102nd Naval Construction Battalion

Historical Information

"Construimus, Batuimus"
"We Build, We Fight"

NAVAL HISTORY & HERITAGE COMMAND

102nd C.B.

NCTC - Peary
ABD - Hueneme
Ready Date - 5 Jan'44
Left ABD - 21 Feb'44
Location - ~~Milne-Bay~~ ~~Finschafen~~ ~~Hollandia~~
Subic Bay

LOG

8-17-43 - Budocks requests transfer of 102nd CB from Davisville on 21 Aug'43 to Parks. (Budocks ltr to CNO 17 Aug'43)

10-15-43 - CNO orders transfer of 102nd CB about 19 Oct. to Hueneme. Assigned Acorn 18. (Conf. Disp. 141581 NCR 8231 from CNO to Parks)

2-25-44 - 102nd CB departed for EDUR 21 Feb'44. (AES)

5-11-44 - 1 Apr'44 report of 102nd CB - Was enroute to Milne Bay and Finschafen from 21 Feb'44 to 24 Mar'44.

6-28-44 - 102nd is enroute to Hollandia as of 31 May'44. (Comservfor7flt Sec. ltr. A-2 over Ser BP-001407 to Dirpacdocks dtd 8 Jun'44)

8- 5-44 - 1 May'44 report of 102nd CB - Staging at Finschafen for forward move. According to the report which was dated 28 Jun'44 they are at Hollandia as of this date. ((1st end. by 24th Reg. dtd 28 Jun'44)

8- 9-44 - 102nd CB May-June'44 report of 102nd CB - operations at Finschafen secured 4 May for sailing to Hollandia on 17 May'44. Delayed with no equipment available at Finschafen until 10 Jun'44. Completed unloading at Hollandia 29 Jun'44.

9-13-44 - 1 Aug'44 report of 102nd CB - operating at Hollandia.

10-21-44 - 1 Sep'44 report of 102nd CB - operating at Hollandia. Report endorsed by 24th Reg.

102nd C.B.

11-8-44 - 102nd CB is in the 24th Reg. and is located at Hollandia. (Comserfor7flt Sec. ltr A9-4 over Ser BP-001882 to Budocks dtd 12 Oct'44 monthly report for Sep'44)

11-29-44 - 102nd CB located at Hollandia. (Comserv7flt Sec. Disp. to CNO 150133 NCR 18921 dtd 24 Nov'44)

12-28-44 - The 102nd CB is located at Hollandia with the 24th Reg.(Comserfor7flt Sec. report for Oct'44 dtd 20 Nov'44).

12-29-44 - 1 Oct'44 report of the 102nd CB - located at Hollandia. Report endorsed by 24th Regiment.

1-10-45 - 1 Nov'44 report of the 24th Reg. - 113 seamen assigned to the 102nd CB. This batt as of 1 Nov being reoutfitted in anticipation of forward movement.

1-13-45 - 102nd CB located at Hollandia and is in the 24th Regiment. (Comserfor7flt Sec report for Nov'44 dtd 15 Dec'44)

1-17-45 - 1 Nov'44 report of the 102nd CB - located at Hollandia. Report endorsed by the 24th Regiment.

1-27-45 - 1 Dec'44 report of the 102nd CB - located at Hollandia. Report endorsed by the 24th Reg.

2- 9-45 - Upon arrival of transportation the 102nd CB hereby detached to proceed and report to CO NABU 6 at MICL 7 for duty. The 102nd CB detachment now at Tolosa will be lifted enroute. This detachment hereby detached CNAB Leyte upon arrival transportation and directed to report to the CinC 102nd CB. (Comserv7flt Sec Disp to CNB Hollandia and Leyte dtd 5 Feb'45 - 030409)

2-13-45 - The 102nd CB is assigned to Samar.(CNO Sec. ltr to distribution list Ser. 0039289 dtd 3 Feb'45).

102nd CB

2-15-45 - Comserfor7flt Sec. ltr Ser. 00101 to ChCarp.F.C. Smith(102nd CB) dtd 29 Jan'45 - Ordered to assume duties as OinC of a Const. Det. to be known temp. as "Const. Batt. Dredge Operating Detachment". A request has been made to CNO for a number. This unit will operate under the 3rd Brg. This unit formed from officers and men of several CB units now on temp. duty status with D. YORK SYME (Dredge). When transportation is available to report to NAB Leyte Gulf for duty with 12th Reg.

2-22-45 - The above unit designated as CBD 1082.(CNO conf. ltr Ser. 060230 dtd 10 Feb'45 to Comservpac).

3-1-45 - The 102nd CB sailed from Hollandia on 18 Feb'45. (OinC ltr 102NCB/A9-4 over Ser 408 over JFH/feb dtd 18 Feb'45 to Bupers)

3-8-45 -- According to Dirpacdocks San Fran 15 Feb'45 report the 102nd CB is located at Luzon.

3-22-45 - 1 Jan'45 report of the 102nd CB - located at Hollandia as of 1 Jan.

3-30-45 - 1 Jan'45 report of the 24th Reg. - 50 men of the 102nd CB on det. duty aboard Suction Dredge D. York Syme. 19 men with a Pont. Det. of 302nd CB. 6 men on det. duty with Lbr Prod. Unit. Total of 75 men on det. duty. Rec'd a draft of 25 replacements. Comserfor7flt states that the personnel serving on the dredge are being detached from the Batt.

3-30-45 -1 Feb'45 report of the 102nd CB - has been ordered to Subic Bay, Luzon.

3-31-45 -1 Feb'45 report of the 24th Reg. - Following dets. on detached duty (of 102nd CB): 48 men at MIKE-3, 173 men at Leyte, 50 men with Dredge York Syme, 19 men with Pont. Det. of 302nd CB--total of 291 men and 11 off. on det. duty.

4- 4-45- This cancels any previous orders issued 102nd CB Det. at Tolosa. The 102nd CB Det. herdet to proceed and report with gear and equip. to CNSB Lingayen for duty. (Comserv7flt Sec Disp 271329 dtd 28 Mar to CNOB Leyte)

4-10-45 - The 102nd CB 1st Sec. is located at Subic. The 2nd Sec. is located at Clark Field with Acorn 34. Proposed to be transferred to Subic 1 Jul'45.(Com7flt Sec. disp to Cominch 250756 Mar'45).

Location - Subic Bay 102nd C.B.

4-10-45 - Com7flt Sec. disp to Cominch 300346 Mar'45 - Correct my 250756 Mar'45 - The proposed location of the 2nd Sec. of the 102nd CB is Lingayen.

4-11-45 - This cancels Comserfor7flt Spdltr BP-00111 of 2 Mar. Upon arrival of transp. the Det. of 102nd CB now at Tolosa, consisting of 5 off. and 170 men, detached presently assigned duties. Prorep CNSB Lingayen for operational duty. Upon arrival report by ltr to OinC 102nd CB Subic for adm purposes. (Comserfor7flt Sec Spdltr P16-5 over Ser BP-00209 to OinC 102nd CB Det. Tolosa dtd 30 Mar'45.)

4-20-45 - OinC 102nd C^{D} ltr to ChBuPers 102NCB/P16-2 Serial 450 DC/feb dated 7 Mar'45 states that 102nd CB sailed from Hollandia on 18 Feb'45, and is now located at Subic Bay.

4-30-45 - 1 Apr'45 report 102nd CB - 102nd C^{D} arrived Subic Bay 28 Feb'45. Report end. by 24th Reg.

4-30-45 - Comserfor7flt Sec Rep of 1 Apr'45 shows 1/2 of 102nd CB at Clark Field, Manila (to build Acorn 34) and 1/2 at Subic Bay. Detach at Lingayen Gulf enroute Subic.

5- 1-45 - 1 Apr'45 report of the 24th Reg. - 4/5 of the 102nd CB left Hollandia with the 24th Reg. on 19 Feb and arrived Subic Bay on 28 Feb'45. Set up camp at the site of the Submarine Base at Meritan Pt. 1/2 batt assigned to const of Submarine Base; 1 Co construction of road from Olangapo to Cubi Pt.; remaing men of the batt are at Tolosa.

5- 8-45 - The 102nd CB is located at Subic Bay assigned NABU 6. Detachment at Singayen, N.P. (Dirpacdocks S.F. Sec Rep of 15 Apr'45)

5-21-45 - 1 Mar'45 report of 24th Reg - 102nd CB was alerted fr forward movement on 7 Feb'45 & departed from Hollandia on 19 Feb'45 arriving at Subic Bay on 1 Mar'45. 113th & 119th CBs to complete work previously assigned 102nd CB at Hollandia.

Location - Olongapo & Subic Bay San Fernando — 102nd C.B.

5-21-45 - 1 May'45 report of the 102nd CB - located at Subic Bay. "B" Co, consisting of 6 off. and 174 men, are on temp duty at San Fernando, La Union Province, Luzon, where they arrived on 22 Apr'45. Report end. by 24th Reg.

6-1-45 - 1 Mar'45 report of the 102nd CB - located at Subic Bay, as of 1 Mar'45. On 5 Feb'45 the 102nd CB was alerted for forward movement & embarked from Hollandia on 18 Feb'45 & arrived at Subic Bay on 28 Feb'45. Report end. by 24th Reg.

6-13-45 - Dirpacdocks SF sec rep of 15 May shows the 102nd CB located at Subic Bay with a detachment at Lingayen.

6-15-45 - 1 Jun'45 report of the 102nd CB - located at Subic Bay. "B" Co of this Batt, 172 men with 6 off., is still at San Fernando, LaUnion, Luzon Is. for the constr of a Section Base. Report via 24th Reg and 3rd Brg.

7-20-45 - 1 Jul'45 report of the 102nd CB - located at Subic Bay. "B" Co, 165 men and 4 off., still at San Fernando, La Union, Luzon Is. for the constr of a SecBase. 35 men transfd for discharge. Report via 24th Reg and 3rd Brg.

7-24-45 - 1 Jul'45 report of the 24th Reg states that the on board complement of the 102nd CB is 853 men including the det "B" still located at San Fernando, Luzon, and 687 men at Subic Bay. 35 men over 42 years of age were returned to the U.S. during Jun.

7-27-45 - The 102nd CB is attached to the 24th Reg and 3rd Brg. Located at Subic Bay, Luzon; 4/5 of the Batt is constructing submarine base and amph training center. A detachment of 5 off. and 170 men of the Batt are constructing the Section Base at San Fernando, Lingayen. (CCT 7th Flt Sec Rep for June)

8-18-45 - 1 Aug'45 report of the 3rd Brig states that the 102nd CB is working at the AmphTraBase in Subic Bay area and is attached to the 24th Reg & 3rd Brig.

Location - Subic Bay; San Fernando — 102nd C.B.

8-20445 - 1 Aug'45 report of the 102nd CB - located at Subic Bay. 4 off. and 156 men on detached duty at San Fernando, Luzon for the construction of a Section Base. Report via the 24th Reg and 3rd Brg.

10-1-45 - 1 Sept'45 report of 102nd CB - located not stated. Report via 24th Reg. & 3rd Brig "B" Co. of 102nd CB with 122 men & 3 off is still at San Fernando, La Union, Luzon Is.

