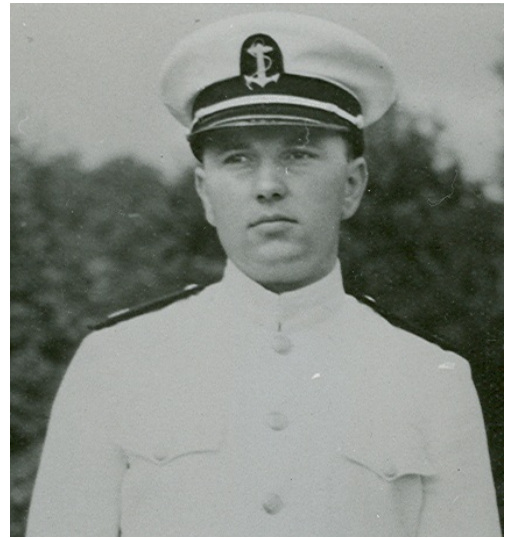


## Alan Robert Clarke

Born: February 8, 1922  
Hometown: Ridgewood, NJ  
Class: 1944  
Service: Merchant Marine  
Position / Rank: Deck Cadet  
Date / Place of death: March 2, 1943 / 62-10'N,  
28-25'W  
Date / Place of burial: March 2, 1943 / Lost at  
Sea - 62-10'N, 28-25'W  
Age: 21



Alan R. Clarke signed on aboard the SS Meriwether Lewis as Deck Cadet on October 13, 1942 at New York, NY. His classmate Randall Bourell signed on as Deck Cadet two days later. The ship's two Engine Cadets were Walter E. Johnson and Daniel J. Maher. After an uneventful voyage to Casablanca, French Morocco the ship returned to New York on January 10, 1943. Walter Johnson was replaced by Francis McCann around January 25, 1943. On February 18, 1943 the Meriwether Lewis with its four Kings Point cadets sailed from New York as part of convoy HX-227 bound for the United Kingdom and then to Murmansk, Russia. The ship was loaded with a cargo of vehicle tires, ammunition, and according to some references, a deck cargo of PT Boats.

According to German Navy records, the Meriwether Lewis was identified as a straggler from a convoy, and unsuccessfully attacked, by U-759 in the early morning of March 2. The submarine was unable to re-attack the Meriwether Lewis due to problems with its engines, but it was able to contact U-634 and lead it to the straggler. The U-634 fired four torpedoes at the Meriwether Lewis, hitting it with one of them. The damage was apparently sufficient to stop the ship, but did not sink it. The submarine hit the Meriwether Lewis with two more torpedoes, the last of which detonated the ship's ammunition cargo. Although there was plenty of time to abandon ship, the USCGC Ingham (WPG 35) found only a 30-mile line of floating tires during its two day long search for the SS Meriwether Lewis and crew. Thus, the ship's entire crew of 44, including four Kings Point Cadets, and 28 members of the Naval Armed Guard perished in the sinking.

Cadet-Midshipman Alan R. Clarke was posthumously awarded the Mariner's Medal, Combat Bar, Atlantic War Zone Bar, the Victory Medal, and the Presidential Testimonial Letter.

Alan R. Clarke was the only son of Robert Clarke and Ruth Clarke. According to his classmate, David Douglas (KP '44), Robert Clarke was a senior executive of the Seamen's Bank for Savings in New York. David Douglas said that he was told by his grandmother that both of the Clarkes died of grief not long after Alan's death.