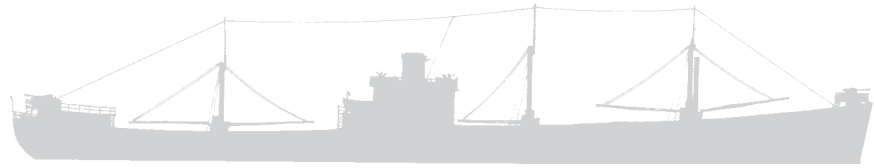


TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

Texas' Liberty Ships



From World War II Working-class Heroes to Artificial Reefs

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ABSTRACT

In an ironic twist of fate, the stripped hulls of 12 Liberty Ships which survived enemy sinking attempts during World War II were intentionally sunk as artificial reefs in the Gulf of Mexico off the Texas coast during the mid-1970s. Texas acquired the surplus ships from the Maritime Administration Reserve Fleet and placed them at five sites during 1975-76 to create habitat for marine organisms. The Liberty Ships serve as reefs by providing a solid foundation for the growth and attachment of sessile organisms. This epitaph for these proud ships not only keeps their memory and history alive, but allows them to continue to serve the citizens of Texas by enhancing marine habitat through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Artificial Reef Program.

Liberty Ships were originally built to bolster the United State's inadequate merchant marine fleet at the beginning of World War II. Relatively inexpensive and expendable, Liberty Ships were virtually mass-produced, with 2,581 completed. Each ship was 441 feet in length and able to carry 10,088 tons of cargo in their five giant holds. These lightly armed ships carried numerous tons of cargo and thousands of troops to battle zones in Europe, Africa, and the South Pacific throughout World War II. The ships saw nearly every theater of war and traveled along several essential supply routes. Most of Texas' Liberty Ships joined the perilous North Atlantic convoys

to Great Britain more than once. Many also made the treacherous Murmansk run, a cold, miserable, airplane and submarine-plagued journey through the Arctic Circle to northern Russia. The Liberty Ships helped save the Allied cause during World War II. After the war, they were moth balled in the Reserve Fleet, and then brought out to ship cargo to Europe under the Marshall Plan. The ships served again during the Korean War before being moth balled again.

In 1994, Texas Parks and Wildlife and the Texas Historical Commission jointly accepted the challenge to designate the ships in the Liberty Ship Reefs as historical heritage sites. The Liberty Ships in Texas readily attract sport anglers and scuba divers, offering them a dual encounter with magnificent reefs and America's maritime heritage. Individual type EC-2 Liberty Ships lying in Texas waters include the: *George Vancouver, William H. Allen, B.F. Shaw, Jim Bridger, George Dewey, Dwight L. Moody, George L. Farley, Edward W. Scripps, Joshua Thomas, Charles A. Dana, Rachel Jackson, and Conrad Weiser*. Other WWII ships found in Texas waters include the *V.A. Fogg* (ex-SS *Four Lakes*) and the *John Worthington* (Type 2 Tanker). While these ships had similar functions during WWII, each has a unique and fascinating wartime history. This report documents that history and their role in the artificial reef program.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures	iv
List of Tables	vi
Acknowledgments	vii
Introduction	1
Texas Liberty Ships	2
Ship Histories	15
SS <i>William H. Allen</i>	15
SS <i>Jim Bridger</i>	17
SS <i>Charles A. Dana</i>	20
SS <i>George Dewey</i>	23
SS <i>George L. Farley</i>	27
SS <i>V.A. Fogg (ex-SS Four Lakes)</i>	31
SS <i>Rachel Jackson</i>	38
SS <i>Dwight L. Moody</i>	41
SS <i>Edward W. Scripps</i>	45
SS <i>B.F. Shaw</i>	49
SS <i>Joshua Thomas</i>	53
SS <i>George Vancouver</i>	56
SS <i>Conrad Weiser</i>	60
SS <i>John Worthington</i>	68
Liberty Ships Built in Texas	73
Liberty Ships and the Texas Artificial Reef Program	87
Acquisition of Texas' Liberty Ships	88
Determination of Artificial Reef Sites	89
Sinking Process	91
Location	94
Texas Legislation and the Artificial Reef Program	102
Conclusions	103
References	104
Appendices	
1. Vessel Status Cards	107
2. Instructions to Masters	114
3. Instructions to Armed Guards	115
4. Lists of Sample Crew and Equipment Issued	130

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Location of the Liberty Ship artificial reef sites off the coast of Texas.	Page 2
Figure 2. Liberty Ship production line at the California Shipbuilding Corp. Courtesy of the Library of Congress (Hoehling 1990).	Page 2
Figure 3. Modular construction of a Liberty Ship (Pitt 1978).	Page 3
Figure 4. Elevation drawing of a Liberty Ship (Sawyer and Mitchell 1973).	Page 4
Figure 5. General specifications for the Liberty Ships (Bunker 1972: 269).	Page 5
Figure 6. View of the engine room of an EC-2 Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).	Page 5
Figure 7. Small, compact shower on a Liberty Ship, particularly welcome to members of the “black gang” after their watch (Douglas and Salz 1943).	Page 5
Figure 8. Officer’s messman in the mess room of a Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).	Page 6
Figure 9. Crewmen relax in the mess hall of a Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).	Page 6
Figure 10. Testing the davits for launching a boat on a Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).	Page 6
Figure 11. Bullet-proof shutters in the wheelhouse of a Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).	Page 7
Figure 12. Athwart ship view of the wheelhouse of the restored Liberty Ship <i>John W. Brown</i> (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).	Page 7
Figure 13. Helm and engine enunciator on the <i>John W. Brown</i> (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).	Page 7
Figure 14. Topside conning station located above the wheelhouse on the <i>John W. Brown</i> . In fair weather the Liberty Ships were usually steered from this position since the view from the wheelhouse is very restricted (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).	Page 7
Figure 15. Officer’s cabin on the <i>John W. Brown</i> (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).	Page 7
Figure 16. Three-inch gun on the bow of the <i>John W. Brown</i> (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).	Page 8
Figure 17. Twenty-mm gun on the <i>John W. Brown</i> . Note the so-called plastic armor on the outside of the gun tub (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).	Page 8
Figure 18. Five-inch gun on the stern of the <i>John W. Brown</i> (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).	Page 8
Figure 19. Stowage of palletized 155-mm ammunition in the No. 2 hold of a Liberty Ship, Leghorn, Italy, Jan. 8, 1945 (National Archives).	Page 10
Figure 20. Army “ducks” which operate from ship to shore carrying cargo from Liberty Ships to shore are shown being loaded with gasoline drums, Bassin Darse Nord, Le Havre, France, 470th and 819th Amph. Truck Co., Nov. 15, 1944 (National Archives).	Page 12
Figure 21. At a French port ammunition receives priority handling from Liberty Ship to railway box car for quick dispatch to the front. Off loading by pallets as shown permits the handling of 30 boxes at one time, containing 60 projectiles for the 105 mm howitzer, the backbone of the US field artillery, Nov. 4, 1944 (National Archives).	Page 12
Figure 22. First group of men to leave staging area in Antwerp, Belgium board Liberty Ship that will take them to the United States for discharge, July 5, 1945 (National Archives).	Page 14
Figure 23. Liberty Ship steaming with anti-torpedo nets deployed (National Archives).	Page 21
Figure 24. SS <i>George Dewey</i> , Sept. 3, 1943 (National Archives).	Page 23
Figure 25. Hourly V-bomb frequencies logged at Antwerp, Belgium from December 25, 1944 to January 8, 1945.	Page 29
Figure 26. Sketch of a T-2 tanker (Talbot-Booth 1949: 201).	Page 31
Figure 27. Explosion damage to the <i>V.A. Fogg</i> from the USCG accident report.	Page 36
Figure 28. A Liberty Ship pitches in rough seas, North Atlantic, December 1943. A number of ships broke apart in such conditions, giving the type a bad reputation among merchant seamen. The danger was increased by the use of welded construction, which allowed a crack to spread from one plate to the next, and the common practice of ballasting the vessels too lightly (Imperial War Museum).	Page 43

Figure 29. SS <i>Conrad Weiser</i> , April 23, 1944 (National Archives).	Page 61
Figure 30. A prewar photograph of the <i>John Worthington</i> covered with snow. (From Standard Oil of New Jersey, <i>Ships of the Esso Fleet in World War II.</i>)	Page 68
Figure 31. Profiles and relative sizes of a Liberty Ship, a T-2 tanker, and the <i>John Worthington</i> (Andy Hall 1995).	Page 69
Figure 32. Damage to the <i>John Worthington's</i> hull at Tank No. 8. The explosion punctured the bulkheads fore and aft of Tank 8, flooding Tanks 7 and 9 as well. Photo probably taken after her arrival in Texas on June 21, 1943. (From Standard Oil of New Jersey, <i>The Esso Fleet in World War II.</i>)	Page 72
Figure 33. Liberty Ships built at Houston, Texas in numbers per month (Sawyer and Mitchell 1973).	Page 74
Figure 34. Allied shipping losses vs. new construction, 1939-1945.	Page 74
Figure 35. The SS <i>James W. Fannin</i> was produced in Texas in May 1943. It survived the war and was grounded and wrecked near Halifax in 1966 (United States Naval Institute).	Page 75
Figure 36. The SS <i>Benjamin R. Milan</i> was produced in Texas in June 1943. It sank near Baltimore harbor after a boiler room explosion in March 1945, but was later repaired. After several name changes, it was scrapped in 1968 (United States Naval Institute).	Page 75
Figure 37. The SS <i>Mirabeau B. Lamar</i> was produced in Texas in July 1942 was later scrapped at Mobile, Alabama in January 1963 (United States Naval Institute).	Page 77
Figure 38. The SS <i>Anson Jones</i> was produced in Texas in May 1943 and later scrapped in Shanghai in 1969 (United States Naval Institute).	Page 79
Figure 39. The SS <i>Jose Navarro</i> was built in Texas in October 1943. It was damaged by a U-178 submarine in the Indian Ocean in December 1943 while carrying Army stores and mules. She was abandoned, reboarded, and abandoned again. The <i>Navarro</i> was torpedoed again and sunk by the same submarine. She was streaming anti-torpedo nets when attacked, but the torpedo struck forward of the net (United States Naval Institute).	Page 80
Figure 40. One of the twelve Liberty Ships awaiting the cutting torch at Andy International, Incorporated's ship breaking yard in Brownsville, Texas. The ships were cut down for sinking to serve as artificial reefs in a program carried out by the Texas Coastal and Marine Council in 1975-76 (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 91
Figure 41. The super structure and all masts and posts were removed from the Liberty Ships (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 92
Figure 42. Sides were removed down to the last deck level (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 92
Figure 43. Tons of scrap metal were salvaged from each of the Liberty Ships for recycling (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 92
Figure 44. Artifacts such as this anchor were salvaged and sold or donated to various organizations (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 92
Figure 45. Aerial view of two of the twelve Liberty Ships that were prepared for sinking as artificial reefs. The ship on the right has had the superstructure and main deck removed. Deck openings seen here plus large side windows provide water circulation and access for fish (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 92
Figure 46. All petroleum products and water were removed by pumps (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 93
Figure 47. During the final stages of clean-up, the ships were steam cleaned to remove remaining contaminants (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 93
Figure 48. Inside view of a cleaned Liberty Ship that is ready for sinking. Note holes in left side to allow for water circulation (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 93

Figure 49. Cuts made in the hull of a Liberty Ship provided adequate water circulation and access for fish when the ship rested on the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 93
Figure 50. Settling stern-first into the 100 foot deep water of the Gulf of Mexico, this Liberty Ship hull provided habitat for marine organisms and enhanced harvest by fishermen in the area (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 93
Figure 51. With the stern already resting on the bottom, the bow of this Liberty Ship submerged to form a part of an artificial reef (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).	Page 93
Figure 52. Site map of the <i>Vancouver</i> Liberty Ship Reef.	Page 95
Figure 53. Side scan sonar record of the <i>Vancouver</i> Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).	Page 95
Figure 54. Site map of the Freeport Liberty Ship Reef. The triangle represents the HL&P Reef. The square is the Galveston County/Conoco structure. The Star Reef is the cluster of oil rigs between the two Liberty Ships.	Page 96
Figure 55. Side scan sonar record of the Freeport Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).	Page 96
Figure 56. Site map of the Matagorda Island Liberty Ship Reef.	Page 97
Figure 57. Side scan sonar record of the Matagorda Island Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).	Page 97
Figure 58. Site map of the Mustang Island Liberty Ship Reef. The <i>Rachel Jackson's</i> hull has broken in two.	Page 98
Figure 59. Side scan sonar record of the Mustang Island Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).	Page 98
Figure 60. Site map of the Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef.	Page 99
Figure 61a. Side scan sonar record of the center and west ship at the Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).	Page 99
Figure 61b. Side scan sonar record of the east ship at the Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).	Page 100
Figure 62. Site map of the <i>John Worthington</i> wreck (Pearson and Simmons 1994).	Page 100
Figure 63. Side scan sonar record of the <i>John Worthington</i> wreck (Pearson and Simmons 1994).	Page 100

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Ships located at each reef site with water depth information (Mean Lower Low Water).	Page 94
Table 2. Center points of each Liberty Ship reef site and the Worthington as determined by Differential Geographic Positioning System in North American Datum 1927 and 1983 (NAD27 and 83). Sailing directions are magnetic compass bearings from jettied entrance channels.	Page 101
Table 3. Locations of individual Liberty Ships and other material at each reef site. Coordinates are for each ship and other reef components in North American Datum 1927 and 1983 (NAD27 and 83).	Page 101

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INTRODUCTION

World War II was reaching its climactic phases over fifty years ago. The recent fiftieth anniversary of World War II puts the events officially into the historical realm, and leads us to consider what sites we have in Texas that can shed light on those titanic events. In five artificial reef sites off the Texas coast there are ships that played a key roll in the Allied victory over the Axis Powers. The purpose of this study is to tell the story of those ships and to provide information to enhance the experience of those who visit the sites and to the general public. The artificial reefs are frequently visited by recreational divers and by sport fishermen. The information in this report, in abbreviated form, will add a dimension of heritage appreciation to their visits. The Liberty Ship reefs represent an ideal example of appropriate private sector access to historic shipwreck sites.

The report has three sections. The first section contains the general history of the Liberty Ships in World War II with an emphasis on the interesting events from the service of the ships in the Texas reefs. The second section has individual ship biographies derived mainly from the trip reports of the Naval Armed Guard units that served on each ship during the war.¹ The third section provides information on the five artificial reef sites in Texas including global positioning system data (GPS). Appendices present vessel status cards from the U.S. Maritime Administration, Instructions to Masters, Instructions for Armed Guards and lists of a sample crew and equipment issued. Copies of all materials retrieved from the National Archive are in the library of the Coastal Fisheries Division of Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW), Austin. The complete file on each ship was not copied, only the pages with pertinent information. This amounted to about one-third to

half of each file. Gaps in the dates for voyages indicate that not all of the trip reports on a given ship were documented in the Navy's file. Copies of secondary historical information obtained during the project are also on file with TPW.

In doing the archival research, the senior author realized that it would be an easy matter to also retrieve Naval Armed Guard reports on two tankers that were World War II veterans and which now lie in Texas waters. The *V.A. Fogg* was previously named the *Four Lakes*, a T-2 tanker. The location of the *Fogg* wreck was selected as the site for one of the Liberty ship reefs. The *John Worthington* was built in 1920. After being torpedoed off Brazil, she made it back to Galveston, but was past repair. She ended up abandoned in the Lydia Ann Channel opposite the historic light house near Port Aransas. The stories of these two wrecks were added to this report.

Interestingly, the 12 Liberty Ships that ended up in Texas artificial reefs are a good representative sample of the experience of over 2700 other sister ships. Members of our select sorority were on the Atlantic convoys; in the Mediterranean; on the dreaded Murmansk run; in the Persian Gulf, India, and the Pacific; and at the D-Day and Philippine invasions. They were in every theater of the war except the Aleutians. The naval combatant ships, the aircraft carriers and the battleships, get the glory, but the war could not have been prosecuted and won without the transportation of vast numbers of men and quantities of supplies in the merchant ships such as the ships described here.

¹The Naval Armed Guard Reports are filed by vessel name at the National Archives, RG 38, Naval Transportation Service, Armed Guard files 1940-1945. Copies are on file at the THC and TPW.

Editor's Note: A clarification needs to be made concerning the terms that describe guns on board Liberty Ships. Throughout this document the reader will see the terms "mm," "inches," and "caliber" to indicate gun measurements. The terms are used in a naval context, not as they may be used for hand-held firearm. For all naval guns that use shells 3 inches or larger in diameter, the length of the gun is expressed by caliber, which is calculated by dividing the length of the bore plus the chamber by the diameter of the bore. Thus, for example, a 3 inch/50 caliber naval gun fires 3-inch diameter shells and is 150 inches long (3 inches times 50 caliber equals 150 inches). In general, the longer the barrel, the more accurate the gun. The term "mm" refers to the bore (and shell) diameter of a machine gun such as an anti-aircraft or multi-purpose gun.

Reference: Naval Ordnance and Gunnery. Volume 1. Naval Ordnance. NavPers 10797-A. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957.

TEXAS LIBERTY SHIPS

In the Gulf of Mexico, off the coast of Texas, the stripped shells of 12 Liberty Ships are slowly becoming covered with coral (Figure 1). By their side lies the wreck of a T-2 tanker, the *V.A. Fogg* (ex-SS *Four Lakes*), blown apart by a benzene explosion in 1972. The sites at which these ships were scuttled have become popular with scuba divers and sport fishermen, who have discovered “concentrations of fishes at locations and at times when they would otherwise be lacking” (Ditton et al. 1979: 31). The peaceful second career of these ships is in sharp contrast to their role in World War II when they, and other merchant marine vessels, helped save the Allied cause.

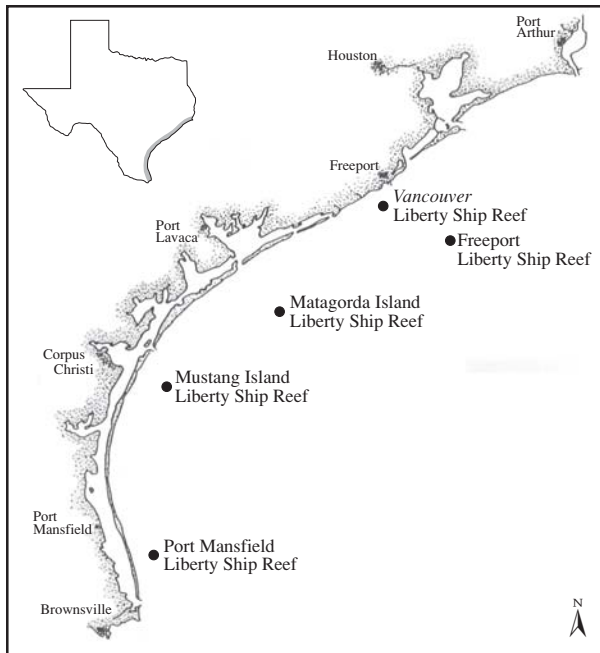


Figure 1. Location of the Liberty Ship artificial reef sites off the coast of Texas.

The Liberty Ship program was founded with two goals: the ships would be built quickly, and they would be able to carry large amounts of cargo (Figure 2). The US had an inadequate merchant marine at the beginning of World War II, and the German and Japanese submarines would be certain to reduce it even further. Luckily, two American companies, Todd Shipyards and Henry J. Kaiser’s Six

Services Inc., had already used an applicable design to build the “Ocean” class of ships for the British government. After some modifications were made to the plan to streamline production, the construction of the Liberties began (Sawyer and Mitchell 1973: 12-15). The Liberty Ships were virtually mass produced with a total of 2,581 of the EC-2-S-C1 type completed (Stewart 1992: 24). In contrast, 705 tankers were built (Lane et al. 1951: 4), which were not all of the T-2 type. These ships were “plain-Jane,” working vessels: relatively inexpensive and expendable.

Henry J. Kaiser’s company, a novice in shipbuilding, brought original ideas to the construction of these ships. In order to speed the completion of the Liberties, they were built mostly on land. Components were subcontracted out all over the country, preventing bottlenecks in production (Douglas and Salz 1943: 58-9). When the parts arrived at the shipyard, they were put into the “filing system.” Cranes lifted prefabricated components into place in the hull, rather than laying the hull first and having workers building up from inside it (Figure 3). Tugs then took the ship to the finishing area, where the engine was installed (Pitt 1978: 192). The idea of constructing ships like cars, in an assembly-line process, was not originated by the Kaiser shipyards,



Figure 2. Liberty Ship production line at the California Shipbuilding Corp. Courtesy of the Library of Congress (Hoehling 1990).

but the youth of these shipyards meant that they were built to take advantage of this technique.

Another time-saver from the Kaiser shipyards was the use of welding instead of riveting as much as possible (Foster 1989: 83-4). Unfortunately, the welding would occasionally crack in cold weather, such as that along the Murmansk route to northern Russia (Hoehling 1990: 152, Gleichauf 1990: 85, 88-90). Some of the design modifications from the original British plans also made the hull more likely to crack (Sawyer and Mitchell 1973: 17). The *Edward W. Scripps*, one of the artificial reef program's ships, suffered a welding failure in rough weather. As the armed guard officer wrote,

Left anchorage off Bangor at 0355, January 1, 1944, and proceeded out to join

convoy. A rough sea was encountered soon after getting out into open water and the ship pitched continuously, sometimes, violently. That condition prevailed throughout that day and the next night, with the ship vibrating considerably whenever the propeller cleared the water. The engineers were in constant attendance in an effort to keep the engine from racing and we found it increasingly difficult to keep up with the convoy. As we were heading into a sea that was coming in just slightly off the port bow, and pitching violently, there was added vibration. At one time, 0355 on the morning of January 2, we were struck so hard that some men were thrown from their bunks and others thought we had been torpedoed.

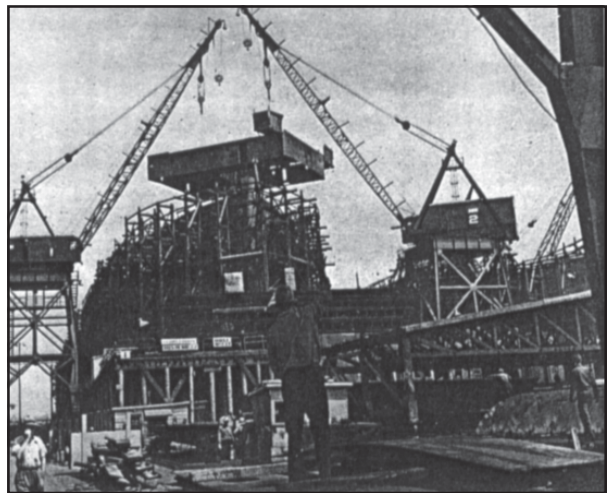
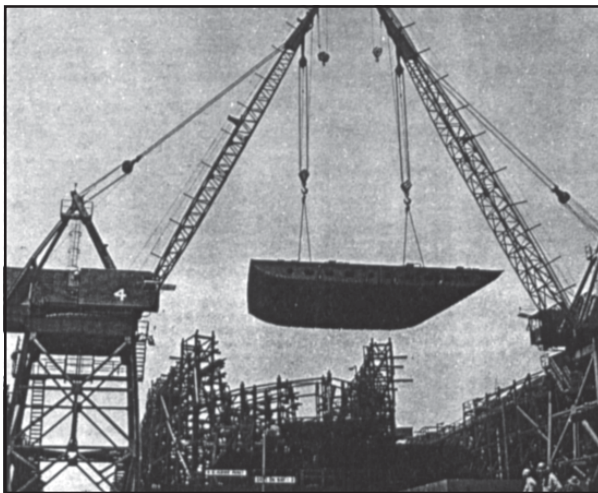
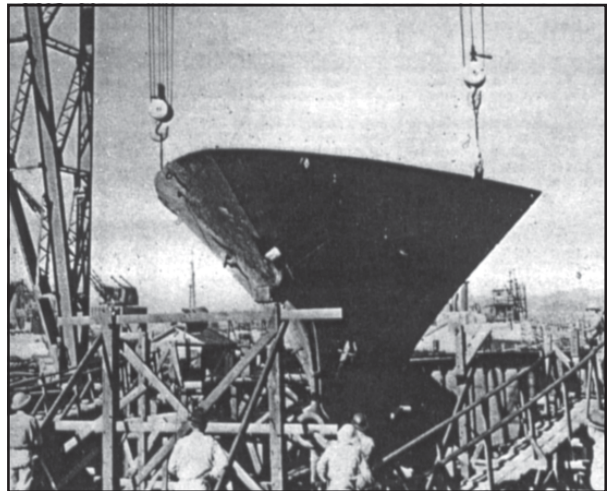
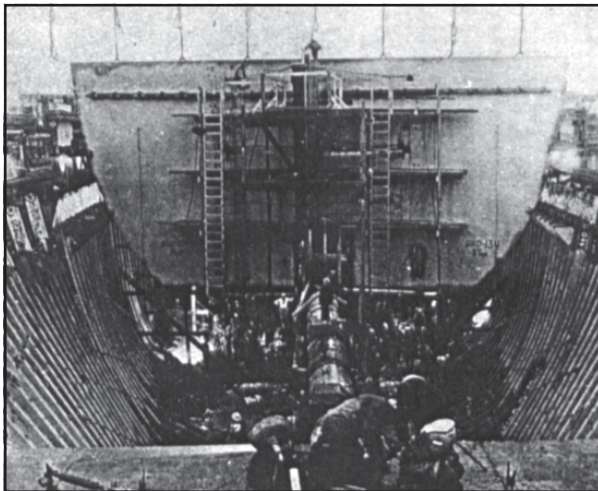


Figure 3. Modular construction of a Liberty Ship (Pitt 1978).

When daylight came, the captain and chief engineer made an inspection of the ship and found that three plates on the main deck were cracked, one to port of the forward side of number 3 hatch and another, a bit, adjoining that. A crack had also appeared similarly to starboard. Also on the starboard side a crack was found aft near number 4 hatch. As the wind was still increasing, the captain decided again to return and notified the convoy escort. We were finding it difficult to keep speed and to continue might mean further damage to the vessel. At 0955 on January 2, therefore, we turned about and made for the Clyde River, anchoring at Gourock at 0835 on January 3 (*Edward R. Scripps*, January 4, 1944).

The damage to the *Edward R. Scripps* might have been partly due to the fact that she was carrying insufficient ballast when she entered the storm. Liberty Ships were built to carry cargo, and could become quite uncomfortable if under loaded. "My experience teaches me," wrote Lt. Sidney T. Feinberg, "that a Liberty ship carrying the present allotment of ballast [1500 tons] is subjected to excessive rolling even in a light or moderate sea, and in a heavy sea, it is impossible to man any guns forward

of the housing" (*Dwight L. Moody* October 6, 1944). Programs were started to improve the quality of the welding, and minor design changes were made in the Liberties, but the Liberties could not be given more ballast during wartime.

The T-2 tanker program was similar to the Liberty ship program: both were a response to the necessities of war. As Louis L. Snyder wrote, "whoever won the battle for oil would win the war. Admiral Chester W. Nimitz at the beginning of the war stated that victory was a matter of 'beans, bullets, and oil.' By 1945 he had changed the order to 'oil, bullets, and beans'" (Snyder 1960: 320). Originally the American oil companies had been able to provide a sufficient number of tankers, but losses to enemy action caused some yards originally designed for Liberty Ships to build T-2 tankers instead. The design was a standard commercial one, already used by the Sun Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company for the Standard Oil Company (Lane et al. 1951: 56).

The Liberty ships that were scuttled off the coast of Texas, the *William H. Allen*, *Jim Bridger*, *B.F. Shaw*, *Charles A. Dana*, *George Dewey*, *George L. Farley*, *Rachel Jackson*, *Edward W. Scripps*, *Dwight L. Moody*, *Joshua Thomas*, *Conrad Weiser*, and *George Vancouver*, were built in shipyards all over the country, but probably varied very little. (All were

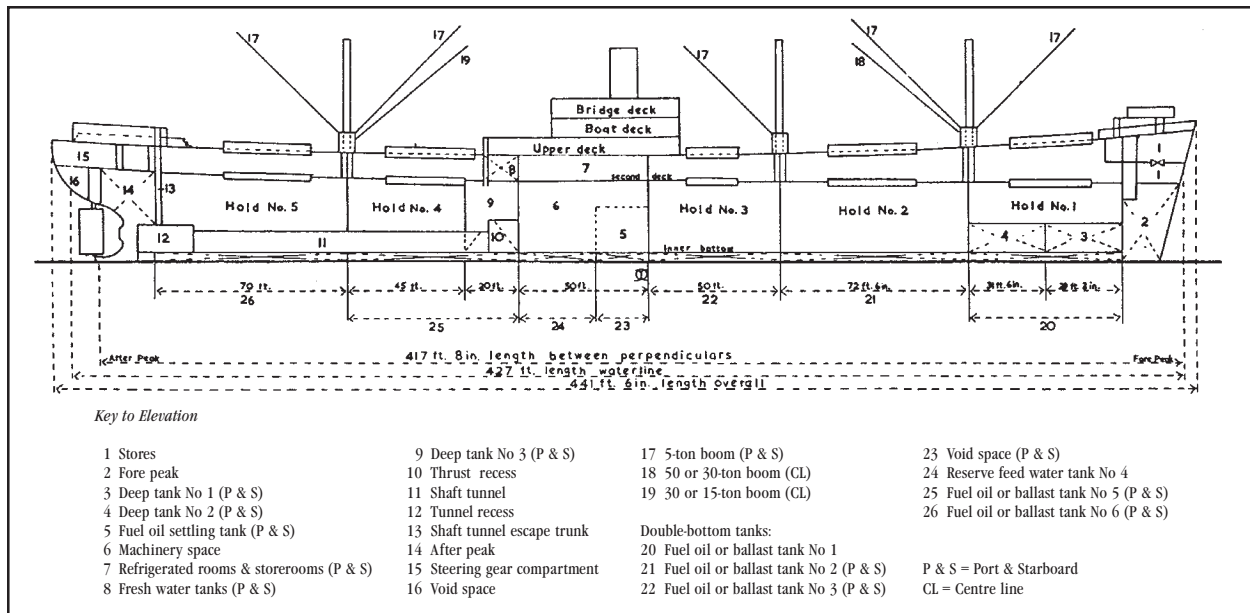


Figure 4. Elevation drawing of a Liberty Ship (Sawyer and Mitchell 1973).

standard EC-2 type Liberty ships.) Four hundred forty-one feet long, and able to carry 10,800 tons of cargo, the Liberties were inelegant and slow-moving. Their five giant holds took up most of the ship (Figures 4 and 5).

Two commands ran each merchant marine ship during World War II: a merchant marine crew and a Navy crew. The ships were owned by the US government and operated under contract by private shipping companies who provided the ships' officers and crew. Though the T-2 tankers had a different design from the Liberty Ships, and, of course, carried oil and petroleum products instead of solid cargo, the roles of the merchant marine and Navy crew were quite similar on both classes of ship. The merchant marine crews were divided into engineers, stewards, and deck men. The engine room, in the lowest part of the center of the ship, was so hot that men would commonly work stripped down to their undershirts (Figures 6 and 7).

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS	
PRINCIPAL DIMENSIONS	
Length over all	441' 6"
Length between perpendiculars (25' 3/4" W.L.)	416'
Breadth molded	56' 10 1/4"
Breadth extreme	57'
Depth to upper deck, molded	37' 4"
Depth to second deck, molded	28' 7"
Draft	27' 9 1/4"
Displacement	14257 tons
Light ship (approx.)	3337 tons
Deadweight	10920 tons
U.S.	7197 gr. t. 4309 net t.
Panama	7223 gr. t. 5093 net t.
Suez	7230 gr. t. 5399 net t.
MAIN ENGINE	
Direct acting, condensing, three cylinder, triple expansion, developing 2500 horsepower at 76 RPM.	
Engine size	bore 24 1/2" - 37" - 70" stroke 48"
Rated speed	11 knots
BOILERS	
Two cross drum, sectional, sinuous header, straight tube type fitted with super heaters burning bunker "E" oil. Pressure: 220 PSI Temperature 450°F. Total heating surface 10,234 sq. ft.	
CARGO CAPACITY (cu. ft.)	
Compartment	Grain Bale
Hold No. 1	Hold 41257 36083
	Tween decks 42924 39322
Hold No. 2	Hold 98860 92008
	Tween decks 46744 42680
Hold No. 3	Hold 68459 59793
	Tween decks 27970 23904
Hold No. 4	Hold 58841 52574
	Tween decks 35277 29689
Hold No. 5	Hold 58620 51571
	Tween decks 34570 30684
Deep tanks	No. 1 port 3639 2729
	No. 1 stbd 3639 3004
	No. 2 port 7473 5294
	No. 2 stbd 7473 5578
	No. 3 port 13674 12506
	No. 4 stbd 13188 12024
	total 562608 499573
ANCHORS	
Two bow—8410 lbs. each, one stream—3195 lbs.	
ANCHOR WINDLASS	
Steam, minimum speed 30 FPM.	
WARPING WINCH	
Steam, minimum pull 2500 lb. at 75 FPM, maximum pull 26000 lb. at 75 FPM.	
AUXILIARIES	
Propeller	4-blade, 18'6" D., pitch 16'
Generators	3 DC type, 400 RPM, 167 amps, 120 V, 25KW each.
Evaporator	1, vertical submerged type, capacity 25 tons per 24 hours.
Distiller	1, capacity 6000 gal. per 24 hours
Refrigeration system	1 compressor, Carrier model 7H5; meat room 15°F., dairy room 30°F., vegetable room 40°F., fish room 15°F., scuttle butt 5 gal. per hour at 40°F. 24 lbs. ice per freeze.
MASTS	
(Height above bottom of keel plate)	
Foremast	Frame 39 ... 82' 1/4"
Fixed mast	Frame 68 ... 82' 1/4"
Fixed mast	Frame 134 ... 82' 1/4"
Telescopic mast	Frame 68 ... 102' 1/4"
Telescopic mast	Frame 134 ... 102' 1/4"
CARGO WINCHES	
Nine, 7" x 12" double geared for 5, 15, & 30 ton booms, capacity 10,000 lb. at 125 FPM, 5,000 lb. at 250 FPM. One 10 1/2" x 12" double geared for 5 ton boom.	
BOOMS	
Ten 5-ton (55' at hatch 1 & 2, 47' at 3, 55' at 4 & 5)	
One 30-ton (51' at hatch 2)	
One 15-ton (51' at hatch 4)	
TANK CAPACITY	
Fuel oil	50792 gal. 1818 tons
Fresh water	506272 gal. 188 tons
STORES (cu. ft.)	
Bosns. stores, 2nd deck, FP to Fr. 112	3034
Bosns. stores, flat between 2nd and upper decks	3492
Cabin stores, 2nd deck, Fr. 88-106	4329
Linen locker	585
Bonded stores	186
Meat (refrigerated)	801
Fish (refrigerated)	173
Vegetables (refrigerated)	768
Dairy (refrigerated)	176
WATER BALLAST	
98361 cu. ft. 2811 tons	

Figure 5. General specifications for the Liberty Ships (Bunker 1972: 269).

The air smelled strongly of oil, and the engine noise was a constant distraction. Liberty Ships were equipped with massive triple-expansion steam engines. Maintaining the steam pressure was a difficult and dangerous job, because of the risk a pipe would burst and cause steam burns. The men of the "black gang" (so-called because of their tendency to become smeared with oil and in earlier days, covered with coal dust) were warned that even a small amount of water coming through the asbestos lining of the pipes could signal a major leak.

Directly above the engine room was the galley (Figure 8). The stewards were responsible for cooking and serving the food, as well as buying supplies. Besides the regular meals, Liberty Ships

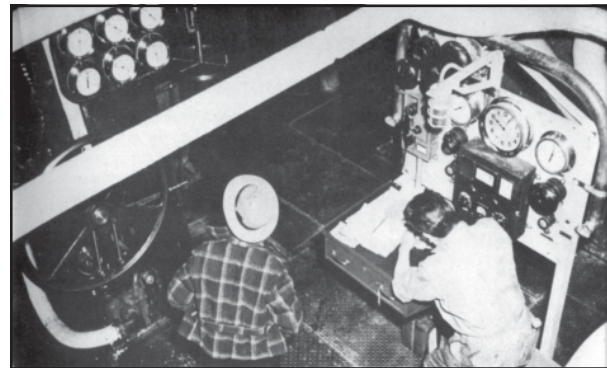


Figure 6. View of the engine room of an EC-2 Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).

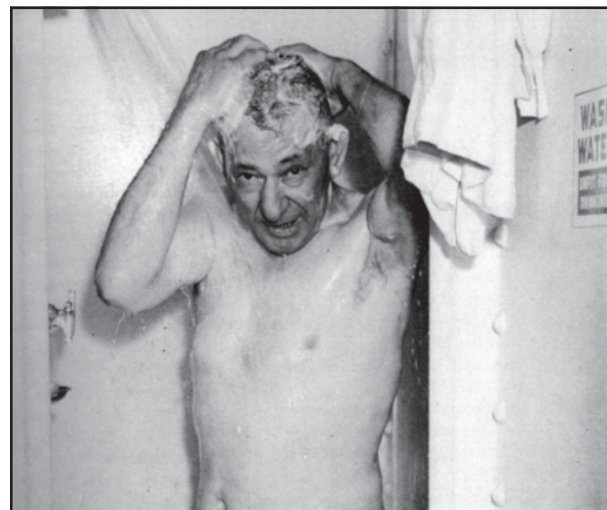


Figure 7. Small, compact shower on a Liberty Ship, particularly welcome to members of the "black gang" after their watch (Douglas and Salz 1943).



Figure 8. Officer's messman in the mess room of a Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).



Figure 9. Crewmen relax in the mess hall of a Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).



Figure 10. Testing the davits for launching a boat on a Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).

also traditionally had coffee hours, which the men especially enjoyed in cold latitudes. Good food was considered important for morale (Figure 9). A. A. Hoehling (1990: 38-39), who served as a Navy officer on a Liberty Ship, wrote that his Liberty...

presumably like others, spoiled its voyagers with a culinary largess: bacon and eggs and/or hotcakes for breakfast; steak and a variety of meat for dinner, the midday meal, with vegetables; an entre again for supper, and always lots of potatoes and fresh-baked breads, plus pies, puddings, and other desserts. The already stocky among us augmented their avoirdupois.

Above the galley were two decks for accommodations, and above that the captain's stateroom and the wheel house. The wheel house, as well as the rest of the deck, was the domain of the deck men (Figure 10). At first assigned to paint, wash, and otherwise maintain the deck, some deck men would eventually stand watches and serve as helmsmen. A few would someday become captains of their own ships. The wheel house of a Liberty Ship had very small windows that during battle stations were closely shuttered, like a tank (Figures 11-15).² The helmsman would peer through the tiny slit, the ship's progress closely observed by the captain, who would stand watch or be on call on a 24-hour basis during the crossing. In World War II, deck men were also used as auxiliaries to the gun crew, though they would typically only be passing ammunition or firing the 20-mm or 37-mm antiaircraft and 0.50-caliber machine guns, unless the Navy crew was "wiped out" (Douglas and Salz 1943: 51).

The captain was absolute master of the ship responsible by law for the navigation and safety of the vessel. A Naval Armed Guard officer was in charge of the defense of the ship. Generally, the Liberty Ships which were used for the artificial reef program were equipped with two 3" dual purpose guns and eight 20-mm antiaircraft machine guns, though

²Photos taken by the principal investigator onboard the fully restored WWII Liberty Ship *John W. Brown*. Restored by volunteers of Project Liberty Ship, the *Brown* is one of the last survivors of the great fleet of Liberty Ships.

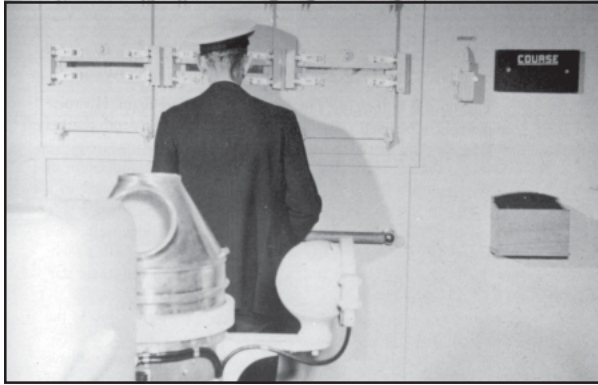


Figure 11. Bullet-proof shutters in the wheelhouse of a Liberty Ship (Douglas and Salz 1943).



Figure 12. Athwart ship view of the wheelhouse of the restored Liberty Ship *John W. Brown* (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).

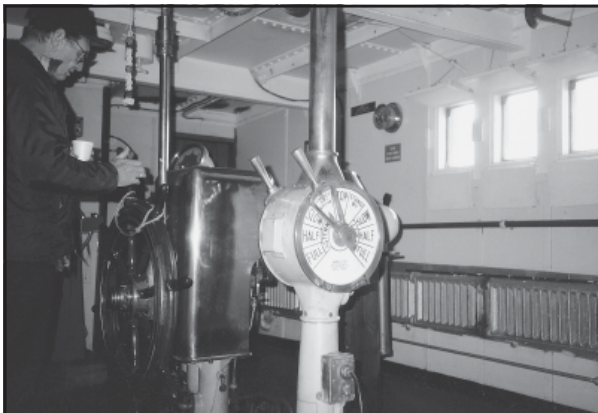


Figure 13. Helm and engine enunciator on the *John W. Brown* (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).



Figure 14. Topside conning station located above the wheelhouse on the *John W. Brown*. In fair weather the Liberty Ships were usually steered from this position since the view from the wheelhouse is very restricted (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).

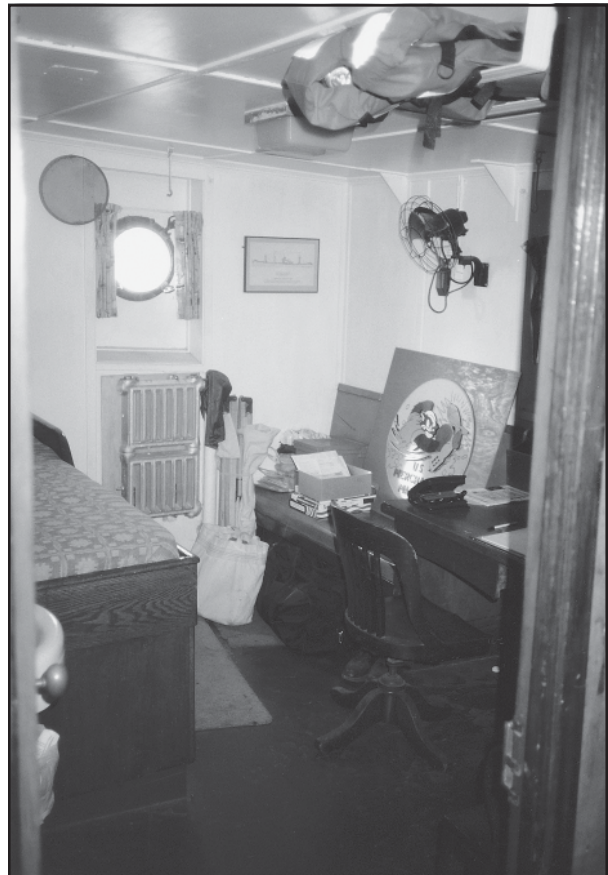


Figure 15. Officer's cabin on the *John W. Brown* (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).

occasionally one of the dual purpose guns was a 5", or they had nine of the 20-mm guns (Figures 16-18). The larger guns were typically placed at the bow and stern of the ship (Friedman 1983: 63-81). Hoehling discussed his opinion of these weapons.

These 3-inchers were classed as dual-purpose, able to depress toward targets afloat or to aim for the sky with equal facility. They were popular among both naval and merchant crews... The men liked the gun's basic qualities - "up 100! right 50!" - as well as the solid heft of the

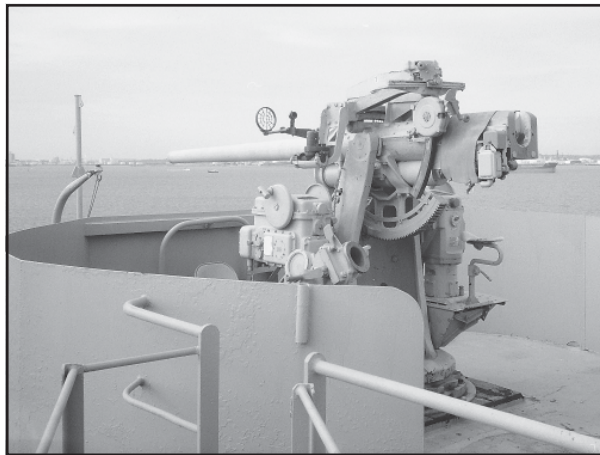


Figure 16. Three-inch gun on the bow of the *John W. Brown* (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).



Figure 17. Twenty-mm gun on the *John W. Brown*. Note the so-called plastic armor on the outside of the gun tub (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).

projectiles. The weapon discharged like a battleship unleashing a broadside. The range was quite sufficient, either for submarine or airplane. If the U-boat was near enough to take a good sighting, it was in range of the 3" 50.

The 20-mms could pour forth a stream of explosive bullets with similar effect, but they were prone to jams. By order, the officer commanding the gun crew must himself quickly don heavy padded gloves, fight the detachable red-hot barrel out of the massive recoil springs, then dump same into a cylinder of water. Otherwise, the projectile could explode within the barrel, showering the crew with fragments (Hoehling 1990: 39-40).

Aside from his responsibility for the weapons, the armed guard officer would write reports of their voyages for the Navy. These reports formed a major source of information for this paper.

The armed guard officer trained both commands during the voyage. The merchant marines were told that they could be promoted every six months (Douglas and Salz 1943: 99), and the navy men knew there was a shortage of officers to serve on all the new ships. Men continued to be trained to fill the roles they needed to play on the ship after their basic training ashore (US Navy 1943, 1944, 1945), as when Ensign Alfred M. Knapp reported that he had run gun drills for both the Navy and merchant crews (*George*



Figure 18. Five-inch gun on the stern of the *John W. Brown* (Photo by Barto Arnold 1995).

Vancouver August 7, 1944). In order to help the men advancing in rate, H. W. Bowles gave "special aid" in basic mathematics (*Edward W. Scripps* January 8, 1945). Lt. James Lee Thorne left a very detailed record of how the men had been trained in his command.

Aside from routine 3 sections of sea watches, and dawn and dusk watches.
Morning Hours: (weather and conditions permitting) From 0900-1130, crew is usually turned to on general duties such as cleaning and greasing guns, painting, general repairs and additions to all naval gear and equipment. Afternoon Hours: (weather and conditions permitting) From 1300-1630 - lecture [sic] and practicum of the following, small arms and rifle handling, gun drills, loading and firing, cleaning and maintenance [sic] of guns, training, pointing, and eye shooting, (target practice when feasible), semaphore [sic] and flag hoist, boat and fire drills and first aid, and discussions.

Evening Hours: study periods, include A-N, Blue Jackets Manuel [sic], P.O. requirements, and assignments & examinations from study books (*Joshua Thomas*, July 11, 1944).

Even though the men worked and trained together, the presence of two commands on board could cause tensions. The armed guard officer of the *Charles A. Dana* blamed the master and steward when food had to be rationed after two months at sea, when enough stores should have been purchased for six (*Charles A. Dana*, January 1944).

Relations between Lt. Marion Kenneth Vickery and the *Rachel Jackson's* captain deteriorated completely. The captain never cradled the booms of the ship during the voyage, so that they blocked the guns. "To say the least," wrote Vickery,

it would have been suicide to the gunners had they been compelled to fire at planes, as the 20 M.M. projectiles would most certainly have exploded against the booms, cables, etc and would have covered the gunners with shrapnel.

Vickery had several other complaints against the captain, including his refusal to rig out the life boats so that they could be quickly used, and his concealment of submarine warnings that came in over the radio. What seems to have made Vickery angriest was the captain's behavior after Vickery used the Navy signalmen to stand watch.

The captain rushed into my room and proceeded to bawl me out for using them without his permission. He stated that the Navy signalmen were under his command... I explained thoroughly that the signalmen were not under his command at all, but he assured me he was going to report me to the navy when we arrived back here, and that he was going to get this point cleared up (*Rachel Jackson*, Nov. 15, 1943).

Unfortunately for the captain, the port director sided with Vickery. Furthermore, "It was noted that [the captain] has a distinctive foreign accent which appears to be Germanic," and had already been listed on the Merchant Marine Suspect List as a possible Nazi sympathizer. It was decided to place the captain under further investigation. Most dual commands, however, seem to have been fairly successful, and a few even rather warm. Captain F. C. Assmus of the *Edward W. Scripps* was well-liked by every armed guard officer who served with him. He was called "very cordial" and "outstandingly helpful and cooperative" (*Edward W. Scripps* October 16, 1944; May 25, 1945).

By late 1943 the standard personnel allowance consisted of a boatswain's mate or coxswain, 2 gunner's mates, and 19 seamen first class. Two signalmen, plus one or two radiomen, depending on the number of commercial operators aboard, were also part of the command. Thus the total Navy complement might run to 26 or 27. Since the merchant crew usually numbered 35 or less, it was essential that the two work together as a 'team' (Britton 1947: 1496).

The merchant marine ships could be asked to travel anywhere. Liberty ships ended up with rather unusual cargoes (Figure 19). The *Jim Bridger*

stopped at Rio de Janeiro on May 26, 1943 to drop off a cargo of coal, and pick up 25 tons of rock crystal and 52 tons of mail. The *Dwight L. Moody* spent August and September 1943 carrying sugar around Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Florida. Most cargoes, however, were less innocuous; the Liberties were mainly used to carry the material of war. One of the *Edward W. Scripps's* petty officers was horrified to find longshoremen smoking around their cargo – general explosives (*Edward W. Scripps* 13 November 1944). The *George Vancouver* spent August and September 1943 bringing Italian prisoners of war to America.

Slow-moving and under-armed, Liberties and T-2 tankers only traveled alone in the safer seas. Usually they were convoyed, which meant that escorts shepherded them in long straight lines with other cargo and tanker ships generally spaced 500 feet ahead and astern and 1,000 feet to the sides. The ship in front on the port side carried the convoy commander or commodore, and signaled warnings to the other ships. Both the *George Vancouver* and the *George Dewey* carried convoy commanders.

The Texas Liberties traveled in convoy along several important supply routes. For example, most of them joined the perilous North Atlantic convoy to Great Britain more than once. Another supply route was the Murmansk run, a cold, miserable, airplane and submarine-plagued journey through the Arctic Circle

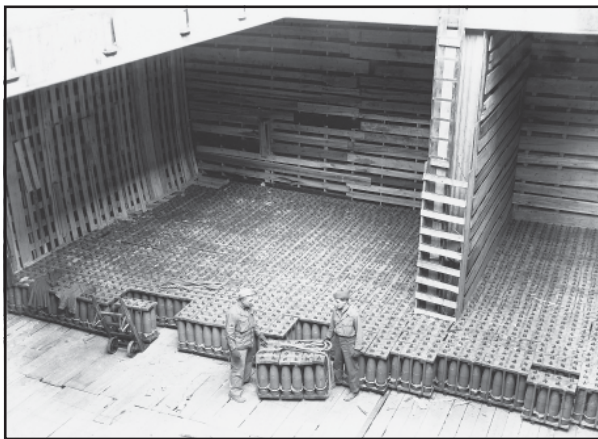


Figure 19. Stowage of palletized 155-mm ammunition in the No. 2 hold of a Liberty Ship, Leghorn, Italy, Jan. 8, 1945 (National Archives).

to Northern Russia. As Hoehling (1990: 26) imagined as he waited to receive his assignment,

According to a bit of graveyard apocrypha with which most of us became familiar, Ensign Smith – shall we label him? – looks up at the clarion of his name. A pause, then the ringing pronouncement of a code we, every one of us, had been dreading like death itself: Murmansk!

Smith blanches, then slowly rises to his feet. He pulls his service revolver from out of its holster, aims at his temple, and falls down with a terrible thud. The officer seated beside him sadly shakes his head, observing laconically, ‘Any of us would have done the same thing.’

The *Joshua Thomas* ran general equipment, explosives, and ammunition to Northern Russia in the springs of 1944 and 1945. By May, there were 24 hours of daylight, and they could be attacked by planes from occupied Norway at any time. One night in April 1944, a ship in the convoy was destroyed.

Ship #33 starboard side of convoy either torpedoed or struck a mine. Ship split in two just forward of #4 hatch. The after part of the ship stayed afloat until out of our sight. Forward section sank in approximately 2 minutes (*Joshua Thomas* May 7, 1944).

The escorts immediately began dropping depth charges, and other ships in the convoy began shooting wildly, but no culprit could be found.

Convoyed Texas Liberty Ships also participated in some of the best known campaigns of the war. At El Alamein, the battle that began to push the Germans from North Africa, the problem of supplies was critical (Snyder 1960: 276). The *George Vancouver* was one of the ships that brought material to Suez before the battle began, though unfortunately no record remains of what their cargo was. Presumably because the British led the Allied cause in the eastern Mediterranean, the *George Vancouver* was escorted to Suez by the British Royal Navy.

Two of the artificial reef program's Liberty Ships served in the recapture of the Philippines from the Japanese. The Allies regained the Philippines by slowly winning nearby islands, so cargo ships that could reliably ferry troops were very important. The *William H. Allen* was present at the invasion of Eniwetok, dropping off marines and cargo, without encountering the enemy. The *Jim Bridger* brought general navy cargo from Eniwetok Atoll to Tacloban on Leyte Island. On the way, as the *Jim Bridger* was traveling as the last ship in the port column, the lookout spotted a periscope. The escort was notified, and searched for several hours, but no submarine was found. After several runs shuttling material up the coast of New Guinea, the *Jim Bridger* also participated in a landing at Mindanao, in the Philippine Islands. Their cargo consisted of...

landing mats, 500# and 1000# bombs, 100 octane gasoline in metal drums, fins for air bombs, Army Signal Corps equipment, 155 mm projectiles and small arms ammunition, metal construction material, construction machinery, pilings and crated aircraft (*Jim Bridger* 23 April 1945).

Both the *William H. Allen* and the *Jim Bridger* earned Philippine Liberation ribbons for their services.

Liberty Ships assisted in the massive troop movements necessary for the invasion of Normandy. The *Edward W. Scripps* brought Army and Red Cross personnel and vehicles to France. "While in France and in and near Southampton, England," wrote Lt. Thomas F. Sartell, "we had 56 air-raid warnings from June 6, 1944, to August 1, 1944, and on four occasions fired at enemy aircraft, expending a total of 986 rounds of 20 millimeter and 53 rounds of 3-inch, 50-caliber a.a. ammunition." The *Jim Bridger* brought Army and Navy equipment and personnel to Omaha and Utah beaches. While they were at anchor off Omaha beach, they could see enemy aircraft overhead every night from dusk to dawn (*Jim Bridger* June 1944). The *George Dewey* spent June through October 1944 bringing Army troops and materiel to Omaha and Utah beach. The ship served as acting commodore several times for small convoys around the coast of France. At one point

when they were not acting as commodore, their convoy got into trouble.

