

Steamer Wayfarer

The Steamer Wayfarer was built in 1903 by Clark and Co Ltd, Belfast.

Her Gross Registered Tonnage was 9,599 tons and her Operator Charente Steamship Co., Ltd. (T. & J. Harrison), Liverpool

Wayfarer sailed from Avonmouth on 10 April 1915 carrying 200 soldiers of the Warwickshire Yeomanry, their mounts and equipment heading for Egypt.

She was torpedoed the next day on 11th April WNW from the Scilly Isles 50° 08'N, 8° 00'W, by U32, Captained by Kapitänleutnant Edgar Freiherr von Spiegel von und zu Peckelsheim.

After the attack (in which there were two men and five horses killed) the ship was taken in tow by Framfield (2510/94) and towed to Queenstown for temporary repairs arriving there on 13 April. Permanent repairs were carried out at Liverpool between 19 May and 16 July.



Position of attack on Wayfarer 11th April 1915



Edgar von Spiegel von und zu Peckelsheim
(October 9, 1885 – May 15, 1965)

Baron Edgar von Spiegel originated from the German noble family "Spiegel von und zu Peckelsheim". Born on 9th October 1885.

He grew up in East Prussia and completed military training at a marine cadet school. In 1903 he joined the German imperial navy as a midshipman. In 1911 he served as Oberleutnant zur See on the small cruiser SMS Cormoran. The cruiser helped to suppress the Sokehs Rebellion in Ponape, German New Guinea. Von Spiegel was the leader of the local police during the suppression.

In World War I von Spiegel was promoted to Captain lieutenant. From September 1914 to February 1916 he served as commander of the submarine U-32. From February to April 1917 he commanded the submarine U-93. Already in the war, in 1916, he wrote "War Diary of U202" which sold very well in the US post war. In his book, he accused the British of using hospital ships to transport troops to France. Until today this has never been solved and it may still take some years before the truth comes out.

On April 30, 1917, von Spiegel's ran out of luck when the U 93 met the small sailing ship Prize in the Channel. He surfaced and planned to sink the ship with his gun. Members of the sailing ship's crew took to the life boats. However, then suddenly the White Ensign was hoisted and the Prize showed her 12 pounder guns. The Prize turned out to be a Q-ship!

The Q-ship was badly damaged in the exchange of fire and nearly sank but she also scored numerous hits on the U-boat. At one point, U 93 tried to ram, apparently went out of control, and disappeared into the mist. Three men, including Spiegel, were rescued from the water by the panic party. Prize's crew as well as von Spiegel assumed the German submarine had been sunk. The Prize's commanding officer, Lieutenant Wilson Sanders RNR, was awarded the Victoria Cross for the action.

Despite heavy damage, however, the U 93 was able to limp home on the surface under the command of her IWO. Spiegel spent the rest of the war in a POW camp in the UK.

After World War I von Spiegel returned to Germany. In the Weimar Republic he started working in the shipping industry and then made a changeover to the automobile industry. In the late 1920s he worked as general manager of the Graham-Paige Automobile GmbH in Berlin, a subsidiary of the American automobile manufacturer Graham-Paige.

In Nazi Germany, von Spiegel served in the German diplomatic service. In the years 1936/37 he worked in the Department Ribbentrop at the German embassy in London. Since 1937 he was Consul (Generalkonsul) in New Orleans. Because of spy activities the Federal Bureau of Investigation investigated him Baron von Spiegel operated in the consulate building "Van Benthuyzen Elms Mansion". He probably briefed German submarines in the Gulf of Mexico via radio about merchant vessels leaving the port of New Orleans for England. In December 1941 Germany declared war on the United States, and he had to leave New Orleans. After returning to Germany he served as consul in Marseille in occupied France. In 1942 he was appointed SS Oberführer. Von Spiegel was an observer of the destruction of the old city of Marseille by the SS and Gestapo. After World War II he claimed that this destruction was necessary because of risk of disease and because of the "security of the (German) troops." In August 1944 Marseille was liberated by the Allies. von Spiegel left Marseille and joined the staff of Reichsführer SS in November 1944. He died on 15th May 1965 in Bremen.

