

83rd Naval Construction Battalion

*Historical
Information*



*“Construimus, Batuimus”
“We Build, We Fight”*



83rd C.B.

1st Embarkation
 NCTC - Norfolk
 ABD - Gulfport
 Ready Date - 18 Apr'43 *29 May 1943*
 Left ABD - 1st Wave - ~~21 May~~'43; 2nd Wave 14 Jun'43
 Location - Trinidad

2nd Embarkation
 NCTC - Davisville
 ABD - Hueneme
 Ready Date - 1 Nov'44
 Left ABD - 27 Dec'44
 Location - ~~Pearl Hbr~~
 Leyte-Samar

LOG

- 4-24-43 - 1st Echelon of 83rd moving from ABD Gfpt. to 2nd Provisional Battalion Chelmette Slip, Jackson Barracks area, New Orleans, La. 29 Apr'43 consisting of 14 off. and 540 men. S.D. - 23 Apr.
 - 6-25-43 - 2nd Echelon, consisting of 9 off. and 597 men, left ABD Gulfport 14 Jun'43.
 - 7-23-43 - 1 Jul'43 report of 83rd CB - 1st Echelon arrived Trinidad 21 May'43, took over function of contractor 1 Jul'43. 2nd Echelon arrived last week in June.
 - 5- 6-44 - 1 Apr'44 report of 11th Reg. - 83rd CB is scheduled to leave for a new assignment to a new area about 15 May'44 by orders of CNO.
 - 5-29-44 - 1 May'44 report of 83rd CB - This batt has a large detail on the Dredge Indiana.
 - 6- 9-44 - 27 May'44 report of ~~83rd CB~~ 11th Reg. - 25 men assigned temp. to Roosevelt Rd., P.R. 83rd will leave shortly and some enl. men have volunteered for duty with CBMU 559.
 - 6-13-44 - 83rd CB arrived Davisville 5 Jun'44. 31 off. and 949 men. (WKK)
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- 10-25-44 - 83rd CB, with 28 off. and 1025 men, arrived Parks from Davisville 20 Oct'44. (210003TWX from Parks to Bupers dtd 21 Oct'44)
 - 11-14-44 - 83rd CB with 33 off. and 1081 men departed Parks for Hueneme 6 Nov'44. (Parks 101510 TWX Nov'44 to Budocks).

83rd C.B.

- 12-12-44 - The 83rd CB is booked to depart 31 Dec'44. (Com 12 Sec. Disp. to Comservpac 082352 dtd 9 Dec'44)
- 1-4-45 - 83rd CB departed Hueneme 27 Dec'44 destination San Pedro FFT. (Hueneme conf. disp. to CNO 281751 dtd 29 Dec'44).
- 2- 6-45 - 1 Jan'45 report of the 32nd Reg. - The 83rd CB was attached to this regiment on 2 Jan'45.
- 2-13-45 - 7th Brg. Sec. ltr Ser. 0017 to CinC 83rd CB dtd 25 Jan'45 - ordered to proceed on ships to a verbally designated place in the Pacific area. Upon arrival to report to the 32nd Reg. for duty.
- 2-13-45 -- The 83rd CB is available from Pearl for assignment to Samar. (CNO Sec. ltr to distribution list Ser. 0039230 dtd 3 Feb'45).
- 2-13-45 -- Comserv7flt desires to lift the 83rd CB from Pearl in Feb or early Mar'45. (Comserv 7flt Sec. disp 061001 to Com7flt dtd 8 Feb'45).
- 2-17-45 -- The 83rd CB is located at Pearl Hbr. (Com 14 Sec. disp to CNO 081016 Feb'45).
- 2-26-45 - 1 Feb'45 report of the 32nd Reg. - The 83rd CB received 58 ratings in exchange for 47 seamen.
- 2-26-45 - 1 Feb'45 report of the 83rd CB - located with HANCB and 32nd Reg.
- 3-20-45 - The 30th and 83rd CB's, 33rd Reg and 2nd Brg cargo is to be lifted ETD 17 Mar'45 from Pearl to Samar. (Cincpoa P. Sec Disp to CNO 180241 Mar'45)
- 4-9-45 - Personnel and equip. of 83rd CB ETD 29 Mar'45. (Cincpoa Pearl Sec Disp to CNO 310153 Mar'45)
- 4-25-45 - 83rd CB included in list of units deleted from 14ND. (Com14 Sec Airmailgram NCR 13634 to CNO dtd 10 Apr'45)

Location - Leyte-Samar

83rd C.B.

- 4-30-45 - Comserfor7flt Sec Rep of 1 Apr'45 shows the 83rd CB ordered from P.H. to Leyte-Samar area.
- 5- 1-45 - 83rd CB enroute Samar from P.H. as of 1 Apr'45. (Dirpadocks P Sec Rep of 1 Apr)
- 5-1-45 - 1 Apr'45 report of 83rd CB - During month of Mar'45 83rd CB was secured & enroute to Advance Base.
- 5-4-45 - 1 Apr'45 report of 32nd Reg. - 83rd CB embarked from Pearl Harbor on 28 Mar'45 enroute to Samar.
- 5-7-45 - 1 Mar'45 report of 83rd CB - location not given. Secured on 31 Jan'45. End. by 32nd Reg & 7th Brigade.
- 5- 8-45 - The 83rd CB is located at Samar. (Dirpadocks S.F. Sec Rep of 15 Apr'45)
- 5- 9-45 - The 83rd CB reported to the 32nd Reg. on 22 Apr'45. (OinC 32nd Reg. Sec Ltr Ser 008 dtd 22 Apr'45 to OinC 83rd CB (3rd end to 7th CB sec ltr Ser 0017 of 25 Jan)
- 5-11-45 - 1 May'45 report of 83rd CB - Embarked 27 Mar'45 at Pearl Harbor. From the 19th to the 26th Apr'45 disembarked at present site and prepared temp camp. Routed via 7th Brig.
- 5-17-45 - 1 Mar'45 report of 32nd Reg - As of 1 Mar'45 the 32nd Reg was comprised of 42nd, 83rd & 99th CBs.
- 6-25-45 - 1 June'45 report of the 83rd CB - located at Leyte-Samar. Report via 34th Reg and 7th Brg.
- 7-25-45 - 1 Jul'45 report of the 83rd CB - located in Samar area. Report via 34th Reg & 7th Brig.
- 7-27-45 - The 83rd CB is attached to the 34th Reg and 7th Brg. Located at Guiuan, Samar, erecting camp site. Assisting on construction of Acorn 13, constructing bomb storage, air facilities and water system. (OCT 7th Flt Sec rep of June)

Location - Leyte-Samar Tangku, China

83rd C.B.

- 8-13-45 - The 83rd CB is assigned to the Olympic Operation. (Com7flt conf report on CB organization in Leyte-Samar area ser 04296 dtd 26 July to CMO)
- 8-21-45 - 1 Aug'45 report of the 83rd CB - located in Samar area. Report via 34th Reg & 7th Brig.
- 8-30-45 - CBs 82 & 96. 28thSp report to respective Gropacs when designation is established. (Comservpac sec disp 280455 Aug'45 to 2nd & 7th Brigs).
- 9-28-45 - 1 Sept'45 report of 83rd CB - located at Samar area. Report via 32nd Reg. & 7th Brig.
- 11-2-45 - 1 Oct'45 report of 83rd CB - location not stated. Report via 33rd Reg. & 2nd Brg.
- 11-29-45 - 83rd CB to be inactivated. Advise Comservpac when inactivation is completed. (Fm ~~Comservpac~~ sec disp 280059 Nov'45 to CG, 3rd Phibcorps).
- 1-3-46 - 83rd CB is located at Tangku, China. 83rd CB is recommended to be inactivated by Dec. 31st. (C.H. Cotter's memo dtd 18 Nov'45 to ComGen, III PhibCorps).
- 1-29-46 - 1 Dec'45 report of 83rd CB - located at Tangku, China. 83rd CB left Samar on 27 Oct'45 & arrived at Tangku, China on 4 Nov'45.
- 2-5-46 - 83rd CB reported inactivated since 31 Dec'45. (Comservpac 012101 Feb'46 disp to BuPers).

