

Op-16-B-5

NAVY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON 25 D C

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13 July 1945MEMORANDUM FOR FILEALL TIMES GCT

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SUBJECT: Summary of Statements by Survivors of the SS MARY A. LIVERMORE, U.S. Freighter, 7176 G.T., owned by War Shipping Administration, operated by the Isthmian Steamship Company.

1. The MARY A. LIVERMORE was struck by a Japanese plane at 2015 GCT, 27 May 45, while at anchor in Nakagusuku Bay, Okinawa (26.12N - 127.46E), having sailed from Ulithi 5 May arriving at Okinawa 9 May, with 5075 tons of Navy cargo (at time of attack about 1000 tons were still aboard). Vessel did not sink but temporary repairs were made and vessel sailed from Okinawa in convoy 5 June for Saipan and departed Saipan 18 June for San Francisco.
2. Ship was at anchor. No other information available.
3. At approximately 2015 a plane, which had just taken off from the water, was sighted about 2 points off the port bow. Plane dived for the ship, first touched the #3 boom which swung plane to starboard; next touched starboard 20 MM gun, and ended up striking directly into the chart room and Captain's quarters. Explosion of bomb carried by attacking plane wrecked chart room and Captain's quarters; destroyed lifeboats #1, #3, and #4 with davits, #3 port boom, #4 starboard topping lifts, top of bridge, bridge deck, and radio and gyro installation. Sound- ing machine was lost. The boat deck accomodations were destroyed or damaged. Main deck beams bent; bulkheads, midships superstructure, crew accomodations, messhalls, and saloon damaged. Temporary repairs were made and vessel sailed under her own power. Confidential publications were secured on board including one completely burned beyond use.
4. Ship was abandoned by the survivors and the dead and wounded were taken ashore. Seven merchant crew and 4 Armed Guard were killed; 4 merchant crew and 3 Armed Guard were injured and hospitalized.
5. The plane was described as a Japanese float plane which had just taken off from the water within sight of those on board. The Jap plane was mistaken for a friendly U.S. plane, commonly called "Kingfisher".
6. There was nothing left of the plane except propeller hub and reduction gear. A small portion of a wooden propeller still remained in the hub fastenings.

E. M. Harris, Jr.
E. M. HARRIS, JR.
Lieut., USNR

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