

NORTH SEA DISASTER

About forty miles off Harwich, tugs take in tow the smashed British Railways steamer "Duke of York." During fog and darkness, the ship, bound for Harwich from the Hook of Holland, had its bows torn off in collision with the American steamer "Haiti Victory." As she limps to harbour, fishing vessels, launches and tugs hurry survivors to safety. Quickly comes the good news that at least 500 are known to have been saved from the crippled steamer. Under their overcoats, many are still wearing their pyjamas, for few of the passengers had time to change when the crash occurred at 4.30 in the morning.

"Haiti Victory," a seven-and-a-half-thousand ton steamer, picked up four hundred survivors from the water. Tenderly the stretcher cases are carried to a lighter. Some are badly injured, for the American ship struck "Duke of York" by the bridge and tore into the crew's quarters and many passenger cabins. Some were trapped in the tangled wreckage, but were quickly freed by others on board.

The bows of "Haiti Victory" indicate the heavy impact with which it hit the steamer, shearing it in two. Apart from this damage, the American ship suffered little from the collision.

Meanwhile, tugs battle to bring "Duke of York" into Harwich. Closer pictures reveal the extent of the damage where a handful of people were trapped for many hours. The bow portion of the steamer sank soon after the crash.

As we go to press, latest reports indicate that of the 509 passengers and crew aboard, only four lost their lives, an almost miraculous escape in what might well have been an appalling tragedy.