

HOW THE GERMANS SUNK THE LUSITANIA

Officer in Charge of Submarine That Committed Deed Makes Remarkable Confession

Perhaps what might be considered one of the most remarkable confessions of wholesale murder is contained in the following admissions stated to be from the officer in charge of the submarine which sunk the Lusitania.

There is no authenticity for the story but its very sensational aspect would seem to bear out the assertions made.

"I think it was either on the first or the second day of May—at that time I was stationed at Heligoland—we received word that the admiralty was serious in its declaration that an exemplary attack would be made against a certain transatlantic passenger steamer.

In the officers' quarters, even this evidently serious declaration was discounted by some as a simple warning to discourage the Americans from patronizing British vessels. I myself believed, and my views were shared by many of my fellow officers, that an attack upon a British trans-Atlantic passenger steamer would be attempted less to inflict punishment on the British than for the internal domestic effect. For the unthinking folks in our country, who had an exaggerated faith in our naval prowess, were beginning to doubt our invulnerability both on land and sea, when the enemy vessels were sailing the seas unmolested as though they had not heard of the great world conflict.

Our ruling element may dispute, or rather, deny this contention, but knowing our domestic feeling as I do, I assure you this is the primal reason for our submarine warfare that has shocked the entire civilized world.

Our admiralty is desperate. It will have to prove, not to our enemies—for we do not care what they think—but to our own Germans, that we have not yet been exterminated in the North Sea. This is the vital point. You may readily understand its significance from the ferocity with which we are conducting this submarine campaign.

In the officers' quarters I have heard no less than six submarine commanders curse the author of such

an order. I have heard one commander stamp his foot and shout sternly, 'I am a soldier, not a thug. I would rather sink my ship than execute such orders.'

You still have my word of honor as a revolutionist. This commander has not yet returned from his assignment of murder.

On the third day of May, nine submarine commanders were closeted with the commandant of our Heligoland base. They were in conference more than three hours. No other naval officer was permitted to take part in the secret deliberations.

After the conference the submarine commanders came out and marched straight to their vessels. I was stationed at the Point. I purposely stationed myself near the submarine landing.

The stern, tragic, pale-faced officers marched without speaking a word to one another. The sight of them was pathetic. One would envy those who were doomed to be their victims rather than these poor souls who had hearts but no individual courage. Yes, their hearts were just as tender as yours and mine, perhaps more tender than mine.

I do not think that eight men doomed to be hung would have looked more affected than these eight unfortunate commanders who were being sent out to murder thousands of innocent souls. I can hardly dwell upon the subject. I know many Germans, men and women, are being tortured thinking of this great shame.

The commandant accompanied them to the landing and, with a forced smile, offered his hand to one of the submarine commanders, who offered to bid him bon voyage. His example was followed by the rest of the submarine commanders. The commandant stood there motionless, like a black statue.

I suddenly saw the future. I saw history sketching our fatherland as dark as that black figure facing the turbulent waves of the North Sea. For the first time in all my life I felt

that I should be ashamed for being a German.

Until the fatal day we all waited for news with nervous expectancy. You still have my word of honor as an internationalist.

We did not receive the sad and tragic news with rejoicings. Far from it. We whispered it. We murmured it. We discredited it. We denied it. Had the Emperor himself appeared on that day, he would have been hissed. Many of us felt wild. I feared I would lose my head. We all felt invisible fingers pointing at us: men, women, children, babes, young men, old men, sailors and civilians, pointing at us and whispering, crying, and shouting, 'They are not soldiers, they are not sailors, they are murderers.'

One of my brother officers walked back and forth in his room all night long, uttering bitterly, 'After the war, after the war! How can I ever face men of other nations and say I am a German!'

I was on board—when Lieutenant Hersing of U 21 arrived back from his murderous assignment.

Taunts and Hisses. There was a suppressed, restrained feeling among those who stood silently as the 'successful crew' marched between silent, statue-like rows of men.

Suddenly I heard whispers of taunts, and hisses.

These did not emanate from the common seamen. Had this been the fact, they would have been shot instantly.

The taunts and hisses came forth from the high ranking officers.

If you had heard these with your own ears, you would have certainly changed your estimate of our German soul.

In reality these taunts coming from our high ranking officials, brightened my own soul.

No, we are still human beings, hearts and souls which soon may cry out.

Later, when Lieutenant Hersing visited the officers' quarters, one bold naval officer handed him a newspaper containing the account of the sinking of the Lusitania. Captain-Lieutenant Hersing crumbled the sheets with fury, cast it on the floor and faced the insulter threateningly. The offender stood unmoved. The two officers faced each other for a second or so. Then the offending officer shook his head and, in a low tone, said, 'No, not with you.'

I could readily understand and appreciate how Cain must have felt.

I questioned myself, 'Would I have obeyed such an order?' Then I answered myself, 'No, no, a thousand and times, no!'

From that time on every man from

the common seaman to the highest ranking officer, appeared in a gloomy mood.

Our admiralty is not so sure of every submarine commander executing orders similar to this.

Still later, when Captain-Lieutenant Hersing entered a room where I was seated with many other officers, all but five left the room.

