

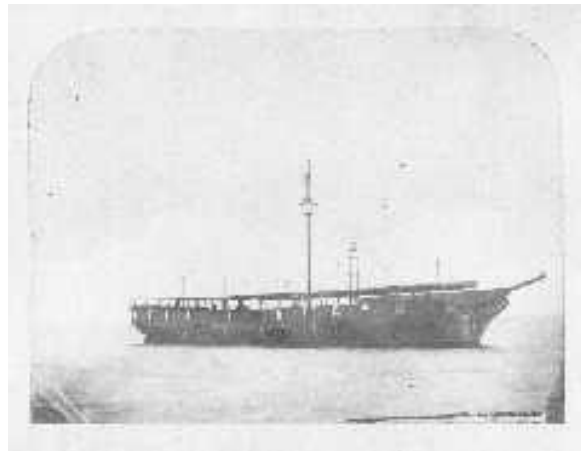


U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

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U.S. Coast Guard Lightships

A Historic Photo Gallery



Original caption: "Merrill's S. Bank Lightship, 1847--iron boat of 400 tons--L.S. not numbered--discontinued Aug 10, 1860; replaced by a screw pile Lt. House in 1860; 'W' on history sheets." 8th Dist [7M.] Photograph; no photo number; 1847; photographer unknown.

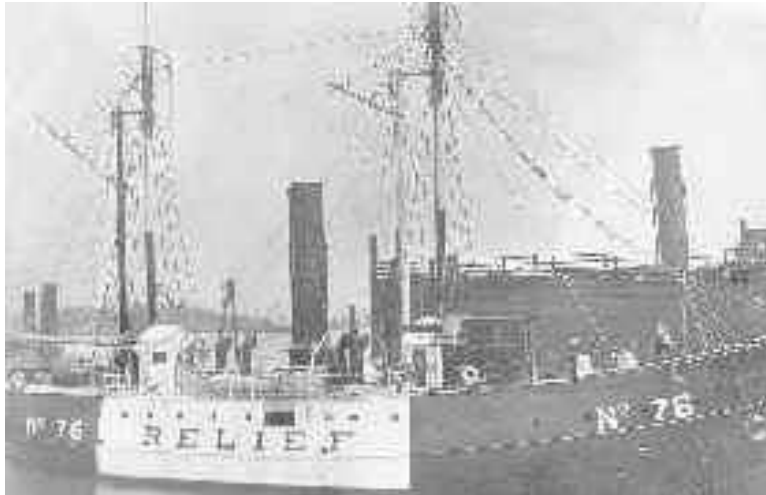


No original caption/date; Photo No. 092260-05; Ninth Dist. -- Cleveland official photograph; photographer unknown.



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No original caption/number; date/photographer unknown.

LV 76: she served as a relief lightship on the west coast for her entire career which spanned 1904-1960.



No original caption; Light House Board Photo No. 10093; 7 January 1909; photograph by N. L. Stebbins.

LV 87 served on the Ambrose station from her commissioning in 1907 through 1932. She then served on a variety of stations until she was decommissioned in 1962.



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Original caption: "February 17/1912, L. Vessel No. 95." No number; 17 February 1912; photographer unknown.

The LV 95 sank at the docks of her builder, the Racine-Truscott-Shell Lake Boat Co on 26 December 1911; the builder then raised her on 20 February 1912, three days after this photograph was taken. She served on the Milwaukee station until 1932 and then served as a relief lightship until she was decommissioned in 1965.



Original caption: "Ambrose Chan'l LV. 87, ent -- to N.Y. Harbor, White Star Liner Olympic passing." No photo number; photo is dated 5 January 1912; photographer unknown.



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No original caption/photo number; photograph is dated 1917; photographer unknown.

LV 71 was commissioned into service in 1897 and served on the Diamond Shoals station, alternating with LV 69 and LV 72 and also serving as a relief lightship. While on the Diamond Shoal station on 6 August 1918, she reported by radio a warning to passing shipping about an Imperial German Navy submarine, the U-140, which had attacked a freighter in full view of the lightship crew. The Germans intercepted her message, closed with the lightship, and, after giving the crew time to abandon ship in the lifeboats, opened fire with their deck gun and sank her.



Original caption: "OFF LAZARETTO DEPOT." No photo number; photograph dated 29 August 1923; photographed by Jas. F. Hughes Co., Baltimore, MD. LV-91 in 1923.



