



USS LST-16

Builder: Dravo Corporation, Wilmington, Delaware

Laid down: 1 September 1942

Launched: 19 December 1942

Commissioned: 17 March 1943

Assigned to: Flotilla 18, Group 53, Division 105

Decommissioned: 8 March 1946

Disposition: Struck from Naval Register 12 April 1946; sold for scrap on 5 December 1947 to Ships and Power Equipment Company, Barber, New Jersey.

Draft: 1' 6" bow, 7' 5" stern (unloaded); 8' 2" bow, 14' 1" stern (loaded -- at sea); 3' 1" bow, 9' 6" (loaded -- beaching)

Displacement: 1,625 (light); 4,080 (w/ full load of 2,100 tons)

Propulsion: 2 x General Motors 12-567 diesels, twin shafts/rudders

Top Speed: 11.6 knots

Complement: 111

Troops: 163

Armament: 1 x 3"/50; 5 x 40mm; 6 x 20mm; 2 x .50-caliber mgs; 4 x .30-caliber mgs

Commanding Officers:

LT Rufus W. L. Horton, USCGR; 17 March 1943 - 22 May 1945

LT(jg) W. J. Kenneally, USCGR; 22 May 1945 - 8 March 1946

History:

USS *LST-16*

LST Flotilla 18, Group 53, Division 105

The USS *LST-16* was placed in commission on 17 March 1943 under the command of LT Rufus W. L. Horton, USCGR. She was assigned to Flotilla 18, Group 53, Division 105. The Coast Guard-manned *LST-16* departed Tunis on 8 July 1943, and arrived at Transport Area 1, Woods Hole Beach on 10 July 1943, carrying *LCT-336*. While engaged in unloading operations the *LST-16* discovered that an enemy shore battery, four miles away, had her range. The battery was located and 3"/50 caliber shells were fired at a range of 8,700 yards were apparently hits. The LST ceased firing as a U.S. destroyer opened fire on the same target, putting it out of action. Crew members on *LST-16* observed small arms fire on the beach with our troops and the enemy separated by small ridges 6 or 8 feet high about 100 feet from the water line.

Ordered to proceed to Bailey's Beach four miles south of Scoglitti she discharged DUKWs before beaching. Both ramp chains parted while discharging DUKWs and a jury rig of wire pennants was installed. The Beachmaster advised that no pontoons were available. The vessel was beached on the 11th and the commanding officer went ashore to arrange for a causeway. While awaiting the causeway, then in use by another LST, several enemy aircraft attempted to attack the beach and the *LST-16* opened fire.

At 1700 the causeway was received and all vehicles and Army were off by 1900. The ship's company unloaded 470 tons of supplies by hand, completing the task by 1400 on the 12th. At 1700 she proceeded to a newly marked beach north of Scoglitti and on the 13th loaded 300 tons of ammunition and supplies from *P-76* and proceeded to anchorage. Fired on enemy aircraft at 2150 on the 14th began discharging ammunition and supplies via DUKWs and on the 15th was underway, anchoring in Tunis Bay on the 16th.

The *LST-16* returned to Gela, Sicily, on 19 July 1943, with 7 officers and 142 enlisted men of the U.S. Army and returned to Tunis Bay with 62 Italian officers and 408 Italian soldiers as prisoners of war on 22 July 1943. Again loading 35 vehicles, 2 officers and 44 enlisted men of the U.S. Army the LST anchored off Gela on the 24th and was back in Tunis Bay the next day. On 28 July 1943, she made her final trip to Gela with 13 officers, 153 enlisted men and 63 vehicles. She returned to Biserte on 14 August 1943, towing two sections of pontoon causeways in tandem. In 14 trips and one shuttle trip 48 officers, 537 enlisted men, 894 tons of cargo and 167 vehicles were transported to Sicily. Thirty-six U. S. military personnel and 471 prisoners of war were returned to North Africa.

(No further reports of the activities of *LST-16* in World War II are available until 31 March 1944.)

On 31 March 1944, the *LST-16* departed Naples for Plymouth, England, via Oran, to make preparations for the invasion of the coast of France. She arrived at Plymouth April 25, 1944. On 2 June 1944 she began to take on board 34 officers, 486 enlisted men, and 79 vehicles of the U.S. Army and she also carried two barrage balloons. On 5 June 1944 she was anchored in the mouth of the Helford River awaiting the order to set sail for Normandy. By this time she was equipped to evacuate and care for casualties, including bringing aboard, in addition to the ship's crew, two doctors and 20 enlisted personnel to care for the casualties. She got underway at 0823 to join Convoy B-3 from Falmouth en route to Omaha Beach.

