



LCT-33 SCORES A HIT

James Burgess - Signalman 2/c

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Enlistment and Overseas

James Burgess, born in Groton, Connecticut, was living with his family in Wood River Junction, Rhode Island, when he enlisted in the Navy's Amphibious Force on September 3, 1942. Burgess graduated from Westerly Senior High School in 1938 and went to work rolling cloth at the Bradford Dyeing Association until he enlisted.

Assigned to the LCT-33 of Flotilla 10, he was among the earliest LCTers to make the trans-Atlantic voyage to Europe in February of 1943. These first LCT Mark 5 landing craft to reach the European Theater saw duty that spring off the coast of North Africa.

LCT-33, one member of the second group of landing craft to cross the Atlantic, lost no time in distinguishing herself. On 20 April while making a routine passage from Tenes to Arzeu (along the Algerian coast), the 33 was attacked by a German JU-88, whose contempt for the little target caused its destruction. As the big bomber came in for a second run to rectify a near miss on the first, the LCT gunners found their mark and the Junker crashed in flames against a nearby mountain. The skipper, Ensign Jesse A. Anderson USNR, and his gunners received the warm congratulations of Admiral Hewitt.

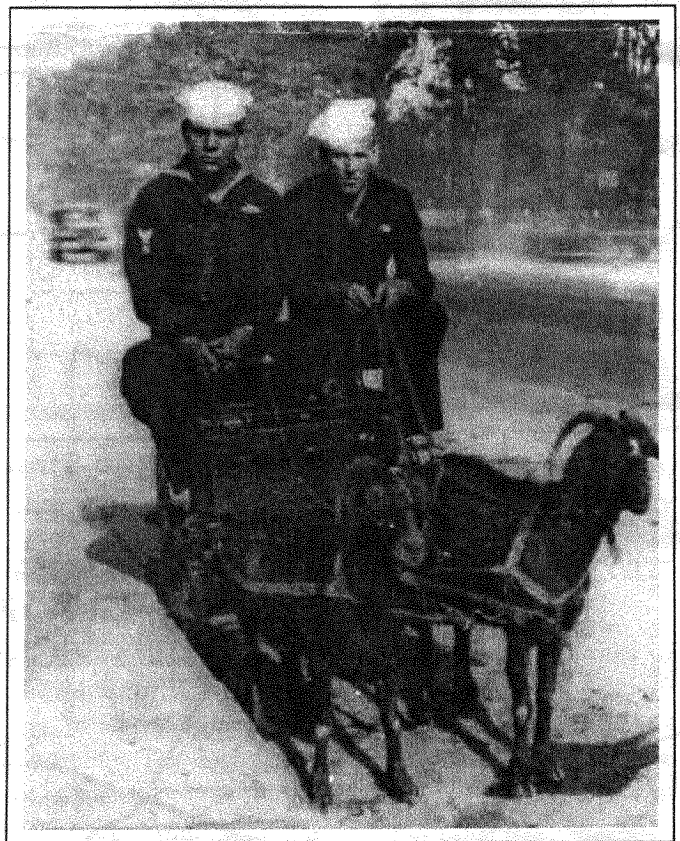
Sicily

Preparations for Operation Husky took place early that summer and one LCT was lost when it buckled and sank while the convoy was headed for the Tunisian port of Bizerta. That LCT was probably overloaded.

In July of 1943, the LCTs of Flotillas 9 and 10 were involved in the landings and supply operations on the island of Sicily off Italy's southwest coast. The convoys headed for Sicily from Bizerte, Tunisia, experienced rough weather and German air attacks. Rough seas at times slowed the LCTs down to under 3 knots.

Salerno

By September, Italy had joined the Allies and after several minor landings on the "toe" of the mainland, a major amphibious landing took place at Salerno. During a supply mission from Tunisia to Castelamare Bay (between Salerno and Naples) the LCT-33 again distinguished herself while unloading tanks and bulldozers under enemy fire. This resulted in another commendation from the Action Report printed on page



James Burgess (right) and a buddy hitching a ride on a goat cart somewhere in Italy during July of 1944.