

SECRET

ACTION REPORT

ORIGINAL

USS MISSISSIPPI

BB 41

SERIAL 015

30 JANUARY 1945

ACTION REPORT - BOMBARDMENT OPERATIONS IN LINGAYEN GULF, LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS DURING PERIOD 6 - 9 JANUARY 1945 AND INCLUDING COLLATERAL SUPPORTING ACTIONS AND OPERATIONS DURING PERIOD 3-18 JANUARY 1945.

105959

OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND LIBRARY

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 968137

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report - Bombardment operations in LINGAYEN GULF, LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS during period 6-9 January 1945 and including collateral supporting actions and operations during period 3-18 January 1945.

-----

PORO area. 1630 formed column of heavy ships preparatory to bombardment. 1708 went to general quarters. 1717 launched two aircraft for bombardment spotting. 1750 commenced bombardment with main battery on reaching range of 19,400 yds. No specific targets could be discovered other than buildings in the area, although according to intelligence reports, there were supply and ammunition dumps in the area. Several fires were started. 1820 secondary battery opened fire on shipping in SAN FERNANDO harbor. 1839 ceased fire; recovered aircraft at 1854 and commenced maneuvering to join TG 77.2. 1855 observed AA fire bearing 220, 7 miles. 1941 secured from general quarters, set condition 3. TG 77.2 remained in LINGAYEN GULF during night.

9 January.

Weather - Wind was from north northeast, averaging 9 kts. Mean temperature was 82, with visibility 10 miles. Sea was smooth, with only slight swell. Time of sunrise 0731; sunset 1843.

0535 general quarters. 0543 observed AA fire bearing 240. 0602 secured from general quarters, set condition 3. 0630 general quarters. 0703 launched two aircraft, one to spot for AUSTRALIA and one for this vessel. 0707 commenced scheduled bombardment of Blue 1 and 2 Beach areas, which continued until 0900. 0715 AA fire bearing 030. Identified Val which was out of gun range. 0718 Val retired out of sight. 0725 observed plane crash in flames bearing 300, apparently hitting ship. 0743 recovered own spotting plane, it having experienced difficulty with propeller pitch control. Plane was repaired aft while forward group of main battery continued firing without interruption to bombardment schedule. The plane was repaired and launched again at 0830. 0744 AA fire bearing 205, 2 miles. Unidentified enemy planes seen diving on transport area, range fouled. COLUMBIA was apparently hit in suicide attack. Several planes retired over land to the southward. 0903-0930 shifted fire of various batteries as indicated in Enclosure (B). 0930 first landing wave hit Blue Beaches; apparently no opposition. 0935 shifted main battery target to town of DAGUPAN. Several large fires were started which were the most spectacular of any noted during the day. Photograph C of Enclosure (L) shows the smoke from two of these fires as they appeared from the MISSISSIPPI at 1000. 1008 checked fire. 1047 resumed bombardment with town of CALASIAO as

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report - Bombardment operations in LINGAYEN GULF, LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS during period 6-9 January 1945 and including collateral supporting actions and operations during period 3-18 January 1945.

-----

main battery target. Registered hits on road junction and levelled several buildings, but discovering no military targets and no sign of activity, ceased fire at 1107 and stood by for any call fire as required. 1227 secured from general quarters and set double condition 3, a special condition of this vessel in which all of AA and machine gun batteries are manned on a watch-and-watch basis. 1145 spotting planes directed to ORCA for refueling. 1303 observed bomb or other object dropped from plane in direction of sun. Very shortly thereafter, observed second plane, later identified as a Val, diving on this vessel out of sun, close aboard. (See AA Action Report, Enclosure I). Commenced firing forecastle machine guns. This plane levelled off in a shallow glide as it passed over forecastle and struck the ship on port side below bridge level, proceeding in a straight line until it was brought up against AA gun #6 and fell clear of the ship over the port side. A bomb carried by the plane exploded shortly after hitting the water. Went to general quarters. For details of damage and casualties, see Damage Report, Reference (j), forwarded via airmail to addressees by separate correspondence, and Report of Personnel Casualties, Enclosure (E). Shifted machine gun fire to second plane, which crashed into AUSTRALIA shortly after MISSISSIPPI was hit. The fires aboard this vessel were brought quickly under control and casualties were removed to sick bay. It is of interest to note that MISSISSIPPI and AUSTRALIA were hit during a period of "Flash White - Control Green", and that information on reported bogey, bearing 200, 9 miles, reached Sky Control about a minute before sighting at close range the plane which later struck AUSTRALIA. Planes apparently approached from direction landing beaches, over which there hung a heavy haze; they were observed by ship's spotting plane while en-route. The plane which struck MISSISSIPPI came in with his motor cut. This vessel was struck by at least one 20mm projectile from friendly sources during the course of the attack. 1400 one spotting plane proceeded to spot for HMAS SHROPSHIRE. 1730 recovered aircraft. 1839 observed AA fire bearing 010. 1856 picked up enemy plane with fire control radar; commenced firing AA and 40mm batteries to port. (See AA Action Report, Enclosure J). 1925 sighted enemy plane (type unidentified); commenced firing AA and machine gun batteries to starboard. (See AA Action Report, Enclosure K). 1941 secured from general quarters, set condition 3. Ship remained in LINGAYEN GULF in company with other vessels of TG 77.2 during night.

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report - Bombardment operations in LINGAYEN GULF, LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS during period 6-9 January 1945 and including collateral supporting actions and operations during period 3-18 January 1945.

-----

10 January.

Weather - A southeasterly wind prevailed with an average of 10 kts. Temperature averaged 82, visibility 8 to 10 miles. There was a light sea with slight swell. Time of sunrise 0732; sunset 1844.

0605 general quarters. 0635 observed AA fire bearing 160. 0702 AA fire over transport area. Observed plane shot down in flames bearing 170. 0713 sighted Val and opened fire with AA and machine gun batteries to port. Val dove and crashed into water bearing 170, 4 miles. Ship lay to during day. In afternoon, transferred ammunition empties to LST. At 1510 was about to answer call fire mission when mission was cancelled. 1625 commenced maneuvering to form cruising disposition. 1745 commenced retirement from LINGAYEN GULF in company with TG 77.2. 1905 sighted Val approaching from about 270; opened fire with 40mm battery. Val headed southward over transport area where it was hit by heavy machine gun fire and crashed into DUPAGE, bearing 150, 6 miles from this vessel. 2000 secured from general quarters, set condition 3. Proceeding to sea in company with TG 77.2.

11 January.

Weather - Wind prevailed from northeast, with marked increase in velocity averaging 23 kts. Average temperature dropped to 79 with visibility 10 miles. Seas were from rough to very rough with moderate swells. Time of sunrise 0733; sunset 1844.

Steaming in SOUTH CHINA SEA in company with TG 77.2, on various courses at various speeds. 0630 dawn general quarters. 0740 effected rendezvous with TG 77.4. 0730 secured from general quarters, set condition 3. 1701 LOWRY came alongside for transfer of guard mail.

12 January.

Weather - Winds continued from northeast averaging 25 kts. Mean temperature was 79, with visibility from 5 to 7 miles. Seas continued rough with moderate swells. Time of sunrise 0735; sunset 1845.

Steaming as before. 0635 dawn general quarters. 0735 secured from general quarters, set condition 3. 1106 unidentified aircraft