

some wind and surf persisted at BARK WEST and ACID.

Situation at beaches.

A. BARK WEST.

The beaches assaulted were unsatisfactory for maintenance owing to flat gradients, the sandbars already mentioned, and poor exits. SUGAR RED beach I was opened and proved satisfactory for L.C.M. and vehicles and guns were unloaded here throughout the day, while L.S.T. and L.C.T. discharged on to ROGER RED. Unloading as a whole was slow, some of the delays being attributable to the inexperience of the men handling the Vehicle Landing Ramp, its liability to "snake" and the length of time required for adjustment when an L.S.T. came up to it.

H.M.S. BOXER, THRUSTER and BRUISER having completed, sailed with three M.T. ships for Malta, leaving twelve ships of the slow assault convoy to complete discharging.

B. BARK SOUTH.

Unloading of L.S.T. continued satisfactorily throughout the day and by nightfall nearly all of the first flight was unloaded and twenty had sailed for Malta with H.M.S. ROYAL ULSTERMAN, S.N.O.L. (Q) having landed and established himself and party ashore at AMBER beach. The General Officer Commanding 30 Corps had also disembarked during the afternoon and set up his headquarters ashore. At 1900 H.M.S. LARGS sailed for BARK EAST and the A/S patrol off BARK SOUTH was discontinued, the destroyers thus released reinforcing the patrol at BARK EAST.

C. BARK EAST.

Unloading at this sector was delayed as a result of the time required for discharging L.C.T. with 51 Division stores which had been transferred from BARK SOUTH owing to the poor beaches in the latter area. In addition, L.S.T. 9, also from BARK SOUTH, grounded on Isola Grande.

D. ACID SOUTH and NORTH.

The only outstanding incident was the successful launching of D.U.K.W. from L.S.T. over the ramp while the L.S.T. were under way. It was found that this method of discharge presented no difficulty in fine weather.

Good progress was made with unloading M.T. and stores, the flow to the beaches increasing steadily and much of the arrears due to delays in discharging L.C.T. the previous day was made up.

Large L.S.I. sail from Malta.—Convoy M.K.F. 18 consisting of eleven large L.S.I. sailed from Malta westbound and soon after midday twelve similar ships left eastbound in M.E.F. 36.

Malta shuttle service begins.—The first empty landing ships and craft arrived back at Malta from Sicily and the shuttle service commenced. The first empty M.T. ships were also sailed from the beaches.

Gun Support.

Supporting fire was provided by ships at various points as required from time to time. In particular:

- (i) between 0030 and 0250, at the request of 1st Canadian Division, H.M.S. ROBERTS

fired from anchor four rounds in each of three prearranged shoots from 12,400 yards at high ground in the Pozzallo area. H.M.S. BLANKNEY and BLENCATHRA had earlier in the night carried out harassing fire on the same area. The object of these shoots, which was achieved, was to force the enemy to retire before the Division advanced at 0300.

(ii) between 1130 and 1205, simultaneously with a shoot by H.M.S. DELHI on Spaccaforno and by H.M.S. BRISSENDEN on Pozzallo, H.M.S. ROBERTS on request from 1st Canadian Division carried out a prearranged shoot on an area N.E. and S.W. of Rosolini in which the enemy were concentrating. At a range of 18,000 yards, 30 rounds were fired from anchor, the area being swept three times. All enemy troops who came under this fire were demoralised and surrendered promptly.

(iii) H.M.S. BRISSENDEN, under way, fired 40 rounds at a gun emplacement and 120 rounds at a building and area in the vicinity of Pozzallo. At the conclusion of the shoot a white flag was hoisted on the gun emplacement.

(iv) H.M.S. ORION carried out a bombardment of Medica at the rear of BARK WEST.

(v) H.M.S. UGANDA engaged a hostile battery at the southern end of Augusta Bay.

(vi) H.M.S. UGANDA and MAURITIUS bombarded the enemy's line of retreat in the vicinity of Augusta.

Enemy Air Activity.

There was rather more activity by enemy aircraft and it was more widespread than on D day. Some particulars follow:—

A. BARK WEST.

Sporadic attacks during the night D day/D+1 day caused no damage to ships but were responsible for a few casualties.

B. BARK SOUTH.

No loss or damage was suffered, though there were several "Red" warnings.

C. ACID SOUTH and NORTH.

Several sharp raids took place and at 1235, S.S. BAARN at anchor off JIG sector was near missed by a Ju.88 and cased petrol in No. 1 hold set on fire. The fire became uncontrollable and in view of the risk of a serious ammunition explosion she was later sunk. Another M.T. ship JOSEPH C. CANNON off How received a direct hit at about 1900, but although the ship's bottom was penetrated no fire resulted as the hold was nearly empty and she was eventually able to proceed to Malta. Raids after dark were ineffective.

Syracuse occupied.—The army entered Syracuse at 2100 on 10th July, and at 0600/11th July, fleet sweepers and B.Y.M.S.*, escorted by H.M.S. NUBIAN and H.M.S. TARTAR, proceeded to sweep the approach channel into the port. No mines were swept; there was no opposition, and at 0830 H.M.S. WHITEHAVEN passed through the gate. Naval Commander Force "A" entered in H.M.S. CROMARTY shortly after, and the majority

Admiralty footnote:

* B.Y.M.S.—British Yacht Minesweeper.