

The Island X-quire







DEDICATION

THE men of Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 540 respectfully dedicate this book to all men of the United States Naval Construction Battalions: To those men who have made the supreme sacrifice to preserve those ideals we consider fundamental to our society as expressed in the great Four Freedoms; those men who have engaged in physical combat against our common enemy; those men who have endured long hours of gruelling labor in the face of the most adverse conditions in building bases on our many fronts of operations, and to those men who have served in the less spectacular but none the less vital job of maintaining these bases.

It remains for History to reveal the part that the combined efforts of the members of the Construction Battalions have played in achieving the military victory to prepare the stage for man to plan a world in which a just and durable peace might prevail.



VICE ADMIRAL BEN MOREELL, (CEC), USN

Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks
and Chief of Civil Engineers
"Founder of the Seabees"

Not all Seabees are in front line Construction Battalions. Some are at work on rear bases which, though essential to the flow of supplies to the fighting front, do not provide much excitement or stimulus to the men who enlarge and maintain them.

The tough battle the maintenance units fight is one for which there is far too little applause.

★ The STAFF ★

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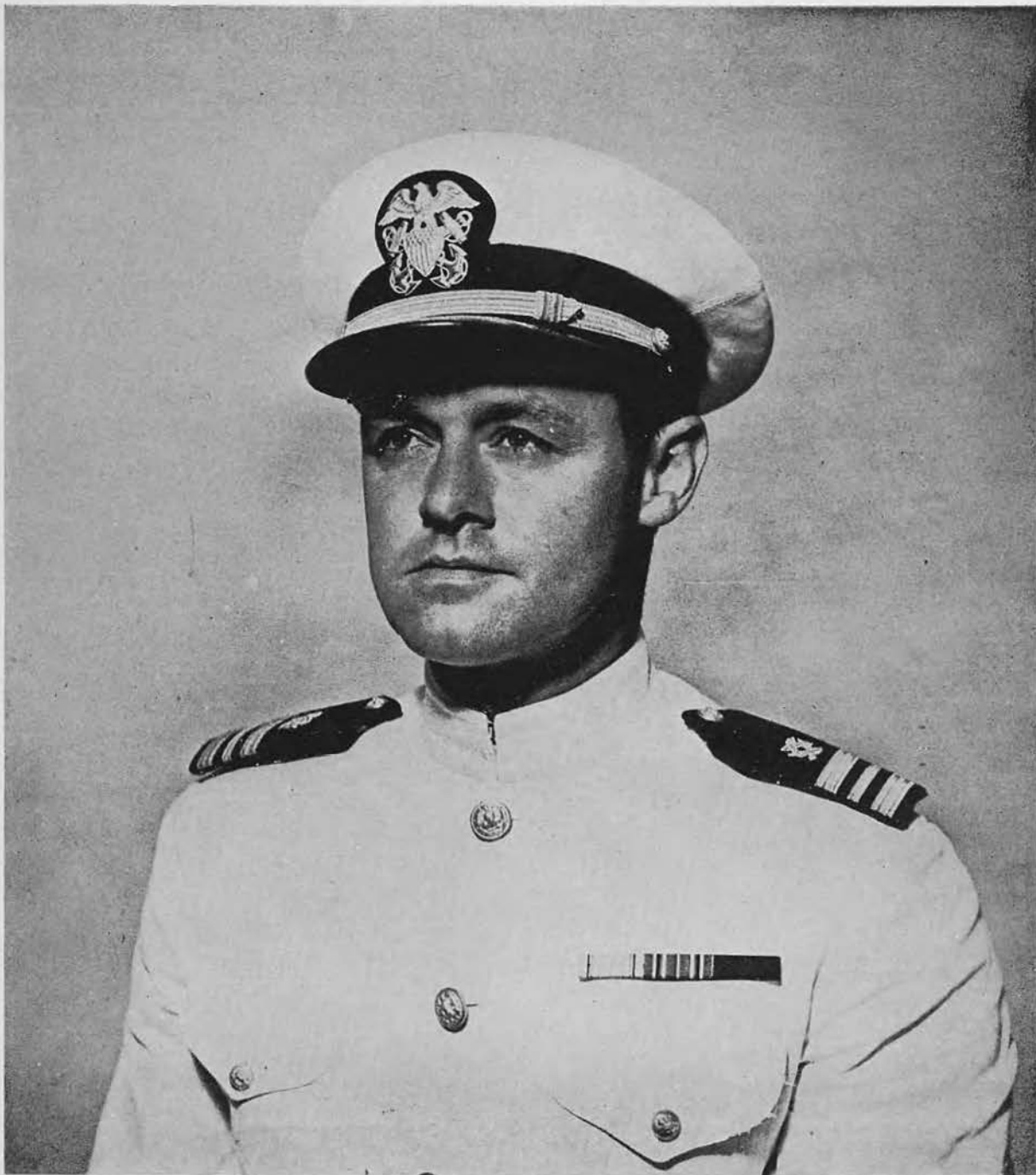
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Officer in Charge

To the men of CBMU 540 who have served during the past two years in Bermuda, there should accrue a real feeling of pride and satisfaction in the realization that here you have left lasting evidence of worthwhile achievement.

Certainly, yours was no small job. To help build a formidable advanced base, and then to operate and maintain it, is no easy task, but it was your job and you did it. Some evidence of how you did it in the best Seabee fashion is to be found in the pages of this "Island X-Quire." The warm tributes paid Seabees on every far-flung battlefield for their hard work "to build, to fight, to win" are surely shared, therefore, by those whose pictures are shown throughout this book.

The pages of "Island X-Quire" should also prove a constant reminder of pleasant comradeships gained from your Naval service with CBMU 540 and your stay in Bermuda—things to be remembered long after all of the dirt and restrictions, the hard work and hard living, will have been forgotten.

With war over, the Mission of CBMU 540, like that of all Seabee units, is now ended and its log is about to close. Before all of you are demobilized, I should like to say as Officer in Charge that no commanding officer has had a more loyal, capable and reliable group of officers and men with which to work. It has been a pleasure and honor to serve with you: "Well done" and Godspeed to all of you on your journey as ex-Seabees from one of the famed Islands "X."

Navy Day, 1945.



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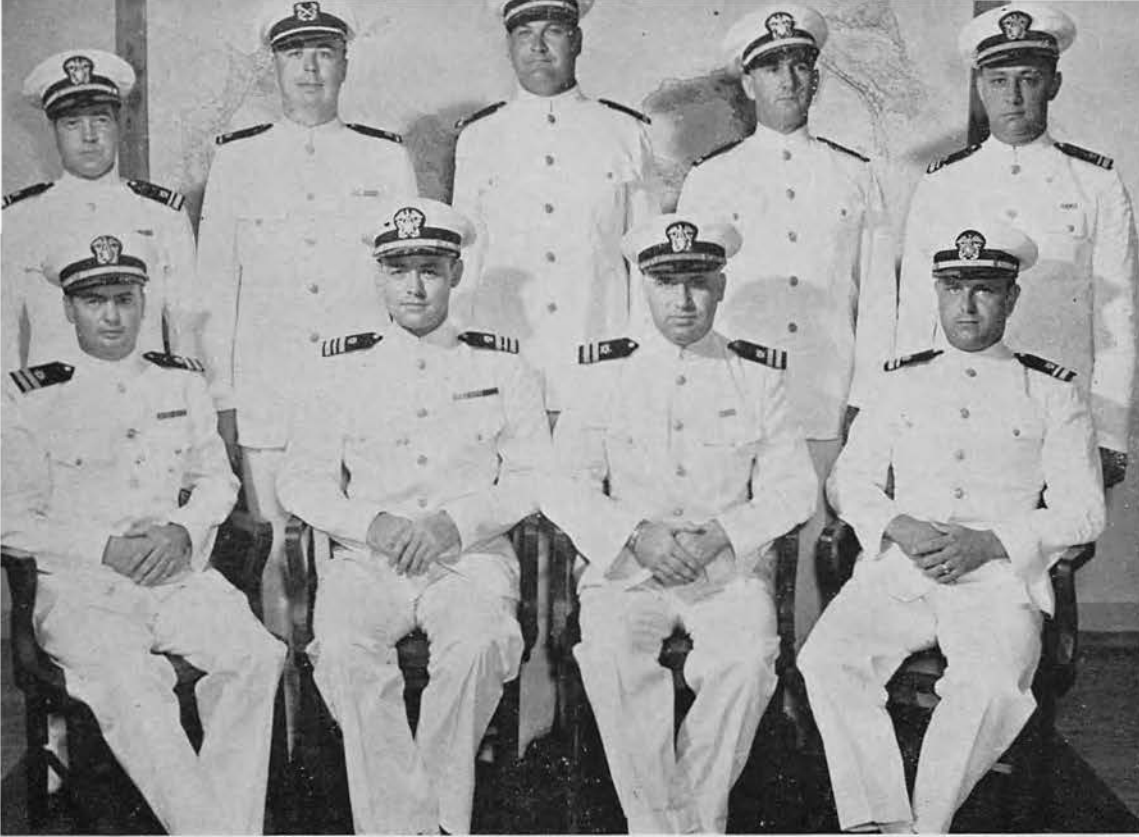
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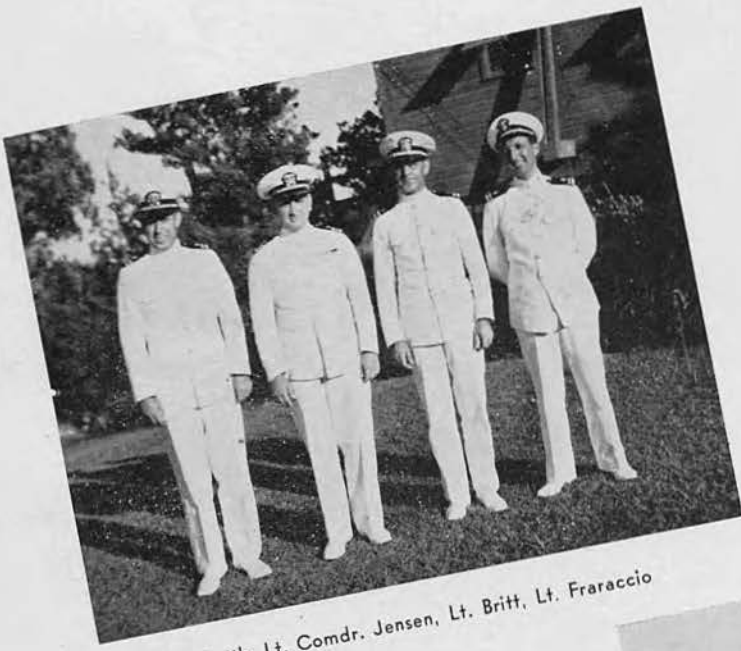


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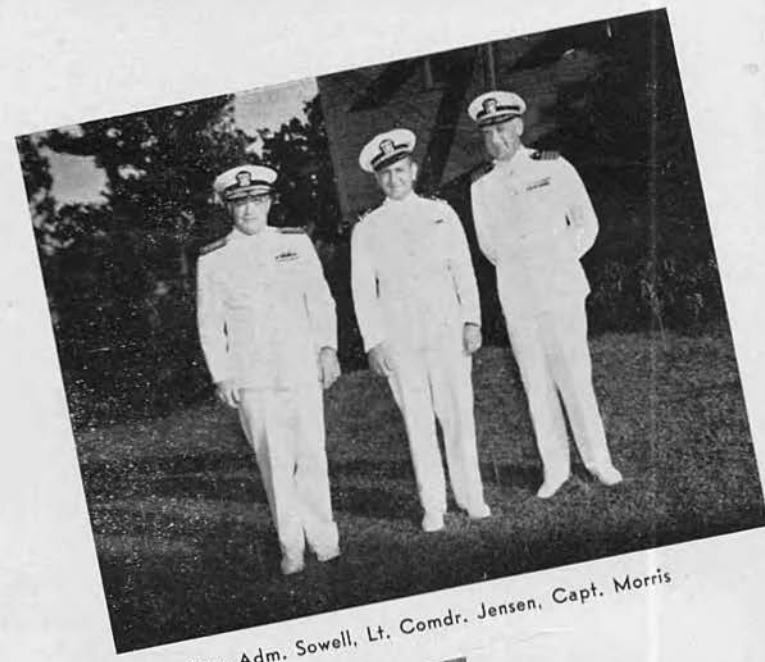




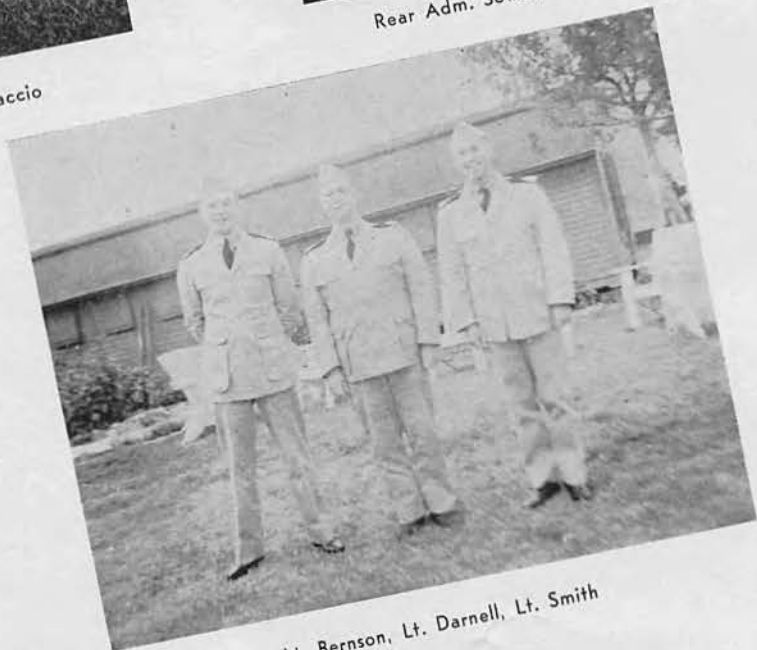
FRONT ROW: Lt. Moyes, Lt. Comdr. White,
Lt. Hughes, Lt. Smith.
BACK ROW: Lt. (jg) Turner, Carp. Flanagan,
Ch. Carp. Imhoff, Ch. Carp. Dixon, Lt. (jg)
Changstrom.



Lt. Smith, Lt. Comdr. Jensen, Lt. Britt, Lt. Fraraccio



Rear Adm. Sowell, Lt. Comdr. Jensen, Capt. Morris



Lt. Bernson, Lt. Darnell, Lt. Smith

Personnel





HISTORY and LOG

CBMU 540

To render a historical background of Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit Number 540 and, more important, to help you fellows to relive many of the pleasant and unpleasant moments of your tour of duty with the unit, this log is enscribed upon these pages.

Many men of the original CBMU 540 were seasoned world travelers from the old 65th Naval Construction Battalion. These men of the 65th who made the famous "Fourteen Day Cruise" returned to Davisville from duty in West and North Africa in July of 1943 and were granted a thirty day leave. Upon return from leave, we were thrown into the 65th Replacement Battalion. It was this same replacement battalion from which the nucleus of the original 540 unit was formed on 25 September 1943. We were then billeted in the famous "I" section of Camp Endicott, and within the week moved over to Camp Thomas.

Our officers came on board two days later through a queer mixup in orders. Lieut. Ralph B. Bernson was assigned Officer in Charge, with Lieut. (jg) Robert W. Smith, Ensign Willie C. Shelton, Carp. Girard J. Myers, and Carp. William J. Harte filling out the complement of officers.

At Camp Thomas, many of the men were granted nine day embarkation leaves while others remained behind and underwent a rugged advanced military training schedule. Complete infantry gear and rifles were given to each man for the trip to whatever "Island X" was in store for us. As usual in a new unit, scuttlebutt was running rampant regarding the many places that our destination might be. Of course, there were many who knew a fellow who saw the orders, so they knew all the time we were coming to Bermuda, and it would be a problem now to find one man who had not mentioned many countries ranging from Egypt to Bermuda. The fact of the matter is, train schedules were even made up for the unit to go to California, so no one really knew where we would end up as we boarded our ship on 14 October 1943.

Chances to prove our seaworthiness came all too soon, as the rolling ocean had a lot of the boys' "innards" turned upside down and many a man could be seen doing rail duty, chumming the fish. Other than the unpleasantness of being seasick, the trip was uneventful until we sighted the Bermuda Islands. A tropical hurricane was sweeping the island as we neared St. George, and we were forced to wait twenty-four hours to ride out the wind and rain that

accompanied the strong blow. If the trip down didn't make a person sick, each swell of the waves and toss of the ship caused a mounting rise in seasickness casualties.

Finally after this seige with old man weather, we caught our first view of Bermuda as we steamed up the channel off St. Georges. In the distance, we could see the famous old barge that had been used by the contractors on the base. The color, the cloud effects, the blue sea, and the green cedar trees from the distance told us that this was the "Paradise Isle." Even the worst cases of seasickness came to life as we saw the cool, calm waters which paralleled the narrow channel leading into Great Sound and up to the base Tender Pier. The sight of airplanes taking off the water at the clipper base in one of the many inlets on the way to Hamilton will always remain strong in our memories.