On the outgoing voyage [from Southampton, England, to Utah Beachhead, France] at 1530 on 29 June 1944 the convoy ran into a cluster of mines about three miles north of buoy JIG. At that time the convoy was in three columns, this ship being number two in the port column. At 1530 the ship astern of this ship exploded a mine at the stern and began to settle at the stern. Ship number four turned to starboard to avoid number three and hit a mine at her bow at 1537. At 1540 the number three ship in the middle column exploded a mine at her stern and seemed to be on fire at the stern afterwards. It is believed that another ship in the middle hit or exploded another mine at 1545 (*George Dewey* July 1, 1944).

As the invasion continued, the *George Dewey*, landing in Rouen, supported the Allied armies as they moved deeper into France (Figures 20-21). The *George Dewey* won an Operation and Engagement Star for participating in the bombardment of the coast of France.

It should be apparent by now that though the merchant marine ships were not designed to wage war, they often found themselves in the midst of battle. The captains were told that the "ship shall be defended by her armament, by maneuver, and by every available means as long as possible. When in the judgment of the Master, capture is inevitable, he shall scuttle the ship" (Navy Dept., March 30, 1942, *George Dewey* papers). While sailing, the men of the Liberties faced terrifying sneak attacks. One dark and drizzly night, the convoy in which the *Dwight L. Moody* was traveling off the coast of Ireland was attacked with no warning. Two ships were torpedoed (*Dwight L. Moody* September 10, 1944). In August 1943, the *Charles A. Dana* was sailing from New York to Liverpool. After a submarine had been attacked by the escort but not, apparently, destroyed, there was an explosion close to the side of the ship. The engine room notified the bridge that something had struck the ship and slid along the side for almost 15 feet. What this object

might have been could not be ascertained, because nothing further was observed (*Charles A. Dana* August 29, 1943).

Sometimes the men on the Liberty ships were able to fight back. Lt. M. K. Vickery, of the *Rachel Jackson*, reported that his men had attacked a submarine. Originally the lookouts believed they had spotted a large box or a crate. When they realized they had seen a conning tower, they trained the ship's 3"/50 caliber gun on the submarine, and it submerged and fired a torpedo at them. The torpedo missed them entirely. The submarine resurfaced, and was fired upon four times, the second round exploding as it struck. Vickery believed that his men had succeeded in "badly damaging and possibly sinking the vessel" (*Rachel Jackson* May 10, 1943). While sailing to Alexandria, Egypt, the *Rachel Jackson* was again attacked. As Lt. Nat Hancock wrote,

On the 5 August at 0040, while in position 32°02" North, 20°10" East, watch reported white flare and 20-mm bursts 3 points on the port quarter, apparently from ship on



Figure 20. Army "ducks" which operate from ship to shore carrying cargo from Liberty Ships to shore are shown being loaded with gasoline drums, Bassin Darse Nord, Le Havre, France, 470th and 819th Amph. Truck Co., Nov. 15, 1944 (National Archives).

the left flank of convoy. Received signals for smoke screen and of approaching enemy [sic] aircraft. Ships on left flank of convoy firing and several explosions thought to be depth charges were heard. Received radio distress message from ship number 15. Heard planes over convoy. An enemy [sic] plane possibly a JU88 approached ship from aft of the star-beam [sic], opened fire on this plane at approximately 750 to 1000 yards, the plane banked deep to the starboard forward of this ship, and flying approximately 300 feet disappeared in the smoke screen. Although no actual damage was observed to this plane, tracer fire from this ship was definitely going into this plane. Also fired on plane on port side, no bombs or torpedoes were observed to be dropped [sic] by either plane (*Rachel Jackson* August 7, 1944).

Though the open waters were dangerous, being in port was no guarantee of safety. The *George Dewey* was in the harbor of Augusta, Sicily on New Year's Eve, 1943, when the city was attacked by German bombers. Eight planes, coming in at a fairly high altitude, began bombing the ships in the harbor. The shore batteries



Figure 21. At a French port ammunition receives priority handling from Liberty Ship to railway box car for quick dispatch to the front. Off loading by pallets as shown permits the handling of 30 boxes at one time, containing 60 projectiles for the 105-mm howitzer, the backbone of the US field artillery, Nov. 4, 1944 (National Archives).

and the ships responded. The *George Dewey* began firing its 3"/50 caliber and its 20-mm guns, but the larger guns were quickly found to be more useful. As the gun deck became littered with brass shells, one of the Navy crew attempted to throw them overboard, and ended up with badly burned hands. At the end of the battle it was discovered that eighty people had been killed in a communication center on shore, and seven people in ships in the harbor. What must have made the situation even more terrifying for the men of the *George Dewey* was their highly flammable cargo: hi-test gasoline and ammunition.

Perhaps the bravest of all the men of the Liberty Ships were the crew of the *George L. Farley*, in Antwerp from December 1944 to January 1945. The city and harbor were constantly bombarded by German V-1 and V-2s. The city had been open for shipping since November 26, but the Germans knew that it would be used for the advance into Germany, and were fighting back fiercely. During their 14 day stay in Antwerp, the men of the *George L. Farley* stood 11 air raid alarms and logged 454 V bombs. One of the most terrible days was January 1, 1945.

This was the day of the big air battle over Belgium when the Luftwaffe was out in force. At 0846 all men were at their battle stations and A.A. fire was heavy and continuous at all point of the compass. Sky was black with A.A. bursts in all areas over Antwerp. Numerous dog fights were observed over the dock area and over the town.

The all clear was given at 1130, but Lt. John P. Maguire kept his men in a state of readiness. The first run of bombers had mainly attacked onshore installations. When they came back after dark, the *George L. Farley* was not so lucky. At 2347,

an enemy plane, with motors cut glided down upon our ship, strafing as it came in and dropping a light fragmentation bomb which landed off our port quarter about 40 yds. away. This plane was immediately followed by another which, using the same tactics, came in over our starboard beam and dropped a bomb which landed on the dock broad on our port beam. This plane

was also strafing and as the aft watch took cover from the strafing, the general alarm did not ring until 2348... At 2349, the crew was getting into the gun tubs when a third raider gilded in over our starboard quarter, strafing and dropping a bomb which landed on the dock, 20 yds. off our starboard quarter, and showered the aft gun tubs with debris. At this time the #5 and #7 20MMs were manned and ready but the plane, flying very low, banked off sharply at 180 degrees, relative so that it was impossible to open fire without hitting the other ships.

The ship's situation was not helped by the disorganization onshore. The air raid alarm did not start sounding until 2357, after the attack on the ship was over. The barrage balloons, whose wires kept planes from flying too low, were taken down from their sites around the city and the docks just before the raid, and were put up again afterwards. The strafing attack would have been impossible had the balloons been left in place.

On January 8, while the Liberty Ship was taking on ballast, a V-2 rocket bomb hit 60 yards off their port bow.

The force of the explosion broke the window in the pilot house and wheel house. It buckeled [sic] the steam pipe guards. Blew all the hatches open. Smashed the life preserver lights., [sic] knocked down and stunned Meadows, SIC, who was the forward watch at that time and momentarily knocked down and stunned this officer, who at that time was on his way to make an examination of the forward magazine, prior to departure. The bomb struck directly among a group of deck workers and soldiers who wwere [sic] unloading the SS *Blenheim*, immediatly [sic] forward of us. Debris, bomb fragments showered upon our deck along with parts of human vicera [sic] and a human head, mangled beyond all recognition.

After he ascertained that no one had been killed on his ship, Lt. Maguire and three crewmen hurried

over to the SS *Blenheim*. The *Blenheim* had been terribly damaged internally, and the men from the Liberty Ship hurried to give first aid and morphine to the casualties. Lt. Maguire and the *Blenheim*'s armed guard officer then went to inspect the magazines and calm the rest of the crew. About 12 men were killed and another 12 seriously injured by the bomb. The incident is also reported from the *Blenheim* crew's viewpoint by Gleichauf (1990: 74-75).

During this terrible stay at Antwerp, the men of the *George L. Farley* did not give in to their fear, but focused on how the situation might be made less difficult for the ships that would dock after them. Lt. Maguire recommended that the men stay within the ship as much as possible, because its steel sides would give relative safety. The navy officer made a chart of the number of V bombs that fell at different times of day, showing that morning was the safest time, and dawn, dusk, and midnight the most dangerous (*Edward W. Scripps* Nov. 13, 1944).

Thanks to the bravery of the men who served on them, their ability to get supplies, food, and troops where they were most needed, and the unexpected durability of their construction, the Liberty Ships and T-2 tankers helped save the Allied cause in World War II (Figure 22). The artificial reef program's ships played an important part in this struggle. After the war, they were moth balled in the Reserve Fleet, and then recommissioned to ship cargo to Europe under the Marshall Plan. They served again in the Korean War. Today they rest in the Gulf of Mexico, helping the Texas recreational diving and sport fishing industries, and becoming part of the seascape.

Under conditions completely different from the military needs for which they were constructed, the artificial reef program's ships continue to have useful histories.



Figure 22. First group of men to leave staging area in Antwerp, Belgium board Liberty Ship that will take them to the United States for discharge, July 5, 1945 (National Archives).

SHIP HISTORIES

This section of the report contains historical accounts of the World War II experience of each Liberty Ship in the Texas artificial reef program, plus two tankers. The primary sources for the ship biographies are the Armed Guard reports of voyages. In the National Archives are files for each merchant ship that was armed and had a Navy gun crew assigned. The Armed Guard officer filed a report on each voyage with much information of historical interest. One section described any contact with the enemy, and another was for any other significant events. The files provide information needed to trace the voyages of each ship which was used to produce the tables shown here. Gaps in the record result from missing voyage reports. Not every report made it to its proper file.

SS William H. Allen

Named for the historian and lecturer, the *William H. Allen* was completed by the Permanente Metals Corp. of Richmond, California on August 3, 1943. Soon thereafter, shipyard crews fitted the *Allen* with a pair of 3-inch guns, forward and aft, and eight 20-mm antiaircraft guns. The War Shipping Administration chartered her to the Isthmian Steamship Company for operations in the war zone.

On August 17, 1943, the *Allen* sailed from San Francisco with a general cargo. She sailed alone across the Pacific, zig-zagging to thwart submarine attacks, and arrived at Espirito Santo in the New Hebrides Islands on September 17. From there she sailed to Purvis Bay, in the Solomons. The *Allen* sailed on October 3 to Guadalcanal, where she unloaded a cargo of motor fuels, then sailed for Espirito Santo in convoy with one other merchantman and two destroyer escorts. After three days at Espirito Santo, she sailed on October 9 with the other merchant vessel and a single escort. The following days, in accordance with orders, the *Allen* left the others and set a northeasterly course for San Francisco. She made good time, with her master and mates pushing her along at speeds of up to 13 knots, passing the Golden Gate on October 28, 1943.

After a week in San Francisco, the *William H. Allen* steamed to Port Hueneme, California, where

she took on a large quantity of general cargo. She continued on to San Diego on November 11, where she took on deck cargo, and sailed for Noumea, New Caledonia on the evening of November 13. She sailed without escort, and arrived without incident at Noumea on December 5, 1943.

The *Allen's* next recorded voyage began on January 6, 1944, when she sailed from Noumea with a general cargo. In company with three other merchantmen and protected by three escorts, the *Allen* arrived at the Russell Islands on January 14, where she unloaded her cargo and took on a new one. From the Russells, she sailed in convoy with one other merchantman and two escorts to Tarawa, arriving on February 16. The small convoy sailed the next day for Kwajalein in the Marshall Group, where they were joined by a third escort, and continued on to Eniwetok. The convoy arrived on February 22, the day Marines landed on Parry Island, the last defended outpost in the atoll. The fight was short and bloody, with the Japanese firing from small, well-concealed nests. The Marines responded with naval gunfire and a particularly gruesome weapon, the tank-mounted flame thrower. By the end of the day, the island and the atoll were firmly in US hands, at the total cost of 339 American and 2,677 Japanese dead (Morison 1963:314-16).

The *William H. Allen* departed Eniwetok for Pearl Harbor on March 5, 1944, in company with three other merchantmen and three escorts. The voyage passed uneventfully, and the *Allen* arrived in Hawaii 10 days later. After a two-day stop at Pearl Harbor, the *Allen* sailed in ballast for San Francisco. She arrived on March 26, and shortly afterward was moved across the bay to Oakland. There she took on a general cargo and sailed independently for Pearl Harbor on April 10, and arrived 10 days later. After unloading, she returned to San Francisco in ballast, arriving on May 6, 1944.

At Port Hueneme, California, the *Allen* took on a load of general cargo and sailed independently for Morobe, New Guinea on May 27. At Morobe she joined a convoy and sailed to Manus in the Admiralty Islands, arriving on June 29, 1944.

In late August, the *Allen* loaded coal at Port Kembele, New South Wales, Australia, and sailed

independently for Noumea. She arrived there without incident on August 30. She then proceeded to Wallis Island, where she took on a cargo of scrap metal. On September 17 she sailed independently for Pago Pago, American Samoa, where she arrived the following day.

Early November 1944 found the *William H. Allen* in Oakland, loading cargo consigned to the Army. She sailed independently from Oakland on November 5 for Finschhafen, New Guinea, and then continued on to Hollandia. At Hollandia, she joined a 54-ship convoy supporting the invasion of Leyte Island in the Philippines. She arrived at Leyte on December 21. The *Allen* remained at Leyte for a month. On January 23, 1945, she sailed in convoy for Hollandia, and then continued independently in ballast to Sydney, Australia, where she arrived on February 7. For her service in the Philippines during the winter of 1944-45, the officers and crew of the *William H. Allen* were later awarded the Philippine Liberation Ribbon.

The *Allen* remained in the southwest Pacific for the next several months. On April 21, 1945, the *Liberty* sailed in ballast for San Francisco. On the long passage across the Pacific, the *Allen's* Naval Armed Guard busied themselves with gun drills, naval training courses and small arms exercises. After arriving at San Francisco on May 14, she moved across the bay to Oakland, where she took on a load of general cargo consigned to the Army. She

sailed independently for the Philippines on June 8, and arrived at Cebu by way of Leyte on July 8.

At Cebu she discharged her cargo, and sailed in ballast for Hollandia on July 20. From Hollandia she continued on to Australia, arriving at Brisbane on the continent's eastern coast on August 3. Loaded with another cargo of Army equipment and supplies, she sailed for Manila on August 17, arriving a fortnight later.

The *Allen* may have completed one or more round voyages in the fall of 1945. On November 4, the *Allen* sailed empty from Manila to Guiuan in the Philippines. From Guiuan she moved to Tacloban, where she took on a cargo of equipment and supplies for US Army occupation forces in Japan. She sailed for Tokyo Bay on November 28, and arrived at Yokohama on December 6. She returned to Manila for another cargo, and was back in Yokohama by mid-January 1946. On January 27, the *William H. Allen* sailed for San Francisco, and arrived there on February 15.

Over the next several months, the *Allen* passed eastbound through the Panama Canal and entered the Gulf of Mexico. On July 29, 1946, at Galveston, the *Allen* was re-chartered to her wartime operators, the Isthmian Steamship Company. She was chartered to Isthmian a third time that December in Mobile, Alabama. In January 1950, she was chartered to the Mississippi Shipping Company at New Orleans, but was deposited with the National Defense Reserve Fleet at Beaumont (Archeological Site No. 41GV136).

SS William H. Allen

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	San Francisco	Espirito Santo, New Hebrides	8/17/43	9/7/43
2	Purvis Bay, Solomon Is.	San Francisco	10/3/43	10/28/43
3	San Diego	Noumea, New Caledonia	11/13/43	12/4/43
4	New Caledonia	Pearl Harbor	1/6/44	3/15/44
5	Pearl Harbor	San Francisco	3/17/44	3/26/44
6	Oakland, CA	Pearl Harbor	4/10/44	4/20/44
7	Pearl Harbor	San Francisco	4/27/44	5/6/44
8	Port Hueme, CA	Manus, Admiralty Is.	5/27/44	6/29/44
9	Port Kembla, New South Wales	Noumea, New Caledonia	8/25/44	8/30/44
10	Wallis Is.	Pago Pago, American Samoa	9/17/44	9/18/44
11	Oakland, CA	Leyte Island, P.I.	11/5/44	12/21/44

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
12	Leyte Island, P.I.	Sydney, Australia	1/23/45	2/7/45
13	Brisbane, Australia	Leyte Is.	3/2/45	3/22/45
14	Hollandia, New Guinea	San Francisco	4/21/45	5/14/45
15	Oakland, CA	Lebu, P.I.	6/8/45	7/8/45
16	Lebu, P.I.	Brisbane, Australia	7/20/45	8/3/45
17	Brisbane, Australia	Manila, P.I.	8/17/45	8/31/45
18	Manila, P.I.	Guivan, P.I.	11/4/45	11/7/45
19	Tacloban, P.I.	Yokohama, Japan	11/28/45	12/6/45
20	Manila, P.I.	Yokohama, Japan	1/8/46	1/27/46
21	Yokohama, Japan	San Francisco	1/27/46	2/15/46

SS Jim Bridger

James "Jim" Bridger was a frontiersman, fur trader and scout who established Fort Bridger, Wyoming in 1834. The Liberty Ship named for him was built by the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation in Portland, Oregon, and was completed on Christmas Day, 1942. The *Jim Bridger* was owned by the War Shipping Administration and operated by James Griffiths & Sons, Inc. On December 26, 1942 she was equipped with a 3"/50 caliber gun and nine 20-mm guns, and furnished with her Armed Guard. In August 1943, one 20-mm gun was removed and an additional 3"/50 caliber gun put in its place.

The *Jim Bridger* sailed first to the Mediterranean. She passed through the Suez Canal, and sailed independently from Suez, Egypt on March 25, 1943. She arrived at Aden on March 30. New orders directed her to head to Lourenco Marques, in Portuguese South Africa (now Mozambique), after first calling at Durban, further down the coast. On March 31, the *Bridger* departed Aden and entered the Indian Ocean through the Mozambique Channel. On April 10, her orders were again changed. The ship was to head directly to Lourenco Marques. She arrived April 12. She loaded a cargo of coal, traveled through heavy seas, independently arrived at Durban on April 24, and anchored in the outer harbor.

The *Jim Bridger* left Durban April 30 in a thirteen-ship convoy escorted by three British patrol craft and headed to Capetown. From Capetown, she sailed independently to Saldanha, a small port about

60 miles northwest of Capetown. There she joined a convoy that sailed farther up the Atlantic coast of Africa to Walvis Bay. From there the *Jim Bridger* crossed the Atlantic independently to Rio de Janeiro, where she dropped off her cargo of coal and picked up 25 tons of rock crystals and 52 tons of mail. She then sailed to Santos, the seaport serving the Brazilian city of São Paulo, and picked up 7,955 tons of coffee. The cargo ship then sailed in a small convoy for Trinidad, and from there headed on July 8 to New York. During this leg of the voyage, the *Jim Bridger* carried the convoy's vice commodore. A number of ships left or joined the convoy along the route. Lookouts sighted what they believed to be a submarine on July 12 near Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. General Quarters was set, but no action developed and Condition 3 watch was resumed the next morning. The convoy arrived at New York late on the night of July 19. Early the next morning a pilot boarded the *Bridger* and conned her into the harbor to discharge her cargo.

The ship left New York on August 19, 1943, and steamed in convoy for Newport, a small harbor on the Welsh coast. There were 58 ships in the convoy, with an escort of six. For the first two days out, a blimp was among the escorts. There were no contacts with the enemy, but heavy weather forced the ships to use stern lights on the night of August 25. Six days later, the gunners were forced to shroud the bow gun as heavy seas were breaking over it. The 3-inch gun was test fired on September 2 and found to be in working order.

The *Bridger* sailed from Newport on September 19 in a convoy of 72 ships with 10 escorts. The convoy encountered thick fog, but the passage was otherwise uneventful.

On November 4, 1943, the ship left Norfolk for the Rooka Float Anchorage and Khorramshar, Iran. She sailed in a 63-ship convoy with an escort of 13 vessels and arrived December 22. American escorts shepherded the merchantmen until November 21, when the convoy passed the Straits of Gibraltar. There a group of British escorts assumed responsibility for the convoy. The escorts made several attacks on suspected submarines, without clear success, and floating mines were spotted November 27 and 29.

The *Bridger* passed through the Suez Canal and continued on to Iran, where she off loaded supplies that would eventually be taken overland to support the Soviet Union. On the return route, when the *Bridger* was in the Gulf of Oman, a British naval officer boarded the ship and directed her to sail independently to Port Sudan. She then sailed to Alexandria, where she joined a convoy of 47 vessels and five escorts. US escorts took command as the ships passed through the Straits of Gibraltar. The return trip to New York was calm, and the *Bridger* arrived on March 8, 1944.

The ship left for Wales on March 28, 1944. From there, she sailed to Plymouth, England, and then to Omaha Beach as a participant in the Normandy invasion. The nights of June 12-15 were harrowing for the crew. Enemy aircraft flew above the ship from dark until dawn. It was too dark to determine how many or what type. The ship never attempted to fire upon the aircraft because it was impossible to make a clear mark, and once firing began, the tracers might disclose the position of the ship. The crew and gunners went to General Quarters every time an alert sounded, and continued to man their stations until the "all clear" sounded.

The *Jim Bridger* made one additional trip between Plymouth and Omaha Beach, and then four round trips between Plymouth and Utah Beach. The cargo was the same every time, Army and Navy personnel and vehicles. No enemy was spotted during her second trip to Omaha Beach, but several enemy aircraft warnings were given. At these times, Navy personnel went to battle stations and guns were readied. The Liberty Ship's gunner continued

to hold General Quarters at dawn and at dusk every day, and throughout the time the ship was anchored off Omaha Beach. During the trips to Utah Beach, no enemy was spotted but the escort did drop depth charges on several occasions.

The ship sailed from Belfast for New York on August 25, 1944. The voyage passed without incident, although on the sixth day out the convoy commodore ordered an emergency turn to starboard for an unknown reason. At New York, the *Bridger* took on a cargo of tanks, trucks and explosives, and joined a 68-ship convoy bound for Liverpool on September 26. Four corvettes served as close escorts. There was no direct contact with the enemy, but one ship in the convoy did report seeing what was thought to be a torpedo track September 29. After unloading at Liverpool, the *Bridger* sailed again for New York on October 25. There were 40 to 49 ships in the convoy, with an escort of seven corvettes and aircraft from a nearby escort carrier. The signal "submarine in vicinity" was hoisted by the convoy commodore on November 2, but no action developed. Aircraft flew above the convoy except during inclement weather, and no lights were shown until the convoy was off the American coast. She arrived November 10.

The next assignment called for the ship to leave New York November 18 and sail to San Francisco by way of the Panama Canal with a cargo of turret tracks and structural steel and framework. The voyage was uneventful, but four men from the ship were held briefly by Canal Zone police in Cristobal. The ship arrived in San Francisco December 9, 1944.

The *Jim Bridger* left San Francisco December 13, 1944, and sailed independently for Pearl Harbor and Eniwetok Atoll. She joined a convoy of 18 ships at Eniwetok; seven of these broke off at Ulithi. Thirty-eight additional vessels were picked up for the voyage from Kossol Roads to the final destination of Tacloban, Philippines. On January 31 at approximately 12:22 p.m. the aft lookout aboard the *Jim Bridger* reported spotting a periscope about 2,000 yards off the port quarter at approximately 09° 28' N, 129° 3' E. The *Bridger* sounded General Quarters, and the Liberty's battle stations were manned immediately. The master quickly hoisted a warning pennant, but could not sound a warning blast because the whistle would not work. Desperate attempts to alert the escort by blinker finally

resulted in one vessel turning back and searching for several hours, but the escort was unable to make a firm contact.

The *Bridger* arrived at Tacloban February 2, 1945. The *Bridger's* crew was forced to settle in for a long wait in the anchorage. She was forced to lie at anchor for nearly four weeks before discharging her cargo, and then had to wait nine more days before receiving new orders.

The *Jim Bridger* left Tacloban March 13 and arrived in Hollandia, New Guinea on March 19. She then steamed towards Cairns, Australia, but before she reached her destination, orders were received directing her to go to Milne Bay, at the southeastern tip of New Guinea. She left Milne Bay March 26 with a cargo of steel runway landing mats and 1000-lb. air bombs, as well as 60 troops. The troops left the ship at Lae, New Guinea. The vessel arrived at Biak Island, north of New Guinea, on April 12, 1945. She left Biak with landing mats, 500-lb. and 1000-lb. bombs, 100 octane gasoline in metal drums, fins for air bombs, Army signal equipment, 155-mm projectiles and small arms ammunition and crated aircraft. She sailed to Polloc Harbor, on the west coast of Mindanao in the Philippines. Battle stations were manned daily at dusk and at dawn, and for a short time after arriving in port.

The ship left Mindanao May 8 and headed to Hollandia via Morotai. The *Jim Bridger* traveled in a convoy until she reached Morotai, where she was

ordered to proceed independently to Hollandia. The ship left Hollandia May 15 and returned to Milne Bay. She returned to Hollandia May 23 with a cargo of 80 octane gasoline, diesel oil, command cars, bulldozers, carryalls and other vehicles. She left Hollandia and headed to Manila at a speed close to 12 knots. She initially zig-zagged, but stopped this maneuver May 31. The *Jim Bridger* arrived June 2, but was plagued by slow and intermittent discharging, and was not completely unloaded until June 17.

The *Jim Bridger* returned to Hollandia in mid-June. She left Hollandia June 27 and sailed to Brisbane, Australia with what was reported as a "special cargo" and 90 bags of mail. She arrived July 25. The voyage itself was uneventful, but the naval crew and the dock workers did clash at the port in Brisbane. The naval commander reported that a good deal of time was lost when the unionized stevedores knocked off work when it began to rain and at other unspecified periods.

In the fall of 1945 the *Jim Bridger* sailed independently with a cargo of Navy gear from Manus in the Admiralty Islands to Seattle, Washington. In Seattle, her armament and armed guard were removed October 5, 1945. The ship was transferred to the US East Coast, where she was placed in the Reserve on the James River. She was purchased in 1975 for use in the Texas Artificial Reef Program and sunk off the coast (Archeological Site No. 41MG84).

SS Jim Bridger

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	Suez, Egypt	New York	4/25/43	
2	New York	Newport	8/20/43	9/4/43
3	Milford Haven, U.K.	New York	9/22/43	10/9/43
4	Norfolk, VA	Rooka Float Anchorage	11/4/43	12/22/43
5	Khorram Shahr, Iran	New York	1/7/44	3/8/44
6	New York	Cardiff, Wales	3/28/44	4/12/44
7	Plymouth, U.K.	Omaha Beach, France	6/11/44	6/12/44
8	Plymouth, U.K.	Omaha Beach, France	6/18/44	6/19/44
9	Plymouth, U.K.	Utah Beach, France	7/3/44	
10	Plymouth, U.K.	Utah Beach, France	7/9/44	
11	Plymouth, U.K.	Utah Beach, France	7/18/44	7/19/44

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
12	Plymouth, U.K.	Utah Beach, France	7/27/44	7/28/44
13	Belfast, Ireland	New York	8/25/44	9/7/44
14	Baltimore	Liverpool, U.K.	9/26/44	10/12/44
15	New York	San Francisco	11/18/44	12/9/44
16	San Francisco	Tacloban	12/13/44	2/2/45
17	Tacloban	Hollandia	3/13/45	3/19/45
18	Hollandia	Modewa, Milne Bay, N.G.	3/21/45	3/25/45
19	Modewa	Biak	3/26/45	4/12/45
20	Biak	Polloc Harbor, Mindanao, P.I.	4/16/45	
21	Polloc Harbor	Hollandia	5/8/45	
22	Hollandia	Ahioma, Milne Bay	5/15/45	5/18/45
23	Ahioma	Hollandia	5/23/45	
24	Hollandia	Manila, P.I.		
25	Hollandia	Brisbane, Australia	6/27/45	7/5/45
26	Brisbane	Manus, A.I.	7/18/45	7/25/45
27	Manus	Seattle, WA	8/8/45	9/4/45

SS Charles A. Dana

Charles Anderson Dana (1819-1897) was a newspaper editor and journalist. He made his reputation as managing editor of the *New York Tribune*. When he left that paper in 1862, after clashing with its editor-publisher, Horace Greeley, Dana was invited to join the US War Department as a special investigator under the secretary of war, Edwin Stanton. Dana spent much of his time reporting to Stanton from the front, and in 1864-65 served as second assistant secretary of war. In 1868, Dana became part owner and editor of the *New York Sun*. Under Dana's leadership, the *Sun* became one of the era's most successful newspapers. The *Sun* was much admired and imitated, and helped to popularize what would later become known as the "human interest story."

The Liberty Ship *Charles A. Dana* was completed by the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company of Wilmington, North Carolina on July 22, 1943. That evening she was chartered to her assigned wartime operators, R. A. Nichol & Co. She carried a complement of 39 civilian officers, seamen and engineers, under the command of Master Viktor

Peterson. On July 23, she received her new Naval Armed Guard, consisting of one commissioned officer, 24 enlisted gunners and two naval radiomen. She was fitted with a 3"/50 caliber dual-purpose gun on the bow, a second on the stern, and eight 20-mm anti-aircraft guns - two by the after deck house, two abreast the foremast, and four around the top of the Liberty's midships superstructure.

The *Dana* steamed to New York, where on August 14, 1943 she set out in convoy for Great Britain. On August 18 and again on August 19, lookouts aboard reported hearing depth charges exploding ahead of the convoy. In the predawn hours of August 27, the lookouts reported flares and depth charge explosions off the port bow. An object broke the surface which appeared to be a submarine, and an escort made repeated runs past the object, firing heavy weapons and machine guns at it. The escorts continued to drop depth charges around the object, which remained on the surface as the convoy continued on. The warship carrying the escort commander continued firing on the object until the convoy was beyond the horizon, but joined up with the convoy later.

The convoy arrived safely at Liverpool on August 29. The *Dana* sailed again on September 9, 1943 in convoy for the United States. Ensign Leo E. Koons, USNR commanded the *Dana's* Naval Armed Guard. The *Dana* arrived safely at Boston on September 23.

In Boston, the *Dana* took on a cargo of general supplies and equipment consigned to the US Army. She sailed in convoy on October 17, 1943, and arrived at Southampton on November 5. She sailed westward in convoy on November 21. On December 13, the day before the *Liberty* arrived at New York, one of her merchant seamen was lost overboard.

The *Charles A. Dana* remained in New York for nearly a month. On January 13, 1944, she sailed in convoy for Great Britain with more cargo consigned to the Army and 500 tons of steel bars. The *Dana* was directed to London to off load her cargo. She continued around the north coast of Scotland and down the east coast of Britain in a series of small coastal convoys. Early on the morning of February 2, 1944, just opposite the small Suffolk village of Aldeburgh, the *Dana* collided with another merchantman, the *SS Catrine*. The *Dana* was not seriously damaged and continued on to London, where repairs were made to the damaged shell plating. At Gravesend, on the south bank of the Thames, the *Dana* received a barrage balloon, which she flew on her trip upriver to the port. The balloon, an inflatable bag tethered several hundred feet above the ship by a steel cable, was intended to discourage low-flying attackers.

The *Dana* remained in London for 24 days. During that time, the *Liberty's* gunners went to general quarters 14 times during air attacks on the port. The ship was not hit, but the crew reported several near misses as German bombs fell into the surrounding waterfront area.

The *Dana* sailed again on February 26, 1944. The *Liberty* retraced her route around Britain and joined a US-bound convoy in early March. She arrived in New York on March 22.

The *Charles A. Dana* headed east again on April 20, this time to the Mediterranean. The *Liberty* arrived safely in Algiers, where she off loaded her cargo, and returned to the United States at New York on June 11, 1944.

In New York, the *Dana* took on a heavy cargo of aircraft bombs and military vehicles consigned to

the US military forces supporting the invasion in Normandy. She sailed in convoy on July 24, and upon her arrival in the British Isles, was routed again around Scotland to England's east coast. Off Scotland, the threat of mines forced the coastal convoy to pass single-file through narrow swept channels. Lookouts aboard the *Liberty* reported seeing 14 mines drifting near the ship. The *Dana* also practiced deploying her anti-torpedo nets, large drapes of lightweight metal mesh suspended around the ship from booms and intended to detonate torpedoes before they reached the hull (Figure 23). The *Dana* was directed to Inningham Dock, a small port on the south bank of the Humber Estuary, about 130 nautical miles north of London. The *Dana* arrived at Inningham on August 13, 1944.

She sailed again a week later. She joined a US-bound convoy, and arrived in Boston on September 8. There she loaded more ordnance and trucks, and set out again in convoy on September 20, 1944. The crossing was a difficult one. The escorts – six warships and a single escort carrier – reported six submarine contacts during the crossing. Two merchantmen collided in a fog, and heavy winds and seas scattered the convoy and damaged several ships.

As the convoy approached the British Isles, detachments began breaking off for other ports. The *Dana* and several other ships continued on to the recently-liberated port of Cherbourg, France, arriving November 2, 1944.



Figure 23. Liberty Ship steaming with anti-torpedo nets deployed (National Archives).

In France, the members of the Armed Guard discovered that the *Charles A. Dana's* food supplies were running low. Although Liberty Ships were equipped to maintain a six months' supply of consumable items, *Dana's* larder was getting bare after just two months. The remaining stores were rationed, but eventually the Armed Guard crewmen had to obtain food supplies from Army quartermaster troops in France. Upon going ashore, the Armed Guard crew also discovered that they could not buy small convenience items like candy or cigarettes because they had never been issued the required ration cards. The master of the *Dana* and the steward, who was nominally in charge of the Liberty's consumable items, refused to alleviate the situation by providing or selling these items from ship's stores. Short rations and absence of convenience items naturally led to a disgruntled Navy crew. This incident provides a prime example of Navy/Merchant Marine friction, a particularly egregious one at that.

The *Dana* sailed from Cherbourg in convoy on November 26. The first day out, she became separated from the convoy and continued on alone. She rejoined another convoy, but the ships encountered heavy seas, and the *Dana* was again blown off course. The *Dana* entered New York harbor on December 22, 1944.

On January 28, 1945, the *Dana* sailed again for Europe. She arrived at Liverpool on February 11. She began her westbound crossing on February 17, and arrived safely in New York in mid-March.

On March 29, she sailed in convoy for Le Havre, France, arriving on April 15, 1945. She sailed for

the United States on April 29, and was at sea when the war in Europe ended. Her westbound convoy consisted of 62 merchantmen and 10 escorts. She arrived at New York around the first of June, 1945.

The *Charles A. Dana* returned to Europe right away. She sailed for New York on June 6, 1945 - the first anniversary of the landings in Normandy - and arrived at Antwerp on June 21. She was back in New York in mid-July. She must have left immediately, for by the second week in August she was at Okinawa in the Pacific, preparing to return to the United States. She sailed from Okinawa on August 11, 1945, and finally arrived at Gulfport, Mississippi on January 3, 1946. On January 23, 1946 her armament was removed.

The *Dana* was chartered to the Norton Lilly Management Corporation on July 26, 1946 at New York, and rechartered to Norton Lilly under a different agreement at Norfolk, Virginia on September 4. On July 20, 1948 the *Dana* was chartered to Dichmann, Wright and Pugh, Inc., at Norfolk, which steamed the Liberty down the coast to Wilmington, North Carolina, where she was placed in the National Defense Reserve Fleet on August 2, 1948.

The *Charles A. Dana* returned to service for a few months during the Korean War, but in June 1952 was returned to the Reserve Fleet once again, this time at Beaumont, Texas. In June 1975, she was purchased by the State of Texas for inclusion in the Artificial Reef Program. After having her upper works removed and holes cut through her hull to admit light and free water circulation, the *Charles A. Dana* was scuttled on March 23, 1976 off Port Aransas (Archeological Site No. 41NU277).

SS Charles A. Dana

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	Wilmington	Savannah	7/26/43	7/27/43
2	New York	Liverpool	8/14/43	8/29/43
3	Liverpool	Boston	9/9/43	9/23/43
4	Boston	Southampton	10/17/43	11/5/43
5	Southampton	New York	11/21/43	12/14/43
6	New York	London	1/13/44	2/2/44
7	London	New York	2/26/44	3/22/44
8	New York	Algiers	4/20/44	6/11/44

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
9	New York	Immingham	7/24/44	8/13/44
10	Immingham	Boston	8/20/44	9/8/44
11	Boston	Cherbourg	9/20/44	11/2/44
12	Cherbourg	New York	11/26/44	12/22/44
13	New York	Liverpool	1/28/45	2/11/45
14	Liverpool	New York	2/17/45	3/45
15	New York	Le Havre	3/29/45	4/15/45
16	Le Havre	New York	4/29/45	6/45
17	New York	Antwerp	6/6/45	6/21/45
18	Antwerp	New York	6/28/45	7/13/45
19	Okinawa	Gulfport, Mississippi	8/11/45	1/3/46

SS George Dewey

George Dewey was the American naval officer who defeated the Spanish at Manila Bay during the Spanish-American War. He later was promoted to admiral and served as the president of the Navy's General Board. The ship that bore his name was completed by the St. John's River Shipbuilding Co., Inc. of Jacksonville, Florida on August 27, 1942 (Figure 24). She was chartered to American Export Lines, Inc. of New York. In September she was armed with a pair of 3"/50 caliber dual-purpose guns and eight 20-mm antiaircraft weapons. She kept this armament throughout her service in World War II.

To man the guns, the *Dewey* embarked a Naval Armed Guard unit of 26 enlisted men and one officer, Lieutenant (jg) Frank D. Bethel.

On September 16, 1943, the *Dewey* sailed from New York in a convoy of 85 merchant vessels escorted by 15 warships. The eastbound crossing passed uneventfully and the *Dewey* arrived at Belfast, Ireland, on September 30. She discharged her deck cargo there and sailed that same evening for Liverpool, where she arrived on October 2. After taking on ballast, she sailed on in a convoy of 75 merchantmen for New York. While at sea, on October 15, the convoy was warned that U-boat packs were thought to be forming in the area. The

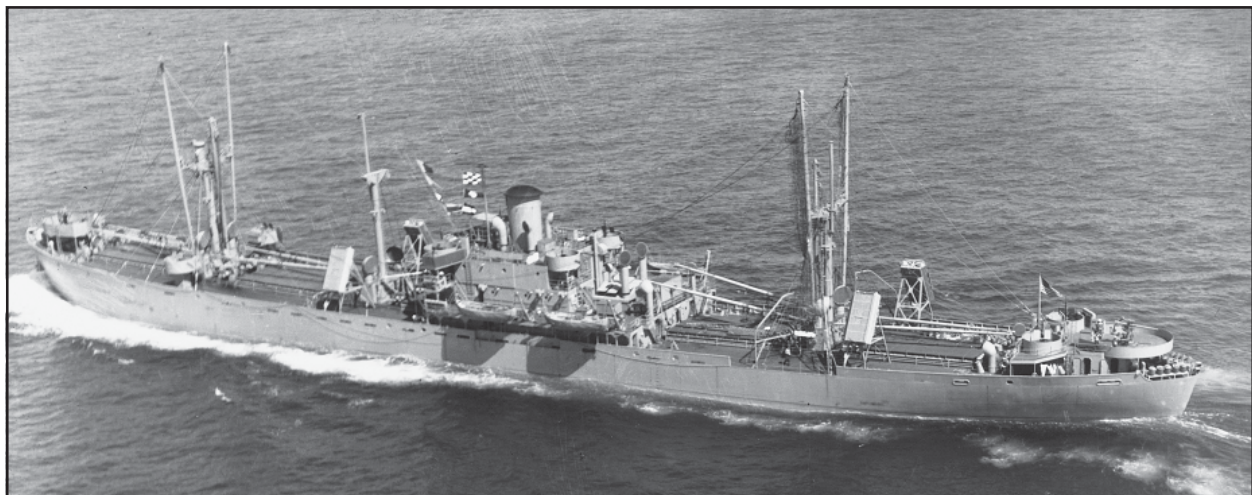


Figure 24. SS *George Dewey*, Sept. 3, 1943 (National Archives).

Dewey deployed her torpedo netting as a precaution. The following morning, an aircraft escorting the convoy sighted and attacked an enemy submarine. The submarine appears to have fired back and hit the plane, which crashed into the sea just off the *Dewey's* port bow. An escorting vessel cut into the convoy and appeared to rescue the crew. The following day, the convoy commodore passed word that an eastbound convoy passing nearby had been attacked with the loss of one merchantman. There were no other attacks on the *Dewey's* convoy, perhaps due to the deteriorating weather conditions, and the convoy arrived at New York safely on October 27, 1943.

The *Dewey* sailed again from New York on November 11 with general cargo for Oran in North Africa. She steamed down to Norfolk, Virginia, where she became part of a large convoy of 65 merchantmen and 13 escorts. Following the convoy at a distance was also a small escort aircraft carrier, with its own escort of four small warships. The weather during the passage was fine, and the convoy arrived without incident in North Africa on December 3.

In Oran the *Dewey* took on a cargo of high-test gasoline and explosives. Two days before Christmas, 1943, she sailed in convoy for Bari, Italy. En route, however, she was diverted to the harbor at Augusta, Sicily, where she remained until January 12, 1944. The crew of the *Dewey* later learned that the Bari anchorage had been bombed by the Luftwaffe, and that all vessels heading for Bari had been diverted to other ports. The officers and crew of the *Dewey* chafed at their vessel's inactivity, and wondered why the three weeks' delay was necessary.

What the crew of the *Dewey* did not know was that the attack on Bari was one of the most devastating of the war in the Mediterranean. The small Adriatic port, located at the base of the "heel" of the Italian boot, had become a major transfer point for supplies going to the British 8th Army, which was gradually fighting its way northward up the Italian peninsula. When the German bombers appeared overhead, below them were arrayed 30 freighters and tankers, busily unloading their cargoes of ammunition, bombs and gasoline under the glare of floodlights. Within 20 minutes, 17 ships (including five Liberty ships) were sunk outright or so badly damaged that they were not worth repairing. Six

other vessels, including one Liberty, were damaged to a lesser degree. Wreckage filled the harbor and the wharves were reduced to a shambles. One of the wrecked ships had carried a cargo of mustard gas; this wafted over the harbor and town after the raid, further complicating the recovery effort (Bunker, 1990: 121-22).

While at Augusta on New Years' Eve, the harbor was attacked by several German bombers. The shore batteries opened fire at 1850, and the *Dewey's* gunner began firing at 1900. Over the next 45 minutes, the *Dewey's* gunners expended 61 rounds of 3-inch ammunition and over a thousand rounds from the 20-mm guns. The only casualty aboard the *Dewey* was a member of the Armed Guard at the stern 3-inch gun. When the deck of the gun mount became cluttered with spent shell casings, he attempted to pitch the hot brass overboard. He suffered badly burned hands in the process, but recovered quickly. There were more serious casualties ashore and on other ships. The *Dewey's* crew learned later that about eighty people had been killed on shore when a communications station was hit, and that seven men aboard ships in the harbor were killed by misdirected antiaircraft fire.

The *Dewey* later steamed to Bari, and then returned in convoy to Augusta. From there, she sailed in convoy to Bizerte, Tunisia. From there she proceeded to Naples, Italy, where the crew of the *Dewey* was frustrated at the very inefficient process of unloading their ship. The Italian civilian laborers, the officers felt, slowed down the process so much that it became necessary to bring US soldiers to the wharf to help unload the ship. Compounding their frustration at the situation was the fact that Naples was under almost constant enemy attack; there were six general alarms while the *Dewey* sat at the pier unloading. Naples port regulations restricted the Liberty's crew from taking part in the antiaircraft barrage.

After a brief stop again at Augusta, the *George Dewey* joined a large convoy headed for New York. While still in the Mediterranean, on the afternoon of February 22, 1944, the crew of the *Dewey* noted a tremendous explosion off the starboard side of the ship. The position was 37° 17' N, 7° 17' E. Signals passed through the convoy that two ships had been torpedoed. One ship was hit amidships, while the other appeared to have had her stern blown off. Both stricken vessels dropped out of the convoy, and

appeared to be in very bad shape. The convoy continued on, arriving at New York in mid-March, 1944.

The *Dewey* sailed again on April 12, 1944, for England. She carried a cargo of general war material consigned to the Army. The *Dewey* was assigned position no. 57 - seventh ship in the fifth column - in the 60-ship convoy, but on the second day out she was moved to position 63. On April 14, 18 more merchantmen and seven escorts from Halifax joined the convoy. The convoy crossed the Atlantic without serious problems, although the escorts depth-charged two possible submarine contacts. Four days out from Manchester, England, the convoy was overflown by a four-engine ocean reconnaissance plane, but the aircraft passed so high overhead that the gunners couldn't tell whether it was a German Focke-Wulf 200 Kondor or a British Short Sunderland flying boat. The convoy arrived safely on April 28.

The *Dewey* appears to have remained in English waters for the next month. She may have been pre-loaded with supplies for the invasion of northern France, which was widely anticipated to occur soon. On June 11, five days after the invasion in Normandy, the *Dewey* sailed from Southampton, the invasion's main staging point, for Omaha beachhead. She carried general cargo for the Army and an unknown number of troops. She transferred her cargo into unloading barges, and the officer commanding the Armed Guard noted that the civilian master and crew of the *Dewey* exhibited a "high degree of hospitality" to their charges.

She returned to Southampton, loaded again with general cargo and troops, and set out again for the invasion beaches on June 19. Once at the beachhead, rough seas and gale-force winds postponed the off loading until June 23. Many of the LCTs (Landing Craft - Tank) used to ferry cargo from the merchantmen to the beach had been lost in the storm, and so off loading the cargo was delayed still further. There were several air raids over the invasion fleet while the *Dewey* waited to offload her cargo, but all the bombs fell wide of their targets.

The *Dewey* returned to Southampton in convoy and again embarked general Army cargo. She also brought on board 299 Army enlisted men and 160 officers. She sailed in a convoy of 27 merchantmen and four escorts for the Utah beachhead on June 29. There were three columns of merchantmen; the

Dewey was placed second in the portside column. En route, the convoy ran through a cluster of mines. The ship just astern of the *Dewey* exploded a mine at the stern and began to settle. The ship behind the stricken vessel swung to starboard to avoid the damaged vessel, and ran herself on a mine. A few moments later, the third ship in the middle column exploded a mine near her stern and appeared to catch fire. A second ship in the middle column was thought to have struck a mine, and the crew reported a fifth explosion of unknown source. The remaining ships arrived safely at the unloading area off Utah Beach, and returned to Southampton on July 1, 1944.

For her participation in the initial phases of the invasion of Normandy, the *George Dewey* was one of 149 merchant vessels whose crews received the Operation and Engagement Star.

Over the next four months, the *Dewey* made 13 more round trips to the unloading anchorages off the invasion beaches: three to the Omaha beachhead, then five to Utah, then one to Omaha, then three trips to Utah, and finally once more to Omaha. In every case, the *Liberty* carried general Army cargo and troops. On several occasions, the *Dewey* served as the convoy commodore's ship. The *Dewey* became one small part in the most massive logistical supply effort ever attempted to that time. One of the factors that made the Normandy operation successful was that the invasion beaches were far from any significant seaport. Many of the German officers planning the defense of the region had insisted that the invasion must come at or very close to one of the Channel ports, because the invaders would need the harbor facilities to bring in reinforcements and supplies. Instead the Allies landed on a series of isolated beaches and created their own harbors by sinking old ships as breakwaters and by placing prefabricated harbors called "Mulberries" off the invasion beaches. The *George Dewey* became part of this resupply effort, and made repeated visits to the Normandy beaches.

In November the *Dewey's* routine shifted slightly, and she began running between Southampton and the port of Rouen, France, on the Seine River. She sailed on her first voyage to Rouen on November 15, 1944, in a convoy of 12 merchantmen and one escort. The *Dewey* served as Convoy Commodore, as she would for the next seven trips. Her cargo again was general

Army cargo and personnel. On this trip she also carried a contingent of 25 French Red Cross workers. On her voyages to and from Rouen, the *Dewey* often found herself delayed due to the extreme changes of tides in the Seine Estuary and the difficult navigating conditions.

Between November 1944 and March 1945, the *George Dewey* made nine round trips between Southampton and Rouen. She transported 4,781 tons of Army cargo, and 1,464 personnel. Most of the cargo on the later trips was trucks, brought in to provide the logistical support for the Allies' final push across the Rhine and into Germany. After her last trip to Rouen in mid-March 1945, she sailed in convoy from Southampton to Newport, England. At mid afternoon on March 21, en route to Newport, the convoy commodore's ship *Parks* was rocked by an underwater explosion, probably from a mine. The *Parks* swung out of column to starboard, settling by the stern. The second ship in the column, the *American Press*, also swung out of line. The fog closed in, and the crew of the *Dewey* could not see what became of the two merchantmen. The *Dewey's* radio operator contacted the convoy escort, which closed quickly on the spot of the *Parks'* emergency. Later that afternoon the fog lifted, and the *American Press* came up from astern, reporting that all crew members had been safely rescued from the *Parks*.

Loaded with ballast, the *George Dewey* joined a large westbound convoy at Newport on March 27, 1945. The convoy's 75-odd merchantmen were joined by 11 escorts. Three Merchant Aircraft Carriers, civilian vessels converted to carry antisubmarine aircraft, were included in the convoy. The convoy

encountered heavy seas for the first few days out, but made up for lost time on the latter half of the voyage and arrived in New York on April 14, 1945.

The *George Dewey* sailed from Norfolk with a 44-ship convoy for the Mediterranean on May 13. She carried general cargo. The voyage passed uneventfully and she arrived at Marseilles, France on May 31, 1945. While there, she received orders directing her to the Pacific Theater. She took on a cargo of ammunition and "Army organizational equipment" and sailed independently for the Philippines on July 5, 1945. She passed through the Suez Canal and crossed the Indian Ocean, and arrived at Tacloban Leyte, the Philippines, on September 2, 1945. By that time, however, the war was over in the Pacific. After a brief layover at Tacloban, she set out on September 9 alone across the Pacific for New Orleans. She arrived at the Crescent City on October 21, 1945. There she was disarmed.

The *George Dewey* was chartered again to American Export Lines on June 20, 1946. It is not clear from available documentation whether there was any break between the line's wartime management of the vessel and her new charter. In late 1947 her charter was transferred to Boland and Cornelius, and on January 6, 1948, she joined the Reserve Fleet in the Hudson River. She remained "in mothballs" until September 1951, when she was briefly chartered to the West Coast Trans-Oceanic Steamship Line, possibly for service during the Korean War. She returned to the Reserve Fleet, this time at Beaumont, in May 1952. In August 1975, the *George Dewey* was purchased by the State of Texas to be sunk as an artificial reef (Archeological Site No. 41MG85).

SS George Dewey

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	New York	Liverpool, England	9/16/43	10/2/43
2	Liverpool, England	New York		10/27/43
3	New York	Oran, Algeria	11/11/43	12/3/43
4	Oran, Algeria	Bari, Italy; Bizerte, Tunisia; Naples, Italy; New York	12/23/43	3/44
5	New York	Manchester, England	4/12/44	4/28/44
6	Southampton, England	Omaha Beach, France	6/11/44	6/12/44
7	Southampton, England	Omaha Beach, France	6/19/44	6/19/44

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
8	Southampton, England	Omaha Beach, France	6/29/44	6/29/44
9	Southampton, England	Omaha Beach, France	7/3/44	7/3/44
10	Southampton, England	Omaha Beach, France	7/7/44	7/7/44
11	Southampton, England	Omaha Beach, France	7/11/44	7/11/44
12	Southampton, England	Utah Beach, France	7/18/44	7/18/44
13	Southampton, England	Utah Beach, France	7/25/44	7/25/44
14	Southampton, England	Utah Beach, France	8/1/44	8/1/44
15	Southampton, England	Utah Beach, France	8/15/44	8/15/44
16	Southampton, England	Utah Beach, France	8/25/44	8/25/44
17	Southampton, England	Omaha Beach, France	9/1/44	9/1/44
18	Southampton, England	Utah Beach, France	9/11/44	9/11/44
19	Southampton, England	Utah Beach, France	9/21/44	9/22/44
20	Southampton, England	Utah Beach, France	9/30/44	9/30/44
21	Southampton, England	Omaha Beach, France	10/27/44	10/28/44
22	Southampton, England	Rouen, France	11/15/44	11/16/44
23	Southampton, England	Rouen, France	11/25/44	11/29/44
24	Southampton, England	Rouen, France	12/11/44	12/15/44
25	Southampton, England	Rouen, France	1/1/45	1/3/45
26	Southampton, England	Rouen, France	1/9/45	1/13/45
27	Southampton, England	Rouen, France	2/7/45	2/10/45
28	Southampton, England	Rouen, France	2/25/45	2/26/45
29	Southampton, England	Le Havre, France	3/5/45	3/6/45
30	Southampton, England	Rouen, France	3/14/45	3/16/45
31	Newport, Wales	New York	3/27/45	4/14/45
32	Norfolk, Virginia	Marseilles, France	5/13/45	5/31/45
33	Marseilles, France	Tacloban, Leyte, PI	7/5/45	9/2/45
34	Tacloban, Leyte, PI	New Orleans, LA	9/9/45	10/21/45

SS George L. Farley

George L. Farley was known for his agricultural work. His namesake Liberty Ship was completed by the New England Shipbuilding Corporation in South Portland, Maine, on July 20, 1944. The ship was operated by Boland & Cornelius Company, Inc. One 5"/38 caliber gun, one 3"/50 caliber gun and eight 20-mm guns were installed July 17.

Her first journey was in a twelve-ship convoy with three escorts leaving Boston on August 7 and

arriving at Halifax, Nova Scotia on August 9. With a cargo of trucks, she joined a large convoy of 107 vessels bound for Oban, Scotland, a small harbor on the Firth of Lorn, about 55 miles northwest of Glasgow. There were six corvettes, one destroyer, and three small aircraft carriers transporting a total of 10 planes serving as escorts. The convoy reached its destination without incident, and from Oban the *George Farley* traveled in small convoys until it reached Milford Haven. At Milford Haven, the convoy broke up and the *Farley* retraced her wake north-

ward to Glasgow, arriving on October 23. She unloaded her cargo at Glasgow in just under five days, and sailed on October 29 for New York in a convoy of 66 merchantmen, with two small aircraft carriers and four corvettes as escorts.

