

"SULTAN STAR"

WRECK No. 174 Section 2

7856

F
REPORT OF TOTAL LOSS, CASUALTY, &c.

No. 34351 in R. B. Wreck Book, p. 20/40

Date of writing this report 21st March, 1940.

Vessel's Name *Steel Twin SS "Sultan Star"* of *London* Tons {Gross 12306 Net 7684Built at *Birkenhead* When *1930* 2 Casualty notice sent to Owner *7/3/40* Owner's reply *8/3/40*Owner's Name *Frederick Leyland & Co. Ltd.*Address *Blue Star Line Ltd, 40, St. Mary Axe, E.C.3.*Case previously before
Classing Committee.

Date

Last Minute

Particulars of Classification.

+ LMC
+100A1

7.39

SS No 2-38

+ LMC
MS 638
BS 539
+ Lloyd's RMC
11.39 etc.
TS 238CLDate of Casualty *14th February, 1940.*Précis of particulars of Casualty *This vessel is reported to have been sunk by submarine 200 miles W.S.W. of Land's End on the 14th February, 1940.*

The Owners concur.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

"SULTAN STAR"

A message from New York announced that the Mackay Radio had intercepted a message reporting that the British steamer *Sultan Star* had been torpedoed at 4.42 p.m. (G.M.T.) yesterday. Her position was given as 48.48 N. 10.06 W. Her crew were stated to be leaving the vessel. The *Sultan Star* has a gross tonnage of 12,306 and is owned by the Blue Star Line, Ltd., London. She was built in 1930 by Cammell Laird & Co. Ltd., Birkenhead.

LL 15/2

BIG CARGO LINER

The Mackay Radio Corporation of America reports (according to Reuter) that the *Sultan Star* was torpedoed at 4.42 p.m. yesterday. The crew abandoned the ship. The latitude of the ship at the time of the attack is given as 48.48 N., the longitude as 10.06 W. This position is roughly 200 miles W.S.W. of Land's End.

The *Sultan Star* had a crew of about 70, and was commanded by Captain W. Bevan, of Cardiff.

The Blue Star cargo liner *Sultan Star* was owned by Frederick Leyland and Co., Limited, and registered in London. She was built by Messrs. Cammell Laird and Co., of Birkenhead, and completed in 1930. She was 505 ft. long, and at the time of her completion was the largest ship of her class in the world. In 1935 she set up a record of 29 days 20 minutes for a voyage from London to Auckland in New Zealand. Her average speed on that trip was 16.95 knots.

Times
15/2

"SULTAN STAR"

Seventy-two survivors of the Blue Star liner *Sultan Star* were landed yesterday at a West of England port. Captain W. H. Bevan, of Cardiff, said that only one man had been lost, the engine room storekeeper. The *Sultan Star* got her four boats away safely.

LL 16/2

RETAIN

WP no 174
Section 2

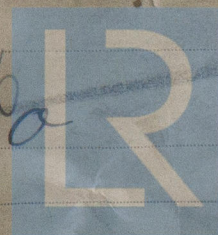
Suggested Record

Date of Committee

Committee's Minute

SUNK - WAR LOSS. 240
WED 27 MAR 1940

Sunk. War Loss 240



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SAGA OF THE "SULTAN STAR"

Wireless Operator Sent S.O.S. as Ship Sank Under Him

PERFECT DISCIPLINE

The gallantry and devotion to duty of the British Merchant Navy was once again demonstrated when the steamship *Sultan Star* was torpedoed by a U-boat on Feb. 14. It was a fine, clear afternoon, and Captain Bevan was on the bridge when the torpedo struck the ship. There was no warning whatever of the attack. The first intimation of the presence of the enemy was the explosion of the torpedo.

Captain Bevan went to the wing of his bridge and looked aft along his vessel. She was shivering from the shock of the explosion. Almost immediately he saw that she was beginning to settle in the water. He went to the engine-room telegraphs and put them to "Finished with engines," which was the prearranged signal for those below in engine-room and stokehold to go to their boat stations. They came up on deck with perfect discipline—all except one man who had been killed by the explosion. At the same time Wireless Operator P. Winsor was tapping out the S.O.S. The crew went rapidly but calmly to their boat stations. There the chief officer mustered the men and then reported them ready to the master. The whole operation was carried out as calmly and deliberately as if it had been one of the routine exercises.

