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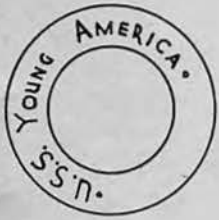
U.S. NAVY

アメリカ海軍

71st

BATTALION

第七十一大隊



SAMOA PAGO PAGO

TUTUILA ROSE

LUNGA BAY BEACH COCONUT GROVE

TETERE BEACH KUKUM DOCK

KOKOMBONA BEACH

AUGUSTA

EMDRESS BOUGAINVILLE CAMP DYSENTERY
TOROKINA AIRFIELD

BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS
PURATA



MILNE

BAY

PIVA BOMBER STRIP TOROKINA POINT

CAROLINE ISLANDS
PACIFIC
MOG MOG

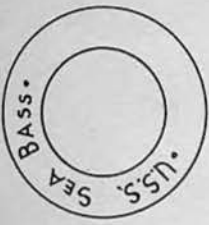


ENIWETOK IS.

MARSHALL ISLANDS
SPARRY

ULITHI IS.





LORENGAU
MANUSAPITYLU
LOS NEGROS
HARENGAN
IRALTA
ANDRILLO

LOMBRUM
POINT CAPITALAI

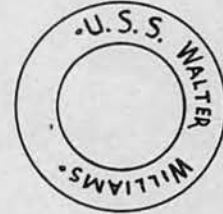
KORUNIAU
HAUWEI
ONNETA

NEW HEBRIDES
EFATE
ESPIRITU SANTOIS.

SEA ADLER

OCEAN

BAY



RYUKYU
RATTO
YAMADA
OKINAWA
Naha
ATSUBARU
YONATAN AIRFIELD
IHI
KAWA
BUONO
TAGO

SOUTH

CHINA

SEA



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U.S. NAVY
アメリカ海軍

71ST
BATTALION
第七十一大隊



To all hands:

The entire staff takes great pleasure in presenting to the Members of the 71st U. S. Naval Construction Battalion, to their families and to their friends this Book Of Memoirs.

It is a feeling of satisfaction and of modest pride that our efforts have manifested the hours we spent in formulating every intricate detail . . . whether it be classified as photography, narrations, art and design work, lay-out and production or reproduction plans. In lieu of the fact that our Battalion was dissolving rapidly, many personal pictures of Shops, Crews, and Road Gangs could not have been taken. Kindly bear in mind this one thought . . . that at least you do have the one book of memories so eagerly desired and if it brings pleasant moments to each one of you . . . then rest assured that each and every one responsible for this presentation will have felt that it was a fine job . . . the last job . . . "Well Done".

In closing, let us remember the age old adage of sage, Cicero . . . and apply it to the Seabees all over the world; "The Greater the Difficulty . . . the Greater the Glory . . ."

Sunrise crowning lofty Mount Bagana, overlooking famous Marine Boulevard.





DEDICATED:

To the men of the 71st Naval Construction Battalion who gave their lives while engaged in carrying the banner of liberty and freedom in its advance to victory over the islands of the Pacific.

Clark, Hal Jr. S2c
Hushman, George W. MM2c
Davidson, William J. SF1c
Jones, Dave C. F1c
Agrimonti, Louis EM2c
Geil, Francis J. S2c
Rogers, Mark J. SF2c
Trenta, Joseph S. S1c

COMMANDING OFFICERS OF THE



CAPTAIN

Austin Brockenbrough, Jr.

CEC USNR

I would like to express to each and every man in this Battalion, my sincere appreciation for your loyalty and cooperation in making this Battalion a success. You have done each job assigned in a capable, efficient and outstanding manner, no matter under what conditions the work had to be done. I believe that the 71st Construction Battalion has made a reputation for living up to the highest traditions of the Seabees and I can only say, "Yours has been a job well done."

Austin Brockenbrough Jr.



71st NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION

CAPTAIN

James F. Cunniff

CEC USNR

To the men of the 71st Naval Construction Battalion with best wishes and regards and appreciation for the privilege of having served with you.

J. F. Cunniff



C O M M A N D I N G O F F I C E R



LIEUTENANT COMMANDER

Michael A. Dandry

CEC USNR

It has been a pleasure to have led the 71st N.C.B. in the closing days of a glorious tour of duty, good luck to you all.

Michael A. Dandry



NAVAL UNIT COMMENDATION



Prepared—25 February 1946

Signed 8 MAR 1946

Pers 328--87a

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the
71ST NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION
for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For exceptionally meritorious service in support of military operations of the III Amphibious Corps against enemy Japanese forces in the Ryukyu Islands from April 1 to June 27, 1945. Employed essentially on combat engineering missions throughout the Okinawa Campaign, the 71st Naval Construction Battalion was responsible for the improvement and maintenance of thirty-eight miles of narrow, native roads vital to the uninterrupted movement into forward areas of combat supplies and divisions during a period of extremely heavy rainfall. Carrying out a large proportion of this military engineering task in the hours of darkness and during frequent blackouts imposed by enemy air attacks, the stouthearted officers and men of the unit risked the additional hazards of hostile artillery, sniper fire and actual combat to keep this main supply route of the Corps passable to traffic. By their unremitting efforts and technical skill, the 71st Naval Construction Battalion made available the continued use of the only route on the entire TENTH Army front kept open during two weeks of excessive rains and rendered service of inestimable value to the success of the Okinawa Campaign."

All personnel attached to and serving with the 71st Naval Construction Battalion from April 1 to June 27, 1945, are hereby authorized to wear the NAVAL UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

Copy to:
Pers 328
Pers 68
Public Relations, Navy Dept.
Secretaries Files
Ref: DDAsdMtg of 15 Nov 1945
end on 10 on ComenIIPhCorps
ltr 1355 PE 1543 of 29 June 1945

James Forrestal

James Forrestal
Secretary of the Navy

INDOCTRINATION AND TRAINING

By Robert O. Lunn

The 71st United States Naval Construction Battalion was activated 28 April 1943 at the United States Naval Construction Training Center, Williamsburg, Virginia, where the majority of the men received their "boot" training. "Boot" is the term not too affectionately used in lieu of indoctrination. First there was the induction area, where you walked a mile to the mess hall, slept in drafty barracks, received a thorough physical examination, and were issued your first Navy clothing; then "boot",—six long weeks of close-order and extended-order drilling, shots, jungle training, marching, manual of arms, the square needle again, semaphore, marching, machete practice, lectures, more shots and marching. The balance of the unit matriculated at Camps Allen, Bradford and Endicott. As goes the saying, "Third time never fails," so it was with the 71st, the numerical designation having been assigned to two previous groups which were redistributed before being actually commissioned. However, we here are concerned with the official 71st Battalion, with men from Maine to California of many nationalities, creeds and occupations, which has cut for itself a deep niche in the annals of Naval history.

From Peary the Battalion travelled by rail to Camp Endicott, Davisville, Rhode Island, arriving there 29 April 1943. There followed six weeks of rigorous combat training and advanced schooling. On 8 May, a dress review was held on the Camp Endicott parade ground, and the unit was presented its colors. While at Endicott, a group of 71st men, one hundred forty-one strong, in what has since been traditional fashion,

smashed all records existing at that time for the erection of an aeroplane catapulting mechanism at the Charlestown, Rhode Island, airport. At the completion of the training period, pre-embarkation leave was given all men whose homes were in the eastern portion of the country. Additional personnel were added to the roster to fill out the Battalion complement; and the Battalion entrained 23 June for Camp Parks, Pleasanton, California, travelling in three sections, and arriving 29 June.

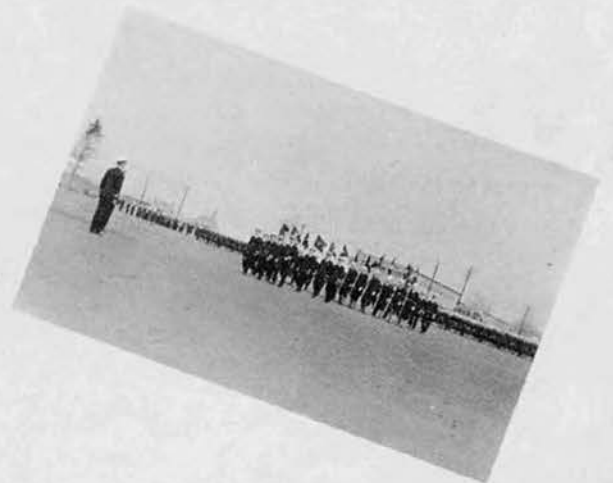
Our stay at Camp Parks was to be a brief one. Upon arrival, all personnel not previously having taken it were given their leave; and routine training was continued for the balance. While at Parks, a detachment of 71st men assisted in salvage operations on a dry-dock grounded at Bolinas Bay, and were highly commended for their work. Infantry gear was issued all hands, and the Battalion then moved on to the Naval Advanced Base Depot, Camp Rousseau, Port Huene, California, for final outfitting and pre-embarkation training, arriving 10 July 1943.

While at Camp Rousseau, LST loading and unloading, and invasion and beachhead tactics were extensively practiced at nearby Point Magu; and further technical training was received. The Battalion added to its record of accomplishments by assisting in forest-fire fighting in the vicinity of Fillmore, California; and by furnishing a detail of men to enlarge the facilities of the Hollywood Guild Canteen. Just prior to embarkation, the Battalion was attached to Acorn 13; and further replacements were received.





Little did you realize . . . as your colors passed our eyes; you carried our banners, the two we highly prize. Little did you know, as we watched you go . . . you symbolized the freedoms . . . against a treacherous foe. Four color bearers, bearing freedom's four: ne'er to fear, ne'er to want, seek your religion, and be free to use your voice . . .





On that memorable date, which need not be recalled to anyone's mind (confidentially it was 7 September 1943), the SS Young America cleared port and set sail for parts unknown bearing the 71st Battalion. On 15 September we entered the Royal Domain of Neptune Rex, Ruler of the Raging Main, and all polliwogs became hardened shellbacks in a ceremony in which everyone from the Skipper down participated, though some had to be "persuaded."

19 September we entered the picturesque landlocked harbor of Tutuila, British Samoa. In the harbor was a city made almost mythical in story and song, Pago Pago; but we were not destined to see it while there. After two days at anchor, during which time native boys paddled alongside in their outriggers peddling coconuts and diving for coins, the Young America again put to sea, this time with a DE for company. On 23 September we crossed the International Date Line into the August Domain of the Golden Dragons, thereby becoming members of their Order, and qualified to learn all the "Ancient Mysteries of the East" (and how).

We next dropped the hook 26 September at Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides. It was there that we received our first mail from home in what we then thought was a long time; and all hands were busy reading and replying during most of our week at anchor, which was well, as there was no opportunity for enlisted men to go ashore. Espiritu was still an active base in those days, and there was considerable activity to occupy our attention.

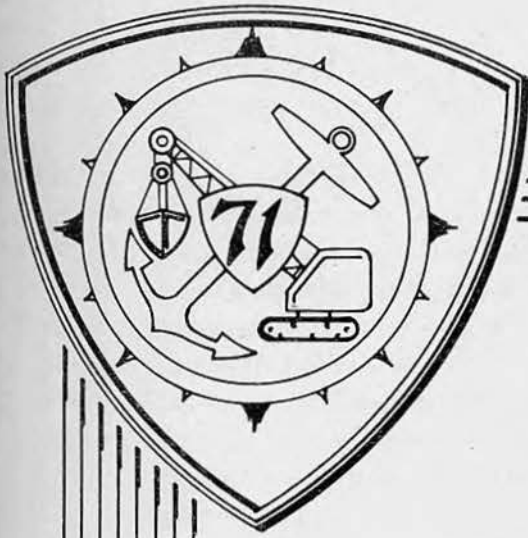
At about noon on 3 October, we left the harbor of Espiritu Santo and headed south until about 1600 when we met our convoy and swung back to a northwesterly course. One of the few exciting moments in an otherwise routine voyage took place on one of the

following nights when the boys sleeping topside awoke to find a freighter bearing down on us. After much blowing of whistles and blinking of lights, the freighter resumed her proper position in the convoy. The entire voyage's only other thrills and chills were provided by two uneventful alerts.

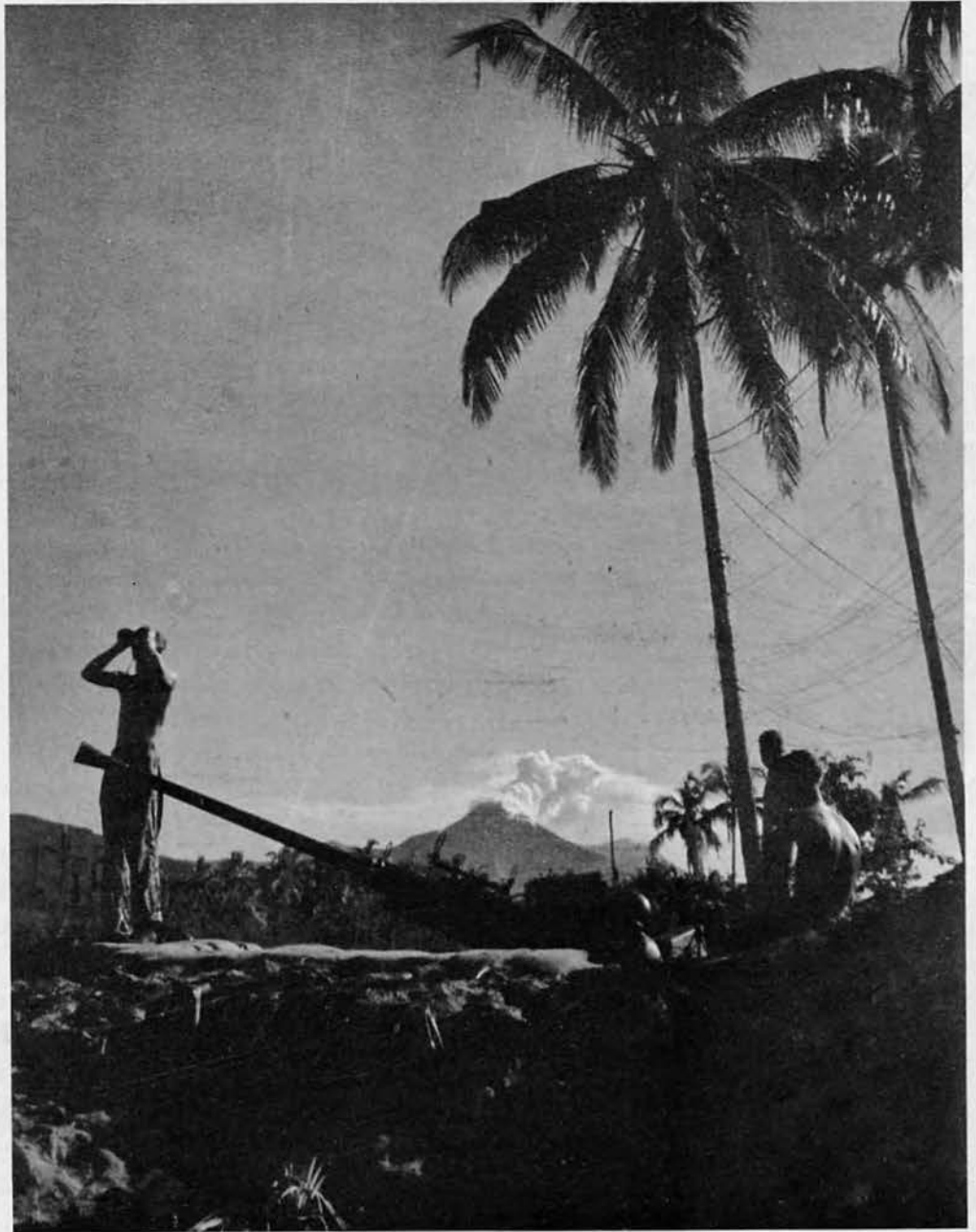
On 5 October 1943, at about 1600, we dropped anchor off Kokombona Beach, Guadalcanal, British Solomon Islands; and after an early supper on board, we went down the scramble-nets and were taken ashore by waiting LCM's, landing at a spot known as Maggot Beach, because of the numerous Japs resting beneath its sands. Before the last ashore could make a shelter in the gathering dusk, a very heavy shower broke; and as many as could be accommodated took refuge in the messhall built by the 82nd Const. Battalion. Those who were able to erect tents before the shower broke soon learned how not to erect a tent, and much trenching and rearranging was done the following morning. It is said that some battalion personnel were ashore several hours before they started on the inevitable quest for souvenirs and seashells. Within a few days, when equipment came ashore from our freighter, camp was set up; but hardly had the men dried out from their first welcome ashore than preparations were started for movement of the first echelon. Six days after our arrival at Guadalcanal, Commander Brockenbrough, (now Captain) with two other officers and 73 enlisted men, boarded the U.S.S. George Clymer for pre-invasion maneuvers. Sixteen days later the Clymer returned to the Canal to pick up one additional officer and 114 enlisted men from the Battalion.

ROBERT O. LUNN





Bougainville



Vigilance . . . awaits the enemy sunrise serenade of motors, bombs and strafing.

BOUGAINVILLE

By Robert O. Lunn

Bougainville is the largest of the Solomon Islands. It is roughly 110 miles long and 30 miles wide, having an area of about 3,500 square miles. (The American occupied zone during the 71st's stay was less than one percent of the total area.) The climate is tropical and rainfall abundant. The dominant topographic features are the Emperor and Crown Prince Ranges which include two active volcanoes, Mt. Balbi, elevation 10,170 feet, and Mt. Bagana, elevation 6,500 feet. The geology is complex, and involves old igneous and sedimentary rocks with more recent intrusives and volcanics. The coastal areas are locally fringed with coral deposits and reefs. An interesting geologic feature is the black sands of Torokina beach. The island was populated by natives and Japanese, especially along the northeast coast where agricultural land was well developed. Crops raised included rice, coffee, sugar cane, coconuts, and other tropical foods. In spite of the Allied sea and air blockade, the enemy was well supplied with food-stuffs; and captured Japanese appeared well nourished. The natives are typical Solomon Islanders of apparently healthy constitutions, but less inclined to friendliness than their more civilized cousins at Guadalcanal.

The area on Empress Augusta Bay is a large, low-lying, marshy alluvial plain covered with a tangled mass of jungle growth. The plain slopes gradually from the beach to the foothills of the back-bone ranges. At Torokina, the maximum elevation was ten feet, and the average elevation about five feet. There were no roads, and but few jungle trails. Such was the area in which the 71st Seabees made their first major debut into the war effort.

The initial landing was effected in Empress Augusta

Bay, around Cape Torokina, at about 0700 on D-day, 1 November 1943, at which time the first echelon of the 71st Naval Construction Battalion landed with elements of the Third Marine Division, Reinforced. (There were also small detachments from the 25th, 53rd, and 75th CB's.) Fourteen men of the 71st landed with the initial Marine wave to establish dispersal areas and erect beach markers. Landings were effected under constant enemy gun and mortar fire, sniping from the beach, and bombing and strafing from the air. Commander Brockenbrough of the 71st was designated Commander of the Shore Party which consisted of the 71st detachment supplemented by contingents from the 53rd Battalion and the Marine Corps.

Immediately after the initial landing, the 71st began unloading two transports. Two TD-9 'dozers were first ashore for the purpose of making roads, clearing dump areas, and moving supplies.

There were no enemy shore installations, except pill boxes, 77 mm field artillery, anti-aircraft and machine gun emplacements in the beachhead area; however, the enemy had two airstrips on Bougainville: Kahili, at Buin on the southeast extremity; and Kieta, on the northeast coast about 40 miles northeast of the beachhead. There were other fields on Buka Island, and at Ballale in the Shortland Islands southwest of Bougainville. All enemy fields were rendered inoperative prior to the initial landings, but were later partially repaired and used by the enemy for furtive night raids during the first three and one-half months of occupation.

Buretoni Mission was near the beach, in approximately the center of the occupied area, but was completely destroyed during the action. There was no white or native population in the area where landings were made; however, when the beachhead was well established, and they were convinced of the friendliness of the American troops, the natives gradually left the hills and filtered into the occupied zone.

Bougainville was originally planned as an advance base from which aerial attacks against New Britain and New Ireland could be easily prosecuted. The plan called for the initial installation of a small

Lady Luck rides again. Seabees and Marines inspect huge bomb crater . . . meant for the LST in the background.



fighter strip to provide air cover while the larger bomber field was being built. Construction of this fighter strip was assigned to the 71st Battalion.

As the beachhead area was low and marshy, there was little choice as to the strip's location. The area chosen, from Torokina Point eastward was the most suitable, but beyond the low ridge paralleling the beach, which here ran due East-West, the area was swampy. Surveys for the strip were started D plus 2 under continued enemy action. Survey parties often found themselves ahead of the established front lines, and were subjected to sniping. Work on the strip was prosecuted as diligently as conditions permitted, and the tempo increased with the arrival of each echelon, the second arriving D plus 5, and the third D plus 10. On D plus 16, the fourth echelon received a torrid welcome. At 0300 the convoy of eight LST's and their escorts were attacked as they approached Empress Augusta Bay. Three of the attackers were shot down, but at the cost of one ADT, the McKean. At 0900, shortly after beaching, the new arrivals were subjected to another bombing attack, but near misses on the beach and in the water were the extent of the results. During this attack, one of our men, a previous arrival, was blown from his beachside foxhole by a close one, but escaped with a few powder burns, abrasions, and a moderate case of shock, returning to duty in a few days. On D plus 27, echelon "F", the Battalion's sawmill crew, arrived, and shortly were producing an abundance of native lumber for the numerous construction units on the island.

Due to the swampy condition, considerable difficulty was experienced in clearing the heavy jungle growth and stripping the slimy jungle muck to a suitable sub-grade. The sizeable ditches required for adequate drainage made a veritable island of the entire point area. Trees could not be pushed over with dozers, so each tree had to be cut down by hand and the stump blasted at least once. (This was the Battalion's first experience in clearing jungle swamps.) In places it was necessary to remove the cut trees and underbrush, and allow the sun and air to dry out the ground before stripping and removal of the stumps was feasible. However, by D plus 20, fifty percent of the area had been cleared and stripped, and grading

advanced sufficiently to start laying Marston pierced plank mat.

During this period the occupied area was limited, consequently there was but little choice in the matter of camp sites. The first camp was, of course, on the beach; and the men bedded down wherever they could find space, echelons subsequent to the assault spreading into and around the strip area. This proved to be a really hot spot for a camp, as the strip was second only to the Purata Island supply dumps on the Japs' bombing priority list. On several occasions poorly aimed bombloads, as were most of them, landed in and around the bivouac area. On D plus 19 numerous bombs landed in the camp area causing two fatalities, minor injuries, demolishing the tent and some of the gear of our executive officer and officers bunking with him, and riddling a jeep, our most unlucky vehicle, which was destined to house more shrapnel 'ere the campaign was over. During the hours of darkness the Japs who managed to get through the night-fighter ring had more or less of a hey-day over the beachhead area; but with the dawn came fighter protection from the rear area, and an



Purata Island. Direct enemy hit strikes fuel dump and flames light early morning sky.



First bomb-proof surgical room at Torokina Point. Solid native logs proved perfect protection.

enemy was not to be seen in the skies after the early days of the campaign.

They didn't always miss though. On one occasion a direct hit was scored on the fuel dump on Purata, destroying much valuable fuel and dangerously lighting the surrounding areas. A Purata ammo dump was blasted on another of the regular nocturnal visits. The morning of the fuel dump fire the Nips returned at dawn to observe results, but P-38's arrived simultaneously and the Zeroes disappeared, as though by magic, hightailing for home.

As construction progressed, it was necessary to move inland away from the construction area; and the only ground available was swampy, with a maximum elevation of eight feet above sea level. Due to continued enemy bombing and shelling, it was absolutely necessary for us to sleep in foxholes; but because of the nature of the ground and the fluctuation of the ground water level, the foxholes, which were shallow at best, were flooded by the slightest rain—and rains were very frequent and heavy. Thus we had the choice of sleeping in the water or sitting up all night during rains. The effects of such conditions were readily apparent. With over twenty men in sick bay at one time, there were as many as 250 seeking treatment during sick call hours for ailments common to the jungle swamp—principally dysentery, which earned the camp the sobriquet of "Camp Dysentery." The jungle was particularly dense, and each man, or group, cleared his own spot to "dig in." It was

really living with nature in that semi-cleared camp area. Giant one-legged grasshoppers, spiders, scorpions, centipedes, and jungle insects of all species were in abundance, and concerned men more than the enemy did. Minute inspection of bunks and netting was a must before retiring.

By D plus 23, sufficient mat had been laid on the 40' wide taxiway for Navy SBD 165 to make a successful forced landing because of a broken oil line. From this time on, emergency landings were made intermittently. Incidentally, one of our 71st electricians assisted the pilot and ground crew in making the necessary repairs and adjustments before 165 could again take to the air.

To meet the deadline date, it was necessary to resort to night work during the latter part of the construction period, in spite of the added danger of night bombings, as there was no air protection after sundown prior to completion of our strip.

On D plus 24, the entire Battalion was mustered into beach defense positions at Torokina as a precaution against threatened Japanese counter-attacks; however, enemy shelling of our positions forced a hasty but orderly withdrawal. The shelling continued until approximately 2100, resuming with greater accuracy at about 0300 the following morning. Apparently they were then concentrating on the howitzer units bordering our camp; but many landed within the camp area causing one death, minor injuries, blowing the top off the Medical Department's Operating Room, and damaging commissary supplies stored behind the galley which was situated right in the center of the camp area. Whether we, or the howitzer units, were the actual target is not certain, but we were the victims that night for sure. Beach positions were again occupied on D plus 26; and at 0400 D plus 29, all hands were mustered under arms because of a condition black alert, but the all clear was given as we were preparing to leave the camp area. These defensive operations resulted in a loss of more than 10,000 man hours during the most crucial construction period.

