

4 July, 1944

141 S.S. KITTANNING

U.S. Tanker; built, 1943; 10,195 gross tons; in ballast.  
Departed Cristobal, C.Z., 4 July, 1944, 0630 EST, for Aruba, N.W.I.  
Torpedoed 4 July, 1944, 0935 EST, 3 hours out of port.  
Weather, squally; wind, light NE; sea, choppy.  
On board, 74; saved, 74.  
Vessel: salvaged.

This ship had left port only three hours previously, and the Third Assistant Engineer had fallen and been seriously injured, so the Master decided to retrun with him to Cristobal for medical aid. Just as the ship was making a 180° turn, the first torpedo struck on the starboard side, abaft the midship housing. The vessel took a starboard list, and the weight of the water against the rudder made it impossible to straighten the course, so she continued to circle to starboard. A second torpedo struck fifteen minutes later, a little aft of the other, and the Master, fearing that the increased list meant the ship would capsize, gave the orders to secure the engines and abandon ship. He gives particular credit to the engine room crew, who secured so efficiently that the machinery was entirely undamaged. The ship was abandoned in four lifeboats and two rafts, and the Master, in one of the motor lifeboats, immediately circulated among the survivors, checking up and finding all personnel present and accounted for. At 0710 a third torpedo in the port midship section caused the vessel to right herself, and she was later reboarded and towed to Cristobal. The Coast Guard Cutters MARION and CRAWFORD arrived and picked up survivors within an hour, landing them at Cristobal by noon of the same day.

NO ILLUSTRATION AVAILABLE