

LST-667 and LSM-151 at Sadau and Tarakan
a story by Carl Kracht

My dad, Ken Kracht PhoM1/c USN, was up to his neck in these landings. He was TAD from **USS *Rocky Mount* (AGC-3)** from 26 April - 3 May 1945. From my reconstruction, he was transported aboard **USS *LST-667*** He photographed Australian Engineers destroying obstacles on both Sadau and Tarakan on 30 April - according to his letter of May 25th detailing the events of the day. All the photos in the War Diary of COMTASK-GROUP 78.1: Rept of the op for the invasion & capture of Sadau & Tarakan Is, Borneo 4/27/45-5/3/45, are in his albums He was taken under sniper fire on Tarakan. He and three LVT drivers were stuck in the mud (you can see those LCVPs and LVTs in the photos), slogged through hip-deep mud to the beach then down the beach to an oil pier where transport awaited. As soon as they got about half-way down the pier a sniper opened up, chasing them down the 500 yd pier - only one board wide in places - until a "gunboat" (probably **USS *LCS(L)(3)-50*** according to its war diary) moved in and silenced the sniper. This occurring at Red Beach about 1500, while engineers were performing demolition. My dad also incurred injuries from white phosphorus at some time. **USS *Phillip* (DD-498)** reported white phosphorus landing near them and **USS *Jenkins* (DD-447)** from Sadau shelling of Linkas beaches.

No doubt some time back
you read about the Aussies
killing Tarakan. Well, we
had our finger in it too.
Technically you might say
I had both legs in it.

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© Because they wanted some
shots of the Aussies in action
and because I held up my hand
again, I got there ahead of the rest,
just one day. I went in with the
Aussie Engineers to photograph
the destruction of the beach
obstacles. We went up there in
amphibious tractors that can
operate on land or water but not
in mud. As the bombardment
drove the Japs, well, most of them, away
we didn't have any trouble and the
engineers took their time. The tide
went out and the tractor was stuck
in the mud. No other tractor
would risk coming up to pull us
out for fear they would get stuck
too so we decided to walk down the
beach and out on a jetty that stuck

Kenmy
Kracht
Photo 'C

about 500 yds out to where a
boat was waiting for us. As
everything was quiet we again
took our time and I shot a
picture of the tractor drivers
standing in front of the former
jap storage tanks. Then we
moseyed down to the pier or jetty.

Oh yeh, about the two legs in
it. When we got off the tractor
the mud was up to our hips. mighty
tough walkin' for about 25 feet.

The jetty had only one board
about 9" wide running clear out to
the end and when I had just about
reached the middle of it a sniper
opened up on us. I looked back,
didn't see anyone, looked ahead,

Kenny didn't see anyone, looked for a
place to hide, didn't see one so
I started moving. This all took
place in about a second. He fired
three more shots at me before
I got to a place I could take cover
and he missed every time. I give

you no guff - its a funny feeling
to hear the crack, the whine
and see the splash or splat
of the bullet when it comes
close. Even if he'd missed 300
feet it would have been to close
for me. Still though, its nice
knowing someone is thinking of
you + you only. After I got in
the boat, the crew opened up on
his hiding place to cover the
engineers who were still on the
jetty. When they got through, a
gunboat removed his hiding
place and probably him too.
I reckon he thought it was nice
too having about 200 men thinking
of his personal welfare. Still though
we learned him who does the shooting
on an invasion.

Kenny
Kracht,
Photo

D-day I went in again and
shot pictures of the beach and some
of the installations. They didn't have
very many as they expected us to
land elsewhere.

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The "sniper pier."
Three tractor drivers seen at left, stranded LCVP and LVP center.



Tarakan Island, Borneo, Southern Oil Pier, ATO-144 Vireo in background
1945 Ken Kracht's WWII Photo Albums



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2/13 Field Company Engineers 30 April, Tarakan, clearing obstacles.