On 10 December the field was operationally complete, the first group of Corsairs landed as per schedule, and SCAT C-47's started their ferry service from

and to the rear area. Other planes soon followed, and the final completion of the field was hazardedly effected while it was in full operation, and, in fact, operating at a capacity far in excess of that originally planned. The field, planned to accommodate 35 fighter planes or light dive-bombers of the SBD class, handled many times that number, taking care of more than 100 planes in the air at one time.

Facilities called for by I-MAC general work order were: "Construct fighter strip including taxiway, parking area, perimeter road, AvGas storage and drum emptying station, ammo storage facilities, facilities for camp and personnel, operations dugouts, operations tower, inner-connecting roadways, and in general, facilities as provided for fields of this type (which later covers a multitude of sins), all in accordance with plans approved by the Corps." Before the field was completed, plans were expanded to include a 500 foot extension of the field, additional taxiways, parking areas, and administration and shop facilities.

The following are pertinent statistics on the field: Runway 200' x 4750' with Marston Mat 100' wide flanked with 25' coral shoulders; Taxiway 65' x 4750' with Marston Mat 40' wide flanked on the south side by 25' coral shoulder; Parking area and marginal road adjacent to taxiway, 85' x 4750' coral surfaced; SCAT area, 350' x 700' coral surfaced; End areas and cross-overs, 120' x 800' Marston Mat; Approach area with 40 to 1 glide angle; Drainage ditches, 50' x 9400'; Culverts 1000' plus; two Tide gates; additional parking; administration, 125' x 3350' coral surfaced; field lighting and electrical distribution system with 2000' underground 6" conduits; 50' Control tower (prefabricated at Guadalcanal); field administration, operation, radio, radar and generator dugouts, all of which were bomb-proofed coco-log construction (revetted), twelve structures ranging from 15' x 15' to 20' x 20'; field telephone exchange; perimeter roads, approximately 2 miles; ammo storage, 20' x 40' revetted, and bomb dumps; avgas drum emptying, storage, and distributing system, 1000-barrel capacity; and other minor facilities, such as parachute loft, warehouses, shops, ready rooms, heads, showers, et cetera.

Simultaneously with the construction of the strip, camp facilities were constructed for aviation personnel. This included facilities for Acorn personnel, pilots and ground crews, and RNZAF personnel. It

required the clearing and drainage of 40 acres of camp ground; 5,000 feet of access roads; two galleys and messhalls with 1500 man capacity each; two officers' galleys and messhalls; bakery; 4 garbage houses; 3 storage rooms; 40' x 120' warehouses; hospital with three 20' x 50' wards, three 17' x 20' operating rooms, first-aid room and diet kitchen; water supply, two 5,000-gallon storage tanks on 12' towers, wells, purifiers, and approximately 6,000' of distributing line; electric power, light system including 75 KW generator and 15 KW auxiliaries, and camp distributing lines; 16 heads and 16 showers; and other miscellaneous facilities.

Local materials were used for construction wherever practical. Coral surfacing for the fighter field, and for some roads, was obtained by excavation under water in off-shore and inland borrow pits at Cape Torokina. Two to four draglines, $\frac{3}{4}$ and $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubic yard, operated 'round the clock when the surfacing of parts of the field was started on D plus 29. Easily obtainable coral was none too plentiful, and its use had to be limited to priority "1" projects only. During the latter stages, it was found necessary to blast a hard crust in the off-shore pits before draglines could operate. Drilling and blasting short, regularly-spaced holes was found too slow, so the ledge was broken by dropping 20-pound dynamite "bombs" into the water. The depth of the water was sufficient to make the blasting effective; and though the method involved a considerable waste of powder, it achieved the desired results.

Native coconut logs were extensively used in rough structures such as dugouts, bridges, and water towers. One tower, supporting a 5,000 gallon water tank, was built of scrub timber, and it collapsed within a month. No trouble was experienced with coco-logs.



Don Sabella under the expert hand of Doctor Hinkson as Doctor Petty, Carl Dorman, Jr., and Ken MacIntosh assist.

16 December, construction of taxiways and hardstands for the Piva Bomber Field was started; and at approximately that time, laying out and clearing of a new "high and dry" campsite got under way. The Piva job included "A" and "B" taxiways, 150' x 15,708'; 37 hardstands, 125' x 300'; MAG shop area, 250,000 square feet; ready bomb area, 150' x 275'; "C" taxiway extensions 100' x 1800'; "C" parking area, 200' x 1350'; and cross-overs (2), 100' x 400'; buildings: 3 welded-type nose-hangers, 4 Navy standard prefabricated nose-hangers; three 20' x 48' SSAR huts; 26 framed and tarp. covered buildings ranging from 17' x 17' to 30' x 30'; fuse house, 14' x 14'; and heads and showers. Much of the building construction was done under artillery fire from the Japanese lines during the last month on the island.

After completion of the Piva Field, Navy dive-bombers and Corsair fighters, and SCAT facilities were based there; and the Torokina field became a base for the 68th USA Fighter Group and the RNZAF Fighter Wing.

On 17 December a Corsair landed unusually close to the edge of the Torokina runway, its wingtip striking the operator of a 71st patrol grader working the shoulder of the strip, throwing him from his machine and killing him instantly.

On 23 December the camp was moved to the new location bordering on the Piva strip area where it remained, in spite of enemy efforts to the contrary, to the end of our stay.

On 24 December the island was shaken at dawn by a violent earthquake, the worst ever experienced by a good many of us. Lesser tremors occurred intermittently during the days and weeks that followed.

Our new camp was one of the best on the island. The administration and medical departments were arranged along the main entrance road, and the company areas were symmetrically arranged around the galley and ship's service area. As previously mentioned, the area was high and dry; and since all underbrush and jungle growth had been cleared, living conditions were further improved, and insect pests were less prevalent.

The ensuing two months could be termed fairly quiet. During the month of January, air raids gradually became less frequent, though the threat of attack was ever present. On several occasions the swish and explosion of the bombs themselves was the signal that a raid was on, rather than the conventional siren. Fortunately the enemy was concentrating on strip installations rather than our brightly lighted camp.

On 27 December two men were lost when a Corsair taking off from Torokina Strip went out of control and exploded on the generators where they were on watch.

On 28 February 1944, a communication was received from the Commanding General (the Army had taken over from the Marines in mid-December) that

(Narration Continued on Page 104)

Full staff of the Medical Department in front of the operating room. Rear left to right: Dr. M. A. Petty, Dr. W. J. Hinkson, Dr. E. V. Petrow and Chief A. E. Hackathorn. Front left to right: C. J. Utter, R. P. Meadows, B. N. Goodwin, G. W. Wible, Jr., W. F. Roberts, F. M. Jones, C. Dorman, Jr. and R. H. Campbell.





In these beach scenes, on D-Day+6 at Torokina Point, the LST's with their protective barrage balloons are hurriedly emptied of their precious supplies. (Below) Precision team work of Seabees and Marines rolling in heavy drums of fuel before Jap bombers return.





Clearing gang, with machettes cutting path for Surveyors.



Blasting tree stumps with dynamite as project begins.



Dwarfed by the jungle heights; operator goes forward.



We went thru the forest like a tropical breeze.



Jacob H. Bothwell, "running the gun" for the proposed Torokina Fighter Strip, on D Day plus 3.



Nearby front lines . . . nor knee-deep mud didn't frustrate John E. Woods as he sights another center line.



Surveying Staff of our Engineering Department. (rear): J. E. Woods, J. H. Miller, F. W. Hubel, Harder, J. R. Sleek, H. M. Walker, H. W. Curtis, CCM, J. H. Bothwell, W. L. Daniels, P. E. Wisdom, P. J. Goudeau, C. Turner, Jr. (front): P. B. Powell, CCM, C. R. Warner, A. H. Conquest, Jr., M. E. Brady, R. L. Robinson, C. L. Lawson, Jr., J. D. Quinn, J. W. Burroughs, Jr., J. W. Scott, Jr., F. H. Sumner, E. B. Hunter.



... and in the beginning, the jungles domineered ...



... and we faltered. Yet, all barriers were defeated ...



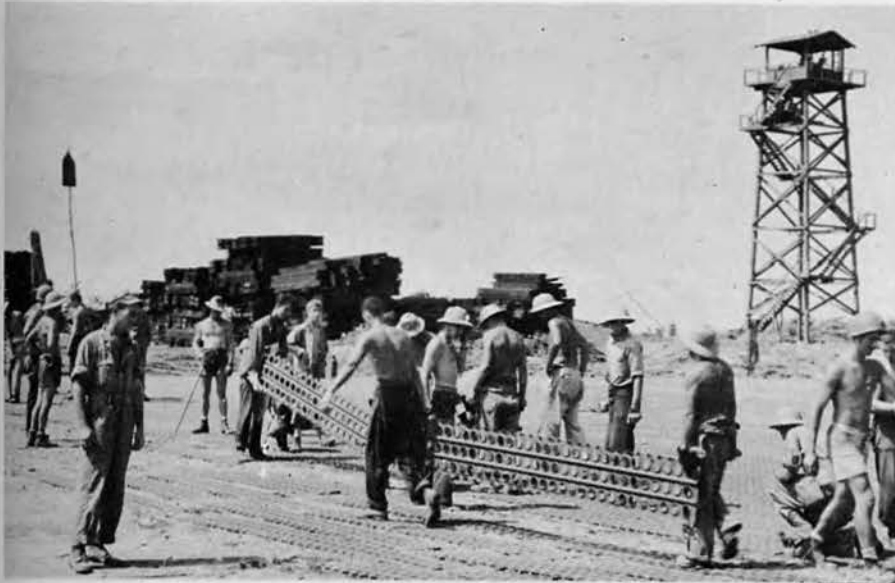
... 'til at last ... we installed the final drainage system, and kept the strip operating ...



Maneuvering a quick emergency . . . welders in action.

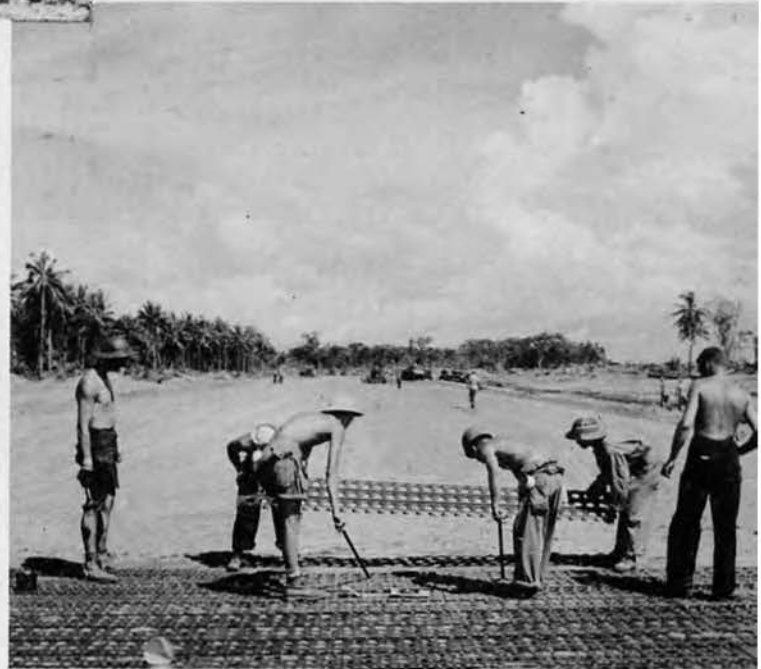


First squadron of Corsairs to land on Torokin Fighter Strip.



Reaching the half-way mark as the men rush, day and night.

The final sight of the strip looms up and the job nears completion . . . and a commendation.





Squadron leaves Bougainville for a bombing attack on Rabaul.



Our operator watches Transport leave with wounded.



Marine fighter comes roaring in at terrific speed . . . close to our grader-man spreading coral on strip.



Wild enthusiasm and joyous men greet first plane to land on the finished "major assignment."



Lt. Andrew M. Newman beside our emblem denoting . . . "Finished".



Underground Radar Station protected by heavy coco-logs.

"Dozer and Man" contesting the elements and obstacles as they grunt forward on extension work.



Drag line . . . loading coral for the many projects in progress.



(above) Douglas bomber escorting our photographer over the mountain ranges of Bougainville.

(left) Lofty Mt. Bagana taken from a height of 10,000 feet.

(below) Aerial scene of the "Billy Mitchell" crater lake near Mt. Bagana.





Douglas Dive-Bombers nestled in the deep jungle.

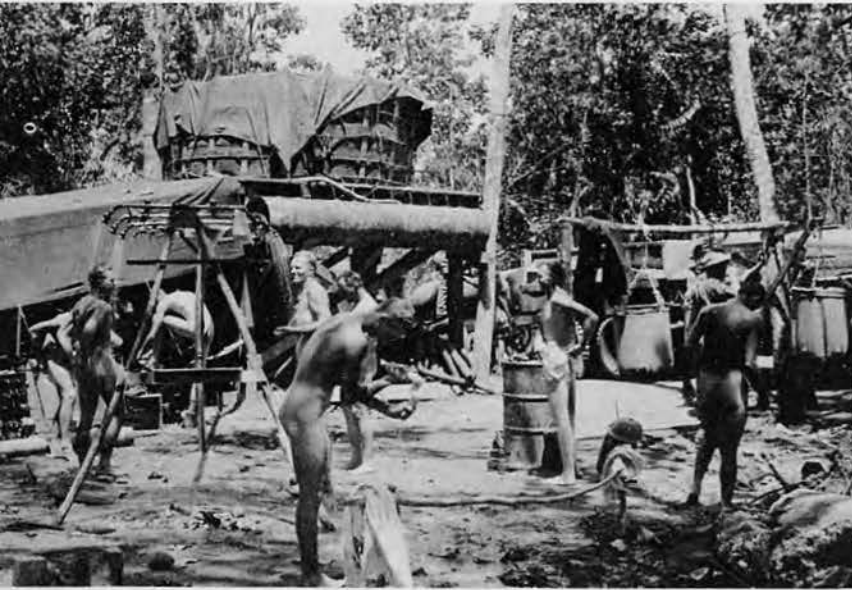


Our final camp-site surrounded by mahogany forests.

Fuel drums sandbagged into place served as drainage culverts on the Piva Field.



Expert handling of the "Iron Broncos" while building revetments around parking areas of bombers.



Modesty was merely a civilized excerpt from Webster's . . .



Will Rogers with "Lizzy the Liz" . . . a constant companion.



"Mom said we'd have days such as these" . . . but she never said how rough.

First construction camp in a palm grove situated at Torokina Point.





Sterilizing mess gear in outdoor Seabee fashion.



Cafeteria, self-service style of eating. Fuel drum-tops nailed on tables were the current vogue.



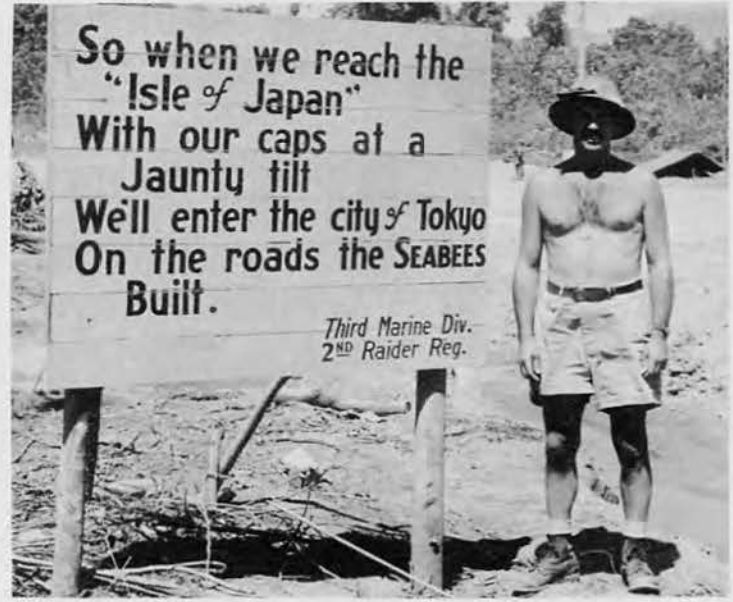
Marston Mat guard with a grill made from boiler plate. It grilled our first flap jacks.



Three huge water towers supplied majority of crystal clear water for our use and many other camps nearby.



Ye olde Torokina Bake Shoppe . . . with a few of its partners.



Chief Edward Olim and the famous sign of Bougainville.



Staff of the Personnel Department. (front): A. A. Hardish, G. D. Ritter, R. Lovett, J. L. McNeer. (rear): D. F. Schwitters, Lt. (jg), R. F. Johnson, J. E. Longsine, R. O. Lunn, R. L. Hamlett, and H. R. Heard, CY.

Commander Austin Brockenbrough, Jr., (now Captain) poses with Lt. Commander George E. Geyer alongside our official Battalion emblem.





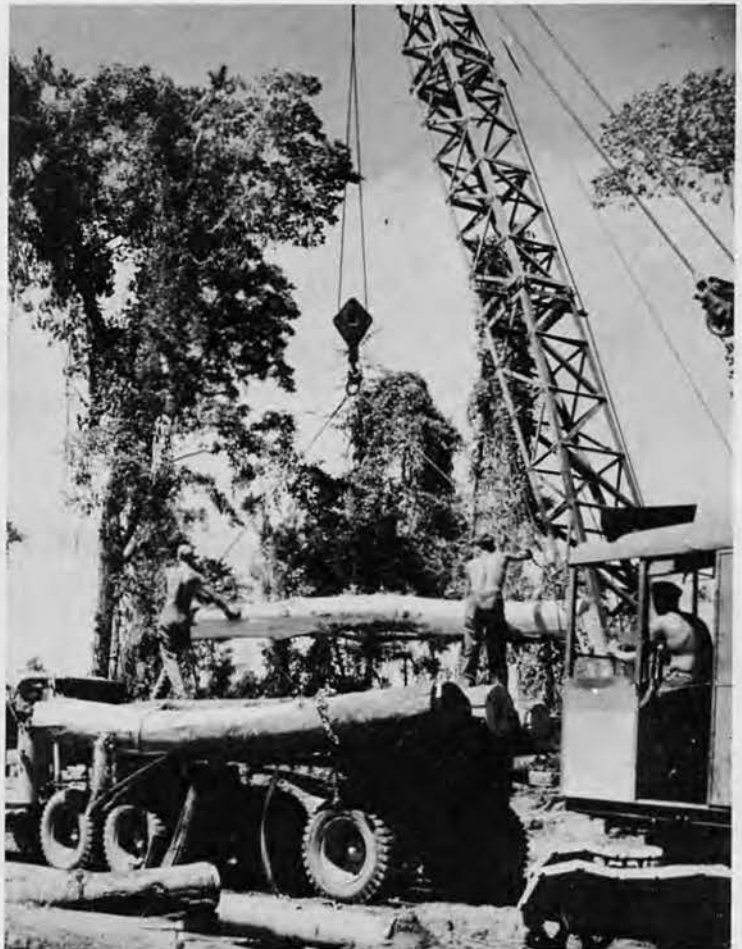
Frank Bustard and Herb Lemons standing on spring boards cut the base of this immense mahogany tree.



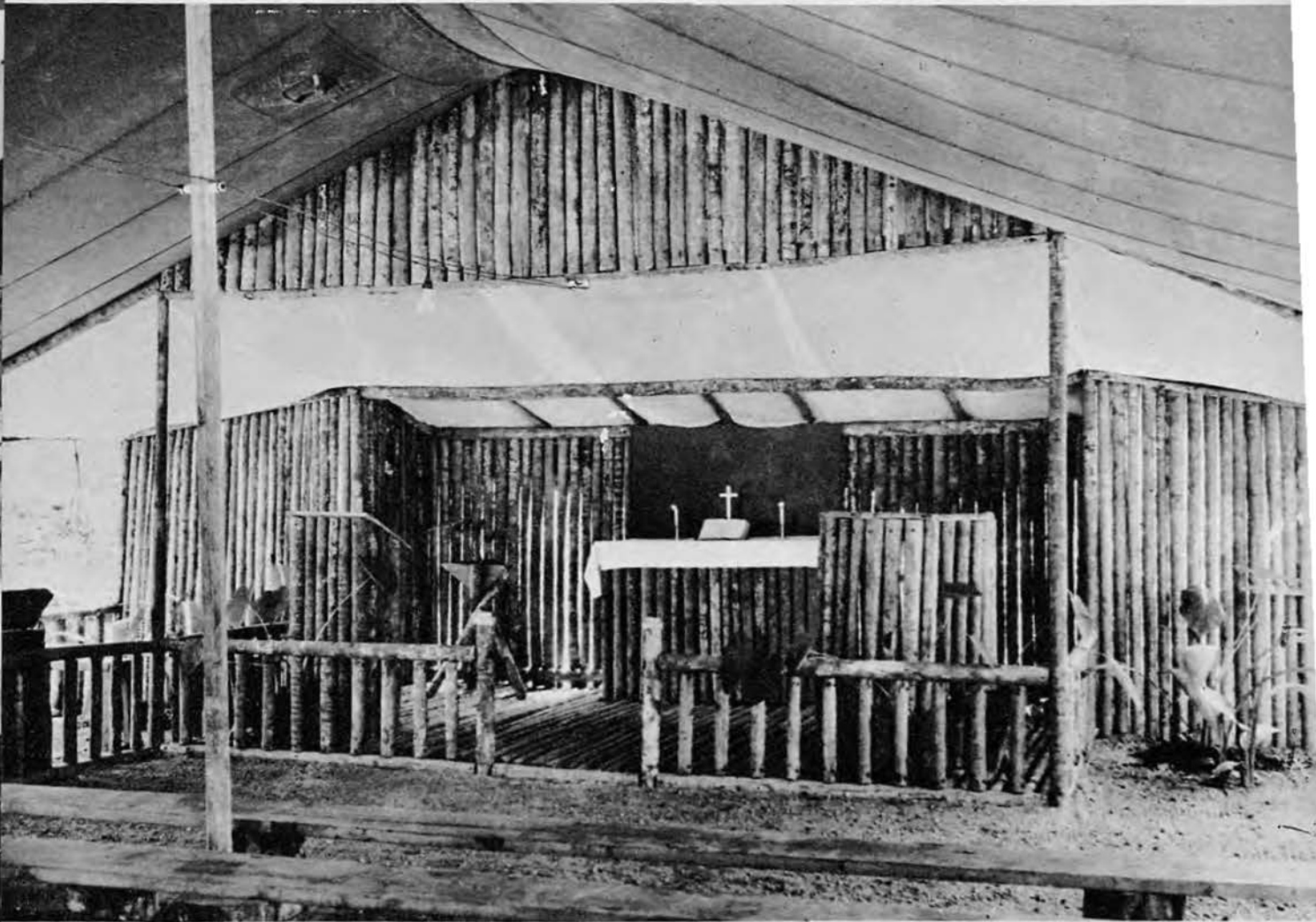
One of the most important building necessities, the Saw Mill, which broke "finished board" records.



Telephone linesmen walk to the tree-tops and string the communication wires . . . with deftness.



Big Crane is used to hoist gigantic logs on trailer prior to shipment for the Saw Mill.



Bougainville Chapel

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let the house of the Lord."—Psalms 122:1
 pressive chancel and altar pictured above was constructed from native timber, le atmosphere to our chapel. At the left, co leaves chapel after Memorial Service hel of their six companions who gave thei Bougainville. This chapel, set amidst hi any trees, was designed and constructed Alonso and crew. (Selection by R. L. Ha



Our initial worship service, held in Army, Navy and Marine Cemetery No. 1.



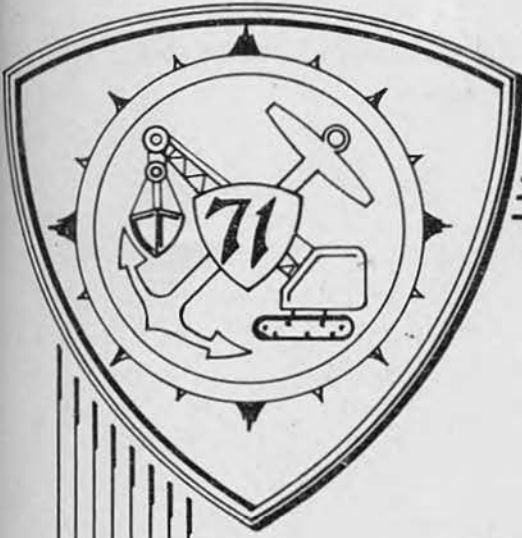
Christian natives favored us with hymns, sung in their own tongue.



Chaplain Huddle rests on native drum in front of Chapel.



An aerial view of the majestic but treacherous jungles in which the enemy was entrenched during the early days of Bougainville. Bordering our camp is the coral finger and fighter strip.



The Admiralties



Tons of water surge majestically into tropical skies as coral reefs are blasted for air-field material.

THE STORY OF THE ADMIRALTIES ★ ★ ★

By Frank A. Donovan

As we watched the wake of the S. S. Poelau Laut, our Dutch manned Attack-Transport Ship, drift toward the shore line of Bougainville, we stood solemnly at the rail filled with many memories. We knew so well that our first assignment, the severest test, deserved a "Well Done". We sailed away from Empress Augusta Bay with the highest respect for the famous Second Marine Raiders. Our sympathies were directed to those who would never leave the shores of Bougainville; for we also had shared the grief and sorrow of losing close buddies and newly made acquaintances.

