

24 August, 1943

131 S.S. ESSO PROVIDENCE

U.S. Tanker; built, 1921; 9,057 gross tons; cargo, fuel.

Departed New York for Sicily.

Attacked by plane, 24 August, 1943, 0700 - 1 time zone; at anchor,

Port Augusta Harbor, Sicily.

Weather, clear; sea, calm.

On board, 72; saved, 72.

Vessel, salvaged; cargo, partly salvaged.

The ship was at anchor off the south end of the North breakwater at Port Augusta Harbor when enemy aircraft attacked without warning, coming out of the sun, and dropping a stick of three bombs, one of which hit the tanker just aft of amidships, while the others hit the water harmlessly, one on each side. The fire alarm was sounded, and the hot decks were wetted down, but no fire broke out. At 0730 port Naval authorities boarded the vessel, and arrangements were made for docking as soon as a berth was available. 150 tons of fresh water were discharged from the after tanks to lighten the stern section. At 0808 she weighed anchors and proceeded to the dock, where the remaining cargo was discharged. There were no casualties among the crew or armed guard, other than minor cuts and burns. Temporary repairs were made, and the vessel proceeded to Malta where she was drydocked and later returned to service.

