

U.S. Naval Armed Guard - Report of Defects or Deficiencies as regards to Material, Personnel or Operations prior to departure of Convoy CU 49 and if any post voyage observations.

Bantam - LT. Leonard P. Brickett - U.S.N.R. # 247178 dated November 17, 1944:

No defects or deficiencies noted in location or arrangement of battery or equipment.

Cape Nome - LT. George V. Salzer - U.S.N.R. # 114160 dated 11-17-44:

(g) Defects or deficiencies: None except as noted in request to port director for alterations and supplies.

THAT MASTERS BE GIVEN UNIFORM INSTRUCTIONS AND AUTHORITY TO ORDER MERCHANT CREW MEMBERS TO MAN GUN STATIONS. PARAGRAPH 5803 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO ARMED GUARD C.O.'s of Navy GUN CREWS 4th ED. states THAT NAVY HAS ASKED MARITIME COMMISSION TO INSTRUCT MASTERS TO DETAIL MERCHANT SEAMEN TO COMPLETE THE GUN CREWS BUT MASTER E.C. DURHAM HAS RECEIVED NO SUCH INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE MARITIME COMMISSION. AS A RESULT OF COURSE MASTERS GENERALLY MUST NOT SUPPLY OR DETAIL MERCHANT SEAMEN TO COMPLETE GUN CREWS DUE TO FACT THAT MERCHANT SEAMEN COMING ON BOARD THE CAPE NOME FROM OTHER VESSELS STATE THAT THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ASKED TO MAN GUN STATIONS IF THEY SO DESIRED AND RESERVE BEING ORDERED BY THE MASTER. FOR ILLUSTRATION: Adolph E. Carlson, Carpenter; Z-425425; U.S.; ON THIS VOYAGE CREATED DISSATISFACTION AMONG THE MERCHANT CREW BY POINTING OUT THAT IF ANY MERCHANT CREW MEMBER TOOK AN ACTIVE PART IN THE DEFENSE OF THE VESSEL, SUBSEQUENT CAPTURE WOULD UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW RESULT IN SHOOTING AS A SPY AND THAT THERE IS NO PROTECTION UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW. OBVIOUSLY LACK OF PROPER AUTHORITY TO DEMAND THAT MERCHANT CREW TO MAN GUN STATIONS CAN EASILY MEAN LOSS OF LIVES, SHIPS AND CARGO BY FAILURE OF MERCHANT CREW TO SUBMIT TO PROPER TRAINING AT GUN STATIONS. MASTERS AND GUNNERY OFFICERS ARE AT A DISADVANTAGE UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS.

Champoeg - LT. (jg) Wilford B. Penny - U.S.N.R. # 343736 dated 11-25-44:

1. Repair leak in after magazine.
2. Replace Mk 1 Smoke-float racks with Mk 2.
3. Put water cooler in Navy Crew's Mess.
4. Rearrange seating in the Navy Mess.
5. Ladders leading down from 20 mm's 3 and 4 to the boat deck.
6. Drain for the training circle of 3/50.
7. Replace lost cool box in 3/50 gun tub.
8. Mk 4 sights for the 20 mms.
9. New deck covering for the 3/50 and 4/50 gun tubs.
10. Radio loud speaker for the Navy Mess.

U.S. Navy reply at New York:

2. Quick turnaround of ship will not permit completion of repairs requested in Par. (g).

U.S. Navy reply at London:

2. Attention is invited to paragraph (g) of the basic report. Due to lack of time this Office was unable to correct the defects and deficiencies noted.

Dated 12-12-44:

(i) Attention is called to a Chief Steward named Lewicki who was aboard ship on 29 and 30 November. This man was drunk and in his sack the entire time. The night of the 30th he was sent ashore by Mr. Shields of Dietze and Co. and a new Steward gotten. It was only through the vigilance of the Navy Crew that kept the stevedors from making off with all the new stewards supplies.

Chantilly - LT. Lawrence E. Kobelt - U.S.N.R. # 240068 dated 11-25-44:

(g) Defects and deficiencies: A complete list of requested alterations and repairs will be turned in to the Port Director for action thereon.

Crown Point - LT. John W. Gilmore - U.S.N.R. # 262768 dated 11-25-44:

Milford Haven British Naval Control should invite Armed Guard Officers to convoy conferences. Also in their instructions to masters, it should be stated that Armed Guard Officers are to have access to all "Secret" instructions.

U.S. Navy reply at New York:

2. Master will be instructed that all confidential instructions are to be made available to the Armed Guard Commander (par.i).

Dated 12-27-44:

Wartime radio instructions were carried out. Only two inexperienced merchant radio operators were aboard, as the experienced Chief Radio Operator missed the ship in New York. These two men did the best they could. Fortunately we were in convoy except for a few hours. If an emergency had occurred, there is some doubt as to their ability to handle the situation. The policy of sending such inexperienced operators to sea, is open to question.

