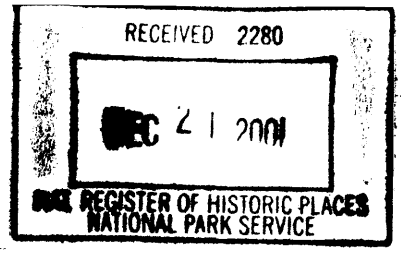
NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name SS American Victory

other names/site number American Victory Mariners Memorial & Museum Ship

2. Location

street & number 705 Channelside Drive, Berth 271 n/a ☐ not for publication

city or town Tampa n/a ☐ vicinity

state Florida code FL county Hillsborough code 057 zip code 33602

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Janet Snyder Matthews 12/20/2001
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida State Historic Preservation Office, Division of Historical Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☑ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper: Carol D Shull

Date of Action: 2-4-02

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☐ buildings
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☒ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Name of related multiple property listings
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: Water-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture: Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation n/a
walls n/a
roof n/a
other Metal: Steel

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☒ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Maritime History
Military
Engineering

Period of Significance

1945-1947
1951-1953
1966-1969

Significant Dates

1945

Significant Person

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Sharpe, George G., Naval Architects
California Shipbuilding Co., Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
_____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
_____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State Agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of Repository
_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References
(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	357910	3091780
2			
3			
4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Timothy J. Teahan, Communications Mgr. & Barbara E. Mattick, Deputy SHPO for Survey & Registration

organization Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation date December 2001

street & number 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name The Victory Ship, Inc.

street & number 705 Channelside Drive telephone

city or town Tampa state FL zip code 33602

SUMMARY

The 1945 Victory Ship AMERICAN VICTORY is homeported in Tampa, Florida. The ship's World War II, US Maritime Commission designation of VC2-S-AP2 indicates she is a "V" for "Victory", "C2" for medium capacity cargo carrier, "S" for "steam", and "AP2" for the 6,000 shaft horsepower type of Victory ship. Moored at Berth 271 in the Port of Tampa, she is currently undergoing rehabilitation.

Plans are to restore the AMERICAN VICTORY to fully operational condition. It will be developed into a mariner's memorial and maritime museum, focusing on the contributions of U.S. Merchant Marine, the U.S. Navy Armed Guard, the thousands of men and women who built American's merchant fleet and those who supplied American's merchant fleet during wartime. The AMERICAN VICTORY will also honor mariners who served during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, providing a unique perspective on their history-making achievements. The AMERICAN VICTORY will become a site for local events, offer maritime educational programs, used for ceremonies honoring Merchant Marine, U.S. Navy Armed Guard, shipyard workers, members of other military branches and civilians, who served in World War II. AMERICAN VICTORY will also be used for training and certification of U.S. Coast Guard licensed and certificated personnel and in upgrading merchant marine qualifications.

AMERICAN VICTORY AS BUILT AND RESTORED

The AMERICAN VICTORY, official number 248005, is a welded steel, full scantling, screw-propelled, steam-powered vessel 455 feet, 3 inches long overall with a 62-foot beam, a 38-foot depth of hold, and 28-foot draft. (Photograph #1) The ship is registered at 7,612 tons gross and 4,555 tons net, and displaces 15,200 tons. Designed with a straight, raked stem with a paravane skeg fitted on the forefoot for dislodging submersed mines and a cruiser stern, the ship's lines were radically different from her Liberty ship predecessors, with a semi V-shaped bow, and a parallel, 70-foot mid-body section.

Transversely framed on 36-inch centers, the ship has a double bottom that carried fuel oil, salt water ballast, and reserve feed water. AMERICAN VICTORY has two complete decks, a forecastle deck that extends over the No. 1 Hold, and a first platform deck in Holds No. 2 and No. 3. The ship is subdivided by seven full watertight bulkheads that extend to the main deck with the exception of the fore peak bulkhead, which extends to the forecastle deck. The VC2-S-AP2 ships were arranged to carry general cargo in five holds, three forward and two abaft the midships machinery space. Hold No. 1 has a 22-foot by 25-foot hatch; Hold No. 2 has a 22-foot by 24-foot hatch; Hold No. 3 has a 22-foot by 36-foot hatch; Hold No. 4 has a 22-foot by 36-foot hatch; and Hold No. 5 has a 22-foot by 24-foot hatch. The forecastle deck, the midships house, and a small poop deck house also interrupt the flush main deck.

AMERICAN VICTORY has three masts, each with a masthouse. The ship is cargo rigged to serve every hatchway. The 100-foot, 8-inch high foremast, located at the forecastle bulkhead, serves Hold No. 1. The 109-foot, 4-inch mainmast, located at frame 52 and supported by standing rigging, serves Holds No. 2 and 3 (Photograph # 2). Kingposts at the forward end of the midships house also serve Hold No. 3; kingposts at the

after end of the superstructure serve Hold No. 4. The 104-foot, 11-inch mizzenmast, at frame 122 is supported by standing rigging and serves Holds No. 4 and 5. Cargo was discharged from the five hatchways by means of 14 five-ton booms, the latter two located to serve hatchways fore and aft of the superstructure. The masts and kingposts support the five-ton booms equipped with single-part topping lifts. The ship also carries two large heavy-lift (jumbo) booms, rated at 30-ton and 50-ton lifting capacity, on the main and mizzenmasts. The jumbo booms serve Holds No. 3 and 4.

AMERICAN VICTORY has 14 electric motor-driven cargo winches, 8 clustered in two groups of four around the main and mizzenmasts, two on the forecastle, and two aft of the superstructure to serve Hold No. 4. Ten single-drum, single-speed winches serve the five-ton booms; four single-drum, two-speed winches serve the 30- and 50-ton booms. Each winch is driven by a 50 horsepower, watertight, enclosed motor. The winches have control equipment, resistors and brakes arranged on a common bedplate under waterproof enclosures. Single-speed winches have a capacity of 7,450 pounds at 220 feet per minute. The 2-speed winches have a capacity of 7,450 pounds at 220 feet per minute in high gear and 19,000 pounds at 85 feet per minute in low gear. All winches are operated from pedestal controllers located near the hatchways. The one-speed, double reduction herringbone gear winches have 18- by 20-inch drums, manufactured by Pacific Iron & Steel Works at Hoisting Machinery, Tacoma, Washington. They are driven by 50 hp, 230-volt, 180-amp, 600-rpm motors manufactured by General Electric Co., Schenectady, New York. The double-speed, reduction herringbone gear winches with 20- by 20-inch drums were also manufactured by Pacific Iron & Steel with motors by General Electric.

AMERICAN VICTORY has an electric motor-driven, horizontal shaft-type anchor windlass on the forecastle deck (Photograph #3). Manufactured by the Hesse-Ersted Iron Works, Portland, Oregon, the windlass is capable of raising two anchors simultaneously from a 30-fathom depth of water at a chain speed of 30 feet per minute. The windlass motor, a General Electric compound wound type, is rated at 60 hp, 230 volts, 226 amps, and 600 rpm. Warping heads on the wildcat shaft of the windlass allow for handling mooring lines.

