

WEATHER

SUNDAY—All clear.

MONDAY—Same.

(Full Report on Page 51)

The

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EDNA

Staggered by Storm, Lightship Asks Help

*'Taking Water, Steering Gear Out,'
Famed Nantucket Beacon Radios*

Nantucket Lightship, famed guardian of the ocean crossroads off Nantucket and the first beacon to be spotted by all incoming ships over the northern route from Europe, was a victim of Hurricane Edna.

At 3:50 p. m., as the hurricane swept between the islands of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, the famed lightship radioed an SOS.

"Taking water over bow. . . . Smashing all ports. . . . Pilot house has been knocked out of commission. . . . Steering gear out."

The Coast Guard said it had rushed the buoy tender Hornbeam from Woods Hole to the scene and radioed to all ships in the vicinity of the lightship to go to her aid.

A Coast Guard reconnaissance plane was sent from New York. The cutters Campbell and Yakutat, both from Newport, also rushed to the scene.

At 8 p. m. the Coast Guard plane radioed the following report after inspecting the vessel, still floundering in mountainous seas:

LIGHTSHIP

Page Twenty-four

Fires All Over Ship

Fires broke out all over the ship as tons of water poured through a gaping hole in her bow, and she keeled over into the wild sea.

The captain and crew were thrown off their feet, and for a minute lay stunned as the heavy ship pitched and rolled dangerously—broadside to the crushing waves that roared over her shaking hull.

The men couldn't have abandoned ship if they wanted. Her life boats were dashed to pieces and the rafts with their steel supports torn away by the sea.

The lights were out, the engines dead, anchors gone, radio on fire and the ship was wallowing badly when Capt. Corea crawled onto the flooded bridge.

BM3 Richard E. Arnold of 10 Marble st., Gloucester, was on the wheel watch when the wave struck. Capt. Corea had just stepped into his emergency ward room off the bridge.

Arnold said last night; "We had been in rough seas since 8 a. m., we were pitching and rolling badly but everything was allright until I spotted that wave.

"It was a sheer mountain of water," Arnold said, "heading right at us. I yelled to the skipper to lay up when it struck."

Wheel Ripped Out

Arnold, visibly shaken from his experience, said: "Water went in every direction. The big wheel was ripped out as foam crashed all over the place. I fell down—must have swallowed half the ocean before I could get up — the radar and radio panels and the light boards were flaming and sparking—all I could hear was a crashing and tearing and water every place. I said my prayers because it looked like we were all through."

Capt Corea called the engine room where Chief Machinist Eugene Darcy of 7 Eastern av., Gloucester, was getting up a full head of steam. "Full Speed Ahead" rang up on the mechanical indicators.

Chief Darcy said: "Water was pouring down the vent shafts and I knew we were over about 65 degrees to port when the skipper rang for speed. The gang and I were already opening her up when we got a signal to stand-by.

"The skipper reported the steering was out and ordered all hands forward to plug a hole in the port bow. The big anchor was gone and ripped a whole series of plates out.

Men Pushed Back Ocean

Capt Corea said five men worked for two hours in water up to their necks plugging the hole with mattresses and waste. They managed to push back the ocean.

Three other men tied themselves to the tilted forward deck and managed to drop an emergency anchor over the side. The ship had now been driven 15 miles off her station.

Capt Corea issued the following

order at 4:30 p. m.:

"This ship is badly damaged. We have lost radio contact. An S. O. S. was dispatched at 4 p. m. We will hold our station or go down with the ship. All hands turn too for damage control—report to your stations."

With a new anchor down and the fire controlled, the men managed to bring the ship around into the sea, and Lightship No. 112 will stand her station again.

Only one man was badly injured, ET3 James E. Sheahan of 53 Hastings st., Framingham. He was burned on his left hand and arms manning his radio when it was on fire.

Other members of the Coast Guard crew were: CS3 Bernard G. DeBlois of Springfield, the cook; Jack A. King (MM3) of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; FN Leo A. Oliva of Tobias, Neb.; SN Clifton L. Giles of Judsena, Ark.; SA Lynn R. Clapp of Warrenton, Or.; SA Haines D. Hewette of Whiteville, N. C.; SA Rufus Jordan of Pittsburgh, and FN James F. Watson of Kewanee, Ill.

These men had been on the ship on station for 56 days when the storm struck. They serve 42 days at a time aboard the anchored ship.