



# USS *Joseph T. Dickman*

AP-26; APA-13

Photo # NH 99278 USS Joseph T. Dickman underway in April 1942



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The *Dickman* was named for Major General Joseph Theodore Dickman (1857-1928), who commanded the Third Army from 15 November 1918 to 19 April 1919. He was a veteran of many campaigns, including the 1885-86 Apache War, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, the Boxer Rebellion, and World War I.

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Builder: New York Shipbuilding Company, NY

Length: 535' 2"

Beam: 72' 4"

Draft: 31' 3"

Displacement: 21,325 tons full-load

Launched: 1922

Top Speed: 17 knots

Commissioned: 10 June 1941

Decommissioned: 7 March 1946

Disposition: Scrapped

Complement: 693

Armament: 4 x 3"

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The Coast Guard-manned USS *Joseph T. Dickman* (AP-26) was built as *Peninsula State* for the U.S.S.B. by New York Shipbuilding Co., Camden, N.J., in 1921 and 1922. She began transatlantic service for United States Lines in 1922, and soon afterward in May was renamed *President Pierce*. In August 1922 the ship was renamed *President Roosevelt*, a name she carried during her many years of passenger service.

Taken over by the War Department in October 1940, she was named *Joseph T. Dickman* and converted to a troopship by Atlantic Basin Iron Works of Brooklyn. The ship was subsequently transferred to the Navy 27 May 1941 and further converted to Navy use at New York Navy Yard. She commissioned at the Navy Yard 10 June 1941 with a Coast Guard crew under the command of LCDR C. W. Harwood, USCG. The new transport got underway 26 June 1941 for Hampton Roads, and until August she took part in amphibious training exercises off Onslow Beach, N.C. After these important landings, which helped develop the tactics and equipment to be used later with such great success, *Joseph T. Dickman* returned to New York on 14 August.

She then moved to Boston for further conversion, remaining there until 1 October. Stores were loaded at Norfolk in October, after which the transport proceeded to Halifax to load British troops. With five other troop ships she departed 10 November 1941 on the long voyage to India. While the ship carried these British reinforcements, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into the war 7 December 1941. *Joseph T. Dickman* arrived Bombay via Trinidad and Capetown 27 December 1941 and debarked troops.

Departing 10 January, she retraced her steps to New York, arriving 28 February 1942 for the installation of new boats and lowering equipment. After leaving the yard in April the ship underwent tests in Hampton Roads before departing 11 May for transport duties in the Caribbean. She stopped at San Juan and Bermuda to debark troops before returning to Norfolk 27 May 1942. The *Joseph T. Dickman* carried further reinforcements to Caribbean bases in June, and spent July on amphibious exercises in Chesapeake Bay. Training and additional conversion to increase her boat capacity continued into October, when the ship prepared for Operation "Torch", the invasion of North Africa.

As part of the Western Naval Task Force, *Joseph T. Dickman* got underway from Norfolk 24 October to take part in the first amphibious invasion ever launched across an entire ocean. Arriving in the transport area of Fedhala early 8 November, she began the debarkation. She remained off shore until German submarine attacks forced her seaward 12 November. As the successful invasion was consolidated, however, *Joseph T. Dickman* entered Casablanca harbor 15 November and completed unloading. Two days later she was underway for Norfolk, arriving 30 November 1942.

After embarking troops and taking on cargo, *Joseph T. Dickman* departed 27 December 1942 for the Pacific via the Panama Canal. She stopped at Noumea and Brisbane before sailing for

Norfolk again, where she arrived 10 March 1943. During this voyage, on 1 February 1943, the ship was reclassified APA-13. The veteran troopship departed 10 May 1943 for North Africa, in preparation for the invasion of Sicily. She arrived Mers el Kebir 23 May and, after landing rehearsals, got underway with the invasion fleet from Algiers 6 July. As a part of Rear Admiral Hall's Gela landing force, she arrived off the beaches 10 July and began the long process of debarkation. Next day she suffered minor damage fighting off German bombing attacks, damaging at least three of the attackers with her accurate gunfire. With the invasion quickly successful, the ship was underway for Algiers 12 July for more exercises.

The next major amphibious operation in the campaign to regain Italy was slated for Salerno; and, after training, *Joseph T. Dickman* arrived off the beaches with Hall's Southern Attack Force 9 September. Rockets from an LCS attached to the ship helped clear the way for the first wave of boats, and, after receiving near misses from shore batteries, the transport debarked her troops and returned to Mers el Kebir. As the battle to consolidate the beachhead began, *Joseph T. Dickman* returned with reinforcements to Salerno 6 October. She made two other follow-up voyages from Africa to Italy, the final one with over 1,000 French troops. The ship sailed 30 November 1943 for Norfolk by way of Scotland. Upon her arrival 1 January 1944, the ship underwent battle repairs; and, after embarking troops, sailed 11 February 1944 for Glasgow.

