

INTRODUCTION

The USS QUAPAW is a diesel electric Fleet Tug of 3000 shaft horsepower. Four 900 horsepower diesels are used to drive the generators, which, in turn, drive the two 1500 horsepower electric motors, which are connected direct to the single shaft.

She is 205 feet overall, with a beam of 39 feet and a designed maximum draft of 16 1/2 feet x She has a cruising radius of approximately 9100 miles at 14 knots, top speed is 16.4 knots, fuel capacity is 91250 gallons, fresh water capacity of 27000 gallons, lube oil capacity 6600 gallons, refrigeration stowage of 800 cubic feet, dry stowage of 1460 cubic feet. This vessel is capable of remaining at sea 90 days without replenishing stores, fuel or provisions.

The QUAPAW was built at the United Engineering Company Shipyard at Alameda, California and is equipped for towing, fighting, anti-submarine patrol, or salvage work. Commissioned on 6 May 1944, on 7 May 1944 we went to Naval Supply Depot, Oakland, California and loaded all commissioning allowance, plus pre-commissioning requisitions. May 11th, 1944, the QUAPAW was departed at Pier 31, San Francisco and ran the degaussing range in San Francisco Bay. On 18 May 1944 the QUAPAW arrived at Small Craft Training Center, San Pedro, California to begin shakedown in accordance with orders from Commander Operational Training Command Pacific. On 6 June, we departed San Pedro enroute San Diego, California for further shakedown in accordance with Commanding Officer Small Craft Training Center, San Pedro movement order 151-44. We arrived San Diego on the 7th of June 1944 for anti-submarine warfare trials and instructions. 14 June departed San Diego for San Pedro, California and arrived San Pedro the same day. 16 June, departed San Pedro for San Francisco in accordance with Coml2 dispatch dated 16 June 1944, towing ARD68. Arrived San Francisco 18 June 1944, averaging 7.2 knots on the trip.

EARLY TOWING ASSIGNMENTS

The QUAPAW departed from San Francisco, California on 21 June 1944, enroute Milne Bay, New Guinea under orders from Commander Western Sea Frontier. The tows were made up of the U.S. Army Engineers, Electric Barge "Electra", on the main tow wire, the US Army Engineers Dump Slow, Number 1, on the starboard wing drum, and the U.S. Army Derrick, BD 1162 on the port drum. The USS YF 341 and the U.S. Army Tug TPL01 made up the remainder of the convoy. On June 22nd, made contact with USS CLIFFROSE (AN42) and placed her 600 yards astern of the main tow.

On 2 July 1944, due to rough seas, the cable to the mud scow parted at 2054. The CLIFFROSE took the mud scow in tow and the convoy resumed the base course at 0045, July 3, 1944.

On 4 July 1944, we arrived off the entrance to Pearl Harbor, and detached all of the convoy, except the mud scow, which we took into Honolulu Harbor. The ship was given a 7 day lay-over, in order to take on fuel, stores and give the crew liberty.

On 12 July 1944, we left Pearl Harbor with the following tows, bound for Funafuti Atoll, Ellice Islands: Y099 on main tow wire, Y0G30 on port wire, and BD1162 on starboard wire. USS SATINLEAF in company. Nothing unusual happened on the voyage. On 16 July 1944 the SATINLEAF was detached with orders to proceed to the assistance of a large Army tug that was in difficulty nearby. On Monday, 24 July 1944, the QUAPAW crossed the 180th meridian.

July 24, 1944, arrived at Funafuti and reported to Port Director. July 27th departed from Funafuti for Milne Bay with the Y099, BD1162, and Y0G30, with the USS SATINLEAF and Army Tug LT57. In attempting to bring the Y0G30 close aboard, one man fell overboard,

but was picked up in quick time. The tow wire was cleared and we proceeded on our course.

On 6 August 1944, we arrived at Milne Bay, took on fuel and water and provisioned ship. On 10 August 1944, we left Milne Bay for Manus Island with YO99, YOC30, and BK07 in tow.

On 14 August 1944, we arrived at Manus Island and turned tows over to Commander Naval Base, Manus. During the stay at Manus the QUAPAW was employed in several harbor tow jobs.

August 17th, 1944, we left Manus Island for Woendi Lagoon towing YOC19 with a deck cargo of 51 motor torpedo boat engines. The USS SILVERBELL (AN51) was in company with us, and on Friday, August 18th the SILVERBELL developed engine trouble, so we took her in tow and returned to Manus for repairs. Repairs completed, the group left Manus for Woendi the next day. We arrived at Woendi on 24 August 1944.

On 4 September 1944, we left Woendi for Maffin Bay to report to Senior Officer Present Afloat, and arrived there on Tuesday, September 5, 1944.

MOROTAI OPERATION

On 5 September 1944, we dropped anchor in Maffin Bay and reported to SOPA and received instructions to stand by for Morotai Operations. As a result, we stayed in Maffin Bay till the morning of 12 September 1944, when we got underway, our destination Morotai Island, by-passing Japanese forces on Halmahera. Our date of arrival to be D plus 1 day, September 16, 1944.