"Scuttlebutt" was everywhere. Naturally, all were curious about our next assignment. Where were we going? This was the big question which time alone, rather than "scuttlebutt", could furnish the answer.

All troops on board were under the jurisdiction of the Army Transportation Corps, and the Troop Commander lost no time in issuing rules and regulations to which we were to adhere during the journey.

While traveling on board any ship, one becomes curious as to what kind of chow to expect, and the first week at sea wasn't so bad because the meals were fair and our appetites were somewhat appeased. However, our good fortune was to last only that first week, because rationing, which we had heard so much of in letters from home, came into effect, and it sure did hit each one of us pretty hard. "Corn Willy," Spam, and cheese for sandwiches at the noon meal was only a forerunner of the days to come, when we had just breakfast and the evening meal to

Boxing tournaments break up the monotony of the voyage.

satisfy our hunger.

From Bougainville the ship set course for the Russell Islands. At the "Russell's" we stopped only long enough to pick up the Fifty-Eighth Seabees who had just returned from a recreation leave at New Zealand. It wasn't long after the Fifty-Eighth boarded ship before our boys began to heckle these vacationers and give them a "snow job" about Bougainville. This was all in fun and soon the two battalions were the best of buddies, for we knew they were going along with us, and it was best to keep peace in the family, so to speak.

After leaving the Russell Islands we headed southeast for a stop-over at Guadalcanal to pick up our rear echelon of two officers and twenty-five men who remained at the Canal during the Bougainville campaign. To be sure, there was much excitement and back-slapping as we greeted them after the long "Intermezzo". Again there was a lot of teasing, but it wasn't long until we were all back on the best of terms.

After weighing anchor we steamed for a short distance to the small island of Tulagi where we rode anchor while the game of fetching water played a delaying role to our forthcoming voyage. From Tulagi we returned to Guadalcanal to pick up rations, and for some reason the Skipper of our good ship decided that he would like to have a few more gallons of water. So, we weighed anchor and went back again to Tulagi. After filling everything with water, except the life boats, we finally steamed into the vast blue Pacific. At long last, we were headed for the place known as Island "X", to use the vernacular of the salty Seabees. This meant almost any place on the broad expanse of the Pacific, or perhaps elsewhere.

We passed many islands of interest, both on our port side and the starboard side, and now we wonder how many of you can recall the difference between the two sides of the ship. The port side was always the left side of the ship, wasn't it? And the starboard had to be the right side if the former decision was true. So much for that.

Sailing smoothly through the Coral Sea from the Solomon Islands we entered Springer Bay which was the body of water along the east coast of the huge island of New Guinea. We stopped in the harbor of Finchhafen, for about an hour or so, to pick up the pilot who was to guide us through the winding Dampier Strait which separated the islands of



New Britain and New Guinea. Hugging the shoreline of New Guinea, we sailed through Dampier Strait zig-zagging, passing many small villages rarely seen by white men. With native thatched huts strung along the beaches they were a treat to behold to those who found beauty in such scenes. The villages were old and quaint, seemingly untouched by the rush of war. Natives could be seen waving to us as we smoothly

passed each tiny isle scattered throughout these straits. Some even came out to greet us in their outrigger canoes, but stayed a short distance away from the ship for fear of being capsized by our swells. Leaving these waters, the pilot found a haven in Milne Bay and the old Dutch Skipper boomed out, "Droop de enger." We lay there for a week taking on supplies which seemed to be everything but what



Peaceful meditation and moments of spiritual relaxation as we sail thru dangerous waters.

we needed most, namely food.

The Poelau Laut can be mentioned as an exceptionally fast ship. Built prior to the war, she was one of the most powerful ships in her class and capable of making twenty-eight knots which is tremendous for a ship of the cargo category. While on our lone dash to the next destination she cruised smoothly and easily at eighteen knots and could, if necessary, outrun any interference from enemy action. Her power was supplied by diesel engines and one of her pistons weighed close to a ton. With plenty

of armament from fore to aft, she had a fair chance in any small engagement with the enemy. As the trip progressed, we took a fond liking to her Dutch Skipper and often kidded him about his broken English and the manner in which he called out commands to his crew—such as: "droop the enger", "'tis time for your last ziga-rett", or "doomp da gairbeeg". We made good friends with him, yet, in time to come, we were mighty glad to get off his "yacktt."

At long last, we neared the scattered isles of the

(Narration Continud on Page 105)

PITYILU ISLAND

Geographically speaking, this little island was almost two degrees south of the Equator or five degrees north of Bougainville which was seven degrees south of the Equator. As time progressed, we were to learn much concerning this small differential in latitude because the intensity of the heat was far greater at Pityilu than at Bougainville. It was noted one day out in the field that the thermometer registered one hundred and thirty-five degrees, not in the shade, but in the sun. Hades could not have been hotter!

Pityilu, one of the smallest islands of the Admiralty Group, was situated about two and six tenths miles off the north coast of Manus. From Lorengeau, the hooked-shaped peninsula on the northern part of Manus Island, to Pityilu was four and six tenths miles. Some of Pityilu's geographical features are quoted for interest. Based upon figures given by the Engineering Department, the island was approximately five thousand yards long and ranged from one hundred and fifty yards to three hundred yards in

width. It occupied about four hundred and eighty-five acres of land which was mostly covered with a coconut plantation and also with what is commonly known as rain forest. This plantation included about twenty thousand trees.

Huge banyan trees held their respective places among the other trees of the forest. It was these trees that we feared more than the coconut trees, because of their extreme height and because of the weakness of their shallow roots. More than once we heard the old call of "timber" as one of these giants would send out its crackling warning, much too soon to allow anyone to get out of its way, and down it would crash across two or three tents. The tents would be crushed beyond recognition, leaving us with chills running up and down our spines, for we were always moments too late to be of any assistance to those who might have been trapped within. Fortunately, there never were any casualties. High winds, heavy rainfalls, and constant humidity were the cause of such untimely incidents.

The highest point on Pityilu was about fourteen feet above sea level. The average rainfall for this vicinity was about one hundred and forty one inches per year, and the days were few and far between when we didn't have our share of tropical storms, some of which took place while the sun was blazing away in all its glory. Pityilu was a coral island with relatively thin top soil which covered a loose coral sand, locally cemented in a firm coral limestone. The island was surrounded by a coral reef one hundred to fifteen hundred yards off shore, treacherous to enter by boat unless guided by an experienced coxswain who had learned of its lanes and reefs by grounding his boat a few times. At low tide the island was exposed almost out to these reefs along the north coast. Natives did not inhabit the island, but they did come to trade with us in their seaworthy canoes.

The early days at Pityilu were rugged and will long be remembered by our battalion. Until the final camp site was established the men pitched pup tents and some managed to procure a tarpaulin which served as a shelter for eight or ten men when it was stretched between trees. Along the beach tents were erected for the Administration Area, and the Officers with the Chiefs shared the same frontage near the beach. Just across the road we built a temporary galley, food issue room, Sick Bay, and Personnel Office. Supplies for the galley soon arrived, and it



The 5500' air strip hewn out of the dense palm plantation and completed within thirty-five days.

wasn't long before the men tasted what they proclaimed was delicious food in comparison to the chow they ate on board ship. Further up the road the remainder of the personnel established their living quarters.

The water men of the Plumbing Department were as busy as bees those first few days digging for fresh water for drinking, cooking, and washing purposes. Meanwhile, until they had their tanks in operation, we drank from our canteens and washed in the ocean with salt water soap. It wasn't the nicest kind of a bath, nor was it the cleanest, but it did help to freshen us and lend a better looking appearance. The stickiness of the salt water for baths has always been an unpleasant memory with us. Within a few days fresh water was available and everyone was happy as buckets appeared and were filled with that clear, chemically treated aqua. Those were the days of the "bath-by-the-bucket" system, although we did have another title for those baths.

The chow hall was in Mother Nature's own backyard. We ate in the open with our mess gear resting on anything high enough to support it. Standing room was available for all those who couldn't find an old box or crate for repose while eating. Thinking back upon those days, we can't help smiling inwardly as we recall the antics of those who were trying to eat buffet style from their mess gear. The battle with the millions of angry flies reminds us of a group of men afflicted with St. Vitus. The flies would swarm around us and try to take the food off the fork before it reached our mouths, and the buzzing inside our mouths testified that we were victorious and had cheated them out of enjoying our food. To watch the men waving their hands to try and chase the flies out of their canteen cups and mess gear was like watching a person "tetched" in the head. And when it rained while we ate, well, it just added more moisture to our food.

Between April 24th and May 5th the various departmental crews were working with assembly line technique to build a permanent camp. The linemen were scaling trees to string power and telephone lines. Masons were laying the cement floor for the bake shop while the carpenter crews were erecting the skeleton frames for the galley and Enlisted Men's Mess Hall. Electricians were there to install the wiring as the plumbers were tapping the main and laying out pipes for the steam table, sinks, and kettle cookers. The water crew were still trying to locate an abundant supply of fresh water because it was



Parking area of Pityilu Strip on the North west end, to store Dive-bombers from the Carriers.

evident that their original well would not supply the future needs of the personnel who would shortly be joining us on the island. Bulldozers cleared areas for tents to house the men. Other crews were building Officers' Country, Sick Bay, Laundry, Administration Area, Shops, and Generator Sheds. Each group of men building the camp worked in conjunction with one another, and within two weeks the camp was in liveable condition, so we moved from our temporary camp along the beach.

On May 5th the remainder of the heavy equipment was brought ashore and moved up the road. Carryalls, graders, rollers, bulldozers, and cranes squeaked and groaned on their way to the heavy equipment area for a final check-up before officially starting the race against time to complete the new airfield which we were to build. Soon they roared into the jungle and began clearing the site for the strip and all the facilities that make up an airfield. The debris of the recent battle was quickly cleared away while shell and bomb craters were filled and compacted. Deeply entrenched fox-holes of the enemy with decaying bodies still intact were sealed permanently by the huge bulldozers. Cranes, with their dredging buckets, were building a slim coral "finger" out to sea from which live coral could be obtained from the ocean bottom for surfacing on the new roads, and for stock piles which would be used when surfacing began on the strip. We were given thirty-five days to complete an airfield for the SBD's, Venturas, Marauders, and Hell Cats of the Naval Air Corps. It was a job that would mean much to the extended road toward Tokyo. In spite of the short time allotted for the project, it was imperative

that the job should meet the rigid specifications of the Bureau of Yards and Docks. Mud—mud, miry, slimy mud was everywhere in those early days to hinder our progress. The men of our Engineering Department had plenty of headaches for awhile, but every problem was solved and, needless to say, the strip was completed within thirty-five days.

Sites for airfields in war time are almost always selected from aerial photographs long before the territory is captured from the enemy. Consequently, when a Seabee Battalion arrives at the designated spot, existing conditions may not be similar to those predicted by the Staff Officers. To a certain degree, the selection of Pityilu as the location for an airfield was a good choice because there wasn't too much earth moving involved. The ideal location for an airfield, from the viewpoint of construction and maintenance, is where complete drainage may be accomplished without resort to artificial means. A location such as this was encountered at the Torokina Strip on Bougainville, but it was necessary to provide means of draining excess water from the surface of the field on Pityilu. Timber cleared from the site furnished rough lumber which is always useful in the early days of an invasion, since "State-side" lumber is very scarce. The coral off shore at Pityilu furnished excellent surfacing material for the strip, parking areas, and roads. Without coral the Army Engineers and Seabees would have been unable to transform island jungles and swamps into advance bases so rapidly, and no doubt, the war would not have progressed as quickly as it did if some other material had had to be found for surfacing. After the "finger" was built out to the reefs, the coral was

Lt. (jg) D. F. Schwitters and Chief Linscott display the novel "can-opener".



loosened by blasting which kept the dynamite crews very busy. In one of the pictures here in the book you can recapture the spectacle of "Old Faithful" caused by the powder men setting off an underwater charge. It was a most beautiful sight to behold. With a rumbling of the ground, we knew so well that within a few moments the blast would have its effect and the force of the dynamite would send up a spout of water two hundred feet into the atmosphere. Its beauty was at its height of splendor whenever a rainbow would appear and cast its many colors upon the spray giving an impression of tiny colored stars. It was always best to use all the practical materials available for we knew too well that a military base of this type would not be of any importance if a construction battalion had to wait until ships arrived with the vital supplies and materials. Therefore, we made the best use of the natural resources of the tropical jungles.

Aeronautically speaking, the isle of Pityilu was ideal for the field the Navy desired for its carrier planes and land based flying war eagles. The island was large enough to accommodate a strip and the surrounding ocean offered plenty of clearance for approaches and take-offs. Here there were prevailing winds rather than shifting winds which are encountered in some parts of the tropics. Camouflage of this area was never required because the Allied forces controlled a good portion of the Southwest Pacific by this time. We were given a time limit in which to complete this field because it was to play a very predominant part in the forthcoming invasion of the Philippines.

Most of the take-offs were to be "singles", therefore the runway was constructed narrower than usual and more space was then allotted to taxiways and parking areas. The runway on Pityilu was four thousand five hundred feet long (later it was extended an additional one thousand feet) and its width for the entire course was three hundred feet. A taxiway sixty feet wide connected the runway with the service area. By use of such a wide taxiway congestion was avoided. The largest of the three parking areas was located west of the runway while other parking areas were situated near each end of the runway.

Construction of Pityilu airfield started on 5 May 1944 and on 10 June 1944 the landing strip was officially completed. To be sure, this accomplishment was heralded by a "Well Done" from Admiral Spruance.

Words are mere tools of expression; it's easy to explain the details involved in the construction of the airfield, but to relate the human aspects and describe the actual man-hours, sweat, and labor put into the project, is to give credit where credit is due. And such commendation goes to every man who worked on the strip until it was completed. It is difficult to relate sweat, aches, and gripes which were the factors contributing to the enviable record of the Seventy-First Naval Construction Battalion. Think for a moment and visualize the labor involved in transforming a coconut plantation and jungle into an airfield. The tropical heat was almost unbearable for a white man; yet every man worked swiftly and diligently. By means of shifts, work never ceased, and in chow line and around the camp area it was interesting to note the enthusiasm the crews displayed in boasting of their accomplishments. Everyone in the Battalion contributed his share in constructing this airfield!

Time took us deeper into the the month of May and most of the other projects associated with the airfield were nearing completion. "C" Company of the Fifty-Eighth Seabees, including three officers, joined us in erecting the Quonset Huts for the aviation personnel who were to maintain the planes at the strip. About 11 June all Quonsets were built and the plumbers, electricians, and telephone men added the finishing touch. When this job was completed the men of the Fifty-Eighth Seabees returned to their camp on Los Negros.

By this time our camp site was one to be proud of, for it was our own little city, busy and humming all through the day. On the edge of camp were the shops where our equipment, which was beginning to feel the effects of constant use, was repaired. The men in the Tire Shop were always busy fixing flats because loose coral has sharp edges which cut the tires. The electricians had covered the island with an elaborate network of communication lines, and it was even possible to make a phone call to Manus across the lagoon. The Carpenter Shop turned out all the necessities to make living conditions a bit more pleasant. By assembly line procedure they turned out chairs, desks, tables, benches, cabinets, and cocktail tables. In addition to this work the cabinet makers would always oblige a new Chief or Officer by making a footlocker for him. Many of these pieces of craftsmanship were made from tropical wood which folks at home would have envied. Our carpenters exhibited their ingenuity by constructing the famous "open



Grass thatched woven palm Chapel constructed by the Christian natives on Ndrillo Island.

air heads" on the shores of the island. The tide was the perfect "flusher" for this new system. Of all the heads used up until this time, this type was the most practical and sanitary. It had to be seen to be appreciated. The Welding Shop was going full blast with many duties to perform in conjunction with construction at the airstrip. One of their jobs was to weld oil drums together for culverts. It was at Pityilu that Lt. (j.g.) D. F. Schwitters improved upon the novel invention of the "Can-opener", a device that cut out the top and bottom of an empty fuel drum in about one twentieth of the time it took one man to do the same job. The boys at the Sheet Metal Shop turned out many fine jobs needed throughout the entire camp, including the perforated air ducts for the parachute loft at the airfield. The Repair Shop had their hands full in keeping the trucks and all the heavy equipment in running condition, with the small assortment of spare parts they had in stock. The Machine Shop assisted the Repair Shop by making the many needed spare parts on its lathes, drill presses, and grinders. The delay in awaiting the arrival of spare parts from the States was avoided by the ingenious methods employed by the machinists. The refrigerator crews had erected many "reefers" throughout the island, but their job was not completed because the boxes had to be serviced and checked everyday. It was at

Pityilu that Bob Gross invented his novel ice cream freezing machine. Many months were spent in perfecting this machine. Needless to say, we of the battalion were grateful to Bob because he gave us the enjoyment of tasting ice cream for the first time since leaving California. A picture of Bob alongside his ice cream freezing machine appears in the text.

A recreation area for the men of the battalion was created on one side of the camp within easy reach by all. Tents housed the reading and writing tables, and many books were added to the library. The ping pong tables were in constant use by our experts who thrilled many a spectator. The movie area had a fine stage from which our orchestra played

for the entertainment of the audience before the show. Those many odd shaped seats, which we hauled to the movie area, were a sight to behold. Boxes, benches, boards, and home-made chairs were scattered all over until there was enough lumber to construct permanent seats.

It was at this movie area where Commander Brockenbrough mustered the Battalion on Decoration Day to present the Purple Heart Medals to those who had been wounded at Bougainville. At the same time the Soldiers Medal, bestowed by the U. S. Army, was presented to three of our men for saving the life of a downed aviator in the waters of Empress Augusta Bay on a stormy day. In his clos-



Away from the cares of the day, at the Lombrum Pt. recreation area built by our men.

ing speech the Skipper expressed his gratitude to the men for the splendid showing they had made under such trying conditions at Bougainville.

The Chapel, a large tent, occupied the space behind the movie area. One night the crown of a banyan tree fell on the tent. The next day construction was started on a new Chapel which was far better than the one it replaced.

In this new camp it was easy to forget the early days when we first came ashore on Pityilu. A

screened-in mess hall protected us from the flies while we were eating. Electric lights replaced the candles by which we read and wrote at night. Showers with plenty of fresh water replaced the ordeal of bathing from a bucket. The new laundry, known as Pityilu Panatorium, removed the distasteful duty of washing our clothes. Open air heads over the ocean replaced the drums we sat on while the magots crawled over us. Time alone can help us to forget many unpleasant memories. Such are the inconven-

iences one can expect when an invasion is made or whenever a new camp is established. It is tough, but soon it is overcome.

On June 26th, at the opposite end of the island, our surveyors staked the Fleet Recreation Area. Out of swampy, steaming jungle and hard crushed coral, the men of the Seventy-First Naval Construction Battalion transformed this tropical hole into one of the most talked of Recreation Centers in the Pacific. Within its eighty acres were many facilities which members of the Fleet could enjoy while on a short liberty. First of all, a landing dock was constructed to permit the barges and personnel craft from the ships to tie up, then a new road was constructed from the dock to the recreation area. Upon inspection of the huge converted area, the sailors could easily see the enormous amount of labor that went into building the baseball diamonds, basketball courts, handball courts, horse shoe centers, bathing pavilion with lockers and showers, shark proof swimming pool, stage, boxing ring, bandstand, and last but not least, Duffy's Tavern, large enough for two hundred beer drinking customers at a time. For those who were to be stationed on the site to act as hosts and take care of the equipment, complete camp facilities were erected. It was fortunate that the finishing touches had been put on the stage, because toward the latter part of August Bob Hope brought his entire company of entertainers to the Fleet Recreation Center. A crowd of seven thousand sat in the rain and saw Patty Thomas do her dance routine with Jerry Colonna clowning as usual, while Bob Hope kept the men howling with his unique humor. Frances Langford, the singing star of Hollywood and Radio fame, rendered as many songs as time would permit.

Just about the time work started on the Fleet Recreation Area, orders were received at Battalion Headquarters for many odd jobs throughout the islands. The battalion sent out groups of experts to tackle special jobs on five small islands. A brief summary of these assignments follows.

On the Isle of Ndrillo our carpenters with helpers from Lion Four constructed a galley and mess hall. A signal tower from which all harbor traffic could be directed was erected. For the personnel who were to remain on the island to operate the signal tower and harbor control facilities, a camp was established. In addition to the roads our men also constructed generator sheds, laundry, recreation building, showers, heads, sick bay, post office, ships store, and an administration building. Men from the Battalion

worked and lived on this island from 26 June until the end of September.

On 24 August another crew left for Onneta Island to install a new laundry for two hundred and fifty men stationed there. It entailed only two days to clear the area and completely set up the Panatorium, laundry to you. Tho it was but a small contract to fulfill, it was done to the best of our ability.

Still another detachment of men from the Seventy-First Battalion was sent to the neighboring Island of Harengan. It was here that they cleared and graded many acres of jungle and erected a complete camp for the twenty-five men and officers who were to operate the Radar Station at the top of the island's only peak. The men who fabricated this remote and essential station envied those who were to live there because it was truly a Hollywood version of a South Sea Island. Harengan was an island of tropical beauty which our men had not seen in all their travels around the Southwest Pacific area. The natives were friendly, extremely clean, and really proud of their domain. They had built their grass huts along the beach in such a fashion that spread their homes in a circle around the island. The streets of this precision built village were swept clean daily. Flowers of brilliant blends adorned the areas around their homes which were situated among the betel nut trees, their favorite source of "chewing plug." The island Chief was well liked, and he was very agreeable to our men as they went about their chores. He only asked us to be careful of their betel nut trees because they were very valuable to the men and women of his tribe. As for the flowers and shrubbery, not one of our men desired to destroy their natural beauty.

Much difficulty was encountered by our 'dozer operator when he tried to get his "cat" up the hill in the center of the isle on which the Radar Tower was to be erected. After many attempts and thoughtful "pow-wows", the earth pusher finally made the grade with its load. No doubt the operator of the bulldozer had a queer feeling as he babied that load of steel to the top of the hill, perhaps with the help of a little prayer. Around and around he went as he cleared and graded the summit in preparation for the erection of the one hundred foot Radar Tower and the Quonset Hut for the instruments and generator. Down below the natives stood in solemn awe as they watched the "iron man" flatten the peak of their hill. His job on Harengan Hill completed, the operator slowly walked his bulldozer down to the base of the hill amidst the

jabbering and smiling natives, and without a pause to take any bows, he proceeded to the area set aside for the camp of the Radar technicians. On his way, he cleared a path for a road which would lead from the beach to the hill. By the time he had finished the area for the camp, the tents were practically up and ready for habitation. Another crew poured cement for the deck of the laundry while the "water men" were busy digging a well and laying pipe to a three thousand gallon storage tank. By this time, the tents were all in readiness, so the carpenters proceeded to build showers and heads. It was with teamlike precision, such as this, that the plumbers and electricians were busily engaged in their professions at the galley and mess hall while the carpenters went ahead with their framing which was to be covered with tarpaulin. Thus another assignment was labeled "well done" along with many thanks for the speed in which the task was accomplished. Our gang packed up their tools and left the beautiful little Island of Harengan after spending thirty-three days there.

At the same time, still another group of men were engaged on the Island of Koruni in establishing an additional Fleet Recreation Center. It wasn't as large as the Pityilu Fleet Recreation Area, but it was in a location where the Pityilu Center would be relieved of any further congestion. During the days prior to the invasion of the Philippines, it seemed as if the entire Fleet of the Pacific made the Admiralty Islands its headquarters, for there were any number of "battle-wagons", cruisers, destroyers, "flat-tops", "subs", destroyer-escorts, oil-tankers, floating drydocks, and one could not begin to count the number of cargo ships, manned by all the Allied Nations. Hence, the need for these much wanted recreation centers to allow the men to get ashore and have a grand time indulging in as many sports as they could hope to play, followed by a refreshing dip within the shark-proof swimming area. Or, if the men didn't care to participate in athletics, there was a cool haven provided for the drinking of refreshments. This center with all facilities, including an LST landing, was begun on 9 September and completed on 3 October 1944.

The last island to have any justifiable face lifting by men of the Seventy-First was Hauwie. It was another one of those small, yet indispensable isles, which contributed its part in making the Admiralty Group a vital link in the Victory Road to Tokyo. A crew of five men with only a clamshell and bulldozer cleared the beach approaches so that open mouthed LST's would no longer have any difficulties in sliding up to

the beach markers. The job was termed a "push-over" since the crew returned to our camp five days after they set out for Hauwie.

During the period of August and September our camp population at Pityilu dwindled slightly but with the return of the men from Hauwie late in mid-September, our numbers were normal again. Also about this time our two expert shipfitters who had spent quite a bit of time on a ten million dollar floating drydock joined us again at Pityilu. This drydock, anchored in Seedler Bay, was one of the largest of its kind in the Western Pacific. It could berth the huge battleships and broad spacious aircraft carriers. Our shipfitters were quite happy to return to the battalion, for the life aboard this dock was too confining for the men who had been accustomed to all the freedoms of a land-based organization.

About the middle of September the maintenance of the airfield on Pityilu, and all other installations, were turned over to the One Hundred and Fortieth Naval Construction Battalion, and we received orders to move to Los Negros where we would relieve the Eleventh Naval Construction Battalion of its duties. The first group of our battalion had moved to Los Negros on 23 June 1944. They landed at what was known as White Beacon "H", Lombrum Point. Thereafter small detachments moved from Pityilu throughout September and October until we were all united again in mid-October. Los Negros was not a pleasant sight to behold when we arrived there, because we had been more or less spoiled by living alone on Pityilu. At Los Negros we shared camp with the Eleventh Battalion until they were secured and sailed for the States after serving overseas for twenty-seven months. Naturally, living in such close contact with the Eleventh caused quite a bit of friction, but undoubtedly this strain was caused by the fatigue of our buddies in the Eleventh Seabees. During the middle of October two hundred and fifty men were transferred to our outfit from the Eleventh Battalion. Now our number was so large that a new company, "E", was created.

