



USS LST-168

Builder: Missouri Valley Bridge & Iron Company, Evansville, Indiana

Commissioned: 3 May 1943

Decommissioned: 14 March 1946

Disposition: Sold for scrap on 9 April 1948 to the Bethlehem Steel Co., Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

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

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

Commanding Officers:

LT Arthur S. Moreau, USCGR: 3 May 1943 - 4 April 1944

LT H. Twiford: 4 April 1944 - 14 March 1946

History:

USS *LST-168*

LST Flotilla 7, Group 21, Division 42

The Coast Guard-manned USS *LST-168* was laid down on 26 September 1942 at the Mission Valley Bridge & Iron Company in Evansville, Indiana. She was commissioned there on 3 May 1943 under the command of LT Arthur S. Moreau, USCGR.

After trial runs at Gulfport, Mississippi, she departed New Orleans, Louisiana, in convoy under Commander, Flotilla 7 and on 10 June 1943, reached Cleveland Bay, Townsville, Australia, on 30 August 1943, after stopping at Lemon Bay, Panama Canal, Balboa, Bora Bora, Pango Suva, Noumea, and Brisbane, Australia.

After transporting supplies and ammunition between Milne Bay, Buna and Lee, New Guinea, she departed Lae in convoy. The next day she was lying off shore from Finschafen, New Guinea, awaiting for the dawn attack. At dawn she beached and unloaded and the wounded were brought aboard for transportation to Buna. The LST was attacked by enemy planes while retracting and she fired on them, being credited with downing one plane and in two assists. There were no casualties. On the second attack she did not open fire and there were again no casualties. She departed Finschafen on 22 September 1943 and for the next three months was engaged as part of various resupply echelons that plied between Buna, Lee, Milne Bay, Ora Bay, Goodenough Island, Port Moresby, Woodlark Islands, Finschafen and Cape Sudest. Once, on 23 October 1943, while beached at Goodenough Island, *LST-168* was attacked by enemy planes and opened fire with no damage or casualties. On 25 December 1943, she departed Cape Sudest, New Guinea with cargo and troops and on 27 December, beached at Cape Gloucester, New Britain with the first invasion forces.

During 1944, *LST-168* participated in five invasions in the Southwest Pacific and Philippines. These were at Saidor on 3 January, Los Negros Island on 16 March, Hollandia, Humboldt Bay, 21 April, Morotai on 19 September 19, and Leyte on 20 October. At Saidor the American shore batteries at Cape Sudest opened up on the invasion bound echelon thinking they were enemy ships but no casualties resulted and caused only slight damage to the ship. At Hollandia she tried to beach on White Beach but a munitions dump caught fire and she had to retract since she was in line of artillery fire. Enemy planes attacked, dropping flares, but no damage was done and no casualties resulted. At Leyte she was attacked by an enemy bomber and shelled from the beach by the enemy, with no damage or casualties. On a resupply trip two enemy planes were downed with two assists. Periods between invasions were occupied in resupply trips and repairs in June and July, 1944.

During 1945 she made up part of the attacking force that landed troops at Lingayen Gulf on 11 January, Mindanao, Philippine Islands, on 17 April, and Balikpapan on 15 July 1945. At Lingayen Gulf on Luzon she was shelled by heavy guns from the hills with no damage or casualties. On 15 March 1945, *LST-168* had the distinction of being the first US ship to enter Manila Main Harbor since the Japanese occupation. At Balikpapan, the last invasion of the war, she was shelled by enemy mortars. Departing Balikpapan on 5 July 1945, she returned from Morotai on 16 July, in a support landing with Australian troops and cargo. The end of the war came on 14 August 1945, and on 15 September 1945 *LST-168* arrived at Yokohama, Japan, unloading troops and cargo for the occupation forces. After further duty in the Philippine area she departed Subic Bay on 18 November 1945 for Oakland, California via Pearl Harbor, arriving on 21 December 1945.

She was decommissioned at Oakland on 14 March 1946. She was struck from the Naval Register on 12 April 1946 and was sold for scrap to the Bethlehem Steel Company of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania on 9 April 1948.

The *LST-168* was awarded eight battle stars for her service during World War II.



No caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.

The USS *LST-168* sometime during the Philippine campaign.



No caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.

The USS *LST-168* sometime during the Philippine campaign.



"THESE LSTs WERE AMONG THE FIRST TO DROP RAMPS AT MANILA. . .with the captial city of the Philippines free from Japanese, the harbor bustled with activity. . ."; no date (October/November 1944?); Photo No. 4334; photographer unknown.

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.