We joined up with the convoy, which consisted of LST's, Liberty Ships, Destroyers and Minesweepers. On the morning of 16 September 1944 we entered Morotai Harbor. On the way in, one Jap plane, identified as a Val, dived close and dropped a bomb near the leading Liberty Ship. The Jap plane was successful in getting away. We remained at Morotai from 16 September 1944 till 1 October 1944. During this period there was considerable intermittent firing on the beach which was quite impressive. There were red alerts every day, during the time we spent at Morotai, and on 8 separate occasions enemy planes were sighted. While we opened fire, we were not fortunate enough to bring down any enemy planes. Our main duty was to retract LST's from the beach, and we were successful in assisting eight LST's in retracting. Pitoe Bay, where the LST's landed, was a unique beach. The LST's beached on a rocky ledge which fringed the shore and their sterns remained in 60 to 100 fathoms of water. By going alongside the LST's and passing our tow wire from our quarter to a little forward of their beam, and then backing, we were able, because of the wash from our propeller and the LST's propellers, to raise the depth of the water approximately 1 foot, which in most cases was sufficient to float the bow of the LST free of the beach. While retracting LST's was our main function, on 5 separate days, we were assigned duty on anti-submarine warfare work. On 1 October we got underway from Morotai for Hollandia, New Guinea.

LEYTE OPERATION

The QUAPAW left Hollandia, New Guinea at 1521 Friday, 13 October 1944 to join a convoy for Leyte in the Philippine Islands. Our duties, as usual, in such operations, were to act as salvage, fire-fighting and towing unit. Nothing unusual happened that day as the convoy continued on course 320° at a speed of 9 knots. About 1000, 14 October, LCI 364 broke down, and we were assigned

to take her in tow. By 1230 we were again in convoy position with LCI in tow. At 1630 our tow reported itself ready to continue on her own power, so we cast off the tow wire.

On October 14th we were joined by additional ships arriving from Manus and after the convoy had changed disposition to accommodate the new arrivals, it changed speed to 9.5 knots. Early that evening the LCI 364 broke down again, and we left the formation to take her in tow. But the time we were ready to tow her, we were 9 miles behind the convoy, and so we made as much speed as possible in an effort to catch up. At 0515, the next morning, we were in convoy position. That afternoon the LCI 364 was ready to continue under her own power, so we cast her off.

Thursday morning, October 19 found the convoy on course making a speed of 8 knots. That afternoon the disposition underwent a zigzagging movement. At 1700 we were ordered to take LCI 28 in tow. We towed her for 3 1/2 hours and then cast her off, after receiving word she could continue without assistance.

Friday morning, October 20, at 0015 we were entering Leyte Gulf and were at general quarters by 0540. At 0624 our first enemy target was in sight on our port side. It was a Jap twin engined bomber, later identified as a Nick. Our guns opened fire, but were unsuccessful as the bomber dropped its bomb into the sea and flew away. At 0730 we were alongside LST 463 to assist with her engine trouble. By 0800 repairs to the 463 were completed and we were heading for Red Beach again. It appeared as though no more enemy action was in the making, so we secured from general quarters at 1100 as we were lying to at Red Beach. We were underway again at 1129 to assist, if necessary LST 465, which had been hit by mortar fire. The LST needed no assistance, so we laid to, awaiting further orders. They came, and at 1405 we were in position to aid LST 452 in retracting from the beach. Before retracting could commence, a red alert was sounded, and we went to general quarters. No action took place by 1630, so general quarters were secured and retracting of the LST began. At 1653 the LST's pelican hook was carried away, but the ship was now in a position to retract itself and she did so shortly afterward. During an air attack, in an attempt to move out to deeper water to anchor, we ran aground on Palo Reef. While still aground at 0545, the next morning, we opened fire at a lone enemy plane which appeared to have been successful in releasing its bomb on an Australian cruiser. At 1010, with the aid of the USS SONOMA and the USS CHICKASAW, we were pulled clear of the reef after 15 minutes of effort. One of our divers was sent over immediately to inspect the bottom. He reported no damage. A red alert at 1635 that afternoon sent us to our guns, but no enemy planes appeared.

October 22nd, Sunday morning, 0554 found us at general quarters. Twenty minutes later we fired on a Jap Nick which attempted to bomb an LST on our port bow, but the bomb missed its target and exploded harmlessly in the water about 400 yards from us. Another two-engined Jap bomber, Nate, passed along our port side at 0653. We opened fire, but observed no hits.

We assisted the PC598 in retracting from Palo Reef Monday morning and repaired the propeller shaft bearings of 2 Army LCM's that afternoon. A twin engined Jap bomber passed near us late that afternoon, but before we could open fire, it had disappeared.

Tuesday proved to be an eventful day. At 0830 we were firing at an enemy plane overhead. Three planes crashed into the sea shortly afterward as an air battle was in progress above us. By 0850 the LCI 1045 and the USS SONOMA had been hit by enemy suicide

bombers. We went to the aid of the SONOMA and assisted the USS CHICKASAW in beaching the ship to prevent it from sinking. At 1210 we were near the grounded LST 741, ready to assist in re-tracting, but were ordered to proceed to the stricken liberty ship Augustus Thomas. The Thomas had been hit by a suicide plane, but investigation proved it in no immediate danger. We were ordered to return to LST 741. At high tide we were successful in retracting her from a reef off Tacloban.

