

In Memory of

Sapper

Arthur Ronald Jenkins

323339, Royal Engineers who died between 06 December 1942 and 07 December 1942 Age 30

Son of Arthur and Eunice Jenkins; husband of Phyllis Margaret Jenkins, of Hale Barns, Cheshire.

Remembered with Honour

Brookwood 1939-1945 Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Sapper Arthur Ronald Jenkins

Royal Engineers

Service Number: 323339

Died: 6 December 1942 Age: 30

How Died: Killed at Sea

Country of burial: Lost at Sea

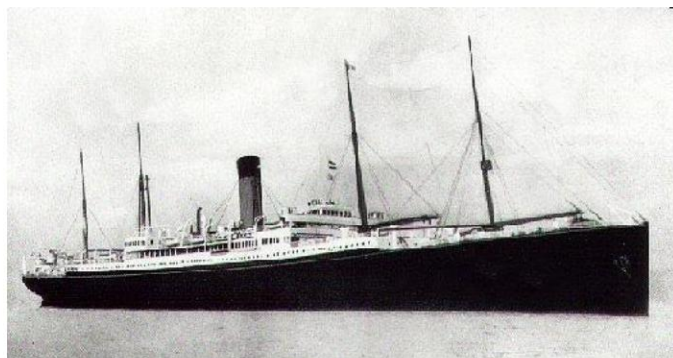
Cemetery or Memorial: Brookwood 1938 – 1945 Memorial, London

Town Memorial: Hale Barns

Extra Information

Born in 1912, the son of Arthur and Eunice Jenkins and husband of Phyllis Margaret Jenkins, of Hale Barns, Cheshire. Joined the **SS Ceramic** in November 1942 in Liverpool to sail to Australia.

On 26 November 1942 the **SS Ceramic** (Master Herbert Charles Elford) left Liverpool in convoy ON-149 with 264 crew members, 14 gunners, 244 military and naval passengers (including 30 nurses of the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service) and 133 fare paying passengers, among them 12 children. On 5 December, she was detached from the convoy and began sailing independently as routed.



Just at midnight on 6/7 December, the **SS Ceramic** was hit by one torpedo from U-515 about 420 miles west-northwest of the Azores. On action stations were sounded and two or three minutes later two more torpedoes struck the engine room below the waterline. The engines stopped and the vessel was

plunged into darkness. There was very little panic among the passengers and the crew launched approximately eight full laden lifeboats, despite of the cold weather, the rough seas and the poor visibility in the darkness. The **SS Ceramic** stayed afloat and three hours later U-515 hit the ship with two more torpedoes, which broke her in two and she sank immediately.

By this time, the sea was very rough and it was raining. The lifeboats were becoming swamped and needed continual bailing out. Some lifeboats capsized and threw the occupants into the water, so that many people were floating in the water, supported by their life jackets. Henke reported the sinking to the BdU and was ordered to return to the site to find the master and to find out where she had been bound. At about midday, the surfaced U-515 returned. A lookout first saw a body, then empty life jackets and the broken mast from the ship. A lifeboat whose occupants waved to him was also seen. It was reported later that Henke was very upset at the sight that greeted him. At this time the wind had almost reached Force 10 and a storm started. The sea was almost swamping the conning tower, so Henke ordered his men to take the first survivor that came close enough to his vessel. Two men threw a rope to one of the men in the water, Sapper Eric Munday of the Royal Engineers, took him aboard and U-515 left the area. A distress signal from **Ceramic** had been heard and **HMS Enterprise (D 52)** (Capt H.T.W. Grant, RCN) and the Portuguese destroyer **Dao** were sent to search for survivors on 9 December, but none were found. Other sailors in the area considered later that this storm was one of the worst storms that they had experienced.

Only Sapper Eric Munday survived when rescued by members of the crew of U-515. Eric Munday lived until 2011.

More information can be found on the internet on <http://www.ssceramic.co.uk/>

Memorials also found on:

Hale United Reformed Church, Hale