



# USS LST-17

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Builder: Dravo Corporation, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Commissioned: 19 April 1943

Assigned to: LST Flotilla 17, Group 51, Division 101

Decommissioned: 15 January 1946 (USCG crew removed on 10 November 1944).

Disposition: Sunk by USN as a "mobile target" by torpedoes on 15 August 1956.

Length: 327' 9" oa

Beam: 50'

Draft: 1' 6" bow, 7' 5" stern (unloaded); 8' 2" bow, 14' 1" stern (loaded -- at sea); 3' 1" bow, 9' 6" (loaded -- beaching)

Displacement: 1,625 (light); 4,080 (w/ full load of 2,100 tons)

Propulsion: 2 x General Motors 12-567 diesels, twin shafts/rudders

Range: 24,000 nm @ 9 knots

Top Speed: 11.6 knots

Complement: 111

Troops: 163

Initial Armament: 7 x 40mm (single mount); 6 x 20 mm (single mount); 2 x .50-caliber mgs; 4 x .30-caliber mgs

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## Commanding Officers:

LT H. B. Gallagher, USCGR: 19 April 1943 - ?

LT Edwin R. Nelson, USCGR: ?

LT William Shallow, USCGR: ?  
LCDR Robert J. Melvold, USN: 30 November 1944 - ?

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## History:

### **USS *LST-17* LST Flotilla 17, Group 51, Division 101**

Mrs. Sarah H. Bankson christened the Coast Guard-manned USS *LST-17* at the Dravo Yard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she had been constructed. She was commissioned under the command of LT H. B. Gallagher, USCGR, on April 19, 1943, at New Orleans, after having been floated down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers from the Dravo Yard. She had left Pittsburgh on April 7, 1943, and arrived at New Orleans on April 18, 1943. After shakedown at Panama City, Florida, late in April 1943, she acted as a training ship in the Chesapeake Bay during May, June and July.

The Navy assigned *LST-17* to Flotilla 17, Group 51, Division 101. Departing Little Creek, Virginia, on July 27, 1943, the *LST-17* headed for Oran, Algeria, arriving there on August 14, 1943. She proceeded to Bizerte on the 19th, returning to Oran on September 2, 1943. Leaving Oran on September 11th, she proceeded via Algiers and Catania, Sicily to Taranto, Italy, returning to Algiers, via Port August, Sicily on October 3, 1943. On October 14, 1943, she left Algiers for Calcutta, India, proceeding via Port Said, Suez, Aden and Bombay, and arriving November 25, 1943. She left Calcutta December 22, 1943, returning to Bizerte via Colombo, Ceylon, Aden, Suez and Port Said on January 23, 1944.

The *LST-17* arrived at Milford Haven, Wales, on March 3, 1944. Leaving Milford Haven on March 3, 1944, she proceeded to Portland and returned to Milford Haven on March 15, 1944. On the 31st she left for Lough Foyle and then visited in turn Londonderry, Roseneath, Plymouth, Senny Cliff Bay, Weymouth, Solent and Southampton, returning to Solent on May 28, 1944, to prepare for the Normandy invasion, towing Rhino barges on which were railway equipment for use in France. She sailed to the sea off Normandy, detaching the Rhino barges to the beach at 1615 on June 6, 1944. At 2010 she received the first group of casualties via DUWKs and returned to Solent on June 7, 1944.

She left Solent for her second trip to France on June 9, 1944, anchoring two miles off the Normandy beach at 0335 on the 10th, moving pontoons ashore and returned to Solent June 11, 1944, proceeding to Southampton the next day. On June 15, 1944, she left Southampton and anchored off France. The following day she beached at JIG GREEN on the "Gold" assault areas at 1108 with British and Canadian troops. She left the beach on the 17th and returned to Tilbury,

England, proceeding to Solent on the 20th. She left Solent on June 23, 1944, and beached at Normandy, France at 1639 that day, returning to Solent on the 24th. Again on June 27, 1944, she left Solent and beached in Normandy, France at 1848, leaving Normandy on the 28th and arriving at Tilbury on the 29th. She left Tilbury on June 30, 1944, and again arrived at Normandy on July 1st, returning to London on July 4th. Her next trip was on July 14, 1944, when she left Thames Dry Dock and arrived at Normandy on the same day, returning to Southampton on the 16th. Again on the 18th she left Southampton, this time for Utah Beach, Normandy, France, leaving there on the 19th and arriving at Weymouth, England on the 20th. She left Weymouth on July 21st and arrived at Omaha Beach that same day and returned to Portland. From this time, September 1944, she made continuous trips between Utah Beach and England. Arriving at Cornwall on September 17, 1944, she departed for Norfolk, Virginia, on October 5, 1944, and taking on fuel and provisions at Norfolk on the 24th, she arrived at Boston on October 26, 1944, for overhaul.

On November 10, 1944, her Coast Guard crew was "relieved of manning" the *LST-17*.

The *LST-17* earned one battle star for her World War II service.



Donated courtesy of Gordon B. Lease, a crewman of LSTs 25 & 381. He notes that:

"USS LST-17, Coast Guard manned. Taken Spring of 1943 near Little Creek, Virginia, as the ship approached the beach while practicing beaching. Photo was taken from LST-25, also Coast Guard manned. Note the bow doors are fully open and vehicle ramp is 3/4 down. This was SOPOS for beaching, to save time of offloading combat vehicles."

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**Sources:**

LST files, Coast Guard Historian's Office

United States Coast Guard. *The Coast Guard At War. V. Transports and Escorts. Vol. 2.* Washington: Public Information Division, Historical Section, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 1, 1949, pp. 66-116.

United States Navy. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships.* Volume VII. Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1981, pp. 574-742.

