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Authority: E.O. 13526

By: NDC NARA Date: Dec 31, 2012

USS LST #334

1 August 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Commanding Officer.
 To: The Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.
 Subject: War Diary, July 1944, USS LST #334.

Reg. No.	57-44
R. S. No.	

References: (a) Alnav 176.
 (b) Cominch letter, serial 7152, 29 October 1943.
 (c) Action Report, USS LST #334, 1 August 1944.

1-15 July (-11 Time Zone) Anchored in Lagoon, Eniwetok, Marshall Islands, awaiting orders; meanwhile taking on necessary provisions and supplies.

15 July 1040 - In compliance with orders of CTF 53, underway and sortied with Task Group 53.16 (Captain Grayson B. CARTER, USN, Commander LST Flotilla Five, USS STEMBEL, DD 644) constituted of six sections deployed as follows: section one, USS LCI(G)s 466, 464, and USS LST 71; section two, USS LSTs 488 (Task Group guide and flag, Task Unit 53.6.2, Commander V. BUSCK, USN, Commander LST Group 15), 241, 399, 449, and 244; section three USS LSTs 125 (guide), 269, 343, 220, and 29; section four, USS LSTs 70 (guide), 219, 247, 118 and 334; section five, USS LSTs 117 (guide), 447, 207, 123, and USS AIOE (AN 6); and section six, USS LCI(G)s 465 and 471 and USS HOLLY (AN 19). Patrolling around these vessels at 3500 to 5000 yards was screen comprised of the following vessels: USS STEMBEL (DD 644), USS PCs 549, 555, and 1125, USS SCs 504, 667, 724 and 1273, and USS YMSs 136, 184, 195, 216, 237, and 242. Prescribed interval and distance 500 yards. Enroute Guam, Marianas Islands, from Eniwetok, Marshall Islands, on course 290° (T), at speed 9 knots, 245 RPM. Throughout the afternoon the task group drilled at various maneuvers to be employed during the contemplated operation. Steering engine and gyro compass failures were incurred, but subsequently repairs on both were effected. 1930 - Changed to course 280° (T), speed as before. Positions: 1200: Lat. 11° 21' N., Long. 162° 18' E. 2000: Lat. 11° 36' N., Long. 162° 14' E.

16 July 0000 - Steaming as before on course 280° (T), speed 9 knots, 245 RPM. Both morning and afternoon, operational maneuvers were staged. At 0900 gunnery drill was held during which there was no firing by this as well other vessels due to the compactness of the formation and to prevent violation of safety precautions. The gyro compass behaved erratically throughout the day, necessitating frequent adjustment and close observation. Positions: 0800: Lat. 11° 41' N., Long. 159° 26' E. 1200: Lat. 11° 58' N., Long. 159° 01' E. 2000: Lat. 12° 07' N., Long. 158° 05' E.

17 July 0000 - Steaming as before on course 280° (T), speed 9 knots, 245 RPM. Once again in preparation for the impending "push", the task group participated in practice maneuvers. Performance on the part of all units while previously good, revealed an ever growing improvement. Trouble with the gyro compass persisted and while usable exacted unremitting attention.