Since Manus and its surrounding territory was a Naval base, the food by October was the best we had enjoyed in many a moon. Stateside butter, fresh meat, vegetables, and fruit were very plentiful, in fact so plentiful that it was a pity that some of this supply couldn't have been saved for the time when we had to depend upon the Army for rations.

The Eleventh's show area was one of the best on Lombrum Point and many outfits came from all parts of the island to see the latest stateside "flickers" at

their huge bowl. By taking advantage of a natural canyon "The Lucky 'Leventh" had created an excellent amphitheatre. The acoustics were excellent, the seating was arranged so that every man could see the picture regardless of how or where he sat, but a lot of difficulty was encountered when it rained. A person had difficulty in keeping his equilibrium as he ventured down the earthen steps toward his seat in wet weather because the canyon walls were composed of slippery, slimy clay. Many times, in the darkness, words of unspeakable mention were uttered by some poor unfortunate soul who had slipped on a muddy spot. Since there was no railing for support he usually did not stop sliding until he reached the stage which was at the bottom of the ravine. Such an incident caused no end of amusement to those of us who had been more fortunate in reaching our seats.

The mud was so bad that, in general, it became a sacred rule for one to take off his shoes before entering his tent. In this respect our tent floors were always

reasonably clean and thus the order of tidiness was maintained. Memories, yes, everyone of them are priceless to us now because the worst of it is a dream rather than a reality. There were times when we thought that we had it pretty tough and it would be a pleasure to be stationed permanently like the Construction Battalion Maintenance Units, but after three or four months in one spot we were very glad to get word of another move, in spite of all the work involved. Yes, we were just vagabonds at heart.

There was no contact with the Japanese at any time after the Seventy-First arrived on Los Negros. The island had been secured two months prior to our arrival. As for Seabee contact with the enemy, the Fortieth and Forty-sixth Naval Construction Battalions were the only units to meet the Japanese face to face on Los Negros. Of the two mentioned, the Fortieth Battalion received the Presidential Unit Citation for the front line resistance they offered against a Japanese counterattack during the early days of the invasion on Los Negros.

LOS NEGROS

The climate of Los Negros was tropical and very humid, made more noticeable by the absence of the usual breeze coming into the inner region from the beaches. The average precipitation at Los Negros, whose weather is judged according to that of Manus, was approximately one hundred and forty one inches per year. The weather at Los Negros was about the same the whole year round. Heavy rains were predominate from one to four days out of the week, and it seemed that at 1600 each day it would rain by the bucketful for an hour or so. This island was entirely different from our former island (Pityilu), insofar as sea level and jungle growth were concerned. The island is deeply indented by bays and narrow inlets giving it a very ragged shoreline. Near the shoreline the land is low and flat. The dense jungle grows on a thin layer of clay and organic matter underlaid by coral or coral sand. Steep hills, with very narrow canyons, rise to a height of about one hundred feet in some places, especially toward the center of the island. Its natural minerals are of organic substance derived from a volcanic state which has been forming for centuries within the coral and basalt mixture, this in turn, weathers into a thick reddish clay matter. A limestone bluff is exposed about three fourths of a mile southward and west of Lolach Bridge.

Rock was encountered during construction at several points but it was either a thin strata of basalt or a very soft limestone. The frequent rains and the character of the prevailing clay soil rendered road construction and all clearing and grading operations

Clearing seventy acres for the Naval Brig at Los Negros.



difficult. Work was often entirely halted due to the soggy, miry condition. Although there were native villages on the island, the natives themselves were under the supervision of the Australians, and at no time did we hire them to assist us with our assignments. Neither did any Army field engineers render us assistance in our projects.

The only local materials of any worth were coral, limestone, and rock; for lumber we used the coconut and the mangrove logs. The Seventy-First obtained coral from two locations. That which was required for the surfacing and cementing material on the projects adjoining Lombrum Point was excavated from offshore borrow pits west of Lombrum Point, but most of the coral for all the roads came from a large pit about two hundred yards inland from the beach near the southeast point on the ocean side of Los Negros. In both the pits the coral was not cemented and blasting was not needed. Some aggregates necessary for cement were obtained from the limestone quarry already mentioned herein. This rock and large stone for rock fills, along with crushed stone, was blasted from a cliff rising about sixty feet above the highway. The rock was drilled by using jackhammers. This blasted rock was then hauled in dumptrucks to the crusher which was two hundred feet east of the quarry. The coconut trees were cut by the lumber crews of the Seventy-First and were used in building foundations and retaining walls. Mangrove logs were used for piles, bridge construction, and lumber for buildings and palletizing. The sawmill gang set up their place of activity in the Ship Repair area to cut plank and timber for bridge construction and lumber for buildings. Salvage dunnage proved useful when the demand for logs and planks was greater than the supply of native timber being cut. The potential output of this mill was slowed down by the loss of time caused by the extraction of spikes, bolts, and metal plates before the actual sawing could take place.

The major obstacles which had to be overcome were wet weather, jungle swamps, poor subgrade soil, and the lack of regular construction materials. Rainy weather greatly hampered progress on all the roads we attempted to build. It also slowed down our clearing and grading jobs. Traffic which drove over any "cleared right-of-way", during wet weather, churned the clay soil until it became so muddy that it had to be stripped and, consequently, wasted. Many difficulties were encountered in primary road building due to the amount of unauthorized traffic over the

roads while they were still under construction. Finally guards had to be posted to turn back all unofficial vehicles. In addition to this delay, the heavy rains forced all grading to be stopped for a day or two until the ground dried to a workable condition. Swampy areas were frequently encountered but they were cleared and drains installed while embankment material was placed on the natural ground. Water and mud forced out by surcharging helped also to overcome these conditions. Although in some instances, considerable extra embankment material was required; this method was deemed most practical in meeting local conditions.

One of the most trying and difficult tasks met and overcome by the Seventy-First "Can Do's" was their part in the construction of the huge Tank Farm. This was not an actual assignment given to the Seventy-First but rather aid given the Fifty-Eighth CB's in constructing sixty three of these gigantic tanks. Those of you who worked on that job can easily recall that particular project and tell the story with more emphasis than the writer. For the story can be told of the seriousness with which the men of the Seventy-First undertook this work and the endurance needed in erecting these tanks capable of holding ten thousand barrels of fuel oil each. The Tank Farm was just off the primary road which the Seventy-First had built joining Lombrum Point and Papitalai, a road which was four miles long and wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass with plenty of room. Of the sixty three tanks to be erected, we installed twenty three from the twenty third of July until the twenty third of September; we left the balance for the Fifty-Eighth CB's to complete. (Sometimes we have wondered if the Fifty-Eighth ever did finish that job). The work was arduous and laborious, intensified by the slimy, slippery red clay mud which caused more physical tension and strain than the actual job itself. The assignment was a rush job, and with but a handful of men to be spared, the crew labored long and tedious hours.

In the heat of the day, the men on the job practically stripped off most of their clothes to lessen the weight of sticky, sweat-dripping garments. Suddenly a torrent of cold rain would chill them to the bone leaving them without a stitch of dry clothing to give them warmth . . . and if there were any . . . the sun would soon be out in all its fiery glory again and the same thing took place as before. These men wore boots most of the time, for to attempt wearing shoes would be fool-hardy. The mud came up over

the ankles and the oozy mud held one's foot in a vise-like suction grip along with the uncomfortable feeling of having the wet clay slipping down into the shoe tops. It can be said here, without fear of contradiction, that the Fifty-Eighth "tankers" sure were a happy lot to see us come into their Tank Farm project to help them out of that predicament. But to their dismay, we pulled out after twenty three of the tanks were erected.

The story of the Admiralty Group cannot be considered complete until a brief resume of the Seawall project is given its share of the limelight. Not that it was a project of such great importance which brings out the highlights of the achievements of men against conditions and barriers of nature, but it can be borne in mind that it was a vital necessity and one classed as major.

In the beginning of this job, the men assigned to its construction found a very unsightly beach. For two hundred feet along the proposed seawall the mud was sickening to behold, due to the fact that this portion of the Point was used as a garbage dump. With an officer in charge and a chief to supervise twenty men on the first shift, and a chief and twenty men to relieve them for the second shift, the job kept going until it was completed within two months. The Seawall project began at the Ship Repair and Pontoon Assembly Unit area and ended at the Seaplane Base which totaled in length three thousand five hundred feet. Into this seawall was built all the endurance, sweat, chills, nausea, manual labor, blisters from handling creosote ties, infection from the animal life in the foul water, and that indomitable spirit of the Seventy-First which brought commendation for more than one "impossible" achievement.

The inlet had formerly been used as a garbage dump and was a breeding place for maggots, water rats, and water snakes. They lived on the floating debris which secreted itself in the coral and on the sand as the tides washed the swill in and out of the inlet. All this was dredged to a depth of about twenty feet, deep enough for LCI's and LCT's to tie up after the wall was completed. A small "cat" was used to push in the fill and to haul in other needed materials. At times, in that two hundred foot stretch of deep mud, the men had to brace their shoulders against the sides of the "cat" to give it added power and traction. Long coconut logs were dragged in and set up to support the wall. To do this, the men stood in the slimy bottom with the water circling from their

waists up to their shoulders. The maggots, snakes, and stench did not lend moral assistance to the men but the work never lagged. Four of the battalion's crack divers were called upon to dive into the channel, and with the aid of shallow water respirators they set the bulkheads while those on the bank placed the fill. On this job the men worked barefooted and wore only shorts. Setting in the creosote ties, fresh from the States, was the most painstaking of jobs. The handling of the rough hewn creosoted ties, cut and scratched the bodies of the men, already smeared with creosote. The reaction of the creosote and salt water in these open wounds burned the flesh to blisters. Within two months the project was completed and in came the small craft to tie up to the bulkhead. Little did the crews or the skippers of these craft fully realize, as they tied up to this newly made convenience, the human sweat and endurance that made it possible. Such was the Seawall achievement.

To go into all the projects that involved the Seventy-First CB, whether they were officially assigned to the Seventy-First or to assist other outfits, would entail page after page of construction history, therefore, we deemed it best to list all the jobs which our battalion had a hand in at Pityilu . . . Los Negros . . . Manus . . . Onneta . . . Ndrillo . . . Harengan . . . Hauwei . . . Koruniat. With this information at hand its memories can incite your vision to follow each of the human angles, ever mindful of the sweat, heat, rain, insects, tropical diseases, and the thoughts on which many wagers were won and lost, namely, "When are we going home." The beautiful photographs here in these pages of our history can tell the story without words . . . without thought of ballyhoo. They were taken as often as weather permitted and photographic materials were available.

Summary of Assignments committed to the 71st:
PITYILU . . .

The Pityilu Air Field for Carrier Planes.

The Pityilu Personnel Camp for:

Acorn #28

Patsu

Casu #42

The roads around the entire island.

Administration and Operational Huts.

The Shops and Supply Huts.

Prefabricated Nose Hangers.

Bomb and Ammunition Dumps.

Bomb Fuse Huts.

Ammo Belting Huts.

Belt Link Huts

Pyrotechnic Huts.

Tank Farm—9-1000 bbl. tanks for high octane gas. Submerged Submarine pipeline from tank farm to a buoy anchored 1300' out and sunk 12 foot.

1-4" pipeline ran from the tanks to the shoreline and 20' pipe lines 6" in diameter were welded together and piped to the receiving valve at the buoy.

Projects completed on Pityilu

Pityilu Airstrip:

Aviation Strip—5800' x 400'.

Aviation Warehouses w/concrete decks.

Photography Hut w/concrete deck.

Photography Water Supply w/4 wells and 3000 gal. tank.

Parachute Loft w/complete air conditioning ducts. (Special prepared pipes for these ducts).

Radio Hut and Antenna.

Rocket Magazine Hut.

Landing Dock w/cocolog cribbing, coral filled.

Mezzanine floor in Aviation Warehouse.

Bomb Sight Hut.

Compass Rose. 40' diam. concrete.

Boat Pool Hut and beachmaster office.

Field operation and field dispensary huts.

All the electrical distributing systems including the air strip lighting.

Fixed Bore gun sight range w/coral background.

Structural Steel Control Tower.

Pityilu Airfield Personnel Camp:

Enlisted men's quarters (66 Quonset Huts).

Enlisted men's galley and messhall.

Bakery, garbage house w/concrete decks.

Officer's Quarters (10 Quonset Huts).

Officer's galley and messhall.

Enlisted men's recreation building w/front porch.

Chief Petty Officer's Club.

Officer's Club.

Showers and Open-Ajr Heads.

Administration and utilities buildings.

Water Supply system w/22' high water tower.

1-15,000 gal. tank and 1-3,000 gal. tank in ground w/3300' pipe line.

Electric Distributor System.

Refrigeration System.

Complete Laundry.

Brig for prisoners.

Transportation Sheds.

Pontoon Gas Tanks—for Motor Pool.

Roads and parking areas.

Slit trenches for air raids.

Armory and extra warehouses.

Hospital, complete w/Quonset Huts.

Pityilu Fleet Recreation Area:

Dock, Personnel 24' coral mole w/2 pontoon docks.

L C I Landings 250' coral mole:

Access Roads and parking spaces.

Enlisted Men's quarters.

BOQ Officer's quarters.

Galley and messhalls for E.M. and Officers.

(Narration Continued on Page 106)

GUADALCANAL

Combat Training and Restaging.

On December 8, 1944 we went on board the AP, the USS C. G. Morton, known as the General Morton. After spending almost eight months in the islands of the Admiralty Group and covering much territory with new laurels added to those gained at Bougainville, we watched the ragged shore line of Los Negros grow dim and the far reaching sister islands fade in the early morning mist. We steamed out of Seaddler Harbor on the 9th of December and set course for our old stamping ground: Guadalcanal, for restaging.

The USS General C. G. Morton was one of the ships in the class known to the "war emergency" vacationers as an auxiliary personnel hence the initials AP. It was a large transport manned by the Navy on all decks including the regulation armed guard, who manned every gun on board ship, thus relieving us of the gun watch duty which has heretofore been a "must" on each trip we have made. The gun power on this ship was tremendous and it gave us a feeling that if anything were to happen on the way to Guadalcanal, we would have more than a fighting chance against the enemy. We were quartered in the fourth deck below and it was quite the job to handle a sea-bag and a duffle bag along with a hand bag both in coming on board and going below on the circular ladder which led you from deck to deck. It was perfect other than that, even tho we did have to use one deck to wash and shower and the one above to attend to the call of nature. The chow was of excellent cuisine (that's what we used to say in the old civilian days, huh) and the boys always had a goodly share of the menu's specials; which was not of variety but that which was picked up by each man, merely using a metal tray and some silverware. The entire trip was uneventful, no doubt the Nips were being kept too busy in other regions of the vast Pacific. Thanks to our Navy and air power. On the 12th of December, 1944 we watched the familiar outline of Savo, Tulagi, the Florida Islands and Guadalcanal rising up from over the distant horizon and within a few hours we were easing up to the docks at Kukum in the Coral Sea. Trucks awaited our arrival and we were hustled all the way up into the coconut grove plantation area near Koli Field. We were to camp adjoining the Third Amphibious Marine Corps and the First Marine Division set camp on the other side of the Grove. Our new camp-site was the old one formerly occupied by the 77th Division of the 10th Army. The barracks they used for mess halls were utilized by our battalion

for housing company A, B and Headquarters. Tents were soon put up for company C and D. It was the usual havoc of running around hither and thither, building this or setting up that. In two weeks the camp was in perfect livable condition, the galley had been extended and the enlisted men's chow hall had been extended and screened. At the same time other carpenter, electrician, and shipfitter crews were putting up Officers Country, Chief Petty Officers Country along with their galley, mess hall and Officers Club. The show area was set up and housed not only the members of the 71st but we also entertained the men of the 1st Marine Division, the Marines from the 3rd Phib, and while they were camped near us we also had the 25th Division of the Army to fill the overflowing show area until they were swinging from the coconut trees.

Little work of any major importance was asked of our battalion while we encamped there at the Grove. We had our share of rifle range practice; machine gunners went out from the various companies in their own groups along with the BAR and sub-machine guns to gain as much practice before the coming invasion of Okinawa (which was not known at that time). After rifle and machine gun practice, different groups went out on a training tour putting up what was known as the Balesuma River Bridge, tho to us it was just the Baley Bridge.

The first echelons of the battalion began to leave the 28th of February, 1945 to join the 3rd Amphib. Corp of the Marines aboard the USS Dickman. They shoved off to receive further invasion training before the jump to Okinawa. There after, week in and week out, the succeeding echelons went on board LST's and slowly wound their way up to join the first echelon. The rear echelon of three officers and men moved from the grove down to Camp Barrett, the headquarters of the Sixth Marine Division remaining there until further orders brought them up to Okinawa to join the battalion. It was their duty to remain behind and to send up needed supplies, to keep the personnel records and the pay records of the entire battalion safe. On May 19, 1945 the rear echelon went on board the USS Naos and after 55 days in which excitement was a daily occurrence, they finally arrived at Beach #2, where the winding natural inlet brought us to the vicinity known as Bisha Gawa. There we met men of our outfit who guided us with the prize of the long trip . . . 500 cases of tempting, delicious beer . . . to the camp-site of our old buddies.



Sawing off the foliage and base of fallen trees.



Logs are "snaked" to a nearby stock pile to be used later for general construction work.



Neither rain . . . nor storms . . . nor the tropics kept surveyors or operators from their inevitable goal.



Another link toward the completion of the Strip on Pityilu Is.



Excavating coral with a drag-line and rushed up to the rollers and graders on the Strip.



Action on a "back-hoe", extending the coral finger out to deep waters where the coral was best.



Beautiful, tropicganza . . . "Old Faithful" setting. Far from the peaceful canyons of Yellowstone National Park.



Ready for the oncoming carrier planes, the Strip is now in its final stages.



Upon completion of construction, the finishing touches are put on the shoulders of the field.



Ditch-digger cutting trench for the salt water sprinkling system to aid the compaction of the runway surface.



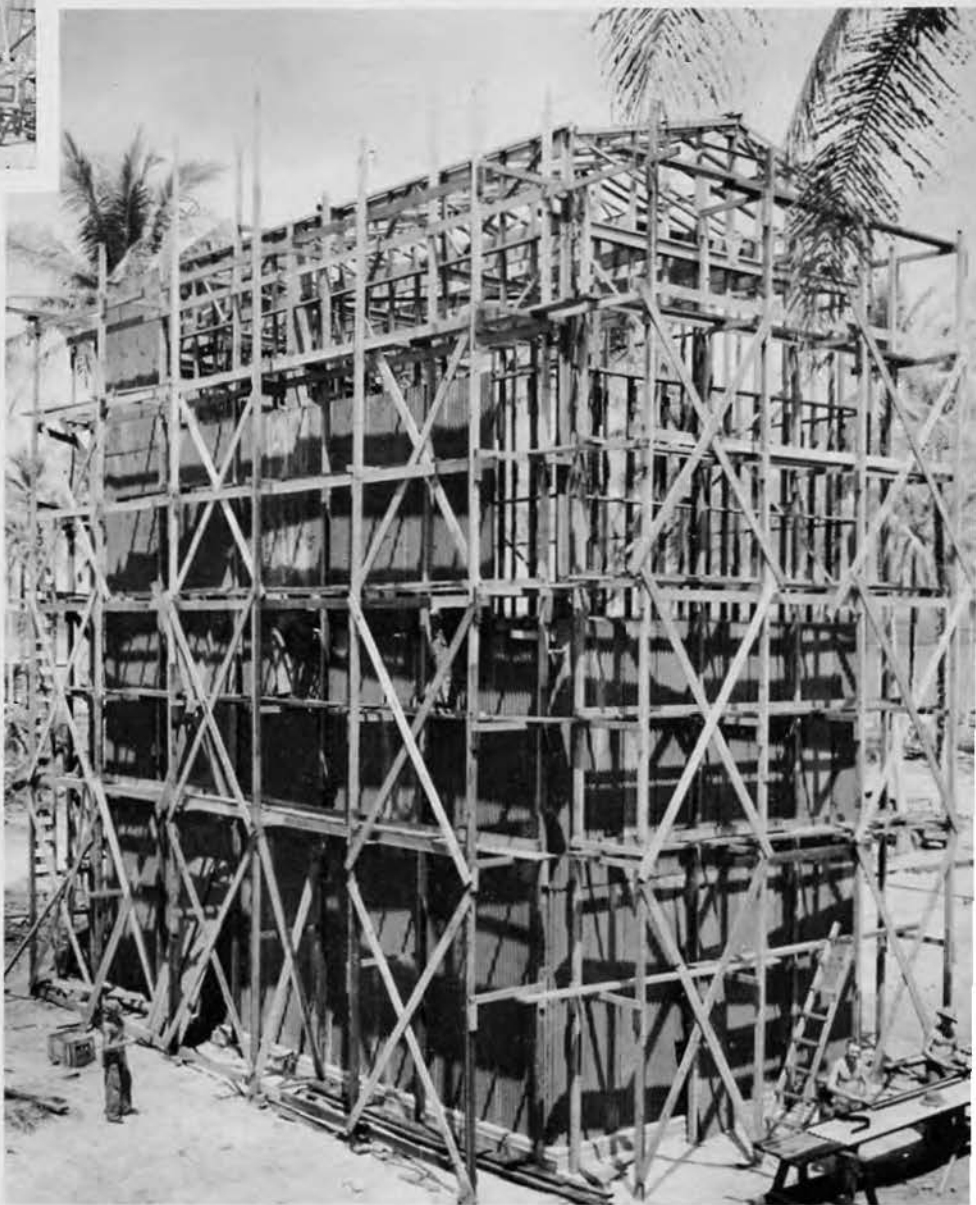
Steel control tower rises above the tall coconut trees . . . to control the constant flow of air traffic.



Half-moon 'Nose Hangar' receives bombers for overhauling of engines.



"Park your plane, Mister"? "Times Square on New Year's Eve as bombers taxi into parking areas."

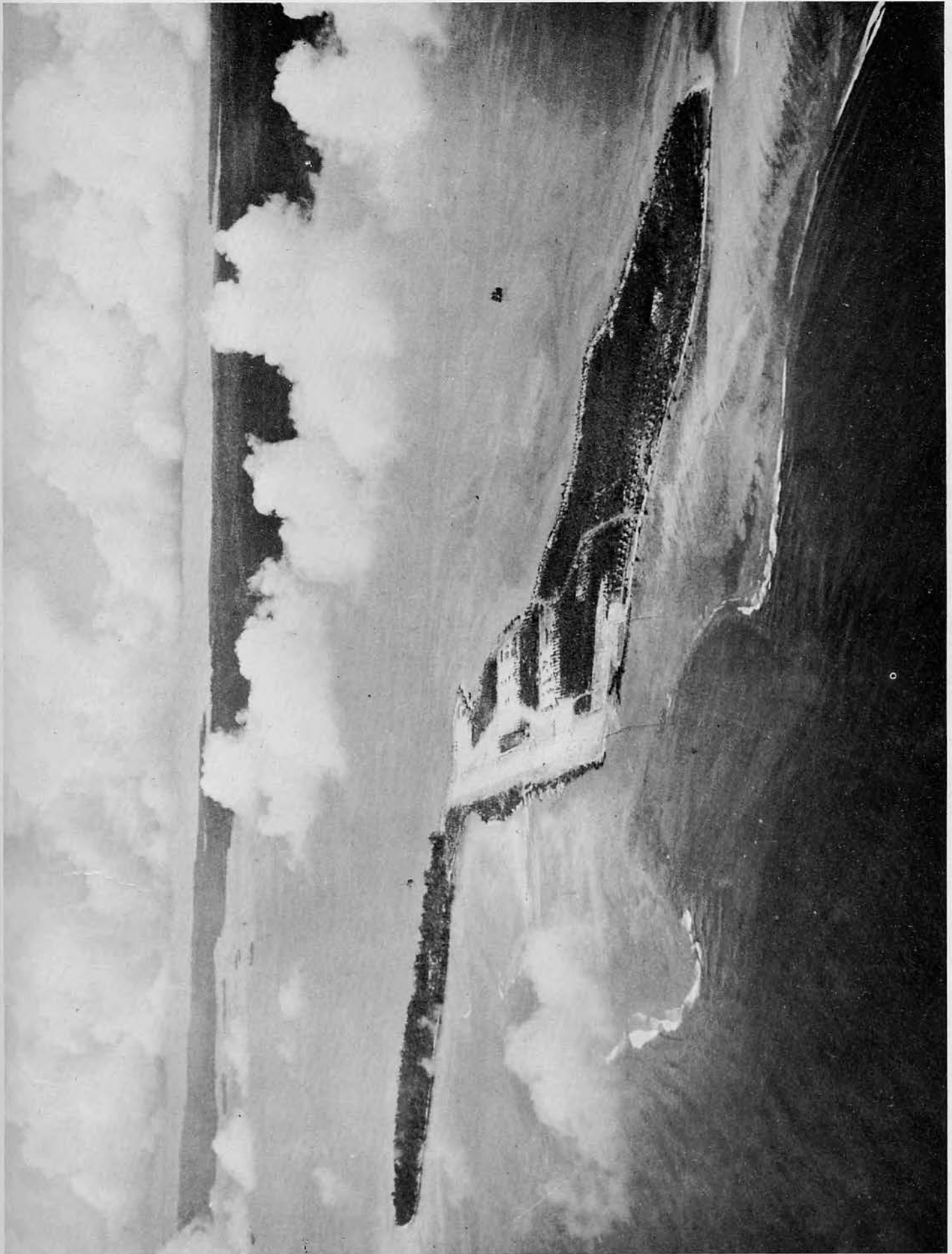


A vital structure, the Parachute Loft; parachutes were hung and special air-ducts conditioned them.



