

St Savours
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EXCERPT FROM BOARDING REPORT WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST TO THE COAST GUARD

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Chief Officer Fox stated that there were several small adjustments which needed to be made in this vessel, but he felt the only serious deficiency in the vessel from an operating standpoint was the lack of a loud speaker system. He remarked that, while the ship is equipped with phones, they are not adequate, and a loud speaker system should be installed to facilitate the rapid transmission of commands both fore and aft when the ship is putting into or leaving a pier.

The chief officer further stated that there are no automatic tapes for measuring of the oil cargo aboard this vessel at the present time.

Chief Engineer Smith and First Assistant Engineer McPhearson pointed out to the boarding officer what they considered a serious situation in the engineroom. The engineroom of the FORT MOULTRIE is so constructed that there are two decks running from the forward engineroom bulkhead through to the stern of the ship. The fireroom and engineroom are separated by a bulkhead. There is no opening in this bulkhead through which an engineer on watch can readily go from one section to the other. Under the present arrangement, the officer must go topside to the main deck, through a passageway and then down to the fireroom. During the trial run of the FORT MOULTRIE, an aperture was cut in the after engineroom bulkhead, making it possible to go directly from the engineroom to the fireroom. However after the shakedown cruise, this aperture was filled and welded. In pointing out this fact to the boarding officer, the chief engineer and first assistant engineer stated that the closing of this opening did not in any strengthen the ship, and it furthermore served no useful purpose regarding the water-tight integrity of the vessel. It was the opinion of these two engineering officers that, if the ship took on enough water to bring it up as high as the second deck where the opening was located, the ship would probably founder, whether an opening was there or not. They felt the situation as it exists is dangerous in that an engineering officer on watch in the engineroom is prevented ready access to the fireroom, and, if he must go to the latter, considerable time is taken. It was further stated that this matter had been brought to the attention of the War Shipping Administration, but no action had been taken, and the ship's officers are of the opinion that there will be no action taken in the immediate future.

Source: 13ND Boarding Report, 5/6/43, SS FORT MOULTRIE (US)

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ENCLOSURE (A)