

CONFIDENTIAL

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
REPORT ON U. S. MERCHANT VESSEL WAR ACTION CASUALTY

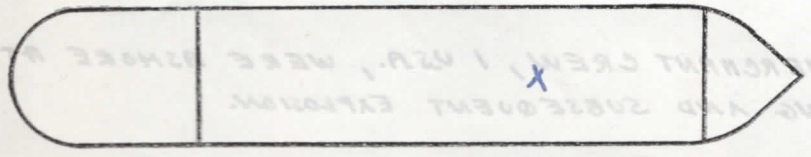
To: Commandant, U. S. Coast Guard, Washington, D. C.

Ship S/S JOSEPH WHEELER Service OCEAN FREIGHT

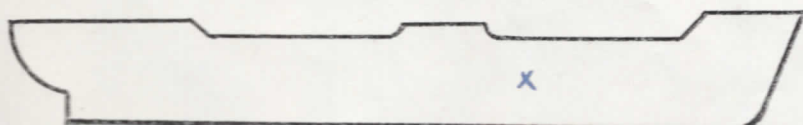
Owner W-S-A Operator SOUTH ATLANTIC SS Co.

Information furnished by CHIEF MATE Date 28 OCTOBER, 1944

LINE No.	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1	Year built and propulsion	Built <u>1942</u> Propulsion <u>STEAM</u>
2	Tonnage	Gross <u>7126</u> Net <u>4380</u>
3	Draft loaded (maximum allowed)	Fwd <u>28' (M)</u> Aft <u>29'6"</u>
4	Draft when attacked	Fwd <u>29'7" (M)</u> Aft <u>30'02"</u>
5	Cargo on board (any deck)	Nature <u>GENERAL AND AMMUNITION</u> Tons <u>8000</u>
6	Voyage	From <u>NEW YORK</u> To <u>BARI, ITALY.</u>
7	Were routing orders followed	<u>YES</u>
8	Any criticism of orders	<u>NO</u>
9	Weather at time of attack	Weather <u>CLEAR</u> Sea <u>CALM</u>
10	Was enemy sighted? When	<u>YES; DURING AND AFTER ATTACK.</u>
11	Any friendly ships in sight	<u>YES</u>
12	Were navigation lights on	<u>NO</u>
13	Date and time of attack	Date <u>12/2/43</u> Time <u>1930</u>
14	Position	Latitude <u>AT ANCHOR AT BARI, ITALY</u> Longitude <u>AT ANCHOR AT BARI, ITALY</u>
15	Nature of attack (Give data)	<u>BOMBED</u>
16	Number of hits	<u>1</u>
17	Location of hits (Mark diagram)	<u>1- FOR'D. - 1#3</u>
18	Effect of hits	<u>SANK SHIP</u>
19	Was ship armed? What type	<u>YES.</u>
20	Was armament used? State result	<u>YES; UNKNOWN</u>
21	Any explosions or fires*	Ship <u>YES; EXPLOSION</u> Cargo <u>YES; EXPLOSION.</u>
22	Was deck ruptured	<u>YES</u>
23	Did ship break in two	<u>YES</u>
24	Was SOS sent	<u>NO</u>
25	Ship's speed	Normal <u>10.0</u> When attacked <u>AT ANCHOR</u> When abandoned <u>STOP</u>
26	Time abandoned, sunk	Abandoned <u>NO TIME TO ABANDON</u> Sunk <u>2000 (30 min.)</u>
27	Was ship reboarded	By whom <u>NO</u> When <u>—</u>
28	Was ship brought in	How <u>NO</u> Approximate damage <u>SUNK</u>



*Fill in this diagram to show attack hits, fires, etc.



Indicate by star (*) rafts, floats, or suits used as temporary refuge in water before rescue by lifeboats.

LINE No.	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
29	Lifeboats.....	Number carried <u>4</u> Which used <u>0</u>
30	Lifeboats.....	Number lost <u>4</u> How <u>1-PREVIOUS HEAVY WEATHER</u> <u>3-BOMB EXPLOSION</u>
31	Life rafts.....	Number carried <u>4</u> Which used <u>0</u>
32	Life rafts.....	Number lost <u>4</u> How <u>BOMB EXPLOSION</u>
33	Life floats.....	Number carried <u>2</u> Which used <u>0</u>
34	Life floats.....	Number lost <u>2</u> How <u>BOMB EXPLOSION</u>
35	Lifesaving suits.....	Number carried <u>50</u> Number used <u>0</u>
36	Were boats, etc., attacked.....	Attacked <u>NO</u> Casualties <u>0</u>
37	Time in each boat, raft, etc.	Boat..... Raft..... Float.....
		Boat..... Raft..... Float.....
38	Rescued by and where.....	By <u>ONLY SURVIVORS WERE</u> Where <u>THOSE ASHORE.</u>
39	Number of gun crew carried (military).....	Officers <u>1</u> Enlisted men <u>27</u>
40	Number ship's crew carried.....	Officers <u>3</u> Radiomen <u>2</u> Unlicensed <u>31</u>
41	Number passengers and others carried.....	Passengers <u>1</u> Others <u>0</u>
42	Total on board.....	<u>70</u>
43	Number gun crew injured (military).....	Officers <u>0</u> Enlisted men <u>0</u>
44	Number ship's crew injured.....	Officers <u>0</u> Radiomen <u>0</u> Unlicensed <u>0</u>
45	Number passengers and others injured.....	Passengers <u>0</u> Others <u>0</u>
46	Number gun crew lost (military).....	Officers <u>0</u> Enlisted men <u>15</u>
47	Number ship's crew lost.....	Officers <u>6</u> Radiomen <u>1</u> Unlicensed <u>19</u>
48	Number passengers and others lost.....	Passengers <u>0</u> Others <u>0</u>
49	Total casualties.....	Injured <u>0</u> Lost <u>41</u>
50	Persons lost by (Specify).....	Drowning <u>0</u> Fire <u>0</u> Shell or torpedo <u>41</u>
		Other causes <u>0</u>
51	Total rescued.....	Gun crew <u>13</u> Officers <u>2</u> Radio operators <u>1</u>
		Unlicensed <u>12</u> Passengers <u>1</u> Others <u>0</u> Total <u>29</u>
52	Persons saved by.....	Boats <u>0</u> Rafts <u>0</u> Floats <u>0</u> Suits <u>0</u>
		Preservers <u>0</u> Other means <u>0</u> No aid <u>29</u> NOTED
53	Engineering watch below.....	Number on watch below <u>3</u> Number lost below <u>3</u>
54	Number of look-outs.....	<u>6</u>
55	Any defective material.....	<u>NO</u>
56	Any personnel fault.....	<u>NO</u>

COMMENTS, CRITICISMS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The comments, criticisms, or recommendations of survivors with respect to safety of seamen and ships involved in war actions are earnestly solicited by Headquarters in order that the fullest provision possible may be made for the safety of American ships and seamen.

NOTED: 13 ARMED GUARD, 15 MERCHANT CREW, 1 USA., WERE ASHORE AT THE TIME OF THE BOMBING AND SUBSEQUENT EXPLOSION.