AMERICAN VICTORY's ground tackle includes two 9,500 lb. cast steel best bowers, stowed in the hawsepipes, and one 3,420 lb. stream anchor stowed on the main deck aft. Baldt manufactured the anchors. The anchor chain is 300 fathoms of 2 1/8-inch diameter stud link cast steel chain, manufactured by Baldt, in two lengths; other lines include a 90-fathom, 1½-inch diameter wire rope stream line; a 130-fathom, 1¾-inch diameter wire rope towline; two 73 fathom 1-inch diameter wire rope hawsers; two 73-fathom wire rope warps; and two 73-fathom lengths of 8-inch sisal rope. All of the wire ropes are mounted on reels located on the weather deck.

Other deck machinery includes an electric warping capstan on the main deck aft, with machinery below. The smooth-barrel, reversible, vertical-motor driven capstan was manufactured by Sellers. It produces a line pull of 20,000 lbs. at a rope speed of 30 feet per minute. The capstan motor is a 35 hp, 230-volt, 138 amp, 600-rpm motor manufactured by Westinghouse. The AMERICAN VICTORY has four 24-foot steel lifeboats, (Photograph 4), two motor-propelled, with a combined capacity of 124 persons, stowed in gravity type davits

manufactured by the Welin Davit & Boat Corp., Perth Amboy, New Jersey. An electric winch, also manufactured by Welin, is provided for each davit, driven by motors manufactured by General Electric.

When launched, the AMERICAN VICTORY was armed with eight single 20mm Oerlikon guns, a 3-inch/50-caliber gun forward, and a 5-inch/30-caliber gun aft. These weapons were removed after World War II, but are being sought for remounting. Weapons identical to the original armament have been located to replace those removed, and arrangements are being made to obtain a 3-inch gun from a private sector firm in Wilmington, CA. The U.S. Navy Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC, is assisting with locating a 5-inch gun, 20-mm Oerlikon guns and related equipment. The majority of the space in the poop deckhouse is for the ship's 28-member Armed Guard, which manned the guns. Their quarters and mess are at the main deck level, while below, accessible by trunk, is the magazine, with shell hoist.

Accommodations are provided for 62 officers and crew in the midships house. An April, 1944, issue of Marine Engineering and Shipping Review article described Victory ship accommodations:

> *"The captain's stateroom and office are on the cabin deck, starboard side. Quarters for deck officers, engineers and radio operators are on the cabin and boat decks; quarters for the crew are on the main deck. The officers' mess and pantry are located at the after end of the deckhouse on the starboard side of the boat deck. The crew's mess and pantry are located on the deck below the officers' mess. The galley is located at the aft end of the deckhouse on the main deck. The hospital is on the portside on the main deck. The quarters for both the officers and crew are comfortably and conveniently arranged. Built-in berths are provided for the officers* (Photograph 5) *and pipe berths for the hospital and crew's quarters."*

Original galley equipment included oil-burning ranges. In the early 1960's, when the AMERICAN VICTORY was mobilized for Vietnam War service, electric ranges replaced the oil-burning ranges. A Hobart mixer, manufactured by Hobart Company of Troy, Ohio, and other original equipment and fixtures are present in the galley (Photograph #6). Original refrigerators are located in the crew's mess (Photograph #7) and officers' mess. Steward's stores, dry stores, and refrigerated stores are located one deck below the main deck, admidships, on the port and starboard sides.

AMERICAN VICTORY retains most of her World War II issue equipment and fixtures, including the gyrocompass, bearing stands, and repeater compasses, all manufactured by the Dodge Division of the Chrysler Corporation of Detroit (Photograph #8).

The radio room on the AMERICAN VICTORY was modernized for service during Vietnam, (Photograph #9) with all original equipment removed and replaced with 1960s era equipment. Efforts are underway to locate original radio components, including the high, low and emergency frequency transmitters, high and low receivers, alarm signal keyer, auto alarm, and crystal receiver and the chart room radio receiver and radio direction finder.

The AMERICAN VICTORY'S bridge (Photograph #10) retains most of her World War II equipment, including ship's wheel, with magnetic compass in a compensating binnacle, engine room telegraphs, bells, fog horn, rudder angle indicator, echo depth sounder, and clinometer. Sound-powered telephones for internal shipboard communication, manufactured by Hose McCann, remain in working condition. The ship's wartime issue Maytag washers are in working condition. The lathe, drill press, and grinder in the machine shop are all functional.

Natural ventilation for below deck spaces is supplied through four 36-inch cowls, two 24-inch cowls, and two 18-inch cowls. Each kingpost serves as an exhaust trunk from Hold Nos. 3 and 4, with 30-inch diameter Breidert exhaust heads installed at the top of each kingpost. Two 20,000 axial flow supply fans with ducts lead to several terminals in the machinery spaces, with a single 12,000 axial flow fan with ducts leading from the heated space. The machinery space (Photograph #11) is housed midships, with a cross-compound, double reduction geared, impulse-reaction type marine steam turbine unit rated at 6000 shaft horsepower, manufactured by Westinghouse, driving a single screw at a speed of 100 rpm. The shafting is forged steel, 16 inches in diameter, which runs aft to the manganese bronze, four-blade, right hand propeller. Manufactured by Dorance, the 18-foot, 3-inch diameter screw weighs 29,765 lbs., has a pitch of 17' 6" and will drive AMERICAN VICTORY at a maximum speed of 15 knots.

Steam is provided by two sectional-header, single-pass design boilers manufactured by Babcock & Wilcox. Rated at 525 psi, with an operating pressure of 465 psi, the boilers produce 27,500 pounds of steam per hour at 750 degrees, with a furnace volume of 450 cubic feet. The boilers are 12 sections wide and are 39 feet, 6 inches athwartship by 11-feet, 8-inches fore and aft, and 21 feet, 3-inches overall height to the top of the economizers. Fitted with interdeck superheaters and economizers, each boiler is fired with water cooled-side walls and refractory, in the front and rear bulkheads and decks.

Inboard and outboard turbo generators provide electrical power. The Joshua Hendy Iron Works of San Francisco, California manufactured the turbines; the generators manufactured by the Allis-Chalmers Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Three-wire marine direct current generators produce 300kilowatts, with 120 and 240 volts and 1250 amps and 1200 rpm. The ship also has emergency diesel generators in the engine room and in the emergency diesel room. The steering gear, a slide electrohydraulic, double-ram type, was manufactured by the Baldwin Locomotive Company, and is located aft.

AMERICAN VICTORY'S PRESENT APPEARANCE

AMERICAN VICTORY retains a high degree of integrity and is readily recognizable as a World War II Victory ship. Vessel restoration began in September 1999 with a general clean up while the AMERICAN VICTORY was still anchored in the James River Reserve Fleet. Following her arrival in Tampa Bay, Florida, (Photograph #11) volunteers began the painstaking tasks of removing 15 year-old sealants from all exterior ship openings, cataloging documents, engineering diagrams, logbooks and other material found on board the ship and other related activities.

