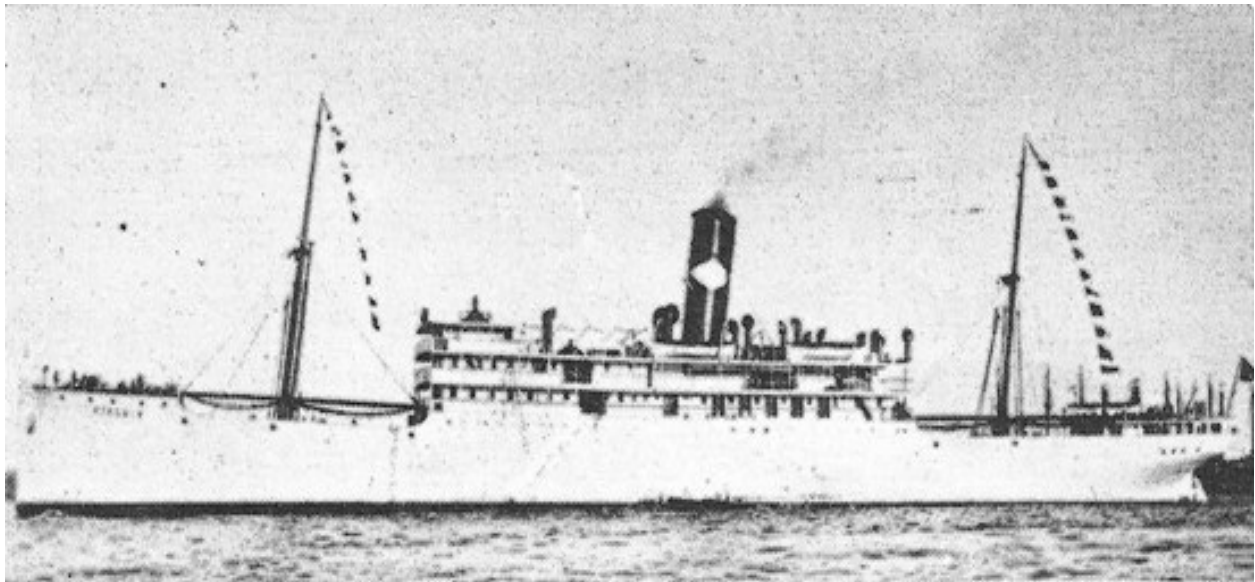


Irwin Stutz Ebel

Born: March 13, 1923
Hometown: Brooklyn, NY
Class: 1943
Service: Merchant Marine
Position / Rank: Engine Cadet
Date / Place of death: May 19, 1942 / 28-53N, 91-03W
Date / Place of burial: May 19, 1942 / Lost at Sea – 28-53'N, 91-03'W
Age: 19



Irwin S. Ebel signed on aboard the passenger-cargo ship SS Heredia as Engine Cadet on April 23, 1942 at New Orleans, LA. In addition to Irwin Ebel, Cadet-Midshipman Glenn Bruaw aboard as Deck Cadet.



SS Heredia

On May 19, 1942 the ship was returning to New Orleans from Puerto Barrios, Guatemala loaded with 40,000 stems of bananas and 5,000 bags of coffee. The ship was traveling without an escort and was not zigzagging since the Navy did not believe that any German submarines were operating in the Gulf of Mexico. However, the

German Navy had recently ordered the submarines of their 10th U-Boat Flotilla to begin operating in the Gulf of Mexico to interrupt the flow of petroleum products and supplies to the U.S. East Coast and Caribbean. During the month of May 1942 these submarines sank 56 ships, including the SS Heredia.

At about 0200 CWT, when the SS Heredia was about two miles south of the Ship Shoal Buoy off the Louisiana coast, the ship was sighted and attacked by U-506. Two torpedoes hit the Heredia on the port side at #3 and #4 holds. Survivors reported a third torpedo hit on the starboard side amidships, leading them to conclude that the ship was attacked by two submarines. However, German Naval records do not identify a second submarine operating in the same area as U-506.

The torpedo explosions on the port side destroyed the life boats there. No distress signal was sent and the passengers, crew and Armed Guard abandoned ship in two life rafts. The survivors were rescued by several shrimp boats (Papa Joe, Conquest, J. Edwin Treakle and Shellwater) and by a seaplane.

Of the Heredia's eight passengers, 48 crewmen and 6 Armed Guard Sailors, one passenger, five Armed Guard Sailors and 30 crewmen including Cadet-Midshipmen Irwin Ebel and Glenn Bruaw, perished.

Cadet-Midshipman Irwin S. Ebel was posthumously awarded the Mariners Medal, Combat Bar with star, Atlantic War Zone Bar, Victory Medal, and the Presidential Testimonial Letter.

Irwin was the youngest of Frank Ebel and Rose Ebel's three children. Frank Ebel, an Austrian immigrant, owned and operated an automotive repair business. Irwin's older siblings were named Maxine and Lester. The 1941 college year book for the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill identifies Irwin as a Sophomore attending the school.