

COMPANY "A"  
727TH AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BATTALION  
Aparri, Luzon  
Philippines

SUBJECT: History of Company.

TO : All officers & men concerned.

1. Following is a brief history of this company's activities from date of activation to VJ-Day:

- 29 Jan 44: Co "C" activated in East Garrison, Ft Ord, Calif. Lt Robert Barr, Company Commander.
- 1 Feb 44: 1st Sgt joined with ball-less whistle.
- 1 Mar 44: Lt McQuade assigned as Company Comdr.
- 7 Mar 44: Capt Keim assigned to Co & assumed command.
- 8 Mar 44: Co moved to Main Garrison. Co strength: 5 officers, 123 EM & 33 LVTs. Constructed & packed many boxes. Plenty of beach driving & maintenance.
- 2 Jun 44: Left Ft Ord, arrived at Camp Stoneman, Calif. Fall in line for beer & WACs.
- 15 Jun 44: Left Camp Stoneman arrived at Pittsburg, Calif Pier. Embarked on USS Catalina & went to Oakland Navy Pier. Boarded USAT Willard A Holbrook at 1900.
- 16 Jun 44: Left Oakland Navy Pier at 0830. Sailed out under Golden Gate Bridge, destination unknown. Slogan: "Golden Gate in '48"
- 23 Jun 44: Crossed equator fr N to S at 0800. 3000 more Shellbacks.
- 27 Jun 44: Crossed International Date Line at 2350 from E to W. Gained one day. It was night so didn't see it.
- 4 Jul 44: Arrived Morobe Harbor, New Guinea at 1330.
- 6 Jul 44: Left Morobe Harbor & tied up to dock at Finschhafen, Langemack Bay, British New Guinea at 1040. Disembarked in rain & mud at 1100. Wrong place! Re-embarked 1430.
- 12 Jul 44: Left Langemack Bay at 1430 for unknown destination.
- 15 Jul 44: Arrived at Hollandia, Humboldt Bay, Dutch New Guinea.
- 16 Jul 44: Disembarked from Holbrook into LCT, landed at Tjeweri Beach (White beach 3) at 1400. Then began the greatest project of jungle moving & bivouac moving known to man.
- 22 Jul 44: Co "C" redesignated as Co "A". Co strength soars to 5 officers, 189 EM & 51 LVTs. Lts McClain, Rothenberger & Wright transferred, Lts Corbin, Cush & Garfinkle joined as Platoon leaders. Capt Keim & Lt Blake retained as Co Comdr & Maintenance officers.
- 19 Aug 44: Lt Blake & Lt Corbin relinquished their rank of senior 2nd Lts in Army & received their silver bars.
- 28 Aug 44: Left Tjeweri Beach, set up bivouac area on Tami Beach in same operational area. Moved elaborate mess hall et al. (Tami, alias Sand Flea Paradise.)
- 2 Oct 44: 3rd Plat DS to 34th Inf Reg, 24th Inf Div as part of task force for Mike 1 operation.
- 3 Oct 44: 1st Plat DS to 19th Inf Reg, 24th Inf Div for Mike 1.
- 7 Oct 44: Keith D Kitchen crushed between 2 LVTs while loading on AK for Mike 1 operation, evacuated to U. S.
- 14 Oct 44: 2nd Plat DS to 19th Inf Reg, 24th Inf Div as part of task force for Mike 1 operation.
- 15 Oct 44: Rear echelon, "The Sand Bag Boys" move back to Tjeweri Beach.
- 20 Oct 44: A-Day on Leyte. 1st & 3rd Plats land on Red Beach, Leyte, Philippine Islands.
- 22 Oct 44: Rade Allen & crew have LVT knocked out while on mission to exterminate Japs. Sgt Beach & crew to the rescue. Sapp & Allen wounded. Allen, Monick & Sapp awarded Bronze Star Medal for activities this date. Over 60 Japs were less fortunate.
- 24 Oct 44: LVT assault on enemy positions near Palo credited with 20 Japs killed. 2nd Plat lands on Red Beach & joins forward echelon.



