Naval Construction Maintenance Unit 510

Historical Information

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

NAVAL HISTORY & HERITAGE COMMAND

CBMU 510

1st Embarkation	2nd Embarkation
ABD - Hueneme	ABD - (Parks) Huen
Left ABD - 22 May'43	Left ABD- 24 Mar'45
Location - Cult Adak Sand-Bay & Andrews-Lagoon Adak	Loc. - Saipan

LOG

4-30-43 - Budocks requests transfer of CBMU 510 from Parks to Hueneme on 3 May'43. (Budocks ltr to CNO dtd 30 Apr'43)

5-22-43 - CBMU 510 sailed for CULT. (Dispatch)

7- 1-43 - CBMU 510 is at Atka. (Com 13 to ComAlSec dtd 6-21-43 Sec. Disp)

8-16-43 - CBMU 510 arrived 2 Jun'43 at Atka. (June report of 1st Reg.)

1- 7-44 - 1 Dec'43 report of CBMU 510 - no indication as to whereabouts of unit.

3-11-44 - 1 Feb'44 report of CBMU 510 - operating at Sand Bay and Andrew Lagoon. Commendation indicates that subj. det. were probably at Attu.

3-17-44 - CBMU 510 is located at Adak. (1st Brig. batt report dtd 1 Mar'44)

3-29-44 - 1 Mar'44 report of CBMU 510 - operating at Sand Bay and Andrew Lagoon.

4-13-44 - CBMU 510 located at Sand Bay and Adak. (1st Brig. status report for 1 Apr'44)

5-30-44 - 1 May'44 report of CBMU 510 - operating at Sand Bay and Andrew Lagoon.

7-14-44 - 1 Jun'44 report of 6th Reg. - CBMU 510 is operating at Adak.

8- 1-44 - 1 Jul'44 report of CBMU 510 - operating at Adak.

8-23-44 - 1 Aug'44 report of CBMU 510 - operating at Adak.

9-26-44 - 1 Sep'44 report of CBMU 510 - operating at Adak.

10-11-44 - CBMU 510, consisting of 3 off. and 266 men, arrived Parks from overseas 6 Oct'44. (09TWX2238 Oct'44 from Parks to Budocks)

10-28-44 - 1 Oct'44 report of CBMU 510 - departed for U.S. 24 Sep'44.

CBMU 510

12-14-44 - From the Chronological History of the 1st Brigade -

30 May'43 - CBMU 508 & 510 arrived Dutch Harbor from U.S. Det. 2 of CBMU 510 along to Atka, Det. 510 along to Cold Bay

? Jun'43 - Moved to Cold Bay from Dutch Harbor.

? Jun'43 - Detachments to Cold Bay from Dutch Harbor.

? Aug'43 - 2 Co's. at Otter Point, 2 Co's at Cold Bay, 2 Co's at Atka.

? Oct'43 - Part transferred to 85th CB, remainder at Cold Bay and Adak.

? Dec'43 - All at Adak.

24 Sep'44 - CBMU 510 left for U.S.

(Com 17 Sec. ltr ND17/A12-1/L7 over 50/2h over Ser 0096 to Budocks dtd 6 Nov'44).

2-22-45 -- CBMU 510 is being withdrawn from Cub 15 and becomes available for new assignment. (CNO conf. ltr Ser. 075430 to Bupers dtd 17 Feb'45).

2-22-45 -- Parks ordered to transfer CBMU 510 to acornTraDet about 1 Mar'45. CBMU 510 is assigned to Acorn 50.(CNO conf. disp 191408 Feb'45 to Parks).

2-26-45 -- CBMU 510 ready with Acorn 50 1 Feb'45 for Saipan.(Cominch Sec. disp to Cincpac 222134 Feb'45).

3- 7-45 - CBMU 510, approx 5 off. and 270 men, scheduled to depart Parks for Huen. 6 March. (Sec ltr NM24-Cpks over ER:hls from Parks to CivOffinCom Hueneme)

3-9-45 -- CBMU 510 consisting of 3 officers and 262 men departed Parks 6 Mar'45 for AcornTra Det. Hueneme.(Parks 080009 TWX Mar'45 to Bupers).