INACTIVATED

ON BOARD

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>MEN</u>	<u>AUTHORITY</u>
27 May'44		984	MoR
21 Jul'44	21		R
1 Nov'44		1081	BNP625
1 Jan'45		1086	BNP625
1 Feb'45	31	1075	BNP625 & MoR
1 Mar'45	31	1048	BNP625 & MoR
1 Apr'45		1042	BNP625
1 May'45	31	1038	BNP625 & R
1 Jun'45	32	1026	BNP625 & R
1 Jul'45	30	1000	BNP625 & R
1 Aug'45	31	966	BNP625 & R
1 Sept'45	30	848	BNP625 & R
1 Oct'45	26	998	BNP625 & R
1 Nov'45	36		R
1 Dec'45	35		R
1 Jan'46	29	998	BNP625 & R

83rd Construction Battalion (INACTIVATED)

ON BOARD

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>MEN</u>	<u>AUTHORITY</u>
1 Aug'44			

Date	Organization	Location	Reference	Notes
6/3/44	-	Trinidad	-	Left U.S. June 1943
7/19	-	Clavinille - 6-441	C.O. report	
9/20	-	Lavinille	1 July Rec. Dept memo 12 Sept	Ready Oct 10 - as may be required (returned U.S. 6/5/44)
9/22	-	"	" 14 Sept	Ready camp
9/29	-	" (P.H.)	" 23 Sept	Banks 1 Jan 45 Estimated. Ready camp Banks (Nov 1 - Ass'd P. Banks)
10/7	-	(Banks)	Cno Conf disp 041327 Oct	about 10 Oct transfer to Banks.
10/27	-	Camp Banks		Nov. priority
11/9	-	(Hueneume)	Cno Conf disp 26 & 101 Oct. Also Com 14 - 319246	about 5 Nov. transfer Hueneume.
11/9	-	Hueneume	Hueneume conf disp. 081709	Arrived Post Hueneume from Camp Banks Nov. 7.
12/9	-	" (P.H.)	Nov. Com 12 rec 087357 Dec.	Personal booked Eld 31 Dec.

83rd

DECLASSIFIED

Date	Organization	Location	Reference	Notes
12/27	-	Hueneume (P.H.)		Departed Post Hueneume 27 Dec. Destination San Pedro FFT.
1/14	-	(P.H.)	Com 12 sec 128210 Jan.	Com 12 sec 128210 Jan. (for 12/14/44)
2/8	-	-		Comdenuboc jet desired shipment in lifted from see disp. 061001 Feb. Blair in Feb and early mar. Consistent with ability of Anipoa to provide shpg.
2/15	-	-	Comdenuboc sec. disp. 061947 Feb.	Shpg. provided to man personnel & housekeeping gear. cargo ready 7 May 10 Feb.
4/21	-	-	Com 14 sec disp. 14 April NCR 13634	deleted tray.

Only report received 4/21 - Summary

The Gulfport Jaunt

The order came to lay out our gear on the bunks for seabag inspection. We were about to shove off. Nobody was more about that. Most of the men in the battalion had been in Camp Bradford for more than two months and some of the boys from earlier units had been there since November or before. It was now March, the 14th.

The idea of bag inspection was an optimistic note since there was always the prospect of getting a complete outfit of equipment at Bradford. Even when they had the gear, they seemed to be able to conjure up a number of reasons for not issuing it to you. Didn't the writer personally flirt with pneumonia; spend Christmas Day in sick bay and then get an order from the Medical Department for the issue of a pea-coat (overcoat, folks)? Indeed, he did.

Few retained a favorable impression of the State of Virginia in general; Norfolk and Camp Bradford in particular. Strange, too, since some of the biggest men in our country's history either were born in Virginia or chose to live there. Maybe it just didn't help your memory to live through the snow, sleet rain, mud, etc., with a tent for a home and an outside latrine with no heat for your showers, if you were crazy enough to want to take one.

Details for departure were completed. The men were mustered. (Every few minutes.) All present and accounted for, we finally embarked in trucks which drove us a few miles to a railway siding, where we transferred to day coaches. The whistle tooted and we were off. It didn't happen quite that fast as all was done in good old traditional Navy style. We didn't know where we were going and didn't care. Any change was bound

to be for the better. Besides, we were heading south. Phil Goets set out to prove that one can use his watch and the sun together as a compass. After some strain on his memory and a few adjusting calculations, he proved his point. It's a good trick, you should try it.

Somebody must have set the "governor" for 20 miles an hour. We seemed to slug along at a turtle's pace. But we were a happy gang; glad because we were moving.

It was a sunny afternoon and the country side looked pleasant as it slid by. The roadbed seemed rather level although we passed occasional hills. To many of the boys, accustomed to life in the larger cities, it was relaxing to observe the quiet tempo of the country as we drifted through the Carolinas.

There was plenty of chatter about about every subject one could imagine, as well as some things that would be hard to imagine. Everyone looked for contact with the outside world. Whenever the train stopped at a small town, heads were poked out the windows all along the line and curiosity ran riot. Any civilian within shouting distance became an information bureau, be he black, white, male or female. "Where are we?" "What town is this?" "What state is it in?" "What railroad are we on?" "What do you do for a living?" "How is the war going?" These were some of the questions that were shot at the poor civilians.

We stopped for water at a little town near Greenville, S.C. We remember a colored boy, about 17 coming down a dusty road toward the station. He was tall and slender, with big hands and feet and he was modelling the latest creation in a "soot suit." It was a pale blue in color. The coat was form fitting at the waist then long and full from there south, hanging halfway to his knees. The pants were full at the knees and tight at the ankles, like those of a bicycle rider. His big feet were encased in bright tan show windows. Going up to the northern extremity we saw a brown hat with a very narrow crown and a

brim broad enough to skate on. His shirt had all the bright colors of the rainbow with no necktie to destroy the color harmony. As he shuffled along the dusty road, the picture seemed to say that he had just finished feeding the cows, had tidled up in his best bib and tucker and was on his way to call on his favorite brunette. The boys on the train saw this fashion plate and gave him a thorough working over, in ribald Navy style. Net result: the colored boy turned about four shades lighter and blushed. What else could happen when the Navy calls a man to attention?

As we moved farther south, darkness fell. It was supper time and we were hungry. The Navy cracked out a lunch box for each man. The Navy feeds its men well; there is a balanced diet and plenty of it. We don't remember now what it was so it must have been good. We usually remember the food we don't like. It probably was breast of fried chicken, a ham and cheese sandwich, a hardboiled egg, an apple, an orange and coffee. Not bad for a picnic!

Then followed more chatter, singing, card games, harmonica playing and soon it was time for bed. But there were no beds. That, we will always remember. The battalion had its full complement aboard that train. There was a seat for everybody but no bed for anyone, so the men improvised beds. Several arrangements were tried but only one appeared to resemble the real McCoy. The backs of adjoining seats were slid up and out of their anchors, the seats were adjusted backward and forward, creating spaces which were filled by the back and seat cushions. By sleeping on their sides, six men could sleep, after a fashion, on this rough platform. It was a good man who could breathe the fresh air and free himself from the stockinged feet of his neighbor. Needless to say, there was very little sleep and rest that night.

The following night it was the same thing as we were still aboard the train and still rolling. We crossed through a corner of Georgia, through Montgomery and Birmingham, Alabama into Miss-

issippi, arriving at Gulfport on March 14th. The gang had left Bradford fresh and stony and now arrived at their destination weary, bedraggled and quiet.

It was great fun to be in the sunny south. The hills and discomforts of Bradford had become a memory. Here it was bright and warm. The people we met seemed glad to see us although they had seen thousands like us before and would again. We couldn't get any farther south without getting our feet wet. Five minutes walk from the station and we could jump into the Gulf of Mexico. A half hour walk in another direction would bring us to Camp Hollywood where we were to be billeted. We didn't have to march this time, that was to come later. Upon arrival, we all piled into waiting trucks and were transported to camp in no time. Later, our gear was handled by a gallant group of volunteers—(You, you and you) and delivered to our barracks.

The camp, an Advance Base Depot was almost completely built and large enough to scare Hitler if he could but realize that this was only one of several hundred like it in the U.S.A. Its layout was a perfect geometrical pattern; a rectangle. The streets were parallel with cross streets at right angles. A string of huge warehouses adjoining a railway siding formed one side of the rectangle with a row of barracks across the street from them. Each building was a two-storied affair which housed comfortably a full company of 260 men.