Wednesday, October 25th, was a day of general quarters and Jap planes. The first plane appeared at 0722. We opened fire but the plane escaped. Another plane came in sight about an hour later, but it was out of range of our guns. By this time we were underway to assist LSM 258, which had a broken screw. A change of orders directed us to assist LST 552 which had been hit with a bomb near Red Beach. Investigation showed the damage well under control. Two Jap Vals appeared at 1241. Our guns commenced firing at a Val on our port side at 1305. No hits were observed, but the plane crashed into the water ahead of us. While underway to go alongside LSM 258, another Val appeared over our stern. No hits were observed as we opened fire. We were alongside the LSM 258 at 1420 and commenced inspection of her propeller. Enemy planes appeared again at 1635 and at 1637 we opened fire at a Val about 3000 yards off our port side. Twelve minutes later we were firing at another Val on our starboard side. A Nick passed over our stern shortly after sunset, and we opened fire once again. By this time we were anchored near Palo Reef and intended to change screws on the LSM 258 the following day.

October 26th, Thursday, was another day of Jap planes. One was sighted being shot down over the bay at 0613. A Kate appeared at 0845 and disappeared after we had opened fire. Four planes were sighted diving on a liberty ship astern at 1008. We commenced firing, but observed no hits. The enemy bombs were short of the liberty ship. Nine rounds of 40mm from our guns were ineffective as we fired at an enemy twin engined plane at 1304. Five minutes later we fired at a Jap Val passing ahead of us. From 1600 to 1820 approximately 30 Jap planes were sighted attacking shipping and the Tacloban air strip. No hits were observed by our gunfire as we fired away at planes which came in range. Three light bombs fell in the water about 3000 yards off our starboard beam at 2058. Between alerts we had managed to remove the propeller nut from the LSM and were making preparations to remove the propeller.

Friday, October 27th, 1944 is a day the QUAPAW will long remember. It was the day the ship shot down its first enemy plane. At 1843 a Kate appeared from the clouds directly overhead. We were the first ship to fire and observed hits immediately. Unfortunately, the plane crashed into the liberty ship Wheeler. Two other Vals had appeared that morning at 0800, but had disappeared before guns could be put into action.

Saturday we were at general quarters a number of times and saw 2 enemy planes, but had no opportunity to fire upon them. In the meantime, we removed the propeller from LSM 258.

Sunday, October 29th, the QUAPAW was successful in shooting down its second Jap plane, this time a Val. It was passing low along our starboard side, when our gun fire found its mark at approximately 2000 yards. The plane crashed at the foot of a nearby hill at 0741. Another enemy plane appeared ahead at 0825, but our gunfire obtained no hits. That evening a typhoon swept over us, and we rode it out with two anchors.

Monday morning found the LCI 65 blown ashore by the typhoon, so we departed to offer assistance in retracting her. With the aid of the USS CHICKASAW and the AN35, we tugged at the LCI for 4 1/2 hours, until the tide went out, with no success. By this time it was dark, and we decided to secure and make another attempt at retraction the next morning.

A Jap Val appeared within gun range at 0555 the next morning and we opened fire. Results were unknown. We continued retracting operations. Another Val passed low over Red Beach at 1817 and again we opened up with gunfire. By 2027 we had successfully hydraulically mined the LCI 65 by means of a 6 inch salvage pump, but our tow wire parted and the LCI was still aground.

Wednesday morning found the QUAPAW attempting to retract LCI 174 from the beach. Operation was unsuccessful because of low tide. At 1053 we shifted retracting attempt to LCI 234. This also was unsuccessful because of low tide.

Thursday and Friday were spent in retracting the LCI 65 and LST 200. Both operations were successful. Five enemy planes were fired upon by us at 0620 Friday. Jap bombers attacked the Tacloban air strip Saturday morning. Our guns fired when targets were in range, but no hits were observed. We changed the port screw of the LSM 311 Saturday afternoon.

During the week commencing November 5th, the QUAPAW fired at only 1 Jap plane, although enemy air action was evident in the vicinity and there were many red alerts throughout the week. Our encounter occurred at 0230 Sunday morning, when a Jap bomber dropped her bombs unsuccessfully at a ship about 2 miles north of us and made off over our stern at medium height. We opened fire, but observed no effective results. During most of the week we assisted in retractions and made changes of propellers to other vessels. Monday it was changing the propeller on the LSM 138. Tuesday we retracted LSM 19 from the beach. Thursday we made minor repairs to the anchor gear of the SS Alexander Majors. Friday and Saturday we tried unsuccessfully to retract 2 pontoon barges which had been washed aground at Dulag by a typhoon, two days before.

Sunday, November 12, found the Jap suicide planes attacking in earnest. Two Jap planes bombed near-by liberty ships at 1120 and then suicide-dived them. We sent our fire party to the Horace Nelson, which had been suicided. The party assisted successfully in extinguishing a fire aboard. A Jap Val attempted to dive into a near-by LST, but missed its target and crashed into the sea. We opened fire on another Val ten minutes later, but appeared to have missed, as the plane flew away.