4-10-45 - CBMU 510 departed on 24 Mar'45 with Acorn 50. (AcornTraDet Sec Disp to Bupers 031626 Apr'45)

5- 8-45 - CBMU 510 is located at Saipan, assigned Acorn 50. (Dirpacdocks S.F. Sec Rep of 15 Apr'45)

Location - Saipan

CBMU 510

5-11-45 - 1 May'45 report of CBMU 510 - location not given. Departed U.S. 24 Mar'45 & arrived at destination 15 Apr'45.

6-21-45 - 1 Jun'45 report of CBMU 510 - no info on location.

7-20-45 - 1 Jul'45 report of CBMU 510 - located at Saipan.

8-17-45 - CBMU 510 is located at NAB Kobler Field, Saipan. (ComAirPac sec report on status of Naval aircraft service units in Pacific area dtd 2 Aug)

8-22-45 - 1 Aug'45 report of CBMU 510 - located at Saipan.

9-11-45 - 52nd Reg is composed of the following units in addition to the Regt. Staff:- 39,51,117,121 CBs, CBMUs 505,510,595,614,616 & CBD 1093. Advise Comservpac of the effective date of establishment. (Comservpac conf ltr ser 05014 dtd 30 Aug'45 to Iscom, Saipan).

10-1-45 - 1 Sept'45 report of CBMU 510 - location not stated. 21 men transferred to local staging center for discharge under point system.

10-3-45 - CBMU 510 is detached from NAB, Kobler & will report to OinC, 52nd Reg. (Comdr. Naval Air Bases, Saipan, conf ltr ser 0412 dtd 12 Sept'45 to OinC, CBMU 510).

11-2-45 - 1 Oct'45 report of CBMU 510 - location not stated. Report via 52nd Reg. & 5th Brig.

11-23-45 - Comservpac is directing Guam to inactivate CBMU 510. (Comservpac restr 220023 Nov'45 TWX to RDO, Guam).

12-27-45 - CBMU 510 was inactivated on 10 Dec'45. (CBMU 510 ltr ser 0101 dtd 10 Dec'45 to Comservpac). Pers. not eligible for release transferred to 121st CB.

INACTIVATED

ON BOARD

DATE	OFFICERS	MEN	AUTHORITY
30 Jun'44	3	269	Recap.
1 Aug'44	3	268	MoR
1 Sep'44	3	266	MoR & R
1 Oct'44	3	265	MoR
1 Jan'45	2	277	BNP625
1 Feb'45		264	BNP625
1 Mar'45		262	BNP625
1 Apr'45		260	BNP625
1 May'45	3	258	MoR
1 Jun'45	6	255	BNP625 & R
1 Jul'45	6	252	BNP625 & R
1 Aug'45	5	248	BNP625 & R
1 Sept'45		229	BNP625
1 Oct'45	4	180	BNP625 & R
1 Nov'45	4	152	BNP625 & R
1 Dec'45	3	8	BNP625 & R

C.B.M.U. #510 (INACTIVATED)

DECLASSIFIED
SECRET

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Date	Organization	Location	Reference	Notes
3/22	Acorn 50	—	Bullocks memo 3/16.	Ready Hueneme 2/1/45 - ass'd Acorn 50. probable april Shpg.
			Cdr. Burke note - Hode.	

CBMU #510

DECLASSIFIED

Date	Organization	Location	Reference	Notes
6/9/44	—	Sand Bay. Adak	—	Left U.S. May 1943
10/20	—	Parks	Bullocks memo 10/14.	returned US 10/6. No Tentative Assignment. Ready 2/1/45.
12/12	—	"	Cnv sec serial 01413030 12/7.	Ass'd Lion 8. ready Hueneme 2/1/45 Substituted for 621.
12/13	—	"	Bullocks memo 12/9	"
12/29	—	"	Op30-01438030 12/22	Ready Parks 2/1/45 - assigned Cub 15. replacement for 617.
1/22	—	"	Op30-0019030 1/15	Cancel assignment Lion 8 - Ass'd Bine.
2/20	—	"	Op30-075430 of 17 Feb 1945.	withdrawn from Cub 15 and available for other assignment.
2/21	—	(Acorn 50)	Hueneme	Parks left Acorn Trader Hueneme about 1 Mar. Ass'd Acorn 50.

History of the 510th

Unlike the famous Rainbow Division of World War I, in which there were men from practically every state in the Union, the men comprising the 89th Battalion, from which the 510th was drawn, were mostly Westernites. Many of the Eastern States were represented, but not with as many men. The South, North and Middle West were also represented by a few.

