

Name: _____

Date: _____

Unexpected Cargo

Spud Campbell, First Radio Officer

Student Worksheet

Historical Context:

During World War II, U.S. shipyards turned out cargo vessels faster than the ships could be supplied with crews. Recruiters urged men to join the Merchant Marine, and volunteers came from across the country. Merchant seamen ran the ships that carried supplies and men through dangerous waters in the North Atlantic and the Pacific. Thousands paid with their lives. By war's end, some 290,000 men had served in the Merchant Marine. Listen to Spud Campbell as he talks about his experiences as a Merchant Mariner on the *SS Henry Bacon*, a Liberty Ship carrying supplies to help the Soviet Union fight Germany on the Eastern Front.

Instructions:

Answer the questions on these two pages using the accompanying primary sources found at: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthewater/oral_histories/maritime_voices/campbell.htm.

These questions are based on the accompanying primary sources. They are designed to help you practice working with historical documents. Some of these documents have been edited, but all are authentic. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document.

Questions:

1. According to Spud Campbell's recorded statements and at least one supporting primary source, what was his job on the ship, and why do you think he was selected by the Captain to board one of the lifeboats?



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2. According to Spud Campbell's recorded statements, what unexpected cargo was the *SS Henry Bacon* carrying on February 23, 1945?

3. Based on Spud Campbell's recorded statements and a careful examination of the newspaper article, how many crew members were killed? How many non-crew? How do the answers to these questions relate to the medal?

