



USS *J. E. Gorman*, 1944

Builder: Great Lakes Engineering Works, St. Clair, Michigan

Length: 373' 6"

Beam: 46'

Draft: 26'

Displacement: 3,861 gross registered tonnage

Cost: ?

Commissioned: 5 September 1944 (Coast Guard crew aboard)

Decommissioned: 20 March 1947 (Coast Guard crew removed)

Disposition: Ultimately scrapped in 1954 (see below)

Machinery: Quadruple expansion reciprocating steam engine; 1,800 HP; 3 Scotch boilers

Performance & Endurance:

Max:

Cruising:

Complement:

Armament:

Electronics:

History:

On 14 March 1944 the Coast Guard agreed to man numerous small Army Transportation Corps vessels and by the end of the war, the service had manned a total of 288 U.S. Army craft. Despite having Coast Guard crews, however, the Army Transportation Corps maintained administrative control over each of these vessels. Many of these vessels were already operating in the southwest Pacific and most served in the South Pacific with no assigned permanent station or home yard. Each of the larger repair ships manned by the Coast Guard was old, in fact David Grover, author of the only history of the Army's "fleet" during the war, characterized each as "ancient castoffs."

J. E. Gorman was a Great Lakes package freighter built in 1909 by the Great Lakes Engineering Works at their St. Clair yard. She was christened *North Lake* (U.S. 206144) and launched on 13 March 1909 for the Mutual Transit Company of Buffalo, New York. She entered service on 1 May 1909. She transferred to the Great Lakes Transit Corp., Buffalo on 22 February 1916 when the railroads were required under the provisions of the Panama Canal Act of 1914 to divest themselves of competing vessels. Great Lakes Transit Corporation was organized to own and operate these vessels. On 3 October 1923, *North Lake* stranded on Lake Superior at Pine River Shoal at a cost of \$23,500.

New Tonnage in 1924: 4,053 GRT, 3,122 NRT. She was renamed *J.E. Gorman* in 1927. She was conscripted by the United States Maritime Administration, Washington, D.C. in July, 1942 for wartime duty. She was to be operated by the War Department. She was towed to the Gulf of Mexico via the Chicago River and the Mississippi River to by-pass the German submarine menace on the East Coast. Rebuilt for the ocean duty as a marine repair ship in April, 1943 by the Alabama Dry Dock Co., Mobile, Alabama. She was then bareboat-chartered to the U. S. Army from April, 1943 to March, 1947.

Her Coast Guard crew reported aboard when *Gorman* was commissioned on 5 September 1944 and served in the Pacific Theater of Operations during World War II. One report shows that *Gorman* also transported troops. She was decommissioned March 20, 1947. She was then sold into Panamanian registry after the war to Panagua Steamship Co., Inc. and renamed *Adelaide* in 1948. Ultimately she was scrapped at Tokyo, Japan in 1954 by Nishi Shoji K.K., arriving there on December 6, 1953 with work beginning in January, 1954.*

*Above information provided by Mr. Louis Meier.

Sources:

Email from Louis Meier.

David H. Grover. *U.S. Army Ships and Watercraft of World War II*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1987.

Robert Scheina. *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft of World War II*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1982.
