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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



12 May 1945

MEMORANDUM

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From: F-48
To: Secret Mail Room.
Subject: Distribution of CO, U.S. LCVP Unit 1 (CTU 122.5.1) Serial 123-45 of 5 April 1945; CTU 122.5.2 Serial 0050 of 6 April 1945, and CTU 122.5.3 Serial 0012 of 11 April 1945, and 1st and 2nd Endorsements of 11 April 1945, and 1st and 2nd Endorsements (Subject: Action Report - RHINE RIVER CROSSING.) (RS 5-565)

C2903

1. Please have subject report distributed as follows:

CominCh:	4
F-105; F-30; F-48; F-46	
Vice CNO:	6
Op-02; Op-12; Op-16; Op-16E; Op-23; Op-30	1
BuMed (Last pg. of Ser 123-45 - Enc. B of Ser 0012)	1
BuOrd	1
BuShips	1
Naval War College	1
General Board	1
Secretary of the Navy	1
Naval Aide to the President	2
CinCPac(2)	1
ComThirdFleet	1
ComFifthFleet	1
ComSeventhFleet	1
PhibTraPac	1
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Chief of Staff, U.S. Army (3)	1
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War Plans Officer BuDocks	1

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G. C. GILL.

BURN WHEN NO LONGER REQUIRED

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26 MAY 1945

POW # 3158410

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UNITED STATES FLEET
UNITED STATES NAVAL FORCES, FRANCE

File No : AL6-3

c/o Fleet Post Office,
New York, N. Y.

Serial : 03280

SECOND ENDORSEMENT to:

CTU 122.5.1 sec. ser. 123-45 of 5 April 1945.

and

CTU 122.5.2 sec. ser. 0050 of 6 April 1945.

and

CTU 122.5.3 sec. ser. 0012 of 11 April 1945.

From: Commander, U. S. Naval Forces, France.
To : Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : Commander, U. S. Naval Forces in Europe.
Subject: Action Report - Rhine River Crossing.

1. The three reports of the units of Task Group 122.5 are all forwarded under this endorsement as they all deal with the Rhine river crossing and should be considered together.

2. As stated in the reports from Units 122.2 and 122.3, considerable difficulty resulted from lack of information and changes of plans. It is considered that in a coordinated task such as major river crossings the development of team work between Engineer units and the boat groups can only be perfected by mutual knowledge of the capabilities and requirements. The wide dissemination of information such as enclosure (C) of the report of CTU 122.5.1 should be of aid to the Army planners. In view of the fact that all units were attached to armies for a period of at least four months in preparation for this assault, the difficulties were much greater than could have been anticipated.

3. The order of the Commanding General of the Twelfth Army Group as stated in paragraph (4), first endorsement to the report of CTU 122.5.2, was sound and clear cut as to the division of responsibilities in movement and launching. Had this policy been followed throughout, a smoother operation would have resulted. In any case, despite difficulties, the operation was extremely successful.

4. It is considered that Task Group 122.5 performed all tasks in an outstanding manner. Their assistance to the U.S. Army in the Rhine crossing contributed greatly to the success of the operation. Their performance of this new task was in keeping with the best naval traditions.

5. Individual commendations will be the subject of separate correspondence.

Copy to:
CTG 122.5

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A.G. Kirk
A.S.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
UNITED STATES NAVAL FORCES, FRANCE
TASK GROUP 122.5

FIRST ENDORSEMENT

11 April 1945.

LCVP Unit 1 Secret
ltr. Ser. No. 123-45/ceb
of 5 April 1945.

From: Commander Task Group 122.5
To : The Chief of Naval Operations.
Via : (1) Commander Task Force 122.
(2) Commander U. S. Naval Forces in Europe.
Subject: Operations - Report of.

1. Forwarded.
2. The correct designation of the reporting unit is Task Unit 122.5.1.
3. This Unit arrived on the continent about a month before the other two units composing the Group. The procedures it established and the experiments it carried out were furnished the others on their arrival and were of inestimable value in starting off the newcomers on the right foot without delay.
4. The First U. S. Army captured the Remagen railway bridge while it was still fit for use. As a result the water borne assault which Unit 1 had trained for so long and hard did not take place. The Unit nevertheless rendered extremely valuable service which was carried out in the face of determined enemy air and artillery attacks.
5. The comments and suggestions are generally concurred in. However the organizational requirements depend on a great many factors which will vary with the operation and cannot be established as hard and fast.
6. Attention is invited to the reports and forwarding endorsements of Task Units 122.5.2 and 122.5.3.

W. J. Whiteside
W. J. WHITESIDE

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U.S. LCVF UNIT 1
Navy 3952
C/o Fleet Post Office
New York, N. Y.

Ser. No. 123-45/ceb

5 April 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Chief of Naval Operations.
Via: Commander; Task Group 122.5.
Commander; Naval Forces France.
Commander; Naval Forces Europe.
Subject: Operations - Report of.

Encl: (A) Muster List - ^{p. 11} *Not Contained*
(B) Suggestions - p. 15
(C) LCVF & LCM - Use of in River Operations, - p. 15
(D) Training Program - *Not Contained*
(E) Rotation System - p. 30
(F) Freezing Problem - Report on - p. 31
(G) 50 Cal. Machine Gun - Report on - p. 33
(H) Ferry and Bridge Sites - p. 35

1. LCVF UNIT #1 was activated on 4 October 1944 in Dartmouth, England. It's mission was to train and prepare for tasks to be performed as indicated by U.S. Army authorities, and to assist in build up after river crossings and maintenance of bridgeheads as directed by Commanding General, First U.S. Army. It's employment was the ferrying of troops and equipment, evacuation of wounded and/or PW's, assisting in bridge construction, patrolling of waters up and downstream to prevent enemy waterborne attempts to destroy the bridges, assisting in the placement of anti-mine booms and nets, etc.

2. It consisted of 24 LCVF's, an E-9 unit and a "house-keeping" group made up of cooks, cook strikers, stewards mates, yeoman, barber, pharmacist mate, storekeeper, radiomen and driver. Original strength--11 Officers,--153 E.M., present strength--10 Officers--160 E.M. See Encl.(A).

3. The entire unit, with the exception of the E-9 unit, was taken across the channel aboard the H.M.S. Oceanway on the 14th October 1944, arriving 9 miles off Le Havre harbor on the morning of 15 October. Passage into the harbor was made without mishap, in spite of having taken a course directly through a mine-field. No information had been furnished about a safe course. The E-9 unit arrived about noon aboard an LCT.

4. Arrangements for trucks, to transport personnel and equipment, had not been completed until late in the evening of 16 October. The trucks to carry the boats arrived the same day and loading started immediately. It was decided to move the unit in two convoys; personnel and equipment left Le Havre at 1800 on the 17th and arrived at Dolhain, Belgium at 1700, Oct. 18th; the boats and E-9 unit left Le Havre at 0800, Oct. 18th, arrived in Dolhain at 2000, Oct. 19th. The boats were taken off the trailers and set on the ground, on a side road about 3 miles from the base. A short time afterward, they were painted olive-drab and covered with camouflage netting, for security. The personnel were outfitted with army uniforms for the same reason. They were quartered in an old factory. We were also given the code name JEPSON, and referred to the boats as JEPSONS, in communications.

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4. 7th Corps of 1st Army, attached the unit to 1120th Gr. C. Engineer's for operations and administration, and Col. Keith R. Barney, Commanding Officer of the group immediately placed his staff at our disposal, to furnish the many items we required for "living in the field", such as pots and pans to fit the army ranges provided, instruction in the operation of the ranges, immersion heaters, etc.--See Encl. (B). This group was extremely generous in the co-operation and went "all out" in their efforts to make us comfortable and happy in army routine. The supply, special service, operations and medical departments were most kind, and whenever possible, filled all of our requests.

5. A large problem confronted both the army and this unit, that of finding suitable methods of transporting and launching the boats under conditions similar to those expected on the Rhine River. To overcome this problem; a training site was selected on the River Meuse, at Cheratte, Belgium, and the experiments begun. Six boats were launched there for this purpose, to work with one company of the 298th Engineer Combat Battalion of the 1120th Group, and our engineering unit. Within a week, another experimental site was opened in Liege, Belgium, by the 236 Engineer Combat Battalion of 1106th Group C. Engineers, and our maintenance unit worked at both sites. The results of these experiments were highly satisfactory, and the training was invaluable. A full report was made up and distributed to everyone concerned. See Encl. (C).

6. On November 5th, the site at Cheratte was moved to Andenne, Belgium, for "combined" training, for the practice of bridge and boom building, loading of troops and equipment, handling ponton barges and rafts, to assist in bridge building, and towing light rafts. It was felt that this new training was most important and a concentrated effort was made to insure a successful operation, from the Naval point of view. This part of the training did not last long however, as all army units of this Corps were moved up to participate in the November Offensive.

7. The Liege site was then closed and the boats and personnel returned to Dolhain, Belgium. It was found desirable to retain the site at Andenne, Belgium and to continue small boat training. See Encl. (D), because of the swift current and the rugged banks. A rotation system See Encl. (E) was placed in effect whereby all of the small boat personnel would get the benefit of this training. This site was closed on Nov. 23rd as the entire unit was ordered to move to Aachen, Germany. This move was made on Nov. 26th. Six of the boats and crews were then alerted for possible use on the Roer River. On 3 December the 1120th Engineer Combat Group requested the unit to form 3 groups of men to instruct their 3 engineer battalions in knot tying, splicing, and other basic seamanship which might help the soldiers in the handling of their powerboats. Three groups of 4 men each were sent to the individual battalions and lived with them for 3 weeks. The groups were highly commended by the battalion commanders for the excellent work they performed. Classroom training went on, and on Dec. 10th the Andenne site was again opened--the offensive had not developed as expected--and six boats were launched. A full scale training program at both the Aachen Headquarters and the Andenne base, was placed in effect, Encl (D) and continued until the German Counter-Offensive in the Ardennes. The unit at Aachen was hurriedly moved on Dec. 24th and 25th, and boats and personnel from the river site, on Dec. 26th to Wareme, Belgium. This was more or less a safety measure; however, the enemy reached a point 11 miles from Andenne before we got out.

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8. The situation at Werenne was unsatisfactory because our personnel were spread over an area of 4 miles, so after one week, when the enemy was pushed back, permission was granted to open Andenne to start another training program,--by this time, mainly a method of keeping the personnel employed. The unit moved on Jan. 13th 1945, but the boats were delayed until the 18th, due to the icy condition of the roads.

9. At this time, word was received that boats of the other two LCVP units were freezing up, operating in cold "fresh water". Fortunately we had no boats in the water at that time, so did not have that trouble. Our engineering officer, Lt. M. L. White, USN conducted several experiments to overcome the freezing problem, and devised a method which has proven successful. See Encl. (F). It was installed on all 24 boats in 3 days and we have had no trouble since, nor is any anticipated. (Note para 5 of Encl. F).

10. On Feb. 6th, the entire unit was alerted, trailers arrived, and preparations were made to move--again for the Roer-- but once more, we didn't go. We were taken off the alert Feb. 28th.

11. Six LCM's arrived on Feb. 7th, pretty well beaten up after a very rough trip through the ice-filled Albert Canal--Antwerp to Andenne in 8 days. The crews lived aboard the boats and food was delivered by truck twice daily. The E-9 unit changed 6 shafts and 12 propellers and replaced 3 engines in two and a half days, making all boats operational for the expected move. Experiments were immediately tried in loading and launching an LCM. An M-25 Tank-retriever was used successfully. No further information concerning the LCM's can be offered because this unit never brought them to the Rhine.

12. Late in the evening, 7 March, orders were received from 1160th Engineer Combat Group, to whom we were attached, to move 16 boats of the unit to Zulpich, Germany, on the 8th of March, for use by 3rd Corps. Further instructions were to be issued by the Corps Engineer. The remaining 8 boats at Andenne, Belgium, were placed on an alert status for use as directed by First Army. Lt. (jg) Frank M. Eby, USNR., was left in charge of this group.

13. The morning of the 8th, the commanding officer left Andenne ahead of the convoy and proceeded to Zulpich. Upon arriving, at 1730 hours, he contacted the Corps Engineer, Col. F. Russel Lyons, and was instructed to have the boats proceed to an assembly area at Odendorf where they would come under the operational control of the 1159th Combat Engineer Group. Since the route through Euskirchen was blocked by the rubble-clogged streets of that town, an overlay routing the column another way was given to the commanding officer, who sent an officer Lt. (jg) P. Werfel with the overlay to join the column at Duren. The route from Duren to Odendorf was to be via N 264 to Modrath, thence south via secondary road to Weilerswist-Metternich-Hammerszheim to route N 26, then west to Odendorf.

14. The column encountered considerable difficulty. First, the night 8/9th March was exceedingly dark. Second, the secondary road from Modrath to Weilerswist was narrow. At Bleisheim, a trestle bridge over the Erft Canal halted the column for more than an hour. The road made a sharp turn on the far side of the bridge. The first prime mover to cross the bridge made this turn with little difficulty, but the trailer got stuck. Finally with the help of some men from the elements of the 3rd Armored Division, who were on the road behind the LCVP unit, all 15

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vehicles and trailers negotiated the turn and continued on to Weilerswist. From here, instead of following the prescribed route, the column went straight down route N-51 into Euskirchen. It was still impassable, so the column had to turn around, go back to Weilerswist and take the specified route. In addition, the crane broke down, one trailer got stuck in the mud and one shop truck rolled over on it's side trying to run through a shell crater. The truck was righted by a wrecker and proceeded to Duron for repairs, as did the crane. Four wreckers were required to get the trailer out of the mud. As a result of all the delays, the unit did not reach its assembly area until about 1630. The 16th boat came in about 1800, 9 March.

15. That night, the commanding officer made a futile attempt to go to Bad Neuenahr to contact Col. Kenneth E. Fields, Commanding Officer, 1159th Engineer Combat Group. But, after going only 3 miles in the space of four hours, he turned back to Oendorf. Leaving early the next morning, 10 March, he contacted Col. Fields and was instructed to move the boats to Bad Neuenahr. He sent his driver back to lead the column, owing to heavy traffic jams and poor roads - in one place a wrecker had to be hitched to each prime mover to pull it through a muddy spot in the road, one trailer slid into a shell crater 4 miles west of Bad Neuenahr and did not get out for 36 hours. 276th Engineer Combat Bn. had a difficult job moving the trailer because of the danger of dropping the boat. The boats did not close into Bad Neuenahr until 2400 hours.

16. At about 0830, 11 March, the commanding officer received orders to get 10 boats into the water at Kripp as soon as possible to assist in the construction of the heavy ponton bridge. The only difficulty in launching, initially, came when the crane slipped on the spot chosen for the launching. It was moved down stream about 100 yards. There the boats were launched by being picked up and dropped into the water "like so many eggs". All boats were in by 1350.

17. Five were immediately put to work on the construction of the ponton bridge. Within ten minutes, one of the boats on the upstream side of the partially completed bridge, lost headway and ended up broadside against the far shore part of the bridge. Powerless to move against the swift current, the boat was pinned against the bridge, its weight threatening to tear loose all of the work so far completed. Quick work on the part of the engineers in loosening the upstream cables allowed the LCVP to slide off the bridge before damage was irreparable. The boat was then hauled back up on dry land for repairs. In the meantime, the near shore part of the bridge which had begun to bend downstream, was bolstered and held in place by three LCVP's pushing upstream. (Training in the Meuse River at Andenne had been conducted against a swift moving, but even current from one shore to the other. Upon arrival at the Rhine, the boats were immediately ordered into operation with no chance to try the current. It was almost immediately discovered that while there was virtually no current along the near shore at Kripp and Remagen because of the bend in the river, the current increased swiftly as boats approached the far shore. Initially, the crews were unaware of this, as a result, if an operator did not hold the bow of his boat angled well upstream as he approached the far shore, control would be lost. To right a boat in such a case required a long swinging arc downstream. Had the crews been given 15 to 20 minutes to try the current, the accident would probably not have occurred.)

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18. The other five boats remained inactive, tied up at the near shore until late afternoon. About 1600, a reconnaissance was made of the far shore for a ferrying site. One officer and four of the inactive boats crossed to the far shore to be available for a two-way flow of traffic. To assist in communications, the craft were equipped with SCR 610 radios, operating on "A" channel. Many other units in the area were also using these radios. The resultant confusion finally brought orders from 3rd Corps for the LCVP's to discontinue using radio channels for communication.

19. Evacuation of wounded via LCVP's began on March 12th. When the ferry at Unkel was put out of action about 1200 hours one LCVP was ordered from Bad Neuenahr to the Unkel site. There it was placed under the operational control of the 303rd Engineer Battalion, 78th Division. The artillery fire was so intense at this point, that the medical people couldn't get the casualties out to the boat, and the crew was "pinned down" for 45 minutes. Later that evening, with casualties piling up faster than the evacuation system could handle them, another LCVP was sent out from Bad Neuenahr to assist.

20. About mid-afternoon of the 12th, one of the boats at Kripp was ordered upstream to assist the 164th Engineer Battalion in the construction of an anti-mine boom at (F679175). Because the completed ponton bridge blocked passage by water it was necessary to lift the boat out of the river, load it on a trailer and re-launch it upstream of the bridge.

21. The remaining boats at Kripp for the most part remained tied up at the shore. That ferrying was done, if any, was not recorded. The major activity of these boats on the 12th consisted in shooting down on ME109 out of a group of several German planes which attacked the bridges at Kripp and Remagen. Observed artillery made this area a virtual shooting gallery.

22. Late in the evening, orders were received from 552nd Heavy Ponton Battalion to move the boats up from Bad Neuenahr to the river and launch 3 more upstream for the 164th Engineer Battalion. The main mission of this group was to patrol the waters immediately upstream from the anti-mine boom. Later two boats patrolled nightly dropping two depth charges of 50lbs. of TNT every five minutes--a total of some 7 tons of explosive per night--to prevent enemy waterborne attempts to destroy the bridges. In addition, these boats were to assist the 164th Engineer Battalion in stringing cable and laying anchors.

23. These 6 boats left Bad Neuenahr at 2000 and arrived at 2400, 13 March. During launching of the 3 boats upstream an ME262 tried to strafe the boats and personnel but only succeeded in setting fire to the crane, but this was quickly extinguished and the crane repaired by the E-9 crew. The west shore of the Rhine, just south of the AHR River, is low and marshy. Prime movers and trailers became bogged down. Finally, by making use of a long sled--one of the methods tried and proven in the launching experiments at Andenne, the three boats were launched by 1200 hours 14 March. This group, four boats in all, under Lt. (jg) Archibald Updike, continued its patrol duties in the waters west of Dattenberg until moved upstream to assist in bridge-building and ferrying of troops for 5th Corps, March 21st. Effectiveness of the patrolling during this period was evidenced on the night of March 17th when an attempt by a group of swimming saboteurs to reach the bridges was frustrated--the swimmers being stunned and forced from the river by the concussion of the depth charges and the coldness of the water.

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24. Enemy planes made a determined attempt to knock out the bridges at Kripp and Remagen on the 13th. Two crew men were wounded, one slightly, by a bomb which hit on the far shore near the exit of the heavy ponton bridge.

25. On the 14th, two of the boats at Kripp were pulled out and relaunched downstream of the Remagen treadway bridge. The remainder stayed in the vicinity of Kripp. Up to this time, there had been no recorded ferrying of equipment or personnel.

26. Meanwhile, Lt. Eby, who had moved to Cheratte, Belgium with the remaining eight boats of the unit, received orders from 7th Corps Headquarters at 1200 hours, 14 March, to move immediately to Oberwinter, Germany. The column left Cheratte about 2400 hours and with no difficulty arrived at Oberwinter about 2000 hours, 15 March. All boats were launched by 2315 hours. Kripp CP moved to Oberwinter and the unit came under the direct operational control of the 1120th Combat Engineer Group, and 3rd Corps.

27. Early in the morning, March 15th, orders were received from 3rd Corps to provide three LCVP's for ferrying troops of the 1st Infantry Division to the far shore at Unkel. The only ones available were those at Kripp. These had to be pulled out of the water, loaded on trailers, moved downstream and relaunched at Unkelbach. This somewhat delayed the start of ferrying operations. At 1000 hours, using these three boats, plus one of those which had been evacuating wounded from Unkel, ferrying began. Each boat carried 36 men, with full pack per trip. A round trip required between five and seven minutes. By 1300 hours 2200 infantry troops had been transported to the far shore. No enemy artillery fire had hindered the operation.

28. Five boats continued to work in and around the heavy ponton bridge at Kripp. Approaches were to be constructed to the river bank by the 276th Engineer Battalion so that the LCVP's could ferry light vehicles and ambulances. Before much work was done on these approaches, the battalion was assigned to another--higher priority job. The task was turned over to the 51st Engineer Battalion, whose commanding officer, Lt. Col. Harvey R. Fraser, decided to construct different approaches because he felt that those originally selected would not stand traffic in wet weather. As a result of the ensuing delay, the boats were almost completely inactive. Permission was requested to move the boats downstream where there was more need of them, and where suitable ferry approaches existed. This was turned down by 3rd Corps because it was desired to have the boats remain at Kripp for emergencies.

29. From the 16th to the 21st, the unit was divided operationally into two main groups, eight boats, initially, serving 7th Corps and 16 serving 3rd Corps. Of the latter, the four boats under Lt. Updike remained on patrol duty, strung cable and dropped anchors for the impact boom.

30. On the 16th, in the 3rd Corps zone, 900 more infantry and eight jeeps of the 1st Division were ferried across from Ernich to a point just south of Unkel. The five boats at Kripp remained inactive. Lt. Eby's eight boats in the 7th Corps zone were split up into two smaller groups. Six boats assisted in the construction of the first 7th Corps bridge--a treadway--at Rolandseck. (Two boats began patrolling downstream of this site against possible enemy midget submarine or torpedo attacks on the bridge.