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No original caption/photo number; April, 1934; photographer unknown.

The Cunard-White Star limited liner SS *Olympic*, sister to the *Titanic*, passes very close aboard the LV-117 on the Nantucket station in early April 1934. The lightship had been rammed already once that year in the fog, and the following month the *Olympic* actually collided with LV-117 and sent it to the bottom in seconds. Four crewmen went down with the ship while the *Olympic* rescued the remaining seven. Three of these men died later from injuries and exposure. The British Government paid for the construction of LV 112 as reparation for the accident.



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Original caption: "L.S. #117." Photo No. 43; 26 February 1931; photograph by "G.E.E."

LV 117, on station soon after her commissioning in 1930. This photo was taken three years prior to her fateful rendezvous with the SS *Olympic*.



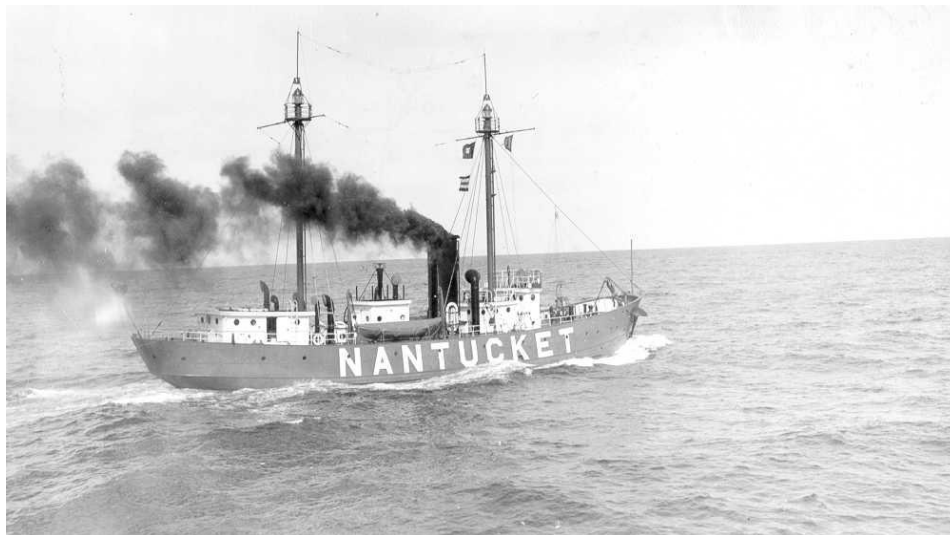


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Original caption: "LEAD KINDLY LIGHT - SAILORS' VERSION: New York. . . Contrary to popular belief the gigantic skyline of New York is not the first sight of the U.S. enjoyed by the incoming voyager, but the shining twin beacons of the Nantucket Lightship. Situated 100 miles off the mainland in Lat. 40.37 North; Long. 69.37 West, the Nantucket Lightship, most isolated one known, is the most important guide for westbound liners en route to New York or Boston. The first Nantucket, established in 1852, bore only a light for the guidance of mariners. The present one, thanks to the progress of science, is a marvel of mechanical ingenuity. In addition to powerful twin lights the present Nantucket has a radio beacon that works automatically for 24 hours a day and can be heard for 1500 miles. It also boasts a submarine oscillator, audible for 60 miles, when fog, the mariner's worst foe, blankets the Atlantic the Nantucket turns on her 'diaphone,' a device that is operated by compressed air to send warning blasts over 35 miles of ocean. So powerful are the vibrations set up by this instrument every 15 seconds that the ship trembles in every rivet and sleep for the crew of 11 men becomes impossible. The present lightship is anchored to the ocean bed by 160 fathoms of chain, right over the grave of her predecessor which was sunk when rammed by the liner Olympic in May, 1934. The crew does three months duty aboard and 1 month liberty ashore. Since the predecessor of the present Nantucket Lightship was rammed and sunk by the liner Olympic in May, 1934, with a loss of seven lives, a weekly fire and lifeboat drill is a routine feature aboard. Here the candid camera looks on while the life-jacketed crew goes through its paces." International News Photo; no photo number/date; photographer unknown.

LV 106 on relief at the Nantucket station, probably in 1934.