She left New York on November 29, 1944, bound for Antwerp in a 40-ship convoy with three corvettes as escorts. Gale-type weather briefly caused the *George Farley* to stray from formation out of New York, but she caught up with her convoy within two days. At 11:40 p.m. on December 21, while running up the English Channel, lookouts spotted red flares and star shells ahead of the convoy. In the ensuing 10 minutes, more star shells were reported and shore batteries responded with gunfire. Running lights, which were being used to keep formation and avoid collision in the mine-infested Channel, went out all over the convoy. Even though no order was given, the entire convoy went to lights out. The *Farley* went to General Quarters, and the lookouts reported more gunfire and at least seven depth charge explosions off in the darkness. The convoy maintained its speed, and the *Farley* secured from General Quarters at 1:15 a.m.

On Christmas Eve, the ships were traveling in single file along a swept channel leading into Antwerp. At 11:15 a.m., 20-mm gunfire was heard coming from the leading ships in the convoy. By 11:20 a.m., the gunfire had intensified and lookouts reported hearing eight rounds from larger guns. The *Farley* again went to General Quarters, and all guns were prepared for firing. At 11:35, the *Farley's* lookouts spotted what they believed was the periscope and top of the conning tower of a midget submarine 2,000 yards off the starboard bow. The four 20-mm guns on the starboard side opened fire and hit the object, which appeared to submerge. It reappeared soon after, just aft of the starboard beam and at a range of 2,000 yards. The four 20-mm guns again fired on it, this time joined by the two larger guns. The three rounds fired from the 3-inch gun fell long, while the first two rounds from the 5-inch gun fell short. The third 5-inch shell, however, fell directly in front of the target, once again forcing it to dive. Cease fire orders were given, and the ship emptied the rounds from the larger guns in an area deemed safe. General Quarters were secured at 12:15 p.m., but the *Farley* remained at Condition 2, in which the naval gunner stood watch four hours

on and four hours off for the remainder of the voyage.

The *George Farley* arrived at Antwerp at the height of the Battle of the Bulge. The surprise German counterattack through the Ardennes caught the Allies off guard, and German armor and troops easily pushed their way through American lines in an all-out, last-ditch effort to stall the Allied offensive. Seizing or destroying Antwerp, the large seaport through which most of the Allies' supplies and reinforcements were arriving, was one of the operation's prime objectives, and the Germans began pummeling the city with Hitler's so-called "vengeance weapons," the V-1 "buzz bomb" and the V-2 rocket, a precursor of the modern ballistic missile.

At 6:00 p.m. on Christmas Day, while the *Farley* continued up the Westerschelde to Antwerp, a series of V-1s passed over the Liberty. Three crashed and detonated within 600 yards of the ship. The weapons continued to fall after the *Farley* entered port on December 26. Over the next two weeks, V-1s and V-2s exploded around the harbor at the rate of one every 20 minutes.

It was an exceedingly difficult time for the men aboard the *George Farley*. Their ship was immobile alongside the wharf, and there was little they could do to defend themselves against the bombs. The V-1, a small, pilotless robot plane, could be heard a long distance off. Its ramjet engine gave off a loud, high-pitched buzzing sound. A wartime saying had it that if you could hear the engine you were safe; it was when the engine cut out and the "buzz bomb" began its dive that one should take cover. V-1s were occasionally shot down by fast fighter aircraft, or by antiaircraft fire, but in among the warehouses and cranes of the port of Antwerp, the *Farley's* gunners had little opportunity even to attempt to fight back against the V-1s.

Against the V-2 there was no defense at all. This weapon was in the form of a liquid-fueled rocket, topped with a ton of high explosive, which could be fired from any number of sites in northeastern Germany. The rocket traced a steep arc through the upper atmosphere, coming down on its target at a near-vertical angle. It traveled at supersonic speeds, so no one could hear it coming.

The crew and gunners of the *Farley* did what they could. In port, blackout regulations were

followed. Bilge and waste materials were emptied at night. The Armed Guard Commander, Lt.(jg) John P. Maguire, recommended that the 3"/50 caliber gun be equipped with open sights, which he felt were better suited to the conditions in the harbor. A response was received from the Commander of US Naval Forces, France, which stated that this would affect accuracy when firing the gun at long-range targets.

A combat alert had been issued by the Army for the period December 24, 1944, through January 1, 1945. The air raid alarm sounded 11 times, and a total of 454 V-bombs were logged while in port at Antwerp (Figure 25). Because of the combat alert, liberty for the men was restricted, and officers were forced to carry side arms when off the ship.

In addition to the continual threat from V-bombs, the port came under repeated attack by German aircraft. One air raid alarm was sounded December 26 at 10:00 p.m. The Armed Guard was at battle stations within one minute. The big guns were restricted from firing, so their crews were reassigned to the 20-mm guns. Three German planes were spotted flying over the city and dock area at a range of 3,000 yards. Bombs fell from the aircraft, without effect, and anti-aircraft batteries began to fire on the planes. Smoke generators spread a haze of chemical smoke over the harbor, and General Quarters was secured by 10:30. However, at 11:00, the air raid alarms again sounded. A plane, identified as a German Me110, a light, twin-engine fighter/bomber, flew over the starboard bow of the *George Farley* and was shot at by shore batteries. Anti-aircraft fire shot down a barrage balloon which landed about 50 yards off the starboard beam. A smoke screen again covered the dock area, and at 12:30 a.m. December 27 General Quarters was secured. The air raid siren was again heard December 29 at 7:30 p.m. and the men were at battle stations within minutes. Anti-aircraft batteries began firing on four Me110s that were circling about 3,500 yards from the ship. No planes were hit. The

planes had dropped bombs, but those fell wide of the ship. The "all clear" was sounded at 9:30 p.m.

Air attacks continued over the next week, with up to 40 aircraft attacking at one time. The raiders were Me110s, Messerschmidt Bf 109s and Focke-Wulf FW 190 fighters. The *George Farley* was not hit directly by bombs during this battle, but was affected by the sheer force of the blasts.

On January 8, 1945, a V-2 rocket bomb fell to earth only 60 yards ahead of the *Farley's* berth. The rocket struck in the midst of a group of longshoremen unloading the freighter *Blenheim*, secured to the pier just ahead of the Liberty Ship. The blast obliterated the loading crew, and severely damaged the *Blenheim*. Aboard the *Farley*, the concussion blew off the hatch covers, stunned the watch on deck, and shattered glass all over the ship, including the tiny light bulbs on the crews' life preservers. Torn metal, debris and human remains rained down on the *Farley*; a human head was discovered on the Liberty Ship's bridge after the blast. Lt. Maguire later guessed that a dozen men were killed in the blast; a more accurate count was impossible.

Maguire came away from the incident with very strong sentiments regarding the lack of training and preparation of his men before being sent into actions such as were occurring at Antwerp. More information was needed regarding proper procedures during air raids. The officer felt that the safest place for the gun crew was aboard ship, preferably

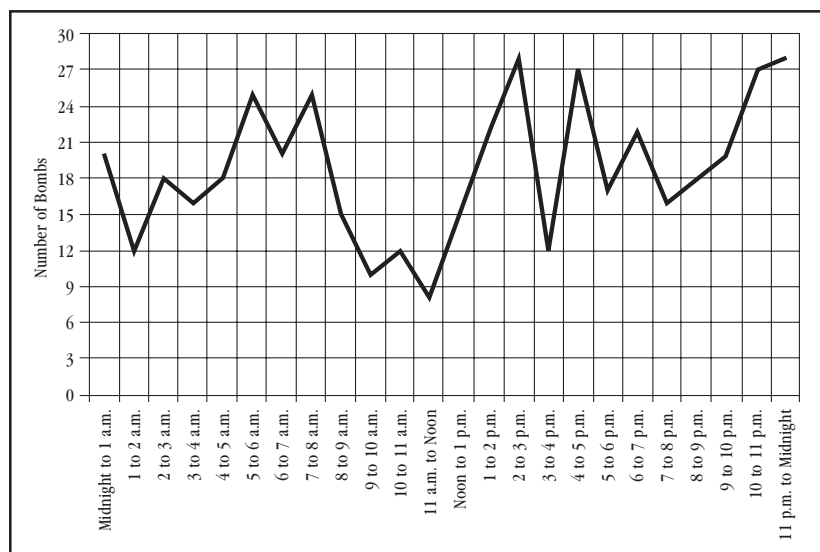


Figure 25. Hourly V-bomb frequencies logged at Antwerp, Belgium from December 25, 1944 to January 8, 1945.

below deck. Port holes and doors should be kept closed to lessen the effect of V-bombs should they explode nearby. He also found the air raid system confusing, and expressed irritation over the unpredictable status of barrage balloons. He also believed it was imperative that the 20-mm guns be ready for fire should the enemy slip through the air defense system. Finally, he was very concerned at the bad feelings between British and American troops. There was a good deal of hostility, Maguire noted, and the situation was made more dangerous by the fact that both sides carried guns.

After returning to New York, the ship took on general cargo and steamed for Cherbourg, France in an 82-ship convoy with four escorts on February 17, 1945. The voyage was routine. From France, she traveled to Southend, Scotland and then back to New York. She left New York again on May 28 for Antwerp. While anchored in the English Channel near Deal, England on the evening of June 11, 1945, the *George Farley* was rammed by the merchantman *Abraham Rosenberg* and the Number two 20-mm gun tub fell overboard. There were no injuries. The *George Farley* had not been blacked out, and was displaying running lights. She continued on to Antwerp, arriving on

June 20. She left Antwerp July 25 and arrived in Newport News, Virginia on August 8.

That fall the *Farley* returned to Europe, this time to Bremerhaven, Germany. She sailed from Bremerhaven on October 16, 1945, and returned to Norfolk, Virginia, arriving November 1. After loading a cargo of cork, she headed to Lisbon, Portugal. She sailed from Lisbon on December 29, 1945, and arrived in New York January 12, 1946. On February 17, 1945, her armed guard was detached.

Boland and Cornelius continued to operate the *George Farley* after her wartime service. The company rechartered her at New York in August 1946. In December 1946, she was chartered again to Boland and Cornelius at Galveston, and operated until January 1949 when Blidberg and Rothchild, her new operators, chartered her at New York again. The ship joined the Reserve Fleet at Wilmington, North Carolina, on November 14, 1949. The Grace Line chartered the ship in 1951, but she joined the Reserve Fleet at Beaumont in June 1952. The ship was purchased by the State of Texas in 1975 to be scuttled as part of the Artificial Fish Reef Program (Archeological Site No. 41WY145).

SS George L. Farley

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	Boston	Halifax	8/7/44	8/9/44
2	Halifax	Oban, U.K.	8/13/44	
3	Oban, U.K.	Glasgow, U.K.	9/20/44	10/23/44
4	Glasgow, U.K.	New York	10/29/44	
5	New York	Antwerp, Belgium	11/29/44	
6	Antwerp, Belgium	New York	1/8/45	
7	New York	Cherbourg, France	2/17/45	
8	Southend, U.K.	New York	4/27/45	
9	New York	Downs, U.K.	5/28/45	6/10/45
10	Downs, U.K.	Tilbury, U.K.	6/13/45	6/13/45
11	Tilbury, U.K.	Antwerp, Belgium	6/18/45	6/20/45
12	Antwerp, Belgium	Newport News, VA	7/25/45	8/8/45
13	Bremerhaven, Germany	Norfolk, VA	10/16/45	11/1/45
14	Lisbon, Portugal	New York	12/29/45	1/12/46

SS V.A. Fogg (ex-SS *Four Lakes*)

Unlike most of the other ships included in this project, the *Four Lakes* was a T-2 tanker (Figure 26). She is included because her wreck is a popular site for sport divers and anglers, and because like the Liberty Ships, she was built under a wartime emergency construction program.

The *Four Lakes* was built by the Alabama Drydock and Shipping Co. of Mobile, Alabama, and was completed on January 26, 1944. As she neared completion, the tanker was fitted with her armament: a 5"/38 caliber dual-purpose gun on the stern for use against both aerial and surface targets, a 3"/50 caliber dual-purpose gun at the bow, and eight 20-mm antiaircraft guns positioned around her amidships and stern superstructures. To work the guns, the *Four Lakes* was assigned a Naval Armed Guard of 29 men. This number included an officer housed on the starboard side of the forward superstructure near the bridge, 25 gunners with bunk space divided between the superstructures, and three Navy signalmen, assigned a small cabin just aft of the tanker's bridge.

The *Four Lakes* was chartered to War Emergency Tankers, Inc., which in turn operated the tanker through the Atlantic Refining Company. She sailed from Mobile on the late afternoon of January 29, 1944, under the command of Elmer O. Wolfe, and arrived at Galveston, Texas just before midnight on the following day. She passed through Bolivar Roads and steamed up Galveston Bay to Baytown, where she took on a load of kerosene. She sailed from Baytown on the afternoon of February 3, and arrived without incident at New York at noon on February 9.

The *Four Lakes* offloaded her cargo of kerosene and on St. Valentine's Day 1944, sailed independently from New York for Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

On the afternoon of February 16, while the tanker was about 320 statute miles east-southeast of Savannah, Georgia, the lookouts spotted what they believed to be a periscope. The crew went to General Quarters, and the Armed Guard fired two rounds from the 5-inch gun on the bow. The supposed periscope disappeared, and the remainder of the voyage passed without incident. The *Four Lakes* arrived at Baton Rouge late in the afternoon of February 21, and took on a cargo of gasoline. The tanker passed the mouth of the Mississippi on February 24, and continued on without escort to New York, arriving there before dawn on February 29.

At New York she joined a convoy of 28 other merchantmen and, on the afternoon of March 1, sailed in convoy for Liverpool. Six destroyer escorts accompanied the convoy. The tanker's first transatlantic crossing was mostly uneventful, although on the evening of March 9 the *Four Lakes*' lookouts reported tracers and heavy gunfire in the distance. The convoy continued on, and the *Four Lakes* passed the Liverpool Lightship on the morning of March 12, 1944.

The *Four Lakes* sailed in ballast from Liverpool on March 16. The orders given her master were that she would sail for some port in the United States. The convoy of 23 merchantmen and six escorts made the westbound crossing without incident. While en route, the *Four Lakes* was ordered to proceed to Philadelphia, and arrived there on the morning of March 28.

From Philadelphia the tanker was moved to New York. With a cargo of 80-octane gasoline, the *Four Lakes* joined an eastbound convoy of 26 merchantmen and sailed from New York on April 6, 1944. Early on the afternoon of April 16, at 53° 10' N, 18° 37' W, the convoy escorts depth-charged a suspected submarine contact. Forty-five minutes later, the

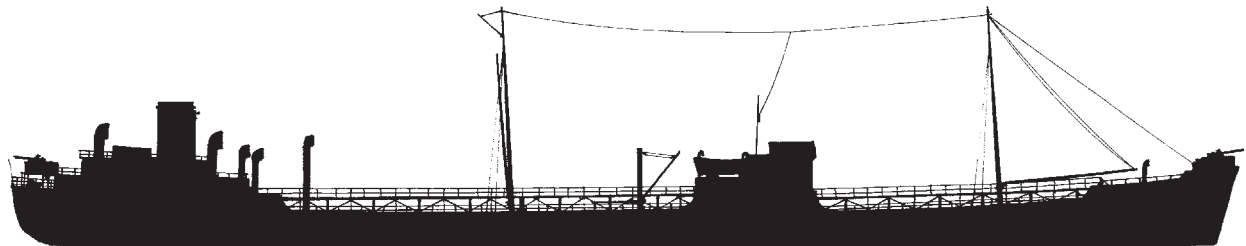


Figure 26. Sketch of a T-2 tanker (Talbot-Booth 1949: 201).

escorts made a second contact and depth-charged it. That evening at about 2,000 hours, another escort sighted a possible periscope and made more depth-charge runs over the contact. The convoy commodore passed the word that the escorts were prosecuting several U-boat contacts, and that Armed Guard crews were to keep a careful watch. The convoy continued on, however, and the *Four Lakes* passed in the Liverpool Lightship without further incident on the afternoon of April 18, 1944.

After offloading her cargo, the *Four Lakes* crossed the Irish Sea to Belfast, from which port she sailed on April 23 with 22 other merchantmen and six escorts for New York. On the evening of April 30, the escorts depth-charged a possible submarine contact, but otherwise there was no contact with the enemy. The *Four Lakes* arrived at New York on the evening of May 3.

The *Four Lakes* sailed again in convoy on May 12, carrying gasoline, kerosene and a load of aircraft on deck. Early the next morning, the 36 merchantmen and nine escorts which had sailed from New York were joined by a smaller contingent from Boston, bringing the combined convoy to a strength of 45 merchantmen and 13 escorts.

On the afternoon of May 16, the convoy sounded a general alarm and an escort vessel steamed quickly down between the columns of merchantmen flying a black signal pennant. A few minutes later, the convoy commodore raised a flag hoist ordering all ships in the convoy to make a simultaneous 30° turn to port. Once all ships in the convoy had acknowledged the signal, the hoist was hauled down and the convoy began its turn. The escorts were unable to make a firm contact, and after 20 minutes or so on the new course the convoy secured from General Quarters.

A similar incident occurred three days later. Shortly after noon on May 19, the convoy commodore ordered two turns to port, one of 30° and a second turn of 20°. Lookouts aboard the *Four Lakes* reported the escorts dropping depth charges on the starboard bow of the convoy. The escorts attacked another contact on the following day, May 20, on the starboard quarter of the convoy. The *Four Lakes* arrived at the Bar Lightship, at the entrance to the Mersey River, on the afternoon of May 23 and took on a pilot. The tanker arrived at her anchorage in the Mersey off Liverpool that same evening.

The *Four Lakes* sailed in ballast from Liverpool on May 28, 1944, as part of an unescorted convoy. The following morning, in the North Channel, the Liverpool group was joined by additional escorted vessels from Belfast and Glasgow, making a combined westbound convoy of 50 merchantmen and six escorts. Early that evening, as the convoy entered the Atlantic, the lookouts reported hearing depth charges. The lookouts reported more gunfire and depth charges over the next half hour.

The next several days passed without incident. On June 4, the convoy was joined by a smaller escort carrier group. Three days later, just before 1:00 p.m., the lookout reported depth charges and one of the escorts ahead was seen to be flying a black signal pennant. The suspected submarine contact must have been very close ahead of the convoy, for only four minutes after the first depth charges exploded, the convoy commodore ordered a 45° emergency turn to starboard, followed by another 45° turn to starboard two minutes later. The convoy turned back to its original course a few minutes later and stood down from General Quarters, but throughout the rest of the afternoon there were more alerts, depth charge attacks and emergency course changes. The escorts' attacks were inconclusive.

The *Four Lakes* passed the Ambrose Lightship off New York just after midnight on June 9, 1944. She later dropped down the coast to Norfolk, Virginia, where she took on a cargo of gasoline, diesel fuel and aircraft. She sailed on July 1 in a convoy of 24 merchantmen and 10 escorts. The convoy steamed eastward for the Mediterranean without incident until the evening of July 9, when lookouts reported seeing two white flares ahead of the convoy. This was the signal that a ship had been torpedoed, and the Armed Guard of the *Four Lakes* went to General Quarters. There were no depth charges heard, though, and when no report of the supposed torpedoing came from the commodore, the Armed Guard dismissed after several tense minutes of waiting (both literally and figuratively) "in the dark."

The *Four Lakes* was routed to Casablanca, on the Moroccan coast, and with three other merchantmen departed the convoy late in the afternoon of July 11. The ships were escorted by three Free French warships. The tanker anchored at Casablanca early on July 12 and began discharging her part of her cargo. Two days later she was moved to a dock, where cranes were used to offload the aircraft she

had carried as deck cargo. That evening, July 14, she sailed with one British and one Free French escort for Gibraltar. She arrived there shortly after noon the following day, and was tied up at the coaling wharf, where she discharged the remaining fuel cargo in her tanks. Port officials came aboard at 2:00 and immediately placed the ship under a 10-day quarantine, keeping the crew from going ashore because their last port of call, Casablanca, was suspected to have active cases of bubonic plague.

The *Four Lakes* sailed alone on the evening of July 24, with water ballast in her tanks. In the Straits of Gibraltar she sighted her assigned west-bound convoy. She joined up with the convoy shortly before midnight, bringing the strength of the convoy up to 16 merchantmen and eight escorts. The passage across the Atlantic was without incident, and on August 2 the convoy split into two sections bound for different ports. The *Four Lakes* was assigned to the New York section, and anchored in the harbor there on August 3, 1944.

The *Four Lakes* sailed again on August 11 for Great Britain. She was part of a convoy of 52 merchantmen and 14 escorts. She again carried diesel oil in her tanks and military aircraft on deck. The convoy was routed close to the Azores, and so was under Allied air protection for most of the way across the Atlantic. The escorts depth-charged several suspected submarine contacts, but without clear results. The convoy arrived at Swansea, in Wales, on August 22, 1944.

The *Four Lakes* returned to New York, and sailed again for Britain on September 12. She carried gasoline and miscellaneous deck cargo. The convoy of 44 merchantmen and 16 escorts steamed east at an average speed of 14 knots. On the afternoon of September 21, as the convoy neared the entrance to the Irish Sea, about a third of the merchantmen and half the escorts detached themselves from the convoy, reformed, and continued eastward for Cherbourg. The remaining vessels turned northward and continued on to Avonmouth, England, a small seaport near Bristol, arriving on September 22, 1944.

On September 26, she sailed in ballast to Milford Haven, where the routine briefing for the upcoming eastbound convoy was held the following day. The briefing customarily included both the masters and Armed Guard Officers of the merchant-

men in the convoy. The notice for this particular conference, however, had been delivered with the line instructing Armed Guard Officers to attend marked through in red pencil. The officer commanding the Armed Guard aboard the *Four Lakes*, Lieutenant Joseph H. Elcock, Jr., USNR, went to the meeting anyway. Elcock was told that while Armed Guard officers were always welcome, they had not been asked to come since the conference dealt primarily with navigation, not gunnery, and also because the additional officers attending would put too much strain on the transportation available to take them from their ships to the conference and back. In his report of the incident, Elcock noted dryly that it was "rather late for an Armed Guard officer to have to establish his right to attend the masters' sailing conference."

The convoy passed without incident, and the *Four Lakes* arrived at New York on October 8. With the U-boat threat in the Atlantic decreasing steadily, an increasing amount of the Armed Guards' time was taken up in drills and training. But neither the Navy nor the shipping companies chartering the vessels provided the necessary resources to make this training effective. Lt. Elcock, for example, found that aboard the *Four Lakes* there was no quiet compartment available where he could conduct classes or give his men a place to study for examinations required for promotion to the next rate. He had to share his own cabin with another officer, and recommended that in the future Armed Guard officers be assigned their own cabins, which could double as classrooms for the gunners. Later Elcock complained about the lack of live-firing practice available for his men. On several Atlantic crossings in a row, the *Four Lakes* was assigned a position near the center of the convoy (standard practice with tankers and munitions vessels), and as a result her gunners were not allowed to fire their weapons for fear of striking another ship. Even when the Armed Guard could safely discharge its weapons, the Navy's ammunition allowance did not provide enough ammunition for regular, realistic practice. A full year's ammunition allowance for a 20-mm antiaircraft gun, Elcock pointed out, would be fired away in just 48 seconds.

At New York the *Four Lakes* took on a load of gasoline and deck cargo, and sailed in convoy for Naples, Italy, on October 14. The 16 merchantmen

from New York were joined the next day by four from Norfolk and one from Bermuda. The combined convoy, escorted by six warships, continued on the Straits of Gibraltar, after which it began shrinking steadily as merchantmen and escorts broke off to proceed to various ports. Four merchantmen continued on to Naples, arriving there on October 28. While in Naples, Armed Guard gunners received mail forwarded from the United States, the first time the ship had a "mail call" while in a foreign port.

She sailed again for New York on November 3, 1944, with five other merchantmen and three escorts. Off Gibraltar, the convoy was joined by 14 other merchantmen and four additional escorts. Three days out from Gibraltar, however, the *Four Lakes* began to lag behind the rest of the convoy. On at least two occasions the convoy had to reduce speed by several knots to allow the *Four Lakes* to regain her position. Lt. Elcock, in an attempt to give his gunners suitable spotting and sight-setting drill without having to fire actual ammunition, set up a miniature "shooting range" on a tabletop using a sheet of canvas and a model U-boat. The gunner in training would sight the U-boat through an inverted pair of binoculars, call out a range, spot simulated shell splashes, and gradually correct the range until he "sank" the target. The *Four Lakes* arrived in New York on November 17, 1944.

On November 23, 1944, under the command of C. E. Cather, she sailed in a convoy of 26 merchantmen and 10 escorts for Swansea, in Wales. She carried a cargo of high-octane aviation fuel. The convoy encountered heavy weather throughout the crossing, which made visual signaling between ships difficult and, on occasion, made it necessary for the Armed Guard gunners to abandon the 5-inch gun due to waves breaking over the bow. The convoy escorts made one possible contact with a U-boat during the forenoon watch on December 3, but were unable to maintain the contact. The convoy arrived safely at Swansea the following day.

She discharged her aviation fuel at Swansea, and sailed independently for Liverpool on December 5. That evening, just after midnight, a British Sunderland flying boat on patrol flew low over the

ship, dropping red parachute flares as a recognition signal. At the time, the *Four Lakes* was taking on seawater ballast in her empty tanks, and as a result, a large volume of gasoline vapor was escaping from the tanks. In addition, several of the tanks which were being filled had already overflowed, spilling a quantity of residual gasoline on the deck. The flares from the Sunderland straddled the tanker, and two narrowly missed falling on the deck. The signalmen on the bridge tried to warn the airmen of the danger using a blinker light, but the Sunderland did not reply. At 2:00 a.m. the Sunderland appeared again, and began to make another low pass over the tanker dropping flares. This time the signalmen aimed the 12-inch blinker light, shutters open, directly on the plane. This time the flying boat veered off and, though it made several more passes over the tanker, did not drop any more flares.

The *Four Lakes* sailed from Liverpool in convoy on December 9, 1944, with 33 other merchantmen and eight escorts. The voyage passed uneventfully, and she arrived at Baltimore, Maryland on December 23.

After a refit and once again under the command of Elmer O. Wolfe, the *Four Lakes* sailed independently from New York on January 19, 1945 for Madras, India by way of the Suez Canal. She carried a cargo of 100-octane fuel and 12 military airplanes on deck. The voyage passed without serious incident, although the tanker suffered a seven-hour breakdown on January 25 after some of her fuel oil became contaminated with water. After entering the Indian Ocean, the *Four Lakes* received two "SSS" warnings of enemy submarine along her projected course.³ In both cases the *Four Lakes* set a higher watch condition and altered her course to avoid the area. The *Four Lakes* arrived at Madras on February 20, 1945.

The *Four Lakes* discharged her cargo at Madras and on February 23 sailed for Calcutta, arriving on February 27. She sailed from Calcutta on March 4 for Abadan, Iran, at the northern end of the Persian Gulf. She arrived there on March 15, 1945, and took on a cargo of 80-octane gasoline. She sailed from Abadan on March 21, passed northward through the Suez Canal, and arrived at Naples, Italy on April 7. En route, the

³Several simple wireless codes were introduced during the war to alert Allied shipping to enemy action. In addition to the traditional "SOS," there was "SSS" to report an attack by enemy submarine, "RRR" to report an enemy surface raider, and "QQQ" to report a "Q-ship," a surface raider disguised as a merchant vessel (van der Vat, 1988).

Armed Guard Commander, Lt. Elcock, used kites as simulated targets for his anti-aircraft gunners.

After a two-day stopover in Naples, the *Four Lakes* sailed independently in ballast for Gibraltar, where she would receive further orders routing her to Aruba in the Caribbean. Off Gibraltar, Capt. Wolfe signaled the port authorities of his orders and asked for his routing instructions to Aruba. The port authorities complied willingly, but also revealed that they had not been notified to expect the arrival of the tanker. The *Four Lakes* continued on, but on April 15 received new orders to proceed to New York. On that same day, the ship held a brief memorial service for President Roosevelt, who had died at Warm Springs, Georgia, on April 12. On the morning of April 21, the *Four Lakes* encountered the Canadian corvette HMCS *Douvan*, which inquired as to the tanker's name. In keeping with security precautions, Capt. Wolfe politely refused but offered to reply to the current naval recognition challenge. No challenge was forthcoming, and after several interchanges the master had the *Four Lakes'* international call sign flashed to the corvette. The remainder of the voyage passed uneventfully, and the tanker arrived at New York on April 23, 1945.

Immediately upon her arrival, the *Four Lakes* was loaded with 80-octane gasoline and assigned to a convoy sailing the following day, April 24. The speed of the ship's turnaround was remarkable, but it created a potentially far more serious problem. The ship's civilian crew had been away from the United States for more than three months, and when they learned that they would have no liberty at all in New York, over 90% of them collected their pay and signed off the ship. As a result, the *Four Lakes* sailed with a new crew who had only been aboard a few hours. On the second day at sea, the tanker suffered a mechanical breakdown which officers traced directly back to a new crewman inexperienced on the ship's turboelectric drive.

The incident also pointed up the differences between the civilian seamen who ran the ship and the naval personnel who manned the guns. Merchant seamen signed on by the voyage; the Navy gunners were in for the duration of the war, with little opportunity even for transfer to another branch of

the service. The gunners did not have the option of "signing off" their ship, and this, combined with the inequities of pay, working hours and benefits, often strained relations between civilian seamen and naval gunners.

The 50 merchantmen and 10 escorts crossed the Atlantic without difficulty, but upon entering the English Channel the convoy encountered poor visibility. Between 8:30 a.m. on May 3 and 10:18 p.m. the following day, the convoy made 26 emergency turns to port and starboard as the escorts reported submarine contacts and gunfire flashes. The convoy finally anchored in the Thames below London on May 5, 1945. Two days later, the Germans surrendered unconditionally to the Allies.

The *Four Lakes* sailed from Southend, London, on May 8 in ballast. She was part of a 38-ship convoy, with a escort of eight warships. While passing south and west through the English Channel, the convoy encountered floating mines and more suspicious underwater contacts. Though the end of hostilities in Europe had been officially announced, the convoy maintained its normal wartime routine. The convoy arrived in New York safely on May 19, 1945.

After a long-overdue refit, the *Four Lakes* sailed again on June 4, 1945, with a cargo of 100-octane gasoline and P-51 fighters as deck cargo, for Madras, India. Her new master was James R. McWilliams,⁴ and Lieutenant (jg) Paul L. O'Toole, USNR had assumed command of the Armed Guard. She sailed independently without zigzagging and burned running lights at night. Lt. O'Toole got permission to test-fire his guns, shooting off five rounds each from the 3-inch and 5-inch guns, and 60 rounds from each of the 20-mm anti-aircraft guns. The *Four Lakes* arrived at Madras, India, on the Fourth of July, 1945.

The *Four Lakes* then steamed west and north into the Persian Gulf, taking on a load of diesel oil at Abadan, Iran. She sailed from Iran on July 24, 1945, and proceeded independently to Darwin, Australia. At Darwin she joined two other merchantmen, and escorted by three warships, steamed north to the Philippines. She arrived at Manila on August 22, 1945.

⁴The first reference to McWilliams, in the Armed Guard Commander's report of July 4, 1945, refers to him as *John C. McWilliams*.

In September, the *Four Lakes* steamed eastward across the Pacific. In late October, the *Four Lakes* carried a load of diesel fuel from the Panama Canal Zone to San Pedro, California. She departed Los Angeles on November 2, 1945 in ballast, passed through the Panama Canal, and continued on to Houston, Texas, arriving on November 19. In December, she carried a cargo of bulk oil from Hamburg, Germany to an undetermined destination.

In February 1946, the *Four Lakes* was rechartered to the American Petroleum Transport Corporation. In July 1946, she carried a cargo of bulk oil from Texas City, Texas to Baltimore, Maryland. Shortly thereafter, she was placed in the Reserve Fleet at Mobile, Alabama. She was chartered again to the American Petroleum Transport Corp. in 1947, and in 1948 was sold to a new company, Tanker Four Lakes, Inc. In 1959, the ship was enlarged, adding 50 feet to her length.

The *Four Lakes* was renamed *V.A. Fogg* on August 11, 1971. About this same time, the vessel was sold to Texas City Tankers, Inc. On February 1, 1972, the *Fogg* sailed from Freeport, Texas, into the Gulf of Mexico. She had recently offloaded a cargo

of benzene, a highly volatile hydrocarbon, and was heading to a point 50 miles offshore to clean the tanks. She also carried a load of xylene. Something touched off a spark which ignited benzene fumes and then the volatile cargo. Sixteen of 18 wing tanks and at least two of nine center tanks blew. Steaming ahead at full speed, the ship sank like a rock. The explosion ripped apart the ship's hull plating midway between the midships and after superstructures, almost completely splitting the vessel in two (Figure 27). All 39 men aboard were killed. The tanker quickly settled in 100 feet of water at 28° 35' N, 94° 48' W (NTSB 1974).

There was no time for the ship to send a distress call, and for several days the disappearance of the tanker was a mystery. A search team found one of the vessel's life rafts on February 8, but noted that there was no evidence that anyone had been in it. Investigators theorized that the raft was released automatically when the ship sank. The wreck was located soon after, and on February 13 divers positively identified what remained of the vessel. Five bodies, including that of Capt. John E. Christy, were recovered (*Galveston Daily News* 1972).

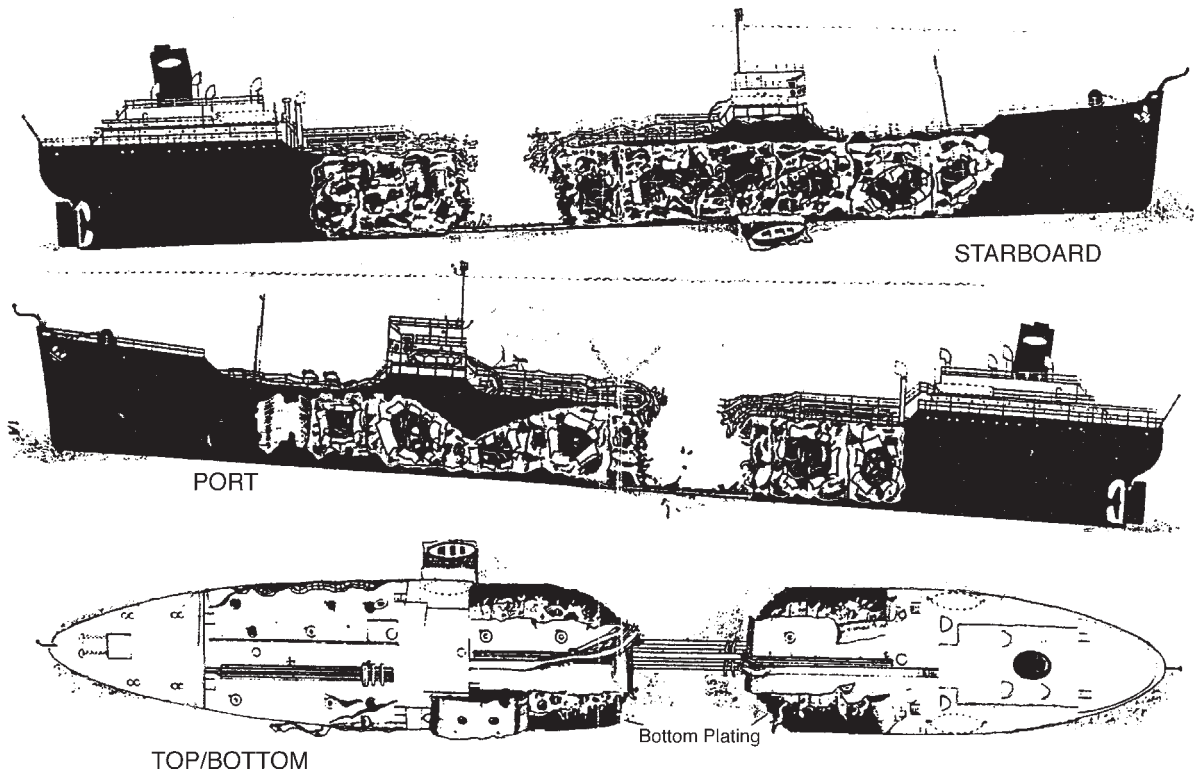


Figure 27. Explosion damage to the *V.A. Fogg* from the USCG accident report.

The sudden, violent end of the *Fogg*, and the mystery surrounding her disappearance, have given the wreck a certain notoriety. The wreck lies relatively close to shore, and in shallow enough water that it has become a popular site for sport divers. Fittings and other objects found drifting after the disaster along

with those removed from the wreck itself by divers can be found in many shops, restaurants and private homes along the Upper Texas Coast. The *William H. Allen* and the *B.F. Shaw* later joined the *Fogg* as the site became part of the Artificial Reef Program (Archeological Site No. 41GV136).

SS V.A. Fogg (ex-SS Four Lakes)

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	Mobile, AL (maiden voyage)	Galveston, TX	1/29/44	1/30/44
2	Galveston & Bay Town	New York	2/3/44	2/9/44
3	New York	Baton Rouge, LA	2/14/44	2/21/44
4	Baton Rouge	New York	2/24/44	2/29/44
5	New York	Liverpool, England	3/1/44	3/12/44
6	Liverpool	Philadelphia, PA	3/16/44	3/28/44
7	New York	Liverpool	4/6/44	4/18/44
8	Belfast, Ireland	New York	4/23/44	5/2/44
9	New York	Liverpool	5/12/44	5/23/44
10	Liverpool	New York	5/28/44	6/9/44
11	Norfolk, VA	Gibraltar	7/1/44	7/15/44
12	Gibraltar	New York	7/24/44	8/3/44
13	New York	Swansea, Wales	8/11/44	8/22/44
14	New York	Avonmouth, England	9/12/44	9/22/44
15	Avonmouth	New York	9/26/44	10/8/44
16	New York	Naples, Italy	10/14/44	10/28/44
17	Naples	New York	11/3/44	11/17/44
18	New York	Swansea	11/23/44	12/4/44
19	Liverpool	Baltimore, MD	12/9/44	12/23/44
20	New York	Madras, India	1/19/45	2/20/45
21	Madras	Naples	2/23/45	4/7/45
22	Naples	New York	4/9/45	4/23/45
23	New York	London	4/24/45	5/5/45
24	Southend, England	New York	5/8/45	5/19/45
25	New York	Madras	6/4/45	7/4/45
26	Abadan, Iran	Manila, PI	7/24/45	8/22/45
27	Canal Zone	San Pedro, CA	10/15/45	10/28/45
28	Los Angeles, CA	Houston, TX	11/2/45	11/19/45
29	Hamburg, Germany		12/6/45	
30	Texas City, TX	Baltimore	7/1/46	7/13/46

SS Rachel Jackson

Named for President Andrew Jackson's wife, the *Rachel Jackson* was completed by the California Shipbuilding Corporation in Los Angeles on March 19, 1943. A few days later shipyard workers mounted nine 20-mm antiaircraft guns and a single, 3"/50 caliber dual-purpose gun. Later, one of the 20-mm guns was replaced with a second 3-inch gun. The ship was chartered by the War Shipping Administration to the Black Diamond Steamship Company.

The *Jackson* moved up the coast of California to San Francisco, where she took on general cargo, and sailed independently for Sydney, Australia on April 6, 1943. It was an eventful voyage. On the tenth evening out, south of the equator, lookouts aboard the *Jackson* spotted an angular shape about 2,000 yards off the starboard beam. The *Liberty* went to General Quarters, and while the naval gunners tried to train their 3-inch gun on the target, it appeared to submerge. A few minutes later, a torpedo track was reported heading for the ship, but the *Jackson's* forward motion carried the ship past the point of impact and the torpedo passed a scant 20 yards astern. The submarine surfaced again on the starboard beam, and the Armed Guard opened fire. The second 3-inch shot hit the conning tower and exploded, after which the submarine submerged and was not seen again. The officer commanding the Naval Armed Guard, Lt. (jg) Marion Kenneth Vickery, USNR, reported that his men's good shooting had "resulted in at least the badly damaging of said vessel."

From Sydney, the *Jackson* continued on in convoy to Milne Bay, New Guinea. She later returned to Australia, and on October 13, 1943 set out on a return voyage to the US. Despite the Armed Guard's success in defeating a submarine attack on the outward voyage, however, tensions between naval and merchant marine personnel ran very high during the remainder of the eight-month voyage. The *Rachel Jackson* must have been a very unhappy ship. Upon the *Liberty's* return to the US, in mid-November 1943, Lt. Vickery filed a detailed and scathing report, accusing the captain of breaches of wartime regulations and citing several occasions where the master's actions placed the ship and her personnel in serious danger. According to Vickery, the master would not allow the Armed Guard to hold General Quarters drills unless the civilian crew was notified in advance, so that they would not have

to "turn to" themselves. When some of the Armed Guard gunners were ill and Vickery assigned his two naval signalmen to stand lookout watches temporarily, the captain dressed him down for making the assignment without his permission. The master refused to move cargo booms and other obstructions in the gunners' arc of fire, and left the life raft assigned to the Armed Guard (the civilian crew were assigned to lifeboats) on deck during part of the voyage, from which position it could not be launched in an emergency. Finally, and perhaps most important, the master refused to share with the naval officer reports of submarine sightings in the area.

Vickery's allegations were taken very seriously, and G. W. D. Dashiell, Port Director for the Naval Transportation Service at San Pedro, interviewed the captain at length about the naval officer's charges. Dashiell later reported that the master denied some of Vickery's allegations, but partially admitted some others. The port director observed the master carefully during the interview, and concluded that most of Vickery's complaints were probably justified. Dashiell also noted that he "has a distinct foreign accent that appears to be Germanic," and that the master's name had been added to the Merchant Marine Suspect List as of September 1, 1943. Lastly, Dashiell observed that while "there is nothing definite to indicate that he is Pro-Nazi... it appears that he has Nazi sympathies and is antagonistic toward Russia."

Dashiell's report is interesting, in that it gives some indication of the way wartime suspicions and prejudices found their way into official correspondence. While it appears from the available evidence that the captain was careless and arbitrary in handling his ship, and that (in the words of Lt. Vickery) he did not "really understand the connection between the Navy gun crew and his merchant seamen," there is no evidence that this stemmed from any ulterior motives. During wartime, though, suspicion alone was often enough. Though the final outcome of Vickery's charges and subsequent investigation are not recorded, it is quite possible that the captain found himself removed from command of the *Jackson* as a result.

The *Jackson* sailed again from San Pedro on November 30, 1943. With a cargo of general material and aircraft consigned to the Army, she steamed alone southwest across the Pacific. After an over-

night stop at Hobart, Tasmania on December 30-31, she continued west and north into the Indian Ocean and arrived at Karachi, India (now Pakistan) on January 25, 1944. She off-loaded at Karachi and, taking on a combined load of general cargo and explosives, she sailed to Bombay, where she joined a small convoy and continued on to Colombo and Calcutta, arriving on February 23.

At Calcutta the *Jackson* loaded a cargo of varied items and steamed in convoy to Suez, Egypt, at the southern end of the Suez Canal. While there, early on the morning of April 10, 1944, one of the *Jackson's* boilers exploded. She managed to pass through the canal to Port Said, but was delayed there for the next month due to a lack of repair facilities.

On May 14, the *Jackson* sailed eastward in an 80-ship convoy. The *Liberty* was unable to keep up with the other ships, though, due to an accumulation of marine growth on the ship's bottom, and was instructed to put into Casablanca. She arrived at the Moroccan port on May 26. She joined a second convoy at Casablanca, and sailed on June 4 for New York. The 62 merchantmen and 12 escorts crossed the Atlantic without incident, and arrived at New York on June 19, 1944.

With a load of general cargo, the *Rachel Jackson* sailed again on July 11. She steamed in a convoy of 21 merchantmen and seven escorts for Norfolk, Virginia, where they rendezvoused with a larger contingent of ships bound for the Mediterranean. The full convoy, with 72 merchantmen and 13 escorts, sailed on July 14. The track across the Atlantic was uneventful, and the convoy passed through the Strait of Gibraltar on July 29. After entering the Mediterranean, merchantmen and escorts began breaking off and joining the convoy at regular intervals. Three days after entering the Mediterranean, the convoy fired on aircraft passing over the convoy at night. Early on the morning of August 5, just after midnight, a lookout reported seeing flares and antiaircraft fire coming from ships on the left flank of the convoy. The *Jackson* went to General Quarters, and radio operators aboard the *Liberty* heard distress calls from ship number 15, the fifth vessel in the first column of the convoy. An enemy plane, believed to be a Junkers Ju-88 medium bomber, approached the *Rachel Jackson* from aft of the starboard beam. The Armed Guard gunners opened fire when the plane was 750 to 1,000 yards

from the ship. The plane banked sharply right, passed along the starboard side of the *Jackson* and disappeared into a smoke screen being laid by other ships in the convoy. The gunners could not confirm damage to the bomber, but were certain they saw tracer fire from the *Jackson's* 20-mm guns going into the aircraft. The convoy continued on without further incident, and arrived at Alexandria, Egypt two days later.

At Alexandria, she took on a load of British motor transport vehicles, troops and ammunition. These were consigned to be shipped to Italy, where the British 8th Army was busy fighting its way northward up the peninsula. On August 28, she sailed in convoy with 15 other merchantmen and five escorts. Off Malta, nine merchantmen left the convoy, which continued on to Augusta, Sicily. She sailed from Augusta in convoy with 25 merchantmen and three escorts. The *Rachel Jackson*, together with eight other merchantmen, departed the convoy shortly thereafter and steamed into the harbor at Taranto, Italy, arriving late on the afternoon of September 5, 1944.

At Taranto, the *Jackson* unloaded her cargo of military vehicles and took aboard a similar cargo, along with 54 military personnel as passengers. She sailed in convoy for Augusta on September 10. From Augusta she continued in convoy to Malta, and from Malta to Algiers in North Africa, where she arrived on September 20. She unloaded her cargo and took aboard more general cargo and military transport vehicles destined for Italy. She sailed on October 1 in convoy for Malta, and from there proceeded in convoy to Naples, arriving on October 7, 1944.

She sailed independently, in ballast, for Cagliari, Sardinia on October 15. At Cagliari, she loaded more supplies, ammunition and military vehicles and returned in convoy to Naples. Both at Cagliari and Naples, the crew experienced considerable frustration at the length of time it took to unload the *Jackson*, due to the lack of dockside transportation facilities and the inexperience of "native labor in discharging cargo." After unloading her cargo, she sailed in convoy to Oran, Algiers, where she joined a larger convoy headed west across the Atlantic. With 97 other merchantmen, one destroyer and seven destroyer escorts, she sailed on December 3. The westbound crossing passed without incident and, after detaching several vessels for Bermuda, the

convoy arrived safely at Charleston, South Carolina on December 21, 1944.

The *Rachel Jackson* returned to the Mediterranean, and in mid-February at Marseilles loaded a cargo of lumber, personnel and equipment consigned to the Army. She sailed on February 14, 1945 for Naples. Shortly after clearing the harbor at Marseilles, the *Jackson's* lookouts spotted a floating mine. The Armed Guard opened fire on it with one of the Liberty's 3-inch guns, but were unable to detonate the device. The *Jackson* radioed the location to the port director at Marseilles and continued on to Naples, arriving there on February 16.

At Naples the *Jackson* loaded a cargo of Canadian military vehicles and personnel. She returned to Marseilles, arriving on March 2, 1945. Again she took on a cargo of flatting lumber destined for Naples. She arrived at Naples on March 6, but the berth assigned her was too short and shallow for the *Jackson* to enter fully loaded. The crew of the *Jackson* was forced to lie in the anchorage and unload cargo into barges until the Liberty was lightened enough to fit her assigned berth.

Over the following month, the *Rachel Jackson* made three more round trips between Naples and Marseilles, carrying military vehicles, personnel and general cargo. She sailed in small convoys eastbound, but each time returned to Naples independently. On April 9, the *Jackson* sailed alone to Oran, where she joined a westbound convoy of 43 other merchantmen and five escorts. The convoy sailed on April 12, crossed the Atlantic without incident, and arrived at San Juan, Puerto Rico on April 29, 1945. The *Jackson* continued independently to Guantanamo, Cuba, where she arrived on May 11. At Guantanamo she joined a large northbound convoy, which sailed on May 13 for New York. Two days out from Cuba, the convoy received orders to disperse and for all ships to proceed to their destinations independently.

With the war in Europe almost over, collision at sea seemed a more likely threat than U-boats, and the merchantmen were allowed to use their running lights again. The *Jackson* arrived in New York about May 19, 1945.

The War Shipping Administration lost no time in transferring the *Rachel Jackson* to the Pacific. Loaded with a cargo of supplies and equipment consigned to the Army, she passed through the Panama Canal into the Pacific in August 1945 and on the 28th of that month sailed independently for the Philippines. She arrived at Tacloban on October 3, and three days later sailed for Okinawa. The *Jackson* arrived at Okinawa on October 14. On October 27, she sailed for Japan, arriving at Wakayama, on November 1. She departed Wakayama for the US on November 16, and the following day, in accordance with orders, dropped her remaining ammunition overboard. En route, the Naval Armed Guard readied the *Jackson's* guns and naval equipment for removal. She arrived at the Panama Canal on December 20, 1945, passed through the canal, and arrived at Philadelphia about December 28, 1945. The *Jackson's* last voyage under wartime command was the one-day trip from Cape May, New Jersey, to Norfolk, Virginia. She anchored in Hampton Roads, Virginia, on January 8, 1946. The last commanding officer of her Naval Armed Guard was Seaman 1st Class Harry William Butler, USNR.

The *Jackson's* guns were removed by February 1, 1946, and the following August she joined the National Defense Reserve Fleet in the James River, Virginia. She returned to service briefly in late 1951, when she was chartered by the New York and Cuba Mail Steamship Company. The *Jackson* returned to the Reserve Fleet, this time at Beaumont, in June 1952. She remained at anchor in the Sabine until July 29, 1975, when she was purchased by the State of Texas for the Artificial Fish Reef Program (Archeological Site No. 41NU279).

SS Rachel Jackson

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	San Francisco	Sydney, Australia	4/6/43	5/1/43
2	Calcutta, India	Casa Blanca	3/4/44	5/27/44
3	Casa Blanca	New York	6/4/44	6/7/44

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
4	New York	Alexandria, Egypt	7/11/44	8/7/44
5	Alexandria	Taranto, Italy	8/28/44	9/5/44
6	Taranto	Algiers, Algeria	9/10/44	9/20/44
7	Algiers	Augusta, Sicily	10/1/44	10/5/44
8	Augusta	Naples, Italy	10/6/44	10/7/44
9	Naples	Cagliari, Sardinia	10/15/44	10/16/44
10	Cagliari	Naples	11/1/44	11/2/44
11	Naples	Oran, Algeria	11/26/44	11/30/44
12	Oran	Charleston, SC	12/3/44	12/21/44
13	Marseilles, France	Naples	2/14/45	2/16/45
14	Naples	Marseilles	2/28/45	3/2/45
15	Marseilles	Naples	3/4/45	3/6/45
16	Naples	Marseilles	3/12/45	3/14/45
17	Marseilles	Naples	3/15/45	3/17/45
18	Naples	Marseilles	3/21/45	3/23/45
19	Marseilles	Naples	3/24/45	3/26/45
20	Naples	Marseilles	4/3/45	4/5/45
21	Marseilles	Oran	4/9/45	4/11/45
22	Oran	San Juan, P.R.	4/12/45	4/29/45
23	San Juan	Aguirre, P.R.	4/30/45	5/1/45
24	Aguirre	Guayanilla	5/6/45	5/6/45
25	Guayanilla	Guantanamo, Cuba	5/9/45	5/11/45
26	Guantanamo		5/13/45	
27	Canal Zone, Panama	Tacloban, P.I.	8/28/45	10/3/45
28	Tacloban	Okinawa	10/6/45	10/14/45
29	Okinawa	Wakayama, Japan	10/27/45	11/1/45
30	Wakayama	Canal Zone	11/16/45	12/20/45
31	Canal Zone		12/20/45	
32	Cape May, NJ	Norfolk, VA	1/8/46	1/8/46

SS Dwight L. Moody

Dwight L. Moody was a non-denominational religious revivalist in the 19th century, who was very popular in both England and America. The Liberty Ship named for him was completed by the J. A. Jones Construction Co. in Panama City, Florida on July 24,

1943. That same day her official owners, the US Maritime Commission, chartered her to the Lykes Brothers Steamship Company. The company, more popularly known as "Lykes Lines" for the bold lettering carried along its ships' hulls in peacetime, had been founded in Galveston early in the 20th century. Lykes Lines expanded quickly in the 1920s

and 1930s, and either owned or chartered many vessels during World War II.

The Navy's Bureau of Ordnance originally equipped the freighter with a single 3"/50 caliber gun, intended for use against both airborne and surface targets, and nine 20-mm anti-aircraft weapons. Later one 20-mm gun was removed and replaced with a second 3-inch gun.

Dwight L. Moody's first wartime voyage was a short round trip from Florida to Puerto Rico to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and back to Florida. In September, loaded with a cargo of sugar, she sailed from Key West to New York, where she joined 37 other merchant ships in convoy to Great Britain. With four escorts (later increased to eight), the convoy sailed on September 28, 1943, and arrived at Loch Ewe, Scotland on October 12. She left the same day in another convoy that took her around the coast of Scotland to Methil, and from there to London, where she arrived on the afternoon of October 17.

While in London, the *Moody's* crew discovered that local regulations had a dramatic impact on their personal comfort. Probably in an effort to limit the amount of sewage dumped into the Thames – one of the world's most historic and dirtiest rivers – crews of vessels at the Port of London were required to go ashore to relieve themselves. The washrooms, or "heads," aboard ship were padlocked. It is not clear whether the *Moody's* crew used the shore side facilities or found some other surreptitious answer to the problem.

At Tilbury, near London, *Dwight L. Moody* off loaded her cargo of sugar and took on ballast for the return trip to across the Atlantic. Again in convoy, she retraced her course around the east coast of Britain to Loch Ewe. She sailed on November 13, 1943 in a convoy of about 45 vessels, with eight escorts, and after a mostly uneventful trip arrived at St. John, New Brunswick on November 28.

The commander of the *Moody's* Naval Armed Guard, Lieutenant David Marx, USNR, discovered on the eastbound passage that sometimes a ship's safety was considered secondary to her profit margin. The dispute involved the use of torpedo nets, curtains of thin wire mesh that were suspended out to the side of the ship from booms. The idea of the nets, which were normally used to protect anchored vessels, was that they would explode an incoming torpedo before it reached the

hull. The *Moody's* crew deployed the ship's torpedo nets while en route to Canada, on November 17, and hauled them in again the following day when the seas became rough. Marx suggested to the *Moody's* master on several other occasions that it might be appropriate to use the nets. The master refused, citing the difficulty of rigging the nets and that the extra work would make it necessary for the steamship company to pay overtime wages to the civilian crew. It is not difficult to imagine the reaction to this argument of the Navy gun crew, to whom profits mattered little and overtime wages were but a peacetime memory.

