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U.S.S. BARB - Report of Twelfth War Patrol.

18 July 1945(Cont'd)

1158-25 TORPEDO ATTACK #4A. Fired tubes #4 and #6 at the Frigate. Range 1240 yds track 160 degrees port, gyros 10 degrees right.

Strung right and at

1159-18 TORPEDO ATTACK #4B. Fired tubes #2, #3, #5 at large AK. Range 1510 yards, track 120 degrees port, gyros 43 degrees right. All torpedoes set on 4 feet, since we believe torpedoes are running deep.

1200 Position: Lat. 46-04 N, Long. 142-29 E.

1200-28 One hit in stern of Frigate. This set off his depth charges and blew his stern off in a tremendous explosion. Noticed his rising sun man-of-war flag sinking properly. The bow end quickly assumed a 90 degree rise angle. Took pictures. Forward end of ship sank until it hit bottom leaving about 20 feet of bow sticking up vertically. This will provide a much better marker than a spar buoy. Sinking witnessed by entire Conning Tower party. There were no survivors.

1205 Large AK made a 90 degree turn toward, then 180 degree away, then right 90 degrees to go back up the coast followed by a 180 degree turn to resume course for his original destination. Seems to have a difficult time making up his mind, which would be eased, if he only knew we are out of torpedoes. Unaccountably we missed him.

1213 Secured from battle stations and opened coast.

1536 Surfaced. Visibility 12,000 yards. We now feel very dangerous with a full forty fathoms of deep water beneath us, and we have a few bitter pills for the other three Frigates in this area, if they care to play on our ground.

1545 APR contact. 95/450/40.

1601 CONTACT #19. Sighted 2 Frigates astern of us about 11,000 yards in 20 fathoms of water. Their decks and superstructure were completely visible. Remained surfaced, hoping to draw them out. Their angle on the bow 20 degrees port. Frigates declined the invitation and, apparently on sighting us, quickly changed their angle on the bow to 90 degrees port and made tracks for the minefield.

1743 Sighted a RUSSIAN ship south of us.

1807 Radar contact at 9 miles closing fast. Dived. Oh well, plane opposition has been tight since the fighter strike.

2121 CONTACT #20 End of twilight, bright moonlight. While making SJ sweep, prior to surfacing, made radar contact on 3 Frigates, two together and one several thousand yards astern. All searching for us, and equipped with 10 CM radar. Commenced approach, but unable to gain position ahead. Frigates passed at 2000 yards plainly visible in night periscope. Unfortunately we have no shooting fish.

2220 Surfaced. Did not consider it good policy to tackle this whole group, with what we have, with the possibility of being held down all night by moonlight. Hope to be able to handle these singly at a later date. Avoided. Set course for PATIENCE BAY and a backlog of unfinished business.

2225 APR contact. 95/450/40.

2337 Another RUSSIAN ship contact.

19 July 1945

Surface patrolling PATIENCE BAY. Our plan is to locate a suitable coastal position of the railways, land our SABOTEUR force and plant a 55 lb. demolition charge under the tracks. Then this charge will be exploded by a train passing over and closing the micro switch.

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19 July 1945 (Cont'd)

- 1022 APR contact. 76/500.
1130 APR contact. 79/500/60.
1200 Position: Lat. 47-03 N, Long. 143-44 E.
1837 Dived and closed coast for observation.
1932 Sighted the regular northbound train. Located a fairly good position. We had previously located two good landing spots north of SHIRETURI.
2201 Surfaced. Bright moonlight and no clouds. Operation off tonight.

20 July 1945

- Surface patrolling across PATIENCE BAY in hopes of finding a Sampan to assist our project. We are remaining undetected until this is completed. Cloudless skies.
- 1200 Position: Lat. 48-03 N, Long. 143-06 E.
A close study of the Japanese Charts of KARAFUTO recovered from the sinking of the coastal AK has revealed more accurate sounding information than our own charts.
Selected a more suitable position for the sabotage.
- 1517 Dived and closed coast for observation.
1648 Sighted train.
1947 Sighted regular train. Previous observations have given us their time tables now. Selected optimum position for landing while we coasted with 2 fathoms beneath the keel. Sandy beach, no houses within 700 yards of spot and submarine could approach to 1000 yards from beach without grounding. Our plans have been laid for three long weeks, every detail checked the waterproof firing system made up - now, all we await is 4 hours of darkness with the moon covered and a calm sea.
- 2132 Surfaced. Sea calm, but we are fouled up by a perfect lovers night, bright moon. Cloudless.

21 July 1945

- Surface patrolling diagonally across PATIENCE BAY towards OHIRE, obtaining sounding information of uncharted sections for the Hydrographic Office and praying for clouds.
- 1200 Position: Lat. 48-52 N, Long. 143-56 E.
1740 APR contact. 77/500/40.
1825 APR contact. 79/750/50.
1920 APR contact. 74/600/700.
Another lover's night. Patience. One Sampan was sighted moving along the beach.

