

LCT-33 ACTION REPORT

The following Action Report was filed by Lieutenant (j.g.) J.A. Anderson, officer in charge of the LCT-33, and covers the events surrounding the amphibious landings at Salerno, Italy in the autumn of 1943.

This report was reproduced from the files at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, where much of the Navy records from World War II are now stored.

Subject: Action Report.

The following is a report of the activities of the U.S. LCT(5) 33 from 4 Sept. to 9 Oct. 1943:

Sept. 4, 1943

Departed Ferryville, Tunisia--all ships formed in line, proceeded out of channel--our ship followed U.S. LCT(5) 201--U.S. LCT(5) 32 at our stern. Twenty-one U.S. Naval personnel and thirty-three (33) soldiers of the British Eighth Army on board. Cargo consisted of one (1) Bulldozer, one (1) tank, two (2) "jeeps", four (4) trucks, two (2) field guns, and two (2) sleds of wire. 1400--Formed convoy. 1900--Moderate sea.

Sept. 5, 1943

0800--Moderate sea. 1600--Pass by Marittimo Island on our starboard beam.

Sept. 6, 1943

Entered Castelmare Bay -- Water too choppy to refuel. 0815--Ships formed in convoy and headed out to sea. 1200--Heading 060°. 1600--Anchored off Cape Gallo. 1645--Refueled from oil barge. 1715--Took on water from U.S. LCT(5) 32. 1800--Anchored for night.

Sept. 7, 1943

0700--Hove in anchor and formed convoy. 1000--Heading 070°. 1700--Moderate sea.

Sept. 8, 1943

British destroyer dropped depth charges. 1000--Heading 010°. 1500--Air raid--several bombs dropped, no hits. General quarters. 1700--Air raid. Bombs dropped--direct hit on British LCT. One hundred twenty (120) rounds 20mm ammunition expended. 2200--Air raid. Planes concentrated on transports.

Sept. 9, 1943 (D-Day)

0400--Approached beach. 0515--Hot beach; ramp was lowered on dry land and troops started to disembark. Cable from the sleds to the bulldozer broke several times and we experienced considerable difficulty in getting the sleds on the beach. Machine gun fire was heavy and the British troops hesitated to disembark with their equipment.

At dawn, German 88mm guns opened up and we received direct hit amidships, broad on the port beam. Three (3) British soldiers were injured by flying shrapnel. Two (2) guns and one (1) truck on the ship were damaged by the direct hit. The tank was wedged in by these damaged vehicles. Impossible to disembark the tank without the aid of several bulldozers which were not available at that time. 88mm shells were bursting all around us during this operation and we received a number of near misses.

After persuasion, the remaining British soldiers, with their good equipment, disembarked. We remained on the beach one hour and thirty five minutes under direct fire.

0650--Retracted from beach with injured British soldiers and damaged equipment aboard. 0800--Placed injured British soldiers on British evacuation ship. 1000--Proceeded to American beach head according to plan. 1700--Landed on Red Beach, unloaded damaged equipment.

Sept. 10, 1943

0730--Tied alongside U.S. HOPI for repairs. 1400--Received ammunition from U.S.S. ARCTURUS.

From Sept. 10 through Sept. 29, 1943

Unloaded cargo from merchant ships according to plan. During this time we were subjected to twenty five (25) air raids and expended one thousand (1000) rounds of 20mm ammunition.

Sept. 29, 1943

Storm came up--anchor cable broke. With only starboard engine, were unable to stay off the beach. Remained broached on beach for four (4) days. Finally towed off by tug, BRANDT. Salt water pump on our starboard engine was shot and we had no engines.

Oct. 5, 1943

0100--Formed convoy for base at Bizerte, Tunisia, under tow of U.S.S. LST 345.

Oct. 9, 1943

Arrived Bizerte, Tunisia.

All the men aboard U.S. LCT(5) 33 performed their duties in an outstanding manner, unflinchingly and in accordance with the highest traditions of the Naval Service.

J.A. Anderson
Lieut. (jg), USNR
Officer-in-Charge

This Action Report dated 13 October, 1943, was filed by the Officer-in-Charge, U.S. LCT(5) 33 and sent to the Commander in Chief, United States Fleet via the Commander of the LCT Flotilla TEN. It is labeled as LCT(5) / F10 / A9 (33) Serial: 0021.

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