During the early part of January, 1943, we were called for active duty in this Battalion from hamlet and city. One group of us reported to Reno, Nevada, on January 9th at four o'clock, and after a few necessary briefs, boarded our cars. Another group left from Los Angeles, Calif., comprising thirteen cars. Others of us gathered throughout the various states and were sent on our way to a military life. As a last luxury, the Navy obtained private compartment cars on the trains, when available.

We arrived at Camp Allen, Norfolk, Virginia, between January 14th and January 19th, where we were divided into A, B, C, and D Companies, about 2,300 men in all. The indoctrination period lasted for about five weeks. In other words, no liberty, and everyone toed the line while shots were given for tetanus, yellow fever, typhoid, and cow-pox.

The first day started the grind and also the fear of many of us—little things that didn't seem to mean much but which brought the sweat to our forehead. Civilian clothes were discarded and another complete examination was made of each individual. Blood types were taken, many coming out "A," jokingly called alcoholic. Puns were told about the needle breaking off and some fainting.

After things were squared away with the usual amount of turmoil, drilling started and became practically a daily concession. Drill, eat, sleep, fire watch, guard duty, and K. P., were the main things at Camp Allen. Discipline was emphasized.

Clothes were finally all issued and then we were taken to the boot barber, where we were met with smiling faces and came out looking like early day Indians. Most of the haircuts took from ten to twenty seconds. If one kept quiet, he was able to save approximately one inch of his hair, but if he objected to the scythe-like cut of the clippers, he came out with a furrow down the middle.

One of the things that our instructor drilled into us particularly was bayonet tactics, and he led us to believe that we were not construction men, but that we would be the bloody fighters of the war. However, that was good strategy as we could protect what we built. We were lectured on arms and hand grenades, first aid and gas attacks, bombs and cleanliness. One of the favorite drill songs of our instructor was: "A one up dreep for your left, your left—dry up! Forty inches back to chest, pick it up and get in step—your left, your left!"

They started us out easy on firearms—twenty-twos. Some of the men were dangerous even with those. Generally speaking, however, we all knew something about firearms, especially the ones who had been in the service before, or the descendants of the Kit Carson-Daniel Boone type.

Finally the day came when the list of the men in the 89th Battalion was posted on the bulletin board and we were to leave for Camp Peary, Williamsburg, Virginia, about 60 miles from Richmond. February 28th, 1943, we took the Chesapeake & Ohio ferry across the bay to Newport News and were whisked away in trucks to our advanced training base.

First glimpse of the camp showed considerable activity, and so we presumed, as did many others, that there would be plenty of work to do. Our surmise was correct. The 89th landed at the camp area closest to the York river, a very historical spot, and work was commenced immediately. Some went on K. P. and the rest on various other details, everything from improving the camp area to being captain of the heads.

One of the first jobs of any consequence was the construction of the rifle range, of which we had considerable to do. A birds-eye-view of the size of this construction would be about a mile in length, with ranges for both 200 and 300 yards. We laid the foundations for heads, built ammunition storehouses and an armory, constructed observation towers, and helped on the other labor. There were instances that involved discussions between the officers and some of the civilian labor leaders over what we were building. The labor leaders claimed that we should not tackle anything in the United States because we had enlisted for foreign duty. Of course they were right about the foreign duty, but we were only helping to build up the camp while taking our advanced training.

Another job, commonly referred to as "The Hog Wallow," was the mortar range, and the 89th was called on to help construct it. Many of our men ran bulldozers, while the others cut down trees in certain sections and the rest constructed and maintained a camp site from which we worked. The camp did not turn out so well, as the Virginia weather turned to almost a continual downpour, and we were soon slopping our way through seas of mud. The tents had all collapsed. Luckily we had not yet moved out in them to be near our work. The doctor decreed at one time that the men remain in their quarters until the weather improved.

Our Marine training soon began and proved to be one of the most gruelling periods to which we Seabees were subjected. It seemed they tried to build us up in one day, for they drilled us continually or held us at attention for long periods of time. They taught us Judo, those fancy holds that make pretzels of the Japs, if one can work them when they're needed. We learned four death blows, holds to disarm the enemy, wrist, arm and leg breakers. All remarked, upon our return to civilian life and using them in some brawl, in which we might become involved, there should be an ambulance present.