It was nearly midday when the first Seabee set foot on shore, and there was a lot of commotion over our arrival, for men of the 31st Naval Construction Battalion (Second Division) were leaving that same day. Immediately, we prepared to make the long walk in the torrid sun to our new quarters, so vaguely described by one self-appointed sailor as being "just over the causeway near the flag pole." While we were acquainting ourselves with our new quarters, the men of the 31st Battalion generously unloaded our seabags, and later in the day we reciprocated by loading their gear into the returning ship. Our first impression of the barracks was enough to make some of us almost willing to return aboard ship. However, we knew that to make this statement was nothing more than sheer madness. In the barracks while trying to get squared away, we were constantly bothered by the old-timers of the 49th NCB, who tried to tell us for the thousandth time: "You'll be sorry!" Most of us had heard and given the same cry a year previously to the boots at Camp Bradford.

Two double deck temporary frame barracks, buildings No. 109 and No. 110, were assigned as unit quarters. Comfortable double deck bunks were assigned to the men, with the chiefs occupying rooms at the end of each wing of the barracks. Headquarters office for the unit was established in the small building across the street from Fire Department No. 2. This office proved to be very convenient for the men, and they soon were seeking their way up the hill to get personnel matters straightened out.

Our first meal in the large, barn-like mess hall was typically Navy as we stood in the long lines trying to get fed. Later as time went on, we became accustomed to all this perpetual waiting and had only a few remarks to pass out about delays in getting served.

On hand for over a month to help us get acquainted was the old 49th Battalion. We worked hand in hand with them, learning the tricks of the various jobs under progress. Friendly kidding soon arose over one job in particular, one which the 31st and 49th Battalions claimed to have done, and which we know also took some of our skilled men and brawn to complete the project; namely, the N.A.S. Supply Warehouse Building. The commanding officer of the 49th NCB was the senior officer in charge of all Seabees on the base, and under his direction we were assuming our places in the various work projects then in progress. Gradually the men were assigned to jobs fitted to their old civilian trades, as experience cards had been filled out and checked over thoroughly to see that each man was assigned to his particular type of work.

Within a short time we heard scuttlebutt that another maintenance unit was on its way to give us assistance and to relieve the 49th Battalion of its duties on this base. For once scuttlebutt proved to be a fact, as Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit Number 551 arrived shortly thereafter.

C.B.M.U. No. 551

Short-lived! This was our impression of CBMU 551. The yeomen were faced with the probability of insufficient time to complete the papers making the title official. The name, CBMU 551, may have been ours for less than two months, but it was instilled to a degree deep enough to make us feel our identity was something belonging to us, alone. A short shoot-the-breeze session with the 551st men will leave little or no doubt as to what contingent introduced them to the Bermuda Isles.

The recorded narrative of our early days will not possess the vivid color and feeling of adventure to our readers as does the history of the original nucleus of CBMU 540. However, the statement is not an exaggeration that, to us, our early beginnings harbor a color just as vivid and a spirit of venturing into the unknown quite comparable to that of our seasoned shipmates. For just a few months prior, the bulk of us were experiencing a young revolution—the reconversion period from the now dreamed of civilian status to a Seabee. The Navy altered us physically and spiritually with Navy thoughts, Navy lingo, Navy dress and, yes, even to a degree, the Navy gait. It took only the first few minutes and a bit of small talk in the indoctrination center at Camp Peary, Virginia, under the direction of Lt. (jg) Geo. Scruggs to realize we made a good cross-section of the nation. There were representatives from the South, New England, Middle West, North East, South West, and South East. This cross-section wasn't limited to geographical terms, but we were also marked by a great variety of vocations, including "the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker." The day of days was spent in the indoctrination center, and the time spent here left a question as to whether we would emerge as human beings or something out of this world. It was here we began to know the Navy and the Navy us, as it soon proved to have a marvelous

sense of inquisitiveness. The most questioning small town gossip could not have gathered such a complete set of personal facts about a person in such a short time. We divulged every psychological secret a man could possess. Physically, our examination was complete with probings, thumpings, and piercings. Not being satisfied with our human interest stories, they did an excellent job of depriving us of our crowning glory. A man might be as "shiny as a billiard ball," but that made little or no impression. They would shear him just the same.

A special effort was made in fitting clothing. A well-trained staff was on hand to help with the fitting. The day was sweltering, but every piece of clothing must be fitted, or at least put on. Fitters decided each garment was a perfect fit if you could keep the pants up with one hand or the other by continually grasping the top, and providing there was enough room left in the jumper to enable some semblance of the process of breathing.

By this time the saturation point had been reached, or so we thought. Staggering under the weight of a mattress cover filled with newly acquired clothing and a mattress, we were hauled to our boot camp area, D-12. Here we were soon to understand Navy life begins after the indoctrination center. The word symbolizing boot camp is "routine." The daily schedule of routine began at 0515, and every minute of the day was planned until 1700, and much to the sorrow of a select few making the awkward squads, it finally drew to a close at the most pleasant hour of the day—namely, sack-duty time.

Forward March! To the rear, march! To the right flank, march! To the left flank, march! These were commands ringing in our ears a hundred times a day. A smart manual of arms was drilled into us until it possessed every brain cell. Our pieces were the famed "Victory" rifle. We soon learned that they had a mean weight even if they weren't too effective, except as a paddle club. Four weeks of this gruelling routine were spent under the Virginia sun rays.

News giving us a great lift and a new lease on life arrived the 26th of September 1943. It was announced the men in our boot area would form the bulk of the 135th Naval Construction Battalion. The following day, seabags were packed and we moved to Area A-8. This marked the commencement of the much talked of and anticipated advanced training. Four weeks were spent learning some of the fundamental secrets of extended order, finding out what a carbine was all about, and a daily turn on the obstacle course. The latter kept many of us busy keeping a clean set of G.I. coveralls on hand after the daily dip in the mud bath after our failure to complete our Tarzan feat on the swinging rope.

Our identity made a sudden conversion at this point. No longer were we to be a construction battalion, but a super construction battalion. 1 October 1943 presented the news that from henceforth our battalion would be the 15th Super Construction Battalion. With this new announcement followed the usual wake of scuttlebutt of the whats and the whys of this new name.

In the Navy, a man lives for change and leave, and the latter to a great degree. Our advanced training was brought to a climax on the 24th of October when we re-

ceived the much coveted leave papers saying once more we could experience the sensation of being a civilian and another touch of home. A large percentage of us remember this leave, as its memories have had to serve from that time to this.

The battalion congregated again on the 4th of November and preparations were made for the trip to our Advance Base Depot, Camp Thomas, Davisville, Rhode Island. The unusual and novel were again to happen to us. The name, 15th Super Battalion, was left to the annals of posterity and did not move out as an organized unit. In its stead, the battalion broke into four maintenance units. Our maintenance unit formed on 16 November 1943 with Lieut. James L. Darnell as skipper. To aid the skipper upon our short course was Lieut. (jg) Carl C. Cullum, Ensign Everette F. Roberts, Carp. John Lowe, and Carp. David V. Kemp. This day was eventful, as we were not only moved but we boarded the train for Camp Thomas. The next day we arrived at Camp Thomas, and as is characteristic of all newcomers we spent most of the day becoming acquainted and making ourselves at home. For a few of us, this was the day of anticipation as men from the West coast were to shove off for their fifteen day embarkation leave on the following day. Those who remained behind did all manner of tasks until they returned. We drilled, did extended order, went to school, worked on odd tasks, and put in some excellent liberty in Providence.

The day of embarkation was close at hand, and we all received a complete pack, gas mask, and an article requiring much of our future effort, elbow grease, and time to clean—the 0-3 Rifle. The day of departure finally descended upon us, and in our dress blue, full packs strapped on our backs, rifles slung over our shoulders, we left Camp Thomas. Boarding the transport ship at the port of embarkation, our minds were in a slight haze, not knowing what and where our destination was to be. We left on the evening of 9 December 1943. For the most of us it was our first trip on a seagoing vessel. For two days we were tossed by a severe storm, which caused many of us to miss routine chow.

We drew into Hamilton on the evening of the 11th, and we were wondering what this strange place had in store for us. Everyone gathered up his belongings, and we were marched out of the ship. We were greeted by some of the sailors from the base who were rather glad to see us. The streets were crowded with passersby who stopped to see what and who had landed. The wind whistled through the warehouse as we waited transportation to the base, and it was there that we heard the first clapping steps of a horse drawing a carriage. We marvelled at the sound and wondered if Bermuda was completely unaware of the automobile industry. A short trip by water brought us to the Naval Operating Base, the scene of the unit's first tour of duty. The bunks at the barracks took on a glimmer of heaven after the two days on the rolling sea. We soon were in the Bermuda swing and assigned to our jobs on the base. Remembering what was said, that CBMU 551 would not live to a ripe old age the thought became father to the fact and so on New Year's Day, 1944, we were absorbed into CBMU 540, casting our chips along with theirs. Lieut. Darnell assumed command of the combined units, with Lieut. Bernson of the original CBMU 540 acting as

executive officer. With the arrival of this extra unit, the need for the 49th Battalion was ended, and they left the shores of Bermuda to return to the States for their well earned leaves.

CASUAL DRAFT 2270

Once again scuttlebutt reared its ugly head—another unit was coming down to help meet the ever increasing demands for maintenance and operations work. History has subsequently proved the truth of this bit of scuttlebutt by the arrival in Bermuda of Casual Draft 2270.

Casual Draft 2270 had its origin in Camp Peary, Virginia. The men comprising this unit were assembled from various special drafts then stationed in that camp. After stepping into every mud hole and sleeping under every leak in the barracks roofs, we were herded into the vicinity of the B-6 Drill Hall area, where we were issued our G.I. gear, subsequently the unit was again moved and quartered in the B-5 area. Our stay in B-5 was very brief, during which time the men did odd jobs under the charge of Alwyn K. Addison, CSF(CB), who had been placed in charge of the draft.

On 15 February 1944, dressed in blues, and saddled with our packs, gear, and carbines, we boarded the train at 1830, whither bound, we knew not—further training in California, embarkation at some California port for the Pacific, or perhaps headed for the European theater of war. As the train sped along, we quietly settled down and it wasn't long before the darkness and the dreariness of the night descended upon us. We were then given our evening chow consisting of sandwiches and fruit. Left to ourselves, some of the boys slept, others talked, while others remained silent, perhaps wondering what the near future held in store for them. Letters from home were distributed to those who were lucky enough to receive them. After a long, uncomfortable night, we pulled into the port of embarkation the following morning at 0800. After leaving the train, we were marched about two blocks and presented with a much needed cup of hot coffee and doughnuts by the ever kindly ladies of the U.S.O. Some of our questions regarding our ultimate destination were answered by the sight of a transport ship which was to take us to our advanced base. At this time, we were joined by Carp. George E. Imhoff, who assumed command of the draft.

After a stint of stevedoring when we unloaded our sea-bags and other gear from the train and into the hold of the ship, we made ready to sail. We were scarcely settled before duty called in the form of mess duty and fire watch. Many men became too sick to stand their watches, and last minute substitutions were frequent throughout the voyage. For two days and two nights we lived in this floating world, the memory of which will never leave us. On the morning of 18 February someone shouted, "Land, ho!" Rumors ran wild. It was Trinidad; Cuba; but no, after much speculation we learned that it was only Bermuda.

Still in our dress blues and peacoats, we donned our packs, slung our carbines over our shoulders and embarked at the Tender Pier, where we were met by the cheering countenances of the men of CBMU 540. After a short march across the causeway, we arrived at Barracks No. 118 which was to be our new home, thereafter known as "Company

D." Within a few days, we received our assigned duties and were quietly integrated into the 540 activities. The famous Company D will not soon be forgotten. We soon assumed our share of the responsibility in the maintenance and operations work performed by the unit.

On 14 March 1943 Lieut. James L. Darnell was detached. Lieut. Comdr. Ralph C. Jenson, Public Works Officer of the base, assumed collateral duties as Officer in Charge of CBMU 540 and continued in that capacity until relieved by Lieut. Oscar W. Britt on 8 July 1944.

Paramount in the minds of all men was the burning question: "When are we going to get home on leave?" We soon learned that we would be eligible for leaves after a six-month tour of duty on this station. To ensure fairness in the method of allowing the men to go home on leave, it was decided to draw names out of a drum, the results to be the sequence in which leaves would be granted. The first drawing for the original 540 group on 5 April 1945 proved to be a gala occasion. An air of hilarity and great expectation prevailed, and the men waited with baited breath as a beautiful local belle drew the first name, the lucky man being Henry Washington Poore, Slc. The same procedure was followed in the Fall for the men of the original 551 unit. However, as a result of a change in policy cancelling leaves in the American Theater of War, a good portion of the 551 men and the entire 2270 group did not realize leaves.

Now that all three units were here, we learned that a battalion is an interesting piece of machinery, for here every conceivable trade can be found. Whether it be watch or clock repairing, fixing a roof, there are men who can be called upon to get the finest equipment or machinery into shape. If tools weren't available, they could be improvised as we went along. Work involved in maintaining a base as large as ours called for complete operation and maintenance. Our activities in the field covered a large range, consisting of jack hammer work; road maintenance; concrete block plant; rock crusher; heavy equipment operation and repair; machine shops and drill sheds; carpenter, paint, plumbing, iron and sheet metal shops; garage repair and body works; drafting and surveying office; electrical maintenance; and all the other utilities, such as fueling the ships and station, water distribution (a careful check on the daily water consumption), oil burner maintenance for the blowers used on the various utilities job, line and telephone crews, and the most vital piece of equipment on the base, the power house.

"All work and no play," we believe, makes a dull Seabee. Every evening after a hard day's work, Joe Seabee could be seen in the uniform of the day awaiting the famous "Cannonball Express" to wind its way from Somerset to Hamilton, or way points. We had a fair amount of liberty—every third evening and every other Saturday afternoon or Sunday. Four or five U.S.O.'s dotted the island, making it possible to visit any one of them for a reasonable steak dinner or a dance. In addition, there were many recreational points of interest. Soon after our arrival, truck parties were made to visit the world famous Leamington and Crystal Caves, Devil's Hole, the historical old town of St. Georges, and the Government Aquarium. We all well re-

member the bathing parties at Elbow Beach with lunches prepared by our Commissary Department.

Local talent was not hard to find, and we soon had a hillbilly band organized. It became very popular and was in great demand by the local organizations and clubs on the island. In the evening after a day's work, the most popular place on the base was the old beer hall where dungarees were the dress of the day. The dress was soon changed to make us appear more dignified, but the beer remained unrationed. In the same building we found the gym, where our Seabees always went down to defeat fighting. At the other end of the Recreation Building was located the Ships' Service Store and photo laboratory, with the pool hall and cobbler shop down the line. Can you remember the day the pool hall was converted into a dispensary. It was a two-fold day for the most of us, as we received our pay first and then filed in line to get three shots. Many of the men fell over just at the sight of the long, "square" needle. At the closing of the beer hall in the evening, all roads led to the nightly features at the outdoor theater. Many a night the fellows would sit through a driving rain just to see the picture, while others maybe not quite so hardy would hit it back to the barracks. Most of the new pictures and U.S.O. camp shows played here nightly, and it didn't cost the fellows a dime.

While in a sense we were a construction outfit, we were not allowed to forget the fact that we were still a military organization, and once a month we had our barracks and locker, as well as personnel inspection, by the Commandant of the base. Primping and getting ready for the personnel inspection went on soon after the Saturday noon meal, as we had to be assembled on Randolph Road at the given time for the Commandant to make his appearance. The Commandant was sure to pay us some complimentary remarks about our appearance as we stood ready for his personal inspection.

For an organization as young as ours, there has been a frequent change in skippers. Lieut. Britt continued as Officer in Charge until relieved by Lieut. Comdr. John J. White, Jr. on 14 March 1945. Soon after the arrival of our new skipper, all the former officers, with the exception of Ch. Carp. Imhoff, were detached, being relieved by our present group of officers with Lieut. R. F. Hughes as Executive Officer, assisted by Lieut. (jg) John F. Changstrom, Lieut. (jg) Charles V. Turner, Chief Carp. Orrin K. Dixon, Chief Carp. Harold R. Miller, and Carp. Edward F. Flanagan. Under this new leadership CBMU 540 really "rolled" and morale flourished for skipper White was bound to fight.

We feel our unit is extremely unusual, as not many maintenance units can boast of such unrelated groups coming together and uniting into such a hard working, well organized group of men. We have learned to set aside our old allegiances and now have a feeling of warmth when the number of our unit is mentioned. As we draw this log to a conclusion, many of the old familiar faces are disappearing as men are returning to the States for discharge under the demobilization program. All of us sooner or later will again be civilians and we will look back many times and muse with interest over our tour of duty in the Bermuda Isles. As Sir Walter Scott said in the *Lady of the Lakes* "Time rolls its ceaseless course."

