

LENA LUCKENBACH (January 20, 1942)

Second Mate's comments:

"Q. Which one did you carry swung?

"A. Starboard boat swung. Had been carryin' both out. Had just swung them out before we left the boat.

"Q. How did you make your lifeboats fast when you swung them out?

"A. Had them swung out and secured to a spar.

"Q. Improvised spar with mattress on it?

"A. Yes. Mattress; padding.

"Q. Did you have any life ropes spanned between the davits?

"A. Yes, sir. Life ropes.

"Q. The wooden hatch covers, did they blow up?

"A. Yes, off No. 1.

"Q. Canvas, too?

"A. Canvas ripped.

"Q. Blow the booms up?

"A. No. Blew beams up. Blew one beam out of No. 1 hatch, I know.

"Q. What rig sails did you have?

"A. Leg of mutton sail.

"Q. No jib?

"A. No, sir.

"Q. How did she sail?

"A. Pretty fair.

"Q. What did you think of the sail?

"A. It worked all right.

"Q. Have any fault to find with the gear on the vessel?

"A. No, sir.



"Q. Did they turn in the general alarm when she was struck?

"A. Yes. Turned it in myself.

"Q. Work all right?

"A. Yes, sir.

"Q. Somebody shut down the main engines?

"A. Yes, sir.

"Q. When you launched the boat, did the vessel have any headway?

"A. Very little, I would say."

NABCO (March 23, 1942)

Excerpts from Summary Report by Navy

"At 0300 E.S.T. or shortly thereafter a violent shock was felt in the engine room and crew's quarters aft, and those crew members not on duty rushed on deck to find the entire 'midships superstructure ablaze and burning oil spurting out over the surrounding sea. It is believed that all deck officers, the radio operator, chief steward, quartermaster of the watch and two seamen, perished in the blaze as neither of the 'midships boats or forward life rafts was launched.

"The ship was thoroughly blackened and no colors were flying at the time of the attack.

"Several minutes after the torpedo struck, the Chief Engineer entered the engine room, shut off the engine and turned on the steam smothering system. An attempt was then made to launch lifeboat No. 4 (port side, aft) but due to the ship's still being under way the boat swamped and a few managed to climb up the falls and enter lifeboat No. 3 (starboard side, aft). All in lifeboat No. 4, with the exception of the boatswain and one A. B. who swam back to the ship later, were burned to death or drowned."