A compact area, roughly a square forming a part of the huge rectangle housed a complete battalion. The area had five barracks, an administration building, and Bachelor Officers' Quarters, (B.O.Q.) mess hall, ship's service store, tailor and laundry shops, movie theatre, hospital, armory, garages and workshops were all within easy walking distance of each other, at least from our location. Other battalions had farther to walk for services other than eating or sleeping. The camp could easily house several battalions of Seabees and the large Armed Guard School at the same time.

These were by far the most comfortable living quarters we had been in. Most of our crew had been billeted in similar barracks at Camp Bradford but there had been trouble there with the central heating plant. Here, where there was less need for heat, each building had its own heating arrangement. It was gas; piped into the building and distributed to a number of small heaters with radiators suspended from the ceiling. The hot air was blown about by an electric fan in each unit. A large and commodious "head" was located on each floor. As each barracks had its own hot water heating unit, there was plenty of hot water for shaving, showers and laundry. Mister, you should have seen us revel in that hot water; it was like a Roman holiday. The water was the hottest we had ever seen; soft as the petals of a magnolia blossom. In the showers, we could easily soap ourselves to a beautiful lather and then that water would take its slow, Southern time about rinsing itself off. It was a pleasure to just let it run and run but after drying off, one still felt a bit soapy. Outside at the washing benches we could scrub our clothes nice and white but it was difficult to rinse the studs out of them.

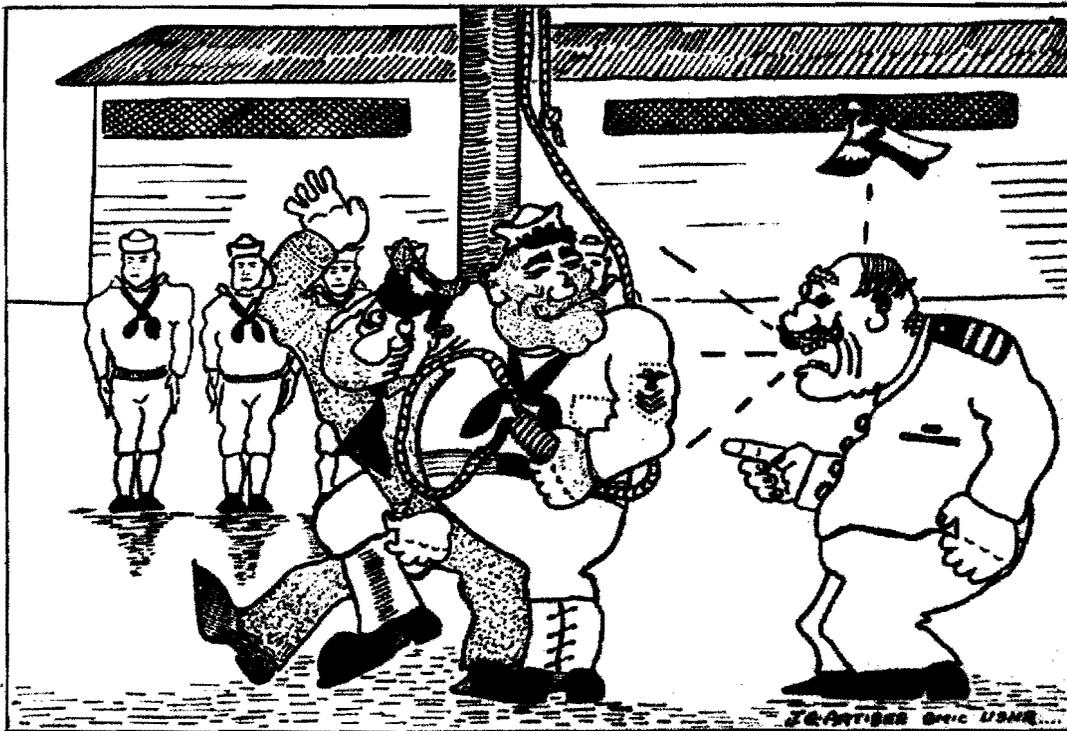
The bunks were double-deckers, with rather thin but comfortable mattresses. Three long rows of bunks were formed on each floor with double rows of wooden lockers. We had two warm, woolen blankets each, that came in handy as the temperature at night was cool enough to warrant the use of them. A considerable amount of humidity in the atmosphere made its presence felt.

Our clothing, for the most part was left in our sea bags which were lashed to the posts of our bunks. The items of clothing for everyday use, such as singlets, extra socks, lines, etc. were stored in the lockers. But we were not to have immediate need for work clothes as other plans were afoot.

Continued on Page 70

NEVER A DULL MOMENT

"Petty Officer of the Guard"



"But Suh, Y'all done tole me to hoist the Ensign."



MORNING COLORS. Men of the 83rd Battalion stand at attention during the daily raising of the colors. They are attentive here but will live to see the day that this touching ceremony will double its meaning for them. Standing so on foreign soil, one clearly realizes that his flag and his shipmates are all remain to him of his beloved homeland and all that he has left behind.

"Rifle Range and Return Hike"

The trip to the rifle range and back is something all of us will remember in connection with our advanced training at Guilford. The battalion split into two echelons, A and B Companies with part of Headquarters Company formed one group and C and D Companies plus the remainder of Headquarters composed the second. In this manner, half of us were to hike to the range and the other unit was to pound the road on the return trip.

Upon our return from embarkation leave, C Company with picked men from the other units was sent to the range to build additional barracks which would provide housing for all of us. The first marching groups to arrive at the range found the work party putting the finishing touches on the rough and rugged quarters. When the first echelon left Guilford they rode in convoy and it was more like a pleasure drive than anything else except that we wore our combat dress including packs and helmets. None of us will forget how lucky the guys were who rode in the first truck of this convoy when we finally left the

concrete highway and turned off on a dusty gravel road. Clouds of dust nearly choked us and we must have looked as though we had been through a battle by the time we arrived at the backwoods camp. Whenever a body of men is moved it seems that regulations require a muster at the start and at the finish, so after being duly checked we were assigned to barracks and were allowed to acquaint ourselves with the camp. That didn't take long as the place was compactly built and all business. For as we had been fortunate enough to have had modern barracks buildings at Bradford and Guilford, it was the first taste of rugged life for the 83rd.

Plans for the order of firing had been made and for the other activities arranged for us so the officers shifted us here and there almost without a hitch. Many details of this trip will be remembered by us such as the phrases "Hit the deck" and "On the double," as well as those bawled by the Range Officer, namely, "Load and lock," "Ready on the right," "Ready on the left," "Ready on the firing line," "Unlock pieces and fire at will." Poor Will. All this will ring in our ears for some time to come because we were all tense, anyhow and trying to make commendable scores while that humdrum clattering on the tympanum made it well-nigh impossible

for one to remain calm and self-confident.

After we had fired, plans called for us to go through some business-like extended order drill. A course was laid out and an objective had been set up. Three sets of targets were along the route and we were supposed to fire on these as we came up to them. They had a nice surprise rigged up for us which was meant to represent a mortar shell, grenade or bomb and as we went through the routine, there came a sudden order—"Hit the deck!" We did and about two split seconds later a blast and a roar shook the earth beneath our sprawled bodies. We had come almost abreast of a carefully placed charge of dynamite which was intended to acquaint us in a small way with what could be expected in a similar advance under actual enemy fire. No damage was done except that a few of the more inquisitive among us had clods of dirt hung in their faces as a result of forgetting the rule of keeping the head down as well as the rest of the body. As soon as the explosion was over we worked our way forward, alternately running and hitting the deck. Soon we drew our first head on the "enemy" and we blasted away as though ping-pong Japanese really confronted us. There were more than one set of clenched teeth and grim faces in those ranks

as the men, no doubt, thought ahead to the day when they would have their chance to even the score with the Axis.

We pushed past the first enemy resistance on to our objective which we took in fine style (as Seabees always do.) Our leaders then called us together and explained the good and bad features of the movement after which we reorganized and marched back to the barracks.