Another part of the training, outside of standing

at attention for too long a period because some "Snafu" wouldn't wise-up, was the obstacle course. One would leap over log fences, pull himself over high obstacles, crawl through underground tunnels, through barbed wire entanglements and swing by rope over a water hole. Both officers and men now and then miscalculated their timing and splashed into the muddy water. In finishing the course, one swung hand-over-hand by rings for a distance of twenty feet, scrambled through more wire and then over a ten-foot wall. The catch came when we had completed the course, as we often went over it again, sometimes with a pack and a rifle.

More hand grenade throwing practice—with duds, running from landing barges and field tactics were then commenced, skirmishers right and left, and all the other necessary battle formations. We climbed a high platform, which served as a ship, and practiced going down rope ladders into landing barges. We were taken on a twelve-mile hike with the Marine setting a rugged pace.

At one time a company had to complete a rough landing field within a specified time. The Seabees "Can Do" and "Did!".

Then started the advanced technical training, and although everyone was supposed to know a trade and most of them did, one had to learn the Navy way. (There's an old saying: "There's the right way, the wrong way, and the Navy way.") Selectees were made to attend everything from electrical to mosquito control schools. Most of us thought we would learn something and a few did, although for the most part, we found out later it was of no advantage, but just a break in the routine of the drill field. Three or four weeks of learning and we had completed our advanced training.

One day, near the completion of our schooling, out of a clear blue sky, came the word that B Company and one quarter of Headquarters Company would be detached from the Battalion and sent out, after their leave, as the 507th Maintenance Unit. This order was countermanded, however, and all our anxieties were unjustified. We had the idea that the 89th was going to stay together. Even that proved to be untrue, later on.

We left for California April 23rd, 1943, following the date Eastern men returned from their leave. Western men were to take their leave from California.

The trip to Camp Parks, near Livermore, Calif., proved interesting, with many of the civilian population turning out and watching us. We were sort of a curiosity, hundreds of sailors in the middle of the United States. Different routes were taken by the three trains making up the transportation for our Battalion, one taking generally a northern route, another a middle route, and the last one taking the southern way.

Finally, after being side-tracked now and then, and waiting as much as an hour and a half in one place, all trains arrived consecutively at Parks around April 29th, 1943. Western men donned their dress blues and started their leave on April 30th. The last ones trailed back into camp, from their leave, on May 11th. Surprises and confusion awaited us as we soon discovered that maintenance units had been composed and the battalion had no hopes of maintaining its original form.

Some, ironically, had been disposed to the Marines, while the 510th and the 511th CBMU's had been made up. Lt. E. S. Mount took command of the 510th with Lt. (jg) Chas. T. Turner (now Lt. and Officer in Charge), Ensign F. P. Nichols (now Lt. (jg)), and Warrant Officer F. E. Ware, Jr. (now Chief Warrant Officer), comprising the roster of officers.

May 12th, 1943, we again boarded a train, this time for A. B. D. Hueneme, Camp Rousseau, Calif., and arrived on May 13th. Our seven days before leaving for Island X were spent on one more liberty and in getting ready for the final push-off. Booster shots were given and foul weather gear sizes taken. This gave us the idea our destination would be a cold country. In spite of the high morale that was evidenced on embarkation day, we all felt that hollow spot inside us.

We shared our troopship, the MORMACKHAWK, with a Maintenance Battalion, and another Battalion joined us later in another ship. Normal troopship experiences and difficulties followed us all the way to "The Harbor" where we arrived on the stormy day, May 30th. As we came in, the fog was rolling heavy around the mountains and the wind was blowing it so that our faces were cut by the cold. The sight of barracks warmed our hearts to some extent. The general feeling was desolation, and we felt half sick from the trip. We just ached to get our feet on terra firma. After the ship was tied up to the dock, a draft of sixty men was called ashore and put under the command of Warrant Officer Ware. They called us Detachment One.

Not many days passed before Detachment One started going to Island X by plane, by "Yippie" and by sub-chaser. One of the sub-chasers, a trim craft, was knocking off the knots, when off to her port bow loomed a freighter, which failed to return the recognition signals. Of course she was challenged with all guns ready for the word "Fire!" However, the ship soon hoisted the proper identification and it was later recorded that she had signals a day old.