COMPANY

A



O. J. BACH



R. E. BEAMAN



W. L. BRADY



B. T. CARNEY



F. J. FRATES



C. C. GILBERT



B. F. LEZOTTE



T. W. T. TERRILL



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O. N. VINES



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M. S. BURROUGHS



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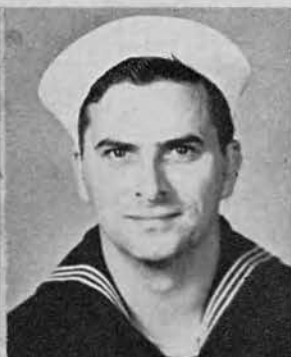
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R. CLARK



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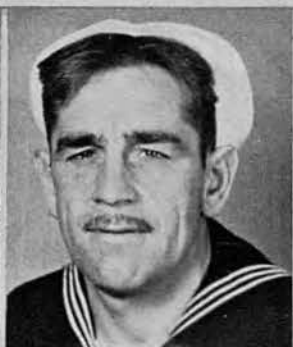
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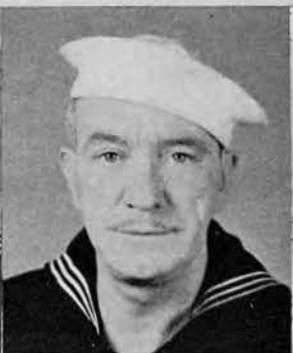
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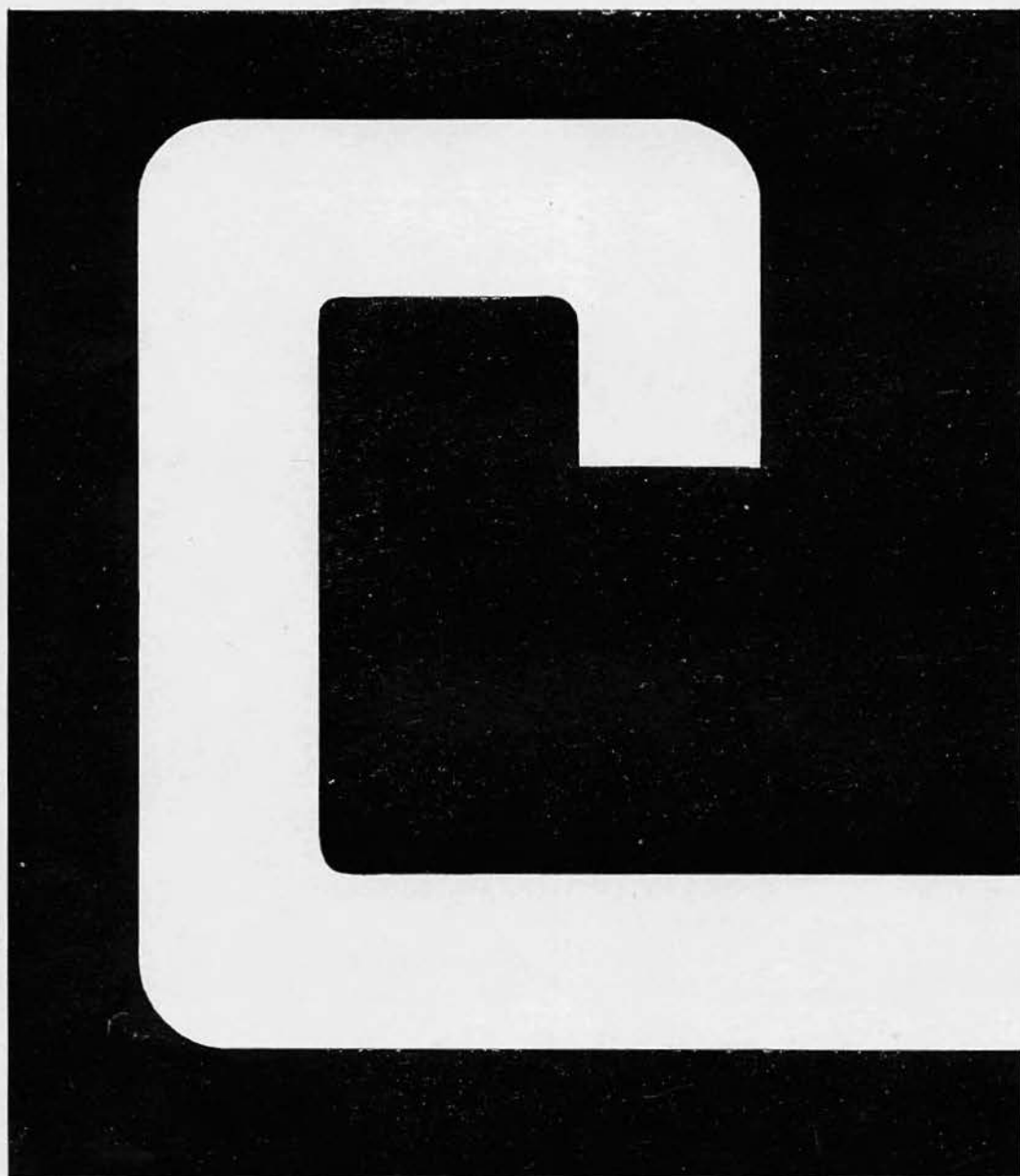


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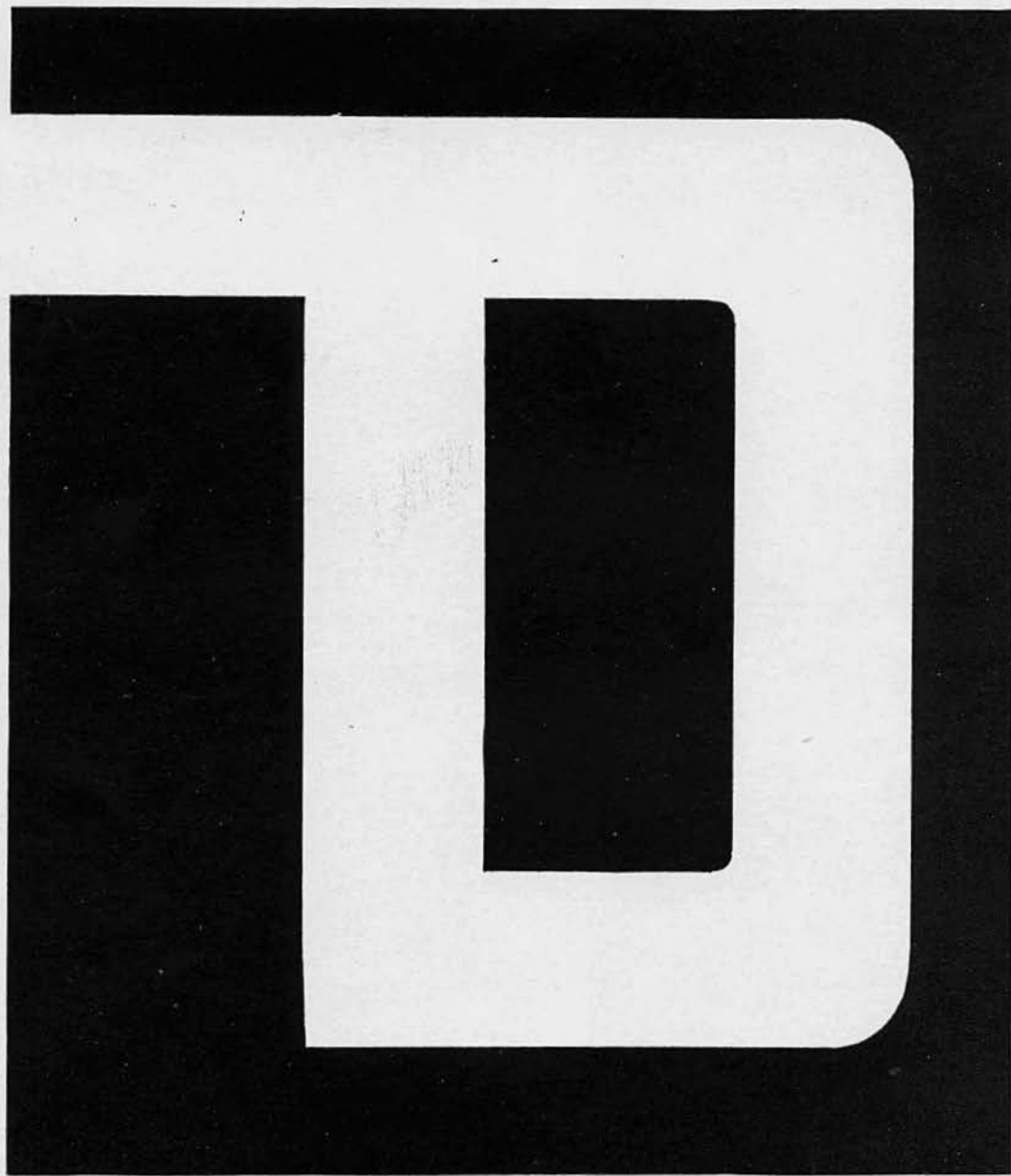


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H. IRONS



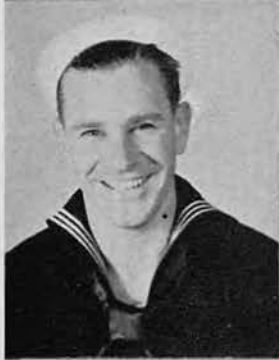
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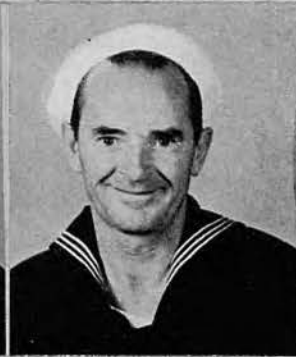
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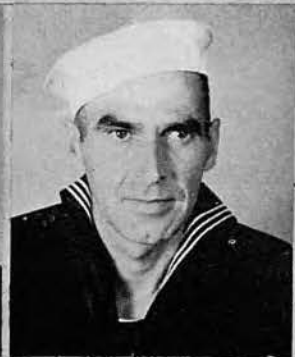
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C. J. CURRY



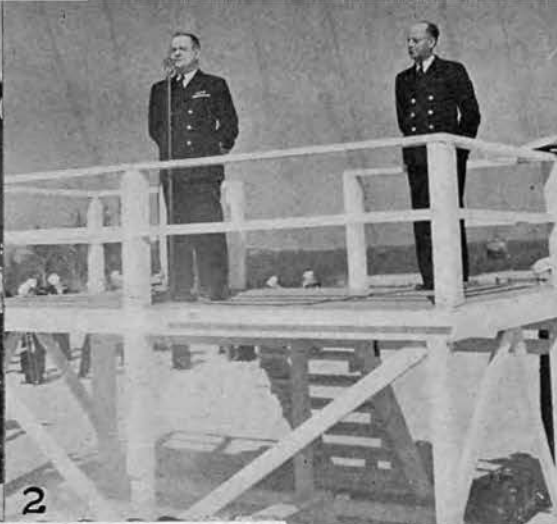
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R. D. SNOW



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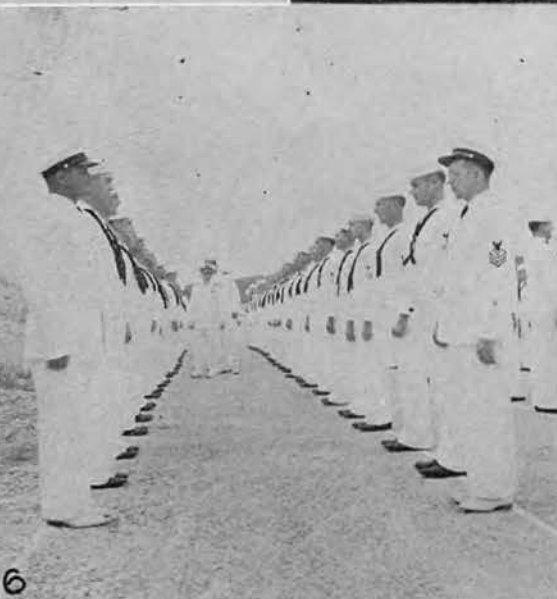
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3

INSPECTION

1. Rear Admiral Manning reviewing CBMU 540 personnel
2. Admiral Manning addresses the men of the unit
3. Commander Blades, Executive Officer N.O.B., looks us over
4. With reviewing stand and band in the distance Admiral Manning "carries on"
5. Lieut. Commander White looks over his men
6. Rear Admiral Sowell gives us the once over in whites
7. Rear Admiral Braisted looks us over in undress blues
8. Marching up Constitution Road to the parade grounds
9. Admiral Manning sights Company "C"



6

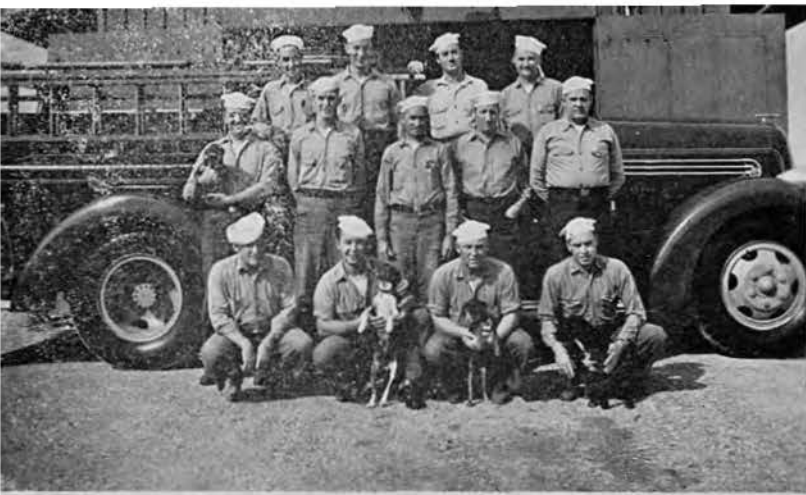


7



OPERATIONS *and* **MAINTENANCE**





SHOPS AND FIELD CREWS

1. Road Maintenance
2. Fire Department No. 2
3. Powerhouse
4. Evaporator Plant
5. Telephone Maintenance
6. Electrical Shops
7. Garage





SHOPS AND FIELD CREWS

1. Motor Pool Drivers
2. Iron Shop
3. Master at Arms
4. Fuel Oil Maintenance
5. "Cristobal Colon"
6. Heavy Equipment
7. Buoy Maintenance



3



4





SHOPS AND FIELD CREWS

1. Carpenter Construction Crew No. 1
2. Concrete Plant and Rock Crusher
3. Public Works Drafting and Engineering
4. Heavy Equipment Repair
5. "Darling Boy"
6. Buoy Shop and Boats
7. Carpenter Maintenance Crew No. 1





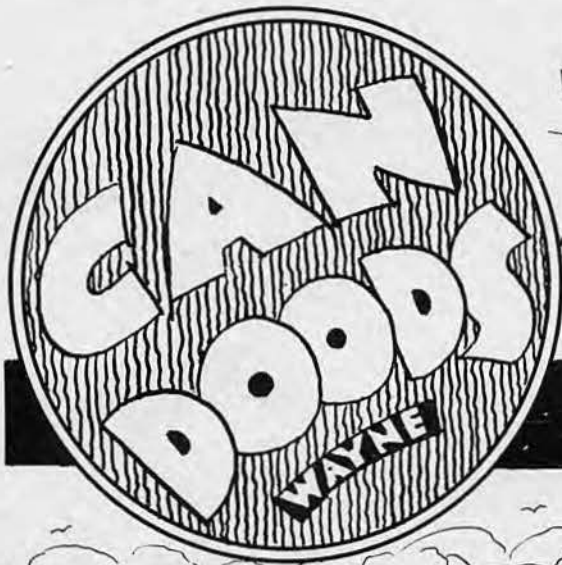
SHOPS AND FIELD CREWS

1. Sheet Metal Shop
2. Paint Maintenance and Shop
3. Carpenter Construction Crew No. 2
4. Carpenter Construction Crew No. 3
5. Refrigeration and Cold Storage Plant
6. Carpenter Shop
7. Machine Shop

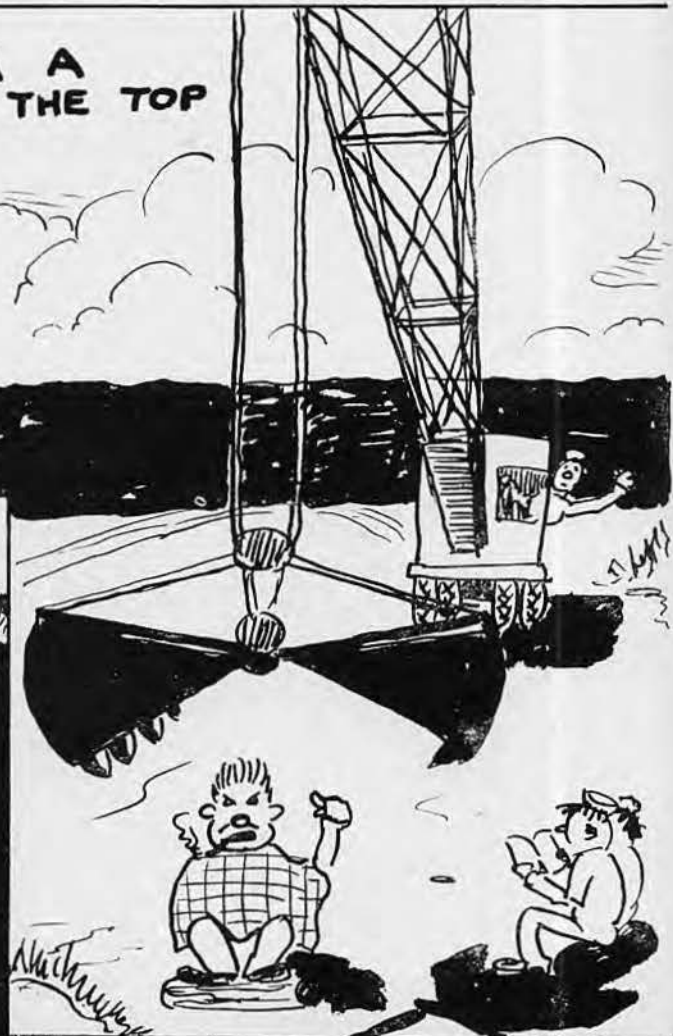




"SEABEES WAY UP AHEAD - BETTER BUY NOW - THEY'RE GO'IN FAST"



