



Miscellaneous Ship Histories

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San Emiliano (I) - Part 1

San Emiliano (I) was in service from 1928 until she was sunk by enemy action in 1942 with great loss of life; she had a working life of 14 years. There is further information about voyages on this ship on the Recollections section of the Benjdog website [HERE](#).

Images 1 and 2 are photos believed to have been taken during trials in the Clyde in April 1939.

Image 1

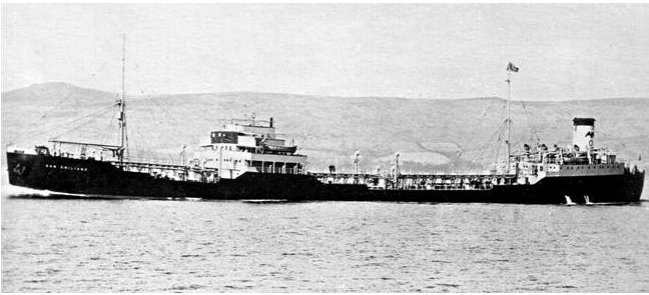
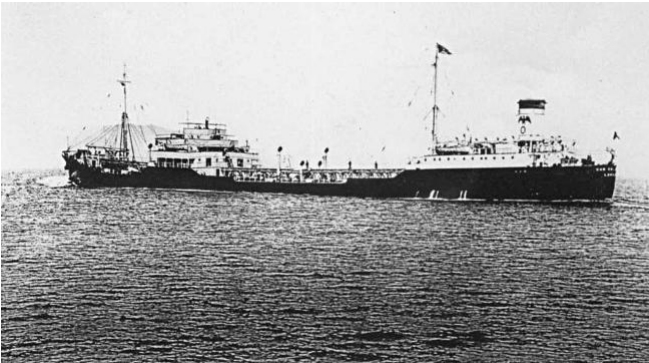


Image 2



Basic Data: San Emiliano

Type: Tanker

Registered owners, managers and operators:
Eagle Oil and Shipping Co. Ltd,
London

Builders: Harland & Wolff Ltd.

Yard: Govan, Glasgow

Country: UK

Yard number: 1015G

Registry: Glasgow UK

Official number: 167216

Signal letters: N/K

Call sign: GRGL

Classification society: N/K

Gross tonnage: 8,071 tons

Net tonnage: 4,818 tons

Deadweight: 12,152 tons

Length: 479 ft 5 in

Breadth: 61 ft 2 in

Depth: N/K

Draught: 27 ft 0 in

Engines: Oil engine 8 cylinder, 25" bore, 55" stroke

Engine builders: Harland & Wolff

Works: Belfast Engine Works

Country: UK

Power: 4,300 bhp

Propulsion: Single screw

Speed: 12 knots

Cargo capacity: 12,000 tons

Crew: 48 at time of sinking

Career Highlights

Date	Event
20 Dec 1938	Launched by Harland & Wolff
5 April 1939	Completed
9 August 1942	Sunk by enemy action at position 7.22N / 54.08W

Service Pre-War

San Emiliano discharged petrol at Santos in August 1939 and arrived in the river Amazon on 3rd September 1939 - the day the war began. She loaded a full cargo of fresh water from the Amazon for Curacao. It was common practice for tankers to take water from the Amazon for Curacao on their return from East Coast South American ports.

At present that is the limit of known information about her service prior to the war but see the section below about the British Ship Adoption Society.

Participation in WW2 Convoys

San Emiliano (I) took part in 47 convoys and a large number of independent voyages during WW2 before being sunk. The information shown in the table below is provided courtesy of [Convoyweb](#) - see [Ext. Ref. #5](#).

