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Authority *IND 780065*

0430:--0530: Morning General Quarters.

0830: At Quarters cleaning stations.

0900: Inspection and muster.

1000: Gun stations.

1200: Thanksgiving Dinner.

1730:--1830: Evening General Quarters. 3"/50 and 20 M.M. Drills.

Rm. J. S. Feathers, U. S. N. R.

December 1, 1944.

0000: At sea.

0500:--0600: Morning General Quarters.

0830: Quarters cleaning.

0900: Inspection and muster.

1715:--1830: Evening General Quarters.

Intensive 3"/50 and 20 M.M. Drill.

Rm. J. S. Feathers, U. S. N. R.

December 2, 1944.

0000: Steaming as before.

0500:--0600: Morning General Quarters.

0830: Quarters cleaning stations.

0900: Inspection and muster.

1000: Gun stations.

1715:--1830: Evening General Quarters.

Intensive 3"/50 and 20 M.M. Drill.

Rm. J. S. Feathers, U. S. N. R.

December 3, 1944.

0000: At sea.

0500:--0630 Morning General Quarters.

0830: Quarters cleaning.

0900: Inspection and muster.

1000: Gun check-up stations.

1715:--1830: Evening General Quarters.

Air attack warnings.

Rm. J. S. Feathers, U. S. N. R.

December 4, 1944.

0000: Steaming at sea.

0500: Condition #1 set.

0900: Muster.

1830: Set Condition #3.

Rm. J. S. Feathers, U. S. N. R.

December 5, 1944.

0000: At sea.

0500: Condition #1 set.

0830: Attacked by "Val" dive bomber from Starboard side. A very near miss on Port Bow.

1215: Attacked by torpedo bombers. Torpedoes dropped. One passed very close to our bow; Seen passing.
Continued torpedo and dive bomber attacks for rest of day.

1700: A dive bomber approached from directly astern at a great height. it dove directly at the ship. The aft 3"/50 shot off the entire tail of the bomber. All 20 M.M. firing into the plane.
The plane passed 4 feet over No.4 and No.6--20 M.M. tubs and between tub No.2 and the mast. these men were firing all the while The plane crashed through the deck to the left of and under the No.1 tub. It dropped as far as the 'tween deck of Hold No.1 and then its entire bomb load exploded.
The bow was laid open on both sides down as far as the 'tween deck of Hold No.1. A terrific hole was blown through both sides of the ship which may be described as "large enough to drive a freight train through". The upper deck was ripped like paper and the whole upper bow was badly twisted, warped, ballooned up, and distorted. The entire fore peak was destroyed.
Flames from the explosion shot up at least 100 feet above the fore mast and particles and objects were blown upwards for hundreds of feet, A severe fire broke out foreward which was not completely under control until sometime during the night.
No.1 gun tub was badly bent and warped in every way. Both ladders were blown off, and the whole tub was about to collapse. The ready boxes were bent out of shape and were covered with flames. The forward 3"/50 was damaged beyond repair. The whole gun seems to be buckled and warped. The cheeks are spread and the gun will neither elevate, nor train, nor will the sword arm function. The forward magazine was flooded. Fortunately no ammunition exploded except some Army small arms cartridges in the hold.
Some 200 or more U.S. Army personel were killed, missing, or wounded. Many were horribly burned and wounded. Words can not describe the ghastly scene of the severely wounded and suffering men, the dead, and parts of bodies strewn about.
Men of the Merchant Crew who died from action on Gun No.1 were: Alvin R., Crawford and Richard G., Matthiesen.
Crawford was killed instantly and Matthiesen died during the night. Matthiesen distinguished himself by saving Ariza and one other member of the gun crew from the flames.
Navy casualties were as follows:
Dead---
Henry C., Newbern, GM3/c, 556-70-73.
3rd degree burns of the entire body.
He passed away during the night.

Wounded---
Harry J., Ariza S1/c, 886-54-58.
2nd degree burns of face, arms, and hands. Severe.

Earnest C., Boatman S1/c, 967-98-68.
2nd degree burns of the entire body.

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Norman E., Quigley Sl/c, 703-23-24.
Shrapnel wounds of the head and body wounds.

Clarence H., Requardt, Sl/c, 577-34-85.
Sucking wound of the chest. Perforating wound of the abdomen with perforation of the bowel.

Bryon (n) Robinson, Sl/c, 843-44-29.
Compound fracture of the elbow, left.
Shrapnel wounds of the left arm and shoulder.

Anthony L., Rutkosky, Sl/c, 923-87-54.
Possible fracture of spine and pelvis. Not able to move his legs.
He was blown from Nol tub to the base of No.3.

Arnold B., Aaron, Sl/c, 671-89-55,
Charles B., Allen, Sl/c, 566-11-78,
and Junius Armstrong, Sl/c, 878-68-75 all suffered severely from shock.

A number of Army men either were blown over the side or went over the side. Some of these were later picked up. Some aft were killed in the screw.

The command was given to stand by to abandon ship as she seemed to be heading down. But the ship righted itself and we were able to continue, later joining the convoy.

We were soon attacked by a torpedo bomber, but by a clever right turn by Captain A.W. Ophiem we avoided the torpedo which passed the stern by as close as 30 feet.

We fired on the bomber and it went away smoking badly as it went over the horizon. We did not count this plane shot down.

During the dive bomber attack, we were also attacked by high level bombers.

During the day we shot down the following planes:

- 1-A "Val" dive bomber by the 20 M.M. guns and forward 3"/50.
- 2-A "Kate" torpedo bomber. A direct hit by the forward 3"/50.
- 3-A "Val" that crashed the ship. Later believed to be a Heavy Zeke fighter-bomber.

Continued at general quarters.

Kenn. J. S. Feather, U. S. N. R.

December 6, 1944.

0800: Arrived at Leyte, Philippines.

0830: Fired on a "Val" high in the air.

1000: Arrived at Tarragona, Leyte.

1630: Wounded and dead removed on a Destroyer Escort.

These men were kept on the ship suffering greatly all day. The delay seemed unexcuseable and childish.

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