

18 December, 1943
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UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

Galveston, Texas NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT
U.S. COAST GUARD
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



COAST GUARD BASE (L)
CAPTAIN OF THE PORT (P)

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10 December, 1943

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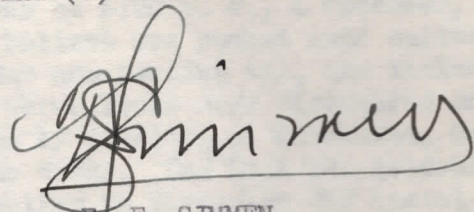
To: The Commandant

Via: District Coast Guard Officer, Eighth Naval District

Subj: Oil Pollution Act of 1924, 33 U.S.C. 431-437; violation
of by SS H. M. FREDERICKSEN, 5 December, 1943.

Ref: (a) HQ ltr to all DCGOS 18 August, 1943 (CG-100.18 Min.)
 (b) DCGO 8 ND ltr to COTP, Galveston 18 September, 1943
 (6614) Enforcement of the Oil Pollution Act.
 (c) HQ Dispatch to all DCGOS 231920 (October).

In accordance with References (a), (b) and (c) inclosure is
forwarded.



F. E. SIMMEN

Incl.
Copy of file in subject case

Galveston, Texas
10 December, 1943

(L)

CAPTAIN OF THE PORT (P)

District Engineer, U. S. Army
Galveston, Texas

Sir:

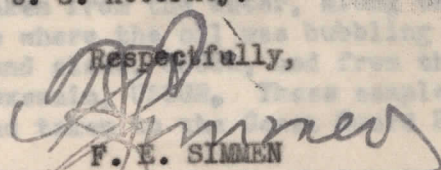
Here is a report of violation of the Oil Pollution Act of 1924, 33 U. S. C. 431-437, by the United States merchant vessel SS H. M. FREDRICKSEN, at Texas City, Texas, Pan American Dock No. 2, on 5 December, 1943. The facts in the case are these:

The H. M. FREDRICKSEN, a steam screw vessel under the United States Flag, is owned by the Sabine Transport Company, Port Arthur, Texas, and is operated by the War Shipping Administration. The First Mate of the vessel is Kenneth M. Smoak (License No. 73213), of 5006 9th. Street, Port Arthur, Texas.

The above vessel arrived in Texas City, Texas at 6:00 p. m., 4 December, 1943 and proceeded to Pan American Dock No. 2, where ballast was pumped into ballast pits. At 11:30 p. m. the vessel began receiving kerosene and heating oil, and finished about 8:30 a. m., 5 December. About 8:12 a. m. three leaks were discovered on the starboard side of this vessel below the waterline by Sterling J. Cheramine, Coxswain U. S. Coast Guard Reserve, who was patrolling the docks. One leak was amidship and two were near the break of the bow. Oil was bubbling up alongside the vessel at the rate of about one or two gallons per hour. The First Mate, Kenneth M. Smoak stated that the Number 3 tank, from which the oil was apparently leaking, was inspected before arrival. Even though some care was exercised to determine whether or not this vessel was in good condition, the oil spill is being reported to the Officer in Charge, Merchant Marine Inspection, U. S. Coast Guard for his information and action.

Statements were taken from Kenneth M. Smoak, First Mate of the vessel, John C. Stanley, Maritime Gangway Watchman, Thomas W. Yarbrough, Sterling J. Cheramine and Harry D. Truesdell, of the U. S. Coast Guard. Copies are attached for your information. Samples of the oil were taken from the water by Thomas W. Yarbrough and from the tank by Sterling J. Cheramine in the presence of each other on each occasion. These samples, together with the originals of the statements taken will be retained in this office for use by the U. S. Attorney.

