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Wilmington Survivor Of Sea Raid Says The Stephano Was Warned Before Sunk

One of the passengers on the ill-fated Red Cross liner Stephano which was torpedoed by the German submarine U-53 off Newport, Oct. 17, evening, Mrs. John D. Marsh, of No. 134 West Seventh street, will remember her harrowing experience until her dying day.

She reached this city last evening after a trying trip from Newport, from which city she started at 4 o'clock yesterday morning, having been set ashore by the commander of the U. S. Destroyer Ericsson with about eighty other passengers and crew of the Stephano.

Mrs. Marsh secured a good night's sleep and awoke today refreshed, and declared that she felt none the worse for her thrilling experience. For fifteen minutes, after the captain's orders to leave the vessel Sunday evening had come, Mrs. Marsh and her fellow passengers on the Stephano fully believed that they were prisoners of war to Germany, and the thoughts of what was in store for her almost caused her to collapse. But reassurances came soon and she was relieved to know that hers was not to be the fate of a prisoner of war, although she lost all her possessions and ran some risk of drowning in the heavy sea that prevailed when the life boat in which she was seated pulled away from the side of the Stephano.

Mrs. Marsh had been in Newfoundland visiting her parents, who live in that English possession, for two or three months, and took passage on the Stephano to return to Wilmington, where her husband is employed by the Wilmington Steel Company. The voyage had been a pleasant one and the vessel was expected to dock in New York Monday morning. Sunday night the steamer was proceeding evenly on her way and was about 150 miles off Newport when the calamity occurred. To a representative of "The Evening Journal" Mrs. Marsh this morning related her experiences as follows:

"It was 6 o'clock Sunday night and the passengers were all assembled in the saloon for dinner. The soup had just been served and I had taken a few spoonfuls when we were startled by the sound of a shot somewhere at sea. We looked white-faced at each other with words of inquiry upon our lips when there came another report and then immediately after that another. The last shot was so close that we felt the jar, and with one impulse the passengers leaped up from their places at the tables and rushed on deck.

"What was our consternation, upon reaching the deck, to see fifteen or twenty war vessels lying by us, their bright searchlights turned on us like immense eyes, and one, which we afterwards found out was the submarine, close in, her great eyes blinking, and her ugly black form outlined in the water. We uttered cries of fright, and the first thought came to me was that our ship had been captured by the German fleet and we were all prisoners of war.

Others of the passengers thought the same thing, but we had no time for talk, for Captain Smith, who was on the bridge, snapped out the order for everyone to don a life-belt and stand by to enter the life-boats.

"The order was so unexpected that we stood stunned for a moment, but we were not given any time to think. Officers and members of the crew began handing the life belt down and assisting the women and children to put them on, all the time returning reassuring answers to the hundreds of questions being put to them by the frightened passengers. Some of the passengers started to go to their cabins to pack a few belongings into valises or bags, but they were ordered back and told that they would not be allowed to take anything. The officers even debated whether it were safe to allow us to wear our heavy coats, for I afterwards learned that the officers expected that we would soon be in the water and any heavy clothing, satchels, etc., would have seriously interfered with our keeping afloat.

No Panic Aboard Ship
"There was no panic, but some of the women were hysterical. It was not long before the true situation was made known to us, and we realized that the queer-looking shape in the water, with its two blinking eyes and reminding me for all the world of the devil, was a German submarine and that the Stephano had been ordered to lay to and discharge her passengers at the order of the commander of the U-boat. We were informed also that the fifteen or twenty war vessels surrounding us were our own American ships and that we had nothing to fear.

"That was all easy to say, but some of the timid women who were venturing in a small boat on the open sea for the first time in their lives, did not consider it such a light thing. While the ocean seemed smooth enough from the deck of the Stephano, we found it quite rough when we were heaving about in the small life boat, and some of the women and children were badly frightened.

"Not all the shapes surrounding us were war vessels, however, as I afterwards found out. Lying not far away was another merchantman which the submarine commander had stopped before he sent his shots across the bows of the Stephano and ordered to lay to until he was ready to attend to it. We had a mixed crowd in our boat—passengers of both sexes and members of the crew. We had rowed about only a short time, though, when a vessel we afterwards learned was the destroyer Ericsson hailed us and bade us come aboard.

"We had entered our life boat, some while it still hung on the davits, scrambling over the side in a near panic, and others descending a rope ladder after she was launched. But we stepped upon the deck of the Ericsson in a more orderly manner, ascending the rope ladder like veterans. The officers and crew stood by to assist us in every way possible

and began looking out for our welfare. The run of the vessel was ours and as soon as we put foot on the deck the men vied with each other in making us comfortable. Bunks were made up in every available place, and lunch was served us immediately. Those of us who had any appetites left were given an opportunity to finish our interrupted dinner.

"When we were safely on board the Ericsson and had recovered our bearings we had a chance to look about. There just beyond us lay the submarine, and with one of her small boats, containing an officer and a few men, waiting until every one had left the Stephano. When the vessel was cleared the small boat, made for the side of the British ship. The crew boarded her and secured her papers and, we learned afterwards, opened the sea valves in an attempt to sink her that way. The valves refused to work, however, so that attempt had to be abandoned.

"Next, the submarine commander

sought to sink the Stephano with shells, but her hull was formed of a thick iron and steel plates, and the whiskey bottle which someone dropped did not take effect. Finally a torpedo was called into play and this brought about the desired result. We did not witness the sinking of the vessel, however, as the Ericsson had steamed away before the final act in the sea drama was enacted.

