

OPERATION REPORT

826TH AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BATTALION

LUZON CAMPAIGN

9 JANUARY 1945 TO 30 JUNE 1945

- INDEX -

BATTALION HISTORICAL NARRATIVE..... I
FIELD ORDER - MIKE I OPERATION..... II
S - 3 JOURNAL..... III
S - 2 PERIODIC REPORTS..... IV
CASUALTY REPORTS..... V
GENERAL ORDERS - CITATIONS VI
ROSTER OF OFFICERS..... VII

91-692

CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:
CANCELLED
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE

APR 11 1945

SUBJECT: HISTORICAL REPORTS (As Directed AR 345-105 and Change #3)

1. 826th AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BN was originally organized as 826th T.D. Bn 15 Dec '41. Unit was organized from Anti-Tank Batteries of 26th F.A. Brigade; 75th and 76th F.A. Regts. Unit received basic tng and maneuver tng as Tank Destroyer Bn.

b. 826th Tank Destroyer Bn was re-designated 826th AMPH Trac Bn at FORT ORD CALIF. Organized under T/O 17-125, 126, 127, 29 April '44. Trained as Amph Trac Bn 29 Apr '44 to Aug 5, '44 at which time Unit departed Fort Ord to Staging Area for overseas operations. Departed U.S.A. 15 Aug '44.

c. 826th Amph Trac Bn arrived at LOS NEGROS ADMIRALTY ISLANDS 19 Sept '44. From LOS NEGROS, this unit staged Co "A" and they, atchd to 1st Cavalry Div took part in LEYTE CAMPAIGN. CO A relieved from LEYTE CAMPAIGN 29 Dec '44. Participated in Landings 20 Oct '44. The Bn (-less A Co) remained at LOS NEGROS till 18 Nov '44 at which time it moved to AITAPE NEW GUINEA and were Atchd to 43rd Inf Div for M-1 (Luzon) Operation. Unit trained Inf personnel to assist in enlarging 826th for Luzon landing. 43rd Inf Div used their Amph Kit vehicles to supplement those of 826th Amph Tractor Bn (Co B)

2. The 826th Amph Trac Bn (Previously 826th T.D. Bn) was composed originally of Reserve Officers, Cadre of U.S. Army officers, and enlisted men composed of Regular Army EM Cadre and remainder of men received both from Induction and Training Centers.

3. Co "A" 826th Amph Tractor Bn as a separate Company, atchd to 1st Cav Div landed troops in LEYTE on A Day H hr and was actively engaged in the Campaign with the 1st Cav Div, X Corps and SIXTH ARMY, for the duration of Campaign. Missions included supply hauling, hauling of casualties, and supplemental landings of troops on ORMOC, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.

4. 826th AMPH TRAC Bn in M-1 Operation, landed on LUZON S-Day H hr and continued operation in Capture, Consolidation, and securing LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS up to and including cessation of organized resistance 30 June '45. Co "A" rejoined and participated after 27 Jan 45.

5. The mission of 826th AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BN (See FO #2 826th Amph Tractor Bn 19 Dec '44.)

a. 826th AMPH TRACTOR BN passed to control of SIXTH ARMY effective 20 Nov '44. Bn less Company Able was simultaneously atchd to I Corps, and re-attached to 43rd Division. The Bn moved to AITAPE, NEW GUINEA 18 Nov '44 and prepared for landing and invasion under direction of 43rd Division. Bn was augmented by 13 additional tractors (LVT-4) which were to be operated partly by Infantry Troops taken from 103, 169, and 172nd Infantry. Amphibian Tanks (12) (LVT-4) were also atchd for purpose of landing. Realistic practice landings, firing at water borne targets, and a school for the men atchd for the landing were held under direction of the Bn. 27th Dec '44 826th Amph Tractor Bn participated in full scale practice landing at AITAPE, NEW GUINEA. Vehicles were re-fueled and re-loaded on six (6) Separate LST's for transport to LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS. Left 28 Dec '44. The Bn was divided into 3 separate groups for the landing. 1st Platoon was under control of 169th Infantry and given mission to land 169th on White Beach TWO (2) LINGAYEN GULF, and to transport troops inland as far as the SAN FABIAN, DAMORTIS RR TRACKS. The Platoon then to revert to Beachmaster WHITE BEACH 2, under 533rd EB&SR. 2nd Platoon 826th AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BN was given mission to land 103rd Infantry 3rd WHITE BEACH 3, LINGAYEN GULF. Immediately upon landing the 3rd Bn the vehicles of 2nd Plat were to remain at tree line and as 2nd Bn 103rd Inf came ashore in LCM's and LCVP's the 2nd Plat was to load them in their vehicles and proceed forward as rapidly as possible, and transport troops of 2nd Bn 103rd Inland. Reconnaissance was to be furnished by 2nd Bn 103rd Inf. 2nd Plat was to remain with 103rd until released by Regt Comdr. 3rd Plat Co "B" 826th Amph Trac Bn

