

*Comdr. Cleave*  
*Mr. DeGard*  
*4-3*  
**UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**  
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO



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*P.A.D.* RECEIVED  
MERCHANT MARINE  
INSURANCE DIVISION

11 July, 1947

8-17

REPLY TO  
DISTRICT COAST GUARD OFFICER (o)  
TENTH NAVAL DISTRICT  
REFER TO FILE: CG-601

From: Commander, TENTH Coast Guard District  
To: Commandant (MVI)  
Subj: Oil Pollution, Charlotte Amalie Harbor, St. Thomas, V.I.;  
Report of Investigation of.

Copies of the subject report and letter of transmittal to the District Engineer, Antilles District, U.S. Army, are submitted herewith for Headquarters information.

*W. H. Barton*  
W. H. BARTON  
Commodore, USCG  
Comdr., 10th CG District

U.S. COAST GUARD HEADQUARTERS  
MAIL & FILES SECTION  
RECEIVED JUL 16 1947 (8)

- Incl: 1. Ltr. fr. Comdr., 10th CGD to District Engineer, Antilles District, San Juan, P.R.  
2. Ltr. fr. Office of COTP, St. Thomas, V.I., to Comdr., 10th CGD

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*o/c*



July 6, 1947.

From: Commanding Officer Coast Guard Group & Office for the COTP St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

To: Commander 10th Coast Guard District

Subj: Oil pollution in Charlotte Amalie Harbor, St. Thomas, V.I.

1. At approximately 0635 hours July 6, 1947 this unit was notified by a telephone call from R. Pederson, Dockmaster of the West Indian Co. Inc. of Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, V.I. that oil had been spilled from the S/S "ELI WHITNEY", an American vessel of the Alcoa Steamship Company of New York City, N.Y. The C.G 40306D with Robert W. Conway (233-304) B.M. 2/c USCG and Joseph A. Fox (261-170) Mo, M.M. 3/c and Mr. G.L. Ebbesen of the U.S. Public Health Service on board was immediately dispatched to the scene and samples of the harbor waters were taken and photographs of the vessel and oil on side of vessel and on dock taken.

2. The Commanding Officer of this unit Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson proceeded by automobile to the West Indian Company Inc. docks, where the S/S ELI WHITNEY of the Alcoa Steamship Company Inc. of New York City, N.Y. was found moored starboard side to the docks with pilot aboard and prepared to sail upon proper release by the agent. Oil was seeping from the decks scuppers near the vent pipe of the starboard settler tank and running in a small amount down the side of the vessel into the harbor waters. A large portion of the dock in the amount of approximately 100 square feet was cover with oil and crew members of the vessel were cleaning up the spilled oil. Oil had been spilled on the deck of the vessel on the starboard side and ships personnel were engaged in cleaning the oil off the deck. Fire equipment was led out and ready for use.

3. The Master of the vessel captain G. Stevens of 49 Grove Street, New York, N.Y. was interviewed and stated he was notified by the Chief Mate at 0600 that oil spillage over the ship's side had occurred at about 0400 hours. The master stated all fire precautions had been taken and arrangements made to notify the local Coast Guard Base throught the company agent. The Chief Officer Norman E. Taylor of 7517 Wakefield Ave. Jacksonville, Florida stated he was notified of the oil loss by the engineer department about 0400 hours and immediately took all fire precautions and notified the captain of the vessel. The chief engineer Mr. Edgar D. Oliver of 155 Illinois Ave. Patterson N.J. stated that bunker C fuel oil was being pumped from the starboard deep tank and in his opinion the neumeracator indicator stuck and gave a false reading thus overflowing the starboard settler tank. He estimated about three barrels of oil was lost, overboard. The second assistance engineer George J. Ozburn of 2540 Fenton Ave, Bronx New York stated he was on watch at the time of the accident and in charge of the operation of shifting oil from the starboard deep tank to the starboard settler tank and the neumeracator stuck without his knowledge giving a false reading and causing the overflow of the starboard settler tank. This officer estimated the loss at about thirty gallons of bunker C fuel and stated he reported the accident to the chief engineer im-

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UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

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TENTH NAVAL DISTRICT  
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mediately, took all possible fire precautions and assigned a crew of men to clean the oil from the vessels decks and from the company docks.

