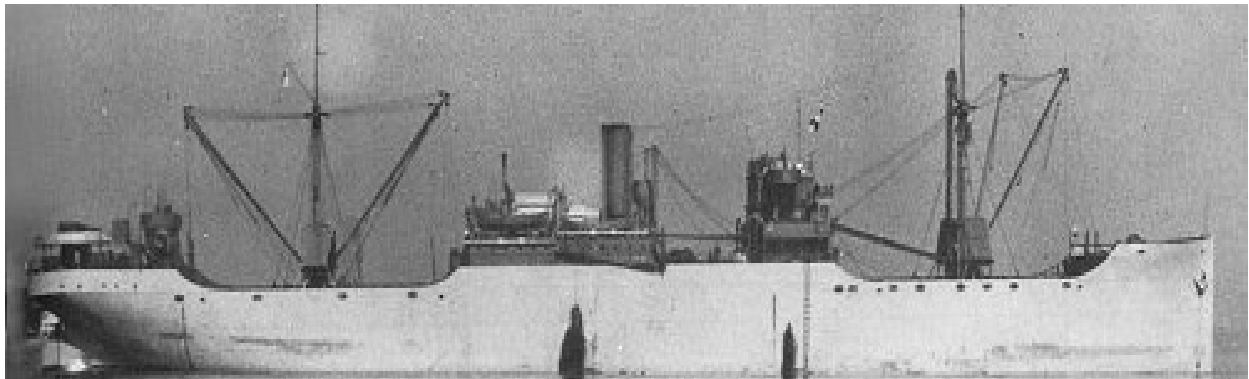


Edward Joseph Ackerlind, Jr.

Born: May 9, 1920
Hometown: Minneapolis, MN
Class: 1943
Service: Merchant Marine
Position / Rank: Engine Cadet
Date / Place of death: December 31, 1942 /
40-10N, 72-02W
Date / Place of burial: December 31, 1942 / Lost
at Sea – 40-10N, 72-02W
Age: 22



Edward J. Ackerlind signed as Engine Cadet aboard the SS Maiden Creek at Mobile, AL on July 7, 1942. His classmate, Cadet-Midshipman Warren B. Carriere had signed on a week earlier as the Deck Cadet. The Maiden Creek, a World War I “Hog Islander” built in 1919, was owned by the Waterman Steamship Company.



SS Maiden Creek

On November 11, 1942 the SS Maiden Creek sailed from New York with a cargo of aviation gasoline in drums for the Army Air Corps airfield designated Blue West Eight (later Sondrestrom AFB). For its return trip it was to load a cargo of ore concentrates. After completing loading of its return cargo the Maiden Creek sailed from Botwood, Newfoundland on December 15 to meet a convoy bound for New York. However, the old ship could not keep up with the convoy in the heavy seas it encountered. On December 19, the Maiden Creek diverted to Halifax, Nova Scotia. When the ship arrived on December 22 inspection of the ship found that the ship's chain locker, fore peak and #1 Hold were flooded due to the heavy seas. Although the fore peak and

chain locker were secured and pumped out, the water in #1 Hold could not be pumped out because of the characteristics of the cargo.

On December 27, despite having significantly reduced freeboard forward due to the flooded #1 Hold, the Maiden Creek sailed from Halifax on December 27 with eleven other ships and three escorts. The ships joined convoy ON-152, bound for New York, the next day. On December 30, as the convoy was nearing New York, the heavy weather resumed. By the afternoon of December 31, the hatch cover for the #1 Hold was leaking again and the hatch cover for the #2 Hold had begun leaking. The water in the Maiden Creek's holds eventually brought the propeller and rudder out of the water. With the ship adrift in heavy seas about seventy miles south of Block Island, the Captain ordered the radio operator to send out an SOS. The Captain then called together the officers and informed them that they would have to abandon the ship.

At about 1700 #3 Lifeboat was launched with eighteen crew members, including the two Cadet-Midshipmen, and five Armed Guard Sailors. A second lifeboat was launched at about thirty minutes later with all but two of the remaining crew and Armed Guard Sailors aboard, a total of 31 men. Two men had to remain aboard because lowering a boat from the Maiden Creek's antiquated lifeboat davits could only be done manually. The two Able Bodied seamen attempted to climb down the falls to the boat but the rough seas carried the boat away before the men could get aboard. One man fell into the water and, despite attempts to pull him aboard, was lost. The other seaman climbed back on board the Maiden Creek and eventually went down with the vessel.

In heavy seas and growing darkness the two lifeboats soon lost sight of each other. The lifeboat with 31 men aboard was spotted by Army, Navy and Coast Guard patrol planes in the ensuing days. However, it was not until January 3 that a patrol plane was able to transmit the position of the lifeboat to a ship close enough to effect a rescue. At about 1840 that day the MS Staghound rescued the men in the Maiden Creek's lifeboat. The 23 men aboard the first lifeboat, including Cadet-Midshipmen Ackerlind and Carriere, were never seen again.

Cadet-Midshipman Edward J. Ackerlind, was posthumously awarded the Atlantic War Zone Bar, the Victory Medal, and the Presidential Testimonial Letter.

Edward J. "Joseph" Ackerlind was the only son and youngest of Edward J. Ackerlind, Sr. and Catherine Ackerlind's two children. Edward's big sister, just three years older, was named Margaret. According to the 1940 U.S. Census, Edward, Sr., was a barber who owned his own shop. Edward, Jr. worked as an assistant salesman at a bottling company while his sister was a stenographer at the Land O'Lakes Creameries. Edward, Sr. passed away on August 25, 1943, just a few months after the death of his son.