22 July 1945

- Surface patrolling easterly across PATIENCE BAY sounding uncharted areas and biding our time.
- 1200 Position: Lat. 48-04 N, Long. 144-23 E.
Southerly breezes brought a stratus. At last the weather is right. Passed word that SABOTEURS will land tonight. After days of patiently waiting and observing, the undercurrent of expected action that ran through the boat made ones spine tingle. Even our prisoner "KAMIKAZE" was swept away with it and asked to be permitted to join the party. Not an escapist he supplied information on dogs and beach patrols when questioned. Briefly the outline of our project is as follows:

GENERAL PLAN

To blow up a train at a vital point in the KARAFUTO east coast

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22 July 1945(Cont'd)

1200(Cont'd)

railway system. Under overcast submarine to approach beach on batteries, at slack water, flooded down, until two fathoms of water remained under the keel, as checked by leadsman. Here, approximately 1000 yards offshore, the two rubber boats, containing eight men and equipment, would be launched. Navigation in to be by radar. Hoped for landing point to be 800 yards from nearest houses. Upon beaching signalman and guard would remain with boats. Other six men would proceed across highway to track. At suitable position for planting charge the party would divide. One guard proceeding 50 yards up track near the road. Another 50 yards down track and a third 20 yards inland. The remaining three would dig under the tracks, plant the battery and charge, test and adjust the firing circuits, recall the men, make final hookup and return to the ship. All men carried red flashlights, watches, knives, two "D" rations, lifejacket, cigarette lighter and pistol. Other equipment in the boats consisted of radar corners, carbines, tommy guns, hand grenades, MK108 (55 lb.) demolition charge, electrical equipment, home manufactured shovels and pick, signal gun, Very pistol, binoculars, line and wedges. Party should land at 2330 and return prior to 0230. Twilight commences about 0245.

Communications were to be simple:

- (1) Alert - 2 Bob White whistles.
- (2) Assemble - Whippoorwill whistles.
- (3) Mechanical whistle - emergency dash for the boats.
- (4) Two Very stars - we are in trouble - lay a barrage in direction indicated.
- (5) One Very star from submarine - we are in trouble, will return every night.
- (6) "W" on blinker gun - party is returning to boat.
- (7) One Very star at 15 minute intervals - unable to locate submarine after 30 minutes paddling from beach.

The party to be comprised of the following personnel:

Lieut. William E. WALKER, U.S.N.R., File No. 120037.
SEVER, Francis N., 621 82 53, SM2c, U.S.N.R.
RICHARD, James E., 564 85 40, MM2c, U.S.N.R.
MARKUSON, John (n), 234 39 38, MM1c, U.S.N.
SAUNDERS, Paul G., 265 72 19, CGM, U.S.N. (Chief of the boat).
HATFIELD, Billy R., 828 15 66, EM3c, U.S.N.R.
NEELAND, Lawrence E., 279 79 21, SC1c, U.S.N.
KLINGLESMTIH, Edward E., 877 88 49, TM3c, U.S.N.-I.

Trains at this point have varied from 7 to 32 cars. The average train consists of twelve freight cars, three passenger cars, and one mail or baggage car. Though narrow gage, the engines are large and of the European type rather than the Oahu type.

2145

Trim dive.

2155

Surfaced, flooded down.

2200

Briefed SABOTEUR party. Headed in.

The atmosphere is charged with excitement. Rubber boats are being inflated, equipment is being gathered, and last minute joshing is well in progress. The night is perfect with a moderate overcast hiding a 3/4 moon, so that we have just enough light, the sea is calm and the tide is slack.

2230

SJ contact at 4500 yards on two spitkits coming down the coast. Probably luggers or Sampans. Lay to and tracked them across our bow at 5 knots.

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22 July 1945(Cont'd)

- 2255 Man battle stations guns. Raised sound heads. Opened out as spitkits zigged our way.
- 2318 Losing valuable time with these spitkits. They are by, now. Commenced closing beach, wiggling back and forth adjusting position. Planned for landmarks indefinite.

