

# MARINE CASUALTIES

M

MONDAY, MAY 6 1940

**MATAKANA.**—New York, May 1.—The Mackay Radio announces that the British steamer Matakana has run ashore at Mayaguana Island, about 100 miles north of Haiti. It added that the steamers Borinquen and Santa Maria were in contact with the Matakana.—British United Press.

Key West, May 1.—British steamer Matakana reported ashore "Managua." Salvage steamer Warbler left to assist.

**MATAKANA.**—London, May 4.—The owners of the steamer Matakana have received the following wireless message from the master, dispatched via salvage vessel Warbler, timed 8.9 p.m., May 3: Merritt-Chapman salvage vessel now alongside Matakana. Have signed Lloyd's Agreement "no cure no pay."

FRIDAY, MAY 3 1940

**Steamer Matakana:** Wreck master reports by wireless: Vessel filled fore and aft bulkhead between engine-room and hold buckled, rivets after end of shelter deck torn out, main deck aft midship house buckled, engine-room open to sea, one propeller knocked off, all occurring immediately after stranding. Depth of water at bow 36 ft., amidships 34 ft., aft 36 ft., sea slight swell. Cargo: Dairy and meat products, 10,000 bales of wool, about 70 per cent. of wool dry. Lloyd's Form "no cure no pay" contract agreed.

Wreck master capable, known personally, am arranging daily wireless reports on progress and condition.—Salvage Association's Surveyors.

**MATAKANA.**—New York, May 1.—Steamer Matakana, wireless stranded Bahamas. Merritt's wrecking steamer Warbler left Key West Wednesday morning (May 1) to offer assistance, should arrive Friday morning.—Salvage Association's Surveyors.

**Nassau, May 1.**—The steamer Matakana struck Plana, a flat cay east of Acklin Island, at 2 a.m. yesterday. The crew abandoned the vessel at 3 a.m. The American steamers Panama and Endicott answered the S.O.S. As the Panama was 100 miles away the Endicott was first on the scene and found the vessel abandoned and no sign of the crew. At 2 p.m. the Panama reported that she had picked up the crew of 82 from open boats. Two men had sustained broken legs. The Panama is proceeding to New York.—Exchange Telegraph Company.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8 1940

**Nassau, May 1.**—Steamer Matakana: Information here Matakana ashore Plana Cay and abandoned (Government have wired Commissioner, Long Island, for information regarding vessel, but probably 48 hours before report can be received. Reported 82 of crew on board steamer Panama, due New York Saturday (May 4).—Lloyd's Agent per Salvage Association.

**London, May 2.**—Following wireless message received from master of steamer Matakana via American steamer Panama and Nassau Radio, dated May 1, 10.50 p.m.: Matakana aground on Plana on Flat Cay Reef east end 1.30 a.m., May 1, abandoned ship 3 a.m. Crew now on board American steamer Panama bound New York. Chief officer, chief engineer and self staying on island while necessary. Vessel in precarious position and badly damaged, propeller off, tunnels, engine-room and lower holds flooded.

**Nassau, May 1.**—Master of steamer Matakana reports via steamer Panama: Vessel loaded with refrigerated and general cargo. Vessel in a precarious position and badly damaged, one propeller dropped off, engine-room and lower hold flooded. Master of Panama reports after deck awash. Chief engineer, chief officer and myself staying on West Island, Plana or Flat Cay.

**New York, May 6.**—Steamer Matakana: Wreckmaster reports May 5: Shelter deck under water, common to other holds and engine-room. Wind and sea increasing, vessel settled, tearing plates and enlarging hole on port side of engine-room, rocks now protruding inside with sea surging through. Sea rising and falling with swell in No. 6 hold. Lighter proceeded and small steamer chartered to tranship salvage wool.—Salvage Association's Surveyor.

No vessel suitable for salvage work in the Bahamas.—Lloyd's Agent per Salvage Association.

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**MATAKANA.** — London, May 8. — Information received, dated May 7, states: Steamer Matakana badly damaged and in precarious position. It is reported that her cargo is being transferred to another vessel. Salvage vessel Warbler is standing by with U.S. destroyer Laub. Local commissioner who has visited wreck reports that she cannot refloat. (See issue of May 8.)

