

NAVY DEPARTMENT

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WAR RECORD OF USS PRINCE GEORGES

The USS PRINCE GEORGES has a workhorse record which typifies all the ships of the vast "A" fleet--the secret weapon which has conquered the enormous distances of the Pacific.

The PRINCE GEORGES' log shows more than 75,000 miles of travel with far more time at sea than in port. During 22 months at sea, the PRINCE GEORGES made more trips than any other vessel in the same division. She never suffered a breakdown and has been in a yard for but one major overhaul. During that time it was more "work" than "fight". Enemies the crew have known, include fatigue, cold, heat, boredom and the relentless sea, as well as the Japanese.

Originally named the SS RICHARD MARCH HOE, for the inventor of the high speed rotary newspaper press, the PRINCE GEORGES was first manned in Alaskan waters by a merchant marine crew following her launching at Richmond, California, in 1942.

After three troop-carrying trips, the Navy took the vessel over with just five days notice in October 1943. Breaking records, the new Navy crew commissioned and outfitted the vessel in that short span and sailed into the warmer Pacific waters to serve as a link in the vital logistics chain.

She was at Eniwetok and later performed a job in the Marianas. Her first trip to the Marianas was during the invasion of Saipan, when she came so close to the embattled beach that Marine gunfire deafened her crew. Jap shrapnel dented her superstructure as she lay anchored in the harbor and spent antiaircraft shell fragments rattled like rain on her decks.

Next the PRINCE GEORGES shuttled through the Palaus for a month on cargo runs. Then the ship headed for Noumea, where the crew spent Christmas. Auckland was the next port of call and the crew went ashore for five days of well-deserved liberty. The compass next swung to a course for Noumea, and then to Saipan, by now a familiar port of call.

During the time covered by this short history of the PRINCE GEORGES the ship was commanded by Lieutenant Commander William Jos. Lane, U.S.N.R., of 1987 California Street, San Francisco, California and by Lieutenant Commander Laurent O. Hess, U.S.N.R., of 560 Fifth Avenue, Beaumont, Texas, the present captain.

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