



The U.s. Navy's "Interim" LSM(R)s in World War II: Rocket Ships of the Pacific Amphibious Forces

Ron MacKay Jr., Foreword by Captain Wayne P. Hughes Jr. USN (Ret.)

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The "Interim" LSM(R) or Landing Ship, Medium (Rocket) was a revolutionary development in rocket warfare in World War II and the U.S. Navy's first true rocket ship. An entirely new class of commissioned warship and the forerunners of today's missile-firing naval combatants, these ships began as improvised conversions of conventional amphibious landing craft in South Carolina's Charleston Navy Yard during late 1944. They were rushed to the Pacific Theatre to support the U.S. Army and Marines with heavy rocket bombardments that devastated Japanese forces on Okinawa in 1945.

Their primary mission was to deliver maximum firepower to enemy targets ashore. Yet LSM(R)s also repulsed explosive Japanese speed boats, rescued crippled warships, recovered hundreds of survivors at sea and were deployed as antisubmarine hunter-killers. Casualties were staggering: enemy gunfire blasted one, while kamikaze attacks sank three, crippled a fourth and grazed two more. This book provides a comprehensive operational history of the Navy's 12 original "Interim" LSM(R)s.

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