10-18-45 - 1 Oct'45 report of 102nd CB - location not stated. Report via 24th Reg. & 3rd Brig 74 men rec'd from the 11th CB. 209 men from the 118th CB are on TAD with 102nd CB. Also 8 from Naval Base, Subic Bay. 1 off. & 10 men are still at San Fernando, La Union.

12-7-45 - Comservpac reqs Comphilseafron to inactivate 102nd CB. (Comservpac restr disp 060115 Dec'45 to Comphilseafron).

12-17-45 - 1 Dec'45 report of 3rd Brig. states that the 102nd CB will have been inactivated by 7 Dec'45.

1-5-46 - 102nd CB reported inactivated since 20 Dec'45. (Comservpac, Pearl disp 022103 Jan'46 to BuPers).

1-11-46 - 1 Dec'45 report of 102nd CB - location not stated. Report via 24th Reg. & 3rd Brg. Unit in process of inactivation.

3-7-46 - DirWestPacDocks conf. CB report of 10 Feb 46 states final inactivation date of 102nd CB is 7 Dec 45.

INACTIVATED

DATE	ON BOARD OFFICERS	ON BOARD MEN	AUTHORITY
1 Jul'44	32	1028	R & Recap.
1 Aug'44	32	1012	MoR
1 Sep'44	32	1002	MoR
30 Sep'44		982	Recap
1 Oct'44	31	982	MoR
1 Nov'44	31	970	MoR
1 Dec'44	31	965	MoR
31 Dec'44		971	Recap.
1 Jan'45	33	971	MoR
1 Feb'45	32	964	MoR
1 Mar'45	30	920	MoR
1 Apr'45	30	908	MoR
1 May'45	31	907	MoR
1 Jun'45	29	898	BNP625 & R
1 Jul'45	30	853	BNP625 & R
1 Aug'45		827	BNP625 & R
1 Sept'45	24	790	BNP625 & R
1 Oct'45	22	574	BNP625 & R
1 Nov'45	16	675	BNP625 & R

102nd Construction Battalion (INACTIVATED)

102nd C.B. Page 2

DECLASSIFIED

Date	Organization	Location	Reference	Remarks
2/5	-	(MICL-7) (Subic Bay.)	Connected Cos 9 & Comsenwrch jet sec. 030409 feb.	Report NAB-bat MICL-7 for duty. det. at Tolosa will be lifted en-route, this detachment det'd Leyte shelf & report to 102 N.B. Leyn requested for 10 feb. at Hollandia.
3/28	-	-	Comsenwrch jet sec. 271329 Mar.	Cancels any previous orders issued 102 det at Tolosa. det to Rep to CNeB Lingayen.
3/29	-	1st sec. * Subic Bay (Nav Base) 2nd sec Lingayen (Nav Sec Base)	Comsenwrch jet sec. 260558 Mar	* present location & assignment.
3/31	-	-	Comwrch jet sec 300346 Mar	proposed location second sec. Lingayen

[illegible] Subic Bay

DECLASSIFIED

Date	Organization	Location	Reference	Remarks
6/3/44	-	Milne Bay. Finschhafen	-	Left U.S. Feb. 1944.
7/19	-	Hollandia	C.B. report 1 July.	
9/5	-	} WROM (Finschhafen) N.G. } TRIM	Comsenwrch jet sec act disp. 110844 July. Comsenwrch jet sec act disp 090824 Aug.	add to 110844
11/25	-	Trim	Comsenwrch jet sec act disp. nos. 150133.	
1/3	-	[illegible]		
3/3	-	-		

HISTORY OF THE BATTALION

While the nation rushed toward frantic preparations for all-out war and the start of the push to drive back the little yellow men who had swarmed over the islands of the South Pacific, at Camp Peary, in the hills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, over a thousand enlisted men fresh from the comforts of civilian life, tried to adjust themselves to military rigors. You and I were among those men that daily pounded the sun-baked gravel of the drill field, trying to sweat out the softness . . . this was "boot training."

We were as green as the surrounding countryside, but gradually hardened until we emerged as a well-synchronized efficient organization capable of carrying on the well-deserved and hard-won standards that form the tradition of the Seabees.

Every state in the Union contributed its share of members, from the wintery Dakotas to the gentle southern warmth of Florida—wherever Americans lived. Our past record was one of achievement. We were the men who had built the great engineering wonders: Boulder Dam, TVA, San Francisco-Oakland Bridge; the ones who had worked in the great steel mills of Gary and Youngstown and the modern scientific laboratories of the gigantic factories of our eastern cities . . . a huge collection of skills poured into one organization.

Men like Bill Kennedy, who helped install the great government-owned Radar station at Point Barrow; Johnny Brophy, whose lay-out abilities planned many of the power plants for General Motors; Bill Baisor, who worked in a diving suit under the blue waters of the Carribean Sea; Ollie Olson, a master at earth-moving and capable of estimating the cubic yards in a hill-side at a glance; Connie Peters, skilled at unloading the bowels of a Liberty ship . . . those listed here are but a few of many, but they give a cross-section of the men of the 102nd Battalion as it was formed at Camp Peary.

After our formation our stay at Camp Peary as a battalion was short, and within a few days we left for Camp Endicott with a muster of twenty-nine officers, thirty-seven chiefs, and one thousand and five men.

Lt. Commander John F. Halpin was in command as Skipper, with Lt. Commander William A. Niebuhr as Executive Officer. Both had had wide experience in construction work and in handling men.

The trip to Camp Endicott started on July 12th. Arriving there the following morning we unpacked our personal gear in the "J" area barracks. By now we were acquainted, and after a day of squaring away, entered into a four-week period that covered both military and technical training, designed to knock off the rough edges and polish us off as an outfit ready for overseas service.

Men were selected for schooling in pontoon assembling, the secrets of Navy communications, the art of small boat handling, deep sea diving, water purification, camouflage, and many of the other requirements essential to the security of a battalion in the field. Others spent their time unraveling the mysteries of modern warfare: learning how to use the mortar, hand grenades, machine guns, weapons of chemical warfare, and also, of course, close-order drill.

Camp Endicott had its lighter side as well, with pleasant recreation halls that included a theater, billiards, bowling, a beer hall, and a ship store, whose stock included everything from a safety-pin to a diamond ring. Another phase of our life here was the more liberal liberty set-up, which, after the confinement of Camp Peary, helped make the Navy more pleasant. Twelve-hour passes every fourth night gave the men an opportunity to see the surrounding towns and accept the hospitality and entertainment offered. Towns that were remembered were Providence, East Greenwich, Pawtucket, and Boston, along with many others. Thirty-six-hour passes came once a month, permitting many who lived on the east coast to spend a few hours with the folks at home.

Gate Four, with its guest house, was another attraction that permitted married men a few hours each night with their wives.

On July 24th, the battalion marched to Sun Valley, a barren, sun-drenched camp of Quonset huts situated on the road to East Greenwich, where

we were to learn to shoot the carbine on the one-hundred and the two-hundred-yard range. We stayed here for one week, during which time we devoted half the day to the range and the other half to clearing the brush for space for the future expansion of the camp.

The high scores for the week were racked up by Chief W. C. Traylor and C. L. Sorrell, with scores of 178 out of a possible 200. On the lighter side, a smoker was presented to them by members of the battalion, with such top-notchers as Nick Ferrara, Jerry Angle, Charley Haddon, "Red" Ahlberg, and W. Minear, as well as little Mike Marino, doing the honors. Commander Halpin, talking with the boys for the first time, explained the objectives and problems of the battalion in the future.

Official liberties were banned, but with our own guards on duty, it was easy to jump the three-strand fence and take off over the fields to the nearest tavern, then to be returned by an escort of the Shore Patrol.

The unrest caused by the approaching ten-day leave, which was to begin on August 8th, was making itself felt, and everyone found it hard to concentrate on the matters at hand. Plans for the leave, through letters to home, poured from the Post Office out to the civilian world. The Personnel Department made the necessary transportation arrangement, and eased the red tape by having the train go directly from Camp to New York City, facilitating connections for all parts of the country. We all remember the ride into the Big City, with the singing and humor of men going home, for in many cases, it was the first trip back since leaving for boot camp.

Of their own choice, men living on the west coast remained in camp, planning to take their leave after the battalion had moved to California. Lt. A. Pruit was left in charge of these men.

Back in camp after the embarkation leave, we were found preparing for Commissioning Day, our formal debut as a battalion. We cared for our personal attire with attention to the most minute detail, and then waited for the word "go." On the afternoon of August 19th we marched out upon the drill field of Camp Endicott and came to battalion formation. The day was hot and the sun shone bright, giving our uniforms an extra whiteness as we stood at attention while Rear Admiral David Whitman, of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, made the commissioning address. Then followed the presentations of colors by Mrs. John F. Halpin, wife of our Skipper. At the command of "battalion pass in review," we paraded before the honored guest giving a snappy "eyes right" as we passed the reviewing stand.

Following the review, we were notified that we would move to the west coast on the following day; and hereafter our address would be Fleet Post Office, San Francisco. Scuttlebutt had it that we were headed for Camp Parks, Pleasanton, California.

Leaving on the afternoon of August 21st, we boarded Pullmans for the west, traveling in three different sections and over different routes. The trip across the country tremendously stimulated the men and gave many a chance to see their home states as we roared through. The five days were spent in writing letters, explaining the sights we were seeing, and watching the interesting countryside. New York displayed its acres of truck farms; the middle-west showed us fields of golden wheat; Nebraska's corn waved as far as the eye could see; vast waste lands of Utah were covered with the famous tumbling weed; the Royal Gorge unrolled its picturesque scenery before us. Others played cards and ducked the cash when an officer came through, faithfully assuring him that they were not playing for money. And, of course, we can't forget the comfortable bunks that the porters made up for us each night.

Rolling into California on August 26th, we had our first look at Camp Parks with its two-story barracks of native redwood. Here we found a camp comparatively new, with many of its planned facilities still incomplete. It was to be our home for the next eight weeks.

Immediately upon reaching our barracks, the men of the west coast were issued papers for their ten-day leave, and no time was lost getting them off. They had waited a long time for this moment and we were all glad to see them on their way.

Training here at Camp Parks was a continuation of that at Camp Endicott, but perhaps in a more advanced stage. Tremendous progress was made in turning the outfit into a finished organization. The rigid daily inspection of barracks was continued, with the inauguration of early morning PT before heading for the morning chow. After breakfast, we fell in at 0800 for muster, then marched to the drill field for colors. A turn around the commando course followed, with lectures on military matters or extended orders to wind up the morning. After noon chow, a hike or a few hours of close-order drill kept us on our toes for the afternoon. The hikes that started at the two-mile mark soon grew to the twelve-mile stage, finally winding up with the forty-two mile trek to the top of Mt. Diablo, where we spent three days

learning how to set up and live under field conditions.