"Dedicated to the pilots and their heavily armed planes who we constantly watched come and go from the strip on Pityilu Island. These planes often took our men up for a trip whether it be for sight-seeing or for photography missions."





The tiny three mile island with its reefs casting a lacey effect. The land base of the Fleet Carrier air warriors.



Galley gets the priority in the building of new camp-site.



Refrigerator crew setting up "cold storage boxes" by sections.



The Pityilu Playhouse, our open-air jungle theatre. Bring your own cushions and ponchos.

Paul E. Roll, CSF, and his men erect the immense "reefers" on native logs for support.





"In the early days . . . we lived near bomb craters, etc. . . ."



Acorn 28 camp is woven amongst the trees, eliminating tree removal.



Skeleton frames of Quonset Huts erected for CASU 42.



Little Coulee Dam backing up a small lake . . .



. . . and the water flowed to the tall aeration tower. . . .



. . . where James C. McGowan, CWT, standing on steel trusses opens chemical controlling valve.



Octane Gas tanks erected inland, supplied fuel to the air-field.



Preparing the long pipe-line . . . ship-to-shore lines for fuel.



Tank Farm crew at Pityilu. (Top) T. H. Burden, C. C. Cooper, R. B. Reid, F. R. Newell, A. O. Benson, S. Chiavetta, and T. M. Scott. (Front) J. L. Sloop, H. E. Barker, R. A. Sheppard, R. J. Barr, G. O. Vick, and M. J. Rogers.



*Lolach Bridge built by E. J. Hamilton, CWO,
and his Bridge gang.*



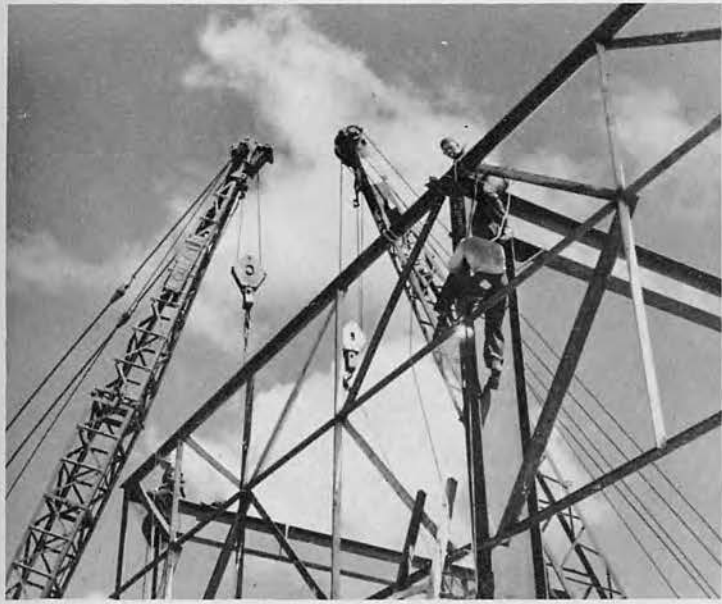
*Our crane operators handled these planes ex-
pertly.*



*"And a Sea-Wall was built . . . in it they poured
sweat, work and discomfort".*

*"Still another crew went to Ndrillo Island and
constructed many things, one of which was this
Harbor Control Tower."*



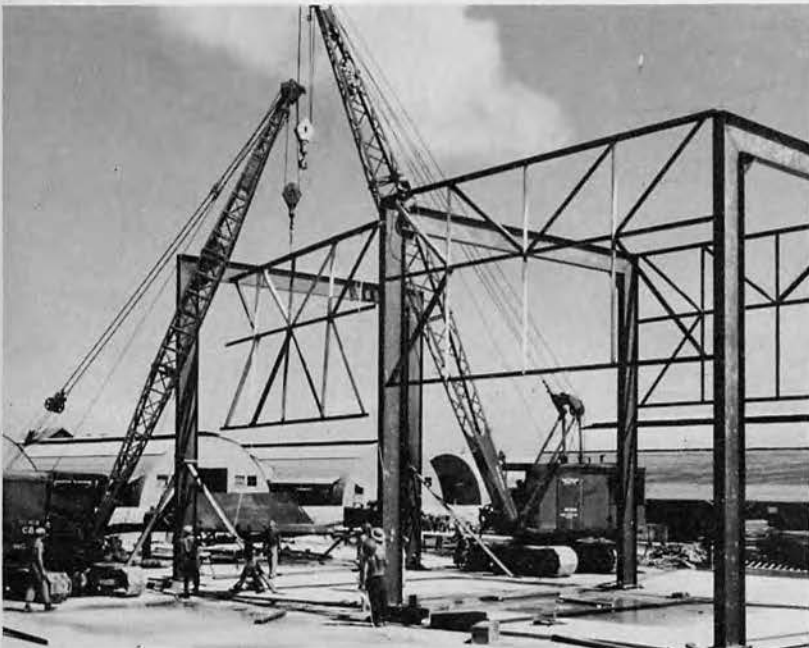


The welding crews were versatile in many ways.



Naval guns await repair as the Ship Repair Unit takes form.

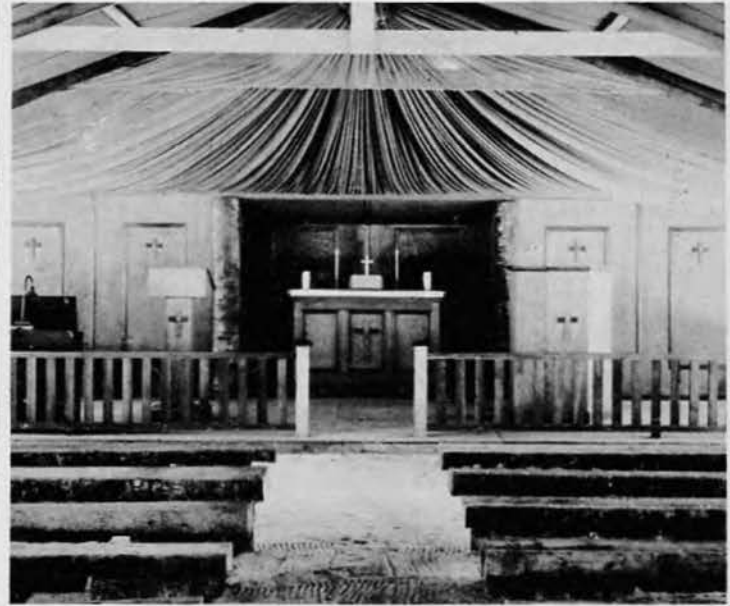
Nearly completed, the warehouse will soon be a busy repair machine shop . . . Stateside fashion.



Hoisting the supporting steel trusses to secure arches into place.



The Chapel on Ndrillo Island made by the native handiwork.



"Come unto me, all ye that labor". Our Chapel at Pityilu Is.



'Miss-Admiralty' of 1944 coming ashore with a pot of fish to prepare for the family outing.

The happiest pastime of natives was fishing . . . especially to use our methods of small dynamite charges.





Hand-ball courts for the "tars of the fleet" were always in full use at the liberty grounds laid out for them.



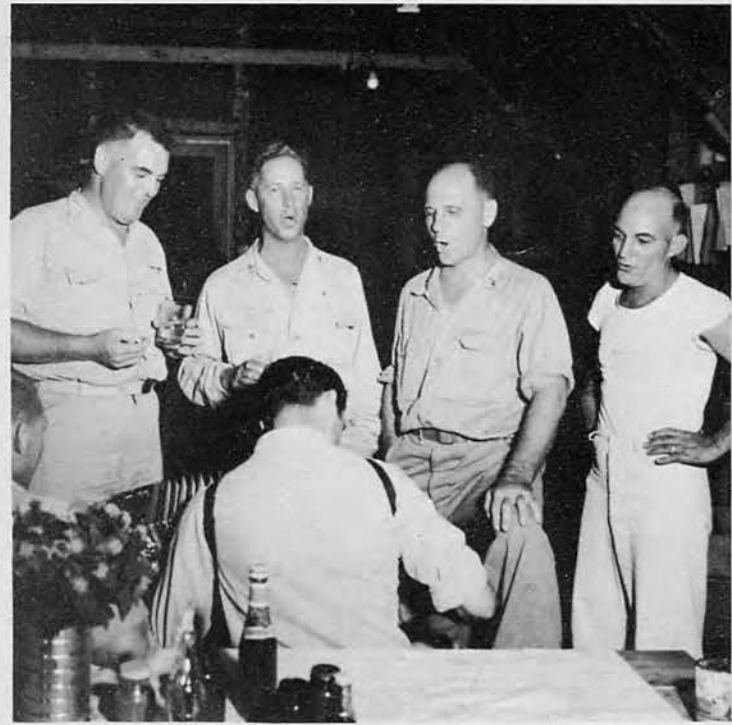
Tho the sun beat down with tropical intensity . . . these basket-ball courts were taken at every chance.



It was one of the most widely known recreation centers in the entire South West Pacific.



The Skipper poses with Bob Main, the baker of this beautiful cake.



"Carry me back to ole Virginy" . . . the quartet sang lustily.



"Hail, hail the gang's all here". (front) W. E. Carran, M. A. Petty, H. E. Delaney, 'Herman Green' (guitarist) and H. C. Dever. (rear) A. Brockenbrough, Jr., Comdr. Corley (Acorn 28), and W. J. Hinkson.



Ray Davidson, the old maestro, gives out with "Pop goes the Weasel".



Herman Green makes with the vocals as "Whitey Allen" beats the Bull fiddle.



Ray Davidson and his Serenaders. (L. to r.) M. P. Allen, M. E. Doran, H. S. Green, Jr., R. D. "Rip" DiDonato, (drums) and guest soloist. Sitting: (rear) C. J. Moore, R. O. Lunn, A. B. Cowardin, and C. C. Cooper.



Our own 'Chico' Alonso, Bob Hope, Two-eyed Connolly, Jerry Collona and Barney Dean.



Bob Hope clowning with the famous singer, Frances Langford, as thousands cheer them in the rain.



Jerry Collona takes a breath before taking a slide, while Tony Romano keeps the rhythm "hot".



Lovely and shapely Patty Thomas held the boys breathless with her dancing . . . and her brief costumes.



The veterans of the "Liar's Club" prove the size of their prize catch.

D. F. Schwitters, Lt. (jg) and one more of his intricate "brain-childs", the Super-Duper laundry washing machine.



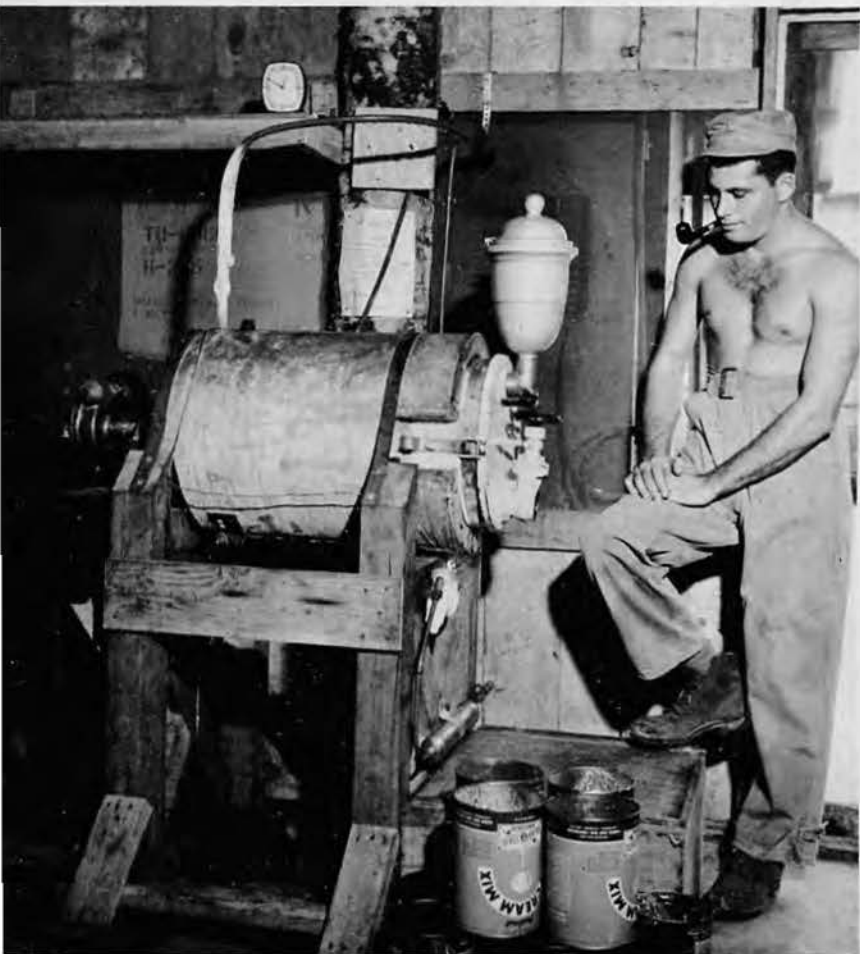
Our well known and often sought Doctors of Medicine. (l. to r.) W. J. Hinkson, Surgeon, W. F. Pierce, Dentist, M. A. Petty, Clinic Specialist.



*71st Financial Bank and Trust Co.
 (rear) L. C. Christensen, C. U. Banta, Lt. (jg),
 J. B. FitzGibbons, and F. A. Donovan.
 (front) R. A. Seydel, Jr., S. A. Gustavson, and
 H. E. Lamb.*



*J. V. "Wildcat" Watkins, W. C. Greensfelder,
 C. B. Hare holding one of the 4 ft. flying-fox bats
 which inhabited the Admiralties.*



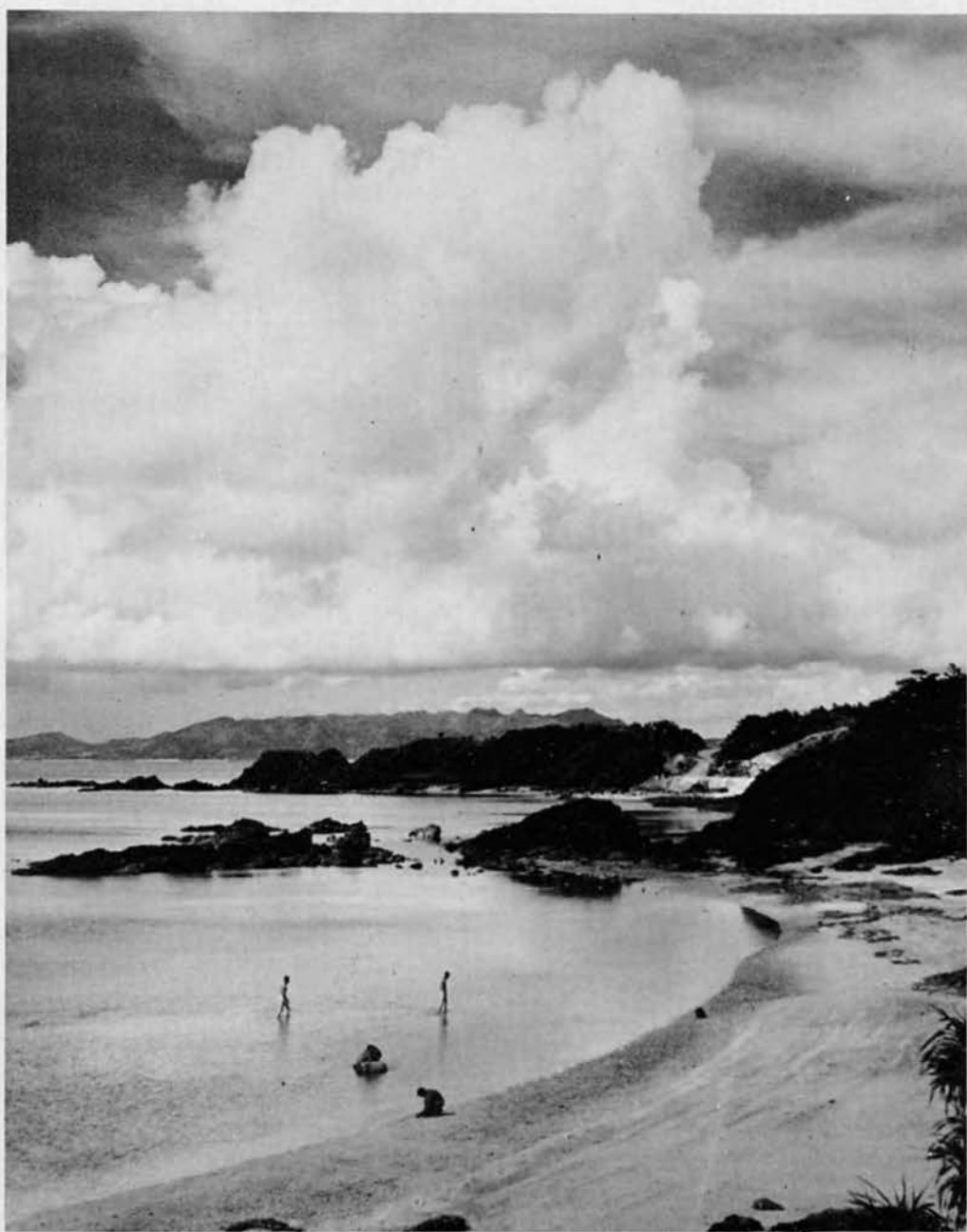
*Bob Gross and his De-luxe ice-cream mixer
 which churned ten gallons per load.*



*William Yancey displays the Jap regimental
 flag found on a soldier in the early days of
 Pityilu.*



Okinawa



Picturesque view of the rugged shore line of Okinawa with Motobu Peninsula in the background

THE STORY OF OKINAWA

By Carl Dorman, Jr.

April 1, 1945—Easter Sunday arrived with a calm sea and a clear blue sky. The sun was two hours above the horizon. The serene South China Sea was fogged with the ghostly gray mist of the smudge pots. Behind the curtain of smoke, landing barges circled restlessly, waiting. In the distance boomed the heavy naval guns. At 0830 the barges flashed across the line to the beach. The battle for "Bloody Okinawa" was on.

This was the moment we had sweated out for thirty days aboard ship. Thirty days of playing cards and

checkers and reading books, magazines, and the news reports; thirty days of boredom and anxiety. The trip up had been the same as all boat trips; the food was fair and the living quarters crowded. There had been a Victory dinner on Good Friday with steaks large enough to cover a standard navy tray and all the trimmings necessary to make a good dinner.

Aboard the USS Dickman we tried vainly to see what was going on. The wall of smoke obliterated everything outside a radius of two hundred yards, tides of the battle were pure conjecture. Scuttlebutt spread widely through the ship: "The Japs are shelling!" Someone had seen several unaccountable splashes near the next ship in line. On our bit of the U.S.A., isolated from the world and the news and in the midst of significant historical events, we depended on the latest developments from the coxswains passing by in landing barges. "No one hit on the fourth wave!" "The sixth wave went in standing up!" Our bird's eye view of the battle was minute indeed.

The original plan of operations called for construction troops to be landed on D plus 3, but the negligible resistance on the beaches speeded up the assault. D-day for Seabees was April 2nd, and the first groups of the 71st Naval Construction Battalion stepped ashore at Blue Beach to the first nearly civilized country they had seen in eighteen months. There, not six yards from the beach, was part of a real house with the wreckage of some native's possessions strewn about. In a sweet potato patch the battalion awaited orders to move into a bivouac area. Occasionally a shell would go whistling overhead on its way to the Nips or a patrol would pass through on its way to the lines. Some of the men wandered off to look at the tombs which covered the countryside and several nearby houses. Within two hours the Chief Master-at-Arms returned with an armful of native cloth. The Seabees had arrived, and the souvenir season had been officially opened.

From Blue Beach we marched five miles, carrying the equipment necessary to existence (a mere 60 to 100 pounds) on our backs, to a former Japanese airfield, Yontan, and prepared to bivouac. Within a few hundred yards of the camp were a number of Nip planes in all states of disrepair. One, a type known as "Frank" and which had never been captured intact, stood on a hard stand in the equipment area without a scratch on it. Already a guard had been placed on it so that it might be returned to the States for study by aeronautical experts. With the feeling of security



In a potato patch, we waited for further orders . . . and for the opposition.

"All ashore that's going ashore". April 2 and D Day for the Seabees as they watch the barges weave in and out heading for the beach.



with which the camp abounded, acquaintance was made with these planes in the first few hours. The first night passed quietly; some of the members didn't even bother to dig in.

The following day everyone set about building temporary homes; putting the camp area in order, and doing a bit of sight-seeing in the immediate vicinity. There was little work to do until the LST's were beached and unloaded. Water was rationed and the delicious chow which comes in little boxes and tin cans was distributed. Camp building was a well-known job, and presented few problems. From past experiences we had acquired the knowledge of how to put up the best shelters in the shortest amount of time. Within a short time structures made from parts of Okinawa's picturesque homes were sheltering Seabees from the rain and wind. Doors, buckets, dishes, floors, iron pots and pans, and sleeping mats adorned the camp and contributed greatly to the comfort of the first weeks. The members of the battalion met the first civilians that day, and promptly classified them with the "gooks". Military police herded droves of them past the camp area on their way to the civilian stockades. The gooks appeared diffident to the conditions the war had imposed upon them. Their faces were masks of typical Japanese stoicism. Horses were acquired by several of the men, and for the first few weeks the mark of ownership of a horse was a horseshoe of flea bites in the crotch. Also added to the battalion menagerie were several flocks of chickens, a family of stray goats, and one or two pigs. Pigs met with a quick end as the more experienced men promptly butchered and ate every porker they could catch. The first days on Okinawa were little worse than an extended picnic. The equipment had not arrived, so there was little work to do. Catching the Japs off guard proved more of a time waster than if they had met us on the beach with brass bands and geisha girls.

The most amusing entertainment, aside from watching the more daring personnel bathe in icy well water, was listening to radio commentators sitting comfortably behind their desks thousands of miles away talking about the "relative importance of the unopposed amphibious assault on Okinawa". We listened each evening to at least a dozen news analysts who were, speaking figuratively, talking through their hats.

Enemy planes made their first formal appearance at 0320, April 6th. No bombs were dropped in the camp vicinity, but old hands neatly hit holes dug for that purpose. Later in the day planes made a strafing



"Lyre back ancient tomb damaged by naval shells". Some of these tombs served as temporary refuge for the homeless.

run on the camp, setting fire to and completely destroying the Frank type Nip plane which was parked near the camp. The first casualty due to enemy action occurred, a slight shoulder wound caused by falling flak. The most severe cases were those individuals unfortunate enough to have been carrying open cans at the time of the raid. Despite annoying air raids, one LST was completely unloaded and the other started. One carpenter crew, previously assigned, worked at the III Corp CP and another began work on the III Corp Medical Battalion Hospital.

Okinawa was the first civilized country the 71st had seen in almost two years, so sightseeing was the main attraction for off-duty hours. The wrecked Jap planes on Yontan airfield were quickly stripped of all equipment, useful material, and possible souvenirs. Caves concealing abandoned Japanese supplies were discovered and ransacked for souvenirs, rifles, and flags taking first place on the souvenir hunter's list. Houses and tombs were interesting for only a few days as all were similar. The broad fields, rolling hills, and terraced rice paddies were a welcome change from jungles and swamps.

On April 8th, grading started on Route 1 from Yamada to Onna, the main road which led north on the China Sea side of the island. This stretch of road formed the backbone of the battalion's job on Okinawa. The next day the first part of the battalion

moved to a more suitable position north, following the Marines of the III Corps and keeping the roads open.

The month of April brought cold weather miseries to the men. Eighteen months in the torrid heat of the South Pacific had weakened the resistance of the men to the mild cold of Okinawa. Cloudy, rainy days and cold nights brought on the worst spell of colds and grippe in two years. Nights were spent with all available clothing wrapped around the body, and baths from buckets and helmets were no longer cool and refreshing as they had been in the tropics, but ordeals to be endured only when the odor became overpowering. Also in April came terrific hailstorms of steel to those remaining encamped beside Yontan. Shore installations and ships in the harbor threw up such a tremendous barrage in each raid that the harbor vicinity for miles around was prey to the never-ending rain of metal. Enemy action against the 71st was insignificant, except for the flak. On 16 April mortar shells aimed at Yontan landed around the camp area. During the previous night the first and only death due to enemy action occurred. There were air raids too numerous to count, but usually the planes merely passed over on their way to more important targets. On several occasions bombs were dropped nearby, but they were just close enough to make a few more Christians.



Inspecting "A" frame trusses which support bridge. This was the second repair job . . . sabotage had wrecked the first attempt.

By April 29th the battalion road responsibility extended from Yamada to Nago, a distance of more than 20 miles. The road was an old Jap road which followed the China Sea coastline as much as possible. It was narrow, as it was built to take the narrow-beamed Japanese trucks. In many places one side of the road was a sheer cliff down to the ocean, while on the other side was a perpendicular bank. Throughout the entire distance the road was widened sufficiently to accommodate the heavy two-way traffic which accompanied the northward drive of the III Corps, and was repaired as best as possible under existing conditions.