After taking on a load of general cargo, the *Moody* steamed to Halifax, where she joined a 52-ship eastbound convoy. The convoy sailed on December 17, 1943, under escort of seven naval vessels, and arrived in Liverpool on December 30. On January 2, 1944, the *Moody* proceeded alone to Manchester, where she unloaded her cargo. She returned to Liverpool in ballast a few days later and joined a large westbound convoy. The convoy sailed on January 24, but ran into heavy seas on the route back. On the evening of January 31, the *Moody* ran into seas so heavy that she was forced to break away from the convoy. The following afternoon she was able to get underway again, and steamed alone to Halifax, where she arrived on February 8, 1944.

The *Moody* probably made at least one more round trip to Europe that spring. In June she was in the Mediterranean, carrying cargoes to support the Allies' steady advances in Italy. She carried a cargo of coal from Naples to Palermo, Sicily, and in July carried a cargo of Army vehicles and scrap metal from Italy to Bizerte, French North Africa (now Tunisia). On July 20, 1944, still loaded with the trucks and scrap metal, the *Moody* sailed from Bizerte in convoy with approximately 50 other ships for New York.

Up to this point, the *Dwight L. Moody's* career had been relatively peaceful. On her next eastbound trip, however, that was to change. She sailed from New York on August 25 in a convoy of 73 merchant ships, 5 escort vessels and 4 MAC (Merchant Aircraft Carrier) ships. Three days later the convoy rendezvoused with a second group of ships, probably from Halifax, consisting of 33 merchant ships and an unknown number of escorts. The combined convoy continued north and east for several days. At 0455

on the morning of September 8, however, when the convoy was just off the Irish coast, two ships on the port beam of the convoy were torpedoed. The men aboard the *Dwight L. Moody* heard four or five explosions; no one was sure of the exact number. One ship, believed to be the *Leif Ericson*, burst into flames and sank within three minutes of the initial explosion. A second ship, believed to be a Liberty, was also hit. The escorts began dropping depth charges, and the officers and crew of the *Moody* continued to hear the frequent rumble of depth charges until 1030 that morning. The convoy sailed on, arriving at Manchester on September 10.

She sailed for New York again on September 15 with 1,500 tons of ballast in her holds. There were no successful attacks on the convoy, but the escorts kept busy dropping depth charges on suspicious contacts on the port (south) side of the convoy. The convoy did not zig-zag. The weather was mostly clear, but the seas were often very heavy. The *Moody* rolled badly, and shipped green water over the bulwarks frequently. It was impossible to man the guns forward of the superstructure in a heavy sea. But the rolling was not only uncomfortable, it also put the vessel in serious danger of foundering. The ballast provided was too light - the ship's

officer thought 2,000 tons more adequate - and tended to shift dangerously in heavy seas. The practice at the time was to use some loose material such as slag for ballast, as this could be removed quickly when the ship reached port. But, as the new officer in charge of the Naval Armed Guard, Lieutenant Sidney T. Feinberg, pointed out, the ship was not fitted with adequate baffles inside the holds to prevent the ballast from shifting when the ship rolled. If a ship rolled heavily to one side repeatedly, the ballast could gradually shift to that side, giving the ship a dangerous list. If the rolling continued, the ship would roll farther and farther to one side until she finally capsized (Figure 28).

The *Moody* arrived at New York safely on October 5, 1944. She dropped down to Norfolk, Virginia, where she took on a cargo of general merchandise, and on October 21 sailed in convoy for Marseilles, France. A few days later it was discovered that the forward ammunition magazine, directly under the 3-inch gun tub on the bow, had flooded with sea water. The magazine was pumped dry and the ammunition removed, dried and greased. Much of the ammunition was found to be badly damaged, however, and on October 31 the explosives were dropped overboard. The 61-ship

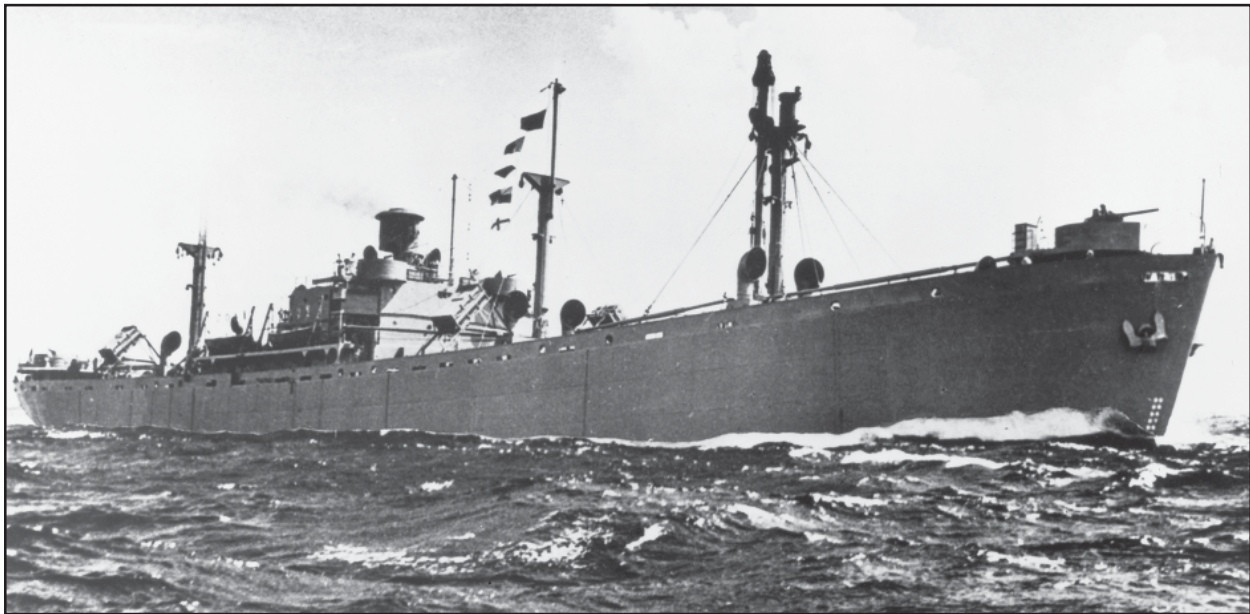


Figure 28. A Liberty Ship pitches in rough seas, North Atlantic, December 1943. A number of ships broke apart in such conditions, giving the type a bad reputation among merchant seamen. The danger was increased by the use of welded construction, which allowed a crack to spread from one plate to the next, and the common practice of ballasting the vessels too lightly (Imperial War Museum).

convoy arrived in France on November 16 after an otherwise uneventful passage.

From France the *Moody* crossed the Mediterranean independently to Oran, where she joined a large eastbound convoy. The 80 merchant vessels and seven escorts sailed for Bermuda on December 13, 1944. Once again the lack of sufficient ballast caused the ship to pitch and roll heavily. From Bermuda, the *Moody* sailed on alone to New Orleans, where she arrived in mid-January 1945.

The *Dwight L. Moody* sailed independently from New Orleans on January 25 for the Panama Canal with general cargo consigned to the Army. She passed through the canal around the first day of February 1945, and continued alone across the Pacific. She arrived at Eniwetok on March 2, and proceeded from there to Manus with one other merchantman and a single escort. From Manus she sailed alone to Hollandia, on the north coast of New Guinea, and from there in a 28-ship convoy to San Fabian (Philippines), arriving on the morning of March 26, 1945. There appears to have been some concern over the quality of the consumables during the long voyage, since the naval officer commanding the Armed Guard recommended that Navy doctors be required to inspect the food aboard merchant ships carrying naval gun crews.

The *Dwight L. Moody* sailed for Hollandia on April 10 with a load of Army cargo and in a convoy of 46 merchantmen and three escorts. From Hollandia, she sailed alone to Cairns and Biak, where she arrived on May 14, 1945. She joined a small convoy to Morotai, and there joined a larger convoy for Brunei, arriving on June 11. Three nights later, at 9 p.m., a single Japanese medium bomber,

known as a "Betty" to the Allies, overflew the anchorage at Brunei and dropped a single bomb about a mile away from the *Moody*. The Liberty Ship's gun crews opened fire with the 20-mm guns, as did other ships in the anchorage. The bomber was hit and crashed, but gunners from another ship got credit for the "kill."

From Brunei, the *Dwight L. Moody* sailed in convoy for Morotai, arriving on June 30, 1945. From there she sailed alone to Mios Woendi, Hollandia, Manus and, finally, Panama. She passed through the Panama Canal eastbound on August 27 or 28, and steamed for New York. On the route back to the US, the lieutenant in charge of the gun crew, James A. Page, tried to keep up the wartime routine of regular gun drills, but the war was effectively over, and the ship's civilian crew had little incentive to participate. Page noted dryly that "not much cooperation was received from the merchant marines." She arrived at New York on September 5, 1945.

The *Moody* had her armament removed in late 1945, and the following spring was transferred to the Reserve Fleet at Lee Hall, Virginia. She remained "in mothballs" for nearly a year, but was again chartered to Lykes Lines in April 1947. Her charter was transferred to the Mississippi Shipping Company on January 13, 1950, and 10 days later she was again placed in reserve at Beaumont, Texas. In May 1951 she was chartered to the Moore-McCormick Line, possibly for transport duty during the Korean War, but returned again to the Beaumont Reserve Fleet in June 1952. On July 1, 1975, the *Dwight L. Moody* was purchased by the State of Texas for the Artificial Fish Reef Program (Archaeological Site No. 41MG83).

SS Dwight L. Moody

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	San Juan, Puerto Rico	Ponce, P.R.	8/29/43	8/30/43
2	Ponce	Jobos, P.R.	9/3/43	9/3/43
3	Jobos	Mayaguez, P.R.	9/6/43	9/7/43
4	Mayaguez	Guantanamo Bay, Cuba	9/9/43	9/11/43
5	Guantanamo Bay	Key West, FL	9/12/43	9/15/43
6	Key West	New York	9/16/43	9/22/43
7	New York	Loch Ewe, Scotland	9/28/43	10/12/43

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
8	Loch Ewe	Methil, Scotland	10/12/43	10/14/43
9	Methil	London, England	10/14/43	10/17/43
10	London	Methil	11/6/43	11/9/43
11	Methil	Loch Ewe	11/11/43	11/12/43
12	Loch Ewe	St. John, New Brunswick	11/13/43	11/28/43
13	St. John	Halifax, Nova Scotia	12/15/43	12/17/43
14	Halifax	Liverpool, England	12/17/43	12/30/43
15	Liverpool	Manchester, England	1/2/44	1/3/44
16	Manchester	Liverpool	1/16/44	1/17/44
17	Liverpool	Halifax, Nova Scotia	1/24/44	2/8/44
18	Naples, Italy	Reggio, Italy	6/26/44	6/27/44
19	Reggio	Palermo, Sicily	7/6/44	7/7/44
20	Palermo	Bizerte, French North Africa	7/14/44	7/15/44
21	Bizerte	New York	7/20/44	8/8/44
22	New York	Manchester	8/25/44	9/10/44
23	Manchester	New York	9/15/44	10/5/44
24	Norfolk, VA	Marseilles, France	10/21/44	11/16/44
25	Port Du Bou	New Orleans, LA	12/13/44	1/15/45
26	New Orleans	Panama	1/25/45	1/30/45
27	Panama	Eniwetok	2/2/45	3/2/45
28	Eniwetok	Manus	3/45	3/11/45
29	Manus	Hollandia	3/11/45	3/13/45
30	Hollandia	San Fabian	3/15/45	3/26/45
31	Brunei	Morotai	6/25/45	6/30/45
32	Morotai	Mios Woendi	7/2/45	7/5/45
33	Mios Woendi	Hollandia	7/7/45	7/12/45
34	Hollandia	Manus	7/12/45	7/14/45
35	Manus	Balboa	7/26/45	8/27/45
36	Panama	New York	8/28/45	9/5/45

SS Edward W. Scripps

Edward W. Scripps founded the Scripps Institute of Oceanography in San Diego, and ran the newspaper organization that would evolve into United Press International. His name sake Liberty Ship was completed by the California Shipbuilding Corporation of Los Angeles, California on May 11, 1943. She

was operated by the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) under a charter from the War Shipping Administration. On May 17, 1943, one 3"/50 caliber gun and nine 20-mm guns were installed, and her armed guard was placed on board. One of the 20-mm guns was removed November 8, 1943, and an additional 3-inch gun put in its place.

The first war-time voyage of the *Edward Scripps* took her from Wilmington to Calcutta, India. The Liberty left the harbor at San Pedro May 21, 1943 and arrived in India July 19. It was a routine journey. No enemy was encountered, and running lights were not shown. She left Calcutta August 11, and sailed to Australia en route to Baltimore. It was not until she arrived at Key West October 18 for the final leg of the journey that the ship joined a small convoy of 10 merchantmen with four escorts, occasionally supported by aircraft. Depth charges were dropped by the escort October 22 and 24, and an emergency 45 degree turn was ordered. She arrived in Baltimore October 26, 1943.

There was no contact with the enemy or anything out of the ordinary on her next voyage, from Norfolk to Cardiff, Wales in a 60 ship convoy with 10 escorts and an aircraft carrier. In Cardiff, her cargo was unloaded and she took on slag and salt water for ballast as aids in keeping the propeller under water. She left Cardiff December 23, sailed to Milford Haven, Wales, and then joined a convoy traveling through the Irish Sea. Once in the Irish Sea, the crew had to stop the engine several times in order to repair the steering gear. The ship had, up to this point, managed to keep up with the convoy. However, on December 25 it became apparent that further repairs were inevitable. The commodore of the convoy was signaled, and the ship headed toward Belfast. Once in port, repairs were made to the telemotor. The ship joined a convoy outside of Bangor January 1, 1944.

The seas were exceptionally rough, and for the next 36 hours the vessel was tossed violently about in the raging waters. Each time the ship pitched and the propellers would clear water, strong vibrations would shake the ship. Engineers worked around the clock attempting to keep the ship's engines from racing. Keeping up with the convoy was proving to be an effort. Early the morning of January 2, a vibration so strong went through the *Edward W. Scripps* that some men were thrown from their bunks. Initially, it was thought the ship had been hit by a torpedo. As daylight broke, the captain and chief engineer inspected the vessel and found that three plates on the main deck were cracked. Weather conditions were still rough, and winds were continuing to increase. Under the fear that continuing on would further damage the ship, she had to

leave the convoy, anchoring at Gourock, Scotland January 3. A life raft was lost on the journey. She was repaired at Glasgow and returned to Gourock to join 40 merchantmen, escorted by corvettes, frigates and two merchant aircraft carriers, and anchored at City Island, New York February 18.

The *Scripps* left the anchorage at Boston Harbor March 10 and arrived in Wales March 29. There was no contact with the enemy, but depth charges were dropped and U-boats were apparently in the area. There are no further details. Her next assignments included several missions during the Normandy invasion, with cargoes of Army and Red Cross personnel and vehicles, but records are scarce. Records continue to be spotty up to late July 1944. The ship was continuing her missions between Southampton, England and Allied invasion beaches at Normandy. A series of red alerts, including two possibly caused by flying bombs, followed swiftly by all clear signals occurred July 23 and July 24. There was a yellow radio air raid alert the morning of July 25, but before a final warning was delivered, bursts of anti-aircraft fire targeted at planes flying over the ship were heard. Shells exploded directly above the ship, and bullets hit the water just past the stern of the ship.

A report completed in September gives a bit more information regarding the wartime role of the *Edward W. Scripps* during this period. The Liberty made eight crossings between Southampton and Normandy, sometimes with as many as 176 merchantmen. There were a total of 56 air raid warnings between June 6, 1944 and August 1. On four occasions, the ship itself fired upon enemy targets, spending a total of 986 20-mm rounds, and 53 3-inch rounds. The ship was struck several times by bullets and shell fragments. No naval personnel were injured, but others aboard the ship were.

The naval commander was upset by the use of running lights by other ships in the convoy during the return voyage to New York. Even though the weather was clear, the ships were showing stern and masthead lights, and using signal searchlights after sundown, disregarding the safety of other ships in the convoy.

The Liberty ship next sailed New York September 15 and landed in Hull, England with a cargo of explosives. She sailed with 68 merchantmen and four escorts. While still docked at New York, an

enlisted man was alleged to have been smoking in his bunk (which was against regulations, possibly due to the nature of the cargo) and passed out after drinking too much alcohol. The bunk caught fire, and the man was removed from ship and placed in detention at Brooklyn. Damage was confined to the bunk. Once underway, a warning flag was hoisted by another ship in the convoy, but no submarines were encountered. Life boat Number Three was lost October 3, the result of high winds. October 4 was election day, but apparently no one aboard thought to vote. The guns were fired, and all were found to be functioning properly. The *Scripps* arrived in England October 14. The ship's master was complimented for the good relations that prevailed between the armed guard and the civilian crew. She departed for New York October 22 in a convoy that had 52 vessels and six escorts, including an aircraft carrier.

Eight robot bombs flew above the ship October 23. The *Edward W. Scripps* was under the command of an English pilot as the ship was still navigating its way out of Southend. The pilot believed the bombs were dropped by a Luftwaffe He111 at an altitude of 20,000 feet. The bombs dropped straight down until they reached 5,000 feet. At that point, the bomb's motor cut in, and the bombs started toward their targets. The pilot noted that the Germans often timed their bombing attacks to when factory workers in London would be changing shifts. Four of the eight bombs were shot down by shore batteries. The *Scripps* itself did not fire upon any of the bombs. English authorities had prohibited her from firing, because if the bomb was struck, its course could be altered and it could strike within the convoy. Since the convoy was not the target of the robot bomb attack, this was not considered contact with the enemy.

The naval commander felt slighted on October 24 when the master and the chief radio operator were taken off the vessel by the British cutter Sun111 for a convoy conference. The commander was told he was welcome to attend, but there would be no room for him aboard the cutter. Navy instructions to Armed Guard officers specified that they were to attend convoy conferences with the ship's chief officers. A potential problem was avoided when 15 dock workers were discovered smoking while unloading explosives at Hull. The naval

commander told the petty officer who reported the episode to take any action necessary to prevent a second occurrence.

The *Scripps* returned to New York and left again for Hull November 24 with a load of explosives. There were 35 merchantmen in the convoy, with 10 corvettes and one carrier serving as escorts. The escort on the port quarter dropped five depth charges the afternoon of December 8, but nothing came of it. Two 45 degree turns were executed as practice, and 480 rounds were discharged from the 20-mm guns, also as practice. The ship began its return to New York December 22. There was another convoy conference December 23. This time, the naval commander made certain to attend. Two alerts were called during the voyage. The first occurred December 25. The escort dropped two depth charges, and an emergency 45 degree turn toward starboard was made. A second alert was called December 27. The commodore of the convoy signaled that they were in danger due to submarines. Although no submarines were visible, another emergency 45 degree turn to starboard was made. A note was made concerning a defect in the starboard 3"/50 caliber gun. The shell was ejecting too slowly, and the problem would be taken care of when the ship arrived in New York.

Her next trip was from New York to Marseilles, France. Her cargo was explosives, and there were 36 ships in the convoy with five escort vessels. She arrived in Marseilles February 16, 1945. From Marseilles, the *Edward W. Scripps* sailed independently from to Oran, North Africa. From Oran to Bermuda, the Liberty was in convoy with 40 other vessels and five escorts, and independently again from Bermuda to Galveston. While docked at Marseilles, a general alarm was sounded as planes, possibly enemy reconnaissance, were heard flying high overhead. Shore batteries attacked the plane with anti-aircraft fire, but it is not known if the plane was hit. On February 28, 1945, the Commodore signaled the convoy to make an emergency turn to starboard. The location was 34° 20' N, 8° 30' W. Three of the escort vessels went to the port quarter, and depth charges were heard. An emergency turn to port was ordered, and General Quarters sounded. The convoy received no official word on this incident, but on that same day at location 34° 30' N, 8° 13' W, U-boat 869 was sunk and all hands on

board were lost (Cremer 1984: 234). Once the ship arrived in Galveston, another defect concerning the starboard 3"/50 caliber gun was brought to the attention of the port director. The electrical firing mechanism had failed due to exposure to salt water and sea air.

The ship left Houston April 6 with explosives and a deck cargo of gliders and sailed to Charleston, South Carolina. The gliders and 300 tons of defective bombs were unloaded. Because of the unloading, the *Scripps* was delayed in port for eight days. Airplane engines were then taken aboard, and the Liberty left for New York in a convoy that eventually numbered over 100 vessels. Submarine warnings were issued by the Commodore of the convoy April 22, and seven depth charges dropped by the escorts. The convoy encountered heavy fog May 17 to May 19, and a radio message was received that one ship had struck an iceberg. It was noted that the 3"/50 caliber gun still was not operating satisfactorily. A report was also made that the lock on the gunnery officer's door needed to be replaced. The

Naval Armed Guard officer also remarked that the dummy ammunition for the 50-caliber guns should be made smaller as it did not fit in the breech. She arrived in New York May 25.

From there, she steamed to Cristobal, Panama Canal Zone. Records are incomplete, but on August 7, an exchange of fire and 20 to 25 tracers were reported about two degrees above the horizon. There is no further information available on the wartime service of the *Edward W. Scripps*.

After WWII ended, the *Scripps* continued to be operated by Alcoa until August of 1948 when she was purchased by Blidberg Rothchild of New Orleans. That company held her for two months and she was then placed in the Reserve Fleet. She returned to active service in May 1951, this time operated by the Isthmian Company of Mobile, Alabama. She was again placed in the Reserve Fleet in June 1952. She remained there until May 1975, when the Liberty Ship was purchased by the State of Texas to be used in the Artificial Reef Program (Archeological Site No. 41WY143).

SS Edward W. Scripps

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	San Pedro	Calcutta, India	5/21/43	7/19/43
2	Calcutta	Vizagapatam, India	8/11/43	8/14/43
3	Vizagapatam	Colombo, Ceylon	8/17/43	8/21/43
4	Colombo	Freemantle, Australia	8/22/43	9/5/43
5	Freemantle	Cristobal, Canal Zone	9/7/43	10/14/43
6	Cristobal	Key West, FL	10/15/43	10/18/43
7	Key West	Baltimore	10/19/43	10/26/43
8	Norfolk, VA	Hoboken, NJ	11/14/43	11/18/43
9	Hoboken	Cardiff, Wales	11/19/43	12/3/43
10	Cardiff	Milford Haven, England	12/23/43	12/23/43
11	Milford Haven	Bangor, Northern Ireland	12/23/43	12/25/43
12	Bangor	Gourock, Scotland	1/1/44	1/10/44
13	Gourock	Glasgow	1/10/44	1/10/44
14	Glasgow	City Island	1/28/44	2/18/44
15	Weehauken, NJ	Boston	2/25/44	2/26/44
16	Boston	Anchorage	3/9/44	3/9/44
17	Anchorage	Halifax	3/10/44	3/12/44

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
18	Halifax	Swansea Bay, Wales	3/15/44	3/29/44
19	Swansea Bay	Belfast	4/11/44	4/12/44
20	Belfast	Cardiff	4/15/44	4/16/44
21	Cardiff	Clyde River, Scotland	4/17/44	4/19/44
22	Clyde River	Greenock, Scotland	4/22/44	4/22/44
23	Greenock	Clyde River	5/5/44	5/5/44
24	Newport, England		6/2/44	
25	Southampton	Solent, England	6/15/44	6/24/44
26	Solent	Southampton	6/24/44	6/24/44
27	Southampton	Southampton	6/28/44	7/2/44
28	Southampton	Solent	7/4/44	7/4/44
29	Solent	Utah Beach, France	7/5/44	7/5/44
30	Utah Beach	Southampton	7/8/44	7/9/44
31	Southampton	Southampton	7/10/44	7/14/44
32	Southampton	Southampton	7/15/44	7/23/44
33	Southampton	Utah Beach	7/22/44	7/23/44
34	Utah Beach		7/25/44	
35	Southampton	New York	8/2/44	9/2/44
36	New York	Philadelphia	9/15/44	9/15/44
37	Philadelphia	Southend, England	9/24/44	10/22/44
38	Hull, England	New York	10/22/44	11/10/44
39	New York	Hull	11/24/44	12/11/44
40	Hull		12/20/44	
41	New York	Marseilles, France	1/17/45	2/16/45
42	Marseilles	Galveston, Texas	2/23/45	3/21/45
43	Houston, Texas	Charleston, SC	4/6/45	4/25/45
44	Charleston	New Orleans	6/6/45	6/11/45
45	New Orleans	Manila, P.I.	6/27/45	
46	Manila	Newport News, VA	9/24/45	10/3/45

SS B.F. Shaw

Named for an Oregon pioneer and Indian agent, the *B.F. Shaw* was completed by the Oregon Shipbuilding Company of Portland, Oregon on April 17, 1943. One 4"/50 caliber gun, one 3"/50 caliber dual purpose gun, and eight 20-mm antiaircraft machine

guns were placed aboard. After receiving her Naval Armed Guard, the Liberty Ship entered wartime service. She was operated by Northland Transportation Company under Wartime Shipping Contract #619. Typical equipment a vessel of this type geared for military service would carry included cold weather and foul weather gear for her Navy crew,

flashlights, gas masks and other equipment of the sort, as well as recreational equipment such as playing cards, marbles, dominoes and checkerboards for the men to play during the long hours of each day spent in crossing the seas.

Loaded with lumber, the *B.F. Shaw* left Portland May 3, 1943 and headed to Brisbane, Australia on her first mission. In accordance with wartime procedure, she sailed without showing lights and zig-zagged at regular intervals. It is not noted if she traveled in a convoy or arrived at her destination. Her next record has the ship making a trip between Brisbane and Townsville and then back to Brisbane, still with a cargo of lumber. It arrived back from Townsville July 2. During the voyages between the Australian cities, the ship followed written instructions from the Australian Navy. She left Brisbane July 25 with a cargo that included general army material and troops and steamed toward New Guinea. There were 11 other merchantmen in the convoy with one escort vessel and continuous air coverage. She left New Guinea August 29 with one escort and a cargo that included engineering equipment and troops, destined for Goodenough Island. The ship arrived safely August 31. On September 17, 1943 she returned to Australia with ballast.

Her next assignment once again took her from Australia to New Guinea and back. She again carried Army troops and their gear on the outbound portion of the mission, but had no cargo upon returning. Perhaps because of the human cargo, the ship had five escorts as well as continuous air coverage heading toward her destination, but was on her own upon returning. There was one episode of possible enemy contact. The ship had stopped at Goodenough Island, and on the nights of October 8 and 9, air raid warnings sounded. No planes were sighted by the crew of the *Shaw*. After the voyage, Lt. Donald Wise, commanding officer of the Naval Armed Guard, did make a suggestions in his required report. He wanted a passageway cut into the 3"/50 caliber gun tub and ladders placed inside the 20-mm gun stations rather than outside. His suggestions for improving the 20-mm guns continued. He felt the gun tubs should have twin barrel holders, one to be used as a water jacket and the other as a spare barrel holder. The tubs also needed racks welded to them for spare part boxes and loading trays. The magazines' ventilating equipment should be more adequate. Finally, regarding the 4-inch

gun, the doors on the ready boxes should be changed so they swing open from the side instead of the top.

The ship once again left Melbourne October 30, 1943 and steamed toward Auckland, New Zealand with rations. She sailed independently following written instructions from the Australian Navy and arrived without incident November 6. Loaded with Marine Corps supplies and equipment, the *Liberty's* next assignment called for her to head to Hilo, Hawaii. She left New Zealand November 24 with neither convoy nor escort. The ship followed instructions received from the New Zealand Navy in conjunction with the US Navy. The ship arrived without incident December 9. Lt. Wise repeated his remarks concerning the efficiency of the gunnery. The *B.F. Shaw* left Hawaii with a load of sugar and docked at San Francisco two days before Christmas, 1943. She sailed independently, and there were no contacts with the enemy.

She stayed in San Francisco until January 22, 1944, then sailed to Vancouver to load grain. While in Vancouver, a member of the Naval Armed Guard jumped ship. He would be heard from again. After loading a partial cargo of grain, the *Shaw* sailed down to Portland to load more grain, and then departed alone for Cristobal, near the Caribbean entrance to the Panama Canal, on February 6 with no escort and only occasional air support. The ship left Cristobal February 28 and headed to Guantanamo Bay in convoy with 19 ships and five escorts. The *Shaw* arrived in Norfolk March 10, but left with 110 merchantmen and an unknown number of escorts four days later.

Once it passed the Straits of Gibraltar, the *Shaw* and the other merchantmen in Convoy UGS-36 came within range of Luftwaffe aircraft. Though the Germans had been forced out of North Africa and Sicily in 1943, they still controlled the northern shore of the Mediterranean. Luftwaffe reconnaissance aircraft shadowed the convoy. They reported at regular intervals on the 72 merchantmen and 18 LSTs of UGH-36. The escort commander, Captain Harold S. Berdine, USCG had under his command the cutter *Decatur*, seven Coast Guard-manned destroyer escorts, and three old destroyers. Upon passing Gibraltar, Berdine's force was augmented by two seagoing tugs and, more important, the British anti-aircraft cruiser HMS *Colombo*. The latter vessel was equipped with a modern radar and an air combat director team.

Before dawn on April 1, a string of bright parachute flares burst over UGH-36. Twenty or more

German aircraft, including twin-engine Donier Do-217 medium bombers, attacked the convoy about 40 miles west of Algiers. The planes released torpedoes among the merchantmen, one of which hit and damaged the Liberty SS *Jared Ingersoll*. Several German planes were shot down, and others were probably hit and damaged. The body of a German pilot, as well as several survivors, were recovered by the convoy (Morison 1956).

The Armed Guard aboard the *B. F. Shaw* was ordered to hold its fire until it could actually locate a target; the gunners spotted their marks and firing was begun. The crew observed a plane which had been hit and continued to fire upon it until it hit the water. The gun crew shot down three parachute flares, and watched as two bombs landed close by the ship. During the general melee, one of the escorts reported a U-boat contact, and escorts raced in dropping depth charges. The primary effect of these detonations was to add to the general confusion. Lieutenant (jg) Harold Jay Caldwell, USNR, commanding officer of the *Shaw's* Armed Guard, later criticized the conduct of other ships and crews during this attack, calling their firing poor and careless. The ships fired low and directly at the *Shaw*, which was on the outside column on the starboard side. The Liberty's merchant crew suffered two minor casualties. The Armed Guard personnel were later awarded Operation and Engagement stars for their part in the battle, as did 38 other ships sailing in UGH-36.

Additional planes, believed to be Stuka Ju-57 dive bombers but never clearly identified, were spotted later in the morning but remained out of firing range. The Liberty arrived in Palermo April 4, and unloaded the sacked grain. She proceeded to Castellmare, where her bulk grain was taken off, and then to Naples. Alerts continued as the ship unloaded at Castellmare and Naples. When enemy aircraft attacked at Naples, shore batteries fired, but the ships were ordered not to fire. Lt. Caldwell made glowing remarks about the efficiency and cooperation of the merchant crew, but did not extend a similar view of the Italians acting as longshoremen. He found the Italian labor "neither willing or efficient" (Armed Guard Report, April 19, 1944).

The *Shaw* began her homewards voyage April 22. She carried only water ballast, and traveled with 80 other merchantmen and 14 escorts.

There was considerable confusion as to where the ship was supposed to pick up the ballast. The crew was originally told it would receive 2,000 tons of scrap at Castellmare. At Castellmare, they were told they would receive the ballast at Naples, and from there were told she would receive the ballast "somewhere in North Africa." In Algiers, they were told by a War Shipping Administration representative that there was no ballast. The weather the night of April 24 grew rough. As the ship searched for ballast, her booms were rigged and her holds were empty. Because of the lightness of the ship, she was tossed about and hard to control. Eventually, she was separated from her convoy. The next day she received a coded message from the Admiralty Malta, notified of her position, and told to rejoin the convoy. She caught up with her convoy April 26. Depth charges were dropped May 5, 6, 7 and 10. On May 14, with the convoy in position 39° 18' N, 44° 28' W, the convoy commodore passed word that submarines were operating in the area. There was little enemy contact, though, and the vessel arrived in New York May 21, 1944.

While the *Shaw* was lying at New York, a potentially serious discipline problem arose among the members of the Armed Guard. The gunner who had jumped ship in Vancouver had written to a friend still aboard the *Shaw*. The AWOL gunner reported that he had been given no disciplinary action. In fact, he had managed to concoct such a convincing explanation that he was simply assigned to another ship and given a few extra days' leave to boot. Some of the crewmen aboard the *Shaw* took this to mean that they could do as they pleased, that their conduct would not be questioned once the ship returned to port.

The *Shaw* left New York July 17, 1944 with 160 other merchantmen. Five corvettes and two submarine chasers served as escorts. The *Shaw* arrived safely in Scotland August 6 and left August 8 for Omaha Beach, France. The ship left Omaha Beach September 6 and went to Avon mouth, England without incident. She loaded a cargo of explosives and headed to Belfast, Northern Ireland, arriving September 13. From Belfast she returned to the United States, arriving at Newport News, Virginia on September 29.

Explosives were again loaded in Newport News, and the Liberty left for Oran, North Africa October 22, 1944. She traveled in convoys of varying size, and after landing in Oran left for Marseilles.

She arrived in Marseilles November 16. The *Shaw* left Marseilles for a return trip to Oran December 7, and then left Oran to return to France and then back to the United States. She arrived in Galveston January 2, 1945 without incident.

From Galveston, the *B.F. Shaw* traveled up to Norfolk, and then headed to Casablanca. A floating mine was spotted February 15, and was fired upon by the escort. The vessel left Morocco February 22 and returned to the US safely in a convoy of varying size. The ship loaded a general cargo and was again under steam March 28. From New York as far as Gibraltar, there were between 17 and 41 merchantmen in the convoy and between 4 and 5 escorts. At Gibraltar, she proceeded independently to Egypt, passed south

through the Suez Canal, and continued on to Aden. She left Aden April 27, and headed to Calcutta.

The *Shaw* later returned to Northern Europe. She made an uneventful journey between Antwerp and New York. The Liberty was disarmed October 9, 1945, and her Armed Guard personnel detached. She was then rechartered to the United States Lines until 1948, and then briefly by A. L. Burbank and Company briefly before being placed in the Reserve Fleet in April 1948. Between 1951 and 1952 she was run by Pacific Atlantic, and then placed again in the Reserve Fleet. In 1975 the *B.F. Shaw* was purchased as part of the Artificial Reef Program. The *Shaw* was scuttled on June 19, 1976 near 28° 36' N, 94° 49' W (Archeological Site No. 41GV137).

SS B.F. Shaw

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	Portland, OR	Brisbane, Australia	5/3/43	
2	Brisbane	Townsville, Australia	6/11/43	6/14/43
3	Townsville	Brisbane	6/28/43	7/2/43
4	Brisbane	Port Moresby, New Guinea	7/25/43	
5	Port Moresby	Beli Beli, Goodenough Is.	8/29/43	8/31/43
6	Beli Beli	Port Moresby	9/4/43	9/17/43
7	Melbourne, Australia	Beli Beli	9/27/43	
8	Beli Beli	Milne Bay		
9	Milne Bay	Melbourne		
10	Melbourne	Auckland	10/30/43	11/6/43
11	Wellington, New Zealand	Hilo Bay, Hawaii	11/24/43	12/9/43
12	Hilo Bay, Hawaii	San Francisco	12/16/43	12/23/43
13	San Francisco	Castellmare de Stabia, Italy	1/22/44	4/9/44
14	Naples	New York	4/22/44	5/21/44
15	New York	Avonmouth, England	7/17/44	9/6/44
16	Belfast, Ireland	Newport News, VA	9/13/44	9/29/44
17	Hampton Roads, VA	Marseilles, France	10/22/44	11/16/44
18	Port de Bouc, France	Galveston, TX	12/7/44	1/2/45
19	Galveston	Casablanca	1/23/45	2/17/45
20	Casablanca	New York	2/22/45	3/10/45
21	New York	Calcutta, India	3/28/45	5/14/45
22	Antwerp, Belgium	New York	9/4/45	9/17/45

SS Joshua Thomas

Joshua Thomas was a clergyman from Maryland who served in the War of 1812. The Liberty Ship named for him was built by the Bethlehem Fairfield Shipyard and completed on August 13, 1943. The War Shipping Administration chartered her to American Export Lines, Inc. On August 15, 1943, the ship left Baltimore for Philadelphia, and on August 17, the vessel was equipped with the following armament: one 5"/38 caliber gun placed on the stern, one 3"/50 caliber gun placed on the bow, and eight 20-mm guns. While in Philadelphia, the *Joshua Thomas* also received her armed guard crew.

Her first voyage was from Philadelphia to ports in Iran, India, and Egypt. The cargo consisted of general explosives. During the night of September 26, 1943, near the Straits of Sicily, Lt. Carl Meister of the Naval Armed Guard aboard the *Joshua Thomas* reported two bright streaks of light, possibly rockets, coming from a ship off the starboard bow, slightly less than a mile away. Seconds later, the ship became engulfed in flames and disappeared. It was too dark to determine if the destruction of the ship was caused by torpedoes or floating mines.

The crew aboard the Liberty ship immediately went to battle stations. Ahead of them, two ships began firing from their starboard beam. Meister himself could not sight any targets, but the guns aboard the ship were loaded and then fired. The 20-mm guns spent three magazines. The gunner fired off three rounds from the 3-inch gun and one round from the 5-inch. The gun had been reloaded when cease fire orders were given and, in accordance with regulations, the gunners kept a watch on the gun until the following day when they were permitted to fire off the round into a safe area. Meister could not determine if hostile forces were ever actually present, but believed the action of the fire dispelled any intentions an enemy may have had.

The convoy encountered a mysterious submarine on October 15 while passing through the Red Sea. The convoy went to General Quarters and the escorts rushed toward the contract. The submarine surfaced but failed to identify itself until directly challenged by the convoy escort. It turned out to be a "friendly," flying a recognition signal, but the winds were so light that the escorts did not identify the boat until the last minute.

In Meister's official report of the *Joshua Thomas*' maiden wartime voyage, he commended the crew for their actions, particularly that of the US escorts. He also commended the commercial radio operator for keeping intercepted messages confidential. Meister did ask that the ship's torpedo nets be utilized more frequently. If the nets were important enough to be standard equipment, he argued, they were certainly important enough to be used consistently. The vessel docked at Khorramshar, Iran, unloaded her explosives and took on a new cargo.

The Liberty ship left Khorramshar November 18, 1943 with a cargo of high octane gas, headed for Bahrain, Arabia. The ship then sailed in convoy for Bombay, India with a load of manganese ore. After unloading at Bombay, she sailed in convoy for the United States via the Suez Canal. At Port Said, the northern end of the canal, and again at Port Tewfik, the *Thomas*' crew was restricted to the ship due to an epidemic of bubonic plague in the area. At Port Tewfik, US Army military police boarded the Liberty Ship and confiscated all the liquor aboard, probably in deference to local Islamic custom.

The number of ships traveling with the vessel varied, from as few as 15 to as many as 50. When headed to the United States, there were 45 ships in the convoy. The number of escort vessels also varied, between five and seven in the Mediterranean Sea to 10 escort vessels and an aircraft carrier when returning to the United States. The voyage was routine, except for a period of seven hours in the Mediterranean Sea, when the convoy "backtracked" to allow a group of ships from Tunis to rendezvous and continue on to Baltimore, Boston and New York.

Upon completion of this voyage, the crew was again commended for its actions, and Lt. Meister once again expressed irritation over the infrequent use of torpedo nets. The *Joshua Thomas* called upon ports in Baltimore, Newport News, Boston and New York. She left New York for Gourock, Scotland on March 6, 1944 with a cargo of explosives, guns and aircraft intended for the Red Army and Air Force. She left Loch Ewe, Scotland on March 27, 1944, and headed to Molotovsk, USSR.

The convoy routes around the North Cape to Russia were perhaps the most difficult anywhere in the world. Unlike the North Atlantic run, where the primary threat to convoys was the U-boat, on the trip to Russia convoys also faced German bombers

and surface warships. This combined threat devastated many convoys, and the Allies were hard-put to defend the eastbound merchantmen. The British Admiralty, which maintained operational control of that theater, routed the convoys as far north as possible, in order to avoid land-based German aircraft, sending the merchantmen and escorts along the edge of the ice pack as far north as Bear Island, at 74° north latitude.

The *Joshua Thomas* was one of 40 American merchantmen in Convoy JW-58. The Admiralty provided a heavy escort, consisting of two escort carriers, HMS *Tracker* and *Activity*, the cruiser HMS *Diadem*, and a close screen of nine escort ships. At the center of the escort group was the old US cruiser *Milwaukee*, a 23-year-old relic being transferred to the Soviet Navy as a gesture of Allied goodwill. Along the edges of JW-58 patrolled two British “hunter-killer” groups, small squadrons of destroyers and escort vessels trained in the use of coordinated antisubmarine tactics. Finally, stationed along the convoy route were two British battle groups, including two full-sized aircraft carriers and four escort carriers, in case German surface units stationed in the fjords of Norway sortied to intercept the convoy (Morison 1956: 308).

The escort groups were under the command of Captain (D) Frederic John “Johnny” Walker, RN, legendary for his success in tracking and sinking U-boats. The second night out from Loch Ewe, Walker’s own ship, *Starling*, almost literally stumbled across the convoy’s first enemy contact. She was U-961, a newly-commissioned boat setting out on her first war patrol. The submarine’s commander, Kapitänleutnant Fischer, was probably unaware that a British convoy was near. *Starling* picked up a strong sonar contact, and Walker made two quick depth-charging runs over the spot. Shortly thereafter the *Starling* was rocked by a powerful underwater explosion, and a stream of wreckage, oil and bodies floated to the surface. U-961 never surfaced again (Robertson 1979: 204-6). Walker’s successful attack was reported to the convoy the following morning.

That same morning, a Luftwaffe reconnaissance pilot spotted the convoy, and U-boats began moving to intercept JW-58 south of Bear Island. The escorts’ luck held, though, and the convoy’s two escort carriers were kept busy launching attacks against submarines spotted by the escorts or by their own patrol bombers.

In the first three days of April, the airborne and surface escorts combined to sink three more U-boats: U-355, U-360 and U-288. There were no survivors from any of them. Convoy JW-58 arrived at Murmansk on April 4 without losing a single merchantman (Morison 1956: 309). The *Joshua Thomas*, along with several other vessels, continued on in convoy east and south through the White Sea to Molotovsk (now Severodinsk, near Archangel).

After leaving Bakaritso, Russia, the ship sailed to Scotland in ballast. She traveled in convoy RA-59, consisting of 46 ships. The escort vessels were 12 destroyers, six light destroyers, six corvettes, one cruiser and two aircraft carriers. On April 27 all hands were called to battle stations as an unidentified aircraft was spotted. The plane, believed to be a twin-engine He 111 medium bomber, made a single run over the convoy before disappearing. Although the plane made no attempt to attack the convoy, 10 rounds were fired at the plane, each missing by several thousand yards. The location of this sighting was 69° 30' N, 36° 00' E, just beyond Murmansk, USSR.

On April 30, a Liberty Ship on the starboard side of the convoy was torpedoed. The merchantman, the *William S. Thayer*, split in two. The aft part remained afloat until out of sight of the crew aboard the *Joshua Thomas* but the forward section sunk within two minutes. The escorts, caught by surprise, began dropping depth charges all around the convoy. Ships throughout the convoy began firing their 20-mm and large guns randomly. Seas were calm, the weather clear and cold, with 24 hours of sunlight. There were mines in the area as well, and the crew of the *Thomas* spotted 25 to 30 of these. The crew attempted to draw this to the attention of the escort by tracer fire and by blinker lamp, but these signals were neither acknowledged nor investigated by the escorts. The *Thayer* was the only ship lost out of Convoy RA-59, but Swordfish aircraft from the escorting carriers sent three U-boats to the bottom. The convoy arrived in Scotland without further incident on May 7, 1944 (Morison 1956: 309).

The ship departed Gourock, Scotland May 11, 1944, in ballast. She joined Convoy ONS 236, consisting of 114 ships. There were approximately eight escort vessels, these being light destroyers, corvettes, and two British aircraft carriers. There were no direct contacts with the enemy, but on

May 30 at 4:55 p.m. the commodore of the convoy raised the signal "submarines in vicinity" and the ships went to general quarters. The convoy made a 45° turn to port. One PBY Catalina flying boat and one carrier-based plane, along with a small escort vessel, closed in on a location approximately four miles from the main body of the convoy. Depth charges were dropped, and the planes made dives toward the water's surface. One ship on the port side of the convoy reported seeing the wake of either a torpedo or submarine, there was no clear indication which. At 6:25 p.m., the convoy made a 45° to starboard, and by 6:35 the entire convoy was back on its original course. During the time of the evasive maneuver, no firing was heard and no apparent enemy action took place. General quarters was secured by 6:50 p.m. The *Thomas* arrived safely in New York on May 27.

The next duty call took the *Joshua Thomas* from New York to Liverpool, England. The ship left New York June 23. She had a general cargo, mostly trucks, and she traveled in Convoy HXS 297, consisting of 132 ships with eight light destroyers and corvettes as its escort complement, as well as two British aircraft carriers.

The eastbound passage to Liverpool was routine. Weather permitting, planes from the escort carrier, usually Albacores and Swordfish, patrolled the areas ahead of the convoy from dawn to dusk. For the men aboard ships, time was spent cleaning and

greasing the guns and repairing the ship as necessary. Afternoons were spent in lectures and on weaponry handling, as well as boat and fire drills. Evenings were for study and reading and other homework assignments from the *Bluejackets' Manual* or other study books. The convoy arrived at Liverpool on July 11. After unloading her cargo, the *Thomas* sailed again for New York in Convoy ONS 245, consisting of 98 ships with eight escorts and three British aircraft carriers. Next, the vessel returned to Scotland with a load of ballast in a 95-ship convoy with 11 escorts and three aircraft carriers. On these uneventful passages, time weighed heavily on the merchant crews and gunners. The officer commanding the *Thomas'* Naval Armed Guard placed special emphasis on training his men.

The remaining missions of the *Joshua Thomas* were uneventful, with no incidents occurring which the Armed Guard officers deemed worth reporting. Her cargoes were tanks, lumber, coal, or iron ore, important supplies to the European Allies. The ship made several stops at ports in France and Scotland, as well as another voyage to the USSR. She then sailed to Belgium, and from there to the United States where she completed her World War II service November 26, 1945.

The *Joshua Thomas* was scuttled on November 4, 1975, as part of a Texas Artificial Reef formed off South Padre Island (Archeological Site No. 41WY144).

SS Joshua Thomas

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	Baltimore, MD	Philadelphia, PA	8/15/43	
2	Philadelphia	Khorramshar, Iran	9/3/43	
3	Khorramshar	Bahrain, Arabia	11/18/43	11/20/43
4	Bahrain	Bandar Abbas, Iran	11/22/43	11/23/43
5	Bandar Abbas	Bombay, India	11/28/43	12/4/43
6	Bombay	Aden	12/7/43	12/14/43
7	Aden	Port Tewfik, Egypt	12/14/43	12/20/43
8	Port Tewfik	Port Said, Egypt	12/21/43	12/21/43
9	Port Said	Alexandria, Egypt	12/24/43	12/25/43
10	Alexandria	Baltimore	12/27/43	1/25/44
11	Baltimore	Newport News, VA	1/29/44	1/30/44

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
12	Newport News	Boston	1/31/44	2/3/44
13	Boston	New York	2/9/44	2/10/44
14	New York		3/6/44	
15	Loch Ewe, Scotland	Molotovsk, Russia	3/27/44	4/6/44
16	Bakaritso, USSR	Gourock, Scotland	4/22/44	5/7/44
17	Gourock	New York	5/11/44	5/27/44
18	New York	Liverpool, England	6/13/44	7/11/44
19	Liverpool	New York	7/18/44	8/2/44
20	New York	Gourock	8/25/44	9/8/44
21	Archangel, USSR	West Hartlepool, England	10/30/44	11/13/44
22	Immingham, England	Oran, Algeria	12/2/44	12/22/44
23	Oran	Baltimore	1/14/45	2/6/45
24	New York	Gourock	3/9/45	3/24/45
25	Gourock	Murmansk, USSR	4/17/45	4/25/45
26	Murmansk	Gourock	5/23/45	5/30/45
27	Gourock	Baltimore	5/31/45	6/13/45
28	Baltimore	Solent, England	6/22/45	7/5/45
29	Solent	Southend, England	7/6/45	7/7/45
30	Southend	Methil, Scotland	7/8/45	7/9/45
31	Methil	Oslo, Norway	7/10/45	7/12/45
32	Oslo	Methil	7/21/45	7/24/45
33	Methil	Greenock, Scotland	7/24/45	7/27/45
34	Greenock	New York	7/28/45	8/9/45
35	New York	Baltimore	8/21/45	8/22/45
36	Baltimore	Pauillac, France	8/25/45	9/9/45
37	Pauillac	Bordeaux	9/12/45	9/12/45
38	Bordeaux	Greenock	9/17/45	9/21/45
39	Greenock	Archangel	9/25/45	10/6/45
40	Archangel	Antwerp	10/22/45	11/2/45
41	Antwerp	New York	11/10/45	11/26/45

SS George Vancouver

Completed by the Kaiser Company, Inc. Yard #1 at Portland, Oregon, on July 22, 1942, the *George Vancouver* was named for an English explorer who surveyed the West Coast, including the island which bears his name. The Liberty was operated by The

American President Lines under a War Shipping Administration contract. She was put into wartime service August 7, 1942 when she was outfitted with one 5"/51 caliber gun, four 50-caliber antiaircraft machine guns, and two 30 caliber machine guns. A 20-mm machine gun was installed August 15.

The first mission of the SS *George Vancouver* took her from her berth in Portland, Oregon to Long Beach sailing to Wellington, New Zealand, where she arrived September 4, 1942. On September 5 the vessel left for Aden, Arabia, eventually calling upon ports in Egypt, South Africa, Surinam and Trinidad before arriving in New York January 9, 1943. Most of the journey was unescorted; the *Vancouver* did not join a convoy until the final part of the voyage, from Trinidad to New York. The voyage took on a tragic note early. Two Naval crew members were lost overboard in heavy seas while the vessel was sailing from New Zealand to Aden. The ship was routed by the British Navy while it passed through the Suez Canal. There was only one significant event involving a possible enemy encounter. Outside of New York some 140 miles, several merchant ships in the convoy opened fire on what they believed to be a periscope. None of the rounds scored a hit, and the threat must not have been too serious as the escorts traveling with the merchantmen did not engage in firing. However, the escort did destroy several floating mines that were encountered between Trinidad and New York. The Commander of the Armed Guard did make a suggestion upon returning to port. He remarked the installation of powder and shell ready boxes for the 5"/51 caliber gun had been reversed and should be changed for expedient handling. He also noted that injuries to crew would be reduced if the insides of the gun tubs were lined with non-splintering material.

While in New York, four 50-caliber guns and two 30-caliber guns were removed and eight 20-millimeter and one 3"/50 caliber added. She left New York February 7, 1943 with 40 vessels and six escorts. Her cargo consisted of munitions, rations and trucks. The *Vancouver* arrived February 26 at Mors-el-Kobir, and left for Nemours March 9, where her cargo was unloaded and a new cargo of manganese ore taken aboard. The ship continued on to Oran, and left for New York March 23. There was no close contact with the enemy, but depth charges were dropped March 20-22 while in the harbor, and again March 23 about six hours after the ship pulled out of the dock.

Although crossings were often routine with little out of the ordinary to report, crews aboard the Liberty ships realized the tensions that existed. Perhaps this is what led two Armed Guard crewmen

to jump overboard May 3. They were seen being picked up by a boat from USS LST 157; this rescue was later confirmed by the crew of the boat. The men remained on board that boat, and on May 7 the LST left the convoy with several other LSTs. Nothing further was heard from the men.

The ship had initially left New York April 28 with a load of munitions, trucks, tanks and other material of war. She arrived in Oran May 18 and spent the next two days unloading her cargo. She was moored just inside the breakwater. At 10:10 p.m., a bomb was heard to fall on the cliffs astern of the ship, and the air raid siren sounded. All ships and the shore batteries opened fire. Because it was dark and there were no searchlights, it was nearly impossible to distinguish planes flying overhead. The *Vancouver* proceeded to aim its 3"/50 caliber gun at the point of convergence between tracers fired by the shore batteries and tracers fired from Mors-el-Kobir. Ranges and fuse settings were 4,200 yards-10 seconds and 3,750 yards-8 seconds.

It was a fierce exchange of fire. Forty-two rounds were expended from the 3-inch gun, and 2,500 rounds from the 20-mm guns. Firing was not continuous, but was in accordance with the firing by the shore batteries. During the battle, the SS *Samuel Griffin* was struck and eventually had to be towed to the outer harbor. Three enemy planes were believed to be brought down. Lt. Fenwick W. Wall, USNR, aboard the *George Vancouver*, actually witnessed one plane falling and bursting into flames. The all clear was sounded at 11:05 p.m. The entire episode had unfolded in just under one hour.

She sailed for Beni Saf May 20 where ore was loaded, and the vessel returned to Oran. On June 4, 294 Italian prisoners-of-war guarded by US soldiers were taken aboard. She left June 7 with 49 merchantmen and an escort of eight British ships. The convoy arrived in New York June 27.

Her next trip took her from New York to Palermo. She left July 9 in convoy with 44 ships and six US Naval vessels as escorts. Depth charges were dropped six hours after she left the harbor. The convoy eventually reached 79 merchantmen and 15 escorts. Passage across the Atlantic was calm, and the Liberty anchored at Algiers August 13. It sailed again August 15, this time heading toward Bizerte. The mission was no longer calm. Early the morning of August 16, a white flash was seen followed by

two rockets. The ship anchored at Bizerte at 9:15 a.m. At 9:00 p.m., the harbor was attacked by enemy planes. Once again, the crew fired its 3-inch guns, this time spending 44 rounds. The 20-mm guns fired 1,522 rounds, some at a dive bomber flying within 2,000 yards of the vessel. The Naval commander believed one of the rounds scored a hit on the plane. One plane was confirmed to be shot down in the barrage, but it is unclear if the kill was made by the crew. Two bombs dropped from planes landed within 200 yards of the *Vancouver*, one on the port side and one to starboard. Slight damage was reported to piping in the Engine room. A plane was sighted, and the air raid signal again sounded at 4:15 a.m. August 18. Four rounds were fired from the 3-inch gun before it was learned that the plane was friendly. The nerves of the gun crews were definitely on edge.

Tensions remained high as the ship prepared to return to New York. The harbor was again attacked August 23 by enemy dive bombers. The Naval Armed Guard fired 14 3-inch rounds and 712 rounds of 20-mm ammunition. Two bombs landed close by, one hitting the water and the other the dock. The *Vancouver* escaped serious damage, but two US subchasers were destroyed, and a British freighter was damaged. It was bitterly noted by Lt. Wall that defensive action taken by the shore batteries was neither as "energetic or efficient as was to be expected" (Armed Guard reports, Sept. 27). A smoke screen was put up around the harbor, and five planes were thought to have been brought down in the barrage. There were similar air raid warnings the ensuing four mornings, but no planes were sighted.