"I don't know whether this is true, but I was told by men on board the Ericsson that the destroyer's guns were loaded and trained on the submarine all the time during her approach to the Stephano and while the passengers were being transferred to the small boats, and that the first intimation that the German U-boat commander was going to violate that nation's faith with our government was to have been shelled.

"There were about eighty passengers on board the Stephano, besides the crew and all were taken off by the American destroyers. Only two accidents occurred among our party to

and they were slight ones. One man was struck in the forehead with a thick iron and steel plate, and the whiskey bottle which someone dropped into the lifeboat just as it was leaving the Stephano, and a woman got her thumb crushed against the side of the Ericsson. The submarine was sighted at 6 o'clock; she fired her shots of warning at 6:09, and at 6:15 o'clock we were all clear of the ship."

Mrs. Marsh continued her narrative by saying that the Ericsson anchored off the naval hospital, Newport, about 3 o'clock Monday morning and while the other passengers and members of the crew remained on board, she hurried to disembark and make inquiry for a train to New York. She was anxious to get home.

[Mrs. J. D. Marsh referred to above is a daughter of Mr. Alfred G. Young of Lewisporte.]

All may not be gold that glitters; the American destroyers. Only two accidents occurred among our party to get by all right.

Port Blandford Welcomes Home Pte. F. Stares

(To the Editor)

Dear Sir,—Please find space for a few words in reference to our young soldier, Private Frank Stares, who returned from the war zone a few days ago. Private Stares was in that terrible fight on the first of July, when so many of our brave heroes fell to rise no more. He fell himself, with a bullet wound in the foot, but managed to escape with his life after severe suffering. Our people here again, even on furlough for a few months and they showed it by giving him a good reception by getting up a free tea for the occasion, on Friday night 13th inst. The ladies certainly did well and made everyone feel at home.

After the tea we had an interesting address from the Rev. Mr. Fahey on various topics in connection with the war and our returned soldier. When he finished, Private Stares gave us a neat little address on some of his experiences since he left home as a volunteer. How he saw brave men fall and die by his side; how he managed to crawl to a dugout where he put in several hours of severe suffering before he was found by the stretcher-bearers and conveyed to a dressing station. Several young ladies gave recitations also for the benefit of the entertainment. Miss B. Barry sang a neat patriotic song. Miss E. Blackmore gave a beautiful reading. Miss F. Blandford recited some very interesting lines suitable for both young and old. Mr. A. M. Stares joined in also and sang an interesting parody on Tipperary.

We believe all enjoyed themselves, and the usual three cheers for our soldiers at home and abroad with the singing of the National Anthem brought the meeting to a close. The Orange Hall was let for the occasion.

G. R. P.
Port Blandford, Oct. 16, 1916.

32 U.S. Senators To be Elected

WASHINGTON, D.C., Oct. 12.—In the elections next month thirty-two United States senators are to be elected to fill the places of seventeen Democrats and fifteen Republicans. The senate is now composed of fifty-six Democrats and thirty-nine Republicans. Counting the results in Maine, where two Republican senators were elected last month, the composition of the upper house becomes fifty-five Democrats and forty-one Republicans.

To gain control of the senate the Republicans must elect twenty-three candidates. That is to say, they must elect all of their fifteen and make an inroad of eight on the Democrats. In Indiana two senators are to be chosen as a result of the death of Benjamin F. Shively, whose seat is now held by Thomas Taggart as appointee of the governor. The States in which one senator is to be elected are Arizona, Florida, New Mexico, West Virginia, Minnesota, Wyoming, Texas, Delaware, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Maryland, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Connecticut, New

Published by Authority

Under the provisions of "The War Measures Act, 1914," His Excellency the Governor-in-Council has been pleased to order that the following Regulations shall come into effect on the 12th day of October instant:

1. The Port and Harbour of St. John's is closed entirely to the entry of shipping at night, from midnight on the 12th October, until further orders.

2. Lights will remain extinguished, until further notice, at Cape St. Francis, Cape Spear, Bull Head, Ferryland and Pormonee, also the lights at Fort Amherst and the leading lights of St. John's.

3. No street or other outdoor lights shall be shown in the City of St. John's, or in or near any of the settlements in the District of St. John's East and West.

4. No lights shall be lit in any public building, shop or private residence in the Districts of St. John's East or West, except the windows in such public building, shop or residence are covered by suitable blinds or shades or such lights are otherwise suitably obscured.

5. No lights shall be lit on board any vessel or boat in the Harbour of St. John's unless suitably obscured.

6. No head lights shall be used on any motor car or motor cycle in or near the City of St. John's or in or near any settlement in the Districts of St. John's East and West, or on any roads approaching St. John's or any of the said settlements, upon which lights may be visible at sea. Side lights on motor cars, motor cycles or vehicles of any description must be obscured, and shall not be of greater strength than five candle power.

7. It shall be the duty of the members of the Constabulary to see that these Regulations are strictly enforced, and all orders issued by them for their better observance shall be forthwith carried out.

8. It shall be the duty of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries to see that these Regulations are observed on all shipping in the Harbour of St. John's, and all orders issued by him for their better observance shall be forthwith carried out.

9. Every person convicted of a violation of these Rules and Regulations before a Stipendiary Magistrate or a Justice of the Peace shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding One Hundred Dollars, or in default of payment to imprisonment not exceeding Three Months.

J. R. BENNETT,
Col. Secy.

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