As the widening process followed a pre-existing road, culverts were already installed but had to be lengthened in order to allow for widening the road. In most places this was accomplished by shoving oil-drum culverts through existing Jap box culverts. Drum culverts have been used by the battalion since their first months overseas, and at each job they proved their worth again and again. Approximately 2,000 feet of drum culvert was installed in the month of April alone.

A Piper Cub strip at Onna was begun on April 16th. By April 20th enough of the strip had been completed to enable the first plane to land. The strip, 1000 feet long and 130 feet wide, with all necessary accessories, was finished April 24th. In September a C-47 made an emergency landing on this Cub strip,



On a road subjected to sniper fire and treacherous sabotage, this bridge was constantly repaired after each sabotage incident.

and to enable the plane to take off, an extra 150 feet were added in less than 24 hours.

In time we found that Okinawa was not so bad as it was cracked up to be. Reports, circulated before the landing, stated that there were numerous snakes, torrential rains (which arrived later), and several unheard of diseases. The most annoying nuisances to physical comfort were the fleas and the mosquitos. The Japanese had courteously built two small appendages to Yontan for the exclusive use of winged insects.

At the village of Kise, a concrete bridge had been badly damaged (by combat action) and was repaired by cribbing along the broken span and back-filling with rubble. Many of the bridges on Route #1 were damaged, seemingly beyond repair. Each bridge was repaired by crib and back fill or with shoring. These bridges were the only ones on the island made passable by using salvage material and drift wood.

On April 26th improvement was started on Route #6 crossing the isthmus near the middle of the island at its narrowest point, from the villages of Nakadomari to Hizonna, a distance of 3 miles. Work was started at the west — its junction with Route #1 at Nakadomari. The road was widened for two lane traffic, and a new section was built from Yamagusuku, northwestward to straighten the route. The road on the China Sea slope was surfaced with coral sand and gravel from the beach at Nakadomari, and the road on the Pacific slope was surfaced with decomposed limestone from the pit at Yamagusuku. The road project was cancelled May 10th for higher priority work nearer the combat zone, when but 0.5 mile was left to be surfaced.

On the 6th of May the main part of the battalion moved south with the III Phib. Corps. A camp was established west of the junctions of Routes 1 and 32, on Route 32. This was camp #2, long remembered for the mud and ugly living conditions. A condition black existed on the night of May 6th. Two nights previous the Japanese attempted a landing on the beach below the camp. During May, Camp #2 was under enemy artillery and anti-aircraft fire. The Japs would set their anti-aircraft shells to go off fifty or sixty feet from the ground, spraying the area with shrapnel. One night a cache of oil drums was hit by artillery fire, but did not explode or burn. Two men were wounded by sniper fire. At the same time Camp #1 was beginning to have difficulties. On several occasions Japs ambushed vehicles and bivouacs within a few miles of the camp. The war was catching up



An aerial view of our concrete pipe plant and storage yard at Antuso.

to the 71st.

The improvement of Route 1 was started by a battalion of Marine Engineers, but was taken over by the 71st May 7th before much work had been done. Widening was started at RJ 32 and the road widened for two lane traffic. Convoy traffic over Route 1 to the combat area was extremely heavy and interfered great-

(Narration Continued on Page 108)



Well preserved Oriental Town Hall escaped shelling at Naha City.



Wreckage of Shuri Castle which was reduced to a mass of rubble.



Deep in the hills of Motobaru, a native family disregards the war and continues with their daily chores unmolested . . . undaunted.

A stray horse and cart proved to be invaluable to assist Seabees; home in background is abandoned.





Japanese fighter plane captured intact and perfect.



Seabees up to their old tricks . . . looking for useful souvenirs.

This Jap heavy duty bomber had been bombed and strafed by suicide pilots so that we could not possibly use it.



Demolished enemy plane. Note in the foreground the crude, antique hand blocks the Japs used to compact the air strip.



DUDS . . . on the outskirts of Naha where mines and bombs were disposed.



Fred W. Balke holds pieces of track from 'Dozer damaged by Jap land mine.



Bill Yancey detects, while Paul Hovanas digs out land mine directed by Lt. (jg) Edward Goebel, Navy demolition expert.



'Dozer deep in the mud extracts a Marine supply truck enroute to the front lines.



Another convoy stuck . . . holding up precious supplies for men and guns.



Debris from Naha City helps to build new roads. Our big shovel scoops up the famous city's remnants.



Typical conditions of roads towards Naha City as the battle ahead rages. Trucks barely squeezed by each other in narrow path-ways.

Frankly . . . this is the same identical road, several days later. Our road gangs worked around the clock to complete it.





Conditions early in April . . . here the sun comes out to dry the ruts.

(Below) Results of exhausting efforts, the roads were packed down and traffic moved forward at a rapid pace.



(Above) Supply train returning from nearby front lines, assisted thru impassable stretch of knee-deep mud by our big bulldozers. It was such conditions as shown that earned our Battalion the Navy Unit Citation during heavy artillery shelling.



(Left) Preliminary survey for new East runway at Yontan Air Field. This was to be a "sister" bomber strip to the adjoining field.

(Below) Four P-51 Mustangs zoom over the tops of our men, just returning from a bombing mission over Tokyo. We worked 24 hours a day to hasten the completion of the new field. Portable lights on towers furnished the lighting for the crews at night.





View of our new project . . . the Yontan Bomber Extension . . . nearly complete lacking but five days. Already in use as a haven for the new Navy heavy, four motored bombers, "The Privateers". This new strip was 7000 feet long adding a unique pattern to the colorful air fields. One can see the many ships laying in the harbor of Okinawa.

On an obscure and tiny Piper Cub strip, this huge C-47 transport made a forced landing due to bad weather and other fields already crowded. Our emergency crews were called out and hastily added another 150 feet to the runway so that the big ship was able to take off.



Bridge approach damaged by combat action at Ishikawa.



(Left) At low tide our bridge gang, using hip-boots, work rapidly to beat the tide and cribbed this bridge with native timber.



(Right) The same bridge shored up and re-vamped . . . ready for use, pending the possibility of Jap sabotage during the night to blow it up.



It was the duty of our men to keep all roads and bridges open.



Assistance is rendered by natives who accepted our friendship warmly.



Heavy timber box culvert replaces inadequate Jap bridge.



A new bridge eliminates blind curves.



Any slight cave-in would send man and 'dozer end over end downward.



Blasting coral for road surfacing and compacting materials.



Wagon drill crew boring deep into the side of coral pit, prior to the placing of the dynamite charges.

The big 6, our largest shovel gouges out coral after the blast and loads it into waiting trucks.





'Dozer cutting corners off a sharp curve. Eventually this ledge was levelled to meet the lower road, making it a two lane highway.



Narrow cliff roads were always treacherous.

In this picture (right) the carryall on a slanting slope lays out the new road routed over the mountains, which will by-pass the shore route.



(Left) Two bulldozers spreading the earth as men, machines, time and materials transform these acres of valleys into modern lanes for fast moving traffic.



A mountainous road curve is eliminated on Route 6.



Single lane road is converted to a two-lane highway.



The roller in the foreground and the 'dozer in the background put on the finishing touches to a seemingly "Stateside" highway.

Here is the finished product. The super-highway as it approaches the village of Onna.





Aerial view of the new three lane highway showing the elimination of unnecessary curves which can also be seen winding along the shore line. In the background the scenic view of one section of Okinawa . . . untouched . . . unspoiled with its rural effect. Taken just north of Onna-by-the-shore.



71ST
U.S. NAVAL CONSTRUCTION
 アメリカ **BATTALION** 第七十一
 海軍 **HEADQUARTERS** 大隊

GUADALCANAL
BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS

BOUGAINVILLE
BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS

PITYILU
ADMIRALTY ISLANDS

LOS NEGROS
ADMIRALTY ISLANDS

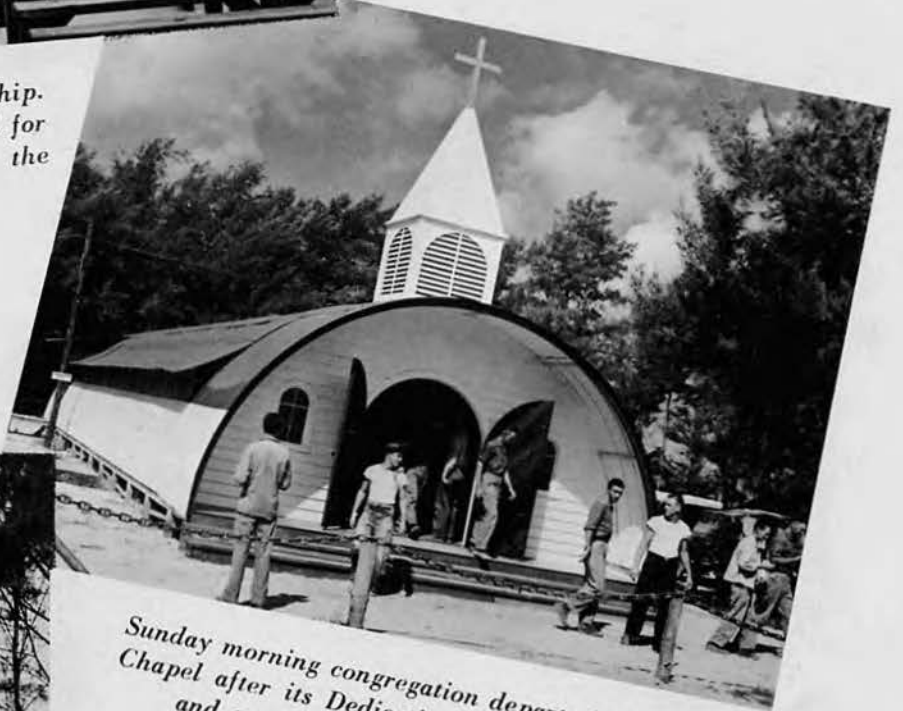
OKINAWA SHIMA
RYUKYU RETTO

Frank Parks takes to the skies to give us this impressive picture of our permanent camp-site located on the China Sea shoreline of Okinawa. This is our entire camp (before the typhoon) with all its facilities . . . and the shops which housed many industries and crafts. It was the finest camp the 71st ever had boasted of in over two years. Three diving rafts can be seen near the shore. Our ole swimmin' hole.

Our sign post in the administration area tells the world of the many places we have been . . . slowly but surely . . . on that road to Tokyo.



The interior of our Chapel of Holy Worship. Artistic neatness and simplicity speaks well for the craftsmanship of our carpenters and the painters.



Sunday morning congregation departs from the Chapel after its Dedication by our well liked and good friend, Chaplain Schnake.



The 65' monument which proudly bears our national colors was ironically a former mast from a Japanese ship sunk in the harbor. The color-bearers stand at attention before raising the 20' flag for the first time.



It was just a mass of lumber and framework . . .



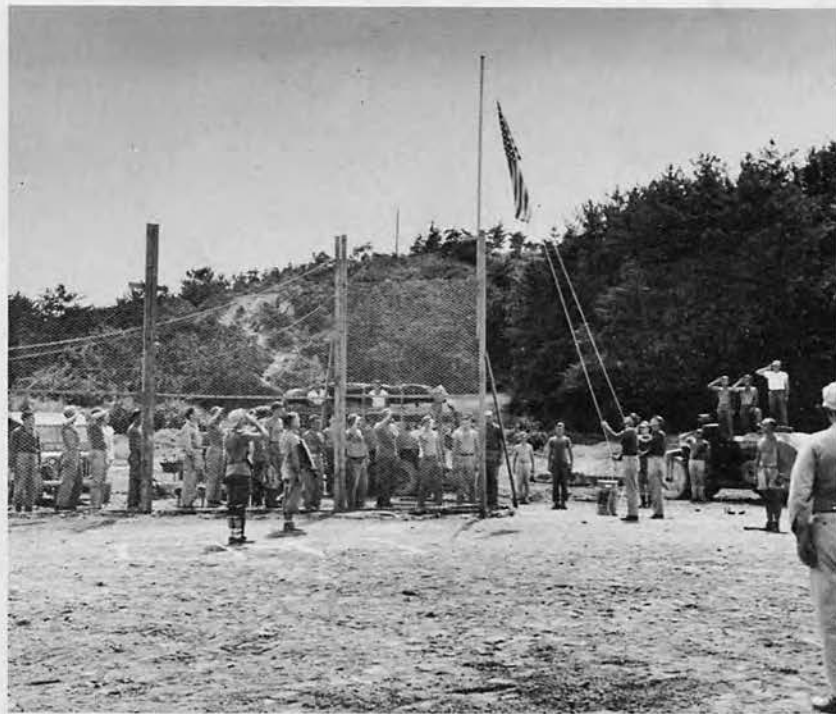
until one day Chief "Chico" ALONSO and his men finished it . . .



and the Marines heard about it . . . and so did the Army . . . once in a while we got seats . . . if we got there before they did . . . grrrrrr.



Our skipper tosses in the first ball as Stan Sendgikoski admires poise.



Captain Cunniff dedicates Trenta Field on our Second Overseas Anniversary.



The diamond which bears the name of our youthful buddy and prize ball-player . . . who was killed in action in the early days of Okinawa.



"Here's that Band again" with Dick Jergens at the Mike.



A bit of sound advice by Captain J. F. Cunniff on our Second Anniversary.



Another new signature added to the famous overseas drum of the Jergen Show.



Our adopted Okinawan son, "Butch" proves to be a seasoned trouper.



The entire troupe of Charles Ruggles blends into a grand finale.



Looking out upon the "Complete Sell-out" of the Ruggles' Show.

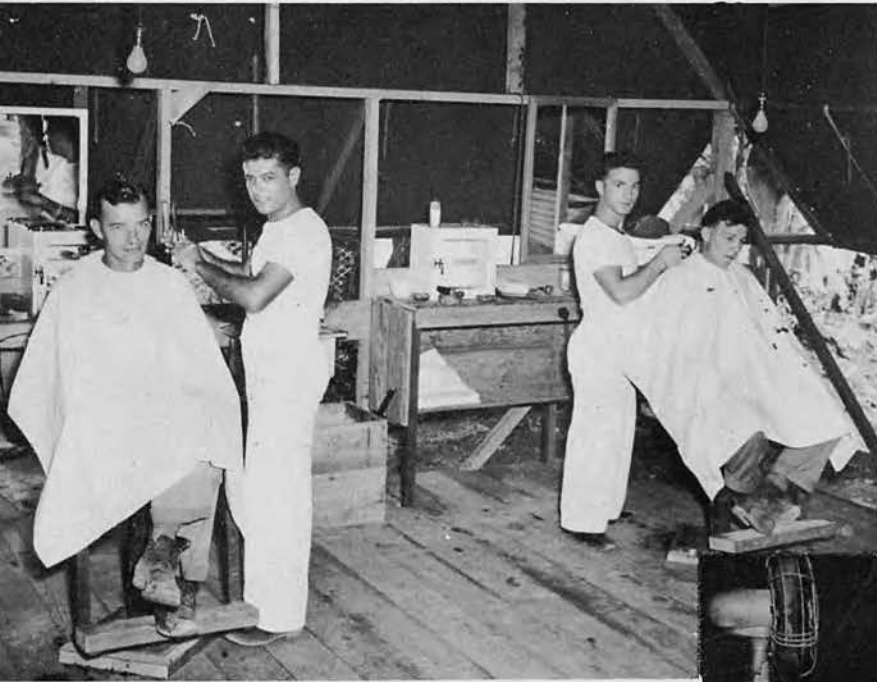
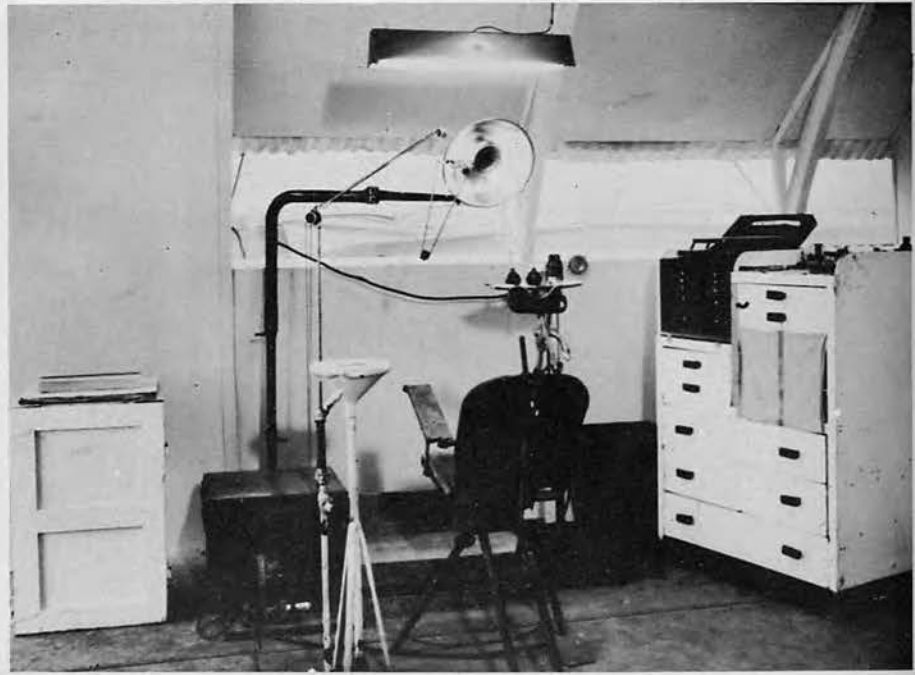


Lovely Ginny Carroll fulfills a very intricate position.



Butch . . . our well dressed Seabee is coaxed for a song.

(Right) Where we took our pains and tooth-aches plus a few fallen plates and let Doc Pierce administer his latest methods in this clinic and modern overseas laboratory. Many of us are grateful to him for his excellent workmanship.



The 71st "Clip Jern" where scuttlebutt came and went . . . carried by both Officers and Enlisted men.

(Left) Sergio Martinez feels for the ears of Jack Cawthorne as he tells him of the new Navy point system. (Right) Cheerful, happy-go-lucky Tony "Pennseltucky" Sandella trims the long flowing hair of the Youngstown Flash, Mike Polofka.

(Right) Busy as the proverbial bees, Sotero Medina and Lou Ortiz smile as they carry on . . . getting our uniforms in shape and adding those newly attained stripes or "did you miss the re-rate board, too?"





(Left) Left to right: Bob Trinkle, Pat Ryon, and Al Watkins have themselves a great time sorting all those Christmas packages you sent us . . . which came sometime in the hot summer months.

The crew of the Okinawan Panatorium (laundry to you) standing in front of their sorting bins. Left to right we give you Frank Masiello; the boss-man Nick Piegari; Ken Six the pride of New York's Village, Carl Keister, and Johnny Hylton. Kneeling (left to right): "Doc" Headley White, jovial Ben Davitt, and Clovis Wyers. These are the boys who lost buttons, shirts, socks, pants; and "what else" did you let them get away with? But in all seriousness they really did a fine job.



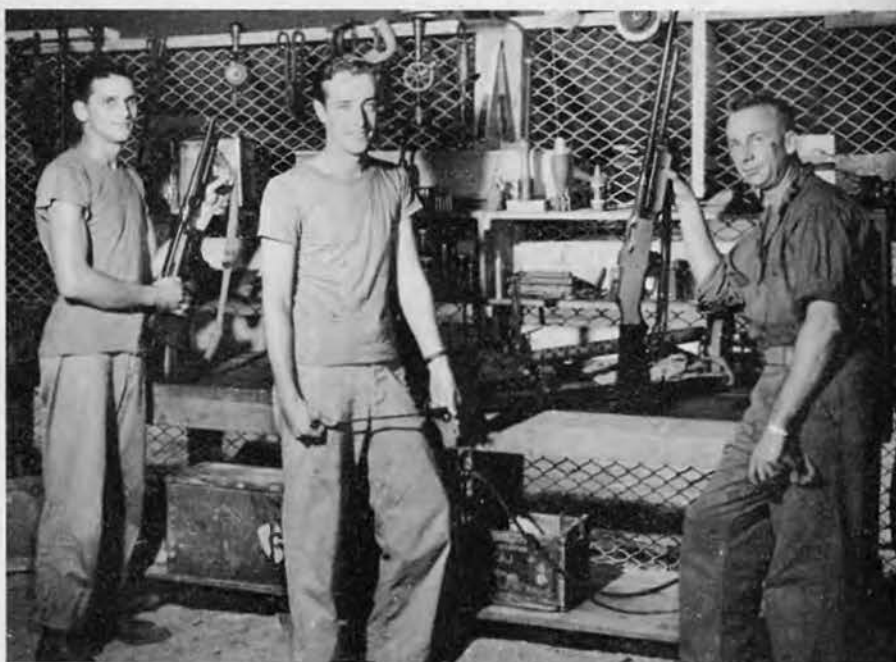
(Left) Clovis Wyers and Kenneth Six operating two of the twelve washing machines set up in the laundry.

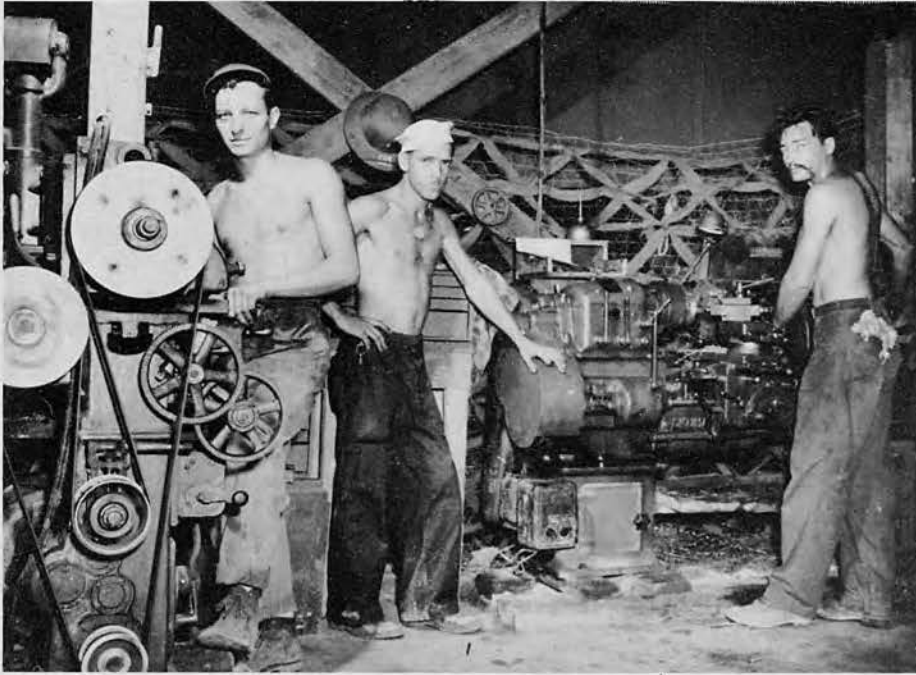
(Right) Long waiting line of trucks slowly moving up to our High Water Tower which produced on an average of 60,000 gallons of fresh water per day. It was to these towers that many other outfits came daily for their water needs and as on other islands, it was our water purification department who supplied fresh water to those who came from remote camps.



The 71st Fire Department . . . which had varied duties far from the fire-fighting title it held. On the left is Bill Hoffman, in charge of the department, sitting down is George Rock and to the rear of the converted jeep stands Curtis Shinn. Bill Hoffman relieved Vic Hansen when the former Fire Chief went home for his discharge.

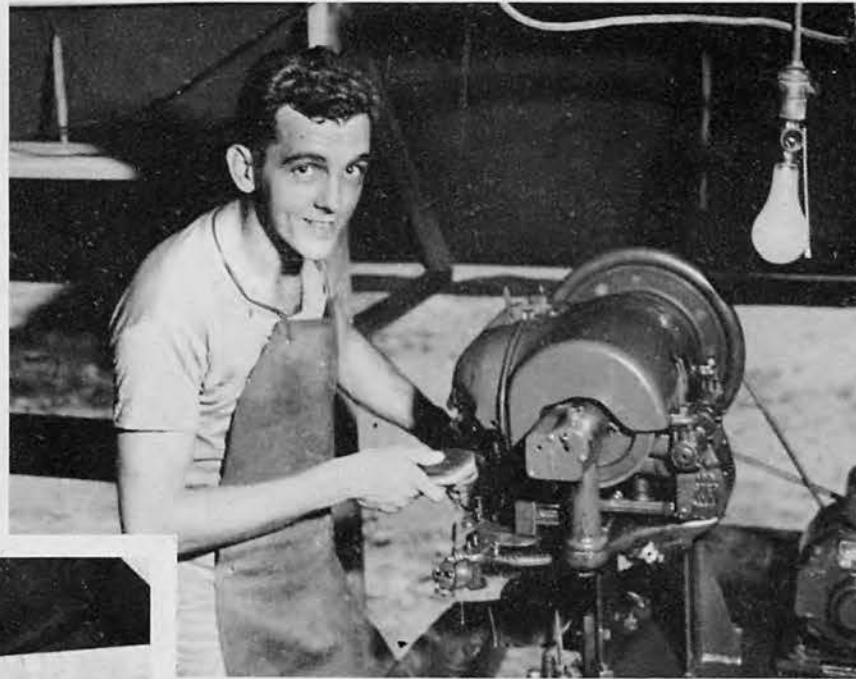
(Right) Left to right: Ed Bacino, Bill Sachau, and Wil Cooper. Guns . . . guns . . . all kinds of weapons. Here in the Armory weapons of all descriptions were expertly overhauled, cleaned and trued. Many were the times that we entered their portals and cleaned our "pieces" and when they were okay we left . . . but not before. Jesse Finch, having left for home is missing from the ole gang of Gunners.





