



## *U.S. Coast Guard History Program*

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# USS *Abilene*, PF-58

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A city in Kansas.

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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.

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### **History:**

*Abilene* (PF-58) was launched as *Bridgeport* 21 August 1943 by Globe Shipbuilding Co., Superior, WI. She was sponsored by Mrs. Thomas F. Rogers. PF-58 was renamed *Abilene* 28 June 1944 and was commissioned 28 October 1944, under the command of LCDR Chester I. Steele, USCG, in command. She reported to the Atlantic Fleet.

*Abilene* assumed its duties with Air-Sea Rescue Station as part of Task Group 24.5, a unit of 26 patrol frigate assigned weather duties and the highly important task of guarding the air routes over which thousands of men were being re-

deployed from the European Theatre of Operations. The *Abilene* received the American Theatre and the European-Middle Eastern-African Theatre Campaign Ribbons for its service during the war.

After VJ Day, the ship was streamlined for peacetime operations and continued its routine patrols weather patrols. The Coast Guard manned 15 weather stations with 23 patrol frigates in the Atlantic by July 1, 1945, following VE Day. Additional weather stations in the Atlantic to handle the tremendous increase in air traffic involved in the redeployment of allied air forces. The *Abilene* served on weather patrol until March 24, 1946.

The weather observations made on patrol 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.

*Abilene* was decommissioned 21 August 1946 and sold to the Netherlands 5 May 1947.

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### **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. 1, p. 5.

