



USS *Covington*, PF-56

A city in Kentucky.

Builder: Globe Shipbuilding Co., Superior, WI

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:

The third *Covington* (PF-56) was launched 15 July 1943 by Globe Shipbuilding Co., Superior, WI, under a Maritime Commission contract. She was sponsored by Miss. J. Phillips and was transferred to the Navy 5 August 1944. She was placed in "ferry" commission 7 August 1944 and was commissioned in full 17 October 1944 under the command of LCDR Frederick S. Brown, USCGR with a Coast Guard crew of 160 officers and men.

Covington arrived at Argentia, Newfoundland, 25 December 1944 for duty as a weather patrol vessel under the command of Task Force 24. The weather observations included the use of the radio-sonde balloons, the recording of the ocean temperature at various depths, the computations of surface and aloft winds and temperatures which were reported to the Weather Bureau in Washington, DC, and used in meteorological research, which proved valuable to the successful operation of the Air Transport Command. The Air-Sea Rescue phase of the warship depended primarily upon the accuracy of the navigational position of the vessel. It involved the transmission of radio beacons both on predetermined periodic schedule and upon request from airplanes. Extensive rescue gear was placed on board for use in aircraft emergencies. LCDR Roy M. Hutchins, Jr., USCG, succeeded LCDR Brown as the commanding officer on 19 September 1945.

She remained on this duty, except for overhauls at Boston and Charleston until 16 March 1946 when she was decommissioned at New Orleans and loaned to the Coast Guard. *Covington* was returned from the Coast Guard 17 September 1946 and sold to Ecuador through the Foreign Liquidation Commission of the State Department 28 August 1947.

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. II, pp. 197-198.

