

U.S.S. FAYETTE (APA-43)

309

APA43/A16-3/A9-8/hj  
Serial 055

Care of Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California.  
23 October 1944.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

From: The Commanding Officer:  
To : The Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet. 11 0624  
Via : (1) Commander Task Unit 78.1.32 (CTD-6).  
(2) Commander Task Unit 78.1.3 (CTD-24).  
(3) Commander Task Group 78.1 (Commander 7th Amphibious Force).  
(4) Commander Task Force 77 (Commander Seventh Fleet).

Subject: Action Report - LEYTE, P.I., Operation.

References: (a) Article 874(6), U.S. Navy Regulations, 1920.  
(b) Com7thPhib Conf. Ltr. FE25/A16-3(3) Serial 0212 of 17 February 1944.

Enclosures: (A) Comments by Boat Group Commander, U.S.S. FAYETTE.-p.8  
(B) Comments by Beachmaster, U.S.S. FAYETTE.-p.10  
(C) Comments by Transport Quartermaster, U.S.S. FAYETTE.-p.16  
(D) Comments by Communications Officer U.S.S. FAYETTE.-p.18  
(E) Comments by Medical Officer, U.S.S. FAYETTE.-p.19

PART I - Narrative.

1. U.S.S. FAYETTE operated as division flagship of Commander Transport Division SIX (Temporary) (CTU 78.1.32), Captain H.D. Baker, USN, with the Northern Attack Force (Task Force SEVENTY-EIGHT), in accordance with CTF 78 (Rear Admiral Barbey, USN) Operation Plan 101-44, during the assault on Leyte Island, P.I. The ship's mission was to transport the 3rd BLT of the 34th Infantry, 24th U.S. Army division and attached units to the objective area and to land them on Beach RED II (PALO) on A day in the TACLOBAN area, Leyte Island.

2. The 3rd BLT of the 34th Infantry 24th Division X U.S. Army Corps was embarked with its equipment at Hollandia, New Guinea, during the period from 7 October to 9 October 1944. Equipment was combat loaded at dock #9, Hollandia on the night of 7 - 8 October, and troops were embarked at anchor in the harbor by ship's boats on 9 October 1944.

3. On 11 October, a debarkation exercise was held while at anchor in Humboldt Bay. This exercise consisted of regular debarkation and boating of troops, and movement to an imaginary line of departure. Troops were reembarked immediately upon return from the line of departure.

93051

C O N F I D E N T I A L  
APA43/A16-3/A9-8/hj --  
Serial 055

23 October 1944.

Subject: Action Report - LEYTE, P.I., Operation.  
-----

4. On 12 October transports of Task Group 78.1 sortied from Humboldt Bay for an official rehearsal off Cape Germana, New Guinea. No boats were beached, but as in the case of FAYETTE's exercise on the previous day the time schedule was met by all boats. The tank lighters, which had not been loaded on the 11th, were delayed by reason of a lack of slings for the self-propelled gun mounts. On return to the anchorage in Humboldt Bay another drill was held, in which the time necessary to launch boats and LCM(6)'s, strip the hatch, and boat the self-propelled guns was found to be one hour one minute, - a time comfortably less than the minimum allowed.

5. Final provisioning was completed at Humboldt Bay on 5 October. Ship was fueled at Manus Island, Admiralty Group on 24 September immediately prior to departure for Hollandia.

6. On 13 October 1944, on signal from CTU 78.1.3 (Captain T.B. Brittain, USN, U.S.S. DUPAGE, flagship), the transport group sortied from Humboldt Bay in accordance with Sortie Plan (Annex B) to CTG 78.1 (Rear Admiral D.E. Barbey, USN) Attack Order No. 1-44, and proceeded in accordance with Movement Schedule to CTF 78 Operation Plan No. 101-44. En route to the objective frequent drills were held for debarkation, gas mask, abandon ship, maneuvering, communications, paravane streaming, and damage control. All the crew and troops were instructed in the details of the operation and in aircraft recognition.

7. During the passage to the objective several radar and sonar contacts were reported but none developed while the disposition was in open water, and this ship sighted no enemy forces prior to A Day. On A minus one day, on order from CTU 78.1.3, paravanes were streamed at 1622. On A day, at 0000, in accordance with orders of CTU 78.1.3, all troops were cleared from the living compartments forward of frame No. 47 as a precaution against personnel casualties in the event of striking a mine. At 0607 on A day two enemy float-type planes were sighted several miles distant, but they did not approach the transport group, and they soon disappeared. At 0624 an enemy twin-engined bomber approached on a level run, dropped one bomb, apparently in the LST formation. As an apparent evasion maneuver it descended to masthead height, circled northward, and disappeared in the direction of San Juanico Channel. None of these planes came within range of this ship's battery.

8. Details of the approach, debarkation, unloading and sortie are noted in Part II, below.



CONFIDENTIAL  
AP43/A16-3/A9-8/hj  
Serial 055

23 October 1944.

Subject: Action Report - LEYTE, P.I., Operation.  
-----

PART III - Chronological Account.