The poor haunted commander, on seeing that at least five officers were not so cruel as to further insult an already suffering soul, walked to the small group and seated himself abjectly. I know he was under the strain of tremendous mental agony. He had a child's tender heart, but no head; and his very heart appeared to cry, and, like that of a child, offer excuses for his act.

He did not raise his head, and, without encouragement, he murmured: 'I hated to do it, but I felt that I must.'

'Even discipline has its limitations,' retorted one of his listeners.

Lieutenant Hersing seemed crushed. I truly pitied him from the bottom of my heart. And if you had been present there, you yourself would have pitied him.

He rose from his seat, walked slowly to the door, stood on the threshold for a moment or so, and then wheeled around and returned to the silent group.

I felt that at last he would deliver himself of his soul's burden. There were large tears sanding in his eyes.

Although I did not write down as he spoke, yet I could not have missed one word of what he said, because every syllable of it sank into our very souls, and by this time there were more than 30 of us in the room. He said:

'I am not a monster. Every glance of yours is like poisoned arrows thrust in my heart.'

From the moment I received the admiralty orders to proceed to the English coast and sink the steamer Lusitania, my soul became sad and gloomy.

I wanted to shout loudly: 'No, but I could not. My speech failed me.'

I beg you to believe me. I sincerely hoped, and then I deceived myself to believe, that some accident would happen to my ship, and that I would be prevented from committing this dastardly act.

During the cruise, none of my fellow officers or men knew the nature of our mission. It was like a long nightmare. I hardly knew what transpired. We cruised most of the time on the surface. My men must have taken notice of my strange behavior. I trembled as we proceeded. I envied my subordinates, who looked to me like innocent children. I des-

pired myself. I hated myself so bitterly that I wished and tried to forget myself.

Several times I wished to tell my subordinates and crew all about our special black mission. I dimly wished one of my subordinates had more courage than I. I had an inexplicable wish that my crew would mutiny and kill me.'

There was a tremor in the captain-lieutenant's voice. I had never before seen a grown-up man cry. Lieutenant Hersing sobbed, and yet he mastered his emotion. Some one pushed a chair under him. He dropped into the chair, pale and sad. His hearers were politely silent, but none showed outside signs of change of heart. He had won their pity, but not their sympathy. Then he resumed:

'The every recollection of it tortures me. At last we arrived at the Lusitania's route. We lay in wait for hours. I thought I could not stand this awful waiting much longer. I thought of turning from the steamer's route and missing her purposely. Then I discovered that another submarine was in the neighbourhood.'

'The doomed steamer was nearing its fate. I submerged once more. By this time our other submarine had taken a position on the opposite side. The doom of the steamer was absolute. She had not the slightest chance to escape.'

'Once more I came to the surface. I saw people gathered on the deck. In another moment every inch of the doomed steamer seemed to be filled with humanity.'

'No, I could not do it!'

I again submerged. Then I discharged. I do not know whether or not my colleagues also discharged.

'The ship was struck, our orders were carried out. I wanted to escape from the terrible scene. I speeded some distance from the torpedoed steamer. Then I came out to the surface.'

'The water was covered with struggling people. I could hear their distant shrieks. It might have been one second, it might have been hours. I cannot tell, but I watched the struggling, dying people, dazed and motionless, and with a strange insane fascination.'

'My God, my God! I can still hear them.'

This is the German soul. And yet I do not wish you to think that this very commander would refuse to commit another act like this if he is ordered to do it. Even his tauntings would find it very difficult not to carry out the orders of the empire. We are in a terrible whirlpool. We are mad, we have lost our senses. But at the end our hearts will win over our distorted senses. Our victory lies in our defeat.

Items of Porcupine In Paragraph Form

Mrs. Geo. Bannerman left last week on a visit to her relatives in Renfrew.

Mr. J. Clement took in the excursion to Ste. Anne De Beaupre.

A large number from this town accompanied the Orangemen to their celebration at Cobalt and all report a good time.

Mr. W. Campsall is spending a few days at Rib Lake.

A number of our local sports took in the excursion to Barbers' Bay last Thursday.

Mr. Bert Catley, of South Porcupine, was in charge of the station on Monday in the absence of the Agent, who took in the celebration at Cobalt.

The tri-weekly dance given by Mr. Robt. Pollock in the Stock Exchange last Friday was an entire success. Many were there from Timmins and Schumacher.

The Orangemen of Porcupine went over on the boat to South Porcupine Sunday evening where they attended in a body with the lodge at South End Divine Service at the Presbyterian Church. Rev. Bro. Malcolm delivered an impressive and instructive sermon.

Mr. O'Brien of the Recording Office, left last week to spend a month at his home in Toronto.

CREATED RECORD IN MILE FLAT RACE AT CELTIC

New York, July 12.—Norman S. Taber, of Oxford University, England, competing for the Boston A. A., won the one-mile handicap run at Celtic Park Saturday in 4:17.3-5, the fastest mile ever run on that track. Taber, running from scratch, gave sixty yards to the men who finished second and third. He won by a margin of seventy yards. Half an hour later, Taber, starting from scratch, in a one-half mile handicap, finished second to E. J. Meehan, Meadowbrook A. C., Philadelphia, who won by five yards in 1:54.1-5.

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