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Original caption: "LS 112 -- 1936." Photo No. 385 (?); 14 September 1936; photograph by George F. Stewart, U.S.L.H.S.

The LV 112 underway. She was the largest lightship ever built in the U.S. and she was paid for by the British Government in reparation for the collision and sinking of the LV 117 in 1934 by the liner Olympic.



Original caption: "LS 112 WAL 534." Photo No. 4581-1; date/photographer unknown.

The bridge of the LV 112; the photograph probably dates from 1936, the year she was built.



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Original caption: "Radio--LS 112, 1936." Photo No. 214; 1936; photographer unknown.



Original caption: "LV 106 -- 110, SPAR DECK." No number; date/photographer unknown.

Photo was probably taken in 1923-24 and provides a view of the spar deck of either the LV 106, 107, 108, 109, or the 110, all of which were sister lightships built by the Bath Iron Works company and entered service in 1923.



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No original caption; Photo No. 659; date/photographer unknown.

LV 73 on the Vineyard Sound station where she served from 1924 through 1944. On 14 September 1944 she was carried off station during a hurricane and sank with the loss of all hands.



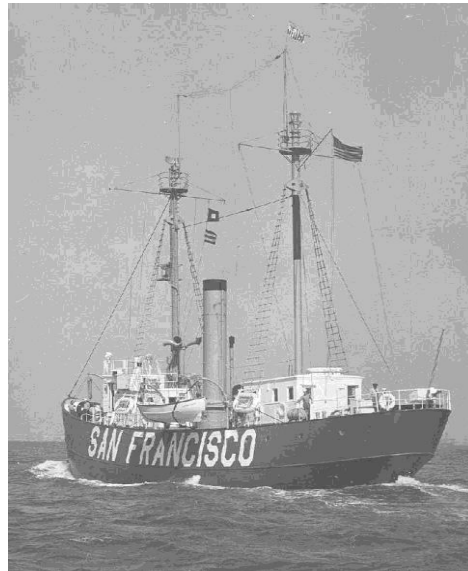
Original caption: "U.S.C.G. 83 -- BROAD ON BOW; General Engineering & Drydock Company, Alameda, California, 1942 August 19." Photo No. 6689-4L; 19 August 1942; photographer unknown.

The LV 83 (WAL-508) outfitted for war. Many of the lightships were armed and served as examination vessels outside of the major ports of the U.S. during the war while others remained on duty as lightships. The LV 83 was redesignated as a "YN" vessel--a net tender--for the course of the war and served as an examination vessel for San Francisco. She returned to lightship duty at the end of the war and remained in service until 1960.



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Original caption: "SAN FRANCISCO Lightship No. 83, 24 August, 1947, On trial trip after machinery overhaul, installation [of] new decks (caulked with Minnesota Mining & Mfg. Co. No. EC-754), duplex lanterns, cargo hatch and davits. Cargo ports permanently closed off." Photo No. 9244711; 24 August 1947; photographer unknown.



Original caption: LS-108 underway view after completion of conversion, C.G. Yard, Curtis Bay, MD., 6/29/45. LIGHTSHIP NO. 108, again refitted in 1945 for duty as a lightship on Five Fathom Bank." Photo No. 821-2; 29 June 1945; photo by H. Davis.



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Original caption: "LIGHTSHIP #106: Collision damage sustained when PCE/R/851 hit LS #106 at 1230 [on] 13 November, 1949, PORT QUARTER FRAME #9."No photo number/date; photographer unknown.

Lightship duty was inherently dangerous, as evidenced by this collision, although in this instance there were no fatalities.



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Original caption: "USCG LIGHTSHIP (WAL-523): 'Relief' is a 133-foot, diesel electric, single screw vessel built in 1929 at Portland, Oregon for the former U.S. Lighthouse Service. She is based at the Coast Guard Base, Yerba Buena Island, San Francisco as are the other two lightships operated in the 12th CG District. She carries one officer, in command, and 18 men. The Commanding Officer is authorized in the rank of Chief Warrant Boatswain.