During the next few months the ship was engaged in intensive training for the giant Normandy invasion, scheduled for June. Sailing from England 5 June, she arrived off Utah Beach early the next day and landed her troops without a mishap. On the afternoon of D-day, she steamed to Portland with casualties, later making a shuttle voyage to the beaches 14 June as troops moved inland to liberate France.

Upon arriving Mers el Kebir 10 July 1944, *Joseph T. Dickman* began preparations for still another landing, this time in southern France. After exacting training operations, she sailed from Sicily 13 August 1944, arriving off the Delta Force beaches next day to debark her troops. After smooth and skillful unloading, she steamed to Naples, arriving 17 August. In the weeks that followed, *Joseph T. Dickman* made five follow-up voyages to southern France from Mediterranean staging points as the Allies pressed northward. The veteran ship sailed from Mers el Kebir 25 October for the United States, arriving Boston 8 November. *Joseph T. Dickman*, after taking part in every major amphibious operation in the European-African theater.

Now turned her attention to the Pacific. She sailed 24 January 1945 with troops for Guadalcanal, arriving via Espiritu Santo 12 February. There she began training operations for the invasion of Okinawa. From 21-27 March the transports made final preparations at Ulithi, sailing the latter date for the last and greatest of the Pacific invasions. The troops stormed ashore 1 April, but the transport remained off the beaches helping to ward off air attacks while unloading cargo until 9 April. She then sailed to Saipan, and continued to Pearl Harbor, where she anchored 25 April 1945.

*Joseph T. Dickman* arrived at San Francisco with veterans 30 May. After two troop voyages to Pearl Harbor, the ship remained at the Navy Yard there for conversion to a casualty evacuation ship for the projected invasion of Japan. Emerging 10 August, she was en route to San Francisco when the fighting ended 14 August 1945. *Joseph T. Dickman* then sailed for the Philippines 24 August; and, upon arrival in Manila 17 September, took on American and Allied soldiers who had been prisoners of the Japanese for transportation to the United States. Ironically, four British enlisted men came on board, who after 3 1/2 years in a prison camp were returning to the United States on the same ship which had carried them from Halifax to Bombay in 1941. The ship reached San Francisco 16 October.

Assigned to Operation "Magic-Carpet," *Joseph T. Dickman* made a voyage to Pearl Harbor, returning to Seattle 2 December 1945. She moved south to San Francisco 13 January 1946.

The ship then steamed to Suisun Bay in March and was formally decommissioned on 7 March, and was returned to the Maritime Commission. She was scrapped in 1948.

The *Joseph T. Dickman* received six battle stars for World War II service.

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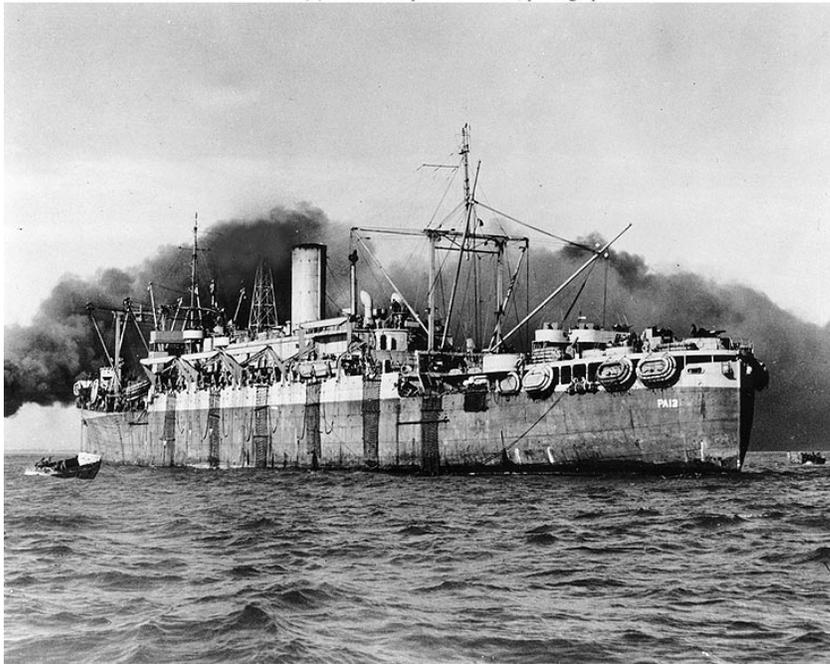
USS *Joseph T. Dickman* (AP-26); "Underway in April 1942."; Photo #: NH 99278; photographer unknown.

*Official U.S. Navy Photograph, from the collections of the Naval Historical Center.*



USS *Joseph T. Dickman* (AP-26); no caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.

Photo # 26-G-12-14-43(4) USS Joseph T. Dickman, photographed circa 1943



USS *Joseph T. Dickman* (APA-13); Photographed circa 1943; Photo #: 26-G-12-14-43(4); photographer unknown.