She anchored five miles off the coast of Normandy at 1010 on 7 June 1944. She continually shifted anchorage closer to shore that day, observing some close shell-fire from enemy batteries ashore. One shell landed only 100 yards off the starboard bow. At 2155 that same day she anchored one mile off shore and opened her bow doors and lowered her landing ramp. She then commenced unloading some of the Army personnel into small boats for transport to Omaha Beach. She closed her bow doors at 0005 on 8 June 1944. At 0102 hours she launched her LCVP #1 to pick up casualties on the beach for return to *LST-16*, but it struck a mine en route and sank, killing one of the crew, S2c Stoy K. Alexander, USCGR, and injuring another. She attempted to beach herself unsuccessfully at 0918 on 8 June 1944. At 1032 that same day the local control vessel ordered her to beach on Omaha Beach at 1400. Until that time she unloaded 150 Army personnel into USS *LCI-554* for transport to the beach.

At 1330 on 8 June 1944 she beached at the western-end of Omaha Beach, dropping her bow and stern anchors as she came to a stop. She then opened her bow doors and lowered the landing ramp and commenced unloading the remaining troops and equipment beginning at 1600. By 1800 all of the Army personnel, their equipment, vehicles and the two barrage balloons were safely ashore. She took aboard five casualties and 17 survivors of USS *LCT-650* and retracted from the beach. She joined a convoy on 9 June that was making its way back to England and arrived at Solent at 2205 on 9 June 1944. She continued making cross-Channel trips, carrying supplies and reinforcements from England to Normandy and returning with casualties. The *LST-16* was ordered on 25 September 1944, to return to the United States. She did not actually leave Plymouth until 26 January 1945, and after arriving at Norfolk on 17 February 1945, proceeded to Davisville, Rhode Island, to unload.

The *LST-16* proceeded to Galveston, Texas via Boston and New Orleans for an availability from 11 March to 17 April 1945. Returning to New Orleans she proceeded on 27 April 1945, via Theodore, Mobile, Canal Zone, Pearl Harbor, Eniwetok, Saipan, Leyte, Luzon and Batangas to Tokyo, where she arrived 15

September 1945. She remained in Tokyo for more than two months and on 28 November 1945, she arrived at Saipan on her homeward voyage, which included stops at Pearl Harbor, San Francisco and the Canal Zone before Charleston was reached 20 February 1946.

She was decommissioned and her Coast Guard crew removed on 8 March 1946.

Campaigns:

The *LST-16* participated in the following campaigns:

North African occupation:

(a) Tunisian operations - July 1943.

Sicilian occupation - September 1943.

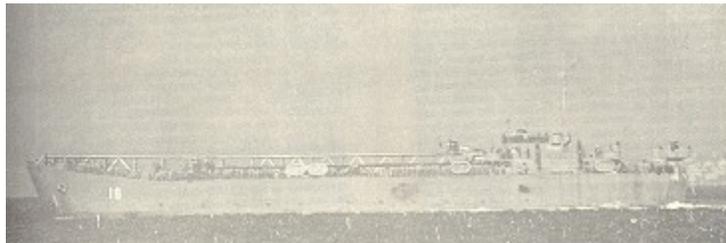
Salerno landings - September 1943.

West coast of Italy operations

(a) Anzio-Nettuno advanced landings - January/February 1944.

Invasion of Normandy, France - June 1944.

The *LST-16* earned five battle stars for World War II service.



"LST-16 WITH AN ELEVATED DECK, BUILT FROM BOW TO BRIDGE USED FOR LAUNCHING PIPER CUB PLANES."; no date/photo number; photographer unknown.

Photo scanned from *The Coast Guard At War: V: Transports and Escorts*, Vol. II, p. 67.

Sources:

LST files, Coast Guard Historian's Office

United States Coast Guard. *The Coast Guard At War. V. Transports and Escorts. Vol. 2.* Washington: Public Information Division, Historical Section, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 1, 1949, pp. 66-116.

United States Navy. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships.* Volume VII. Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1981, pp. 574-742.

