

## **The Voyage of the “She’ar Yashuv”** [Hebrew: The Remnants (of our people) Shall Return]

This vessel is named symbolically, to commemorate the whole Aliya Bet operation, whose aim was to bring the Holocaust survivors to the Land of Israel. The vessel was readied for its voyage at Porto Venere, Italy and she sailed from the port of Bogliasco, near Genoa, on April 7<sup>th</sup> 1947, carrying 622 Ma’apilim. Eliezer Tal was responsible for loading the Ma’apilim on the vessel. On April 17<sup>th</sup>, 151 additional Ma’apilim were taken aboard from the “Albertina”, when the two vessels rendezvoused at sea.



The commander of the “She’ar Yashuv” was Menachem Cohen (Churchill, pictured here), joined by Dudale Ben-Chorin, who had been commander of the “Albertina”. . Yitzchak Landauer, who had been on the “She’ar Yashuv” went over to the “Albertina” to replace him, in order to return that vessel to Italy. The Gideoni was Oved Sadeh and the crew of eleven seamen was Italian. The plan had been for the Ma’apilim of the “She’ar Yashuv” to transfer to the vessel “Theodor Herzl” at sea, near the Turkish coast, but technical problems with the communications equipment on that vessel caused that plan to be altered, and both vessels continued en route to Palestine.

The “She’ar Yashuv” was spotted by a British scout plane on April 21<sup>st</sup> and soon she found herself in the company of four British destroyers, who ordered her to steer for Haifa. On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, two more destroyers joined in the ‘procession’ and a fight broke out when the British attempted to board. The Ma’apilim were no match for the water hoses and the tear gas used against them, and the vessel was taken captive and towed to Haifa.

The Ma’apilim were deported to Cyprus, but the Palyamnikim were able to hide in their pre-prepared hideout, and were liberated the following day by the cleaning squad of “HaOgen” of “Solel Boneh”.

(Compiled by Tzvi Ben-Tzur)

