

= SS Pennsylvanian =

SS Pennsylvanian was a cargo ship built in 1913 for the American @-@ Hawaiian Steamship Company . During World War I she was requisitioned by the United States Navy and commissioned as USS Pennsylvanian ( ID @-@ 3511 ) in September 1918 , and renamed two months later to USS Scranton . After her naval service , her original name of Pennsylvanian was restored .

Pennsylvanian was built by the Maryland Steel Company as one of eight sister ships for the American @-@ Hawaiian Steamship Company , and was employed in inter @-@ coastal service via the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the Panama Canal after it opened . Pennsylvanian was one of the first two steamships to travel eastbound through the canal when it opened in August 1914 . During World War I , as both SS Pennsylvanian and USS Scranton , the ship carried cargo and animals to France , and returned American troops after the Armistice in 1918 .

After her naval service ended in 1919 , she was returned to her original owners and resumed relatively uneventful cargo service over the next twenty years . Early in World War II , the ship was requisitioned by the War Shipping Administration , and shipped cargo on New York ? Caribbean routes and transatlantic routes . In mid @-@ July 1944 , Pennsylvanian was scuttled as part of the breakwater for one of the Mulberry artificial harbors built to support the Normandy Invasion .

= = Design and construction = =

In September 1911 , the American @-@ Hawaiian Steamship Company placed an order with the Maryland Steel Company of Sparrows Point , Maryland , for four new cargo ships ? Minnesotan , Dakotan , Montanan , and Pennsylvanian . The contract cost of the ships was set at the construction cost plus an 8 % profit for Maryland Steel , with a maximum cost of \$ 640 @,@ 000 each . The construction was financed by Maryland Steel with a credit plan that called for a 5 % down payment in cash with nine monthly installments for the balance . Provisions of the deal allowed that some of the nine installments could be converted into longer @-@ term notes or mortgages . The final cost of Pennsylvanian , including financing costs , was \$ 70 @.@ 35 per deadweight ton , which came out to just under \$ 716 @,@ 000 .

Pennsylvanian ( Maryland Steel yard no . 127 ) was the final ship built under the original contract . She was launched on 29 March 1913 , and delivered to American @-@ Hawaiian in June . Pennsylvanian was 6 @,@ 547 gross register tons ( GRT ) , and was 429 feet 2 inches ( 130 @.@ 81 m ) in length and 53 feet 6 inches ( 16 @.@ 31 m ) abeam . She had a deadweight tonnage of 10 @,@ 175 LT DWT and a storage capacity of 491 @,@ 084 cubic feet ( 13 @,@ 906 @.@ 0 m3 ) . Pennsylvanian had a single quadruple expansion steam engine powered by oil @-@ fired boilers that drove a single screw propeller . It could propel the ship at a speed of 15 knots ( 28 km / h ) . The engine had cylinders of 25 ½ inches ( 65 cm ) , 37 inches ( 94 cm ) , 53 ½ inches ( 136 cm ) and 78 inches ( 200 cm ) diameter by 54 inches ( 140 cm ) stroke . It was built by the Maryland Steel Company , Sparrows Point , Maryland .

= = Early career = =

When Pennsylvanian began sailing for American @-@ Hawaiian , the company shipped cargo from East Coast ports via the Tehuantepec Route to West Coast ports and Hawaii , and vice versa . Shipments on the Tehuantepec Route would arrive at Mexican ports ? Salina Cruz , Oaxaca , for eastbound cargo , and Coatzacoalcas for westbound cargo ? and would traverse the Isthmus of Tehuantepec on the Tehuantepec National Railway . Eastbound shipments were primarily sugar and pineapple from Hawaii , while westbound cargoes were more general in nature . Pennsylvanian sailed in this service on the west side of North America .

After the United States occupation of Veracruz on 21 April 1914 ( which found six American @-@ Hawaiian ships in Mexican ports ) , the Huerta @-@ led Mexican government closed the Tehuantepec National Railway to American shipping . This loss of access , coupled with the fact that the Panama Canal was not yet open , caused American @-@ Hawaii to return in late April to its

historic route of sailing around South America via the Straits of Magellan . With the opening of the Panama Canal on 15 August , American @-@ Hawaiian ships switched to taking that route . Pennsylvanian , on the west side of the canal when it opened , was one of the first two eastbound steamers to traverse the canal during her trip to New York . In late August , American @-@ Hawaiian announced that Pennsylvanian would sail on a San Francisco ? Panama Canal ? Boston route , sailing opposite of Mexican , Honolulan , and sister ship Washingtonian . When landslides closed the canal in October 1915 , all American @-@ Hawaiian ships , including Pennsylvanian , returned to the Straits of Magellan route again .

Pennsylvanian 's exact movements during 1916 and 1917 are unclear . She may have been in the half of the American @-@ Hawaiian fleet that was chartered for transatlantic service . She may also have been in the group of American @-@ Hawaiian ships chartered for service to South America , delivering coal , gasoline , and steel in exchange for coffee , nitrates , cocoa , rubber , and manganese ore . However , when the United States entered World War I in April 1917 , the entire American @-@ Hawaiian fleet , including Pennsylvanian , was requisitioned by the United States Shipping Board ( USSB ) , which then returned the ships for operation by American @-@ Hawaiian .

