

JOINED FORCES WITH ARMY IN BATTLES AND ATLANTIC

The four transports were manned principally by sailors from cutters, especially the 10 250-foot Lake-class vessels that had been transferred to the Royal Navy by Lend-Lease a few weeks earlier, and by some of the more than 6,700 men who entered the Coast Guard under *special temporary* three-year enlistments in 1939 and 1941.

CG-MANNED TRANSPORTS

The first three transports to be commissioned, the USSs *Leonard Wood*, *Joseph T. Dickman* and *Hunter Liggett*, were turbine-powered 535-footers of World War I design, while the USS *Wakefield*, commissioned on June 15, had been launched as the liner *Manhattan* in 1931. At 705-feet long, the *Wake-*

field was the largest ship ever manned by the Coast Guard and one of the fastest. Geared turbines drove it at 20 knots sustained speed.

All immediately began naval training. Active service for the *Wood*, *Dickman* and *Wakefield* came during the autumn of 1941 when, together with three Navy-manned transports, they embarked some 20,000 British troops at Halifax, Nova Scotia, for transportation to the Near East by way of the Cape of Good Hope.

Arriving at Cape Town on Dec. 8, they were diverted to Bombay and Singapore because of Japan's belligerence. The *Wakefield* had discharged its troops at Singapore and was refueling there on Jan. 30, 1942, when Japanese bombers attacked waterfront facilities.

A bomb exploded in its sick bay, killing five men and wounding 15; nonetheless, the ship embarked approximately 500 women and children and took them to Bombay where the ship was repaired sufficiently to steam to New York. Upon their return to the United States, the *Wood* and the *Dickman* underwent further conversion to enable them to conduct assault landings.

The *Liggett* was similarly refitted, but the *Wakefield* seemed to have been thought unsuitable for this purpose, so it did not receive the extra davits for small landing craft that distinguished the vessels classified as attack transports (APA) in 1943.

ATTACK TRANSPORTS

Six more APAs of the Maritime Commission C-3 type, were manned by the Coast

Below right: The Coast Guard-manned PF Greenboro, a new type of fighting ship outfitted during World War II, protects the Allied convoys carrying vital war supplies and men to foreign shores.

