

MANZANILLO

ONI-112 (Revised)

CONFIDENTIAL
Enclosure "D"

Intelligence Report

ENEMY ATTACK ON MERCHANT SHIPS

From: District Intelligence Officer, At: Miami, Florida Date: August 12, 1942
Seventh Naval District.

Subject: SS "MANZANILLO," Torpedoing and Subsequent Sinking of.

Name of Ship: SS "MANZANILLO"

Type:

- (1) Tanker
 (a) Single Bulkhead ____
 (b) Twin Bulkhead ____
 (c) Summer Tank ____
(2) Cargo X
(3) Passenger ____
(4) Passenger-Cargo ____

Gross Tonnage: 1129 Net Tonnage: 611 Whether Armed: Yes ____ No X

Date of Attack: August 12, 1942 Position at Attack: Lat. 24°20' N.,
Long. 81°50' W.
(Approximate)

Whether Sunk X Damaged ____ Captured ____ or Escaped ____

PARTICULARS OF SHIP AND VOYAGE

Questions

Answers

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. (a) Port of Departure: | Miami, via Key West, Florida |
| (b) Date of Sailing: | August 8, 1942 |
| (c) Destination: | Havana, Cuba |
| (d) Route Instructions: | Yes, to Key West, then convoy to Havana. |
| 2. Name of Owners and Charterers (if any):
(If on Government Service the fact should be stated.) | Empresa Naviera De Cuba |
| 1. Cargo | |
| (a) Loaded or in ballast (type of ballast) | Loaded |
| (b) General Description of cargo, and weight | Trucks, Lead, General. |
| (c) Deck load (give distribution) | Six large trucks |
| (d) When a tanker give distribution and amount of liquid cargo or ballast. | - - - - |
| 3. Full Christian Name, Surname and Nationality of Master. | Fernandes De La VEGA, Cuban. |

4. Ship's position, date and time

(a) When enemy was sighted

- (1) Date (local) and time (Specify whether GCT, Zone, War Time.).
- (2) Depth of water.

Enemy was not sighted.

(b) When attack commenced

1200 GCT, Aug. 12, 1942,
7 miles South of Sand Key.

(c) Was warning given? Yes ___ No X If so, what?

(d) Ship's position, date and time

(1) When ship sank, or

1202 GCT, Aug. 12, 1942,
7 miles South of Sand Key.

(2) When chase was abandoned.

- - - -

(e) Ship's position, date and time ship was abandoned.

1201 GCT, Aug. 12, 1942,
7 miles South of Sand Key.

5. (a) What was the cause of ship sinking:

(Torpedo X, gunfire ____, bombs ____, mine ____, interval explosion ____, other.

(One torpedo.)

(1) Estimated type, weight, diameter of projectile, bomb, torpedo or mine.

Seemed large.

(b) Was she seen to sink? Yes X No ___

(1) Manner of sinking: (a) Capsized ___
(b) Even keel ___ (c) Plunged (bow ___
or stern X first) (d) Listed (to
port ___ or starboard ___ degree of
list ___ (e) How long afloat after
being hit: Two minutes.

(2) Depth of water where sunk:

Approximately 60 fathoms

6. Course and speed of ship when enemy was first sighted or when attack commenced:

210° True, speed 9 knots.

(1) Course and speed after damage:

None

(2) Drafts, forward and aft, before and after damage (approximate):

- - - -

7. Was ship zigzagging? Yes ___ or no X. If so,

(a) Nature of zigzag

- - - -

(b) How long had ship been zigzagging previous to the attack: - - - -

(b) If so, what became of them?

(c) What did the confidential papers consist of?

The Captain is reasonably confident that they did not because they were not aboard subject vessel long enough to blow the safe.

(NOTE: If codes or papers came to enemy hands, Opanv to be advised immediately by dispatch)

OFFENSIVE ACTS OF ENEMY

Gunfire

21. At what time and range did enemy open fire?

About 450 ft. away.