The 13th and 14th of November were days spent in salvaging pontoon barges off Dulag Beach. One enemy bomber appeared within range of our guns at 0612 on the 14th, but we were unsuccessful in our attempt to shoot it down. We managed to retract four barges from the beach during the two days.

The QUAPAW remained in the vicinity of Dulag beach until the 3rd of December. During this time we alternately performed emergency jobs and continued retracting barges from the beach. Retraction of pontoon barges at Dulag was noteworthy, in that each barge was hard aground and was blocked with coral sand fore and aft, and between pontoon sections. Heavy swells were encountered in these operations, which, combined with enemy air activity, made handling of our main tow wire quite difficult. Chief Boatswain Walter Jackson devised a means for eliminating much of the back-breaking labor, by attaching a long 7/8 inch wire pendant to the

main two inch wire, hauling the main wire to the beach, as far as possible, with an LCM. Then running the smaller wire to an army bulldozer, which dragged the heavy wire ashore. The bulldozer cleared as much sand as possible and the QUAPAW tugged with the main tow wire connected to the beached barge. When the barge cleared the beach it was disconnected and towed away by LCM's. The main tow wire was over-hauled by the smaller pendant and the process began again. During this time the enemy planes continued to operate. On November 15th we inspected the SS William Coulter for possible underwater damage due to a near bomb miss, but found none. Our welding party repaired the steering gear of the SS Alexander Majors. On November 16th and 18th, we attempted, unsuccessfully, to retract the grounded SS John Bartram. Although enemy planes were visible at various times from November 15th to 18th, none came within range of our guns until late on the 19th, when we fired warning shots upon an unobserved plane overhead. From November 15th to 19th, we retracted seven barges from the beach. Two more barges were retracted from the beach on the morning of the 20th, and that afternoon we retracted the LST from the beach off Catmon Hill. Tuesday, the 21st and Wednesday, the 22nd, was devoted entirely to the retraction of pontoon barges in the Dulag area. Our main tow wire became fouled in our screw and cost of the 23rd was spent in getting squared away. The 24th of November found us fighting a fire aboard the SS Gus Darnell, which had been torpedoed. Three Jap planes appeared as the fire raged, and they scored near misses with their bombs as our guns blasted away at them. No hits were observed. The fire in the Darnell was extinguished at 1350 that afternoon, approximately 16 hours after the QUAPAW had arrived at the scene. Later that afternoon we assisted the USS HIDATSA in drydocking the USS ROSS. The next three days we continued retracting operations off Dulag Beach, and were successful in retracting one barge. On November 28th we retracted an LCM loaded with aviation gas, that had been beached at Catmon Hill and the next day we salvaged the beached YOG22 from Ringatungen Point. Our job for November 30 was the LST 616 beached off Catmon Hill. We retracted it successfully.

December 1st we towed YOG22 from Punubulu Island to Dulag. On afternoon of December 2nd, a Jap Dinah appeared and we opened fire, but observed no hits. That evening our commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander N. H. Castle, USNR was relieved by Lieutenant Commander R.H. Donnell, USNR.

Tuesday afternoon, December 5th, our divers were surveying a sunken SC off Tacloban dock area, when we received urgent orders to proceed to the assistance of ships under attack in a convoy. Early the next morning we contacted a torpedoed and abandoned liberty ship being towed by an Army tug and being escorted by a destroyer. The QUAPAW assumed a screening position opposite the destroyer and the small group proceeded slowly to port. Enemy planes frequently attacked out of the low level clouds and many were destroyed by ship's gunfire, coupled with our counter-attacking P-38's. However, one enemy bomber succeeded in planting a torpedo amidships of the liberty ship, immediately sinking it. Thursday, December 7 and Friday, December 8th, we retracted the USS SPENCER, which had run aground near Tacloban. On Saturday we went alongside the USS LAWSON to assist the ATR 31 in towing her into port after a suicide plane had hit, and in salvago work being done aboard her.

On the morning of December 10th we were alongside the USS LIDDLE assisting in patching her decks. She had been struck by an enemy plane. That evening we were rushed to the assistance of the USS HUGHES, which had been hit by a Jap suicide bomber in Surigao

Straits. We towed her to San Pedro Bay, where we took her alongside and began salvage operations. She had suffered considerable damage and we were assigned to patch her up. Monday we had plugged the holes in her side and pumped out her flooded compartments. Several bodies were removed. Her crew was eating aboard our ship and we were providing her with water.

By the 14th, an estimated 40 per cent of the salvage job had been completed. That afternoon we sent our divers down to inspect the propeller of the SC745.

Work on the USS HUGHES progressed satisfactorily and she had one boiler and her evaporators in operation by the 15th. At that time the job had been approximately 55 per cent complete.

On December 19th we inspected a partially sunken ship in the bay and found it to be the LCI 1045, which had been hit during the invasion. We were ordered to sink it completely, which we did.

Thursday, the 21st, we removed the port screw from the AM295, and Friday we repaired the sound gear on YMS68. On Saturday and Sunday we removed the starboard screw of AM295.

The LCT 863 came alongside for a minor welding job on the 26th and on the 28th we completed a minor repair operation on the LCI 1165. For the remainder of 1944 we took on stores and carried out routine work aboard our ship.