1. The immediate approach to the objective was made through Surigao Strait via Leyte Gulf into San Pedro Bay in accordance with Entry Plan to Movement Plan (Annex C) to CTF-77 (Vice Admiral T.C. Kinkaid, USN; U.S.S. WASATCH, flagship), Operation Plan 13-44. First sight of Philippine Islands was made on SIARGAO ISLAND by lookout at 1806 on A-1 day bearing 260° True, distance 31 miles. The special light on HOMONHON Island was sighted at 2315 bearing 330° T. Subsequent events are enumerated in the following chronological account of events. (All times are zone minus nine; East longitude date).

20 October, - A Day

0000 Cleared living compartments forward of frame No. 47 of all personnel in anticipation of mines.  
0500 Recovered starboard paravane; inhaul on port paravane parted.  
0530 General Quarters.  
0607 Sighted two float planes astern; distance about six miles.  
0624 Sighted twin engined bomber bearing 240° Relative. Escorts, landing craft and transports commenced firing on the plane.  
0629 Sunrise. Lighted ship. Mine reported dead ahead, distance about 2000 yards.  
0635 Twin engined bomber disappeared at low altitude in direction of San Juanico Channel having skirted this disposition.  
0700 Secured from General Quarters. Set Condition III.  
0730 General Quarters.  
0738 Set Condition ONE ABLE.  
0800 Commenced launching all hatch boats and designated davit boats.  
0801 Boat Group Commander left ship. Sent Division Beachmaster to USS PC 1129.  
0803 Commenced debarkation of assault boat teams. 11 0624  
0810 Anchored in the transport area.  
0824 U.S.S. TITANIA (AKA 13) boats reported for duty.  
0835 Commanding Officer 3rd BLT, 34th Infantry, left the ship. Lt. Col. E.M. Postlethwait.  
0837 Col. A.S. Newman, Commanding Officer, 34th Infantry, left the ship.  
0854 Forward echelon of ship's beach platoon left the ship.  
0855 Dispatched wave # 1 to line of departure.  
0857 All boats of first six waves in rendezvous area. Tank lighter from U.S.S. JOHN LAND (AP 167) reported for duty.  
0859 Dispatched wave #2 to line of departure.  
0900 Recovered port paravane of which inhaul had previously parted.

23 October 1944.

Subject: Action Report - LEYTE, P.I., Operation.  
-----

0903 Dispatched wave #3 to line of departure.  
0904 Completed debarking all assault wave troops and equipment.  
0907 Dispatched wave #4 to line of departure.  
0912 Dispatched wave #5 to line of departure.  
0917 Dispatched wave #6 to line of departure.  
1000 First assault wave hit the beaches RED and WHITE.  
1005 Second assault wave hit the beaches RED and WHITE.  
1040 LCVP's from first assault wave returned to the ship.  
Received one (1) personnel casualty who had fainted en route to the beach.  
1042 Commenced unloading combat equipment.  
1054 Rear echelon of ship's beach platoon left the ship. 11 0624  
1059 On signal from CTD-6 got underway to move inshore to transport unloading area. Continued unloading while underway.  
1140 Pursuant to instructions of CTD-6, sent three (3) LCVP's to USS CARTER HALL (LSD 3).  
1154 Anchored in transport unloading area.  
1155 First LCM(6)'s from EPPING FOREST (LSD 4) reported for duty.  
1224 Received on board nine (9) casualties from the beach in LCVP, USS FULLER (APA 7).  
1300 Rear Echelon of 34th Infantry Command Post left the ship.  
1442 Received on board one (1) casualty from the beach in LCM.  
1525 Completed unloading of cargo. Commenced hoisting boats at davits and closing hatches.  
1535 Received on board one (1) casualty from beach in LCVP.  
1540 Ship's platoon left the ship.  
1645 FAYETTE Beach platoon and boat group secured.  
1720 Beach platoon returned on board. Boat Group Commander returned.  
1728 Secured from Condition ONE ABLE, Set Condition III.  
1729 Reported to CTD-6 ready to proceed.  
1730 Completed hoisting boats.  
1743 In accordance with orders received from CTU 78.1.3 got underway to move out to initial transport area.  
1819 Sunset. Darkened ship.  
1824 On order of CTF 78 went to General Quarters to repel air attack.  
1826 Observed anti-aircraft fire from many ships in Leyte Gulf.  
1936 Secured from General Quarters; Set Condition III. The anti-aircraft fire having ceased, and no additional planes reported in the area.  
2027 Forming in company with Transport Division 6 and 24 for sortie from Leyte Gulf and the Objective area in accordance with orders from CTF 78.  
2112 Streamed paravanes. Steaming on various southeasterly courses to form with TG 78.3 (CTG 78.3 is Rear Admiral Struble, USN, USS HUGHES (DD 410) flagship).



