

John Norton Stewart Jr.

Born: February 26, 1924
Hometown: Pass Christian, MS
Class: 1944
Service: Merchant Marine
Position / Rank: Deck Cadet
Date / Place of death: July 9, 1943 / 9S, 81E
Date / Place of burial: July 9, 1943 / Lost at Sea –
9S, 81E
Age: 19



John N. Stewart signed on as Deck Cadet aboard the *SS Samuel Heintzelman* on May 11, 1943 at Charleston, South Carolina. The ship sailed on July 1, 1943 from Freemantle, Australia bound for Calcutta via Columba, and Karachi, India with a cargo of ammunition and general cargo. The *Heintzelman* was due to arrive in Colombo on July 14th, but never arrived after being last seen on July 4. For months her disappearance was a mystery. Then, on September 29th, a plank marked with the ship's name, along with several boxes of ammunition and boxes of glass vials filled with an unidentified powder washed up on the beach of Minni Minni village, in the Maldives. Villagers had also noticed two unoccupied ship's boats the previous day, but these were never recovered.

After the war, German records showed that the ship had been torpedoed on July 9th by U-511. The submarine submerged after firing on the vessel, but the crew heard underwater explosions. When the submarine resurfaced, there was no sign of the *Heintzelman* or any survivors. All of the 42 crew members and 19 Naval Armed Guard perished.

Cadet-Midshipman John N. Stewart, a graduate of the Basic School at Pass Christian, was posthumously awarded the Mariners Medal, Combat Bar with star, the Atlantic War Zone Bar, the Mediterranean-Middle East War Zone Bar, the Pacific War Zone Bar, the Victory Medal, and the Presidential Testimonial Letter.

John N. Stewart listed his mother, Beth L. Stewart of Pass Christian, MS as his next of kin. He had a sister, Nancy.