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1944 JUN 24 AM 7 57

U.S. NAVAL LIAISON OFFICE

TAKORADI, GOLD COAST

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

14 June 1944

**From:** The Commanding Officer.  
**To :** Chief of Naval Operations.  
**Subj:** Misconduct of Merchant Marine Personnel aboard  
 SS JOHN P. MITCHELL - Report of.  
**Ref :** (a) Opnav Airmailgram 091513 Dec 1942.  
 (b) Our dispatch CNO 141500 June 1944.  
**Enc :** (A) One carbon copy of each confession obtained concern-  
 ing misconduct.

1. On 14 June 1944, this officer in company with the junior officer of this post, boarded subject vessel at the invitation of the master, to obtain complete information and testimony surrounding a theft committed by certain members of ship's crew, who broke into the Army P-X aboard on 2 June 1944.

2. Information, identical with that presented in enclosure (A), was given by Comdr. H. Sandvik, USMM, who supplied the signed copies of enclosure (A).

3. Briefly, Robert H. Davidson, wiper, Z-485512, Samuel M. Hardy, merchant seaman, oiler, Z-390125, and R.W. Snider, merchant seaman, O.S. acting A.B., on 2 June 1944 broke into the Army P-X, stole a quantity of cartons of cigarettes and certain other merchandise. Included in the division of the loot, as well as the three aforementioned, were Charles M. Green, Jr., utility Z-337639, Claude J. Hill, ordinary seaman Z-469667.

4. Reference (b) consisted of a preliminary report from this office.

5. It is the more regrettable that this incident occurred, since the master of subject vessel maintains rigid discipline aboard. This officer, while aboard, inspected the Armed Guard crew, their quarters and armament, and found all in commendable condition. Additionally, the master, through the proper exercise of disease preventive and suppressive measures aboard, has established an excellent health record for the ship's crew.

6. This office took no action save to transmit this information to CNO. The master of subject vessel requests that the men be apprehended at the first port of call in the U.S.A.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NN 3-26-83-11

By LW NARA. Date 5/25/17

JOHN P. YOUNG  
Lt. Comdr., USNR.

S/S John P. Mitchell

*W. C. W. Mason  
4.0.P. & Ph. M.*

S S JOHN P. MITCHELL  
S S JOHN P. MITCHELL

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MARSHALL, LIBERIA  
JUNE 5, 1944  
1950

ROBERT H. DAVIDSON, WIPER

Z 48563712 *R.H.D.*

I, Robert H. Davidson, Wiper, being warned of my rights that I do not have to make any statement and any statement made by me may be used against me.

I wish to make the following statement:

*1020 AM R.H.D*

On June 2, 1944, at ~~8 P.M.~~ I went down to the Army sleeping Quarters to get a bunk for sleeping out on deck. I noticed the P X light on and went over and looked in. I noticed the chain and lock and then ten more cartons later. I did not enter the PX or have knowledge of how these cigarettes were obtained but did know that Oiler, came in and asked me what I was doing. I told him the Px was these cigarettes were stolen. We went in and took a Coke case and put twenty-three cartons of Chesterfields, eight toothbrushed, toothpowder and shaving cream in it. Hardy and I took this merchandise to Hardy's room and divided *R.H.D.* ~~fifty-fifty.~~ *R.H.D.*

*C.M. Grump*  
Signature

About nine o'clock p.m. the same date, I told R.W. Snider, AB and he and I went down to the PX again. Snider took a case of Chesterfields, some toothbrushed, tooth powder and a package of Dukes smoking tobacco.

I have made this statement voluntarily without promise or threats from any person.

*Jack A. Holt*  
Second mate

*Robert H. Davidson*  
Signature

WITNESSES:

*William A. Shaw*  
*1st Lt. J.C. Transport Comm.*

*H. Sandvik*  
H. Sandvik, Master  
S/S John P. Mitchell

*Arthur A. Blalock*  
Ch. Mate

*Jack A. Holt*  
Second Mate

*D.E. Benson*  
*J.R.P. & Ph.M.*

*H. Sandvik*  
H. Sandvik, Master  
S/S John P. Mitchell

S S JOHN P. MITCHELL

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MARSHALL, LIBERIA

JUNE 5, 1944

2010

CHARLES M. GREEN, UTILITY

Z 337639 C.Z.G.

1979  
1976

CLAUDE J. HILL, ORDINARY SEAMAN, Z 469667 C.J.H.

I, Charles M. Green, Utility, being warned of my rights that

I do not have to make any statement and any statement made by me may be used against me.

I wish to make the following statement:

On June 3, 1944, at P.M. R.W. Snider, asked me if I wanted some cigarettes. I said 'Sure'. He gave me ten cartons and then ten more cartons later. I did not enter the PX or have knowledge of how these cigarettes were obtained but did know that these cigarettes were stolen.

I have made this statement voluntarily without promise or threats from any person.

C.M. Green  
Signature

I have made this statement voluntarily without promise or threats from any person.