JUST TRIM A LITTLE OFF THE TOP





10



3



SHOPS AND FIELD CREWS

1. Preparing for Bermuda rains
2. "Personality Boy" of the Concrete Plant
3. Redecorating our "quarters"
4. Mass production in the Sheet Metal Shop
5. Heavy Equipment Repair Crew tuning up a compressor
6. Installation of new shower facilities
7. "Dreaming up" a sign
8. Foundry boys casting a bearing
9. Machine Shop in action
10. Carpenter Shop men preparing to make a cut



4

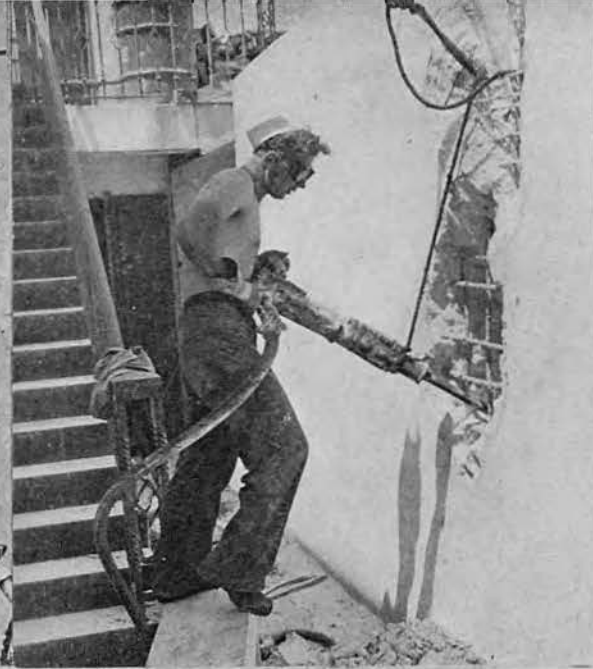


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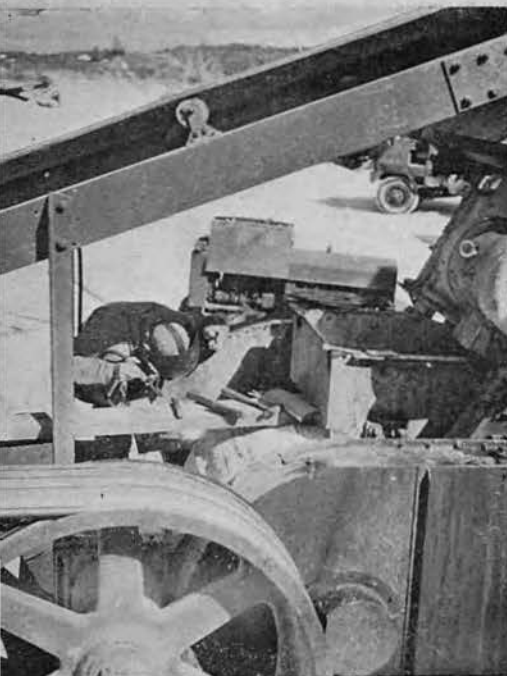
Chipping



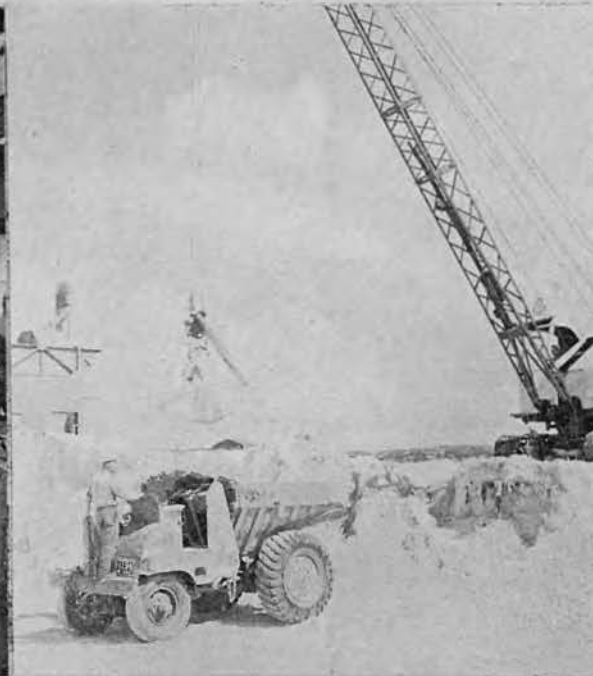
Jack-hammer on the Crane House



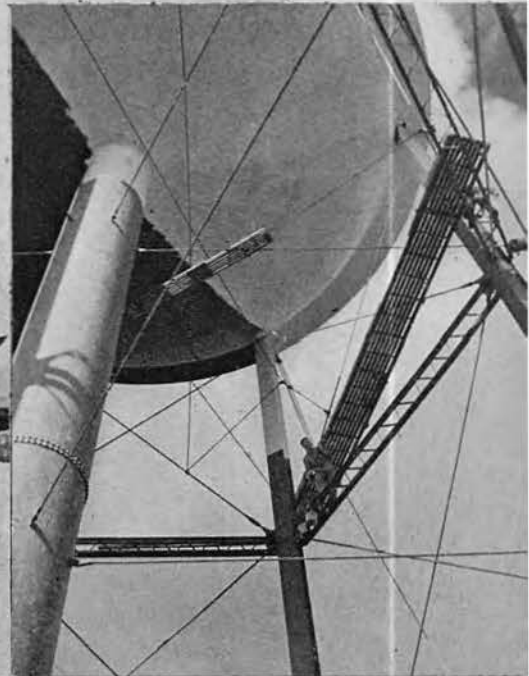
Wiper in the Evaporator Plant



Welder at work on the Rock Crusher



Aggregate pile at the Crusher



Painting the Water Tower





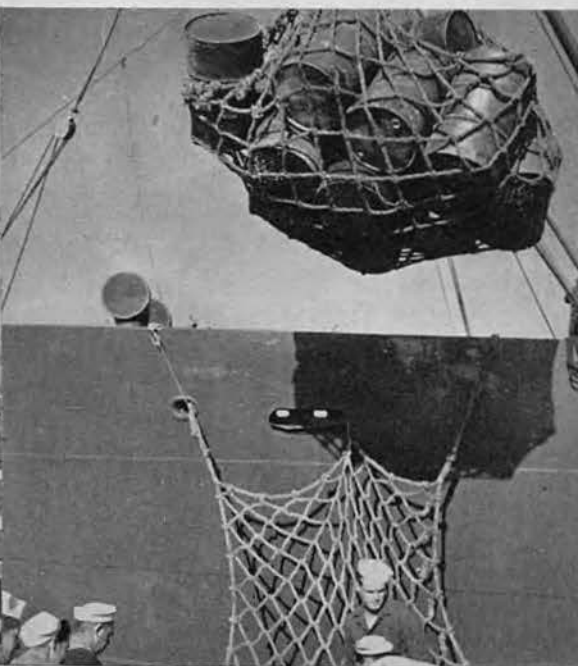
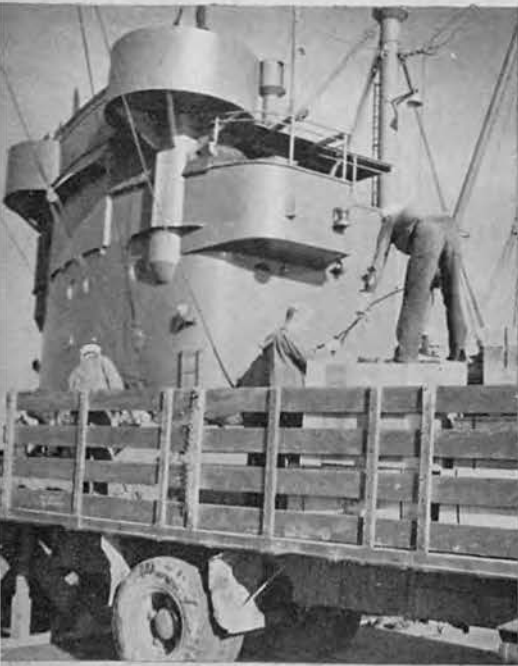
Remodeling the Crane House



Battery Charging House



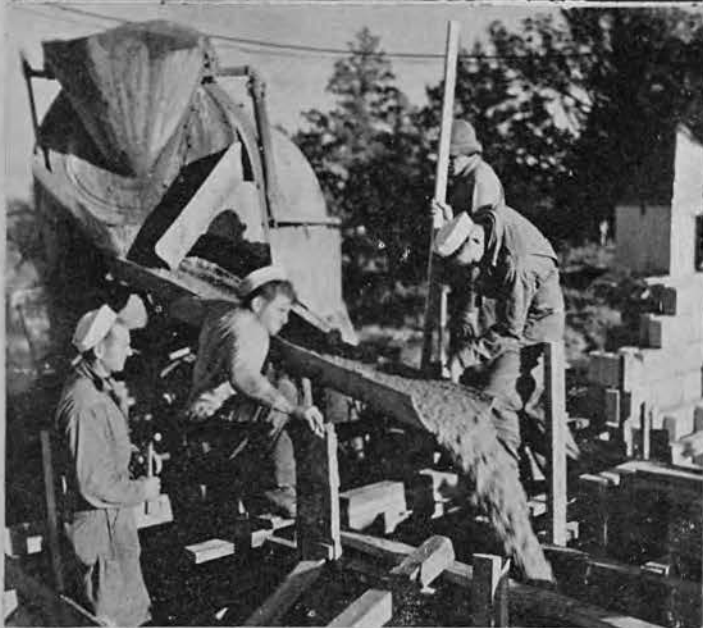
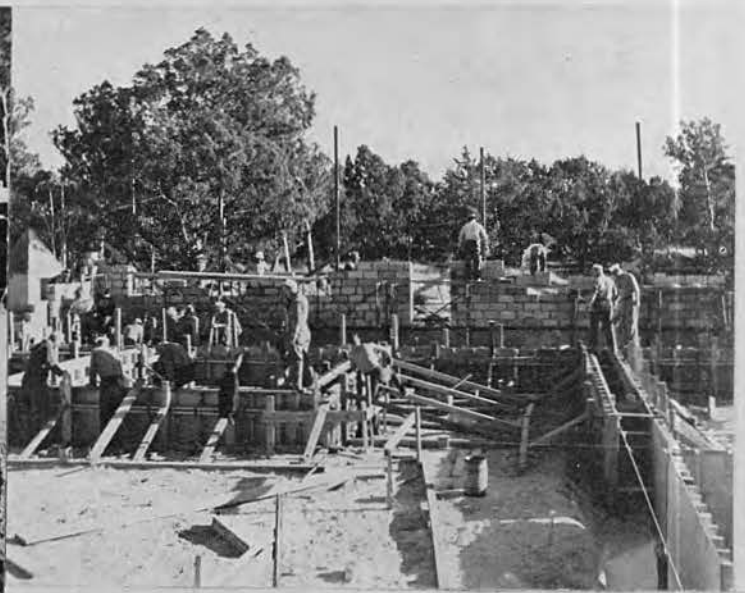
Flashing for the new shops



Cargo Handling at the Tender Pier



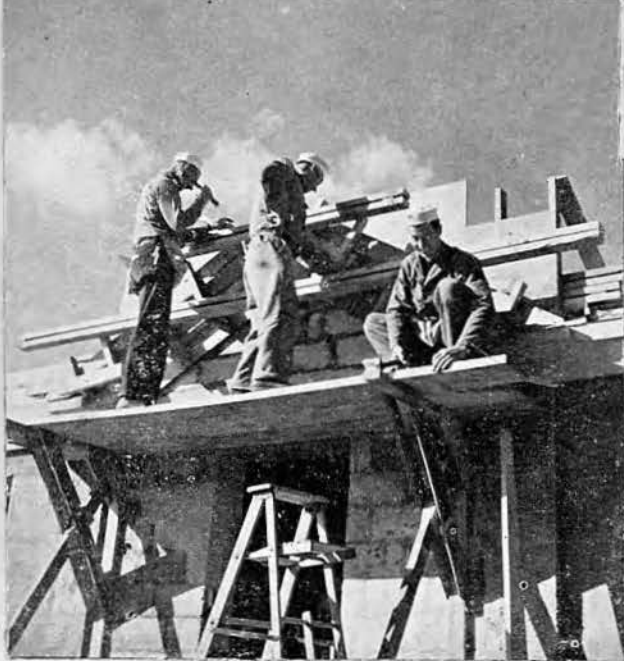
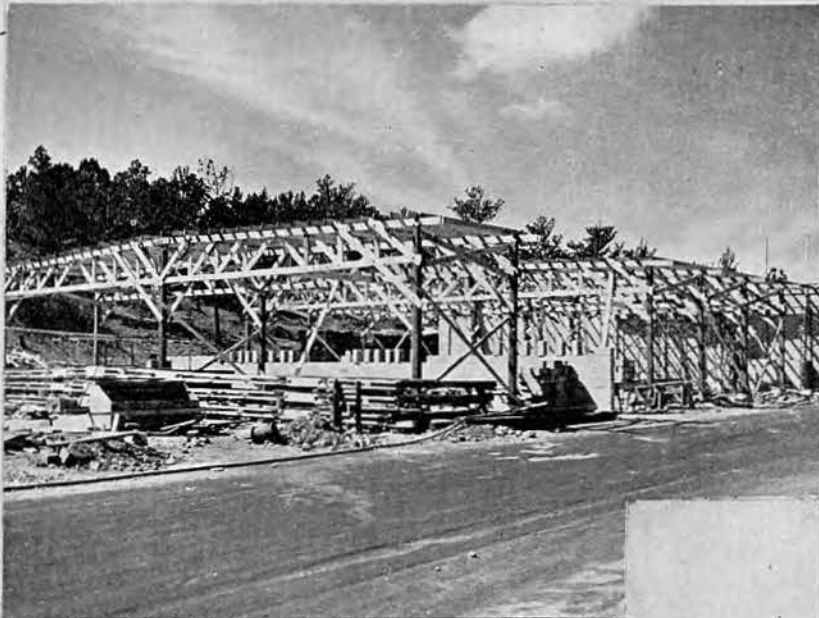
Rock Crusher and Quarry, Harrington Sound, Bermuda Road Project



NEW CONSTRUCTION

The construction crews of our unit carried on numerous and varied construction projects. Shown on this page is the construction, from the ground up, of a modern residence to be used for senior officer quarters. It is styled in typical Bermuda architecture.

On the opposite page the pictures show the development and growth of the Base Shop area after it was ravaged by fire. This area was rebuilt with great speed, for around this center many of the essential activities of the base were carried on.

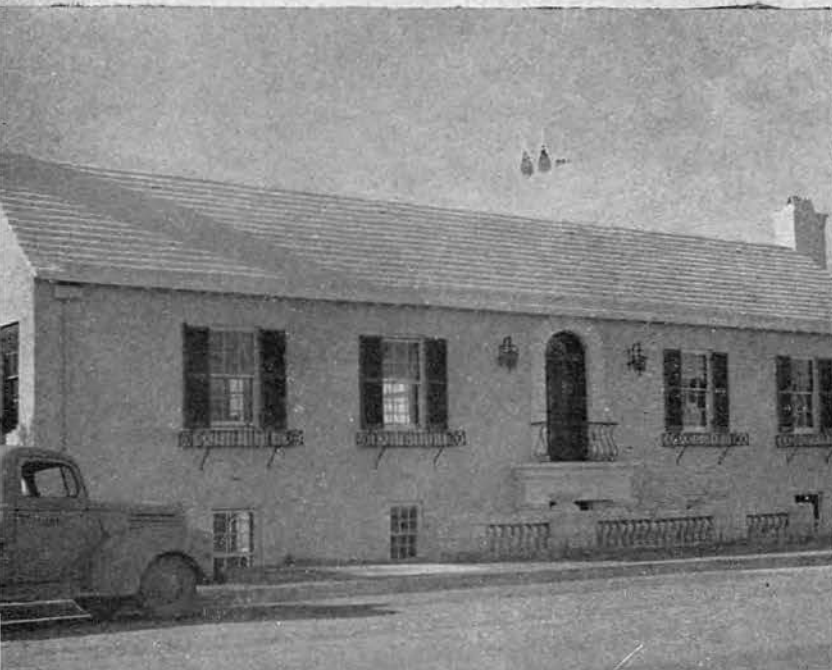




Bus the Seabees built from spare parts



Three men on a dumpster



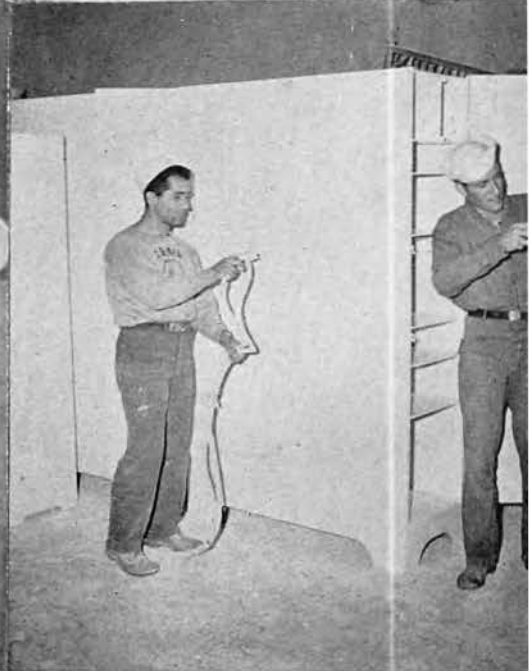
Hostess House for enlisted personnel and their guests (formerly the Crane House)