C O N F I D E N T I A L  
APA43/A16-3/A9-8/hj  
Serial 055

23 October 1944.

Subject: Action Report - LEYTE, P.I., Operation.  
-----

21 October, - A plus one Day.

- 0101 Set course 090° to form column of Divisions.
- 0130 Formed column transport division in order as follows:  
TD-4, TD-24, TD-6, TD-20, TD-32.
- 0420 With Desolation Point, Dinagat Island, abeam to starboard set course 116° T and took departure for HOLLANDIA, N.G.
- 0430 Recovered paravanes.
- 0503 Formed cruising disposition ABLE-ONE consisting of sections one, HMAS MANOORA, KANIMBLA, WESTRALIA; two, USS DUPAGE (APA 41), FULLER (APA 7), WAYNE (APA 54), JOHN LAND (AP 167); three, USS FAYETTE (APA 43), ORMSBY (APA 49); LEEDSTOWN (APA 56); four USS LEONARD WOOD (APA 12), PIERCE (APA 50), JAMES O'HARA (APA 90), LA SALLE (APA 102); five, USS HARRIS (APA 2), BARNSTABLE (APA 93), HERALD OF THE MORNING, (AP 137), ELMORE (APA 42). Screen L to R USS SCHROEDER (DD 501), RINGOLD (DD 520), USS HUGHES (F) (DD 410), SIGSBEE (DD 502), DASHIELL (DD 659).

PART III - Performance of Own Ordnance Material and Equipment.

- 1. This ship encountered no enemy surface, subsurface or air forces within range of the battery.
- 2. No ammunition, smoke, nor pyrotechnics were expended by the ship during the operation either for exercise or for defense. 1440 rounds of 30 caliber MG were expended by boats of the first assault wave firing at the beach in order to require any possible enemy troops to keep under cover until boats landed.

PART IV - Battle Damage.

- 1. This ship suffered no battle damage nor did she inflict any on the enemy.
- 2. No boat damage was suffered by this ship's boats, with the exception of material failures in three instances - namely, one rudder and two engines.
- 3. There was no incidental damage to the ship nor to any of her appurtenances with the exception of the parting of inhaul ring of the port paravane during recovery on A Day morning. This ring was temporarily replaced with a shackle for subsequent use.

C O N F I D E N T I A L  
APA43/A16-3/A9-87PJ  
Serial 055

23 October 1944.

Subject: Action Report - LEYTE, P.I., Operation.  
-----

4. A total of 1360 dual pneumatic life belts was issued to embarked troops for this operation. 1300 were retrained on board. This marks a decided improvement over losses in previous operations and is believed to be largely due to the fact that life belts could be left in the boats instead of being recovered from LVT's.

5. All other equipment in the ship - main engines, generators, winches, davits, rigging, etc. - worked as designed without casualty.

#### PART V - General Comments.

1. Total troop personnel (including officers) embarked numbered 1265. Their combat loaded equipment totalled 350 short tons. Loading and unloading of equipment and embarkation and debarkation of personnel was effected smoothly and without incident, due in a large measure to the efficiency and cooperation of the troops themselves. Details of loading and unloading appear in enclosure (C).

2. Comments on the ship-to-shore movement are covered in Boat Group Commander's report (Enclosure (A)) and Beachmaster's report (Enclosure (B)). The first four waves were ready to be dispatched by 0850 but the first wave was not dispatched until 0855, due to waiting for a confirmation of H-hour from CTU 78.1.3. All waves reached the control point, however, in ample time, were dispatched from the line of departure on time and landed almost exactly on scheduled time. All assault waves from this ship and their equipment were completely debarked at 0904.

3. The first boats returned from the beach at 1040 and unloading commenced thereafter without delay. It is believed that expeditious cargo discharging was due partly to the nearly optimum conditions on the beach, and partly to the fact that the relatively light load encouraged the ship's platoon and hatch parties in that the end was in sight from the start. The three (3) LCM's from the EPPING FOREST were helpful to this vessel's own LCM's in unloading vehicles. The absence of the LCC in favor of an additional LCM was considered invaluable.

4. It is generally believed that casualties from the beach can be better treated by APA's than by LST's if APA's are available. Such procedure permits of more expeditious evacuation of casualties from the objective area, and has been proven in ship-to-shore operations in the past. Further comments on this subject are contained in the report of the Beach Party Medical Officer, enclosure (B), Appendix One.



C O N F I D E N T I A L  
PA43/A16-3/A9-87hJ  
Serial 055

23 October 1944.

Subject: Action Report - LEYTE, P.I., Operation.  
-----

5. With the exception of superfluous traffic on the TBS radio at times, communications were excellent. Remarks by the ship's Communication Officer are included as enclosure (D).

6. The small number and slow rate of casualties received (12 in all) is noteworthy only in that it left the excellent medical facilities of this ship virtually idle.

