

21 February, 1942

14. S.S. J. N. PEW

U.S. Tanker; built 1921; 9,033 gross tons; cargo, fuel oil.

Departed Aruba 20 February for Panama Canal.

Torpedoed 21 February, 1942, 1855, 225 mi. west of Aruba.

Weather, clear; wind, fresh; sea, choppy.

On board, 36; saved, 3.

Vessel: total loss.

This ship was torpedoed when 27½ hours out of Aruba, the missile striking and exploding between the mainmast and midship pumproom; and fire immediately broke out around the midship house, rendering the #1 and #2 boats useless. There was some difficulty in lowering #4 boat, and, as a result, when it hit the water there were only two men in it, and the roughness of the sea prevented the rescue of any of the men in the water. #3 boat was released too suddenly and capsized, but 11 men clung to it through the night, and 10 remained in the morning and were able to right it and climb aboard, although the water breaker had been loosened and lost overboard.

The #4 boat made a landing near Riohacha, Colombia, on 25 February, and the two men were taken to Baranquilla and repatriated through the American Consul.

The #3 boat sailed westward, but one by one the men aboard perished of thirst until, when it was picked up on 14 March by the Coastal Steamer ANNETTA I, there was but one survivor, the 17 year old mess attendant, who was taken to Panama and hospitalized there.