Departure	Convoy/Independent	Arrival	Departure	Convoy/Independent	Arrival
Natal, Sep 7, 1939	Independent	Trinidad, Sep 9, 1939	Bermuda, Jul 6, 1941	Independent	Halifax, Jul 9, 1941
Trinidad, Sep 25, 1939	Independent	Kingston, Sep 30, 1939	Halifax, Jul 11, 1941	HX.138 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Liverpool, Jul 27, 1941
Kingston, Oct 4, 1939	KJ.3 (Kingston Jamaica - UK Ports)	Liverpool, Oct 28, 1939	Liverpool, Aug 6, 1941	ON.5 (Liverpool - Dispersed)	
Liverpool, Nov 20, 1939	OB.38 (Liverpool - Dispersed)			Independent	New York, Aug 20, 1941
	Independent	Corpus Christi, Dec 12, 1939	New York, Aug 23, 1941	Independent	Halifax, Aug 25, 1941
Corpus Christi, Dec 15, 1939	Independent	Halifax, Dec 24, 1939	Halifax, Aug 29, 1941	HX.147 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Loch Ewe, Sep 11, 1941
Halifax, Dec 27, 1939	HXF.14 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Havre, Jan 9, 1940		WN.179 (Oban - Methil)	Methil, Sep 13, 1941
Havre, Jan 20, 1940	Independent	New York, Feb 10, 1940	Methil, Sep 13, 1941	FS.594 (Methil - Southend)	Southend, Sep 15, 1941
New York, Feb 14, 1940	Independent	Halifax, Feb 17, 1940	Southend, Sep 20, 1941	FN.521 (Southend - Methil)	Methil, Sep 22, 1941
Halifax, Feb 18, 1940	HX.21 (Halifax - Liverpool)	London, Mar 6, 1940	Methil, Sep 24, 1941	EC.76 (Southend - Clyde)	Loch Ewe, Sep 27, 1941
Southend, Mar 31, 1940	OA.120G (Southend - r/v OB 120 49.27N 06.32W)			Independent	New York, Oct 15, 1941
	Independent	Aruba, Apr 18, 1940	New York, Oct 17, 1941	Independent	Halifax, Oct 19, 1941
Aruba, Apr 20, 1940	Independent	Curacao, Apr 20, 1940	Halifax, Oct 22, 1941	HX.156 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Belfast Lough, Nov 4, 1941
Curacao, Apr 25, 1940	Independent	Halifax, May 3, 1940	Belfast Lough, Nov 6, 1941	BB.97 (Belfast Lough - M Haven)	Swansea, Nov 8, 1941
Halifax, May 4, 1940	HX.40 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Clyde, May 19, 1940		Independent	Milford Haven, Nov 11, 1941
Clyde, Jun 5, 1940	OB.162 (Liverpool - Dispersed)		Swansea, Nov 11, 1941	Independent	
			Milford Haven, Nov 12, 1941	ON.36 (Liverpool - Dispersed)	

