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HEADQUARTERS
539TH AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BATTALION
APO 72


1 December 1945

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Historical Summaries of 539th Amph Trac Bn.

TO : Commanding General, 14th A.A. Command, APO 75.

Attention: G-2, Historical Section

1. Transmitted herewith is Historical Summary of 539th Amph Trac Bn for period of 1 November 1945 to 1 December 1945 submitted in accordance with Memorandum No. 43, Hq 14th A.A. Command, dated 14 Aug 1945.


DAVID W. INGRAM
Major, F.A.
Commanding

1 Incl:

Historical Summary for period 1 Nov 45 to 1 Dec 45 (2 copies)

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I

This Historical Summary of the 539th Amphibian Tractor Battalion for the period from 1 November 1945 to 1 December 1945 is submitted in accordance with Memorandum No 43, Hqs 14th Antiaircraft Command, 14 August 1945.

II

For the 539th Amphibian Tractor Battalion, the November menu began with dessert and ended with dreams-come-true. The dessert was ice-cream, the first in six months, made in an ice-machine bought with unit funds. Each company had ice-cream every third day in the week. As a result, nobody missed one item dropped from the menu on 3 November--atabrine.

The "Red Apple" (Bill) also proved appetizing to many. Sixty-four men of the battalion re-enlisted and were sworn in during the first week.

New "high-cards" were dealt early in the month, to replace some of the first-three-graders who re-enlisted and those among the 36 men who left 2 November for return to the States with the 503d Parachute Battalion. Tech Sgt John J Gurn and Staff Sgt Theodore Brockhaus became Master Sergeants, the first as Sergeant Major and the second as Motor Sergeant; and Staff Sgt Clyde L Thomas and Tec 4 Raymond E Heidig were made First Sergeants (SOs 101 and 102, Hqs 539th Amph Trac Bn, 3-6 Nov 1945).

Other honors were more widely distributed. An additional nine enlisted men were authorized battle honors for participation in the Southern Philippines Campaign (GO 17, Hqs 539th Amph Trac Bn, 26 Nov 1945, amending GO 6, 21 Aug 1945). All members of the battalion were authorized to wear the Victory Medal,

463 enlisted men and officers the American Theater Ribbon (GO 13, Hqs 539th Amph Trac Bn, 27 Nov 1945).


Thanksgiving brought much to be thankful for besides turkey and mince-meat pie. The day before the holiday the unit was designated as Category IV, scheduled to move to the United States on or about 20 December. (Par 1, Movement Directive, AFWESPAC, 21 Nov 1945). And the day after Thanksgiving came Warning Order No 1 (Hqs 32d AAA Brigade, 23 Nov 1945), setting the readiness date as 20 December. But not until five days later was the harrowing question of critical point scores decided.

Then the battalion was declared a 55-59 point unit. Its 50-54 point men were going to the 534th Amph Trac Bn, its 60-64 point men to the 543d FA Bn, its 65-69 point men to the 199th AAA AW Bn, and those with less than 50 points to Base K. If all transfers were completed in the two days ending 2 December, as ordered, only 91 enlisted men and six officers of the original organization would remain.

So the last day of November was also the last day of the 539th Amphibian Tractor Battalion as a functional military unit. Besides being paid, all old-timers of the battalion were given copies of "The Five-Thirty-Winers," a booklet containing an informal history of the outfit and the names and civilian addresses of its members.

WILLIAM B. ZILGERMAN
1st Lt, Inf
Historical Officer

APPROVED:


DAVID W. EBORAM
Major, F.A.
Commanding