The *Vancouver* left Palermo, sailing to Bizerte, Oran and Mors-el-Kobir. There a cargo of rifles in need of repairs was unloaded and Italian POWs taken on. The ship joined a convoy headed for home. Twice an Italian prisoner had to be transferred onto other ships because of appendicitis. She re-entered US waters September 24 and was placed in quarantine, possibly because of the Italian prisoners, and remained in quarantine until the 25th. The POWs were unloaded at that time by an Army steamer. As the ship completed its voyage, eight rounds of 5"/51 caliber ammunition were fired at floating targets.

Her next voyage was to Algiers. The trip was swift, but the ship was delayed 10 days while

waiting for a berth to open in the harbor. She left to return to New York November 26. Although no enemy was sighted, three air raid drills were sounded while at Algiers. The merchant crew volunteers participated in these drills, and were very cooperative. A problem with the steering mechanism was discovered on the return trip, causing the ship to lose the convoy. The master followed instructions for stragglers and the convoy was rejoined one day out of New York.

After loading a cargo of trucks, jeeps, and other general cargo, the next assignment took the *Liberty* to Cristobal, Canal Zone. The journey was quiet, but some events made the crossing almost amusing. A torpedo wake was spotted by a lookout, but the Commodore of the convoy who was aboard the *Vancouver* believes the "wake" may have actually been a porpoise. Another incident involved planes observed bombing a target at the edge of the horizon. The planes were never positively identified, but there appeared to be debate over whether they were enemy planes or American planes taking target practice on an old hull. There were 584 enlisted men and officers aboard; the men were used as additional lookouts. A problem developed between the civilian master and the naval commander. A coded message had been received, but the master was unable to decode it, and refused to allow the naval officer to help. The master broke radio silence to have the message repeated. Although the message was not repeated, his radio message was acknowledged. The ship eventually landed in San Francisco.

While in San Francisco, one of the 3"/50 caliber guns was replaced with a similar gun. Reports of the *Vancouver* then detail a calm sailing from San Francisco November 3 to Port Apra, Guam, then returning to Portland, Oregon. On the voyage to Guam, the ship was held for three weeks at Eniwetok Atoll as docks were being repaired at Guam. There were no contacts with the enemy in either crossing. She arrived in Portland December 16. The convoys on this mission were small; the largest had but 13 vessels and three escorts. Heading towards home, she sailed from Eniwetok to Portland alone.

The next assignment took her from Portland to Noumea, New Caledonia on January 12, 1943. She had to turn back to San Francisco January 16 as excessive water in the number one hold was causing

the ship to list. There were no other unique events, and the ship arrived in New Caledonia February 14. From New Caledonia, she headed to Guadalcanal. The Liberty then headed to Sydney, Australia, where she arrived March 12. Action in the Pacific was noticeably more peaceful; at no time on this assignment did the ship travel in a convoy. However, the nation was still at war. Because of this, gun drills involving loading and sight setting were held daily, and even the civilian crews were trained in manning the guns. Actual target practice was conducted March 9. Five rounds from the 5"/51 caliber gun were fired, as were five rounds from the 3"/50 caliber anti-aircraft guns, and 60 rounds from each 20-mm machine guns. Again the merchant crews were expected to participate. An interesting aspect of this voyage was the ship carried no cargo.

A load of general cargo was taken aboard as the *Vancouver* headed to Aitake, New Guinea. There is no mention of the cargo being unloaded while at Aitake, but records indicate the vessel headed to Biak with general cargo arriving April 12. She had been sailing solo, but did join five other merchantmen with two aircraft escorts as she sailed to Morotai, again with general cargo. She was delayed in Morotai 10 days due to a lack of port facilities. Her cargo must have been unloaded at this time, because when she later sailed to Brisbane (via Hollandia) the cargo holds were empty. Cargo was taken aboard at Brisbane, and the ship sailed to

Hollandia. An enlisted man was transferred to a hospital ship en route to Hollandia, suffering from an acute sore throat and a high fever.

From Hollandia, the Liberty went to Luzon. Another medical emergency occurred during the trip, this time with tragic results. A young crewman died of pneumonia, and was buried in the American cemetery in the Philippines. The *Vancouver* left Batangas, Philippine Islands and went to San Pedro, California. A periscope feather was sighted briefly, and General Quarters was called. The ship made an emergency turn, but there was no other indication of enemy contact. It arrived in San Pedro August 11.

The ship then went from Long Beach to San Francisco, where her armament was removed February 1, 1945. Originally operated by American President Lines, at the war's completion the Liberty was operated by Oliver J. Olson and Company. After the war, she was placed in the United States Marine Corps Reserve fleet before being operated briefly by Eastern Gas and Fuel Association. It was then held by Dich, Wright, and Pugh before it was again placed in the reserve fleet. It was operated briefly by General SS Corporation in the early 1950s, possibly serving as a cargo ship during the Korean Conflict. The SS *George Vancouver* was again placed in the reserve fleet in June 1952. Today, the ship rests at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico as part of the Artificial Reef Program (Archeological Site No. 41BO183).

SS George Vancouver

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	Portland, OR	Marshfield, OR	7/26/42	7/27/42
2	Marshfield	Long Beach, CA	8/2/42	8/5/42
3	Long Beach	Wellington, New Zealand	8/11/42	9/4/42
4	Wellington	Aden, Arabia	9/5/42	10/11/42
5	Aden	Safaga, Egypt	10/11/42	10/16/42
6	Safaga	Suez, Egypt	10/16/42	10/17/42
7	Suez	Ismalia, Egypt	10/24/42	10/24/42
8	Ismalia	Suez	11/4/42	11/4/42
9	Suez	Aden	11/6/42	11/11/42
10	Aden	Capetown, South Africa	11/13/42	11/27/42
11	Capetown	Paramanbo, Surinam	11/28/42	12/16/42

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
12	Paramanbo	Port-o-Spain, Trinidad	12/19/42	12/21/42
13	Port-o-Spain	New York	12/27/42	1/9/43
14	New York	Nemours	2/7/43	3/9/43
15	Oran	New York	3/23/43	4/14/43
16	New York	Oran	9/28/43	5/18/43
17	Oran	Nemours	5/20/43	5/20/43
18	Nemours	Beni Saf	6/2/43	6/2/43
19	Oran	New York	6/7/43	
20	New York	Palermo, Sicily	7/9/43	8/20/43
21	Palermo	New York		
22	New York	Algiers		11/2/43
23	Algiers	New York	11/26/43	
24	New York	San Francisco	1/12/44	8/7/44
25	Port Apra, Guam	Portland, OR	11/21/44	12/16/44
26	San Francisco	Port Apra	9/11/44	12/3/44
27	Portland	Noumea, New Caledonia	1/12/45	2/24/45
28	Noumea	Guadalcanal	2/21/45	2/25/45
29	Guadalcanal	Sydney, Australia	3/6/45	3/12/45
30	Sydney	Aitape, New Guinea	3/21/45	3/30/45
31	Aitape	Biak	4/10/45	7/12/45
32	Biak	Morotai	4/13/45	4/16/45
33	Morotai	Brisbane, Australia	5/1/45	5/13/45
34	Brisbane	Hollandia	5/30/45	6/7/45
35	Hollandia	Batangas, Luzon	6/7/45	6/14/45
36	Batangas	San Pedro, CA	7/15/45	8/11/45
37	Longbeach, CA		9/22/45	10/21/45
38	San Francisco	10/21/45	12/8/45	

SS Conrad Weiser

Named for an early colonist of Pennsylvania, the *Conrad Weiser* was built by the Bethlehem Fairfield Shipyard of Baltimore, Maryland, and completed on May 29, 1943 (Figure 29). That afternoon, she was chartered by the War Shipping Administration to Dichmann, Wright & Pugh, Incorporated, which would operate her during the war. In early June, ordnance crews installed her armament - one

5"/38 caliber gun aft and nine 20-mm antiaircraft guns. Eight of these were fitted around the midships and aft deckhouses, while the ninth was placed in the gun tub on the bow where a heavier artillery piece would normally be found.

On June 9, 1943, under the command of Master Leonard D. Watkins, the *Weiser* sailed from Baltimore for New York. Her civilian crew totaled 42 officers, engineers and other crewmen, while her Naval Armed Guard consisted of one Naval Reserve

officer, Norman M. Kramer, three enlisted signals personnel, and 25 seamen gunners.

The *Weiser* was fitted with an unusual arrangement of hydrophones known as Mark 29 Antisubmarine Gear. These hydrophones, which were probably intended to provide early warning of submarines or incoming torpedoes, were to be streamed from both the bow and stern of the ship. A small cabin for the gear's operator was fitted in the wheelhouse. The complex arrangement of towing cables, chains and other related equipment was clumsy to use and, as Captain Watkins soon discovered, particularly prone to accident.

At New York, the *Weiser* was assigned to sail with a convoy departing on June 23. Unfortunately, the Liberty's first wartime voyage got off to an abortive and embarrassing beginning. The *Weiser* was ordered to leave port early to deploy her Mark 29 gear. She proceeded down the Ambrose Channel early that morning, and just before 7:00 a.m. the Armed Guard crew began laying out the gear. An inexperienced seaman on the starboard side aft began reeling out the cable too quickly, though, with the result that a large loop of slack cable formed in the water near the stern of the ship. This loop was sucked into the Liberty's single screw, entangling the propeller and the propeller shaft. When the fouled cable came taut, it spun the deck winch to which it was secured backwards, which in turn created a

slack in the towing cable on the port side. That cable, too, became fouled in the screw. The *Weiser's* master stopped engines quickly and tried for several minutes to loosen the cables by moving the ship slowly astern and ahead, but the cables remained jammed. The *Weiser* anchored at 7:30 and signaled a nearby British escort vessel of its predicament. That afternoon, four tugs came out to the *Weiser* and took the *Weiser* under tow to Gravesend Bay, where Navy salvage divers worked for two days to clear the shaft. The *Weiser* was later towed to Pier 45 on the North River, where salvage divers continued their work. The last parts of the Mark 29 towing cable were cleared away from the propeller shaft on the morning of June 30. The commander of the *Weiser's* Armed Guard, Lt. Kramer, was replaced by Lieutenant (jg) Arthur H. Messing, USNR.

The *Conrad Weiser* sailed from New York again on July 8, 1943, carrying a cargo of cotton, foodstuffs and tanks. But Captain Watkins' frustrations with the Mark 29 gear were not over. Just after clearing the channel, the *Weiser's* Armed Guard successfully deployed the Mark 29's after cables. The Liberty then dropped astern of the convoy to deploy the towing cables from the bow. In running out the starboard towing cable, though, the Armed Guard let it get afoul of a sharp edge of the bulwark fairing, which ripped the cable so badly that it had to be retrieved. The port side cable was successfully



Figure 29. SS *Conrad Weiser*, April 23, 1944 (National Archives).

launched. Captain Watkins increased speed in order to resume her position in the convoy, but was unable to do so due to the increased drag caused by the hydrophone gear. Early on July 9, the master requested that the Mark 29 gear be hauled in to allow the ship to regain the convoy. The forward gear was hauled in but damaged in the process; the stern hydrophone was left deployed. The *Weiser* resumed her position in the convoy.

At noon on July 11, the convoy slowed to allow the *Weiser* to deploy her forward set of hydrophones using spare cables. The Armed Guard accomplished this, but with the increased drag the *Conrad Weiser* was once again left far behind the other ships in the convoy, and only managed to regain her assigned station with difficulty. The convoy ran into heavy weather on July 14, and 2:30 a.m. the following morning, Captain Watkins notified the Armed Guard commander that the ship would have to heave-to to secure shifting deck cargo. He promised to try to keep on a little headway, since the Mark 29 gear streamed from the bow required a 4-knot speed to maintain its buoyancy. The *Liberty's* speed dropped too much, though, and the Mark 29 gear sank, hanging straight down below the ship. The Armed Guard could not retrieve the gear, and it was cut away at 10:00 a.m. On July 17, the ship's towed fog buoy became entangled with the stern hydrophone. The fog buoy was successfully recovered, but Captain Watkins later had it streamed again, and this time the hydrophone was damaged. Lt. Messing deployed another hydrophone, but that one proved to be defective. Finally, on the evening of July 18, Lt. Messing gave up on the Mark 29 gear and secured the operator's cabin for the remainder of the voyage.

In his report of the incident, Lt. Messing complained that Capt. Watkins seemed "unwilling to give the Mark 29 gear a fair chance and [was] reluctant to modify his procedures to meet new needs arising through the operation of Mark 29 gear" (Armed Guard Report, 25 August 1943).

For his own part, Capt. Watkins was thoroughly disgusted with the experimental sound gear. In a letter to his company's representative in London, Watkins wrote,

we were forced to cut away our Mark [29] gear at sea, and as far as I am concerned they

can give it back to the Indians. I do not want you to get the impression that I am a one tripper, as my record does not show that, but I must advise you now, that... if certain parties insist on putting [the sound gear] right back again, then you can get me a relief, as I would not go shipmates with that gear again for anyone... It is the worst headach [sic.] that I have ever had on any ship... (Confidential Intelligence Report of Lt. Cdr. J. M. Reynolds, USNR, 11 August 1943, Naval Armed Guard File, SS *Conrad Weiser*).

It is easy to understand Watkins' frustration. The gear had been put aboard by the Navy, and the Armed Guard given the responsibility of operating it. The men directly under Watkins' command had no responsibility for it, and could only watch as the inexperienced Armed Guard seamen handled (or mishandled) the equipment. The gear was clumsy and of questionable use. If the gear did detect a submarine or incoming torpedo, it would be virtually impossible for the towing ship to maneuver evasively. By getting afoul of the propeller in New York harbor, the gear had caused Capt. Watkins considerable professional embarrassment in a very public venue. Perhaps most important of all, the drag caused by the gear made it difficult for the *Weiser* to maintain her station in the convoy, putting the lives of all aboard at added risk. Heartfelt as it was, though, Watkins' letter was also ill-advised and indiscreet. A wartime censor intercepted the letter and reported it to the Navy Department and the US Maritime Commission. There is no record of what disciplinary action, if any, was taken against Capt. Watkins.

The 60 or so merchantmen, escorted by six British corvettes and destroyers, completed their passage without further incident, and arrived at Loch Ewe, Scotland on the afternoon of July 21. Just before midnight on the following day, the *Weiser* sailed with a smaller, coastal convoy of 12 other merchantmen and two escorts around the northern tip of Scotland to the Firth of Forth, arriving on the morning of Saturday, July 24. The following Monday afternoon, the *Weiser* joined a large coastal convoy of about 60 merchant ships and four escorts, and steamed south along Britain's east coast, and arrived without incident at London late on the evening of July 28.

After unloading her cargo at London, she sailed in ballast on the morning of August 9 in a 20-ship convoy to Methil, Scotland, and from there again to Loch Ewe. She sailed from Loch Ewe on August 14, 1943, with 24 other merchantmen and two escorts. At 8:00 a.m. the following morning, the group rendezvoused with a larger contingent of ships, and the combined convoy of 65 merchant vessels and six escorts turned west into the North Atlantic. The convoy arrived safely at New York in the early afternoon of August 27, 1943.

In early September, while at New York, the forward-mounted 20-mm gun was removed and a 3"/50 caliber gun put in its place. The *Conrad Weiser* crossed the Atlantic again and on October 19, 1943, sailed from Casablanca, Morocco in a convoy of 12 merchant ships and four escorts. The following day, she rendezvoused with a larger westbound convoy, bringing the total number of vessels present to 45 merchantmen and nine escorts. The combined convoy was a slow one, steaming westward at an average speed of 8.5 knots, and arrived safely at Newport News, Virginia just after noon on November 6, 1943. On both the outbound and homeward legs of the voyage, the convoy commodores, US Navy captains, had ordered that the *Weiser* not deploy its Mark 29 hydrophone gear.

The *Conrad Weiser* sailed from Newport News on November 24, the day before Thanksgiving, in a convoy of 51 merchantmen and 14 escorts. She carried general supplies consigned to the US Army Quartermaster Corps. The escort group included a small aircraft carrier, which provided air coverage throughout the voyage. During the crossing the escorts depth-charged several possible contacts, but the results of these attacks were inconclusive. The convoy arrived at Oran, Algeria on December 12, and the *Weiser* anchored in the open roadstead outside the harbor. At noon on December 14, the ship was moved to Pier 16 in the harbor, and the unloading of her cargo begun. The unloading was soon ordered stopped, however, and the cargo that had already been removed was placed back aboard. The *Conrad Weiser* received orders placing her on "stand-by" status. At some point after that, she again offloaded her cargo of quartermaster's supplies at Oran.

The *Conrad Weiser* sailed from Oran on December 22, 1943, embarking on a zigzagging course across the Mediterranean. Following the

routing instructions relayed by the British Admiralty, the *Weiser* steamed first to Bizerte, Tunisia, and then continued on to Naples, Italy, arriving there on December 26. Departing Naples on January 18, 1944, the *Weiser* steamed to Augusta, Sicily, and then continued on to Bône, Algeria (now Annaba), where she arrived on January 23. From Bône, she returned to Augusta and then Naples, arriving there on February 9. From Naples she returned first to Bizerte and then Tunis, and from there continued on to Oran, arriving there late on the afternoon of Sunday, February 20. From Oran, she sailed on February 24 in a westbound convoy of 103 merchantmen and about 15 escorts. The westbound crossing passed quietly, and the convoy arrived at New York just after midnight on March 18, 1944.

In New York, crews from the Navy's Bureau of Ordnance again changed the armament aboard the *Weiser*. They removed the 5-inch gun on the stern and, in its place, mounted a pair of 3"/50 caliber guns, bringing the Liberty's armament strength to three 3-inch dual-purpose guns and eight 20-mm anti-aircraft weapons. The *Weiser* also acquired a new Armed Guard officer, Ensign Hubert Martin Marshall, USNR.

The ship dropped down the coast to Newport News, where she joined convoy UGS-40, bound for the Mediterranean. The 85 merchantmen and 16 escort vessels sailed from Newport News on April 23, 1944. The *Conrad Weiser* carried general cargo and troops. The convoy commodore, Captain Thomas H. Taylor, and the escort commander, Commander Jesse C. Sowell in the US Coast Guard Cutter *Campbell*, anticipated air attack once the ships entered the Mediterranean. Together they had worked out an air defense plan. En route, both the ships in the convoy and the escort vessels repeatedly practiced defending against air attack.

The officers had good reason to be concerned. Three days before UGS-40 sailed, just after sunset on April 20, Luftwaffe torpedo bombers attacked convoy UGS-38 off the Algerian coast near Cape Sigli. Twenty-five to 30 planes swooped down upon the convoy in the gathering darkness. One launched a torpedo which struck the US Liberty Ship *Paul Hamilton*. The *Hamilton*, loaded with high explosives, was literally blown to pieces. Tragically, in addition to the munitions, she was also carrying 471 US Air Corps personnel as passengers. No one on

board survived. Including the *Hamilton's* Naval Armed Guard and merchant crew, the total death toll totaled 530 men, the heaviest loss of life aboard any Liberty ship in World War II (Bunker 1990; Morison 1956).

Captain Taylor and Commander Sowell may have been made aware of this tragedy; certainly those aboard the ships in the convoy were not. Convoy UGS-40 passed the Straits of Gibraltar on May 9. The convoy's escort group was augmented off Gibraltar by the addition of the British anti-aircraft cruiser HMS *Caledon*, the US destroyer *Benson* and destroyer escort *Wilhoite*, the British salvage tug HMS *Hengist*, and the American minesweepers *Steady* and *Sustain*. The latter two vessels were specially equipped with electronic gear for jamming the radio-controlled glide bombs the Germans had recently begun using. German aircraft shadowed the convoy for two days, determining its course and speed. The convoy was formed into eight columns of ships spaced 1,000 yards apart, with 500 yards spacing between the vessels in each column. The *Weiser* was in position 42, the second ship in the convoy's fourth column from the left. On the evening of May 11, Commander Sowell passed word that the convoy should anticipate an attack at dusk. At 8:44 p.m., just one minute before sunset, shore-based radar picked up the echo of over 60 German aircraft headed for the convoy from the northeast. The escorts began making smoke around the convoy. UGS-40 was then about 55 nautical miles east-northeast of Algiers.

The weather was misty and the visibility poor. HMS *Caledon*, the anti-aircraft cruiser, was perfectly placed to defend the merchantmen. Located on the port bow of the convoy, the *Caledon* unleashed a heavy barrage on the incoming planes at 9:06 p.m. Those aboard the *Conrad Weiser* and other ships in the convoy could not see the target, but watched as the firing gradually spread from the port bow along the port side of the convoy to the stern. Ships all over the convoy began firing around 9:10. At 9:18, the lookout aboard the *Weiser* witnessed an explosion off the *Weiser's* starboard quarter and reported (incorrectly) that a ship in the sixth or seventh column was hit. A minute later, another explosion was seen off the *Weiser's* port quarter. About the same time, Cdr. Sowell ordered an emergency 45° turn to port, turning the ships directly toward the

incoming planes and presenting the smallest possible target.

The first group of Germans bore down in four waves of about seven planes each. The torpedo planes came in low with their engines cut back, swooping down to within 40 feet of the water. The first group swept in over the port bow; another came in from starboard, while others ran down the lanes of ships. Many planes launched torpedoes, but all passed harmlessly through the convoy. The *Conrad Weiser* was towing its Mark 29 hydrophones at the time of the attack, and the operator reported hearing a torpedo pass close aboard. The helmsman and the starboard Navy lookout both spotted its wake as it passed diagonally from port to starboard ahead of the ship.

A *Conrad Weiser* bridge lookout spotted a torpedo plane low over the convoy, about two points off the port bow, being fired on by the lead ships in the third and fourth columns. The *Weiser's* 3-inch guns on the bow fired on this aircraft as well. Radar operators aboard the escorts reported another wave of planes sweeping in from the port quarter. Cdr. Sowell ordered an emergency turn 45° to starboard, again presenting the smallest possible target. This attack failed as well.

The firing died down gradually, and by 9:40 p.m. all was quiet again. Not a single ship in the convoy or escort group had been hit. Though almost everyone involved had witnessed explosions and believed several ships had been hit – German radio broadcasts bragged of sinking seven merchantmen and one escort – the only casualties in the convoy were four Army passengers wounded by 20-mm anti-aircraft fire from another ship. After the action, Cdr. Sowell plotted 19 Luftwaffe aircraft shot down over or near the convoy. One more was intercepted on the way home by British fighters and shot down, while another crashed. Fully a third of the 62 Luftwaffe planes in the attack failed to return to base (Morison 1956).

The convoy continued its eastward journey without further incident. The *Weiser* arrived safely at Naples on May 18, 1944. The Naval Armed Guard crews of the *Conrad Weiser* and 37 other US merchant vessels in Convoy UGS-40 were later awarded the Operation and Engagement Star in recognition of their service during the confused battle.

The *Weiser* sailed from Naples on May 27, carrying a cargo of aircraft parts and mail. The westbound convoy included 65 merchantmen and 11 escorts. While in the Mediterranean, the convoy escorts laid smoke screens at dusk to discourage enemy aircraft. On June 7 and 8, the convoy was warned of suspected U-boats operating in the area, but no action resulted. The voyage passed quietly, and the *Conrad Weiser* arrived safely at New York on June 19, 1944.

In New York, the *Weiser* took on a load of general cargo, tanks and trucks bound for the Allied armies in Normandy. The Liberty sailed on July 10, 1944, in convoy of 90 merchantmen, six escorts and five Merchant Aircraft Carriers. The latter, known as "MAC" ships, were British tankers or bulk cargo carriers fitted with flight decks and each carried three or four Swordfish biplane torpedo bombers. The Swordfish, though slow and vulnerable against most targets, were supreme antisubmarine patrol planes. The MAC ships also carried cargo (van der Vat 1988).

The convoy ran into heavy fog on its way across the Atlantic, and the ships burned blue stern lights to assist each other in maintaining position. The *Weiser* arrived at Oban, a small anchorage on the Firth of Lorn on Scotland's west coast, on July 23. The following day, she sailed with 20 other merchantmen and two naval trawler escorts around Scotland's northern coast to Methil, on the Firth of Forth, arriving on July 27. After a convoy conference, the *Weiser* sailed that same day with 34 other merchantmen to Southend, a port at the mouth of the Thames in Essex, arriving on July 30. The *Weiser* sailed again on August 2 for Southampton, but anchored at Yarmouth, on the Isle of Wight on August 3. The following day, August 4, she joined a convoy of about 17 other merchantmen and steamed south across the English Channel to Omaha Beach. The *Weiser* began discharging cargo on August 7, and on the 13th weighed anchor and returned to the British Isles.

The *Weiser* sailed from Bangor (or North Down), Northern Ireland, on August 18, 1944, in ballast in a convoy of about 50 merchantmen. Off Scotland, the convoy rendezvoused with a larger group of about 100 ships, and the combined convoy steamed westward at about eight knots. Again the ships encountered heavy fog, but made no enemy contacts. The convoy arrived safely at New York on September 3, 1944.

The *Weiser* returned to Europe, this time to the Mediterranean. On October 30, 1945, under the command of R. J. Dexter and loaded with general cargo, she sailed from Leghorn (or Livorno), Italy with seven other escorted merchantmen to Naples. After anchoring overnight in an Italian bay, she arrived at Naples on the morning of November 1. No berths were available, and the *Weiser* remained anchored in the bay there until November 4, when the Liberty was shifted to a nearby anchorage. On November 11, the *Weiser* docked at Naples and began discharging her cargo. She sailed independently from Naples a few days later and arrived at Oran on the morning of November 20, 1944. The *Weiser* left Oran the following day and steamed to Beni Saf, about 45 nautical miles to the southwest, where she took on ballast, and returned to Oran on November 22. On November 23, the *Conrad Weiser* joined a convoy for the United States. The 84 merchantmen and eight escorts steamed westward at 9.5 knots. The military situation in the Mediterranean had swung so far in favor of the Allies that on this voyage – just six months after Convoy UGS-40 had been attacked by torpedo bombers in those same waters – that the convoys now burned running lights. Collision was now a more serious threat than enemy action.

The running lights were put out again after the convoy passed the Straits of Gibraltar and entered the Atlantic. There were no enemy contacts on the westbound passage, though, and the *Conrad Weiser* arrived without incident at New York on December 11, 1944.

After a Christmas liberty in New York for most of her crew, the *Conrad Weiser* sailed for Europe again on December 29, 1944. Ensign Marshall had been transferred, and the Armed Guard was now commanded by Lieutenant M. R. Cobaugh, USNR. Lt. (jg) Donald Taylor supervised the Liberty's three Navy radio operators. In the convoy were 40 other merchantmen, 11 naval escorts and an escort aircraft carrier. The eastward voyage across the Atlantic passed without incident, and the convoy anchored in the Downs, off Deal on the English Channel coast, early on the morning of January 14, 1945. She sailed at 2:00 a.m. the following morning for Antwerp, Belgium, but ran aground at 3:37 a.m. She cleared ground later that morning, and returned to the Downs anchorage. The *Conrad Weiser* sailed

again at 3:15 on January 16, arriving at Antwerp late that afternoon.

Antwerp had endured a massive bombardment by German V-1 flying bombs and V-2 rockets in the days just prior to the *Weiser's* arrival (see the ship's history of the SS *George Farley*). The port facilities had been a major target, and a number of ships had been hit. The *Weiser* lay in the port of Antwerp for three weeks. During this time, the ship came under repeated attack by German V-bombs and aircraft. A ship nearby, the SS *Alcoa Banner*, was hit by a bomb dropped from a German Ju-88 medium bomber. No aircraft came within range of the *Weiser's* 20-mm guns, though, and the Armed Guard were prohibited from firing their heavy weapons at the attackers. The *Weiser* finally sailed for Southend on February 6, with 25 other merchantmen and eight escorts. The convoy anchored at Southend on February 9, 1945. The following day, the *Weiser* sailed with 28 other merchantmen and six escorts, heading south and west through the English Channel. On February 13, the ships rendezvoused with an Atlantic convoy off Fastnet Rock, Ireland, and headed west for the United States. The escorts made no contact with the enemy, and the convoy arrived safely at New York on March 1, 1945.

At New York, the heavy guns aboard the *Conrad Weiser* were removed and replaced with three 3"/50 caliber guns. These guns, the Armed Guard discovered, were supposedly reconditioned but proved to be in very poor condition. The barrels were pitted, and the guns appeared to have been exposed to the weather for some time.

Under the command of F. W. Lunenburg, the *Conrad Weiser* made a brief trip to Norfolk, Virginia. Lieutenant George C. Johnson, USNR, commanded the Armed Guard, while Lt. King Wilmot supervised the Navy radio operators aboard. She sailed from Norfolk on March 22, 1945 for New York, and there became part of a 50-ship convoy for Antwerp. The merchantmen, shepherded by four escorts, were joined by 10 merchantmen, three escorts and an escort carrier. En route across the Atlantic, the convoy made two emergency turns when the escorts reported submarine contacts ahead. As the convoy approached the British Isles, small groups of ships began breaking off to continue on to other ports. Thirty-two ships of the original group and seven escorts stayed with the convoy to

the Downs; 26 merchantmen and three escorts continued on to Antwerp. Leaving the anchorage Schelde River on the run into Antwerp, the *Conrad Weiser* collided with the SS *Miaduus*, but neither vessel was seriously damaged. The *Weiser* arrived at Antwerp on April 9, 1945.

The *Weiser* sailed from Antwerp on April 26 and arrived at the Downs early on April 28. She sailed that same evening for Cherbourg, arriving on April 30 – the same day, it would be discovered, that Adolph Hitler shot himself in Berlin. The *Conrad Weiser* sailed from Cherbourg to Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, and on May 2 joined a 90-ship convoy bound for the US. Curiously, midway across the Atlantic, on May 8, the *Conrad Weiser* and two other merchantmen were detached from their westbound convoy and reassigned to a large convoy heading east. The *Weiser* arrived at Le Harve, France on May 19, 1945. She left LeHarve on May 21 and arrived again at Cowes the following day. On May 22, she joined another US-bound convoy, composed of 75 merchantmen, 8 escorts and one escort carrier. This convoy crossed the Atlantic without incident. As they neared the US, the *Conrad Weiser* and six other merchantmen were detached from the convoy to proceed independently to Boston. The *Conrad Weiser* arrived there on June 4, 1945.

At Boston, most of the *Weiser's* Armed Guard was detached. The Guard was left under the direction of Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Sylvan Kline. Captain Lunenburg continued in command of the ship. The *Conrad Weiser* sailed from New York carrying general cargo consigned to the US Army. She probably proceeded independently to Northern Europe, bringing supplies for the Occupation forces there. She returned to New York on August 9, 1945.

That same day the second atomic bomb exploded over Nagasaki, Japan. Perhaps with the end of the war in the Pacific imminent, the remaining members of the *Weiser's* Armed Guard decided to quit their drilling and maintenance duties altogether. In late September, the *Conrad Weiser* was in Galveston, Texas when a naval inspector came aboard and discovered "gross negligence in maintenance and lubrication of guns and equipment." The remaining members of the ship's Armed Guard were detached and returned to the Armed Guard center at New Orleans for disciplinary action.

The *Conrad Weiser* sailed from Galveston on September 29, 1945 for the Mediterranean. Capt. Lunenburg remained in command, although the naval personnel on board were now reduced to a three-man maintenance crew led by a Gunner's Mate 3rd Class. The *Weiser* carried general cargo consigned to the Army. She called at Bizerte, Tunis and Naples before returning to the US at Hampton Roads, Virginia on November 22, 1945. The next day she moved up the coast to Baltimore, where she had been built. Her guns were removed there in early December.

On May 22, 1947, the *Conrad Weiser* was chartered at New Orleans to the Eastport Steamship

Corporation. She was rechartered at New Orleans in late July 1949 to the South Atlantic Steamship Line, but was placed in the Reserve Fleet at Beaumont, Texas a few days later. During the Korean War, she was chartered briefly by Lykes Brothers Steamship Co., but returned to the Reserve Fleet at Beaumont in June 1952.

On June 20, 1975 the *Conrad Weiser* was purchased at Beaumont by the Texas Marine Council and delivered to the Texas Artificial Reef Program on June 27. On January 28, 1976, the *Conrad Weiser* was scuttled off Port Aransas near 27° 34' N, 96° 51' W (Archeological Site No. 41NU278).

SS Conrad Weiser

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	New York	Loch Ewe, Scotland	7/8/43	7/21/43
2	Loch Ewe	Firth of Forth, Scotland	7/22/43	7/24/43
3	Firth of Forth	London	7/26/43	7/28/43
4	Estuary of the Thames	New York	8/9/43	8/27/43
5	Casablanca, French Morocco	Newport News, VA	10/19/43	11/6/43
6	Newport News	Oran, French Morocco	11/24/43	12/12/43
7	Oran	Bizwete, Tunisia	12/22/43	12/24/43
8	Bizerte	Naples, Italy	12/24/43	1/18/44
9	Naples	Augusta, Sicily	1/15/44	1/19/44
10	Augusta	Bône, Algeria	1/20/44	1/23/44
11	Bône	Augusta	2/3/44	2/6/44
12	Augusta	Naples	2/8/44	2/9/44
13	Naples	Bizerte	2/12/44	2/14/44
14	Bizerte	Tunis	2/14/44	2/15/44
15	Tunis	Oran	2/16/44	2/20/44
16	Oran	New York	2/24/44	3/18/44
17	Newport News	Naples	4/23/44	5/18/44
18	Naples	New York	5/27/44	6/19/44
19	New York	Oban Bay, Scotland	7/10/44	7/23/44
20	Oban Bay	Methil, Scotland	7/10/44	7/23/44
21	Methil	Southend, England	7/27/44	7/30/44
22	Southend	Southampton, England	8/2/44	8/2/44
23	Southampton	Yarmouth, England	8/2/44	8/3/44
24	Yarmouth	Omaha Beach, France	8/4/44	8/4/44

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
25	Omaha Beach	Barry Roads, Wales	8/13/44	8/16/44
26	Barry Roads	Bangor, Ireland	8/17/44	8/18/44
27	Bangor	New York	8/18/44	9/3/44
28	Leghorn, Italy	New York	10/30/44	12/11/44
29	New York	The Downs, England	12/29/44	1/14/45
30	The Downs	Antwerp, Belgium	1/15/45	1/16/45
31	Antwerp	New York	2/6/45	3/1/45
32	Norfolk, VA	Antwerp	3/22/45	4/9/45
33	Antwerp	The Downs	4/26/45	4/28/45
34	The Downs	Cherbourg	4/28/45	4/30/45
35	Cherbourg	Cowes, England	5/1/45	5/2/45
36	Cowes (bound for US but turned back)	Le Havre	5/10/45	5/19/45
37	Le Havre	Cowes	5/21/45	5/22/45
38	Cowes	Boston	5/22/45	6/4/45
39	Boston	New York	?	?
40	New York	New York	6/27/45	8/9/45
41	Galveston, TX	Bizerte, Tunisia	9/29/45	10/21/45
42	Bizerte	Tunis	10/30/45	10/31/45
43	Tunis	Naples	11/1/45	11/2/45
44	Naples	Hampton Roads	11/4/45	11/22/45
45	Hampton Roads	Baltimore, MD	11/22/45	11/23/45

SS *John Worthington*

The *John Worthington* began her career in the far Pacific Northwest. She was a tanker launched in 1920 by the G. M. Standifer Construction Corporation of Vancouver, Washington (Lloyd's Register, 1940). She had four sisters: the *W. H. Libby*, *Livingston Roe*, *Christy Payne*, and *Chester O. Swain*. She measured 463 feet 3 inches long between perpendiculars (477 feet 10 inches overall), had a beam of 60 feet, and a cargo capacity of 89,851 barrels (Figures 30 and 31). With a four-cylinder, quadruple-expansion engine rated at 2,800 horsepower, the *John Worthington* had a certified speed of 9.9 knots. In a pinch, she could do more.

The *Worthington* was part of the growing fleet of tankers operated by the Standard Oil Company of

New Jersey. She operated for Standard Oil – the “Esso Fleet” – for nearly 20 years, often carrying oil from ports on the Gulf Coast to refineries and distributors on the Atlantic Coast. On September 3, 1939, the day Britain declared war on Nazi Germany, the *Worthington* sailed from Baytown, Texas

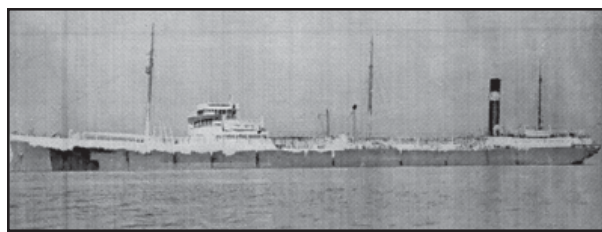


Figure 30. A prewar photograph of the *John Worthington* covered with snow. (From Standard Oil of New Jersey, *Ships of the Esso Fleet in World War II*.)

for New York with a full load of petroleum products. Before the end of the year, she had made six wartime voyages, carrying some 533,786 barrels of oil products.

The *Worthington* continued to operate as part of the Esso Fleet during the early part of World War II. In 1940 she made 20 voyages, carrying 1,703,648 barrels of oil. She made 21 voyages in 1941, safely delivering 1,777,731 barrels to their destinations.

By early 1942, the *Worthington* had been equipped with a Naval Armed Guard and weapons for self-defense. She carried an Armed Guard of eight, led by a naval reservist coxswain. The tanker carried a 3"/23 caliber dual-purpose gun mounted on the bow, a 4"/50 caliber dual purpose gun on the stern, and four 0.50-caliber Browning machine guns divided between the midships and aft super-structures.

In the spring of 1942, the *Worthington* took on a cargo of petroleum products at Baytown, Texas, bound for Bermuda. During this same period, the US convoy system was just getting organized, and German U-boats were causing heavy losses along the Eastern seaboard, particularly off Florida and the Virginia Capes. Many Allied convoys during this period were forced to make coastwise passages without escort of any kind; the *Worthington's* voyage to Bermuda may have been one of these. The *Worthington* rounded the tip of Florida safely, though, and continued on to Bermuda without incident. After unloading her cargo at St. George's, the tanker was shifted to a nearby anchorage to

wait for the next US-bound convoy. After two-and-a-half weeks, the *John Worthington* was assigned the best escort available – the US Navy fleet tug *Owl* – and weighed anchor for New York. The trip north passed without serious incident, and the *Worthington* arrived safely in New York at 2:00 a.m. on May 13, 1942.

By autumn the US convoy situation had improved considerably. On the morning of November 15, 1942, under the command of Master Gunnar Gjertsen, she left New York in ballast for Galveston, Texas. Gjertsen had nearly 20 years' experience in the Esso Fleet, having joined the company in 1925 as third mate on the *Worthington*. Gjertsen was all too familiar with the war against merchantmen at sea, having served as a mine warfare officer in his native Norway throughout World War I and, more recently, having served as master of the tanker *Arriaga* when she was torpedoed and sunk in June 1942.

The Naval Armed Guard had been expanded with the addition of more gunners and four naval communications ratings, all under the direction of Lt. (jg) Charles C. Dalton, USNR. The *Worthington* sailed in a slow, eight-knot convoy of 27 merchantmen and five small escorts. The first few days passed without incident. Late on the afternoon of November 19, while the convoy was abreast of the Georgia coast, one of the escorts dropped two depth charges over a suspected submarine contact. The convoy commodore ordered emergency turns to avoid the area. The following day, in the forenoon watch, lookouts aboard the *Worthington* spotted what looked like a ditched plane off on the horizon. Two of the convoy's escorts approached and appeared to rescue the airplane's crew. The convoy arrived safely at Galveston in the mid-afternoon of November 25, 1942, the day before Thanksgiving. The *Worthington* was routed into the Galveston Ship Channel and tied up at Todd Shipyard on Pelican Island. A Todd repair crew came aboard that evening and worked through the night repairing a leaky hull plate on the starboard bow.

The *Worthington* sailed at noon on Thanksgiving Day and proceeded independently down the coast to Corpus Christi. She entered Aransas Pass during the night of November 26-27, and arrived at Corpus Christi in the early morning hours of November 27. Later that morning the *Worthington*

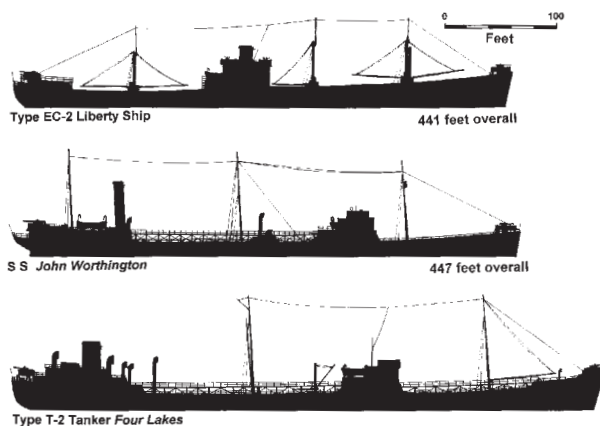


Figure 31. Profiles and relative sizes of a Liberty Ship, a T-2 tanker, and the *John Worthington* (Andy Hall 1995).

was shifted to the Humble Oil Docks at Ingleside, Texas on the northern shore of Corpus Christi Bay, where she took on a load of petroleum products. She sailed from Ingleside at noon that same day and proceeded independently to Harbor Island Dock, Texas, arriving there early on November 28. The *Worthington* sailed from Harbor Island later that morning in convoy with five other merchantmen and six escorts. At 10:00 a.m. on the 29th, the *Worthington* anchored in Bolivar Roads between Galveston Island and the Bolivar Peninsula.

The *Worthington* sailed in convoy from Galveston later that afternoon in a convoy of 29 merchantmen and five escorts for New York. On December 4, 1942, and again on December 5, the convoy escorts depth-charged possible submerged contacts and the convoy made emergency turns to clear the area. The convoy anchored safely at the buoy off Ambrose Light, New York on the afternoon of December 8. After taking on her pilot and making a brief stop at Quarantine, the *John Worthington* made fast at Pier 5, Constable Hook in Bayonne, New Jersey, on the morning of December 9, 1942.

The *Worthington* sailed from New York again on December 16, 1942 in a convoy of 21 merchantmen and five escorts. A Navy blimp patrolled overhead during daylight. The convoy steamed south along the U.S. Atlantic seaboard. The following day, as the convoy passed Norfolk, nine more ships joined the group. On the morning of December 23, the convoy reached a point near Key West, Florida, and the convoy broke up into separate segments routed to different destinations. The *Worthington* proceeded on to Galveston, anchoring again in Bolivar Roads at noon on the day after Christmas, 1942.

After a brief layover in dry dock at Todd Shipyards, the *Worthington* sailed again on December 28 for the Standard Oil Docks on the Houston Ship channel, arriving in the Bayou City that afternoon. After filling her bunkers with 87,000 bbls of Navy diesel oil, she left the dock late on the afternoon of December 29, but ran aground on Hog Island, near the head of Galveston Bay. There appeared to be no damage, but a hawser became entangled in the ship's screw. She was refloated successfully the next morning and continued slowly on to her anchorage in Bolivar Roads, where salvage divers removed the fouled hawser. She sailed from

Galveston that same afternoon, December 30, 1942, and steamed alone to Key West and then New York, arriving at Stapleton Anchorage, New York, on January 8, 1943. The *Worthington* had made 11 voyages in 1942, delivering nearly a million barrels of oil.

The *Worthington* sailed again from the Federal Anchorage in New York Harbor before dawn on January 15, 1943. Three of her tanks were filled with seawater for ballast, but she also carried 27 sacks of mail. In a convoy of 22 merchantmen and five escorts, she steamed first to Guantanamo Bay and then to Aruba, Netherlands West Indies, arriving there at 2:00 a.m. on January 25, 1943. At the oil docks there she took on a cargo of 30,230 bbls of diesel oil and 1,897 bbls of fuel oil, all bound for Cristobal, Panama, and 18,141 bbls of aviation fuel and 36,662 bbls of diesel fuel consigned to the US submarine base at Coco Solo, Panama. She arrived at Cristobal on January 30, 1943, and continued on to Coco Solo the following day. She sailed from Panama without escort, returning to Aruba on February 7. On February 10, 1943, she sailed in convoy for New York with 33 other merchantmen and four escorts. At 6:50 a.m. on St. Valentine's Day, at 21° 2' N, 72° 43' W, one of the escorts made contact with a suspected submarine. The corvette dropped a quick series of eight depth charges about two miles off the convoy's starboard beam. Two other escorts, a corvette and submarine chaser, quickly closed the scene as the convoy commodore ordered emergency turns away from the area. The escorts continued to depth-charge the site for half an hour after the original attack, but were unable to report positive results.

On February 18, the *Worthington* was forced to heave-to when a link pin on one of the engine's four main cylinders broke. The Esso tanker got underway again on three cylinders, but could not regain the convoy. The *Worthington* proceeded on alone, zigzagging, and reached New York on the evening of February 20, 1943.

On March 14, 1943, the *Worthington* sailed from New York in ballast in convoy for Aruba. The convoy consisted of 28 merchantmen and five escorts. She arrived in Aruba on March 24. There she took on 11,000 bbls of gasoline and 20,355 bbls of naval diesel fuel, destined for Pernambuco in Brazil. She loaded 8,377 bbls of gasoline, 5,630 bbls

of naval diesel fuel, and 11,000 bbls of kerosene consigned to the Atlantic Oil Company office in Rio de Janeiro. Finally, she loaded 7,600 bbls of kerosene consigned to the Standard Oil Company of Brazil in Rio.

The *Worthington* sailed from Aruba on March 26, 1943, and proceeded in convoy with one other merchantman and a single escort. After a short stop at Curaçao, she continued on to Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, in a convoy of 14 ships and five escorts. She sailed from Port-of-Spain on April 2, 1943, in convoy for Recife, Brazil.

Recife, formerly called Pernambuco, was a key Allied base by that time. Brazil had maintained close relations with the United States for many years, and the US Navy had taken a particular interest in developing Brazil's own naval capabilities. While several countries in South America remained sympathetic to Nazi Germany, Brazil remained loyal to the US. When Germany and Italy declared war on the US just following Pearl Harbor, Brazil immediately broke off diplomatic relations with those nations. Brazil allowed US patrol aircraft to operate from airfields on its soil, and opened its harbors to US warships. Recife was the most important of these, for though it was isolated and only moderately well-equipped, it was located near Cabo de São Roque, the easternmost point on the Brazilian coast. After Brazil declared war on the Axis in August 1942, Recife quickly developed into a major naval installation, providing for the training, outfitting, and resupply of both Brazilian and American antisubmarine forces (Morison 1988).

The *John Worthington* sailed for Recife in convoy TB-7 (Trinidad-Brazil), along with 12 other merchantmen and seven escorts. It was a slow convoy – six-and-one-half knots – but it arrived safely at Recife on the evening of April 19, 1943. The *Worthington* sailed from Recife on April 28 in company with three other merchantmen and four escorts. The escorts left the merchantmen at La Bahia to continue on alone, and the *Worthington* arrived safely at Rio de Janeiro on May 4, 1943.

After emptying her bunkers at Rio, the *Worthington* sailed again on May 14, 1943, under the command of Captain Gunnar Gjertsen. All tanks had been vented of oil fumes, and main tank nos. 3, 5 and 7 were filled with seawater as ballast. The *Worthington* continued up the coast to São Salvador, Brazil, where she rendezvoused with a U.S.-bound convoy. The convoy sailed on Monday, May 24, and steamed slowly up the coast of Brazil.

The merchantmen of the convoy were arranged in five columns. The *John Worthington* took her assigned position as the second ship in the middle column. Five American warships, a destroyer and four corvettes patrolled ahead of the column and off to each side.

After sundown on May 27, the convoy came abreast of Cabo de São Roque. One after another, the merchantmen swung to port and settled on a northwesterly course for Trinidad. The weather was clear, with a moderate sea and a steady southeast breeze. Four minutes before midnight, a torpedo fired by U-154 raked the third ship in the column just to starboard of the *Worthington* (Kelshall 1994:305). The stricken ship, the Texas Company (Texaco) tanker *Florida*, immediately began to settle and fell out of formation. The officer of the watch on the *Worthington*, Third Mate Frederick Arfstrom, sounded general quarters. Captain Gjertsen was also on the bridge at the time of the explosion.⁵

A minute or so after the *Florida* was hit, while the merchant crew and the Naval Armed Guard were rushing to their battle stations, a torpedo struck the *John Worthington* aft of the starboard side, sending up a sheet of water near the after superstructure. The force of the explosion skewed the stern of the vessel 30° to port, putting her on a collision course with ships in the next column to starboard, but the tanker's steering gear was undamaged and the helmsman quickly got her back on course and in proper formation.

Gjertsen sent his chief mate, Frank Hooper, aft to inspect the damage. Hooper soon returned and reported that the torpedo had struck the no. 8 tank,

⁵The *Florida* did not sink. Escorted by the corvette USS *Saucy*, she struggled into Fortaleza, Brazil, where she was beached and examined. Although her keel was broken, her owners salvaged the vessel and towed her to Puerto Rico, where she underwent temporary repairs. She later received permanent repairs at Chester, Pennsylvania, and returned to war service.

and had seriously damaged the bulkhead separating that tank from those forward and aft. Nevertheless, he reported, the ship seemed to be structurally sound. It was fortunate that the *Worthington* was lightly ballasted, for she had enough reserve buoyancy to keep her afloat. The chief engineer, Walter Gilliam, telephoned the bridge and reported that, apart from some minor damage, all was well in the engine room. Gjertsen made his decision. He would stay with the convoy.

The *John Worthington* kept her station in the convoy and continued on to Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, a distance of over 1,900 nautical miles. Although she bore a hole in her starboard side the size of a small house, she averaged a speed of 9.14 knots over the course from São Salvador, Brazil.

At Port-of-Spain, the tanker was examined by a surveyor from Lloyd's and by Myles Bylsma, chief engineer for Standard Oil. The damage was more severe than first thought. The torpedo had blasted a hole that extended down the side of the ship from just below the main deck, around the turn of the bilge, and along the bottom to within 12 feet of the centerline bulkhead. Tanks 7, 8, and 9 were flooded. But there had been no vibration or additional deterioration of the ship's structure in the 1,900 miles the *Worthington* had traveled since the attack. Since there were no suitable repair yards in Trinidad, the Lloyd's surveyor certified the tanker as seaworthy enough to travel to a repair facility on the Gulf of Mexico (Figure 32).

The tanker sailed from Port-of-Spain on June 8, 1943, and arrived at Guantanamo, Cuba, five days later. She sailed again on June 14, and arrived at Galveston, Texas on the morning of June 21, 1943. She had covered the distance from Trinidad to Cuba at an average speed of 8.47 knots, and the distance from Cuba to Galveston at an average speed of 8.38 knots. In all, the *John Worthington* had steamed about 4,400 nautical miles since being torpedoed off Brazil (Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, 1946: 447-51).

The *Worthington* was examined carefully at Todd Shipyards in Galveston. The damage was extensive, and would require considerable resources to repair. Instead of repairing the ship, the US Maritime Commission declared the *John Worthington* a constructive total loss (CTL). She would not be repaired.

The tanker's guns were removed at Todd Shipyard. On July 21, 1943, Standard Oil transferred the title of the *John Worthington* to the War Shipping Administration. The WSA moved the ship down the Texas Coast to the Corpus Christi area. The *John Worthington* was abandoned in the Lydia Ann Channel, near Port Aransas, Texas.

In mid-November 1943, long after the *John Worthington* had been written off by the Maritime Commission, the War Shipping Administration issued a press release highlighting the tanker's "epic 4,600-mile dash." The press release, delayed to negate any intelligence value it might have for enemy agents, gave a brief summary of the torpedoing and subsequent voyage to the US. Though the article did not provide much detail – again, to deny valuable intelligence to the enemy – the information it did contain about the incident was accurate. No mention was made of the fact that the ship would never sail again. The press release concluded by listing the names and home addresses of several of the *Worthington's* merchant officers and crew, including Captain Gjertsen.

The vessel was later stripped and the hull left to fall apart until she disappeared beneath the waters of the channel between Port Aransas and Aransas Bay. The wreck is marked by a lighted buoy (Archaeological Site No. 41AS88).



Figure 32. Damage to the *John Worthington's* hull at Tank No. 8. The explosion punctured the bulkheads fore and aft of Tank 8, flooding Tanks 7 and 9 as well. Photo probably taken after her arrival in Texas on June 21, 1943. (From Standard Oil of New Jersey, *The Esso Fleet in World War II*.)

SS John Worthington

Voyage	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Departure Date	Arrival Date
1	Bay Town, TX	Bermuda		
2	Bermuda	New York		6/13/42
3	Lynnhaven Roads, VA	Wilmington, NC	8/3/42	8/5/42
4	New York	Galveston, TX	11/15/42	11/26/42
5	Galveston	Corpus Christi, TX	11/26/42	11/27/42
6	Corpus Christi	Galveston	11/28/42	11/29/42
7	Galveston	New York	11/29/42	12/9/42
8	New York	Galveston (repairs at Todd Shipyard)	12/16/42	12/26/42
9	Galveston	Houston, TX	12/28/42	12/28/42
10	Houston	Galveston	12/29/42	12/30/42
11	Galveston	New York	12/30/42	1/9/43
12	New York	Aruba	1/15/43	1/30/43
13	Aruba	Cristobal, Panama	1/27/43	1/30/43
14	Cristobal	Aruba	1/31/43	2/7/43
15	Aruba	New York	2/10/43	2/18/43
16	New York	Aruba	3/14/43	3/24/43
17	Aruba	Recife, Brazil	3/26/43	4/19/43
18	Recife	Rio de Janeiro	4/28/43	5/4/43
19	Rio de Janeiro	Bahia, Brazil	5/14/43	5/18/43
20	Bahia (torpedoed 5/27/43)	Port of Spain, Trinidad	5/24/43	6/5/43
21	Port of Spain	Guantanamo	6/8/43	6/14/43
22	Guantanamo	Galveston	6/17/43	6/21/43

LIBERTY SHIPS BUILT IN TEXAS

Of the roughly 2,700 Liberty Ships completed during World War II, 208 were built in Texas. All were built at the Houston Shipbuilding Corporation, located at Irish Bend Island on Buffalo Bayou (Figure 33). Management of the yard was later assumed by the Todd Shipyard Corporation, after which the facility was known as the Todd Houston Shipbuilding Corporation.

