



General D. E. Aultman

AP-156

Dwight Edward Aultman, born 2 February 1872 at Allegheny, Pa., graduated from the Military Academy in 1894 and was commissioned Second Lieutenant, Field Artillery. During the Spanish-American War, he fought in the Battle of San Juan Hill and at the siege of Santiago Aultman served at various posts until World War I when he was an artillery commander in France, participating in the Aisne-Marne and St. Mihiel offensives. He received the Distinguished Service Medal, and returned to the United States in 1919 as Commanding General, Camp Knox, Kentucky. Brigadier General Aultman's last command was the Field Artillery School, Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He died 12 December 1929 at Washington, D.C.

Builder: Kaiser Shipbuilding Inc., Richmond, California

Commissioned: 20 May 1945

Decommissioned: Her Coast Guard crew was removed on 15 March 1946.

Length: 522' 10"

Beam: 71' 6"

Draft: 26' 6"

Displacement: 17,250 tons (fl)

Top speed: 16.5 knots

Complement: 426 officers & crew

Armament: 4 x 5"/38 dual purpose; 4 x 1.1" twin gun mounts; (later replaced by 4 x 40mm twin gun mounts); 16 x 20 mm (single).

Troop Capacity: 3,343

History:

USS *General D. E. Aultman* (AP-156) was built at Kaiser Shipyard, No. 3, Richmond, California and commissioned there on May 20, 1945. Her first commanding officer was CAPT S. P. Swicegood, USCG, who was succeeded by CDR E. H. Thieter, USCG, on August 12, 1945, at Panama. He in turn was succeeded by CDR Benjamin B. Sherry, USCG, on February 11, 1946. Her shakedown exercises at San Diego, California, continued until June 22, 1945, after which she proceeded to San Pedro for four days of post-shakedown availability. The *Aultman* was 523 feet long, with a 72-foot beam and displaced 15,900 tons. She drew 26 feet and at an average speed of 17 knots with a cruising range of 9,600 miles. She accommodated 221 troop officers and 3,107 enlisted men besides her officers and crew. The *Aultman* made three voyages in the 8-1/2 months she operated as a Navy transport. Departing San Pedro on July 1, 1945, she reached the Canal Zone on July 8th and Marseilles July 22, 1945. Here she embarked 3,298 troops of the 1367th Engineers, 229 General Hospital troops and various port companies and departed July 26, 1945, for Manila via the Canal Zone and Hollandia. At Panama the ship's power failed while in the locks and with steering control lost she swung into the canal bank bending her screw and denting her hull plates. She was drydocked and repaired by the 12th of August and able to proceed. The second day out of the Canal Zone the report of Japan's surrender was received on August 11th, 1945. She arrived at Humboldt Bay on September 2, 1945, 22 days after leaving Panama. She arrived at Manila September 13, 1945, where all troops were discharged and Coast Guard and Navy personnel taken aboard for transportation to the United States. Departing Manila on September 17, 1945, she anchored at Naha Bay, Okinawa on the 20th where more troops were loaded until a total of 3,162 miscellaneous personnel plus 84 Army nurses were embarked. She departed Okinawa September 27th bound for San Francisco but was diverted to Portland, Oregon, en route. Portland was reached October 12, 1945, where all troops were debarked, and many Coast Guard and Navy personnel transferred. After this she was drydocked for further repair of the damage incurred at Panama and renamed there until November 5th. She then proceeded to Astoria and

departed for the Philippines on November 7, 1945. She arrived at Toclaban November 19, 1945, and after taking on 16 officers and 125 enlisted men of the Coast Guard and Navy for transportation to the United States proceeded to Agusan, Mindanao Philippine Islands. Here 3,525 enlisted men and 234 officers of the 31st Army Division were taken aboard and arrived at San Francisco December 14, 1945. Her last voyage, begun December 29, 1945, was on a "Magic Carpet" detail to Nagoya where replacements for Pacific Theater veterans were picked up on January 14, 1945, the transport returning to San Pedro on February 3, 1945.

The *Aultman* was decommissioned as a Navy Transport on March 15, 1946, at Terminal Island, San Francisco, and redelivered to the War Shipping Administration who delivered her to the War Department.

DANFS' History:

General D. E. Aultman (AP-156) was launched 18 February 1945 under Maritime Commission contract by Kaiser Co., Inc., Yard 3, Richmond, Calif.; sponsored by Mrs. Alma H. Aultman, widow of General Aultman; acquired by the Navy and commissioned 20 May 1945, Captain S. P. Swicegood, USCG, in command.

After shakedown out of San Diego, *General D. E. Aultman* got underway 30 June bound for France. She transited the Panama Canal and arrived Marseilles 24 July, embarking troops, nurses, and Red Cross workers for the Pacific theater. The transport sailed 26 July via the Panama Canal and found herself 1 day out of Balboa bound for New Guinea when the Japanese capitulated 15 August.

General D. E. Aultman arrived Humboldt Bay, New Guinea 4 September, and carried troops to Manila before returning to Portland 11 October 1945. She was then assigned to the "Magic-Carpet" fleet, contributing her important part to the gigantic task of returning the hundred of thousands of Pacific veterans. She made two "Magic-Carpet" voyages to the Far East before decommissioning at San Francisco 15 March 1946. She was returned to the Maritime Commission for transfer to the Army Transportation Service, serving in the Pacific. Reacquired by the Navy 1 March 1950, *General D. E. Aultman* joined the MSTTS with a civil service crew and resumed her support of American posts in the Pacific. After the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, the transport began the vital job of transporting troops to that strategic country. The veteran ship sailed to the western Pacific until she was returned to the Maritime Commission 4 June 1958. She entered the National Defense Reserve Fleet, Suisun Bay, Calif., where she remains.

Sources:

Cutter History File. USCG Historian's Office, USCG HQ, Washington, D.C.

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships. Washington, DC: USGPO.

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