

Theodore Albert Heidt

Born: March 5, 1920
Hometown: Glendale, NY
Class: 1942
Service: Merchant Marine
Position / Rank: Chief Officer
Date / Place of death: November 4, 1945 / Kahului,
Maui, Hawaii
Date / Place of burial: Nassau Knolls Cemetery, Port
Washington, NY ??
Age: 26



Theodore A. Heidt joined the U.S. Merchant Marine Cadet Corps in March 1939 and served as Deck Cadet aboard the Scanstates, Mormacsun, Deer Lodge and Mormacyork on voyages to Europe and South America. He subsequently sailed as Third Mate aboard the SS Argentina and as Second Mate aboard the SS George Weems. He signed on as Chief Mate aboard the C1-M-AV1 Cargo ship SS Link Splice on August 28, 1945 at Savannah, GA. The Link Splice sailed later for Hawaii via the Panama Canal.

By November 4, 1945 the Link Splice had reached port in Kahului, the port for the Hawaiian island of Maui. As the Chief Mate Theodore Heidt was standing the 4pm to 8pm watch on deck, supervising cargo handling and the ship's lines. At approximately 7pm the ship's Captain, Joseph N. Gonyeau, noticed that the ship's gangway was out of position. He went to inform the Chief Mate of the fact but could not find him. While talking with the ship's Purser the Captain reported that he heard screaming and yelling on deck. The Captain and Purser immediately went on deck and found that Theodore Heidt had been pulled into a winch by the gangway line. From the lack of other crew members around it was apparent that he had attempted to handle the gangway himself rather than calling the deck crew on watch to help him with it. Apparently he had become fouled in the gangway line while the winch was operating and was unable to disengage himself from the line. The line pulled him into and around the winch several times, wrapping him in the line and crushing him as the line was tightened by the winch.

The Captain, Purser and other members of the crew were able to extricate Theodore Heidt from the winch and called for medical assistance. One U.S. Public Health Service doctor and two U.S. Navy doctors arrived on the scene but could not save him. Theodore Heidt was declared dead at about 7:40pm. After preparation for burial by a

local mortician, the body was returned to the Link Splice and placed in its refrigerated cargo hold for return to the U.S. According to crew records on file in New York, the ship returned to New York from Hawaii on December 4, 1945.

Based on his Merchant Marine service Theodore A. Heidt was entitled to the Atlantic War Zone Bar, Mediterranean - Middle East War Zone Bar, Pacific War Zone Bar and the Victory Medal.

At the time of his death Theodore A. Heidt was the husband of Irene A. Heidt of Kew Gardens, Long Island, NY. He was the only son of Alfred A. Heidt and Frieda Heidt. Alfred Heidt managed a bar and grill.