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(To correspond with SUBJECT given below. See O. N. I. Index Guide. Make separate report for each main title.)

From U.S. Naval Observer at Natal, Brazil Date 8 October, 1943
(Ship, fleet, unit, district, office, station, or person)

Reference (a) U.S. Naval Attache, Rio Intelligence Report #615-43 of 9 Sept. 1943.
(Directive, correspondence, previous related report, etc., if applicable)

Source Captain of the Port, Personal Observation, Evaluation A-1
(As official, personal observation, publication, press, conversation with-- Identify when practicable, etc.) A-1 to E-9 etc. AS/EN 3-10; SER. 4312/16-11-18-42

Subject BRAZIL Shinning Casualty to Commercial Vessel.
(Nation reported on) (Main title as per index guide) (Subtitles) (Make separate report for each title)

BRIEF.—(Here enter careful summary of report, containing substance succinctly stated; include important facts, names, places, dates, etc.)

SUMMARY: U.S.A.T. MONTEREY RAILED AND SANK BRAZILIAN COMMERCIAL SCHOONER, AREIA BRANCA, WHILE CLEARING NATAL HARBOR AT 0345, SEPTEMBER 28 - CIRCUMSTANCES INDICATE MONTEREY WAS NOT TO BLAME - CAPTAIN OF PORT OF NATAL FORWARDING REPORT ON CASE TO "TRIBUNAL MARITIMA" IN RIO - IF ATTEMPTS OF OWNERS TO SALVAGE AREIA BRANCA FAIL, IT WILL BE DYNAMITED TO CLEAR HARBOR ENTRANCE.

Enclosures:

- (A) Statement of Capt. H. A. CHURCH, Commander of "Monterey" of 28 Sept. 1943.
- (B) Record of Ships Log "Monterey" of 28 September 1943.
- (C) ALUSNOB, Natal conf. despatch 011756 of October 1943.

1. The U.S.A.T. MONTEREY made ready for sea and cast off from the dock at Natal at 0335 on September 28th. The tide was high water slack at 0325, light wind, calm water, dark night with no moon. Two lights marking the entrance to the harbor and 3 buoy channel lights were burning and the MONTEREY running lights were bright. As the MONTEREY was passing between the end of the breakwater and a reef which marked the entrance to the harbor, a small two-masted Brazilian commercial schooner hauled across the bow. The pilot endeavored to maneuver to avoid collision but it was impossible to maneuver sufficiently in the restricted waters without certainly running the MONTEREY on the reef or into the breakwater, so the MONTEREY struck the schooner amidships at 0345 and after pushing it along for about a hundred yards, the schooner sank.

2. The sunken vessel was a two-masted coastal schooner without auxiliary engine, the AREIA BRANCA, owned by the Mossoro Comercial, Ltda., with main offices at Areia Branca, Rio Grande do Norte. The AREIA BRANCA, was carrying a cargo of 90 tons of gypsum. The vessel, valued at approximately \$15,000 U.S.C., was not insured, but the cargo was. - All 6 of the AREIA BRANCA's crew were saved, and only 2 sustained minor injuries.

3. The Master and the First Mate of the MONTEREY were interrogated by the Captain of the Port and both made written statements which they left in his possession. The statement of the Captain, as well as a record of the ships log are appended as enclosures (A) and (B). Statements have also been made by the pilot, the Captain of the sunken vessel, as well as three crew members. The Captain of the Port is in the process of making a report on the basis of the

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Routing space below for use in O. N. I.

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Serial No. 259-43

U.S. NAVAL OBSERVER
NATAL, BRAZIL

above mentioned statements, which he will submit for approval to the representatives of the MONTEREY (U.S. Army, Parnamirim Field) and the representatives of the wrecked vessel before turning them in to the "Tribunal Maritima" in Rio where the case is to be adjudicated.

4. Judging from the circumstances of the collision, it is evident that the blame does not lie with the Master of the MONTEREY. From a discussion with the Captain of the Port on this subject, the writer feels that the owners realize the futility of making a claim against the steamship company. In the course of the conversation with the Captain of the Port, he informed the writer that the Master of the AREIA BRANCA had failed to obtain permission from the Office of the Captain of the Port to depart Natal, which further corroborates the lack of any case against the MONTEREY.

5. The AREIA BRANCA is resting on the bottom on its side in 7 meters and 70 centimeters - 5 meters and 60 centimeters depth, 115 meters off the breakwater and bearing 15 degrees true from it (this is calculated on chart #872, Revised (see reference (a))). The wreck constitutes a hazard to ships entering and leaving the port of Natal and a communication to that effect was sent by the Naval Observer, Natal to interested parties, informing them of the situation (see enclosure (C)). A diver has been sent down to examine the wreck, and efforts are now being made by the owners to salvage the AREIA BRANCA. If salvage fails, plans have been made to dynamite the wreck and clear the harbor entrance.