Esso Hartford - LT. Carl D. Von Der Lippe -

U.S.N.R. # 243070 dated December 12, 1944:

*8. THERE ARE NO DEFECTS IN THE BATTERY.
AT COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK, CHIEF RADIO
OFFICER H. LONG REPORTED HIS DEPARTMENT COMPLETE WITH
3 OPERATORS. THIS STATEMENT WAS FALSE. SHIP SAILED WITH
ONLY 2 OPERATORS NOR DID HE HAVE 3 WHEN HE REPORTED
TO NAVY. HE NOW (STRANGELY) BLAMES THE NAVY.*

U.S. Navy reply at Liverpool:

2. With reference to paragraph (f), the Armed Guard Officer states that no action need be taken in this port as the two operators are sufficient for the return voyage.

Esso Wilmington - ENS. Charles E. Gallagher -

U.S.N.R. # 298782 dated November 6, 1944 ?:

The guns are arranged in best possible manner and are in good operating condition.

Exanthia - LT. Robert I. Blair - U.S.N.R. # 239800
dated November 17, 1944:

(g) No defects or deficiencies in location or arrangements of battery.

Exceller - LT. (jg) John J. Sullivan, jr. - U.S.N.R.
260025 dated November 16, 1944:

NO DEFECTS OR DEFICIENCIES AS REGARDS MATERIAL, PERSONNEL OR OPERATIONS.

Excelsior - LT. William B. Keys - U.S.N.R. #
201539 dated 11-24-44:

No defects or deficiencies in location or arrangement of the Battery. Recommend cartwheel sights on 5th 38 Cal. gun. Recommend forward quarters be split up and part of men moved to quarters amidship. Test Cocks needed on Fore and aft magazine flood valves. Install two doughnut rafts on 3rd gun tubs fore and aft.

U.S. Navy reply at New York:

2. Repairs requested in Par. (g) have been referred to Army for action.

Exchequer - LT. Charles A. Scott - U.S.N.R. #
135994 dated 11-25-44:

Defects or deficiencies: None except as follows: 3rd 50 Cal. gun starboard side aft frozen in train. This condition was reported to ordnance department of the New York Port Director upon our arrival from the last voyage 25 October 1944. It was also reported in previous voyage report forwarded viz the Port Director, Plymouth, England.

U.S. Navy reply at New York:

2. The 3rd 50 gun is being replaced and other necessary ordnance repairs are being affected by the New York Navy Yard.

Exhibitor - LT. Chester A. Geer - U.S.N.R. #
206767 dated 12-12-44:

Recommend the extra heavy coats be put on board for sea watches, of ships traveling in North Atlantic in Winter. Regular Jackets not heavy for extreme cold.

U.S. Navy reply:

9/26/44 (j)
A.S. Or
Should draw
special winter
clothing
E.C.C. (j)

Exminster - LT. Donald E. Potter - U.S.N.R. #
260546 dated 11-17-44:

There were no defects in location or arrangements of the
battery, or in equipment.

Fort Stevens - LT. Walter G. Baker - U.S.N.R. #
244413 dated 11-25-44:

Wooden structure in the port section of the forward magazine is inadequate for ammunition storage in moderate seas. After magazine needs an additional petcock and drain to prevent seepage of water on stowed ammunition whenever pressure is put on the water lines during fire drills. 3"50 on the bow requires boresighting. Heavy head seas knocked sights out of alignment.

U.S. Navy reply at New York:

2. Availability of ship did not permit installation of pet cocks and other repairs at this time.

(Repairs would be effected on 12-29-44 in N.Y.)
Golden Fleece - LT. James F. Casey - U.S.N.R. #
222391 dated 12-12-44:

No defects or deficiencies.

(The previous armed guard commander's report
dated 11-17-44 showed:)

No changes are needed in the ship at this time.

Grand River - LT. (jg) Weldon W. Poole - U.S.N.R.
374837 dated 12-12-44:

No defects or deficiencies in locations or arrangements of the
battery. time

Great Republic - LT. Richard S. Moffitt - U.S.N.R.
169233 dated November 26, 1944:

No deficiencies in the battery were noted.

Kernstown - LT. (jg) William B. Smith - U.S.N.R. #
347901 dated November 25, 1944:

(g) The following defects and deficiencies in material are to be reported:

Firing key on the 3"50 failed to operate or allow electricity to pass through due to the fact that the fibers between the metal bridge and the spring were burned out. The solenoid is not in good working order because weak connections are beyond repair and should be replaced with a new one and also a new firing key. 3"50 gun should be given a thorough checking over particularly the solenoid and the electrical firing leads.

The electric motor on the port side of the 3"50 gun tub should be given a thorough check up. This motor overheated during the voyage and it was necessary to turn it off. The cause for overheating has been repaired.

The 20mm Mark IV Mod. IV has a frozen spring thrust bearing and frozen thrust bearings in pedestal. Unable to repair on board ship. (No. 4 20mm port side amidships on flying bridge)

General alarm bells can not be rung anywhere except wheelhouse. Ship's electrician has not been able to ascertain cause.

(i) Recommendations:

Install cartwheel type open sights on 20mm, 3"50, and 5"38 guns. 20mm guns are now equipped with Mark V sights

Remove all empty shell cases, brass, and boxes from magazine forecabin on port side.