William A. Thon

1st Lt. U.S. Transport Company

Arthur G. Glaser  
Ch. Mate

Jack A. Holt  
Second Mate

D.E. Benson  
J.A.P. + Ch. M.

Claude J. Hill  
Signature

H. Sandvik  
H. Sandvik, Master  
S/S John P. Mitchell

Jack A. Holt  
Second Mate

D.E. Benson  
J.A.P. + Ch. M.

H. Sandvik  
H. Sandvik, Master  
S/S John P. Mitchell

S S JOHN P. MITCHELL

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MARSHALL, LIBERIA  
JUNE 5, 1944  
1950 MARSHALL, LIBERIA  
JUNE 5, 1944  
1940

CLAUDE J. HILL, ORDINARY SEAMAN, Z 469667 C.J.H.

I, Claude J. Hill, O.S., being warned of my rights that I do not have to make a statement and any statement made by me may be used against me.

I wish to make the following statement:

On June 3, 1944, at P.M. R.W. Snider, asked me if I smoked Chesterfields and if I wanted some. He gave me fifteen cartons of which I put five in my locker and ten in my suitcase.

On June 5, 1944, an unexpected inspection was made by Ship's Officers and I knew that these cigarettes should not be found in my room. I asked R.W. Snider, what I should do and he told me to put the cigarettes where he, could get them. I set the suitcase, containing ten cartons cigarettes in the door and he took them someplace. I kept five cartons in my locker.

I have made this statement voluntarily without promise or threats from any person.

Claude J. Hill  
Signature

WITNESSES:

William G. Thorn  
1st Lt. U.S. Transport Comm.

Arthur G. Lehner  
Ch. Mate

Jack A. Holt  
Second Mate

D.E. Benson  
J.A.P. & Ch. M.

H. Sandvik  
H. Sandvik, MASTER  
S/S John P. Mitchell  
H. Sandvik  
H. Sandvik, Master  
S/S John P. Mitchell

S S JOHN P. MITCHELL

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MARSHALL, LIBERIA

JUNE 5, 1944

1930

Z 394148 R.W.S.

R.W. SNIDER, MERCHANT SEAMAN, O.S. ACTING AB.

I, R.W. Snider, O.S. acting AB, being warned of my rights that I do not have to make any statement and any statement made by me may be used against me.

1978

I wish to make the following statement:

On June 2, 1944 at nine-thirty p.m., R.H. Davidson, Wiper, and

myself went down to the Army P.X. (located in the Troop Quarters) and

~~prized the lock off~~ <sup>opened</sup> the door. We entered and took a full case of Chester-

R.W.S.

fields (50 Cartons), took ~~some~~ <sup>one</sup> toothbrushes, tooth powder and a package

R.W.S.

Dukes smoking tobacco.

I gave Charles M. Green, Jr. Utility, twenty cartons, Claude J.

Hill, O'S. fifteen cartons and kept the balance myself.

the coast was clear, which it was, and we agreed to divide fifty-fifty.

I have made this statement voluntarily without promise or threats from any person.

I have made this statement voluntarily without promise or threats from any person.

R.W. Snider

Signature

Samuel H. Hardy

Signature

WITNESSES:

William A. Thorne  
1st A.C. Transport Comm.

Arthur A. Walker  
Ch. Mate

Jack A. Holt  
Second Mate

D. E. Benson  
J.A.P. & Ph.M.

H. Sandvik

H. Sandvik

H. Sandvik, MASTER  
S/S John P. Mitchell

*E.O. Exhibit #1*

S S JOHN P. MITCHELL

CONFIDENTIAL

MARSHALL, LIBERIA

JUNE 5, 1944

2000

SAMUEL H. HARDY, MERCHANT SEAMAN, OILER Z 390125 *SHH*

I, Samuel H. Hardy, Oiler, being warned of my rights that I do not have to make any statement and any statement made by me may be used against me.

*1975*

I wish to make the following statement:

On June 2, 1944, about <sup>*10:30 AM*</sup> ~~six thirty p.m.~~ I went down to Army *SHH*  
Sleeping Quarters for a piece of 2" x 4" and found Robert H. Davidson,  
Wiper. Davidson told me the PX door was open and we went into the PX  
Davidson ~~and I~~ <sup>*SHH*</sup> took twenty-three cartons of Chesterfields, eight tooth-  
brushes, four shaving cream and some toothpowder. I went out to see if  
the coast was clear, which it was, <sup>*SHH*</sup> and we ~~agreed to divide fifty-fifty.~~ *SHH*

I have made this statement voluntarily without promise or threats from any person.

*Samuel H. Hardy*  
Signature

WITNESSES:

*William G. Thorne*  
*1st Lt. J.C. Transport Comm.*

*Arthur C. Plaker*  
*Ch. Mate*

*Jack A. Holt*  
*Second Mate*

*D. E. Benson*  
*J.A.P. + Ch. M.*

*H. Sandvik*  
H. Sandvik, Master  
S/S John P. Mitchell