Although the shipyards that built Liberty Ships were widely known for the speed with which they

completed the ships (Figure 34), the Todd Houston Yard was one of the slower engaged in wartime construction. The first Liberty launched by the yard, delivered in May 1942, took 300 days to complete. The rate of completion increased gradually, but remained low throughout the war. In late 1943, when Liberty Ship construction reached its peak nationally, Todd Houston's contract with the War Shipping Administration still allowed for a 45-day construction schedule. Even so, the average period from the laying of the keel to delivery for ships built

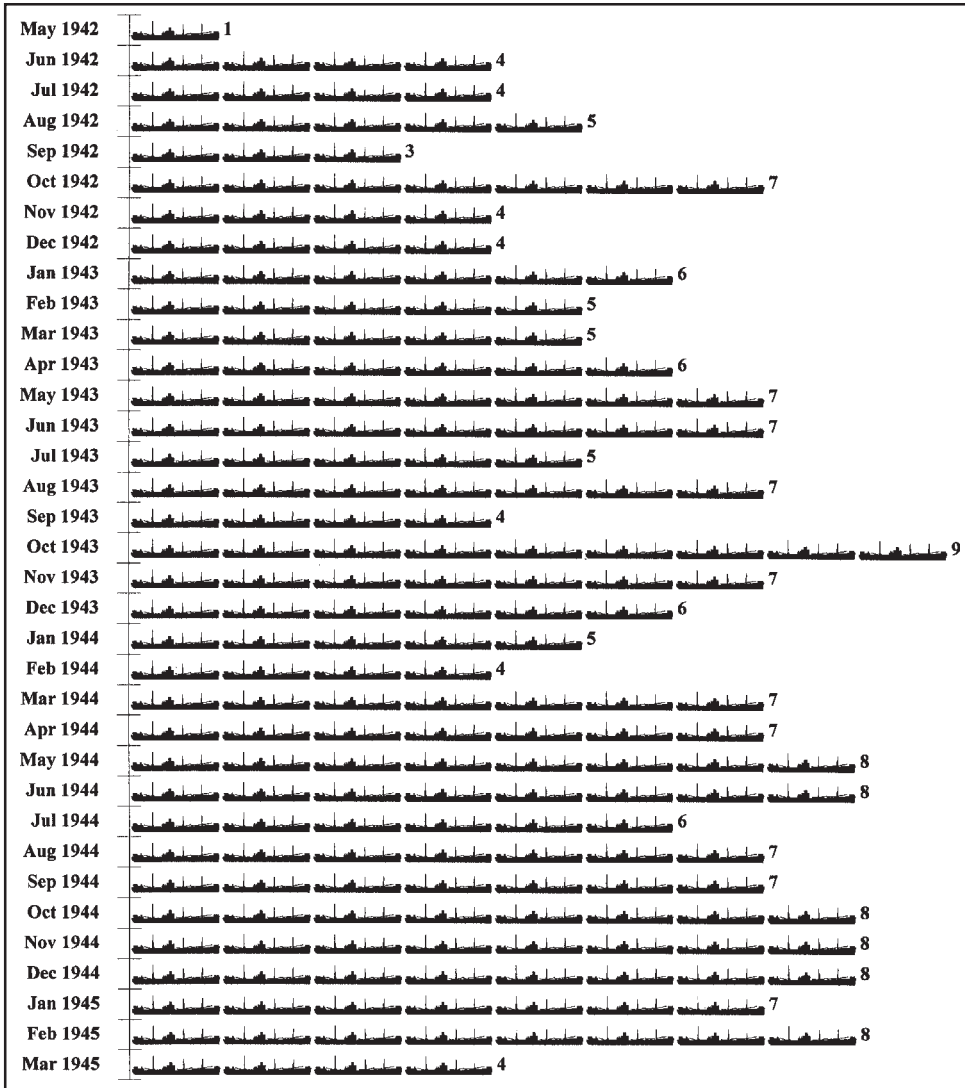


Figure 33. Liberty Ships built at Houston, Texas in numbers per month (Sawyer and Mitchell 1973).

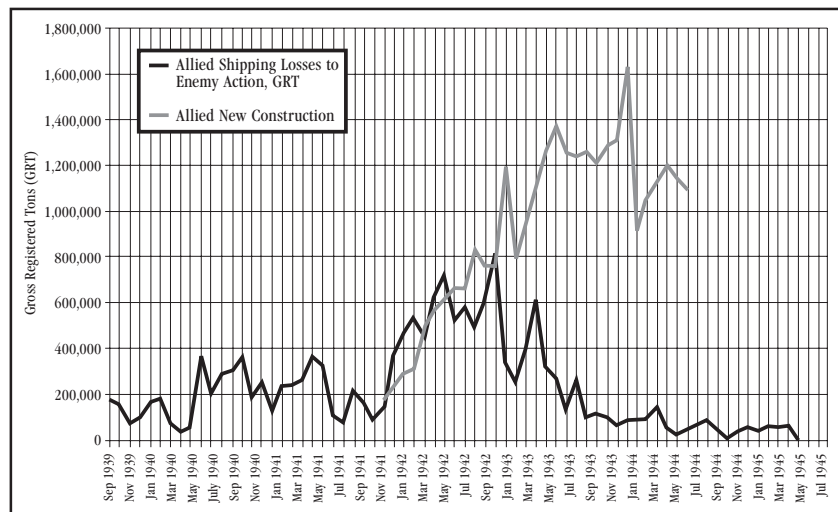


Figure 34. Allied shipping losses vs. new construction, 1939-1945.

at Todd Houston never dropped below 50 days. The ships built at Houston cost an average of \$1,833,400 each, only slightly more than the national average of \$1,822,000 (Lane 1951: 175, 826; Sawyer and Mitchell 1985: 168-179).

In granting contracts to Todd Houston, the WSA was careful to assign the yard vessel names that would appeal to local sentiments and patriotism. Famous Texans made up a considerable share of the Liberty Ships built at Todd; the first two Liberty Ships completed were the *Sam Houston* and the *Davy Crockett*. The yard built a second *Sam Houston* after the first was lost in combat. Other heroes of the Texas Revolution followed with the launching of the *William B. Travis*, *James W. Fannin* (Figure 35), *James Bowie* and *Benjamin R. Milam* (Figure 36). Contemporary war heroes were memorialized as well; the *Houston Volunteers* honored the local men who volunteered *en masse* for Navy duty after the cruiser USS *Houston* was sunk in the Pacific early in the war. *Henry M. Robert*, the Army engineer who helped design the Galveston Seawall and other harbor projects, was honored. The *Edwin W. Moore* was named in honor of the commanding officer of the Texas Navy. Among the state's governors represented were *James S. Hogg* and *Oran M. Roberts*. *Henry Austin*, who brought the first steamboat to Texas in the 1820s, was on the roster, as was *Charles Morgan*, the New York merchant who

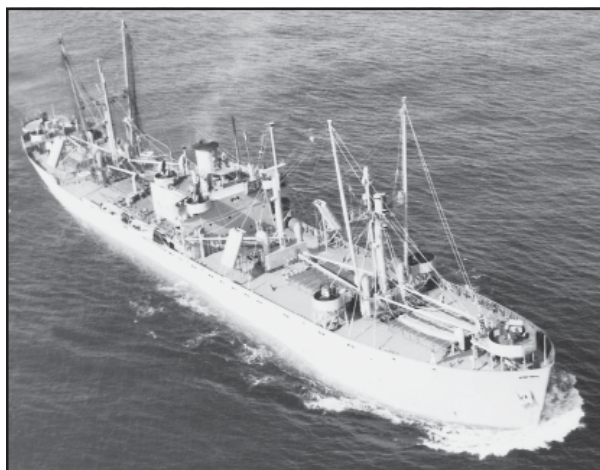


Figure 35. The SS *James W. Fannin* was produced in Texas in May 1943. It survived the war and was grounded and wrecked near Halifax in 1966 (United States Naval Institute).

dominated maritime commerce in Texas and the Gulf of Mexico from the 1830s to the 1870s. Other famous Texans represented on the launching ways at Irish Bend were *Jane Long*, *Charles Goodnight*, *Lorenzo de Zavala* and *Big Foot Wallace*. The Houston yard also built a number of ships named after famous Confederate generals, including the *A.P. Hill*, *John B. Hood*, *James Longstreet*, *J.E.B. Stuart* and *George E. Pickett*.

Liberty ships built in Texas.

Contracts to the Houston Shipbuilding Corporation:

Government Contract No.	Yard No.
95 - 119	1 - 25
265 - 276	26 - 37

Contracts to Todd Houston Shipbuilding Corporation:

Government Contract No.	Yard No.
828 - 859	38 - 69
1936 - 1966	70 - 100
2420 - 2431	101 - 112
2908 - 3003	113 - 208 (varied order)

The following list shows the Liberty Ships built at Houston in order of their yard numbers. The fate of each ship shown in the Notes column represents a fair sample of the careers of the Liberty ships as a class. All the information in the table is taken from Sawyer and Mitchell, *The Liberty Ships*, pp. 168-179.



Figure 36. The SS *Benjamin R. Milan* was produced in Texas in June 1943. It sank near Baltimore harbor after a boiler room explosion in March 1945, but was later repaired. After several name changes, it was scrapped in 1968 (United States Naval Institute).

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
1	<i>Sam Houston (I)</i>	May 1942	Sunk by U-203 near the Virgin Islands, June 28, 1942.
2	<i>Davy Crockett</i>	June 1942	Sold for scrap in March 1969, but later converted to pipe laying vessel.
3	<i>Matthew Maury</i>	June 1942	Damaged by U-371 off Bougie, Algeria; later repaired. Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Terminal Island, March 1961.
4	<i>Winfield Scott</i>	June 1942	Scrapped at New Orleans, July 1966.
5	<i>Michael J. Stone</i>	June 1942	Damaged by U-300 near Gibraltar, February 17, 1945; repaired. Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Baltimore, March 1960.
6	<i>David S. Terry</i>	July 1942	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Bilbao, Philippines, March 1971.
7	<i>Benjamin Bourn</i>	August 1942	Sold for scrap at New Orleans, November 1969.
8	<i>Daniel Carroll</i>	August 1942	Scrapped at Philadelphia, March 1960.
9	<i>Nicholas Gilman</i>	August 1942	Scrapped at Philadelphia, 1963.
10	<i>Samuel Griffin</i>	August 1942	Scrapped at Baltimore, November 1961.
11	<i>Thomas Hartley</i>	August 1942	Converted to floating platform at Seattle, 1966.
12	<i>Daniel Hiester</i>	September 1942	Reserve fleet; scrapped in Spain, April 1972.
13	<i>Benjamin Huntington</i>	September 1942	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Santander, April 1971.
14	<i>John Laurance</i>	October 1942	Scrapped at Panama City, July 1963.
15	<i>Samuel Livermore</i>	October 1942	Scrapped at Jersey City, December 1959.
16	<i>Houston Volunteers</i>	October 1942	Scrapped at Oakland, 1966.
17	<i>A. P. Hill</i>	October 1942	Scrapped at Panama City, October 1965.
18	<i>James Longstreet</i>	October 1942	Grounded in storm at Sandy Hook, New Jersey, October 1943. Refloated but declared Constructive Total Loss (CTL), November 1943. Sunk in 20 feet of water in Cape Cod Bay, April 24, 1945, and used as missile target until 1971.
19	<i>Joseph E. Johnston</i>	November 1942	Scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, May 1969.
20	<i>J. E. B. Stuart</i>	December 1942	Scrapped at Portland, Oregon, July 1969.
21	<i>John B. Hood</i>	December 1942	Scrapped at Wilmington, North Carolina, March 1965.
22	<i>Big Foot Wallace</i>	December 1942	Begun as <i>Fitzhugh Lee (I)</i> . Recalled for service during Korean War. Scrapped at Panama City, August 1965. Builder's nameplate presented to the Texas Maritime Academy at Galveston, January 1966, under the Liberty Ship Memorial Program.
23	<i>Amelia Earhart</i>	December 1942	Wrecked off Borneo, November 10, 1948, and declared CTL. Sold and repaired. <i>Modena</i> , 1951; <i>Przyszlosc</i> , 1951; <i>Jiading</i> , 1965. Broken up?
24	<i>Champ Clark</i>	January 1943	Scrapped at Terminal Island, 1958.
25	<i>Joseph T. Robinson</i>	January 1943	Scrapped at Panama City, April 1967.
26	<i>Stephen F. Austin</i>	July 1942	Scrapped at New Orleans, September 1967.

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
27	<i>William B. Travis</i>	July 1942	Mined or torpedoed off Bizerte, Tunisia, September 12, 1943. Repaired and returned to service. Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Panama City, December 1964.
28	<i>Mirabeau B. Lamar</i> (Figure 37)	July 1942	Scrapped at Mobile, January 1963
29	<i>Theodore Sedgwick</i>	September 1942	Scrapped at Hirao, March 1961.
30	<i>Thomas T. Tucker</i>	October 1942	Ran ashore in fog near Cape Town, South Africa, November 28, 1942. Total loss.
31	<i>Jeremiah Wadsworth</i>	October 1942	Sunk by U-178 off South Africa, November 27, 1942.
32	<i>James Bowie</i>	November 1942	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Brownsville, Texas, December 1971.
33	<i>Thomas J. Rusk</i>	November 1942	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Panama City, October 1972.
34	<i>Lambert Cadalader</i>	November 1942	Scrapped at Baltimore, January 1960.
35	<i>James Madison</i>	January 1943	Scrapped at Oakland, May 1966.
36	<i>William L. Smith</i>	January 1943	Scrapped at Panama City, August 1964.
37	<i>Stephen C. Foster</i>	January 1943	Scrapped at Oakland, June 1961.
38	<i>William Eustis</i>	January 1943	Torpedoed by U-435 at 50.38° N, 34.46° W, March 17, 1943, and abandoned. Torpedoed and sunk later that day by U-91.
39	<i>John Armstrong</i>	February 1943	Scrapped at Mobile, July 1964.
40	<i>William H. Crawford</i>	February 1943	Scrapped at Terminal Island, December 1969.
41	<i>James Barbour</i>	February 1943	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Clatskanie, Oregon, November 1970.

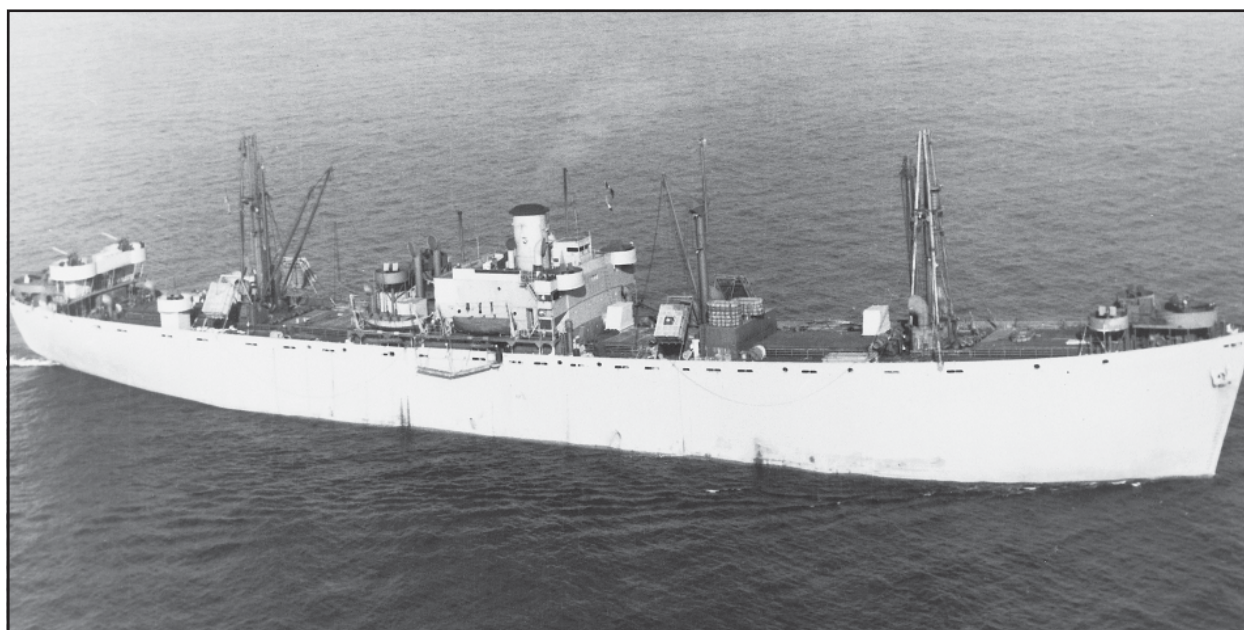


Figure 37. The SS *Mirabeau B. Lamar* was produced in Texas in July 1942 was later scrapped at Mobile, Alabama in January 1963 (United States Naval Institute).

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
42	<i>John H. Eaton</i>	February 1943	<i>Myriam</i> , 1946; <i>New Kaohsiung</i> , 1957. Scrapped at Kaohsiung, March 1968.
43	<i>Joel R. Poinsett</i>	February 1943	Broke in two and abandoned at 43.30° N, 56.30° W, March 21, 1944. Afterpart towed to Halifax and converted to depot ship.
44	<i>John Bell</i>	March 1943	Damaged by U-410 off Sardinia, August 26, 1943. Caught fire and abandoned; sank the following day.
45	<i>John C. Spencer</i>	March 1943	Scrapped at Baltimore, 1962.
46	<i>James M. Porter</i>	March 1943	Scrapped by Bellingham, Seattle, October 1961.
47	<i>William Wilkins</i>	March 1943	Scrapped at Panama City, June 1963.
48	<i>Fitzhugh Lee (II)</i>	March 1943	Scrapped at Baltimore, September 1959.
49	<i>Jubal A. Early</i>	April 1943	<i>Nicolaos G. Kulukundis</i> , 1947; <i>Captain Nicholas</i> , 1964. Scrapped at Shodoshima, June 1968.
50	<i>Richard S. Ewell</i>	April 1943	Scrapped at Camden, New Jersey, 1965
51	<i>George E. Pickett</i>	April 1943	Scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, March 1969.
52	<i>William N. Pendleton</i>	April 1943	Reserve Fleet; sold to Pakistani buyers, December 1970; resold and scrapped at Burriana, Spain, August 1971.
53	<i>Moses Austin</i>	April 1943	<i>Cherbourg</i> , 1947; <i>Antonios</i> , 1954; <i>Dimos</i> , 1966. Scrapped at Whampoa, July 1969.
54	<i>Benito Juarez</i>	April 1943	<i>Jalakirti</i> , 1947; <i>Chrysanthi</i> , 1956. Scrapped at Hong Kong, August 1968.
55	<i>David G. Burnet</i>	May 1943	Scrapped at New Orleans, June 1964.
56	<i>James S. Hogg</i>	May 1943	Acquired by USN and renamed <i>Pavo</i> , AK 139, November 1943. Returned to WSA under original name, December 1945. Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Bibao, June 1972.
57	<i>Jane Long</i>	May 1943	Reserve Fleet; sold December 1972 to Dutch buyers. Renamed <i>Roem II</i> for towage to ship breakers at Bibao. Scrapped 1973.
58	<i>James B. Bonham</i>	May 1943	Scrapped at Portland, Oregon, November 1966.
59	<i>James W. Fannin</i>	May 1943	<i>Saint Malo</i> , 1947; <i>Tegean</i> , 1963. Grounded and wrecked near Halifax, December 20, 1966.
60	<i>Anson Jones</i> (Figure 38)	May 1943	<i>Lappland</i> , 1946; <i>Caspaina</i> , 1950. Scrapped at Shanghai, 1969.
61	<i>Frederick L. Dau</i>	May 1943	<i>Stylios N. Vlasopoulos</i> , 1947; <i>Plate Trader</i> , 1964; <i>Antonia II</i> , 1965. Scrapped at Kaohsiung, April 1969.
62	<i>James E. Haviland</i>	June 1943	Reserve Fleet; scuttled as an artificial fish reef off the Virginia Capes, 1976.
63	<i>Edward Burlison</i>	June 1943	Scrapped at Oakland, April 1963.
64	<i>Lorenzo de Zavala</i>	June 1943	Scrapped at Philadelphia, October 1943.
65	<i>Benjamin R. Milam</i> (Figure 36, pg. 75)	June 1943	Sank near Baltimore after boiler room explosion, March 8, 1945. Repaired; <i>Hyeris</i> , 1947; <i>Duero</i> , 1961; <i>Fanor</i> , 1964; scrapped at Santander, October 1968.

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
66	<i>Sidney Sherman</i>	June 1943	Scrapped at Baltimore, August 1959.
67	<i>John Mary Odin</i>	June 1943	Scrapped at Panama City, May 1961.
68	<i>Mary Austin</i>	June 1943	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Gandia, Spain, September 1972.
69	<i>E. A. Peden</i>	July 1943	<i>Sounion</i> , 1947; <i>Maria Los</i> , 1949; <i>Mariel</i> , 1955; <i>Northport</i> , 1958; <i>Sagittarius</i> , 1966. Sank at Buenos Aires after collision, September 25, 1969; refloated and sold for scrapping at Campana, Argentina, December 1969.
70	<i>Sam Houston II</i>	July 1943	Scrapped at Portland, Maine, December 1959.
71	<i>George C. Childress</i>	July 1943	Grounded and sunk near Bassein, Burma, July 27, 1967.
72	<i>J. Pinckney Henderson</i>	July 1943	Collided with tanker <i>J. H. Senior</i> off Newfoundland on maiden voyage, August 18, 1943. Both ships were drenched with blazing aviation fuel, and all but nine crew members from both ships were killed. Towed to Nova Scotia, where <i>Henderson</i> was beached and allowed to burn herself out. Declared CTL and scrapped at Philadelphia, July 1944.

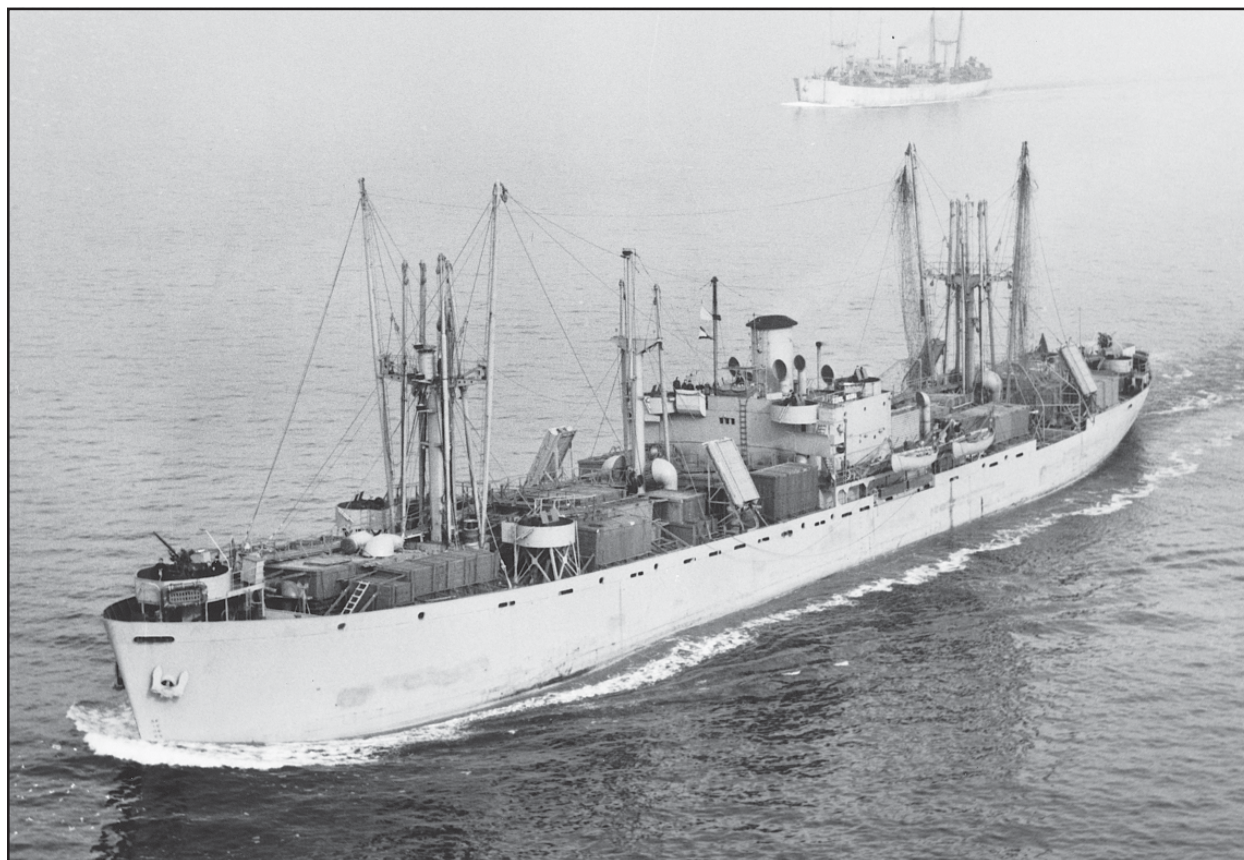


Figure 38. The SS *Anson Jones* was produced in Texas in May 1943 and later scrapped in Shanghai in 1969 (United States Naval Institute).

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
73	<i>George P. Garrison</i>	July 1943	<i>Belgian Liberty</i> , 1945. Returned to US under original name, 1947. Reserve Fleet; scuttled as artificial fish reef off the Virginia Capes, 1974.
74	<i>Oran M. Roberts</i>	August 1943	Reserve Fleet; scuttled as artificial fish reef off Alabama, 1974.
75	<i>Robert T. Hill</i>	August 1943	Scrapped at Wilmington, North Carolina, May 1963.
76	<i>Frederick H. Newell</i>	August 1943	Scrapped at Portland, Oregon, March 1968.
77	<i>John H. Reagan</i>	August 1943	Scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, April 1967.
78	<i>R. M. Williamson</i>	August 1943	<i>Nicholas Kairis</i> , 1947; Grounded and sank near Kuchino Shima, Japan, May 5, 1959.
79	<i>Jesse Billingsley</i>	August 1943	<i>Laguna</i> , 1949. Re-engined by Fiat, 1950. <i>Marilu</i> , 1964; <i>Orione</i> , 1965. Engine breakdown and holds flooded near Azores, February 3, 1969. Abandoned; later taken in tow. Later scrapped at Bibao.
80	<i>Edwin W. Moore</i>	August 1943	Scrapped at Baltimore, March 1960.
81	<i>George Bellows</i>	September 1943	<i>Evanthia</i> , 1947; <i>Evie</i> , 1960; <i>Albino</i> , 1965. Scrapped at Bilbao, December 1969.

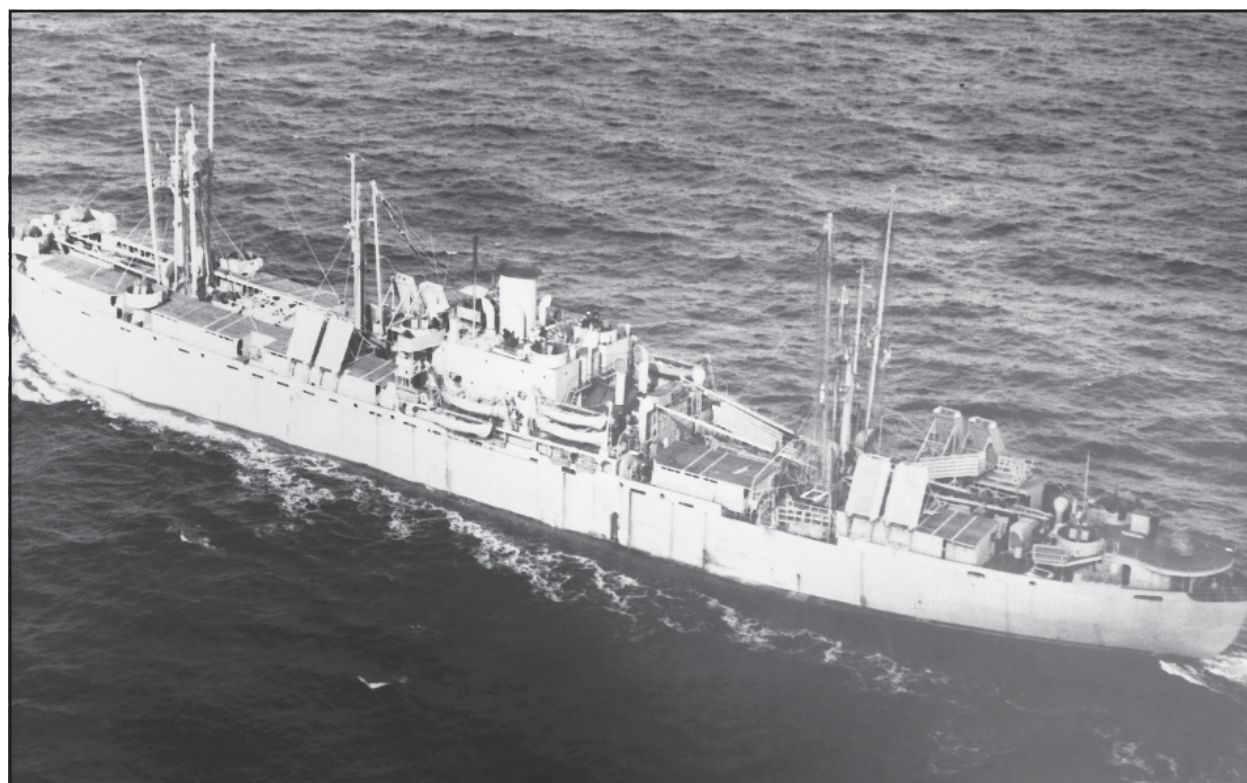


Figure 39. The SS *Jose Navarro* was built in Texas in October 1943. It was damaged by a U-178 submarine in the Indian Ocean in December 1943 while carrying Army stores and mules. She was abandoned, reboarded, and abandoned again. The *Navarro* was torpedoed again and sunk by the same submarine. She was streaming anti-torpedo nets when attacked, but the torpedo struck forward of the net (United States Naval Institute).

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
82	<i>David Wilmot</i>	September 1943	<i>Anthony Leewenhoek</i> , 1947; <i>Laurenskerk</i> , 1947; <i>Grosvenor Trader</i> , 1960; <i>Gloria</i> , 1967. Scrapped at Shanghai, December 1968.
83	<i>Samuel H. Walker</i>	September 1943	Scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, October 1964.
84	<i>Erastus Smith</i>	September 1943	<i>Kyma</i> , 1947; <i>Rodos</i> , 1960. Scrapped at Shanghai, September 1967.
85	<i>Jose Navarro</i> (Figure 39)	October 1943	Damaged by U-178 in Indian Ocean while carrying Army stores and mules, December 27, 1943. Abandoned; reboarded; abandoned again. Torpedoed again and sunk by same submarine. <i>Navarro</i> was streaming anti-torpedo nets when attacked, but torpedo struck forward of the net.
86	<i>Joshua L. Leach</i>	October 1943	<i>Evros</i> , 1947; <i>Bar</i> , 1961. Grounded off Split, February 27, 1967, and scrapped in place.
87	<i>Harvey C. Miller</i>	October 1943	Scrapped at Hirao, February 1960.
88	<i>George W. Lively</i>	October 1943	Scrapped at Philadelphia, June 1966.
89	<i>Thomas W. Gregory</i>	October 1943	<i>Belfri</i> , 1949; <i>Romance</i> , 1960. Severely damaged by fire at Naples, October 31, 1969; towed to Split and scrapped.
90	<i>Will R. Wood</i>	October 1943	Scrapped at Yokosuka, June 1961.
91	<i>William M. Rayburn</i>	October 1943	Scrapped at Philadelphia, October 1966.
92	<i>L. H. McNelly</i>	October 1943	<i>Zeeman</i> , 1947; <i>Trompenberg</i> , 1950; <i>Santa Fe</i> , 1959. Lengthened at Yokosuka, 1959. Lost radio contact in storm in Straits of Magellan and presumed lost, August 13, 1967.
93	<i>Lucien B. Maxwell</i>	October 1943	Grounded in Seine Estuary, August 6, 1945, and broke in two. Total loss.
94	<i>Albert S. Burleson</i>	November 1943	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Santander, January 1971.
95	<i>Joseph H. Kibbey</i>	November 1943	Converted by US Army to troop transport. Later transferred to Navy and renamed <i>Phobos</i> , AK129. Returned to WSA, March 1946, and placed in Reserve Fleet under original name. Scrapped at Oakland, May 1970.
96	<i>Oscar Chappell</i>	November 1943	Scrapped at Baltimore, March 1958.
97	<i>J. S. Cullinan</i>	November 1943	Acquired by US Navy and renamed <i>Alderamin</i> , AK 116. Returned to WSA, April 1946 and transferred to Reserve Fleet under original name. Scrapped in the United States, about 1965.
98	<i>Hugh Young</i>	November 1943	Acquired by US Navy and named <i>Zaurak</i> , AK 117. Served in Pacific. Returned to WSA under original name, March 1946. Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Oakland, June 1963.
99	<i>Matthew J. O'Brien</i>	November 1943	Scrapped at Panama City, July 1966.
100	<i>Henry Austin</i>	December 1943	Scrapped at Tacoma, October 1964.

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
101	<i>Charles Morgan</i>	December 1943	Struck by aircraft bombs at Utah Beach, Normandy, June 10, 1944. Settled in 33 ft. of water and abandoned as total loss.
102	<i>John W. Gates</i>	December 1943	<i>Aristotelis</i> , 1947. Scrapped at Onomichi, October 1968.
103	<i>Anthony F. Lucas</i>	November 1943	Acquired by US Navy and renamed <i>Zaniah</i> , AK 120. Sent to US Naval Reserve at Pearl Harbor, April 1946. Returned to US Maritime Commission and placed in Reserve Fleet, May 1947. Scrapped at Tacoma, January 1974.
104	<i>William Becknell</i>	December 1943	Acquired by US Navy and launched as USS <i>Sabik</i> , AK 121. Service in Pacific. Returned to the WSA and placed in Reserve Fleet, March 1946. Scrapped at Oakland, November 1961.
105	<i>Harry Percy</i>	December 1943	<i>Ira</i> , 1947. Grounded on Goodwin Sands, England, on March 7, 1947 and broke in two.
106	<i>Rebecca Boone</i>	December 1943	Sold to commercial interest, 1948. <i>Venerator</i> , 1950; <i>Giga</i> , 1958; <i>Cuyano</i> , 1960. Lengthened in 1960 and converted to bulk carrier. <i>Palos</i> , 1961; <i>Eymar</i> , 1963; <i>Antonia B.</i> , 1971. Scrapped at Split, December 1972.
107	<i>Charles Goodnight</i>	January 1944	<i>Baccarat</i> , 1947; <i>Margalitis</i> , 1954; <i>Winona</i> , 1964. Scrapped at Aioi, December 1968.
108	<i>Andrew Briscoe</i>	January 1944	<i>Crete</i> , 1947. Scrapped at Sakiade, February 1969.
109	<i>William M. Eastland</i>	January 1944	<i>Le Havre</i> , 1947; <i>Ville du Havre</i> , 1948; <i>Le Havre</i> , 1960; <i>Almar</i> , 1964; <i>Tegean</i> , 1967. Scrapped at Shanghai, 1969.
110	<i>John G. Tod</i>	January 1944	<i>Dorado</i> , 1947; <i>Glyfada</i> , 1960; <i>Platres</i> , 1969. Scrapped at Istanbul, June 1972.
111	<i>Charles J. Finger</i>	January 1944	<i>St. Thomas</i> , 1947; <i>Cavostaras</i> , 1951; <i>Despina</i> , 1953; <i>Amphitheia</i> , 1959; <i>Maratha Explorer</i> , 1964; <i>Samudra Vijay</i> , 1966. Scrapped at Bombay, August 1970.
112	<i>Morris Sheppard</i>	February 1944	<i>Giuliano</i> , 1947; <i>Kopalnia Siemianowice</i> , 1962. Converted in Poland to floating warehouse, renamed <i>MP-PZZ-3</i> , 1966. Arrived for scrapping at Faslane, Scotland, 1978.
113	<i>Katherine L. Bates</i>	February 1944	<i>Coutances</i> , 1947; <i>Mariblanca</i> , 1954. Scrapped at Kaohsiung, April 1969.
114	<i>Jacob Perkins</i>	February 1944	<i>Hai Tee</i> , 1946; <i>Sincere Carrier</i> , 1963; <i>Kondor</i> , 1964. Grounded outside Onahama, July 17, 1966. Refloated but scrapped at Hirao, September 1966.
115	<i>Jose G. Benitez</i>	February 1944	<i>Panagiotis Coumantaros</i> , 1947; <i>Filia</i> , 1965. Collided with MV <i>Tayga</i> at mouth of Red Sea and abandoned at Mokha, January 2, 1967.
116	<i>Robert Henri</i>	March 1944	Scrapped at Baltimore, 1958.
117	<i>Keith Palmer</i>	March 1944	Scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, August 1968.

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
118	<i>Anna H. Branch</i>	March 1944	<i>Arthur Stove</i> , 1947; <i>Kostis</i> , 1955. Stranded on Bissagos Island, 230 miles south of Dakar, June 3, 1968. Burned and abandoned.
119	<i>George Steers</i>	March 1944	Scrapped at Baltimore, c. 1961.
120	<i>John Gibbon</i>	March 1944	Scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, July 1968.
121	<i>Thomas Say</i>	March 1944	<i>Atlantic Trader</i> , 1946; <i>Split</i> , 1962. Scrapped at Split, July 1967.
122	<i>Isaac Van Zandt</i>	March 1944	Transferred to US Navy in 1966 and loaded with obsolete cargo and explosives for scuttling, 1966. Towed to sea on May 23, 1966 and scuttled; explosives detonated at 4,000-foot depth as planned.
123	<i>Daniel E. Garrett</i>	April 1944	Transferred to US Army and converted to aircraft repair ship. <i>Major General Robert Olds</i> , 1944. Reverted to former name, 1946. Scrapped at Baltimore, April 1960.
124	<i>Christopher S. Flanagan</i>	April 1944	Scrapped at Portland, Oregon, November 1963.
125	<i>John Ireland</i>	April 1944	Scrapped at New Orleans, March 1967.
126	<i>Henry M. Robert</i>	April 1944	<i>Atlantic Wind</i> , 1946; <i>Wind</i> , 1953; <i>Galini</i> , 1960. Scrapped at Kaoshiung, February 1968.
127	<i>Sul Ross</i>	April 1944	<i>Astra</i> , 1947; <i>Sil</i> , 1963. Scrapped at Kaoshiung, February 1968.
128	<i>Julius Olsen</i>	April 1944	<i>Blue Grass State</i> , 1947; <i>Auburn</i> , 1955; <i>Marshall</i> , 1957; <i>Marieleen</i> , 1961. Deck and hull plating cracked under heavy weather while en route from Vancouver to Ceylon, January 1967; sold to Japanese shipbreakers in March 1967. Scrapped at Kaoshiung, December 1968.
129	<i>Felipi de Bastrop</i>	April 1944	Scrapped at Tampa, Florida, February 1961.
130	<i>Richard O'Brien</i>	May 1944	Converted to US Army aircraft repair ship <i>Brigadier General Asa N. Duncan</i> , 1944. Returned to Maritime Commission under original name, 1946. Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Burriana, Spain, December 1972.
131	<i>O. B. Martin</i>	May 1944	Reserve Fleet; arrived at Kaoshiung for scrapping, April 1973.
132	<i>Henry D. Lindsley</i>	May 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Bilbao, October 1970.
133	<i>Minor C. Keith</i>	May 1944	<i>Governor Brandon</i> , 1947; <i>Aktion</i> , 1949; <i>Omega</i> , 1951; <i>Omnium Freighter</i> , 1954; lengthened at Yokohama, 1957; <i>Omnium Trader</i> , 1965; <i>Thor</i> , 1968. Scrapped at Yawata, Japan, August 1969.
134	<i>Nicholas D. Labadie</i>	May 1944	Scrapped at Mobile, May 1962.
135	<i>Arthur St. Clair</i>	May 1944	Scrapped at Wilmington, North Carolina, May 1963.
136	<i>Rufus Choate</i>	May 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Santander, February 1971.

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
137	<i>Gus W. Darnell</i>	May 1944	Damaged by Japanese aerial torpedo off Samar, the Philippines, and beached, November 23, 1944. Refloated but declared CTL. Later repaired and taken over by US Navy and renamed <i>Justin</i> , IX 228. Returned to WSA under original name, January 1946. Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Terminal Island, June 1954.
138	<i>Eleazar Lord</i>	June 1944	Scrapped at Richmond, California, 1967.
139	<i>Juan N. Seguin</i>	June 1944	Scrapped at New Orleans, September 1966.
140	<i>Bertram G. Goodhue</i>	June 1944	Scrapped at Richmond, California, 1967.
141	<i>Oliver Loving</i>	June 1944	Scrapped at New Orleans, June 1970.
142	<i>Andrew W. Preston</i>	June 1944	<i>Northport</i> , 1951; <i>Abalone</i> , 1957. Lengthened at Tokyo, 1961. <i>Norwalk</i> , 1962. Scrapped at Kaoshiung, September 1969.
143	<i>Nataniel Scudder</i>	June 1944	<i>Alfred J. Lyon</i> , 1944. Converted to Army aircraft repair ship <i>Brigadier General Alfred J. Lyon</i> , 1944. Converted to depot ship at Portland, Oregon, 1964.
144	<i>John B. Hamilton</i>	June 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Panama City, August 1976.
145	<i>Nataniel Silsbee</i>	June 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Brownsville, Texas, June 1972.
146	<i>Robert Watchorn</i>	July 1944	<i>American Robin</i> , 1947; <i>Pacific Star</i> , 1957; <i>Rover</i> , 1960; <i>Hwa An</i> , 1960. Scrapped at Kaoshiung, March 1968.
147	<i>Thomas Guardia</i>	July 1944	Scrapped at New Orleans, 1964.
148	<i>Laura Drake Gill</i>	July 1944	<i>Hawaiian Lumberman</i> , 1947; <i>Cape Henry</i> , 1960; <i>Trikeri</i> , 1962; <i>Dahlia</i> , 195. Scrapped at Kaoshing, February 1967.
149	<i>Angus McDonald</i>	July 1944	Scrapped at Seattle, October 1969.
150	<i>Wynn Seale</i>	July 1944	Sold, vessel stripped and converted to crane barge <i>Zidell's Delight</i> , May 1964. Used at Zidell's ship breaking yard at Portland, Oregon.
151	<i>T. E. Mitchell</i>	July 1944	Scrapped at Portland, Oregon, January 1970.
152	<i>Carlos J. Finlay</i>	August 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Brownsville, Texas, September 1970.
153	<i>Kyle V. Johnson</i>	August 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Panama City, 1975.
154	<i>Jacob A. Westervelt</i>	August 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Panama City, December 1972.
155	<i>Robert S. Lovett</i>	August 1944	<i>Western Rancher</i> , 1951; <i>Chryssi S. M.</i> , 1954. Scrapped at Hamburg, September 1965.
156	<i>Ida Strauss</i>	August 1944	Scrapped at Baltimore, March 1960.
157	<i>Thomas Bulfinch</i>	August 1944	Reserve Fleet. Sold to shipbreakers in Portland, Oregon, in 1971 but resold and converted to a non-seagoing fish processing plant at Dutch Harbor, Alaska, 1971.

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
158	<i>Lorado Taft</i>	August 1944	Scrapped at Philadelphia, September 1966.
159	<i>Howard L. Gibson</i>	September 1944	While en route from Galveston to Karachi, collided with tanker <i>Geo. W. McKnight</i> 250 miles NW of Madeira and caught fire, October 14, 1944. Reboarded the next day and towed to Casablanca and then New York. Declared CTL and scrapped at Philadelphia, October 1945.
160	<i>Thomas Eakins</i>	September 1944	Scrapped at Baltimore, August 1960.
161	<i>Robert E. Clarkson</i>	September 1944	Scrapped at Portland, Oregon, January 1965.
162	<i>Irving Babbitt</i>	September 1944	Scrapped at Philadelphia, September 1961.
163	<i>Michael J. Owens</i>	September 1944	<i>Polarus Trader</i> , 1949; <i>Burco Trader</i> , 1950; <i>Montego Sun</i> , 1960; <i>Diskos</i> , 1961. Grounded at Panama City, Florida on November 2, 1961. Refloated but heavily damaged. Scrapped at Hirao, May 1962.
164	<i>Edward G. Janeway</i>	September 1944	<i>Santa Venitia</i> , 1951. Main deck fractured and machinery trouble in heavy weather, December 30, 1963. Temporarily repaired and sold; scrapped at Oppama, Yokosuka, September 1964.
165	<i>Herbert D. Croly</i>	September 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Tacoma, Washington, July 1970.
166	<i>Frederic C. Ives</i>	October 1944	<i>Rana</i> , 1947; <i>Turmoil</i> , 1952; <i>Valiant Power</i> , 1959; <i>Pantazis L.</i> , 1960. Scrapped at Hirao, August 1968.
167	<i>Walter Wellman</i>	October 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, May 1972.
168	<i>Richard J. Hopkins</i>	October 1944	<i>Atlantic Water</i> , 1951; <i>Koumiotissa</i> , 1962; <i>Agia Erini L.</i> , 1963. Foundered at 30.22° N, 153° E, after developing hull fractures and leaks in heavy weather.
169	<i>J. D. Yeager</i>	October 1944	Scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, April 1967.
170	<i>Johnny Appleseed</i>	October 1944	Scrapped at Philadelphia, March 1964.
171	<i>Paul Bunyan</i>	October 1944	Scrapped at Philadelphia, October 1971.
172	<i>Anson Mills</i>	October 1944	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Bilbao, January 1971.
173	<i>Robert Neighbors</i>	October 1944	Scrapped at Bilbao, July 1970.
174	<i>Francis B. Ogden</i>	November 1944	Scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, August 1965.
175	<i>Edwin S. Nettleton</i>	November 1944	Reserve Fleet; scuttled as an artificial reef off Brunswick, Georgia, May 19, 1975.
176	<i>Pontus H. Ross</i>	November 1944	Scrapped at Portland, Oregon, May 1969.
177	<i>Clarence Roberts</i>	November 1944	Scrapped at Philadelphia, December 1971.
178	<i>Otis E. Hall</i>	November 1944	Scrapped at Oakland, California, January 1968.
179	<i>Charles L. McNary</i>	November 1944	Scrapped at Terminal Island, April 1966.
180	<i>Cyril G. Hopkins</i>	November 1944	Completed as <i>Navarchos Koundouriotis</i> . Grounded and broke in two while leaving Mar del Plata for Marseilles, October 20, 1964. Sold locally for scrapping.

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
181	<i>I. B. Perrine</i>	November 1944	Completed as <i>Eleftheria</i> . Mined in the North Sea, March 23, 1945. Total loss. Wreckage dispersed, 1952.
182	<i>Paul David Jones</i>	December 1944	Scrapped at Panama City, 1967.
183	<i>Will B. Otwell</i>	December 1944	Scrapped at Panama City, December 1964.
184	<i>Jacob Chandler Harper</i>	December 1944	Scrapped at Santander, April 1970.
185	<i>Harold D. Whitehead</i>	December 1944	Sold commercial, 1951. <i>Jackie Hause</i> , 1959; <i>Gloria Dunaif</i> , 1960; <i>Rainbow</i> , 1960. Lengthened at Tokyo, 1961; <i>Asidos</i> , 1968. Scrapped at Chittagong, December 1969.
186	<i>Clyde Austin Dunning</i>	December 1944	<i>Boy</i> , 1951; <i>Joan O'Berg</i> , 1958; <i>Eldmere</i> , 1961; <i>Ocean Merchant</i> , 1961; <i>Union Skipper</i> , 1963. Scrapped at Kaoshiung, November 1969.
187	<i>James Kyron Walker</i>	December 1944	Reserve Fleet. Sold December 1972 to Dutch buyers; resold and arrived Burriana, Spain, for scrapping, February 1973.
188	<i>Walter Frederick Kraft</i>	December 1944	Global Farmer, 1947; Evergreen State, 1947; Marcel M. H., 1955. Scrapped at Aioi, June 1967.
189	<i>William R. Lewis</i>	December 1944	Polarus Carrier, 1950; <i>Norcoba</i> , 1950; <i>Evicynthia</i> , 1954. Lengthened at Innoshima, 1956. <i>Spartan</i> , 1961; <i>Elaine</i> , 1962. Scrapped at Onomichi, January 1968.
190	<i>William Asa Carter</i>	January 1945	Scrapped at Panama City, December 1961.
191	<i>James Roy Wells</i>	January 1945	<i>Seapioneer</i> , 1951; <i>Lamyra</i> , 1952; <i>Cosmos Betelguese</i> , 1963. Scrapped at Kaoshiung, February 1968.
192	<i>William K. Kamaka</i>	January 1945	Scrapped at Kearny, New Jersey, December 1967.
193	<i>Daniel L. Johnston</i>	January 1945	Scrapped at Panama City, February 1963.
194	<i>Lloyd S. Carlson</i>	January 1945	<i>Mary Adams</i> , 1951; <i>Wind Rush</i> , 1955; <i>Debardeleben Marine I</i> , 1959. Converted at Baltimore in 1960 to bulk chemical carrier. Returned to US Government in 1968 in exchange for C-4 troopship <i>General W. C. Langfitt</i> . Scrapped at New Orleans, March 1970.
195	<i>Russell R. Jones</i>	January 1945	<i>Pegor</i> , 1951; <i>Pacific Wave</i> , 1958; <i>Ching Yung</i> , 1960. Scrapped at Kaoshiung, February 1967.
196	<i>John Martin Miller</i>	January 1945	Reserve Fleet; scrapped at Brownsville, Texas, May 1971.
197	<i>Wallace M. Tyler</i>	February 1945	<i>Seastar</i> , 1951; <i>Archon</i> , 1960. Scrapped at Edajima, Japan, November 1966.
198	<i>William W. Johnson</i>	February 1945	<i>Seagarden</i> , 1951. Grounded off Tabago, April 17, 1961. Refloated but severely damaged. Sold and scrapped at Bibao, September 1961.
199	<i>Bernard L. Rodman</i>	February 1945	<i>Seafighter</i> , 1951; <i>Meldia</i> , 1953; <i>Jupiter</i> , 1967. Grounded and abandoned at Cabo San Lazaro, Mexico, March 29, 1968.

Yard Number	Name	Launched	Notes
200	<i>Leonardo L. Romero</i>	February 1945	<i>Chian Trader</i> , 1951; <i>Coal Miner</i> , 1957; <i>Peter Blix</i> , 1960. Lengthened at Tokyo and renamed <i>Meteor</i> , 1961. <i>Asitres</i> , 1968. Scrapped at Chittagong, January 1970.
201	<i>Willard R. Johnson</i>	February 1945	<i>Neptunus</i> , 1951; <i>Apollo</i> , 1952; <i>Evimar</i> , 1954; <i>Theokeetor</i> , 1958; <i>Riverhead</i> , 1964; <i>Maru</i> , 1965. Scrapped at Hong Kong, April 1967.
202	<i>Samuel L. Jeffrey</i>	February 1945	Damaged on war service, 1945, and laid up at Mobile. Declared CTL. Scrapped at Port Arthur, Texas, 1947.
203	<i>Clifford E. Ashby</i>	February 1945	<i>Peconic Bay</i> , 1951; <i>Trojan Trader</i> , 1952; <i>Armonk</i> , 1957; <i>Marine Rice Queen</i> , 1960. <i>Sello Rojo</i> , 1963; <i>Alnfield</i> , 1964. Reported as <i>Ceres</i> , 1967. Scrapped at Vado as <i>Alnfield</i> , April 1967.
204	<i>Alfred L. Baxlay</i>	February 1945	Completed as <i>Lektor Garbo. N. O. Rogenaes</i> , 1947; <i>Kalu</i> , 1960. Scrapped in Brazil, April 1973.
205	<i>Francis E. Siltz</i>	March 1945	<i>Portland Trader</i> , 1947. Grounded on Tubbataha Reef, 400 miles south of Manila, on January 5, 1961. Refloated but declared CTL. Sold and scrapped at Hong Kong, April 1961.
206	<i>Charles H. Lanham</i>	March 1945	<i>Thunderbird</i> , 1951; <i>Watling</i> , 1961; <i>New Kailing</i> , 1963. Scrapped at Kaoshiung, December 1967.
207	<i>Mark A. Davis</i>	March 1945	Completed as <i>Psara</i> . Scrapped at Osaka, Japan, May 1967.
208	<i>Edward N. Hinton</i>	March 1945	<i>Les Andelys</i> , 1947; <i>Cormorant</i> , 1954. Scrapped at Onomichi, June 1969.

LIBERTY SHIPS AND THE TEXAS ARTIFICIAL REEF PROGRAM

The stripped hulls of 12 World War II Liberty ships lie quietly on the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico off the Texas coast. Merchant marine and navy sailors no longer clamor about their decks, keeping a wary eye out for enemy ships, planes, and submarines. Instead, encrusting corals, tunicates, and other invertebrates gently carpet the ships' steel plating and bulkheads, while large predators like groupers, snappers, and sharks lurk about the dark recesses of the ships keeping a hungry eye out for a meal. This epitaph for these proud ships not only keeps their memory and history alive, but allows them to continue to serve citizens by enhancing marine

habitat as artificial reefs through Texas Parks and Wildlife's Artificial Reef Program (Reef Program).

In an ironic twist of fate, the Liberty Ships which survived enemy sinking attempts during World War II were intentionally sunk as artificial reefs in the Gulf of Mexico during the mid-1970s. In the Gulf of Mexico, natural hard bottom habitat is limited. The majority of bottom substrate is sand or silty clay. There are few natural coral or rock formation reef areas such as the East and West Flower Garden Bank Sanctuaries. Twenty-five percent of hard bottom habitat available is created by the steel legs

of nearly 4,000 petroleum platforms. Although the majority of these platforms are located offshore of Louisiana, approximately 800 platforms are located in Texas waters. These platforms, Liberty Ships, and other artificial material have provided habitat for reef fish and a unique source of recreational opportunities for Texas divers and anglers.

In 1972, the United States Congress offered surplus Liberty Ships in its Reserve Fleet to several coastal states for use as artificial reefs. Texas acquired 12 Liberty Ships and placed them at five sites during 1975-76 to create habitat for marine organisms. These Liberty Ship Reef sites formed the foundation of the Reef Program.

With the passage of the federal Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987, Texas was required to provide appropriate private sector access to shipwrecks in state waters, and develop cultural education about these wrecks. In 1994, Texas Parks and Wildlife and the Texas Historical Commission jointly accepted the challenge to designate the ships in the Liberty Ship Reefs as historical heritage sites. The Liberty Ships in Texas readily attract sport fishermen and divers, offering them a dual encounter with magnificent reefs and America's maritime heritage.

Acquisition of Texas' Liberty Ships

The process of Texas acquiring and sinking 12 obsolete WWII Liberty Ships was a long and interesting one. The following historical information documenting the acquisition of the ships, determination of reef sites, and sinking process was taken from Schwartz (1980)⁶ unless otherwise noted.

