

28 June, 1942

83. S.S. WM ROCKEFELLER

U.S. Tanker, built 1921; 14,054 gross tons; cargo, fuel oil.
Departed Aruba, 19 June, 1942, for New York.
Torpedoed 28 June, 1942, 1216 EWT; 35°11 N.- 75°02 W.
Weather, clear; sea, smooth; wind, light NNE.
On board, 50; saved, 50.
Vessel: total loss.

After being anchored for the night near Ocracoke Lighthouse under Coast Guard supervision, the ROCKEFELLER was proceeding northward escorted by a C.G. patrol boat, when she was struck on the port side amidships by an enemy torpedo, about 16 mi. ENE of Diamond Shoals Lightship. The vessel remained on an even keel, and the Master felt it was not necessary to abandon, but steam and smoke cut off communication with the after section, and the boats aft were hastily lowered without orders. As some of the crew required first aid treatment, it was decided to abandon ship, the Master hoping to return if salvage proved possible. All hands got off in #2 and #4 boats, and #3 and #4 rafts, as the forward falls on #1 and #3 boats had been let go, and they hung upended, and were swamped.

The rescued crew members were taken to the Ocracoke Coast Guard Station, where they received the necessary attention. A patrol craft stood by the burning vessel in the hope that salvage would be possible, but she sank at 2338, approximately 11 hours after the attack.