FRIDAY MAY 10, 1940

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**MATAKANA.** — London, May 8. — Information received, dated May 7, states: Steamer Matakana badly damaged and in precarious position. It is reported that her cargo is being transferred to the salvage vessel Warbler, which is standing by with U.S. destroyer Laub. Local commissioner who has visited wreck reports that she cannot refloat (not as before reported).

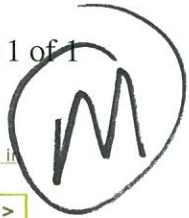
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New York, May 8. — Steamer Matakana: Two hundred bales of wool now on board salvage steamer. Salvage of cargo at present suspended in consequence of weather conditions. Lighter, together with small steamer, due on Friday (May 10). Refrigerated cargo lost. Anticipate salvage good percentage of wool, tallow and pelts, but steel billets doubtful.—Salvage Association's Surveyor.

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*Marcus?*

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## Mariners-L Archives

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*From:* D J Macdonald <[djmacd50@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:djmacd50@blueyonder.co.uk)>  
*Subject:* Re: [Mar] ss Panama and crew of Matakana  
*Date:* Wed, 01 Mar 2006 12:04:49 +0000

Thanks to Ted and Martin for information.

I've had a look at the Shaw Savill site and they say "the crew were landed on a small island without drinking water and were in poor condition until rescued by the American passenger vessel ss President"

The discharge book that I have has under "Date and Place of Discharge" "1-5-40 Vessel Stranded", which cannot be argued with, and the report of picking up the crew on the 3rd May in the Times likewise cannot be argued with, so where did the "poor condition" story come from?

Once again it is a case of "I wish I had listened more closely 20 odd years ago!!"

Regards

Don

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No virus found in this outgoing message.

Checked by AVG Anti-Virus.

Version: 7.1.1.375 / Virus Database: 268.1.1/271 - Release Date: 28/02/2006

**This thread:**

- [Re: \[Mar\] ss Panama and crew of Matakana by D J Macdonald <djmacd50@blueyonder.co.uk>](#)
  - [RE: \[Mar\] ss Panama and crew of Matakana by "Martin Elliget" <melliget@bigpond.net.au>](#)
  - [RE: \[Mar\] ss Panama and crew of Matakana by D J Macdonald <djmacd50@blueyonder.co.uk>](#)

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*From:* D J Macdonald <[djmacd50@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:djmacd50@blueyonder.co.uk)>  
*Subject:* RE: [Mar] ss Panama and crew of Matakana  
*Date:* Wed, 01 Mar 2006 17:01:28 +0000

Martin,

Thanks for your latest, I've looked at the NAA site and there doesn't seem to be any reference to the sinking. The oddest thing that the search turned up was the "Tariff classification of 200 cards of tinsel ribbon ex 'Matakana' 8/9/1932". It's amazing what gets kept!

A bit of background on the Matakana was that the voyage she went aground was the first time she had been through Panama since being built in 1925, normally she went out via Good Hope and home via Cape Horn, coaling at Valparaiso.

My father reckoned that the Fourth Mate (who was on watch when she grounded) was a Belgian fifth columnist, but probably all foreigners were so regarded at that time

Thanks again for your help

Don

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Version: 7.1.375 / Virus Database: 268.1.1/271 - Release Date: 28/02/2006

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*From:* "Martin Elliget" <[melliget@bigpond.net.au](mailto:melliget@bigpond.net.au)>  
*Subject:* RE: [Mar] ss Panama and crew of Matakana  
*Date:* Wed, 1 Mar 2006 23:51:31 +1000  
*In-Reply-To:* <6.2.5.6.2.20060301114425.01f95588@blueyonder.co.uk>

Don.

I plugged Matakana into the National Archives of Australia RecordSearch and it came back with 21 hits.

[http://www.naa.gov.au/the\\_collection/recordsearch.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/the_collection/recordsearch.html)

One or two may be of interest, incl. crew lists late 1930's. Information regarding obtaining a quotation for supply of copies can be found here:

[http://www.naa.gov.au/the\\_collection/refform1.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/the_collection/refform1.html)

Regards,

Martin Elliget  
 Fig Tree Pocket QLD Australia

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