was given mission of landing troops of assault waves 172nd Infantry on WHITE BEACH 1, LINGAYEN GULF, proceed inland as far as SAN FABIAN DAMORTIS RR TRACKS, and move forward to initial objective if possible. Upon release by 172nd Regt Comdr the 3rd Plat was to revert to control of 533 EB & SR on WHITE BEACH 3 for unloading of ships and cargo and help establish dumps on WHITE BEACH 3.

b. 29th Jan '45 826th Amph Trac Bn was given mission of guarding installations I CORPS area, and mopping up of miscellaneous Jap Units by-passed in original taking of ground. Co B originally relieved 727th Amph Tractor Bn of this responsibility. Co B 826th Amph Tractor Bn also took over control of 150th Guerrilla Sqdn to assist, consisting of approx 500 Guerrilla O's and EM. Area originally included DAMORTIS, LINGAYEN, VILLALUIS, ROSALES, PANGASINAN. Responsibility taken over 5 Feb '45. Co "A" assigned Base M Perimeter guard as of 4 Feb '45. Area included local bridges, railroad, finance, road crossing and Base M Hdq proper.

On 4 March '45 826th Amph Trac Bn was given mission of clearing by-passed Japs from CABARUAN HILL AREA, PANGASINAN. Co "A" (less Base M perimeter personnel) plus 107 Guerrillas from Co A 5th Bn 2nd Regt at MALASIQUI, PANGASINAN were assigned the job. Mission terminated 19 March '45.

Unit continued to guard bridges and installations and perform regular patrol duty up to and including 7th of May 1945. 7 May 1945 Co A was given the mission of guarding LICAB, LUPAO, RIZAL, BONGABONG, LAUR NEEVA ECLJA from infiltrating Japs moving north from the BATEAN PENINSULA and by-passed Japs moving north from the ANTIPOLO area that had been cut off by Infantry Divisions in that area. Attached for this operation which with patrols and Military Police duties included DINGALAN BAY AREA was the 1st Bn 1st O'Donnell Guerrilla Regiment.

826th Bn continued Bridge and installation guards up to and including 30 June '45 at which time the LUZON CAMPAIGN closed.

6. The 826th AMPHIBIAN TRACTOR BN (less Co "A") landed 43rd Division Initial assault waves on White Beaches 1, 2, 3. Beaches 1, 2, 3, were located SAN FABIAN and north. Co B 1st Plat landed 169th Inf Regt on WHITE BEACH 2 at H-hour, S-day from 2 LST'S. The 1st Platoon landed as scheduled and moved elements of 169th Infantry inland to RR Tracks, dismounted troops and immediately reverted to control of 533rd EB & SR as approximately H - 2 hrs. 2nd Plat Co "B" 826th Amph Trac Bn landed 103rd Infantry 3rd Bn White Beach 3 from 2 LST's at H-hour, S-day and proceeded approximately 400 yds inland to tree line where they halted, unloaded 3rd Bn and waited for 2nd Bn 103rd to load from incoming LCM's and LCVP's. 2nd Bn loaded at approx H-20 and proceeded inland direction SAN FABIAN, SAN JACINTO. Reconnaissance was put out by 2nd Bn but was too thin for blind vehicles, thinly armored, carrying approx 25 Infantrymen each. 8 of LVT's became mired down in rice paddies approx one-half (1/2) miles SE OF SAN FABIAN. Remainder of vehicles moved troops forward along roads all of S-day. The afternoon of S-day while proceeding south, south-east, two tractors were hit by 47mm anti-tank weapons (where SAN FABIAN - SAN JACINTO rd crosses ABINOLANG RIVER (COORD). Two men killed, two men wounded, later one died on way to hospital. On evening of S-day (9 Jan '45) the forward elements of 2nd Plat went into Bivouac immediately West of San Jacinto. Rear elements of the 2nd Plat (comprising those men whose tractors were stuck in rice paddies) formed beach perimeter defense, approx 1/2 mile E SAN FABIAN (COORD). During night infiltration was repulsed and 4 Japs found dead next morning from our MG fire. 10 Jan '45 2nd Plat continued advance on SAN JACINTO w/103rd Inf and hauled supplies and troops. Bivouaced during night of 10th Jan