Was any shot fired "across bows" as warning?

No

22. Number of rounds fired by enemy:

- (a) Before ship was abandoned
- (b) After ship was abandoned
- (c) Approximate rate of fire

None
Twelve rounds
Survivors unable to estimate.

23. Number of times ship was hit:

- (a) Before ship was abandoned
- (b) After ship was abandoned

None
Twelve times

Torpedo or Aircraft Bombing

24. Distance and bearing of submarine or aircraft when torpedoes or bombs fired.

Not seen before torpedo hit.

25. Was there any way on the ship at time torpedo or bomb was fired?

Yes, 8 knots.

26. (a) Number of torpedoes or bombs fired
(b) Number which hit
(c) Number which missed

One torpedo hit, none seen to miss.

27. If hit: -

(a) Position of damage and depth below water (for torpedoes)

About 5 or 6 ft. below water line.

(b) Description of damage

No. 5 hold port side. Tore huge hold in side.

If missed: -

None seen to miss.

(c) Whether torpedo or bomb passed ahead, astern, under or short, and by how much

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(d) Any other reason to account for missing?

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(e) If torpedo or bomb failed to explode and if torpedo observed to be float-

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ing after attack failed

Boarding

- 28. Was ship boarded by enemy and how? Yes, two men came from submarine to ship after it was abandoned
- 29. Was Master interrogated by enemy Officers? What questions were asked? Which officer (or Officers) asked questions and what knowledge of the English language had he? Submarine came alongside ship (bow only) to take the two men off. Men on about five minutes. No conversation was carried on between those on submarine and those in lifeboats.

Explosive charges

30. If ship was sunk by explosive charges:

- (a) How many were used? ---
- (b) Where were they placed? ---

DEFENSIVE ACTS OF SHIPS

Gunfire

- 31. What guns were carried? One 101 H.M. aft.
- 32. At what time and range did ship open fire? Did not fire. Gun was damaged by impact of torpedos.
- 33. Was ship showing her proper colors when she opened fire? ---
- 34. (a) Number of rounds fired by ship ---
- (b) Approximate rate of fire ---
- 35. Number of times enemy was hit by gunfire ---

Smoke

- 36. Was ship supplied with smoke apparatus? No
If so:-
 - (a) What pattern? ---
 - (b) How was it used and with what effect? ---
- 37. (a) Were there any casualties? No
- (b) What were they? ---
- (c) How caused? ---

38. (a) What was the number and nationality of the passengers and crew? **Forty-eight (48) in crew, including officers. All Brazilian citizens.**
- (b) How did they behave? **Crew members panicky. Officers calm.**
39. (a) What became of the passengers and crew after abandoning ship? **Crew members took to boats. Officers on rafts. Later picked up by crew in boats.**
- (b) Were any taken prisoner? **No**

PARTICULARS OF ENEMY CRAFT

40. (a) Number, if submarine or aircraft. **None seen.**
- (b) Where was number seen and how distinguished? **--**
41. With the help of a sketch or silhouette drawing give a general description of the enemy ship and especially of any peculiarities noticed. A drawing of the submarine or raider, however rough, should be attached and the following points of descriptive detail noted as examples:
- (a) Whether large or small **About 150 ft.**
- (b) Color and whether any streaks or stripes. **Medium grey.**
- (c) Shape of conning tower. **Round.**
- (d) Shape, rake and position of stack. **--**
- (e) Any irregularities or bulges on hull or superstructure? **No**
- (f) Gun position (s) **One forward, about 4 inches.**
- (g) Whether any net cutter **No**
- (h) Shape of bow; of stern **High bow; low stern.**
- (i) Relative height and position of masts. **No masts.**

42. Guns, number, position, and nature? . One 4-inch retractable forward.
43. Number of masts and king posts? None
44. Radio serials and gear, description of? None
45. (a) What color was enemy vessel painted? Medium grey.
- (b) Did paint look old or new? New.
- (c) Did ship bear any marks of damage? No
46. Estimated speed? Don't know.
47. Estimated tonnage (gross)
48. Steam or motor ship? Diesel.
49. Officers of enemy vessel, Name and personal description. Unknown.