On entering the bay leading to our Island X in the early part of June, no one was very much enthused as it was cold and one of the most desolate looking spots that we had ever seen. We proceeded to the section base, where we were taken to the mess hall for chow and then to a place where we fished about for our sea bags and somewhere to sleep.

The next morning, upon looking over our locality, we sighted, off to the left of the bay, part of a vast mountain range. All the peaks were snow capped and very rugged. To the right, on the other side of the bay, was a volcano, which was said to shoot up puffs of smoke every twenty minutes. We later learned that the country was full of wild animals: Kodiak bears, caribou, ptarmigan, porcupine and several varieties of fox. Fishing became one of the main spare time

hobbies and one could hunt after obtaining the proper license. During their time of migrating, thousands of ducks and geese swarmed around the bay.

As relief for those of the 23rd Construction Battalion, we soon proved we could finish any job we were assigned. There was the customary griping at some of the jobs we had to do and close examination and comment on what the previous units had completed on the base. Everything went fine (confused as was the setup most places) until men started going out to other small outposts. At "The Cove" we enjoyed immensely the chow and the fact that we could get something to eat whenever we wanted. An extra snack came in very well after some of the more strenuous jobs were finished. Duty was rugged at "The Point" and just the opposite at "The Cove." Some of the boys patched up old craft or painted the bottoms of these same boats. General reconditioning of the various workshops was made. The crew was very small but adequate for that particular spot.

One of the main things of interest that was missing at "The Point" but existant at "The Cove," was a small civilian population, which derived its living from the local fish cannery. Aleut Indians, who made their living by working at the cannery during the season, helped add a little color to our bleak world. There were a few stores that we could explore for souvenirs, even though we very seldom found any. We attended the village theatre in spite of the fact a number of the pictures were old and did not have sound. It was interesting to watch the boatloads of salmon coming in and the way they were canned. Such was "The Cove."

At a small island some of us helped put in a well, a boat house, and ran skids to the ocean, to facilitate landing. More power lines were added and other utilities enlarged. This island was classified as "the best duty." The living quarters had been built by the C. A. A. and we boasted the only known bath tubs in the islands.

Everything from chimneys to water mains were put in at D-1's main base. Our own shops were constructed, thereby making working conditions better inside and also improving the general looks of the premises as the old buildings were torn down. There was the reinforcing of the water tower done in good time and under capable hands and there were the loading details, which became more and more prevalent previous to our departure from the base. Some of the jobs were dirtier than the others, but had to be done. There were the generator watches, pump watches and security watches. Then of course there were the regular departments, such as the electrical, the plumbing, the garage and transportation, sheet metal, carpentry and welding. However, not all of us had something to do in our line, so we were doomed to do our bit on other details. All in all, we carried on considerable maintenance work and were commended on the splendid job accomplished. The Captain of the base said that he believed there wasn't anything our unit couldn't do. We were also commended on the skillful handling of an aircraft which had been damaged in the vicinity.

November 23rd, 1943, found Detachment One aboard ship and heading up the Island Chain. We were sadly interrupted about the second day out, aboard the ....., when she received a distress signal. Immediately our new course was set in the opposite direction and we started clipping off the knots as fast as possible. We traveled all of one night, all day, and it was the next evening in the fog, which was being blown about terrifically, that we sighted the half of a vessel that was still floating. She was the remains of one of the 10,000-ton Liberty ships. The stern was still floating when we came abreast of her heaving hulk, and the American Flag was still tossing her colors at the storm. We first spied her off our port bow and passed her on that side about 500 yards distant. She looked like a ghost ship with her stern sticking high out of the water. We searched her decks with a spotlight but there was no one aboard. Rope ladders hung evident over her sides, so the spotlight was kept going continuously over the rough surface of the water in hopes that the one last life-boat or raft might be located. The water was searched all night but as dawn announced itself, a terrible storm came up, and all we could do was ride the tempest through. We heard later that another small craft had picked up the remaining survivors. They would not have lasted long in the storm as the water was ice-cold, thereby narrowing one's chances of living. From then on we proceeded normally to our final Island X, which like our previous base, was like being in another world. No sunshine, no trees, and on this place there were no animals. There was hardly a break in the cloudy formations and the rolling fog. One redeeming factor that favored life on these islands was the scarcity of diseases which is so detrimental to progress in other theatres or fighting fronts. Consequently the man hours lost, due to sickness, was incredibly low.

