

USS MANITOWOC (LST-1180)
FPO San Francisco 96601

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From: Commanding Officer, USS MANITOWOC (LST-1180)
To: Director of Naval History (OP - 09B9) Washington Naval
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Encl: (1) Command History for Calendar Year 1970

I. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded


G. T. DYER

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USS MANITOWOC COMMAND HISTORY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 1970

A. CHRONOLOGY OF HIGHLIGHTS

(1) 5-9 January 1970 - MANITOWOC underway for the first time with own power for machinery trials. Machinery trials were conducted off Cape May.

(2) 24 January 1970 - MANITOWOC was commissioned in ceremonies conducted at Naval Shipyard, Philadelphia. Governor Warren P. Knowles, Governor of Wisconsin, was the principal speaker.

(3) 18-20 February 1970 - Builder's trials were conducted off Cape May.

(4) 23-27 March 1970 - The Atlantic Sub Board of Inspection and Survey inspected MANITOWOC.

(5) 17 April - Having completed fitting out, MANITOWOC departed Philadelphia Naval Shipyard.

(6) 17 April - 12 May 1970 - MANITOWOC transited from Philadelphia to Long Beach, California (Home Port) via the Panama Canal.

(7) 8 June - 2 July, 1970 - MANITOWOC underwent Shakedown Training in San Diego.

(8) 13-17 July 1970 - MANITOWOC conducted final contractor trials with Pacific Sub Board of Inspection and Survey.

(9) 27-31 July, 17-21 August 1970 - MANITOWOC underwent Amphibious Training for all evolutions except those requiring use of the Stern Anchor Winch which was inoperative.

(10) 8 September - 25 October 1970 - MANITOWOC deployed to WESPAC. loaded marines, marine vehicles, and equipment in Danang and returned to CONUS.

(11) 1 November - 31 December 1970 - MANITOWOC underwent Post Shakedown Availability at Long Beach Naval Shipyard.

B. BASIC NARRATIVE

(1) Command - The first Commanding Officer Of USS MANITOWOC was Commander George T. Dyer Jr, who assumed command on commissioning of ship 24 January 1970 and has had command throughout the year. USS MANITOWOC was commissioned with an allowance/compliment of 10/11 Officers and 160/180 Enlisted Personnel. The Enlisted allowance/compliment has been increased to 180/202.

(2) OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES - On January 24, 1970, a year after her launching, USS MANITOWOC was placed in Commission (special) at Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Commissioning was the culmination of six months of preparation by the crew. The "nucleus" crew headed by CDR George T. Dyer, then prospective Commanding Officer, was based at the ship yard throughout the Pre-Commissioning period. This group, consisting primarily of Department Heads and Leading Petty Officers, acted as overseers during critical phases of construction, worked to familiarize themselves with the various ship's systems and began the task of establishing the ship's Administrative Organization. The "balance" crew under the direction of LCDR George A. Noggle, then prospective Executive Officer, was located at the Fleet Training Center, Norfolk, Virginia up to a month prior to the Commissioning. This group consisting primarily of Division Officers, Second and Third Class Petty Officers, Seaman and Fireman Apprentices, conducted training to comply with Commander Amphibious Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet requirements.

In late December, the "nucleus" crew and "balance" crew were brought together at Philadelphia to compose the crew of MANITOWOC. Shortly thereafter, on January 5, 1970 MANITOWOC put to sea for the first time to conduct machinery trials. During these trials the propulsion system was given a full test. The ship was manned by approximately 80% of the crew and one hundred fifty shipyard personnel. For the trial, since MANITOWOC was not yet commissioned the PCO was designated O-IN-C of the precom detail with authority equivalent to the Commanding Officer of a Commissioned Naval Ship. The second day out MANITOWOC developed full power with six diesel engines developing 16,000 horsepower for speed in excess of 22 knots. A week after returning from machinery trials the crew moved on board the ship.

The Commissioning Ceremony on January 24th was well attended and considered a great success. The Honored Guest and principal speaker, the Honorable Warren P. Knowles, Governor of Wisconsin, set the mood of the occasion by calling MANITOWOC'S Commissioning "Especially Significant" in that the ship exemplified many of the best features of our new and progressive Navy. Governor Knowles presented the ship with a flag of the state of Wisconsin which is now displayed in the Crew's Mess. The ship was especially honored by a delegation from the city of Manitowoc, Wisconsin headed by the City's Mayor, the Honorable John L. Krey, who presented a silver tea service to the ship on behalf of the citizens of Manitowoc, Wisconsin. The Commanding Officer presented ship's plaques to Governor Knowles, Mayor Krey and Miss Joan Mutz representing Mrs. Gaylord Nelson, the ship's sponsor. CDR Dyer also presented to the city of Manitowoc, on behalf of the ship and the crew, a picture of MANITOWOC underway during trials. Other distinguished guests present included: Major General R. N. Fairburn, USMC representing the Commandant of the Marine Corps, RADM P. M. McManus, USN, Commander Amphibious Group Two, representing Commander Amphibious Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet, and a delegation from the city of Manitowoc. Following the ceremony a reception was held at the Philadelphia Naval Station Officer's Club