REPORT OF INTERVIEWING OFFICERS

50. General remarks by interviewing officer.

1. Captain Ernesto Masodi Vidal and Radio Operator of subject vessel were interviewed by the Interviewing Officer at San Juan. Together they furnished the facts upon which the above report is based. Their statements were substantially in accord on all essential points.

2. The survivors were brought in to Section Base, Tenth Naval District at San Juan by Naval tug MANKATO. The tug had picked up the survivors in two lifeboats about half a mile off the northern coast of Puerto Rico, about twenty-five (25) miles northwest of San Juan. They were picked up shortly before noon (San Juan time) on June 30, 1942.

3. Captain and Radio Operator were shown a copy of Jane's Fighting Ships. They both picked out German submarine No. U 45-55 as being the nearest type of submarine to that which attacked the subject vessel. They pointed out, however, that the attacking submarine seemed to carry less equipment than that pictured in Jane's, as for instance, lack of net cutter or wireless equipment.

E. F. WILMERDING
Lieut. (jg) USNR

Interviewing Officer

feat which earned him a commendation from the Commandant of the Coast Guard.

COAST GUARDSMEN
LOST ON
SS MANZANILLO
EN ROUTE CUBA

Two more ships, the MANZANILLO and SANTIAGO DE CUBA, travelling in convoy from Key West on August 12, 1942, were the last on the list of submarine victims in the 7th Naval District for nearly a year. One, the MANZANILLO, carried Coast Guard personnel and a cargo of special equipment for an advance Coast Guard base in Cuba. Two Coast Guard radiomen and all the MANZANILLO's officers were lost. The rest of the 16 men killed in the attack were from the SANTIAGO DE CUBA. Survivors were picked up by other ships in the convoy while a CG picket boat recovered all bodies.

CG AVIATOR
DIRECTS RESCUE
OF SURVIVORS
FROM USS STURTEVANT
(DE 239)

On April 26, 1942, Andrew J. Cupples (201-504) AM1lc, (AP), attached to the St. Petersburg Air Station, while returning to Key West from patrol in a CG plane, sighted an oil slick nine miles from the eastern end of Marquesas Key. Upon investigation he found a ship, later found to be the USS STURTEVANT (DE 239), sinking stern first with only a small portion of the bow above water. One lifeboat was afloat and was picking up survivors. The position of the vessel was inside a recently laid mine field. No ships or boats were observed in the vicinity to render assistance and the pilot proceeded full speed to Key West, 20 miles distant, being unable to raise NAR on voice and having no radioman aboard. He reported the incident to Naval operations by phone at 1635 E.W.T. warning them that the vessel was inside the mine field and to observe caution in approaching. They were apparently unaware that the mine field extended any farther westward than Smith Shoal, which was nine miles east of the sinking ship. After refueling his plane and picking up a radioman, Cupples took off and sighted a rescue boat five or six miles from the scene. He directed them to the lifeboat and rafts containing survivors. When it appeared that the rescue boat was inadequate to pick up all survivors, he radioed Naval operations through NAR and at 1905 E.W.T. a second boat arrived on the scene and picked up the remaining survivors. After departure of the second boat, Cupples searched the area but found nothing more of interest and returned to base at 1940 E.W.T., at which time only the mast and crow's nest of the sunken vessel was above water. Cupples was recommended for commendation by his commanding officer.

CG PLANE NO. 185
RESCUES SURVIVOR
OF PLANE CRASH
FROM OCEAN

Coast Guard Plane No. 185, from Salem (Mass.) Air Station, while on patrol at 1838, on May 9, 1942, intercepted a message that a plane was down at sea north of Cape Cod. The plane proceeded to the scene and located a man in a life raft in position 42° 08' N = 70° 08' W. There were two