



General H. B. Freeman

AP-143

Henry Blanchard Freeman, born 17 January 1837 in Knox, Ohio, enlisted in the 10th Infantry 16 July 1855. Appointed Lieutenant in May 1862, he was breveted Captain in December for gallantry in the Battle of Murfreesboro, Tenn., and breveted Major in September 1863 for gallantry in the Battle of Chickamauga, Ga.; received the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism in the Battle of Stone's River 31 December 1862. After the close of the Civil War, much of his remaining career was spent on Indian frontiers and reservations in Wyoming, Ohio, Colorado, Utah, and Oklahoma. Promoted to Brigadier General in 1901, he received the Indian Campaign Medal. General Freeman died 16 December 1915, at Douglas, Wyo.

Builder: Kaiser Shipbuilding Inc., Richmond, California

Class: *General G. O. Squier*

Type: C4-S-A1

Commissioned: 26 April 1945

Decommissioned: Her Coast Guard crew was removed on 4 March 1946

Length: 522' 10"

Beam: 71' 6"

Draft: 26' 6"

Displacement: 17,250 tons (fl)

Propulsion: Geared turbine; single shaft; 8,500 HP

Top speed: 18 knots

Complement: 512 officers & crew

Troop capacity: 3,823

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).

General H. B. Freeman (AP-143) was launched 11 December 1944 under a Maritime Commission contract by the Kaiser Co., Inc., Yard 3, Richmond, Calif.; sponsored by Mrs. Marie Wheeler; converted in the Kaiser yard at Vancouver, Wash.; acquired by the Navy 26 April 1945; and commissioned at Portland, OR, the same day, Comdr. Harley E. Grogan, USCG, in command.

After shakedown operations out of San Diego, *General H. B. Freeman* departed San Pedro 1 June 1945 with 3,040 troops and passengers for Calcutta, India, where she arrived 9 July with 16 additional passengers, British Royal Marines who had embarked at Brisbane, Australia. On 13 July she was underway with more than 3,000 military passengers; embarking and debarking in Ceylon, Australia, New Guinea, and the Philippines before arriving Hagushi, Okinawa, 16 August 1945, the day after hostilities ended.

More than 1,000 homeward-bound veterans boarded the transport which departed Okinawa 21 August 1945 headed via Saipan and Pearl Harbor for the West Coast, arriving San Pedro, Calif., 12 September 1945. She sailed 7 October, carrying occupation troops to Tokyo, and returned to Seattle, Wash., 5 November as the "Magic-Carpet" home for more than 3,000 fighting men from the Pacific War. *General H. B. Freeman* made a similar passenger run from Seattle to Yokohama and back (16 November-16 December 1945).

She next entered the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Wash., for inactivation overhaul and decommissioned there 4 March 1946. She was redelivered to the Maritime Commission for service with the Army's peacetime transport fleet.

General H. B. Freeman was reacquired by the Navy 1 March 1950 and assigned to MSTs. Manned by a civil service crew, *General H. B. Freeman* carried military passengers throughout the Korean War from the West Coast to Korea, Japan and island bases in the Pacific.

She was in the gallant fleet that evacuated besieged Hungnam. Her distinguished service won her the "Smart Ship Award" for three consecutive years (1950-52). The transport continued to operate throughout the Pacific until 24 July 1958 when her name was again struck from the Navy List. She was returned to the Maritime Commission and to the National Defense Reserve Fleet, Olympia, Wash., 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.