near SAN JACINTO and morning of 11 Jan '45 hauled supplies and troops on approach from SAN JACINTO, POZZORIBIO (COORD). 2nd Plat was released from control of 103rd Inf on 11 Jan '45 and reverted to White Beach 3 and was put under operational control 533rd EB & SR for unloading and hauling supplies from ships.

3rd Plat Co of 826th Amph Trac Bn landed elements of 172nd Inf on White Beach 1 at H-hour S-day and proceeded inland under medium heavy mortar fire. 172nd Inf were transported inland to 1st objective the Hill Mass approx 800 yards inland (coord). 3rd Plat continued with 172nd Inf till approx 1400 9 Jan '45 at which time they proceeded by road from RABON (COORD) to SAN JACINTO and reverted control of 826th Amph Tractor Bn. Morning of 10 Jan '45 2nd Plat reverted to Operational Control 533rd EB & SR and unloaded Cargo and supplies under their control. Entire 826th Bn (-A) unloaded supplies and equipment from ships under 533rd EB & SR till relieved by 727th Amph Trac Bn on 29th Jan '45. 826th Amph Trac Bn reverted to control I CORPS under G-4 section for guarding of bridges and installations as of 29 Jan '45, and operated independently under ICORPS control up to and including the end of the campaign. Trucks and Guerrillas were given to supplement the strength of the Bn. A total of 900 Guerrilla troops were used in Patrol duty, mop up and installation guards. The Unit had responsibility for area DAMORTIS, LIMAYAN, GABARUAN, SAN JOSE, UMINGAN, TAYUG, BINALOGAN.

7. Hostile opposition upon landing White Beach 2 and 3 negligible. Hostile opposition on White Beach 1 relatively light on landing but mortar fire immediately intensified stopping for extended periods the work of vehicles on the beach and driving the ships off of the beach. Nights of 9 Jan '45 through 13th of January was characterized by 12 inch gun fire intermittently throughout the night. Several infiltrating parties threatened the beach area. Units going inland with the Infantry received negligible fire for the first 5 miles, but upon approach to SAN JACINTO heavy machine gun and anti-tank fire was encountered. Heavy fire was encountered by Platoons of "B" Company that moved inland with the 103rd Infantry Regiment. Co "A" in the GABARUAN HILL mission encountered rifle, machine gun, and mortar fire in medium intensity when by-passed Japanese were cornered. Fire from the enemy on most patrols was relatively light and sporadic. Ambush of patrols from high grass and wooded areas was characteristic of fire encountered by majority of patrols.

8. SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED:

1. Amphibian Tractors and Tanks must mutually support each other after reaching hostile shore. Tractors must not be run inland w/out fire and movement under any conditions.
2. Tractors must move when inland by bounds w/over watching fires from supporting tractors and/or tanks.
3. Tractors are thin skinned vehicles and vulnerable to any fire of Cal. larger than and including 50 Cal.
4. Tractors should never be used to transport Infantry or other ground troops inland without visible connecting files and adequate reconnaissance. To do so is suicidal to both vehicle and crews.
5. Amphibian personnel should always be consulted as to capabilities of LVT's by Inf Comdr or any other commander under whom they are working. Loss of equipment, men, and inefficient operational support is inevitable if supported commanders and officers attempt to take over command and dictate missions without advice from trained Amphibian Personnel.

[REDACTED]

6. Each Bn and Co Hq should have small battery charge unit present at CP's in order to facilitate charging of radio batteries w/out running of tractor motors to charge them.

7. If continued use of tractors is anticipated by tactical plan, after the initial landing; supporting Ordnance and rapid supply of parts should be made available. Mortality rate of parts when operating on ground missions is tremendous. An experienced Amphibian Motor officer should be consulted as to probable needs as concerned the proposed mission.