- 26 Oct 44: Forward echelon bivouaced in Palo, Leyte. Back in rear echelon in New Guinea, Carl Simpson goes berserk. Capt Keim recovering slowly from 3 hour interview with him.
- 2 Nov 44: Forward echelon in forced march under cover of darkness advanced to Carigara. Menagerie starts here.
- 3 Nov 44: Forward echelon moves bivouac area 2 mi W of Carigara & makes amphibious landing N of Capoocan. Too hot to handle, retreated to previously prepared positions.
- 10 Nov 44: Made amphibious landing on beach 3 mi N of Pinampoan.
- 15 Nov 44: New Guinea: Capt Keim & 21 EM leave to join forward echelon on Leyte. 1st Sgt with no officers & 56 hapless men remain in the Paradise of the Tropics.
- 21 Nov 44: Forgotten rear echelon in New Guinea boards USS Jose Pedro Varela in Humboldt Bay there to remain for 26 days before sailing for Leyte.
- 22 Nov 44: Sgt Harry Williams wounded in action evacuated to U.S. Capoocan bivouac area untenable. Mess kit water cans perforated by shrapnel. Filipino KPs desert, others felt like it.
- 24 Nov 44: C.O. & 21 men arrive on Leyte.
- 27 Nov 44: Small detachment sent to Calubian. The "Colonel" assumes command of entire township, GIs & civilians alike.
- 28 Nov 44: Maintenance swamped LVT in Naga River. Abandoned.
- 3 Dec 44: LVTs picked up survivors of B-25 shot down near Daha.
- 7 Dec 44: 3rd Anniversary of Pearl Harbor. Lt Blake, Sgt McGee & Cpl Walko witnessed what few Americans have; Jap landing at San Isadora & Daha from high ground while on horseback ride.
- 8 Dec 44: LVTs hold Calubian after Jap landing while civilians evacuate & continue to hold positions for several days under bombing & strafing attacks.
- 14 Dec 44: Co relieved from combat duty. 788th Amph Trac Bn takes over assignment.
- 15 Dec 44: Co arrives at staging area on Camiris Point.
- 21 Dec 44: Long lost rear echelon land on Leyte, absconding with ships beer.
- 22 Dec 44: Monkeys, parrots, cocks & dogs by now have assumed command.
- 24 Dec 44: Christmas Eve, case of beer per man & all the trimmings for a Christmas dinner. Whatta night!
- 25 Dec 44: Christmas Day! 1 LVT loaded with personnel was struck by a P-47 pursuit plane in a faulty take-off on Tanuan Field, Leyte, at 1420. Arthur R Black, Earl E Turner, Adrian J Davis, Stephen Bawolak & Thomas E Cook were instantly killed & Sgt William A Meyers seriously injured & later evacuated to U. S.
- 31 Dec 44: New Year's Eve. Was it bombs & paratroopers????????
- 2 Jan 45: LST on which 2nd Plat was preparing to embark was recipient of enemy bomb thereby decommissioning same.
- 3 Jan 45: Co loads on LSTs for secret destination, King 1 operation.
- 6 Jan 45: Weighed anchor in San Pedro Bay & joined convoy. Pretty rough, that China Sea.
- 11 Jan 45: S plus 2. Dropped anchor in Lingayen Gulf, Luzon. Land- ed near Dagupan & set up camp. Plenty of ship to shore work followed.
- 22 Jan 45: Company moved 10 miles to barrio Sobol.
- 2 Feb 45: James Stewart injured in LVT accident, evacuated to U.S.
- 7 Feb 45: Co moves back to Dagupan bivouac area.
- 9 Feb 45: 3rd Plat embarks on LSMs for secret destination.
- 12 Feb 45: 3rd Plat arrives at Subic Bay, Luzon.
- 15 Feb 45: 3rd Plat makes assault landing at Mariveles, Bataan.
- 22 Feb 45: For several days 3rd Plat has been having field day picking up & picking off Japs attempting to swim from Corregidor to Bataan.
- 13 Mar 45: LVTs make reconnaissance of caves on Corregidor to draw enemy fire.