SINKING BY THE STERN

Captain Bevan saw that his ship was sinking rapidly by the stern and at once gave the order to abandon ship, instructing all the boats to get well clear except one, which was to stand by to pick up the wireless operator and himself.

The boats quickly got away from the ship, on board which the wireless operator continued to broadcast the S.O.S. and the master stood by him. The ship was sinking faster and faster. Her stern was under and the water was over the after end of the boat deck when the master, seeing that it was essential that he and the wireless operator should leave at once if they were to escape with

their lives, tried to drag the wireless operator away from his instruments. Wireless operator Winsor, who is a big and heavy man, literally fought his captain off, shouting that he was not certain that the signal was through and he was going to stay until he was certain.

There was nothing more Captain Bevan could do. The ship was going and it seemed certain suicide to stay another instant. He dived over the side and struck out for the boat which was standing by for him. As he was hauled into the boat he looked back for his wireless operator. The ship was almost standing on her stern. Her bows were in the air and the water was actually going down the funnel when he saw Winsor leave the wireless office and dash for the ship's side. The wireless operator was in the act of sliding down a rope when the ship sank. He did not leave the ship—the ship left him. The next time he was seen—very soon afterwards—he was clinging to some wreckage.

THE AVENGERS

The *Sultan Star* carried a deck cargo of some 200 tons in barrels. The barrels had broken loose and were crashing about. To have taken a boat into that maelstrom would have ensured its destruction and the death of all in it. Moreover, there was the danger of a boiler explosion releasing more wreckage which would shoot to the surface. Captain Bevan could not, therefore, at once take his boat to the rescue of the wireless operator. All he could do was wait on the edge of the maelstrom for the disturbance caused by the ship sinking to die down, so that the barrels would cease crashing about. It was agonising, that waiting within a few yards of a man in deadly peril, but it had to be. So close to Winsor was the boat that Captain Bevan heard him groan as he was caught and pounded and crushed between two barrels. It seemed that all was over—but Winsor did not loose his hold on the floating wreckage to which he was clinging.

About twenty minutes after the ship had gone down it was possible for the boat to reach Winsor. He was dragged on board the boat, unconscious and more dead than alive. Captain Bevan never thought that he would live. The first thing done was to force brandy down his throat. The S.O.S. which Winsor had made certain of getting out through his bravery and devotion to duty was quick in securing help. Three destroyers came rushing up—not

only to rescue the survivors of the *Sultan Star*, but also to hunt the submarine which had sunk that ship. They picked up the men from the *Sultan Star's* boats and mercilessly counter attacked the U-boat with depth charges. They sank the U-boat.

Winsor was therefore got on board a destroyer and under the care of a doctor very quickly. Captain Bevan is certain that he would not have lived if this had not been so; and he is insistent that the care of the destroyer's doctor saved the wireless operator's life. As it was, Winsor was all right next morning. Thus the gallantry and devotion to duty of Wireless Operator Winsor not only got help to the survivors quickly and enabled just retribution to be so swiftly meted out to the U-boat, but incidentally saved his own life—the one thing for which he had shown no regard.

"HOW TO PAY FOR THE WAR"

Mr. J. M. Keynes's proposals that our war finance should include a big scheme for compulsory savings have been under continuous discussion since he outlined them in "The Times" last November. He has revised and amplified his plan, met some objections and anticipated others, and the revised version is now available in a booklet called "How to Pay for the War" (Macmillan, 1s.). It can be strongly recommended not only as an exposition of Mr. Keynes's own proposals, which deserve the closest consideration by all classes of the community, but also for its diagnosis of our financial problem and its examination of other possible solutions and their effects on the national economy.

PILOTAGE RATES AT GOOLE

From Our Own Correspondent

HULL, Wednesday
The Humber Conservancy Board at their meeting at Hull yesterday concurred in the view expressed by a number of Goole ship-owners that the application of the Goole pilots for a temporary increase in current rates was not at present justified. The pilots asked for a temporary increase of 25 per cent. A letter from the Goole Steamship Owners' Association stated that they had gone carefully into the earnings of pilots for a period of eight months, from May to December, and they could not assent to the application.



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