	Independent	Corpus Christi, Jun 23, 1940		Independent	New York, Dec 1, 1941
Corpus Christi, Jun 26, 1940	Independent	Bermuda, Jul 3, 1940	New York, Dec 3, 1941	Independent	Halifax, Dec 6, 1941
Bermuda, Jul 5, 1940	Independent	Halifax, Jul 8, 1940	Halifax, Dec 8, 1941	HX.164 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Belfast Lough, Dec 23, 1941
Halifax, Jul 11, 1940	HX.57 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Methil Roads, Jul 27, 1940	Belfast Lough, Dec 26, 1941	BB.116 (Belfast Lough - M Haven)	Swansea, Dec 27, 1941
Methil, Aug 3, 1940	OA.193 (Methil - Dispersed)			Independent	Milford Haven, Jan 4, 1942
	Independent	Baytown, Aug 23, 1940	Swansea, Jan 4, 1942	Independent	
Baytown, Aug 26, 1940	Independent		Milford Haven, Jan 5, 1942	ON.54 (Liverpool - Dispersed)	
Bermuda, Sep 4, 1940	BHX.71 (Bermuda - Jd HX 71)			Independent	Aruba, Jan 28, 1942
	Independent	Bermuda, Sep 12, 1940	Aruba, Jan 30, 1942	Independent	Bermuda, Feb 6, 1942
	HX.71 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Liverpool, Sep 27, 1940	Bermuda, Feb 6, 1942	Independent	Halifax, Feb 9, 1942
Liverpool, Oct 7, 1940	OB.225 (Liverpool - Dispersed)		Halifax, Feb 13, 1942	HX.175 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Liverpool, Feb 25, 1942
	Independent	Aruba, Oct 24, 1940	Liverpool, Mar 23, 1942	ON.79 (Liverpool - Halifax)	Halifax, Apr 5, 1942
Aruba, Oct 27, 1940	Independent	Bermuda, Nov 2, 1940	Halifax, Apr 8, 1942	HX.184 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Belfast Lough, Apr 20, 1942
Bermuda, Nov 3, 1940	BHX.86 (Bermuda - Returned To Bermuda)		Belfast Lough, Apr 21, 1942	BB.165 (Belfast Lough - M Haven)	Swansea, Apr 23, 1942
Bermuda, Nov 10, 1940	Independent	Halifax, Nov 13, 1940		Independent	Milford Haven, Apr 29, 1942
Halifax, Nov 14, 1940	HX.88 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Liverpool, Dec 1, 1940	Swansea, Apr 29, 1942	Independent	
Liverpool, Jan 5, 1941	OB.270 (Liverpool - Dispersed)		Milford Haven, May 1, 1942	OS.27 (Liverpool - Freetown)	
	Independent	Aruba, Jan 23, 1941		Independent	Trinidad, May 20, 1942
Aruba, Jan 25, 1941	Independent	Bermuda, Jan 30, 1941	Trinidad, May 23, 1942	TO.1 (Trinidad - Curacao)	Aruba, May 25, 1942
Bermuda, Feb 1, 1941	BHX.107 (Bermuda - Jd HX 107)			Independent	Curacao, May 27, 1942
	HX.107 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Avonmouth, Feb 23, 1941	Aruba, May 27, 1942	Independent	
Avonmouth, Mar 6, 1941	Independent	Clyde, Mar 9, 1941	Curacao, May 29, 1942	OT.4 (Curacao - Trinidad)	
Clyde, Mar 12, 1941	OB.297 (Liverpool - Dispersed)			Independent	Takoradi, Jun 16, 1942
	Independent	Curacao, Apr 1, 1941	Takoradi, Jun 19, 1942	Independent	
Curacao, Apr 5, 1941	Independent	Halifax, Apr 13, 1941	Matadi, Jun 28, 1942	Independent	Trinidad, Jul 14, 1942
Halifax, Apr 16, 1941	HX.121 (Halifax - Liverpool)	Liverpool, May 2, 1941	Trinidad, Jul 15, 1942	TAW.5 (Trinidad - Key West)	Curacao, Jul 17, 1942
Liverpool, May 17, 1941	OB.323 (Liverpool - Dispersed)			Independent	Aruba, Jul 19, 1942
	Independent	Baytown, Jun 7, 1941	Curacao, Jul 19, 1942	Independent	Curacao, Jul 26, 1942
	Independent	Mobile, Jun 8, 1941	Aruba, Jul 26, 1942	Independent	
Mobile, Jun 8, 1941	Independent		Curacao, Jul 29, 1942	WAT.8 (Key West - Trinidad)	Trinidad, Jul 31, 1942
Baytown, Jun 30, 1941	Independent	Bermuda, Jul 6, 1941	Trinidad, Aug 6, 1942	Independent	

Conversion to DEMS

At an unknown date, **San Emiliano** was equipped as a Defensively Equipped Merchant Ship (DEMS). Standard references state that she was equipped with one 4.7" gun, one 12 pounder, two Twin Marlines, two Hotchkiss, one Savage Lewis and four P.A.C. Rockets.

The Recollections website has accounts by Stan Mayes of several convoys in which he sailed in **San Emiliano** [HERE](#).

Stan states:

The 4.7" gun was on the poop and in addition there were two 20 mm Oerlikons located in nests built on the bridge, and one 40mm Bofors gun installed near the funnel. DEMS Gunners were on the ship. Mick Snashall and I had gunnery courses and gained a certificate. We were paid 6d per day for it while on ships Articles. We performed our normal duties, but manned guns during action stations. We also had lots of gun drill when at sea.

Image 3 is an enlarged and enhanced to show the nests for the Oerlikons which could be accessed from the deck by rope ladders as well as from the bridge.

