

USS CADDO PARISH (LST 515)
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Ser 08
5 January 1967

From: Commanding Officer, USS CADDO PARISH (LST 515)
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Command Histories

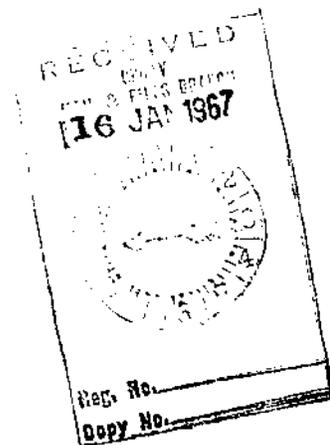
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

Encl: (1) 1966 Command History of USS CADDO PARISH (LST 515)

1. Enclosure (1) is hereby submitted in accordance with reference (a).

A. E. King
A. E. KING

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HISTORY OF USS CADDO PARISH (LST 515)

USS CADDO PARISH (LST 515) is named for a parish in the extreme northern section of Louisiana. Originally commissioned as USS LST 515, her name was assigned on 1 July 1955.

Caddo Parish was formed in 1838. With Shreveport as the parish seat, it is notable for its many natural-gas wells, oil and gas refineries, and pipelines. Its resort regions include Cross Lake and part of Caddo Lake. There are also shipping activities and agricultural products including cotton, corn, hay, peanuts, and lumber.

CADDO PARISH (LST 515) was built by the Chicago Bridge and Iron Works of Seneca, Illinois. Her bottom laid 3 September 1943, she was launched on 31 December 1943 under the sponsorship of Miss Rebekah Brown whose three brothers were in the armed forces. The tank landing ship was ferried down the Mississippi River to New Orleans, Louisiana where she was placed in commission on 28 January 1944.

CADDO PARISH trained in St. Andrews Bay, Florida, then arrived in New York from New Orleans on 10 March 1944 to take on stores preparatory to sailing for Europe. Sailing by way of Boston and Halifax she reached the United Kingdom in April. The following weeks were spent preparing for her participation in the invasion of France. During the night of 26-27 April 1944 CADDO PARISH and other tank landing ships proceeded through Lyme Bay with minecraft sweeping ahead in a mock invasion formation. German E-boats sometimes prowled the English Channel on favorable nights. On this particular night, nine of the enemy craft had sailed out of Cherbourg, France and dashed past the patrols at the mouth of Lyme Bay. Attacking with torpedoes, the E-boats caused LST 507 to burst into flames and be abandoned. Another landing ship tank, hit by two torpedoes, rolled over and sank within six minutes. The E-boats slammed a torpedo into the belly of LST 289 in a duel, then escaped using smoke and high speed. CADDO PARISH was narrowly missed by one torpedo which passed under her hull and by another which passed ahead of the ship. She rescued 132 survivors of this brief but furious action which cost the lives of 197 sailors and 441 soldiers.

CADDO PARISH hit Utah Beach of Normandy on 6 June 1944 and debarked her troops and tanks without incident. Intervened by one voyage to Oslo, Norway, the following twelve months were spent in shuttling troops and cargo across the English Channel to the French invasion beaches. CADDO PARISH returned to Norfolk from England in the summer of 1945 and spent the next ten years out of that port as a unit of Service Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. Her amphibious assault training took her from Norfolk to principal ports of the Caribbean Sea. She also made periodic cruises from Norfolk with the logistic support force to resupply defense bases in Greenland. In 1951, 1952, and 1954 she served with the Sixth Fleet in amphibious training that took her to principal ports of the Mediterranean. During the latter tour, she cruised from ports of the Africa and Spain with heavy construction equipment for the building of air bases under the Mutual Defense Pact. She was placed out of commission, in reserve, on 20 October 1955.

CADDO PARISH's stay with the mothball fleet in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was not to be forever. Following the Cuban Crisis in 1962, the Navy found it could not muster enough ships to transport the large numbers of Marine and Army personnel needed for a full scale invasion. Ships to transport Army personnel were particularly in demand to follow initial landings by Marines.

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For this reason, CADDO PARISH, along with ten other ships of her class, was recommissioned "in reserve" in August 1963. Together they formed Reserve LST Squadron TWO, a mobile force ready to meet emergencies.

The ship which was home ported in Little Creek, Virginia after re-commissioning, conducted local operations and made port visits until the summer of 1965. In June, 1965, CADDO PARISH with the other units of RESLSTRON TWO commenced hauling cargo and supplies to provide logistic support for our Army during the Dominican Republic Crisis. Operations to the Dominican Republic ceased in December after CADDO PARISH had steamed in excess of 20,000 miles since June.

By January 1966 RESLSTRON TWO was changed to Landing Ship Squadron Two. CADDO PARISH was placed into active commission and underwent a six week restricted availability in Savannah, Georgia in preparation for deployment into the Pacific Ocean. On 11 February 1966 CADDO PARISH left for WES-PAC from Norfolk. She transited the Panama Canal 23-24 February and underwent voyage repairs in Pearl Harbor from 19 March to 4 April. April 27 saw CADDO PARISH steam into Subic Bay, Philippines enroute to Vietnam and Sasebo, Japan.

Homeported in Sasebo, Japan, CADDO PARISH was placed under the operational control of Military Sea Transport Service Far East and administrative control of Commander Service Force Pacific. CADDO PARISH's primary mission of hauling cement, provisions, and other military cargo became evident upon her arrival in South East Asia. Hauling cement between Kaohsiung, Taiwan and Chu Lai, Phan Rang, Qui Nhon, or Danang, Vietnam most of the time, CADDO PARISH interrupted one trip for LT A. E. KING to relieve LCDR B. C. NEWBY as Commanding Officer. Lt KING, a veteran of WW II, came to CADDO PARISH from DODGE COUNTY LST 722 where he was executive officer.

That CADDO PARISH and other LST's were ideally suited to help solve the logistic problems caused by congested ports for deep draft vessels was evident from her arrival in the Vietnam area. Between July and December 1966, she alone delivered more than 12,000,000 pounds of cement to the front doors of the airfields at Chu Lai and Phan Rang, Vietnam. Congested ports posed no problems for CADDO PARISH; she could off load at numerous places along the Vietnamese coast line. CADDO PARISH and other LST's have proven that although their mission of hauling cargo to beaches in Vietnam may not be one of the most glorious, it is certainly one of the most vital.

CADDO PARISH (LST 515) earned one battle star and other awards for the operations listed below:

- 1 Star/INVASION OF NORMANDY
6 JUN 44 - 25 JUN 44
- NAVY OCCUPATION SERVICE MEDAL (Europe)
4 MAY 51 - 2 NOV 51
- ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL (Dominican Republic)
6 JUN 65 - 14 DEC 65
- VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL
5 MAY 66 - Present

Enclosure (1)

CURRENT

LENGTH OVERALL:	328 feet
EXTREME BEAM:	50 feet
TRIAL DISPLACEMENT:	
Tons:	3,960
Limiting Draft:	11 feet, 2 inches
TRIAL SPEED:	
Knots:	11.0
TOTAL ACCOMODATIONS (Crew):	
Officers:	9
Enlisted:	89
TROOP ACCOMODATIONS:	
Officers:	14
Enlisted:	116
ARMAMENT:	(2) Single 40MM anti-craft gun mounts (4) 50 Cal. Machine Guns

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