This particular hike was one of the milestones of the battalion's career and long remembered by all as the most grueling event of the entire training program, made with full packs and victory rifles, which became heavier as the miles slowly trudged by and the hard surfaced road became even harder under foot. The start had been made before the sun was up, and the trek was pleasant in the cool of the morning but faded into a trudging drudgery as the heat of the day sapped the vim from our bodies. Climbing the steep road that wound to the crest, men dropped out repeatedly, finally setting their own gait until the concrete ribbon seemed to crawl with struggling Seabees. The meat wagon patroled the way, but their well-intended advice seemed little help. A few cases of badly blistered feet were permitted to ride.

Men such as "Moose" Masencup and "Wrist" Sausville set the pace and led the rest, reaching the camp site first, accompanied by Lt. Ponzo. As the afternoon wore on, others straggled in, completing the first half of the hike. Struggling with the mysteries of a pup tent, the bivouac was set up and K-rations were distributed for the evening meal. A perimeter was set up by our guards and orders were issued that no one was to be permitted to enter or leave the area. Protecting ourselves from possible outside force was part of the maneuver. Station force men—and especially the Judo team—were considered the opposition force, with plans to make our stay as unpleasant as possible, and in the case of "A" and "B" companies, they were able to stage a bit of strategy that resulted in the capture of Lt. Reagan. It came about this way.

Just after the evening meal and before darkness had set in, a private car of the park ranger drove slowly up the hill road and stopped on the orders of "halt" from our guard. At the wheel sat the pretty young wife of the park official and she insisted upon seeing an officer; Lt. Reagan was nearby and approached the car. With few formalities, she proceeded to release her wrath upon him concerning the behavior and conduct of his men.

It seemed from her story that a group of Seabees had invaded her residence and taken over, making the property unsafe for sane people, and as her husband was not at home, would he please do something about the situation?

"Of course, madam," Mr. Reagan replied. Then, brushing aside the warning that it was a trap, he jumped into the car and disappeared down the road to the scene of the disturbance.

By now the shadows had lengthened, and it was growing quite dark as the car reached the house. Instead of a group of playful Seabees swarming the grounds, the scene was one of complete tranquility. Although the windshield of a weapon-carrier parked across the road reflected the rays of the single light outside, he failed to notice the vehicle.

Alighting from the car, Mr. Reagan officially surveyed the area and was about to speak to his hostess, when suddenly from the surrounding shadows, bedlam broke loose. Hands grabbed him from every direction. Struggling as well as he could under the circumstances, the combined weight of the four judo men was more than he could cope with, and he was soon borne to the ground. In the scuffle, his nose was badly bruised and his left eye partially closed. Tying the Lieutenant securely, they tossed him into the weapon carrier face down and bounced him most disrespectfully in the twenty-two miles back to camp, depositing him in the brig to spend the balance of the night.

Quoting the Lieutenant's own description of the event, "I never came so near dying, and didn't."

Camp life wallowed into a routine with no definite program of training, as it seemed we had exhausted the established schedule, and it was now a question of keeping the men busy until further plans could be made.

In the meantime, liberty was still on schedule every fourth night off, and we found entertainment plentiful in such places as San Francisco, Oakland, Hayworth, Walnut Creek, San Jose, Livermore, Santa Cruz, and Sacramento.

The "1830 Club" was established by Mr. Ponzo for minor infractions and was well attended nightly on the drill field behind the brig. The first summary court-martials, as well as the battalion's newspaper, were established, an art department was started for the manufacture of the color placques designed by P. A. Delaney and carved on wood by N. Clayton. Later, these were turned over to Chief T. Wearing to be worked out by silk-screen process, with the assistance of A. Florio and J. Lang. The soft-ball team was rounded out into a smooth running organization which, under the able management of Johnny Zullo, defeated all comers.

Changes were made in the Officer personnel, with the recall to Camp Peary of Lt. (j.g.) E. Ray, Lt. Andrews, and Lt. Davis; Ensign A. Schaffer and Warrant Officers Schwab, Budd, A. Canivan, and E. Stayman, replaced them. Lt. O. O. Ediger as-

sumed command of "D" company, and Lt. (j.g.) D. Cohen took over Headquarters' Company.

The final weeks at Camp Parks found us building cottages for station force personnel, erecting large warehouses, as well as taking on the midnight shift of a major earth-moving project. The performance of the 102nd on these first few efforts spoke well for all men assigned to the details, as it had been some time since they had had the feel of their tools.

* * *

The endless rumors and scuttlebutt of the past week finally culminated in orders to pack our bags and prepare to move to Camp Rosseau, Hueneme. Leaving on the afternoon of October 19th, we headed for Southern California and for what turned out to be the last of the training camps for the 102nd Battalion. Many wives and friends watched us march to the train, and gave us a cheery good-bye, planning to join us at our new camp.

It was damp and rainy the next morning when our train pulled into Camp Rosseau just before noon, just the kind of day California never brags about, and as, clad in wet dress blues, we carried our seabags, we looked about in vain for the sunny climate we had read about. However, we trudged through the puddles till we found our section of the camp. It was a cluster of Quonset huts accommodating twelve men each, with Army cots as bunks. After the confinement of barracks life, this was a novelty and a pleasure, with only a dozen men to contend with instead of two hundred and fifty. The outlook was cozy.

In spite of our many weeks of past training, we found that we still had more to learn and jumped into the advance schooling with the same spirit we'd evidenced in other camps. Many of the subjects were the same as at Parks and Endicott, but staged under more warlike conditions. In addition, a short distance away were the five great docks where the ten-thousand-ton Liberty ships were loaded with materials and equipment for embarking battalions, and this gave a more realistic aspect to the situation, making you realize that this was the jumping-off spot where they played for keeps!

These docks held a great attraction for the men, and despite the fact that the station force carefully guarded the approaches, the boys still found ways to elude them, and roamed among the stevedores or even aboard the ships to exchange yarns with the merchant marines.

The big story here was a thousand stories—some columns long, some a few sentences. The date lines were legion. The basic subject matter was monotonously unvaried . . . The "Golden Era" of the battalion. With Hollywood, the Mecca of the entertainment world, only sixty miles away, nothing better could have absorbed the interest of the men. It was like a shot in the arm! The city could be reached on a twelve-hour liberty, via the special Greyhound busses that left from in front of the theater nightly.

Remember the Hollywood Canteen with its array of glamorous stars from the movie colony, name bands with their great music, and radio celebrities from the big networks? All of it was part of a vast system of entertainment that could only be staged in a place like Hollywood, with its exciting Hollywood and Vine, and modernistic N.B.C. studios which separate stages opening on to the patio that overlooked Sunset Boulevard. And then there was the Palladium, just a short distance down the Boulevard, where a fellow like Willie Bauer could dance with Ruth Hussey, while Frenchy Arcement made love-sick eyes at Betty Grable, and Moose Angle danced with a beautiful creature only to find later, after he had thanked her and departed, that she was Carol Landis.

This desire for entertainment wasn't limited to hours away from camp, but brought many stars and their shows to our own theaters. Bob Hope and his entire company, with Veronica Lake as guest star, broadcast from "A" theater. Other well-known stars from time to time endeavored to do what they could to "blow the blues" away.

Besides the nightly forays on Hollywood, other cities and towns came in for their share of 102nd's attendance: Santa Paula . . . Camarillo . . . Ocean Park . . . Beverly Hills . . . Santa Barbara . . . Pasadena . . . Burbank . . . Santa Monica . . . Huntington Park . . . Glendora . . . Long Beach, and of course, well-known Oxnard and Ventura, where many of the married men maintained apartments for their wives.

Saturday morning was usually devoted to Captain's inspection, and we spent the time right after morning chow slinging a mop, shining shoes, and cleaning pieces for the competitive drills that followed battalion inspection by the Skipper. To the lucky platoon that won went an extra week-end liberty, and it goes without saying that the competition was keen.

Another memorable event of the training routine was the night that station-force called the battalion out around midnight to march to the area behind the testing grounds to the positions along the waterfront, in defense against a possible invading force. The suddenness of the call caused many, especially those just in from liberty, to grab

clothes that were handiest. Consequently, many of us wore low shoes and light socks and nearly froze, slushing through the wet mud and sand of the beach. The tempers of the men that night were such that a real foe storming the beach would have met a mighty mad bunch of Seabees.

Twenty enlisted men, with Lt. H. H. Williams, Carpenters O. W. Hole, G. H. Scott, and H. E. Stayman, were sent to San Diego for anti-aircraft training, and combined pleasure with work at that famous base. They were housed in one of the remaining San Diego Exposition buildings that the Navy had taken over for barracks. Liberty was every night, and the only thing needed to get by the gate was an ID card.

When the first word reached camp of the appalling forest fire that had swept through the picturesque Laurel Canyon north of Hollywood destroying many homes and ranches, a volunteer detail of two hundred and fifty men under Lt. A. Pruit answered the call to help stop the inferno. Rushed by Navy trucks to the scene of the flaming disaster, which by now was racing with lightning speed toward the coast, our men, side by side with soldiers from local Army units, fought the blaze for thirty-six hours, accepting relief only after complete physical exhaustion. After a few hours of sleep, they were ready to return to battle when word came that the fire was under control.

Another milestone in the history of the Battalion was our debut into the movies, when we acted as background material during the filming of the "Fighting Seabees," the Republic Picture that starred John Wayne and Susan Hayworth. We also contributed to the scene showing "boots" in training, and although our band was the only unit shown in the close-ups, still the 102nd was in there doing its bit, under a hot sun, on the greensward of the Oxnard High School gridiron. We decided that making movies was not much fun, especially on a diet of one "hot dog" and one bottle of soda.

In the midst of the great volume of camp activities, we were ordered to move to Splinter City, an area separate from the main camp and used to house battalions about to be shipped out. Living conditions there were somewhat crowded, but that was

overlooked in view of the fact that the liberty schedule became more liberal. We enjoyed every other night off, with week-ends every other week, and, with our own guards on the only gate that led into the outside world, it was a simple matter to spread the schedule to include every night. This was to the married men a veritable Utopia, giving them the opportunity to enjoy some home life. Of course, needless to say, not only the men with wives took advantage of this situation. This freedom, coupled with the endless seeking for amusement, made itself seriously felt around the region of the pocket-book; consequently, financial assistance was solicited by way of wires to those at home—a throwback to the old "college try."

Scuttlebut was gathering that we had been assigned to Acorn 18 and would soon be on our way, but in the meantime, the training program continued, now under the Battalion's direction rather than station-force, as in the past. Classes were held in semaphore and small boat handling by Mr. P. Smith, while Mr. Budd took over the pontoon men and put them through the actual operations that were expected on Island "X." Study of communications was continued, with practice on blinkers and radio code. At about the same time the battalion's dance band was organized and daily struggled with the complicated arrangements of Wayne Hinkle, under the direction of Mr. Ponzo, playing nightly for dancers on an extended itinerary that was culminated by an engagement at the Hollywood Canteen.

