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EYEWITNESSES TELL STORY OF LOSS OF SUPER-DREADNOUGHT "AUDACIOUS" BY HITTING A MINE IN THE IRISH SEA

Two Members of the Orchestra of the Olympic Say They Were on the Liner When She Was Engaged in the Task of Rescuing the Crew of the Great British Battleship Late in October

SAY THE 'AUDACIOUS' REMAINED AFLOAT FOR TWELVE HOURS AFTER THE EXPLOSION

An Attempt Was Made to Tow the Crippled Ship Into Port But the Hawser Broke Twice and the Ship Had to be Abandoned—Only Two Fatalities in Crew of Nine Hundred Men

(Continued from page 1)
 sized in the heavy sea. A minutes or two later we saw clearly from the deck of the Olympic four heads bobbing on top of the water, and then four men climbed upon the keel of the capsized boat. The fifth man, petty officer, was drowned.

"A second boat put off from the starboard side of the Audacious and rescued the men from their perilous position after they had clung on for ten minutes.

Huge Sea Running.

"The lifeboats were half an hour in reaching the side of the warship, owing to the big seas, which made rowing difficult. The bowmen threw the painters when they got close alongside, and they were caught by the crew of the Audacious and made fast on board.

"As the lifeboats rose on top of the high seas, the crew of the partly submerged warship took their chances and jumped down the rail. The discipline on the Audacious was magnificent. The men stood stripped to their trousers and flannel undershirts, calmly waiting their turns, as if it were an ordinary drill while the officers walked the bridge with their hands behind their backs as if they were on review.

Crew Taken On.

"While the rescue work was going on, several torpedo-boats, trawlers and light cruisers had come on the scene in answer to wireless messages sent by the Liverpool. Two hundred and fifty of the crew of the Audacious were taken to the Olympic and 450 others were distributed among the destroyers and the cruisers. The remaining 200 of the crew were mustered on the forecastle head of the Audacious to assist in attempting to save the ship.

"By this time the Audacious was very deep in the water. The mine had blown the hole into her at 8 o'clock, and she had then been five hours with water rushing through the great breach in her port quarter. The port rail of the quarter deck was under water, and her port guns in the main turret were awash.

Abandoned Boats.

"Some of the Olympic's boats made as many as three trips in rescuing the crew. By 1 o'clock the crew of the Olympic had returned on board, leaving fourteen lifeboats floating adrift, because it was impossible to hoist them up in the heavy sea.

"The salvage operations were begun by the little destroyer Fury by a splendid piece of seamanship. She came close up to the Olympic and took a light steel hawser over to the bow of the Audacious, where it was put around the capstan and the men in the forecastle head hove in a big steel hawser, which they made fast to the Audacious.

"After skilful manoeuvring, Capt. H. J. Haddock, commander of the Olympic, started with a steady strain to tow the battleship to Lough Swilly, which was twenty miles away. The heavy seas lifted the Olympic up and caused the hawser

to snap from the weight of the battleship in the trough of the sea.

"Once again the plucky little destroyer Fury came and cast another hawser from the Olympic to the Audacious. The second hawser snapped in the same manner. As a final effort, Capt. Haddock tried to get a six-inch hawser to the battleship from the Olympic direct by manoeuvring his ship so as to get her stern directly over the bow of the Audacious. After several attempts this was given up. The seas and gale had increased in violence and there would have been danger of a collision if the Olympic got too close.

"At 6 o'clock it had become dark, and the captain of the Audacious signalled to Capt. Haddock to go on to Lough Swilly and leave his lifeboats to be used for rescuing the 200 men left on the Audacious when it became necessary.

"The Olympic arrived in Lough Swilly on the same night. The survivors of the battleship had very little clothing when they boarded the Olympic and were fitted out by the crew of the liner.

"An engine artificer, in describing the disaster, said that he had just gone on duty at eight bells and was in the steering room when he heard a loud report on the port side resembling a six-inch gun.

Crew Was Calm.

"A few minutes afterward the word was passed to the engine room: 'Torpedo, port side. Close all watertight doors.'

"The order having been obeyed, he went on deck, where most of the crew had quietly assembled, waiting for orders. The other battleships of the squadron that accompanied the Audacious had steamed away a moment after the explosion, following Admiralty instructions.

"After she had been struck the Audacious circled about in order to keep her from settling. The cruiser Liverpool was the first to come up, but could not rescue the crew because she was stripped for action and had very few boats. At first it was thought that the Audacious had been struck by a torpedo fired from a submarine, but it was afterwards discovered that she had hit a floating mine laid by German trawlers sailing under the Norwegian flag.

Was Low in the Water

"The Olympic was the second ship to arrive on the scene, and by that time the Audacious was so down by her stern in the water that the order was given to 'draw the fires.'

"The blowing up of the battleship took place at 9 o'clock that night, and was witnessed from the afterdeck of



1st Newfoundland Regiment.

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W. E. DAVIDSON,
 Lieut. Colonel.

nov14,17,19,21



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TORONTO, ONT.

the Olympic by Hugh Griffith and several of the passengers and the crew.

"I was standing on deck just after two bells had struck," said Griffiths, "when suddenly a bright glare shot up three or four hundred feet into the sky in a direct line with the harbor, which was where we had left the Audacious. It lit up the whole ship's decks like day for a period of about ten seconds, and then came a low, rumbling report.

Held Olympic Up

"In order that the news of the sinking of one of the finest ships in the navy should not get out the Admiralty kept the Olympic in Lough Swilly for a week. There was not a single complaint on the part of the passengers, and they all promised not to make any statements when they landed at Belfast.

"After the nine hundred men of the crew of the Olympic had been paid off in Liverpool and scattered to their homes, the report got out that the Audacious had been sunk, but it was not printed in the newspapers in England."

Lough Swilly is a naval base and is used by British squadrons. While the Olympic lay there five or six of the big warships, accompanied by light cruisers and torpedo-destroyers, were sent going into the lough. They would remain a few hours and then depart.

No Visitors Allowed

The passengers of the Olympic noted that the same squadron never visited Lough Swilly two days in succession. No one was allowed to go on board the Olympic during the week she was anchored there except the officers of the warships who called upon Capt. H. J. Haddock.

The agents of the White Star Line were not admitted to the ship and no mails were sent ashore. Passengers communicated with their friends by telegrams, which were censored by Purser Lancaster and a naval lieutenant who was on board.

Capt. W. J. Roberts, of the New York, said it was commonly reported in shipping circles in Liverpool that the Audacious had been sunk and her crew rescued by the Olympic. Capt. Roberts also said that just before the disaster a small steamer flying the Norwegian flag and manned by German soldiers had been captured in Belfast with her lower hold filled with mines under a deck load of timber.

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St. John's, Oct. 12, 1914.
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