Check general alarm system.

Enlarge Navy gear locker in shelter deck space.

Attach door to the 3"50 Navy gear locker on forecabin deck.

Lay new deck pad in 3"50 gun tub.

U.S. Navy reply at New York for letter I:

2. Items #3, 4, 5 and 6 will be taken care of.
Item #1--No Mk IV 20MM cartwheel sights are available at the present time.

Markay - LT. (jg) Francis C. Everts - U.S.N.R. # 294928 dated November 29, 1944:

(g) There are no defects or deficiencies to report at this time.

Midnight - (The previous armed guard commander's report dated 11-16-44 showed:)

(G) The below listed deficiencies if corrected will help materially in the better operation of the battery, and in the health and comfort of the Gun Crew.

- (1) Install Electric Toaster in Gun Crew Mess.
- (2) Repair Non-skid deck covering on after gun and in 20mm. gun tubs.
- (3) Paint out Gun Crew Mess Hall.
- (4) Paint out Gunnery Officers quarters.
- (5) Straighten open sights on 5th gun.
- (6) Install holder at after gun for air bottles.
- (7) Inspect air bottles for verification of contents.
- (8) Insert faucet in shower line of Gun Crew Shower.
- (9) Install wooden rack in Gun Crew Mess for stowage of cups and glasses.
- (10) Repair wardrobe door in Gunnery Officers quarters.

U.S. Navy reply at New York for letter G:

2. All items in Par. (g) except #1 will be taken care of. No toasters are available at this time.

Paoli - ENS. Leo F. McNamara - U.S.N.R. # 307565 dated November 30, 1944:

NONE

Perryville - LT. (jg) John Fisher - U.S.N.R. # 282551 dated November 26, 1944:

There are no defects or deficiencies in the location or arrangements of the battery. A higher splinter shield should be erected on the stern gun deck. The present low shield and low, single life line make the deck unsafe for either action or watchstanding in rough weather.

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Cont- The decks of all gun tubs should be recovered as they are torn and worn.

Recommendations: Arrangements should be made for Armed Guard Officers, including Communications Liason Officers, to attend conferences in all foreign ports. In Southend, England, the launch is authorized to bring only the master and chief commercial radio operator to the conference.

U.S. Navy reply at Philadelphia for letter G:

1. Forwarded. Regarding par.(g) the following is submitted:-
 - (1)- No repairs could be affected due to the gaseous condition of the vessel.

Raphael Semmes - (The previous armed guard commander's report dated 11-1-44 showed:)

There were no defects or deficiencies in location and arrangement of the battery or in the equipment as regards material, personnel or operation.

Sachem - LT. Joseph J. Geagan - U.S.N.R. # 239001 dated 12-13-44:

The 20 MM guns still have mark V sight. These are bent and out of line due to the pressure of the gun covers upon them caused by high winds and heavy seas. Constant request at the Port Director, New York for replacement with Mark IV sight have been un-availing.

U.S. Navy reply at London:

2. Attention is invited to paragraph (g) of the basic report. Due to lack of time this Office made no attempt to replace these gun sights.

U.S. Navy reply at New York:

2. Mark V 20MM sights are replaced with Mark IV 20MM sights whenever supply permits.

Sag Harbor - LT. Kenneth F. Perley - U.S.N.R. # 276813 dated November 25, 1944:

Defects or deficiencies in location or arrangements of the battery or in equipment as regards material, personnel, or operation None
Recommendations tending to the improvement of this service. None at this time.

Turkey Island - LT. (jg) William K. McKinnon -
U.S.N.R. # 287023 dated November 25, 1944:

(g) None

White Falcon - LT. Ralph A. Jones - U.S.N.R. #
244393 dated November 17, 1944:

(g) The non-skid surface on the decks of the 3" 59 gun turrets has again come off. Heavy seas washed the covering from the port turret and that on the starboard turret was broken by workman making repairs in Marseille. Replace sound powered phone jack-box on bow, port side. Replace mark 5 gun sights on all 20 MM guns with Mark 4 sights.

U.S. Navy reply at New York:

2. Items requested in Par. (g) will be taken care of.

Dated December 12, 1944:

(g) Trigger of one 20 MM gun broken. No other repairs or supplies are needed at this time.

U.S. Navy reply at Bristol Channel Area:

2. In reference to paragraph (g), the broken trigger of the 20MM gun is being replaced in this area.

Yellow Tavern - LT. (jg) Walter F. Oleksiak -
U.S.N.R. # 328521 dated December 12, 1944:

The following defects and deficiencies have been brought to the attention of the Port Director, New York, New York. None.

Marine Wolf - LT. George F. Pigott - U.S.N.R. #
239708 dated November 25, 1944:

No defects or deficiencies in equipment or material or arrangement of the battery.

Santa Rosa - LT. Gabriel M. Ondeck - U.S.N.R.
dated November 17, 1944:

None.

NO reports found for U.S.S. Lejeune, H.M.S.
Patroller, Arawa, Britannic, Empire Milner, Karsten
Wang and Santa Paula.

mck 8-21-2015 (file 42B)