Respectfully,


F. E. SIMMONS

Lieutenant, U. S. Coast Guard Reserve
Captain of the Port, Galveston

Copies to:

The Commandant, U. S. Coast Guard, Washington, D. C.
DCGO, Eighth Naval District, New Orleans, La.
U. S. District Attorney, Houston, Texas
Merchant Marine Inspector in Charge, Galveston, Texas

COTP (S)

Statements were taken from Kenneth M. Smoak, First mate of the S/S I.M. FREDRICKSEN; John G. Staley, 27 Texas Ave., Texas City, Texas; Maritime Gangway Watchman; Thomas W. Yarbrough, seaman second class, USCGR; Sterling J. Cheramie, coxswain, USCGR; and Harry D. Truesdell, coxswain, USCGR.

TO: Captain of the Port, Galveston, Texas. 5, 1943.

Subj: Oil Pollution; violation of.

1. I received a telephone call from Harry D. Truesdell, Coxswain of the Watch, USCGR, who was on duty at the waterfront of Texas City, Texas, at 0815, this date, notifying me of a leak on the vessel S/S A.M. FREDRICKSEN which was docked at Pan American Dock No. 2.

2. I arrived on the scene at about 0830 and found that the above vessel had three leaks on the starboard side, about midship. Oil bubbles were coming up to the surface of the water in a steady stream alongside of the vessel. Approximately a gallon of oil an hour was coming from each leak.

3. I interviewed First Mate Kenneth M. Smoak (License No. 73213), of 5006 9th St., Port Arthur, Texas, who had charge of the vessel and who was in charge of the loading, and showed him the leaks. He stated that he had tested the tanks and they did not show any leaks but that the leaks could have been caused by the vibration of the vessel or by the ship striking the dock at the time of docking. He also stated that the leaks did not show up until just before I arrived, while he was topping off the cargo. When I asked him where the leaks were coming from, he told me that they were either coming from the No. 3 starboard tank or from another tank alongside the No. 3. The bubbles coming up to the surface of the water of the harbor were following the edge of the plate on the vessel's side to get to the surface.

4. Kenneth M. Smoak, first mate, stated that the vessel is owned by The Sabine Transport Company, of Port Arthur, Texas, and is under the War Shipping Administration. He also said that he would notify his superiors and his agency immediately. He stated that the ship's cargo was heating oil.

5. Samples of oil were taken from the water, along the starboard side of the vessel, at the place where the oil was bubbling up, by Thomas W. Yarbrough, seaman second class, USCGR, and from the No. 3 tank by Sterling J. Cheramie, coxswain, USCGR. These samples were witnessed, signed, and sealed and taken to the Coast Guard Base office in Galveston, Texas.

6. There was about five gallons of oil on the surface of the water around the vessel at this time and, as far as the mate knew, she was not due to depart until sometime in the afternoon.

7. Statements were taken from Kenneth M. Smoak, first mate of the S/S A.M. FREDRICKSEN; John G. Staley, 27 Texas Ave., Texas City, Texas, Maritime Gangway Watchman; Thomas W. Yarbrough, seaman second class, USCGR; Sterling J. Chermie, coxswain, USCGR; and Harry D. Truesdell, coxswain, USCGR.

8 December, 1943

8. This vessel departed about 1400 December 5, 1943.

S/S K. M. Fredrickson
Owned by Sabine Transport Company
Port Arthur, Texas
Under War Shipping Administration

Wm. Lazauskas C. Sp.
WM. LAZAUSKAS

1. Incls: K. M. Smoak, Chief Mate, 5006 Fifth Street, Port Arthur, Texas.
Five statements of witnesses and samples of oil. License number is 73215. The ship docked in Texas City about 8:00 P. M., December 4, 1943. Proceeded to pump ballast into ballast pit. Finished pumping ballast and started loading kerosene and heating oil, started loading cargo 11:30 P. M., December 4, topping off about 8:30 A. M., December 5.

Two leaks show upon starboard side, about 1/3 mid-tank, at break of midships. Cause of leaks unknown as tanks were inspected for leaks before arrival. I am in charge of loading the vessel. Leaks could be caused by vibration or by coming alongside of dock. The leak was about one gallon per hour.

A report of these leaks will be made to my superiors immediately.