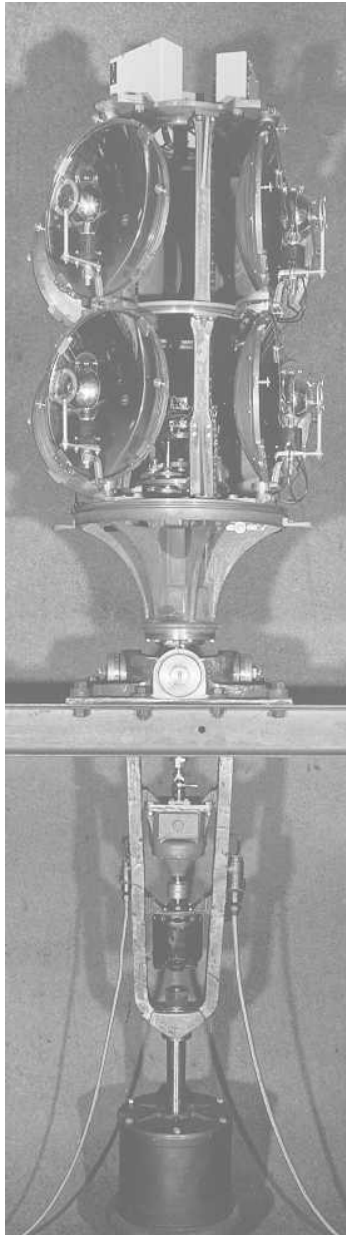
This vessel is: 133' 3" in length overall; 30' beam; 11' 9" forward draft, 13' 3" aft.; 630 tons displacement. With her diesel-electric engines this lightship can cruise 6,800 nautical miles, and her top speed is 8.0 knots. Fuel capacity is 26,000 gallons and water capacity is 11,539. WAL-523 carries one AN/SPN-11x type radar.

Accommodations aboard include one officer's stateroom, two CPO quarters and 19 enlisted berths. As a RELIEF vessel this unit relieves Lightships 612 (SAN FRANCISCO) and 605 (BLUNTS REEF) on station. Based at YBI [Yerba Buena Island] this unit has available to her all the military sources of supply found in the San Francisco Bay Area." Photo No. 12CGD-101760-1; 17 October 1960; photographer unknown.



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Original caption: "Stabilized optical apparatus built by CHANCE BROS for L.S. 613. Closeup showing catoptric type lens with reflecting mirrors. Four units where four bulbs or lamps are used. Lower section shows motor driven assembly and counterbalancing apparatus. AMBROSE, built in 1952-53, is the only lightship equipped with a modern catoptric type lens. Most other lightships, built long before AMBROSE, have fixed 500mm lanterns. (Copied from ECV Photo.)" No photo number; dated 13 May 1960; photographer unknown.



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No original caption; Photo No. I(d); date/photographer unknown.

WLV-605 on her way to or from her station at Overfalls. She entered service in 1951 and operated from the Overfalls station until 1960. She then served on the Blunts Reef station through 1969 and ended her Coast Guard career as a relief lightship for the west coast. She was decommissioned in 1975.





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No original caption; Photo No. CGRC 12226602; December, 1960.

FSCS Norman Krumpe, USCGR, recently emailed (15 November 2004) the Historian's Office with details about this photo:

"I have had this photo in my house since 1966. In reality this is the crew of the Five Fathom Lightship, WLV-530, and was taken in December, 1966. I remember the names, too. . .kneeling left to right: ENC Rebele, CS2 Krumpe (me), SN Kalinowski, NS Stein. Standing left to right: BM1 Rosen, EN3 Kemmerer, SN Haig."



Original Caption: "New York Harbor: AMBROSE LIGHTSHIP (WLV-613), last of the lightships to guide ships from all of the globe to busy New York Harbor, is pictured while still guarding her important post. The WLV-613 served as sentinel in Ambrose Channel at the entrance to Lower New York Bay from 1952 until August 23, 1967, when she yielded her duties to a new permanent Ambrose Offshore Light Structure. It was then that AMBROSE LIGHTSHIPS's farewell signalled the end of a succession of red lightships that guarded the New York Harbor entrance since 1823." Photo No. G-BPA-03-14-63 (01); March 1963; photo by Bersage.



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No original caption/photo number; February 1975; photographer unknown.

LV No. 112/WAL 534 on station in 1975.



Original caption: "Ambrose Lightship (WLV-613) makes farewell departure as new Ambrose Offshore Light Structure is placed in operation." No photo number; 23 August 1967; photo by PH2 Dorwin Douglass, USCG [3rd District Photo Lab, Governors Island, NY.].