During time in a drydock, the AMERICAN VICTORY's sea chests were opened and inspected and faulty valves were replaced and her fuel, fresh and salt water tanks inspected. She was also sandblasted and painted with haze gray paint in January 2000. Rehabilitation of the vessel is now underway with mostly volunteer labor under the direction of an advisory committee which coordinates operations aboard ship.

SUMMARY

The SS AMERICAN VICTORY, built in 1945, is significant at the national level under **Criterion A** in the areas of **Maritime History** and **Military**, and qualifies under **Criterion Consideration G** because of the significant contributions it made in the Cold War era, including the Korean War, 1951-1953 and the Vietnam Conflict, 1966-1969. It is significant under **Criterion C** in the area of **Engineering** as one of the few remaining examples of the 414 Victories built during World War II. Victory ships, which replaced the earlier Liberty cargo ships, were designed to be faster, with more modern steam plants, better trim and stability, and stronger hulls; and more efficient, with electrically driven winches and windlasses and improved navigation equipment.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The 1945 Victory Ship AMERICAN VICTORY is one of 414 Victories built during World War II, and, at this time, one of only a handful of remaining Victory ships. As war raged in Europe, the United States faced the need to supply its allies by sea and the increased possibility of American entry into the conflict-while confronted with a critical shortage of cargo ships. The result was the emergency fleet program, which introduced the assembly-line production of standardized ships - the "Liberty Ships" - in 1941. Overall, 2,571 Liberty ships were constructed between 1941 and 1945, making them the largest class of ships built worldwide. The two unaltered survivors of the class, *SS Jeremiah O'Brien* and *SS John Brown* have been designated National Historic Landmarks.

The AMERICAN VICTORY is a tangible and representative artifact of that period of America's history when shipbuilding techniques used to build Victory ships made an immense impact on the marine industry that continues in 2001, 56 years later. The AMERICAN VICTORY was one of 69 Victory ships built by California Shipbuilding of Los Angeles at Terminal Island. She was named for American University in Washington, DC, acknowledging the contribution made by the school in providing its campus as an ordnance-training center to the U.S. Army during both World War I and World War II.

The AMERICAN VICTORY is the only Victory ship being preserved as a mariner's memorial, maritime museum and cruising ship on the U.S. East Coast, and when she is steaming, will be the only World War II era merchant vessel cruising ship in the Southeast U.S. While the majority of Victory ships were built on the West Coast, a number were also produced on the U.S. East Coast, including Baltimore and shipbuilding yards in the Northeast U.S. Only two other Victory ships the *SS Lane Victory* (homeported in Los Angeles) and the *SS Red Oak Victory* (homeported in Richmond, CA) have either been restored (Lane Victory) or under restoration (Red Oak Victory).

America's history of World War II includes descriptions of the heroic efforts of the U.S. Merchant Marine in supplying the country's war machine, in which Victory ships played an integral part. The Southeastern Untied States, particularly Florida, played an important part in training the Merchant Marine for war service. For example, the U.S. Maritime Service (the government agency which oversaw the Merchant Marine) operated a Training Center in St. Petersburg, Florida, from 1940 until 1950 for young men entering the Merchant Marine.

Part of the AMERICAN VICTORY'S mission is to memorialize the efforts of America's Merchant Marine, recognize the devastating loss of life suffered by the Merchant Marine during World War II, particularly in the North Atlantic, the South Atlantic, and the Gulf of Mexico and the importance of the Port of Tampa as a ship building and ship repair center in the 1940s and beyond.

The preceding discussion is based on the detailed information that follows.

Emergency Fleet Ships, the Victory Ship Program, and Their Role in World War II

As war spread through Europe in 1939-1940, the need for a strong naval force to meet any threat was matched by the need for a modern merchant marine fleet capable of efficiently sending material, ordnance, supplies, and troops abroad. The U. S. Merchant Marine fleet was for the most part, more than 20 years old, and the majority of the ships could make no better speed than 11 knots. Realizing the problem as early as 1936, Congress passed the Merchant Marine Act, which created the United States Maritime Commission. The Act introduced a policy featuring development of overseas commerce served by a new, modern and efficient merchant marine as one of several government programs to create a resurgent economy and industry.

Subsidies for merchant vessel construction followed, as well as the design of three standard designs for high-speed cargo vessels, known as the "C" (for cargo) ships - - the C1, C2 and C3 types. The new design and increased production of these types of ship was soon overtaken by the need to supply trade routes in wartime, as it became clear that the threat of a spreading conflict would soon affect America's shores and shipping. By early 1941, the "quality" production of the "C" ships was being replaced by the "quantity" production of emergency fleet vessels, the so-called EC-2 (for emergency cargo) "Liberty Ships" of World War II.

Authorized as a defense measure, the emergency fleet ships were built to the order of the Maritime Commission by 18 shipyards across the United States between 1941 and 1945. In all, 2,751 Liberty ships were built, the first being the *SS Patrick Henry*, launched on September 27, 1941, and the last being the *SS Albert H. Boe*, delivered on October 30, 1945. Based on the design of British tramp steamers, Liberty ships were designed by New York naval architects Gibbs and Cox and the Maritime Commission. Approved by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in early 1941, who termed the proposed ship "a real ugly duckling," the Liberty program was underway just in time for America's entry into World War II.

Early in 1942, the Maritime Commission called for 2,000 ships to be built by the end of 1943 in order to win the war. This colossal shipbuilding task undertaken in such short a time had never been faced by any nation. Tentative schedules extended the program into 1945. Throughout the war, production of emergency fleet ships struggled to keep pace with losses to German U-boats, finally catching up, as anticipated, in 1943. Manned by merchant seamen and protected by deck guns manned by the U.S. Navy Armed Guard, the Liberty ship fleet carried fuel, ammunition, food, weapons, and troops across the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the Mediterranean, and the Baltic. Liberty ships were the largest standardized fleet in world history.

Victory Ships

With production finally outpacing ship-sinking losses in 1943, the Maritime Commission embarked on a program to design new types of emergency fleet ships, most importantly fast cargo vessels, to replace the slower Liberty ships. The engines of choice were steam turbines, which were being produced in larger numbers by Maritime Commission-subsidized factories. The standardized design adopted by the Commission called for a 445-foot by 63-foot steel vessel. Initially designated EC2-S-AP1, the design was redesignated VC2-S-AP1 on April 28, 1943 when the ships were given the "Victory" appellation by which they were henceforth known. The Maritime Commission chairman, in a speech in early 1943, noted, "We have developed a new emergency ship, the Victory ship, to replace the Libertys. The new ship is designed to permit use of the Lentz engine, turbines, or diesels, with an expected speed is 15 to 17 knots, compared to the Liberty's 11 knot speed. This indicated that the Victorys would be a good competition ship in the post-war era, which we cannot claim for the Liberty ship."

Victory ships were different from the Liberty ships primarily in propulsion, the triple-expansion marine steam engine of the Liberty giving way to more modern, faster turbines or diesels. The AP-1 Victory ship was powered by a 5,500-hp steam engine; the AP-2 Victory by a 6,000-hp steam engine; the AP-3 by an 8,500-hp steam engine; and the AP-4 by a diesel engine. The ship profile was to have sleeker lines, and construction techniques were to be different.

