

LST637/A16
Serial: 0141

U.S.S. LST 637
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

LST. Flotilla 24.100
REG. NO 167
R. S. NO 7 02211
REG. SHEET NO 2-1

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

12 June 1945

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet
Via: (1) Commander Task Unit 78.1.16 (ComLSTFleet 24)
(2) Commander Amphibious Group SIX (CTG 78.1)
(3) Commander SEVENTH Amphibious Force (CTF 78)
(4) Commander SEVENTH Fleet
Subject: Action Report - LABUAN ISLAND, Brunei Bay, Borneo,
Netherlands East Indies Operation
Reference: (a) Art. 874(6), U.S. Navy Regs. 1920
(b) Com7thPhib conf. ltr. FE25/A16-3(1) , Ser. 0563
dated 10 March 1945.
(c) Copy of report of Lt.Col. Boyd NORMAN, CO of
Assault Troops.

1. In compliance with reference (a) and (b) the following
is submitted as report of action:

PART I. This ship staged at MOROTAI ISLAND, NEI and loaded the
following:

Elements of Royal Australian Army
Elements of U.S. Navy Beachmaster Group TEN
Elements of U.S. Army (operating LVTs)
Elements of U.S. Navy Combat Photographic Team
Total vehicles - 49
Total cargo - 544 tons (including vehicles)
Total Personnel- 488

One of the ship's LCVPs was left at the Boat Pool at MOROTAI to make room for the Beachmaster's boat. A beaching rehearsal was held at staging area. The purpose of this ship's participation was the carrying of assault troops and supporting elements and equipment to the objective area and place them ashore at LABUAN ISLAND to wrest its control from the Japanese forces in that area. One officer of this ship (Ensign A.M. SHUTTIE) was assigned as first wave guide on Brown Beach One. The Beachmaster's boat with Ensign SAVAGE of Beachmaster's Party was assigned as third wave guide on Brown Beach One. Lt.(jg) WATERMAN of the U.S. Navy Combat Photo Team embarked in first wave guide boat.

Assault was carried out according to plan. The ship was not under any direct fire during the entire operation. One enemy plane (an IRWIN) flew over at approximately 0645, dropped one bomb in the Transport Anchorage Area, and succeeded in escaping. This plane did not come within range of ship's guns and no fire was ordered.

132481

12 June 1945

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report - LABUAN ISLAND, Brunei Bay, Borneo,
Netherlands East Indies Operation.

This ship beached at 2/3 speed on order from beaching officer at 1630, the tide being out at that time. Vehicles were unloaded in about fifteen minutes, and five trucks loads of bulk cargo were taken off up to 2000, when unloading ceased because of shortage of trucks and depth of water at ship's ramp. One load was taken off by DUKW during the night.

PART II

The following is a chronological statement of events in which this ship participated:

22 May

Arrived Blue Beach, MOROTAI, loaded with troops and vehicles returning from TARAKAN ISLAND, Borneo, NEI. Completed unloading.

23 May

Commenced loading of bulk cargo, and took on 180 tons destined for subject operation. Retracted from beach and anchored in Morotai Harbor.

24 May

At anchor. Replaced broken ring in port engine.

25 May

At anchor. Replaced broken ring in stbd. engine.

26 May

Underway to Fleet Anchorage preparing to go alongside repair ship. Orders were changed - tied up alongside LST 942 at Army Can Dock No. 2 for water.

27 May

Completed taking on water - cast off and proceeded to anchorage in Fleet Anchorage Area.

28 May

Moored alongside LST 466 (third ship tied up at USS CULEBRA ISLAND) for acid cleaning of evaporators.

29 May

On orders from Beachmaster, proceeded to Blue Beach, beached, completed loading of bulk cargo, loaded vehicles and LVTs. Retracted and proceeded to anchorage in harbor.

30 May

Proceeded to anchorage in Fleet Anchorage Area.

31 May

Changed anchorage to allow room for Green and White Beach rehearsal.

1 June

Underway to anchor for rehearsal. Conducted part of rehearsal plan (Brown Beach)

2 June

Underway for Blue Beach to pick up LVTs - loaded LVTs and returned to Fleet Anchorage Area

7 02211

12 June 1945

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report - LABUAN ISLAND, BRUNEI BAY, BORNEO,
Netherlands East Indies Operation.

3 June

Beachmaster Group No. 10 aboard.

4 June

Underway to objective area.

5 June to 9 June

Underway

10 June

0530 - At General Quarters - Condition I-M.

0630 - Anchored in assigned position to launch LVTs.

0645 - Japanese plane sighted over Transport Area - dropped one bomb and swerved off in a westerly direction. Plane was fired upon by DDEs in the vicinity. It was not within range of this ship's 40MM guns.

0745 - Launched LCVPs. Commenced launching LVTs.

0750 - Completed launching LVTs.

1630 - Beached in Slot 6 on Brown Beach #2

1700 - Unloading party aboard. Continued unloading until 2000, when unloading ceased because of shortage of trucks and depth of water.

11 June

0645 - Unable to hold position on beach - retracted and beached again in same slot using 2/3 speed.

0730 - Commenced unloading by DUKWs. Continued unloading until 1400.

1430 - On orders from Commander Brown Beach Assault Unit, retracted from beach and anchored off Pappan Light House 1/2 mile.

1515 - Continued unloading of bulk cargo.

12 June

0400 - Completed all unloading operations.

0930 - Changed anchorage to Berth T-17 preparatory to getting underway.

PART III

No ammunition expended.

PART IV

LCVP #1, previously damaged at TARAKAN ISLAND, BORNEO and then repaired at Morotai Small Boat Pool was damaged when bottom planking came loose from frame enroute to objective. Temporary repairs were made so that boat could be used in operation. Small hole was made in ship's hull by pontoon at Blue Beach Morotai in beaching to load vehicles. Temporary patch was welded on by ship's force.

PART V

No special comments.

7 02211

LST637/A16
Serial: 0141

U.S.S. LST 637

12 June 1945

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report - LABUAN ISLAND, BRUNEI BAY, BORNEO,
Netherlands East Indies Operation.

PART VI

Ship's personnel performed in a satisfactory manner. Much of the unloading was done by ship's company until it was discovered that unloading crews took the appearance of ship's company on the tank deck as a signal to quit work. When the condition became such that there were thirty one of ship's company personnel working along with only fourteen troop personnel, while at the same time twenty troops were sitting and lying around on the tank deck, and eighteen more were topside lying around, ship's company was ordered to knock off on the unloading, and the remaining to be unloaded was done by troops.

This command believes that much congestion aboard ship could be avoided by having assault troops remain ashore until time for beaching rehearsal. It is believed that on 2 June, LVTs could have been taken aboard while ship was at anchor about eight hundred yards off LVT beach in the harbor area, rather than send the ship around to Blue Beach. None of the LVTs carried by this ship was used as a weapons carrier.

It is believed highly desirable that loading officers be informed that ships need more than one copy of the nominal roll of passengers. Never in the various times this ship has carried Australian troops have any of the units furnished more than one copy for ship's use. Sufficient copies should be made to attach to sailing reports.

R. A. VIELHABER

cc: ComInCh (direct)
ComLSTFlot 22
ComLSTGr 65

7 02211