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San Victoria

San Victoria The brand new motor tanker of 12,000 tons, under command of Captain S.Perry, and whilst on her maiden voyage May 1942, and returning from Aruba with a full cargo of gasolene when she was attacked by a U-boat and struck by a torpedo, the effect was volcanic. A fiery withering flame swept the ship, and almost instantly she was blown sky-high. That anyone should have lived to tell what happened is a miracle, one man was rescued, the Gunner Ryan of the Maritime Regiment of the Royal Artillery who happened to be on the poop-deck and was blown over the stern-rail by the first explosion, and was far enough away from the ship to escape the second devastating explosion that killed everyone else on board, human intervention was impossible in such a tragic case.

Winston Churchill expressed the opinion privately that had the Germans been able to put Curacao out of action the allies may have lost the war. Situated in the Dutch West Indies off the coast of Venezuela, is one of the most important oil refining and shipping centres in the world, during WW2. Curacao was chosen as the refinery because of being the only Dutch deep water port available for deep draught Shell oil tankers. The Curacao refinery of C.P.I.M dealt with all cargoes from the area, producing aviation spirit, motor gasolene, lubricants, and other refined products. In 1944 alone the production of the refinery was 10,000,000 metric tons. This Dutch Islands achievement in production and transshipment represents 3,000,000,000 gallons. Surprisingly the Germans made no attempt to block the narrow entrance to Willemstadt