

The following morning the 677 was moved by a tug and moored alongside U.S.S. LST 575, bow to beach at berth 2 Iroquois Point, for unloading of tank deck. Lt.(jg) R. Hicks, (MC), USNR and 12 men of LCT Flotilla SIX Staff were transferred to Commanding Officer, Waipio Amphibious Base, Pearl Harbor for further transfer to their flotilla staff. Captain Bast reported to Commander, Administrative Command, Amphibious Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor for duty. Here we were assigned to the FIFTH Fleet and given information that the ship was under consideration for conversion into a type of small craft mother ship, the details of which were not completed. U.S.S. LST's 575, 676, and 678 also were to be converted.

Unloading of tank deck equipment was completed 22 September. On the 24th the ship was ordered to berth T-8 Westloch Channel, Pearl Harbor, to undertake preparation for the launching of LCT 901 from the main deck. This was to occur the next day. The LCT was launched the 25th and was provided with water, fuel, and provisions from the ship's supply. Ensign R. Wynn and crew moved aboard.

After the LCT launching, LST 677 shifted to berth T-9, Westloch Channel, Pearl Harbor, and remained there until receipt of training order no. 170-44 on 2 October, when training exercises were conducted under command of Commander Zalenka, USN. In company with 4 other LST's the LST 677 proceeded into Maalaea Bay, Maui, T.H., conducting tactical and firing exercise enroute. As the column entered Maalaea Bay this ship reported that her anchor had become fast in the hawse pipe and could not be freed. Permission was granted to steam during the night and join in the exercises on the following morning. That morning exercises consisted of rubber docking but all ships anchored in the bay in the afternoon due to heavy seas. On the 4th of October ships participated in tactical maneuvers with LST 923 as guide. Commander Zalenka and staff shifted flag to this vessel in the early morning, 5 October, when U.S.S. LST 923 was ordered to return to Pearl Harbor. Flag hoist drills were conducted in forenoon and in afternoon we got underway with LST's 575 and 675 for night steaming and maneuvers. The morning of the 6th was used for A.A. firing drills, firing at a towed sleeve, enroute to Pearl Harbor where the LST 677 tied up at berth T-7, Westloch Channel at 1600. Commander Zalenka and staff went ashore almost immediately. The ship remained in berth T-7 until October when she was ordered to participate in training exercises with the army amphibious teams. She proceeded to the beach off Diamond Head, Oahu, T.H., where army crews of LVT's practiced loading and unloading from the bow ramp. These exercises continued for three days, 11-13 October inclusive. The ship returned to berth T-7 Westloch Channel for the night of 11 October, to Kowalo Basin the 12th and again to T-7 the 13th.

While tied up at berth T-7 the crew prepared the deck surface for the pending conversion job. On 21 October this ship moored at Waipio Amphibious Repair Dock, Westloch Channel, alongside U.S.S. LST 676 which was already in the conversion process.

Appendix 9, Transport Doctrine, Amphibious Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet, promulgated to guide the mother ship's operation, contains the following paragraphs.

The Commander, Amphibious Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet on 23 August 1944 directed the Commander, Administrative Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet to prepare a plan to be submitted to the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, for the conversion of LST's to landing craft tenders for the purpose of replenishing consumable supplies and to provide for conveniences conducive to the morale for small landing craft and control craft immediately after the assault phase of amphibious operations. The need for landing craft tenders for this purpose was realized as a result of experience gained in previous amphibious operations in the Pacific, which demonstrated that small auxiliary vessels of the YMS, PCS, PC, SC, and LCS classes and landing craft of the LCI and LCT type arrive at the scene of amphibious operation with consumable supplies almost totally expended.