Next day, we received a lecture on the coming hike and all the facts about proper care of the feet, selection of well fitting socks (without holes or darnings) and the methods of adjusting the pack for the easiest, most comfortable way of carrying also the most practical use of our canteen of water. All this was good dope as was shortly to be proven.

The following day was designated as the starting date and that night there was much activity and general hubbub of preparation in camp. We hit the deck at 8:00 that eventful noon and proceeded to wash up, chew, don pack and helmets, adjust them, fall out, fall in and muster. Then we stood waiting for last minute holdups and technicalities that only the officers could handle.

At last, the moment arrived and at the command "Forward, March," we stepped off on our way. To a great many, the memory will be one of sore,

Continued on Page 66



AN UNPLEASANT MEMORY. Most of us would gladly forego any further acquaintance with the well-remembered Obstacle Course at Gulfport, the bane of all advanced trainees. Things like this that put the A.O.L. in solidarity.

"Invasion"

"This is it, pal."

"Yeah. This is it."

Months of preparation and tramping had gone into making the 33rd Seabee ready for this moment. The sea was calm as the distant shores of our objective slowly materialized. Palm trees fringed the crest of a ridge and the heavy deck of an invasion barge burned through off slabs. Canteens had long since been emptied. Some of the men coughed beneath huge transport trucks seeking a little shade. Mercilessly the sun seared down. The sea, a few feet beneath us, looked inviting, but gave small comfort. No breeze relieved the situation.

Our task was to steal in and make a landing without the assistance of Naval guns or aerial support. Delay, which was partly due to engine trouble and partly to green troops, had changed what was to have been a dawn invasion into a mid-day landing. Nerves were taut and the restlessness of the first few moments of the trip had given way to quiet, strained looks on the faces of the men about me. One or two had become surly and sharp like a couple of old men who had quarreled.

"Attention!" the Commanding Officer was speaking. "Come forward by platoons and get your K rations. We'll land in about thirty minutes. This may be the last food we'll get for some time. Everybody eat. The water tanks will be broken out and everyone must fill his canteen. Following that, platoon leaders will have their men file past to receive their rounds of ammunition. That's all for now. Your platoon, that's Peckham, then Wiseman's then yours, Williams, followed by White and Graham's."

Never had food (sic) been so dry and tasteless. By the time the strip of sand upon which we were to establish a beach had been reached, all details had been attended to. Men were again grouped in platoon formation. Squad leaders were called for last-minute instructions. It seemed as if we were to go straight forward for thirty yards, if possible, and await the second wave, then to go on to a point about five hundred yards inland and wait for instructions. Runness would contact us.

Each squad leader called his scouts and passed on instructions. Scouts carry no firearms, thus avoiding any temptation to shoot and expose our position to the enemy; also to keep him unremembered as he steals forward to discover the whereabouts of enemy patrols and formations. It takes a lot of nerve to be a squad scout.

The nose of the barge ground to an abrupt stop. The great end-gate was let down to form a draw-bridge. Bulldozer motors sprang into life with a roar. Water filter equipment, refrigeration supplies, transports, machine gun squads moved on at once. Amid this bedlam of activity, squad after squad leaped into the waist-deep surf and moved forward into their positions. My squad drove swiftly across the beach in a thin line and hit the deck just short of the crest of the first dune. Scout Vuelich moved ahead alone. When he was two hundred yards beyond us he gave the signal to advance. The second wave of troops was already at our heels as we zig-zagged another hundred yards and sought cover once more.

The scout moved up again. At his signal we followed and five hundred yards from the water, we burrowed in. Ahead was the tall grass. At any moment the enemy might be sighted and the battle would be on. We experienced difficulty in keeping sand out of the bolt mechanism of our rifles. Panting and sweating we strained our eyes for the slightest movement ahead of us. A runner crawled up beside us.

"You are to drive straight ahead to the other side of the island," he whispered. "Then swing to your left in an encircling movement. Keep in contact with the squads on your right and left through your runner. Keep them in sight and move up together as closely as possible."

Then began a steady drive forward. I could see Vuelich, already waist deep in swamp. For three hours we waded across this morass. On my right, spaced at about ten yards were Snow, Tomerlin, and Bradley. On my left were Intritus, Reddie, Gace, and Campbell. At my side was our runner, Leonardo. Snakes, lizards, and various swamp inhabitants divided our attention with the possible enemy ahead. At one point, Bradley, carrying his rifle chest high, suddenly went out of sight beneath the murky

water. He came out all right but I was worried about the condition of his piece and his ammunition.

Finally we struck a ridge of wooded terrain. Our contact with the other squads had long since been broken. Leonardo was dispatched to contact our troops on the left. That was the last we saw of him. He became as completely lost from us as we were from the rest of the force. Eventually, we broke through to the ocean on the far side of the island. Our canteens had been emptied long ago and "Water, water, everywhere and not a drop to drink" became more than a line from a poem to us. Acute suffering was experienced by all.

A few moments were taken to wash in the surf—which was accomplished by the simple expedient of wading out waist-deep—clothes and all. Once cooled off we resumed our drive. Swinging to the left, about a mile, we came upon a dimly outlined trail leading inland toward the center of the island. We decided to follow this. Later, once again on the alert, we heard the barking of a dog—two dogs—a whole pack of dogs. Quickly we made a decision. We had to find our battalion. We had to have water and food. We would move up, and if necessary, attack. We couldn't go on much further.

After a long time we broke into a clearing. Before us stood row after row of dog kennels. Dogs of every size, shape, and breed had heard us and were watching through kennel wire as we approached. Suddenly they broke into a wild chorus of barking. Crouching low and moving up, we came upon a Jap, clothed in a heavily padded suit with a wire mask over his face and thick gloves to protect his hands. He looked at us and grinned.

"Hi, fellows," he said.

"Where are we?" I asked.

"The United States Army Dog Training Camp," he replied.

Our invasion of "Cat Island" was over!

—Ted Graham.

The Seabee Speaks:

So you're tired of working, Mister, and you think you'll rest a bit. You've been working pretty steady, and you're getting sick of it. You think the war is ending, so you're slowing down the pace. That's what you may be thinking, Sir, but it just ain't the case.

What would you think, Sir, if we quit because we're tired, too? We're flesh and blood and human, and we're just as tired as you. Did you ever dig a foxhole and climb down deep inside, And wish it went to China, so you'd have some place to hide? While motorized "buzzards" packed with gas were circling overhead And fired the ground around you with hot, exploding lead? And did you ever dig out, Mister, from debris and dirt? And feel yourself all over, to see where you were hurt?

And find you couldn't move, tho' you weren't hurt at all? And feel so darned relieved that you'd just sit there and bawl?

Were you ever hungry, Mister—not the kind that food soon fixes, But a gnawing, cutting hunger that bites into your guts? It's a homesick hunger, Mister, and it digs around inside And it's got you in its clutches, and there ain't no place to hide.

Were you ever dirty, Mister—not the sticky-collar kind, But the cozy, slimy, mossy dirt, and gritty kinds that grind?

Did you ever mind the heat, Sir—not the kind that makes sweat run, But the kind that drives you crazy 'til you even curse the sun?

Were you ever weary, Mister, I mean dog tired, you know—When your feet ain't got no feeling, and your legs don't want to go?

But we keep a-goin' Mister, you can bet your life we do, And let me tell you, Mister, we expect the same of you!

Written by an unknown Seabee of the 53rd Battalion.



END OF THE COURSE. Ever a welcome sight was this final obstacle, the walkway that marked the finish line of tough Course A. Some of the boys are seen taking this last hurdle and from their sour expressions, they've had plenty.



COMPANY A



Lt. H. B. MILLER,
1080 N. Oxford Rd., Grosse Pointe, Mich.



Lt. Joel M. ROTHSTEIN,
420 Ann Street, East Lansing, Mich.



Lt. Joel H. G. BROWN,
11 Columbia Avenue, London, Ohio.



Corp. W. P. HALL,
3084 Jackdaw Street, San Diego, Calif.

The Trip Over

It was late in April 1942, when we received notice in Gulfport that we were due to leave for the U.S.A. Each of us had been issued a carbine, a combat helmet, shelter half, extra field shoes, coveralls and held pack with messkit, canteen and ammunition belt.

Our battalion was divided in half, one group was to leave immediately and the other was to follow later. Companies A and B plus half of Headquarters Company made up the First Echelon, which made preparations for departure.