The Libertys suffered form a major design flaw, causing hull fractures, which led to sinking. To resolve the problem, Victory ship hulls were built with frames on 36-inch centers, compared to the stiffer 30-inch centers on Libertys. Better stability and two enlarged tanks aft of the machinery space that carried fuel, dry cargo, or salt water ballast eliminated the need for fixed ballast. The resultant flexibility of draft meant that the inherent stiffness of the Liberty ships, was eliminated. Additionally, the Victory ship design included a 'tween deck in three cargo holds, electric winches for handling cargo and anchors, compared to steam-driven winches and capstans on Liberty ships.

The first Victory ship completed was the *SS United Victory*, launched on January 12, 1944, and delivered on February 28. The next 33 ships were named after member countries of the United Nations; those that followed were named for cities and towns in the United States and for American colleges and universities, all ending in the suffix "Victory." In total during the war years, the Maritime Commission built 414 Victory cargo ships and 117 Victory attack transports, designated as VC2-S-AP5 ships, for a total of 531 vessels. The majority of the 531 built, 272 vessels, were VC2-S-AP2, with 6,000-hp engines, followed by 141 VC-S-AP3, 8,500-hp vessels and one VC2-M-AP4, diesel-powered ship. When the war ended in August 1945, the Maritime Commission canceled contracts for an additional 132 vessels, however, three Victory ships (two AP3s and one AP5) were completed in 1946 as VC2-S1-AP7 vessels, modified as post-war passenger and cargo carriers by Alcoa Steamship Co., New York. The number of Victory hulls built in the United States totaled 534 ships.

Victory ships formed a critical maritime link to the theaters of war. These fast, large capacity carriers served honorably in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters of war. Ninety-seven of the Victories were converted to

troop carriers; the others carried food, fuel, ammunitions, material, and supplies. Three of the ships, the *SS Logan Victory*, the *SS Hobbs Victory*, and the *SS Canada Victory* were lost to kamikaze attack at Keram Retto and Okinawa in April 1945. The loss of these three ships, with their cargoes of 24,000 tons of munitions, including nearly all of the country's supply of 81mm mortar ammunition, was a serious blow to the Okinawa invasions, demonstrating the importance of the ships and their cargoes.

At war's end, a number of Victory ships were offered for sale by the Maritime Commission under the authority of the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946. Thirty-one AP-2 ships and 41 AP-3 ships were sold to U.S. firms, while 65 AP-2s and 33 AP-3s were sold abroad, most to Netherlands, Argentina, and Great Britain. Twenty vessels were loaned to the U.S. Army, and the rest were placed in mothballs as part of the National Defense Reserve Fleet, at eight different sites around the country. Some vessels were reactivated to serve during times of national crisis, including the Korean and Vietnam conflicts and the 1956 closure of the Suez Canal. Other vessels were retained as logistic support ships as part of the Military Sealift Command (MSC). Beginning in 1959, eight Victory ships were reclassified and refitted as instrumentation, telemetry, and recovery ships for the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NOAA). Victory ships also served America's space program. On August 11, 1960, for example, the former SS Haiti Victory recovered the nose cone of Discoverer XIII, the first man-made object recovered from space.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Sailing History of the SS AMERICAN VICTORY

The AMERICAN VICTORY was delivered to the U.S. War Shipping Administration by California Shipbuilding at Terminal Island, Los Angeles, California, on June 20, 1945. (Photograph #1). The AMERICAN VICTORY was the 442nd ship built by the shipyard. Her hull designation was No. 792. She was named after American University in Washington, DC, to honor the school's contributions to war training and weapons research during both World War I and World War II.

Her inaugural voyage began in Long Beach, California, on July 3, 1945, sailing with a full load of military cargo bound for Manila in the Philippines. After delivering cargo to Manila, she made port calls in Singapore, Shanghai and Calcutta before retuning to Manila to load equipment bound for the U.S.

From June 29, 1946 until November 26, 1947, American Export Lines operated the ship. During this time, the AMERICAN VICTORY carried foodstuffs and machinery to Europe and Russia under the auspices of the Marshall Plan, delivering cargo to the ports of Triesete, (Yugoslavia), Constanza (Romania), Piraeus (Greece) Odessa (Russia), Antwerp (Belgium), and other European ports.

On the outbound trip from Odessa, in January 1947, the captain of the Russian icebreaker *Turgenev* asked the AMERICAN VICTORY captain to delay his departure by a week because the Black Sea was icebound and the icebreaker needed time to clear a route through the ice. The captain advised that he could not afford to wait and

refused the request and then set sail, using the AMERICAN VICTORY as an icebreaker. She led several other ships out of the harbor and into the ice, including the *Turgenev.* This portion of the trip lasted about 36 hours, and severely taxed the AMERICAN VICTORY's engines because of the frequent need to reverse engines to get through the ice. Following her trip to Odessa, in ballast through rough ice-choked waters of the Black Sea and North Atlantic, she was laid up in dry-dock in Boston for hull repairs. While under the American Export Lines flag, she sailed mainly from Jersey City, New Jersey, and made several coastwise trips with port calls in Philadelphia and Baltimore.

She was de-activated and prepared for lay-up from November 27, 1947 through December 19, 1947, entering the Hudson River (NY) Reserve Fleet on December 19, 1947. She remained on in-active status until February 15, 1951. The U.S. Navigation Company chartered the AMERICAN VICTORY on February 15, 1951, under a general agency agreement charter until December, 1952, supplying American and Untied Nations troops during the Korean War from ports in the Untied States and Japan.

On December 30, 1952, the AMERICAN VICTORY was chartered under a government agency agreement to Dichmann, Wright, & Pugh, Inc. The AMERICAN VICTORY carried military cargo, vehicles and equipment during the Korean Conflict during and after the war, which ended on July 27, 1953. On January 6, 1954, the AMERICAN VICTORY was de-activated and entered the Sabine River Reserve Fleet, near Orange, Texas.

In 1963, The U.S. Navy developed a plan to acquire 15 Victory ships for use as "special project" vessels, among them the AMERICAN VICTORY. The plan called for conversion of the selected vessels for use as "Forward Depot" ships, which would be loaded with cargo, ammunition and other military supplies. The ships would then be anchored near potential "flash points" around the world to supply American troops if needed. As a likely result of growing political and military unrest in Southeast Asia from 1963 onward, the Navy canceled the conversion plan in February 1966, after only three of the 15 ships had been refitted. Had the Navy plan fully materialized, the AMERICAN VICTORY, then still in the Sabine River Reserve Fleet, would have been renamed the *USNS Carthage* (AG 185).

After eight years in the Sabine Reserve Fleet, the AMERICAN VICTORY was broken out on July 19, 1966, and chartered to Hudson Waterways Corporation under a general agency agreement to support American troops in Vietnam. Under control of the Military Sealift Transportation Service (MSTS), she operated between the U.S., Europe and the Far East carrying military supplies to South Vietnam. She sailed from Orange, Texas, to New Orleans for reactivation.

