

Daniel Joseph Maher

Born: July 17, 1923
Hometown: East Boston, MA
Class: 1944
Service: Merchant Marine
Position / Rank: Engine Cadet
Date / Place of death: March 2, 1943 / 62-10N, 28-25W
Date / Place of burial: March 2, 1943 / Lost at Sea --
62-10N, 28-25W
Age: 19



Daniel J. Maher signed on aboard the SS Meriwether Lewis as Engine Cadet on October 15, 1942 at New York, NY. Cadet-Midshipman Walter E. Johnson had signed on a few days earlier as Engine Cadet. The ship's two Deck Cadets were Cadet-Midshipmen Randall Bourell and Alan Clarke . 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 Daniel J. Maher was posthumously awarded the Mariners Medal, Combat Bar with star, Atlantic War Zone Bar, the Victory Medal, and the Presidential Testimonial Letter. He had previously earned the Pacific War Zone Bar for service

aboard the SS Charles Kurz and SS Argentina. Crew lists on file in New York indicate that he had signed on aboard the SS Argentina as a Fireman at San Francisco on April 15, 1942.



Danny Maher (age 8) and Father call home on his first voyage to sea

Daniel J. Maher, known to his family as “Danny”, was the youngest of Capt. Daniel J. Maher and Annie M. J. Maher’s three children. The oldest child was Dannie’s big sister Rita, who, according to the 1940 U.S. Census, worked in a hospital. The middle child was Dannie’s brother William who was working in a fish processing and cold storage plant in 1940. Dannie’s father was captain of the trawler MV Foam. On May 17, 1942 the Foam was sunk by a German submarine off the coast of Nova Scotia, the first American fishing trawler sunk in World War II. Danny graduated from Tilton Parochial School and East Boston High School, in 1941. He was an active member of the Sea Scouts, and was remembered by his sister Rita for his excellent character, his love of life and for the sea.