Moving became one of the outstanding features of our life on this last desolation, and we began looking

Top picture at the right is an assembly of carpenters busy on desks, tables, and many other needs of the Navy. Clockwise are G. J. Salvetti, Chief L. W. Ray, J. C. Tillery, T. C. Price, A. J. Larson, W. A. McGrath, R. L. Turner, F. L. Danielson, R. Hoyt and F. J. Otis.

Surrounded by signs—D. H. Kruse and W. D. Swingle.

In the lower scene are the shipfitters: Left to right are: J. B. Stogsdill, J. G. Jones, R. I. Elmquist, E. F. Lambrecht, E. W. Chandler, L. Z. Reeves, Chief R. C. Higby, C. W. Sackett, D. D. Padon, Chief W. Purvis and C. Yuckert. Kneeling on the floor is Chief V. A. Chez.

forward to it, as a baby bird does in learning to fly.

Detachment Two, under Ensign Nichols, landed on their Island X just before nightfall on June 3rd. There was no dock and the landing of all personnel and gear was made by barge. From the harbor there were very few signs of life visible and the whole outlook was rather dismal. But by morning it was obvious that it was a snug little station. Though it was slightly crowded for a while, within a few weeks several new huts and a new head made everything more convenient.

During June and July the majority of the group were employed either on construction of a range station or on the ill-fated highway, which was supposed to be a supply route. Road construction on this island was not an easy task and many difficulties were encountered. Notable among these was the deep ford at Fish Creek, where trucks, jeeps, command cars and tractors were frequently "drowned." Only the highest praise is due the crew which toiled for two months to finish this road, only to have great stretches of it made useless by blowing beach sand and by the fickle creek, which couldn't decide from one day to the next where it's channel should be.

Actually, all the material for the range station had to be transported five miles by pontoon barge, an amphibious operation of no small consequence. All the lumber, cement, steel, pre-fabricated buildings, and other equipment were loaded and unloaded by hand without damage. Everything was pulled up a steep muddy hill by two small "cats." Coarse aggregate for concrete was hauled across treacherous tundra by tractor and trailer and was loaded by hand. All the men deserve all the credit in the world for making this job a success.

The history of this Island X should not leave out the famous Motor Pool Garage, the largest and most imposing building on the island. Compared to the rest of the base, this building stood out like the Grand Central Station.

Recreation facilities were strictly limited, but the fishing was good in the numerous streams and in the bay. The 510 helped to maintain the interest in softball, but the ball park was rather remote and the soft sand made base running difficult. The infrequent movies in the mess hall averaged about five years of age and most of them were second rate.

After the completion of the range station it was obvious that the station was doomed. First the four erection experts were detached, and a couple of weeks later, thirty men were ordered by ComAlSec to "The Harbor." Then in late September an LST arrived and the entire station turned to on the job of loading aboard everything useful on the island. Everything was left desolate and stripped.

Detachment Three, headed by Lt. E. S. Mount and Lt. (jg) Chas. T. Turner, was taken to their base by small boat. The reason was the lack of docking facilities and the strong tidal current in the channel separating two islands. This has been called the most rapid tidal current in the world, running as it does between the Pacific Ocean and the Bering Sea.

Our gear was loaded aboard a barge which came alongside, some of the crew accompanying it ashore. However, it proved we were due for a long wait, during which time we were to get our first taste of a Willi-Waw. A 40-knot gale sprang up, causing the ship to drag anchor. The crew ran a ten inch hawser to a buoy, but this snapped like a string under the pressure, so the engines were started and for four hours the crew struggled with the ship, trying to get in the lee of a nearby cove, for the wind made it impossible to turn around. About 2130 we were loaded aboard a "Yippie" for the twelve mile run to "The Point." Arriving at midnight, we were loaded aboard trucks for the remainder of our journey to the camp area. There in the middle of the night, by the light of a single automobile, we searched through a multitude of sea bags trying to identify our own. After falling into numerous fox holes, fire holes and ditches, we finally managed to find a hut and get to bed.

We had had our first taste of Island X, and the following day moving started in earnest, various "cliques" trying to find housing together. This settled, we were given our respective assignments. We found that the immediate projects to complete were a large hangar, a recreation hall, a range station many miles from our base, and a large amount of maintenance to be carried on. A group of men was assigned to the range station, given sleeping bags, tools, and several days' supply of food.

