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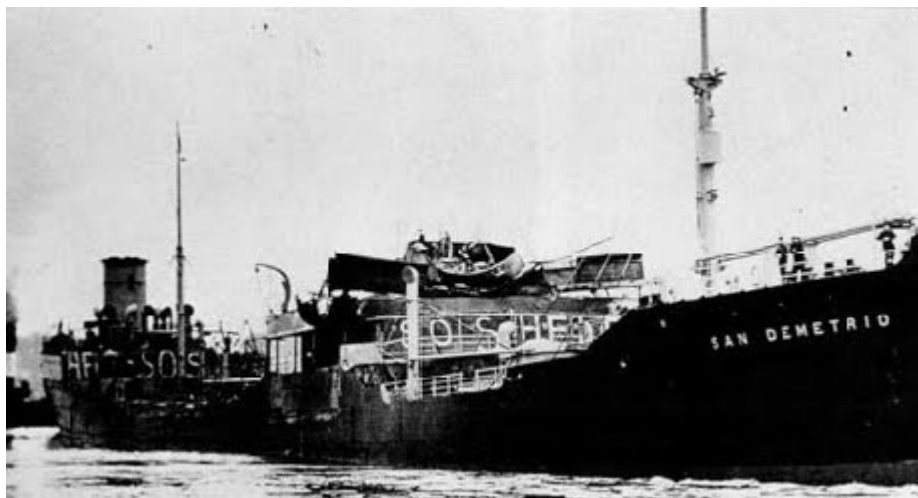
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San Demetrio



The 12,000ton motor tanker San Demetrio Captain G.Waite, O.B.E. of the Eagle Oil Company, was one of the ships in the convoy selected as a target by the pocket-battleship. Fire broke out amidships and aft and with a full cargo of petrol in the tanks her doom appeared certain. She was abandoned under continued heavy shell-fire, and the lifeboats became widely separated during the gale force winds that arose during the night. On the following day the San Demetrio was still afloat, and one boat remained in sight of her, in charge of the Second Mate A.G.Hawkins and Chief Engineer Pollard and fourteen crew members. She was a wreck, heavy smoke rising from the deck and surrounding sea, petrol spurting from the shell holes parts of the hull were glowing red. The boats crew conferred and decided to reboard her, accepting the grave risk of the vessel exploding. By courage and toil unparalleled in ship salvage, they extinguished the fire, plugged the leaks, raised steam and steered 'By guess or by God' safely to port, to deliver no less than 11,000 tons out of a total of 11,200tons of gasoline cargo.

The reconditioned San Demetrio command of Captain Conrad Vidot, was torpedoed and sunk on 16 March 1942 in the Atlantic Ocean, less than 100 miles from the American coast.