On August 22, 1972, the 92nd Congress passed and the President signed the Appropriations Authorization-Maritime Programs Bill which became known as Public Law 92-402. This law allowed for the transfer of surplus World War II Liberty Ships that were designated as scrap to coastal states that indicated they would use them as artificial reefs. Telegrams were sent out to state governors offering the ships as artificial reefs. Then-Texas Governor Preston Smith did not respond. On December 11, 1972, Governor Smith's office received a duplicate telegram asking about Texas' interest in applying for ships under the public law. Three days later, the Governor's Legal Counsel sent a copy of the telegram to Clayton T. Garrison, Executive Director of TPW with the comment, "If you are not interested in the offer of the Liberty Ships, and you are aware of a state agency or commission that could use them, I suggest you forward this information to them." TPW responded five days later by stating they had no intention of applying for the ships because, according to TPW Commissioner Pierce Johnson, of the lack of available funds.

During this time, a Corpus Christi dentist named Tom Johnson, became interested in the Liberty Ships after seeing an article in a diving magazine advertising the ships availability for artificial reefs. He contacted Dr. Carl Oppenheimer at the University of Texas Marine Sciences Laboratory (Port Aransas) for more information. Dr. Oppenheimer informed Tom Johnson that Texas had been offered the ships but Governor Smith had declined them on the recommendation of TPW. However, the Texas Coastal and Marine Council (TCMC)⁷ was studying their possible use as reef material.

The State Senate passed Resolution No. 162 authorizing the Senate interim committees to review the matter of using the Liberty Ships for the

⁶This history of the Liberty Ship program in Texas is taken from the detailed historical research in John Schwartz' Texas A&M University (College Station, Texas) masters thesis from entitled: A public program analysis of operations and impacts of the Texas Liberty Ship Reef Program (1980).

⁷The Texas Coastal and Marine Council, also known as the Texas Council on Marine-Related Affairs was established by the 62nd legislature to serve as an advisory body to assist the legislature in the assessment and planning of coastal resources management and other marine concerns in the state. The 12 members were appointed by the Governor. The Council was abolished September 1, 1985 following recommendations of the Sunset Advisory Commission and the management of the Liberty Ship Reef Sites forwarded to TPW.

State of Texas. This was referred to the TCMC. TCMC member Cecil Reid reported on the availability of the ships under P.L. 92-402 on February 23, 1973 in a public meeting. Tom Johnson had petitioned the local diving community and others and presented a petition with 1,000 signatures in support of initiating a Liberty Ship program. The Council was impressed with this show of public support and instructed staff to pursue the feasibility of the program. On February 27, 1973, Senator A.R. "Babe" Schwartz sent a letter to newly elected Governor Dolph Briscoe to notify the Maritime Administration (MARAD) that Texas was interested in some of the surplus ships in the Beaumont (TX) Defense Reserve Fleet. The Governor's office responded to MARAD on March 29, 1973 via telegram that Texas was interested in some of the Reserve Fleet vessels. TCMC staff then decided that a workshop composed of a multidisciplinary task force would provide valuable information on the technical, political and social problems associated with instituting the reef program. The workshop was held in Corpus Christi on March 23 and 24, 1973.

Much of the discussion at the workshop dealt with procedural matters. The EPA representative gave general guidelines as to the kind and amount of cleaning these ships would require before certification as "clean" could be made. Other topics discussed included site selection, ship preparation considerations, and continuing the reef program. The workshop provided needed information for Council staff members to consider. While the TCMC was studying the use of Liberty Ships as offshore artificial reefs, the scrap steel industry was pressuring the U.S. Department of Commerce to release the remaining ships for scap.

With pressure from the U.S. Department of Commerce for states to make a decision regarding the ships, Joe C. Moseley and Howard T. Lee (TCMC staff) were challenged with deciding how many ships Texas could use. Mr. Lee determined that due to the four major population centers and jettied entrance channels along the Texas coast and water depths offshore, four reef locations should be used: Freeport/Galveston area, Port Lavaca/Port O'Connor area, Corpus Christi/Port Aransas area, and Port Mansfield/Port Isabel area. To ensure the sites were large enough to sustain fish populations, they

decided each reef site should have three ships sunk parallel 300 to 500 feet apart. A resolution from the Council to the Governor was then made requesting 12 of the 18 ships from MARAD. The Governor's office sent a letter requesting the ships on April 15, 1973.

On May 10, 1973, Senator Schwartz introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution (SRC) No. 102 which directed TPW and TCMC to construct artificial reefs using surplus Liberty Ships. The Governor signed the resolution on May 28. Now, under legislative mandate, TPW was directed to construct reefs but questioned whether state funds could be expended on programs outside state waters. An official opinion from the State Attorney General's office was requested by TPW in June 1973. The Attorney General's office issued Opinion No. H-101 on September 12, 1973 stating "...the State of Texas may fund and erect artificial reefs in that area with funds from the Special Game and Fish Fund, provided the Legislature enacts an appropriation for that purpose." The statutory authority of the TCMC was different than that of a state agency such as TPW, so the applicability of the Attorney General's opinion was not the same. The TCMC continued the program without any direct appropriations for a program.

Determination of Artificial Reef Sites

The next series of steps involved TCMC determining sites for the ships. The Council had obtained a great deal of information from the previous workshop at Corpus Christi. On a chart, 30-mile arcs were drawn from each jettied entrance channel near a population center. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) guidelines recommended a 50 feet clearance above the reef. To defray costs, it was decided that the ships would be cut down to about 27 feet. If the ships rolled to the side, they would be around 56 feet tall. After consideration, the TCMC set 100 feet as the minimum depth. Contour lines of 100-110 feet were then located on the chart. The shallow slope of the continental shelf in the northern areas of Texas were well outside the 30-mile range and this is why Beaumont/Port Arthur and Galveston

areas did not receive reefs. For Beaumont/Port Arthur, the reef would have had been over 100 miles offshore to meet depth requirements. Next, they looked for any snags or obstructions and pipelines. Once suitable areas were located, bottom substrates were investigated to assure stability for the ships. Finally, sites were designated as an area that was 1/2 mile square with three ships to be sunk parallel about 300 to 500 feet apart.

Two public hearings were held by TCMC to assure that no objections to the program remained. One was held in Houston on October 3, 1973 and the other in Corpus Christi on October 4, 1973. Public response was generally favorable. On October 19, 1973, TCMC Executive Director Joe Moseley was authorized to submit an application to MARAD. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certification, Corps permits, and U.S. Coast Guard buoying permits were needed prior to submission for ship transfer. In order for the TCMC to comply with the clean ship criteria as set forth in Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (P.L. 92-500), they had to include a complete description of the preparation process including oil removal and tank cleaning in the MARAD application. EPA issued a letter of certification to the State of Texas on January 14, 1974 with the understanding that the salvage contractor would fully comply with the provisions within the preliminary application.

The Liberty Ship reef program also required Corps permits for each reef location. Applications for permits were sent on December 14, 1973. The three southernmost reef site locations were amended after comments from the shrimping industry. The most difficult objections came from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Three objections were made to the TCMC by these two agencies: 1.) the ships should be anchored bow and stern to preclude any possible movement during a hurricane; 2.) the ships should be positioned for sinking using Raydist of Hi-Fix Navigation Systems instead of LORAN; and 3.) the ships should be placed in a location where they would not interfere with the future development of the petroleum leases. Only the last objection caused a problem for the TCMC, because it was not clear how and why the proposed reef locations interfered with petroleum leases. The

TCMC contacted the Offshore Operator's Committee who felt the likelihood of all southern sites being situated on potential well locations was remote. After further negotiations with the USGS and BLM, the Corps wrote a letter to both agencies requesting further information on their objections to the reef locations. By July 2, 1974, it was felt that the USGS and BLM objections were arbitrary and capricious, Texas Senator Schwartz encouraged Texas Congressmen to call and write the Secretary of the Interior, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior, and Heads of the USGS and BLM. On July 23, 1974, the Acting Manager of the Gulf of Mexico Operations in the BLM wrote a memo stating they had new information showing that the proposed reef sites posed no problem with potential oil leases. About one week later, the Corps permits were issued.

On October 11, 1974, the final application for the release of the Liberty Ships to Texas was sent to MARAD. Copies of the application were provided to the Secretary of Interior, Secretary of Defense, and other appropriate federal agencies by the Secretary of Commerce under Section 3(c) of P.L. 92-402. No problems were expected since all the federal permits were included in the application this time. However, the National Park Service (NPS) objected because the application did not contain a complete survey of the area using magnetometers, profilers and side-scan sonar to determine if the reef locations contained historic sites.

The TCMC did not have the funds for such a survey and requested the Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to make a position based on historical knowledge. The THC determined it was very unlikely that the proposed locations contained any significant cultural resources and did not object to the project. The NPS did not accept this position. Mr. Lee of TCMC then called the Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior and explained the situation with the understanding that the TCMC was prepared to request from the Texas Congressional Delegation as they did in getting the Corps permits. The Special Assistant stated he would look into the problem, and three days later called to state that all problems had been resolved. On March 14, 1975, MARAD informed the TCMC that the Secretary of Commerce had approved the application.

Sinking Process

With final approval of the application, the TCMC began soliciting bids from contractors for the preparation of the Liberty Ships for sinking. Each contractor was to bid on : 1) towing the vessel from the Defense Reserve Fleet at Beaumont to the contractor's ship yard; 2) remove all contaminants from vessel tanks and compartments to meet EPA requirements; 3) remove as much nonferrous material as possible; 4) remove everything above the second deck (27 foot mark) or more dependent on Council desires; 5) deploy a temporary buoy on each vessel prior to sinking; 6) tow and sink each vessel in a keel down position; and 7) place 3,000 pound anchors at each ship's bow and stern.

Contractor's specifications were given out at a meeting in Houston on March 26, 1975. On the last day of the bid process, two bids were hand delivered: one from Andy International, Incorporated of Brownsville, Texas and the other from Consolidated Steel Corporation in conjunction with Alberti Equipment, Incorporated from Brownsville and Port Lavaca, respectively. Andy International, Incorporated won the bid by giving a work schedule of

189 days for a total of \$423,996 for all 12 ships. The final service contract was signed on May 7, 1974 and work began May 23 on the first ship, the *Edward W. Scripps* (Figure 40). By August 6, 1975, all 12 Liberty Ships assigned to Texas had been released to Andy International.

At the time of sinking, the hulls of the Liberty ships were in the following condition: all hull plate and superstructure above the tween deck removed; all piping, wiring, propulsion gear, rudder, hull and compartments aft of the steering post removed; and fuel and ballast tanks cleaned, filled, and sealed. Large holes were cut along the side walls of each ship to facilitate water flow once the ship was on the bottom (Figures 41-51). On August 22, 1975, the *Edward W. Scripps* was the first ship sunk and was placed at the Port Mansfield reef site. The 11 remaining ships were sunk at various sites through October 29, 1976 (Table 1).

No significant problems were encountered during the sinking process with the exception of the *George Vancouver*, the last ship of the entire project. The *Vancouver* was towed to the Freeport Liberty Ship reef on October 27, 1976. Winds were intense and 7 to 9 foot swells were present at the Freeport jetty. The U.S. Coast cutter *Point Monroe*



Figure 40. One of the twelve Liberty Ships awaiting the cutting touch at Andy International, Incorporated's ship breaking yard in Brownsville, Texas. The ships were cut down for sinking to serve as artificial reefs in a program carried out by the Texas Coastal and Marine Council in 1975-76 (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).



Figure 41. The super structure and all masts and posts were removed from the Liberty Ships (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).

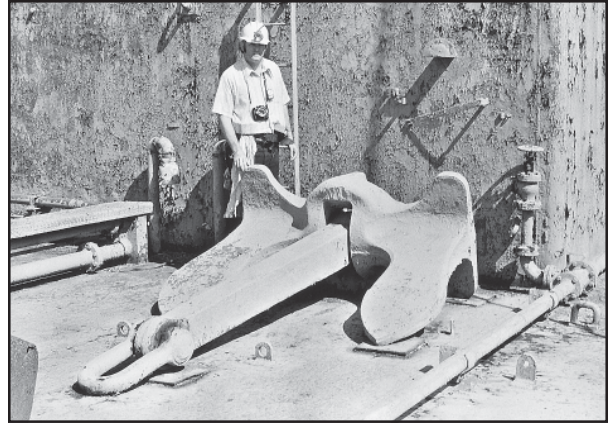


Figure 44. Artifacts such as this anchor were salvaged and sold or donated to various organizations (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).



Figure 42. Sides were removed down to the last deck level (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).



Figure 43. Tons of scrap metal were salvaged from each of the Liberty Ships for recycling (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).



Figure 45. Aerial view of two of the twelve Liberty Ships that were prepared for sinking as artificial reefs. The ship on the right has had the superstructure and main deck removed. Deck openings seen here plus large side windows provide water circulation and access for fish (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).

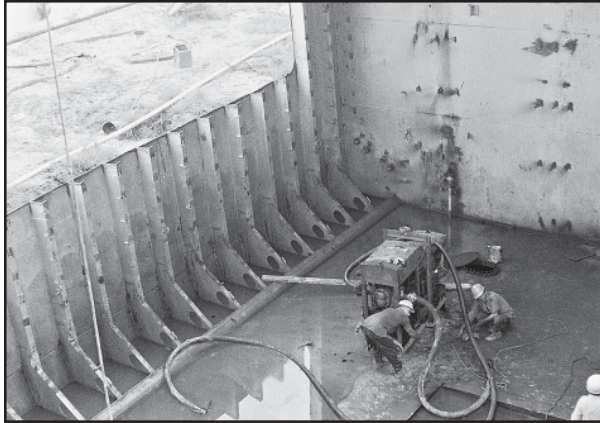


Figure 46. All petroleum products and water were removed by pumps (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).

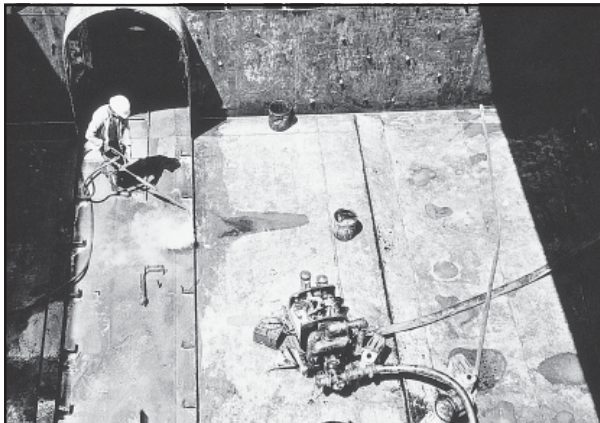


Figure 47. During the final stages of clean-up, the ships were steam cleaned to remove remaining contaminants (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).



Figure 48. Inside view of a cleaned Liberty Ship that is ready for sinking. Note holes in left side to allow for water circulation. (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).

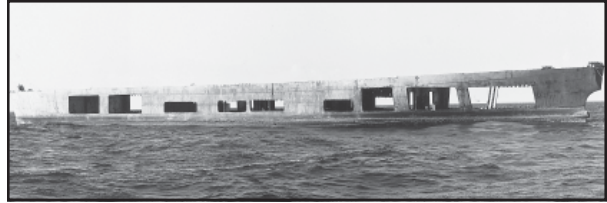


Figure 49. Cuts made in the hull of a Liberty Ship provided adequate water circulation and access for fish when the ship rested on the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).



Figure 50. Settling stern-first into the 100 foot deep water of the Gulf of Mexico, this Liberty Ship hull provided habitat for marine organisms and enhanced harvest by fishermen in the area (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).



Figure 51. With the stern already resting on the bottom, the bow of this Liberty Ship submerged to form a part of an artificial reef (Texas Coastal and Marine Council 1975).

Table 1. Ships located at each reef site with water depth information (Mean Lower Low Water).

Reef Name	Ship Names with Date of Sinking	Water Depth (ft)	Depth to Wrecks (ft)
Freeport Liberty Ship Reef	<i>William H. Allen</i> (September 23, 1976); <i>B.F. Shaw</i> (June 19, 1976); <i>V.A. Fogg</i> (non-Liberty Ship - February 1, 1972)	100-102	70-80
Matagorda Island Liberty Ship Reef	<i>Jim Bridger</i> (June 15, 1976); <i>George Dewey</i> (April 25, 1976); <i>Dwight L. Moody</i> (April 6, 1976)	105-107	85-105
Mustang Island Liberty Ship Reef	<i>Conrad Weiser</i> (January 28, 1976); <i>Rachel Jackson</i> (March 8, 1976); <i>Charles A. Dana</i> (March 23, 1976)	108-111	82-109
Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef	<i>Edward W. Scripps</i> (August 22, 1975); <i>Joshua Thomas</i> (November 4, 1975); <i>George L. Farley</i> (October 8, 1975)	96-100	85
<i>Vancouver</i> Liberty Ship Reef	<i>George Vancouver</i> (October 29, 1976)	60	33
<i>John Worthington</i>	<i>John Worthington</i> (WWII Tanker - July 21, 1943)	25	10

was slightly damaged when attempting to place an Andy International worker onboard the *Vancouver* to set the explosives. After all attempts failed to place a person onboard, the *Monroe* returned to port, but the tug boat towing the *Vancouver* was unable to enter Galveston jetty due to high seas. The tug was diverted southeast to shallower water. The shackle of the stern anchor on the Liberty Ship broke, dropping the 3,000 to 4,000 pound anchor over the side. During the next night, wind gusts reached 50 mph. The *Vancouver* drug its anchor and the tug boat down the coast to a point 9 miles southwest of Freeport where it sank in approximately 60 feet of water. After public testimony and meetings with the West Gulf Maritime Association, the Corps issued a permit to the TCMC to leave the ship at its current position. Presently, TPW maintains a permanent buoy to mark the site.

At the Freeport Liberty Ship Reef, the *V.A. Fogg* (which sank accidentally) was flattened out by explosives after sinking to eliminate a hazard to navigation. In addition, the *John Worthington*, located in the intracoastal waterway at Port Aransas,

was initially exposed above the water and later deteriorated and fell apart over the years.

Location

There are five locations off the Texas coast where the public can visit the remains of Liberty Ships (Figures 52-61). Area maps presented include other reef materials present in addition to the Liberty Ships.

The coordinates presented are the result of surveys with Differential Global Positioning Systems (DGPS). The systems are extremely precise, achieving accuracy of from three to five meters. Relocating the sites with GPS systems is a simple matter. John Chance and Associates, Inc. (Lafayette, LA), a member of the FUGRO group of companies, surveyed the reefs under contract to TPW in 1995, except for the *Vancouver* site which was surveyed by NOAA. The ex-WWII tanker *John Worthington* was surveyed by Coastal Environments, Inc (Figures 62-63). The information, maps, and side scan sonar data presented in this section are taken from those survey reports.

Figure 52. Site map of the *Vancouver* Liberty Ship Reef.

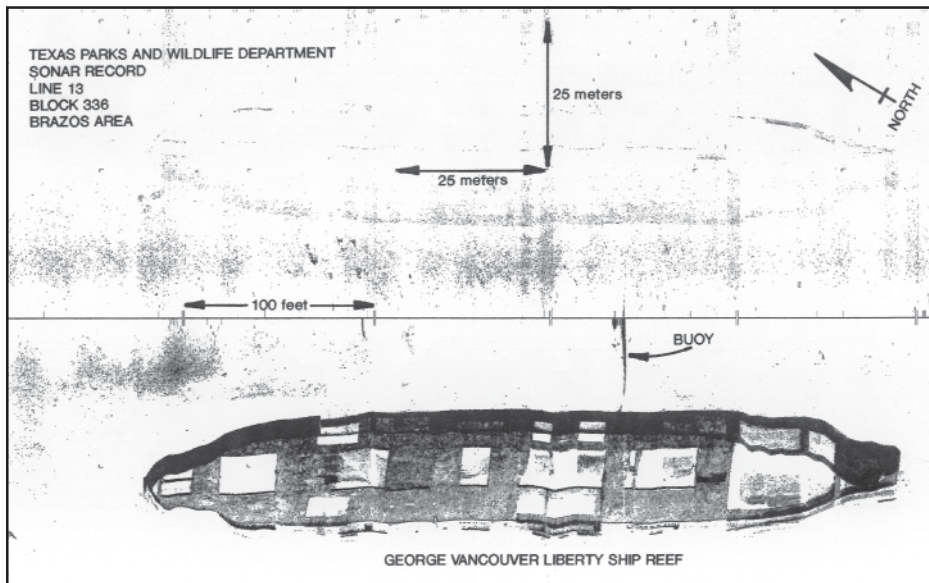
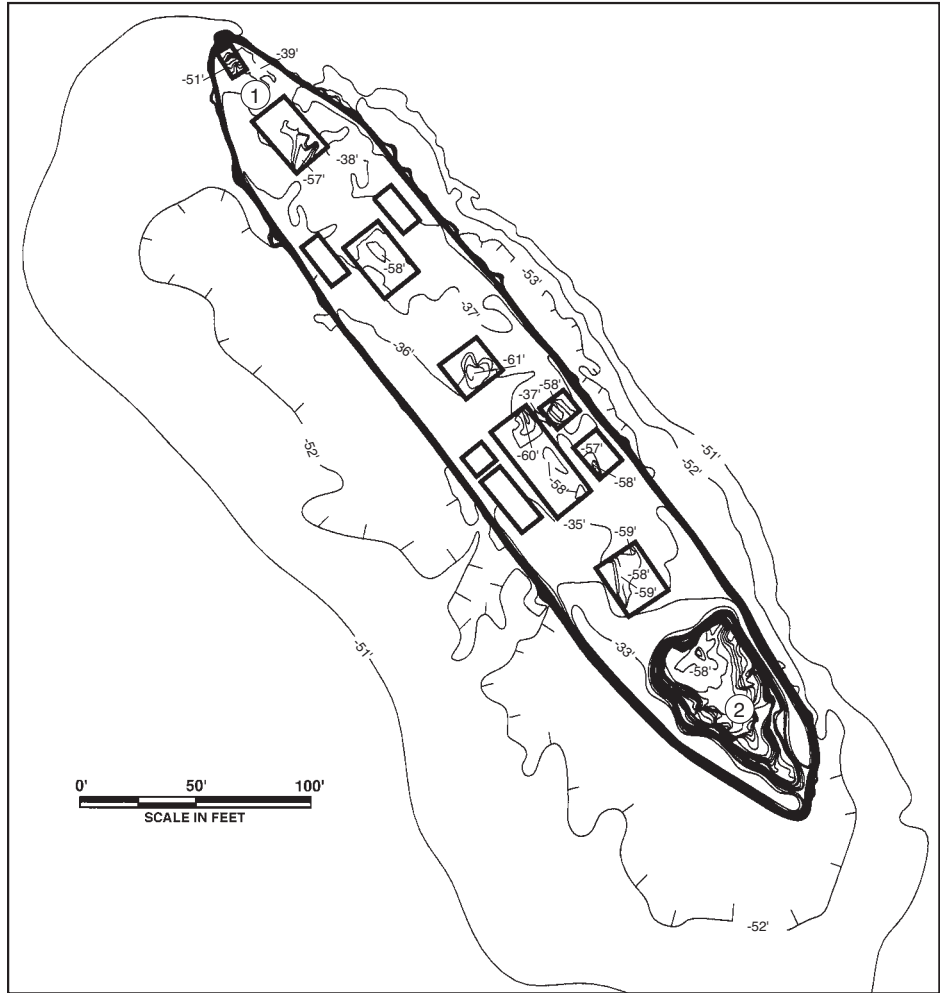


Figure 53. Side scan sonar record of the *Vancouver* Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).

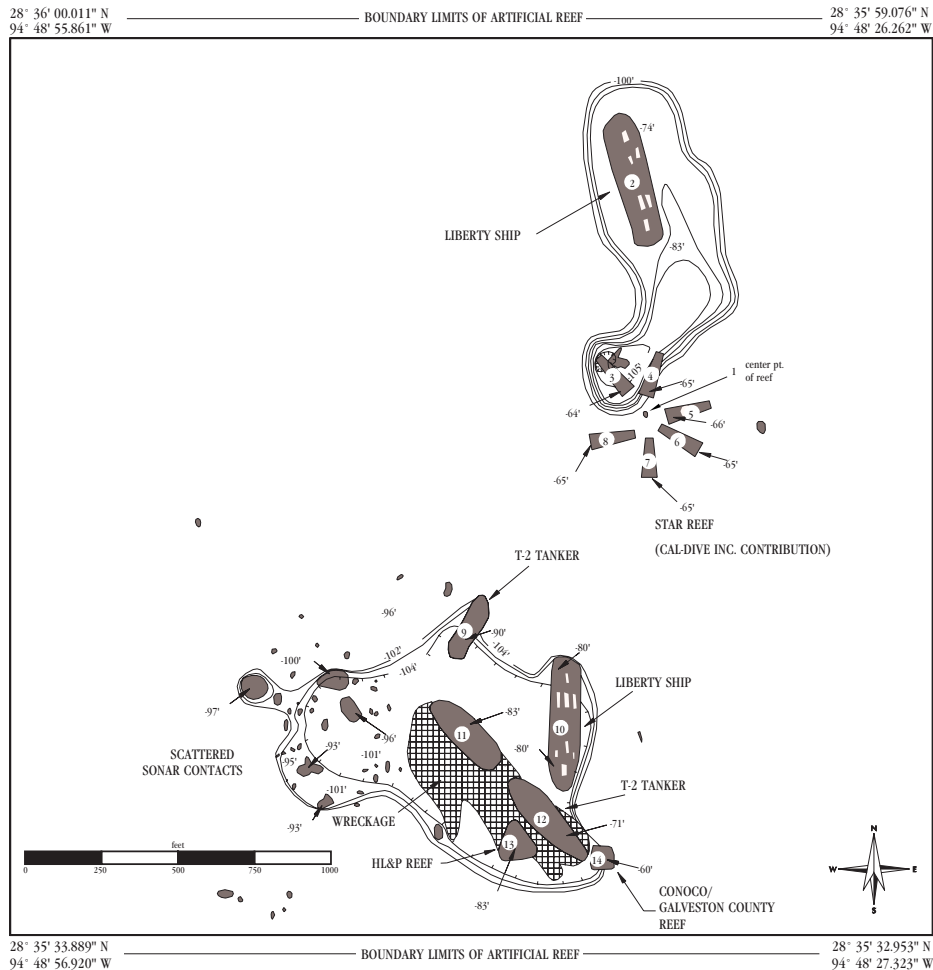


Figure 54. Site map of the Freeport Liberty Ship Reef. The triangle represents the HL&P Reef. The square is the Galveston County/Conoco structure. The Star Reef is the cluster of oil rigs between the two Liberty Ships.

Using the NAD83 datum set, the center point of the Freeport Liberty Ship Reef is located at 28° 35' 46.485" N and 94° 48' 41.605" W (Galveston Block A-22). This point can be reached by sailing 36 nautical miles on a bearing of 122° from the Freeport jetties.

Reef Component	North Latitude	West Longitude	Reef Material
Shaw ⁽²⁾	28° 35' 52.612"	94° 48' 41.782"	Liberty Ship
Allen ⁽¹⁰⁾	28° 35' 38.954"	94° 48' 44.295"	Liberty Ship
V.A. Fogg ^(9,11,12)	28° 35' 36.600"	94° 48' 44.937"	T-2 Tanker
HL&P Reef ⁽¹³⁾	28° 35' 36.065"	94° 48' 45.833"	300 one ton fly ash blocks
Conoco/Galveston County Reef ⁽¹⁴⁾	28° 35' 35.593"	94° 48' 43.358"	Welded pipe structure
Star Reef ⁽³⁻⁸⁾	28° 35' 46.485"	94° 48' 41.605"	Cluster of 6 obsolete petroleum platforms

Figure 55. Side scan sonar record of the Freeport Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).

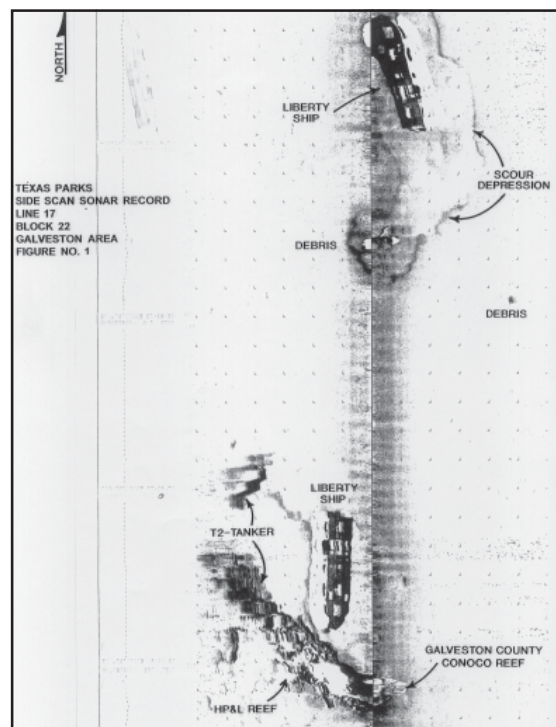
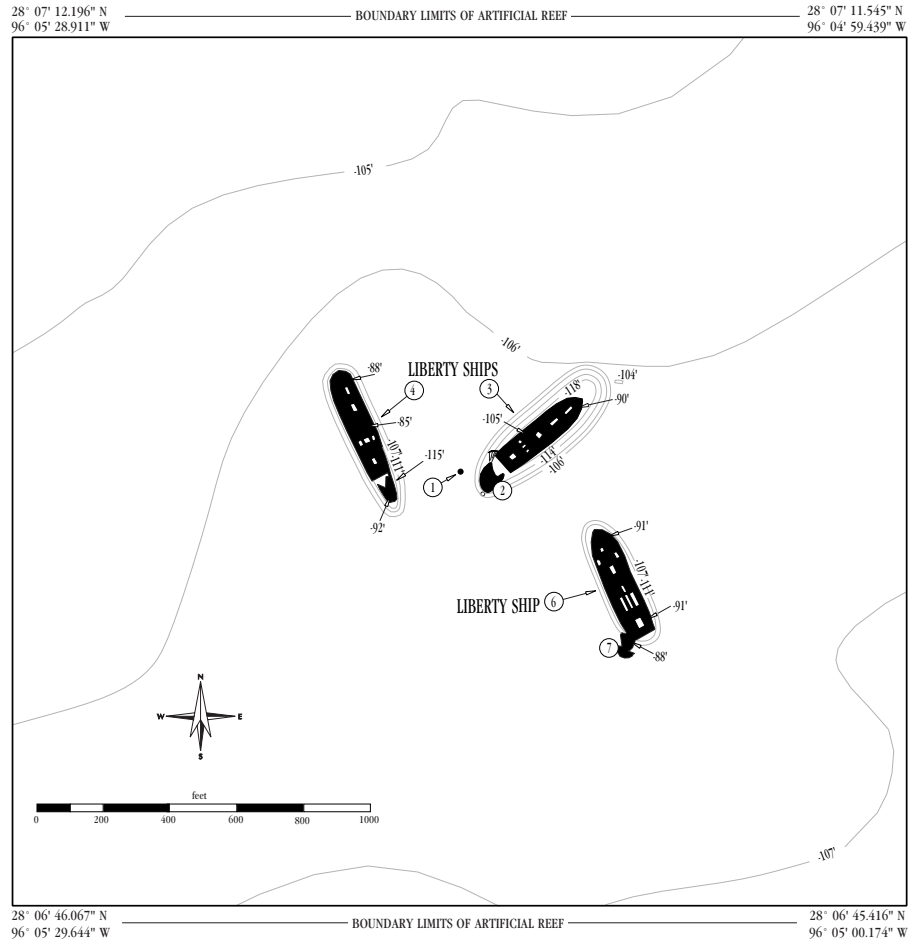


Figure 56. Site map of the Matagorda Island Liberty Ship Reef.



Using the NAD83 datum set, the center point of the Matagorda Island Liberty Ship Reef (1) is located at 28° 06' 58.806" N and 96° 05' 14.542" W (Matagorda Island Block 616). This point can be reached by sailing 21 nautical miles on a bearing of 139° from the Matagorda jetties.

Reef Component	North Latitude	West Longitude
Liberty Ship (2,3)	28° 06' 59.732"	96° 05' 12.035"
Liberty Ship (4,5)	28° 07' 00.183"	96° 05' 17.745"
Liberty Ship (6,7)	28° 06' 55.442"	96° 05' 09.327"

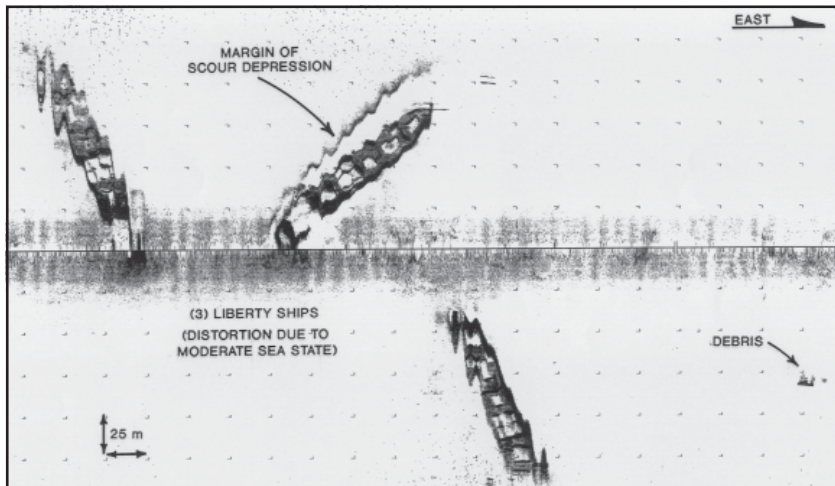


Figure 57. Side scan sonar record of the Matagorda Island Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).

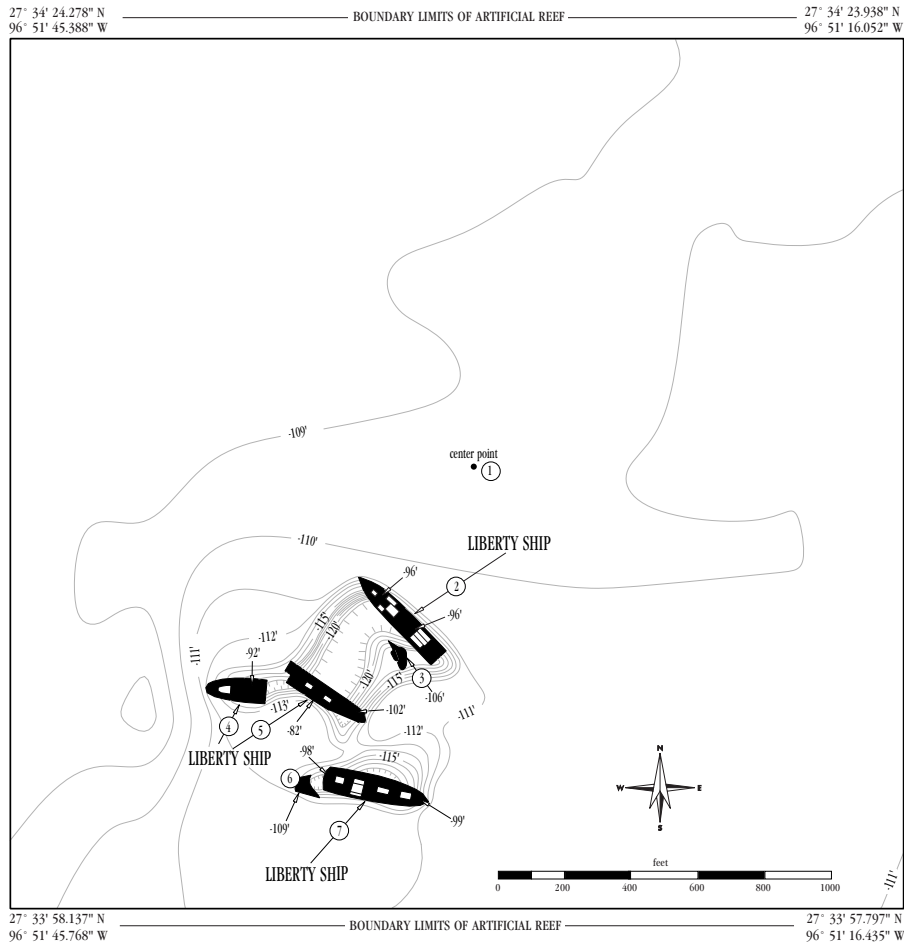


Figure 58. Site map of the Mustang Island Liberty Ship Reef. The *Rachel Jackson's* hull has broken in two.

Using the NAD83 datum set, the center point of the Mustang Island Liberty Ship Reef (1) is located at 27° 34' 11.038" N and 96° 51' 30.911" W (Mustang Island Block 802). This point can be reached by sailing 18 miles on 141° from the Port Aransas jetties.

Reef Component	North Latitude	West Longitude
Liberty Ship (2,3)	27° 34' 06.516"	96° 51' 33.293"
<i>Jackson</i> (stern) (4)	27° 34' 04.536"	96° 51' 38.605"
<i>Jackson</i> (bow) (5)	27° 34' 04.428"	96° 51' 36.135"
Liberty Ship (6,7)	27° 34' 01.493"	96° 51' 34.482"

Figure 59. Side scan sonar record of the Mustang Island Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).

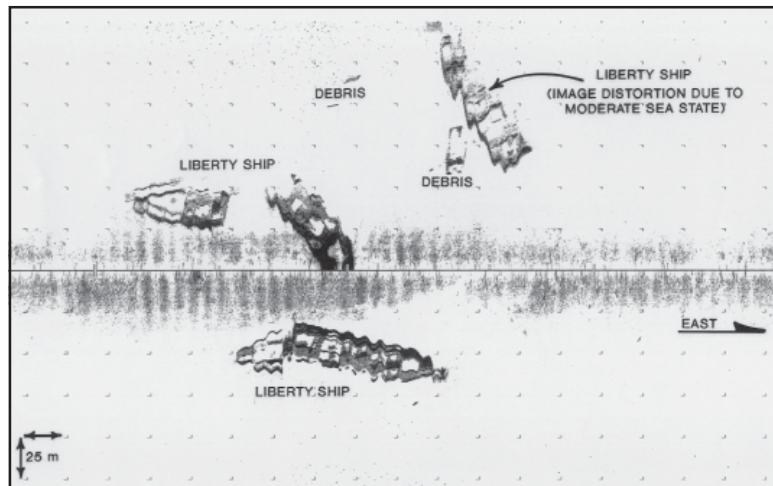
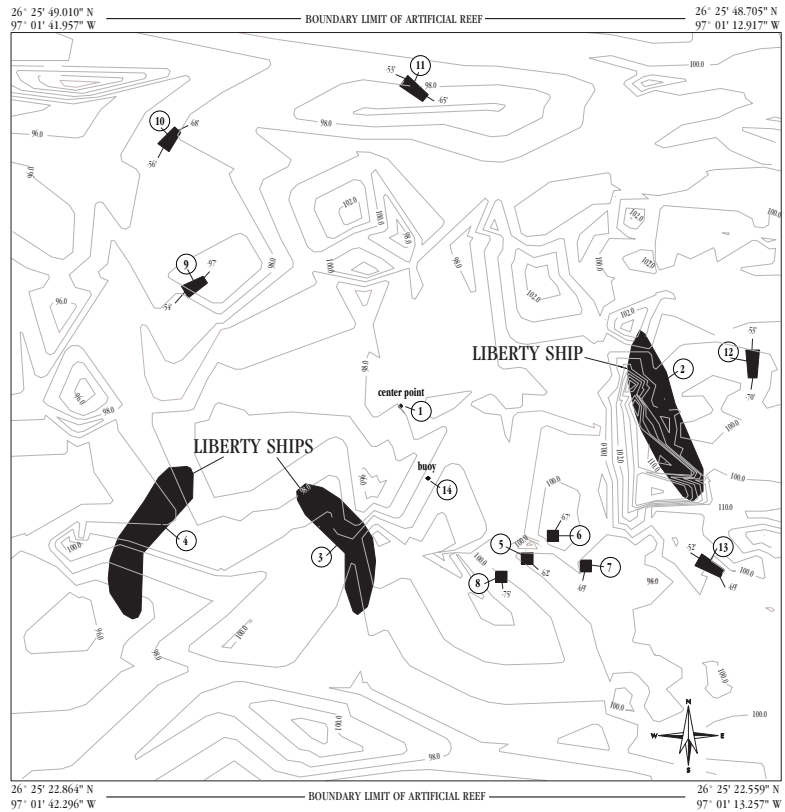


Figure 60. Site map of the Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef.



Using the NAD83 datum set, the center point of the Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef (1) is located at 26° 25' 35.785" N and 97° 01' 27.607" W (South Padre Island Block 1070). This point can be reached by sailing 15 nautical miles on a bearing of 110° from the Port Mansfield jetties. A buoy marking the reef is located at 26° 25' 33.199" N and 97° 01' 26.556" W (14). The Smit America Rigs to Reef donation was composed of two 4-pile jackets that were cut in-half, with each section being placed in a standing position on the bottom at four different locations. The Mobil Rigs to Reef donation was composed of four 4-pile jackets from structures "A" (cut in-half), "B", "C" and "D", with the five structures positioned at different locations.

Reef Component	North Latitude	West Longitude
Liberty Ship (east) (2)	26° 25' 35.597"	97° 01' 17.224"
Liberty Ship (center) (3)	26° 25' 31.665"	97° 01' 30.295"
Liberty Ship (west) (4)	26° 25' 30.503"	97° 01' 38.520"
Smit America's obsolete petroleum platforms:		
"A" structure - top (5)	26° 25' 30.304"	97° 01' 22.682"
"A" structure - base (6)	26° 25' 31.098"	97° 01' 21.644"
"B" structure - top (7)	26° 25' 30.016"	97° 01' 20.357"
"B" structure - base (8)	26° 25' 29.663"	97° 01' 23.708"
Mobil's obsolete petroleum platforms:		
"A-1" structure - base (9)	26° 25' 39.929"	97° 01' 36.087"
"A-2" structure - base (10)	26° 25' 45.089"	97° 01' 36.867"
"B" structure - base (11)	26° 25' 47.379"	97° 01' 27.327"
"C" structure - base (12)	26° 25' 37.639"	97° 01' 13.676"
"D" structure - base (13)	26° 25' 30.179"	97° 01' 15.916"

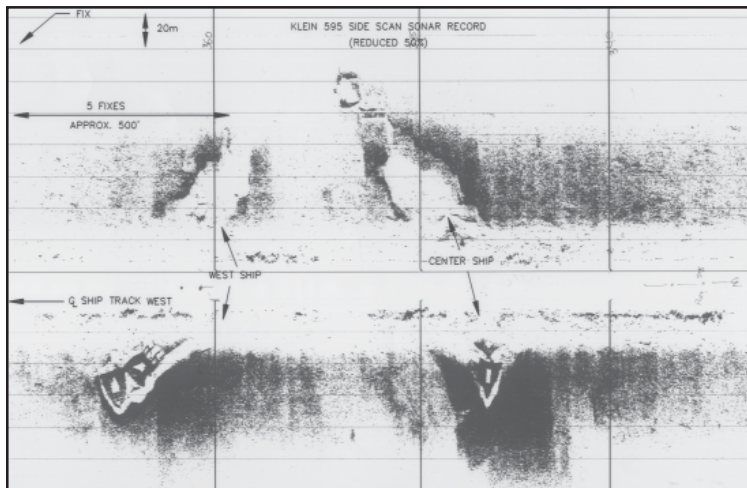


Figure 61a. Side scan sonar record of the center and west ship at the Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).

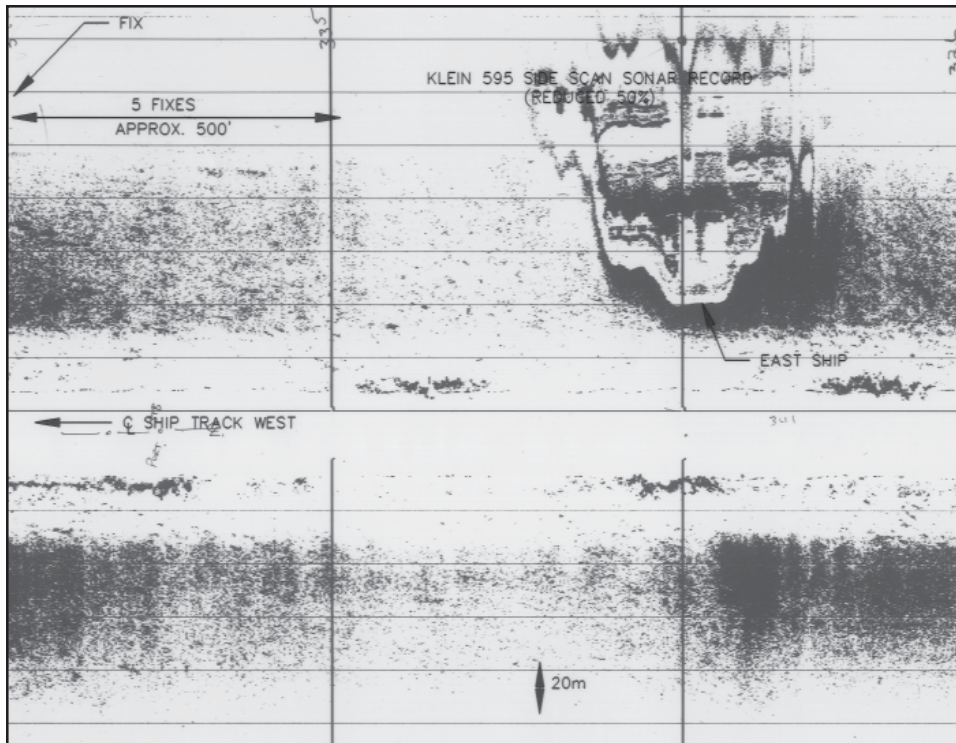


Figure 61b. Side scan sonar record of the east ship at the Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef (John Chance and Associates 1995).

Figure 62. Site map of the *John Worthington* wreck (Pearson and Simmons 1994).

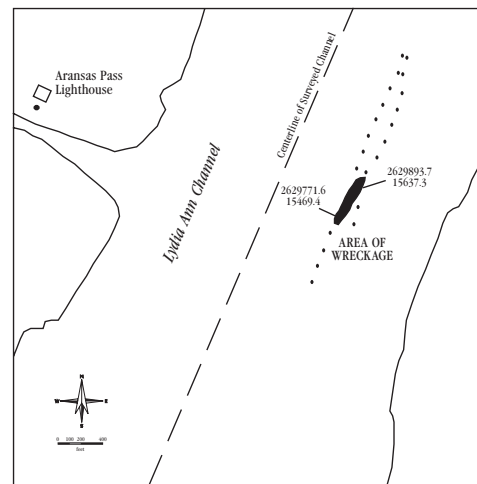
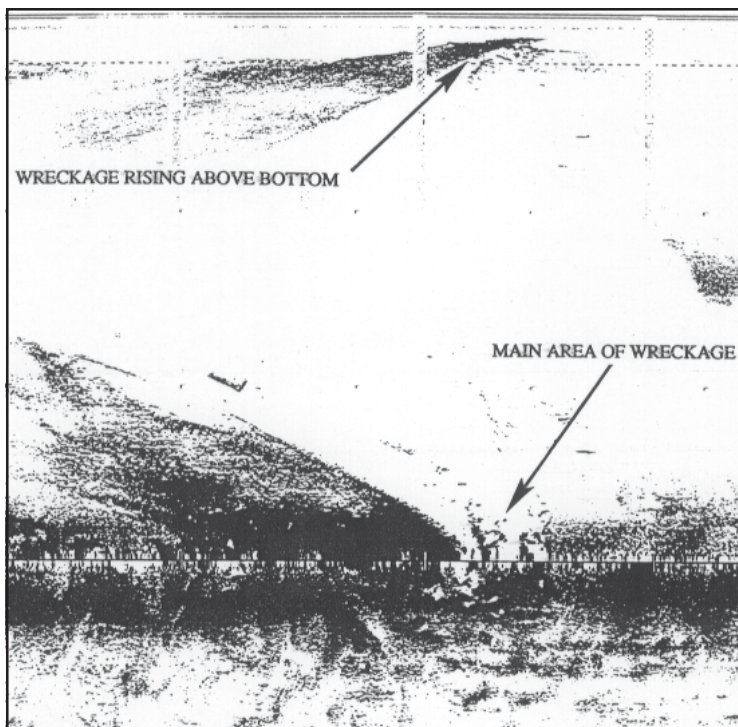


Figure 63. Side scan sonar record of the *John Worthington* wreck (Pearson and Simmons 1994).

Table 2. Center points of each Liberty Ship reef site and the *Worthington* as determined by Differential Geographic Positioning System in North American Datum 1927 and 1983 (NAD27 and 83). Sailing directions are magnetic compass bearings from jettied entrance channels.

Name	Block	Coordinates (NAD27)	Coordinates (NAD83)	Sailing Directions
Freeport Liberty Ship Reef	A-22	28° 35' 45.567" N 94° 28' 42.485" W	28° 35' 46.485" N 94° 28' 41.605" W	36 miles on 122° from Freeport
Matagorda Island Liberty Ship Reef	616	28° 06' 57.832" N 96° 05' 13.701" W	28° 06' 58.806" N 96° 05' 14.542" W	21 miles on 139° from Matagorda
Mustang Island Liberty Ship Reef	802	27° 34' 10.000" N 96° 51' 30.000" W	27° 34' 11.038" N 96° 51' 30.911" W	18 miles on 141° from Pt. Aransas
Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef	1070	26° 25' 34.535" N 97° 01' 26.720" W	26° 25' 35.785" N 97° 01' 27.607" W	15 miles on 110° from Pt. Mansfield
<i>Vancouver</i> Liberty Ship Reef	336	28° 47' 33.152" N 95° 20' 50.634" W	28° 47' 34.817" N 95° 20' 52.052" W	9 miles on 213° from Freeport
<i>John Worthington</i>	Intracoastal Waterway	27° 51' 41.204" N 97° 03' 04.642" W	27° 51' 42.296" N 97° 03' 05.600" W	1.5 miles NE of Port Aransas

Table 3. Locations of individual Liberty Ships and other material at each reef site. Coordinates are for each ship and other reef components in North American Datum 1927 and 1983 (NAD27 and 83).

Reef Name	Reef Component	NAD27	NAD27	NAD83	NAD83
		North Latitude	West Longitude	North Latitude	West Longitude
Freeport Liberty Ship Reef	<i>Shaw</i>	28° 35' 51.689"	94° 48' 41.059"	28° 35' 52.612"	94° 48' 41.782"
	<i>Allen</i>	28° 35' 38.031"	94° 48' 43.572"	28° 35' 38.954"	94° 48' 44.295"
	<i>V.A. Fogg</i>	28° 35' 37.895"	94° 48' 46.416"	28° 35' 36.600"	94° 48' 44.937"
	HL&P Reef	28° 35' 35.145"	94° 48' 45.110"	28° 35' 36.065"	94° 48' 45.833"
	GV Co./Conoco	28° 35' 34.670"	94° 48' 42.635"	28° 35' 35.593"	94° 48' 43.358"
	Star Reef, center	28° 35' 45.567"	94° 28' 42.485"	28° 35' 46.485"	94° 48' 41.605"
Matagorda Island Liberty Ship Reef	Liberty Ship	28° 06' 58.757"	96° 05' 11.193"	28° 06' 59.732"	96° 05' 12.035"
	Liberty Ship	28° 06' 59.209"	96° 05' 16.903"	28° 07' 00.183"	96° 05' 17.745"
	Liberty Ship	28° 06' 54.467"	96° 05' 08.486"	28° 06' 55.442"	96° 05' 09.327"
Mustang Island Liberty Ship Reef	Liberty Ship	27° 34' 05.479"	96° 51' 32.382"	27° 34' 06.516"	96° 51' 33.293"
	<i>Rachel Jackson</i> stern	27° 34' 03.499"	96° 51' 37.694"	27° 34' 04.536"	96° 51' 38.605"
	<i>Rachel Jackson</i> bow	27° 34' 03.391"	96° 51' 35.225"	27° 34' 04.428"	96° 51' 36.135"
	Liberty Ship	27° 34' 00.456"	96° 51' 33.571"	27° 34' 01.493"	96° 51' 34.482"
Port Mansfield Liberty Ship Reef	Liberty Ship, east	26° 25' 34.348"	97° 01' 16.338"	26° 25' 35.597"	97° 01' 17.224"
	Liberty Ship, center	26° 25' 30.415"	97° 01' 29.408"	26° 25' 31.665"	97° 01' 30.295"
	Liberty Ship, west	26° 25' 29.253"	97° 01' 37.633"	26° 25' 30.503"	97° 01' 38.520"
	Smit America rig	26° 25' 29.055"	97° 01' 21.796"	26° 25' 30.304"	97° 01' 22.682"
	Mobil rig (5 components - see Fig. 53)	26° 25' 44.483"	97° 01' 35.414"	26° 25' 39.929"	97° 01' 36.087"
<i>Vancouver</i> Liberty Ship Reef	Liberty Ship (bow)	28° 47' 33.152"	95° 20' 50.634"	28° 47' 36.311"	95° 20' 53.329"
	Liberty Ship (stern)			28° 47' 33.540"	95° 20' 50.974"

Texas Legislation and the Artificial Reef Program

The formal beginnings of the Texas Artificial Reef Program began with the sinking of the 12 Liberty Ships in 1975-76 and the dissolution of the TCMC on September 1, 1985. Texas Parks and Wildlife inherited the ships and began management of the reef sites. In 1989, the seventy-first Texas legislature directed Texas Parks and Wildlife to develop a state Artificial Reef Plan. Legislation for the Texas Artificial Reef Act is provided under the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapter 89, (Section 89.001-89.0061).

The Texas Artificial Reef Plan emphasizes using a diversity of materials, and specifically requires that only highly durable, stable, and complex structures in a "form as close to their current form" as possible be used in order to enhance the fishery resources. Many materials meet this criteria, especially petroleum platforms, in terms of complexity, durability, and stability in addition to providing the maximum biological profile in the water column. The Reef Plan also requires that these structures meet EPA clean water standards and be free of hydro-carbons before they can be accepted into the state program (Culbertson 1998).

Also, the Reef Plan gives guidance on reef location criteria in order to provide the optimum benefits to the reef fishery resource and recreational users, while minimizing impacts to other user groups in the Gulf of Mexico. Criteria used in determining optimum reef location include evaluating the biological, hydrographic, geographic, geological, ecological, social and economic factors involved surrounding each potential donation.

Biological activity occurs at all depths. There are deep water natural reefs which enhance the fishery resource as a result of venting, hydrates, oil and gas seepage, and nutrients brought in by currents. In general, the higher the profile of the structure, the better the biological productivity of the reef. Recent research by Quenton Dokken at Texas A&M University and by Dave Stanley at Louisiana State University has documented that the majority of biological activity surrounding a platform structure is above 300 ft (Culbertson 1998).