Hudson Waterways operated the AMERICAN VICTORY for over three years, sailing on several occasions to South Vietnam and Southeast Asia carrying ammunition, military equipment and supplies. One trip began in August 1966, sailing from New Orleans to Mobile to take on a cargo of 6 x 6 military trucks bound for Vietnam. She left Mobile on September 14 for New Orleans and a day later set sail for South Vietnam, via San

Pedro, California. She made two ports of call in South Vietnam, at Cam Ranh Bay and Qui Nhon, to discharge her load of vehicles. The AMERICAN VICTORY returned to the U.S. at Los Angeles on December 20, 1966.

In September 1967, the AMERICAN VICTORY set sail for Qui Nhon, South Vietnam from Yokohama, Japan with a load of military vehicles, 400 tons of telephone poles, and explosives. About a day out of Yokohama and sailing through the Philippine Sea, the ship was severely battered by Typhoon Diana.

During the typhoon, a non-watertight door to the emergency generating room on the aft end of the deckhouse sprung open. Seawater flooded into the room, shorting out the emergency switchboard, which caused a fire and loss of the main electric plant for several hours. The fire was extinguished and electrical service was restored. To repair deck damage caused by the telephone poles and the electric system, the AMERICAN VICTORY put into Buckner Bay in the Okinawa Islands and four days later resumed her journey to Qui Nhon. The following year, the AMERICAN VICTORY circumnavigated the world, making calls in Johannesburg, South Africa and other ports.

In June 1969, still under charter to Hudson Waterways, the AMERICAN VICTORY took on a full load of bombs at a port in North Carolina and sailed for Sattahip, Thailand. The AMERICAN VICTORY was to discharge cargo at an American air base in South Vietnam, but was instructed to anchor off Sattahip until a bombing halt over North Vietnam ended and the bombs in her holds were needed. On her return trip, she sailed to Battaan in the Philippines, then embarked for the U.S., via Pearl Harbor. The AMERICAN VICTORY then sailed through the Panama Canal to Norfolk, Virginia, where the voyage ended.

She was de-activated on October 24, 1969 and placed in the James River Reserve Fleet (JRRF), located on the James River near Norfolk, Virginia. While in the fleet, the AMERICAN VICTORY was protected from salt-water corrosion by a cathodic protection system and her interior spaces were sealed tight and dehumidified. The AMERICAN VICTORY was withdrawn from the JRRF on March 13, 1985 to participate in a government-sponsored Victory Ship Validation Program. The program was designed to gauge the time and expense necessary to activate mothballed Victory ships. She was activated to full operational status and performed sea trials, but returned to in-active status in the JRRF on June 24, 1985 (Photograph #12). In March 1988, the AMERICAN VICTORY's readiness status was downgraded, reducing the amount of regular maintenance she received.

In October 1996, Captain John C. Timmel, a Tampa Bay harbor pilot, attended a Propeller Club convention in Baltimore, Maryland. He participated in one of the convention activities, an evening cruise aboard the *SS John W. Brown*, a reconditioned Liberty ship and began thinking about the potential for bringing a similar ship to Tampa, Florida.

In February 1998, Timmel learned through the U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port of Tampa that several Victory ships in MARAD reserve fleets were earmarked for scrap if not acquired for memorial purposes. Timmel further considered the possibility of bringing a Liberty or Victory ship to Tampa for use as a museum and conducted an informal study of the idea. He determined that a memorial ship/museum would be feasible in Tampa.

Timmel and Charles A. Harden, a Tampa-based marine surveyor, visited U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) reserve fleets in the James River and the Beaumont River in Texas to survey available ships. Following the trip, Timmel and Harden selected the AMERICAN VICTORY as the vessel to be acquired for memorial purposes. Soon afterward, they secured significant local support in Tampa for turning the AMERICAN VICTORY into a mariner's memorial and museum vessel and formed the Victory Ship, Inc., in August 1998.

Three months later, The Victory Ship, Inc. received title conveyance legislation for the AMERICAN VICTORY, part of the final legislative action of the 105th Congress. MARAD approved the title transfer in April 1999, and in September 1999, the AMERICAN VICTORY was towed from the James River Reserve Fleet to Tampa, arriving on September16 (Photograph 13).

Beginning in September 1999, and continuing, the ship exterior has been sandblasted and painted and restoration work performed on her interior, deck and machinery spaces. In April 2000, the AMERICAN VICTORY was moved to her current location, Berth 271, (Photograph 14) adjacent to The Florida Aquarium, in Tampa's Channelside District.

In December 2000, the American Welding Society (AWS), a prestigious professional organization which sets worldwide welding standards, designated the AMERICAN VICTORY as a "Historic Welded Structure," the first afforded to a ship of the Victory class. The AWS presents the award to welded structures having either historic and/or technical significance. Construction techniques used to build the AMERICAN VICTORY and the other ships of the Victory class made extensive use of welding as a means of joining parts of the ships together. Welding was a vast improvement over the riveting method used predominantly on Liberty ships. The AWS award presented to the AMERICAN VICTORY reads:

> *"The AWS Historical Welded Structure Award is honorably bestowed upon the SS American Victory in recognition of the increased cargo and troop transport needs available by this American merchant ship during World War II and in appreciation of its valuable contribution to the welding industry, symbolizing for all generations a continued vision into the future"*

CONCLUSION

At the time *SS Jeremiah O'Brien* was launched in 1943, the design for a class of emergency vessels to replace the Liberty ships was underway. The new vessels were to be faster, with more modern steam plants, better trim and stability, stronger hulls, and more efficient, electrically driven winches and windlasses and improved navigation equipment. In April 1943, the new class was introduced as the "Victory Ship," and production commenced. The first Victory ship launched, *SS United Victory*, was delivered on February 28, 1944. From that point until the end of the war, the U. S. Maritime Commission constructed 414 Victory ships, and 117 Victory ship attack transports - a total of 531 ships.

Victory class ships entered the war at an important juncture, in mid-1944, ferrying supplies and troops to the European and Pacific theaters, including critical battle action in the Pacific Theater at Okinawa and Iwo Jima. Three Victory ships were lost to kamikaze attack during the Okinawa campaign, the only ships of the class lost to direct enemy action. Vital partners of the Liberty class ships, Victory ships became indispensable participants in the war effort.

After the war, many of the ships remained in service, ferrying troops home and helping rebuild ravaged Europe, the South Pacific, and Asia. Victory ships were recalled to war service during the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, and some were modified as support ships for the burgeoning American space program in the 1960s. The AMERICAN VICTORY represents the distinctive characteristics of the Victory class vessels, a nationally significant type in the categories "Military" and "Transportation", specifically: naval history, naval engineering, maritime commerce during wartime, and wartime transportation.

The obsolete fleet of Victory ships has gradually declined since 1945. None of the privately sold, modified ships nor the vessels in military use are known to be in service today, either in the Untied States or abroad. Victory ships in the three U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) fleets around the country number less than 20, out of the 534 produced during the mid-1940s.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

American Welding Society, "Historic Welded Structure" plaque, presented to the *SS American Victory* on December 13, 2000.

Bunker, John Corley. Liberty Ships: The Ugly Ducklings of World War II, (Annapolis: United States Naval Institute, 1972)

Historic Naval Ships Association, "Historic Naval Ships Association Members," Historic Naval Ships: A Guide to more than 100 Classic Warships on Public Display. No date.