*Photograph from the U.S. Coast Guard Collection in the U.S. National Archives.*

USS *Joseph T. Dickman* (APA-13); "At sea in convoy with other transports, probably at the time of the Southern France invasion, August 1944." Photographed from USS *Quincy* (CA-71); Photo #: 80-G-K-1947 (Color); photographer unknown.

*Official U.S. Navy Photograph, now in the collections of the National Archives.*

Photo # NH 99278 USS Joseph I. Dickman underway in April 1942



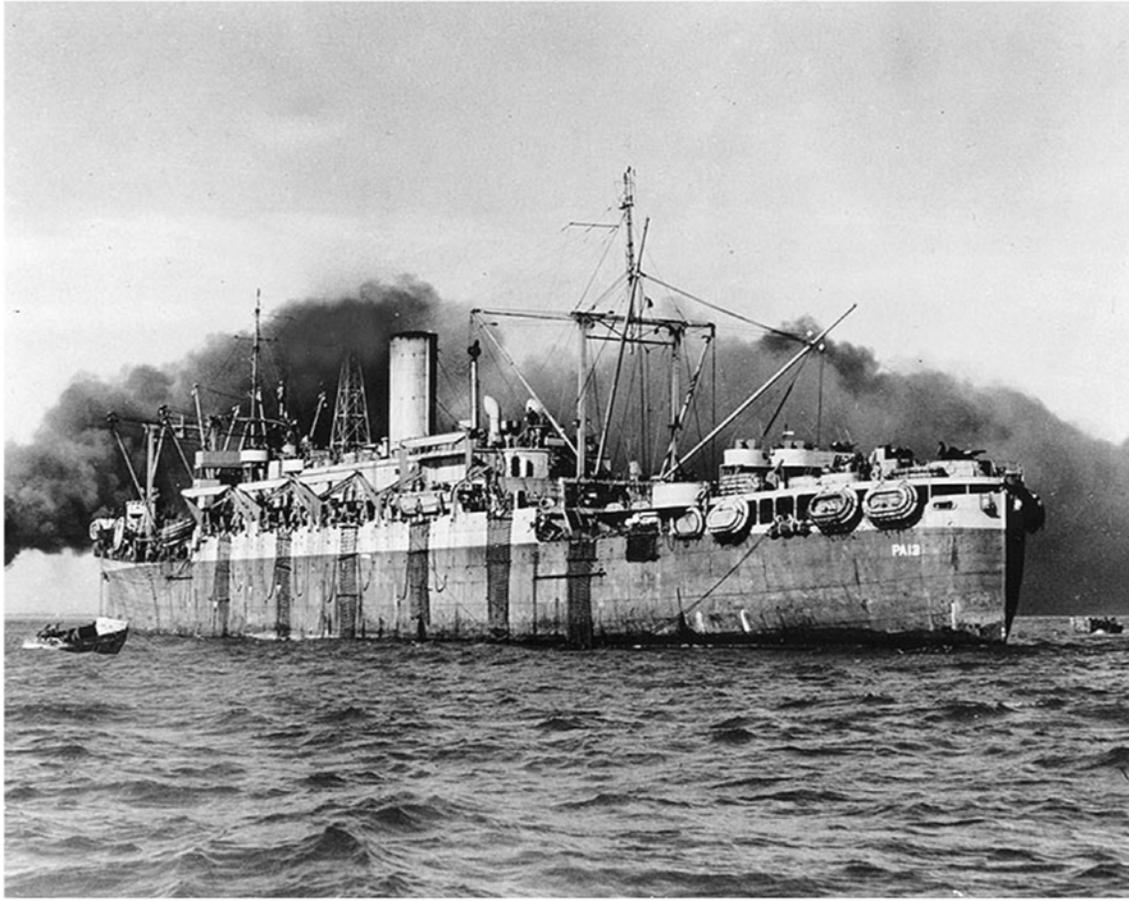
USS *Joseph T. Dickman* (AP-26); "Underway in April 1942."; Photo #: NH 99278; photographer unknown.

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USS *Joseph T. Dickman* (AP-26); no caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.

Photo # 26-G-12-14-43(4) USS Joseph I. Dickman, photographed circa 1943



USS *Joseph T. Dickman* (APA-13); Photographed circa 1943; Photo #: 26-G-12-14-43(4);  
photographer unknown.

*Photograph from the U.S. Coast Guard Collection in the U.S. National Archives*

Photo # 80-G-K-1947 USS Joseph I. Dickman at sea with other transports



USS *Joseph T. Dickman* (APA-13); "At sea in convoy with other transports, probably at the time of the Southern France invasion, August 1944." Photographed from USS *Quincy* (CA-71); Photo #: 80-G-K-1947 (Color); photographer unknown.

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**Sources:**

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

*Coast Guard At War: Volume V: Transports & Escorts, Part II.* Washington, DC: U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, Historical Section, Public Information Division, 1949.