Training trips were taken aboard the station-force LST to practice loading and unloading these amphibious ships in the heavy surf off Megu. Combined with the activities of the pontoon men, they gave us a chance to see how it was done under conditions similar to the "real thing." Heavy equipment men under Mr. Pruit and Mr. Stayman used and checked the materials and machinery that we were to use in the field. Trucks were examined. Extra checks on GI equipment and gear were held by company officers so that every man was properly equipped. Nothing was overlooked, and still no orders came concerning our leaving.

As Thanksgiving Day passed and the year of 1943 raced to a close, it definitely looked as though we would spend Christmas in the States. Training was waning and those not on school or work details were kept busy pounding the asphalt of the drill field. Our equipment ship was being loaded, and it finally sailed from dock four late in December with men from the heavy equipment department aboard under Lt. Missner, to be met at Island "X" at some later date. A special draft of pontoon men under Carp. Budd was formed and affectionately christened the "Super Sixty," shipping out just before the year ended and spending the holidays on the high seas. This group later distinguished themselves in the invasions of the Admiralty Islands, Guam, and Saipan, as well as Leyte and Lingayen Gulf, and we were all proud of the fact that they were at one time members of the 102nd Battalion.

Our own transportation to Hollywood and Los Angeles was arranged through the efforts of Chaplain Williams, and left from the main gate that opened into the town of Hollywood-by-the-Sea, returning at 0430 in the morning from the corner in front of the NBC studios and making the trip in time for the morning chow and the deadline of 0700. This gave you time to eat, change from dress "blues" and answer muster with a sleepy "here."

On Christmas Day, the men were permitted to invite their wives or friends to the ample feast that the Commissary Department prepared under the supervision of Chief Leo Duprey, aided by Chief Arthur Fishman. Walt Slater and his gang of bakers excelled themselves on the tempting pastries, and candy and cigarettes were distributed through the courtesy of Ship's Store. Men with no relations nearby took over the duties for the day so that those who had their wives close by could spend the day with their loved ones.

Shortly after the beginning of the year came the disappointing news that we were to return to the main area of the camp. We were beginning to think by now that the powers-to-be were plotting against sending us out, and we once more returned to the more comfortable living of Quonset huts. Of course, the liberty schedule reverted back to the old set-up with twelve-hour passes every fourth night and week-ends once a month. Some extra liberties were granted to married men, while unofficial ones were taken via the fence, much to the discomfort of guards from the 99th Battalion who patrolled this particular area.

Speaking of liberties by way of the fence recalls the night that Bud Manges had a very important engagement in Ventura. At least, it was important to Bud, but no amount of pleading to the front office could secure liberty for that night. Naturally, the only recourse left was to take to the fence. After discussing the possibilities with the nearby guard, he scaled the fence. Safely outside, he proceeded to thumb the first car that appeared. After several had passed him by, one stopped. Bud dashed for it only to find out too late that it was the Shore Patrol. Of course, as a rule, the Shore Patrol is not particularly interested in any angle

of personal engagements, especially when the Seabee in question has no pass to justify his being off the base, and so they proceeded to return Bud to his outfit, depositing him at the OOD's office.

As no charges were lodged, he was permitted to go, and Bud immediately proceeded to the same guard, who was, needless to say, very surprised to see him. For the second time, Bud hopped the fence and, using more caution than before, started to walk, taking no chances on thumbing. Getting some distance down the road, he breathed more easily, but before very much longer, the same car pulled up alongside with the same four SP's. Very unhappy about Bud's complete disregard for their authority, they again packed him into the vehicle and returned to camp—the next time they found him outside, it would be the brig for Bud.

The station-force never seemed to learn that the 102nd had little fear of the brig, and a short time later Bud again approached the same guard, who, by now, thought he was seeing things as he watched Bud scale the fence for the third time. But this time the Shore Patrol were not taking any chances and had posted one of their members in the darkness to wait for our hero. The end of the story was that Bud never kept his engagement, but instead remained a guest of Jack Love for the balance of the night.

* * *

The tempo of events slowed somewhat after our return to Camp Rosseau, with military matters somewhat dropped for construction work, as we erected large Quonset warehouses for the Camp, and furnished men for the famous "lumber-pile detail" under Lt. A. Schaffer. Other details under Mr. Canivan worked on the supplies coming to the docks from factories the country over. Work that was started on the placques at Camp Parks was continued and they were distributed to the men for mailing home. Other details were assigned to public works, paint shop, and carpenter shop, while the baseball team continued to swamp all opposition.

Skeptics who had contended that we would never ship out found no consolation in the new trend of "scuttlebutt" that was circulating and gaining force with tremendous rapidity as we entered the month of February. Since there was no evidence to go by, the only explanation was the feeling the men had inside. When meeting a mate in town it was common to hear the question "have we been secured yet?" Our time in the States was getting shorter, and hubbies were seeing wives off for the home towns with sad farewells. Extra personal gear was packed and mailed along with peacoats and other winter gear, as it was definitely known there would be little need for such items on Island "X." The long siege of training and camp life was coming to an end, and the pattern of events pointed to only one possibility — the South Pacific.

Then, on February 18th, came the electrifying news that, at 0700 on the following morning, the battalion was secured for oversea duty. The statement fired the imagination of the men, and overnight the battalion became the focal point for telephone calls, letters, and wires to loved ones, as all last minute details were attended to. The flurry of activity ended the following night with orders to fall out at 2200 with two bags, personal gear, packs, helmets, gas masks and pieces, and be ready to march to the train that would give us our last ride in the States.

A few who were spending the last day on unofficial liberty arrived with only enough time to change clothes before "fall in," but thanks to understanding buddies who had their gear packed and ready for them when they did arrive, they made it before the deadline.

As the clock ticked off the minutes leading to the "big moment," a heavy rain started to fall — the old good luck sign that usually preceded our various moves in the past. Then the trek for the train began. Burdened with our heavy bags, two hands didn't seem to be enough to carry everything, especially with the piece that kept sliding off the shoulder. But everyone else was having the same troubles so you just kept plugging along. The march soon developed into an unorganized struggle to make the train rather than that of a military organization on the move. And, remember when you finally reached there with a sigh of relief only to be told by some officer that your car was the last of the nineteen? Finally we were stowed in our proper cars and could settle back for the overnight ride to San Pedro. Not much time was spent fooling around that night because besides realizing that these were our last days in the States, we were too tired after lugging our gear to do anything but make ourselves comfortable for a little sleep. The only humor on this particular trip came through the group of business-minded boys who had stowed aboard the train several hams and an equal amount of bread with the idea of selling sandwiches to the others. The only reason for the failure of the enterprise was that the two left their stock unguarded for several minutes while they answered a call of nature, and returning, found only a few bread crumbs and a bare ham bone. The satisfying smiles on the faces of the mates in seats across from theirs gave little satisfaction to the pocketbooks of the businessmen.

We arrived the next morning at 0700 and left the train just a short distance from the pier that berthed the West Point. What a sight that ship was the first time we saw it. It was tremendous and seemed to stretch for miles. We "fell in" on the dock near the bow of the transport, still under the burden of our various gear, and slowly moved toward the stern, being checked as we went aboard. Compartment officers took us in hand and hustled us through narrow passages to our bunks. There we stowed our gear and were ordered to remain below until the ship was under way. However, a few managed to sneak to the topsides and watched as tugs towed the mammoth ship into the channel. A gentle rolling told us the moment she reached the open water.

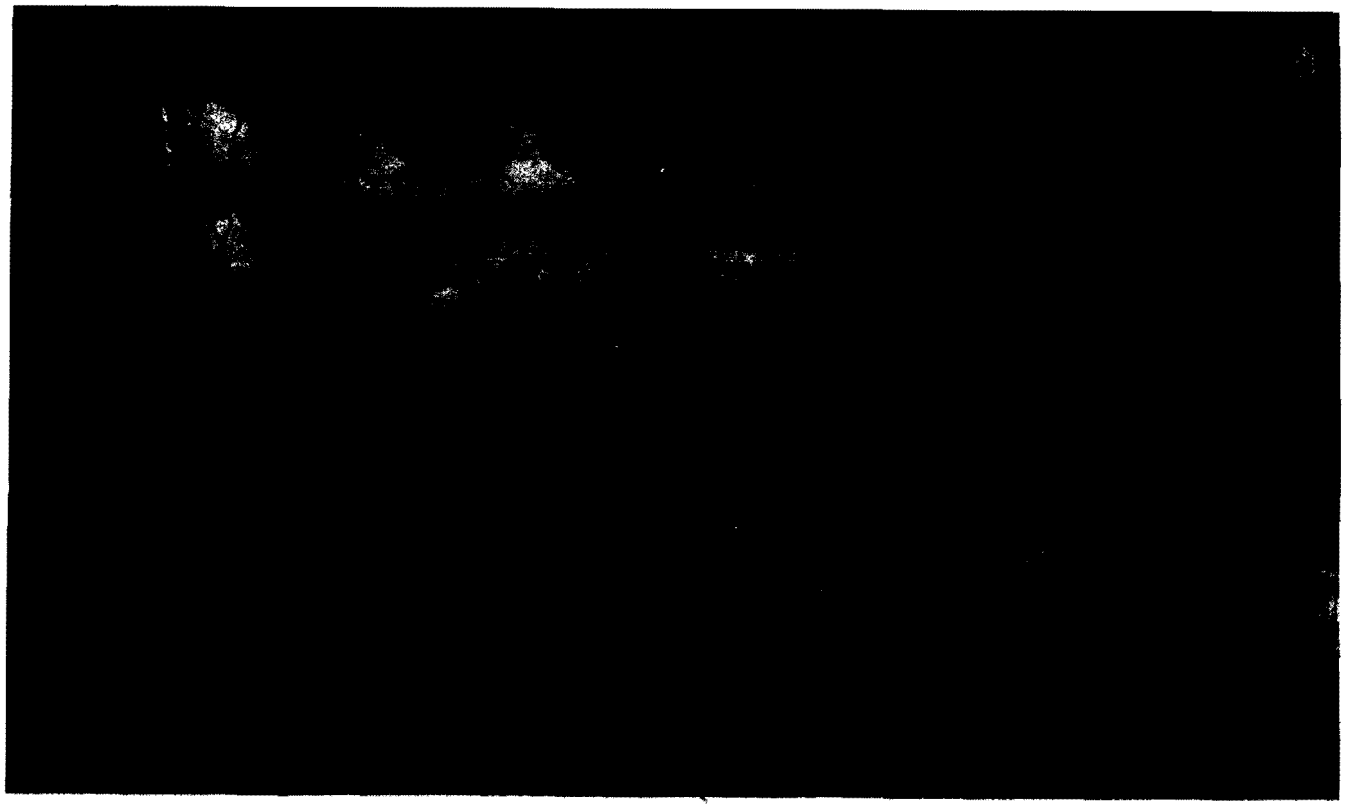
Over ten thousand troops were crammed into the ship for the trip overseas, and among others was Lew Ayres of the popular Dr. Kildare movie series. He looked just like all the rest of us, and in fact had to be pointed out to be recognized. We were permitted to come topsides after the ship left the harbor, and we all had our last look at the United States as it faded astern.

Life aboard ship settled down to routine after the first night, and the day usually started with our fighting the chow line that wound around the many passages before it finally reached the chow hall.