4. A sample of oil was taken by the investigating officer Lt. (jg) A. B. Peterson USCG from the settler tank of the ELI WHITNEY, from the oil running down the side of the vessel and two samples of oil were taken from the harbors waters near the vessel. Photographs were made immediately of the vessel, oil on the dock and of a member of the crew of the investigating party Robert W. Conway, B.M. 2/c USCG, taking a sample from the side of the vessel.

5. Photographs and statements of the vessel's personnel interviewed and statements of the officials of the West Indian Company are being forwarded with this report. Oil samples are being forwarded immediately under separate cover.

6. From the statements of the personnel and statements of the officials of the West Indian Company and agents of the Alcoa Steamship Company of New York Inc. and in view of the exceptional cooperation shown the investigating officer by all persons concern, it is indicated that this case was an accident and was not intentional. However it is estimated that oil in the amount of approximately six barrels were probably lost overboard.

7. In view of this oil pollution case and prior cases of a similar nature in this area it is suggested that mimeograph forms citing the oil pollution act together with penalties for violation of this act be made up and signed by the Commander 10th Coast Guard District and forwarded to this office for distribution to the agents of the various shipping companies this area, with directions this form be handed to the captain of each vessel upon arrival and the same be brought to the personal attention of the chief engineer by the captain of the vessel. It is assumed to some extent this method would serve as an affective preventive measure. This form of prevention has also been suggested by the manager of the West Indian Company.

A.B. Peterson, Lt. (jg) USCG

6 July, 1947

cc: Comdr. 10th C.G. Dist.

File

C.G. Group, and Office for the CGP, St. Thomas, V.I.

2. Certified to be a true and correct copy.

*A.B. Peterson*  
Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson, USCG



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

% FLEET POST OFFICE

ADDRESS REPLY TO  
DISTRICT COAST GUARD OFFICER  
TENTH NAVAL DISTRICT  
REFER TO FILE:



S.S. ELI WHITNEY

Statement of Master Regarding Oil Spillage in the Port of Saint Thomas on July 6, 1947 at 0400 hours.

Address: Capt. G. Stevens  
49 Grove Street  
New York, N.Y.

I did not know about said oil spillage until I got up at 0600 when the Officer of the watch (The Chief Mate) told me. I immediately made sure all fire precautions were being taken and the mess was being cleared up, and arranged to report to the local Coast Guard authorities.

SIGNED

G. STEVENS

MASTER

6 July 1947

Ind-1

C.O.C.G. Group and Office for the COTP, St. Thomas, V.I.

1. The above statement was taken this date by the undersigned and is certified to be a true statement.

Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson, USCG

6 July, 1947

Ind-2

C.O. C.G. Group, and Office for the COTP, St. Thomas, V I.

2. Certified to be a true and correct copy.

*A.B. Peterson*  
Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson, USCG



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

% FLEET POST OFFICE

ADDRESS REPLY TO  
DISTRICT COAST GUARD OFFICER  
TENTH NAVAL DISTRICT  
REFER TO FILE:



S.S. ELI WHITNEY

Statement of Chief Officer regarding spillage of Oil in St. Thomas Harbor on July 6, 1947 at 0400 hours.

Address: Norman E. Taylor  
7517 Wakefield Ave.  
Jacksonville, Fla.

I was notified at about 0400 by the Engine department that there was an oil spill on deck. All fire precautions were taken and sawdust scattered to prevent as much oil as possible from flowing overboard. Cleaning of oil began as soon as possible.

SIGNED

N. TAYLOR CHIEF MATE

6 July 1947

Ind-1

C.O. C.G. Group and office for the COTP, St. Thomas, V.I.

1. The above statement was taken this date by the undersigned and is certified to be a true statement.

Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson, USCG

6 July 1947.

Ind-2

C.O. C.G. Group, and Office for the COTP, St. Thomas, V.I.

2. Certified to be a true and correct copy.

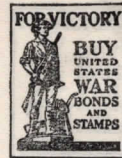
Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson, USCG



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

% FLEET POST OFFICE

ADDRESS REPLY TO  
DISTRICT COAST GUARD OFFICER  
TENTH NAVAL DISTRICT  
REFER TO FILE:



Statement of Chief Engineer Regarding Oil Spillage in St Thomas  
7-6-47, 0400.

Address: Edgar D. Oliver  
155 Illinois Ave.  
Patterson, N. J.

