

DECLASSIFIED

Authority: E.O. 13526

By: NDC NARA Date: Dec 31, 2012

LST555/A16-3
Serial: 018

CONFIDENTIAL

U.S.S. LST 555
% Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.
4 March 1945

From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Commander-in-Chief, United States Navy.
Subject: LST 555 War Diary for the month of January 1945.

1. 1 January 1945. (Zone-9). Underway in formation in accordance with orders of Task Group 78.5. This ship a member of Task Unit 78.5.5. Commander of the Task Unit was on LST 614. Our mission was the invasion of Lingayen Gulf, Luzon Island in the Philippines. This ship was designated as a hospital ship and we were to beach and pick up casualties. Surgical Team #23 was aboard and a group of fourteen Pharmacist Mates. Also aboard were seventeen Army Officers and two Naval Wave Guide Officers in addition to 432 Army enlisted personnel and eighteen Seabees. The Army personnel were from Headquarters Company 1st Bn., 1st Inf., 198th AA Bn., 1st F.A. Btry A, 294th Port Company, 727th ARB Co. "B", 244th Port Company, Co. "D" 1st Inf., 48th Ordnance, 706th Ordnance, 543rd EB & SR, 6th Signal Co., 6th Engineers, and Co. "C" 1st Infantry. Our combat load consisted of 250 tons of bulk cargo (ammunition, gasoline and rations), 2 mobile 40MM, 2 M-51 mobile, 2 3/4-ton trucks, 1 1-ton trailer, 1 1/4-ton trailer, 1 generator, 4 2 1/2-ton trucks, 1 4-ton wrecker, 1 water trailer, 1 D-6 tractor, 1 TD-14 tractor, 1 Buckeye Crane, 1 D-7 tractor, 1 D-8 tractor, 1 1 1/2-ton truck and 12 LVT's.

2. 7 January 1945. (Zone-9). At 2306 we were steaming on course 350 degrees True and a Jap destroyer exploded and was sunk after a heavy concentration of fire was observed off our starboard bow.

3. 8 January 1945. (Zone-9). Our Task Group was harassed continually on the morning of the 8th of January by Jap planes. LST 912 was hit by a Jap suicide bomber but sustained somewhat minor damage in the hours before dawn. This ship was two columns away on our starboard side. We made the best possible use of a smoke screen but the Jap planes could not be entirely disposed of. At 0756 our guns fired on a Jap plane which flew high overhead at approximately 7,000 feet. A little later that morning a Jap plane scored a hit on a transport up ahead.

4. 9 January 1945. (Zone-9). The actual invasion met with little opposition and Jap planes were hard to find. Beached on Blue Beach #1 on Luzon at 1202. At 1305 two Jap Zeros came over at terrific speed and dove down like bullets at some of our larger ships. The Callaway was said to have been hit. Our guns fired but the Jap planes were going away too fast. Then, at 1905, another Jap bomber came over headed inland. Our 40MM's opened up and smoke was seen to be trailing from the plane. Army personnel on the beach said that our #6 40MM hit this plane as we were the only ship firing at the time and they said that the plane crashed several miles inland. We retracted from the beach at 2336.

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5. 10 January 1945. (Zone-9). Got underway in formation to make the return trip to Leyte at 1816. Saw firing ahead and an explosion at about 2030. We later learned that one of our destroyers had been sunk and at 2047 we stopped all engines and turned on running lights to try to help pick up survivors. Unfortunately, our ship found none.

6. 15 January 1945. (Zone-9). Arrived San Pedro Bay and anchored at 1112.

7. 21 January 1945. (Zone-9). Beached at Dulag, Leyte Island.

