



USS *Grand Rapids*, PF-31

A city in Michigan.

Builder: Walter Butler Shipbuilders, Inc., Superior, Wisconsin.

Length: 303' 11"

Beam: 37' 6"

Draft: 12' 8" fl

Displacement: 2,230 tons

Propulsion: 2-shaft VTE, 3 boilers

Range: 9,500 nm at 12 knots

Top speed: 20 knots

Complement: 190

Armament: 3 x 3"/50; 4 x 40mm (2x2); 9 x 20mm; 1 x Hedgehog, 8 x depth charge projectors; 2 x depth charge racks. For those frigates fitted out for weather patrol duty, the after 3-inch gun was removed and a weather balloon hanger was added aft.

History:

Grand Rapids (PF-31), formerly designated PG-139, was launched by Walter Butler Shipbuilders, Inc., Superior, Wis., 10 September 1943. She was sponsored by Mrs. Ted Booth. PF-31 was commissioned 10 October 1944 under the command of LCDR Theodore F. Knoll, USCG. The ship had been taken down the Mississippi River and outfitted at Plaquemine, Louisiana, before being commissioned at New Orleans.

Outfitted as a weather ship, *Grand Rapids* sailed 17 October for Bermuda and her shakedown cruise, but was damaged at sea by a hurricane and returned to Algiers, Louisiana for repairs. She proceeded toward Bermuda again 27 October, and after her shakedown training put in at Boston, 4 December 1944. *Grand Rapids* steamed out of Boston 6 January 1945 for duty as a weather picket ship off Newfoundland.

Grand Rapids operated as a weather ship out of Argentia until returning to Boston 6 June 1945. The ship soon sailed for her station 7 July. On 11 August 1945 LT G. R. Osterfelt took over command for a short time and on 19 August 1945 LT Johnson L. Hale took over permanent command. The frigate continued sending vital weather reports for the north Atlantic area while patrolling various weather stations. On 15 January 1946 she returned to Boston, thereby completing her final weather patrol. *Grand Rapids* decommissioned at Boston 10 April 1946, was sold to Sun Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co., Chester, Pa., 14 April 1947, and was subsequently scrapped.

Sources:

The Coast Guard At War, Transports and Escorts, Vol. V, No. 1.

Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships, 1922-1946. London: Conway Maritime Press, 1992, pp. 148-149.

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Vol. III, p. 134.