31. On the 17th, two boats from 3rd Corps were attached to 7th Corps, giving them 10 boats in all. To avoid the "bottling up" of the boats which had occurred in the 3rd Corps sector, and the resultant tedious and time-wasting process of pulling them out of the water, loading them on trailers and re-launching them elsewhere, they were moved downstream prior to the closing of the Rolandseck treadway bridge. One was left on the upstream side of this bridge.

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The rest moved to Konigswinter to assist in the construction of a heavy ponton bridge.

32. In the 3rd Corps zone, another ferrying site was opened up in the vicinity of Oberwinter and placed under the supervision of Lt.(jg) Philip Wriell. At the Unkel site, 617 infantry, some miscellaneous equipment and some bulk cargo of steel matting for road reinforcement and building were ferried across in the morning.

33. When the Ludendorff railroad bridge collapsed in mid-afternoon, two of the boats from Unkel were immediately dispatched to bolster the treadway bridge at Remagen against the pressure of debris, planks, etc., floating down from the fallen bridge. One of the boats at Kripp was sent to help sweep the river for casualties, but by the time it arrived on the scene, although only a few moments had elapsed, the speed of the current had swept any of the surviving men downstream to the treadway bridge. Further north, in the 7th Corps sector, when debris began to approach the nearly completed ponton bridge (Lannesdorf to Konigswinter), the LCVP's were moved upstream through the last 60 foot gap remaining. Since part of their training at Andenne had been aimed at handling just such an emergency as this, the crews succeeded in diverting all heavy debris through this gap with grappling hooks, ropes, and poles. No damage was done to the ponton bridge.

34. March 18th, the boats at this heavy ponton bridge, laid smoke to screen its construction. Patrolling downstream was continued by two of the boats.

35. In the 3rd Corps, three boats were sent to assist the 148th Engineer Battalion in the construction of the Class 40 Bailey bridge at Remagen. As sections of this bridge were completed downstream, they were towed upstream to be put into place initially, by a large tug. This proved too unwieldy for speedy operation in the swift current, so the task was taken over by an LCVP. The coxswain of this craft, Bos'n Mate 2nd class, Hugh L. Batten, refused relief at the wheel, and in spite of occasional artillery fire landing in the vicinity of the bridge, remained at the wheel for 29 hours without a halt. The small group of LCVP's at Kripp, under Lt.(jg) Jack Cannon, strung a wire cable across the river as added support for the treadway bridge and ferried 15 light vehicles to the far shore. At Oberwinter, 51 vehicles and 145 personnel were carried to the far shore.

36. On the 19th, all of the 7th Corps boats were moved downstream of the heavy ponton bridge at Konigswinter to be ready for use on the next bridge which was to be put in, in the vicinity of Bonn. In the 3rd Corps, 67 personnel and 34 vehicles were ferried at Unkel, and 16 vehicles ferried across at Kripp. Soundings were made for the sinking of anchors at the Remagen bridge. March 20th, the LCVP's at Kripp ferried 72 vehicles, mainly ambulances and jeeps, to the far shore, and continued sounding operations for the Bailey Bridge at Remagen.

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37. At 1730 on the 19th, orders were received to alert 4 boats and load them at Oberwinter by noon of the 20th, and one from Kripp, which was already loaded, for immediate movement. The one from Kripp was launched at 2200 on the 20th and two of the others at 1000 on the 21st at Niederbreisig. These boats ferried troops of the 2nd Division, and later at the same site, assisted in the construction of the longest bridge across the Rhine. Lt. Updike put two boats on patrol duty the night of the 21st. On the other end of the long sector in which Unit # 1 was by then operating, two boats patrolled downstream of Bonn. TNT charges were reduced from 50 to 25 lbs., and the interval of dropping reduced from five minutes to 2 1/2 minutes.

38. From the 21st on, the duties of the unit became almost routine. Exceptions were on the 24th when the boats in the 7th Corps aided in removing the center sections of the bridges at Rolandsech and Konigswinter to allow for the passage of barges carrying bailey-bridging equipment for the bridge to be constructed in the vicinity of Bad Godesburg; and on the 26th--27th when the 5th Corps LCVF's ferried across troops of the 69th Division and some 60 weasels in the vicinity of Bendorf. More cables were strung and the depth charges from the patrol craft were responsible for the capture of 3 more demolition swimmers.

39. Questions.

(1) Q. What were the total number of troops and/or supplies and vehicles transported.
A. 406 Vehicles
10 Bulk loads
200 Wounded evacuated
13,800 Infantry (1st, 2nd, and 69th Divisions)

(2) Q: What were the locations of LCVF sites
A. 5th Corps Bendorf
Brohl
Niederbreisig

3rd Corps Kripp
Remagen
Oberwinter

7th Corps Longsdorf
Konigswinter
Bad Godesberg
Bonn

These sites covered 35 miles of the river, Encl. (H).

(3) Q. In the construction of what bridges, where and by what units, did the LCVF's assist?
A. 5th Corps Heavy Ponton Bridge--Niederbreisig
(254th Engr. Bn. C.)

3rd Corps Heavy ponton Bridge--Kripp--
(552nd and 181st Hvy. Pon. Battalions)
Treadway Bridge--Remagen--
(998th Tdwy Bridge Co. and 291st Engr. Bn. C.)
Bailey Bridge--Remagen--
(148th Engineer Bn. C.)

7th Corps Treadway Bridge--Langsdorf--
(298th Engr. Bn. C.)
Heavy Ponton Bridge--Konigswinter--
(86th and 181st Hvy Pon. Bns.)
Treadway Bridge--Bonn--
(237th Engr. Bn. C.)

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(4) Q. What other work was done by the unit?

A. In addition to ferrying, patrolling and assisting in bridge construction, the unit was given the job of marking all sunken wrecks, so that when the expected spring floods arrived, the maintenance craft still operating on the Rhine would not run afoul of derelicts hidden from view by the flood waters. It regularly checked the cables and anchors of the barges to make certain they were secure and not liable to break loose, drift downstream on the bridges.

(5) Q. Were any other Naval units operating in the area.

A. The only other naval unit in the area was a small group of SEEBEES--one officer and six men--who had been attached to First Army for the specific purpose of instructing army engineers how to build NL Ponton barges. These were to be used for transporting pile drivers for the installation of piers to support semi-permanent or permanent road or rail bridges. This group worked at Kripp supervising the assembling of added supports for the Ludendorf railroad bridge. Work was within a few hours of completion when that bridge collapsed into the river. This unit was not connected with LCVP Unit #1.

(6) Q. What administrative system was used for Army-Navy Co-ordination?

A. The unit was assigned directly to First Army and attached to 1120th Combat Group Engineer for administration and operations. This system worked out very well. We were required to submit daily operations reports, requisition through army channels, use army terms, and wear army clothes. The outcome was a closer association, the results of which were shown on "R day".

(7) Q. What were the chief problems of operations in the Rhine? Were there any that seemed peculiar to a river of this type?

A. The first problem, the unevenness of the current at Kripp and Remagen was solved very quickly. It was merely a matter of getting the feel of the current.

The biggest problem was the constant damaging of propellers and shafts on the rocks just off the beach on approach sites. Fortunately; although it was necessary to change these items continually, the unit had a sufficient supply of replacement parts on hand to keep the boats in almost continuous operation. Another problem was the holes made in the bottom of the boat, by rocks thrown up by the motion of the propeller, when working close to the banks. It is suggested that Tunnel Plates, 12" X 30" 16 Gauge sheet metal, be installed on all LCVP's operating under these conditions. These plates had been installed on all the boats but the only material available at the time, was soft and did not hold up.

The problem of maintenance became increasingly difficult as the beachhead limits were extended, but was overcome by the efficiency and determination of the E-9 unit. Regardless of the extent of damage, no boat was out of operation for more than a few hours.

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(8) Q. What were the unit's total casualties?
 A. Recapitulation of personnel of this unit who were hospitalized in the past six months;

Injuries	Admitted			Transferred
	ADMITTED	OUT	DIED	
Burns, 1st & 2nd Degree	3	1		2
Contusion	1	1		
Fracture, Simple	2	1		1
Intra Cranial Injury	1		1	
Wound, Fragment Shell	1			1
Wound, Gunshot	1	1		
Wound, Lacerated	1			1
Venereal Diseases				
Gonococcus Infection Urethra	6	6		
Syphilis	2	2		
TOTAL	18	12	1	5

(9) Q. Were any points of operation or defects of equipment noted in the operation.

A. Only one problem arose, concerning the construction of the bow ramps. When loading or unloading vehicles, gravel & rocks are thrown into the space between the ramps and the deck at the hinge, which is set a few inches below the level of the deck. This prevents the ramp from "sealing" properly when hoisted, and soon springs the hinge, allowing the craft to take on water.

It is recommended that in future construction of LCVP's a stronger hinge be used on the ramp and so placed as to prevent rocks & gravel from entering & causing the trouble mentioned above.

(10) Q. What was the most important job performed by the LCVP's.

A. The biggest job this unit accomplished in performing it's mission, was the assistance given to the Engineers in their bridge construction. The speed with which these bridges were built allowing strong forces to cross the river and strengthen the beach-head, was the leading contributions to the success achieved in this most important operation.

W. Wenker
 Lt. W. WENKER.

Copies to: Chief of Naval Operations (4)
 CTG 122.5 (2)
 CTF 122 (2)
 COMNAVJEU (2)

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U.S. LCVF UNIT 1
NAVY 3952
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, N.Y.

7 April 1945.

SUGGESTIONS

1. It is very essential and necessary that when units of this type are formed they should be equipped and outfitted to live as the Army lives.
2. It is recommended that all units be furnished Army Field Ranges and necessary cooking utensils to be used with such ranges. Also an adequate number of vehicles for administration, and for maintenance of a base be furnished before the units leave Naval control.
3. It has been found by this unit that the Army can easily furnish necessary lubricating oils, greases, and ammunition, and it is not necessary to carry the above mentioned items because it proves to be a handicap as far as moving and storage is concerned.
4. It is also necessary that the storekeepers assigned to the units be acquainted with the Army Supply system before they are sent on similar missions.
5. The personnel required follows:
 - (a) 2 - Yeomen
 - (b) 2 - Storekeepers
 - (c) 2 - Pharmacist Mates (1 - CPHM)
 - (d) 7 - MM as follows:
 - 1 - CPHM
 - 2 - H1c
 - 2 - H12c
 - 2 - GOK.
 - (e) 15 - Galley Total
6. The following equipment should be furnished to units of this type:

HOUSEHOLD GSK

12 hand lanterns
36 extra batteries for above
150 flashlights complete
450 extra batteries for above
30 buckets

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SUGGESTIONS (Cont.)

HOUSEHOLD GSK (Cont.)

3 cases toilet paper
 5 charged fire extinguishers
 4 cases soap powder
 4 cases soap
 5 axes
 250 lbs. chlorinated lime.
 3000 PX rations (RAC Packs) 15 cs.
 5 M-1937 US Army Field Range complete w/3 cabinet set-up
 and accessories.
 5 Case Water Heaters w/accessories
 6 Immersion Heaters
 8 G.I. Cans, 32 Gal. capacity
 25 Jerrycans, Water, 5 Gal. capacity
 30 tents 16' x 16'
 12 Stoves, for heating purposes
 3 filter bags with material necessary to purify water.
 150 packages Hazeltone tablets
 350 waterproof canteen matches packed 12 boxes to carton.
 12 camp chairs
 150 cots
 5 tarpaulins
 1 coil light line
 1 coil 1/2" line
 1 bale rags (100%)
 2 gross envelopes
 1 ream of paper
 1000 blanks V-mail stationery
 4 doz. pencils
 3 Typewriters, Standard
 2 Field Desks

RATIONS

300 CASES "10-in-1" rations
 63 CASES "M" rations
 94 CASES "C" rations
 15 CASES PX rations

11 Tons machinery spare parts and GSK items for E-9 unit.

POL PRODUCTS

Product	Size Units	No.
7-0-2 Diesel Fuel	5 gal. jerri-can	240
M3-9250 Lube Oil	6 gal. oil can	50
Grease, Mineral 14G1 Grade II	25 lb. can	24
Grease, Graphite, 14G2 Grade II	10 lb. can	24
Grease, Ball & Roller, 14L3, Grade II	5 lb. can	50
Grease, Waterpump, 14L11	5 lb. can	25
Grease, Hypoid 90, VV-L-761	25 lb. can	24
Prestone, Antifreeze	1 gal. can	96

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SUGGESTIONS (Cont.)

POL PRODUCTS (Cont.)

<u>Product</u>	<u>Size Units</u>	<u>No.</u>
52-C-18 Grade III Anti-Rust Compound	5 gal. can	24
52-C-18 Grade I Anti-Rust Compound	5 gal. can	2
Cutting Oil, Mineral Sulfur Treated, 14-0-11	5 gal. can	2
Cutting Oil, Soluble, VV-0-261	5 gal. can	2
Cutting Oil, Mineral Lard VV-0-251	5 gal. can	2
Carbon Tetrachloride	5 gal. can	5
Chain & Wire Rope Lub. VV-L-751	25 lb. can	4
Gun Bearing Lub. OS1350	25 lb. can	2
Lub. Oil NS-2135	5 gal. can	3
Unleaded Motor fuel, 73 Octane	5 gal. jerri-can	72
Leaded Motor fuel, 80 Octane	5 gal. jerri-can	96

PLUS:

- 3 E-9 trucks
- 1 3/4 T. weapons carrier w/3/4 T. trailer for E-9
- 4 2 1/2 T. Trucks
- 5 Jeeps
- 8 3/4 T. weapons carrier w/3/4 T. trailer
- 1 One Ton Trailer
- 1 300-gallon water carrier

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U.S. LCVP UNIT 1
Navy 3952
C/o Fleet Post Office
New York, N. Y.
Serial No. 71-45/ceb

25 February 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To:
Subject: LCVP AND LCM - Use of in River Operations.
Enclosure: (A) Drawing of LCVP
(B) Drawing of LCM
(C) Drawing of LCVP Launching Sled.
(D) Drawing of LCVP Launching Cradle for 16 Ton Flat Bed Trailer.

A. Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel - LCVP

I LCVP - Description of

1. Construction - Plywood
2. Armor - $\frac{1}{4}$ inch bulkheads running from ramp to approximately 22 Ft. aft. $\frac{1}{4}$ inch armor ramp.
3. Armament - Two (2) 70 cal. machine guns, air cooled, in gun pits in stern.
4. Propulsion - One (1) 225 H.P. Gray Marine Engine.
5. Length - 36 Feet.
6. Beam - 11 feet at widest beam.
7. Draft - 3'6" at stern, 1' at bow.
8. Hoisting weight - 18100 lbs.
9. Capacity - 8100 lbs. or 36 combat equipped troops.
10. Center of Gravity - 17' aft of bow.
11. Length of cargo well - 18'1".
12. Width of cargo well 6'3" on deck, 7'4" three feet off deck, 7'6" at gunwale. Widths taken at ramp.
13. Speed - 10 knots.

II TRANSPORTATION.

1. 40 foot 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ ton C-2 Trailer: This type was used for a three hundred mile haul from the coast. The craft rode in LCVP cradles shored to the deck of the trailer, in addition to support cables tightened by turnbuckles rigged on port and starboard sides fore and aft. The trailer is quite satisfactory for transporting LCVP's.

2. Heavy Ponton Trailer: It has been found that the flanges fore and aft on this trailer are spaced wide enough apart to allow the LCVP's cradle to ride securely between them. This eliminates shoring. In addition the aforementioned supporting cables are rigged. The heavy ponton trailer is satisfactory.

3. 16 ton flat bed trailer, semi: In order for the craft to ride this trailer a specially constructed cradle is needed (Encl. D). When finally secured on, the craft ride at a steep angle fore and aft with some overhang of the stern. This type of trailer is satisfactory for short hauls only in that there is, an itinerant risk of the craft breaking loose from it's lashings and sliding stern first to the ground.

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4. Transportation General: This unit has used successfully for a prolonged period the heavy ponton trailer. We have transported craft from place to place on the main roads and from main roads to launching sites. We consider the heavy ponton trailer the most feasible type.

III LAUNCHING.

(A) Launching Cranes.

1. 5 ton quickway Crane: It is not satisfactory, used either alone or in combination with other cranes of it's type.

2. Engineer or heavy ordnance Lorraine Crane: This crane is satisfactory only when rigged with double shivs and enough cable to lower boat ten feet below the level of the of the crane.

3. Bay City Crane: This unit has used this crane repeatedly in many places and under many varied conditions. It's only limitation is the inability to traverse soft terrain. However, we consider it the most satisfactory piece of equipment tried.

4. Le Tourneau Crane: The Le Tourneau is unable to hoist craft from the transporting trailers. It can easily lift them from the ground and lower them into the water. It can also pick a boat up and "walk" it out into a stream.

5. Cranes General: Any crane of 10 ton capacity should be able to handle the LCVP. The Le Tourneau crane is capable of lifting a craft off the ground and "walking" to and lowering it over a quay side or "walking" it into shallow water. But it cannot lift a craft off a ponton trailer due to the cranes low construction. It is therefore not regarded as a practical, although satisfactory crane.

(B) LAUNCHING SLEDS.

1. Timber Sled: (Ref. Encl. C) Length 33'11" Width 6'1" Height at stern 3'9". This sled was constructed in such a way that it can be towed from either end and pushed from the bow. We have employed the sled on concrete sloping ramp and soft dirt ramps of varying degrees of slope up to 20°. It is eminently satisfactory. In launching with this sled, secure it to the prime mover with 3 fathoms of line to pull it out from the craft after it is water borne.

2. Steel Dolly Sled: This unusual sled was constructed with wheels. Later it was found advisable to place timber runners underneath. It will roll on hard surfaces and slide on soft. But it's advantages over the timber sled were so slim that it was discarded, being very heavy to move around.

3. Log Sled: This sled has no advantage over the timber sled unless constructed of green logs. This would enable it to traverse uneven terrain with little risk of cracking.

4. Sleds General: The experiments tried pointed out the conclusion that the timber sled answered all requirements. It is in effect a replica of the LCVP carrying cradle made of much heavier timber. One D-7 Bull Doser or the equivalent is required as the prime mover.

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(C) Launching Trailers. (Ref. Encl. D)

1. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ ton Flat Bed: This is too short, it is not satisfactory.
2. 16 ton Flat Bed Trailer: The 16 ton flatbed with our specially constructed cradle is ideal. It is fitted with an elongated tongue attached to a D-7 Bull Doser or equivalent as a prime mover. In all tests so far it has been able to launch craft anywhere the sleds have but it is assumed the sleds could get through very soft dirt easier. The craft is secured to the cradle by two cables, one on each side. When the trailer is backed into the water the cables are cut by the crew inside the craft or by shore hands. The craft slides off the cradle into the water.
3. Heavy Ponton Trailer: Due to the height of this trailer and of the risk of it's turning over if leaned over to one side to far, it is not considered a satisfactory launching trailer.

(D) Launching General: We feel that we can launch an LCVP anywhere with the following pieces of heavy equipment.

1. D-7 Bull Doser (on hand 0)
2. Timber Sled (on hand 3)
3. Bay City Crane (on hand 1)
4. 16 ton Flatbed (on hand no trailers 3 cradles.)

IV RIVER OPERATIONS.

(A) Loading and unloading Sites: It has been observed on the Meuse River that the banks are generally 2 to 6 feet steep sloped dirt. In order to load vehicles and facilitate loading bulk equipment the bank slope should not be any greater than 20°. Therefore it is necessary to prepare a site by pushing down the bank into the water to secure a beach. The beach area should be wide enough to permit the craft to come in at an angle to the river current (ie) at least 15 yards.

Loading: All bulk loads should be placed as far aft in the cargo well as possible. A skid ramp such as is used in ammunition depots is a useful expedient in loading bulk cargoes

(B) Vehicles an LCVP can carry.

1. Jeep
2. Command Car.
3. $\frac{1}{2}$ ton trailer
4. 1 ton trailer
5. Jeep and $\frac{1}{2}$ ton trailer.
6. $\frac{1}{2}$ ton trailer and 1 ton trailer
7. $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton weapons carrier.

(C) Ordnance an LCVP can carry

1. 57 MM anti-tank Gun
2. 105 MM infantry cannon
3. 57 MM anti tank gun and 105 infantry cannon.
4. Jeep and 105 MM infantry cannon
5. Two (2) $\frac{1}{3}$ MM Howitzers
6. 40 MM anti-aircraft gun.
7. Airborne Bull Doser.

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(D) Table of Bulk Loads Craft can Carry.

30 Cal. Cartridges	- 60 cases
50 " " " "	- 80 "
57 MM A. T. Gun	- 750 Rounds
40 MM A. A. Gun	- 1360 "
60 MM Mortar	- 1620 "
81 MM Mortar light	- 800 "
81 MM Mortar heavy	- 480 "
75 MM Howitzer	- 340 "
75 MM Gun	- 325 "
76 MM Gun	- 270 "
105 MM Howitzer	- 150 "
155 Gun Projectiles	- 100 "
155 Gun Prop Charges	- 200
155 MM Howitzer Projectiles	- 95
155 MM Howitzers Prop Charges	- 810
240 MM Projectiles	- 25
240 MM Prop Charges	- 86
8 Inch Projectiles	- 45
8 Inch Prop Charges	- 290
2.36 Bazooka Rockets	- 13500
Jerri Cans - Gasoline filled	- 200
10 in 1 Rations	- 180 Cases.

V. REARMAMENT EXPERIMENTS.

After trying several methods of mounting a fifty cal. M.G. forward the idea was given up as impractical.