I think the neumeracator air indicator hung up giving a false reading of tanks we were pumping into thus overflowing the tanks we were pumping into. The oil escaped through the oil vent on deck, starboard side, and through the overflow on the starboard side of vessel, for the tank being filled onto the deck and into harbor waters. I estimate about three barrels of bunker C oil was lost overboard. I reported same to the Chief Mate and took all possible fire precautions. The Second Assistant Engineer was in charge of the operation.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

CHIEF ENGINEER  
S.S. ELI WHITNEY

6 July 1947.

Ind-1

C.O. C.G. Group and Office for the COTP St. Thomas, V.I.

1. The above statement was taken this date by the undersigned and is certified to be a true statement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson USCG

6 July, 1947.

Ind-1

C.O.C.G. Group, and Office for the COTP, St. Thomas, V.I.

2. Certified to be a true and correct copy.

*A.B. Peterson*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson USCG

6 July, 1947



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

% FLEET POST OFFICE

ADDRESS REPLY TO  
DISTRICT COAST GUARD OFFICER  
TENTH NAVAL DISTRICT  
REFER TO FILE:



S.S. ELI WHITNEY

Statement of Second Assistant Engineer Regarding Oil Spillage in the harbor of St. Thomas on July 6, 1947 at 0400 hours.

Address: George J. Ozburn  
2540 Fenton Ave.  
Bronx, New York

I was on watch and in charge of the operation at the time of the accident and am personally responsible for this accident. I was pumping from my starboard deep to my starboard settler and intended to put about sixteen feet in the starboard settler but the Neumeracator stuck without my knowledge and I must have put about three inches too much oil in the starboard settler thus overflowing the tank through the starboard vent and starboard overflow pipe on the starboard side of the vessel. I estimate that about thirty gallons of oil went overboard. This accident occurred at about 0400 hours. I immediately reported to the Chief Engineer and broke out crew to clean up mess on deck, dock, and overside after taking all possible fire precautions.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

G. OZBURN 2ND ENGR.

6 July 1947

Ind-1

C.O. C.G. Group and Office for the COTP, St. Thomas, V.I.

1. The above statement was taken this date by the undersigned and is certified to be ax true statement.

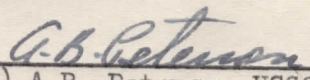
Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson USCG

6 July, 1947

Ind-2

CO C.G. Group, St. Thomas, V.I.

2. Certified to be a true and correct copy.

  
Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson USCG



66 July 1947.

6 July, 1947.

Statement of R. Pederson,  
Dockmaster for West Indian Company, Inc.  
Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, V.I.

July 6, 1947 at approximately 0930 hours.

Address: R. Pederson,  
Charlotte Amalie,  
St. Thomas, V.I.  
% West Indian Co. Inc.

I arrived on the dock of the West Indian Company  
Inc. where the S/S "ELI WHITNEY" was moored starboard side to the  
dock, at 0630 hours this date.

Upon arrival I saw fuel oil on the starboard side  
of the S/S "ELI WHITNEY" which ran from the scuppers near a fuel  
oil vent pipe down the side of the vessel to the harbor waters and  
about 100 square feet of the dock was covered with spilled fuel oil  
apparently from the vessel.

I estimated about three barrels of oil had been lost.  
As the vessel was due to sail I notified the Company officials of the  
West Indian Company Inc. who delayed the vessel from sailing. I imme-  
diately notified the local Coast Guard Base, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas,  
who started an immediate investigation.

*R. Pederson*  
R. Pederson,  
6 July 1947.

Ind-1

Certified to be a true statement taken by the undersigned.

*A.B. Petersen*  
Lt. (JG) A.B. Petersen, U.S.C.G.



July 6, 1947.

6 July, 1947.

Statement of the West Indian Company Inc.  
Agents of the Alcoa Steamship Company Inc.  
Of New York City, N.Y.

Statement taken July 6, 1947.

Our offices were informed by our dockmaster R. Petersen at about 0645 hours, July 6, 1947, that a small amount of oil had been lost by the S/S "ELI WHITNEY" on the West Indian Company Docks and into the harbor waters of Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

The local Coast Guard was immediately notified and took immediate action to investigate the accident.

THE WEST INDIAN COMPANY, LTD.

SIGNED

EINAR HOPFNER

6 July 1947.

Ind-1

1. Certified to be a true statement taken by the undersigned

A.B. Peterson

Lt. (jg) A.B. Peterson USCG