

= SS Samuel Huntington =

SS Samuel Huntington was an American liberty ship during World War II . She was the 248th liberty ship authorized by the United States Maritime Commission and was named in honor of Samuel Huntington , a signer of the American Declaration of Independence . SS Samuel Huntington was launched in 1942 and sailed to ports in the Pacific , South America , Africa , and the United Kingdom . She was one of a select group of liberty ships that were outfitted to carry a limited number of either troops or prisoners of war . As part of a convoy to resupply the Allied troops at Anzio , she sank after a successful German bomb attack in January 1944 .

= = Construction = =

Samuel Huntington was laid down on 20 January 1942 by Permanente Metals Corp. on ship way number four at their No. 2 Yard in Richmond , California . She was the 248th liberty ship authorized by the United States Maritime Commission and the 48th ship begun at the ship yard . The Huntington ? a type EC2 @-@ S @-@ C1 , or standard , liberty ship ? was launched on 26 April , and delivered on 18 May . She was completed in 118 days , spending 96 on the ways and 22 on the water before delivery . She was one of about 220 liberty ships , about one out of every 10 made , that were outfitted to carry a limited number of either troops or prisoners of war . Sources are not clear when the passenger capability was added to Samuel Huntington , but modifications of this sort were made after November 1942 .

= = Service history = =

Ten days after her delivery , Samuel Huntington departed San Francisco for Los Angeles . Sailing from that port on 31 May 1942 , she arrived at Suva in the Fiji Islands on 19 June . After the Huntington made her way to Lautoka , she departed there on 6 July for Chile . After arriving at Antofagasta on 29 July , the cargo ship worked her way up and down the South American coast , calling at Iquique on 30 July , Valparaiso on 7 August , and Punta Arenas on 13 August . Sailing from Punta Arenas the next day , she navigated the Straits of Magellan , crossed the South Atlantic , and arrived at Cape Town , South Africa , on 2 September .

Sailing from Cape Town on 6 September , Samuel Huntington sailed around the African continent , calling at Durban on 10 September , and arriving at Aden , on the Arabian peninsula , in mid September . Departing there on 24 September , the Huntington sailed up the Red Sea , calling at Massaua on the Eritrean coast on 26 September and Suez on 1 October . Departing Suez on 12 October , she retraced her track around Africa , calling at Port Sudan on 18 October , Durban on 2 November , Cape Town on 7 November . Leaving the same day , she crossed the South Atlantic and headed for Paramaribo , Suriname .

Samuel Huntington arrived at Paramaribo on 27 November , and sailed three days later for Trinidad . After arriving at that Caribbean port on 1 December , the Huntington waited for a week before sailing in convoy TAG @-@ 27 to Guantanamo Bay with 12 other ships . After arriving at Guantanamo Bay on 12 December , the convoy , dropping four ships , reformed as convoy GN.27 headed for New York City and departed the same day . The Huntington , calling at a U.S. port for the first time in seven months , arrived at New York on 19 December .

The Huntington departed New York as a part of Convoy SC @-@ 118 headed for Liverpool via Halifax on 24 January . As the convoy , which consisted of 60 ships and 26 escorts , sailed near Iceland , a wolf pack of Kriegsmarine U @-@ Boats attacked the convoy repeatedly over a four @-@ day period . Some 20 U @-@ boats participated , sinking 12 Allied ships , including Henry R. Mallory , a troop transport that went down with 272 men ? more than half of her passengers and crew ; three U @-@ boats were lost . Samuel Huntington departed the convoy and arrived at Clyde on 11 February .

After calling at Belfast Lough in early April , Samuel Huntington made her way to Liverpool to join Convoy ON 181 to New York . Departing on 30 April as one of 48 merchant ships in the convoy , the

liberty ship made port at New York on 17 May . The convoy reported no submarine activity , and about two @-@ thirds of the convoy were able to take target practice on icebergs during the voyage .

Samuel Huntington next departed New York on 13 June for Oran as a part of Convoy UGS @-@ 10 . Joining 74 other merchant ships and their 28 escorts , the Huntington made it safely to Oran on 5 July ; another ship in the convoy was sunk by a U @-@ boat . During her participation in Operation Husky , the Allied invasion of Sicily , the Huntington and fellow liberty ships William W. Gerhard and William Mulholland all suffered casualties from an air attack on 1 August at Palermo . Damage to the ship was apparently minor enough that she was ready to sail nine days later , when she joined Convoy GUS @-@ 12 ? which had originated in Alexandria and was destined for Hampton Roads , Virginia ? to return to the United States . Samuel Huntington left the convoy as it neared the U.S. east coast , and headed for New York , arriving there on 5 September .

After making her way to Hampton Roads , Samuel Huntington departed for Casablanca on 5 October as part of Convoy UGS @-@ 20 , where she arrived on 21 October . Eight days later , she joined Convoy GUS @-@ 19 ? a 110 @-@ ship Alexandria ? Hampton Roads convoy ? and headed for home . She arrived in Baltimore on 16 November . Shifting to Hampton Roads in early December , Samuel Huntington prepared to depart on what would be her last sailing from the United States .

The Huntington ? in Convoy UGS @-@ 27 , a 115 @-@ ship convoy ? sailed from Hampton Roads on 15 December for Oran , arriving there on 3 January 1944 . She departed from Oran on 16 January and arrived at Naples five days later . One week later , Samuel Huntington sailed to Anzio where she anchored one @-@ quarter mile (400 m) off the beach on 29 January with 7 @,@ 181 long tons (7 @,@ 296 t) of cargo , including ammunition , canned gasoline and TNT .

= = = Sinking = = =

At sunset on 29 January , Luftwaffe bombers planes armed with Henschel Hs 293 anti @-@ shipping guided missiles attacked the ships at anchor off Anzio . British cruiser Spartan was hit amidships and rolled over on her port side and sank with a loss of 65 men . Soon after Spartan was hit , another Hs 293 slammed into Samuel Huntington , penetrating to her boiler room before exploding and killing four men . The force of the explosion blew out two of her cargo hatches , launching a jeep into the stricken ship 's flying bridge in the process . With no power , and , hence , no way of fighting the fire , Samuel Huntington 's master ordered the ship abandoned , and the crew lowered her lifeboats and headed away from the ship . Fifteen minutes after the bomb 's blast , another explosion rocked the ship , throwing a cloud of debris over 1 @,@ 000 feet (300 m) in the air , and raining shrapnel on ships as far as 1 1 ? 2 miles (2 @,@ 400 m) away .

After the second explosion , Samuel Huntington settled to the bottom , but because the bottom had been only 3 feet (0 @.@ 91 m) below her keel , most of the ship remained above the water . U.S. Navy salvage ship Weight came alongside the Huntington and trained two deck water guns and a 2 @.@ 5 @-@ inch (6 @.@ 4 cm) water hose to douse the fires . When the task seemed accomplished , Weight pulled away . The fires flared up again four hours later and Weight returned to fight the conflagration again . After tending to other ships damaged during the raid , Weight returned a third time . By the early morning hours on 30 January , any hope of salvaging Samuel Huntington or her cargo ended when the fires reached her load of canned gasoline . The resulting explosion completely destroyed the ship and again rained shrapnel on nearby ships . When the smoke cleared , no trace of the Huntington remained .