Interviews with former *SS American Victory* crewmen, on file on board the *SS American Victory*

Mitchell, W.H., and Sawyer, L.A., The Liberty Ships (Newton Abbott, Devon, England: David & Charles, 1970)

Mitchell, W.H., and Sawyer, L.A. Victory Ships and Tankers: The History of the "Victory" Type Cargo Ships and of the Tankers Built in the United States of America during World War II (Newton Abbott, Devon, England: David & Charles, 1974)

U.S. Department of Transportation. United States Coast Guard Merchant Vessels of the United States, 1981, January 1, 1981, Volume I, Page 91, listing for the *SS American Victory.*

Verbal Boundary Description:

All that area contained within the extreme length and breadth of the vessel.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire area of the vessel as she floats at her berth.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

INFORMATION FOR LABELLING ITEMS 1 and 2 APPLIES TO ALL PHOTOGRAPHS

1) *SS American Victory*

2) Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida

3) California Shipbuilding Company

4) June 20, 1945

5) Unknown

6) *SS American Victory* at launching, June 20, 1945, California Shipbuilding Company, Terminal Island, CA

7) 1/14

3) Jeff Young
4) September 16, 1999
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory* moving up Garrison Channel toward Tampa Bay Shipbuilding & Repair. Shot from the port (left) side forecastle looking aft, showing the classic, distinct lines of a Victory Class vessel superstructure.
7) 2/14

3) Jeff Young
4) May 30, 2001
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The forward part of the *SS American Victory's* forecastle, showing the windlass and deckhouse, shot from starboard (right) side looking forward.
7) 3/14

3) Jeff Young
4) May 30, 2001
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory's* original No. 2 forward lifeboat, port side. Shot from the boat deck facing aft.
7) 4/14

3) Jeff Young
4) May 30, 2001
5) SS American Victory archives
6) Captain's quarters on the cabin deck, starboard side of the *SS American Victory*. Shot facing aft.
7) 5/14

3) Jeff Young
4) May 30, 2001
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory* galley, on the main deck, shot facing the port side.
7) 6/14

3) Jeff Young
4) May 30, 2001
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory* crew's mess, starboard side of the main deck, shot facing forward.
7) 7/14

3) Jeff Young
4) May 30, 2001
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory's* gyro-compass, cabin deck, port side aft. Photograph shot facing starboard aft.
7) 8/14

3) Jeff Young
4) May 30, 2001
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory's* radio room, located on the cabin deck, port side amidship. Photograph shot from the portside passageway looking toward the port side.
7) 9/14

3) Jeff Young
4) May 30, 2001
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory's* wheelhouse, located on the bridge deck. Shot from the starboard side looking left.
7) 10/14

3) Jeff Young
4) May 30, 2001
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory's* engine room control station, starboard side, three decks below the main deck. Photograph shot from the starboard side looking forward.
7) 11/14

3) U.S. Maritime Administration
4) June 1985
5) Unknown
6) The *SS American Victory* undergoing sea trials in the Atlantic Ocean off of Norfolk, Virginia, 1985.
7) 12/14

3) Jeff Young
4) September16, 1999
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory* as she nears her temporary berth. The photograph shows the unique profile of a Victory Class vessel, cargo masts, and raised forecastle.
7) 13/14

3) Mike Pease
4) April 21, 2000
5) SS American Victory archives
6) The *SS American Victory* at her home berth, Berth 271, 705 Channelside Drive, Tampa Florida.
7) 14/14

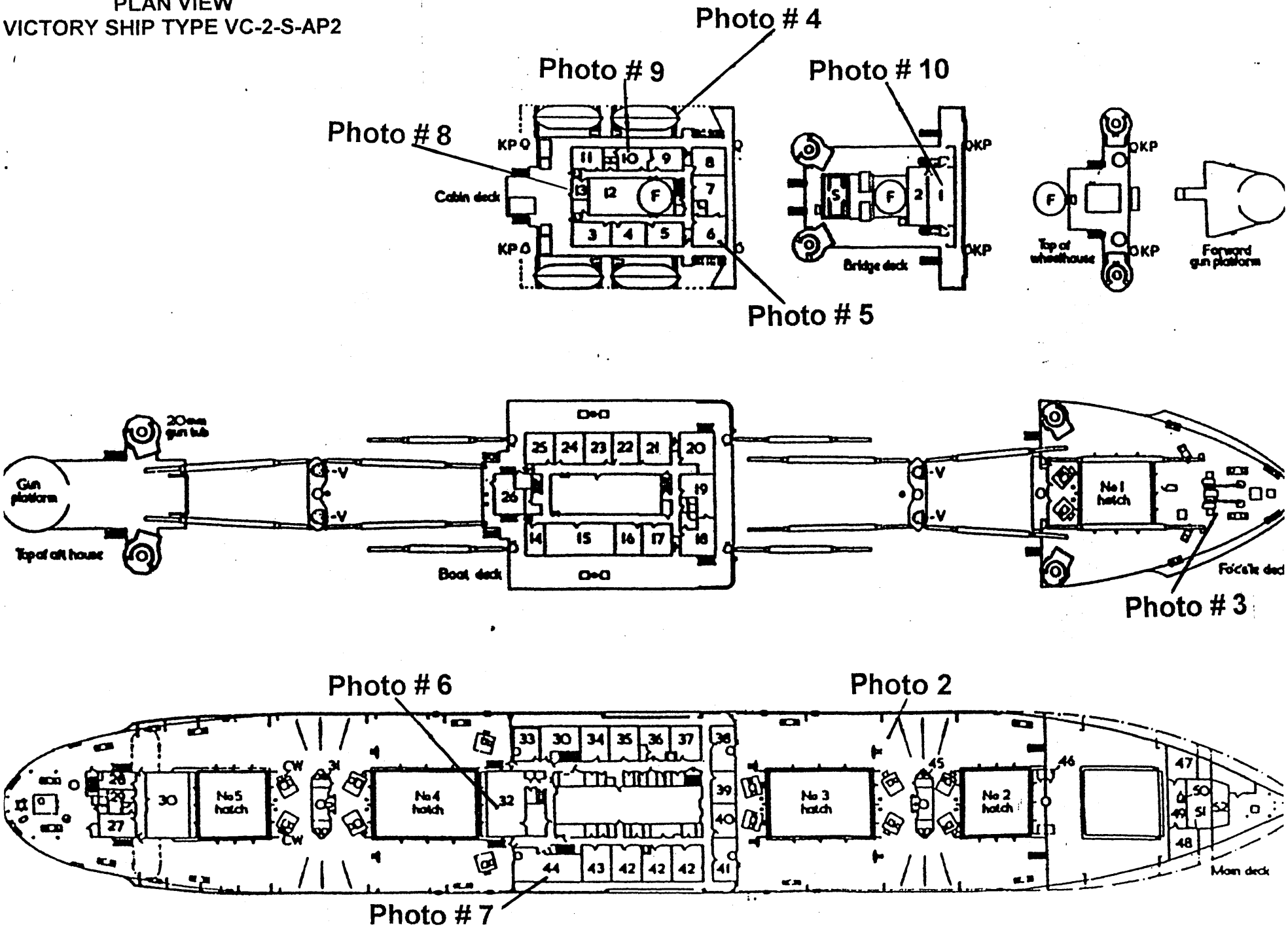
DIAGRAMS

D-1
Plan view, Victory Ship Type VC-2-S-AP3 (U.S. Maritime Commission stock plan for the *SS American Victory*) **(Note: Ship compartments/cabins are identified at bottom of D-2.) Locations of photographs 3-10 are identified on D-1 and D-2).**

