

1939 SEP 26 PM 1 34

# Isthmian Steamship Company

25 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

S. S. STEEL MARINER

PORT NEW YORK, N.Y.

DATE September 22, 1939

New York Department of Health,  
125 Worth Street,  
New York City.

Attention: Dr. Walsh

Gentlemen:

The following is the entry in my official Log Book of the particulars attending the death aboard my ship and the burial at sea of Mr. Frank D. Sprague, passenger who joined my vessel at Avonmouth on September 11, 1939.

\*Bristol, England, Sept. 9th-10th. During the last two days we have embarked 44 persons, American Citizens, returning home on account of the war in Europe. I record their names on Page 28.

(Sgd) L. Duks, Chief Mate  
(Sgd) F. Pickering, Master.

September 14th - At Sea - 6.25 A.M. Lat. 46°-20', Long 23°-55'.

This morning shortly after 6 A.M. Chas W. Chapin, passenger - appeared on the bridge and stated to Mr. L. Duks, Chief Officer on watch at the time, that Mr. Sprague, a fellow passenger berthed in the same cabin, had been missing since about 5 A.M. and could not be located, and he was apprehensive owing to the morose condition manifested by Sprague ever since leaving Avonmouth. The Chief Officer called me, I relieved him on the bridge and he went to search the ship. At about 6.45 A.M. he hurriedly returned to the bridge and reported that he had found Sprague who had hanged himself in the after part of the ship (the fan-tail) and was found dead hanging to some piping that spans the fan-tail, the body was immediately cut down and both the Third Officer, Mr. Dutton, and the Chief Officer worked on it to endeavor to resuscitate it, but without avail. Sprague was beyond human aid and had been dead apparently for a couple of hours, his extremities were quite cold, slight warmth in the trunk; at 8 A.M. I was relieved on the bridge and went aft to examine Sprague. In my opinion his neck was broken, it looked as if his windpipe was severed when the rope (a piece of nine thread Manila roping that is used for awning lacing) had been around the man's neck. His body was laid out and later in the day sewn up in canvas, his personal effects and luggage was collected and placed in Master's custody. Relations in Munroe, Michigan were connected and informed by radio and they approved burial at sea.

(sgd) C.W. Chapin (passenger)  
" L. Duks, Chief Mate  
" F. Pickering, Master.

September 15th, 9 AM in Lat 44°-50' Long 31°-42'.

The body of F. Sprague was buried at sea under Protestant Rites, crew and passengers attending the Religious ceremony.

(sgd) L. Duks, Chief Mate  
" F. Pickering, Master.

Subscribed and Sworn to  
before me, this 21<sup>ND</sup> day  
of September 1939.

*[Signature]*  
Notary Public, Bronx Co. No. 66, Reg. No. 343-6-68  
Commission expires March 30, 1941

*[Signature]*



ORDER NO. 317904  
 DATE 9-29-39  
 NUMBER ISSUED  
 SEARCHER  
 PHOTO. OP.

ORDER NO. 324660  
 DATE 11-3-39  
 NUMBER ISSUED  
 SEARCHER  
 PHOTO. OP.

*[Faint, mostly illegible text from a document, possibly a report or letter, with some circular stamps visible.]*