Baron Edgar von Spiegel wrote several, mostly autobiographical, books about his experiences in the Imperial German Navy. In his first book *Kriegsbilder aus Ponape. Erlebnisse eines Seeoffiziers im Aufstande auf den Karolinen* (War pictures from Ponape. Experiences of a naval officer in the rebellion on the Caroline Islands, 1912) he described his involvement in the suppression of the Sokehs Rebellion in Ponape. His bestselling book was *Kriegstagebuch U 202* (published 1916), translated by Barry Domvile as *U boat 202*. The war diary of a German submarine, published 1919, where he described his experiences as commander of the submarine SM U-32 (The title "U 202" was fictional; a German submarine with this name did not exist). The book sold 360,000 copies in Germany and was one of the most widely spread works of German World War I literature.[9] The war diary sold also very well in the United States.[10] It was used as a template for Gerhard Menzel's screenplay of the movie *Morgenrot* (1933) about the fate of a German submarine in World War I.[11] His book *U-Boot im Fegefeuer* (Submarine in Purgatory, 1930) described von Spiegel's prisoner of war after the sinking of his submarine U 93. von Spiegel also wrote two original screenplays. He translated Lowell Thomas' *Raiders of the Deep* (1928), a book about Submarines in World War I, and wrote a romance novel in a south sea surroundings (*Das Maedchen unter den drei Baeumen* - The girl under the three trees, 1930).

Successes

14 ships sunk with a total of 36,925 GRT
 2 ships damaged with a total of 9,806 GRT
 1 ship taken as prize with a total of 1,115 GRT

Ranks

1 Apr 1903 Seekadett
 15 Apr 1904 Fähnrich zur See
 28 Sep 1906 Leutnant zur See
 27 Mar 1909 Oberleutnant zur See
 12 Mar 1915 Kapitänleutnant
 24 Nov 1919 Out of naval service

Decorations

Order of the Crown
 Iron Cross 2nd class
 Iron Cross 1st class

U-boat Commands

U 32 3 Sep 1914 - 17 Mar 1916
 U 93 10 Feb 1917 - 30 Apr 1917

Ships hit by Edgar von Spiegel von und zu Peckelsheim

8 Apr 1915 U 32 Chateaubriand Sailing vessel 2,247 fr
 11 Apr 1915 U 32 Wayfarer (d.) Steamer 9,599 br
 22 Jun 1915 U 32 Kiew (p.) Steamer 1,115 da
 4 Mar 1916 U 32 Teutonian Tanker 4,824 br
 5 Mar 1916 U 32 Rothesay Steamer 2,007 br
 6 Mar 1916 U 32 Trois Freres Sailing vessel 107 fr
 7 Mar 1916 U 32 Ville Du Havre Sailing vessel 3,109 fr
 15 Apr 1917 U 93 Fram Sailing vessel 105 da
 18 Apr 1917 U 93 Troldfos Steamer 1,459 nw

18 Apr 1917 U 93 West Lothian Sailing vessel 1,887 nw
22 Apr 1917 U 93 Vestelv Sailing vessel 1,729 nw
28 Apr 1917 U 93 Diana (d.) Sailing vessel 207 da
29 Apr 1917 U 93 Comedian Steamer 4,889 br
29 Apr 1917 U 93 Ikbal Steamer 5,434 br
30 Apr 1917 U 93 Ascaro Steamer 3,245 it
30 Apr 1917 U 93 Horsa Steamer 2,949 br
30 Apr 1917 U 93 Parthenon Steamer 2,934 gr

15 ships sunk (38,040 tons) and 2 ships damaged (9,806 tons).