8. 25 January 1945. (Zone-9). We retracted from the beach at 1445 and left Leyte in the Philippines headed for a new invasion of Luzon Island, Philippine Islands at La Paz, several hours after Task Group 78.3 had formed and departed in accordance with their orders. Our delay in getting underway was due to being unable to retract from the beach due to the heavy load we had aboard. Finally, after the third attempt with the assistance of tugs, we were able to retract with our cargo. After steaming alone all night, we fell into position in the formation at 0920, 26 January. We were in Task Unit 79.3.4 with Captain SEAY, Commodore of LST Flotilla 14, the Commander Task Unit of LST 693, the formation guide. We were carrying aboard 10 Army Officers, of whom the Senior Officer Passenger embarked was Major C. B. Callaway of the 339th Engineers, and 325 enlisted personnel. Our combat load consisted of 148 tons of bulk cargo (ammunition, gasoline and rations), 13 2½-ton cargo carriers, 2 D-7 tractors, 13 1-ton trailers, 10 ½-ton trucks, 4 3/4-ton weapon carriers, 6 4-ton dump trucks, 1 6-ton truck, 3 D-8 tractors, 1 D-6 tractor, 2 D-12 motor graders, 1 ½-yd. shovel, 1 ditch-digger, 2 carryalls--12 yd., 2 carryalls--8 yd., and 2 20-ton trailers. Our ship was designated as a hospital ship again and Surgical Team #23 and 14 Pharmacist Mates were aboard.

9. 29 January 1945. (Zone-9). Arrived and anchored off Blue Beach, La Paz, Luzon Island at 0705. Lay to in the harbor all day and finally beached at 2310 on the 3rd attempt. A sandbar interfered with beaching attempts.

10. 30 January 1945. (Zone-9). Retracted from the beach at 1330 and joined formation 78.3.22 at 1800 to make the return voyage to Leyte.

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U.S.S. LST 555
% Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.
4 March 1945

From: Commanding Officer.
To: Commander-in-Chief, United States Navy.

Subject: LST 555 War Diary for the month of February 1945.

1. 1 February 1945. (Zone-9). Underway in formation 78.3.22 returning from the landing at La Paz, Luzon Island, Philippine Islands.
2. 3 February 1945. (Zone-9). Returned to San Pedro Bay, Leyte Island, Philippine Islands and anchored at 1011.
3. 5 February 1945. (Zone-9). Beached on White Beach at 2030.
4. 7 February 1945. (Zone-9). Retracted from beach at 1304 and anchored in San Pedro Bay.
5. 8 February 1945. (Zone-9). At 1633, got underway on a routine trip to Mindoro carrying personnel and supplies. Major B. M. Read was the Senior Officer Passenger Embarked and 336 Army personnel were aboard. These men were from Bn. "A" 24th Med. Co., the 24th Sig. Co., the 723th Ord. Co. and the Casual Co. Our combat load consisted of 120 tons of Sig. and Ord. equipment, 50 tons of gasoline, 130 tons of ammunition, 6 tons of mail, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton trailers, 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton jeeps, 5 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -6 x 6, 8 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton ambulances, 10 3/4-ton weapon carriers, 3 3/4-ton commander cars, 3 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton panel trucks, 1 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton small arms repair, 1 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton DUKW, 22 1-ton cargo trailers.
6. 11 February 1945. (Zone-9). At 0935 beached on White Beach, Mindoro Island in the Philippines and commenced unloading. Completed unloading and anchored off White Beach at 2212.
7. 12 February 1945. (Zone-9). Got underway to make the return voyage to Leyte at 1655.
8. 15 February 1945. (Zone-9). At 1159, anchored in San Pedro Bay.
9. 20 February 1945. (Zone-9). Tied up alongside USS MARKAB for necessary repairs at 1708.
10. 26 February 1945. (Zone-9). Got underway from alongside USS MARKAB at 0723 and proceeded to the waterhole.
11. 27 February 1945. (Zone-9). Cast off from the dolphins at 0752 at the waterhole and proceeded alongside AKS 22 to take on ammunition. Proceeded to anchorage in San Pedro Bay at 2013.

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