

LCT(A) 2273 maneuvers off the beachhead at Omaha H-Hour +4 on 6 June 1944. Note the starboard list as described by Frank Hess in his revised action report. Photo reproduced at the National Archives.



6 June 1944

At about 0300 the Officers in charge of the Army Engineers and the Navy Underwater Demolition Unit and the Army tank crews decided to transfer to the LCM we were supposed to be towing. It is not known whether they decided to transfer for lack of confidence in the seaworthiness of the LCT or just frustration after having been pent up in those very jammed quarters for about 24 hours. At about 0730, we passed a French cruiser in the transport area where the LSM came along our port side to transfer the tank crews back on board. A U.S. Command Ship signaled us to the beach.

The LCM quickly moved out and we headed for Omaha beach. Approximately 5 or 6 miles from the beach, shells from a high caliber shore battery fell 5 feet from our starboard side, 20 feet from our port side, and 35 feet directly in front of our bow in rapid succession. A single salvo from the French cruiser silenced the shore battery.

We arrived at the beach at 1030 and circled around other landing craft to get into position to go in on "Dog Green" beach at 1100. With our ship listing heavily to starboard and the tank deck covered with over a foot of water, we approached the beach under full power. The ship hit the beach with a terrific thud and slid about 10 feet to a stop. At impact, it felt like the stern was trying to catch up to the bow. The ramp was lowered and the tanks drove off in less than 3 feet of water. With the reduction in weight, we retracted successfully but it immediately became apparent the ship suffered serious structural damage when we hit the beach.

We went out to the British LSDZ and took on one hundred cans of diesel fuel. While getting fuel, we aided in the transfer of wounded soldiers across our deck from ducks to the LSD giving them water and

Helping however we could. We then anchored in the bay for the night to get the first sleep most of the crew got in 42 hours.

7 June 1944

At high tide, we decided to beach the ship to determine the extent of our damage. When the tide went out, the ship was fully exposed and we could see the ship had suffered a broken back and there was nothing we could do to repair it. While waiting for the tide to come back in, we inspected the damaged LCT-332 which struck a mine on its starboard bow, blowing it straight up. In the middle of the tank deck we found a scorched body which we assumed was the ramp wench operator who would have been in that starboard bow compartment. When the tide came in, we had difficulty retracting and LCT(A)2273 helped tow us off the beach. Realizing the un-seaworthiness of the ship, we decided to anchor close to shore so if the ship began to break up, we could get ashore.



8-18 June 1944

Remained at anchor awaiting further orders. Repair units promised to contact us as soon as they could but they were too busy repairing ships, they could fix. LCT Operations was busy assigning LCT's to unload ships and had no time for a ship that could not work.

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