(Left) A machine shop fully equipped with precision Japanese handiwork was hurriedly abandoned intact and into this "gold-mine" stepped the machinists of the 71st. With such machinists as Gordon Green, Milton "Whitey" Allen and Marvin Cox, many vital parts were turned out for hasty emergencies.

Willie Collins stands by his sewing machine mending a broken down pair of GI shoes which needed a face-lifting and good soles. What with the elements and jungle rot . . . these shoes took an awful beating.

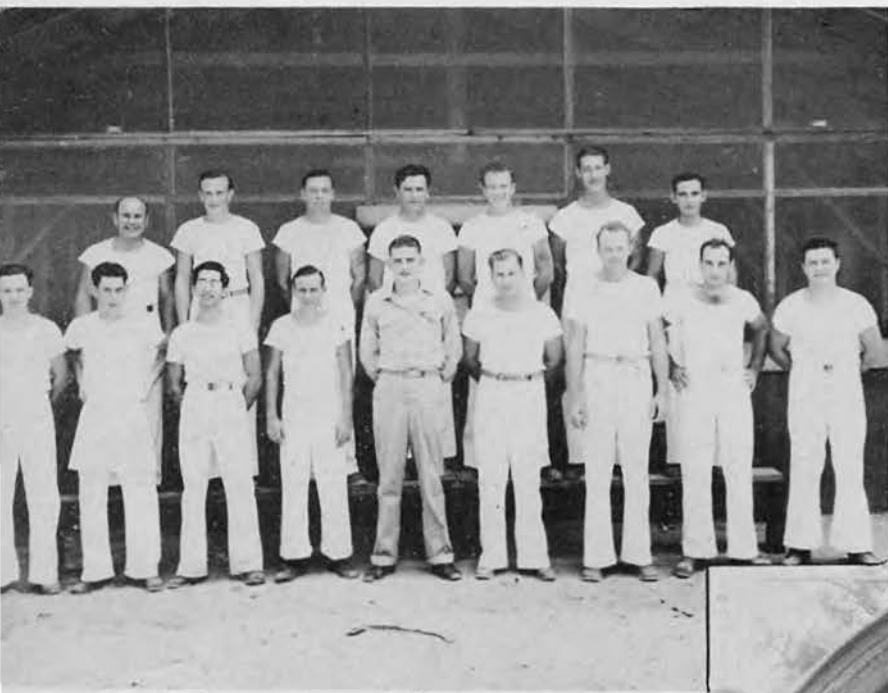
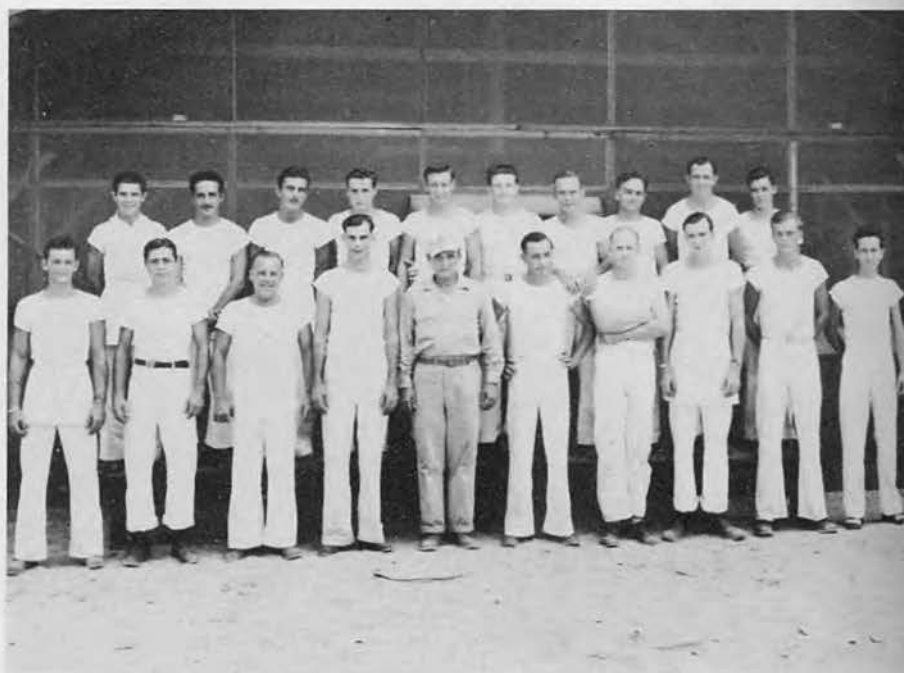


(Left) The Sheet Metal Shop turned out numerous articles of excellent craftsmanship . . . one of which was the specially prepared air-ducts used in the Parachute Loft at Pityilu Island. Left to right: Chief Jim Boldrey, Bill Revell (back to camera), Al Jensen, Ed Ottenheimer, Frank Hubbard, and Paul Rhoades.

(Right) Some meals were good . . . and some were sad . . . some made us happy . . . and some made us wish we had never left Mom's home cooking.

Rear—left to right: B. J. Gilliam, M. Sandler, C. M. Seman, J. Pavkovich, R. N. Baugh, J. S. Howell, W. J. Pinkham, M. W. Darres, J. V. Watkins, J. C. Stuteville.

Front—left to right: W. H. Campbell, J. C. Richards, J. N. Coffield, E. D. Smith, Chief E. C. Scarbrough, J. R. Darroh, P. W. Brinkley, H. O'Donnell, S. D. Ramsaur, and T. F. Smiley.



When it came to baking . . . we would gladly lay odds that we had the best in the Navy . . . and the Butchers made our mouths water when and if they snared a load of fresh meat instead of the stuff in little cans.

Rear—left to right: R. H. Bertini, J. P. Samanich, A. Fogarty, V. F. Brand, E. P. Heath, F. S. Ackett, H. S. Goodwin, Jr.

Front—left to right: G. L. McNamara, A. L. Morris, G. Topalian, J. F. Osborne, Chief R. M. Main, W. L. Beach, E. E. Hassebrock, J. A. Giannini, C. E. Clupka.

(Right) Full staff of the Storekeepers and supply men of the Supply Dept.

Rear: J. J. Driscoll, J. D. Kennelly, R. Drosen, H. Dickman, W. A. Lausen, B. W. McEntire, R. B. Sausaman, R. E. Bowers, W. F. Williams, H. H. Corkran.

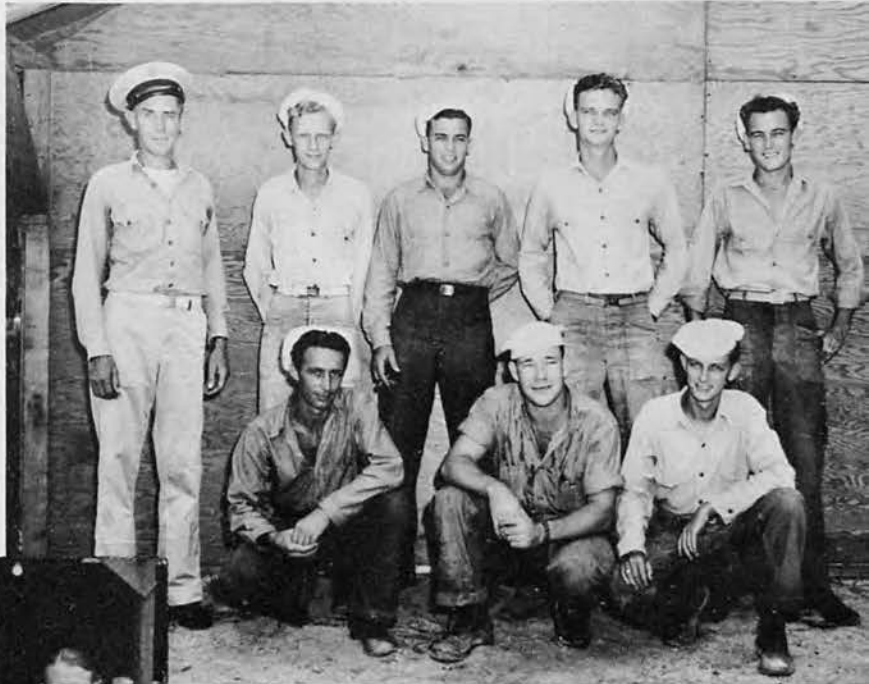
Front: D. J. Locke, C. P. Minge, H. J. Stumpe, E. T. O'Neil, L. F. Huettl CSK, J. L. Hagler Lt. (jg), B. W. Millican CSK, J. B. Johnson, H. Pincus, J. H. Paine and H. B. Torrence.





(Left) Over in Officer's Country there lived the cooks, attendants, and wine-men . . . rarely did we see them and so here they are: F. E. Dickerson, G. H. Drought, H. D. Ballard, and J. C. Stuteville. Front row: L. C. Lau, Jr., T. E. Webb, and G. Pellicci.

Our guardians whilst we sleep . . . the O. O. D. and full complement. Rear: Chief E. G. Hansen, R. K. Linder, E. V. Manes, H. M. Hood, E. J. Locke, Jr. Front: E. B. Hunter, J. E. Campbell, Jr., CCM, P. A. Vaillette.



(Left) The crew of the Carpenter Shop, minus such capable men as Chief M. B. Garcia, T. H. McMurtrie, W. L. Daniels, G. Svestad, G. C. Birrell. They turned out everything requested of them — made with the finest woods of the tropics. Pictured here from left to right in the rear row: J. W. McIntosh, J. H. Barry, M. D. Frazier, D. M. Cox, L. H. Henzler and C. W. Lee. Front: E. E. Carter, D. R. Hoiles, H. W. Baldwin.

(Right) Operations could tell you where any man was situated if and when you wanted him . . . but whether you could have him, it was a different story. Here are the planners, the schedulers and the men behind the wheels. Left to right: J. G. Messina, L. V. Arbogast Ch. Carp., Chief J. H. Allen, H. Powell Lieut., J. H. Quackenbush, and E. L. Shelton, CCM.



When it came to handling earth moving these Chiefs were the ones who could move a mountain and leave a molehill. Left to right: H. A. Wolfe, J. L. Ray, H. A. Dalton, R. L. Mauldin, and J. H. Bothwell. Later on these men became specialists in their own fields.

(Right) When it came to making signs . . . no matter how large your order or how small the sign . . . you can take it from the Painters . . . they sure were kept busy whether on signs, or spray jobs or jobs around the camp. Left to right: P. S. Belkoff, L. A. Sollid, W. A. Moore, J. Anderson, N. R. Baldwin Cptr. (holding emblem) kneeling—left to right: E. A. Blades and C. A. Bergau. Fred H. Kunkle is missing having gone home previously.





(Left) We passed by the machine shop and asked our machinists to pause long enough to take a photo. Rear row: C. Goldstein, T. M. Light, R. L. Schaller, M. P. Allen, M. R. Cox. Front row: G. W. Green, W. Zenker, J. B. Gagnon, and F. T. Sharp.

. . . then we met the Grade Crew and they willingly posed also. Rear row: L. H. Cobb CSF, C. Turner, Jr. CCM, W. F. Carris CCM, J. E. Woods CEM, J. H. Redding CCM. Front row: W. O. Watson CM1c, P. J. Goudeau, CM1c. M. D. Dallison, CM1c and C. J. Knutson GM1c.



(Left) . . . from there we walked over to the Tire Shop and the boys stopped with their tire overhauling long enough to give us a few smiles. From left to right: B. B. Shales, D. L. Lane, R. N. Walker, Ray M. Walker, M. Falk, A. P. Gazzillo, and C. D. Spurgeon.

the Japanese were preparing to attack our defense lines, and that all CB units were to be assigned battle stations. Since the American-occupied section represented less than 1% of the total area of the island, the urgency of such a measure is readily apparent. On 5 March all hands were assigned defense positions in the Torokina area; and the following night the 400 volunteers requested from the 71st started erecting beach defenses to repel any enemy advance from the sea. The positions were manned nightly by this group until the battalion was secured for embarkation.

The enemy counter-offensive opened with shelling at 0530, 8 March 1944. The beach watch was ready for any contingency; and the balance of the battalion was dug in at the campsite, which was actually only a few hundred yards behind the front lines, awaiting call to man defense positions. The size of the American area made all points vulnerable to shelling; but the airfields and artillery installations were targets which most interested the enemy, and many of the larger planes were temporarily withdrawn from the island lest they be clay pigeons, or sitting ducks when not in the air.

Once again, with the Piva Field on one side of us and a 90mm battery on the other, we found ourselves right in the middle of the action. Fortunately for us, the Japs overshot the field more often than they undershot. On 13 March, however, a number of shells landed in the bivouac area, riddling tents with shrapnel and causing one serious injury. How others escaped injury will ever remain a mystery. Needless to say, foxholes that hadn't been improved upon at the start of the counterattack received attention after that morning.

Officers' country was right beside the battery of 90's; and many a night the shrapnel whistled through the area as "their-tillery" felt for "our-tillery." No casualties were suffered therefrom, however. During the entire operation, but one officer was injured by enemy action, and that while serving as rear gunner on a strafing mission over enemy lines.

By this time, most jobs assigned to the 71st had been completed; but uncompleted work continued in spite of intensified enemy action. Minor injuries were inflicted from time to time by shrapnel and stray bullets, but no further serious injuries were suffered. Barking batteries in the neighboring areas, and mortar and small arms fire from both sides of the front lines was heavy and nightly, letting up noticeably during the daylight hours; and brilliant flares were fired aloft, seemingly at regular intervals, all along the front

lines. Many nights it seemed that most of the slugs fired by the Japs on the nearby ridges hissed through camp, many pinging as they ricocheted from tree to tree.

During the March action the 71st's Sawmill was inadvertently located in a "hot spot" also, off the end of the Piva Field, and in line with Japanese artillery fire and bombing directed at the field. In spite of these hazards, the mill operated continuously, and produced in excess of 465,000 board feet of cut lumber, principally mahogany, from 20 December to 18 March. Most of the logs were obtained from the clearing for taxiways at Piva.

It was with considerable pleasure that we watched the daily dive-bombing attacks made by our planes on the nearby front lines. One of the most startling incidents during these attacks took place the day before we embarked, when one of our planes unwittingly returned to its formation, after making its diving run, with what was apparently a 2000 pounder dangling beneath it. The bomb hung a few feet beneath the plane for a brief period, then suddenly broke loose behind our own lines. Though it landed some distance from our camp, a very large piece of hot shrapnel came to rest in front of the executive office. Naturally most of those who hadn't witnessed the bomb's descent took cover until acquainted with what had transpired.

During the approximately five-month stay of the Battalion on Bougainville, a great deal of work was done; and a detailed description of each individual project would occupy too much space. Briefly, in addition to the work previously described, the 71st was assigned the following: Collection of all gasoline drums, and the converting of them into suitable form for culverts, trash barrels, et cetera; (For culverts, both ends of the drum were cut out by hand, and five such drums spot-welded together to form a culvert section 24" in diameter by 15' long. The labor involved in cutting out the heads by hand led to the development of the "Schwitters Master Barrel-Opener" (see improvisations), which was fully developed on Pityilu.); Revetments for RNZAF radar installations; move and set up Regimental Headquarters three times; LCT landing at "Blue One" Beach, 300 x 600; 2,000' of primary road (Piva Road to Bomber Road).

On 25 March, the Battalion once again put to sea in quest of new fields of adventure. Bougainville was "gone but not forgotten." During the 71st's stay, only two periods were entirely free from local enemy action: 5 to 12 December 1943, and 14 February to 8 March 1944.

Admiralty Group. It was then early in April, and we had almost completed a full month aboard ship. We scanned this newest of sights with sighs of relief for the men were growing restless and weary of the drawn out voyage. It had been lack of good food, living conditions, and personal temperament that had caused most of this discontent, but now the men were happy because they knew it wouldn't be long before they would be touching land again.

On April 17, 1944, we sailed into Seedler Harbor and dropped anchor at 1832 o'clock. The Fifty-Eighth Seabees were the first battalion to debark from the ship. They landed at Los Negros and set out to establish their camp and to proceed with their new assignment. Two days later, April 19th, our reconnaissance party of three officers, four chiefs, and sixteen enlisted men landed by means of an LCM on the small island of Pityilu, the location of our next job. Meanwhile, the rest of the battalion remained on board ship waiting for further orders. We rode anchor off the shores of Manus, the largest of the many islands which form the Admiralty Group. The harbor was very large and nature had made it a perfect haven for many ships.

One week later we again pulled up the anchor and set a course to cover the few remaining miles to the Isle of Pityilu, which was to be our new home for the next few months. On 24 April we went over the sides of the Poelau Laut and down the scramble nets into the waiting LCM's which were to carry us to the beach. It is a wonder that more of our expert "net" men didn't land in Sick Bay with broken fingers, hands, wrists, and heads. It was humorous for those of us who watched all this from top-side. Rifles, helmets, and packs dropped into the boats with seeming carelessness but the real cause of all this confusion was the lack of practice. It was a grand feeling to touch good old terra firma once more, also to stretch and relieve those tired, sea-going legs.

Upon the arrival of the remaining twenty-seven officers and one thousand men at the beach, we were met by our reconnaissance party, and even though a week had lapsed since last we saw them, the usual "where have you been, Mac" was prevalent for a few hours. The men of the reconnaissance party had gone ashore on the day known in military circles as D+2. It was two days after the landings by the allied forces who had encountered very little opposition. Our reconnaissance party, mostly men from the Engineering Department, had gone ashore to make the preliminary survey for the airstrip which was to be constructed on Pityilu and, also, to locate a suitable camp area. Along with our welcoming party came groups of the now famous "Wild Texans" of the First Cavalry Division. For some unknown reason they thought we were "honest-to-goodness boots" fresh from the States. Out came all their captured enemy "wares", and the old souvenir sales talk was the highlight of our first meeting with these tall, rangy, grounded horsemen. It wasn't long before some of our high pressure salesmen took a few of our newly found friends "over the coals" and sold them all they had brought with them from Bougainville plus relating some hair-raising yarns fresh from a larger battle scene. It was during these conversations that we learned that the tiny Isle of Pityilu had been cleared of enemy resistance shortly before the "Seventy-First Invasion." All enemy installations had been wrecked or burned, and the camp of the First Cavalry Division was the only indication of man's presence on the island. Within a few weeks our Cavalry friends departed, leaving only a small portion of the Forty-Third Field Artillery for security reasons. It wasn't long before these men also left and we of the Seventy-First Battalion found ourselves alone on the "rock". So the tiny isle became the new home of the veterans of the war in the Pacific.

Showers and Heads.
 Water Supply w/4 wells—1-15,000 tank on 72' tower.
 Office and gear lockers.
 Dressing Pavillions.
 Beer Pavillions and Ships Service.
 Showers and heads for men on liberty.
 Boxing Ring and Fleet Band Stand.
 Handball Courts, 10 of them w/concrete decks.
 Basketball Courts, 6 of them w/concrete decks.
 Volleyball Courts, 10 of them.
 Horse Shoe Pits, 10 of them.
 Baseball Fields, 14 of them.
 Stage with 2 dressing rooms.
 Swimming Pool (Shark Proof).
 Refrigerators and Beer Storage Room.
 Huge Garbage Dump—set off from area.

NDRILLO ISLAND: Harbor Control and De Gauss Facilities.

Signal Tower and catwalk.
 Harbor Entrance Control Post Operation Huts.
 DeGauss Shops.
 Access Rooms.
 Laundry for 250 men.
 Refrigerator and generator sheds.
 Recreation Building.
 Fluxmeter foundations.
 Landing wharf—Deep water channel dock.
 Galley and mess hall.
 Water Supply—4 wells, 2-5000 gal. tanks w/pipe line.
 Officers Quarters and enlisted men's huts.
 Sick Bay and Dispensary.
 Post Office and Ships Store.
 Complete Administration Area.
 Showers and heads.

ONNETA ISLAND:

Laundry for 250 men (the only job.)

HARENGAN ISLAND: Complete Radar Station and Personnel Camp.

Tower, 100' tall, structural steel.
 Radar Hut w/2 generators of 15 kw each.
 Galley and mess hall for 25 men.
 Laundry w/concrete deck.
 Officers quarters and enlisted men's tents.
 Showers and heads.
 Water Supply system including 3,000 gal. tank storage.

KORUNIAT ISLAND: Fleet Recreation Center Complete.

Beer Pavillion.
 Dressing Pavillion w/showers.
 Baseball fields.
 Basketball Courts.
 L S T Landing.

HAUWIE ISLAND:

L S T Landing (just the one job).

LOS NEGROS: Projects assigned to the 71st.

Pontoon Assembly Depot: Facilities.

Clearing area of approximately 25 acres.

Pontoon Dock, anchor and dolphin piles.
 Warehouses for Machine Shops (3).
 Office and drafting rooms.
 Pontoon Cell Factory.
 Paint Shop.
 Hydrostatic Test Shop.
 Concrete pavement for crane-ways (3600 sq. yds.).

Pontoon Assembly Depot: Personnel Camp.

Quonset Huts and wooden barracks (28).
 Laundry, drying room.
 Ships Service.
 Post Office.
 Armory.
 Showers and head.
 Water Supply and Distribution Systems.
 Galley and mess for 50 Officers.
 Galley and mess for 500 men.
 Sick Bay and Dispensary.

Shore Road:

A coral surfaced road running from Lombrum Point to Loniu Passage which was four miles long and 30' wide.
 The Lolach Bridge with a span of 365' long and 30' wide.

Primary Road:

A coral surfaced road running from Lombrum Point to Papitalai, making connection with construction work of the 58th and the 46th CB's. This road was also four miles and a fraction with a width of 30 feet.

Seaplane Base:

Graded and cleared enough acreage to set up Personnel Camp.
 A complete Camp for Personnel with every convenience necessary.
 Repaired damage done to the landing ramp by one of the bad storms.
 Constructed boat moorings.
 A water cooling tower connected with the parachute loft which also served as an air duct.

Landing Repair Base:

Concrete decks in two large warehouses and storage bins for three warehouses.

Landing Craft & Ship Repair Unit: Facilities.

Transportation area with garage, grease and wash racks.

Landing Craft & Ship Repair Unit: Personnel Camp.

Quonset Huts for Officers and men (34).
 Showers and heads.
 Sick Bay and Dispensary.
 Dental Clinic and Optical shop extension.
 Laundry extension, for 1000 men.
 Galley and the Post Office extended.

Oxygen and Acetylene Plants: Facilities.

15,000 gal. water, storage tank.
 Complete Water Distribution Supply.
 Generator foundations.
 Paint Shops.

Showers and Heads.

Warehouses (3).

Fuel Storage Tank.

The area was completely cleared and graded.

(This job was transferred to another battalion).

Base Telephone System: Service Lines.

From ASD switchboard to points in Lombrum, the crash boat dock and to the Seaplane Base.

Lombrum Point Water System: Facilities.

The entire reservoir area was cleared and graded.

Construction of the Filter Plant.

Install..

1-Tank of 6666 bbl. capacity for sedimentation.

1-Tank of 3333 bbl. capacity clear water well.

2-Tank of 15,000 gal. for filter system.

Pump House with 4—350 gpm pumps.

Aeration Tower.

12" pipe line from Dam 5 to filter plant then to 10,000 bbl. storage tank, then of the 6" pipe distribution line north of the 71st Camp, total length of pipe-line was 5300 feet.

Built rolled earth fill dam with concrete core wall and diked section with concrete spillway.

Lombrum Point Recreation: Facilities.

Complete Recreation Area.

Cleared and Graded.

Facilities for all sports.

Ship Repair Industrial Area: Facilities.

Heavy machine shops of structural steel and concrete slabs.

Warehouses and Engine over-haul shops.

Plate and Metal Storage Shops.

Pipe racks and plate racks with concrete decks.

Area was cleared and graded before construction.

Cable Crossing Markers:

Two cable markers for Bear Point and one for Lombrum.

Lombrum Point Fire Station:

Large building to house fire equipment w/concrete deck.

Mobile "AA" Training Center: (started by 71st and Transferred to 58th)

Complete camp facilities for 250 men.

South West Pacific Area: Confinement and Detention Camp (Prisoners).

Clear and grade 70 acres and set up a camp for personnel stationed permanently.

Complete camp for 250 men, who were to be Station Force.

Complete facilities for housing and feeding prisoners.

(This job was started by the 71st and later transferred to the 46th).

All the signs for roads and facilities built by the 71st were painted also.

All types of furniture was ordered by various outfits and delivered.

The total amount of man hours put in by the 71st in assisting other battalions with the work assigned to them was: 74,646 hrs.

Projects and Battalions we assisted in Los Negros until 23 September 1944.