We boarded a train and journeyed to our port of embarkation. Censorship still prevents writing too specifically about certain things; the war isn't won yet.

The officers nicknamed their quarters "The Grand Hotel." There was nothing grand about them but they were adequate. The barracks, mess hall, canteen etc., were all located on an immense, long concrete pier with railroad spur on one side and a ship docking facility on the other. Many soldiers and sailors, in addition to our group, were in evidence. Single cots were lined up in rows upon rows and marked off in sections. It was a good man who could find his way back to his own bunk once he left it. For train travel we had worn our undress blues, the issued high field packs and our rifles. The cots were assigned to sleeping quarters. There was necessarily a lot of mustering, in "company noses" standing in line waiting for location orders. Those packs on our backs were anything but "light." We had field shoes, a blanket, toilet articles and sufficient changes of linen and towels to last for the ocean trip.

A hot afternoon was spent under this shed. Although the ceiling was high, the roof apparently of galvanized iron, seemed to hold the heat of a hot sun and to stifle the air inside. The night, too, was a warm one. Next morning we marched out into open country and took setting-up exercises. Later that day, we boarded our steel ship which had warped in to the pier. She was of some 6000 ton capacity and of ancient vintage; a cargo ship converted into a transport for the record of many voyages in the Caribbean

Sea. We steamed down stream about a mile and dropped anchor for the night.

The water here was a muddy green. Our quarters were chimney to say the least. The decks were lettered A, B, C, and D in order going down. We drew D Deck, of course, in the very bottom of the vessel, many feet below the water line. It was not the spot one would select for a honeymoon suite. There was a theoretical ventilating system but it was entirely inadequate for the large number of men quartered there. Up top-side were two decks divided off into small cabins, sick bay, etc. Here the officers, ships company and armed guard were quartered. These staterooms were small; comfortable in the daytime but stuffy at night, as regulations required that all ports be closed after dark. The following day, the convoy had assembled; we weighed anchor and got under way. Nothing to do now except to relax and enjoy the cruise. So we thought, anyway. But there was time on our hands. Time for cards, craps, reading, eating, grousing and looking. Plenty of each was practiced. We did considerable thinking, too.

What did we think about? Well, first, the law of self-preservation suggested that if a torpedo should hit the hull of the ship near our quarters, we would be caught like rats in a trap. Vertical pipes had been installed from the overheads to the decks. Three tiers of canvas bunks were attached to these pipes so that they could be swung down to the horizontal sleeping position or swung to a 45 degree angle when not in use. The point was that we were packed in there tighter than sardines in their tin shelter. After climbing a slippery wooden companion-way (the only exit) we came out in a narrow passage, with a steel deck as uneven as an obstacle course and another compartment loaded with sailors on O Deck. If we turned left, a narrow passage led past the galley and into a crowd of soldiers. If we turned right, there was a section of sailors immediately ahead of us and as we proceeded toward the bow, we passed the head, showers and wash bowls and encountered another group of sailors from D Deck but closer to the bow hatch than ourselves. Here

was another slippery, wooden companion-way leading through a hatch to B Deck. Now we would be in the open air at least, but our emergency or life boat station was on A Deck up a steep narrow steel ladder. We reasoned that should a torpedo strike in daylight, we would probably be on deck and have a chance. Should it strike at night, (only an accidental chance would affect us) since light is needed for torpedo aiming and we were well screened by other ships. The dangerous times, therefore, were at twilight and at dawn. We could make a break for ourselves at these times by remaining on deck until dark and by being there before dawn.

Our convoy must have consisted of some thirty ships. It could not easily be determined. They were arranged in a rectangular pattern; tankers, cargo vessels, our transport, three P.C.s and a gunboat. The P.C.s are fast and heavily armed. They continued to circle the entire convoy during the whole trip. The gunboat remained at one side or the other of the transport at all times. At various stages, the position of the ships in formation would be altered but with each move, the gunboat still remained at our side. It was a comforting thing. Apparently our ship was considered the most valuable one in the whole convoy. After all, lost equipment and cargo may be replaced in relatively short time but to replace men takes a whole generation of time and has since Adam and Eve. There was other protection, too. One freighter, a Liberty ship carried a catapult plane, and there was air cover also provided by land based planes. We usually had two or three planes above us. PBMs or PB4s; long distance patrols or swift fighters. Occasionally a blimp would hover above us for hours at a time.

As we moved farther out into deeper water the color of the sea changed to blue becoming darker and darker until it was an inky blue. Now and then we saw fast swimming fish leap from the water and disappear again. What a paradise for deep sea anglers! Schools of porpoises played about our vessel, leaping and diving in formation, reminding us of the seals we had seen back home in the Zoo.

After two or three days out, a strong breeze kicked up. In fact one might have called it a blow. Our accident tub, was heading right into her. They didn't seem to like each other and it became an angry argument to see which could outlast the other. The ship would raise its bow out of the water in protest and bring it down again "Ker-plunk" on the surface, like a huge giant banging his fist on the table to emphasize his point. Then that "Ole Debil" wind would raise that big hand by force and blow in her face. She would spit at him too and that didn't help any. There was little rolling by the beam but the pitching and tossing kept up in a steady rhythm, deadly, monotonous and sickening. We thought that we were in the belly of a huge whale and the big fish was just about to give up his lunch; and so were we. Our ideas of rhythm and tempo have changed. We thought that it was transmitted through the ears to the brain, but not so, it is through the stomach. When the bow raised up out of water, the stomach rolled up too, pinching off the air in the esophagus. When the bow settled down and slapped the water, the stomach slid back and yelled for citrus fruit.

That brings us to another somewhat bitter subject. The food wasn't fit for a dog. The galley, scullery and mess-kitchen were filthy joints; the stench of them was nauseating. Civilians did the cooking and a detail of soldiers acted as mess line and scullery hands. It was apparent that little imagination had been used in the preparation of menus. Meat, usually "goat stew," was of poor quality, fat and insufficiently cooked as a rule; the worst thing in the world for people with a tendency to sea-sickness. A total absence of green was noted; no salads—not even a cole slaw. We did get fresh bread and butter each day, if you liked that. The coffee was undrinkable, and there was no alternate except water. Three times a day it was the typical, no good Army java, thick, strong and muddy. You could try it with any combination of milk and sugar, with or without—but you couldn't drink it. There was no milk, no cocoa, no chocolate.

Continued on Page 26

The Trip Over

Continued from Page 23

lemonade, orangeade, fruit-juice, no tea, but there was coffee. The dessert was always predicable: two chances out of three it was jello. The third chance, that is, breakfast, no dessert was served. We always knew what fruit would be there for breakfast, however; it was dried apricots. Once upon a time we liked jello and apricots but we don't anymore. There was a terrific demand for citrus fruits, they were most agreeable and a good stomach sealer during a rough voyage. We had some lemons, oranges and grapefruit but not nearly enough. The boys would connive to take two or three oranges or sneak back into line for more fruit and the unfortunates at the end of the line would find the quota all gone when they arrived at the orange crate.

It was said that the food and bunks on Army transports of which this was one, had been contracted between the government and civilians. It was also said that Uncle Sam paid \$5 per day for each man's meals. If that were the truth, then someone or a corporation was making a handsome profit. We were consoled by the thought that large income taxes would take back a portion of these ill-gotten gains. We hardly thought that this matter would bear the scrutiny of a Senate investigation. The Navy feeds its men handsomely on some 72¢ per day. It is good quality food of great variety and the greatest danger is in enjoying some too much and overeating. The Navy very often, too, makes a profit of its daily allotment of 72¢ per day per man.

Life became monotonous. We were forever standing in line for that bum food. The chow line reached the entire length of A Deck and continued down into a large queue of waiting men on B Deck. After eating, there was another long

line to wait in—to clean and sterilize our mess gear.

For once, guard duty was almost a pleasure. The guard was a select group of 20 men but every one of the sailors had a chance at it; the guard being changed nightly. The doors of the two upper decks had to be guarded so that no light from inside could be visible from the deck when a man went through. Each was a double door with a box-like booth between them and guards were stationed on the inside and outside. The inside guard would allow two or three men to step into this box or booth and close the door behind them. Then the men would rap on the outside door and the exterior guard would open the door and permit them on deck. In that way no light could shine through at any time. This guard duty had a great advantage. The detail being relieved and one going on duty had a sandwich lunch and good coffee available. The sandwiches were of plain bread with cheese, pressed ham or liverwurst and a couple of them would sustain life if you had missed one or two regular meals which were unbearable.