D-2
Elevation view, Victory Ship Type VC-2-S-AP3 (U.S. Maritime Commission stock plan for the *SS American Victory*)

D-3
Cut-away view, Victory Ship Type VC-2-S-AP 3(U.S. Maritime Commission stock plan for the *SS American Victory*)

D-1
PLAN VIEW
VICTORY SHIP TYPE VC-2-S-AP2



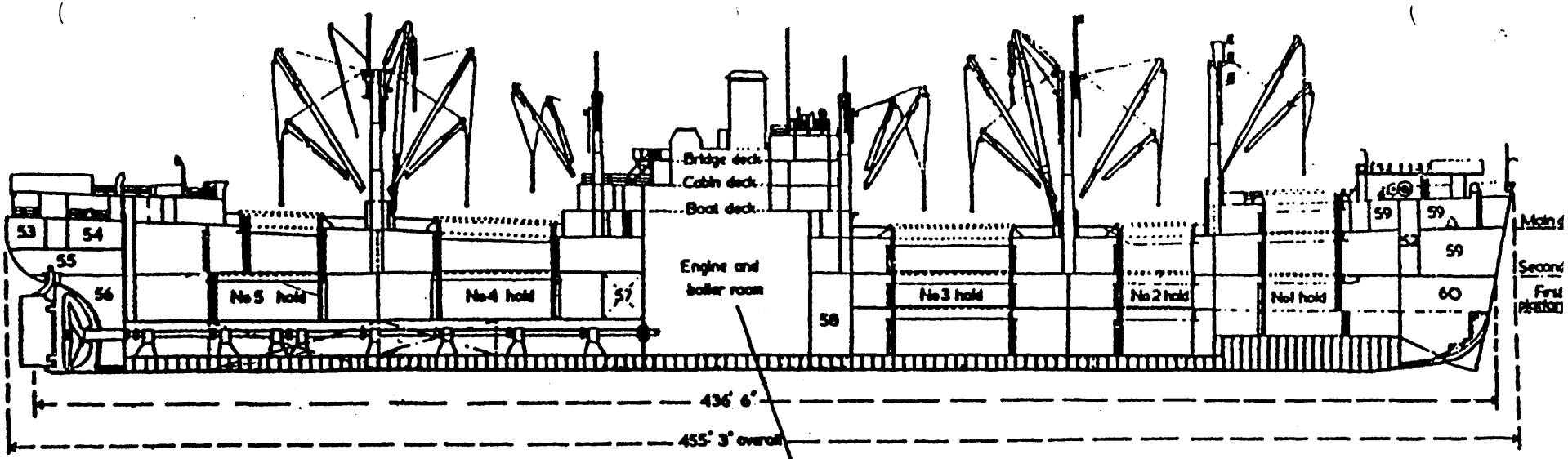


Photo 11

Key to deck plans and profile

Bridge deck:
1 Wheelhouse
2 Chartroom

Cabin deck:
3 2nd mate
4 3rd mate
5 Junior 3rd mate
6 Captain
7 Captain's office
8 Chief officer
9 Radio and radar operators
10 Radio room
11 Gunnery officer
12 Machinery casing
13 Gyro room

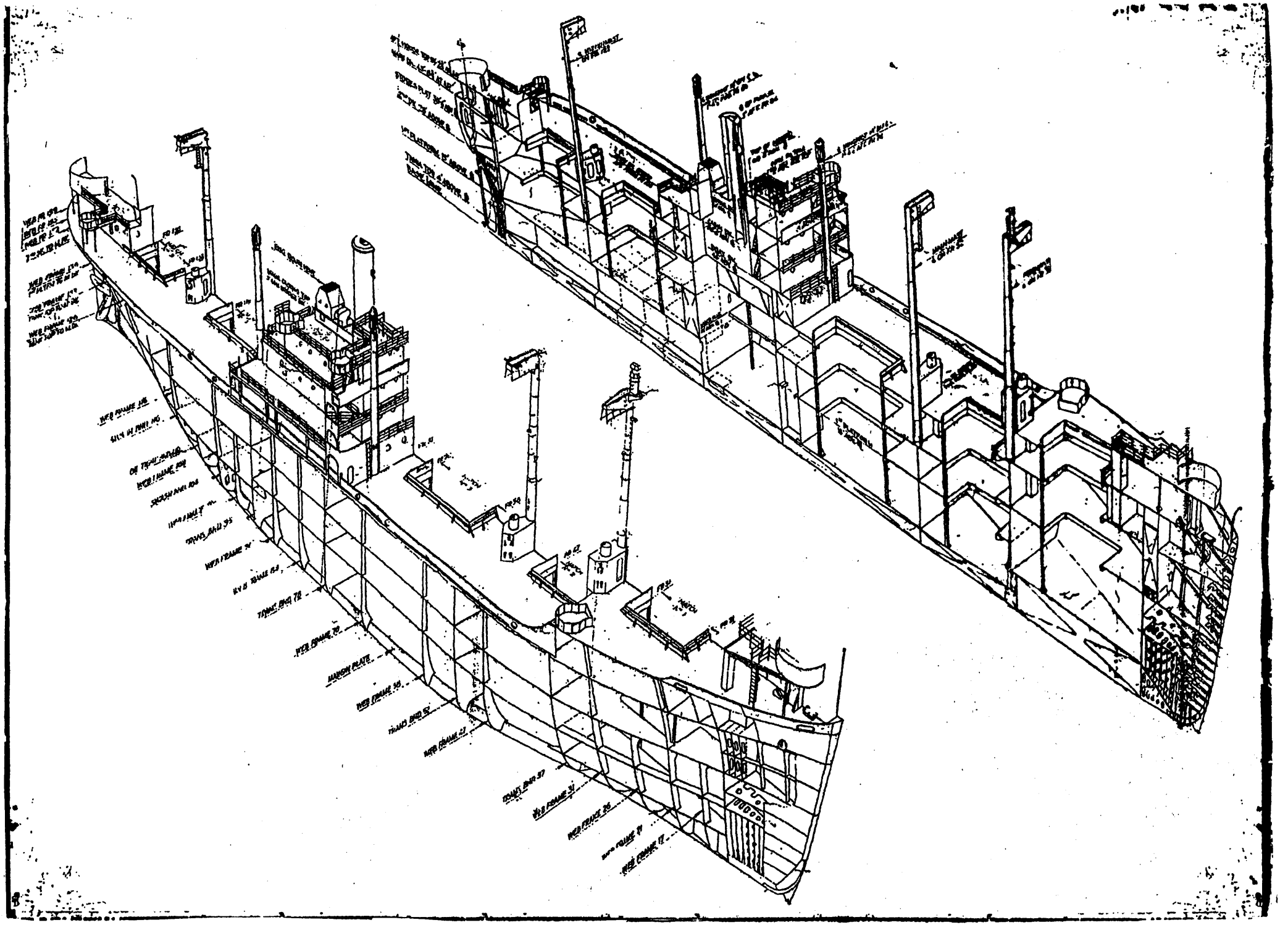
Boat deck:
14 Officers' pantry
15 Officers' mess
16 Ship's office
17 Spare
18 Chief engineer
19 Chief engineer's office
20 1st assistant engineer
21 Cadets
22 Officers
23 Junior 3rd assistant engineer
24 3rd assistant engineer
25 2nd assistant engineer
26 Generator room

