels, a third of which went over the side into the harbor water.

6. H. G. Martell, First Assistant Engineer, was in charge of loading operations. C. C. Morris, Second Assistant Engineer, and P. Krupa, Third Assistant Engineer, were assisting Martell.

7. At the time of the spill fuel oil was being pumped from the oil barge into the ship's No. 4 deep tank. The suction line valves were open

DCGO, 11th ND (omi)
File MIN C-1355
25 August, 1945

to Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 5 double bottom fuel tanks and these tanks were filling, by gravity, from No. 4 tank. In order to speed up the loading operations, the First Assistant Engineer went below and started the ship's oil transfer pump and began pumping oil from No. 4 deep tank and discharging it into No. 1 double bottom tank.

8. When Martell, the First Assistant Engineer, went below to start the fuel oil transfer pump, he instructed C. C. Morris, the Second Assistant Engineer, to maintain careful watch over the filling double bottom tanks Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 5; and to sound them frequently.

9. At approximately 5:30 P.M., which was but a short time after the transfer fuel oil pump had been started, fuel oil began gushing out of the vent pipe connected to No. 1 double bottom tank. Morris had gauged this tank a few minutes before the spill occurred and noted that the tank was only slightly more than one-half full.

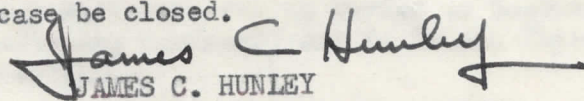
10. When Morris saw that oil was coming out of the vent pipe of the No. 1 double bottom tank, he ran to the door leading to the engine room and shouted to the First Assistant Engineer, who was below in the engine room, to stop the transfer pump. By the time this was accomplished, approximately three barrels of oil had spilled on deck and some of it went overboard.

CONCLUSIONS

11. The evidence indicates that the spill was caused by an air lock which formed in No. 1 double bottom tank; and that the air lock was caused by pumping oil into the tank at such a rate that the vent line could not prevent the free escape of air from the tank. There was no evidence of inattention to duty on the part of the First Assistant Engineer, who was running the pump, or the Second Assistant Engineer, who was sounding the tanks. The spill was due to an error in judgment on the part of the First Assistant Engineer, in his effort to speed up the loading operations. It is the opinion of this Examining Officer that under the circumstances no disciplinary action should be taken against the officers involved. The Chief Engineer, as well as his assistants, were advised to be more careful in the future to prevent spills of this nature.

RECOMMENDATION

12. It is recommended that the case be closed.


JAMES C. HUNLEY
Lieutenant Commander, USCGR
Examining Officer

25 August, 1945

Approved:


ADDISON S. ELLIOT

Lieutenant Commander, USCGR
Senior Hearing Officer