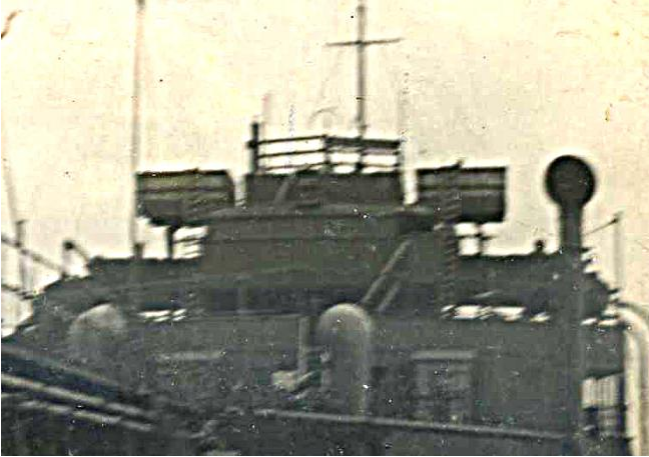


Image 3

Image 4 shows Stan Mayes and Mick Snashall on duty at one of the 4.7" guns on San Emiliano.



Image 4

Convoy HX 184

The following note and photos are from Stan Mayes

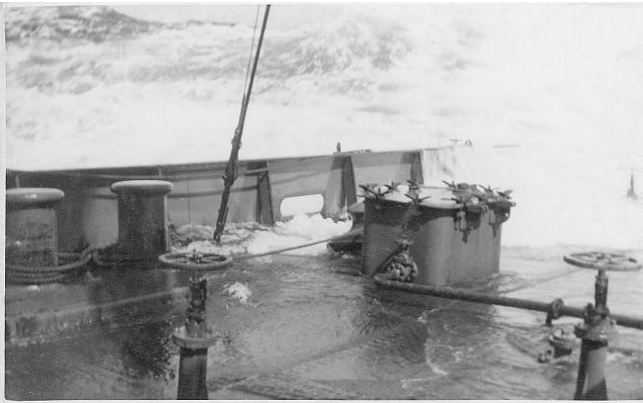
The convoy was led out of Halifax, Nova Scotia by the Blue Funnel passenger vessel **Agapenor** (7,587 grt) which was built in 1914 and subsequently torpedoed and sunk off Freetown in 1942 with the loss of 7 lives. **Agapenor** left Halifax at 11:00 on 8 April 1942, the last member of the convoy at 13:42 and the convoy is reported as arriving at Liverpool on 20 April 1942. In reality not all the ships in the convoy were destined for Liverpool and **San Emiliano** was bound for Swansea. According to [Ext. Ref. #7](#), she was towards the rear of the convoy.

Images 5 and 6 taken on convoy HX 184 show San Emiliano with decks awash.

Image 5



Image 6



Images 7 was taken onboard **San Emiliano** on convoy HX 184. The ship in the background of the photo below is the Elders and Fyffes ship **Cristales** (5,368 grt) - the Commodore's ship for convoy HX184. **Cristales** was torpedoed by **U-124** on 12 May 1942 - two weeks after the arrival of convoy HX184. She was part of convoy ON92 and sunk by gunfire from **HMCS Shediac** (K110) Fortunately all 82 on board survived, picked up by **HMCS Shediac**.

Image 7



Image 8 The photo below shows Stan Mayes AB (left) and Mick Snashal AB (right). The tanker in the background is **British Power**. On an enlarged version of the original photograph you can see the two funnels of a Danish passenger ship **Amerika** beyond the aft deck of **British Power**; she was sunk shortly afterwards whilst sailing in a later convoy. **British Power** survived the war.

Image 8



Image 9 is an enlargement of Image 8 to highlight the Degaussing cables fitted to **San Emiliano**. Degaussing reduced the risk of ships being detected by magnetic mines and was initially fitted externally as shown here. The thick cables carrying the degaussing current are to be seen strapped to the diagonal metal trough.

Image 9



Almost overpaid!

In March 1942 it appears that there was an administrative error at Eagle Oil with the wages of ship's carpenter D.P. Brennan - they were shown as £16 15s 0d instead of £14 15s 0d so the office notified Captain Tozer in a letter dated 9 April 1942. The main point of this appears to be to ensure that, in the case of loss of the ship, he would not be overpaid. Wages in any case would cease immediately for crew whose ship was sunk.

