

(16-TJF-wd)

UNITED STATES NAVAL INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

Confidential

INVESTIGATION REPORT

Sixth Naval District

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Subject: SS "JAMES E. WAYNE" - loose talk concerning.

Report Made at: SIXTH NAVAL DISTRICT - 2-4-J **Date:** May 28, 1943.

Report Made by: Gen. T. J. PENTWISS, USNR, and E. J. GOFF, CY(AA), USNR.

Period Covered: May 28, 29, 1943. **Status of Case:** PENDING

Origin of Case: Information received from Sgt. Norman E. BAKER, Jacksonville (Florida) Police Department, concerning a discussion of SUBJECT'S cargo and sailing time.

Character of Investigation:
To identify persons involved.

Enclosures: [None listed]

Copy to: [None listed]

Source File No. [None listed] **ONI File No.:** [None listed]

Synopsis: Information was received by Zone 4, GND, on May 28, 1943, at 0930, concerning the alleged conversation between two passengers in a taxi-cab who discussed the cargo and sailing time of the SS "JAMES E. WAYNE". Perry Lee HOWELL, driver of Safety Cab No. 61, stated that two men had ridden in his cab from 17th Street and Talleyrand Avenue to Bayshore Drive and Main Street and returned to 18th Street and Talleyrand Avenue. While in the cab these men talked primarily about women and "juke joints" but during the conversation discussed the cargo and sailing time of SUBJECT vessel. The younger man was described as being dressed in dungarees, skivey shirt, and sailor's hat, spoke with a marked southern accent, approximately 5 feet 6 or 7 inches tall, slight build. The other man was described as being dressed in civilian clothes, stiff straw hat, about 6 feet tall, talked with a marked foreign accent. The features of these men were not observed by the driver because of darkness. Crew members of the SS "JAMES E. WAYNE" were interviewed and without exception were able to account for the time in which the conversation is reported to have been held; however, Charles F. SCHOTT, Second Cook, 28 years of age, born in Arkansas, 5'8", ruddy complexion, light hair, 2-249429, 2-325024, SS 527-01-1268, next of kin, wife, Lella, 2730 Ridgewood Avenue, Tampa, Florida, is reported to have left the

Deductions: SS "JAMES E. WAYNE" about 1900 on May 21, 1943, for the purpose of returning to his home because of a relative's death. He has previously been investigated for "loose talk" by the U.S. Army and violation of the Selective Service Act by FBI.

Undeveloped Leads
For: None.

Approved:
J. LLOYD ABBOT,
Commander, USNR.,
District Intelligence Officer

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1. This investigation was conducted as a result of information received from Perry Lee HOWELL to the effect that a person whose appearance indicated he was a member of the merchant marine and a person dressed in civilian clothes entered his taxicab and discussed the cargo and sailing time of the SS "JAMES H. WAYNE". Investigation was conducted jointly with FBI, Jacksonville, Florida.

2. On May 23, 1943, at 0930, Sgt. Norman E. HANSEN, Jacksonville (Florida) Police Department, furnished the following information:

3. A taxicab driver by the name of HOWELL, who drives Safety Cab No. 51 telephoned the Police Department on May 21, 1943, at approximately 2300, and stated he had been hailed by two men on Talleyrand Avenue about 2100 and had driven them out Main Street and returned them to Talleyrand Avenue; that during the drive these men talked about the approximate sailing time of the SS "JAMES H. WAYNE" and its cargo.

4. Perry Lee HOWELL, 3453 Brentwood Avenue, Jacksonville, Florida, driver of cab #51 for the Safety Cab Company, 711 Houston Street, Jacksonville, states he has been driving a taxicab in Jacksonville for nine years and has been driving safety cabs for six years; that on May 21, 1943, at 3045, he was hailed by two men at 17th Street and Talleyrand Avenue who asked for a private cab and were informed by HOWELL that if they were going in the direction of downtown Jacksonville this would not be possible but if they wished to go in another direction they could have the cab private. The men agreed to accept the offer and instructed informant to drive in any direction that they could have a private cab. HOWELL states he drove the men to the corner of Bayshore Road and Main Street where he made a U-turn and returned them to 19th Street and Talleyrand Avenue where they left the cab and walked in the direction of the entrance to the Municipal Dock. Informant states he informed the passengers that the fare would be \$2 and they paid him \$3.

5. HOWELL described one passenger as 25-28 years of age, five feet six or seven inches tall, slight build, spoke with marked southern accent, wearing blue dungarees, white khivey shirt, and a white sailor's hat, but states that due to the darkness during the entire trip he did not see his face.

6. HOWELL described the other passenger as appearing to be a civilian, dressed in medium dark suit, stiff straw hat, about six feet tall, spoke with a marked foreign accent, but advised that he did not see this person's features and is of the opinion that he could not positively identify either of the passengers.

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7. ROWELL states that upon entering the cab the passenger described as a merchant seaman said, "XO946". Since this seemed odd to ROWELL he wrote it down on the inside of a package of paper matches for future reference. From that point until they returned to Talleyrand Avenue the conversation was primarily about "juke joints" and women but intermittently the younger man stated that the SS "JAMES M. WAYNE" would leave Jacksonville within 12 hours; that she was loaded with Army tanks, cotton, and some other type of cargo which ROWELL did not recall.

8. Immediately upon discharging his passengers, ROWELL drove to the nearest Safety Cab phone located at 28th and Pearl Streets and gave the above information to the Jacksonville Police Department.

9. Investigating officers proceeded to the SS "JAMES M. WAYNE" accompanied by ROWELL where the entire crew, with the exception of one Charles P. SCHOTT, Second Cook, was interviewed, including those members of the armed guard crew who had liberty on the night of May 21, 1943.

10. The unanimous decision of interviewing officers was that those men aboard the ship were not involved as a result of the questioning; however, information received concerning SCHOTT was that he had left the vessel about 1900 on the night of May 21, 1943, and apparently had no intention of returning to the ship. Captain HUGHINS stated that SCHOTT left the ship because of a death in the family and had returned to Tampa, Florida.

11. Articles show that Charles P. SCHOTT is 28 years of age, born in Arkansas, 5 feet 8 inches tall, ruddy complexion, light hair, E-242429, E-325084, SS 527-01-1258, next of kin, wife, Leila, 2750 Ridgewood Avenue, Tampa, Florida.

12. Files of FBI, Miami, were checked and revealed that this man has been investigated by the U. S. Army with reference to "loose talk" and investigated by FBI for violation of Selective Service.

13. Captain HUGHINS and the Chief Mate of the SS "JAMES M. WAYNE", were requested to inform investigating officers immediately upon arrival of SCHOTT aboard that vessel, but no information concerning the arrival of SCHOTT aboard the vessel was obtained prior to its sailing. After this vessel had sailed information was obtained that SCHOTT was aboard. NYIU will interview Charles P. SCHOTT, Second Cook, SS "JAMES M. WAYNE" upon the arrival of this vessel at Charleston Navy Yard.