

SS JACK CARNES

On 30 August, 1942, while enroute from Swansea, Wales, to Aruba in Ballast, the SS JACK CARNES, a tank vessel of 10907 gross tons, sighted an enemy submarine at 0600 bearing five miles off her port quarter in position 45.35N, 28.02W. The submarine immediately commenced firing and continued firing for five minutes, but the evasive steering of the master coupled with the Armed Guard's defensive firing enabled the SS JACK CARNES to temporarily elude the submarine.

Later, at 2158 on the same day, at position 42.00N, 29.05W, the CARNES was struck by a torpedo in the #3 starboard tank. At 2220 she received two more torpedoes in her midship section, port side, and in her #4 starboard tank, respectively. Since the CARNES was so extensively damaged that it could not be maneuvered, the Master ordered "Abandon Ship!" at 2230, (32 minutes after the initial hit), rather than sacrifice the lives of the crew in a probable further attack.

After the abandonment of the CARNES, she was hit by three more torpedoes at 2235, 2305, and 2335, in #6 starboard tank, #9 starboard tank, and #5 starboard tank, respectively. The ship finally sank at 2345, one hour and forty-seven minutes after the first torpedo hit and only after having received six torpedo hits, three before abandoning and three after.

Although the crew of fifty six managed to embark safely in two lifeboats, twenty-eight were last seen at sea in one lifeboat and the other lifeboat, containing the surviving twenty-eight, sailed to Terciera Island in six days.

This tanker, the SS JACK CARNES, built in 1942, incorporated the latest known features of design and construction many of which were born from the analysis of earlier casualties. This case not only typifies the rugged construction of U. S. tankers and the courage of the men who manned them during the war, but also reflects the efficiency of the Coast Guard's administration of the laws governing marine inspection when it is considered that the plans and specifications of every U. S. merchant ship must be submitted for the approval of the Coast Guard.