Main deck:
27 Wipers
28 Gunner's pantry
29 Toilets and showers
30 Gunners
31 Nos 4 & 5 holds escape and vent trunk
32 Galley
33 Chief steward
34 Cook and utility men
35 Messmen
36 Hospital
37 Firemen
38 Oilers
39 Electricians
40 Bos'n and carpenter
41 Junior engineers
42 Seamen
43 Cooks
44 Crew's mess
45 No 3 hold escape and vent trunk
46 Nos 1 & 2 holds escape and vent trunk
47 3in ammunition
48 20mm ammunition
49 Handling room
50 Ammunition hoist
51 Store
52 Chain locker

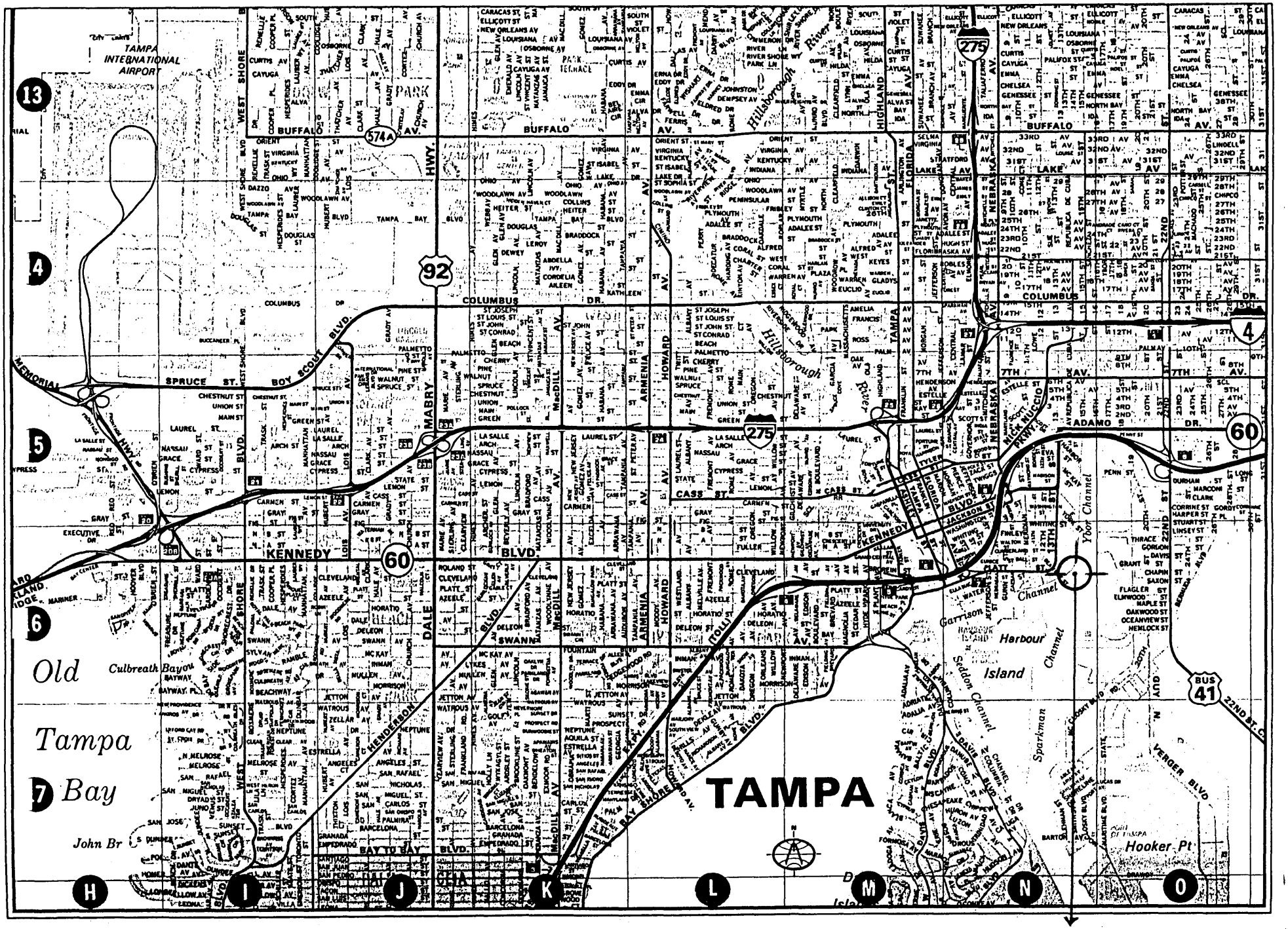
Profile:
53 Rope locker
54 5in ammunition
55 Steering gear
56 Afterpeak
57 Fresh water
58 Fuel oil settling tanks
59 Stores
60 Forepeak

CW = cargo winch (14 in all)
F = funnel
KP = kingpost
S = skylight
V = ventilator

ELEVATION VIEW
COMPARTMENT/CABIN LISTING



D-3 CUT-AWAY VIEW, VICTORY SHIP TYPE VC-2-S-AP2


TAMPA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
WEST SHORE BLVD.
HIGHLAND AV.
Hillsborough River
BUFFALO AV.
574A
HWY.
92
COLUMBUS DR.
MEMORIAL HWY.
SPRUCE ST.
BOY SCOUT BLVD.
MABRY
HOWARD
ARMENIA
TAMPA
FLORIDA
NEBRASKA
MICHIGAN
275
4
60
41
KENNEDY BLVD.
CASS ST.
JACKSON ST.
ADAMO DR.
7TH AV.
HENDERSON BLVD.
DALE MABRY
SWANN
PLATT ST.
CLEVELAND
HORATIO
DELEON
MORRISON
JETTON
WATROUS
SUNSET
NEPTUNE
ESTRELLA
ANGELES
SAN RAFAEL
SAN MIGUEL
SAN NICHOLAS
SAN CARLOS
BARCELONA
GRANADA
EMPEDRADO
BAY TO BAY BLVD.
Old Culbreath Bayou
Tampa Bay
John Br
TAMPA
Harbour Island
Garrison Channel
Seddon Channel
Sparkman Channel
Ybor Channel
Hooker Pt
VERGER BLVD
22ND ST.
SS AMERICAN VICTORY
H
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