On the walls could be seen decorations and paintings, reminders of brighter days when the West Point had been the U.S.S. America, a luxury liner carrying tourists and honeymooners instead of troops. Only two meals a day were served, but in-between snacks could be secured from the amply stocked ship's store. Ice cream was purchased and distributed daily through a pass furnished by the compartment officer, and if a little ingenuity was used, a member of ship's company would come to the rescue by making purchases for you. In some cases, even members of the large corps of nurses making the voyage were enlisted to use their rank to make purchases. Nothing can keep a Seabee from trying.

Days were spent lying out in the sun, if space could be found, while amateur navigators plotted our course and kept us landlubbers informed on the ship's latest position. Although military security prevented accurate information, it is safe to assume that the course followed a southwesterly line passing close to Palmyria Island and Baker Island, then around the Ellice Islands to Neameria, New Caledonia, which we reached on the morning of March 6th, after a voyage of sixteen days.

During the voyage, entertainment had been presented aboard ship, employing talent drawn from the various outfits aboard. A show was presented each night after chow and before dark. Then, after dark, the rest of the night was spent writing letters or sitting on deck watching a beau-



tiful tropical moon play its tricks with the gentle swells of the Pacific Ocean.

One night, we witnessed the sorrowful sight of a burial at sea after the sudden death of a member of the Marine Corps assigned to ship's company.

After our arrival at Neameria, we stayed long enough to permit a hospital unit to disembark and to have a tanker refuel our ship. Weighing anchor, we continued north the following day to Milne Bay, New Guinea, arriving there on March 10th. No sooner had the anchor been dropped, than we were ordered to prepare to leave ship, and were transferred by LCM's to the Alcoa Patriot.

This ship did not compare in class with the West Point, but it was more roomy and we at least had space to move around. As shipmates we had a BMU outfit that had been aboard for weeks, in fact since shipping out of the United States.

The second day aboard, we had a little human-interest story unfolded before our eyes. Mrs. P. Filer came out from shore where she was stationed as a nurse in the Army hospital to see her husband, our mailman. It had been some time since they had seen one another, and it was a touching sight to see the two meet on the weather bridge. The Skipper of the Alcoa was an understanding "old gent," and offered his quarters to the pair for the length of time she was aboard.

The next eight days were spent in lying at anchor in the harbor, and were indeed dull ones with the only bright spots the mails that caught up with us at this port. Details were assigned to unload our materials from the West Point to the Alcoa Patriot. Another detail acted as a chain gang passed rotten potatoes from the food lockets to the side of the ship, where they were cast into the bay.

The Recreation Department tried to ease the men's minds by presenting several movies, and one night the orchestra entertained while Mike Marino sang the "Banana Song," followed by Mario Grassi rendering Irish ballads.

We were all amazed at the display of lights that dotted the shoreline, after coming from dimmed-out America, and we were permitted to smoke at all hours while in the harbor.

Finally, on March 18th, we sailed out of Milne Bay and joined a small convoy escorted by destroyer-escorts and led by a destroyer. The sun was hot and the day clear; hundreds of flying fish soared out of the path of our ship only to flop back into the waters some yards away. This was the Bismark Sea, scene of much sea fighting in the past. Emergency drills were held daily and the gun crews, which included some of our men, had firing practice. Fresh water was at a premium, so the daily rains provided a good substitute for

showers. It was a funny sight to see nude men slipping on the wet steel decks, both covered with soap. Finally we arrived at Finschhaffen, the hypothetical Island "X."

Disembarking from the Alcoa Patriot, we were loaded into trucks furnished by the 19th Special and rushed to our staging area adjacenet to the 113th Battalion. The coconut trees, heavily laden with fruit, were a great novelty to the boys, and very shortly we all were cracking shells to get at the fruit. That night we slept in pup tents, using old Mother Earth as our mattress. We had a good meal with the 113th, and, after five weeks at sea, the ground felt pretty good. The next morning, right after chow, we all pitched in, cleaning the area and erecting 16 x 16 tents that were to shelter eight men. Large cans were secured for boiling clothes—over-ripe by now—and all over the area steaming kettles were stirred over the blazing fires, making the area look like a gypsy camp. Other men headed for the swimming hole, where there was plenty of fresh water for baths. Tent floors were finally issued from the Carpenter Shop, and we were able to get up off the damp ground. We made our lights by sticking a rag in the neck of a bottle filled with gasoline. Details were established for the unloading of the ship, and this work continued for days, with the stock pile of equipment across the road from the camp growing larger every day. A ship's store was established, as well as a barber shop, post office, and the essential "brig." Men were assigned to the 24th Regiment, of which we were a part, and the well-remembered pipe-line job was started under Mr. Harshbarger. Only items really essential to the welfare of the men were permitted to be unpacked, as the time of our stay there was to be short.

The Recreation Department went to work and built a stage on the hill behind the camp, presenting movies every night, rain or shine. We soon learned to gauge the quality of the picture by how little we noticed the rain. When the weather was clear, the projector usually developed some sort of trouble. But they did a swell job, and the appreciation of the men was shown by the large attendance, nightly.

It was here that the first enlisted man in the battalion was presented with a commission, when Commissary Chief Leo Duprey was returned to the States with the rank of warrant officer.

Six-hour duty shifts gave the men some time to themselves, and they used it in the pursuit of the cat-eyes and shells found at the water's edge for rings and bracelets to send home to their wives and sweethearts. Some even went so far as to set up shop and turn out these items in quantity for sale to others. This also included brass P38's and salt and pepper sets made from .50 caliber shells. The souvenir business developed into one of New Guinea's foremost enterprises. We did the bloody Aussies one better by making erstwhile Jap flags out of bed sheets and red paint, while even the black-skinned natives purchased the grass skirts that we wove from rope.

Speaking of the natives, they had one particular custom—the lady members of the family did all the heavy work, while the old man just trotted along with a big stick in his hand. We never learned what the big stick was for; however, we don't think that it would be a good custom to try out on the American wife. They also were masters at trading, even though the handicap of language acted as somewhat of a barrier. No Seabee was ever known to receive the best of a deal. Their villages were of grass-thatched houses erected on poles to lift the floors some distance above the ground; their chickens and hogs roamed below searching for food. The children went unclothed and the ladies wore no more than necessary, but the old gent seemed to have a wardrobe complete in every respect.

Points of interest visited by the boys were the German mission and the Jap hospital, both in ruins, but still places to look over with the possibility that some gem of a souvenir might come to light. Many took pieces from the old seasoned mahogany rafters to make jewelry boxes to send home.

Easter came and services were held under real palm trees, while camp life continued dull as a real camp, and facilities were withheld pending the move to our assigned job. It again became a case of just waiting until orders were given.

The middle of May came, meaning a year of service to most of us. Details were assigned to load our equipment aboard the Jean Chateau, a ten-thousand-ton Liberty ship that was to carry us, as the scuttlebutt had predicted, to Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea. Orders came that we were to pack sea and duffle bags for stowage in the holds and would carry packs and hand bags with us. Clothing was to be enough for ten days. As it turned out, we didn't leave for five weeks, in the meantime living the best we could with what we had left.

Mr. Hart, with a detail of twenty-two men, went aboard to watch over the cargo when the ship left for Lae to take aboard other material. They returned on June 8th, and we immediately moved

aboard both her and the Lewis H. Dyche, with "A" and "B" and part of Headquarters companies on the Chateau, and "C," "D," and the balance of Headquarters aboard the "Dyche."

Leaving Langemark Bay on June 10th, at 1700, we joined a large convoy for the five hundred mile voyage. The one unpleasant event that we remember on this trip was the disappearance of Victor M. Preston, presumed to be lost at sea.

We arrived at Hollandia three days after our departure from Finschaven and started unloading on the following day. Details were sent ashore to clean out the camp site, and others were assigned to the many tasks of moving in.

The first night the entire battalion spent ashore was somewhat of a nightmare, with the silly stories that circulated about Japs behind every bush, how they specialized on picking off lighted trucks as they pass, and how they would steal among the tents at night seeking food; you were taking your life in your hands if you left your sack after dark. After the first few nights the jitters left, and the boys settled down to the construction of the camp.

While waiting for the chow hall to be finished, we ate in a large tent at the turn of the road that led to the beach. Between dodging trucks sliding off the steep road into our laps, and fighting the flies that attempted to carry our food from our trays, we waged a daily battle with the score about even.

The camp, after some time, was partially completed, and the job at the contemplated destroyer base began. After the earth-moving men had used their huge equipment to level hillsides and fill in lowlands, the concrete gang under Chief Leon Bell followed with thousands of yards of coral mix, pouring the floors and foundations on which the giant Quonset huts were to be built. Competition between groups of these later gangs sped the work along to a schedule of at least one building completed each day. The gangs worked under Chiefs Frank J. Peters and James H. Culpepper. Barracks and chow halls were erected for members of the Naval Base and smaller Quonsets were finished for a first-class hospital. This same hospital later cared for the wounded from Leyte and other Philippine invasions. The Destroyer Base, entirely completed in time for this same action, was ready to accept ships that were damaged, repair and send them back to the fleet in short order.

To the 102nd Battalion was entrusted the complicated job of laying the telephonic submarine cable that spanned the treacherous currents off Pim Jetty, with Smoky Fanning and George B. White doing the difficult splicing, all under the direction of Warrant Officer Clayton. Other communications were under the direction of Warrant Officer G. R. Scott.

Chief Verl G. Hukill finally completed the chow hall around the middle of July, and it was dedicated with a turkey dinner and ice cream. This same chow hall was soon to become the best of its kind in this particular part of New Guinea and played host to as many as twenty-four hundred individuals on Sundays. This was one and a half times the number in the battalion. No one was ever turned away from our chow hall, and this extra burden was taken in stride by "Marbletop"

Mulvihill and his genial crew of KP's, who kept dishing it out as long as there was someone to eat it.

The Chief's mess-hall was completed and a club formed, with Corley King as president and Chief Wehner as secretary. By this time, we had a real camp set-up, and facilities were good considering the fact that we were in the jungles. A few attempts to hold midnight movies were finally given up after a drop in attendance. A boxing ring was built in "C" company area and used for workouts by those who had participated in the boxing shows held in the theater. By now, the theater, named Tropicdrome, was host nightly to an audience of over four thousand; the Recreation Department attempted to secure the best films offered through Special Service of Base "G."

A softball league was formed among the different companies, and hotly-contested battles were waged several times each week for the championship.

To speed up the finishing touches in the completion of the Base, men were put on a working schedule of seven days a week. The men worked at top speed, doing the apparently impossible with little consideration for personal security. Extra warehouses grew in number until the area took on the appearance of a small city.

