

U.S.S. TUNA (SS203),
Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.,
22 June 1944.

Mrs. Flora Bell Huff,
Knierium, Iowa.

My Dear Mrs. Huff,

It is with great sorrow that I write to you about the sudden drowning of your son John Kirkman. While in the execution of his duties in combat with the enemy he lost his footing and was knocked over the side of this vessel. The water was calm and he could be plainly seen swimming about. Every effort was made to rescue him, but approximately five minutes after he fell and while the ship was maneuvering to rescue him, he was seen to go under and not come up again.

His loss had a tremendous effect on all of us aboard because he was so well liked and because he was so proficient in his work. You must realize how rapidly he had advanced since his enlistment in 1936. His assignment on board TUNA was, I can assure you, an important one. His energy zeal and devotion to duty was of the highest order. He had been commended for service during three war patrols and recommended for appointment to the rank of Torpedoman.

We aboard TUNA have missed your son more than I can say. We join you in reverent sorrow knowing full well that John always did everything the best he could for the interest and good of the Navy for which he loved so well.

His effects are being forwarded to you in the customary manner.

Officers and members of the crew of U.S.S. TUNA have contributed the amount of \$500 (check enclosed) as a benefit gift to you. We hope you will accept it with the same sincere feeling that it is being sent.

Please do not hesitate to write to me if
there is anything I can do to make your sorrow
less.

Sincerely yours,

James T. Hardin
James T. Hardin,
Commander, U.S. Navy,
Commanding, U.S.S. TUNA.

RECEIVED
NAVY STATE DEPT OF NAVY
MAY 30 1943