KENNETH M. SMOAK

Texas City, Texas

STATEMENT

Texas City, Texas
5 December, 1943

S/S H. M. Fredrickson
Owned by Sabine Transport Company
Port Arthur, Texas
Under War Shipping Administration

I, Kenneth M. Smoak, Chief Mate, 5006 Ninth Street, Port Arthur, Texas, have been aboard this ship two months as same. My license number is 73213. The ship docked in Texas City about 6:00 P. M., December 4, 1943. Proceeded to pump ballast into ballast pit. Finished pumping ballast and started loading kerosene and heating oil, started loading cargo 11:30 P. M., December 4, topping off about 8:30 A. M., December 5.

Two leaks show upon starboard side, about # 3 mid-tank, at break of midships. Cause of leaks unknown as tanks were inspected for leaks before arrival. I am in charge of loading the vessel. Leaks could be caused by vibration or by coming alongside of dock. The leak was about one gallon per hour.

A report of these leaks will be made to my superiors immediately.

/s/ KENNETH M. SMOAK

Texas City, Texas

STATEMENT

Texas City, Texas
5 December, 1943

Texas City, Texas
December 5, 1943.

My name is J. C. Staley, 27 Texas Avenue, Texas City, Texas and am employed by Mr. Hughes as a Maritime Guard.

I came on duty as the ship's guard on the Fredricksen, (berthed at Pan-American Docks, Texas City, Texas), at 8:00 A. M. December 5, 1943.

At 8:15 A. M. on December 5, 1943, one of the Coast Guardsmen discovered a leak on starboard-midships side. I looked also and saw the oil escaping into the water, and at this time, 9:05 A. M., it is still leaking.

On December 5, 1943, I was on regular duty, patrolling the docks of Texas City, Texas in company with Stow/s/ J. C. STALEY (SAC-325), Corvair. About 8:15 A. M. we were inspecting the ship Fredricksen, moored at the Pan American Dock number 2, the ship was berthed with the bow to the dock. I discovered a leak on the starboard side of the ship, and about midship and had a bucket of the buoy oil was bubbling up from the water immediately alongside the vessel in three or four places, all of which are near to the bow & starboard side of the ship.

We notified Marine Leader Harry E. Trumbull, (SAC-386), Corvair, U.S.N.R., 23rd zone. He had just gone aboard the Fredricksen, and looked at the leak and immediately notified Chief Officer Herman, Captain of the vessel.

The Chief arrived at Pan American Dock number 2 at about 8:30 A. M. When he arrived he instructed Harry E. Trumbull to use the bucket of the buoy oil to stop the leak. Trumbull then instructed me to take a bucket of the water, which I did, and Herman to get another bucket of the oil from the starboard side, which he did immediately.

I made certain that about two gallons of oil was used to stop the leak at the break of the buoy, and that very soon after the leak was stopped.

J. C. Staley
J. C. STALEY
Corvair 23rd Zone
U.S.N.R. 191

STATEMENT

December 5, 1943

Texas City, Texas
December 5, 1943.

My name is T. Walter Yarbrough (613-033), Seaman Second Class, U. S. Coast Guard Reserve. I am attached to the Asst. Captain of the Port Detail, Texas City, Texas, and have been doing patrol duty in the Texas City Harbor for about 12 months.

On December 5, 1943, I was on regular duty, patrolling the docks of Texas City Harbor in company with Sterling J. Cheramis (510-829), Coxswain. About 8:12 A.M. we were inspecting the ship Fredricksen, moored at the Pan American Dock number 2, the dock lies parallel with the harbor. We discovered 3 leaks on the starboard side of the ship, one about midship and two at the break of the bow. Oil was bubbling up from the water immediately alongside the vessel at these three places, all of which are near to the number 3 starboard tank of the ship.

We notified Section Leader Harry D. Truesdell, (526-656), Coxswain, U.S.C.G.R. at once. He had just gone aboard the Fredricksen. He looked at the leaks and immediately notified Chief William Lazauskas, Asst. Captain of the Port.