At present we have successfully mounted and fired two fifty cal. M. G. in the 30 cal. gun pits. The 30 cal. receivers were replaced by the fifty cal. and the whole unit put on without additional changes to the gun pit itself. The shield slit has to be cut out larger to fit the 50 cal. M.G.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS OPERATION USES

1. Laying Cable: The LCVP can be used to string wire or cable across a stream. The most practical way to go about the job is securing the bitter end of the cable to the craft and leaving the spool on shore. In as much as the craft is affected in mid stream by the currents and the changes of heading are likely to be made suddenly. There is danger of the wire or cable fouling in the spool. if it is carried aboard the craft. This adaptation of the craft should prove useful in laying communications wire and in boom building.

2. Smoke: Experiments were tried in using the LCVP to lay smoke. Smoke pots were not used, instead two smoke generators were placed in the craft. Good results were obtained. There is space in the craft for three (3) generators and fuel drums if it is desired to use three sets.

3. Ferry Power: One LCVP was used to power a heavy ponton ferry with a 2 1/2 ton truck on board the ferry. The current of the river was four knots. The craft is securely tied to the ferry clear of the bank and other than that the LCVP carries on unaided.

4. Bridge Building: One LCVP was employed by engineers in experimental bridge work. The craft was found quite capable in the various functions it performed particularly in placing and holding bridge sections. It should be pointed out however that the LCVP is not as maneuverable as the Utility Boat.

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B. LANDING CRAFT MECHANIZED, MARK III - LCM(3) (Encl 1,

The LCM(3) is an outgrowth of the United States Navy's small landing craft program designed to secure a craft capable of handling armored equipment.

1. LCM(3) Description Of.

1. Construction - Steel
2. Armor - $\frac{1}{4}$ inch sides to Control Station
3. Armament - Two 50 Cal. Air cooled M.G. on Anti-Aircraft mounts.
4. Length - Fifty (50) feet.
5. Beam - Fourteen (14) feet, 1 inch
6. Propulsion - Two (2) 225 H.P. Gray Marine Diesel Engines.
7. Draft - 3'6" at stern 2' forward.
8. Hoisting weight - 52000 lbs.
9. Length Cargo well - 31'6" Width Cargo Well at ramp 10'
10. Speed - 11 knots.
11. Capacity - 60000 lbs or 60 troops.

2. OPERATIONAL USES

1. Loading site: The loading and debarking sites are necessarily the same for the LCM as for the LCVP. In both cases a beach area is needed with a slope not greater than 20° to the waters edge. This enables the ramps to be lowered where by an easily accessible runway into the boat is secured.

2. Vehicles Carried by the LCM:

- (a) 2 Jeeps
- (b) Two (2) $\frac{1}{4}$ ton weapons carrier
- (c) One (1) $1\frac{1}{2}$ ton personnel carrier.
- (d) Two (2) command cars (without winch)
- (e) One (1) ambulance
- (f) One (1) 6 X 6 $2\frac{1}{2}$ ton truck with or without full load.

Armored Vehicles carried by an LCM:

- (a) Armored Scout car.
- (b) Light Tank (all Models)
- (c) Medium Tank (exclusive of heavily armored assault tank) and M-36
- (d) 155 gun mounted on carriage self propelled M-12
- (e) Half track
- (f) Half track with 50 cal. M.G. Anti-aircraft quadruple mount.
- (g) The LCM will carry any armored vehicle not exceeding the weight of the sherman medium tank equipped with the 76 MM gun not over 10 feet wide.

Artillery Carried by the LCM

- (a) Four (4) 105 MM infantry cannon
- (b) Two (2) 57 MM anti-tank guns
- (c) Four (4) 75 MM Howitzers
- (d) One (1) 155 Howitzer.

Miscellaneous Vehicles

- (a) Artillery prime mover
- (b) R-4 Bulldozer with blade
- (c) D-7 Puller (without blade)
- (d) D-8 Bulldozer (without blade)

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3. Bulk Loads

30 Cal.	-	450 Cases
50 Cal.	-	560 Cases
57 MM A.T. Gun	-	4625 Rounds
40 MM AA Gun	-	10200
60 MM Mortar	-	12150
81 MM Mortar (light)	-	6000
81 MM Mortar (heavy)	-	3600
75 MM Howitzer	-	2650
75 MM Gun	-	2440
76 MM Gun	-	2025
105 MM Howitzer	-	1275
155 MM Gun Projectiles	-	750
155 MM Gun Prop Charges	-	1500
155 MM Howitzer Projectiles	-	712
155 MM Howitzer Prop Charges	-	6075
240 MM Projectiles	-	187
240 MM Prop Charges	-	645
8 Inch Projectiles	-	340
8 Inch Prop Charges	-	2100
Jerri Cans - filled	-	1500
10 in 1 Rations	-	1350

3. OPERATIONAL SUGGESTIONS

The LCM(3)'s comparatively greater cargo tonnage gives it a great advantage over the LCVP. It is suggested in the early phase to use the LCM in carrying loaded 6 X 6, 2 1/2 ton trucks rather than bulk loading. Bulk loading is a slow process at the best and would require four handlings of the cargo. The transporting vehicle would have to be unloaded, load placed in craft, load removed from craft on far shore, and then reloaded in a transporting vehicle. Whereas a loaded truck can be speedily backed on the craft; craft carrier truck and load to far shore and the truck rolls off to it's destination. More material can be moved out of supply dumps on the near shore and carried to points of consumption on the far shore by handling loaded trucks than by handling bulk loads. The craft returning to the near shore from the far shore can bring back empty trucks or such other items as required to be moved

4. TRANSPORTATION AND LAUNCHING.

LCVP UNIT 1 has received no craft at the time of this writing therefore we are unable to give results of any proposed experiments. Additions to this report will be distributed covering the launching and transportation

Submitted by:

A. R. OPDIKE
Lt. (jg) USNR.

APPROVED:

Lt. W. WENKER

COMMANDING OFFICER.

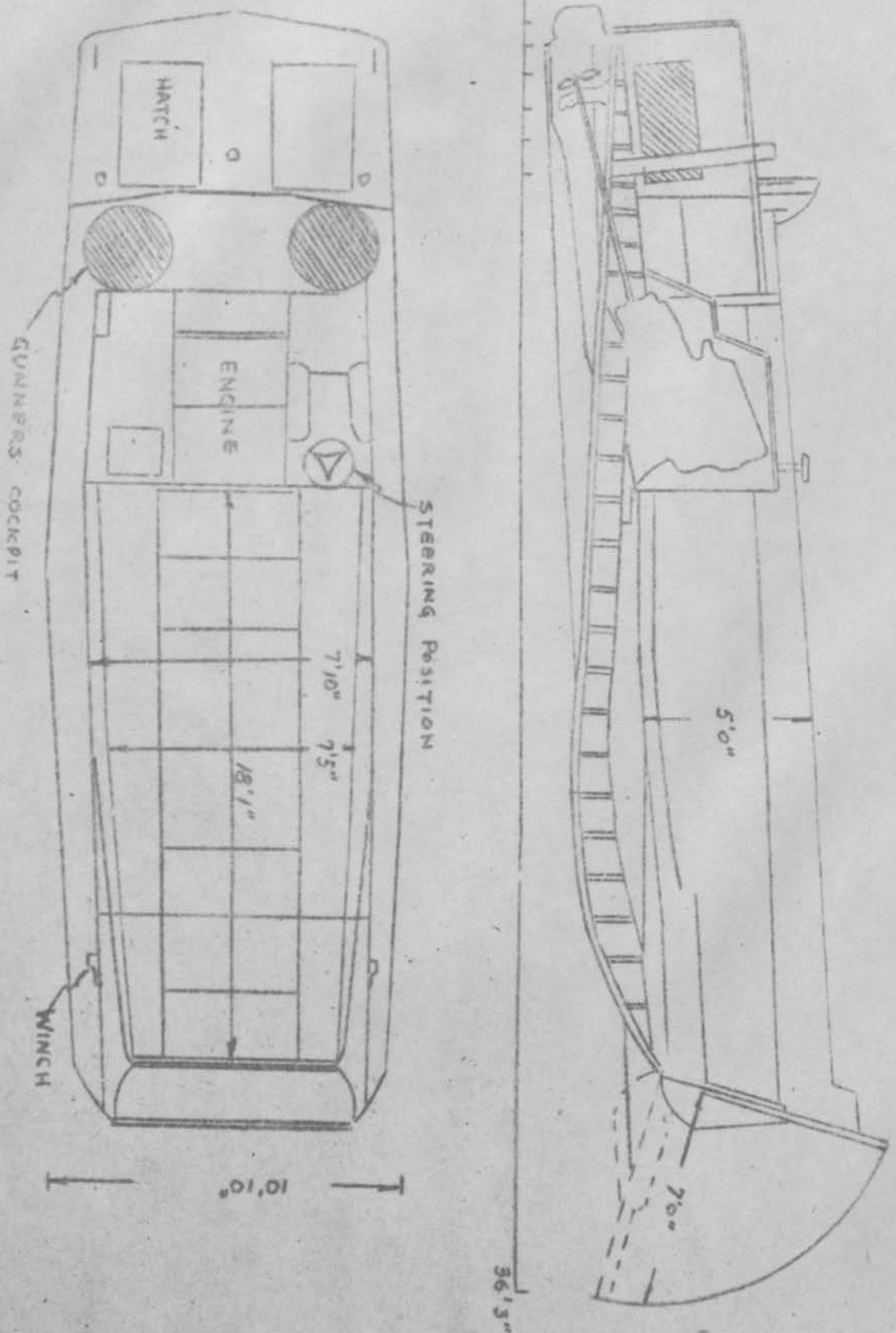
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LCVP UNIT 1 (1)
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7TH CORPS (3)
1120TH GP. C. ENGR. (1)
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1106TH G. R. C. ENGR. (1)
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LCVP

ENCLOSURE



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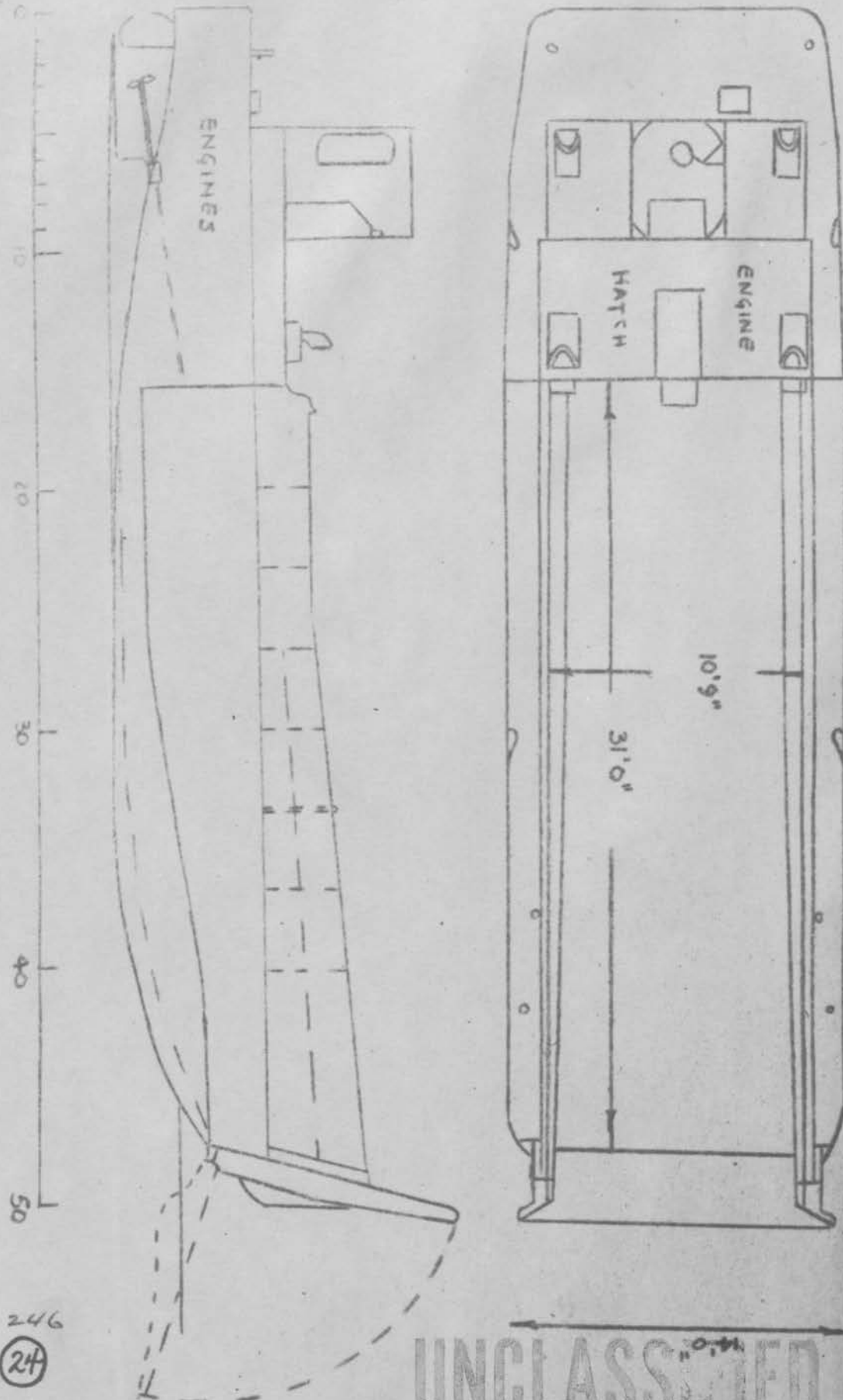
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LCM(3) ENCL. (3)



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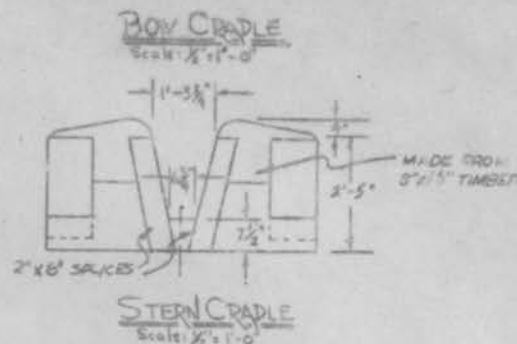
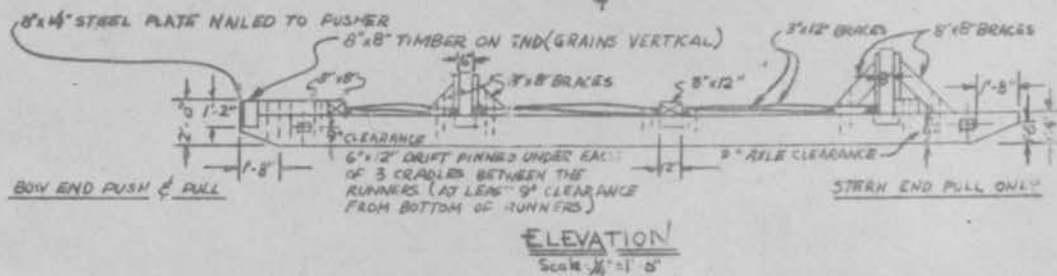
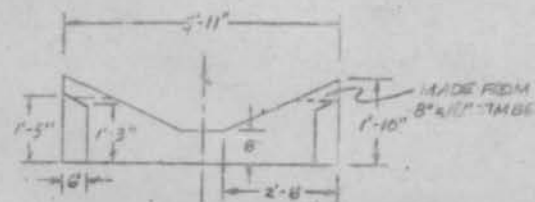
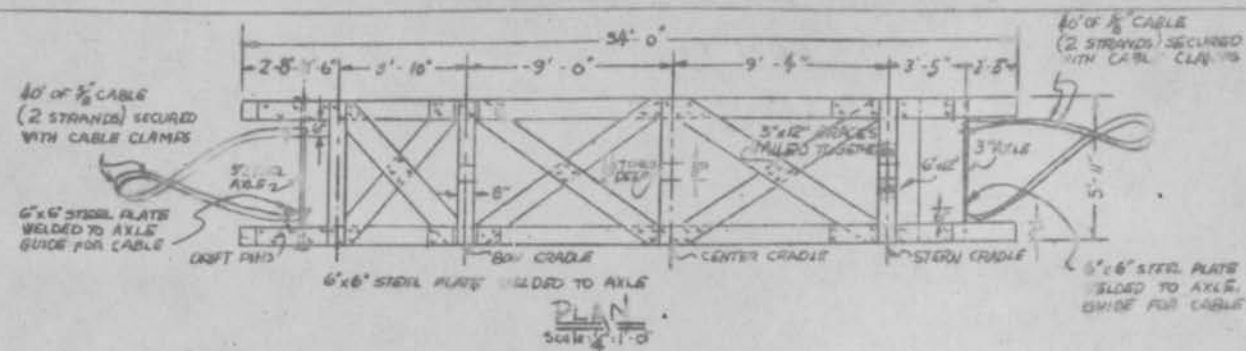
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FEELINGS



NOTE:-

1. WIDTH MUST BE 71" SO THAT SLED WILL FIT 25-TON PONTON SEMI-TRAILER.
2. CLEARANCE OF SUPERSTRUCTURE FROM BOTTOM OF RUNNERS MUST BE AT LEAST 9" IN ORDER FOR SLED TO FIT STEEL TREADWAY BRIDGE.
3. 8"x16" RUNNERS MUST NOT BE NOTCHED.
3"x12" BRACES MUST NOT BE NOTCHED.

IVAR DEPARTMENT U.S. ARMY

298TH ENGR C BN

Timber Sled
For Launching LCVP

Scale AS SHOWN Date: 3 NOV 1947

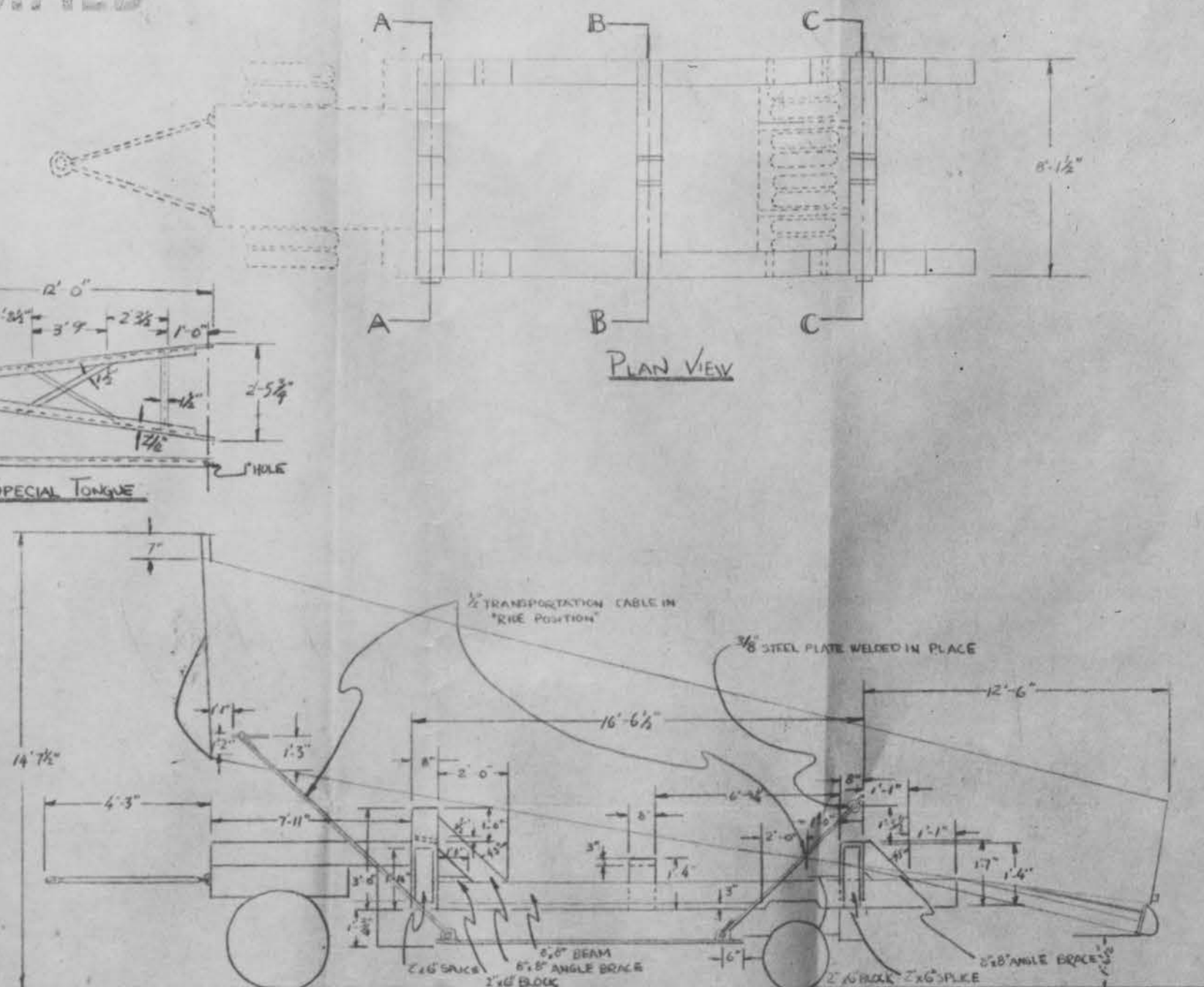
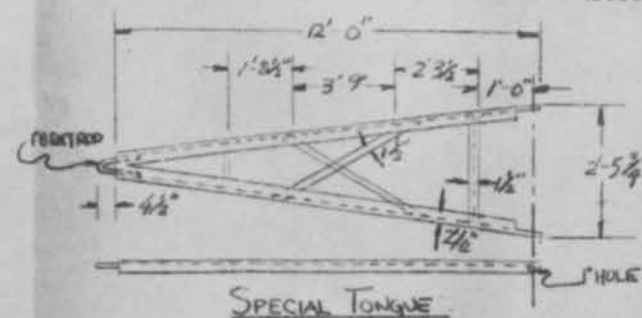
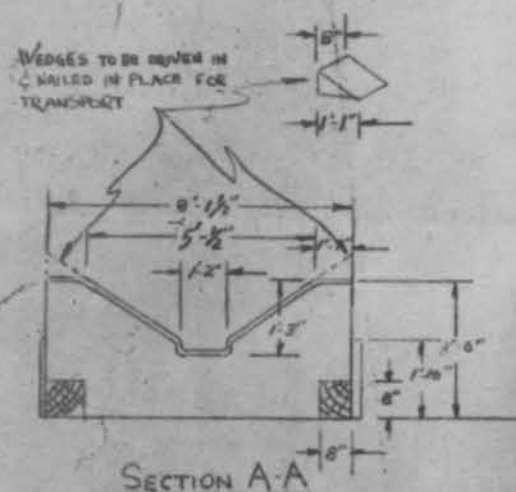
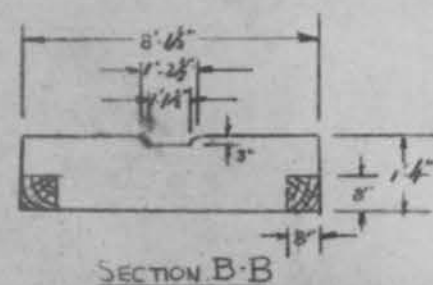
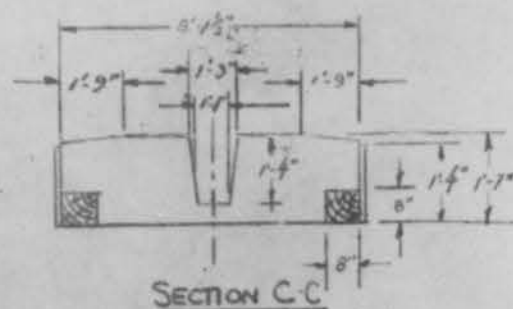
Designed by: MAJOR A. H. AHMAJAN, C. E.

