

REPORT OF TOTAL LOSS, CASUALTY, &c.

No. 73900 in R. B. Wreck Book, p. 168/40

Date of writing this report 19 4

Vessel's Name *S.S. Quad Screw Empress of Britain* of *London* Tons { Gross 42348 Net 22385

Built at *Clydebank* When 1931 4 Casualty notice sent to Owner ✓ Owner's reply ✓

Owner's Name *Canadian Pacific Railway Co. (Canadian Pacific Steamships, Ltd., Mgrs.)*

Address *8, Waterloo Place, London, S.W. 1.*

Case previously before
Classing Committee.

Date
Last Minute

Particulars of Classification.

+ 100 A. 1. + LMC 12,35
with fuelboard 1238.
BS 1,40.
SS Sou. N° 1-35 TSP 1,40
Fixed for Oil Fuel 1,40

Date of Casualty *28th October, 1940.*

4.31 P.M. above 150° E.

Précis of particulars of Casualty Struck by bomb and caught fire

LL 29/10

on the 28th October, 1940. She

was taken in tow and was subsequently
sunk by submarine.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

CL 28/10, 29/10, 6/11, 7/11 and
23/11.

"EMPRESS OF BRITAIN"

Germans Claim to have Sunk Her by Bombing

BERLIN, Saturday
The official German news agency today reported that the liner *Empress of Britain* has been sunk by German bombers in the Atlantic. "The *Empress of Britain*," it says, "was successfully attacked by German bombers on Saturday morning within the waters north of Ireland. The ship was badly hit and began to sink at once. The crew took to their boats."
The *Empress of Britain* was set on fire, according to the Deutschland-sender Wireless Station. The attack, said the announcer, was made about 60 miles off the west coast of Ireland.—Reuter.

OTTAWA, Saturday
In official quarters here it was stated that no information had been received regarding the *Empress of Britain*. There were no Canadian troops on board the liner, it was added. The *Empress of Britain* had not been on the Canadian route for a year.—Reuter.

The Canadian Pacific liner *Empress of Britain*, one of the most famous ships flying the red ensign, was launched by the Duke of Windsor (then Prince of Wales) on June 11, 1930. Built by John Brown & Co., Ltd., Clydebank, she was at the time of her construction the largest vessel to have been built in this country. She was, too, the largest, fastest and most luxuriously appointed ocean-going vessel to ply between any two ports within the British Empire. Her speed of over 24 knots enabled her to make the voyage between Southampton and Quebec in five days, and to cover the actual Atlantic crossing in 24 days. In all she had accommodation for 1153 passengers.

She made many fast passages between this country and Canada, and she added to her popularity with the travelling public by the many world cruises she subsequently undertook. In 1932 she carried the members of the British delegation to the Ottawa Conference to and from Canada, and in 1939 she brought back to this country the King and Queen after their successful visit to Canada and the United States.

The *Empress of Britain* has a gross tonnage of 42,348, a length of 758 ft., and a breadth of 97 ft. 6 in. She has four propellers, each driven by an independent set of single-reduction turbines of the Parsons type.

"EMPRESS OF BRITAIN"

Vessel Sinks After Explosion While in Tow

A communique issued by the Admiralty and War Office yesterday afternoon gave details of the loss of the *Empress of Britain*. The communique reads:

The Admiralty and War Office regret to announce that the *Empress of Britain* has been lost as the result of enemy action. The *Empress of Britain* was attacked by enemy aircraft and set on fire and in consequence necessary to abandon ship. Salvage operations were commenced immediately but while in tow the *Empress of Britain* subsequently blew up and sank. Some 598 survivors out of a total on board of 643 have already been landed by British warships. Included in this number were military families and a small number of military personnel. The resolute and efficient handling of the *Empress of Britain's* A.A. detachment contributed largely to the high proportion of the total complement being saved.

Yesterday's German communique claimed that the vessel had been torpedoed. It stated:

The *Empress of Britain*, an ocean-going vessel registered in Great Britain, was torpedoed and set on fire by units of our force and which the British tried to bring to port under the protection of a strong convoy, has been torpedoed and sunk by a submarine under the command of Captain Jenisch.

BERLIN, Monday

The British liner *Empress of Britain* was finally destroyed early today by the firing of two torpedoes from a U-boat, the official German News Agency claimed today. The German agency's statement said: "The *Empress of Britain*, which was heavily bombed and set alight on Saturday by a German reconnaissance plane was sighted yesterday 50 kilometres west of her original position and still burning. British attempts to tow the ship into the nearest harbour did not succeed. Thanks to the co-operation between the German air and sea forces a German U-boat in the early hours of this morning succeeded in finally destroying the *Empress of Britain* by two torpedoes."—Reuter.

Survivors from the *Empress of Britain* were landed at a western port on Sunday. It was stated that the liner was bombed by a German plane 700 miles off Ireland on Saturday morning. The raider disappointed, then returned and dropped four more bombs including incendiaries. The liner caught fire and passengers took to the boats, but some could not be lowered as they were set ablaze by incendiaries. She blazed from bow to stern. There was no panic. A number of women and children on board calmly obeyed instructions and stayed below in some time after the liner was hit. There was little danger of her sinking immediately and ample time for them to get into the boats. It was learned that a number were killed when the bombs exploded.

Sug.

Date of Committee

Committee's Minute

OMITTED FROM R.R.
TUE. 24 DEC 1940

OMITTED FROM R.R.

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Foundation