Hydrographic considerations include evaluating the water depth of the proposed reef site and the structure profile. Geographic considerations include

locating reef sites at least two nautical miles from designated safety fairways, and at different distances from shore in accordance with user's preferences. Geological concerns include placing reef materials on stable Gulf bottom sediments and avoiding natural bottom areas. Social and economic considerations have not limited the number of reef sites created in the Gulf of Mexico (Culbertson 1998).

The major component of the Artificial Reef Program is the Rigs-to-Reef program, in which petroleum companies donate their obsolete platforms to build reefs. The Reef Plan gives guidance on how to pay for the costs to the program. Texas legislation requires the donor of a petroleum structure pay 50% of the monetary savings for not having to take the structure back to shore and dispose or recycle it. This money goes into the Artificial Reef Fund and is used exclusively to support research monitoring activities, administration of permits, maintenance of buoys, liability and construction of inshore reef sites. Maintenance of buoys marking each new reef are major costs to the Program.

There are specific checks and balances to the donation procedures. The Reef Plan requires that all potential donations be reviewed by a citizen's advisory committee composed of ten interested user groups in the Gulf of Mexico. This advisory committee allows a forum for minimizing conflicts between user groups before the permitting process begins. The Artificial Reef Advisory Committee is represented by a salt water fishing group, an oil and gas industry representative, the Texas Department of Commerce representing tourism, the Texas General Land Office representing petroleum and mineral leasing interests in state waters, a commercial shrimp fishing organization, a Texas diving club, the Attorney General's Office, a Texas University, an environmental group, and the Texas Historical Commission Department of Antiquities Protection (Culbertson 1998).

Since the Plan was approved, the Department has accepted the donation of 45 oil and gas structures, which have been donated by 28 different petroleum companies. The Department currently maintains 34 different reef sites located in state and federal waters. Other structures at these reef sites include: 12 Liberty Ships and 1 T-2 tanker, a tugboat, 4 barges, a YR-Naval vessel, 44 concrete culverts, 300 fly-ash blocks, 132 reef balls, 50 quarry rocks, a welded pipe structure, and 16 concrete sinkers.

CONCLUSION

Like oases in the desert, sunken Liberty ships provide refuges where animals can find food and shelter. To enhance the marine life in the Gulf, the Texas Artificial Reef Program has placed 45 petroleum platforms, fly ash blocks, pipe, concrete blocks and obsolete ships in 34 different sites along the Texas coast. The Liberty Ships serve as reefs by providing a solid foundation for the growth and attachment of sessile organisms. Colonizing animals grow at such high densities that most of the ships are entirely covered. These underwater food and shelter centers attract other invertebrates and numerous fish species until the whole area is

teeming with life. In addition, numerous anglers and divers visit the sites each year to witness the positive effects these historic Liberty Ships have made in enhancing the marine resource.

Texas Parks and Wildlife and the Texas Historical Commission hope to teach the general public about the heroism of the men who sailed on the Liberty Ships, and about the importance these and other merchant marine ships had in World War II. The study of Liberty Ships is an example of how existing shipwrecks can be given an added historical dimension.

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APPENDIX 1.

VESSEL STATUS CARDS

Off. #243,221

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name **B. F. SHAW** Flag **AMERICAN** Type **CARGO** Former Name
F.B. 308.T
 D.W.T. 10439 Gross 7176 Net ~~4380~~ Bale Cu. 500229 Grain Cu. 562865 Sp. ^{19.5}
EC2

MCE Hull No. 1622 Built by Oregon S. B. Corp. #663 At Portland, Ore. Completed 4-17-43

Basis to W.S.A. 4-17-43 11:00AM FWT @ Portland, Ore. Del by Builders to U.S.M.C. Prod. Simultaneously to W.S.A. Div.

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	Northland Transp. Co.	GAA	Portland, Ore.	4-17-43 11:00AM
	Del. to USMC James River Fleet	-	Lee Hall, Va.	10-13-45 12Mid.EST
	U. S. Lines Co. (pending del. to US Lines under bb charter)	GAA	Lee Hall, Va.	4-2-47 9:45AM EST
	U. S. Lines Co.	MC/BB	Balt., Md.	5-9-47 12:01AM EDT
	U.S. Lines Co	GAA	New York NY	4-10-48 12 Mid
	A.L. Burbank & Co	GAA	"	4-13-48 12.01 AM
	Reserve Fleet		Hudson River	4-23-48 12.15 PM
	Pacific Atlantic SS Co.	GAA	Hudson River	7-20-51 10:00EDST
	RESERVE FLEET	-	BEAUMONT	6-1-52 11:30AMCST
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Virginia	Purchase	James River	8/21/75 9:00AmEDT

Off. #243,774

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name **CHARLES A. DANA** Flag **AMERICAN** Type **CARGO EC-2** Former Name
Fixed Ballast 201.5 T
 D.W.T. 10,617 Gross 7176 Net 4380 Bale Cu. 499,573 Grain Cu. 562,608 Sp. 12.5

MCE Hull No. 1991 Built by NO. CAROLINA S.B. CO. WILMINGTON, N.C. Completed 7-22-43

Basis to W.S.A. 7-22-43 11:45PM EWT @ Wilmington, N.C. Owned

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	R. A. Nicol & Co.	GAA	Wilmington, N.C.	7-22-43 11:45PM
	Norton Lilly Mgm't. Corp.	Int. BB	New York, NY	7-26-46 12:01AM EDT
	Norton Lilly Mgm't. Corp.	MC/BB	Norfolk, Va.	9-4-46 12:01AM EDT
	Dichman Wright & Pugh	GAA	"	7-20-48 4 PM
	Reserve Fleet		James River WILM. N.C.	8-2-48 9.45 AM EST
	Blidberg, Rothchild Co.	GAA	Wilmington	10-28-51 10:00AMEST
	Reserve Fleet		Beaumont	6-19-52 9:00AMCST
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Texas	Purchase	Beaumont	6-25-75
	Physically Delivered			7-2-75

Off. #243,475

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name CONRAD WEISER Flag A MERICAN Type SARGO Former Name
 Fixed Ballast 206 T Net 4380 Bale Cu 499,816 Grain Cu 562,827 Sp. 12.5
 D.W.T. 10,521 Gross 7176 Hull No. 2140 Built by BETH FAIRFIELD SHIPYARD At INC. BALTIMORE, MD Completed 5-29-43
 Basis to W.S.A. 5-29-43 4:00PM EDT @ Baltimore, Md. Owned

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	Dickmann, Wright & Pugh, Inc.	GAA	Baltimore, Md.	5-29-43 4:00PM
	Eastport SS Corp.	MC/BB	New Orleans	5-22-47 12:01AM CST
	SO. ATLANTIC SS LINE	GAA	NEW ORLEANS	7-28-49 MID CST.
	RES. FLEET		BEAUMONT	8-11-49 10:30AM CST.
	Lykes Bros. SS Co. - Operating	GAA	Beaumont	4-17-51 1:25PM CST
	Reserve Fleet		Beaumont	6-20-52 12:15PM CST
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Texas	Purchase	Beaumont	6-20-75
	Physically Delivered			6-27-75

#243, 527

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name DWIGHT L. MOODY Flag AMERICAN Type CARGO Former Name
 EC-2
 D.W.T. 10,453 Gross 7176 Net 4380 Bale Cu. 499,573 Grain Cu. Sp. 12.5
 Hull No. 1526 Built by J. A. Jones Const. Co. At Panama City, Fla. Completed 7-24-43
 Basis to W.S.A. 7-24-43 5:30PM CWT @ Panama City, Fla. (Owned)

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	Lykes Bros. SS Co., Inc.	GAA	Panama City	7-24-43 5:30PM CWT
	Reserve Fleet	-	Lee Hall, Va.	5-29-46 12Mid. EDT
	Lykes Bros. SS Co., Inc. (Pending dely BB)	GAA	Lee Hall, Va.	4-1-47 2PM EST
3-28-47	Lykes Bros. SS Co.	MC/BB	Balt., Md.	5-6-47 12:01AM EDT
	MISSISSIPPI SHP&G CO.	GAA	NEW ORLEANS	1-13-50 MID. CST.
	RES. FLEET		BEAUMONT	1-23-50 11AM CST.
	Moore McCormack Lines	GAA	Beaumont	5-4-51 3:00PM CST
	RESERVE FLEET	-	BEAUMONT	6-16-52 1:45PM CST
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Texas	Purchase	Beaumont	7/1/75
	Physically Delivered			7/9/75

Off. # 243,360

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name **EDWARD W. SCRIPPS** Flag **American** Type **Cargo EC-2** Former Name
 D.W.T. **10,800a** Gross **7,176** Net **4,380** Bale Cu. **499,573** Grain Cu. **Sp. 12.5**
 MCE Hull No. **1645** Built by **California S.B. Corp. #178** At **Los Angeles, Cal.** Completed **5-11-43**
 Basis to W.S.A. **5-11-43 10:30AM PWT @ Los Angeles, Cal.** Owned

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	Alcoa S^o Co., Inc.	GAA	Los Angeles, Cal.	5-11-43 10:30AM PWT
	Alcoa SS Co., Inc.	BB Int.	Mobile, Ala.	5-9-46 12Mid. CST
	Alcoa SS Co., Inc.	MC/BB	Mobile, Ala.	9-22-46 12Mid. CST
	BLIDBERG ROTHCHILD	MC/BB	NEW ORLEANS	8-19-48 MID CST
	Waterman SS Corp	GAA	Mobile Ala	10-22-48 12 NoonCST
	Reserve Fleet		Mobile Fleet	10-26-48 145 PM CST
	Isthmian SS Co.	GAA	Mobile	5-3-51 8:20 AM CST
	RESERVE FLEET	-	BEAUMONT	6-25-52 9:45AM CST
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Texas	Purchase	Beaumont	5/8/75
	Physically Delivery			6/5/75

Off. #244,100

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name **GEORGE DEWEY** Flag **AMERICAN** Type **CARGO** Former Name
 D.W.T. **10325c** Gross **7225** Net **4397** Bale Cu. **499573** Grain Cu. **562608** Sp. **12.5**
 ECL #10 **JACKSONVILLE, FLA.**
 MCE Hull No. **1202** Built by **ST. JOHN'S RIVER SBA CO. INC.** FLA. Completed **8-27-43**
 Basis to W.S.A. **8-27-43 2:50PM EWT @ Jacksonville, Fla.** Owned

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	American Export Lines, Inc.	GAA	Jacksonville Fla.	8-27-43 2:50PM
	Amer. Export Lines, Inc.	Int. BB	New York, NY	6-20-46 12:01AM EDT
	American Export Lines Inc	MC/BB	New York	11-6-46 12:01am EST
	AMER EXPORT LINES INC	GAA	" "	12-7-47
	BOLAND & CORNELIUS	GAA	" "	12-12-47 12:01AM EST
	Reserve Fleet		Hudson River	1-6-48 3.30 PM
	West Coast Trans-Oceanic SS Line	GAA	Hudson River	9-26-51 12:15PM EDT
	RESERVE FLEET	-	BEAUMONT	5-31-52 10:05AM CST
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Texas (Physically Delivered)	Purchase	Beaumont	8/6/75 8/12/75

Off. #245,915

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name **GEORGE L. FARLEY** Flag **American** Type **Cargo** Former Name **12.5**
 D.W.T. ~~10,800~~ ³⁷⁵⁴ 10,491c ^{FB 2767} Gross 7176 Net 4380 Bale Cu. **499,573** Grain Cu. **Sp.**
 EC2-S-C1
 Hull No. **3037** Built by **New England SB Corp.** At **So. Portland, Me.** Completed **7-20-44**
 Basis to **W.S.A. 7-20-44 2:00PM EDT @ So. Portland, Me.- Owned**

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	Boland & Cornelius Co., Inc.	GAA	So. Portland, Me.	7-20-44 2:00PM EDT
	Boland & Cornelius	Int.BB	New York, NY	8-17-46 12:01AM EDT
	Boland & Cornelius	MC/BB	Galveston, Tex.	12-14-46 12:01 AM CST
	Blidberg Rothchild Co RES. FLEET	BB	New York N.Y	1-4-49 12 Mid EST
	Grace Line INC. - Husbanding	GAA	WILM. N.C.	11-14-49 2PM EST.
	Grace Line Inc. - Operating RESERVE FLEET	GAA	Wilmington	3-31-51 9:00AM EST
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Texas Physically Delivered	Purchase	Wilmington BEAUMONT	5-4-51 12MID EST 6-21-52 10:30AM CST 6/6/75 6/20/75

#242,020

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name **GEORGE VANCOUVER** Flag **AMERICAN** Type **CARGO** Former Name **12.5**
 D.W.T. **10844c** Gross 7176 Net 4374 Bale Cu. **499573** Grain Cu. **562608** Sp. **11**
 Hull No. ^{ECA} ~~3033~~ ³⁰³³ Built by **KAISER CO. INC.** #1 At **PORTLAND** (Vancouver, Wash.) Completed **7-22-42**
 Basis to **W.S.A. 7-22-42 10:00PM PWT @ Portland. Owned**

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	American President Lines	GAA	Portland	7-22-42 10:00PM
	Oliver J. Olson & Co.	GAA	San Francisco, Cal.	8-29-44 1:00PM PWT
	USMC Reserve Fleet	-	Hudson River, NY	4-30-46 12Mid. EDT
	Eastern Gas & Fuel Assoc. (Pending delay - BB)	GAA	New York	3-17-47 7AM EST
	Eastern Gas & Fuel Assoc. DICH. WRIGHT & PUGH RES FLEET	MC/BB	New York	4-11-47 12:01AM EST
	General SS Corp. RESERVE FLEET	GAA	BALTO WILM N.C.	12-11-47 4PM EST 1-5-48 11:5AM EST
		GAA	Wilmington BEAUMONT	7-21-51 1:00PM EST 6-14-52 12:05PM CST

Off. #242,673

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name JIM BRIDGER Flag AMERICAN Type *Cargo* Former Name
 D.W.T.10,844 c Gross 7180 Net ~~4580~~ ⁴³⁷⁰ Bale Cu.499,573 Grain Cu562,608 Sp^{12.5}
 Hull No. 610 Built by Oregon SB Corp. At Portland, Ore. Completed 12-25-42
 Basis to W.S.A.12-25-42 7AM PWT @ Portland, Ore. Owned

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	James Griffiths & Sons, Inc.	GAA	Portland, Ore.	12-25-42 7AM PWT
	Moore McCormack Lines, Inc.	MC/BB	Portland, Ore.	3-8-47 Mid. PST
	Dichman Wright & Fugh Reserve Fleet	GAA	Baltimore Md	2-14-48 12 Mid
	Olympic SS Co.	GAA	James River	3-16-48 3 PM
	RESERVE FLEET	-	BEAUMONT	6-15-51 11:40 PMEDS
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Texas	Purchase	Beaumont	7/10/75
	Physically Delivered			7/16/75

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name JOHN WASHINGTON Flag AMERICAN Type S. TANKER Former Name
 D.W.T.12,475 Gross 3366 Net 3155 Bale Cu. Grain Cu. Sp10.8
 Hull No. 61 Built by C.M. Steadifer Const. Corp. Vancouver Completed Dec. 1920
 Basis to H.S.A. 4/22/42 7:45 PM @ St. George, Bermuda from Standard Oil of NJ RTC
 7/21/43 12 Noa CWT @ Galveston, Tex. del. to " " " " from RTC
 7/21/43 12 Noa CWT @ Galveston, Tex. from Standard Oil of NJ R Purch.

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	Standard Oil Co. of NJ	GAA	St. George, Bermuda	4/22/42 7:45 PM
	Damaged in convoy 5/23/43 General Export Iron & Metal Co. (for scrapping)	Purch.	Port of Arkansas, Tex.	3/22/44 5:00 PM CWT

Off. #243,991

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name **JOSHUA THOMAS** Flag **AMERICAN** Type **CARGO** EC 2 Former Name
 D.W.T. ~~16800~~¹⁶²⁸² Gross 7176 Net 4380 Bale Cu. ~~499,573~~¹⁴¹⁵⁸⁸⁶ Grain Cu. Sp.12.5
 Hull No. **1760** Built by **BETH FAIRFIELD SY, INC** at **BALTIMORE, MD.** Completed **8-13-43**
 Basis to W.S.A. **8-13-43 4:00PM EWT @ Baltimore, Md.** Owned

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	American Export Lines, Inc.	GAA	Baltimore, Md.	8-13-43 4:00PM
	Coastwise (PFE) Line	MC/BB	Portland Ore	1-4-47 12M. PST
	WATERMAN SS CORP.	GAA	MOBILE	12-21-49 MID. CST.
	RES. FLEET	"	"	12-27 #49 NOON CST.
	States Marine - Operating	GAA	Mobile	4-17-51 12:10PM CST
	Reserve Fleet		Beaumont	6-23-52 10:35AM CST
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Texas	Purchase	Beaumont	5/29/75
	Physically Delivery			6/5/75

off. #243,078

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name **RACHEL JACKSON** Flag **AMERICAN** Type **CARGO** Formgr Name
 F.B. 278
 D.W.T. 10572 Gross 7176 Net 4380 Bale Cu. 499573 Grain Cu. 562608 Sp.12.5
 Hull No. **721** Built by **CALIFORNIA S. B. CORP** at **LOA ANGELES, CAL.** Completed **3-19-43**
 Basis to W.S.A. **3-19-43 10:45AM PWT @ Los Angeles, Cal.** Owned

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	Black Diamond SS Co.	GAA	Los Angeles, Cal.	3-19-43 10:45AM
	Reserve Fleet	-	Lee Hall, Va.	8-6-46 12Mid. EDT
	New York & Cuba Mail SS Co.	GAA	James River	10-26-51 11:00AM EST
	RESERVE FLEET		BEAUMONT	6-13-52 6:05PM CST
	Artificial Fish Reef Program/State of Texas	Purchase	Beaumont	7/29/75 1:40Pm CDT

Off. #244,007

VESSEL STATUS CARD

Name WILLIAM H. ALLEN Flag AMERICAN Type CARGO Former Name
 F.B. 273 T. EG2-S-C1
 D.W.T. ~~10,518~~ Gross 7176 Net 4380 Bale Cu. 499573 Grain Cu. 562608 ^{12.5} Sp. 11
 10,469c

ACE Hull No. 1714 Built by PERMANENTE METALS CORP. RICHMOND, CAL. Completed 8-3-43
 Basis to W.S.A. 8-3-43 3:00PM PWT @ Richmond, Cal. Owned

Date Allocated	Operator	Form of Agree.	Port of Delivery	Date and Time Delivered
	Isthmian S.S. Co.	GAA	Richmond, Cal.	8-3-43 3:00PM
	Isthmian SS Co.	Int.BB	Galveston, Tex.	7-29-46 12Mid.CST
	Isthmian SS Co.	MC/BB	Mobile, Ala.	12-13-46 12:01AM CST
	MISSISSIPPI SHIP'G CO. RES. ELEMENT	GAA	NEW ORLEANS BEAUMONT	1-17-50 MID. CST. 1-28-50 3:30PM GST.
	Olympic SS Co. - Operating RESERVE FLEET	GAA	Beaumont	4-26-51 9:30 AM CST
	Program	-	Beaumont	6-14-52 7:15PM CST
	Artificial Fish Reef/State of Texas Physically Delivered	Purchase	Beaumont	7/16/75 7/22/75

APPENDIX 2.

INSTRUCTIONS TO MASTERS

NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

Op-23L-JH
(SC) S76-3
Serial 097923

March 30, 1942

CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Secretary of the Navy.

To: Master V.S. GEORGE DENEY 7225 Gross Tons.
S.S. _____

SUBJECT: Instructions for Scuttling Merchant Ships.

1. It is the policy of the United States Government that no U. S. Flag merchant ship be permitted to fall into the hands of the enemy.
2. The ship shall be defended by her armament, by maneuver, and by every available means as long as possible. When, in the judgment of the Master, capture is inevitable, he shall scuttle the ship. Provision should be made to open sea valves, and to flood holds and compartments adjacent to machinery spaces, start numerous fires and employ any additional measures available to insure certain scuttling of the vessel.
3. In case the Master is relieved of command of his ship, he shall transfer this letter to his successor, and obtain a receipt for it.

/s/ FRANK KNOX

Port Director

Received 3 September 1943
Date

Jacksonville, Florida
Port

Edwin C. Jamuski
Master

Copy to: VCNO

APPENDIX 3.

INSTRUCTIONS TO ARMED GUARDS

ICTED

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMMANDING OFFICERS OF NAVAL ARMED GUARDS
ON MERCHANT SHIPS
1943

- ter I. THE ARMED GUARD COMMANDER.
 - 1. General.
 - 2. Relations with Crew and Passengers.
 - 3. Relations with the Master of the Vessel.

- ter II. PRIOR TO SAILING.
 - 1. General Arrangements.
 - 2. Equipment.
 - 3. Watch, Quarter, and Station Bills. (see amplification)
 - 4. Security in Port.

- ter III. AFTER SAILING.
 - 1. At sea.
 - 2. Lookouts.
 - 3. Action.
 - 4. Air Attacks.

- ter IV. ARRIVAL IN PORT.
 - 1. Foreign Port.
 - 2. United States Port.
 - 3. Reports.

- ter V. GENERAL INFORMATION.
 - 1. Pay and Subsistence.
 - 2. Advancement in Rating.
 - 3. Mail and Censorship Regulations.
 - 4. Communications.
 - 5. Care of the Wounded.
 - 6. Notes on Abandoning Ship.
 - 7. Armed Guard Training Facilities.
 - 8. Basis for Assignment of Armed Guards to Ships.
 - 9. Miscellaneous Information.

TS:

- General Instructions for Commanding Officers of Naval Armed Guards on Merchant Ships.
- Wartime Instructions for United States Merchant Ships.

RESTRICTED

I. ORGANIZING THE SHIP. Before sailing, plan your organization, as far as practicable, covering all stations of your crew under the various conditions.

A. A Watch, Quarter, and Station Bill shall be drawn up for the vessel and published, showing location of stations and allocation of naval personnel on watch duty on a 24-hour basis. The Watch Bill will in all cases include the following Conditions of Readiness which have been established for the Armed Guard service.

1. CONDITION I - GENERAL QUARTERS.

Show disposition of naval personnel at the ship's armament, with all hands at battle stations, including the merchant crew.

CONDITION II.

In areas where submarine, surface, or air attack is imminent and contact with the enemy may be expected at any moment, the entire Armed Guard will stand watch and watch. Each of the 2 watches under this Condition may be divided into two sections. This will provide sufficient men for each section to stand 2 hours' lookout duty each 4-hour watch. The standby section will be stationed at the guns ready for instant action. If conditions warrant, the standby section shall also be stationed on lookout duty.

CONDITION III.

During normal steaming at sea, the Armed Guard will be divided into not to exceed 3 watches. The Armed Guard lookouts shall stand their watches at the guns at all times. When anchored in an unguarded anchorage or roadstead, Condition 3 shall be maintained.

2. Show to what extent the merchant crew are used in supplying ammunition and manning the ship's armament under each of the above Conditions. Consult the Master of the ship concerning details of assigning merchant crew members to complete your gun crews and ammunition parties.

3. GENERAL ALARM SIGNALS.

Post signal to be sounded on ship's general alarm system for each type of attack. When the general alarm is sounded, all hands, including the merchant crew, will

RESTRICTED

report to General Quarter's battle stations. The following signals should be made standard on all armed merchant ships:

Submarine sighted, or attack from starboard:
One long and one short ring.

Submarine sighted, or attack from port:
One long and two short rings.

Air attack:
One short and one long ring.

The above signals do not conflict with the fire and emergency or abandon ship, or boat lowering signals established by the Safety of Life at Sea Convention of 1929. It is essential that the above system of signals be adopted on all armed merchant ships to prevent confusion when members of the Armed Guard or merchant seamen change ships.

The code of signals should be displayed at all operating and bell stations for the information of personnel. The Armed Guard and ship's lookouts should be directed to ring only the authorized submarine or aircraft attack or warning signals. All other signals should be sounded under the authority of the ship's officers.

It is essential that the entire ship's company (Armed Guard and merchant crew) be called to their action stations without delay when a torpedo wake, periscope, submarine or unidentified surface or aircraft is sighted. The general alarm bells should be sounded for this purpose in order that personnel may be aroused from their sleep in the shortest possible time and also that action stations may be fully manned without delay.

4. ABANDONING SHIP.

Confer with the Master regarding assignment of men to life boats and auxiliary stations in life rafts.

5. Cleaning stations for battery and Armed Guard quarters.

B. U. S. ARMY TRANSPORTS.

It will be noted in paragraph 1203 of General Instructions for Commanding Officers of Naval Armed Guards on Merchant Ships, 1943, Third Edition that, in cooperation with the Transport Commander, military personnel embarked for transportation may be utilized to assist the Armed Guard Unit.

RESTRICTED

It must be remembered, however, that in nearly all cases, troops are disembarked at their destination, and are not available for watch standing on the homeward voyage. Therefore, it will be necessary for the Armed Guard Commander aboard a USAT to have two Watch Quarter and Station Bills; one for the outbound voyage when troops are aboard, and the other for the homeward voyage when troops are not aboard. Both Watch Bills will be made up for the Armed Guard crew as indicated in (A) above.

1. OUTBOUND.

Include battle and extra lookout stations to be manned by the troops aboard under Conditions I, II, and III. Due caution should be exercised so as not to assign military personnel afflicted with so-called "night blindness" to lookout duty. On the outbound voyage while the troops are on board the merchant crew should be assigned by the Master to man their abandon ship and boat lowering stations during Condition I. The merchant crew should be drilled at gun and ammunition detail stations during the outbound voyage, in preparation for the homeward voyage or passages when no troops are on board.

2. HOMeward BOUND.

Sufficient of the merchant crew should be assigned to gun stations to complete all gun crews and pass ammunition as outlined in (A) above."

C. ADDITIONAL.

1. As nearly as practicable, assign quarters based on proximity to Condition I station.
2. Confer with the Master regarding extension of ship's regular Fire and Emergency Station Bill to include the Armed Guard. In the event of fire or other emergency, such as collision, the Armed Guard's chief responsibility lies with aspects of the ship's armament. Magazine and flood valve keys must be readily available and members of the Armed Guard shall be stationed at magazine flood valves and sprinkler systems. Other members of the Armed Guard will stand by ready service boxes ready to jettison ammunition, if necessary, while others must be so stationed that they will be able to protect the Armed Guard quarters. The ship's regular abandon ship Bill shall be extended in like manner.

RICTED

TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.

1. TRAINING.

Drills in the following duties to be performed aboard ship.

- a. General Quarters.
- b. Pointing, training, and sightsetting.
- c. Casualty.
- d. Talker drills on battle 'phones.
- e. AA ring sight tracking.
- f. Aircraft recognition.
- g. Fire and abandon ship.
- h. First aid.
- i. Instruction in the use of tools on ordnance equipment.
- j. Instruction of lookouts in standing an alert watch.

2. EDUCATIONAL.

1. Qualifying SEA 1c as such through use of Navy Training Courses.
2. Advancement of SEA 1c to Petty Officer rating through use of Navy Training Courses.

RESTRICTED

WATCH, QUARTER, AND STATION BILL

- TYPE OF SHIP - STANDARD MARITIME COMMISSION LIBERTY SHIP.
- ARMAMENT - 4" 50 Cal. - 3" 50 Cal. DP - 8 @ 20 MM.
- ARMED GUARD - OFFICER - 4 PETTY OFFICERS - 20 SEAMEN.
- *****
- Exhibit #1 - Shows the location of armament with the disposition of lookouts and standbys when sailing in Condition II, and the assigned arcs of vision for which lookouts are responsible. Entire armament can be fired by members of the watch section.
- Exhibit #2 - Shows the disposition of lookouts and standbys in Condition III, and the assigned arcs of vision for which each lookout is responsible. Both of the broadside guns and 4 of the 20 mm can be fired by members of the Watch section.
- Exhibit #3a, 3b - Shows the following for each member of the Armed Guard:
- (1) Condition I Station
 - (2) Condition II
Section
Lookout Station
Standby Station
 - (3) Condition III
Section
Lookout Station
Standby Station
 - (4) Cleaning Station.
 - (5) Fire Station.
 - (6) Abandon Ship Station.
- Exhibit #4 - Shows the Merchant Crew Battle Station Assignments.

RESTRICTED

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CONDITION II WATCH

SECTION _____

P. O. _____

FIRST TWO HOURS OF THE WATCH

<u>LOOKOUT</u>		<u>STANDBY</u>	
2OM #1 _____	3" 50	_____	" 50
2OM #2 _____	3" 50	_____	ONTF OM #
CONTROL 2OM #3 _____	2OM #5	_____	OM #
2OM #4 _____	2OM #6	_____	" 50
2OM #7 _____	4" 50	_____	
2OM #8 _____	4" 50	_____	" 50

SECOND TWO HOURS OF THE WATCH

2OM #1 _____	3" 50	_____	ONTF OM #
2OM #2 _____	3" 50	_____	OM #
CONTROL 2OM #3 _____	2OM #5	_____	" 5
2OM #4 _____	2OM #6	_____	
2OM #7 _____	4" 50	_____	
2OM #8 _____	4" 50	_____	

TO BE POSTED IN GUN CREW QUARTERS TOGETHER WITH A SCHEDULE
SHOWING THE WATCH TO WHICH EACH SECTION IS ASSIGNED.

RESTRICTED

CONDITION III WATCH

SECTION _____

P.O. _____

FIRST TWO HOURS OF THE WATCH

LOOKOUT

STANDBY

" 50	_____	3" 50	_____
CONTROL			
20M #3	_____	20M #5	_____
20M #4	_____	20M #8	_____
" 50	_____	4" 50	_____

SECOND TWO HOURS OF THE WATCH

" 50	_____	3" 50	_____
CONTROL			
20M #3	_____	20M #5	_____
20M #4	_____	20M #8	_____
" 50	_____	4" 50	_____

TO BE POSTED IN GUN CREW QUARTERS TOGETHER WITH A SCHEDULE
SHOWING THE WATCH TO WHICH EACH SECTION IS ASSIGNED.

RESTRICTED

WATCH, QUARTER, AND STATION BILL
S. S. LIBERTY SHIP

ICTE

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RATE</u>	<u>CONDITION I</u>	<u>SECTION</u>	<u>CONDITION II LOOKOUT STATION</u>	<u>STANDBY STA</u>
	Sl/c	POINT. 3"50	1	20M#1	3"50
	Sl/c	TRAIN. 3"50	2	20M#1	3"50
	GM3/c	SIGHTSETTER 3"50	1	20M#2	3"50
	Sl/c	1ST. LOADER 3"50	2	20M#2	3"50
	Sl/c	20M#1	1	20M#1	3"50
	Sl/c	20M#2	1	20M#2	3"50
	Sl/c	20M#1	2	20M#1	3"50
	Sl/c	20M#2	2	20M#2	3"50
	Sl/c	20M#3	1	CONTROL 20M#3	20M#5
	Sl/c	20M#3	2	20M#4	20M#6
	GM3/c	20M#4	1	CONTROL 20M#3	20M#6
	Sl/c	20M#4	2	20M#4	20M#6
	Sl/c	20M#5	1	20M#4	20M#5
	COX.	20M#5	2	CONTROL 20M#3	20M#5
	Sl/c	20M#6	1	20M#4	20M#6
	Sl/c	20M#6	2	CONTROL 20M#3	20M#5
	Sl/c	20M#7	1	20M#7	4"50
	Sl/c	1ST LOADER 4"50	2	20M#7	4"50
	Sl/c	20M#8	1	20M#8	4"50
	Sl/c	H.S.-2ND LOAD. 4"50	2	20M#8	4"50
	Sl/c	POINT. 4"50	1	20M#7	4"50
	Sl/c	TRAIN. 4"50	1	20M#8	4"50
	Sl/c	SIGHTSETTER 4"50	2	20M#7	4"50
	COX.	PLUGMAN 4"50	2	20M#8	4"50

ICTED

WATCH, QUARTER, AND STATION BILL
S. S. LIBERTY SHIP

CONDITION III

LOOKOUT STATION	STANDBY STATION	CLEANING STATION	FIRE STATION	ABANDON SHIP STATION
3"50	3"50	3#50	3" READY BOX	
3"50	3"50	3"50	3" READY BOX	
3"50	3"50	IN CHARGE 3"50	FOR'D MAGAZINE	
3"50	3"50	3"50	3" READY BOX	
3"50	3"50	20M#1	#1 READY BOX	
3"50	3"50	20M#2	#2 READY BOX	
CONTROL 20M#3	20M#5	20M#1	#1 READY BOX	
CONTROL 20M#3	20M#5	20M#2	#2 READY BOX	
CONTROL 20M#3	20M#5	20M#3	#3 READY BOX	
CONTROL 20M#3	20M#5	20M#3	#3 READY BOX	
CONTROL 20M#3	20M#5	(IN CHARGE 20M) 20#4 (#2,4,6,8,)	#4 READY BOX	
CONTROL 20M#3	20M#5	20M#4	#4 READY BOX	
20M#4	20M#8	20M#5	#5 READY BOX	
20M#4	20M#8	(IN CHARGE 20M) 20#5 (#1,3,5,7,)	#5 READY BOX	
20M#4	20M#8	20M#6	#6 READY BOX	
20M#4	20M#8	20M#6	#6 READY BOX	
4"50	4"50	20M#7	#7 READY BOX	
20M#4	20M#8	20M#7	#7 READY BOX	
20M#4	20M#8	20M#8	#8 READY BOX	
4"50	4"50	20M#8	#8 READY BOX	
4"50	4"50	4"50	4" READY BOX	
4"50	4"50	4"50	4" READY BOX	
4"50	4"50	4"50	4" READY BOX	
4"50	4"50	IN CHARGE 4"50	AFT MAGAZINE	

RESTRICTED

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MERCHANT CREW BATTLE STATION ASSIGNMENTS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BATTLE STATION</u>
		LOADER 3" 50
		LOADER 20MM #1
		LOADER 20MM #2
		LOADER 20MM #3
		LOADER 20MM #4
		LOADER 20MM #5
		LOADER 20MM #6
		LOADER 20MM #7
		LOADER 20MM #8
		20MM #7
		20MM #8
		AMMUNITION FOR'D MAGAZINE
		AMMUNITION FOR'D MAGAZINE
		AMMUNITION FOR'D MAGAZINE
		AMMUNITION AFT MAGAZINE
		AMMUNITION AFT MAGAZINE
		AMMUNITION AFT MAGAZINE

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MASTER

Lieut. (JG), USNR.

RESTRICTED

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND GENERAL ORDERS

It is essential that Instructions and Orders of the Armed Guard be published and posted to members of his Unit. The attached copy of General Orders will serve as assistance in the instruction of new officers so that they may familiarize themselves with the type of orders and instructions.

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(SAMPLE COPY OF GENERAL ORDERS TO BE POSTED IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE
ABOARD)

GENERAL ORDERS
S.S. LIBERTY SHIP

CONDUCT IN GENERAL

- A. Attention is directed to "ARTICLES FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY" which have been posted.
- B. You are under the constant observation of the Merchant Officer and the Crew of this Vessel. Never commit any act which will bring discredit to the Navy and the uniform that you are wearing.

PORT WATCHES

- A. Port Watches are stood by the Armed Guard to prevent sabotage of armament and other Navy Department equipment.
- B. Uniform for the watch will always be undress blues, leggings, watch caps, or white hats, and sidearms. (Any change in the uniform will be posted with watch)
- C. All members of the watch section will remain aboard at all times.
- D. The watch will be stood in a strictly military manner. Smoking or eating on watch will not be allowed.
- E. In case of fire:
 - 1. Ring the GENERAL ALARM
 - 2. Notify the bridge and engine room
 - 3. Prepare to throw ammunition over the side
 - 4. If necessary - flood the magazine
- F. Each sentry will know and understand the particular duties of his post. He will know the location of the magazine flood valve and have the key for same in his possession.
- G. The Petty Officer of the watch will have keys to all magazines in his possession.
- H. Under no circumstances will a sentry leave his post without being properly relieved.
- I. Members of the Armed Guard will stand the watch to which they are assigned.
- J. If you relieve the watch for any purpose whatsoever you must be in proper uniform.
- K. You will salute all commissioned officers of the Navy, Army, and Marine Corps.

SEA WATCHES

- A. It is of little use to arm a ship unless a bright lookout is kept.

RESTRICTED

The safety of the vessel depends fully as much upon a proper lookout as it does upon the protection afforded by the guns. Each man has a heavy responsibility.

- B. Lookouts will be alert at all times and will be held responsible and accountable for a definite assigned arc. NO CONVERSATION WILL BE PERMITTED.
- C. Lookouts will not be allowed to smoke or eat while on station.
- D. Lookouts and standbys under no circumstances will leave their assigned stations without the approval of the Petty Officer of the watch.
- E. All hands who man battle 'phones will restrict their use to official business. NO CONVERSATION, WHISTLING, OR SINGING WILL BE ALLOWED ON THIS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM.
- F. At GENERAL QUARTERS all hands will stand an alert watch. (Dawn and Dusk)
- G. Upon sighting anything suspicious the General Alarm will be rung, standbys called to their battle stations, and Control notified. Control will immediately notify the bridge.
- H. When reporting anything sighted to Control, the bearing in degrees, and approximate distance should be given.
- I. At night the relief watch will be called 30 minutes before the watch is to be relieved. Each member of the relieving watch will be at his assigned station 15 minutes before the hour of change so that he may accustom his eyes to the darkness.
- J. Life jackets will be worn by all members of the watch and by all hands at General Quarters.
- K. When you are off duty it will be necessary for you to stay as close to your quarters as possible. You cannot go to your battle station quickly if you are in some part of the ship completely removed from it.

EQUIPMENT

- A. All hands will see to it that improper use is not made of any tools on ordnance equipment. If you do not know how to use the tools which are issued to you ask for instruction.
- B. All tools, etc., issued to you will be returned to the Ordnance Locker as soon as you are finished using it.
- C. No one is permitted to sell, remove from the vessel, or otherwise misappropriate any article belonging to the Navy Department. To do so is a court-martial offense.

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QUARTERS

- A. Members of the Armed Guard shall keep their quarters clean and orderly at all times. An inspection of quarters may be made at any time.
- B. Only U.S.N. personnel are permitted in your quarters.
- C. Ship's crew quarters are off limits at all times.

CLOTHING

- A. Men shall keep themselves neat, clean, and in proper uniform. will not wear or have in your possession any non- regulation clothing.
- B. You have been issued certain articles of clothing which are the property of the Navy Department and for which you are held accountable. Selling or misappropriation of this equipment is a court martial offense.

MAIL

- A. All outgoing mail will be placed unsealed on the desk of the Commanding Officer to be censored.
- B. All incoming private mail must be addressed as follows: NAME, c/o ARMED GUARD CENTER, ADDRESS. No other address may be used.
- C. No one is permitted to accept mail from anyone else in either the U.S.A. or any foreign port for purposes of evading censorship regulations.

LIQUOR

- A. No one will drink wines, beers, or liquor aboard the ship or have same in their possession.

GAMBLING

- A. Gambling by members of the Armed Guard is not permitted.

GIFTS

- A. Members of the Armed Guard shall not at any time accept gratuities in any form if offered by the Merchant Crew.

Lieut. (jg) USNR.
Commanding Officer, Armed Guard

Note: The preceding section on general instructions on Armed Guard duties should be duplicated and complete copies furnished the officers in training.

APPENDIX 4. LISTS OF SAMPLE CREW AND EQUIPMENT ISSUED

Supplement #1

PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT ARMING MERCHANT VESSELS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SERIAL PD 148508..... NAME OF SHIP: MS.....
 SS. William H. Allen
 OWNER: War Shipping Administration OPERATOR
 or AGENT Isthmian SS Co.
 REGISTRY: United States..... Class (Pass., Cargo or Tank Ship) ..Cargo
 ITINERARY: Sailing Date: Aug. 17, 1943..... From: San Francisco, Calif. To: Fern
 Via:

SHIP'S CREW

Commissioned
 Rank
 Name
 MASTER: MAJOR WARRY
 OFFICERS:

Deck Department	Engineering Department	Steward's Department
Chief Mate	Ch. Engineer 1	Ch. Steward
2d Mate	1st Engineer 1	Ch. Cook
3d Mate	2nd Engineer 1	2nd Cook
Chief Armorer	3rd Engineer 1	3rd Cook
Boat Swain	4th Engineer	Messmen
Seaman	Firemen 3	Utilitymen 2
Seaman-Ord.	Oilers 3	
Radio Operator	Wipers 2	
	TOTAL CREW INCLUDING MASTER	42

PASSENGERS - Number on Board 28

EXPANDED CREW LIST

Deck Department	Engineering Department	Steward's Department
First Mate	Deck Engineer 1	2nd Steward
Junior Mates	Lie. Jr. Engrs.	3rd Steward
Carpenters 1	Electricians Mate	Cabin Chief Steward
Cadets 1	Maintenance Men	Head Waiters
	Plumbers	Aud. of Supplies
Staff Department	Refrig. Engrs.	Yeoman
Clerk Pursers 1	Unlic. Jr. Engrs.	Storekeepers
Doctor's Asst.	Storekeepers	Janitor
Printers	Yeoman	Messmen
	Cadets 1	Porters
Communication Crew		Concessionaires
Officer in Charge		Chef
Enlisted Men		Sous Chef
		Leading Cooks
		Asst. Cooks
		Bakers
		Butchers
		Scullions
		Waiters
		Pantrymen

COV

U. S. NAVY PERSONNEL

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SERIAL PD 148608 MS
SS William H. Allen

Armed/Guard Unit Name Rank Branch Classification
Officer in Charge: BERRY, Robert E. Ensign USNR DV(S)

Assistant O. I. C. :

Enlisted Men:	Name	Rating	Branch	Service No.
ANDREOZZI, Gino Joseph		Slc	V-6(SV)	866 37 87
BAROZUKI, Stanley Steve	1	"	USNR	329 288 25
BATHE, Oswald William		"	"	918 988 49
BLISS, Albert Eben		"	USNR	313 00 45
BURNS, Ronald Eugene		"	V-6(SV)	865 88 71
BURROWS, Jack Havel	12	"	"	882 24 41
CAPP, Roy Earl		"	"	849 88 41
COOK, James Layton		"	"	843 61 90
DANFORD, James Clifford		SM3c	USNR	604 28 75
EDWARDS, Melvin Oliver		Slc	V-6(SV)	843 62 08
JOHNSON, Gordon Layton		Cox	USNR	832 71 99
KENNEDY, Robert Nathan	22	Slc	USNR	886 40 71
MC FARLAND, George Galvin		"	V-6(SV)	843 62 45
MILLER, Earl David		"	"	882 20 78
PARSONS, John Harry		"	"	882 76 24
RATHEL, Albert Steve		"	"	861 68 84
EVANS, Franklin Gay		"	"	844 77 16
STANLEY, Donald Woodard		"	"	863 68 84
TRACON, Regill Sylvester	2	"	"	869 84 33
WALKER, Nelson William		"	"	878 60 43
WEST, Donald Archibald		"	USNR	306 07 01
WHELAN, Eric David		"	V-6(SV)	851 81 35
WHELAN, Thomas Albert		"	"	861 62 85
WING, Lovell Wesley		"	USNR	655 72 97

Communication Group

Officer in Charge: _____
 Petty Officers _____
 Enlisted Men:

COOPER, Lyndla Clark	SM3c	USNR	668 77 89
FIKKAN, Earl Thomas	"	"	554 13 55

COMEL

PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT ARMING MERCHANT VESSELS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SERIAL PD 148508 ARMED FOR AREA I

SS William H. Allen GROSS TONS 7,176 DEADWEIGHT TONS 10,850

WHERE ARMED (PORT) San Francisco, Calif. DATE 8/3/43 YARD Metal... Inc. Permanent

Number of Guns	Caliber and Type	Gun Mark and Model	Mount Mk. and Model	Gun Location	Ammunition
1	3" 50 (MP)	22-2	22-0	Aft	(200 rds. AA
1	3" 50 (DP)	22-2	22-0	Fore'd	(152 rds. Com.
4	20 MM	4-0	6-0	Aft	(
2	20 MM	4-0	6-0	Bridge	(40,500 rds.
2	20 MM	4-0	6-0	Fore'd	(
2	38 Cal. Revolvers	#304323	266510 274705 280852		240 rds.

BUORD form Nr. 228 (rev. May 1942) submitted August 14, 1943, in triplicate
 3" 50 Dead Shells

INSTALLATIONS

Smoke Mount Marks	ITEM	DETAIL
1.	Splinter Protection - Bridge	Concrete and steel
	Splinter Protection - AA Machine Guns	Steel tubs and shields
2.	Gun Foundations, Number and Location	10: 3 aft, 4 bridge, 3 fore'd
3.	Morganses, Number and Location	1: 1 aft, 1 fore'd
4.	Painting	Grey
5.	Darkening Ship Facilities	Light locks, Blue lights, auto. switches
6.	Reinforced Steel Chests	Steel sea valves
7.	Fire Control Communication System	1: 3 aft, 8 bridge, 3 fore'd
8.	Sky Look Out Stations, Number and Location	1-bridge
9.	Results Industrial Manager's Inspection	None made
10.	Messing Facilities	Good

ACCOMODATIONS NAVY PERSONNEL

ARMED GUARD UNIT	SPACE	LOCATION
Officer in Charge 1	Room No. Gunners Rm.	Portside amidships (Br. Deck)
Assistant O. I. C. None		
Petty Officers 1	No. rm. number	Starboardside aft
Seamen 6	Hospital	" "
3	No. rm. number	Aft amidships
5	" " "	Portside aft
7	" " "	" amidships
		Starboardside amidships

COMMUNICATION GROUP

Officer in Charge	2	Clerks office	Amidships (Main deck)
Petty Officers			
Seamen			

BUORD TYPE ALLOWANCE LISTS

3" 50	15722	12-23-41
	15930	12-18-41
	15932	12-20-41
	16088	1-17-42

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PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT ARMING MERCHANT VESSELS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SERIAL PD 142508

MS
SS William H. Allen

GROSS TONS ... 7,176

WHERE
ARMED (PORT) San Francisco, Calif.

DATE ... Aug. 3, 1943

ITEM	INSTALLATIONS	
	NUMBER	DETAILS
Acoustic Warning Devices	0	None furnished
Barrage Balloons and Equipment	0	" "
Hydrogen Gas Equipment	0	" "
Snowflake Flares	0	" "
Snowflake Flare Projectors	0	" "
Smoke Floats	0	" "
Smoke Float Racks	0	" "

ITEM	EQUIPMENT	
	QUANTITY	
1. Merchant Marine Type Life Jackets	Complete	
2. Gas Masks for Merchant Crew	45	
3. Helmets for Merchant Crew	25	
4. Life Rafts (Capacity 20 per raft)	4, 2-15 floats	
5. Life Boats	2-31, 2-25 motor	
6. Emergency Rations	Complete	
7. Repair and Upkeep Equipment Armament	Complete	
8. Wake Light Screened	1	

DEGAUSSING OPERATION

Type of Coils Each Compass Compensated Yes

If not Coiled Date Wiped or Date Flashed

Date Calibrated Aug. 5, 1943 Range San Francisco, California

Degaussing Factor
(From Range)

Date Depermed Aug. 5, 1943
(If shows necessary by range)

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PORT DIRECTOR'S MATERIAL REPORT
FOR ARMED GUARD UNIT

Serial PD 148508

ON BOARD SS MCS William H. Allen

ITEM NO.	QUANTITY	UNIT	DESCRIPTION	STOCK NUMBER	TITLE
1.	1	Each	BAG, canvas, weighted #C&R 43479	24-B-60	C
2.		Cell	BATTERIES, Blinker-Signal Gun	17-B-7040	C
3.	48	Cell	BATTERIES, Flashlight	17-B-7210	C
4.	8	Cell	BATTERIES, Dry, Hand lantern	17-B-7600	C
5.	4	Each	BELTS, Pistol	L2-B-1620	B
6.	4	Pair	BINOCULARS, 6x30	18-B-1185	B
7.		Each	BLINKER, Signal-Gun, battery type	17-B-1600	B
8.	4	Each	BOTTLES, Vacuum, 1 quart	68-B-500	B
9.	1	Set	BRUSHES, Varnish, various sizes	38-B-5220-25	C
10.	1	Set	BUNTING, Spare	5-B-228-38	C
11.	2	Each	CASE, First-aid armed guard	S2-510	
12.	1	Misc.	CLEANING, supplies (brushes, soap, buckets, rags, etc.)		
13.		Set	DECONTAMINATION GEAR		
14.		Set	CONVOY LIGHTS, colored		B
15.	2	Set	FLAGS, alphabet code #4	5-F-255-80	C
16.	2	Set	FLAGS, Semaphore	5-F-5100 to 5110	C
17.	12	Each	FLASHLIGHTS, 2 cell pocket type	17-F-13452	C
18.	7	Pair	GOGGLES, for lookout, light density	37-G-3555	C
19.	4	Pair	GOGGLES, for lookout, dark density	37-G-3450	C
20.	4	Each	GOGGLES, Variable density	37-G-3755	C
21.	200	Ft.	HALYARDS, signal 3/4"	21-H-112	C
22.	27	Each	HELMETS, steel standard	37-H	B
23.	11	Each	HELMETS, steel to wear with headphone	37-H	B
24.	4	Each	HOLSTERS, .38 cal. revolver	L-H-1140	B
25.	Comp.	Each	HOOKS, snap-bolt, swivel eye with rings	None	C
26.	4	Each	LAMPS, hand lantern	31-G-270	C
27.		Each	LAMPS, blinker signal gun	17-L-6800	C
28.	12	Each	LAMPS, flashlight	17-L-6320	C
29.	2	Each	LANTERNS, Hand, portable type "J"	17-L-7760	B
30.	1	Kit	LIGHT, signal, multi-purpose kit	17-L-12929	B
31.	28	Each	LOCKS, Pad 1 1/2"	42-L-15180	C
32.	27	Each	MASKS, Gas, NDO Mk. I		B
33.	5	Each	MEDICAL GUN BAG, equipment	S-2-03	
34.	1	Each	MEGAPHONE, 18" small	37-M-330	C
35.	1	Each	MEGAPHONE, 32" large	37-M-335	C
36.	2	Pair	MITTENS, ammunition handling ashes	A(L)2-G-48116	C
37.	10	Gal.	PAINT, dark gray, formula 20 B	52-P	C
38.	1	Each	PAULINS, No. 2 canvas, 7'x8'	24-P-23	B
39.	2	Set	PENNANTS, 1st, 2nd, 3rd repeaters	5-P-1127-77	C
40.	27	Each	PRESERVERS, life jacket type kapok Navy type	23-P-160	B
41.	2	Set	PENNANTS, Numeral, Set #4	5-F-4375 to 4384	C
42.	4	Each	REVOLVER, .38 cal. S and W special	(L)2-4-705	B
43.	12	Each	ROCKETS, white, marine distress	4-R	C
44.	1	Each	ROPE, 3/4" manila for spar	21-R-418	C
45.	1	Set	SAILMAKER'S TWINE, needles, wax, etc.		C
46.	1	Each	SEARCHLIGHT, elect signalling 12" or better	17-S-4000	B
47.		Each	SEARCHLIGHT, signal 8"	17-S	B
48.	1	Each	SPAR, towing	23-S-180	B
49.	1	Each	SPY GLASS, quartermaster, 16 power	18-S-2255	B
50.	1	Misc.	STATIONERY, (#53 items) (not over \$30)		C
51.		Each	VERY'S PISTOLS, and cartridges	2-P & 4-C	B
52.	16	Each v	Army cots		

RECREATION GEAR: 1 complete set.....
 15 Each Target balloons
 1 Each Tank of helium

ARMED GUARD CENTER REPORT OF MATERIALS
FURNISHED TO ARMED GUARD UNITS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED TO ARMED GUARD OFFICER—

MS
SS WILLIAM H. ALLEN

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Ordnance and Gunnery Instructions for Armed Guards | Yes |
| 2. General Instructions for Commanding Officer of Naval
Armed Guards on Merchant Ships | " |
| 3. Wartime Instructions for U. S. Merchant Vessels | " |
| 4. Test Firing of Guns After Leaving Port — (CNO ltr.)
No. 396123 of 1 December, 1941—Attached to Orders | " |
| 5. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS — (Condensed from Naval Regulations,
for Armed Guard Officers) | " |
| 6. SILHOUETTES Surface Raiders | " |
| Aircraft | " |
| 7. Signals for Control of Merchant Vessels by Aircraft | " |
| 8. Publication of German Raider Tactics | " |
| 9. Anti-Aircraft Machine Gun Training Centers | When available |

MOVABLE EQUIPMENT ISSUED TO ARMED GUARD UNIT

ITEM	QUANTITY	STOCK NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
<u>FOUL WEATHER CLOTHING</u>			
1.	26	37-C-2148	Coats, short
2.	1	37-C-2180	Coats, long
3.	27	37-H-665	Hats
4.	27	37-T-305-50	Trousers
<u>WATCH STANDERS COLD WEATHER CLOTHING</u>			
5.	12	72-A-600	Arctics
6.		37-C-2350	Coats (submarine woolen)
7.		37-T-325-62	Trousers (submarine woolen)
8.	12	37-J-154-164-5	Jackets (Jungle cloth)
9.	12	37-T-326	Trousers (Jungle cloth)
10.	12	38-M-410	Mittens (" ")
	12		Jungle cloth mackes and helmets
<u>SPECIAL WINTER CLOTHING</u>			
11.			Suits, complete
12.		37-C-2172	Coats, sheepskin
<u>HEAVY WINTER CLOTHING</u>			
13.			Coats, sheepskin
14.		37-C-2172	Suits, complete

RESTRICTED

RESTRI

CONDITION II WATCH

SECTION _____

P. O. _____

FIRST TWO HOURS OF THE WATCH

<u>LOOKOUT</u>		<u>STANDBY</u>	
20M #1 _____	3" 50	_____	" 50
20M #2 _____	3" 50	_____	ONTF OM #
CONTROL 20M #3 _____	20M #5	_____	OM #
20M #4 _____	20M #6	_____	" 50
20M #7 _____	4" 50	_____	
20M #8 _____	4" 50	_____	" 50

SECOND TWO HOURS OF THE WATCH

20M #1 _____	3" 50	_____	ONT OM #
20M #2 _____	3" 50	_____	OM #
CONTROL 20M #3 _____	20M #5	_____	" 5
20M #4 _____	20M #6	_____	
20M #7 _____	4" 50	_____	
20M #8 _____	4" 50	_____	

TO BE POSTED IN GUN CREW QUARTERS TOGETHER WITH A SCHEDULE
SHOWING THE WATCH TO WHICH EACH SECTION IS ASSIGNED.



**COASTAL FISHERIES
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PWD RP V3400-491 (4/99)

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