

## James Arthur Hope

Born: April 15, 1921  
Hometown: Avalon, PA  
Class: 1944  
Service: Merchant Marine  
Position / Rank: Deck Cadet  
Date / Place of death: April 11, 1943 / 50N, 39W  
Date / Place of burial: April 11, 1943 / Lost at Sea  
– 50N, 39W  
Age: 22



James A. Hope signed on as Deck Cadet aboard the SS Edward B. Dudley at Savannah, GA on March 1, 1943, just days after its delivery from North Carolina Shipbuilding. James Hope was joined aboard the Edward B. Dudley by Cadet-Midshipman James J. Magee, who was also sailing as Deck Cadet.

After loading a cargo of cotton in Savannah, the Edward B. Dudley sailed on its maiden voyage for New York. At New York the ship loaded more cargo, including either ammunition or explosives. The Edward B. Dudley sailed from New York with convoy HX 232 on April 1, 1943 bound for Liverpool via Halifax, Nova Scotia.

At some point after the convoy sailed from Halifax the Edward B. Dudley straggled behind the convoy, due to, according to some sources, a bent propeller blade. According to German Naval Records, the Edward B. Dudley was located by U-615 on April 10. The submerged submarine fired a four-torpedo spread at the ship. Only one of the four torpedoes was seen by U-615 to hit the ship, and it failed to explode.

Alerted to the danger, the Edward B. Dudley began zig-zagging but it was unable to shake off the pursuit by U-615. The pursuit lasted all night with U-615 finally getting ahead of the Edward B. Dudley and setting up its approach on the surface. When the Edward B. Dudley was in U-615's sights it fired two torpedoes at the ship, hitting it amidships and stopping the ship. However, the Edward B. Dudley would not sink. Twenty minutes after the first torpedoes hit the Edward B. Dudley the U-615 closed to within ½ mile of the ship and fired another torpedo which hit the stern. The explosion of this torpedo detonated the ammunition for the 5" gun there, but the Edward B. Dudley still remained afloat. At this point the crew of the U-615 witnessed the crew abandoning ship in the ship's lifeboats.

The U-615 then moved even closer to the crippled ship and fired a fourth torpedo which was observed to hit under the bridge. This torpedo detonated the Edward B. Dudley's cargo, totally destroying the ship. Falling debris from the explosion wounded the U-615's captain and slightly damaged its conning tower, forcing the submarine to abort its patrol and return to base. The U-615 itself was sunk by allied aircraft in the Caribbean on its next patrol.

Although the U-615's captain and other crew members had seen boats being lowered, no survivors of the Edward B. Dudley, including Cadet-Midshipmen James A. Hope and Joseph J. Magee, were ever found. Given the extent of the explosion of the Edward B. Dudley's cargo any survivors who were in the life boats perished in the explosion.

Cadet-Midshipman James A. Hope was posthumously awarded the Mariners Medal, Combat Bar with star, Atlantic War Zone Bar, the Victory Medal, and the Presidential Testimonial Letter.

James A. Hope was the second of George Cowan Thompson Hope and Margareta Agatha Barnhart Hope's three sons. James brothers were George K. who went by his middle name, Keith, and Dean. The boys were born in Hamilton, Canada, but the family moved to America in 1923. George Hope, a civil engineer and World War I veteran died in 1924. They were raised from 1925 to 1940 by their aunt and uncle, George and Helen Hess. However, by the 1940 U.S. Census all three boys were living with their mother. George K. was identified as working in a steel mill while their mother took in boarders. According to Dean, James and he caddied at a local country club during high school. James was also the quarterback on his high school football team. After graduating from high school James worked briefly at American Bridge Company before going to Kings Point.