Though the Royal Navy liked the higher load capability of the Mk-3, it soon discovered several construction deficiencies which led to the addition of longitudinal stiffeners which avoided the stresses to so lengthy a hull.

The Mk-4 measured 187 feet in length but had a much wider beam of almost 39 feet as opposed to 31 feet of the Mk-3 and a displacement of 586 tons. The wider beam was intended for cross-channel operations where the ferrying aspect was critical for the fast unloading of raiding assaults as opposed to sea-going use for the transfer of tanks and vehicles to smaller landing craft.

As the war broadened in scope after Pearl Harbor, the British production of LCTs increased. 350 Mk-3s were built (71 with Sterling gasoline engines) followed by over 800 Mk-4s powered with two of the reliable 460 h.p. Paxman diesels. These could carry nine M4 Sherman or six Churchill tanks. Carrying a load of 350 tons, the Mk-4 would be built throughout the war, being the largest LCT production in the English shipyards.

England’s hard-learned lessons in amphibious warfare would inure to the benefit of their Yankee allies. Soon to be mass-produced, American-made Mk-5 and Mk-6 LCTs, 160 of which were lend-leased to the Royal Navy, would be 177- and 120-footers, respectively, and both marks would be rated at about 285-ton displacement. These versions would see the largest number of LCTs procured with 500 Mk-5s and over 950 Mk-6s built by the war’s end.

Armament varied widely on the LCTs with the ponderous 2-pounder pom-pom mounts gradually losing favor to the more agile faster firing 20mm Oerlikons of later production. The Mk-4 also used a combination of 40mm Bofors/20mm Oerlikon which made them a superb gunfire support vessel.

As any LCT vet will admit, most landing Craft did need a certain measure of tender loving care!