Clean-up detail was a necessary function every morning. Bright and early, a group of three or four men would be assigned to clean each hold. These men were privileged to avoid the breakfast chow line by eating early (a doubtful advantage) and then clean their section while most of the gang were eating. And were those holds dirty! They really needed a thorough going over from stem to stern. All they ever had was a quick lick and a promise; only the visible dirt being swept up. Previous voyages had left their evidence which was apparent when we first boarded the ship. The supporting steel beams under the overhead could be easily reached from the top bunks and had been reached often and used as trash collectors. In addition to a half-inch of dust, there were orange peels, cigarette butts, paper wrappings and magazines galore.

Getting water for shaving, showers and laundry is another trial which we shall long remember. Due to the limited capacity of the ship for stowing water and the large number of men aboard it was necessary to control its use—for drinking, first and for washing, if available. No shortage of drinking water ever existed and the fountains were always open. But for washing, fresh water was rationed and shut off except for an hour before each meal. As wash bowls were limited there was a line waiting to use them and the wise heads used their steel helmets to hold water until a bowl and a mirror was free for use. For shower baths we used salt water pumped from the briny deep. This water was supposed to be used also for washing clothes and we even tried to use it for shaving. Ordinary soap and salt water don't mix. It just won't lather. We had no salt water soap. As the trip took several days longer than anticipated, our supply of clean linen was exhausted and we felt and were dirty.

Coveralls were the uniform of the day and a good choice it was. Although the decks were washed down each morning and after each meal they quickly became littered and dirty but there was nothing else to sit on.

There was lots of time for sitting and we did plenty of it. Fortunately, some of the boys had thought to bring some books and magazines aboard. These were read and passed around; reread and read again. Time seemed to hang heavily on our hands. Our old tub could have made 20 knots per hour, no doubt, but the speed of a convoy is that of its slowest ship, which we judged to be about 6 knots. Looking down at the water from the top deck one would wonder if we were not standing still.

We poked along, hour after hour. Hardly anybody attempted to write home. There wasn't a desk to write on and no place to post mail, anyway. One could sit in a dim light and write on his knee but it was discouraging work. Further-

more, we were unfamiliar with censorship regulations and a lot of things written about on shipboard were later cut out by the censors before release to the Post Office department. Such things as the point of embarkation, date of sailing, route, time enroute, speed of ship were taboo.

Occasionally during the first few days there would be an alert at unexpected moments for the Armed Guard. These gun crews were fast on the draw and would fly to their shell-tossers, rip off the muzzle covers, take their positions and be all set in no time flat to fire in any direction. We were given life boat drills, too. We learned to reach our assigned positions opposite a certain life boat on a certain deck in about two or three minutes.

Suddenly on the hazy horizon, we spotted land. What a welcome sight it was! In half an hour, we could see as we approached, that it was an island of substantial proportions. We were doomed to disappointment, however, as this was not our destination. Nor were we to go ashore. Our mission was to replenish our dwindling water supply, take on needed stores and to wait for another convoy.

We had been so slow as to miss a previous convoy we had been expected to join at this rendezvous. Six long days and nights we spent here at anchor. That was really tough since we were so close to land and couldn't set foot on it. A few of the boys improvised fishing lines and dropped them over the side and some fish caught were edible and hit the frying pans promptly. Native traders came alongside and were handy at picking up a few dollars by selling (at fancy prices) Brazilian candy bars, picture post cards, magazines etc. But the waiting around was deadly.

The regimentation is the hardest pill of all to swallow. We Americans are so accustomed to be free to enjoy life as we see fit, that we bitterly resent any restriction of that freedom. The feeling of restriction is difficult to imagine. It must actually be experienced to be fully comprehended. Nobody knows better than the man in the armed forces what regimentation really means. That is why we are all anxious to finish the war as quickly as possible, pay the price of our slovenly thinking in the past and to get out of the ranks. To have someone control and dictate your every move and even your thoughts, is the most ghastly experience imaginable.

Eventually, our six day stretch in this harbor passed. We joined another convoy and were on our way again. Our crew's nest had a 24 hour watch and many eyes were constantly on the alert for enemy subs. Yes, our listening devices picked up the sound of submarines but we fooled them by zigzagging, back-tracking and outsmarting them. This territory, the Caribbean Sea has been a graveyard for merchant shipping but apparently, we were just lucky. We came through the area known as "Torpedo Junction" without a scratch. We had ready a hot reception for any sub that chose to fight it out but let us not minimize their potency, as it would be foolish to do so.

Our good ship wallowed along. We experienced a feeling of monotony with a strain of tension in it. The boys dug up some entertainment talent and put on a show in the Officer's Dining Room. The show was repeated several nights in a row owing to the fact that only a small audience could witness each performance. There were singers, imitators, music, comedy skits which were pretty good, too. Often the entertainers were seasick at show time and the small crowded room, ill ventilated would have made it difficult for Fred Allen or Bob Hope to hold attention.

If you steamboat long enough in any given direction, you will eventually hit land or fall off the earth. In our case it happened that we struck Island X and

NEVER A DULL MOMENT

"The Brigadier"



"----- Ah Sneezed -----"

Continued on Page 25

83rd Naval Construction Battalion

Chronology

02 Feb 1943	Formed at NCTC, Norfolk, Va.
14 Mar 1943	Departed NCTC, Norfolk
16 Mar 1943	Arrived ABD, Gulfport, Miss.
29 Apr 1943	1 st Echelon departed ABD, Gulfport. 14 officers and 536 men.
21 May 1943	1 st Echelon arrived Trinidad.
14 Jun 1943	2 nd Echelon departed ABD, Gulfport. 9 officers and 597 men.
26 Jun 1943	2 nd Echelon arrived in Trinidad.
23 May 1944	25 men detached to Roosevelt Roads, P.R. for temporary duty with CBMU 559.
30 May 1944	Departed Trinidad.
05 Jun 1944	Arrived NCTC, Davisville, R.I.
28 Sept 1944	25 men on detached duty transferred to USNCTC, Davisville, R.I., for duty.

Second Tour of Duty

14 Oct 1944	Departed NCTC, Davisville.
20 Oct 1944	Arrived CBRD, Camp Parks, Shoemaker, California.
06 Nov 1944	Departed from CBRD, Camp Parks.
07 Nov 1944	Arrived ABD, Port Hueneme, California.
27 Dec 1944	Departed ABD, Port Hueneme for San Pedro FFT Pearl Harbor. 31 officers and 1,086 men.
03 Jan 1945	Arrived Pearl Harbor.
29 Mar 1945	Departed Pearl Harbor for Samar. 30 officers and 1,042 men.
22 Apr 1945	Arrived Samar

83RD. U. S. NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

83NCB/INWC/mvj
P16-3(64)

20 June 1945

Serial S-199

C O N F I D E N T I A L

From: Officer in Charge.
To: Chief of Naval Personnel.
Subject: Itinerary of 83rd U. S. Naval Construction Battalion.
Reference: (a) Ltr QF9, Pers-21220-CEC/mvs, dated 23 April 1945.
(b) CB Circular Ltr. #18-44 dated 10 October 1944.
(c) CB Circular Ltr. #3-45 dated 5 February 1945.

1. In compliance with reference (a), a certified itinerary of the 83rd U. S. Naval Construction Battalion is listed below.

- 2 Feb. 1943 - Formed at NCTC, Norfolk, Va.
- 14 Mar. 1943 - Departed NCTC, Norfolk
- 16 Mar. 1943 - Arrived ABD, Gulfport, Miss.
- 29 Apr. 1943 - 1st Echelon departed ABD, Gulfport.
 14 officers
 536 men
- 21 May 1943 - 1st Echelon arrived Trinidad.
- 14 Jun 1943 - 2nd Echelon departed ABD, Gulfport
 9 officers
 597 men
- 26 Jun 1943 - 2nd Echelon arrived in Trinidad.
- 23 May 1944 - 25 men detached to Roosevelt Roads, P. R.
 for temp. duty with CBLM 559.
- 30 May 1944 - Departed Trinidad.
- 5 Jun 1944 - Arrived NCTC, Davisville, R.I.
- 28 Sep 1944 - 25 men on detached duty transferred to USNCTC,
 Davisville, R. I., for duty.