On January 1st we changed the propeller for the FS365. The next morning we left San Pedro Bay to take part in operation "Musketeer Mike-One".

LINGAYEN CAMPAIGN

On 2 January 1945 we rendezvoused with convoy and took position as last ship, third column; proceeded through Surigao Straits with a speed of advance of 10 knots, enroute to Lingayen Gulf.

That evening an enemy plane made a shallow glide toward one of the screening ships, dropped a bomb which missed, and disappeared into the cloud. We sighted a second enemy plane and took him under fire. Moving fast, he crossed our bow and disappeared into the clouds. Early morning of January 3rd we went to battle stations for dawn alert. Our air coverage consisted of four P-47's, but 10 enemy planes attacked the convoy. We fired on all planes within range, but no hits were observed. Three enemy planes were seen to fall. We entered the Sulu Sea at 0800. That afternoon one enemy plane was observed passing astern of the convoy, pursued by P-47's. Several bogies were reported as we continued to advance toward Lingayen Gulf on January 4th. During the day, air coverage consisted of P-61's. Weather and sea continued fine and smooth.

On January 5th, enemy destroyers were sighted on our starboard quarter. Three escorting ships left the convoy to intercept the enemy vessels. Smoke was observed over the horizon as a possible result from sinking of the enemy destroyers by our ships and planes. Eight enemy planes attacked the convoy at sunset, using suicide tactics. One plane made a low-level bombing run from our starboard beam directed at this ship. Two bombs fell a few hundred yards short and the plane passed extremely close over our mainmast. The USS APACHE and an LCI had hits which damaged their masts and bows.

Early morning of January 6th we contacted the USS STAFFORD, an escorting DE for the bombardment group, which had been damaged by a bomb hit on her starboard side amidships. The STAFFORD proceeded under her own power and we stood by as ordered to render any necessary assistance.

At dawn the STAFFORD and this vessel were detached to remain in waters of the China Sea approximately 35 miles off Lingayen Gulf and in the vicinity of carrier task groups. The USS RALPH TALBOT (DD390) acted as escort and tactical command for this small detached group.

Sunday, January 7th, we went alongside the STAFFORD to supply her with water for boiler feed. The group was attacked earlier by two enemy planes, each of which dropped bombs that missed. The following day our salvage officer boarded the STAFFORD and found her bulkheads to be well shored and seaworthy for proceeding in slow convoy to a safe port. On the evening of January 8th we parted company with the STAFFORD and TALBOT to join the assault groups in Lingayen Gulf.

Tuesday, the 9th of January, was D-Day. This ship was placed on patrol of both attack areas to render all necessary assistance. Enemy air resistance was light during the entire landing operation. Various alerts were issued concerning attack of ships at anchor by suicide boats and demolition swimmers. Deck patrols were stationed with light machine guns to guard against such attacks. On January 11th we sunk the partly submerged LCI 974, with 50cal machine gun fire. After pulling a pontoon causeway off Yellow Beach, we anchored for the night.

On the 12th we cleared another pontoon causeway from the beach, along with a beached LSM. The following day we salvaged the LSM3, which was beached on Blue Beach. Assistance in re-tracting was rendered the LST624 on the 14th. Fresh water was transferred from this ship to the USS WHIPPOORWILL on the same day. January 15th found LCT 1070 high and dry on the beach. We put two divers aboard her to clear propellers and passed our tow wire to her. The operation was successful, as the LCT was clear of the beach soon after we took a strain.

From the 16th through the 27th of January we made various attempts at salvaging the beached LST 1028 from the beach. The operation was extremely difficult, since all of the LST's power had been knocked out by an explosion. Our efforts were complicated by heavy swells, and we parted many tow wires. The assistance of the USS POTAWATOMI made the operation successful on the 27th. The following day we delivered the 1028 to Port Sual for repairs, then returned to Orange Beach to tow LCI 738 from the beach. On the 29th we towed her to a more calm section of the gulf, where our divers cleared her screws. On the 31st the LSM 8 came alongside with a line in her wheel. Our divers removed the line and the LSM was returned to duty.

From the 1st of February to the 18th we continued to retract landing ships, make repairs and tow ships and barges as directed. On the 18th we got underway in convoy for Subic Bay. On the 19th we arrived and made repairs to an LSM which had two damaged propellers. The 21st we received orders to rendezvous off Sueste Point and proceed to Mangarin Bay, Mindoro, there to await further orders. We arrived at Mindoro on Thursday, 22nd of February.

PALAWAN OPERATION

February 26th, 1945, the QUAPAW departed Mangarin Bay, Mindoro with Task Group 78.2 under the command of Rear Admiral W.M. Fechteller. The destination was Puerto Princesa, Palawan, where the initial assault against the enemy-held island was to be made. Enroute, the QUAPAW took the LCI 683 in tow, when the latter was unable to maintain convoy speed, due to engine trouble. Entry of the landing forces was made into Puerto Princesa at approximately 0730 on February 28th. The QUAPAW's role in the assault consisted of the retraction of LSM 53 from Tidepole Point, the LST 722 from the beach east of Puerto Princesa City, the LSM 128, the LST's 912, 640, 18, 467, 597, all from the beach in the vicinity of the city jetty. Assistance was also rendered the ATR 86 in retracting LST 638 off Princessa Point.