The Chief arrived at Pan American dock number 2 at about 8:30. Upon his arrival he instructed Harry D. Truesdell to see that samples of the oil were obtained. Truesdell then instructed me to take a sample from the water, which I did, and Cheramis to get sample from the number 3 starboard tank, which he did immediately.

I would estimate that about two gallons of oil an hour was coming from the two leaks at the break of the bow, and not very much from the leak about midship.

T. W. Yarbrough
T. W. YARBROUGH
Seaman 2nd Class
U.S.C.G. (R)

Harry D. Truesdell Jr.
Harry D. TRUESDELL JR.
Coxswain,
U.S.C.G. (R)

STATEMENT

December 5, 1943

Texas City, Texas
December 5, 1943.

My name is Harry D. Truesdell Jr. (526-856). I am a coxswain in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve. I am attached to the Captain of the Port Detail, Texas City, Texas, and have been on patrol duty in Texas City for about 18 months. I have been in the Coast Guard for about 19 months.

On December 5, 1943, at 0810 while on regular duty, I boarded the ship Fredricksen, moored at the Pan American Dock # 2 of the Texas City Harbor.

Just after I boarded the ship, T.W. Yarbrough, S. 2c, and S.J. Cheramie, Coxswain, called my attention to three leaks in the starboard side of the Fredricksen. Oil was bubbling up alongside the ship in two places adjacent to the # 3 Starboard tank. There was another much smaller leak amidships on the starboard side.

At approximately 0815, I called Chief William Lazauskas and told him of the leaks. Chief Lazauskas arrived at the Pen-Am Dock # 2 at about 0830. Upon his arrival, Chief Lazauskas instructed me to obtain samples of the oil. Chief Lazauskas then went to the mate's cabin to obtain a statement from him.

Yarbrough took a sample of the oil on the water alongside the ship and Cheramie took a sample of oil from the # 3 Starboard tank. I would estimate that about two gallons of oil an hour was coming from each of the two leaks adjacent to the # 3 Starboard tank. The amount of oil coming from the leak amidship was negligible.

I would estimate that the way leaks at the break of the bow was losing oil at the rate of two gallons an hour and the leak at amidship very little.

Harry D. Truesdell Jr.
HARRY D. TRUESDELL JR. (510-856)
Coxswain, S. (R)
U.S.C.G. (R)

STATEMENT

Texas City, Texas
December 5, 1943.

My name is Sterling J. Chermanie (510-829), Coxswain, U. S. Coast Guard Reserve, I am attached to the Asst. Captain of the port detail, Texas City, Texas, and have been doing patrol duty in the Texas City harbor for sixteen months. I am 22 years of age and have been in the Coast Guard for 22 months.

On December 5, 1943, I was on regular duty, patrolling the docks of Texas City Harbor in Company with T. Walter Yarbrough (613-033) seaman second class. About 0812 A.M. we were inspecting the ship Fredricksen, moored at the Pan American dock number 2, which dock lies parallel with the harbor. We discovered 3 leaks on the starboard side of the ship, one about midship and two at the break of the bow. Oil was bubbling up from the water immediately alongside the vessel at those three places, all of which are near to the # 3 starboard tank of the ship.

We notified Section leader Harry D. Trussdell, (526-856), Coxswain, U. S. C.G.R., at once. He had just gone aboard the Fredricksen. He looked at the leaks and immediately notified Chief William Lazauskas, Asst. Captain of the port.

Upon Chief William Lazauskas arrival he immediately talked to the ship mate and got a statement from him. Chief Lazauskas then told Trussdell to see that samples were taken. Yarbrough took a sample of oil from the water alongside the vessel and I took a sample from the # 3 starboard tank.

I would estimate that the two leaks at the break of the bow was losing oil at the rate of two gallons an hour and the leak at midship very little.

Sterling J. Chermanie
STERLING J. CHERAMIE (510-829)
Coxswain
U.S.C.G. (R)