2nd TOUR OF DUTY

- 14 Oct 1944 - Departed NCTC, Davisville.
- 20 Oct 1944 - Arrived CBRD, Camp Parks, Shoemaker, Calif.

#2 enc.

1945 JUL 5 PM 3 19

RECEIVED
NAVY DEPARTMENT
PERSONNEL

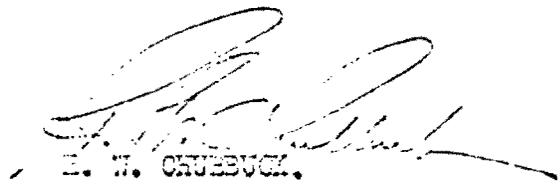
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To: [illegible]
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#2

Subject: Itinerary of 83rd U. S. Naval Construction Battalion

- 6 Nov 1944 - Departed from CBPD, Camp Parks.
- 7 Nov 1944 - Arrived ABD, Port Hueneme, Calif.
- 27 Dec 1944 - Departed ABD, Port Hueneme for San Pedro FPP Pearl Harbor.
 31 officers
 1086 men
- 3 Jan 1945 - Arrived Pearl Harbor.
- 29 Mar 1945 - Departed Pearl Harbor for Samar
 29 officers
 1042 men
- 22 Apr 1945 - Arrived Samar.


E. W. CHUBBUCK.

I certify that the above itinerary is true and correct, as reflected by the records of the 83rd U. S. Naval Construction Battalion.


H. W. CHUBBUCK,
Comdr. CEC-USNR.

To Facility
Administrative
Classification
Date

TELETYPE
U.S. NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION
SIGNED

NCB 83

96th U.S. Naval Construction Battalion
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California

DECLASSIFIED
C396/A9-1
Serial: 1348

ACTIVITIES REPORT
Month of January
2 February 1946

1. PERSONNEL REPORTS

- a. BuPers Form 353 is attached herewith. BuPers Form 6053 and 625 will be delayed in forwarding due to large numbers of changes to be reported.
- b. Battalion strength is approximately 1300. About one hundred and fifty men and four officers per month will be shipped state-side for discharge during the next three months. A systematic program of replacements has been requested from ComServPac, beginning 1 March (reporting date). This schedule for officers and enlisted men is attached (see enclosures 2 and 3). Fulfillment of Battalion Construction commitments in China are dependent on receipt of the replacements in above mentioned schedule.

2. MOVEMENT OF UNIT

- a. Present location, Taingtao, China, remains unchanged.
- b. Approximately five hundred men are now quartered at the airfield compound some ten (10) miles distant.
- c. Taingtao detachment, Tientsin, formerly part of the 83rd NCB, approximately 240 strong has been "taken aboard" and has been established as part of the 96th NCB.

3. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

Major work may be classified as follows:

- a. STEVEDORES: AKA 104, LST 46, LST 122, LST 920 and LST 827 have been unloaded during the period of this report. AKA 104 contained 1000 tons of construction supplies; LST 122 - construction equipment from 83rd NCB at Tientsin; LST 46, construction equipment from Shanghai; and

50th U.S. Naval Construction Battalion
c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California

DECLASSIFIED

CR98/A9-1

Serial: 1348

ACTIVITIES REPORT

Month of January

2 February 1946

3. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

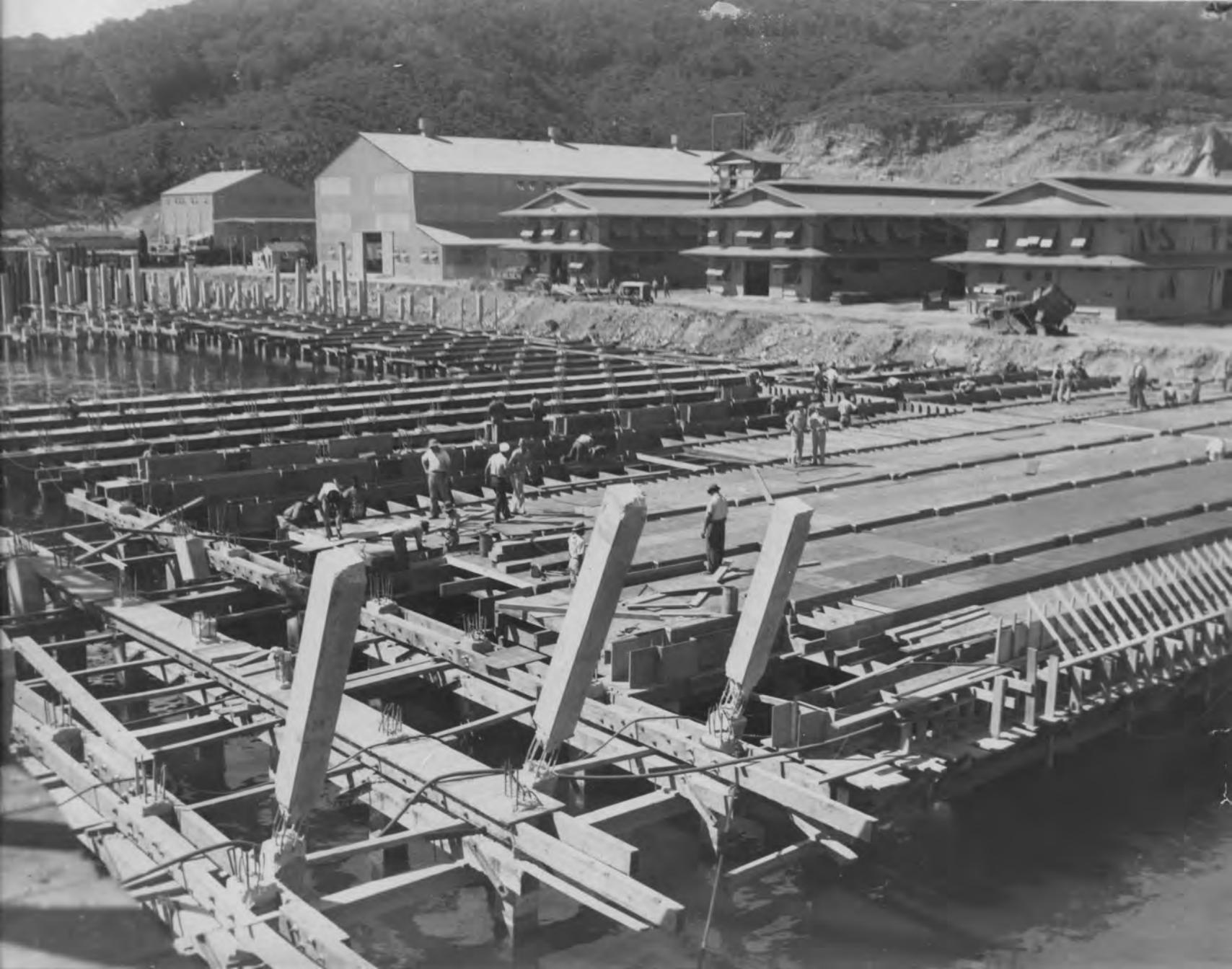
- a. STEVEDORING: (cont'd) LST's 920 and 937 construction equipment from Okinawa. Details of Tangier Detachment operations will be forwarded with subsequent reports. This activity is doing primarily base maintenance and stevedoring.
- b. CONSTRUCTION: Airfield Reconstruction. Crushers and asphalt plants are now being set up. Heavy equipment program consists of removal of 150,000 yards of rock and earth, large majority being of the former. Equipment is at present making fill and preparing runway extension of N-SE runway. Work was delayed for a short period due to need for removing graves from a Chinese cemetery located on the center line extended of above mentioned runway.
- c. MISCELLANEOUS: Approximately 25% of road repair to Tsingtao airfield, a distance of about seven miles, is complete. Work on concrete parking apron and oiled taxiway is of maintenance nature. Well drill operations for water procurement has proceeded to 325 feet below the tone of the hole. Compass Rose and hut construction for airfield are 90% complete. Approximately sixty-five trucks have been assigned to authorized work daily, during period of this report.
- d. BATTALION WORK: balance of battalion has been engaged in expanding billets at the airfield compound, improving existing quarters and construction such facilities as are considered necessary for good morale. This including a theater, beer hall and library.

