

In the same fire, LEE, Marshall William, then Shipfitter First Class, USNR; also distinguished himself. LEE, with no regard for his own safety, was one of the first on the scene, quickly and coolly brought hoses to bear on the burning material. For his courageous action and subsequent splendid devotion to duty and hard work in the amphibious invasion upon the Island of Sicily, July 10 - 12, 1943, LEE was recommended by the Commanding Officer for advancement to Chief Shipfitter, for meritorious conduct. This promotion was effected pursuant to authority granted by Admiral A.G. KIRK, Commander, Amphibious Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

In the Sicilian invasion the vessel was assigned to ASSAULT UNIT ONE of the Central Assault Group (TG 85.1). With the First Battalion, 180th RCT, 45th Division, U.S. Army embarked, the U.S.S. CALVERT departed from Mers El Kebir, Algeria on 5 July 1943 for the southeast coast of Sicily. "D" day had been designated as 10 July. On the preceding day the weather became increasingly worse as evening drew on and as the convoy to which this vessel was assigned neared the point of departure for the transport area, the ship was undergoing considerable roll and pitch because of the wind velocity. After dark, and as the convoy neared the land, the wind abated and the sea subsided until at the time of anchoring for the debarking of the assault there was very little wind, although a swell continued which gave the ship a "snapping" roll, a factor which contributed materially to the difficulty of debarkation.

The Commanding Officer, Captain L.A. THACKREY, USN, stated in his operation report that "the officers and men in the ship's company conducted themselves in an exemplary manner throughout the landing. Their spirit was most gratifying. The winchmen and the hatchmen deserve special credit for their excellent exhibition of skill and industry. 381 LCVP, 28 LCM and 3½ LCT boat loads were necessary to unload the ship of personnel and cargo."

The Boat Group Commander, Lieutenant (then Lieutenant junior grade) WILLIAM B. COTT, USNR, 201516, received the following commendation from the Commanding Officer: "During the period of July 10th to 12th 1943, the U.S.S. CALVERT participated as an assault transport with the Western Naval Task Force in the amphibious invasion of the Southeastern Coast of the Island of Sicily in the section of the coast between the Acate River and Punta Bracetto. . . . by his courageous, devoted and intelligent performance of duty under adverse weather conditions and while opposed by enemy machine gun and shore battery fire escorted the assault waves to their assigned beach and effected a successful landing. Through the succeeding two days and two nights his resourcefulness and skill were a great contributing factor to the record unloading of the CALVERT and the salvage of a large percentage of the boats broached by the heavy surf over a dangerous beach often under enemy fire.

The following remarks were submitted by the Commanding Officer regarding CARPENTER, Francis, Slc, 647 37 70, USNR, in a letter to Commander, Task Force 5: "Seaman CARPENTER, without regard for his own personal safety, volunteered to land with the first assault wave and to obtain additional information concerning the terrain in the vicinity of the beach. By skillful use of knowledge which he had obtained in two previous visits to Sicily and through interrogation of residents of the district, Seaman CARPENTER obtained this valuable information. During his reconnaissance, though he was under intermittent fire and his soldier companion killed by a mine and he thrown some distance, CARPENTER ascertained the location of a mine field and captured an Italian prisoner, though he himself was harmed. He thus contributed materially to the success of the assault operations and was instrumental in the saving of the lives of several men".