- 19 Mar 45: 3rd Plat moves CP fr Mariveles to Corregidor. LVTs attempt reconnaissance of Cabillo Island. Forced to withdraw because of enemy resistance.
- 23 Mar 45: 3rd Plat arrived at Lingayen Gulf & join company.
- 24 Mar 45: Co begins embarking on USS Simon Bamberger.
- 26 Mar 45: Loading of ship completed. 19 LVTs & crews (3rd Plat) unable to get on ship, go back to Dagupan.
- 27 Mar 45: Departed for Morotai Island, NEI to join Aussies.
- 31 Mar 45: Dropped anchor in Leyte Gulf seeking shelter from typhoon.
- 2 Apr 45: Departed from Leyte Gulf.
- 4 Apr 45: Dropped anchor in Morotai Strait off coast of Morotai Island in the Moluccas.
- 9 Apr 45: LVTs discharged from USS Bamberger & company set up camp on Morotai Peninsula.
- 21 Apr 45: Company & attached personnel from Co "B" this Bn embarked on LSTs.
- 24 Apr 45: Dry run. LVTs disembarked from LSTs & simulate landing in rehearsal for coming mission.
- 27 Apr 45: Departed in convoy for Oboe 1 operation.
- 30 Apr 45: LST transporting Special Plat (2nd Plat) arrived in Celebes Sea off SW Tarakan Island. LVTs with attached engineers demolished Jap under-water beach defenses. This was P minus 1 day.
- 1 May 45: P-Day. 34 LVTs landed at H-hour (0815). Small arms enemy fire encountered. No casualties. Maintenance & reserve crews out on ships had thrill of seeing enemy torpedo pass under bow of their LST.
- 3 May 45: Co minus Special Plat leave for return to Morotai.
- 6 May 45: Land on Morotai & return to Bn bivouac area.
- 7 May 45: Special Plat depart from Tarakan Island.
- 11 May 45: Special Plat land on Morotai & join company.
- 12 May 45: VE-Day. Co staging for another mission. No beer.
- 14 May 45: Rear echelon (3rd Plat) joins Co on Morotai having travelled by LST from Luzon.
- 29 May 45: Co embarks on LSTs for Oboe 6 operation.
- 31 May 45: Dry run. LVTs discharged from LSTs & simulate landing in rehearsal of coming mission.
- 4 Jun 45: Departed from Morotai for mission.
- 10 Jun 45: Z-Day. Landed on Muara Island in Brunei Bay off NW Borneo at J-hour (0915). Donald E Westwood got his Purple Heart via slug in the shoulder.
- 11 Jun 45: All LVTs & personnel embark on assigned LSTs. Very warm - the weather.
- 12 Jun 45: Depart from Brunei Bay for return to Morotai.
- 18 Jun 45: Landed on Morotai Peninsula & joined battalion.
- 19 Jun 45: Prepare for Oboe 2 operation.
- 22 Jun 45: Co embarks on LSTs & await convoy formation.
- 23 Jun 45: Leave Morotai peninsula.
- 24 Jun 45: Dry run. LVTs discharged from LSTs & simulate landing on Jap occupied E coast of Morotai in rehearsal of Oboe 2 operation. Return to Morotai peninsula. Tokyo radio later reported that an Allied attempt to land troops was "repulsed".
- 26 Jun 45: Took position in convoy & departed from Morotai.
- 1 Jul 45: F-Day. All LVTs discharged into Makassar Strait & made assault landing at Klandasan in Balikpapan operational area Borneo at H-hour 0900. Robert F Ullmann wounded shortly after landing & died same day aboard hospital ship.
- 2 Jul 45: Clayton F Davis stopped piece of shrapnel in his shoulder. Enemy mortar shell exploded in Co area. For 20 days company makes numerous runs to Manggar & Sepinggang air strips.
- 20 Jul 45: Company embarks on LSTs.
- 21 Jul 45: Departed Balikpapan Bay, Borneo.
- 28 Jul 45: Arrived at San Fernando, La Union, Luzon, P. I.



- 29 Jul 45: Received orders to proceed to N Luzon. Too close to civilization at San Fernando for the 727th.
- 30 Jul 45: Arrive off shore Linao Lighthouse, Aparri, Luzon. Discharged from LSTs & set up camp in battalion area near Linao Lighthouse.
- 3 Aug 45: Joseph F Masterson, Dallas F Pohlmann, Raymond R Sacramo Lindsey E Sole, Luther R (Ole Man) Copeland & Frank W McMurray left Co for return & discharge in U. S. under point system.
- 6 Aug 45: One officer & 52 EM move to Aparri for purpose of operating LCMs & port facilities.
- 11 Aug 45: Co moves 500 yards. Set up permanent bivouac area.
- 13 Aug 45: In seven days built best mess hall in Far East. Never got to use it.
- 14 Aug 45: Henry N Kraus returned to U. S. for temporary duty.
- 22 Aug 45: Lt Cush returned to U. S. for temporary duty.
- 30 Aug 45: Co moved from Linao Lighthouse across river to Aparri. Build another mess hall.
- 2 Sep 45: VJ-Day. General of the Army, Douglas MacArthur accepts formal surrender of Japanese aboard battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay, Japan. Gen Yamashita in our own area has not surrendered. Beer, case, 1 each, M1A1 authorized & issued to all company personnel. MORALE EXCELLENT.

2. The above are extracts from the Record of Events section of the company morning report. Personal experiences if included in this record would probably fill volumes and prove both interesting as well as hair-raising for you & yours for years to come. At some time in the future one of you possibly will compile such a narrative but under present circumstances shortage of materials prevent this.

3. Certainly this Company has not been a perfect one but find another company of nearly 200 officers & men in the entire U.S. Army who as a whole have worked, played & fought with a better record; find another outfit that has undergone any more hardships or any more periods of leisure; any more periods of steady grind or periods of waiting; find one that can move more jungle or build better mess halls & latrines; find a company that excelled us in any of these & only then will you have found a perfect company. We may have been the forgotten soldiers in this war but we may well have the satisfaction of adding to our records the notation in heavy type: "Well done".

4. Soon we will be going home - never no more to roam. We shall not forget those we leave behind who will never return.

5. Respectfully submitted.

*Spencer W. Sissell*  
SPENCER W SISSELL  
1st Sgt 34131146