After Commissioning, the Ship's Force commenced preparations for builders trials held during 18-20 Feb. During these trials Ship's Force took a more active part in actually operating the equipment on board. In the period following builder's trials work continued to correct discrepancies in equipment discovered during builder's trials and complete unfinished systems. Preliminary acceptance trials were conducted the week of 23 March. During these trials all ship's systems were demonstrated to the Board of Inspection and Survey. The Inspection team uncovered a number of discrepancies, but very few were of any consequence.

The major discrepancies found by the Insurv Board were corrected and on 17 April 1970 USS MANITOWOC was accepted for Naval Service, placed in Commission (Active) and got underway from Philadelphia for points west to join Amphibious Squadron SEVEN and the U. S. Pacific Fleet. After a brief weekend stop at Norfolk, Virginia, to load ammunition, the ship headed for Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, where the efforts of the Navy League to provide recreational opportunities for the crew were particularly noteworthy. After three days sailing from Florida, which included various general exercises, drills and a steak cookout on the main deck, MANITOWOC was standing off the entrance to the Panama Canal.

On the Pacific side of the Canal Zone, at Rodman Naval Station, MANITOWOC berthed for a day and a half, to refuel and load cargo.

After the brief visit in Panama, MANITOWOC, now a unit of the Pacific Fleet, set sail for the anticipated port of Acapulco, Mexico, the last liberty port before entering Long Beach, California, the Home Port.

On Monday, May 11th, MANITOWOC entered San Diego Harbor to unload several tons of cargo that the ship was tasked to transport from Rodman, Panama, Canal Zone. After a few hours MANITOWOC was underway again to enter Los Angeles Harbor the following day.

The weeks immediately following arrival at Long Beach were taken up with preparation for shakedown training, settling families, and completing routine administrative chores. On June 8th the ship got underway for San Diego to begin shakedown training. Shakedown training was completed with an overall grade of "GOOD."

On July 27th, MANITOWOC began Amphibious Shakedown Training. Equipment problems prevented completion of all Amphibious evolutions during this period. The final battle problem - a simulated beach assault, was conducted in pre-dawn. The ship was awarded a grade of excellent for the problem.

On 8 September MANITOWOC was underway for redeployment of U. S. Marine Forces from Vietnam to CONUS via the liberty port of Kaohsiung, Taiwan and then Vietnam. However, four days out of Long Beach problems with the main propulsion system required the ship to stop at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard for repairs. Repairs were completed in two days on an around-the-clock basis and on 15 September MANITOWOC got underway for Danang, Republic of Vietnam.

For two weeks the ship steamed at high speed across the Pacific to meet her first operational commitment. On September 23rd MANITOWOC diverted 500 miles south to avoid the destructive effects of Typhoon Hope which generated 45 foot seas and 150 knots winds near the storm center.

At 1930 on September 31st, in gale force winds, the ship arrived at Danang, Republic of Vietnam. The persisting high winds and seas together with torrential rains prevented accomplishment of loading on the first day. MANITOWOC rode at anchor for four days awaiting moderation in the weather. Finally the skies cleared, wind and seas subsided, and the ship was brought alongside the deep Water pier. Over seventy vehicles and eighty tons of bulk cargo were loaded, stowed and secured for sea in a twelve hour period. All means of loading the ship were employed simultaneously during the course of this operation. Wheeled vehicles were loaded onto the main deck and tank deck over the bow ramp while tracked vehicles were loaded from utility craft married to the stern gate. Bulk cargo was loaded at the same time through the cargo hatch using the ship's own booms.

At midnight on the fifth of October, MANITOWOC got underway for Kaoshiung, Taiwan. Typhoon Iris, located in the South China Sea, forced the ship to divert to Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines for provisions, fuel, and recreation. After three days, MANITOWOC headed across the Pacific for San Diego, California. A SOA of 20 knots was maintained for the entire transit, a first for LST type ships.

On 23 October MANITOWOC entered San Diego Harbor and off loaded all cargo and troops, returning to Long Beach on the 24th of October.

During the period 1 November - 31 December the ship underwent Post Shakedown Availability (PSA) in Long Beach Naval Shipyard)