

Recollections by Edward John Macey

This part of his life is being guessed at based on the recollections of Ted – who died in 1982 - his daughter Merry and Keith Batchelor - Archivist for the HMS Cossack Association.

According to Ted's naval record he joined Cossack on 20 February 1940. Prior to that he appeared to be Portsmouth (RN School of Physical Training?) Not showing on his record but proved through an official photo and press cuttings he was on HMS York when it met the German merchantman ARUCAS in charge of Captain Mohring.

The ARUCAS was a two funnelled German passenger ship owned by Nord-deutscher Lloyd and was built in 1927 by Flensburger Schiffsbau-Gesellschaft. 3359 tons and 97.5 X 14. 3 metres she could reach 12.5 knots. She was used as a passenger ship used on the Bremen to Canary island voyages and could carry 50 first class passengers.

At the start of WWII she was interned at Vigo. In February 1940 she tried to reach home by choosing the North Atlantic route via Iceland and then via Norway to Germany. She had a cargo of mercury onboard.

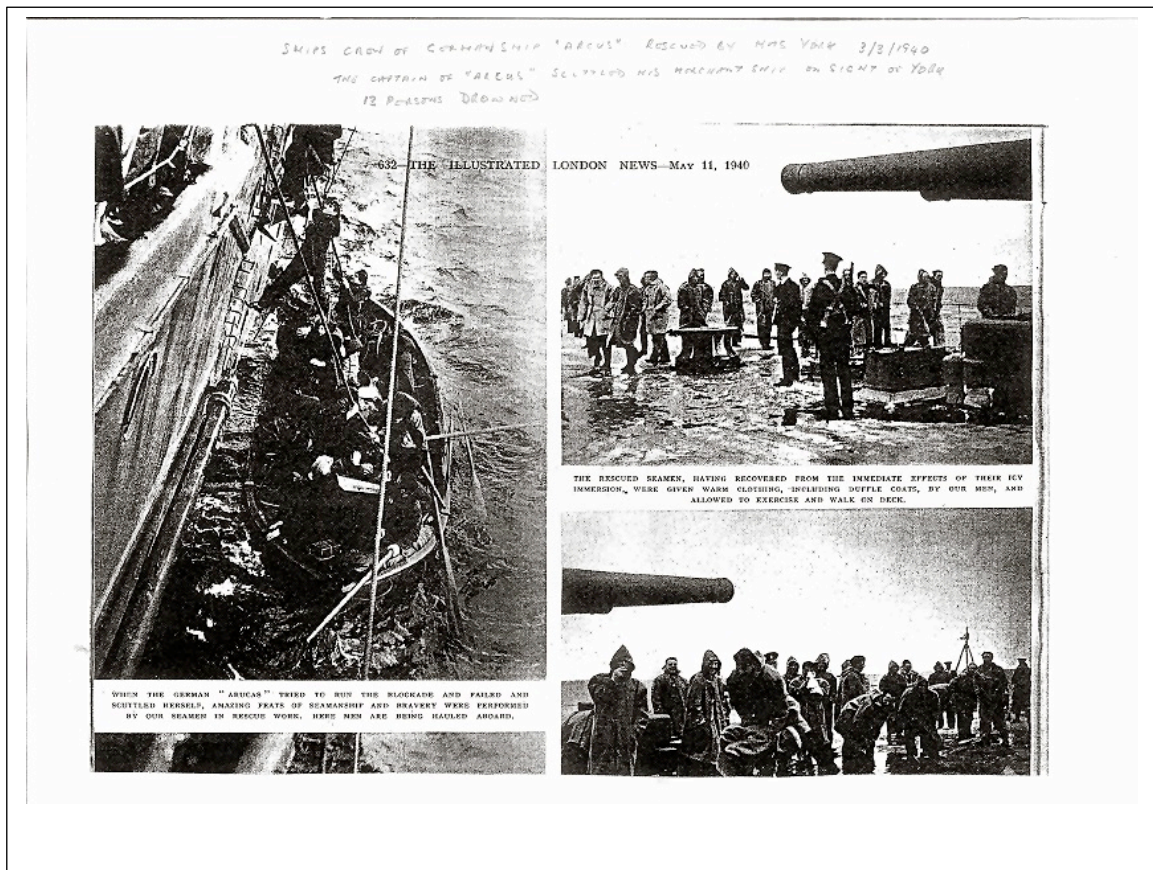
On 3 March 1940 she was sighted by the British cruiser HMS York during stormy weather. (Force 9) In order to avoid capture the German Captain decided to scuttle his ship and the crew took to the lifeboats. Unfortunately 13 drowned. (Ten missing presumed dead and three that died after being taken from the sea) The remaining 40 being rescued by YORK. The German captain was washed away by the heavy sea as he was being lifted onboard the YORK by British sailors who had jumped into the sea.