7. The rocket boats LCI(R)'s did a splendid job in bombarding the beach ahead of the first assault waves. It is strongly recommended that even more of these craft be used for this purpose in future landings.

8. Red Beach 2 on which the FAYETTE landed her troops had an unsuitable gradient for LST's which were unable to beach closer than two hundred yards where the depth of water at the ramp was six feet. This prevented their unloading urgently needed vehicles and completely upset the medical plan for this beach, as the LST's were designated to receive casualties. Due to light opposition, this did not seriously interrupt the assault. However, it is recommended that in the future LST's carry pontoon causeways in order to be able to land vehicles and cargo regardless of the beach gradient.

#### PART VI - Personnel Performance and Casualties.

1. All personnel performed their duties in an efficient and highly satisfactory manner and according to plan.

2. None of this ship's personnel became casualties either from operational accidents nor from enemy action.

3. U.S. Army casualties received on board numbered twelve, one of which died shortly after coming on board and was buried at sea. Ten others were wounded - seven seriously enough to be confined to bed and three ambulatory. The twelfth casualty was classified as a neurosis.

4. The excellent performance of the LCM(6) crews of the 2nd Engineers, Special Brigade, in their unloading of this ship merits special mention.

  
J.C. LESTER.

Advance copy to:  
Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet. ✓

C O N F I D E N T I A L

COMMENTS OF BOAT GROUP COMMANDER  
Lieutenant Ted W. Wright, D-V(G), USNR.

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Subject: U.S.S. FAYETTE Boat Group - Action Report on -  
During Invasion of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands.

1. At 0810 on 20 October 1944, the FAYETTE arrived in the Transport Area. All hatch boats and designated davit boats were immediately lowered to the water and stood by pre-designated nets to embark boat teams previously assigned. Davit boats were lowered to the rail where boat teams were embarked. The boats from the U.S.S. TITANIA, which were to embark boat teams of the fourth wave, arrived at the FAYETTE at approximately 0825 and proceeded to assigned stations for loading. The pre-assignment of these boats proved valuable due to the limited amount of time allowed for debarkation which required that all boats be available at each net as loaded boats cleared the station. The debarkation was completed on schedule and at 0850 the first four waves were formed in the rendezvous area, ready to be despatched by the ship to the control point marked by SC-726 some 3000 yards from the rendezvous area.

2. The first wave was despatched at 0855, passed the control point at the scheduled time and arrived at the line of departure three minutes early. At 0943 the first wave was despatched from the line of departure following twenty (20) to thirty (30) yards astern of the LCI(R)'s. The LCI(R)'s fired their rockets in salvos from various distances while proceeding toward the beach. These craft did an excellent job in rendering fire support to aid in neutralizing the beaches. It is strongly recommended that in future operations more of these craft be made available to lead in the assault waves.

3. The first wave landed forty-five (45) seconds early but by so doing the troops were put on the beach before the enemy had an opportunity to recover from the bombardment of the rockets from the LCI(R)'s. Very light opposition was met by the first wave as the troops hit the beach. Snipers and scattered machine gun fire prevented the troops from moving in rapidly causing some delay in clearing the beaches. All boats in the first wave retracted and were clear of the beach area at 1002. The second wave hit on schedule with the exception of one boat, PA43-24, which lost steering control when two hundred (200) yards from the beach. The coxswain shipped his emergency tiller and landed his boat and retracted safely with a delay of about three minutes from the original landing schedule for the second wave. The third, fourth, and fifth waves landed on schedule, all boats retracting with the exception of one LCM (6) in the fifth wave which was forced to remain on the beach for approximately thirty (30) minutes when the vehicle the boat was carrying failed to clear the ramp before the engine went dead. The sixth wave landed one (1) minute behind schedule except that LSM #257 which accompanied this wave landed approximately five (5)

-1-  
Enclosure (A) CO USS FAYETTE conf. letter serial 055 of  
23 October 1944.

11 0624 8



C O N F I D E N T I A L

Subject: U.S.S. FAYETTE Boat Group - Action Report on - During  
Invasion of Leyte Island, Philippine Islands.

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minutes behind schedule. This LSM was very efficient in beaching and discharging tanks which were urgently needed on the beach. This was the first operation this writer had participated in where LSM's were used and from observation they appear to be much superior to LCT's in that the LSM is easier to maneuver and has a greater speed than LCT's. It is recommended for future operations that more LSM's be used in early waves to bring in high priority vehicles.

4. The remaining waves landed approximately on schedule except the LST's in wave twelve (12). Four (4) LST's received hits from mortar or artillery, the amount of damage not known. These four (4) LST's were approaching Red Beach I, only two (2) LST's getting in close enough to discharge vehicles. No LST's were able to get within two hundred yards of Red Beach II therefore no cargo from LST's was discharged on this beach. From the experience gained in past operations there should be made available sufficient pontoon causeways to enable LST's to discharge cargo when beach conditions prevent the beaching of these craft.

