

Jr., Quartermaster 3/c, 661-710; H. Pelt, Seaman 1/c, 557-327; E.F. DiGiovanni, Steward's Mate 2/c, 616-777; E.F. Langevin, Gunner's Mate 2/c, 521-075; L.C. Bridge, Chief Gunner's Mate, 200-653; H.G. Swindarski, Seaman 1/c, 7001-179; G.I. Nims, Ship's Cook 2/c, 594-739; J.C. McNamara, Ship's Cook 3/c, 568-541; T.D. Eichhorn, Seaman 1/c, 680-010; C.R.G. Olson, Fireman 2/c, 662-339. These men made up the nucleus of the salvage crew which later manned the 884 on her trip to Ulithi.

Numerous ships were standing by at this point and several streams of water were being played on the deck which made it possible for the fire party to move about. At one point hoses had to be kept on Capt. Pearson and Lt. Geist as they passed flaming hatches.

During the following several hours the fire fighters fought the blaze which had swept through the after portion of the tank deck, run through the crew's quarters on the portside and completely gutted the captain's and officers' cabins, wardroom and ship's office. The galley had also been razed and a good portion of the starboard living quarters was ruined. Both the main and auxiliary engine rooms had been flooded with water. Electric power was out and along the galley passageway 20mm gun magazines racked up there had been set off. In general the ship was completely out of action and lay a helpless hull. However, as the fire was brought under control and finally extinguished salvage parties from the 884 crew as well as from nearby ships assisting in the operation came aboard to restore some sort of order. Although no fatalities had occurred in ship's company it was a number of days before a complete count could be taken as the crew was scattered about among various ships in the area. A number of Marines had been killed in the initial blast and as the day wore on their bodies were removed.

With the fire hazard checked the ship was taken in tow to Karema Retto harbor, an anchorage in a small group of islands just off the southwest coast of Okinawa. This 18-mile journey was completed without incident and once arrived at the anchorage salvage work continued. The days spent at Karema Retto were filled with air alerts and the weary men of the 884 moved about their ghost ship bringing order out of chaos, their work constantly interrupted by air attacks and snipers from the shore.

The one fatality among the crew occurred on the night of April 1 when F.D. Flockencier, Motor Machinist's Mate 1/c, was shot through the neck and killed while standing a security watch on the foredeck of the LST.

Coast Guardsmen and Marines went ashore in armed burial parties and the dead now rest on the green and brown slopes of the hilly islands that are Karema Retto.