"Massasoit" survey boat



Plumbers at work



Spraying barracks lockers



Rock Crusher



VR-8 landing



Setting roof truss



Tearing dunnage from Warehouse



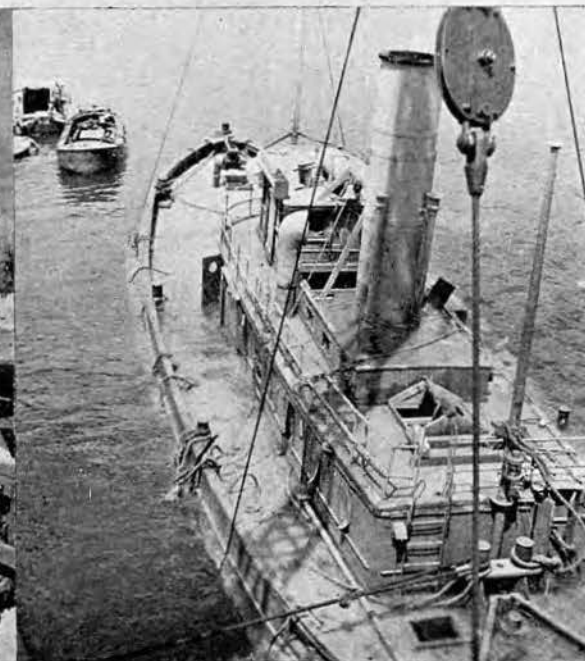
Diesel repair



Carpenter Shop



Dumpsters at Quarry



Raising the "Mildred"



Fuel Oil Maintenance



"Tucker" under repair



New Outdoor Theater



"Darling Boy"



Putting "Queen Bess" in water



Setting Buoy Block



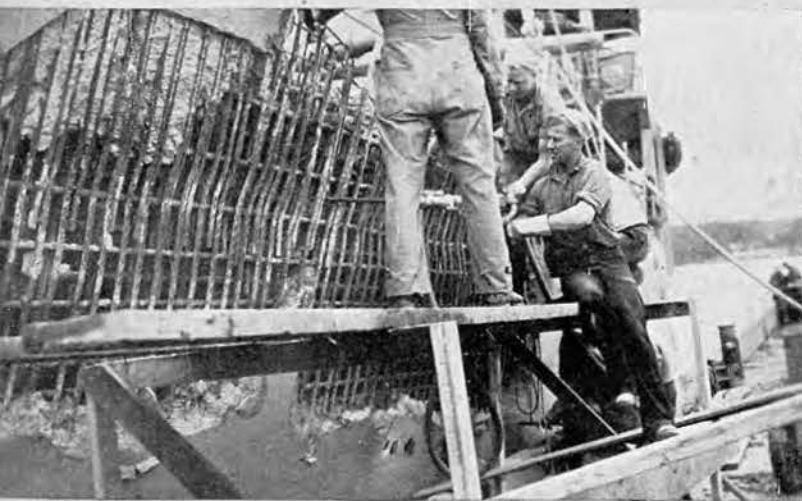
Preparing for a dive



Raising a Buoy



Scraping Buoy Boat



Concrete ship repairs



"Italian" Barge remodeling



RECREATION



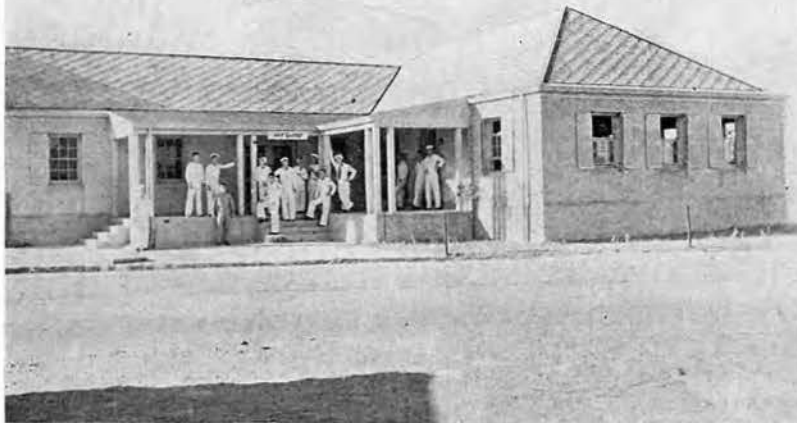


SHIP'S SERVICE

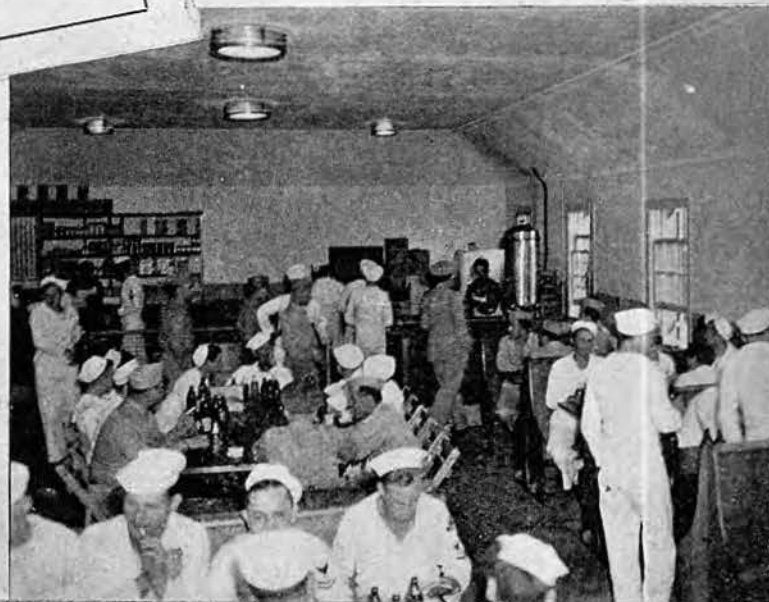
Our Ship's Service organization was ever ready to provide services for the welfare and convenience of all the men on the base. Offering the highest quality workmanship and service "with a smile" were the barber shop; cobbler shop; photographic studio; ships store; tailor shop and the ever popular canteen, where R-and-H had that "certain appeal."

Next!

Seabees' "Woolworths"



The "Bee Hive"



Interior view of the old "Marine PX"



Queues for ice creams, beer and cokes



Pool hall in the Recreation Building



form of the Day" at the Beer "parlor"



Ice cream for the store



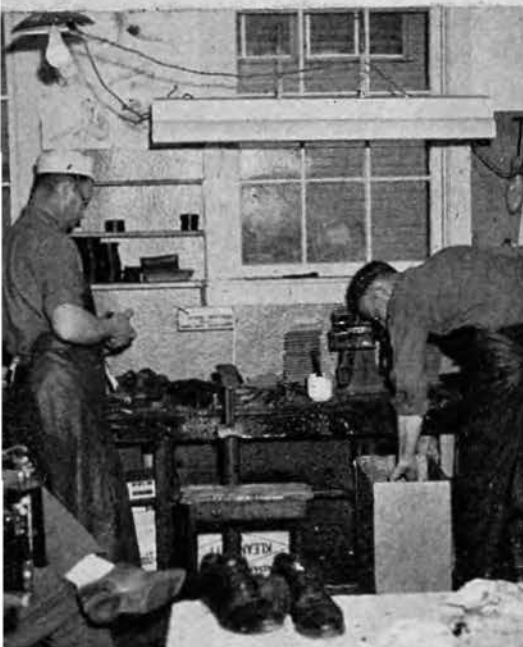
A brew when day is done



Ship's Service Crew



Tap room in the "Bee Hive"



ing a few "soles" in the Cobbler Shop



Friendly service



Free beer at Whitehill Field



Wherever men may be and whatever they are doing, it is vital that they have some means of enjoying their idle and off-time hours. Recreation plays a major part in the winning of a war, in keeping the men in the proper frame of mind to carry out their duties to the best of their ability.

The men of CBMU 540 were no exception as they served on this Atlantic island. They needed recreation and there was usually something to do.

The national pastime, baseball, of course, was never forgotten in this English colony. The unit entered a team in the Bermuda Inter-Service Athletic Association League each season, and although they were never a championship club, they displayed a classy brand of baseball.

The non-ball players will never forget the enjoyable days they spent at Whitehill Field witnessing a ball game, especially when these games were played as doubleheaders on Wednesday afternoons. The Seabees can boast that they supported their team more ardently than any other activity represented in the league.

Softball, too, was popular with the unit being represented by a team each season. The softball teams were probably the most enthusiastic and spirited aggregations that represented the Seabees in sports.

The annual Lily Bowl football game was the most colorful sporting attraction on the island. Each year early in January thousands flocked to the BAA Field in Hamilton to see the Navy's best pitted against the Army eleven in what was always a thrilling and exciting engagement. The Navy fielded some powerful elevens which twice walloped the soldiers. Seabees Ed Zak, Lowell, Gingrich, Otis, Meissner, Tom Mazarelli, Norton White, Johnny Porter, and Dick Prickett played a prominent role in the 39 to 6 defeat inflicted on the Army on January 7, 1945.

On the base a touch football league was formed and once again the CB's produced a team in that circuit. These

games gave the men something to do on Sunday autumn afternoons with all the contests being played at Whitehill Field.

On rainy winter evenings the NOB Gym was packed with basketball enthusiasts witnessing Inter-Service and NOB League games. The unit was represented by a team in both leagues. The games not only gave the Cagers an opportunity to play, but the nightly contests were a popular form of entertainment.

Entered in the Base Bowling League, the Seabee keglers proved the class of the league as they finished on top in the standings by a comfortable margin. The six-man squad was composed of Earl Stright, Art Hay, Garland Feigenbaum, Larry Peterson, George Schaeffer, and Amos Perkins.

The CB Recreation Building offered another form of recreational activity. Men working night shifts spent many hours in this building playing billiards, pool, or ping pong, and it was one of the most convenient places to obtain a "coke" anytime during the day. After working hours, the place was always a scene of much activity.

Those who enjoyed swimming were in a paradise. With the barracks located near the Great Sound, it was only a short trek to the pier and a quick dip. Many of the tanned bodies were a result of many hours spent in swimming. The sport was enjoyed nearly the entire twelve months of the year, although during several months it was admittedly "pretty chilly."

Never to be forgotten is the Riddell's Bay Recreation Center. The Navy leased it and converted the recreational center into one of the most widely-used spots of enjoyment on the island. When in doubt where to go for several hours of relaxation, Riddell's Bay always solved the problem. There were practically no limits to the recreational opportunities offered there. Many of the men developed their golf game on the nine hole course. Tennis courts were

conveniently located on the grounds. There were horse-shoe pits and here too one could enjoy swimming.

And who will ever forget the Saturday afternoon outings at Riddell's Bay with free beer, cokes, ball games and a general good time! And the weekly Wednesday night dances on the tennis courts became more and more popular each week. It might be said that on the island the word "recreation" was synonymous with Riddell's Bay.

For those who followed the pastime of Isaac Walton, fishing was a popular sport. Bermudas islands are world famous for the various kinds of speckled beauties that abound in her waters. However, let it never be said that Bermudas fish aren't smart for those who tried to land them found them very cagy. Two of the NOB's best known fishermen were Commander Porterfield, senior medical officer who caught the famous 180-pound tuna fish on an 18# line with rod and reel after a two and a quarter hour battle "off the banks"—and Miss Nancy White, the sparkling lover of Bermudas fish and game life, daughter of Lt. Comdr. John J. White, Jr., the sporting skipper of CBMU 540.

The USO did not fail to bring some of the comforts and attractions of the States to the island. The USO Camp Shows on their tours usually stopped and gave several performances of their show for the personnel stationed on the island who were helping to win the Battle of the Atlantic. A steady flow of American entertainment was brought to the men through the appearances of stage, screen, and radio personalities. Among the top-flight performers to appear were Linda Darnell of the screen and Conrad Thibault, noted radio star.

Service clubs throughout the island were also provided by the USO. The Hamilton Hotel in Hamilton became the United Services Club, open to all members of the Allied Military Forces. And it served thousands of them.

Nearer the base was the Somerset I.O.D.E. USO Club with its feature of Tuesday evening dances, good food, and quiet relaxation.

Many enjoyable Sunday afternoons were spent at the Flatts USO Club. The Flatts featured Sunday afternoon dancing and also good food.

When weekend liberty was a reality, the St. George USO at the opposite end of the island was often the destination of those seeking relaxation. Here was offered the oppor-

tunity to live, for all too short a time, in a private room with all the conveniences of home. The indoor swimming pool was a feature of the St. George USO Club.

Offering these varied services, the USO certainly did not pass up the men stationed on Navy 138. With its clubs and camp shows, it helped to pass away what would have been lonely days for the men away from home and their families and loved ones.

One of the finest CBMU 540 dinner dances in Bermuda was held at the Belmont Hotel with dancing under the stars on the Cedar Terrace. Chief Carpenter Harold R. Miller the units crack welfare and recreation officer attended to all details. He was ably assisted by the MAA department. As port and starboard liberty was then in effect, two dances were necessary, the first falling on the evening of June 23, 1945 and the second followed a week later. Over 200 couples were in attendance the first night and well over 250 couples attended the second affair, the girls taking in both parties. As always, transportation was the bugaboo on the Island and the Bermuda young ladies who came from all the island parishes bid their goodbyes at the Belmont boat landing or from the steps of the NOB busses engaged to take them home. The Marines, as usual, were the guests of the Seabees.

One of the recreational facilities on the base so often taken for granted but still so very important was the nightly showing of movies in the Open Air Theater. Though many miles away from the big cities, the men still were seeing the latest movies, often seeing them before the folks at home. For many, it has probably been the only time they have sat under a beautiful moon or in a pouring rain and enjoyed a movie.

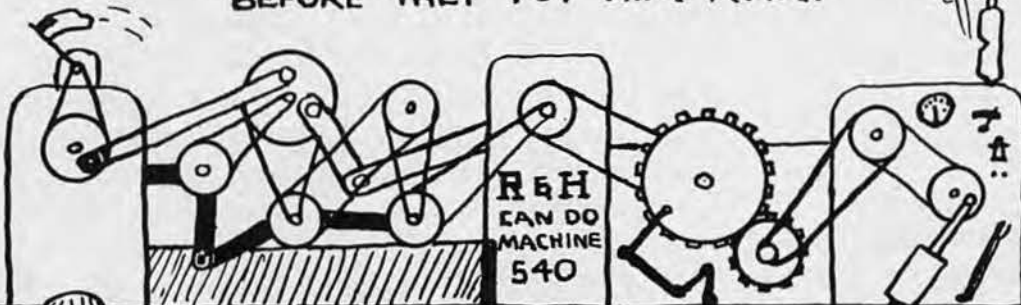
During the summer of 1945 the old outdoor theatre adjacent to the No. 2 galley was torn down but not before a brand new CB designed and CB built 700-man theatre had been erected. The new theatre overlooked Little Sound and was situated next to the former Marine warehouse at the west end of the causeway. As was customary at the NOB, the Seabees furnished the projection operators.

During their stay in Bermuda, the men often wished they were elsewhere because they thought it was monotonous and lonely at times, but this recreation, for those who would accept it, made life pleasant at times, a lot more pleasant than it would have been without these things to do.

U.S. UNFAIR TO HONORABLE JAPANESE.
 EITHER GIVE UP USING ATOMIC BOMBS
 OR SEABEES, OR WE APPEAL!



DADDY INVENTED IT IN BERMUDA JUST
 BEFORE THEY PUT HIM AWAY



RR (T) (CB)



**BEE LEAVE IT
 OR KNOT**
 WAYNE

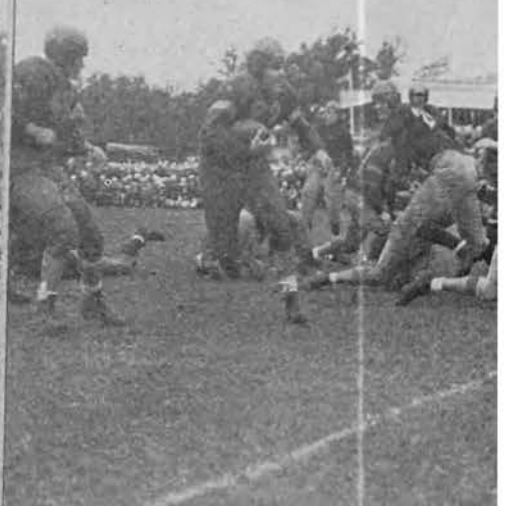
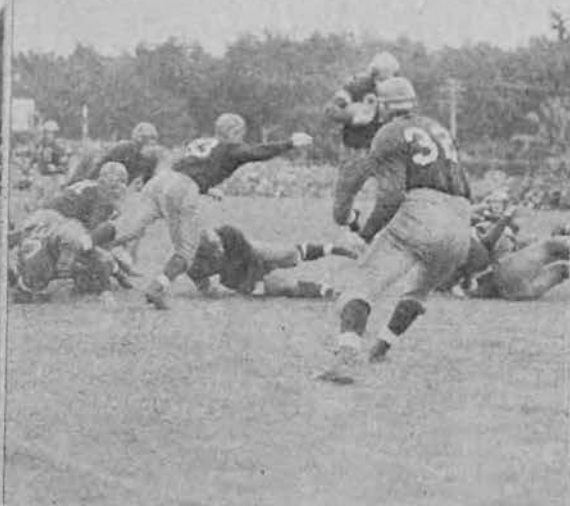
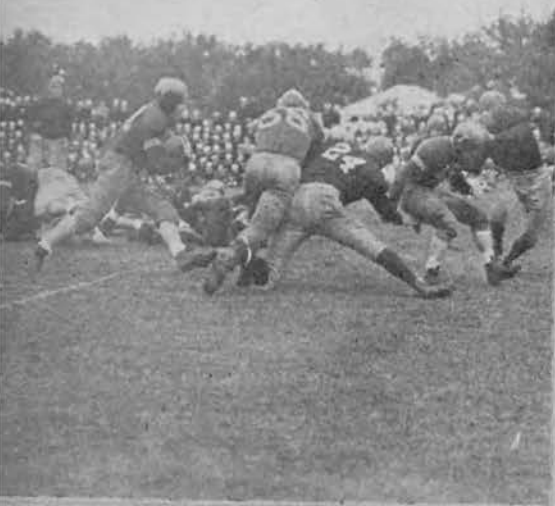


LILY BOWL GAME

January 1945

Navy 39

Army 6





THE 1945 BASEBALL TEAM

Front row, left to right: Ray Wisniewski, outfield; Lou Dvorak, shortstop; Bob Bauchens, second base; "Shorty" Reichert, third base; "Doc" Gericke, second base; Ray Goss, outfield. Middle row: Johnny Porter, pitcher; Stu Eppinga, third base; W. R. Louis, shortstop; "Birdie" Soloman, catcher; Guy Taylor, outfield; Bill Fredin, outfield. Back row: Coach "Red" Stright; Garland Feigenbaum, pitcher; Elmer Mechan, first base; Reece Wood, catcher; Dom Beneventi, outfield; Mel Armstrong, outfield; Hubert Dennis, outfield; Dick Prickett, outfield; and, Manager Lowell Gingrich. Team's mascot "Red" in the foreground.