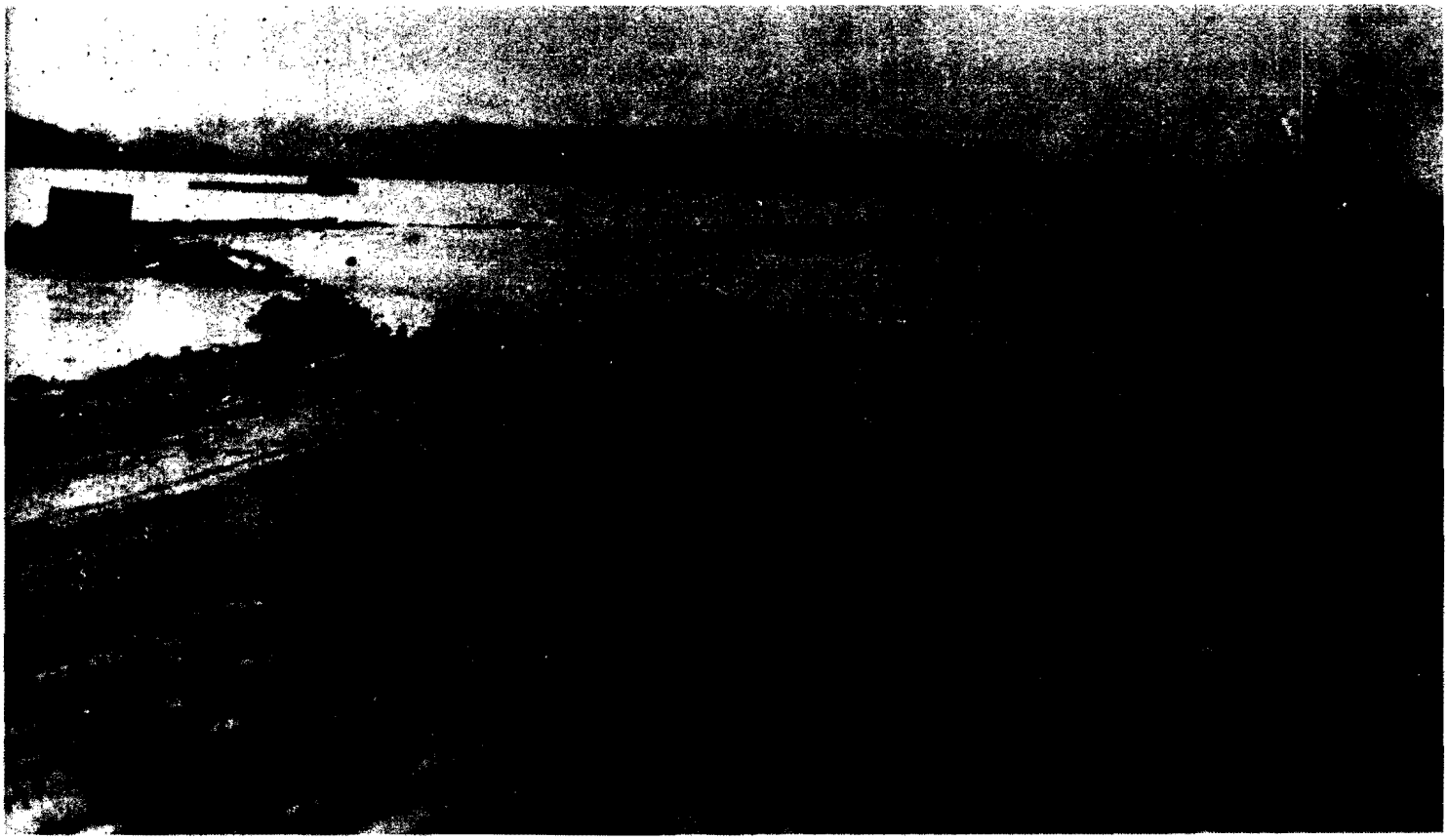
A change was made in the set-up of the OOD's office with Chief D. B. Hill replacing Lt. King as officer-of-the-day. Our brig became the confinement center for most of the surrounding Naval outfits, as an epidemic of stolen jeeps and trucks broke out and kept the guards on the jump tracing and reporting to the Provost Marshal's office; even their own guard truck disappeared from in front of the chow hall one night while the driver was eating.

On July 19th, J. W. Perryman, C. L. Johnstone, J. J. Smith, E. M. Davis, and John Eyberg left the outfit for Australia to attend yeoman school and be further assigned. And, "A" company trodded their area with easy steps after the discovery of an unexploded bomb, which was taken care of by the members of the Bomb Disposal Department of the Naval Base.

Because of its sheer magnitude, its endless ramifications and baffling complexities, the job of building the Base produced no particularly outstanding situation more important than the others, it was in another field that one of the most outstanding incidents of our stay occurred. On the night of October 2nd, the crowds made up from our own battalion and supplemented by men from surrounding outfits flowed tranquilly toward the theater. It was a clear night and the seats were jammed, with the overflow spread over the hillside behind. The picture promised to be good, and the boys settled back for an evening of entertainment. They laughed at the short subjects and the show continued into the main feature; just as the third reel was reaching its end, a rumble started on the hillside behind the seats and with increasing momentum grew louder and louder, until it became a roar!! The whole hillside of men seemed to be pouring down upon those in the seats below, and then the men piled up before the stage like a great tidal wave. Those operating the projector first thought it an air raid and turned off the lights, thus adding to the confusion. Some time went by before count could be taken of the number injured and assistance given them to the sick-bay for medical attention. As the excitement subsided it was learned that about forty persons were hurt, the most serious injuries being several cases of broken bones. The cause of the trouble was finally established: a large snake had dropped from a tree into the group on the hill, and becoming frightened, the men took off down the hillside. Others, not knowing what had happened, but not to be left behind, had joined in the rush until it became a massive stampede. Steps were taken to prevent a re-occurrence of the event; thereafter guards were posted at various spots within the crowd and extra lights strung overhead. This proved a good move because, only a short time later, another mob rush began, but was stopped immediately by flooding the area with lights from the projection booth.

On October 21st, a detail including Chief Oriea K. White, Glen R. Torbeck, and Russell Percy left the battalion to take up duty with the Lumber Production Section, while the battalion officers studied methods of overcoming the handicaps plaguing them because of unavailable materials. Urgent needs for the Base could not be ignored, but still exasperating delays in shipments persisted. Plans were discussed, but nothing definite could be advanced to solve the problem. The needs were finally met through the ingenuity of the men.

By the end of October and after the Army invasion of Leyte, the hospital was ready to care for the wounded that the LST's were returning, and the Repair Base was ready to handle the damage done to our fleet. In both cases the need was great, and we were pleased to know that we had had a hand in the overall plan of strategy that won the first step in regaining the Philippines. Today Hollandia stands as a monument to the 102nd Battalion.



November came and went with its usual two Thanksgiving Days, while the scuttlebutt had it that we were to move to Manila by the end of December. The 55th Battalion, that had been sharing our chow hall, packed their bags and returned to the States after spending twenty-two months in the Pacific. The MAA staff underwent a change and emerged with a more liberal policy toward the men. The younger men nightly entertained members of the Wac Corps, and the older men looked on approvingly. The enlisted men's club was opened behind the ship's store, with tables and seats for drinking beer in comfort. Part of the galley was disassembled and crated for moving, along with other items that were not considered immediately essential to the welfare of the battalion.

We spent Christmas Eve singing carols at the Chapel; Protestant services were held at midnight by Chaplain Williams with Major Blank, soloist from the Army Nurses' Corps singing, O, Holy night. Father Durosha, of Boston, conducted the Midnight Mass, with singing by a chorus of Navy men. Other services were held on Christmas Day. The dinner that day was served with an air of grandeur, with the cooks and bakers out-doing themselves in an effort to give the boys an "old-fashioned" turkey dinner, the kind Mom used to cook. Private parties were held throughout the area, and even though it was odd to spend Christmas under a tropical sun with a backdrop of palm trees, the same spirit prevailed as if the ground were covered by ice and snow.

Two details had left us by this time, spending the holidays on the high seas or on other islands of the South Pacific. One was the pontoon causeway detail that had been assigned to the 302nd Battalion, out of Pearl Harbor, and included members of the "Super Sixty" that had left us at Splinter City.

Chief Frank J. Peters was in charge of the eighteen men, and they boarded LST's to join the convoy that was to invade Luzon at Lingayen Gulf. (The details of this event are described in another article).

The other detail, that left about the same time or shortly after, was under Lt. H. H. Williams and included Lt. Ediger, Warrant Officers J. L. Hart and M. C. Farmer, and forty-seven enlisted men. Their assignment was communications and we finally caught up with them when we moved to the Philippines.

While the battalion speculated about the next move as the new year started, the scuttlebutt ran the gauntlet. The 113th Battalion, moving out, gave the rumor mongers a chance to spread their stories—stories that ranged from reports of our remaining here as station force of the Base to ones prophesying our moving into Tokyo proper. This was a pause in the midst of continued activities, a time for planning and improving. The Bat-

talion lost one of its key men when Chief Harry E. Roe, of Kenneth Square, Pa., died on January 30th.

And from the staff, too, old familiar faces were disappearing. Lt. Missner and Warrant Officer H. E. Stayman were returned to the States for reasons of health.

Again on January 14th, another minor stampede occurred at the theater as a result of a log becoming dislodged and rolling down the hill toward the seats. The men in the immediate location did not run, but those sitting in the seats below, hearing the noise, became excited and rioted. Calmer heads prevailed and soon brought the situation under control, but not before ten persons were injured, requiring attention from the sick-bay.

Toward the end of the month Lt. G. W. Reagan, with Lt. (j.g.) A. Schaefer, Lt. (j.g.) R. Frick, Ens. J. W. Carman, Mr. Swart, Mr. Blume, and seventy enlisted men from "B" company boarded the USS Gold Star for duty in the Philippines. (Details of their trip and assignment are covered in another article.)

February began with a Jap alert after James E. Luther reported he had seen two Nips on the main road, below the theater. The Battalion began to prepare for its next move. The men of the pontoon causeway details finished their job at Lingayen, drifted into camp in small groups, making the trip back by plane, and entertained the boys with stories of the invasion. The 119th moved from their area into the vicinity of the air strip to replace the 122nd Battalion in its former area up the road from our camp.

Then definite plans were announced for moving and the loading of the Liberty ship William Wolfskill began. Details were assigned to build galley and heads on the top deck. The endless pile of crates and material grew as cranes and sweating riggers struggled to load the trucks ferrying from the camp to the dock. An endless procession of bulldozers, carryalls, cranes, and various other types of heavy equipment dotted the road to Hollandia, moving on a twenty-four hour basis. Other riggers aboard the ship grabbed the loads from the trucks and stowed them carefully below. Supplies and rations were piled high on the deck near the galley, while plumbers and pipemen rigged the water lines and sinks for the cooks. Trucks, boats, and lowboys were chained securely to the deck until the giant ship bulged at the sides. Then on February 18th, the officers and men of the Battalion went aboard the Wolfskill, carrying field gear, pieces, and personal effects, as well as cots. We left the area by truck according to companies and platoons, and swarmed over the ship finding places and nooks to hole-up for the voyage. Canvas was spread from the rigging of the bows for shelter against the hot sun of the day and the windy rains at night. We pulled out from the dock immediately, threaded our way through the many ships in the harbor, and tied up to a tanker along side of which we spent the night, while the power-giving fuel was pumped into our tanks. We spent the night kidding the Navy boys aboard the tanker about being the "Common Navy."

