



Crew of the 586

Front: Butterworth, Taschner, Burgess and Malin.

Back: McKenna, Gaines, Ackner, Williams, Miarecki, Chase and Brown.

Missing: Zaffer, Rade, McClellan, McCay, Harrington, Carey and Niten.

with clean white sheets and big pillows with clean white pillowcases every night. It cost you 25 cents a night. The meals in the restaurant put out the best of food also for 25 cents. They had entertainment every night and it was free. This hotel sat way up on top of a large wooded hill.

The road up to this hotel was a long and winding road. It was a good mile around the hill from the bottom to the top. There was a walkway straight up the top but half way up there were steps, a couple hundred of them. One Sunday, I wanted to save taxi money so I walked and climbed those steps. I thought I would die before I got to the top. I couldn't move by legs for a week. Needless to say, I never tried it again.

In Dartmouth, we would go out in the English Channel every day and practice beach landings with the army tanks. We would get four tanks off the beach and take them out six miles off the beach. These tanks had canvas sides that were raised up around the tanks by a hydraulic system that held them up tight. These tanks looked like a big bathtub floating in the water. They would drop our ramp down just below the water and the tanks would go off the end of the ramp into the water and drive to shore. These tanks had two screws (propellers) that a man standing on the back of the tank would steer the tank to shore.

One day we were headed back to Dartmouth when our signalman saw something in the waterway off to our starboard side. After looking through the binoculars, they saw someone waving a white shirt. We turned and went over to see what the problem was. They had ran out of fuel and were drifting farther out to sea, so we hooked a line to the LCVP and towed them back to Dartmouth. Had we not seen them they would have drifted to France.

Around the last of May, we went out to the beach and picked up our four tanks and four jeeps with trailers. That would be our load for the trip to France and the Normandy coast. We would have these vehicles on board for a little over a week. When we could be at anchor and not moving, they would take the army personnel off until we would move again. When the soldiers were aboard during mealtime, the Army fed them. The soldiers were served a totally different menu from our crew.

One evening we had a big fancy dinner: steak, mashed potatoes, gravy, one of the best dinners that the cook had ever put out. Martin took his steak up deck where the soldiers were eating their mush. He ate his delicious meal right in front of them, then, he went down and came back up with a big slice of pie to flaunt in front of them! Aboard the LST was the U.S. Army, 743rd Tank Battalion--a part of this Battalion would be transported to Omaha Beach by LCT 586.

We had taken off for Portland with the Army personnel of the tanks and jeeps aboard. When we got to the Harbor of Portland, it was full of ships. One was the USS Ancon, the flagship of the Navy's European operations with the Chief Admiral of Operations onboard. This was not good as the Germans seemed to know that the Ancon was in this harbor. On the first night, we received our first air raid. I damned near crapped in my pants. I was so scared. I couldn't get out of the crew's quarters. Ted Rade was the same way. He couldn't get out either. I never had such a feeling. We finally cooled down and were able to get out. When we were outside and could see what was going on it was as scary. I never felt like that again all the rest of the time in combat.

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