5. The unloading phase was very satisfactory since there was ample space for all ship's boats to beach without any traffic control problem arising. All cargo was unloaded from FAYETTE boats at 1610 and at 1645 the last elements of the FAYETTE Beach Party along with Transport Division SIX Beachmaster cleared the beach.

6. This was the best coordinated and timed amphibious operation this writer has participated in. The landings of practically all waves was with precision which proved the valuable experience gained in past operations.

7. The work of the Boat crews and Beach Party from the FAYETTE should be highly commended for their efforts in making the operation a success. All boats proceeded in with one objective which was to land their boat teams in the best possible way.

8. During the unloading phase the Beach Party and Boat crews turned to in aiding to unload boats, and it is this writer's opinion that fifty (50) percent of the unloading was done by these units.

*T. W. Wright*  
TED W. WRIGHT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

COMMENTS OF BEACHMASTER  
Lieutenant J.W. Smith, D-V(G), USNR.

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Subject: Report on Beach Party Activities on Leyte Island,  
Philippine Islands.

1. The FAYETTE Beachparty was assigned to control of Fox Beach, which extended 600 yards on the right (northern) flank of Red Beach. An advance party consisting of the Beachmaster, Assistant Beachmaster, two radiomen, two signalmen, one hospital corpsman, one boatswain's mate second class, and one coxswain, landed in the fifth wave at 1020 (H plus 20).

2. Landing was made under considerable small arms fire. Machine gun fire was sporadic. Only three mortar shells were observed to hit in the immediate vicinity. Troops and beachparty were pinned to the beach for approximately fifteen minutes before any but the most cautious movement was possible. Nevertheless, the 610 radio was immediately set up, and excellent communications established.

3. This advance section was landed at least 500 yards to the left (south) of its designated area. This led to slight confusion with respect to information concerning LST's, but otherwise caused no difficulties. The beachparty had reached and organized their proper area within half an hour of landing. Complete freedom of movement became possible over the entire beach area by 1100.

4. The Medical Section of the Beachparty was boated in a free boat which landed at 1035. During the first hour 17 casualties were cleared from the immediate beach areas and evacuated to LST's. In addition to these initial casualties, suffered by the first assault waves, only 7 more casualties passed through the beach medical set-up. A day casualties were very few, and the beachparty medical officer's status was largely advisory, as described in appendix I to this enclosure.

5. The remainder of the Beachparty - twenty-five men - landed in the first returning LCVP's at 1120. With their arrival, full scale unloading immediately became feasible.

6. In general, beach conditions were excellent for all landing craft. No mines were encountered. The central area of Fox Beach was strewn with numerous tree trunks which rendered certain sections unusable. The beach area was of sufficient extent, however, to render these areas more help than hindrance. They served the purpose of clearly separating unloading areas for the three ships which unloaded over Fox Beach.

-1-

Enclosure (B) to CO USS FAYETTE conf. letter serial 055 of  
23 October 1944.

11 0624

10



C O N F I D E N T I A L

Subject: Report on Beach Party Activities on Leyte Island,  
Philippine Islands.

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7. The landing was not a dry one. All unloading from LCVP's and LCM's had to be accomplished through ten to fifteen yards of shallow water. This water was not over knee depth and speed of unloading was not affected. Three factors led to complete absence of trouble with small boats at the beach: (a) No surf or current; (b) a gradient which, while gradual, was steep enough to keep screws clear at most places; and (c) a beach composed of such soft sand that where the gradient was too shallow boats could retract under their own power without damage to screws.

8. LSM's were able to unload only in the central area. Most vehicles required the assistance of dozers to travers about 25 yards of water. This need was consequent more upon the softness of sand than the depth of water.

9. LST's were unable to unload on Fox Beach. This was not true on the Dog Beach area next to which the Beachmaster was landed. The northern flank of Red Beach was presumably impeded by a bar, as LST's could not approach nearer than about 300 yards to the beach. In the Beachmaster's opinion the failure of LST's to carry pontoons was most unwise. Fox Beach was very similar to certain beaches in the Chesapeake Bay where, during training in September 1943, the Beachmaster supervised the use of such pontoons with highly successful results. Such pontoons were equally successful when used under more trying conditions on Green Beaches at Kwajalein Island.

10. Fox Beach was assigned to three ships for unloading. The northern flank was allocated to the LEEDSTOWN (APA-56), the center to the TITANIA (AKA-13) and the southern flank to the FAYETTE. The TITANIA area was smallest, and in view of the fact that extremely few LEEDSTOWN boats arrived with bulk cargo, TITANIA boats were constantly diverted to the northern and preferable flank. LEEDSTOWN bulk cargo arrived at the beach in an LSM.