At the site, part of the crew set about building living quarters, while the balance began to assemble the construction material which had been delivered. This project was completed under the worst working conditions, both at the site and in the process of supplying the men. The full distance was over tundra, marshes, and almost impassable ravines. Numerous streams had to be forded, and one especially, was quite dangerous and caused many mishaps and delays. The men suffered all the hardships of an isolated outpost, and carried on most of their work in mud up to their shoe tops.

Top picture is a "shot" underneath the dispensary, which had to be raised due to settling. From the left—J. O. Conrow, L. P. Adamsen, Chief L. R. Gullion and J. E. Fountain.

Middle and bottom "pics" show R. Hoyt and R. L. Turner working on the housing of refrigeration units.

Building a bridge—J. H. Head and F. C. Lenhart. Chief L. R. Gullion stands by.

About the time this range station was completed, a survey was finished for a thirty-mile dual telephone line. This project offered even greater obstacles than on the previous job as poles had to be hauled and distributed at all points along the line. Some of the holes had to be blasted out of solid rock, while others were set in muck that filled as fast as dug out. Weather conditions were very bad most of the time, but the lines were completed and put in operation.

Work had been progressing on the hangar project and was nearing completion at about the same time. An interesting feature of the hangar project was the fact that it contained enough lumber to build seven six-room cottages with a fence around a six-acre plot in addition to carloads of heavy timber.

We were assigned the building of a small radio station with housing facilities for the men. This was another job well done. In the meantime the recreation job had been progressing, and use of the building was started. It was complete with barber shop, gym, ships service, and a snack bar. Among the last projects that we completed was an officers' club, an addition to the administration building, heads, and other units.

The maintenance crew had been connecting oil barrels to all the stoves, changing the water system in the mess hall, laying new concrete floors in the scullery and men's head, building storm entrances to huts and buildings, adding electrical lines, and repainting the buildings. All cargo brought aboard by the Navy had to be unloaded by gangs from our crews. This often entailed the working of many men half a night or longer in addition to their day's work.

Work in the inclement weather, day after day, was something of a feat. Many times crews were broken out of peaceful slumber to work the night out. Muster and inspection in front of the administration building was one of our weekly chores on our day off, then fire drill or battle tactics and the rest of the day was at our disposal.

Spare time was spent at various attractions. Fishing was at its best in the numerous streams and ocean fishing parties were conducted each week by the Chaplain. Soft ball was popular, although a rather wet game on the islands. For indoor sports there was the gymnasium, card tables ("Galloping Dominoes"). Some preferred hiking along the beaches or in the nearby mountains, which were covered with abundant flowers such as Lupine and Poppies. The mountains were beautiful but rugged. Some of the peaks reached up to several thousand feet and many of them were covered with a layer of black cinders, indicating an active volcano in the past. An island appropriately named "Shiprock," towered some five hundred feet from the channel.

Wildlife was of a great many varieties and in numbers approaching the skeptical. Caribou roamed the hills in herds of from five or ten to herds of two hundred. Reports have been made of groups of as many as one thousand. Foxes were to be found on all parts of the island, so tame they would eat out of one's hand. The ever present sparrow, eagles, and ravens comprised most of the bird life, outside of the homely sea-gull. Thousands of geese and duck flew over during migrating season.

The first part of October, half of our unit was ordered to the "Harbor" to work with the 85th Construction Battalion and about one month later the remainder was also ordered there, to assemble and head west. Considerable work was completed for the 85th during our two months under their jurisdiction.

The 40 men from D-2 were the first of the 510th Maintenance Unit to invade final Island X. When they arrived, they were immediately transferred to the 86th Constrution Battalion and from then until December 20, 1943, were officially attached to that battalion. Aside from living together in tents about a half mile from the head, this group was shuffled into the 86th and practically lost its identity as a unit. However, in mid-November they were joined by the groups from D-3 and the "Harbor" and in early December, the D-1 detachment arrived. By this time, however, the unit was already split again, this time into three groups. Upwards of half of the unit had begun their duties at "The Bay." A group of men had moved to "The Lagoon" and the rest were fighting the snow and mud on the so-called Pneumonia Hill.

The main function of the station at "The Bay" was the fueling of ships which was carried on by the 510th. Fueling ships called for working at all hours and in all kinds of weather. All the men who worked on this detail were highly commended.

