

FROM...Lieutenant E.H. West R.N.V.R. Flotilla Officer, 507th L.C.A. Flotilla. 9 02735

DATE...8th June 1944.

TO....The Commanding Officer, H.M.S. PRINCE BAUDOIN.

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Report on operation ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
Craft taking part; L.C.A's 1377, 863, 670, 578, 577, 554, 521.
Troops embarked; 5th United States Rangers.

All craft were lowered in Transport Area at 0545 in conditions of heavy swell and choppy seas; but no difficulty was experienced in clearing ship's side. Craft formed up and proceeded, taking up station astern of 504 L.C.A. Flotilla according to operation orders.

2. The run in towards Dog Green beach was carried out according to plan, speed approximately 5 knots. Difficulty was experienced in keeping station owing to the condition of sea and swell, but under circumstances craft were able to keep fairly good formation.

3. At 0630 L.C.A. 578 was noticed to be low in the water, owing to swamping, and was quickly left astern. The subsequent report by Coxswain of this craft disclosed that the engines were eventually stopped by flooding and troops were disembarked into passing L.C.T. 88, which was proceeding towards the beach. This craft was taken in tow by an L.C.V. (P), but when engines were restarted, after intensive bailing, she was able to proceed back to ship under own power.

4. At 0645 signal "Crowbar" was picked up from Charlie Sector, and on reaching position "Queenie" at 0700 the group was stopped by Navigational Leader (M.L.163). As no success signal had been received at 0715 from Charlie Sector, the group continued to Dog Green beach according to orders.

5. On approach to beach the obstacles expected were seen to line the approaches, and at same time I perceived a certain amount of mortar fire falling amongst the 501st and 504th Flotillas the former being beached to the right, whilst 504th Flotilla was proceeding in well to left of Dog Green beach. I therefore decided that, being unable to await the unbeaching of all craft of their two flotillas, I would take my flotilla into the centre of beach. It was apparent that no clearance of beach obstacles had been made, and therefore there was nothing to choose between any position on beach from navigational point of view.

6. I deployed the flotilla approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off beach, and after that it was a question of each craft finding its own way into beach independently. Craft had to zig-zag their way through beach obstacles for a matter of 50 yards, and all obstacles had taller mines attached to topmost stakes. I would like to say that officers and coxswains all showed utmost presence of mind and kept a cool head in beaching their craft in these extremely difficult conditions.

7. All the craft found their way to beach and Rangers were disembarked at 0805 into between one and two feet of water; and I must say that after a very rough passage and a certain amount of sea-sickness the Rangers went ashore in exceptionally good spirits.

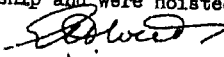
8. As Flotilla touched down there was considerable mortar fire and fairly heavy machine gun fire directed on and across the beach, and an L.C.I. (L), No. 91 which had beached just ahead of my craft was hit forward and commenced to burn furiously; this entailed a certain amount of manoeuvring on the part of three of my craft in order to touch down clear of her.

9. Whilst clearing the beach a number of casualties from L.C.I. (L) 91 were picked up by L.C.A's 670, 577 and 521, some being badly burnt. I ordered these craft to return to parent ship at best speed together with L.C.A. 554.

10. In meantime L.C.A. 863 had struck an underwater obstacle which badly holed her forward. The crew commenced bailing and I hailed her coxswain to proceed at maximum speed, hoping that she would be able to rejoin ship. As she commenced to fill up very quickly however, I went alongside with the intention of taking her in tow; but she suddenly began to turn turtle and went down by the head in about three fathoms of water, approximately one mile off the centre of Dog Green beach. All crew were taken on board L.C.A. 1377.

11. All remaining craft returned to parent ship and were hoisted by 0945.

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Lieutenant R.N.V.R.
Flotilla Officer, 507 Flotilla.

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