

Samuel Schuster

Born: February 19, 1923
Hometown: Philadelphia, PA
Class: 1943
Service: Merchant Marine
Position / Rank: Deck Cadet
Date / Place of death: October 9, 1942 / 34-52S, 18-30E
Date / Place of burial: October 9, 1942 / Lost at Sea –
34-52S, 18-30E
Age: 19



Samuel Schuster signed on as Deck Cadet aboard the freighter *SS Examelia*, a World War I “Hog Islander” at New York, NY on May 22, 1942. He was joined by Cadet-Midshipman Bernard W. Spillman who signed on as Engine Cadet. On October 9, 1942 the ship was traveling unescorted and not zig-zagging, about 50 miles south of the Cape of Good Hope bound from Colombo, Ceylon to Cape Town, South Africa loaded with a cargo of chrome ore, jute and hemp. According to a report submitted by the Commanding Officer of the ship’s Naval Armed Guard, at 0148 local time on October 9, 1942 the ship was hit by a torpedo on the starboard side at the bulkhead between the Fire Room and Engine Room. Post-war reports identify the submarine that fired the torpedo as U-68. The torpedo explosion immediately disabled the engines and the ship sank in minutes.



SS Examelia

Of the 51 merchant crew and Naval Armed Guard, 43 succeeded in getting into two of the lifeboats. Three more men died either during the launching or immediately

afterward. Cadet-Midshipman Samuel Schuster was one of the eleven men that did not get safely away from the *Examelia*.

Although the forty survivors were rescued by the SS *John Lykes* about twelve hours later, this was not the end of their misfortunes. On October 21, 1942 the *Examelia's* survivors sailed aboard the Dutch passenger ship *Zaandam* for return to the United States. However, the *Zaandam* was torpedoed on November 2, 1942, killing 21 of the *Examelia's* survivors. Of the nineteen men who survived the second sinking, three more died before they could be rescued. Among the dead from the sinking of the *Zaandam* was Cadet-Midshipman Bernard W. Spillman.

Cadet-Midshipman Samuel Schuster was posthumously awarded the Mariners Medal, Combat Bar with star, Atlantic War Zone Bar, the Mediterranean-Middle East War Zone Bar, the Victory Medal, and the Presidential Testimonial Letter.

Samuel Schuster was the son of Morris Schuster and Pauline Schuster. No further information about his family could be located.

Although Samuel Schuster was a "Kings Pointer" he had previously attended the Pennsylvania Nautical School. It is interesting to note the relationship between Kings Point and the Pennsylvania Nautical School (PNS). Administration of the Pennsylvania Nautical School was transferred to the U.S. Maritime Commission in 1940 and renamed the Pennsylvania Maritime Academy. In March 1942 the Maritime Commission ended its administration of the Pennsylvania Maritime Academy, closing the school. The school ship *Seneca*, a former Coast Guard Cutter, was assigned to other duties. All of the cadets and their instructors were sent to Kings Point to complete their training. However, in September 1942 the Pennsylvania Maritime Academy re-opened under state control. The *Seneca* was returned to the Pennsylvania Maritime Academy and renamed "*Keystone State*". At Kings Point, the former Pennsylvania Maritime Academy instructors and cadets that desired to return to Pennsylvania Maritime Academy were allowed to do so, while some remained at Kings Point. Although the official name of the institution from 1940 onward was Pennsylvania Maritime Academy, the name change did not seem to "stick" and the institution was commonly referred to as the Pennsylvania Nautical School.