Tested by: 298th EWG CBN ELCMP

UNIT #1, USN

Drawn by REK. Drug Approved by KRB/GP3.

Reproduced by: 112071 ENGR CGR, 18 NOV. 1949



BILL OF MATERIALS

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	SIZE	UNIT	QUANTITY
TIMBER	ROUGH	8" x 8" x 20'-0"	Pcs	4
"	"	8" x 16" x 10'-0"	"	6
"	"	2" x 6" x 10'-0"	"	2
CABLE	WIRE	1/2"	Ft	75
ANGLE IRON		2 1/2"	"	30
"		1 1/2"	"	15
PLATE	STEEL	3/8" x 6" x 10"	Nº	1
ROD	"	1"	Ft	2
CABLE CLAMPS	"	1/2"	Nº	16
Nails	WIRE	60d	Lbs	30

WAR DEPARTMENT U S ARMY

298TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

Cradle ^{for} LCVP
16 Ton Flat Bed Trailer

Scales: NOT TO SCALE Date: 16 OCTOBER 1944
Designed & Built By: LT. M. L. WHITE, USN
Tested By: JERRY ENGR. CORP. & LCVP UNIT #1, US
Drawn By: R.E.K. Approved: K.R.B., B1b
Reproduced By: 1120TH ENGR. CGP, 22 APR 1944
Reproduced By: ENR. CORP. - B1, 7 April 1944

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ENCLOSURE (E)

U.S. LCVF UNIT #1
NAVY 3952
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, N. Y.

ROTATION AND DISPOSITION OF TROOPS.

DIVISIONS	CLEANING DUTY	WATCH DUTY	TRAINING AT C.P.	TRAINING AT REAR	MOVE TO
1 and 2	Dec. 11 to 18	Dec. 18 to 25	Dec. 25 to 31	Jan. 1 to 8	REAR - 31 Dec.
7 and 8	Jan. 1 to 8	Dec. 11 to 18	Dec. 18 to 24	Dec. 25 to Jan. 1	REAR - 24 Dec. JEPSON C.P. - 31 Dec.
3 and 4	Dec. 25 to Jan. 1	Jan. 1 to 8	Dec. 11 to 17	Dec. 18 to 25	REAR - 17 Dec. JEPSON C.P. - 24 Dec.
5 and 6	Dec. 18 to 25	Dec. 25 to Jan. 1	Jan. 1 to 8	Dec. 11 to 17	JEPSON C.P. - 17 Dec.

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U. S. LCVP UNIT 1
Navy 3952
C/o Fleet Post Office
New York, N. Y.

Serial No. 84-45/ceb

4 February 1945.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To:
Subject: Freezing Problem - Report on.
Enclosure: (A) Drawings of New Circulation System
Drawings of Original Circulation System.

1. The drawings enclosed (encl.A) are the result of several experiments made by the Engineering Department of this unit, in overcoming the freezing problem that hindered the operation of the craft.

2. This modified cooling system is easily installed, and is so fitted as to enable the operator to switch to the original system, or from the original to the new, in fifteen seconds.

3. It is recommended that 1 1/2" galvanized pipe be used instead of the 1 1/8" that was used here, and that 2" pipe with 1/8" holes be used for the strainer. It is further recommended that operators should be instructed to lift the strainer just clear of the water when draining for the night, or when the craft is to be idle for any great length of time.

4. This equipment has been installed in our 24 LCVP's and will be installed on the LCM's immediately upon their arrival. This system has been tested several times, even through ice filled water, and since we have experienced no difficulty, believe it will work satisfactorily.

Lt. V. WENKER.

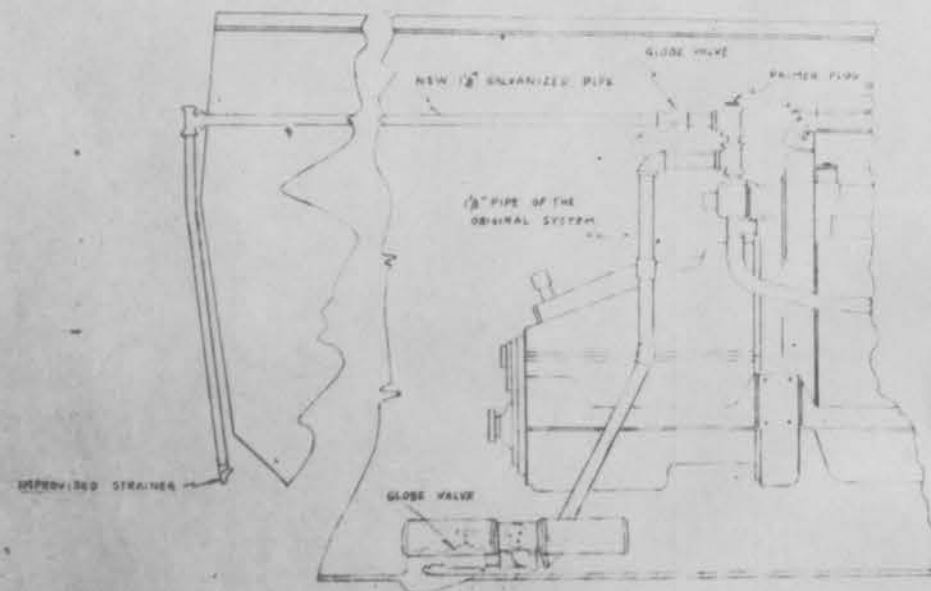
Copies to:-	CTG 122.5	(3)	C.G. 1st Army	(3)
	CTF 122.	(1)	7th Corps	(3)
	LCVP Unit 2	(2)	1120th Engr. C. Gr.	(1)
	LCVP Unit 3	(3)	1128th Engr. C. Gr.	(1)
	LCVP Unit 4	(3)	1106th Engr. C. Gr.	(1)
	CTF 125	(3)	C. G. 3rd Army	(1)
	CTF 127.	(3)	C. G. 9th Army	(1)
			12th Army Group	(1)

5. The main reason for this type of installation was to overcome the freezing encountered during the period the engine was not running. This freezing occurred in the section between the lowest globe valve and the intake, approximately 3 inches, which is below the water line and cannot be drained.

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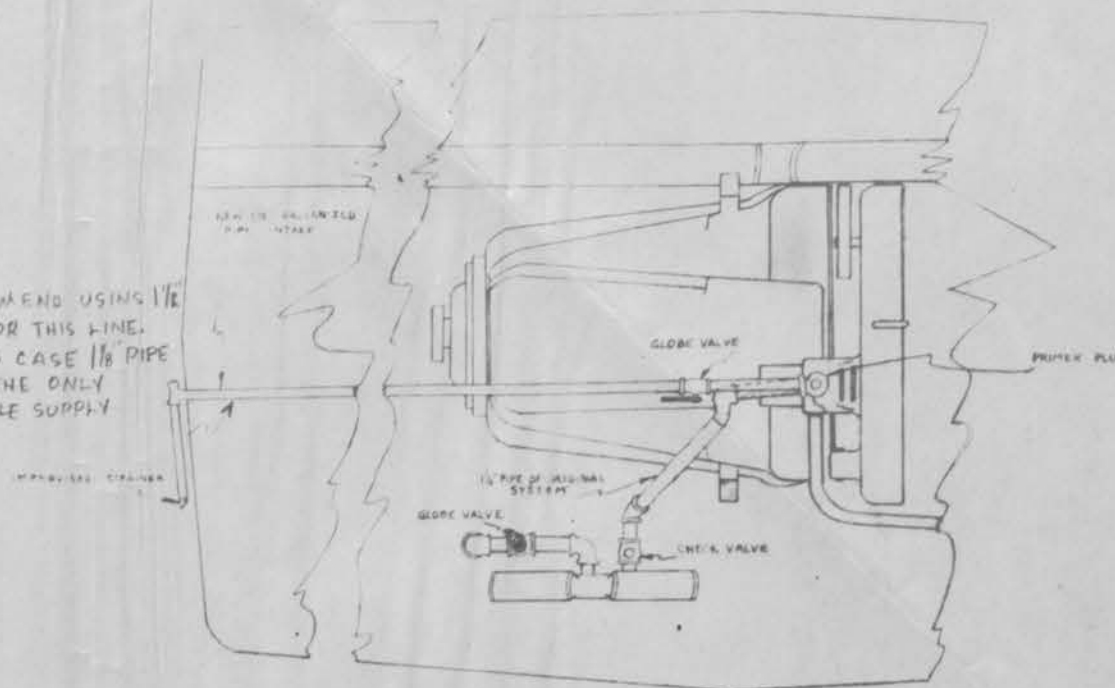
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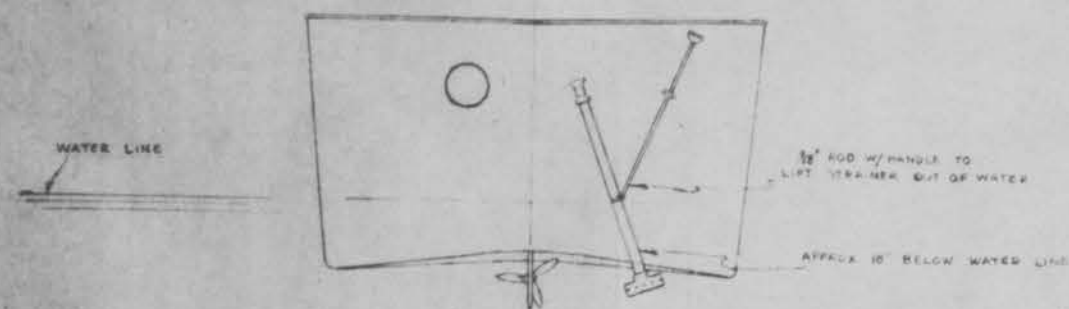


SIDE VIEW OF TWO SALTWATER INTAKE SYSTEMS
ORIGINAL SYSTEM CROSS-HATCHED - NOT TO SCALE

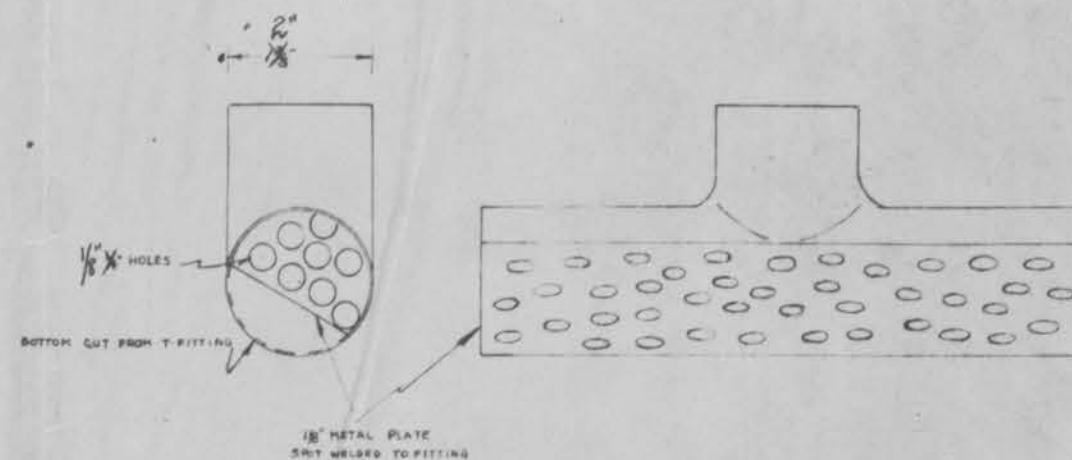
RECOMMEND USING 1/2\"/>



PLAN VIEW OF STERN LCVP SHOWING NEW SALT WATER INTAKE
ORIGINAL SYSTEM CROSS-HATCHED - NOT TO SCALE.



END VIEW, SHOWING POSITION OF IMPROVISED STRAINER
NOT TO SCALE



IMPROVISED STRAINER
FULL SCALE

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1128TH ENGINEER COMBAT GROUP			
LCVP MODIFIED COOLING SYSTEM			
DESIGNED BY: LCVP UNIT NO. 1			
DATE:	DRAWN BY:	CHECKED:	APPROVED:
FEB. 1, 1945	HC	M. WHITE	W. Hender
		V. BYRD	

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U.S. LCVP UNIT 1
NAVY 3952
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, N.Y.

1 APRIL 1945.

FROM: THE COMMANDING OFFICER.
TO: THE BUREAU OF ORDNANCE.
SUBJECT: ALTERATIONS TO 30 CAL.M.G. MOUNT ON LCVP.

1. EXPERIMENTS WERE CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE THE MOST PRACTICABLE METHOD FOR MOUNTING TWO (2) 50 CALIBRE MACHINE GUNS IN EACH BOAT INSTEAD OF THE LIGHT 30 CALIBRE. A SUCCESSFUL METHOD WAS FINALLY DEvised BY LT.M.L.WHITE U.S.N. ENGINEERING OFFICER OF THIS UNIT, WHICH REQUIRED VERY LITTLE ALTERATION TO THE STANDARD MOUNT. AN EXTENSION WAS WELDED TO THE SHIELD, RECEIVER FOR THE 50 CALIBRE GUN WAS DESIGNED AND MADE. THE SLOT IN THE GUN SHIELD ENLARGED, AND THE SHIELD FITTED TO THE NEW RECEIVER.

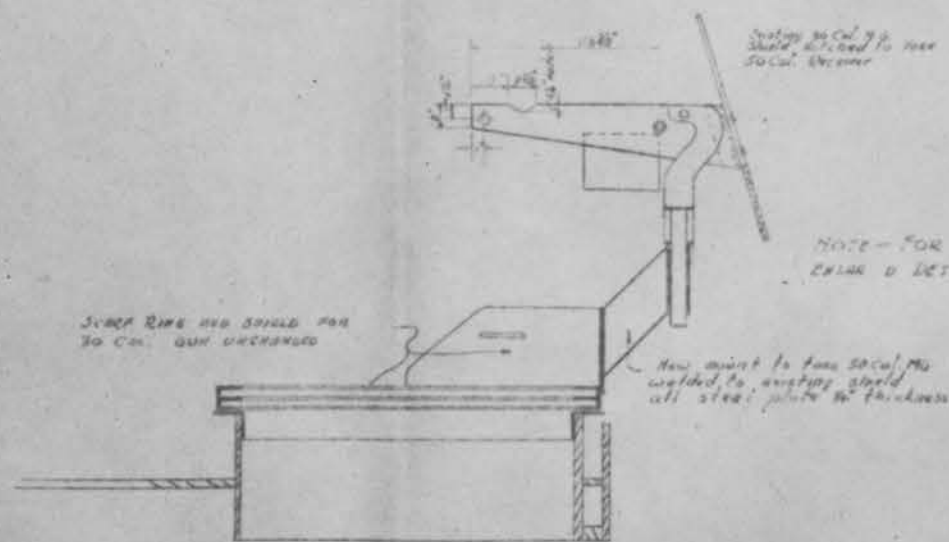
2. THIS GUN CAN BE A FORTIDABLE WEAPON IN THE HANDS OF WELL TRAINED GUNNERS, AND HAS PROVEN IT'S VALUE DURING THIS OPERATION.

W. Wenker
LT. W. WENKER.
COMMANDING OFFICER.

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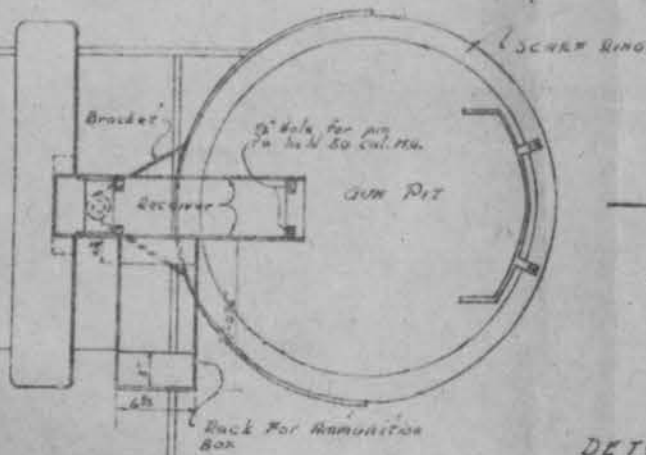


SECTION A-A
Scale 1 1/2" = 1'-0" 2822

Edge of Boat

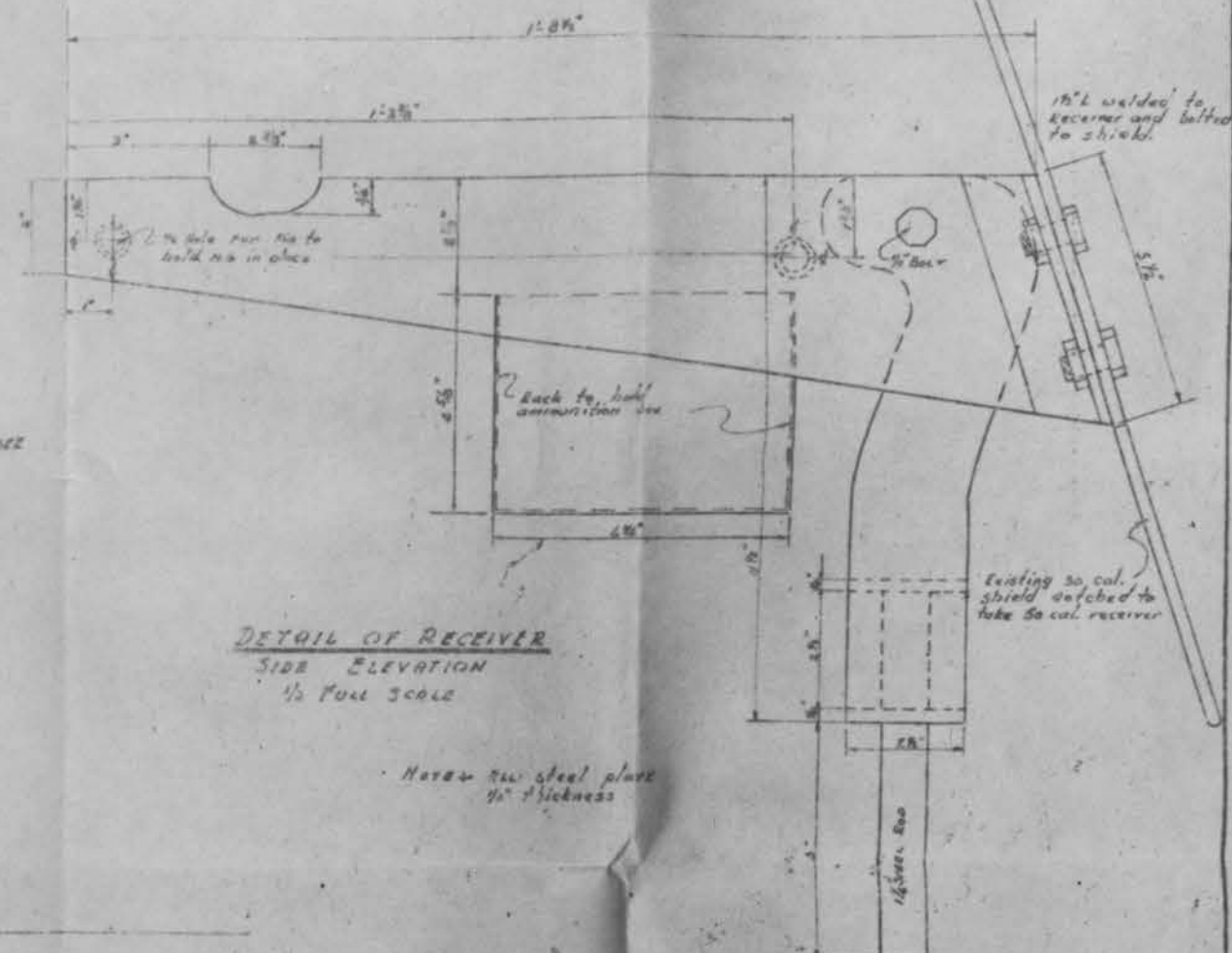
Coaming

TOP OF ENGINE BOX



PLAN OF ALTERATIONS
Scale 1 1/2" = 1'-0"