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- Positions: 0800: 12° 29' N., Long. 156° 03' E. 1200: Lat. 12° 34' N., Long. 155° 41' E. 2000: Lat. 12° 39' E., Long. 153° 51' E.
- 18 July (-10 Time Zone) 0000 - Steaming as before on course 280° (T), speed 9 knots, 245 RPM. 1600 - Entered -10 Time Zone; set clocks back one hour. Positions: 0800: Lat. 12° 47' N., Long. 152° 58' E. 1200: Lat. 12° 53' N., Long. 152° 22' E. 2000: Lat. 13° 06' N. 151° 01' E.
- 19 July 0000 - Steaming as before on course 280° (T), speed 9 knots, 245 RPM. 0700 - Changed to course 267° (T), speed reduced to 6 knots, 165 RPM. 1400 - Changed to course 269° (T), speed unaltered. Positions: 0800: Lat. 13° 22' N., Long. 149° 06' E. 1200: Lat. 13° 21' N., Long. 149° 52' E. 2000: Lat. 13° 17' N., Long. 147° 43' E.
- 20 July Steaming as before on course 269° (T), speed 6 knots, 165 RPM. 1500 - Changed to course 132° (T), speed unaltered. Planes based on an unidentified aircraft carrier have provided air cover for the past two days. Augmenting the anti-submarine patrol, were TBFs which circled the task group from dawn until dusk. 2000 - Bearing 275° (T), from the vicinity of Guam, Marianas Islands, which we are now nearing, sighted flares, star shells and flashes of gunfire which continued throughout the balance of the night. 2200 - Changed to course 307° (T), speed unaltered. Positions: 0800: Lat. 13° 16' N., Long. 146° 31' E. 1200: Lat. 12° 58' N., Long. 146° 19' E. 2000: Lat. 13° 19' N., Long. 145° 26' E.
- 21 July 0000 - Steaming as before on course 307° (T), speed 7 knots, 185 RPM. 0230 - Changed to course 270° (T), speed as before. 0330 - Speed increased to 9 knots. 0400 - As we approached the eastern shores of Guam, frequent course and speed changes occurred. 0625 - Upon order CTU 53.6.2 proceeded to lie to approximately 12 miles from Asan Point, Guam.
- 21-31 July The night of 21 July was replete with flares, star shells and gun fire, seemingly accelerating the advent of daylight. At daybreak, ranged along the coastal waters of western Guam were several each of our battleships and cruisers, both light and heavy, together with more numerous destroyers and LCI(G)s. All, in accordance with design and ability, poured salvo after salvo of fire into enemy shore positions none of which appeared to respond in kind. Overhead, relays of planes, fighters and bombers as well as the isolated scout, flew on in large flights or singly to their assigned bombing, strafing, patrol, spotting or reconnaissance missions. Nowhere appeared any enemy aircraft to oppose or engage either our air or surface units. We stood off Asan Point astern of transports and cargo ships until twilight at which time the task group reformed and in accordance with a prescribed night retirement plan circled to westward of Guam until dawn. At sunrise or thereabouts, we returned to a distance of five to eight miles off Asan Point where we were ordered to lie to. The practice of lying to or steaming in that vicinity was pursued until 26 July when upon order of CTG 53.16 at 0832 we beached on a coral ledge approximately three quarters of a mile off shore between Asan Point and Point Adelup, Guam.

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About six hours later we retracted without having discharged either cargo or passengers. On the following day at 0740, we beached again in approximately the same spot. Here, all rolling stock was discharged and one officer and twenty enlisted men from Lion Six were disembarked. On the 28th., unloading of bulk cargo was commenced by 60 enlisted men of the 59th. U.S. Naval Construction Battalion under the supervision of two officers from that organization. About mid-morning the remaining passengers were debarked. Due to adverse conditions, progress in unloading was extremely slow. The use of trucks was precluded as few were able to negotiate the water covered coral route from ship to shore. LVTs of the Third Marine Division were pressed into service. Notwithstanding their large size, a disadvantage in that only two at a time could be brought into the tank deck as opposed to twice the number of trucks, their cargo capacity was smaller than that of trucks further curtailing unloading speed. This routine was pursued until 1938 when enemy artillery carried the battle to us, and the three adjacent LSTs, causing the retraction of all from the beach. After lying to as previously, we rebeached in the early morning of the 29th. and resumed unloading which was again disrupted in the late afternoon by hostile artillery fire. For an account of these actions see reference (c). Retracting at 1736, once more because of this fire, about two hours later we rebeached, but soon thereafter a heavy storm set in lashing the island and brought operations to a standstill. At 2330 the storm having greatly lessened in intensity, we again retracted and proceeded to lie to as previously. On the 30th., at 0635, we rebeached in the previous area and reinstated unloading operations which proceeded until 2000. After remaining beached the entire night, of the 31st, unloading was recommenced at daybreak and at 1456 when the discharge of all cargo was completed, we retracted to lie to and subsequently retire for the night pursuant to previous practices. Unloading to the last was a tremendous struggle and moved at snails pace. Plaguing us frequently through out the whole unloading effort were squalls, high winds and heavy running seas. In order to keep the ship on the beach on these occasions, one or both engines were run ahead at speeds varying from one third to standard. On the 29th., Lt.(jg) George J. LOVOS, USNR, executive officer, was detached by Cincpac to return to the continental limits of the United States for reassignment.

R.S. Blieden
R.S. BLIEDEN
Lieut., USNR
Commanding.

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