11. The shore party was not entirely satisfactory. Its officers, especially Lt. Huetter in charge, were excellent; but they confronted two primary difficulties: (a) Most of the troops assigned to Lt. Huetter were not only inexperienced, but entirely unknown to him. (b) All of these troops were transported either by the JOHN LAND or the FULLER, both of which were part of Transport Division TWENTY-FOUR. By reason of the latter factor it took too much time to assemble the shore party which was landed a thousand yards to the south. By reason of the former factor all work obtained from the shore party personnel was gained only through constant harassing vigilance on the part of Lt. Huetter and the Beachmaster.

*DuPere*

-2-

Enclosure (B) to CO USS FAYETTE conf. letter serial 055 of  
23 October 1944.

11

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Subject: Report on Beach Party Activities on Leyte Island,  
Philippine Islands.

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12. The absence of difficult hydrographic conditions released approximately twenty-five members of the beachparty itself for unloading work. To these men the major portion of credit for a rapid unloading is due. They were tireless in their efforts, and with the splendid assistance of small boat crews, they themselves accomplished well over half of the actual unloading of bulk cargo.

13. The failure of LST's to unload reduced the number of dozers available to the shore party. The two which were available were supplemented, however, by several LVT's. These LVT's were very efficient in towing swamped vehicles, being able in two instances at least to salvage trucks which dozers could not assist. Both dozers were in constant use towing vehicles. Accordingly, all unloading of bulk cargo was accomplished by hand.

14. All ships were cooperative in furnishing their own signs to designate unloading areas. The FAYETTE supplied in addition the signs to mark the flanks of Fox Beach.

15. At 1610 all small boats of the APA's unloading over Fox Beach were secured. One LSM remained at the beach with considerable cargo from the LEEDSTOWN still aboard. TITANIA boats were still unloading. On orders from CTD-6 the beachparty turned over its functions to the Engineer Shore Battalion and secured from operation. The Beachmaster remained ashore with the Transport Division Beachmaster until 1645, at which time he secured and returned to the ship.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

COMMENTS OF BEACH PARTY MEDICAL OFFICER  
Lieutenant E.W. Clawater, Jr., MC-V(G), USNR.

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Subject: Report of Beach Party Medical Section Activities.

1. The Medical Section of the FAYETTE Beach Party embarked for the beach at approximately 0800 20 October 1944. Four (4) hospital corpsmen, a radioman, a signalman, and the Medical Officer were boated in an LCVF flying the "mike" flag and designated as the "Medical Boat". This boat had been preloaded with twenty (20) stretchers and such medical gear as was deemed necessary for handling initial casualties. The Medical Boat followed the first wave into the line of departure where it stood by the PC-1129 awaiting further orders from Lt. Comdr. Baggs, Beachmaster, Transport Division SIX. One (1) hospital corpsman was boated in the fifth (5) wave with Lieutenant J.W. Smith, FAYETTE Beachmaster in order to care for any initial casualties in this group. The Medical Section of the FAYETTE Beach Party was called into the beach by the FAYETTE Beachmaster at approximately 1025 and landed at 1035. The beach was under sniper and machine gun fire at the time of landing, hence the medical section was able to land only what could be easily and quickly carried; this consisted of corps pouches, beach bags (2), six (6) litters, and 610 radio; the remainder was left in the boat to be called in later.

2. Casualty density was light on Red Beach Fox on A day. In all, 24 casualties were evacuated to LST's; seventeen (17) were evacuated to LST-456; four (4) were evacuated to LST-181; and three (3) were evacuated to LST-459. It may seem on first glance that LST-456 was over loaded; however, this was done in following out the Operation Order. LST-456 had aboard (in conjunction to a surgical team) the Orthopedic Specialist; therefore, to this ship were sent the orthopedic cases or those which on original impression were considered to be of an orthopedic nature. As a high percentage of the casualties were of an orthopedic nature, no other course could be followed.

3. Evacuation of casualties presented a difficult and disconcerting problem. The plan as originally conceived was to evacuate all A day casualties to LST's; four (4) of which were to have Surgical teams and Specialists aboard. This plan as it was intended to work would have given care of the most excellent type in the shortest possible time; however, several vital factors were not considered or were deemed not to be present, and it is to these factors that the difficulties of evacuation were attributed.