We sailed out of Humbolt Bay the next afternoon, February 19th, to join the convoy of about 35 ships. Included among them were destroyers, tankers, LST's, and little saucy LCM's. It was interesting to watch a small SC patroling off our starboard beam pitch and roll in the heavy seas that we encountered, but she was game and kept right on with her job of watching for and sheltering us from Jap subs.

For the first part of the trip, time lay heavy on the boys' hands and any source of diversion assumed gigantic importance. The small tanker that fell out of the convoy and had to be towed by one of the other vessels was of great concern to us, and we were glad to see it finally rejoin us the following morning. On the starboard bow several men started a small game that developed into one of the most interesting events of the cruise, growing in size daily until by the time the Islands off Leyte were sighted, nearly everybody had a spot invested.

When we approached the southern tip of Leyte Gulf our convoy broke up, some ships continuing toward Tacloban while others coming from there joined us—all without a stop by any ship. During this maneuver, we had the misfortune of losing our good friend Dinty Healy, of Boston, Mass., who, stricken with acute appendicitis, was removed to a destroyer escort which carried him to a base hospital on Leyte for an operation. "Dint" later rejoined us at Subic Bay, as good as ever.

Our convoy entered the Surigao Sea off Dinacat Island, at that time still in the possession of the Japs, and steamed through the narrow passage between the extreme southern tip of Leyte and the northern tip of Mindinao into the Mindanao Sea. Cruising here was much calmer than it had been on the open Pacific, and we moved along with tranquility. On the Island of Bohol, you could, with the aid of glasses, spot the tiny villages dotting the water-front. It took a full day to pass this large island, and we moved on, the sea widening about us until we could see land only on the north side. It looked like hilly country, the land greener than it had been at Hollandia, with

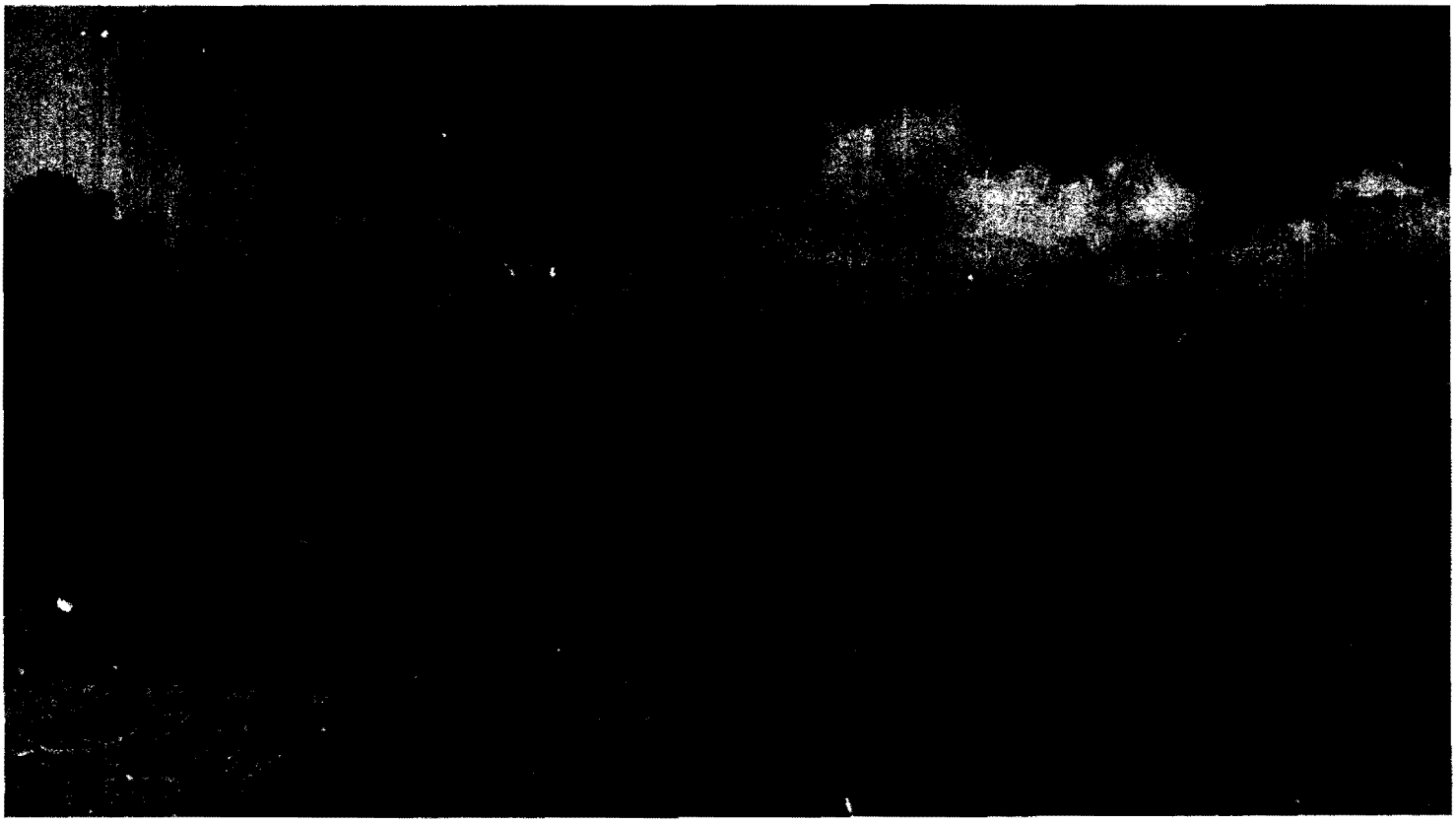
checkerboard patterns here and there indicating farmland. An interesting sight was the two native bankas that floated in our path, their occupants resting on their paddles and watching us. It was necessary for our large ships to veer to keep from running them down; had we been a Jap convoy, they would have been mowed down; but, as it was, we just slipped past, giving them a cheerful greeting.

The next large island that we passed in the straits was Siquijor Island near Negros Island; it was mistaken for Cebu Island, which lay some twenty-five miles further north and could not be seen that day. Japs were still in control of the island at that time, and we wonder what their reactions were as they saw the mighty convoy pass.

Rounding Negros Island into the Sulu Sea, we passed a convoy returning from the north; overhead, two circling American planes gave us a sense of security. It was from this point on that the boys who had traveled this same route on the Lingayen invasion told us that they had seen their first action. We knew that on this island of Negros was a large Japanese air strip, with the bulk of their air power concentrated there, but we didn't know at that time that daily pounding by our Leyte-based planes was reducing their air power to nil, while a general offensive by the Philippine Guerrillas under Lt. Col. Salvador Abcede had cleared the southern half of the island, with the exception of the Dumaguete area, which lay on the eastern side of Negros far from the paths of our ships. The Japs were having enough troubles of their own, without adding us to them.

We continued north in the Sulu Sea, now again in open water. A school of porpoises played before our bow, giving the boys quite a show. The game in the bow of the ship continued to be the major form of recreation, drawing a large group of contestants daily. The corpsmen inaugurated the use of the "purple milk" for the treatment of skin ailments. Books and letter-writing helped pass the time of the day, and the cooks and bakers did their best to overcome the handicaps of limited facilities.

The hills of Negros Island faded into the blue waters of Panay Gulf, and we struck a stretch of water that really gave our ship a tossing around. For hours land was out of sight on both sides for the first time since we had arrived in Philippine waters, but toward the end of the day the faint purple hills of Panay Island rose out of the seas and took shape as our convoy plowed forward. Here, as in the other islands where the Americans had yet to land, the guerrillas were striking violent harrassing blows, driving the Japs from the western coastline and seizing vital airdromes. That is why we could cruise in these waters as safely as though on a Sunday afternoon's row on a lake back home. Overhead was the comforting sight of the ever-present pair of planes that hovered over us like a mother hen watching her chicks.



The end of the journey was nearing, but we were not quite sure of our destination. Scuttlebutt had us headed for every port from Vigan in northern Luzon down to Manila; since this was a troop movement and not an invasion, it was natural to assume that our destination would be a port already in American hands.

Late the following day, we had a chance to see a part of our own air power displayed as we passed near Mindoro: an endless chain of bombers passed overhead returning to an airstrip hidden in the hills behind the shoreline; this show gave us a tremendous lift as we watched until darkness blotted the planes out of sight.

The next morning, a number of LST's left us, heading inshore and reducing our convoy by half. We still had hopes that we might see Manila as our new Island "X." The amateur navigators were now trying to spot our position so that a more possible destination could be predicted; most of us, however, waited until more definite evidence presented itself. The day passed and, after crossing a wide stretch of water that hid the mainland of Luzon, we were sure our destination wasn't to be Manila, but, still hoping we were wrong, we interrupted whatever we were doing to scan the waters from time to time for some sign of the imminent future. About noon on February 28th, the high peaks of Bataan Peninsula rose out of the snowy white cumulus clouds as the convoy headed inland over the placid waters of the South China Sea. At two-thirty that afternoon our convoy split again, but this time we joined the ships heading for shore. For some reason the Skipper of our ship seemed reluctant to leave the main convoy, but finally got his orders straight and joined the others who had been waiting for him; following several LST's that were to lead us through the channel, we headed for the opening of Subic Bay—we had arrived at our third Island "X."

We spent our last night aboard the Wolfskill and, for the first time in ten nights, slept without rolling from side to side. The few lights that dotted the shoreline indicated Army shore installations, and we had the smoking lamp out while all the ships around us blazed with lights.

Right after morning chow the next day, March 1st, we disembarked into LCT's that landed us at the point that later became the small boat area. There was nothing there at the time but a large tent used by the submarine boys for a recreation area; a place to drink their beer and give them a chance to get their feet on the ground.

The detail that had left Hollandia under Lt. H. H. Williams was there to greet us and already had a few buildings under construction. One of these was the Officer's Club, which we used as a galley until our own was built.

The grounds swarmed with Filipinos. We found that those we met were not the naked savages we had been accustomed to see in New Guinea; though their clothes were rags, they were people of Christian Culture. Language difficulties were few as most Filipinos of even grade school age could speak English in part. With a willing spirit of co-operation, they gave us assistance in the problems of unloading and stowing our gear. We had no trouble making friends and were soon invited to share the few possessions left them after Jap occupation.

For our arrival they wore their best clothes, and distributed the few gifts that could be found—mostly occupation currency and souvenirs from the Japs.

We set up a temporary camp on the flats of the rice paddies near the beach, using only cots and bars with no tents as there was but little chance of rain. Unloading started immediately, with details assigned to handle its many phases. Mr. Canivan was in charge of the cargo handling on the ship. The work continued around the clock, with no stops until all equipment was ashore. Supply dumps were set up along the beach, and a camp site was surveyed on the slope further inland. Some of the men investigated the two towns on the other side of the Bay in their spare time and trading with the civilians became a major part of our life. The Filipino ladies of the communities solicited the boys to do their laundry, thereby eliminating one of the major evils of the Navy.

