

= SS Dakotan =

SS Dakotan was a cargo ship built in 1912 for the American @-@ Hawaiian Steamship Company that served as a transport ship in the United States Army Transport Service in World War I , and then was transferred to the Soviet Union under Lend @-@ Lease in World War II before being finally scrapped in 1969 . During World War I , she was taken over by the United States Army as USAT Dakotan . Near the end of that war she was transferred to the United States Navy and commissioned as USS Dakotan (ID @-@ 3882) . During World War II , the ship was transferred to the Soviet Union and renamed SS Zyrianin (or ???????? in Cyrillic) .

Dakotan 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 . During World War I , as USAT Dakotan , the ship carried cargo and animals to France . Dakotan was in the first American convoy to sail to France after the United States entered the war in April 1917 . In Navy service , USS Dakotan carried cargo to France and returned over 8 @, @ 800 American troops after the Armistice .

After her Navy service ended in 1919 , she was returned to her original owners and resumed relatively uneventful cargo service over the next twenty years . Dakotan ran aground off the coast of Mexico in 1923 but was freed and towed to port for repairs . Early in World War II , the ship was requisitioned by the War Shipping Administration and transferred to the Soviet Union under the terms of Lend @-@ Lease in December 1942 . Sailing as SS Zyrianin , the ship remained a part of the Soviet merchant fleet into the late 1960s .

= = 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 , Pennsylvanian , and Montanan . The contract cost of the ships was set at the construction cost plus an 8 % profit for Maryland Steel , but with a maximum cost of \$ 640 @, @ 000 per ship . 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 . The deal had provisions that allowed some of the nine installments to be converted into longer @-@ term notes or mortgages . The final cost of Dakotan , including financing costs , was \$ 66 @. @ 00 per deadweight ton , which totaled just under \$ 672 @, @ 000 .

Dakotan (Maryland Steel yard no . 125) was the second ship built under the original contract . She was launched on 10 August 1912 , and delivered to American @-@ Hawaiian in November . Dakotan was 6 @, @ 537 gross register tons (GRT) , and was 428 feet 9 inches (130 @. @ 68 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 492 @, @ 519 cubic feet (13 @, @ 946 @. @ 6 m3) . A single steam engine with oil @-@ fired boilers driving a single screw propeller provided her power ; her speed was 15 knots (28 km / h) . The steamer had accommodations for 18 officers , 40 crewmen , and could carry up to 16 passengers .

= = Early career = =

When Dakotan 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 arrived at Mexican ports ? Salina Cruz , Oaxaca , for eastbound cargo , and Coatzacoalcas for westbound cargo ? and traversed the Isthmus of Tehuantepec on the Tehuantepec National Railway . Eastbound shipments were primarily sugar and pineapple from Hawaii , while westbound cargoes were general in nature . Dakotan sailed in this service on the east side of North America .

At the time of the United States occupation of Veracruz on 21 April 1914 , Dakotan was in port at

Coatzacoalcos . There she loaded 127 American refugees from sugar plantations in the area and steamed to Veracruz . As a consequence of the American action , the Huerta @-@ led Mexican government closed the Tehuantepec National Railway to American shipping .

In early May , The New York Times reported that Dakotan had sailed to Cristóbal to pick up a cargo of sugar that had been originally slated for transport via Tehuantepec . According to the article , the sugar was to be carried on barges through the still @-@ unopened Panama Canal , then loaded onto Dakotan . There was no indication in the newspaper whether this mission was completed or not , but it is known that American @-@ Hawaii returned to its historic route of sailing cargo around South America via the Straits of Magellan after Tehuantepec was closed but before the canal opened .

With the opening of the Panama Canal on 15 August , American @-@ Hawaiian ships switched to using the canal . In early September , American @-@ Hawaiian announced that Dakotan would sail on a route from New York via the canal to San Francisco and on to either Seattle or Tacoma . When landslides closed the canal in October 1915 , all American @-@ Hawaiian ships , including Dakotan , returned to the Straits of Magellan route .

In 1916 , Dakotan was one of several American @-@ Hawaiian cargo ships chartered by the DuPont Nitrate Company to carry sodium nitrate from Chile to the United States . Dakotan and the other cargo ships in this South American service would typically deliver loads of coal , gasoline , or steel in exchange for the sodium nitrate . In May , The Christian Science Monitor reported on what may have been a typical delivery for Dakotan . The ship had left Tocopilla with 91 @, @ 872 bags ? about 9 @, @ 000 long tons (9 @, @ 100 t) ? of sodium nitrate for use in making explosives , and , after transiting the newly reopened Panama Canal , arrived in Philadelphia .

= = World War I = =

After the United States declared war on Germany in April 1917 , the United States Army , needing transports to move its men and materiel to France , convened a select committee of shipping executives who pored over registries of American shipping to evaluate transport capabilities . The committee selected Dakotan , her sister ship Montanan , and twelve other American @-@ flagged ships that were sufficiently fast , could carry enough fuel in their bunkers for transatlantic crossings , and , most importantly , were in port or not far at sea . After Dakotan discharged her last load of cargo , she was officially handed over to the Army on 29 May .