DETAIL OF BRACKET
FOR RECEIVER
1/2 Full Scale



DETAIL OF RECEIVER
SIDE ELEVATION
1/2 Full Scale

Notes: 2" steel plate
1/2" thickness

Existing 30 cal.
shield and scarf ring

New work from this point

WAR DEPARTMENT U.S. NAVY
ALTERATIONS TO 30 CAL. M.G.
MOUNT ON LCVP
TO TAKE 50 CAL. MACHINE GUN

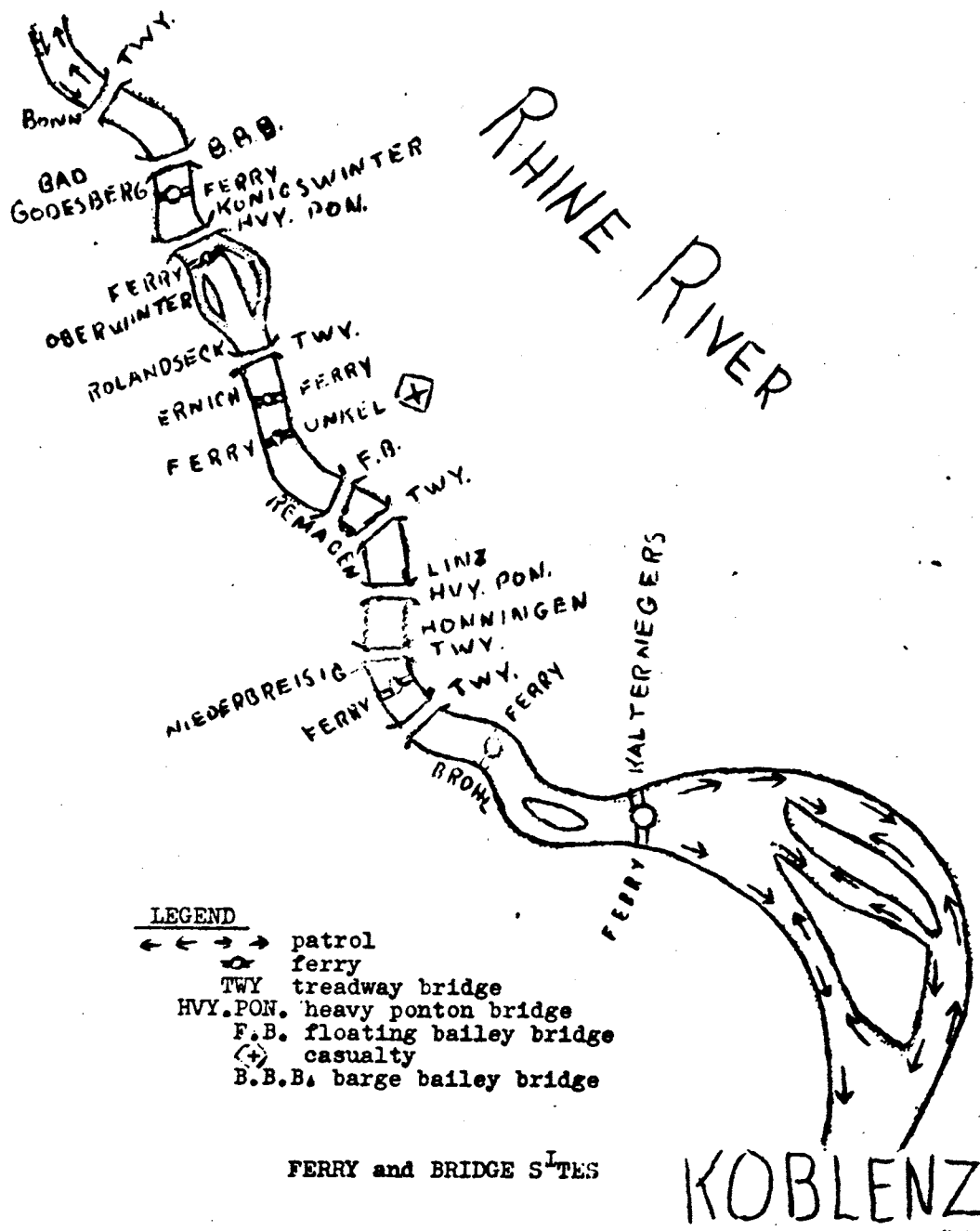
SCALE - AS NOTED
DESIGNED BY - LT. H. L. WHITE, U.S.N.
DRAWN BY - LTJG. R. EBY, U.S.N.
APPROVED BY - LT. W. WENKE, U.S.N.E.

LCVP UNIT No. 1

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ENCLOSURE
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UNITED STATES FLEET
UNITED STATES NAVAL FORCES, FRANCE
TASK GROUP 122.5

FIRST PRIORITY
CTU 122.5.2 Secret
ltr A16-3/WD
SRL: 0050

10 April 1945.

From: Commander Task Group 122.5
To : Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
Via: (1) Commander Task Force 122
(2) Commander, U. S. Naval Forces in Europe.
Subject: Action Report - Rhine River Crossings.

1. Forwarded.
2. The performance of this unit was outstanding and it is very highly regarded by the Third U. S. Army. Last minute tactical developments demanded changes in plans and eventually resulted in the unit making four assaults in six days. That these were accomplished so successfully reflects great credit on the Commanding Officer and is an indication of the splendid organization and high state of efficiency of his unit.
3. This unit was more fortunate than the other two in that it was continuously attached to the same Engineer Combat Group from its formation to the time of the assault. Army and Navy units have a great deal to learn from one another when engaged in a joint task such as this one. They must understand fully each others organization and the capabilities of their equipment. The long association of this unit with its Engineer Combat Group contributed to the efficiency of both. It is to be regretted that rapid tactical developments caused their ultimate separation. The unit then became attached to a series of other engineer units who were unfamiliar with the naval equipment or its requirements. Difficulties with transportation, communications and subsistence ensued. It is recommended that in future operations of this kind steps be taken to insure that the naval unit remains always attached to an engineer unit thoroughly familiar with its needs and capabilities.
4. By order of the Commanding General, Twelfth Army Group the loading, transportation, (including provision of vehicles and personnel and reconnoitering routes) and launching (including provision of cranes) were made the responsibilities of the Armies. The Navy was charged only with maintaining the craft and operating them in the water. This division of responsibility should prevail in future operations and should be well understood by all Army authorities concerned from the very inception of the joint plan. Navy personnel do not know how to reconnoiter roads or conduct vehicle convoys.

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They have no access to reserves of trucks, trailers and cranes. They are not experienced in demolition nor equipped to carry it out. They have been asked to do all these things (and have done most of them successfully) because the Army Group Commander's order had not filtered down to the lower echelon.

5. It is recommended that the attention of the Bureau of Ships be directed to the weakness of the LCM (3) mechanical ramp winch mechanism. During the continual use incident to the rapid turn-around in a river crossing, the clutch fails due to warping of its plates. It is also recommended that the LCP be provided with a mechanical ramp mechanism for use in river crossings.

W. J. Whiteside
W. J. WHITESIDE.

UNCLASSIFIED

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A16-3/WD
SRL: 0050

UNITED STATES FLEET
UNITED STATES NAVAL FORCES, FRANCE
TASK UNIT 122.5.2

6 APRIL 1945

FROM: COMMANDER, TASK UNIT 122.5.2
TO: COMMANDER IN CHIEF, UNITED STATES FLEET.

VIA: (1) COMMANDER, TASK GROUP 122.5
(2) COMMANDER, TASK FORCE 122
(3) COMMANDER, U. S. NAVAL FORCES IN EUROPE

SUBJ: TASK UNIT 122.5.2 ATTACHED THIRD U. S. ARMY - FOUR RHINE RIVER CROSSINGS; ACTION REPORT OF.

1. GENERAL:

ON 7 NOVEMBER 1944 ORDERS WERE RECEIVED BY ME AS COMMANDER, TASK UNIT 122.5.2. AT THE SAME TIME, LT. (JG) DAVID L. SPAULDING, 188357, (D)L USNR, WAS MADE EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THIS UNIT.

ON 8 NOVEMBER 1944 EIGHT OFFICERS AND 24 CREWS WERE MET AT DARTMOUTH, DEVON, ENGLAND, AND WORK OF WELDING A HOMOGENEOUS UNIT WAS BEGUN.

ON 10 NOVEMBER 1944 THE UNIT EMBARKED WITH 24 LCVP'S ON "H.M.S. OCEANWAY" FOR LE HAVRE, FRANCE. ON 11 NOVEMBER 1944 THE UNIT ARRIVED AND DEBARKED AT LE HAVRE, WHERE FURIOUS ACTIVITY ENSUED IN ORDER TO IMMEDIATELY GET READY FOR WHAT WAS THEN THOUGHT TO BE AN IMMINENT CROSSING OF THE RHINE. THE ENGINEERING UNIT (E-9 31), HEADED BY LIEUT. JACK W. LOZIER, 191955 S(E4) USNR, ARRIVED AT LE HAVRE THE SAME DAY, HAVING SAILED SEPARATELY FROM PORTLAND, ENGLAND. THEY ALSO HAD BEEN IN A MAD RUSH TO ACQUIRE ADEQUATE SPARE PARTS AND MATERIEL FOR PROPER MAINTENANCE OF THE CRAFT.

ON 15 NOVEMBER 1944, I REACHED 1134TH ENGINEERS (C) GROUP, HEADED BY COLONEL JAMES C. FITCH, U. S. ARMY, TO WHOSE GROUP OUR UNIT WAS ATTACHED. THE UNIT WAS ASSIGNED QUARTERS IN A BLASTED FRENCH CAVALRY BARRACKS IN TOUL, FRANCE. IT WAS BITTER COLD AND RAINING HARD. WITHIN A WEEK THE QUARTERS WERE HABITABLE AND THE NAVY WAS DIGGING IN.

SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE BOATS, ALL THE CRAFT WERE LAUNCHED IN THE MOSELLE RIVER, AND AN EXTENSIVE FIVE-WEEKS PROGRAM OF LAUNCHING AND LOADING EXPERIMENTATION, PLUS SIMULATED COMBAT RIVER CROSSINGS TOOK PLACE. THIS STOOD US IN GOOD STEAD WHEN THE JOB HAD TO BE DONE FOR PAY. THE RIVER CROSSINGS WERE A MIXTURE OF THE SHIP TO SHORE MOVEMENT AND BUILD-UP LEARNED UNDER FIRE AT OMAHA BEACH, NORMANDY. THE PRACTICE MOSELLE CROSSINGS, WITH VARIATIONS ONLY AS TO PECULIARITIES OF THE RHINE RIVER SITES, WERE FOLLOWED TO THE LETTER. THE RESULT WAS THAT THE OFFICERS AND MEN KNEW EXACTLY

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6 APRIL 1945

SUBJ: TASK UNIT 122.5.2 ATTACHED THIRD U. S. ARMY - FOUR RHINE RIVER CROSSINGS; ACTION REPORT OF.

WHAT TO DO IN SPITE OF A SERIES OF UNAVOIDABLE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH CALLED FOR INITIATIVE AND DETERMINATION. ALTHOUGH BRIEFED AND WITH CROSSING SITES SELECTED ON THE RHINE RIVER ITSELF, THE ADVENT OF VON RUNDSTEDT'S COUNTER-ATTACK AND OLD MAN WINTER COMPLETELY IMMOBILIZED U. S. NAVAL UNIT TWO. THE CRAFT WERE TAKEN FROM THE WATER AND PLACED ON SKIDS IN THE CENTER OF OUR QUADRANGLE. TEDIOUS MONTHS OF WAITING FOLLOWED. THIS WAS BROKEN ONLY BY THE ADVENT OF FIFTEEN LCM'S PLUS ENLISTED PERSONNEL AND TWO OFFICERS, WHICH ARRIVED OVERLAND ON M-25 TANK RETRIEVERS DURING THE PERIOD OF 11 DECEMBER TO 20 DECEMBER 1944. AT THE LAST MINUTE 5 LCM'S PLUS 2 ADDITIONAL OFFICERS, AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL CAME BY WATER TO ANTWERP, BELGIUM AND WERE LATER BROUGHT DOWN THE ALBERT CANAL TO ANDENNE, BELGIUM, WHERE THEY WERE TIED UP AND SUBSEQUENTLY NEVER USED.

DURING THIS WAITING PERIOD THE ENTIRE ATTENTION OF THE UNIT WAS DEVOTED TO MILITARY DISCIPLINE AND COURTESY, UP-KEEP AND SQUARING AWAY OF THE CRAFT, RECREATION, AND FULFILLMENT OF ARMY WORK ORDERS AS REQUIRED. THIS WORK RANGED FROM THE PAINTING OF 15,000 DIRECTIONAL SIGNS TO THE LOADING OF BARBED WIRE ON FLAT CARS. ALTHOUGH IT COULD NOT BE CLASSED AS NAVAL WORK, IT WAS AN OUTLET FOR THE ENERGIES OF THE PERSONNEL AND DID MUCH TO DEVELOP PETTY OFFICERS, SO THE UNIT BENEFITED INTANGIBLY BUT IMMEASURABLY. ALSO, DURING THIS PERIOD ARMY AND NAVY RESPONSIBILITIES WERE CLEARLY DEFINED IN WRITING, AS WERE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF THE UNIT TO THE RHINE RIVER'S EDGE. THIS TURNED OUT TO BE MERELY RHETORICAL EXERCISE AND PRACTICE IN LETTER WRITING.

ON TUESDAY, 20 MARCH 1945, U. S. NAVAL UNIT TWO WAS ALERTED, AND ON WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH 1945, THE FIRST SERIAL OF THE CONVOY LEFT TOUL, FRANCE. BY 1630 THE SAME AFTERNOON THE OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN AND TWENTY-FOUR LCVP'S, PLUS A STAFF, WAS ENROUTE. THE TREK ACROSS A BLAZING GERMANY HAD BEGUN.

2. "D" DAY NO. 1:

AT 2100, WEDNESDAY, 21 MARCH 1945, THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND I SET SAIL FOR BAD KREUZNACH, GERMANY, WHERE THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE 12TH CORPS, THIRD U. S. ARMY, WAS THEN LOCATED. ASIDE FROM ALMOST GOING OVER A 60 FOOT CHASM, CAUSED BY A BLOWN BRIDGE, AND BEING FORCED TO SPEND A FEW HOURS IN SAUERLAUTERN, GERMANY, UNTIL DAYLIGHT, NOTHING OF NOTE OCCURRED. WE REACHED BAD KREUZNACH, GERMANY, THE FOLLOWING MORNING AND WERE TOLD THAT THE ASSAULT WAS SCHEDULED FOR 2200 THAT NIGHT. AT THIS TIME THE CRAFT WERE MANY MILES AWAY, WE HAD NOT BEEN BRIEFED, AND THE RECONNAISSANCE OF THE RIVER ITSELF FOR LAUNCHING SITES AND EMBARKATION AND DEBARKATION SITES NOT YET COMPLETED. THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND I MADE A PERSONAL RECONNAISSANCE OF THE UNLOADING SITE IN A LAGOON UPSTREAM FROM THE TWO FERRY SITES AND ONE DEBARKATION POINT CHOSEN. WITH A MOVIE STYLE INFANTRYMAN APPROACH AND A SET OF GOOD U. S. NAVY BINOCULARS, THE TASK WAS, WHILE HAZARDOUS, RELATIVELY SIMPLE.

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6 APRIL 1945

SUBJ: TASK UNIT 122.5.2 ATTACHED THIRD U. S. ARMY - FOUR RHINE RIVER CROSSINGS; ACTION REPORT OF

AT 1800 WE WERE BRIEFED BY COLONEL STARBIRD, COMMANDING OFFICER, 1135TH ENGINEERS (C) GROUP. HIS INSTRUCTIONS WERE UNMISTAKABLY CLEAR AND TO THE POINT. THERE WAS ONE DRAWBACK - THE CRAFT HAD NOT YET ARRIVED. AT 2130, 30 MINUTES BEFORE THE 5TH DIVISION WAS SCHEDULED TO JUMP OFF, THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF CHANGES WAS HANDED US. INSTEAD OF 12 CRAFT GOING DIRECT INTO THE OPPENHEIM LAUNCHING SITE AND 12 CRAFT BEING DIVERTED TO ALZEY FOR FURTHER ASSIGNMENT TO 20TH CORPS, WE WERE INSTRUCTED TO TAKE ONLY 8 CRAFT TO THE OPPENHEIM SITE, ASSIGN 8 CRAFT TO 20TH CORPS, AND HAVE 8 CRAFT READY FOR TRANSFER TO 8TH CORPS. THIS WAS DONE. WE WERE SCHEDULED TO LEAVE OUR RENDEZVOUS AREA AT DEXHEIM FOR OPPENHEIM AT "H" PLUS 3 HOURS. AT "H" PLUS 2 HOURS, WITHOUT ANY WARNING, WE WERE ORDERED TO MOVE UP. THE CRAFT WITH PERSONNEL AND GEAR IN THE BOATS THEMSELVES, WERE SET IN MOTION, AND THE ONLY INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN WERE "FOLLOW THE MOSELLE PLAN". ENROUTE, AND ALMOST UPON THE OPPENHEIM SITE, AN ARMY COURIER ARRIVED WITH INSTRUCTIONS THAT FOUR ADDITIONAL CRAFT WERE NECESSARY. HE WAS DISPATCHED 25 MILES TO OUR REAR TO GET THE FOUR CRAFT UNDERWAY. WE REACHED THE SITE UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS, ALTHOUGH A BRIGHT MOON ASSISTED US. THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF MINOR TRAGEDIES AROSE - OUR LE TOURNEAU CRANE (M-20) AND TRACTOR HAD BEEN UNABLE TO GET THROUGH THE ROAD BLOCKS WHICH WERE TO HAVE BEEN REMOVED, AND WAS HOURS LATE. THROUGH SHEER STRENGTH AND AWKWARDNESS FOUR BOATS WERE WRESTLED AND BULLDOZED INTO THE WATER WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF SOME VERY LIGHT CRANES BELONGING TO SOME NEIGHBORING ENGINEERS.

BY 0300 THE FIRST BOAT WAS OUT OF THE LAUNCHING LAGOON, AND WITH LT. (JG) DAVID L. SPAULDING AND LT. (JG) HARRY S. SZALACH, 268874 (D) USNR, ABOARD, THEY MADE FOR THE FAR SHORE, ESTABLISHING A CONTROL POINT FOR SUBSEQUENT DEBARKATIONS. IN THE SECOND AND THIRD BOATS, AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME TIME OR IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER, LT. (JG) OSCAR MILLER, 310786 (D) USNR TOOK HIS STATION AT THE FERRY SITE, WHICH WAS TO BE USED AS AN EMBARKATION POINT, AND FURTHER DOWNSTREAM, LT. (JG) ROBERT D. CARTER, 268019 (D) USNR TOOK HIS STATION AT ANOTHER EMBARKATION SITE. AT 0500, THE LE TOURNEAU CRANE ARRIVED AND LAUNCHING CRAFT WAS EXPEDITED. NINE BOATS WERE CLEAR OF THE LAGOON BEFORE DAYLIGHT AND THE SUBSEQUENT BARRAGE OF ARTILLERY FIRE. THE LAST THREE CRAFT MADE THEIR WAY OUT OF THE LAGOON INTO THE RIVER UNDER TICKLISH CIRCUMSTANCES, SINCE THE FIRE, ALTHOUGH INACCURATE, WAS NEAR.

THERE WAS A DISTINCT LAG BETWEEN THE TIME THE CRAFT WERE IN THE WATER AND FULL USE BY THE ARMY. OPERATIONS DID NOT ACHIEVE MAJOR PROPORTIONS UNTIL 0630. IN THE INTERIM LT. (JG) SPAULDING AND I MADE PRIVATE DEALS WITH INFANTRYMEN WHO WERE ABOUT TO PADDLE ACROSS THE RIVER AND SUPPORTING INFANTRY VEHICLES WHICH WERE URGENTLY NEEDED ON THE FAR SHORE. THE CRAFT PROVED THEMSELVES, AND IN THIS FIRST OPERATION-ACTUALLY EXCEEDED OUR FONDEST EXPECTATIONS. THE TURN-AROUND TOOK ONLY ONE MINUTE AND TWENTY SECONDS. IT IS ROUGHLY ESTIMATED THAT OVER 15,000 MEN AND OVER 1,200 VEHICLES CROSSED IN OUR CRAFT. |||

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6 APRIL 1945

SUBJ: TASK UNIT 122.5.2 ATTACHED THIRD U. S. ARMY - FOUR RHINE RIVER CROSSINGS - REPORT OF.

THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED WITH AN AVERAGE OF ONLY EIGHT CRAFT, SINCE ONE WAS ASSIGNED TO PUSH THE HEAVY PONTOON FERRY LOADED WITH TANK DESTROYERS AND TANKS, WHICH ARE ALWAYS NEEDED IN IMMEDIATE SUPPORT OF THE INFANTRY, AND THE OTHER TWO ASSISTED IN THE BUILDING OF THE TREADWAY BRIDGE, LAYING OF SUPPORTING WIRE ACROSS THE STREAM, AND INSTALLATION OF THE BRIDGE PROTECTIVE BOOMS. ONE OF THE CRAFT WAS GENERALLY LAYED UP DURING THE ENSUING 72 HOURS FOR MINOR REPAIRS. THE RETURNING OF CASUALTIES AND PRISONERS OF WAR FROM THE FAR SHORE TO THE NEAR SHORE WAS ALSO AN OUTSTANDING PIECE OF WORK. AN OUTSTANDING INCIDENT WAS THE RESCUE OF ARMY PERSONNEL AND PRISONERS OF WAR WHEN A RAFT CAPSIZED.