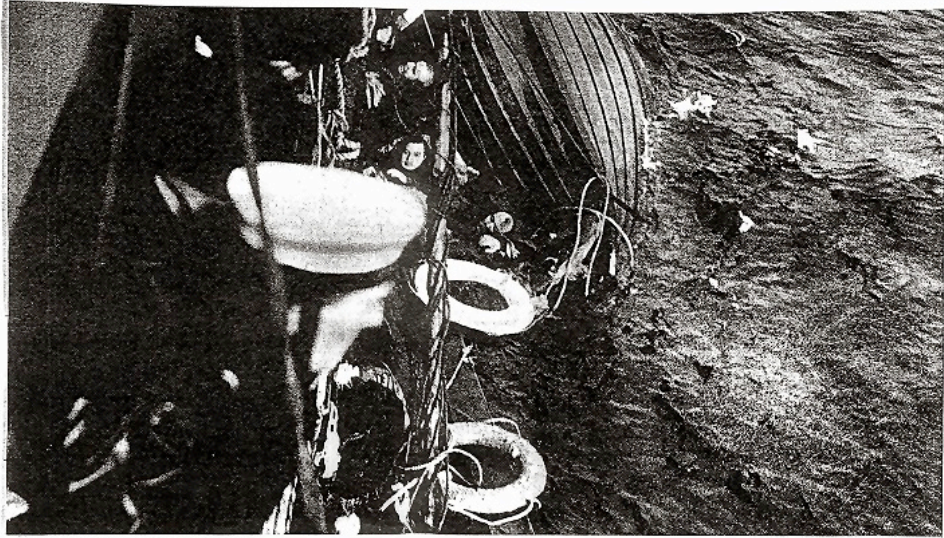
It is presumed that whilst waiting for LO3 to return from the ALTMARK incident and then having to go into dock Ted was loaned to HMS York and so had another adventure added to his tally.



Ted

Artificial Respiration being applied to a German Seaman by British sailors.
 Ted is shown in the bottom right hand corner of the photo. Taken from the Illustrated London News. Page 632 May 1940

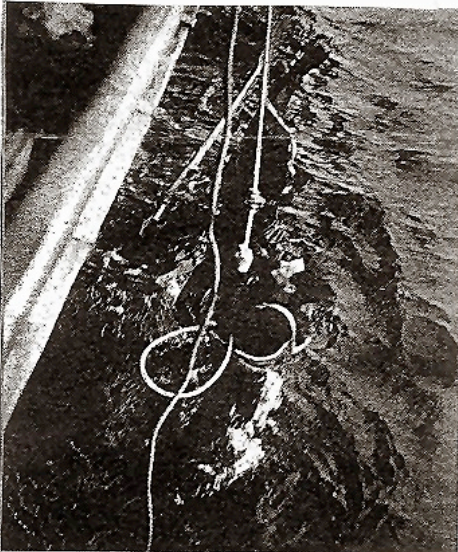




THE FIRST BOAT FROM THE "ARUCAS," BADLY TRIMMED, HAS CAPSIZED IN THE GALE, AND THE MEN, WITH AGONISED EXPRESSIONS, ARE FIGHTING FOR LIFEBELTS. A SAILOR HAS GONE DOWN AND GOT ONE MAN BY THE ARM; AN ANXIOUS OFFICER DIRECTS OPERATIONS FROM ABOVE.