23 July 1945

- 0000 SABOTAGE ATTACK #1. In position at last. Two fathoms under the keel. Shore line 950 yards. We can do no better. Launched rubber boats.
- 0005 As boats shoved off had planned to say something apropos to such an operation as "Synchronize your watches," however all I could think of was - "Boys, if you get stuck, head for Siberia 130 miles north - follow the mountain ranges, good luck".
- atched the boats all the way in, and radar easily tracked them by their radar corners. I imagine the Barb is easily sighted from the beach, but, I hope, hard to identify.
- 0035 Party landed on the beach. Seconds are dragging by. Feel positive that once initial landing is made, unopposed, the rest will go off smoothly. Momentarily expecting shots, flares and a general clamor, but the blackness of the night has engulfed all in a challenging silence.
- 0047 An unscheduled North bound train coming up the tracks. No lights except from the firebox, white smoke swirling back. The boys ashore must be in the middle of their job now. Crossed my fingers and held my breath. Imagination running rampant.
- 0052 Train passing by successfully. Heaved a sigh of relief and shifted that horseshoe around again.
- 0132 At last, the boats are leaving the beach. Muffled cheers from our side. They are blinking their signal - holding off our answer. Surely they can see us. Their blinking becoming insistent - perhaps they mistake us for a patrol vessel. Gave them a short dash and darkness settled.
- 0145 Ye Gods! another northbound train coming up the tracks. Broke the silence to yell to the boats "Paddle like the devil". Entirely wasted, the boats have spotted the train and the paddles are churning like eggbeaters. The train is getting closer and closer. Any second now. That a moment! Even the boats have stopped to look. Everyone is awe stricken with the expectancy of momentary destruction.
- 0147 THAM!! That a thrill! That a beautiful sight! The charge made a much greater explosion than we expected, the engines boilers blew, wreckage flew two hundred feet in the air in a flash of flame and smoke, cars piled up and rolled off the track in a writhing, twisting, mass of wreckage. Cheers!
- 0151 Hauled the boats aboard and backed clear.
- 0202 Kicked ahead and hauled out to deep water. A small fire flickered alongside the tracks and, shortly, lights of a car came dashing along the road. Feel more proud and happy over what my lads have done, than I would in sinking a hundred ships. Their stories are priceless. Bear with me while I give you the highlights briefly as heard over the medicinal libation.

Our navigation, though close for such a coastline, was about 500 yards off to the north. Haze covered the two close peaks the party was to work in on, and the boat compass was erratic. Consequently when the party landed they found themselves in somebody's backyard, fifty yards from a house. Fortunately no dogs put in an appearance, though dogtracks with

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0202(Cont'd).

human barefoot prints alongside were noticed on the beach. After a short period of huddled reconnaissance, the main party left the boat guards and proceeded cautiously inland skirting the houses. At this point what had appeared to be grass, from our offshore view, turned out to be waist high bullrushes which crunched and crackled with every move, shrieking out their presence. All shapes took on human forms. About two hundred yards inland they came to the highway. Another huddled reconnaissance. All clear, so Lt. Walker arose starting a dash across the road and immediately fell head-first into a four foot ditch. Picking himself up, he cautioned the rest to watch out for the ditch, then made a dash across the highway and immediately fell headfirst into the ditch on the other side. A hundred yards farther and they arrived at the track, reconnoitered, and selected their spot. Having noticed a peculiarly shaped object a short way down the tracks, Markuson, a guard was told to check on it and the guards were sent out. Digging commenced, but soon stopped when someone came running up the track. It was Markuson, who reported, "Jeeper, that thing is a lookout tower". Then queried as to why he didn't give the alert to warn them of his approach, he replied, "I tried to whistle, but when I saw that tower my mouth dried up". Quiet continuing, he was again sent out. Digging recommenced, but the picks and shovels shattered the night with loud ringing sounds. They were laid aside and excavation continued dog fashion. A flickering light was spotted down the tracks. A train? Work ceased. In proper frontier fashion all ears were pinned to the rails. No sound. Turn to again.

Suddenly at an estimated range of 75-100 yards a train loomed up, roaring down upon them. Nearly the entire party made a dive for the nearest foxhole, the few remaining squeezed themselves into hiding behind bushes six inches high and two inches wide. The train blared past with the engineer hanging far out of his cab looking each of the party over personally.

When the initial foxhole crash dive was made, Hatfield, the electrician, landed in such a fashion that both carbon dioxide cartridges attached to his lifejacket went off. He was sure he was shot, yet soon found that he was merely approaching maternity as his Mae West inflated.

The train by, the project hurried along with no untoward occurrence, other than the boys decreasing the micro switch clearance to the rail well below what had been assigned - just to be sure it would work. Circuits were checked, the charge was hooked up, the digging disguised and then the night filled with whippoorwills. A little difficulty was encountered in launching the boats through the light surf with everyone getting a bit soaked. About two thirds of the way back they sighted the train, and thoroughly enjoyed watching the fruits of their effort being explosively plucked.

1200 Position: Lat. 48-16 N, Long. 143-41 E.
1611 APR contact. 99/375/20.
1722 Submerged off SHIRITORI for reconnaissance.
2001 Surfaced. Reconnaissance a failure due to haze.
2016 APR contact. 74/500/40.

24 July 1945

0718 Surface patrolling off SHIRITORI.
APR contact.