At earliest morning of March 4th, the QUAPAW departed Palawan enroute to Mindoro in company with LST Flotilla 24. The convoy was bound for Mangarin Bay.

ZAMBOANGA OPERATION

On March 8th, 1945, this vessel was anchored Mangarin Bay, Mindoro, making all preparations to participate in operation Victor Four, the seizure and securing of Zamboanga, Mindanao, Philippine Islands. At 0715 the ship got underway, forming in convoy for the invasion. At 1625 on March 9th, our convoy was joined by a number of LST's from Leyte, and during the night one man was lost overboard from an LCM in the convoy.

Sunrise on the 10th found all hands at battle stations for the entry into Santa Cruz Lagoon. U.S. cruisers were standing off the assault areas, bombarding specified targets. Prior to landings, squadrons of Liberators dropped many tons of high explosive bombs from a height of 10,000 feet. The bombing was followed up by persistent strafing attacks on the town proper. The first wave hit the beach at 0915, subsequent to a heavy rocket barrage by LCS's. A number of destroyers bombarded enemy mortar and gun emplacements. Mortar fire upon landing craft continued steadily all that morning and afternoon. At 1615 this vessel was ordered to proceed to Yellow Beach to render assistance in retraction of LST's. Mortar fire was regular and we kept on the move. No damage was done from several near misses. At 1855 we retired at sea for the night along with other units of the operation.

At 0800 March 11, we were anchored off Little Santa Cruz Island. Our tow wire was placed on LST 753, who was hard aground, and at 1305 we pulled her off. Mortar fire was regular, but inaccurate. This vessel retired in convoy for the night at 1656. The two days following we stood by to assist landing vessels as necessary, but our services were not required. Fire from mortars was silenced on March 13th, after the assault troops located their positions. On March 14th, the QUAPAW anchored off Zamboanga Pier, in compliance with orders from SOPA to assist in salvage and demolition work around the pier.

Methods were under consideration for the removal of sunken Jap hulks which were obstructing passage to the finger jettys of the pier. At 1000 one of our divers was sent down to make our main tow wire fast to a sunken wreck. With the aid of a bulldozer, the hulk was pulled within 150 feet of the beach, free of entrance to the pier.

At 1730 of the same day we were ordered by SOPA to proceed to sea and intercept the USS ATA 176, which was having difficulty with her tow. Contact was made with the 176 and the PC 1120 at 2155, but assistance could not be rendered until daylight. At 0630 the following day, March 15th, this ship relieved the ATA of two of her tows and proceeded to Caldera Bay, Zamboanga. After discharging the tows at 1500, we proceeded to anchor for the night in the vicinity of Santa Cruz Bank.

On the morning of the 16th the QUAPAW docked at Zamboanga Pier to continue salvage work and clearing of harbor wreckage. The ship remained moored for the night, but got underway the following morning to assist beaching LST's. We anchored close to the beaching area, but were forced to shift anchorage further off shore, as an enemy counter attack drove close to the nearby beach. We remained anchored for the night, but shifted to Santa Cruz Bank on the following morning. The ship remained at anchor until 0900 on March 20th, when we were underway to go alongside LST 631. With the use of our boom, a rearing boat was lowered from her cargo deck. We then returned to anchorage for the night. At 1230 the following day, the LCS-41 came alongside for repairs to her ruptured bow. It was necessary to beach her before undertaking such repairs. This was done and the job completed on March 23. The following two days we remained at anchor while several landing craft came alongside for welding repairs. They were LSM's 42 and 218, LCI's 779, 710 and 653. At 1800 of the 25th the QUAPAW was underway in convoy bound for San Pedro Bay, Leyte.

POLLOC HARBOR OPERATION

While anchored in San Pedro Bay orders were received on March 31st to report for duty and participation in the Victor Five Operation, the assault on Polloc Harbor, which is located on the south-eastern coast of Mindanao. We got underway in convoy enroute to Mangarin Bay, Mindoro, from where the operation was to be staged. The Victor Five convoy was underway on April 14th. Prior to that date, the QUAPAW performed the following assignments in Mangarin Bay. The disabled liberty ship, Juan de Fuca, was towed to anchorage in deeper water; two five-ton anchors were salvaged from the wreckage of the USS PORCUPINE in 9 fathoms of water; assistance was rendered the LST 717 and the ATR-61, both of which were aground on an unmarked shoal. During this period of cooperative quiet and inactivity, Lieutenant Commander R.H. Donnell, USNR was relieved as commanding officer of the QUAPAW on April 7th, by Lieutenant W. R. Hughes, USNR.

On April 14th, 1945, we assumed our position in convoy bound for Polloc Harbor and the Victor Five Operation. On the second day enroute we departed convoy and proceeded independently to Malanaui Island. There, a gasoline barge was taken in tow, and we proceeded to rejoin the convoy. The barge was delivered to the USS PORTONIS (AGP4) after the convoy had entered Polloc Harbor on April 17th. This ship anchored until ordered to assist the LCI 61 which was aground. In carrying out these orders, our ship ran aground on an unmarked reef. An immediate underwater inspection was made and no damage was observed. An LCM carried both our bow anchors forward of the ship and dropped them. By heaving on the anchors, the ship was cleared of the shoal without assistance.