In the event Daniel Brennan lost his life when San Emiliano was sunk four months later and we can all rest in our beds knowing that no overpayment would have occurred.

Images 10 and 11 show a copy of the letters sent to Captain Tozer.

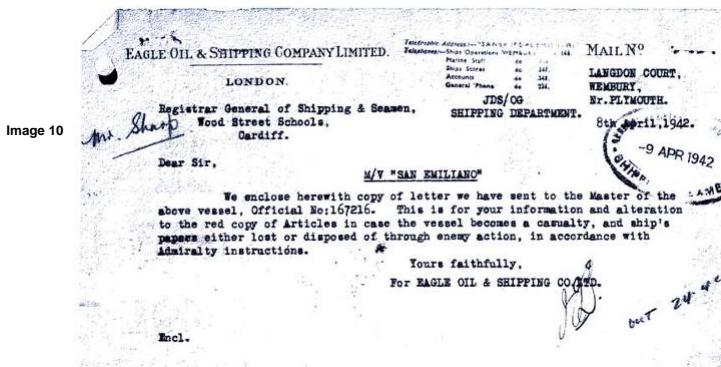


Image 12 shows a copy of the official log of San Emiliano showing changes in crew in 1941 and 1942. The first entry records J Tozer taking over as Master on 29 December 1941. Later entries for January 1942 record new crew members. Of the names I can make out, three of these men were lost with the ship - Alan Woodward, Stephen Williamson and Harry Pyman.

Image 12

1. 1. 1912	d	4. 1. 1912	The following signed on on this date
			J. D. Smith, 4th Officer, wages 127. 0. 0
			A. J. [unclear], 4th Officer, 10. 10. 0
			J. [unclear], 10. 10. 0
			W. [unclear], 4th Officer, 9. 5. 6
			D. [unclear], 4th Officer, 4. 10. 0
			L. [unclear], 4th Officer, 10. 12. 6
			J. [unclear], 4th Officer, 5. 16. 0
			D. [unclear], 4th Officer, 11. 12. 6
			A. [unclear], 4th Officer, 14. 0. 0
			P. [unclear], 4th Officer, 4. 0. 0
			L. [unclear], 4th Officer, 10. 12. 6
			J. [unclear], 4th Officer, 9. 12. 6
			A. [unclear], 4th Officer, 11. 2. 6
			A. [unclear], 4th Officer, 4. 10. 0
			J. [unclear], 4th Officer, 0. 0. 0 for duty
			P. [unclear], 4th Officer, 1. 0 for duty
			A. [unclear], 4th Officer, 1. 0 for duty
			R. [unclear], 4th Officer, 10. 12. 6
			L. [unclear], 4th Officer, 4. 10. 0
			J. D. Smith, 4th Officer

N.B.—Every entry in this Log-Book required by the Act must be signed by the Master and by the Mate or some other of the Crew, and every entry of illness, injury or death must also be signed by the Surgeon or Medical Practitioner on board (if any); and every entry of wages due to, or of the sale of the effects of, any Seaman or Apprentice who has died must be signed by the Master and by the Mate and some other member of the Crew; and every entry of wages due to any Seaman who enters His Majesty's Service must be signed by the Master and by the Seaman or by the Officer authorized to receive the Seaman into such Service.

NOTE.—Reading over Entries of Offences.—The Master's special attention is called to Section 228 (b) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, which is printed on page 2 of the blue cover of this Official Log-Book.

I certify that I have carefully examined this Official Log-Book and find that no entries have been made on the pages subsequently to this certificate.

R. [unclear]
By, Capt.



Images

1. Images #1 and #2 from the collection of the Webmaster
2. Images #3 to #11 provided by Stan Mayes and enhanced by Brian Watson

Other San Emiliano pages on this website

[San Emiliano History](#)

The history of San Emiliano

[San Emiliano and Govan High School](#)

The Ship Adoption Society and correspondence with Govan High School

[San Emiliano Loss](#)

Account of the loss of San Emiliano with survivor reports and casualty list

[Voyages](#)

Voyage accounts by Stan Mayes