

# Kickapoo Sailor Recounts Rescue At Sea Off Korea

George Nader, 20, seaman apprentice from Kickapoo, now home for a month's leave, is one of 92 survivors of a naval ship that hit a mine and sunk within five minutes off the shore of North Korea in early morning, August 28.

A graduate of Spalding Institute in 1950, he worked for R. G. LeTourneau, Inc., more than a year before enlisting in the navy last January. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Nader, operate a grocery store in Kickapoo. He arrived home last Wednesday from California.

THE USS SARSI, an ocean fleet tug, was among ships on night patrol August 27 about 27 miles off shore from Hungnam, a port on the west coast of North Korea. Aboard were 97 crewmen. The time was near midnight and Nader was asleep in his bunk when it happened, he said.

"First thing I knew I was thrown to the deck from my bunk and smoky haze was drifting around. The deck was tilting to the stern. Automatically I grabbed my life jacket and walked up the slanting deck to topside. I was ordered into the lifeboat and our group shoved off. Really wasn't much confusion," he related.

"WE WERE about 50 yards away when the ship went down—about five minutes after midnight," he said.

"We were rescued about 8 o'clock in the morning—not in 20 minutes after sinking, as was reported," he explained.

OTHER NAVAL ships searched for them most of the night, not finding them immediately because of the strict blackout required of ships in combat waters. They were discovered by the use of radar, he said. Men in the lifeboat removed the cowl from the engine and held it aloft as high as they could, knowing that surface radar would pick up the obstruction, he said.

The stranded men were close enough to the North Korean shore that they could see headlights from the Communist trucks winding along inland roads.

HE WAS PICKED up by ship, but said a helicopter helped get other survivors from the sea. The pilot later told them that the Communists had set up machineguns and sniper positions on the beach waiting to welcome any survivors that drifted to shore.

Of the 97 men in the Sarsi's crew, five were lost, he said. Two were killed in the original explosion, two were drowned, and a radioman went down with the ship while attempting to send out distress signals. He had been aboard the ship since it left Japan in July.

Nader said he is ordered to report to Treasure Island, San Francisco, Calif., at the end of October for re-assignment. He was home last in April.



GEORGE NADER