

# SLIEDRECHT

## REPORT OF TOTAL LOSS, CASUALTY, &c.

No. 33855 in R. B. Wreck Book, p. 96/39 Date of writing this report 21st December, 1939  
Vessel's Name *Steel No. 1 "Sliedrecht"* of *Rotterdam* Tons {Gross 5733  
YEAR. MONTH. Net 2935  
Built at *Rotterdam* When *1924* 9 Casualty notice sent to Owner *11/2/39* Owner's reply *11/12/39*  
Owner's Name *(N. K. Phs. van Ommereen's Scheepvaartbedrijf, Ngrs.)*  
Address *10 Westerlaan, Rotterdam*

Case previously before Date  
Classing Committee. Last Minute  
Particulars of Classification.  
H 10091 639 H L M C S 4,36 5,37  
S.S. No 3-436 DBS 6,39  
Carrying Petroleum TS 8,38CL  
in bulk OIL ENGINES

Date of Casualty *16th November, 1939*

Précis of particulars of Casualty This vessel is reported to have been sunk by submarine in the North Atlantic on the 16th November, 1939.

The Owners concur.

### SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

#### DUTCH SHIP SUNK BY U-BOAT

Times  
25/11

#### SURVIVORS' ORDEAL

Five exhausted and half-frozen seamen picked up by a trawler in the Atlantic after seven days and a half in an open boat, brought first news of the loss of the Dutch steamer *Sliedrecht* (5,733 tons). They were landed on the north-west coast on Thursday night. Their ship was sunk by a German submarine. Twenty-six others of the crew who were in another boat are missing.

Peter Bruns, one of the survivors, stated yesterday that he and the other four men rowed over to the submarine to show the ship's papers. The U-boat commander gave them half an hour to abandon ship. They pointed out that theirs was a neutral ship bound for a neutral port, but he said he would still have to sink her. While returning to the ship they yelled to those on board to man the lifeboat. The 26 other members of the crew did so and scrambled in. Shortly afterwards the submarine fired, and there was a terrific explosion. In the darkness they lost the other boat. For days the weather was bad and they had to bale continually. They had no coats, and their food was soon gone.

Eventually they came in sight of land, and on the last morning sighted a trawler. With the little strength that they had left they shouted for help, and eventually attracted the boat's attention.

A British United Press message from Rotterdam says that the owners of the *Sliedrecht* state that she was carrying petrol to Norway. The Dutch flag was painted on both sides of the ship. The news of the sinking of the vessel has caused great indignation in Holland.

Dutch steamer *Sliedrecht* (5,733 tons) torpedoed in the Atlantic eight days ago. U-boat commander, although shown the ship's papers, refused to allow her to proceed to a neutral port, and she was sunk. Twenty-six others of the crew are missing.

NC 25/11

#### WITHOUT COATS

One of five survivors of the Dutch steamer *Sliedrecht* stated yesterday that the U-boat commander had told them that he would have to sink their ship, although they had pointed out that she was neutral and bound for a neutral port.

He said that he and the other four survivors rowed over to the submarine to show the ship's papers. The commander gave them half an hour to abandon ship.

"It took us nearly half an hour to reach our ship," said the survivor. "We yelled to those on board to man the lifeboat. The other members of the crew immediately lowered the boat and scrambled in."

For days the weather was bad and they had to bale continually. They had no coats, and their food was soon gone.

Eventually they came in sight of land, and on the last morning sighted a trawler. "With the little strength that we had left," the survivor said, "we yelled and shouted and eventually attracted the boat's attention."

Suggested Record

Date of Committee

Committee's Minute

SUNK - WAR LOSS. 11,39

FRI. 29 DEC 1939

Sunk - War Loss 11.39

WB No 17

SECTION

LR

© 2020

Master of Shipping.

Lloyd's Register  
Foundation

W446-0172

LL 25/11  
and  
LL 27/11

# DUTCH TANKER SUNK BY U-BOAT

The Dutch motor tanker *Slidrecht*, 5133 tons gross, was sunk by a submarine in the North Atlantic on Nov. 16, it was learned yesterday, after five survivors of the crew had been landed on the North-West Coast by a trawler which had picked them up after they had been seven and a half days in an open boat. The *Slidrecht* had a crew of 31. One of the survivors said yesterday that the U-boat commander told members of the crew that he would have to sink their vessel, though it was pointed out to him that she was a neutral ship bound for a neutral port.