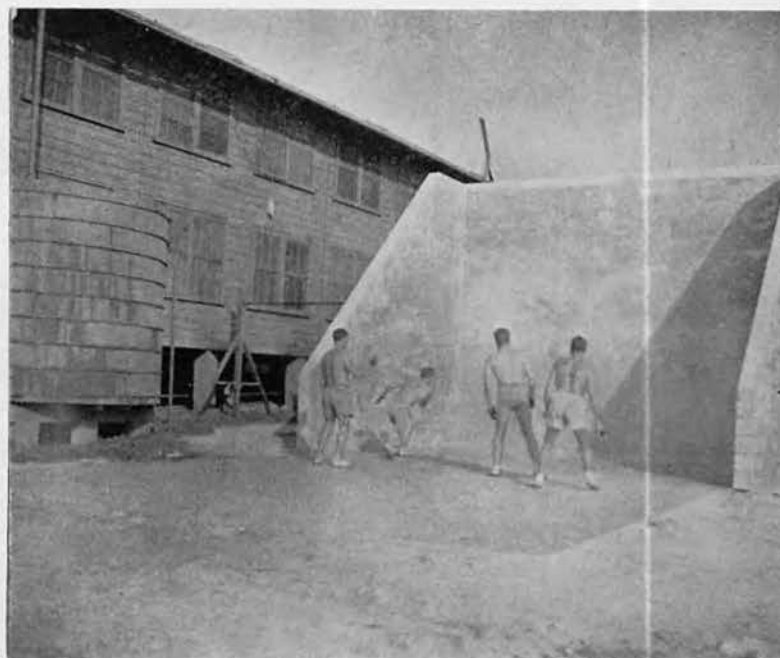


THE 1944 SOFTBALL TEAM

Front row, left to right: Al Vinson; "Pat" Patrick; George Braxton; Irv Schneider; Dom Beneventi and Bobby Bauchens. Back row: "Gunner" Smith; "Chubby" Thompson; Lou Le Winter; Ray Curtis; Marv Shelley; Bill Anderson and "Sims" Armstrong. Not shown are Lou Dvorak and Lee Thompson. Vinson, Braxton, Schneider, Beneventi, Dvorak and Lee Thompson were selected on the Navy's All-Star Softball team.



"Tiger" leads a cheer



Volleying on handball court



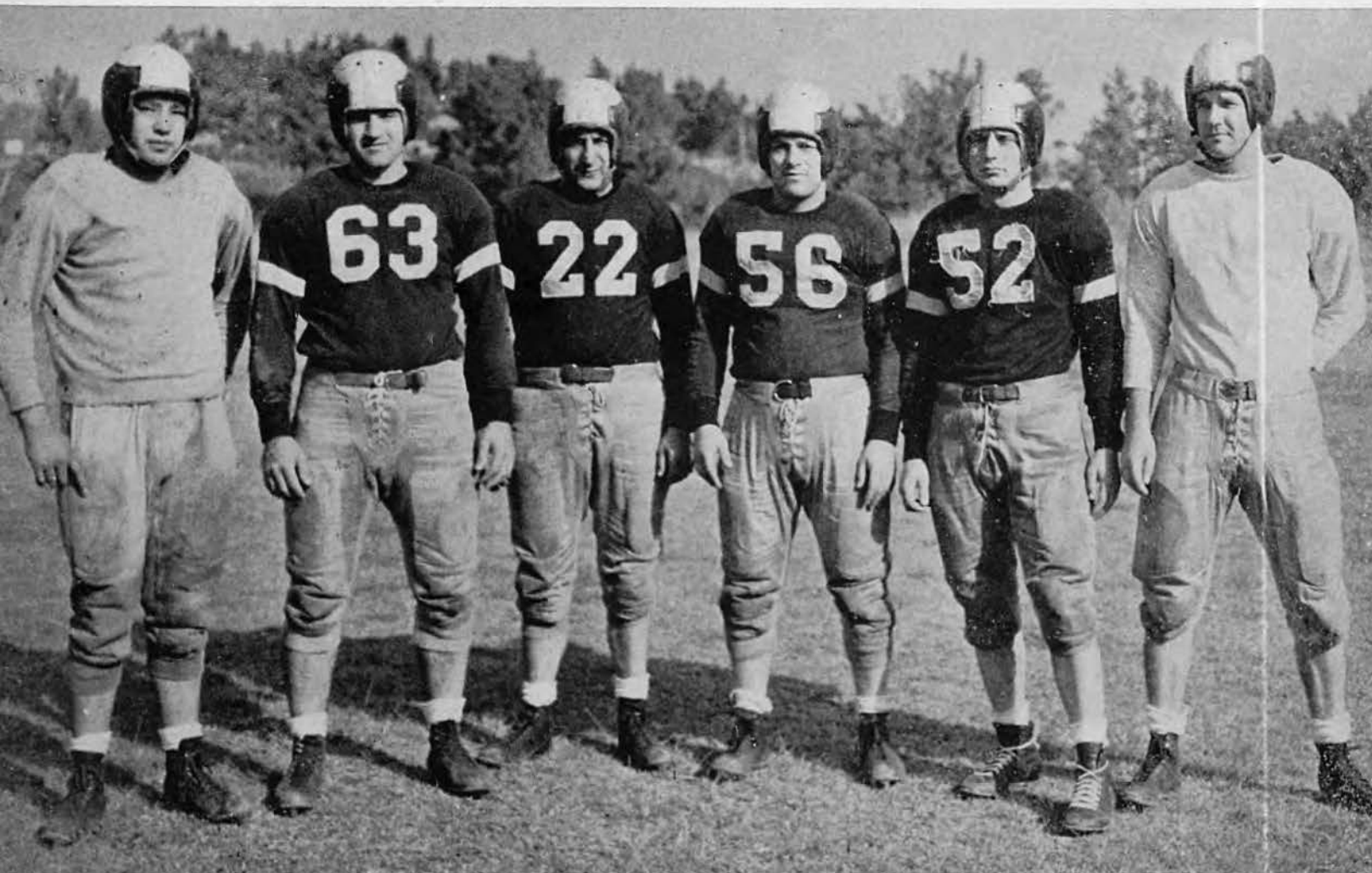
The Seabee basketball team entered in the Inter-Service League. Front row, left to right: "Doc" Gericke; Jack Eaton; Ted Stoddard and Bill Fredin. Back row: Stu Eppinga; Tom Dufficy; Coach Lowell Gingrich; Lou Dvorak and Dick Prickett. Stoddard was a member of the Navy's All-Star team, he and Fredin leading the team in scoring.



The Seabee basketball team entered in the N.O.B. league. Front row, left to right: Don Jeffers; Jack Eaton; Stu Eppinga and Mike Jacoby. Back row: Bill Fisher; Gene Bigelow; Johnny Foley and Mel Armstrong.



The Navy Lily Bowl football team, victorious over Army in the 1945 Lily Bowl Game, by the score 39 to 6. It was the Navy's second win in three Lily Bowl contests. Lt. C. L. Updegraph was the officer in charge of the team, Lt. George McKinnon the head coach assisted by CSP John Boyd. Boyd and CSP Chet Wimberg were elected co-captains of the squad.



Seabees on the Lily Bowl squad, left to right: John Porter, tackle; Ed Zak, center; Tom Mazarelli, guard; Lowell Gingrich, guard; Norton White, guard and Otis Meissner, halfback.



★ SHOW TIME ★

Many celebrities of stage, screen and radio gave generously of their time and talent through the courtesy of the U.S.O. Camp Shows to entertain the boys stationed in Bermuda. A wide variety of numbers was always characteristic of the U.S.O. Shows, and every member of an audience was sure to find a bit that suited his particular taste. Some of the well known entertainers coming to Bermuda were glamorous Linda Darnell, Conrad Thiebault and Gypsy Markoff.

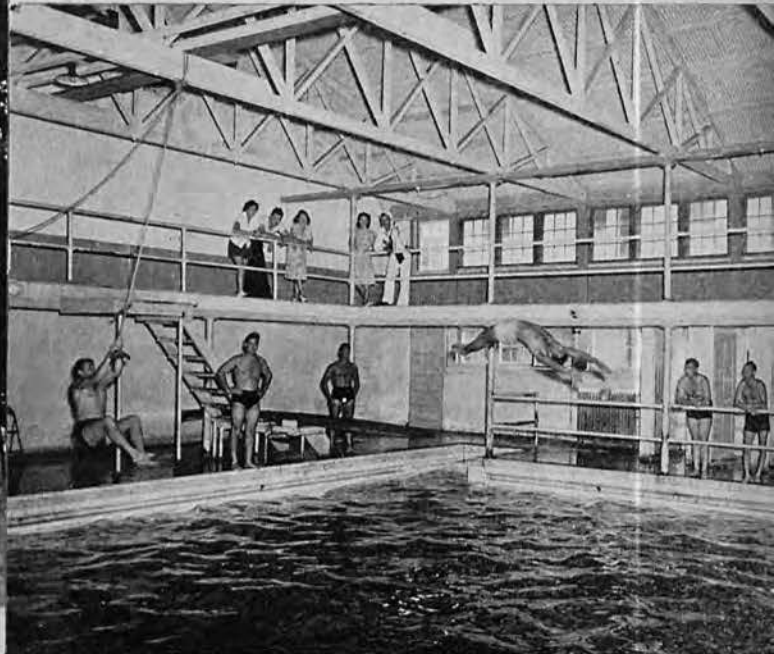






ST. GEORGE U.S.O.

Well known to many peace time visitors to Bermuda is the famous St. George's Hotel overlooking the picturesque St. George's Harbor. The United Service Organizations used the facilities of this hotel for a serviceman's club, where dances, study classes and quiet rooms were always available. The outstanding feature of the St. George's Hotel was the indoor swimming pool, and it was here many a soldier and sailor bathed in its crystal clear water.



FLATTS U.S.O.

The Flatts U.S.O. was famous for its Sunday afternoon programs. Keynoting the programs were the Sunday afternoon dances and swimming parties, in fact these activities made it a "must" on many a sailor's itinerary. The members of the U.S.O. Camp Shows used the Flatts as their headquarters. With the hopes of sighting a world famous entertainer the Flatts became a worth-while stop and a place of interest.

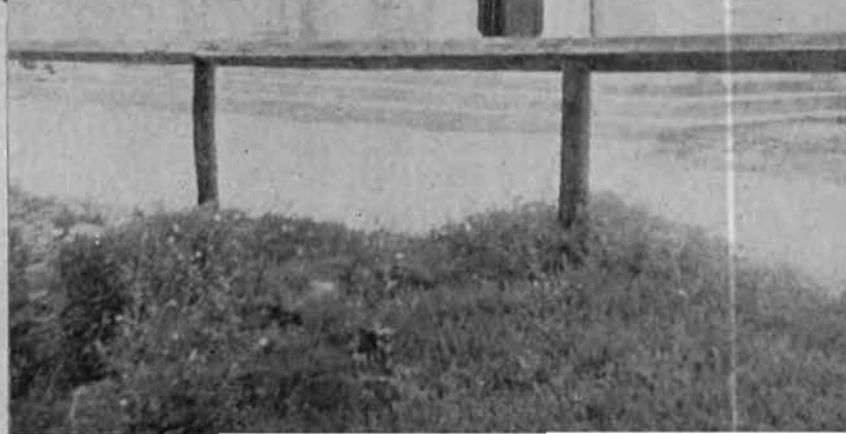
HAMILTON UNITED SERVICES CLUB

One of the first service organizations visited by a man on his introduction to the Bermuda scene was the United Services Club in Hamilton. Men serving a tour of duty in Bermuda will long remember this club as the meeting place of old friends. We always found the Hamilton USC the place for that "pick-me-up" snack and good comradeship after a good siege of sight seeing.



SOMERSET I.O.D.E. AND U.S.O.

Forty five minutes by foot or twenty minutes by the Bermuda "flyer" from the Main Gate of the Naval Operating Base was the most popular mid-week U.S.O. for the Seabees. Operated by the International Order of the Daughters of the Empire and the United Service Organizations this club featured Tuesday night dances, games and crafts. It was here that many a budding artist learned of his hidden talents.

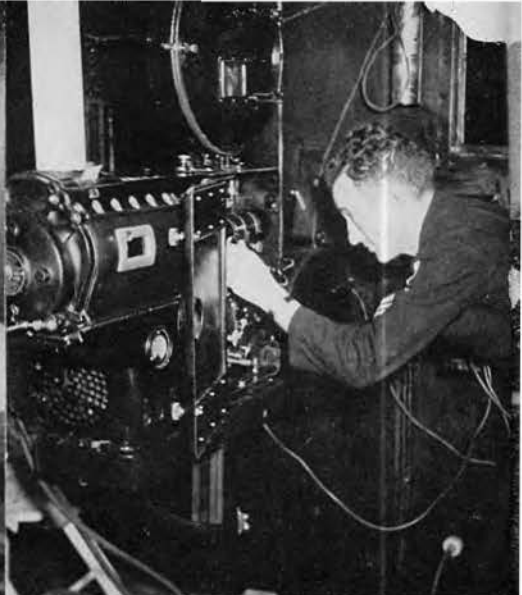




All sports served



Embryo photographers



The man behind the projector



Evidence to confirm the fish stories



Riddles Bay dance



Music, no matter where, for the Seabees



Valentines Dance



Refreshments after a U.S.O. show



Pay Day!!



The "list" is up!



Most popular men of the unit



"Red" dog and his master



Bond rally after pay day



"NAZIS QUIT"



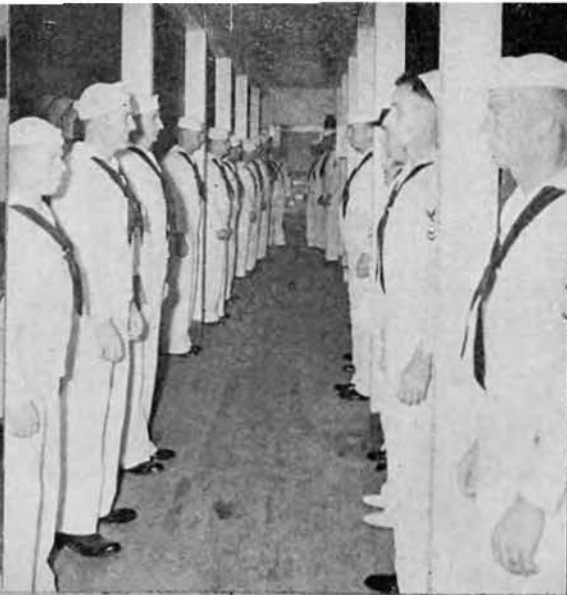
Security Patrol on watch



Inspection tomorrow



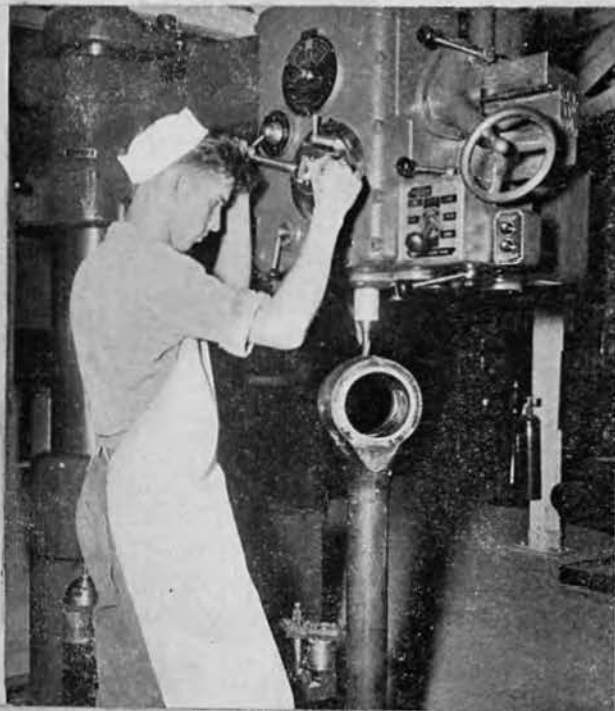
Drawing lucky leave numbers



Standing inspection



Another lucky winner!