Project	Our man	
	hours	Assisted
Tank Farm—23-10,000 bbl. tanks.....	30,600	58th CB
Seaplane Base, Quonset Huts for		
Enlisted Men's quarters	2,526	11th CB
Seawall and slip—.....	13,798	11th CB
(a) Seawall and slip		
(b) Bos'n Locker		
(c) LST landing		
(d) Diesel Oil filling station		
Roads and grading, Lombrum Point.....	4,578	11th CB
G-7 Dispensary, Fully completed.....	8,402	11th CB
Ship Repair Base, Quonset Huts.....	1,410	11th CB
Seaplane Base, Paint and Dope Shop.....	1,014	11th CB
Seaplane Base, Quonset Huts for		
Officers	1,455	11th CB
Roads and Grading, Ship Repair Base....	8,425	11th CB
Ammo, Storage and revetments.....	642	11th CB
Ship Repair Base, 30 Warehouse 40x100	1,796	11th CB

ly with the progress on road work. However, the road was kept in passable shape and was coral surfaced to RJ 34 by the 16th of May when the first heavy rains started. Maintenance was extended to RJ 36 on the 24th of May but before too much could be done, the extremely heavy rains of 25 and 26 May started, and road improvement was brought to a standstill. All efforts and resources of the road gangs were taxed to keep traffic moving. On May 30th conditions had not improved and road work went on a 24-hour basis. Prior to May 30th night lighting was not permitted in the combat area because of enemy artillery and air attack. Due to the emergency, field lighting was authorized and about sixty Marine Military Police were assigned to out-post sentry duty at construction operations and isolated equipment. Thus all battalion manpower was engaged on Route 1 in order to keep it open to traffic. On June 2nd all traffic was stopped for a 24-hour period to give road gangs time to rehabilitate the road as much as possible. At RJ 36 the equivalent of an 8-foot thickness of rubble was dumped into the muddy road before it was stabilized. This was due to the fact that the bedrock turned out to be a soft clay which turned to a semi-fluid ooze with no apparent bottom when wetted and churned by ordinary truck traffic. The rubble was then surfaced with decomposed limestone. Traffic was kept moving and vehicles not able to manage under their own power were hauled through by tractors.

The rubble fill was obtained from the city of Naha, and at this time acquaintance was made with that city by most of the members of the battalion. The ruins served both as a source of road material and as a goal for sightseers. The main road was paved and some of the buildings were three stories high, one of which was rumored to be a theatre. Also in Naha was the most photographed shrine on the island. Shuri and the famous Shuri Castle numbered second on the tour of the island. During the attack on Shuri it had been rumored that eighteen inch shells bounced off the Castle Walls. But when the tourists reached there, Shuri Castle was a pile of rock, to be used as a coral pit.

On June 10th, in order to keep pace with the forward movement of the combat zone, the 71st CB was assigned road responsibility in a more forward area, and the forward camp, #3, was established at the junction of Routes 5 and 44.

Camp #3 had a nightly show of fireworks. Japs were infiltrating back from the lines carrying demolition charges. To make matters more interesting, on

a hill behind and slightly to the left of the camp was a "boot" Seabee outfit just out of the States. They were trigger-happy. Behind the camp was another outfit, the Army. They too were apparently just out of the States. They were trigger-happy too. From dusk to dawn the tracers careened over and through Camp #3. Several nights there was danger of a war developing between the neighboring outfits, especially those nights when the Nips weren't around to be shot at. It paid off for one of the boys to have been overseas for a goodly length of time. The "boot" battalion guards finally did manage to get a Jap one night. In the morning they clustered around the body like babies with a new toy. One of our cook strikers, carefully dressed in khaki to portray authority, edged his way through the crowd with a manner befitting at least two gold bars. He proceeded to make notes of the killing, got full information and the local hero's name, confiscated a Jap flag, rifle, and other gear, mumbled something about G2, turned away and walked off.

On a small section of Okinawa soil, adjacent to Camp #3, lies the last resting place of Jimmy, the battalion mascot from the early days of the campaign. Jimmy was discovered one day rooting in a pile of rubbish and adopted by one of the boys. For better than three months Jimmy wooed the hearts of the battalion with his piggish antics. Jimmy wasn't much to look at and his language was limited, but when the doctor ordered his demise for messing up the camp and creating unsanitary conditions he was mourned as though a brother had been lost. Jimmy was only a pig, but he was a little something to take the brunt of unlavished affections.

Of the assignment, 0.7 mile of Route 7 and 0.5 mile of Route 44 was concrete pavement, but the concrete was badly broken up by bombing and shelling. The balance of the roads were the usual narrow dirt roads without benefit of durable surfacing. Pot holes and muddy stretches of road were immediately filled with rubble from the bombing and shelling of the buildings in Naha. Widening to accommodate two-lane traffic was started as soon as all roads were made passable. Ditching with draglines was also started. All roads were surfaced with pit-run limestone or graded rubble. To prevent churning up the main roads by tracked vehicles, a tracked vehicle by-pass was built through the area of the 71st responsibility. This by-pass was built along a pre-existing narrow-gauge railroad grade, and the work consisted of removing tracks, repairing breaks, and surfacing with rubble where necessary. The grade was wide enough to ac-

commodate one-lane traffic.

Due to the fact that all work on these roads had to be done without interrupting the heavy flow of traffic, ammunitions, and supplies to the front and casualties to the rear, considerable difficulty was experienced in road improvement during the first ten days. During the last 10 days of May, over 14 inches of rain fell, and 1.26 inches additional fell during the first seven days of June. Heavy traffic coupled with heavy rains created mud conditions which taxed the entire engineering resources of the battalion. Equipment was dispersed wherever it would be used to advantage, and hand labor crews operating Mexican draglines were kept constantly busy draining and ditching and filling chuck holes along the roadways. Work was continued around the clock. One of the methods resorted to by the road gang was to compel each driver to straddle the ruts of the previous vehicle, and thus minimize, and even prevent, the formation of deep impassable ruts, as would have been the result had they followed in each other's tracks.

Four bridges were repaired during May. One small single-span concrete bridge was strengthened by shoring underneath. On May 19th and 21st, two attempts were made by Japs, who infiltrated American lines, to blow up two separate bridges. On May 19th, a single-span concrete bridge was skillfully drilled, but the failure of the entire demolition charge to go off minimized the damage and the bridge was quickly repaired by crib and fill. On May 21st, during daylight, in an area alerted by previous attempts, another attempt was made by the Japs to blow up a second bridge. Again the failure of the entire charge to go off prevented serious damage. This bridge had previously been strengthened with A-frame piers, which were knocked out by the blast. The piers were replaced. All 3 of the above bridges were on Route 1 north of Onna.

Building construction consisted entirely of camp and hospital facilities, construction of a temporary nature typical of forward areas where camp locations are frequently changed. Carpenter crews worked with the III Corps CP, III Corps Medical Battalion, III Corps Evacuation Hospital, No. 2, and III Corps Rest Camp. Structures consisted essentially of tents which were framed, screened against mosquitos, and decked with either sand, coral, or in exceptionally muddy area (everywhere) with lumber. A few prefabricated wood structures were erected in hospital areas, and a stran-steel hut was erected for a galley at the Rest

Camp. Many of the offices and shops consisted merely of tarp covered frames with dirt decks, and possible camouflage netting for walls. A considerable amount of labor was spent in building furniture, shelving, and other facilities for the Corps CP and the Medical Units. Due to the scarcity of lumber in the forward area, practically all the lumber used in building construction was salvaged from wrecked native buildings. As most of this was of odd sizes, it had to be ripped into useable sizes by hand saws.

On July 1st, work was again started on the northern end of Route 1, from Yamada to Atsutabarau. The assignment called for construction of a standard two-lane highway. Traffic was to be maintained on the road during construction. Realignment was started on all sections which included bad curves and poorly placed bridges. The road was straightened, and new bridges constructed where necessary.

The East runway of Yontan airfield was added to the schedule of July 15th. The runway was 7,000 feet long with coral surfacing one foot thick and 100 feet wide. Cross-overs and warm-up aprons were provided. The estimated dirt which was moved on the project was 135,000 cu. yds. and emplacement of limestone surfacing was 1,300,000 sq. ft. Work was held up considerably during the period of July 19th to July 31st due to heavy rains. The rainfall during this period reached 8.20 inches. On July 27th the first plane landed on the East runway. The project was finished at 0600, 17 August 1945. Construction of the FEAF Headquarters Camp was started on July 24th. The work order specified 9 standard semi-tropical Quonset huts. Two of these were to be quarters for Generals MacArthur and Kinney and required the construction of an additional good-frame screened sunporch and interior partitioning into rooms. One hut was for a General's mess and the balance for WAC quarters, all huts requiring interior partitioning, etc. Construction was also started on the FEAF water system.

Ground was broken and foundation forms set for a Concrete Pipe Plant at Anfusu on July 30th. The plant consisted of the following: cement warehouse, machine and working shed, generator plant, tool shed and work shop, elevated cement loading platform, 5000-gal. water storage tank with accompanying tower, concrete curing slabs, concrete runway, steel storage area, shipping and pipe storage area, and a framed hut office, also the necessary access roads. The plant supplied concrete pipe to all naval and army construction units as required.

On August 5th, the FEAF Camp was completed, and on August 6th maintenance and improvement of Route #1 from Atsutabaruru to Chuda was begun. On August 16th construction on the concrete Pipe Plant was finished. From August 18th to the 31st, 1402 feet of pipe was produced.

By August 17th, 71st road reconstruction responsibility extended from Nakadomari to Chuda. The order called for a standard two-lane highway, eliminating all blind curves of the pre-existing road and straightening where possible. The job required a tremendous amount of dirt-moving, some of the fills being up to sixty feet deep. During all construction, traffic was extremely heavy. Bridges were built where necessary.

The news of the Jap peace offer came one night in an announcement after the movies. For what seemed a matter of minutes the entire area, filled with the 71st and Marines and Soldiers from surrounding camps, was silent as a morgue. Then, as joy burst through the steel bonds of surprise, there was such a yelling and screeching that has never been heard before. The common emotion was that of chills running up and down the spine. No one slept much that night. Law and order were strangely forgotten.

On September 7, 1945 the two-year anniversary of the 71st Naval Construction Battalion overseas, the work consisted mainly in the operation of the concrete pipe plant and the face lifting of the old Jap road from Nakadomari to Chuda. But September

7th meant more to the members of the battalion than a mere working day. September 7th was a day to get homesick (or drunk if one could find the where-withal). It was a day of looking back over the past two years at the accomplishments of a bunch of highly skilled workers who had learned the spirit of co-operation, who had learned to hate the Nips, and who had learned, the hard way, just exactly what democracy means. They had landed on the shores of two hostile islands and seen for themselves the might that went with the US Navy. They had seen jungles and swamps turned into airfields and Navy bases in a matter of weeks, and they had had a small hand in that job. The anniversary was celebrated with a general holiday, an issue of beer, and the dedication of the baseball diamond to Joseph Steven Trenta. There was also a baseball game with another Seabee outfit (to whom we lost).

They had built airstrips, recreation centers for the fleet, roads, and Naval bases from Guadalcanal to Okinawa. Each job was a small portion of the long road to Tokyo. One is reminded of the sign on Bougainville, dedicated to the Seabees:

“So when we reach the Isle of Japan,
With our caps at a jaunty tilt,
We'll enter the city of Tokyo,
On the roads the Seabees built.”

Erected by
IIIrd MARINE DIVISION
2nd Raider Regiment

OFFICERS ROSTER

SEVENTY FIRST U. S. NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION



CAPTAIN CEC USNR
AUSTIN BROCKENBROUGH, JR.
1132 West Avenue
Richmond, Virginia

CAPTAIN CEC USNR
JAMES F. CUNIFF
1145 Northampton Street
Holyoke, Massachusetts

LIEUT. COMMANDER CEC USNR
JOHN P. DALY
116 Lenox Road
Brooklyn, New York

LIEUT. COMMANDER CEC USNR
MICHAEL A. DANDRY
308 Washington Avenue
New Rochelle, New York

LIEUT. COMMANDER CEC USNR
GEORGE E. GEYER
419 North Narberth Avenue
Narberth, Pennsylvania

LIEUT. COMMANDER MC USNR
JAMES P. LONDERGAN
81 Governor Street
Providence, Rhode Island

LIEUTENANT CEC USNR
NELSON BOOTH
64 Leahman Avenue
Dallas, Pennsylvania

LIEUTENANT CEC USNR
HARRY C. DEVER
c/o Copperweld Steel Co.
Rhodes-Haverty Bldg.
Atlanta, Ga.

LIEUTENANT CEC USNR
WORTH H. DIKEMAN
c/o Dikeman Ranch
Smartville, California

LIEUTENANT MC USNR
WILLIAM J. HINKSON
103 Englewood Avenue
New Castle, Pennsylvania

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HEIDMEYER, HERMAN
11335 S. Forest Avenue, Chicago
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HILL, WAYNE EDWIN
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HORCHER, JOSEPH FRANK
P.O., Prairie View
HOSPODAR, STEVE
Fox Lake
HUETTL, LOUIS F.
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HUTTON, JAMES ALBERT
2537 S. 9th Street, Springfield
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JONES, FRANKLIN MERRITT
2217 W. Cherry Street, Mt. Vernon
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2737 Cannon Street, Rockford
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OBOSKI, RAYMND FRANK
3036 N. Mason Avenue, Chicago
O'DONNELL, HUGH
2026 W. Congress Street, Chicago
PATTEN, IVAN OWEN
721 Monson Street, Peoria
PIERCEALL, MELVIN CLEMENT
Riverton
PINKSTAFF, DONALD "M."
Route #3, Lawrenceville
PITCHFORD, RONALD LEON
General Delivery, Sesser
RABUS, WALTER ALBERT
4111 Lincoln Avenue, Chicago
RUBY, HARDY WILLIAM
5823 N. Central Park Avenue, Chicago
SAULINSKAS, STEPHEN JOSEPH
5238 S. Monitor Avenue, Chicago
SAUSAMAN, ROBERT BERNARD
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SCHIRMER, RAYMOND CHARLES
637 Selbourne Road, Riverside
SCHWALBACH, JOHN SEBASTIAN
600 Central Avenue, Highland Park
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1253 Cleaver, Chicago
SHADAUSKAS, PETER
1230 Park Avenue, Chicago Heights
SHARP, RICHARD DEAN
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SHARPE, HOWARD WILLIAM
12013 Yale Avenue, Chicago
SHEEHAN, THOMAS GILBERT
6652 S. Kenwood Avenue, Chicago
SIELOFF, CLIFFORD JOHN
6346 S. Aberdeen Street, Chicago
SMETANA, ROBERT WILLIAM
7125 S. Paulina Street, Chicago

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BRUCH, AMOS HENRY
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231 Cook, Auburn
STURGIS, DEAN MILTON
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KUBISKI, JOHN JOSEPH
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10 Thorndike Street, Everett
KUZMA, JOHN JOSEPH
656 Bridge Street, Holyoke
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18 Ocean Circle, Lynn
LOVETT, RICHARD
45 Pleasant Street, Hudson
LUNN, ROBERT OTIS
15 Dolloff Avenue, Beverly
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44 Bell Street, Chicopee
MAHONEY, JAMES COLEMAN
47 Brookford Street, Dorchester
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15 Fenno Street, Revere
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50 Friend Street, Amesbury
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REVELL, WILLIAM WALLACE JR.
150 Boutelle Street, Fitchburg
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175 Elm Street, Cambridge
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VAILLETTE, PAUL ANTHONY
112 Spruce Street, Leominster
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17 Butler Avenue, Wakefield

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STROBEL, MARION
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PERRY, OLIN PETER
106 Winter Street, New Port
RENO, ROBERT IRVING
100 Union Street, Manchester
ROBERGE, EDWARD LEROY
Wolfboro Falls
WALKER, ROGER HERBERT
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EVERMAN, RALPH THOMAS
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BIRRELL, GEORGE CHRISTOPHER
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BLAKE, FRANK HENRY
20 Progressive Avenue, Buffalo
BOYER, HERMAN EDWARD
37-25 61st Street, Woodside, L. I.
BRADLEY, ARCHIE EDWARD
51 Main Street, Faust
BROCKWELL, BERNARD LINCOLN
18 Overlook Place, Baldwin, L. I.
BROOME, WALTER L.
1914 East 127th Street, New York
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594 St. Marys Street, Bronx
BURKE, JOHN JOSEPH
c/o Sloan, 316 E. 165th Street, Bronx
BURKE, LAWRENCE ALBANIE
156 8th Avenue, New York
BURT, MARCUS
43-30 48th Street, Long Island City
CADDEN, SEYMOUR CY
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DIAZ, RAFAEL NICOLAS
1472 Amsterdam Avenue, New York
DISPENZA, JOSEPH EDWARD
279 6th Street, Brooklyn 15
DORMAN, CARL JR.
311 E. 9th Street, New York 3
DRISCOLL, JOSEPH JOHN
545 No. 6th Street, New Hyde Park
DROUGHT, GEORGE HENRY
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JANNOTTO, THOMAS MICHAEL
183 Butler Street, Brooklyn
JENNINGS, EDWARD JOSEPH
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JOHNSON, EDWIN WILLIAM
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BROWNS, VALMER LOUIS
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421 Elm Street, Martins Ferry
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567 N. Webb, Alliance
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POIRIER, JOHN MICHAEL
4009 W. 22nd Street, Cleveland
POLOFKA, MATTHEW MICHAEL
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QUAIL, ROBERT EDWIN
635 Cherry Street, Findlay
RAUCKHORST, JOHN DOWNING SR.
2094 West 7th Street, Cleveland
RIKER, CHARLES WALTER
2631 N. Erie Street, Toledo
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1220 Bonacker Avenue, Hamilton
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SNYDER, KENNETH OLIVER
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SPEERBRECHER, EDWARD ROBT. SR.
186 N. Bridge Street, Struthers
SPENCER, WILLIAM JEROME
47 Bissell Street, Youngstown
STEIN, ROY ALLEN
1618 Hamilton, Warren
THORNBERRY, HOLLIS DUANE
Beallsville
ZIMMERMAN, DARREL DANIEL
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OKLAHOMA

ARTHUR, ADRIAN LEE
General Delivery, Box K45, Fletcher
BURDEN, TOM HENRY
13 E. 18th Street, Tulsa
CAMPBELL, JOHN TROIS
519 N. Chickasaw, Claremore
EDWARDS, WALTER EUGENE
General Delivery, Sand Springs
GIBSON, REX OSCAR
120 N. Birmingham Street, Tulsa
HAMMONTREE, PAUL HENRY
P.O. Box 380, Keyes
HENSON, GLEN (N)
609 East 5th Street, Claremore
HODGE, ARCHIE LEE
General Delivery, Wilburton
JONES, OLEN GUY
1300½ So. 7th, Ponca City
LUTZ, JOHN WILLIAM
Kingfisher
McINTOSH, JESS WILLARD
Route #3, Box 116, Claremore
MOORE, RAYMOND CECIL
307 S. 10th Street, Okemah
OLIVER, CLINTON BURRELL
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314 W. Central, Miami
SHEPPARD, ROY ALBERT
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SMITH, ELMER DOYLE
140 South First Street, Vinita
WHITE, HEADLY TALMADGE
General Delivery, Tishomingo
WILMETH, RICHARD HENRY
Cardell
WINANS, LEROY COLE
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CRISP, RALPH WALDO
c/o Fletcher, Public Market Bldg., Eugene
DAHLHEIM, ERNEST FRANKLIN
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ELY, ALVA REGINALD JR.
2181 N.W. Gleason Street, Portland
GOODRICH, ROY EMERSON
542 E. 12th Street, Eugene
HELZER, FRANK MELVIN
403 S.E. 86th, Portland
HYLTON, JOHN WILLIAM
Florence
INGRAM, HAWLEY SCOTT
Route #2, Pendleton
LANDRU, HARRY BENJAMIN
4826 N. Montana Avenue, Portland
MASTON, MARION BRADLEY
2602 N.E. 18th Avenue, Portland
MEYER, ARTHUR DONALD
1531 N.W. Johnson Street, Portland
MYRAN, PAUL ALBERT
8609 S.E. 82nd Avenue, Portland
NESHEIM, FRANKLIN EDLUND
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OSTERGARD, MICKEL IVERSON
Box 603, North Bend
PRITCHARD, DONALD JAMES
Route 3, Box 1106A, Portland
REYNOLDS, ROBERT HOWARD
944 So. 10th Street, Corvallis
SELLERS, DICK DEWITT
1015 Dewey Avenue, Baker
SHELTON, ELMORE LEROY
4626 N.E. 39th Street, Portland
SMITH, SEFORD JOHN
4706 South E. Milwaukee St., Portland
WEISS, FRANK ALBERT
General Delivery, Grants Pass
WORDEN, WARREN WAYNE
6029 South E. 47th Avenue, Portland

WYMAN, ROBERT JUSTIN
2923 S.E. Olsen Avenue, Milwaukie
WYMORE, CASSIE ELMER
(Unknown)

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BUNCE, WAYNE LINN
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956 "C" Street Hillcrest, Meadville
CALLEN, PAUL ELLSWORTH
Cochrane Avenue N., Apollo
CAMPBELL, RICHARD HOBERT
R.R. #1, Camp Hill
CAMPBELL, ROBERT BURTON
Avella
CAMPBELL, WILLIAM HOWARD
R.R. #1, Camp Hill
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DONNON, FRANK PORTE
Maple Avenue, Paoli
ELLIOTT, HOWARD KINSLEY
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EWIG, PAUL CYRUS
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2nd and Evans Avenue, Media
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RD #1, West Brownsville
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2303 Sarad Street, South Side, Pittsburgh

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COOPER, WILLIAM TAFT
279 Arnolds Neck Drive, Apponaug
PUTNAM, ALBERT LEIGH
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RFD, Centerdale 11
SPERO, ANTHONY (N)
25 Hall Avenue, Newport

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TILLMAN, THEOBALD LEAPOLD
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*For injury received as a result of
enemy action in time of war.*

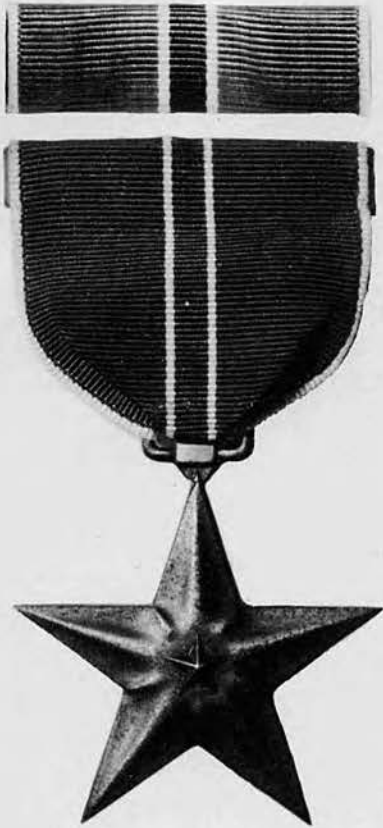
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in lieu of

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presented to:

AUSTIN BROCKENBROUGH, JR.
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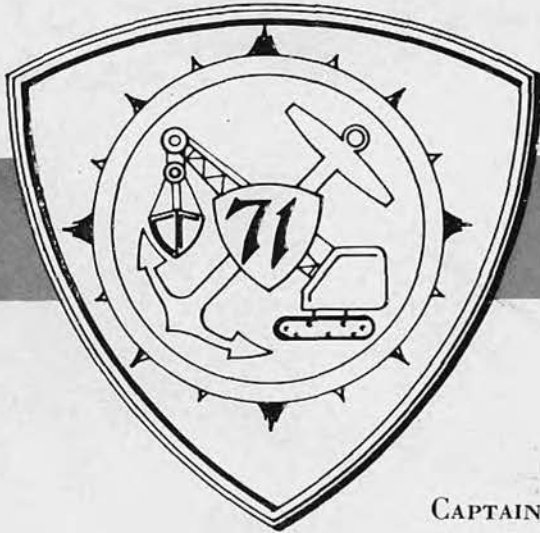
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presented to:

VINCENT CHARLES HOERBELT
CHRISTY WILLIAM LIZZOLI
ALVIN JUNIOR RYON

For heroism at Bougainville, Solomon Islands, on 14 January 1944, when, without regard for personal safety, they overcame growing exhaustion to swim and tow a partially inflated rubber float through a half mile of heavy seas, and courageously assisted in the rescue of a drowning pilot, unable to swim or free himself from his parachute.





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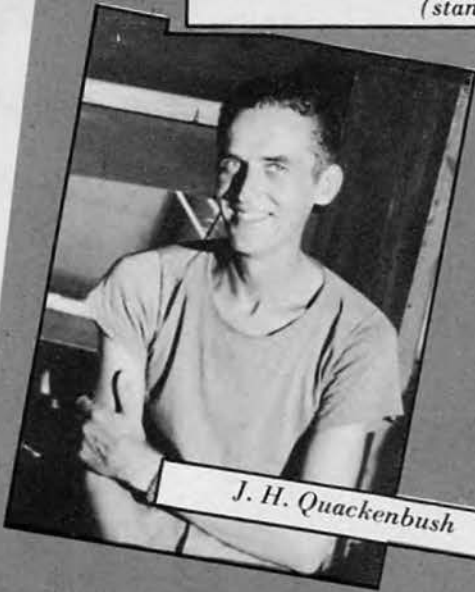
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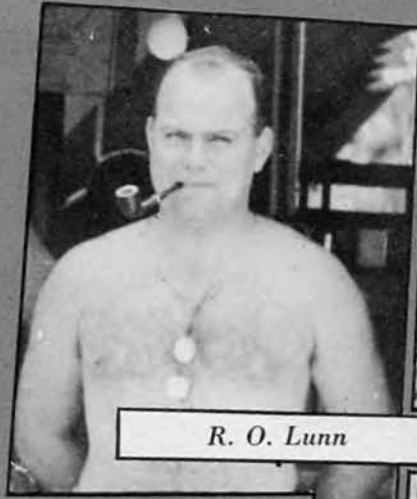
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Going home for keeps!



HIGHLIGHTED by nat bellantoni



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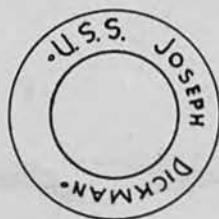
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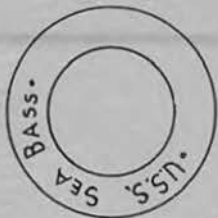


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