

Mercury

of Service—1851-1952

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5c DAILY

Navy Tug Hits Mine; Five Lost, 92 Saved

Vice Adm. Joseph J. Clark of Pryor, Okla., commander of the Seventh Fleet, today commended Lt. Howard "for the courageous manner in which he directed and effected the rescue of his personnel after the sinking of his ship. His actions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval service."

The survivors were put aboard the Auxiliary Oiler USS Platte for transportation to Sasebo. Extra doctors and medical corpsmen boarded the Platte from ships off Northeastern Korea to care for the injured.

The dead are Chief Quartermaster Raymond S. Parrish and Steward Second Class Hampton C. Carter, both of San Diego, Calif.

Listed as missing are Radarman Third Class Robert T. Slattery of Milford, Mass.; Damage Controlman First Class Charles H. Kunsch Jr., of Omaha, Neb.; and Yeoman Third Class Hubert N. Demarest, Parsippany, N.J.

Navy officers in Tokyo said numerous floating mines had been sighted in the Hungnam area following a typhoon which roared across the Korean peninsula two weeks ago. It was probably one of these that sunk the Sarsi, they said.

Three ships arrived at the scene within 30 minutes and an all-night search for survivors. One of those rescued was the commanding officer, Lt. W. M. Howard, of Norfolk, Va.

The search was initiated by the Destroyer USS Boyd and the Minesweepers USS Zeal and USS Competent, after they were unable to reach the Sarsi by radio. Other ships joined the search later and a helicopter was dispatched to the scene at dawn.

Lieut. Howard, one of the first to be pulled from the water, directed the rescue ships to life rafts and boats.

The job of fixing the number of missing crewmen was complicated by the loss of all records and the dispersal of survivors among many rescue vessels. When early figures were checked, it was feared that more than 50 men had been lost.

Later, when reports of survivors picked up by various ships were in, the list dwindled to three missing and two known dead.

Craft Sinks Off Korea In 20 Minutes

Other Ships Conduct All-Night Hunt For Survivors of Sarsi

TOKYO (AP)—The U.S. Navy Tug Sarsi struck a mine and sank within 20 minutes off the east coast of North Korea at midnight Wednesday, the Navy announced here today.

Two crew members were killed and three are missing.

The explosion destroyed the Sarsi's communications equipment and no distress signal could be sent.

Three ships, whose captains became worried when they could not make radio contact with the Sarsi started an immediate search and rescued 92 of the fleet tug's crew of 97.

The survivors, including four seriously injured, were due to arrive today at the U.S. Navy Base at Sasebo, in Southern Japan.

The 1589-ton Sarsi struck a mine three miles from Hungnam and sank in 120 feet of water. Hungnam is the port from which Allied forces were evacuated during the first Chinese Communist offensive in December, 1950.