Radial drill press



Seabee a la "Esquire"

Navy "lend lease"



The "Blue Room"



Free "Cokes"





"Chow" time in Mess Hall



Admiral Braisted joins the line



Entertaining the USO performers



Lord Burghley inspects the Marines



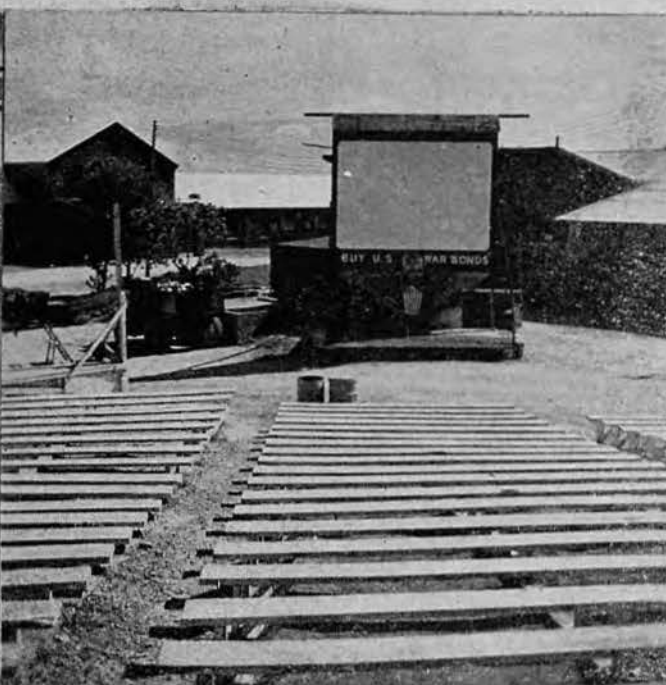
The leave drawing winner



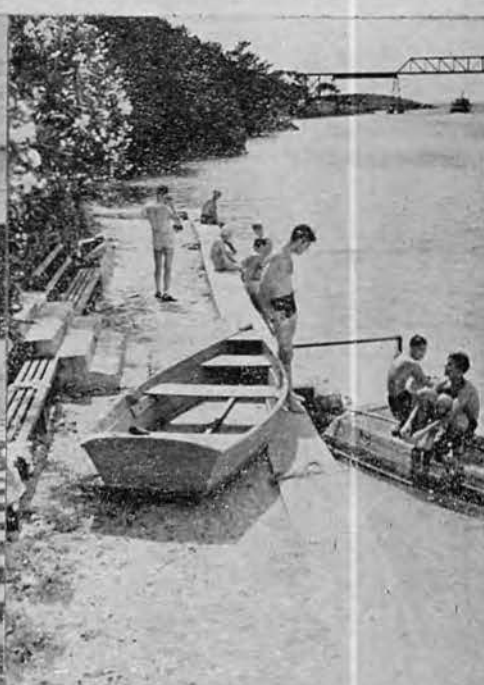
Platoon 4, Co. "A"



"Going formal"—MAA Staff



Seabee Outdoor Theatre



Always time to row and swim



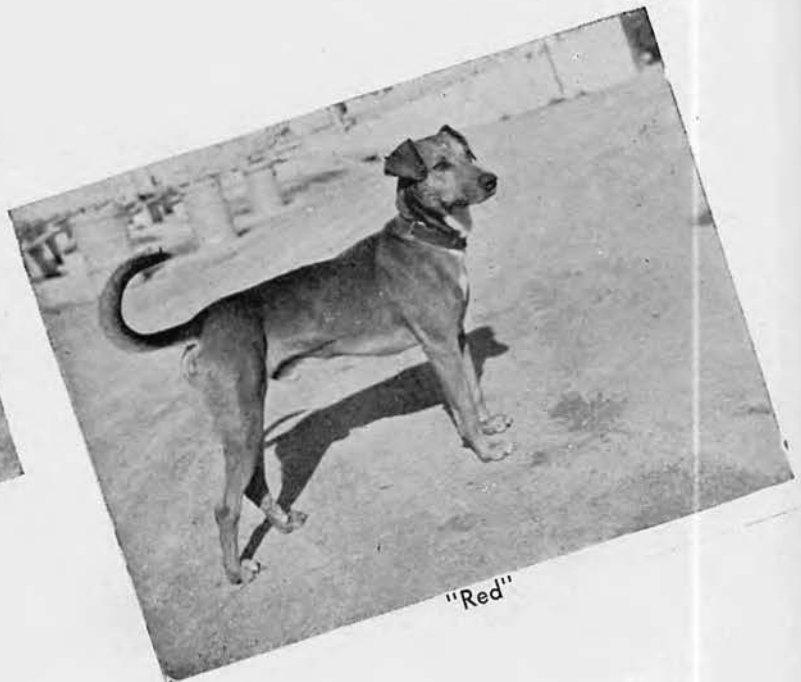
"Nancy's litter"



"Billy the Kid"



"Tiger"



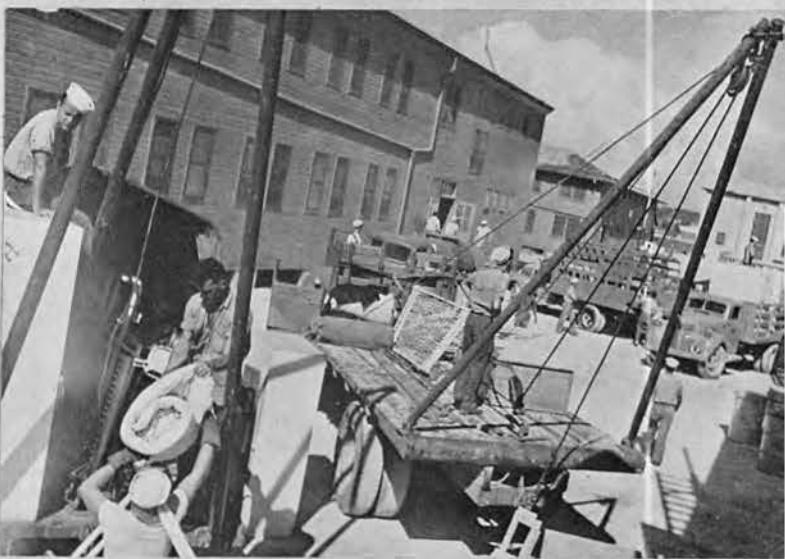
"Red"

"Smokey, Sr."

"Red" dislikes air guns

"Smokey, Jr. (?)"