During this operation our work proved varied. On April 18th, we cleared the propeller of LCT 820, which had been fouled by her anchor cable. Later that day we went alongside the LSM 18 to change one of her propellers, damaged in beaching. This job completed, the TP 232 came alongside for repairs to her anchor chain. On April 21st, having completed repairs to the main condenser of the LT 650, we were ordered to inspect a sunken wreck off the Green

Beach Pier, Parang, Mindanao. The wreck was in water too deep for shallow water diving gear, therefore it was necessary to move the ship closer to the wreck, so that deep sea diving gear could be used. The inspection completed the same day proved no immediate danger to navigation or shipping and no salvage work was undertaken. On April 23, 1945 we rendered assistance to LST 911 beached on Green Beach and were successful in retracting her. The same day, we made an underwater inspection of the LCT 758, but no work was undertaken. On April 28th, the LSM 21 came alongside to have both her propellers changed. The job completed, the LSM 311 came alongside and we changed her starboard propeller. Late the same day we got underway to assist the LST 636 in retracting, but found our assistance was not needed. No other work was undertaken on this operation, except for ASW patrol on the 1st and 2nd of May. The ship remained at anchor, carrying out ship's maintenance work until May 5th, 1945, when we got underway for Tolosa Bay.

On the morning of May 7th we entered Tolosa Bay as first resupply echelon for troops in the Davao area. Late on the same afternoon all ships had finished unloading and were successful in retracting without our help. In accordance with our basic orders, we joined convoy and proceeded to Morotai. On the morning of May 9th, we arrived in Morotai and reported for duty. We immediately received orders to proceed to Tarakan Island, Borneo to assist in retracting LST's. We were escorted by the USS EDWARDS. On the morning of May 11th, 1945, we arrived in Tarakan to find five LST's on the beach, four of which were high and dry at low tide. We were successful in retracting LST 390 unassisted, LST 667, assigned to work with this vessel having parted his tow wire at the first strain. Finally, on 13 May 1945, all the LST's were off the beach, and we once again proceeded to Morotai, towing LCT 8.

On 16 May 1945 we arrived at Morotai, three days later we were ordered to Tolosa Bay, Morotai to retract LST 711, which was completed in the afternoon. We sent a diving party, on 24 May 1945, to the USS SCUTTLE, which had lost her boat slings and shock absorbers in 120 feet of water. Our divers recovered the shock absorbers. The QUAPAW remained at anchor until 26 May 1945, when the USS PINTO (ATF90) relieved this vessel for the pending operations of Obse Six.

TOWING OPERATIONS MAY 1945 to OCTOBER 1945

After being relieved by the ATF90 the QUAPAW proceeded to Hollandia, New Guinea for a three week overhaul. This was the first availability she had had since commissioning. On 29 May 1945 we arrived in Hollandia, and after completing our overhaul, we were ordered to Espiritu Santo, New Hebrides, on June 25th, 1945, to tow a section of a battleship drydock to Samar, P.I. Heavy weather was encountered all the way to Espiritu Santo. We arrived on 1 July 1945, took on fuel, water, and fresh provisions, the crew was given liberty. On 6 July 1945 we stood over to Pallihulo Bay in company with ATA's 203, 179 and 177. There each ship was to take in tow one section of the ABSD 1. The convoy encountered a following sea for the first week of the voyage, the average speed for the trip was 6 knots. In order for the ATA's to take on water, we stopped at Hollandia on 21 July 1945. The next day we were underway again and arrived at Samar on August 2nd, 1945. Our next job was to tow three PT pontoon drydocks from Manus, Admiralty Islands to Zamboanga. The QUAPAW left Samar on August 9th, and arrived in Manus on the 14th. We immediately took on fresh water, fuel, and stores. The 21st of August we departed Manus for Zamboanga. We had a drydock on each wing drum and one on the main tow wire. Our average speed for the trip was 6 knots. We delivered the drydocks to the PT base at Zamboanga on the 4th of September, and after taking on fuel water and granting the crew liberty, we left Zamboanga for Bink. At Bink on 9 September 1945, we made

preparations to take the USS ATR 27 and a water pontoon barge in tow. On September 17th, 1945, we anchored in San Pedro Bay, Samar with the ATR27 alongside. We delivered the ATR for repairs, and got underway with the water barge on the 21st for Subic Bay, Luzon. We delivered the water barge to CNB Subic Bay. The QUAPAW was granted one week's availability in Manila. The crew was granted its first real liberty since leaving the United States. We departed Manila on 4 October 1945 for Finchaven, New Guinea. We arrived there on October 12th and made preparations to take the YO 147 in tow. We departed on October 13th for Manus with the YO 147 on the main tow wire. We anchored in Manus on the 15th of October 1945 and reported to the Port Director for stand-by duty. On 20 October we proceeded to Hollandia, arriving there on the 21st. On the next day we took the USS CLYDE (IXL44) in tow for Manus. Upon arrival in Manus we placed the CLYDE alongside the SS Cayuse, another tanker, for gasfreeing all tanks.