COMMENT: The present position of the wrecked vessel, which is marked by two buoys, necessitates extra care on the part of vessels entering and departing Natal harbor. Large vessels are only permitted to enter at high water, and no vessels are permitted to enter at night. - It is desirable to have the AREIA BRANCA removed as soon as possible either by salvaging or by dynamiting.

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Enclosure (A) to ALUSNOB,
 Natal Intelligence Report
 #259-43 of 8 October 1943.

28 September 1943

Statement of Capt. H. A. CHURCH, Commander of "Monterey".

At 3:45 AM after underway and headed down river the engine was put on slow speed. I stood in the wheel house with the pilot checking on the Quarter-master to see that the pilot's orders were carried out properly. When we was about to make the last channel turn at the last flashing white buoy, we, the pilot and I sighted the schooner on port side, and when ship was on the course to pass between the breakwater, the schooner was still about four degrees on port bow, when all of a sudden I observed that he had hauled across our bow, and at the same time the pilot gave a command hard aport, seeing that would do no good he ordered "Hard astarboard" which would enable us to swing around the breakwater and possibly clear the schooner. However the schooner swung more on our bow where we struck her at four fifteen.

At the time it was noticed that the schooner had hauled across our bow. Our ship was in a very dangerous place to stop or back her with the current, and loose stowage way she would have gone onshore.

The pilot boat which we were towing along side cast off at the time of the collision and rescued all of the schooner crew.

In as far as the pilot was concerned I feel that he done everything possible to avoid the collision. Visibility was clear.

/s/ H. A. Church,
 Master

At 3:45 AM after underway and headed down river the engine was put on slow speed. I stood in the wheel house with the pilot checking on the Quarter-master to see that the pilot's orders were carried out properly. When we was about to make the last channel turn at the last flashing white buoy, we, the pilot and I sighted the schooner on port side, and when ship was on the course to pass between the breakwater, the schooner was still about four degrees on port bow, when all of a sudden I observed that he had hauled across our bow, and at the same time the pilot gave a command hard aport, seeing that would do no good he ordered "Hard astarboard" which would enable us to swing around the breakwater and possibly clear the schooner. However the schooner swung more on our bow where we struck her at four fifteen.

/s/ H. A. Church,
 Master

Enclosure (A) to ALUSNOB,

From: ALUSNOB NATAL

To: BUREAU RECORDS; ALUSNOB BUREAU; ALUSNOB PORTLAND; ALUSNOB SAN DIEGO

INFO ALL AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS PARS TO ALUSNOB BUREAU & ALUSNOB BUREAU PORTLAND

SAG LITA HAVE 1 ADVISORY PARAGRAPH WHICH CONCERNES CHANNEL NATAL WENT TO BE

NOT ENTER AFTER DARK AND ONLY DRAFT WHICH SHOULD ONLY ENTER AT 11:00 - AFTER DARK

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Enclosure (B) to ALUSNOB,
Natal Intelligence Report
#259-43 of 8 October 1943.

28 September 1943

RECORD OF SHIPS LOG "MONTEREY"

12:22 Midnight - Finished discharging cargo.
12:40 Stevedores left ship.
02:30 Pilot onboard, started getting crew out and singling up lines.
03:02 Stand by engines.
03:35 Cast off lines on dock. Started turning ship.

AHEAD				ASTERN			
Stop	Slow	Half	Full	Stop	Slow	Half	Full
0330	0330					0357	
0331	0331			0359		0359½	
0332	0332			0400		0419	
0333	0333			0426			
0334	0334						
0337	0340						
0341	0346						
0347	0347						
0351	0352						
0353		0355					
	0356						
0357		0359					
	0359						
			0401				
	0402	0402					
0413	(Bells to engine while leaving dock, turning ship, thence to anchorage outside of breakwater)						

0415 When between entrance breakwaters struck schooner that hauled across our bow from port side. Position of ship was such it was impossible to back or stop until clear of breakwaters. Pilot boat that was towing alongside cast off and picked up crew. Six men all of crew. Dropped anchor at 0424. At 0430 pilot boat with schooner crew arrived alongside - two members of the crew were bruised and taken to ship's hospital onboard.

/s/ H. A. CHURCH,
Master.

Enclosure (C) to ALUSNOB,
Natal Intelligence Report
#259-43 of 8 October 1943.

DESPATCH

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From: ALUSNOB NATAL

To: USNAVCOM RECIFE; ALUSNOB BELEM; ALUSNOB FORTALEZA; ALUSNOB SAO LUIZ

INFO ALL ADDRES CONFIDENTIAL PASS TO ALUSNOB RECIFE X ALUSNODS BELEM FORTALEZA
SAO LUIZ HAVE X ACCOUNT PRESENCE WRECK SCHOONER CHANNEL NATAL VESSELS MUST
NOT ENTER AFTER DARK AND DEL. DRAFT SHIPS SHOULD ONLY ENTER AT HIGH WATER SLACK X