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Appendix I to Enclosure (B) to CO USS FAYETTE conf. letter  
serial 055 of 23 October 1944.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Subject: Report of Beach Party Medical Section Activities.  
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Firstly, in order for this plan to work smoothly and effeciently, the LST's had to beach; this was found to be impossible. The LST-459 tried to beach on Red Beach Fox at approximately 1050 but was unable to get closer to the beach than 150 yards. This left the ramp in approximately 6 feet of water which prevented bringing casualties aboard other than by small boats. The LST-459 retracted some 15 minutes later and stood by off shore. Secondly, the majority of surgical care was embarked in four (4) LST's which were supposed to beach at an early hour, discharge their cargo and personnel, and receive casualties almost immediately. Unfortunately LST-171 was hit by enemy fire as she approached the beach, rendering her useless as a casualty LST; this decreased our surgical teams and specialists by 1/4 which was a serious loss. Due to the fact that the LST's could not beach, they could not discharge their cargo and troops and hence were slow in setting up their medical facilities. Thirdly, since all casualties had to be evacuated to LST's by LCVP's a serious difficulty in the plan was discovered. The plan called for sending certain types of casualties to certain LST's; this was next to impossible practically speaking. If 4 casualties, one orthopedic, on thoracic, one eye, and one urological were present at any one time, it would necessitate four (4) LCVP's to carry these casualties to the correct LST; or it would require one LCVP to make four stops thereby consuming time and adding to the casualties' discomfort. While it is recognized that this is somewhat of an exaggeration, nevertheless, it is believed that the point can be clearly seen, namely, that the plan necessitated too many LCVP's or too much time was consumed in handling the casualties. It also consumes the time and effort of one or more Medical Officers in doing nothing but allocating casualties when their energy and skill could be utilized in caring for the wounded. Fourthly, a great deal of time was consumed in locating the Shore Party Medical Section since the Beach Party Medical Officer concerned was unknown to the Army Medical Officer concerned. Such officers with their section should be aboard the same transport.

4. It is the opinion of the Medical Officer that casualty evacuation could have been handled more efficiently if casualties had been sent directly to the transports. The transports were available, were set up, and had efficient proven medical staffs aboard. If specialization is desired, these specialists should be placed aboard one transport so designated and all specialized casualties sent to that ship. If LST's are to be used, they should be empty or very lightly loaded and should carry pontoon causeways which could be utilized when the LST could not beach. Moreover if casualty density is great more LST's will have to be available in order to handle the



C O N F I D E N T I A L

Subject: Report of Beach Party Medical Section Activities.  
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number of patients which they would receive. Supplies were quite well handled. 50 litters were passed on to the collecting company through the FAYETTE Medical Section in addition to 20 litters which were boated originally.

*E.W. Clawater, Jr.*  
E.W. CLAWATER, Jr.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Subject: Report of Beach Party Medical Section Activities.  
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Appendix I to Enclosure (B) to CO USS FAYETTE conf. letter  
serial 055 of 23 October 1944.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

COMMENTS OF THE SHIP TRANSPORT QUARTERMASTER  
Captain R. K. Dahl, USMCR.

Subject: Loading and Unloading.

1. Loading plans of the FAYETTE to load the Third Battalion, 34th Infantry, 24th Infantry Division, were drawn up aboard ship on 2 October by the ship's Transport Quartermaster and the troop loading officer. Troop cargo to be loaded totaled 350 short tons, consisting of 250 tons of vehicles and 100 tons of bulk cargo. This limited load allowed a very even distribution of cargo among the holds and resulted in an excellent combat load. No cargo was carried on this ship that was not actually required by the troops in the initial combat stages. Every vehicle and trailer was fully loaded. Bulk fuel, water, and organizational equipment were not carried by this ship.

2. The 350 tons of cargo was loaded on board from a dock in Humboldt Bay, Hollandia, New Guinea, in eight hours - - from 2000 October 7th to 0400 October 8th.

3. The 350 tons of cargo was unloaded in 4½ hours; general unloading of cargo commenced at 1045 A-Day and the ship was unloaded at 1525. Speed in unloading is attributed to these facts: there was no reef; the beach was excellent; and a sufficient number of LCM's was available. The FAYETTE carried two LCM's and three additional LCM's reported to this ship from the EPPING FOREST after discharging initial loads. These boats were used to good advantage in unloading the 90 vehicles, trailers and guns on board.

4. Hourly Unloading Percentages:  
Key: A-percentage total cargo unloaded.  
B-percentage rations unloaded.  
C-percentage ammunition unloaded.  
D-priority number of last vehicles unloaded.

	Hour	A	B	C	D
A-Day	1200	23	0	0	43
	1300	42	0	15	65
	1400	60	35	45	80
	1500	90	100	90	88
	1525	100	100	100	90

*R. K. Dahl*  
R. K. DAHL



Subject: Loading and Unloading.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

LOADING SUMMARY

Hold & Platform	Hold CuFt	Space SqFt	CARGO	Cu Ft	Sq Ft	Short Tons	Est. Lifts
#1 -Hold	21500	1043	3-37mm Guns 5- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks 2- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trailers 14-Hand Carts Total Vehicles  Rations Engineer Equip. Cloth.Bags'GasMask TOTAL #1	4269	813	10	12
#2 -3rdPlt	10250	1700	7- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks 4- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trailers Total Vehicles Small Arms Ammo. High Expl. Ammo. TOTAL #2	2902	567	13	12
-Hold				265		9	15
				1983		44	24
				5150		66	51
#4 -2ndPlt	70000	4361	3- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks 3- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trailers 8-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks 11-3 $\frac{3}{4}$ Ton Trucks 4-3 $\frac{3}{4}$ Ton Ambulances 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks 5- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks 1- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trailers 3-Water Trailers 1-Disinfect Trailer TOTAL #4	28812	4149	131.6	40
#7 -2ndDeck	22142	2734	2- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks 2- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trailers 3-37mm Guns 13- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trucks 5- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton Trailers Rations	4300		22	16
-1stPlt							
-3rdPlt							
#8 -3rdPlt	19248	541	3-SPM-M8's(75mm) TOTAL #7&8	13336	1665	95.4	44
			TOTAL CARGO			350.0	187

C O N F I D E N T I A L

COMMENTS OF COMMUNICATION OFFICER  
Lieutenant J.B. Cullen, USNR.