The first signs of Japs were encountered one night during the showing of the movies that had been set up above the camp. It seemed that several had been sighted in the village across the river and the civilians had notified the OD's office. The show was rushed through, while some of the boys accompanied a Filipino back to the village. After a careful search of the area revealed no sign of the Nips, the men returned to our camp.

Orders were issued to erect tents in the new camp area and a move was made to the higher ground. First make-shifts, and then a small town arose from the hillside, where weeks before only lizards and birds had roamed. Different from the

tents at Hollandia, these were veritable palaces on which the boys really out-did themselves; we called them tropical cottages.

Heavy-equipment men went to work clearing sites for the chow hall and overcoming the handicaps of the large rocks and boulders imbedded in the soil. Roads leading to the various company areas were cut through the forest. The chow hall started to take shape, and the Personnel and Disbursing offices moved into new quarters. The Jap incident behind Olongapo, where four of our men were killed, had the boys somewhat on edge. Outpost guards were placed on a perimeter that circled the camp, with Filipino guerrillas to augment our men. Lights appearing on the mountain-side that rose behind the camp were the subject of much speculation and kept the guards constantly on the alert. In fact, so much concern was felt that a patrol was organized by Lt. Commander W. A. Niebuhr—it consisted of H. E. Stone, B. A. Houle and F. L. Stagg —to search that region. They left at 6:00 one night and reported back at 7:00 the next morning, reporting that many signs were seen but no Japs encountered. Another patrol was immediately organized and led by Lt. (j.g.) King, including H. E. Stone, F. L. Staggs, R. Bragdon and J. C. Masencup, who, using daylight this time for obvious reasons, retraced the steps of the first patrol. There was now no question that the area was infested. The Army sent spotting planes over the area, but nothing definite could be found. The outpost guards were alert and poised for whatever might come. The tension was not relieved until a Japanese native fisherman was caught and turned over to us, our first prisoner. A member of a labor battalion, he was about nineteen, had been born in Taiwan, and was of Japanese and Formosan parentage. He was turned over to Lt. Starbuck of the C. I. C.

Because of the sheer magnitude of the assignment which loomed ahead, camp facilities were rushed to completion. Our chow hall opened after several false starts, playing host not only to our own boys, but those of the S. R. U., Camp Coe, and an Army ack-ack detachment camped near us. We were feeding, in a chow hall designed to seat four hundred, over three thousand men, but the extra burden was capably handled by our commissary department.

Among the first assignments was the erection of machine shops for the Sub Repair Unit; these shops were to house the repair facilities of this important unit. Many of our under-water craft were working out of this area, and it was necessary not only to have complete rest facilities available for the crew, but also the shops and equipment to maintain, repair, and service the craft speedily so that they could be back at work in the shortest time possible.

Chief Jimmy Culpepper was in charge of this construction work and, as a result of an unfortunate situation in the early stages of the work, good-naturedly took a lot of lampooning about the collapse of the framework. It could have happened to anyone, but in this case it happened to Culpepper, and it was a long time before he lived it down. The shops were finally completed, despite the fact that the men had to work with poor material and little of that.

The concrete gang under Chief Leon Bell and later, after Bell left for the States, under Chief John Nussberger, poured the hundreds of yards of concrete that were needed for the many buildings and structures to be raised.

First and second class men were sent to the SRU to assist them in erecting the Quonsets and enlisted men's barracks. After the buildings for the shops were covered, the work was temporarily stopped so that Chief Culpepper could take his gang over to the barracks for Camp Coe. This job had to be rushed in view of the fact that men were sleeping out in the open or under make-shift tents. In fact, as the carpenters picked up their tools to go to the next barracks, men moved in with bunks and bags; these buildings were completed just before the rainy season set in, and Culpepper vindicated himself when the first hurricane arrived and the barracks withstood the winds.

The dredge arrived from Hollandia under Carp. P. Smith, with many of the boys who had formerly been attached to the battalion and were now assigned to CBD 1086. They went to work filling a low area just behind the beach and in front of the SRU's machine shops.

Recovered from a deserted Jap logging camp behind Olongapo, an old steam engine with boilers in fairly good shape was brought to this side of the Bay, and a rig for pile-driving was built by Chief "Big Buddy" Smith, Claude Rains, and Martin Sorensen, our ex-Chief MAA. To them was assigned the tremendous task of driving the piles for the several docks the battalion was asked to build. A pontoon dock that could handle Liberty ships had already been erected, and several carrying equipment for the machine shops were unloaded there.

The ATC was another assignment entrusted to us; it included an entire camp, with all facilities for both officers and enlisted men going through training in this essential type of work. Chief Peters and Chief Hill were in charge of the erection gangs, and Mr. Cohen was officer over it all. This was another case in which the personnel moved in before the camp was completed, and the story of Camp Coe was repeated.

We heard that "B" company, under Lt. Reagan, was at Lingayen Gulf and had been assigned the duty of building a small base near San Fernando for a Navy shore detachment stationed there. Its facilities were to include barracks for the enlisted personnel, officer's country, mess halls for both, communications, road building, water supplies, and the other incidentals required for such a base.

From time to time, men would visit us from up there and give us the scuttlebutt and the personal stories of their camp. It seemed that working conditions were about the same as our own, with a shortage of supplies and a lack of equipment. Even with this handicap, however, they were still able to hack out results.

We did not build the radio station, but we did pour the heavy concrete decks and erect the Quonsets that housed the equipment, while the Camp Coe men installed the technical parts and the steel towers. This was done far below Little Tokyo and at that time, the Nips were still believed to be in the vicinity. The first couple of times we carried pieces, but after that we said the hell with them, and decided that a few well-placed rocks could be pretty effective. If any Japs were around, they must have seen us first, because we never got a look at them.

The temporary shops and garage were moved up near the chow hall after the start of the rainy season flooded the original structures, so that more permanent buildings had to be erected.

It was not long after this that we heard the amazing news that our Skipper was being called back to the States, and would be replaced by a man who had spent three years out in the field. The scuttlebutt ran rampant for some time and his rank was classified from Admiral down to Lieutenant. Finally, the Skipper spoke before the men at the theater, telling us good-bye and at the same time, bestowing "purple hearts" on O. H. Luker, R. A. Hopkins, and J. H. Neal, in a ceremony before the entire battalion.

Some weeks later we had the pleasure of meeting our new Skipper, Commander Leonard Miscall, formerly with the 19th Regiment in the same capacity. He talked in a friendly manner, punctuating his address with many humorous stories, and was warmly accepted by the men.

Many times thereafter; whenever he had something in mind, he brought it to the men's attention in his own style and manner addressing the boys, and never did he find an uninterested group of listeners.

The next and almost last milestone in the history of the battalion was the release of the 42-year-olds, who, after waiting for some time for the order to come through, were finally permitted to go home. Altogether about sixty men from the battalion were released; a few left each week until the last finally was sent on his merry way. There were a few who refused the release and stayed on with the battalion for reasons of their own.

Recreation was stepped up considerably, and the most outstanding event was the 4th of July Barbecue. All details, except the essential ones, were released from duty, and extra beer was issued through Ship's Store. We had all we could eat, played games on the horseshoe arena, volley-ball, and even had a cock-fight in the carpenter shop. In later days when their leisure time lay heavy on the men's hands, the night spots in Subic, and other nearby towns received their share of patronage from the 102nd.

When the eighteenth month brought its thoughts of going home on leave, the flash came that Japan had offered to surrender. For days, our news was only rumor based upon the reports of Domei, the Japanese official news agency. Then, on August 11th, the President of the United States gave the official proclamation. Immediately plans for demobilization were announced by the Navy Department in Washington. The first order said we needed 44 points, disappointing to those men with enough service, but who were not old enough to build the credits up to the required amount. However, plans were soon announced that a reduction of points was on its way.

And, it might be a good idea to end the story at this point, for we are sure we will never be much happier than we are right now, knowing that the war is over, and that we can return to those loved ones who so bravely waited while we helped out Uncle Sam at the time he needed us.

ONE HUNDRED and SECOND NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION
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25 July 1945:

From: Officer in Charge,
To: The Chief of Naval Personnel.

Subj: Itinery of 102nd Naval Construction Battalion.

Ref: (a) BuPers ltr. requesting subject information.

1. The following information is furnished as requested by the above reference.

6 July 1943	Battalion formed at U.S.Naval Construction Training Center Camp Peary, Virginia.
12 July 1943	Transferred to U NCTC, Camp Endicott, Davisville, R.I.
19 August 1943	Battalion Commissioned.
21 August 1943	Transferred to NCTC Camp Parks, Shoemaker, California.
23 August 1943	Arrived at Camp Parks, California.
19 October 1943	Transferred to Advanced Base Depot, Camp Rousseau, Port Hueneme, California.
21 October 1943	Arrived at Camp Rousseau, California.
22 December 1943	Warrant Officer Burd and sixty (60) men detached from Battalion to form 1089 Special Detachment.
12 January 1944	Lieutenant Wiesner with eighteen (18) men depart for over-seas duty, with Battalion Equipment.
18 January 1944	Warrant Officer Hart departed with second ship of Battalion equipment for over-seas duty.
21 February 1944	Battalion embarked for over-seas duty.
10 March 1944	Arrived Milne Bay (lay at anchor), New Guinea.
21 March 1944	Departed from Milne Bay.
24 March 1944	Arrived at Finschhaven, British New Guinea.
6 May 1944	Lt.(jg) Schaefer and six (6) men Sewell left for Hollandia, DNG, with 113th NCBattalion. Small Boat Detail.
10 June 1944	Battalion left Finschhaven for Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea.
14 June 1944	Arrived Hollandia, DNG.
21 October 1944	Six (6) men detached from Battalion to Lumber Producing Section, 3115.
3 December 1944	Nineteen (19) men temporarily attached 308nd CB Pontoon Detachment.
15 January 1945	Lt. H.H. Williams, CEC of forty-eight (48) men and three (3) officers [illegible]

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Subj: Itinery of 102nd Naval Construction Battalion

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	1 February 1945	Lieutenant Reagen, OinC of one hundred-seventy men (170)and five (5) officers detached as unit to Tulosa, Leyte, P.I. 10 April 1945 left Leyte for San Fernando La Union, Luzon, and at this date are still there.
	10 February 1945	Nineteen men (19) men pontoon detachment return to Battalion, participated in Lingayen Gulf invasion.
19 February 1945	Battalion departed for Subic Bay, Luzon, P.I. Fifty (50) men aboard Dredge D. York Syme remain in Hollandia.	
29 February 1945	Arrive at Subic Bay, Luzon,	
15 March 1945	Dredge D. York Syme Commissioned and men detached from Battalion to form CBD Detachment 1082.	
18 April 1945	CBD 1082 (Dredge) departs from Hollandia.	
20 May 1945	CBD 1082 arrives Subic Bay, Luzon, working with 102nd Naval Construction Battalion.	

W.L. WIESNER,
Lt. Comdr. CEC USNR
Executive Officer
By direction, OinC.

To Technical Information Center Naval Civil Engineering Laboratory

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CONSTRUCTION BATTALION