THE CRAFT SHUTTLED WITHOUT CESSATION IN SPITE OF STRAFING ATTACKS FROM THE AIR, BOMBING ATTACKS, AND ARTILLERY FIRE. ONE SHELL STRUCK THE BUILDING WHERE NAVY PERSONNEL WERE HOUSED AT APPROXIMATELY MID-NIGHT 23 MARCH 1945. THE SHELL DID NOT EXPLODE, AND ONLY ONE MAN, SOTO, GEORGE W., 816 27 78, S1C, USNR, WAS SEVERELY WOUNDED, LOSING BOTH ARMS, PLUS LEG AND ABDOMINAL INJURIES.

THE TURN-AROUND WAS SO RAPID SEVERAL OF THE MEN COLLAPSED FROM FATIGUE CAUSED BY CRANKING THE RAMP. ANOTHER SHARP BOMBING ATTACK TOOK PLACE 24 MARCH. THE WORK CONTINUED AT A TERRIFIC PACE, AND THE CREWS WERE DIVIDED IN HALF IN A 6 HOURS ON - 6 HOURS OFF SHIFT. THE OFFICERS THEMSELVES CARRIED ON UNTIL MIDNIGHT OF THAT NIGHT, WHEN ONE OFFICER, WHO HAD BEEN DELAYED, REMAINED IN CHARGE.

LATER THERE WERE MINOR DUTIES SUCH AS PATROL AND THE HANDLING OF DEPTH CHARGES TO FORCE SUICIDE SWIMMERS, WHO WOULD BE AFTER THE BRIDGE, TO THE SURFACE. IN THIS ONE ACTION THE NAVY HAD EARNED ITS KEEP.

AFTER 72 HOURS THE EMPLOYMENT OF NAVAL CRAFT WAS AT A STANDSTILL. BY THAT TIME A HEAVY PONTOON BRIDGE, IN ADDITION TO THE TREADWAY BRIDGE, HAD ALREADY SPANNED THE RIVER, AND ALL BOOMS WERE IN PLACE.

3. "D" DAY NO. 2:

AT 1700, FRIDAY, 23 MARCH 1945, WORD WAS RECEIVED THAT THE 12 CRAFT REMAINING WERE NOT TO BE EMPLOYED BY 20TH CORPS, BUT WERE TO BE USED BY 8TH CORPS. LT. (JG) SPAULDING AND I SET OUT FOR SIMMERN, GERMANY, AT 1830. LT. (JG) H. S. SZALACH WAS LEFT AS OFFICER IN CHARGE.

AS WE LEFT OPPENHEIM, A STRAFING ATTACK OCCURRED WHICH FOUND US UNDER THE COMMAND CAR AND DILIGENTLY TRYING TO DIG A HOLE IN THE ASPHALT WITH OUR BARE HANDS. NEITHER THE STRAFING NOR THE DIGGING WAS SUCCESSFUL.

WE REACHED THE OFFICE OF COLONEL KELLER, 8TH CORPS ENGINEER, AT SIMMERN AT ABOUT 2300. HE BRIEFED US LIGHTLY, ADVISING THAT THE 8TH CORPS ASSAULT WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL THE FOLLOWING NIGHT. THE

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6 APRIL 1945

SUBJ: TASK UNIT 122.5.2 ATTACHED THIRD U. S. ARMY - FOUR RHINE RIVER CROSSINGS; ACTION REPORT OF.

FOLLOWING MORNING WE WERE BRIEFED AND WERE TOLD THAT 6 CRAFT WOULD BE USED TO SUPPORT THE 87TH INFANTRY DIVISION CROSSING AT BOPPARD, AND THAT 6 CRAFT WOULD BE HELD IN RESERVE TO ASSIST THE 89TH INFANTRY CROSSING AT ST. GOAR. LT. (JG) SPAULDING AND I AGAIN WENT FORWARD INTO THE TOWN OF BOPPARD, MAKING A RIVER RECONNAISSANCE, SELECTING A LAUNCHING SITE AND EMBARKATION AND DEBARKATION POINTS. "F" HOUR WAS SCHEDULED FOR 0001 AT BOPPARD, SUNDAY 25 MARCH 1945. WE MOVED TO A SECLUDED SPOT AT THE CREST OF A HILL LEADING TO BOPPARD, SOME TWO MILES FROM OUR DESTINATION. THE ROAD INTO BOPPARD WAS TORTUOUS AND DANGEROUS, AND THE SITES WERE BETWEEN PRECIPITOUS CLIFFS WHICH WOULD DWARF OMAHA BEACH, NORMANDY.

WE WERE SCHEDULED TO LEAVE AT DAWN AND ARRIVE IN POSITION, SINCE THE LAUNCHING SITE WAS IN FULL VIEW OF THE OPPOSITE SHORE AND ONLY 50 YARDS UPSTREAM FROM OUR EMBARKATION POINT. AT 0500 AND WITH DAYLIGHT BREAKING FAST, WE WERE UNDERWAY. AT THAT TIME IT WAS DECIDED BY THE ARMY TO ONLY TAKE TWO BOATS DOWN AT A TIME. I DID NOT AGREE WITH THIS DECISION NOR WOULD WE AGREE WITH ANY OTHER PLAN OTHER THAN TO TAKE THE CRAFT DOWN THE HILL UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS SO THAT THE MAXIMUM USE OF THE CRAFT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ASSAULT WOULD BE AFFORDED. TACTICAL REASONS NOT APPARENT TO THIS COMMAND MAY HAVE PROMPTED THESE DECISIONS. ACTUALLY, MUCH VALUABLE TIME WAS LOST.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE FIRST BOAT AT 1000 WAS GREETED BY A FEW ARTILLERY SALVOS, BUT THE AIM WAS POOR AND OTHER THAN DRIVING US TEMPORARILY INTO FOX HOLES, DID NO DAMAGE. IT IS OUR OPINION THAT THE ARTILLERY BARRAGES WERE AIMED AT THE BRIDGE BEING INSTALLED UPSTREAM FROM US.

AGAIN, THERE WAS A LAG IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE CRAFT. THE LESSON HAD NOT BEEN LEARNED THAT A FEW LCVF'S WITH A QUICK TURN-AROUND COULD TRANSPORT A LARGE NUMBER OF COMBAT INFANTRY TROOPS. LT. (JG) SPAULDING AND I AGAIN SOLICITED BUSINESS FOR OUR CRAFT - THIS FROM THE INTERESTED DIVISION ITSELF.

AT THIS TIME IT WAS REPORTED THAT 6 LCM'S WITH LT. (JG) EDWARD "I" ROBERTSON, 226510, (D) USNR, IN CHARGE, WERE IN THE VICINITY OF BOPPARD, AND THAT 9 LCM'S WITH LT. (JG) VINCENT A. AVALLONE, 266645 (D) L USNR, IN CHARGE, HAD REACHED THE VICINITY OF OPPENHEIM.

THE LAUNCHING OF THE CRAFT WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY MEANS OF OUR SECOND LE TOURNEAU CRANE AND BULLDOZER, WITH TWO 20-TON CRANES AS STANDBYS. THIS WAS ACCORDING TO PLAN. AGAIN A STRENUOUS 48 HOUR SCHEDULE, WITH 6 CRAFT, WAS EMPLOYED, THE BOATMENT BEING RELIEVED EVERY 6 HOURS WITH THE CREWS BEING DIVIDED IN HALF.

ALTHOUGH RESISTANCE FOR THE INFANTRY HAD BEEN FAIRLY SHARP, AND IT WAS QUITE NECESSARY THAT THE LCM'S BE AVAILABLE FOR THE TANK DESTROYERS AND MEDIUM TANKS, IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE LCM'S WOULD NOT BE

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BROUGHT DOWN THE TREACHEROUS HILL INTO BOPPARD. IT WAS OUR OPINION THAT THE CRAFT COULD NEGOTIATE THE HILL SAFELY. NOT TO EMPLOY THESE CRAFT FOR TACTICAL REASONS WAS THE DECISION FOR THE ARMY. THEY MADE IT.

ARTILLERY FIRE DURING THE ENSUING SEVERAL DAYS WAS SPORADIC AND IN-ACCURATE; NO BOMBING OR STRAFING ATTACKS TAKING PLACE TO OUR KNOWLEDGE. MORTAR FIRE WAS QUITE HEAVY THE FIRST NIGHT BUT DID NO MATERIAL DAMAGE.

IN ADDITION TO THE TRANSPORTATION OF TROOPS AND SUPPORTING VEHICLES, CRAFT WERE EMPLOYED IN THE BUILDING OF THE TREADWAY BRIDGE.

4. "D" DAY NO. 3:

ALTHOUGH WE KNEW THAT THE INFANTRY ASSAULT CROSSING AT ST. GOAR, GERMANY, WAS TO BE MADE EARLY A.M. OF MONDAY, 26 MARCH 1945, NO PLANS WERE PROMULGATED AS TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE 6 REMAINING LCVP'S AND THE 6 LCM'S WHICH WERE IN THE AREA AND AVAILABLE. IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FOR CONTINGENCIES, TWO NAVAL OFFICERS, LT. (JG) JOHN G. MONKMAN, 268586 (D) USNR AND ENSIGN EARL D. EPSTEIN, 312027, (D) USNR, WERE SENT TO ST. GOAR FOR RECONAISSANCE. IT HAD BEEN REPORTED THAT THE ROUTE TO THE RIVER AT ST. GOAR WAS MORE TREACHEROUS AND MORE PRECIPITOUS THAN THAT TO BOPPARD. OUR OFFICERS REPORTED THAT ALTHOUGH THE RIVER CROSSING HAD BEEN MADE, IT HAD BEEN FIERCELY CONTESTED AND SMALL ARMS FIRE WAS NOT CLEARED FROM THE AREA. LAUNCHING SITES AND EMBARKATION AND DEBARKATION POINTS WERE NOT READILY AVAILABLE, AND IT WAS TIME FOR A QUICK DECISION. AT 1400 IT WAS DECIDED TO LAUNCH AND MAKE THE CROSSINGS AT OBERWESEL, GERMANY, 2-1/2 MILES UPSTREAM FROM ST. GOAR. THIS WAS THE AREA BELONGING TO THE 89TH INFANTRY DIVISION, WHICH WAS CHARGED WITH THE MISSION OF CROSSING IN THE ST. GOAR-OBERWESEL AREA. LT. (JG) SPAULDING AND I MADE A QUICK RECONAISSANCE OF THE OBERWESEL AREA, SELECTING EMBARKATION AND DEBARKATION POINTS WITH A READY MADE LAGOON TO BE EMPLOYED FOR LAUNCHING. THE DEBARKATION POINT ON THE FAR SHORE WAS TO BE SHARED WITH A RAFT PROPELLED BY POWER BOATS. THE FIRST BOAT WAS LAUNCHED AND READY FOR SERVICE AT 1615 MONDAY, 26 MARCH 1945. THE LAST LCM WAS AVAILABLE AT 0210 THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

TRAFFIC WAS TERRIFIC FROM THE OUTSET. 2 LCVP'S WERE DISPATCHED UPSTREAM TO A DUKW RUN WHERE A BATTALION OF OVER 800 INFANTRY HAD TO BE CROSSED. WE SUPPLEMENTED THE WORK OF 10 DUKWS WHICH HAD DONE A MAGNIFICENT JOB SINCE EARLY MORNING. IF THE NAVAL CRAFT HAD BEEN ON THE SCENE EARLIER WE COULD HAVE DONE A BETTER AND FASTER JOB. THIS, IN NO WAY SHOULD DETRACT FROM THE MAGNIFICENT EFFORTS OF THE DUKWS, BUT IS AN INCONTROVERTIBLE FACT.

THE PATTERNS WERE AGAIN THE SAME. IN THE ENSUING 48 HOUR PERIOD OVER 1200 VEHICLES WERE BROUGHT TO THE FAR SHORE AND OVER 6000 MEN. FOR THE FIRST TIME THE LCM'S WERE EMPLOYED, CARRYING TREMENDOUS LOADS, INCLUDING HEAVY CANNON.

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SPORADIC ARTILLERY FIRE AND NO ATTACKS FROM THE AIR WERE MET AT THIS SITE.

AT 0100 A RAFT LADEN WITH AN AMMUNITION TRUCK CAPSIZED, BUT 6 OF 8 MEN WERE SAVED BY AN LCVP AND AN LCM. ALL CRAFT HAD BEEN FIRED WITH LIFE LINES, A LESSON LEARNED AT OMAHA BEACH.

AT THE END OF 72 HOURS, WITH THE BRIDGE INSTALLED DOWNSTREAM AND THE BULK OF THE HEAVY EQUIPMENT HAVING BEEN TRANSPORTED BY THE LCM'S, EMPLOYMENT OF THE CRAFT WAS AT A STANDSTILL.

THE TURN-AROUND AT THIS LOCATION WAS 5 MINUTES AND 55 SECONDS. THE REASON FOR THIS RATHER LENGTHY TURN-AROUND TIME WAS THAT THE DEBARKATION SITES ON THE FAR SHORE WERE DIFFICULT TO APPROACH.

EMPLOYMENT OF TWO CRAFT IN BUILDING OF A BRIDGE UPSTREAM AND A LITTLE TRANSIENT TRAFFIC ACROSS THE RIVER ENDS THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THIS DETACHMENT.

5. "D" DAY NO. 4:

AT 2100, TUESDAY 27 MARCH 1945, A LATRINE RUMOR REACHED US AT OBERWESEL THAT 6 LCVP'S AND 6 LCM'S WERE TO BE EMPLOYED IN AN ASSAULT CROSSING AT MAINZ, GERMANY BY THE 20TH CORPS, WITH THE 80TH INFANTRY DIVISION SPEARHEADING THE ASSAULT. LT. (JG) SPAULDING AND I JUMPED IN A JEEP AND MADE A DASH FOR 8TH CORPS. WE WERE ADVISED THAT "H" HOUR WAS SCHEDULED FOR 0100 THE MORNING 28 MARCH 1945. WE LATER DISCOVERED THAT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSPORTATION OF BOATS AND THEIR EMPLOYMENT HAD BEEN MADE BY THE OFFICER IN CHARGE, LT. (JG) H. S. SZALACH AND LT. (JG) M.L. MADDEN, (SC) USNR, WHO WAS IN THE AREA ON BUSINESS AS SUPPLY OFFICER FOR LCT FLOTILLA TWELVE, MY PERMANENT DUTY STATION, WITH WHOSE AFFAIRS I HAD BEEN OUT OF TOUCH FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. LT. (JG) SPAULDING AND I REACHED MAINZ AT 0045, AFTER AN UNFORGETTABLE RIDE THROUGH A BLACKED-OUT AND UNFAMILIAR PART OF GERMANY. THEN BEGAN A FUTILE SEARCH FOR THE 12 CRAFT. MANY PEOPLE HAD SEEN THE NAVY BOATS BUT THE EXACT LOCATION REMAINED A MYSTERY. "H" HOUR AND ALL THE ATTENDANT NOISES OF WAR CAME AND WENT AND STILL NO BOATS. AFTER NEEDLESSLY AND FUTILELY EXPOSING OURSELVES, WE FOUND A RUIN WITH TWO M.P.'S AND DUG IN UNTIL DAWN. AT 0500 WE FOUND THE LOADING SITE WITH ENSIGN OSCAR MILLER IN CHARGE, AND WERE NOTIFIED THAT THE FIRST LCVP HAD BEEN LAUNCHED DOWNSTREAM AT 0130 AND THE 5TH LCVP HAD BEEN LAUNCHED AT 0310. ONE CRAFT HAD HAD ITS RUDDER SMASHED ENROUTE AND WAS IMMOBILIZED. BY 0545 ALL THE LCM'S WERE IN THE WATER, THE SAME METHOD OF LAUNCHING BEING EMPLOYED AS WAS USED AT OBERWESEL. THE M-25 TRAILERS WERE BACKED INTO THE WATER AND THE CRAFT FLOATED OFF. THE LAUNCHING SITE HAD BEEN CLEARED OF ALL OBSTRUCTIONS AND GRADED TO A 25 DEGREE SLOPE AND FILLED IN WITH CRUSHED ROCK BY THE 160TH ENGINEER BATTALION, WITH LT. COL. JACKSON COMMANDING.

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THE ARTILLERY, 20 MM, MORTAR, AND SMALL ARMS FIRE WAS FAIRLY HEAVY THROUGHOUT THE AREA. A RECONNAISSANCE TRIP BY ONE LCVP, WITH FARAH, JOHNNY M., 657 85 15, BM2C(T) USNR, AS COXSWAIN, WAS MADE, AND IT WAS DECIDED THE WAY WAS CLEAR. AT 0420, FARAH MADE THE FIRST TRIP FROM THE EMBARKATION POINT TO THE FAR SHORE, WITH A LOAD OF INFANTRY AFTER HE HAD LEAD THE 5 LCVP'S TO THE EMBARKATION POINT. THREE LCM'S LATER FOLLOWED TO THE EMBARKATION POINT. THE BALANCE OF THE LCM'S REMAINED AT THE LAUNCHING SITE.

RADIO COMMUNICATIONS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED AND ALL WAS WELL IN HAND. THERE WAS NO LAG IN THE APPEARANCE OF TROOPS, SINCE SUPPORTING INFANTRY WAS URGENTLY NEEDED ON THE FAR SHORE.

AT 0600 LT. (JG) SPAULDING AND I SET OUT BY WATER FOR THE LAUNCHING SITE, BUT SINCE WE HAD A LOAD OF TROOPS ABOARD, WENT TO THE FAR SHORE INSTEAD. IN THIS MANNER WE FORTUITOUSLY AVOIDED SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH. A TERRIFIC ARTILLERY BARRAGE, WHICH WE WITNESSED FROM THE FAR SHORE WAS POINTED AT OUR LAUNCHING SITE AND DID NOT RAISE SUFFICIENTLY SO THAT OPERATIONS COULD BE RESUMED UNTIL 0930. LT. (JG) VINCENT A. AVALLONE WAS KILLED IN ACTION. A DIRECT HIT WAS SCORED ON OUR BULL-DOZER AND LE TOURNEAU CRANE, AND SHRAPNEL DID UNTOLD DAMAGE TO OUR VEHICLES AND SPARE PARTS VANS. ALL PERSONNEL WAS PINNED DOWN. FOX HOLES HAD BEEN DUG AND AN AIR RAID SHELTER WAS AVAILABLE, REDUCING CASUALTIES TO A MINIMUM. BY 1000 THE REMAINING PERSONNEL AND CRAFT HAD BEEN REMOVED TO THE EMBARKATION POINT AND FERRY FUNCTIONS WERE GOING AT TOP SPEED. IT WAS OUR OPINION THAT SUPPORTING INFANTRY AND TANK DESTROYERS BROUGHT ACROSS IN THE EARLY HOURS ACTUALLY MADE THE ASSAULT SUCCESSFUL. LT. COL. DYER, COMMANDING OFFICER, 135TH ENGINEER (C) BN., WHO WAS CHARGED WITH THE MISSION OF TRANSPORTING THE 80TH U. S. INFANTRY DIVISION TO THE FAR SHORE, ALSO STATED SO POSITIVELY.

THE EMBARKATION AND DEBARKATION POINTS IN THIS AREA WERE NOT NEARLY AS GOOD AS OUR PREVIOUS LOCATIONS. THE TURN-AROUND WAS COMPARATIVELY QUITE LONG, TAKING 15 MINUTES.

IN VIEW OF THE INTENSE FIRE THAT SWEEPED THE AREA DURING THE ENTIRE FIRST DAY, IT WAS DECIDED TO CONTINUE LOADING IN A SHELTERED LAGOON RATHER THAN SACRIFICE PERSONNEL OR CRAFT UNNECESSARILY. IN THE LONG RUN THIS PROVED WISE. THE ROUTINE FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS WAS THE SAME. PERSONNEL WORKED 6 HOURS ON AND OFF, THE CRAFT OPERATING CONTINUOUSLY. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT OVER 10,000 MEN AND 1,100 VEHICLES WERE TRANSPORTED DURING THE FIRST 72 HOURS. THIS DETACHMENT IS AGAIN DOING ROUTINE ASSISTANCE IN BRIDGE BUILDING AND OCCASIONAL FERRYING DUTIES.

6. LESSONS LEARNED:

(A) TO EACH CONVOY SERIAL OF LCVP'S AND LCM'S A SMALL EXPERIENCED DEMOLITION UNIT SHOULD BE ATTACHED. THIS DEPENDS UPON THE FACT THE AREA TRAVERSED IS SIMILAR TO THAT IN FRANCE AND GERMANY, WHICH IS THICKLY POPULATED WITH NUMEROUS VILLAGES WITH NARROW STREETS AND COUNT-LESS ROAD BLOCKS.

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(B) IN ADDITION TO THE DEMOLITION UNITS ATTACHED TO EACH CONVOY SERIAL OF CRAFT BEING TRANSPORTED OVERLAND, AN EXPERT WIRE CUTTING GANG SHOULD ALSO BE MADE A PART OF THE UNIT. DIFFICULTIES WITH WIRE WERE ENCOUNTERED BOTH BY THE LCVP'S AND LCM'S, CAUSING COUNTLESS MINOR INJURIES AND ONE SERIOUS INJURY. NOT ONLY WOULD THIS REDUCE DANGER TO PERSONNEL, BUT PASSAGE THROUGH CITIES WOULD BE EXPEDITED.

(C) EVERY UNIT, IN ADDITION TO A LE TOURNEAU CRANE WITH BULLDOZER, SHOULD HAVE TWO 20 TON CRANES ATTACHED, OR IN COMPANY AS ALTERNATIVE LAUNCHING METHODS. IT MUST BE EMPHASIZED THAT THE ARRIVAL OF UNFORESEEN CONTINGENCIES MAY MAKE OR BREAK THE OPERATION. THE CRAFT ARE VALUELESS UNLESS IN THE WATER.