## SURVIVOR'S STORY

Peter Brons, of Vlaardingen, Holland, interviewed in hospital, said that on Nov. 16 the *Slidrecht* was stopped in the Atlantic by a submarine, which ordered the captain to send over the ship's papers in a small boat for examination. They launched the small boat, and Brons and four members of the crew rowed over to the submarine. After examining the ship's papers the submarine commander informed them that he would have to sink their ship, and gave them half an hour to abandon her. "We told him that we were a neutral ship bound for a neutral port," said Brons, "but it made no difference. He said he would still have to sink us. We then asked him if he would take us on board and transfer us to another ship, but he refused, saying that he had no room. Before we returned to our ship he warned us that if we gave any distress signals he would sink us without any further warning. It took us nearly half an hour to return to the *Slidrecht* and as we approached he yelled to those on board that the ship was going to be sunk and to man the lifeboat. The 26 other members of the crew immediately lowered the boat and scrambled in. Shortly afterwards the submarine fired and there was a terrific explosion. I shall never forget the flame that shot up into the air. In the darkness we lost sight of the other boat.

"We stayed near the spot where our ship sank in the hope that we might be picked up by another vessel, but as the weather the following day began to deteriorate we set a course as best we could for the east in the hope that we would reach land. We had no compass, but we considered that the wind would blow us towards land. For days the weather was terrible, and we were continually bailing water out of the boat. We only had overcoats to protect us from the cold. What little food we had quickly disappeared. On Wednesday, Nov. 22, the weather improved slightly, and we managed to make a sail out of two overcoats, and that evening we saw the flash of a light-house and knew that at last we were near land. We lay off the light during the night in case we were washed against the rocks in the darkness, and in the morning we sighted a trawler. With the little strength that we had left we yelled and shouted, and eventually attracted the boat's attention. We were taken on board exhausted and frozen with cold, but still alive. We had given up hope of being rescued, and were all waiting for the end."

The *Slidrecht*, which was built at Rotterdam in 1924, was owned by the N. V. Phs. Van Ommeren's Scheepvaartbedrijf, of Rotterdam.

LL 5/12

## THE SINKING OF THE "SLIEDRECHT"

It will be remembered that when the Dutch motor tanker *Slidrecht* was torpedoed without warning in the Atlantic recently, the German excuse for sinking her was that they thought she was a British "Q" ship. Further details of this sinking have now been made known. It appears that the vessel was signalled by the U-boat to stop, and the master of the *Slidrecht* was ordered to go to the submarine with the ship's papers. He got into one of the ship's boats and was rowed across by five seamen. When he reached the submarine he was ordered back to his ship, and while he was making for her the U-boat, without warning, torpedoed the *Slidrecht* and sank her. The remaining 27 members of the tanker's crew are all missing and must be considered drowned: the survivors are the master and the men who were with him in the boat. They had a perilous voyage of 300 miles until they were picked up by a British trawler and landed in England, and they are now in hospital where they are likely to stay for a few weeks. It may be noted that the *Slidrecht* was a neutral vessel but was carrying cargo from one neutral country to another.

LL 6/12

## THE "SLIEDRECHT"

It has now been ascertained that the known survivors of the Dutch motor tanker *Slidrecht* consist of the first mate and four seamen, and not the master and five men as stated in Lloyd's List yesterday. It appears that when the commander of the German submarine (which later sank the *Slidrecht*) ordered the *Slidrecht's* papers to be taken to him, they were given to the first mate to take over. When the mate and the four men were on their way back to their vessel she was torpedoed. The master and the remainder of the crew managed to get away, but have not since been heard of.

D. Tel 8/12

## HOLLAND PROTESTS TO GERMANY

### SINKING OF TANKER

From Our Special Correspondent  
AMSTERDAM, Thursday.

It is officially announced to-night that the Dutch Government has protested to the German Government over the torpedoing of the Dutch tanker *Slidrecht*, 5,133 tons, in the Atlantic on Nov. 16.

This step was taken after a study of survivors' evidence had established with certainty that a German U-boat was responsible.

The *Slidrecht*, which was carrying petroleum from Iran to Norway, was sunk though the U-boat commander was informed that she was a neutral ship bound for a neutral port.

Times 11/12

The NETHERLANDS Government have lodged a protest in Berlin against the sinking of the Dutch tanker *Slidrecht*, as it has been established from reports by the survivors that the ship was torpedoed by a German submarine on November 16 in the Atlantic.

8.  
RE  
Date of  
No. in  
Reg. Book.  
TONN  
GROSS  
UNDER D  
NET  
Survey  
Cell DB  
total ca  
N.B.  
Last