

World War One News



Lest We Forget.

Monthly News from Home & Abroad



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July 1915

July 9, 1915 - In Africa, the German Southwest Africa colony (present day Namibia) is taken by the Allies following 11 months of fighting between the Germans and South African and Rhodesian troops loyal to the British.

July 13, 1915 - On the Eastern Front, the next phase of the combined Austro-German offensive against the Russians begins in northern Poland, with the Austro-Germans advancing toward Warsaw.

Borth News

July 9, 1915- Talybont Petty Sessions.—At the monthly sessions on Tuesday, before A. Cecil Wright and Edward Jones, Esqrs., Margaret Williams, Gwastod, Borth, was charged, on the evidence of P.C. Griffiths, with having allowed two cows to stray, and the case was dismissed on payment of 5s. costs.

July 30 1915

BORTH. Jetsam.-On the beach at Ynyslas a ship's mast and the greater part of a large boat have been washed ashore, a portion of the starboard side of the boat and the bow are missing. The boat bears the name "Straithanirn."

Event and Historical Information:

The "STRATHNAIRN" was a steel-hulled steamship built by A Rodger & Co, Port Glasgow, in 1909. The ship was transporting 7,000 tons of coal from Penarth to Archangel under the command of master J N Browne when it was torpedoed by U22 at 9.30 pm on 15 June 1915. The force of the blast burst the ship's steam boiler and the ship itself soon began to list to port. The ship's four lifeboats were immediately swung out, but with the ship still having forward momentum, the first lifeboat was smashed against the ship's sides. The occupants were thrown into the water, drowning the Master, Chief Officer and 19 men. Two other lifeboats capsized after being cut from their davits. The last was launched as the ship slowed to a halt and the remaining of the crew got safely into it. They managed to rescue some of the Chinese from the water. Although the attacking submarine, U22, was never seen, her periscope was observed moving around the stern of the vessel to ascertain the ship's name. The lifeboat remained in the vicinity until dark, by which time the ship had sunk, then they commenced rowing towards the shore. The Padstow schooner "AMANDA" picked them up, and then transferred them to the "ROSABELLA" of Chester to take towards Milford Haven. The men were transferred to the steamer "THORMOUND" to be landed at Milford Haven on 16 June 1915. The one surviving British Officer, James Wood, Second Officer, and 10 Chinese mariners originating from Hong Kong were taken care of at John Cory's Sailors Rest Home. The SS "ABBOTSFORD", coming across a great deal of floating wreckage, spotted one of the "STRATHNAIRN's upturned lifeboats some nine hours after the attack and rescued the Chief Engineer, John C Smith, and one other Chinese sailor. They were landed at Swansea. These 13 were the only survivors of an original crew of 33. Over a month later, the body of the Chief Officer, Alexander Stewart, was washed up on the beach at Berlan Las, with a great debris such as barrels, hatches, bedding, clothing, etc. Alexander Stewart was buried at Llandwrog cemetery.