

CONFIDENTIAL

ACTION OF ENEMYName of Vessel
Date of CasualtyRICHARD CASWELL (Cont'd)
7-16-43

were headed for New York. He asked us what the cargo consisted of and how much cargo there was. We told him there was about 9,000 tons of mixed cargo. He said he didn't believe it. Then he left the deck and walked back and spoke to the other men in the conning tower, then he came back and handed us a package of cigarettes and a package of matches. Then he went back to the conning tower and turned the submarine around and went off at a right angle and submerged and some of the boys waved their fingers in a 'V' and some of our boys waved back. When the commander was on deck he didn't even point the gun at us. He asked if the captain was with us. We said: 'No, the last we saw of the captain was on the bridge.' He said: 'That's too bad.'

Name of Vessel
Date of CasualtyRICHARD HOVBY
3-29-44

Armed Guard Officer

"After a time the submarine surfaced and fired upon the ship. Subsequently thereto it fired on the lifeboats and rafts and came closer to them. It concentrated its fire first on #2 lifeboat. When they jumped overboard into the water and did everything possible to avoid being struck by shells and gunfire. The submarine approached #2 lifeboat first and after firing upon it, rammed it causing it to overturn and partially sink so that only one quarter of it was out of the water. It was in an overturned condition likewise. At the time I had no idea how many of the men in #2 lifeboat had been shot. Subsequently thereto the submarine approached the Captain's lifeboat, #1, which had our raft in tow. The men in the Captain's lifeboat had been hiding behind the raft in the water. Whether or not the Captain got into the water I do not know. The Navy gunners and I sought protection behind the raft which was still tied by a line to the lifeboat. As the submarine approached us they continued firing at us and we worked from one side to the other of the raft to keep from being struck. Many of us swam under water and under the raft for protection. The submarine passed the Captain's lifeboat and our raft and proceeded past us at which time I believe they fired on the Chief Mate's lifeboat and a raft which he had attached to said boat. In looking in that direction it appeared that all of the men in the lifeboat and raft were in the water trying to avoid being struck the same as we were. The submarine then turned and came back towards the Captain's lifeboat and our raft and it was apparent it was going between the boat and the raft. I, therefore, instructed one of the men to cut the line which attached the two as I realized that we would be towed alongside. As the submarine came abreast of the lifeboat and the raft, I was told that the Japanese demanded in clear English: 'Where is your Captain? We want your Skipper.' As about that time I had been doing considerable swimming under water and around the raft, I did not hear this request. However, I did see

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CONFIDENTIALACTION OF ENEMYName of Vessel
Date of CasualtyRICHARD HOVEY (cont'd)
3-29-44

the Captain stand up in his lifeboat and it was apparent to me that he had been hiding in the bottom of same. The submarine drew the Captain's lifeboat alongside and it was then that I saw the Captain, 2nd Mate, Mr. Turn, who had been in the water, but who apparently had climbed back into the lifeboat, Sims and Bill Margetto, an able seaman, go upon the submarine. I witnessed them leave the lifeboat and board the submarine. Following that, one of the men from the submarine started to smash something in the lifeboat and it was apparent that he was smashing the radio set. The Japanese then took the lifeboat in tow and proceeded, surfaced, away from us in, I believe, a westerly direction. I lost sight of the surfaced submarine and lifeboat as it grew dark. When it became evident that the Japs had finished with us and were proceeding on their way, we climbed back onto the raft and immediately started to pick up other survivors."

Name of Vessel
Date of CasualtyJEAN NICOLET
7-2-44

1st Assistant

"In the meantime the submarine approached and asked 'what ship?' We acknowledged it, told them the name and they came close alongside of the lifeboat. They threw us a line and told us to go aboard the submarine. Then upon going aboard the submarine, we were searched for articles. Watches and life preservers were taken off of us; our hands tied behind our backs and during that time, of my being led forward, I noticed a merchant seaman was led forward previous to me and was shot for no apparent reason at all and shoved over the side, and I was forced to resume the position of sitting down with my head more or less bowed down as far as I could do it, and it was the general attitude for all of us to sit in that position and not look aft, that was an order. Then during this time, while we were sitting there, various crew members came around and literally beat us for no reason at all, with clubs, pipes, or whatever material they had. That lasted for about two hours or so. During this time we were sitting there, we had a couple of Jap fellows that spoke English and they asked different questions, or tried to get us to talk about why we were lead to war, and if any of us had been to college. One fellow said he was to San Francisco, J.C., and had his teachings there. In the meantime, while we were, I later observed and heard, the rest of the lifeboats and rafts and the crew were taken aboard and the life rafts were machine-gunned. Then, when we were still all on board, the ship was burning violently, the submarine circled the ship numerous times and finally when we were astern of the ship, they fired a couple of shells into it. But we didn't quite catch on to what they were saying, they stuck with bayonets each time we swung our heads around, they would hit

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