(D) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CRAFT SHOULD BE THOROUGH. THE INFANTRY DIVISIONS MAKING THE CROSSING SHOULD BE APPRAISED AS TO IMMEDIATE AVAILABILITY OF THE CRAFT WHICH COULD PROBABLY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY AN ARMY LIAISON OFFICER AT THE LAUNCHING SITE AND LATER AT THE DEBARKATION POINTS. THE DIVISION ENGINEER, IN PARTICULAR SHOULD BE THOROUGHLY ACQUAINTED WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF THE CRAFT AND OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION.

(E) THE CRAFT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE RIVER UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS BETWEEN THE TIME OF THE INFANTRY ASSAULT AND THE BEGINNING OF TRAFFIC TO THE RIVER. THIS TO TAKE PLACE AS SOON AS HEAVY SMALL ARMS FIRE HAS BEEN CLEARED. TOP PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN THE CRAFT AS TO MOVING THEM INTO POSITION SO THAT THEY CAN BE OUT OF THE WAY WHEN TRAFFIC BEGINS, THEREBY DELAYING OR IMPEDING OTHER PHASES OF THE BUILD-UP PROGRAM.

(F) OPERATION OF THE CRAFT ON A SHORT TURN-AROUND CAN BE EFFECTED WITH A CREW OF ONLY TWO MEN. HOWEVER, THE FOUR MAN CREW SHOULD BE MADE UP OF TWO TEAMS, WITH A SKILLED COXSWAIN AND A SKILLED MOTOR MACHINIST'S MATE. QUITE OFTEN THE SECOND TEAM, WHICH HAD EQUAL RESPONSIBILITY, WAS NOT UP TO THE CALIBER OF THE FIRST STRING COXSWAIN, BUT IN FUTURE OPERATIONS THIS COULD EASILY BE ANTICIPATED. THE SAME IS APPLICABLE TO THE MOTOR MACHINIST BRANCH.

(G) ALTHOUGH THE ENTIRE OPERATION DEVELOPED AT BREAK-NECK SPEED, IT WOULD BE WISE TO HAVE A NAVAL OFFICER ACCOMPANY THE ARMY OFFICERS WHO ARE MAKING THE ROAD RECONNAISSANCE. COMPLETE FAMILIARITY WITH THE CRAFT AND CRANES ATTACHED TO THE UNIT AS SUPPLIED BY THE NAVAL OFFICER WOULD IMMEASURABLY ASSIST THE ARMY RECONNAISSANCE DETAIL.

(H) IN ANY LARGE RIVER CROSSING, IT SHOULD BE MADE STANDARD PRACTICE FOR THE REGULAR AMPHIBIOUS BEACH MARKERS TO BE USED WITH APPROPRIATE COLORS BY DAY AND SHADED LIGHTS BY NIGHT ON THE FAR SHORE. MARKERS AND LIGHTS WERE USED IN THE OPPENHEIM-NEIRSTEIN SITES AND WERE QUITE VALUABLE. THEY WERE SORELY MISSED AT THE OTHER LOCATIONS.

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SUBJ: TASK UNIT 122.5.2 ATTACHED THIRD U. S. ARMY - FOUR RHINE RIVER CROSSINGS; ACTION REPORT OF

(I) IT WAS AT FIRST BELIEVED THAT ARMY PERSONNEL WOULD BE NECESSARY TO HANDLE LINES IN ORDER TO HOLD BOW OF CRAFT PERPENDICULAR TO SWIFT MOVING STREAM. GOOD SEAMANSHIP ON THE PART OF THE COXSWAINS PRECLUDED THIS. ENGINE POWER AND PROPER RUDDER ACTION WAS ALL THAT WAS FOUND NECESSARY. HOWEVER, PERSONNEL WAS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN THE FRESHLY CUT EMBARKATION AND DEBARKATION SITES, WHICH WERE BEING SUBJECTED TO TERRIFICALLY HEAVY TRAFFIC. AT SOPPARD, PARTICULARLY, THE EMBARKATION SITE LITERALLY WASHED AWAY FROM UNDER THE PIERCED PLANKING, SO THAT LOADING WAS DELAYED, AND THIS MEANT LIVES IN JEOPARDY. AGAIN TEAMS OF ARMY ENLISTED PERSONNEL WERE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO OPERATE THE CRANK RAISING AND LOWERING THE RAMPS OF THE LCVP'S. THE TURN-AROUND WAS SO RAPID THAT THE ONE FREE NAVY MAN IN THE CRAFT MANY TIMES FELL PROSTRATE FROM SHEER EXHAUSTION. ALTHOUGH THIS LATTER DEFICIENCY WAS REMEDIED IN THE 3 SUBSEQUENT LANDINGS, IT WAS A POINT WHICH SHOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF IN ADVANCE AND NOT ON THE SPOT.

(J) ALTHOUGH THE LCM'S, WHEN ONCE IN THE WATER, PROVED VERY VALUABLE BECAUSE OF THEIR ABILITY TO CARRY LARGER PAY LOADS, MANY BOATS WERE FROM TIME TO TIME NON OPERATIONAL BECAUSE OF RAMP DIFFICULTIES. THE MECHANICAL RAMP IS NOT EQUIPPED WITH A HEAVY ENOUGH CLUTCH MECHANISM TO RAISE AND LOWER THE RAMP AS FREQUENTLY AS A QUICK TURN-AROUND REQUIRES.

(K) ALTHOUGH THIS UNIT HAD MADE EXTENSIVE PREPARATION FOR A DIVISION INTO TWO EQUAL AND SELF SUFFICIENT COMPONENTS, TACTICAL REASONS, REQUIRING DIVISION INTO FOUR PARTS SCATTERED THE WELL PLANNED ORGANIZATION TO THE WINDS. MESSING FACILITIES WERE AT BEST HAPHAZARD. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT PERSONNEL OPERATING ON A CONTINUOUS BASIS BE FED REGULARLY. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT IN THE EVENT OF SPLITTING UP AN ORGANIZATION INTO SMALLER PARTS THAN ORIGINALLY CONTEMPLATED, THAT ARMY ROLLING KITCHENS BE ATTACHED SO THAT THE PROVISION OF FOOD AND HOT COFFEE BE UNINTERRUPTED. MANY TIMES THE ENGINEER BATTALION TO WHICH WE WOULD BE ATTACHED ON THE SCENE OF AN OPERATION FOR SUBSISTENCE WOULD BE 100 MILES AWAY AT THE END OF 48 HOURS, AND THE SUBSEQUENT CHANGES OF ATTACHMENT TO FOLLOWING ENGINEER COMPANIES WOULD BE LIGHTNING LIKE IN RAPIDITY. THIS DEMORALIZATION, WHILE NOT TOO SERIOUS, COULD BE AVOIDED.

(L) THE FAILURE OF THE ARMY TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION AS OFFICIALLY REQUESTED WORKED UNDUE HARDSHIPS. IT WAS NECESSARY TO PLACE ALL PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT IN THE CRAFT THEMSELVES, WHICH DID NOT LEND TO REST AND COMFORT. IT MUST BE MADE CLEAR THAT THE SPEEDY ADVENT OF THE OPERATION GAVE NO OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PROPER EMPLOYMENT OF SUPPORTING VEHICLES. HOWEVER, IT IS A FACT THAT MUST NOT BE OVERLOOKED. IN THE OPPENHEIM-NEIRSTEIN OPERATION THE MEN ACTUALLY JETTISONED ALL THE EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING GALLEY EQUIPMENT, ON THE BANKS OF THE LAGOON IN ORDER TO HAVE THE CRAFT SHIPSHAPE AND READY FOR ACTION. THE LOSS OF GEAR AGAIN, WHILE NOT MAJOR, WAS ANOTHER FACTOR IN CREATING DISCOMFORT.

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(M) IN THE PREPARATION OF EXITS AND ENTRANCES, AT THE VARIOUS DEBARKATION AND EMBARKATION POINTS, THE ANGLES OF THE CUTS SHOULD ALWAYS BE DOWNSTREAM. CRAFT, HEAVY LADEN OR LIGHT, TAKE A PROPER APPROACH UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY IF HEADED UPSTREAM.

(N) PROPER ARMY PERSONNEL AT EACH LOADING SITE, TO HANDLE AND DIRECT THE LOADING OF VEHICLES, PARTICULARLY WITH TRAILERS, SHOULD BE A PREROGATIVE. QUITE OFTEN, IN HASTILY PREPARED ENTRANCES, THE TERRAIN IS SUCH THAT LIGHTER VEHICLES AND TRAILERS ATTACHED TO HEAVY VEHICLES MUST BE MANHANDLED BEFORE THEY CAN BE PLACED INTO THE CRAFT. A MINIMUM OF FOUR MEN PER SITE IS RECOMMENDED.

(O) WITH ARMY CONTROL OF NAVAL UNITS CHANGING RAPIDLY AS EACH ARMY UNIT CROSSES THE RIVER AND MOVES FORWARD, SOME THOUGHT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO A SMOOTHER CHANGE IN THIS RELATIONSHIP, SINCE CONFUSION AND UNCERTAINTY AND LACK OF MATERIAL ASSISTANCE IMPAIRS THE EFFICIENCY OF THE NAVAL UNIT.

7. CONCLUSION:

COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE OFFERED BY THE U. S. ARMY WAS UNSTINTED. IN PARTICULAR THE INTEREST SHOWN BY THE ENGINEER BATTALIONS AND COMPANIES WHO WORKED WITH US IN THE FACE OF THE ENEMY. THUS, THE BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE OPERATION INDICATED A SMOOTH WORKING ORGANIZATION; HOWEVER, IT WAS THE WORM'S EYE VIEW WITH WHICH WE HAVE BEEN PRIMARILY CONCERNED. IT IS THE ENDEAVOR OF THIS COMMAND TO BRING OUT THE PITFALLS AND ERRORS IN A CONSTRUCTIVE MANNER, SO THAT IN FUTURE OPERATIONS OF THIS TYPE THESE ERRORS CAN BE FORESTALLED.

THE OVER-ALL EMPLOYMENT OF U. S. NAVAL PERSONNEL AND CRAFT IN THE RHINE RIVER OPERATIONS WAS AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS. THE RESPONSE OF THE OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN IN STRANGE SURROUNDINGS WAS IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE U. S. NAVY. IN NO INSTANCE WAS THERE ANY FALTERING.

William Leide
WILLIAM LEIDE.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
UNITED STATES NAVAL FORCES, FRANCE
TASK GROUP 122.5

FIRST ENDORSEMENT

15 April 1945.

C.T.U. Secret ltr. WTR/ear
Serial: 0012 of 11 April 1945.

From: Commander, Task Group 122.5.
To : Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet.
Via : (1) Commander, Task Force 122.
(2) Commander, U.S. Naval Forces in Europe.
Subject: Operation Report.

1. Forwarded. The addressees have been corrected as indicated in the heading of this endorsement.

2. Enclosure (C) has been removed and returned to the originator for submission in proper form.

3. This Unit has performed splendidly in the face of difficulties which were not experienced by the other two Units. In the early stages of their attachment to the Ninth U.S. Army, there was a shortage of engineer equipment and troops and the assistance and understanding that was immediately available in the First and Third Armies was not on hand. The Unit Commander by his zeal, perseverance and professional ability conducted a thorough training program which overcame this handicap and found the Unit entirely ready when the Rhine was crossed. The paragraphs of a letter from the Commanding General XVI Corps dated 5 April to C.T.U. 122.5.3 are quoted:

"1. The work of your unit during the recent crossing of the Rhine by the XVI Corps was outstanding in the viewpoint of this headquarters.

"2. With a small number of men and a large number of craft, your unit by untiring effort and long hours of work placed these craft where they were needed and at the proper time. Further than this, the members of your unit who operated these craft in the face of enemy fire performed in a superior manner and cooperated to the fullest extent with the Army units using these craft to transport both personnel and material in the crossing of the Rhine. History, I am certain, will record the Rhine crossing as one of the major operations of the war in the European Theater, and your Naval Unit through its diligent work for and hardy cooperation with the Army units made this a record breaking crossing.

"3. This headquarters appreciates keenly, from intimate knowledge, your excellent work, and your men can well be proud of the record of the Navy in this major inland crossing."

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4. It was in a craft of this Unit that Mr. Churchill made his historic crossing of the Rhine.

5. As in Unit Two, the last stages of preparation for the operation were complicated by several transfers of this Unit to new and unfamiliar engineer units. This may have been demanded by changes in tactical plans but in future operations it must be guarded against. In this operation no damage resulted but it is easily conceivable how it might. Naval boat Units should always be attached to an engineer organization which is thoroughly familiar with the capabilities of the craft, the difficulties involved in their loading, transport and launching and the administrative requirements of the Unit.

6. Attention is invited to the reports and endorsements of Task Units 122.5.1 and 122.5.2.

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W.J. WHITESIDE

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WHP/ear

Serial: 0012

TASK UNIT 122.5.3
Navy No. 3952
Fleet Post Office
New York, N. Y.

11 April 1945

From: Commander TASK UNIT 122.5.3.
To: Commander TASK FORCE 122.
Via: Commander TASK GROUP 122.5.
Subject: Battle Report of Operation FLASHPOINT, Rhine River Crossing 24 March 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Map of D-day assault area, 24 March.-p.7
(B) Casualty report.-p.8
(C) Recommendations for awards.-Missing
(D) Narrative of activities.-p.9

1. The above enclosures are herewith forwarded.

2. For the Rhine River Crossing (Operation Flashpoint) D-day 24 March, Naval boats of this Unit successfully operated in the Ninth Army area under the XVth Corps, assigned as follows for lifting the 30th and 79th Divisions.

30th Division sector.

RED Beach four (4) LCVPs.
WHITE Beach two (2) LCVPs, six (6) LCMS.
BLUE Beach three (3) LCVPs, three (3) LCMS.

79th Division sector.

ABLE Beach four (4) LCVPs, five (5) LCMS.
BAKER Beach five (5) LCVPs, four (4) LCMS.

3. The above are the actual number of boats used and successfully operated on D-day, eighteen (18) LCVPs and eighteen (18) LCMS. One of the LCVPs assigned to WHITE beach was damaged while unloading and replacement was immediately dispatched by Naval Unit Commander from reserve pool of six (6) LCVPs and six (6) LCMS held in Lintfort, all of which were loaded, fully manned and in readiness. For reasons unknown replacement reported to RED beach, where it was put to good use. Failure of replacement to report to WHITE beach did not impair operations as adequate boats were available in the area, two (2) LCVPs and six (6) LCMS.

4. Entire boat convoy, including cranes, assembled in the Lintfort area on the night of 23 March and dispatched in detachments to arrive at the respective launching site areas by 0100 (H hour) 24 March, at which time Ninth Army artillery barrage started. Under the screen of the thunderous

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barrage road approaches and launching sites were begun by the Army engineers, there being the necessary bulldozers, road fill and equipment in readiness.

A. RED Beach (launched four (4) LCVPs)

- (1) No particular problem was encountered. The launching site was directly below a dike, up over which there already was a road to the beach, requiring a minimum of grading. The mobile crane drove down to the beach, positioned itself on a groin, the trailers backed to the crane's position and the boats were lifted off and launched in deep water. Three (3) LCVPs were launched by 0330; the fourth, dispatched in error but put to good use, launched at 0900. The site was under intermittent enemy shellfire and two of the three assigned crane operators were wounded.

B. WHITE Beach (launched five (5) LCVPs, nine (9) LCMS)

- (1) Commander Naval Unit anticipated difficulty at this site and accordingly stationed himself there. The site included a railroad siding, with concrete quayside along the river, the vertical distance from the top of the quayside to the water being about twenty (20) feet. Also there was a ramp-like chute at one end of the quayside, extending to and part of a road approach from the river. This ramp-like approach was about fifty (50) feet long, twenty (20) feet wide with about a thirty (30) degree angle, and the vertical drop to the river at the end of the ramp was about fifteen (15) feet. The depth of the water off the quayside and ramp was ideal for launching both LCVPs and LCMS.
- (2) For launching the LCVPs the ramp-like approach was cleared by bulldozers, stationing the crane to one side and the trailers were backed down. The first boat was damaged as a result of faulty crane operation and was not put into operation; the remaining five (5) LCVPs were successfully launched.
- (3) It was originally intended to bodily pick up the LCMS with two (2) cranes, one at either end of the boat and launch them

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directly into the river, the trailers taking position parallel to the quayside. One of the cranes became non-operational, the cable having snapped, and this plan was dismissed.

- (4) The so-called ramp-like approach was then prepared, dozers filling the site to make a ramp chute to the water's edge, by dozing soil into the river. Sizeable rocks and stones were removed by hand so that the boat propellers would not be damaged. In all, a chute was now prepared down which the LCMs were to go to the water's edge.
- (5) The single crane was stationed the same as used for the LCVPs. The LCM trailer backed down to about twenty (20) feet from the water's edge. The crane picked up the stern of the LCM which was loaded stern forward. As a result the boat aboard the trailer slid backward and the bow grounded, back hauls protecting against any abrupt movement. The trailer was then moved forward and out of the way and the crane slacked off and entirely grounded the boat.
- (6) With the LCM now on the ground bow towards the water, a bulldozer was detailed to push against the stern and push it into the river.
- (7) As a result of the bulldozer pushing the LCM to the end of the prepared chute, the end of which was steep and in deep water, there was a question of losing the bulldozer overboard. To protect against this the leading bulldozer was securely chained to a second bulldozer, and when the first bulldozer pushed the LCM to sufficiently deep water the second bulldozer retrieved the first bulldozer.
- (8) This plan worked out successfully and no damage to the nine (9) LCMs was sustained. The site was under both AA and intermittent 88 MM enemy shellfire from midnight until long after completion of launching the boats. One of the cranes was slightly damaged

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by 88 mm shellfire but no casualties were sustained.

- (9) The first boat was launched at 0600, the last at 1320, all successfully launched except one (1) LCVP.

C. ABELL Beach (launched nine (9) LCVPs, nine (9) LCMs)

- (1) Behind the beach was a dike through which no road had previously been provided. Dozers cleared a path.
- (2) Of the two (2) cranes supplied, the one of minimum capacity was the first delivered to the launching site. It unloaded the first two (2) LCMs by taking position in the water and at the end of a groin, the trailers backing down into the water to the crane's position and the inadequate crane feebly lifted the boats up from the stern and jerked them off sideways to gain flotation. This was a slow process, although safe.
- (3) The second two (2) LCMs were backed into the water bodily and until water entered the cabs of the trucks, after which a dozer pushed them further and until the boats floated off. In doing this the trailers' bogging down stole much valuable time.
- (4) The second crane of greater capacity was delivered and the remainder of boats, LCVPs and LCMs, were unloaded by trailer backing to crane at end of groin. In the case of LCVPs they were picked up bodily and boomed out, while with LCMs due to excessive weight, they were picked up by the stern, the trailer moved forward and out of the way, after which the LCM was slacked down by the crane and cleared under its own power.
- (5) All boats were successfully launched. The launching site was under intermittent enemy fire but no hits were scored on D-day. On D plus 1-day one of the cranes was strafed and damaged.

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(6) The first boat was launched at 0557, the last at 1530, all successfully.

4. Some of the boats were making trips to the Far Shore with their loads, unloading, and in readiness again on the Near Shore in six (6) minutes. It is conservatively estimated that as of midnight D-day the following equipment and personnel had been successfully shuttled across the river.

- 3000 Infantry, medics and personnel.
- 375 Tanks and tank destroyers.
- 15 Bulldozers.
- 180 M-29 weasels.
- 80 57 MM guns.
- 300 Jeeps, half with and half without trailers.
- 200 Trucks and vehicles, 3/4 ton, 1 1/2 ton, 2 1/2 ton.
- 200 Casualties.
- 500 Prisoners.

5. Boats also carried out the following details, on D-day and after:

- (a) Power unit for army Bailey ferry.
- (b) Floating bridge construction, plus laying anchors for same.
- (c) Patrol, firing upon and retrieving floating objects.
- (d) Streaming boom cable across river.
- (e) Laying admiralty nets.
- (f) Streaming wire for communications across river.
- (g) Cross river messenger service.
- (h) Standing-by at bridge sites after bridges spanned river.

6. Boats shuttled continuously in some areas for seventy-two (72) continuous hours, in other areas for but eighteen (18) hours, depending upon army bridge construction. The total pieces of equipment shuttled across by D plus 3-days, at which time adequate bridges were constructed, is not accurately known but would number several thousand.

7. On D plus 2-days Army requested two (2) LCMs and two (2) LCVPs be launched at Wesel. On D plus eight (8) days another LCM was requested. These boats were taken from the reserve pool held at Lintfort, the Army now having put into service twenty (20) LCVPs and twenty-one (21) LCMs. The boats in this area were used the same as in other areas except for making two (2) LCMs power units for a Rhino Ferry, which consisted of nothing more than NL Navy pontoons assembled as a barge, to which the LCMs fastened themselves as power units. Heavy equipment was transported on this type barge, including heavy cranes.

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8. A high standard of servicing and repairing the boats was maintained at all times by the attached Navy E-9 Repair Unit, and was formed into two (2) complete mobile repair detachments, each detachment having adequate equipment and replacement parts. These detachments were further split up into still smaller detachments as need arose, all constantly roving the beaches making repairs.

9. Loss of equipment in the operation was negligible:
- (a) One (1) LCVP damaged beyond repair while launching on D-day.
 - (b) One (1) LCVP sunk at about H plus 16 hours; reason unknown but apparently caused by leak.
 - (c) One (1) LCVP sunk on D plus 1-day while streaming anchors, heavy anchor at end of ramp filling and capsizing boat.
 - (d) One (1) LCM seriously damaged by enemy shell-fire on D plus 1-day.