83RD BATTALION

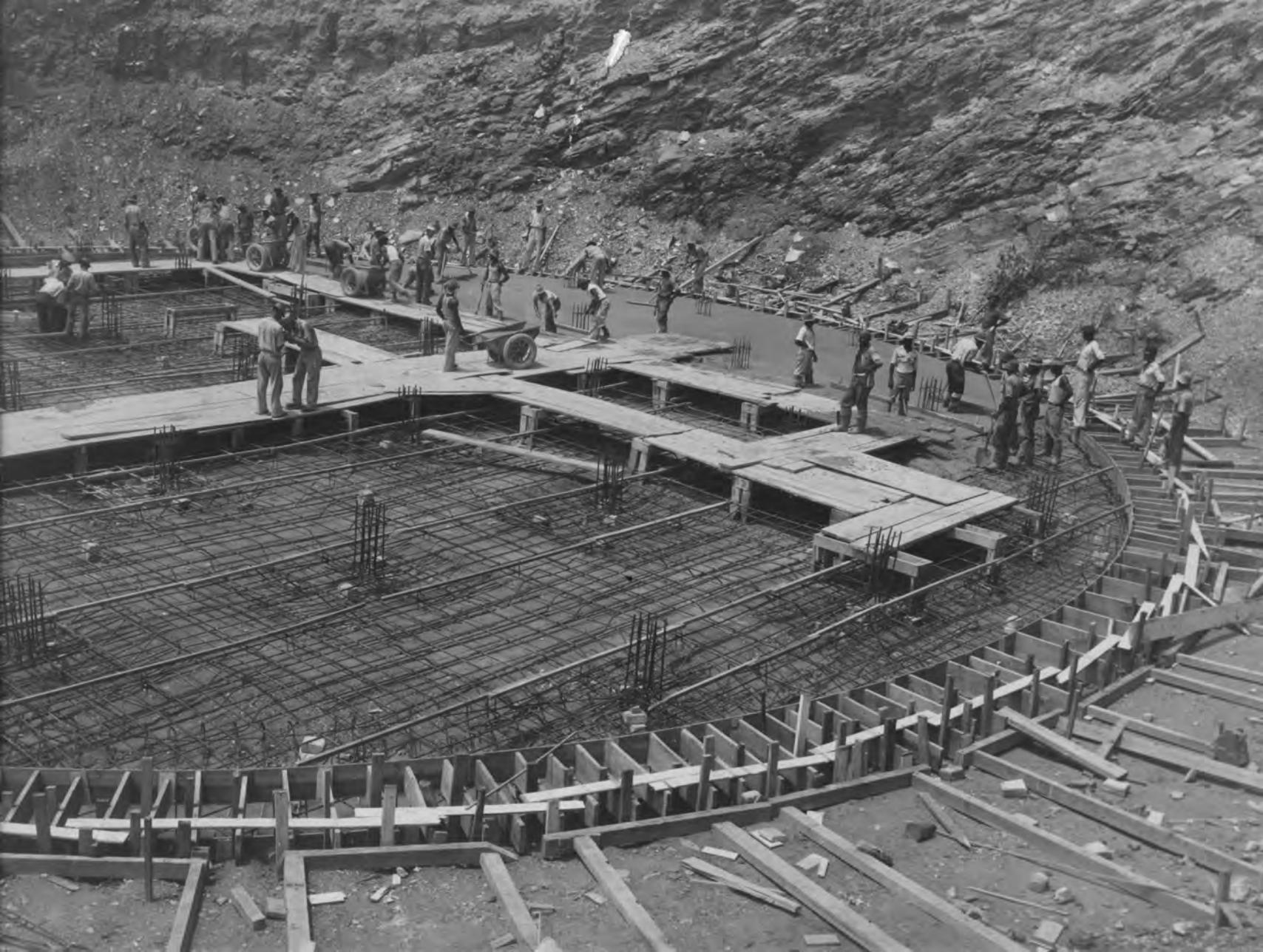


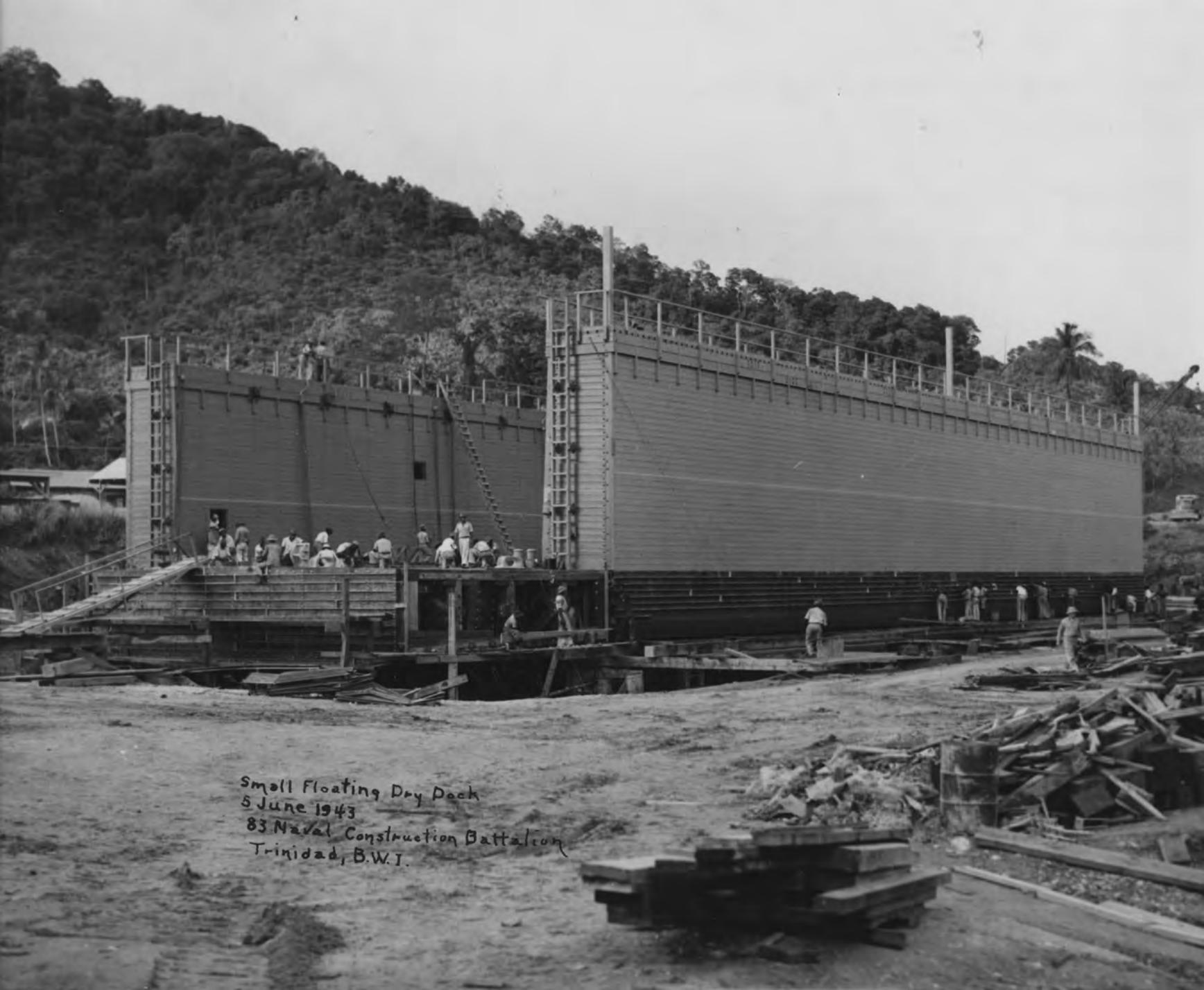
SEABEES











Small Floating Dry Dock
5 June 1943
83 Naval Construction Battalion
Trinidad, B.W.I.