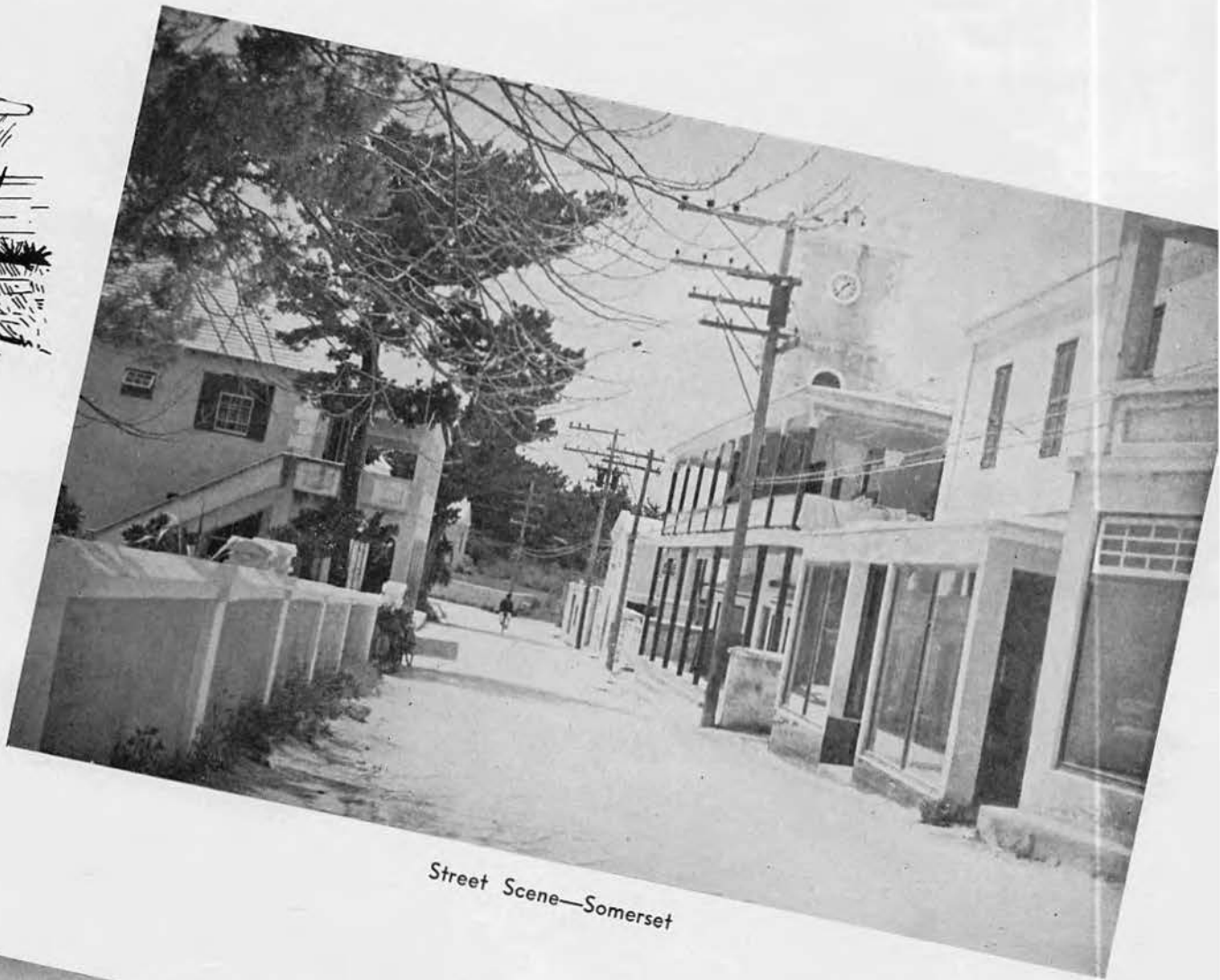






AROUND *the* **ROCK**



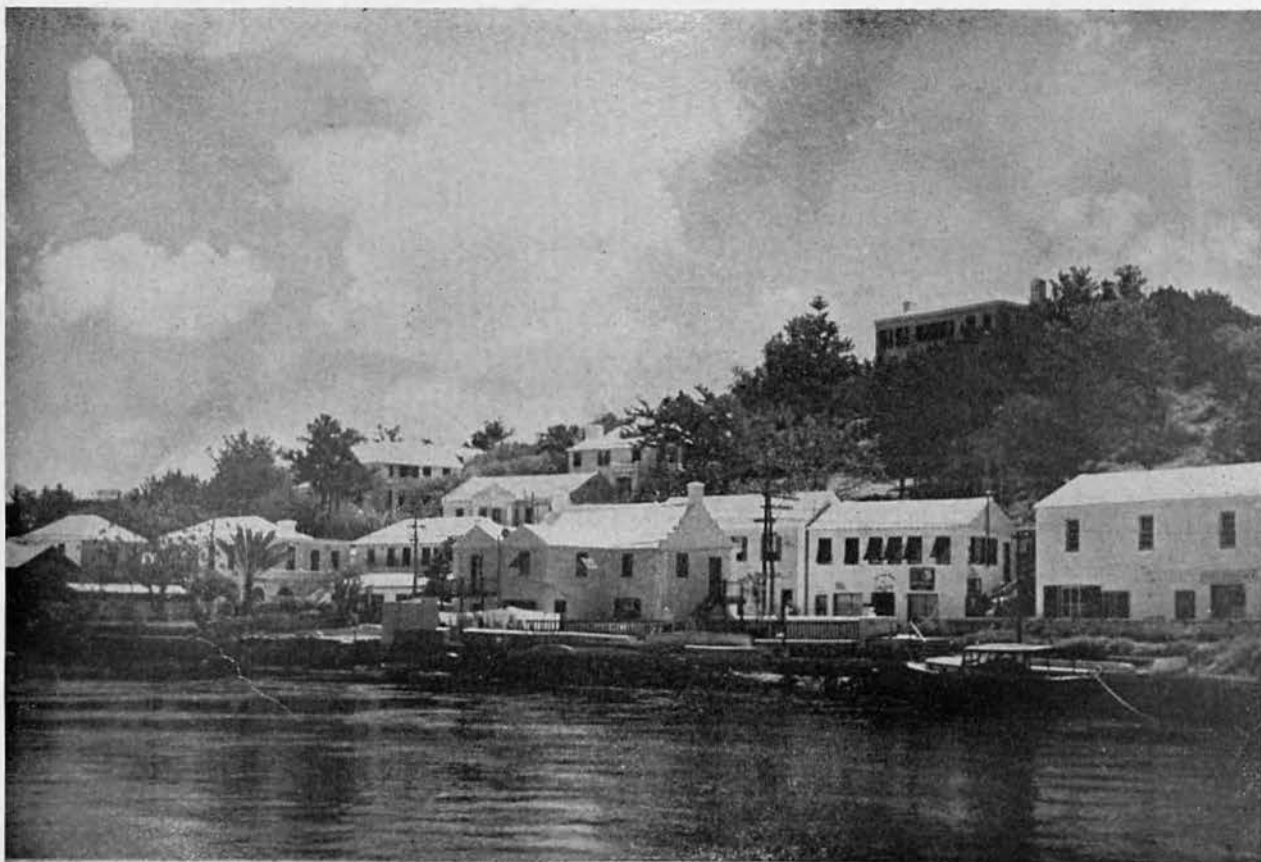


Street Scene—Somerset



Bermuda Inlet

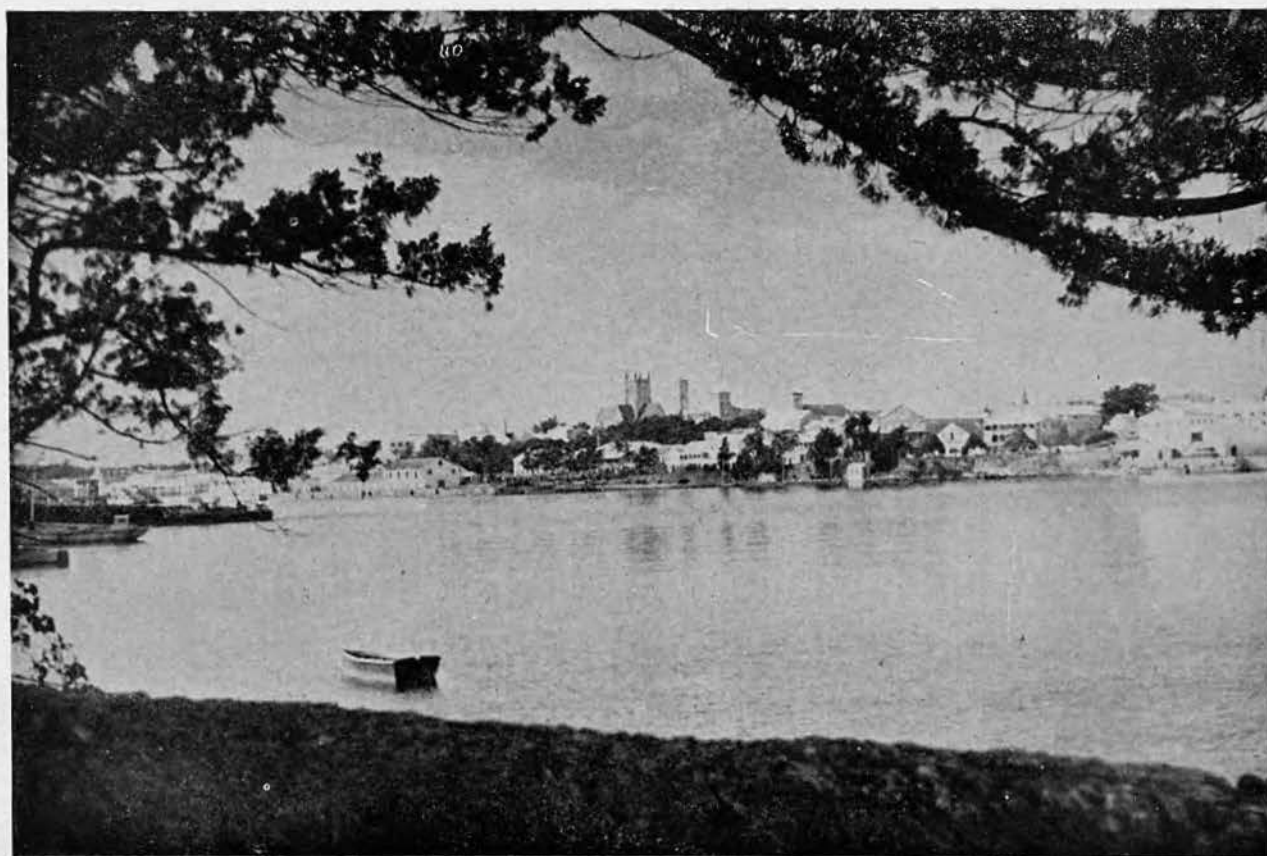




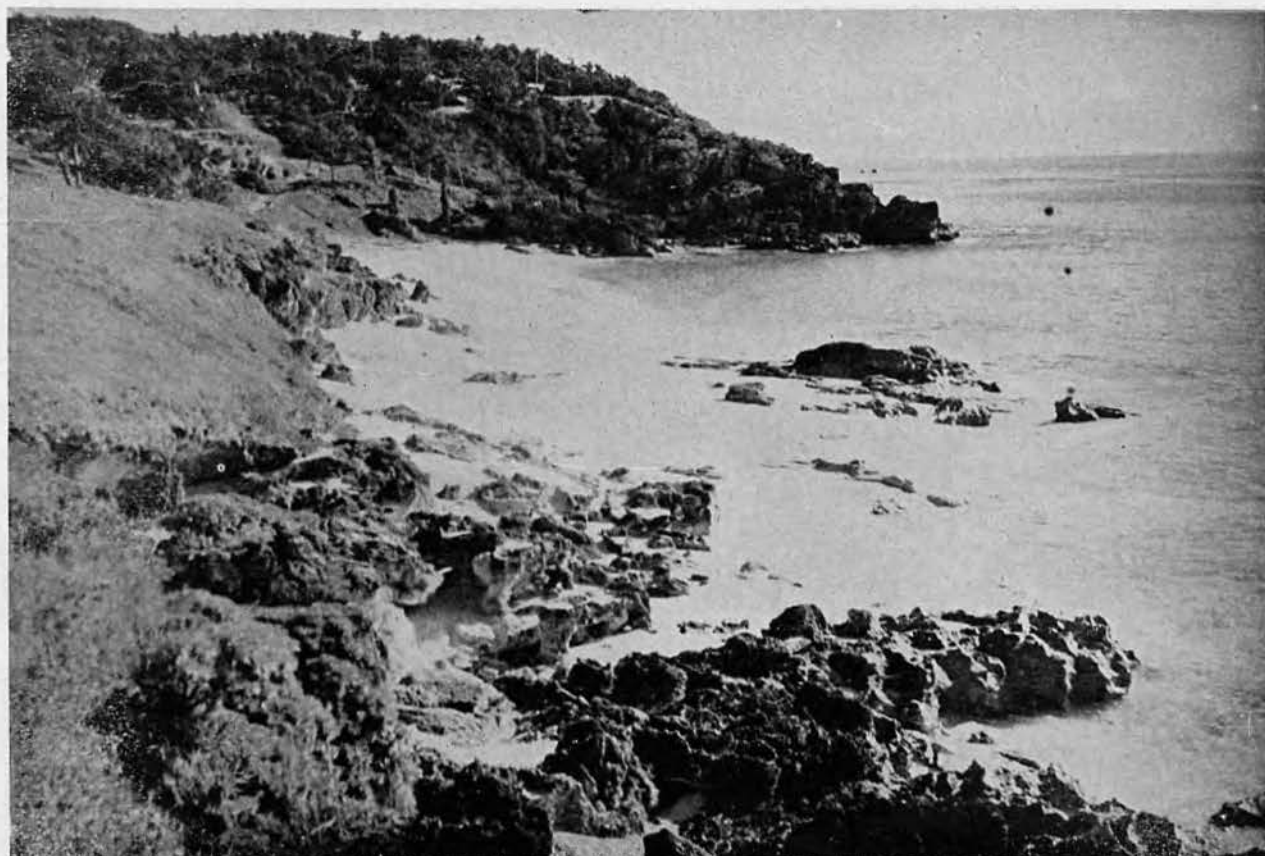
The Flatts



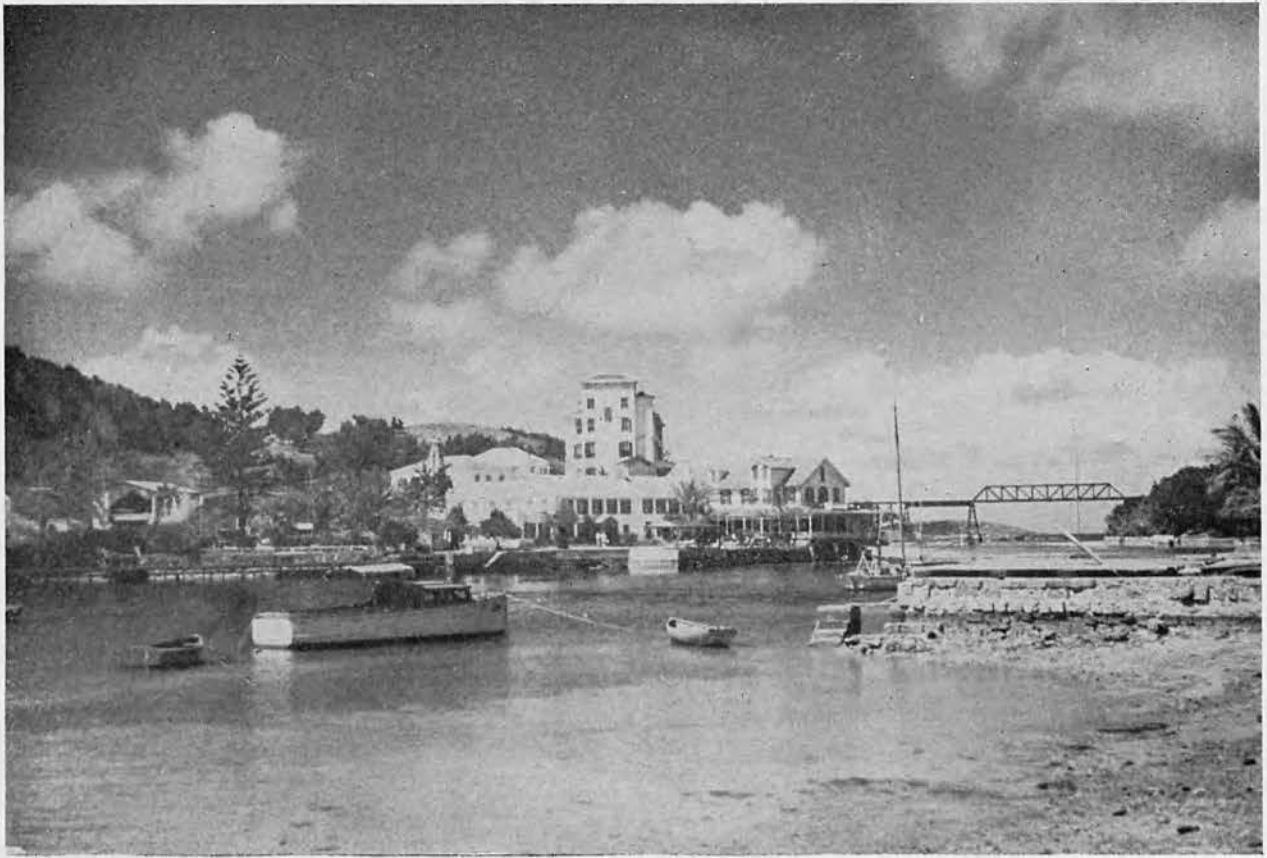
Summerside



Hamilton Skyline



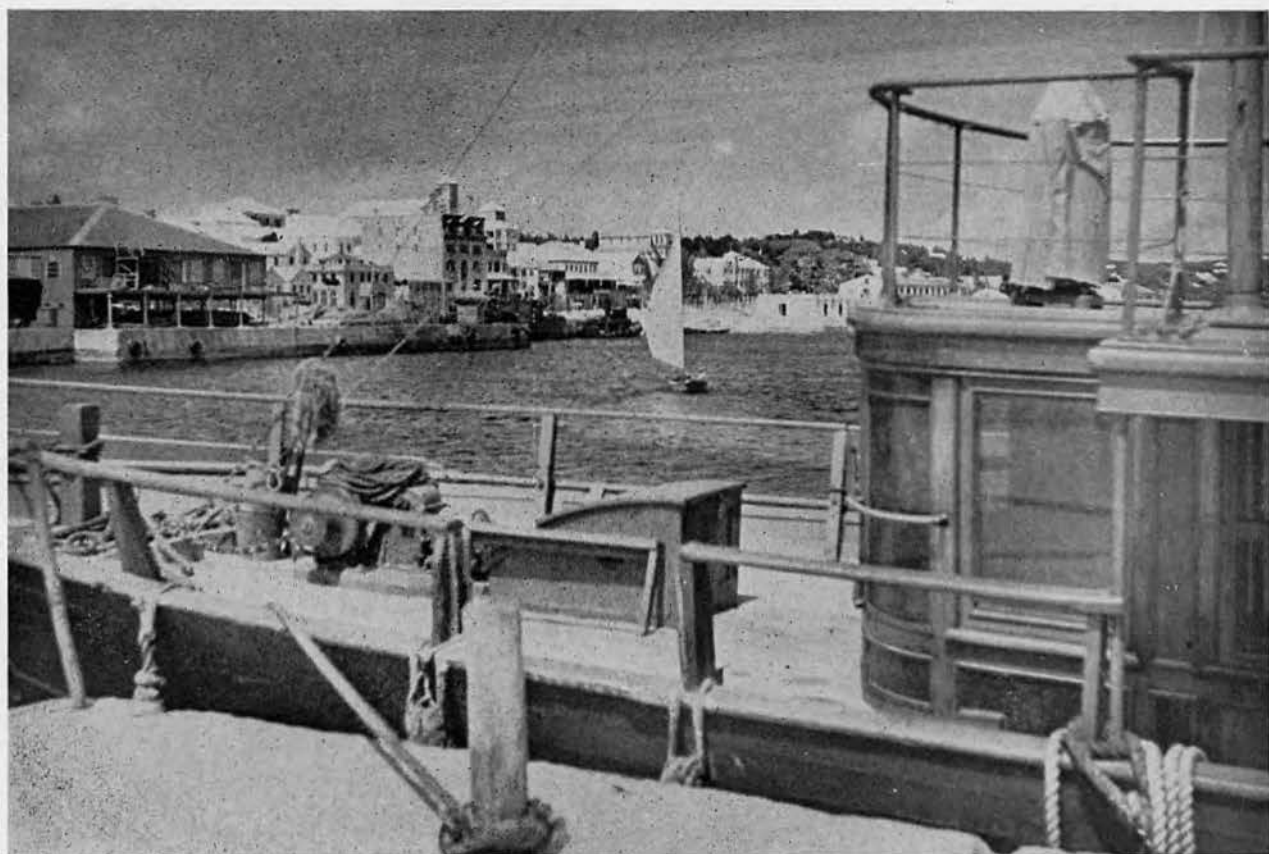
South Shore



Flatt's U.S.O.



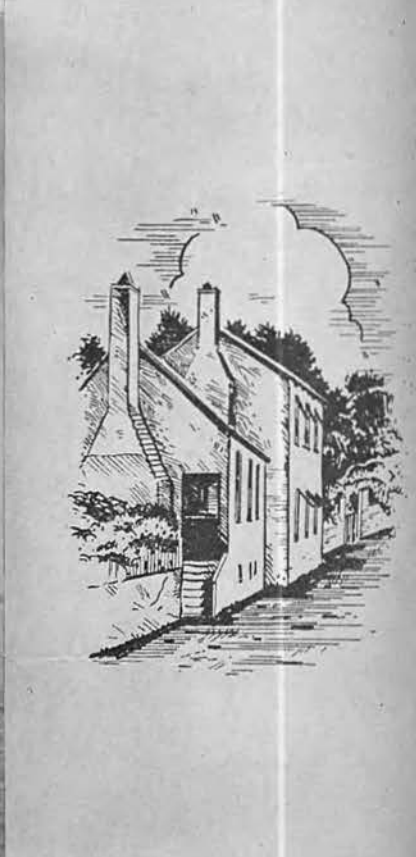
Bermudian passage



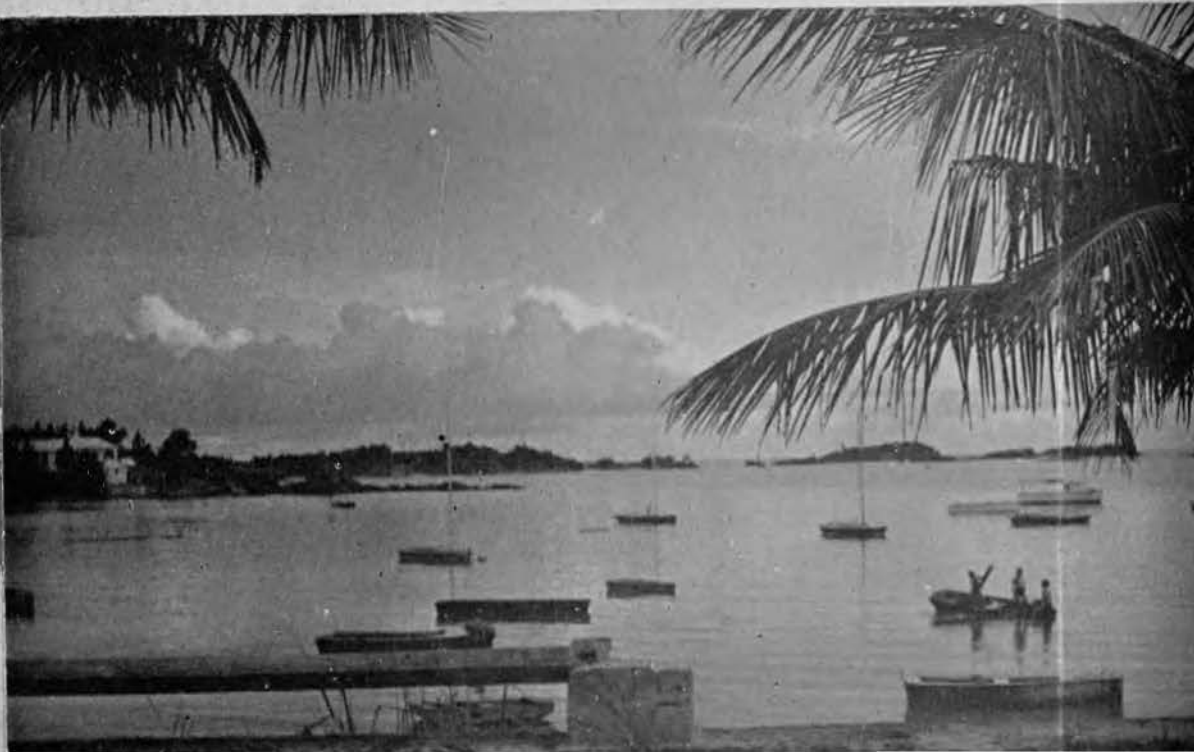
Hamilton Harbour



A By-Way







MUSTER

John J. White, Jr., Lieut. Comdr., 520 26th Road South, Arlington, Virginia
 Russell F. Hughes, Lieut., Naugatuck, Connecticut
 Cecil L. Moyes, Lieut., Union Star, Missouri
 John F. Changstrom, Lieut. (jg), 2232 South 32nd Avenue, Omaha, Nebraska
 Ralph E. Smith, Lieut. (jg), 50 Kent Road, Upper Darby, Pennsylvania
 Charles V. Turner, Lieut. (jg), 1913 Grove Avenue, Richmond, Virginia
 Orrin K. Dixon, Ch. Carp., 7036 N. W. Fifth Avenue, Miami, Florida
 George E. Imhoff, Ch. Carp., 1020 Bell Street, Mt. Vernon, Illinois
 Harold R. Miller, Ch. Carp., 3022 McGee St., Kansas City, Missouri
 Edward J. Flanagan, Carp., 8820 S. Hamilton Ave., Chicago, Illinois

A

Abersfeller, Ernest G., 10110 Hereford Pl., Silver Springs, Md.
 Adams, Charles "B.", 131 Immanuel St., Vestal, Knoxville, Ky.
 Adams, George D., 4111 11th St. Pl., Des Moines, Iowa
 Adams, Jack E., c/o Lois Smilek, 4014 Cana St., Houston, Tex.
 Addison, Alwyn K., Box 41, Caldwell, Texas
 Aldrich, Edwin C., Box 9, Tintle Ave., Hewitt, New Jersey
 Allen, Virgil H., Act. #1, Navy #138, Fleet Post Office, N. Y.
 Anders, Howard E., Telephone, Texas
 Anderson, Carl P., 279 Luedtke Ave., Racine, Wisconsin
 Anderson, Arthur G., 311 Cass St., Lemont, Illinois
 Anderson, David F., 137 Plymouth St., Holbrook, Mass.
 Anderson, Nels A., RFD #2, Box 178, Pine City, Minn.
 Anderson, Noel D., 205 Elm St., Duncan, Oklahoma
 Anderson, William A., 211 Bay St., Santa Monica, California
 Andreas, William J., Hudson River State Hospital, New York
 Andraesen, Kenneth R., 3140 Lyndale Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn.
 Armstrong, Melvin L., 223 Fifth St., Cedar City, Utah
 Arnost, John J., 906 Wilson Ave., Menominee, Michigan
 Aydelott, Ira G., 431 College St., Wachschie, Texas
 Ayers, Raymond M., Rt. #7, Box 826, Portland, Oregon

B

Bach, Oscar J., 301 Charles St., Waterloo, Iowa
 Badia, Anthony M., Box 777, Houston, Penna.
 Baker, Murl E., Box 122, Shipshewana, Indiana
 Banfill, David P., 4267 Orleans, Grand Rapids, Michigan
 Banister, Emory L., Coolidge, Georgia
 Bargas, Mauro, 2096 Vermont St., Detroit, Michigan
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