10. In conclusion it is desired to mention that every possible launching condition was considered before the operation, realizing that ~~NO BOAT CAN BE OPERATED UNTIL LAUNCHED~~. Even trailer beds or cribbings were modified on the LCMs so that boats could be dozed off if cranes were not available. The usage of one crane was considered in the event one of the intended two cranes expected at each site should be knocked out or become non-operational. As well, the backing in bodily and bogging down of trailers was taken into account. Further, provision for sleds was made for the LCVPs, on which the boat could be set and bulldozed into the water if need arose. This planning, entirely Navy, was not in vain. A review of the launching sites and the conditions encountered will clarify the need of preparedness for any and all conditions.

W. T. Patrick
W. T. PATRICK.

D-DAY (24 MARCH 1945) ASSAULT MAP

ENCLOSURE - A

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BÜDERICH
RED BEACH LAUNCHING
SITE AND ASSAULT AREA
FOUR (4) LCVPS

Sunken boat for
ferry site

Sand bank

Sunken boat

ferry site



SPELLEN

Sunken barge

Sunken boat

Sunken barge

WHITE BEACH ASSAULT AREA
SIX (6) LCM'S
TWO (2) LCVPS

WHITE

30TH DIVISION LAUNCHING
SITE

NINE (9) LCM'S

SIX (6) LCV'S

NOTE:
ONE (1) LCV DAMAGED, TIPPED
IN UNLOADING AND
NOT USED

3 barges
ashore

Crane
on
barge

2 barges

MEHRUM

Navigation
Channel

Blue Beach Assault Area
THREE (3) LCM'S
TWO (2) LCVPS

30TH DIVISION SECTOR
79TH DIVISION SECTOR

RHEINBERG

ABLE
79TH DIVISION LAUNCHING
SITE
NINE (9) LCM'S
NINE (9) LCVPS

STAPP

ABLE BEACH ASSAULT AREA
FIVE (5) LCM'S
FOUR (4) LCVPS
BAKER BEACH ASSAULT AREA
FOUR (4) LCM'S
FIVE (5) LCVPS

WALSUM

ORSOY

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NAVIGABLE LINE & OBSTACLES ON RHINE RIVER
ENGINEER III CORPS
G99S 4414 Shte 4905, 4405, 4406
Scale 1:25,000
24 Mar 45

LINTFORT



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TASK UNIT 122.5.3
Navy No. 3952
Fleet Post Office
New York, N. Y.

8 April 1945

REPORT OF CASUALTIES SUFFERED BY TASK UNIT 122.5.3 DURING RHINE RIVER CROSSING (OPERATION FLASHPOINT) 24 MARCH 1945.

1. The following names are submitted as of this date. No loss of life was sustained by the Unit. Army personnel noted (*) were under Navy control and reporting to Navy for operation of crane.

KENNEDY, Richard S.	Lt.(jg)	226351	USNR
HAYES, Harold Earl	Slc	377 66 20	USNR
LAGOW, Jack (n)	Slc	377 24 78	USNR
BOWEN, John Melvin	Slc	843 81 22	USNR
SMITH, Merle Leonard	MoMM2c	852 50 90	USNR
BAKER, Earl Alfred	MoMM3c	238 90 30	USNR
MANSFIELD, James Albert	Slc	576 27 88	USNR
PACELLI, Nicholas (n)	Slc	807 47 07	USN-I
MINNICH, John Arthur	BM2c(T)	819 11 37	USN-I
WHITLEY, James Bruce	Cox(T)	833 93 67	USNR
SOLLOSI, Thomas (n), Jr.	Cox(T)	653 93 37	USNR
*BARMANN, Raymond	T-5		US Army

Co.B, 202nd Engineer Combat Battalion

2. Casualties other than battle:

CROOK, Warren Lynn	BM2c(T)	813 91 92	USNR
WARREN, Joseph Cornelius	F1c	803 34 12	USN-I
PIZZANO, James Arthur	GM3c(T)	762 32 57	USNR

W. T. Patrick
W. T. PATRICK,
Lt. Comdr., USNR,
Commander TASK UNIT 122.5.3.

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TASK UNIT 122.5.3

Navy No. 3952

Fleet Post Office

New York, N. Y.

24 March 1945.

NARRATIVE OF ACTIVITIES OF TASK UNIT 122.5.3 PRIOR TO RHINE RIVER
CROSSING (OPERATION FLASHPOINT), 24 MARCH 1945

The Task Unit was originally designated as LCVP Unit # 3 with twenty-four (24) LCVPs and was formed at Weymouth, England on 4 November 1944 with Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, eight (8) boat officers, ninety-six (96) LCVP boatmen, twenty (20) staff personnel, and E-9 Repair Unit No.18 consisting of three (3) warrant officers and twenty-six (26) repair personnel, a total of 10 officers, 3 warrant officers and 142 men. At a later date the strength was more than doubled in both boats and personnel.

Unit (Commanding Officer, boat personnel and boats) were transported aboard LSD, HMS NORTHWAY, on 6 November with orders to report for duty with Commander U. S. Ports and Bases, France, at Le Havre, France. Boats were discharged from LSD on 9 November in the port of Le Havre. E-9 Unit personnel and remainder of Task Unit personnel were transported from Weymouth to Le Havre aboard LCI(L) 500, where three (3) E-9 mobile or maintenance vans and equipment were prepared for joining the Task Unit.

Task Unit upon completion of assembly of personnel and equipment at Le Havre was ordered to further report to Commanding General, Ninth U. S. Army at Maastricht, Holland, and was designated Task Unit 125.20.3, 13 November by Commander U.S. Ports and Bases, France (Commander Task Force 125). On 19 December Task Unit was redesignated Task Unit 122.5.3 by Commander U. S. Naval Forces, France (Commander Task Force 122). Boats were loaded aboard 12½ ton 40 ft. trailers by Army Transportation Corps at Le Havre. Convoy departed overland from Le Havre on 14 November; arrived Maastricht, Holland, 15 November.

Upon reporting to Ninth Army, the Unit was further assigned to 1143rd Engineer Combat Group located in Maastricht, for administration, the Group recommending that Unit establish itself at Grand Lanaye, Belgium, and that boats be unloaded by chain falls in the absence of army cranes, in the St. Peter Canal at Petite Lanaye, establishing E-9 Repair Unit adjoining canal to service boats. This was done. Grand Lanaye is 5 miles distance from Maastricht, Petite Lanaye is 2 miles distance from Grand Lanaye or 3 miles from Maastricht. The population of Grand Lanaye is 500, Petite Lanaye 200.

All personnel, officers and men, were clothed in army uniform in accordance with army instructions. The question of payment for these clothes frequently arose, particularly for officers. Unit maintained that if army uniform was to be worn, it would be at Army expense. It was.

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It was immediately recognized that Unit was to be entirely self-sufficient and steps were taken to organize along the lines of a naval base, utilizing boat officers and boat personnel accordingly. The people of Lanaye were most helpful and offered rooms for the men and officers in their homes while the mayor turned over the City Hall, part of which had school rooms, for messing and headquarters.

Experiments were undertaken with LCVPs on the Maas (Meuse) River, Belgium, from 18 November to 19 December, as follows:

- a. Launching directly into the water on various types of army trailers.
- b. Launching by crane.
- c. Launching by timber sled.
- d. Use in river current.
- e. Use in running boom cable and signal cable across a river.
- f. Use of as propulsion unit for Bailey Ferries and other barges.
- g. Determination of launching and landing sites.
- h. Possibilities of increase of armament.
- i. Loading of various types of army vehicles and cargo.
- j. Testing of various type bridge anchors in river current.

On 21 November orders were received to load six (6) LCVPs onto heavy ponton trailers to stand by on six (6) hours notice for use in the Roer River Crossing. Boats were loaded and in readiness on trailers for this crossing. On 21 December orders were received to secure from standby as boats were not required.

On 23 November a buzz bomb landed in Lanaye and the concussion blew down the overhead in the Mess Hall. Buzz bombs were extremely frequent in this area, as many as sixty in a day passing, occasionally one falling short causing damage locally. It is believed that these buzz bombs were directed at Liege and Antwerp.

The town of Lanaye, Belgium was flooded by a rise in the Maas (Meuse) River from 25 November through 27 November. Personnel in the lower end of town moved up to the second deck of their houses.

Two (2) disassembled army harbor craft (sea mules) were delivered to the Unit on 26 November with orders from 1143rd Engineer Group for the Navy to assemble them. Lt(jg) W. M. Stubblefield, USNR, with a CB Detachment of six (6) men reported 28 November. Work was begun assembling sea mules and on 2 December the first sea mule was launched.

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On 3 December Lt. Comdr. Willard W. AYRES, Commanding Officer and Ensign William Urwin, Boat Officer, were seriously injured in an automobile accident; both were evacuated to 39th Field Hospital in Charleroi, France. Lt(jg) R. S. Kennedy, Executive Officer, temporarily assumed command.

On 18 December, paratroopers were reported by 1143rd. Group to be in the vicinity. Searching party was sent to an island in the Maas (Meuse) river from where flashing lights were observed. No paratroopers were found.

Lt. Commander Willard T. PATRICK; USNR, reported aboard 20 December 1944 to assume command of the Unit, relieving Lt. Comdr. AYRES who was seriously injured in an automobile accident 3 December.

On 24 December, the Unit was notified of another paratrooper drop, and roving jeep patrol was established in Lanaye. No paratroopers were found. Also road block was established, questioning all passers-by. Several suspicious characters of questionable identity were turned over to army authorities in Maastricht. Frequently townspeople would report suspicious persons who were apprehended and turned over to army authorities in Maastricht.

On 25 December a Christmas party was given for the town of Lanaye. One of the Unit's Warrant Officers, Chief Carpenter J. Dauphinais, USN, who speaks fluent French, acted as Santa Claus with costume borrowed from local padre. Candy was distributed to the children.

River patrols were established between Maastricht, Holland and Vise, Belgium, for security of bridges, at three (3) different points using a total of six boats. The enemy was advancing in the direction of Liege.

Freezing weather presented a problem in fresh water and boats were run at hourly intervals to protect against freezing, while those not needed for patrol duty were taken out of water and drained. Experiments were undertaken to modify cooling system. Patrol continued without interruption and without incident until 29 January, enemy having been driven back sufficiently far by that date and patrol was secured.

Enemy advance appeared to be serious in December and Army Group requested plans for a provisional Infantry Company, as well as plans for evacuation of personnel and demolition of boats. Enemy was checked and plans not executed.

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On 10 January 1945 a buzz bomb landed in Petite Lanaye at about 0800. Help was requested and about a hundred men were sent to extricate the victims. Four persons were dug out of the debris, two alive and uninjured except for shock and minor injuries, two dead. Unit's pharmacist's mate administered first aid to the injured. The homeless were supplied with food for a period of two days.

The local inhabitants of Grand Lanaye who had opened their homes to the Navy were now making endless requests anywhere from hauling fodder from distant fields for cattle to delivery of the ill to Liege, a distance of fifteen miles, for medical treatment, as Lanaye had no doctor. All requests were given every consideration until they became too numerous, after which they were turned over to the mayor to be acted upon only if URGENT, in which case the Navy supplied transportation. Requests were reduced to a minimum after filtering by the mayor.

The Unit had an adequate sickbay consisting of two large rooms in a private home in charge of CPM LAMBETH and one other PHM. Minor cases were bedded in the sick bay, serious cases were turned over to the Army at Maastricht, Holland or Liege, Belgium. Townspeople were occasionally treated for cuts and bruises. The health of the Unit was exceptionally good.

Discipline was not to be overlooked. All hands carried arms and reports of unauthorized and unnecessary firing of carbines were frequent, at all hours. This was soon controlled by establishing brigs for offenders. A deck court with confinement on bread and water soon controlled the situation. Examination of personnel records disclosed that over twenty-five percent of the men had questionable records, ranging from GCMs (of which there were three) down to minor mast punishments.

Recreation was provided by taking over a local cafe in which captured furnishings from Aachen, Germany, were provided, including a piano. Movies were shown every other night if possible and dances were arranged for the men on Saturday nights. Lanaye itself could not muster enough dancing partners for the men, so arrangements were made with the Dutch in Maastricht. The dances were a great success. In all cases the girls, both Dutch and Belgian, were strictly chaperoned. This was a national custom, not a Navy request.

Two Dutch tugboats were attached to the unit, on call for Army needs. Provisioning, supply and payment of crews was designated a Navy responsibility, fully complied with but not accepted with flavour. Supply problems mounted, army requiring strict accountability. In the absence of a Navy supply officer, a boat officer was assigned this duty, a full-time assignment.

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Mail and Navy supply was maintained by weekly overland runs to Le Havre in charge of one of the Unit's boat officers. All requisitions were given immediate attention and at no time did Navy supply present a problem.

It was common practice to search captured supply dumps in the Aachen, Eschweiler, and Geilenkirchen area. Many useful items were found, fittings, lamps, wire, tools, stoves, furniture, etc. Also it was standard routine to get coal from these areas as none was available for the unit in Maastricht and the need was great. While on a search for pipe fittings in Geilenkirchen, Chief Machinist Trammel was wounded in the hand 16 January by either sniping or shrapnel. This was the Unit's first casualty and was not serious. He was awarded the Purple Heart.

On 20 January Unit Commanding Officer with Task Group engineering officer, who was in Lanaye at the time, proceeded to Antwerp to inspect and prepare the twenty-four (24) LCMS held there for delivery to this Unit, plus six (6) LCMS for Unit # 1 at Andenne, Belgium. The boats were to have been delivered at an earlier date but due to the German bulge were detained. The condition of the boats, the entire thirty (30), was deplorable. Many of the boats were damaged, the result of a severe storm that broke them loose from their moorings a few days before. Practically all of them had dead batteries and could not start; five new engines were required, seven new clutches and a series of hull and miscellaneous repairs were set in motion. Nine boats required underwater repairs and were lifted out by crane. The Army and Navy E-9 both effected these repairs.

On 1 February boats were ready to leave Antwerp under own power via Albert Canal for Lanaye, after much difficulty in repairing, outfitting, rationing and fueling them for the trip. Assurances were given that ice conditions would not hinder trip and that icebreakers had cleared a path. Such was not the case and ten miles out of Antwerp boats were marooned in ice jam. Army tugs and sea mules were solicited between Antwerp and Maastricht. Those boats unable to push thru the ice were towed by the army tugs and sea mules supplied.

By 3 February all the LCMS, thirty (30), had arrived at Lanaye, requiring change of propellers on most of the boats due to ice damage. The six (6) LCMS destined for Unit # 1 at Andenne, Belgium, continued on after making repairs.

With the arrival of the newly attached LCMS the total strength of the unit increased as follows:

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Twenty-four (24) LCVPs, twenty-four (24) LCMS, one (1) Commanding Officer and one (1) Executive Officer, eleven (11) boat officers, one (1) See Bee officer, three (3) E-9 Unit warrant officers, ninety-six (96) LCVP boatmen, one hundred-twenty (120) LCM boatmen, six (6) See Bee construction men, thirty-six (36) E-9 repairmen, thirty-five (35) staff personnel, a total of fourteen (14) officers, three (3) warrant officers, two hundred ninety-three (293) men, giving a grand total of three hundred ten (310).

Considering the entire population of Grand Lanaye was but 500, billeting would have been a problem had not the local padre turned over three classrooms and the townspeople expanded their homes to care for the influx.

Messing also presented a problem. After examining the situation from a "Childs" or "Automat" point of view, the mess line was soon under control and all hands were fed in less than a half hour. As a whole, the food served was far above field standard.

No exercises were ordered by Army for newly arrived LCMS. However, practice beaching and loading of trucks were begun by the Unit and with Unit's equipment. Request was made for medium tanks to exercise LCMS but Army (1143 Engineer Combat Group) reported that none were available. Commanding Officer of Navy Unit solicited tank commander in area to release at least one tank for exercises. Tank commander was impressed with need of LCMS for Rhine crossing and drove aboard the first M4-A1 medium tank himself with facility, convincing all concerned that LCMS could carry these tanks. They did on D-day.

A battalion under 1143 Engineer Combat Group exercised for three days with trucks and dozers but were secured, a disappointment to Navy Unit Commander as no one (army) was becoming sufficiently familiar with Navy equipment.

On 11 February twelve (12) LCVPs were loaded onto heavy pontoon trailers for standby on six (6) hour notice for a Roer River crossing. Boats were, as usual, loaded by Navy as no Army personnel were available. On 23 February boats proceeded to Aachen, Germany, in full "Navy" convoy as no Army personnel were on hand. Orders for dispatch of boats to Aachen area read "upon arrival report location". In other words, no one knew to whom detachment of twelve boats reported to upon arrival. A check with the town major at Aachen revealed a surplus of sympathy, that is all as he had no information. A First Army ordnance Battalion (we were attached to the Ninth Army) took over the messing of the boat crews, thankfully, for Navy had no roving mess detachments, which were necessarily inaugurated after this episode. Two days later, 25 February boats were attached to XIX Corps, to standby for the Roer River crossing. XIX Corps did not use the boats, which were then sent to Echt, Holland, to stand by for the XIII Corps. The XIII Corps did not use the boats.

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On 1 March Unit was detached from 1143rd Engineer Combat Group and attached to 1103rd Engineer Combat Group. On 3 March the twelve (12) LCVPs from Echt, Holland, returned to Lanaye, Belgium for unloading, and were unloaded at 1900. On 4 March at 0300 officer messenger from 1143rd Group reported with verbal orders requiring that twelve (12) LCVPs and twelve (12) LCMs be loaded immediately and dispatched to XIX Corps at Munchen-Gladbach, Germany, for a Rhine River crossing. The twelve (12) LCVPs were loaded by Navy on 4 March and dispatched to Munchen-Gladbach, while the twelve (12) LCMs were to be loaded by 1143rd Group immediately upon completion of trailer alteration required on M25 tank transporters. Trailer alteration required installation of large timbers to support LCM in transit.

Up to this time no experience had been gained in loading LCMs for want of a heavy duty crane and tank transporter with which to practice. A crane was finally supplied, of but a bare twenty (20) ton capacity to do a twenty-seven (27) ton job with inexperienced operators. The tank transporter (which includes the trailer) was backed close to the water's edge, on a near level to the boat, and boat was picked up by the stern, rested upon the trailer supporting timbers that were installed to act as a cribbing for transporting boat, and then winched aboard by the tank transporter's winch. This improvised system of loading had possibilities (and was used exclusively for future loading) but due to the limited experience of personnel, their first experience, and particularly the crane operators, both rudders and propellers were being damaged with each loading. This damage was not serious as Navy repair unit was fully equipped to handle the problem, devoting an hour or less on each boat. The loading was effected from a basin at Maastricht, Holland.

On 8 March the twelve (12) LCMs were loaded and ready to join the twelve (12) LCVPs already at Munchen-Gladbach, Germany. Unit Commanding Officer consulted Corps at Munchen-Gladbach. XIX Corps indicated that they knew what they wanted and Navy was on hand to serve them. However, Army deferred need for both LCVPs and LCMs, a disappointment to both Corps and Unit Commander.

On 9 March Army attached Naval Unit to XVI Corps with headquarters at Nieukerk, Germany, who further attached Unit to 1153rd Engineer Combat Group with headquarters at Esch, Holland. By this time Naval Unit Commander became concerned (as he was then officially attached to the 1103rd Group plus attachment to the 1143 Group, in a fashion) and requested written orders as other Army Group commanders were sending representatives with various requests for boats and information. Written orders were given by XVI Corps to report to 1153rd Group, who were requested by Navy Unit Commander to give written orders to the next lower echelon in command, the 202nd Engineer Combat Battalion who were located at Maasbracht, Holland and with whom the Unit was to work. This request worked out to the satisfaction of all concerned.

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The XVI Corps then ordered the twelve (12) LCVPs at Munchen-Gladbach, Germany, to report to Maasbracht, Holland, for training on the Maas (Meuse) River, plus the twelve (12) LCMs at Maastricht, Holland, already on trailers, plus the twelve (12) LCVPs and twelve (12) LCMs held at Lanaye in the water. A shuttle service was inaugurated with but twelve of each kind of trailer to deliver twenty-four of each kind of boat. All boats were delivered at Maasbracht, Holland, twenty-four (24) LCVPs and twenty-four (24) LCMs by 13 March. Also the entire Naval Unit was moved from Lanaye, Belgium, to Maasbracht, Holland.

Eight (8) LCMs and eight (8) LCVPs were launched at Maasbracht for training with units of the 30th and 79th Infantry Divisions. LCMs exercised at loading tanks, tank destroyers, half-tracks and vehicles; while LCVPs undertook loading personnel, vehicles, 57 mm guns and M-29 weasels. The exercises were a great success. Although the loading and unloading sites were rocky, a common condition in the area causing havoc with propellers, exercises continued and adequate boats were kept operational by Navy E-9 Unit, as seldom were more than four (4) of each type boat required at one time.

The Rhine crossing was now taking form. Nine (9) LCMs and nine (9) LCVPs were assigned to the 1153 Engineer Combat Group who were to land the 30th Division; nine (9) LCMs and nine (9) LCVPs were assigned to the 1148 Combat Group who were to land the 79th Division. This made a total assignment of eighteen (18) LCMs and eighteen (18) LCVPs for the Rhine crossing, the remaining six (6) LCMs and six (6) LCVPs to be held in reserve for Army. Meetings now became a problem; the XVI Corps, the 1148 Group and the 1153rd Group. All were served.

All craft were ready and enroute to Lintfort, Germany, plus personnel and equipment at 0700, 20 March, Lintfort being the assembly area. There was some confusion in loading boats as trailers did not arrive until 0600, 19 March. Fortunately, Navy anticipated need for timbers and brackets for trailer cribbing for the LCMs plus cable and turnbuckles for securing all craft on trailers. Material was on the spot. All loading was accomplished by Navy, installation of trailer cribbing was done jointly by Army and Navy.

All craft were now ready in Lintfort, awaiting D-day. D-day was decided, 24 March 1945 and the Rhine River was to be crossed.

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