Before troop transportation began , all of the ships were hastily refitted . Of the fourteen ships , four , including Dakotan and Montanan , were designated to carry animals and cargo ; the other ten were designated to carry human passengers . Ramps and stalls were built on the four ships chosen to carry animals . Gun platforms were installed on each ship before it docked at the Brooklyn Navy Yard , where the guns were put in place . All the ships were manned by merchant officers and crews but carried military personnel : two U.S. Navy officers , Navy gun crews , quartermasters , signalmen , and wireless operators . The senior Navy officer on board would take control if a ship came under attack .

The American convoy carrying the first units of the American Expeditionary Force was separated into four groups ; Dakotan was in the fourth group with her sister ship Montanan , Army transports El Occidente and Edward Luckenbach , and accompanied by the group 's escorts : cruiser St. Louis , U.S. Navy transport Hancock , and destroyers Shaw , Ammen , and Flusser . Dakotan departed with her group on the morning of 17 June for Brest , France , steaming at an 11 @-@ knot (20 km / h) pace . A thwarted submarine attack on the first convoy group , and reports of heavy submarine activity off of Brest resulted in a change in the convoy 's destination to Saint @-@ Nazaire .

Dakotan departed Saint @-@ Nazaire on 14 July in the company of her convoy mates El Occidente , Montanan , and Edward Luckenbach . Joining the return trip were Army transport Momus , Navy armed collier Cyclops , Navy oiler Kanawha , and cruiser Seattle , the flagship of Rear Admiral Albert Gleaves , the head of the Navy 's Cruiser and Transport Force .

Sources do not reveal Dakotan 's movements over the next months , but on 6 September 1917 , the Naval Armed Guardsmen aboard Dakotan shelled a German submarine after its periscope had been

sighted . On 29 January 1919 , Dakotan was transferred to the Navy and commissioned the same day , with Lieutenant Commander J. Simmons , USNRF , in command . Outfitted for service as a troop transport to return American servicemen from Europe , Dakotan made five transatlantic roundtrips to France as part of the Navy 's Cruiser and Transport Force between 15 February and 20 July . Eastbound journeys delivered cargo to Saint @-@ Nazaire and Bordeaux for the Army of Occupation ; westbound trips returned soldiers to the United States . Dakotan carried a total of 8 @,@ 812 troops on her five westbound voyages . Dakotan returned from her final voyage on 20 July , was decommissioned at New York on 31 July , and returned to American @-@ Hawaiian the same day .

== Interwar years ==

Dakotan resumed cargo service with American @-@ Hawaiian after her return from World War I service . Although the company had abandoned its original Hawaiian sugar routes , Dakotan continued inter @-@ coastal service through the Panama Canal in a relatively uneventful manner over the next twenty years . One incident of note occurred on 20 August 1923 when Dakotan issued distress calls after she ran aground at Cabo San Lázaro on the Pacific coast of Mexico . The Navy transport ship Henderson and the Standard Oil tanker Charles Pratt responded to Dakotan 's calls . Charles Pratt successfully freed Dakotan , which had suffered damage to her rudder post in the accident . The American @-@ Hawaiian ship Nevadan arrived and towed Dakotan to Los Angeles for repairs .

In 1933 , two members of Dakotan 's crew had medical emergencies that received news coverage . The first , in February , involved a seaman with an abdominal disorder . He was transferred from the eastbound Dakotan to the Dollar Line ocean liner President Hayes which carried him to Los Angeles to receive medical attention . The second occurred in July when Dakotan 's quartermaster came down with appendicitis near Balboa . Radio calls for assistance brought the U.S. Navy 's Destroyer Division 7 to Dakotan 's aid . The destroyer unit 's medical officer boarded Dakotan and performed an appendectomy on the man , who was too ill to be moved off the ship .

== World War II and later career ==

After the United States entered World War II , in 1941 - though most of Europe had been involved since summer 1939 - Dakotan was requisitioned by the War Shipping Administration (WSA) , but continued to be operated by American @-@ Hawaiian . In December 1942 , Dakotan was transferred to the Soviet Union under Lend @-@ Lease , and renamed Zyrianin (??????? Russian pronunciation : [zʲɪrʲənʲn]) . Throughout the rest of the war , Dakotan made at least one trip to the United States , being photographed in port at San Francisco in August 1943 . Near the end of World War II , the WSA offered a payment of \$ 670 @,@ 210 to American @-@ Hawaiian for the former Dakotan as part of a \$ 7 @.@ 2 million settlement for eleven American @-@ Hawaiian ships that had been requisitioned by the WSA . Zyrianin remained a part of the Soviet merchant fleet through the 1960s , and was listed in Lloyd 's Register until the 1970 ? 71 edition .

Zyrianin was operated by the Far East Shipping Company (FESCO) from 1943 to 1957 . From 1957 , she was operated by the Black Sea Shipping Company . The ship was written off and scrapped at Split , Yugoslavia in 1969 .