

## ELEVEN OIL STAINED AND FLAME SEARED SURVIVORS OF TANKER SUNK OFF COAST TELL GRIPPING STORY OF FIGHT FOR LIFE



**MEN WHO CHEATED DEATH ARRIVE AT SOUTHPORT HOSPITAL**

Covered in a film of black oil and suffering from burns and shock, the survivors of a tanker which was torpedoed Thursday night, are shown at Dasher Memorial hospital at Southport. They were rescued from the ocean by a coast-guard patrol boat which landed them at the fishing town.

**War-Wrecked Crew Members Under Treatment At Hospital In Southport**

### QUARTERMASTER HERO

**Swims To Raft And Directs Others Struggling In Water To Safety**

By HUGH HUMPHREY

At one o'clock Friday afternoon a small group of oil stained and flame seared men were brought ashore in Coast Guard patrol boats and landed at Southport.

They were 11 of the 26 survivors of a giant U. S. oil tanker which went down off the southeastern North Carolina coast 24 hours after a

### REASON FOR DELAY

The story on the tanker torpedoed off the southeast North Carolina coast could not have been published earlier due to Navy censorship regulations. The story was not released to the press until late yesterday afternoon.

torpedo from an enemy submarine ripped into its side and scattered an inferno of blazing oil for miles around the turbulent sea.

There was no sign of fear or intimidation in the eyes of those men; only a grim determination and the glazed look which comes to one after a severe shock and exhaustion.

### Just a Hell

Covered in a thick film of crude oil, as black as some imp from the fiery depths, these men went through nine hours of terror and misery such as few ever experience. Swimming through a sea which was ablaze from the thousands of gallons of oil loosed from the dying ship, they clung to a life raft through a night of horror. As a young seaman put it, "Buddy, it was just hell." He saw two of his comrades ground to pieces by the huge propeller of the ship as they tried to escape the flames. Another man, a fireman, told of the cries of anguish, the screams, and the prayers of the dying men as they were engulfed by the flames which leaped to the sky in a never-ending roar of destruction.

In an inky black night, the giant tanker was ploughing her way up the east coast of the United States, bearing vital oil for the country's defense effort, when suddenly she was shaken by a dull thud; an instant later she was lifted as if some mighty hand had suddenly pushed her aside; and then a mighty roar which was heard for 25 miles split the calm night air.

A geyser of crude oil rocketed skyward to cover the sea for hundreds of yards around the ship. A cry of "man overboard" was heard and a life preserver was shot from the stern, a young seaman said today. As the self-igniting flate from the life preserver ignited, a sudden flash of fire was seen on the water, he continued, and then a tremendous hissing and flash of blinding flame came rolling toward the ship. A blast of heat and noise ran over the decks as the tanks in the hold of the vessel caught fire.

### Man the Boat

Orders were given to "man the life boats," and the young seaman continued with "We were calm at