= = U.S. Navy service = =

On 13 September 1918 , Pennsylvanian was transferred to the U.S. Navy at New York and commissioned USS Pennsylvanian ( ID @-@ 3511 ) the same day . Assigned to the Navy 's Naval Overseas Transportation Service ( NOTS ) , Pennsylvanian loaded a general cargo and sailed for Brest , France , on 30 September . She arrived there on 15 October and sailed for La Pallice the next day , where she unloaded her cargo before departing for New York on 5 November .

Arriving at New York on 15 November , four days after the Armistice , Pennsylvanian was refitted as an animal transport ship , which , among other things , required the building of ramps and stalls for the animals . Sometime in November , probably during her refit , she was renamed USS Scranton , becoming the first U.S. Navy ship named in honor of the Pennsylvania city . Scranton sailed for France on 12 December , arriving at Saint @-@ Nazaire on 29 December , and returning to New York on 29 January 1919 .

On 5 February , Scranton was transferred from the NOTS to the Navy 's Cruiser and Transport Force , and began conversion to a troop transport to carry American personnel home from France . While sailing to France to begin her first troop @-@ carrying duties in late March , Scranton suffered damage to her rudder and was disabled 900 nautical miles ( 1 @,@ 700 km ) east of New York . Navy transport El Sol responded to Scranton 's distress call , and attempted to take Scranton under tow . During the day on 28 March , Scranton attempted to run a towline to El Sol by sending a launch in the rolling seas , but it capsized , drowning three men . El Sol stood by Scranton for over 40 hours until minesweeper Penguin arrived and took Scranton under tow . Penguin and Scranton arrived in New York on 3 April , where Scranton entered drydock to undergo repairs .

After repairs , Scranton made three roundtrips to France and carried some 6 @,@ 000 troops and passengers home to the United States before she was decommissioned on 19 July . The ship was handed over to the USSB for return to American @-@ Hawaiian , who restored her original name .

= = Interwar years = =

Pennsylvanian resumed cargo service with American @-@ Hawaiian after her return from World War I service . Though the company had abandoned its original Hawaiian sugar routes by this time , Pennsylvanian continued inter @-@ coastal service through the Panama Canal in a relatively uneventful career . One incident of note occurred on 28 November 1930 , when Pennsylvanian hit a Southern Pacific ferry near Goat Island ( present @-@ day Yerba Buena Island ) in a dense fog in San Francisco Bay . Pennsylvanian hit the stern of the ferry and caused damage to the ferry 's superstructure and destroyed about 15 feet ( 4 @.@ 6 m ) of the ferry 's railing . No one on either ship was injured .

Other hints of Pennsylvanian's activities throughout the rest of her career can be found from contemporary newspaper reports . In October 1929 , the Los Angeles Times reported on a shipment that included 2 @, @ 500 to 3 @, @ 000 radio sets among Pennsylvanian's 2 @, @ 300 long tons ( 2 @, @ 340 t ) of cargo . In March 1938 , The Christian Science Monitor reported that Pennsylvanian's captain , C. M. Bamforth , had temporarily turned the deck of the cargo ship into a boatyard to build a 15 @-@ foot ( 4 @. @ 6 m ) catboat for his son in Swampscott , Massachusetts . Bamforth laid the keel while in San Francisco , bought copper rivets for the hull planking in Portland , Oregon , and began painting the boat after Pennsylvanian had traversed the Panama Canal . He expected to have the boat finished when Pennsylvanian arrived in Boston on 22 April .

In October the same year , Pennsylvanian delivered 325 long tons ( 330 t ) of steel parts for the Hale Telescope then under construction at the Palomar Observatory outside San Diego . The ship had picked up the \$ 375 @, @ 000 cargo in Philadelphia before sailing for San Diego .

= = World War II = =

At some point after the United States entered World War II , Pennsylvanian was requisitioned by the War Shipping Administration ( WSA ) , and , as with her pre @-@ U.S. Navy service in World War I , she continued to be operated by American @-@ Hawaiian . From July to September 1942 , Pennsylvanian sailed between New York and Caribbean ports , calling at Trinidad , Key West , Hampton Roads , Guantánamo Bay , and Cristóbal . In January 1943 , Pennsylvanian called at Bandar Abbas , Iran , on the Persian Gulf , and returned to Caribbean sailings again by March 1943 .

Between May and September 1943 , Pennsylvanian made four transatlantic crossings between New York and Liverpool , making intermediate stops in Loch Ewe and Methil while in the United Kingdom . The cargo ship made two New York ? Guantánamo Bay roundtrips between September and December before resuming transatlantic sailings . After two New York ? Liverpool roundtrips between late December 1943 and April 1944 , Pennsylvanian left the United States for the final time on 19 May 1944 , arriving in Liverpool on 2 June . She called at the British ports of Methil , Loch Ewe , Clyde , and Milford Haven in late June and early July , and , sailing from Barry in mid July , Pennsylvanian arrived at Saint @-@ Laurent @-@ sur @-@ Mer , France . There she was scuttled as part of the breakwater for the Mulberry artificial harbor built to support the Normandy Invasion .

In March 1945 , the WSA offered a payment of \$ 565 @, @ 910 to American @-@ Hawaiian for Pennsylvanian as part of a \$ 7 @. @ 2 million settlement for eleven requisitioned American @-@ Hawaiian ships that had either been sunk , scuttled , or were to be retained by the government .