



Top row (l-r): Al Wm. Argenta (EM3/c); Phillip H. Icenhour (S1/c); Winston Berry (S1/c); Robert M. Bailey (S1/c); John E. Foulk (Cox); Jerome T. Landsberger (Ens. CO); Lawrence J. Bondi (Ens. XO). *Middle:* John F. Gordon (S2/c); Nestor Makris (S2/c); Henry W. Graeff (QM3/c); Ralph E. Gallant (MoMM2/c); Vern Leroy Cole (S2/c); Paul M. Havner (MoMM2/c); Ralph Leroy Rost (MoMM2/c). *Front row:* James A. Bittle (S1/c); Gere H. Sanders (S1/c); Raymond R. Harmon (MoMM2/c); Bruce Bergstresser (S1/c); Ray L. Slaughaupt (S1/c).

LIGHTER MOMENTS

There were always lighter moments as well. After D-Day we settled into the 24-hour routine of unloading the Liberty ships, Army cargo ships and troop transports. Everyone remembers "Pop" on the stern taking a mooring line from an Army transport ship (APA) we were to unload. The bow line was secure--we were using the bow to spring in our stern. Pop was busy attaching the transport's heavy 8-inch line to our stern. As we eased forward, he noticed too late that the Army had a latrine at the rail on the main deck. We couldn't help but laugh (and the soldiers enjoyed the scene as well) as Pop was drenched!

When the laughter died down, Pop took a dramatic pause and then shouted out for all to hear, "Shot at and missed,"... (another pause)... "Sh** at and hit!" We roared again--shades of Laurel and Hardy.

POST-INVASION DUTY

On 19 June, a 100-year-old record-breaking hurricane unleashed its fury on us for three straight days. Many small craft were driven ashore with more equipment damaged than on D-Day. A breakwater of sunken and weighed and concrete caissons were tossed into wild disarray. We attempted to seek shelter at Isigny but were driven back.

After returning to Omaha Beach, Ralph Gallant rigged our generators so that we had power even when the tide was out. Later, a Lt. Commander from our Flotilla 19 took Ralph's information and presented it to higher

authorities as his own idea! (No other comment than, "Time Wounds all Heels.")

The crew of LCT-546 and the salty skipper, I feel, were responsible for guarding and caring for this green Ensign. I shall always thank them for the respectful consideration that they all showed for their Exec.

We worked Omaha Beach until the beach closed sometime shortly after Veteran's Day, November 1944. I was then transferred on 11 November to LCT-539 as the skipper. I took the 539 to Plymouth, England, where we were put atop the deck of the LST-309 for transportation to the USA and a 30-day leave.

Clarence Gramling (QM 3/c) of the LCT-547, sends us the final word on the LCT-546. It was in the possession of the U.S. Marine Corps for a time and then sold to a civilian who used it to haul rocks (called rick-rack) to shore up lakes in South Carolina against erosion. There the trail ends sometime in 1947--as with many of the wartime LCTs, we are not sure of its final fate.

I am so proud of my service to my country. I can still see the French-born 2nd Lieutenant wearing a U.S. uniform wading knee deep in the surf, turning his back to the small arms fire dotting the water all around him as he calmly motioned his men and equipment to follow in sporadic fashion. He was returning to the land of his birth to liberate it from Nazi domination.

more about LCT-546 continued on page 6...