PERSONNEL

The authorized personnel allowance of the QUAPAW is as follows:

OFFICERS

Commanding Officer	Lieutenant
Executive Officer	Lieutenant (junior grade)
Gunnery Officer	Ensign
First Lieutenant	Boatswain
Engineering Officer	Machinist

ENLISTED MEN

Seaman Branch

Chief Boatswain's Mate	1
Boatswain's Mate First Class	1
Boatswain's Mate Second Class	1
Coxswain	2
Gunner's Mate First Class	1
Gunner's Mate Second Class	1
Chief Quartermaster	1
Quartermaster Second Class	1
Quartermaster Third Class	1
Signalman First Class	1
Signalman Second Class	1
Signalman Third Class	1
Seaman First Class	11
Seaman Second Class	12

Artificer Branch

Radioman First Class	1
Radioman Second Class	1
Radioman Third Class	2
Radio Technician First Class	1
Radarman First Class	1
Radarman Second Class	1
Radarman Third Class	1
Soundman First Class	1
Soundman Second Class	1
Soundman Third Class	1
Carpenter's Mate First Class	1
Shipfitter Second Class	1

Engine Room Force

Chief Motor Machinist's Mate	1
Motor Machinist's Mate First Class	3
Motor Machinist's Mate Second Class	3
Motor Machinist's Mate Third Class	3
Chief Electrician's Mate	1
Electrician's Mate First Class	2
Electrician's Mate Second Class	2
Electrician's Mate Third Class	2
Fireman First Class	3
Fireman Second Class	3

Specialist Branch

Yeoman First Class	1
Storekeeper Second Class	1
Pharmacist's Mate First Class	1

Concissary Branch

Ship's Cook First Class	1
Ship's Cook Third Class	1
Baker First Class	1

Steward Branch

Officer's Cook Third Class	1
Steward's Mate First Class	1
Steward's Mate Second Class	1

Special Qualifications

Salvage Diver	1
First Class Diver	1

On 6 May 1944, date of commissioning, the QUAPAW was at full strength for enlisted allowance with 81 ratings and in excess of officer allowance by two. For the first six months we were in commission we experienced a 4 per cent excess in ship's personnel allowance. During the period from November 1944 to April 1945, inclusive, we were in excess of allowance by 5 per cent and during this period we had assigned to us, for temporary duty, one fire fighting officer and one salvage officer with 13 enlisted men. They were relieved of this duty and were transferred in January 1945.

From May 1945 to July 1945, inclusive, found the QUAPAW with a complement in excess by 10 per cent. During this period the officer roster was in a state of transition--officers relieved, officers reporting aboard for duty, newly commissioned officer from the ranks--this temporary excess affected the total percentage to an extent disproportionate to the ship's roster as a whole.

STATISTICS OF INTEREST

	<u>Enlisted Men</u>	<u>Officers</u>
The average weight of the crew is	157	161
The average height of the crew is	5' 10"	5' 10"
The average age of the crew is	23	31
There are 26 states represented.		
Promotions (6 May 1944 to 1 October 1945)	80	6

STATISTICS OF INTEREST

	<u>Enlisted Men</u>	<u>Officers</u>
Captain's Mast	38	
Deck Courts Martial	3	
Summary Courts Martial	3	
General Courts Martial (recommendations for)	4	
Demotions	3	

VICTORY AND DEMOBILIZATION

The day the Japs officially declared intentions of accepting surrender terms, 15 August 1945, the QUAPAW was anchored in Secader Harbor, Manus in the Admiralty Islands. Even though there had been rumors of the Jap's intention to quit a few days previous, the announcement came as a surprise to everybody aboard. The B-29 raids and the atomic bomb had raised our hopes, but the general opinion was that the Japs would continue for some time. That day was a day of back-slapping, hand-shaking, praying, weeping and laughing. The commanding officer declared holiday routine and the boys expressed their feelings to the utmost. Every ship in the harbor blew its whistles and sirens, fired flares and star-shells, and we participated. Everyone aboard was telling his shipmates what he planned to do when he got home. The big question they wanted answered, however, was when they would be home.

Demobilization aboard the QUAPAW began almost immediately after August 15th. Within five days we transferred a Chief Boatswain's Mate, two Chief Motor Machinist's Mates, a Chief Electrician's Mate, a Boatswain's Mate First Class, and a Ship's Cook First Class to a receiving station to be sent to the United States for discharge. These men had 44 or more points and were eligible for discharge under the provisions of Alnav 196-45. Two more men were transferred to the receiving station at Mios Woende, Schouten Islands, on September 11th for transportation to the United States. On September 26th an Electrician's Mate First Class was transferred also. By September 27th, 1945, seven more men were eligible for discharge under the point system, and so left the ship. At present there are 70 enlisted men and 7 officers on board. Our allotted complement is 81 enlisted men and 5 officers. Two enlisted men are eligible for discharge because of dependents. As of October 1st, our point for discharge situation was as follows:

40 - 43 points inclusive	9 men
35 - 39 points inclusive	18 men
30 - 34 points inclusive	7 men
25 - 29 points inclusive	15 men

The above figures do not include USN enlisted men who are completing an enlistment.