At "The Bay" we performed quite a few jobs worth mentioning, and as is usual in many places, the officers' club was something out of this world conceived by the usual "Can Do" ingenuity that developed out of our excellent group of designers, carpenters, painters, and plumbers. Another interesting job, which was completed at "The Bay" was the moving of the dispensary from one side of the station to the other. It was interesting watching the quonset huts and the buildings traveling the roads like gigantic trailer houses.

At "The Lagoon" there were a few interesting jobs going on. The main one was the maintenance of two large runways, which required the services of many of our men. Keeping the runways level and the "shoulders" up was rather difficult, as the earth underneath the "bedding" thawed, or became soggy due to permeation of water. As fast as holes or irregularities occurred, sand was dumped on the spot. "Bomb Buggies," were used as hoists to lift up small sections of the matting, letting the sand fall through. Extra material was then graded off.

Two or three small jobs were rather outstanding. The ready room at "Operations," reputed the best of its kind, brought our designer and unit considerable praise. Another job that was of interest was the working stand that was built for the dental office, complete with fountain and drill brackets and plate for holding the instruments. One of the men designed an intricate plate for the Medical X-Ray Department. The plate, made of plexi-glass and inlaid metal numerals, was fixed so that a record could be made on the film of the X-Ray taken.

Then of course there were the many departments of

public works, all contributing their share to the maintenance of the station. The men in every division showed they could do the work assigned.

Entertainment was somewhat better than on our other bases, as we could attend the large theatre, enrich our mind in the library, or make use of the large gym. There were basketball and handball courts and pingpong tables.

A number of our G I days were spent taking military and out on the rifle range. Previously, many of us had gone to school during the evenings, learning more about the 50 calibre machine gun and the 20 mm.

One or two outstanding and unusual accomplishments by groups of 510 men should be mentioned here. The first is the special commendation from Admiral F. E. M. Whiting, ComA1Sec, to Arne Hoff, A. B. Fuller, R. A. Lutz, and O. L. Jahnke, for their work in connection with the erection of three range stations. The last job was accomplished in the dead of winter under the most adverse conditions.

Three other 510-ers had a strange trip from "The Bay" at final Island X to Seattle on the stern section of a Liberty ship which had broken in two in an Alaskan storm. These men, E. F. Lambrecht, J. A. Gierke and L. G. Woodard, stood engine room watches and kept steam up for the entire trip, lasting nearly a month. From December until April the crippled ship lay in harbor at "The Bay," and to these men, to CPO's A. A. Straub and V. A. Chez, and to M. P. Rivette, J. C. Wilkinson, and E. P. Kinney, is due all the credit for upkeep of the ship's fine engine room, during the time she lay in the harbor.

And so the days, the months, and finally a year passed. Celebration of the year we had completed of foreign duty was held at Public Works, where most of our various shops were. Our one great hope, besides the end of the war, was to get home for leave, but we carried on our duties as always, knowing in our hearts that we did contribute a share to a world of peace. Time rolled on towards the end of 1944.

DECLASSIFIED

ITINERARY OF CONSTRUCTION BATTALION MAINTENANCE UNIT #810

1st Tour of Duty

3 May 1943 - Transferred from CBRD Parks to Hueneme.

29 May 1943 - Sailed for Alaska.

2 Jun 1943 - Arrived Atka, Alaska.

Jun 1943 - Moved to Cold Bay from Dutch Harbor.

Aug 1943 - 2 Companies at Otter Point; 2 Companies at Cold Bay; 2 Companies at Atka.

Oct 1943 - Part transferred to 85th CB; remainder at Cold Bay and Adak.

Dec 1943 - All at Adak.

24 Sep 1944 - Unit left for U.S.

6 Oct 1944 - Arrived CBRD Parks.

2nd Tour of Duty

6 Mar 1945 - Transferred from CBRD Camp Parks to Acorn TraDet, Hueneme.

24 Mar 1945 - Departed ABD Hueneme for overseas with Acorn 50.

15 Apr 1945 - Arrived Saipan.

1 Aug 1945 - Located at Saipan.

NOTE: This itinerary based on records available in the CB Operations and Personnel Section, Bureau of Naval Personnel.

30 August 1945.

To Facilitate Administrative Handling Classification changed from: CONFIDENTIAL

To: RESTRICTED

[illegible] Rasmussen
[illegible]C-V(S), USNR

Signature

NO LOGO AVAILABLE