were lowered from the 'Arucas.' One capsized almost as it touched the water, throwing its occupants into the sea. . . . We threw out life-lines and a number of Germans were pulled on board, their clothing frozen to their bodies. Meanwhile, the other boatload of Germans manoeuvred to within a short distance of us, but was ordered to lay off to avoid her being battered against the side of our vessel." Although the weather worsened, the boatload was eventually brought

safely against the protected side of the ship and the men were taken aboard. Some later expressed regret at having to leave the ship for internment, declaring they would have liked to remain "for the duration." A few had reached the warship, to become unconscious as they were drawn alongside; others being buffeted against the side; and so great was the roll that one moment it was possible to catch hold of a survivor and the next he was out of reach.



WHAT WOULD YOU DO THIS FOR A BROWNED MERCHANT SAILOR? AN ALMOST LIFELESS MEMBER OF THE "ARUCAS" CREW BEING HANDED TO SAFETY AFTER RESCUE BY A RESCUER, WHO HAS DIVED IN TO HELP HIM.

The fundamental difference between Nazi and Allied methods receives exact testimony in this series of remarkable photographs illustrating phase by phase the rescue by British sailors of members of the crew of the German merchant vessel "Arucas" (3359 tons), the last of six German vessels to leave Vigo in an attempt to run the blockade, which scuttled herself and her valuable cargo of mercury in early March in northern waters on the approach of a British warship.



IN CONTRAST TO THE NAZI PRACTICE OF MACHINE-GUNNING SURVIVORS OF TOSSED-BOARD SHIPS AND FISHING-BOATS: RESCUED NAZI SEAMEN PLAYING CARDS ON DECK.



A SERVICE IN WHICH THE DICTATES OF HUMANITY OVER-RULE ALL ANTAGONISM TOWARDS THE RESCUED ENEMY: ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATION BEING APPLIED BY BRITISH SAILORS, WHILE BRITISH AND GERMAN SEAMEN DEMONSTRATELY SOCIAL.

Out of the crew of fifty-three, three died after being taken from the water, ten were reported as missing, presumed dead, and the remaining forty were all rescued and taken on board the warship. The captain was lost through being washed away by a heavy sea as he was being lifted on board by sailors who jumped into the icy water, afterwards making light of the action as a "routine job." "As we came within hailing distance," an eye-witness stated, "two boats

HMS Cossack history for the same period.

17 February 1940 Proceeded to Leith, laying alongside the quay at the entrance to the Imperial Dock at 1540, in the company of ARETHUSA, SIKH, NUBIAN, IVANHOE, INTREPID. Released prisoners, 13 ship's captains, 286 officers and men, were landed at Leith at 1545 being met by the C-in-C Rosyth and civic dignitaries. John Hulme piloted Cossack from May Island to Leith's Imperial Dock.



19 February 1940 Arrived Rosyth then to Leith

Leith Docks. An oblique aerial photograph taken facing south 5 December 1935



20 February 1940 Docked at Robb's Shipyard for repairs to bow and side.

23 February 1940 Undocked from the Imperial Dock. (Presumably with Ted onboard!)

23 February 1940 COSSACK departed Methil with DELIGHT, DIANA, IMPERIAL, NUBIAN and SIKH to escort convoy ON 15 consisting of 2 British, 20 Norwegian, 6 Swedish, 3 Danish, 6 Finnish and 3 Estonian ships. They were joined by AURORA, CALCUTTA and PENELOPE.