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Subject: Communications Report of Landing Operation  
on Leyte.

1. Again the SCR 608's and 610's bore the brunt of communication and stood up to all that was demanded of them. A careful check of all sets before leaving the staging area did away with the necessity of calibrating while underway. However, the troops had not done so and requested permission to calibrate while under radio silence. This was denied, and it is suggested that all troops be notified in the future to have radio sets ready for landing before coming on board.

2. Complete lack of discipline on the T.B.S. jeopardized the use of that circuit for tactical orders. Administrative messages of every kind were heard on this circuit, though there were other nets assigned for that purpose. There was a constant stream of talk on the T.B.S. which was impossible to log and parts of messages which should have been recorded were lost in an effort to log the preceding message. It is suggested that all stations on this circuit be advised of the proper use for the T.B.S.

3. Difficulty was encountered in copying the Force Fox due to the frequency used. Atmospheric conditions of day and night interfered with the assigned frequencies, and there was no definite time set for changing. It is suggested that the frequencies of 8 and 12 thousand KC's be keyed steadily during the 24 hours of day and night, that 16 thousand be added during the day and 4 thousand during the night with a definite hour for changing.

*J. B. Cullen*  
J. B. CULLEN.

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Enclosure (D) to CO USS FAYETTE conf. letter serial 055 of  
23 October 1944.



C O N F I D E N T I A L

MEDICAL OFFICERS REPORT  
Lieut-Comdr. J.H. Wallace, MC-V(S), USNR.

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Subject: Medical Officer's Report of Landing Operations  
on Leyte.

The following action report is written as of 1600,  
21 October 1944.

NARRATIVE

1. (a) The Medical Department was in a state of  
readiness at H-hour on A-day.

(b) The first casualty, received at 1100, was a  
soldier who developed hysterical symptoms on the way to the beach  
and, without going ashore, was returned to the ship in the same  
boat in which he went in.

(c) At 1230 nine casualties were received on board.  
One of these died within 10 minutes after admission.

(d) Two more casualties, arriving singly, were  
received at 1450 and 1535.

(e) There were, therefore, a total of twelve cas-  
ualties received, with one death. All were Army personnel.

2. ANALYSIS OF CASUALTIES.

(a) Of the twelve patients received eleven were  
wounded and one suffered a neurosis.

(b) The agents of injury were missiles in 8 cases,  
falling trees in 2, and unknown in one. The latter patient re-  
ceived a large contusion of the right buttock and one over the  
right scapula, probably from spent shell fragments or flying debris.  
Of the 8 missile inflicted wounds 2 were caused by bullets and 6  
by shell fragments.

(c) Wound sites analyzed as follows: Head 3,  
abdomen 1, lumbar region 2, upper extremity 6, lower extremity 7.

(d) There were 2 fractures, both compound.

(e) One patient with multiple shell fragment wounds  
received an eye injury which will necessitate enucleation.

3. PROGNOSIS.

(a) As of this date there are 7 bed patients and  
4 ambulatory.

(b) Of the 7 bed patients the wounds in 3 are con-  
sidered serious and in 4 they are mild.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Subject: Medical Officers Report of Landing Operations  
on Leyte.

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(c) The 3 serious cases include 2, both of which show multiple wounds of the face, arms and legs. The third case has an avulsion of the right arm just below the shoulder. For several hours after admission he appeared to be in irreversible shock but following refrigeration of the arm and repeated blood transfusions he has responded remarkably. Amputation will be performed when his condition indicates it is a safe procedure.

4. DEATHS.

(a) The one patient who died survived only 10 minutes after admission. From examination it appeared that a shell had exploded in close proximity to the buttocks. Both legs were nearly severed at the hips, being attached to the torso by only a few strips of macerated muscle.

5. SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

(a) During the Leyte operation 12 casualties were received on board the U.S.S. FAYETTE on A-day.

(b) Of these, one died and of the 11 remaining, 3 were seriously wounded.

(c) The number of casualties received was too small to warrant any worth while analysis and deductions.

(d) The Junior Medical Officers, Dental Officer and Hospital Corpsmen performed their duties rapidly and efficiently.

*J. H. Wallace*  
J. H. WALLACE.

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Enclosure (E) to CO USS FAYETTE conf. letter serial 055 of  
23 October 1944.

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