

SIXTH BRIGADE

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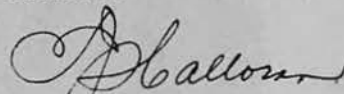
Capt. R. E. Bassler, CEC, USN, Ret.
DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL INSTITUTE DEVELOPMENT
University Of Tampa Tampa 6, Fla.



This book in years to come should serve as a reminder of the great bond of friendship and personal association that were such vital factors in the accomplishments of our Brigade. The work of the 6th Brigade on Tinian was unique in that the magnitude of several major projects dictated a close harmony and a smoothly coordinated activity of many men from several Battalions and even from a group of Regiments in the round-the-clock field associations. Realization of the timely completion of two of the largest airfields and one of the best small harbors in the Pacific attested the splendid character of that perfect teamwork. It is my belief and faith that these bonds and associations will continue long after the 6th Brigade is inactivated.

The accomplishment of the impossible in such important projects for the support of the long range bombers is a great tribute to the integrity, the industry, and the unselfishness of every officer and man of this construction unit. Each and every man should and does take more than ordinary pride in his direct contribution to the war effort. When you return to your normal peacetime occupation, there is no doubt that the examples manifested by your Tinian performances will assist in making the world a better place and you may honestly feel that your personal sacrifices have had a definite influence on the early termination of the war.

It is an excellent opportunity to express the appreciation of the 6th Brigade for the constant inspiration given us by our Chief, Vice Admiral Ben Moreell, (CEC), USN, and for the cheerful and forceful leadership of his representative in the Pacific, Rear Admiral C. H. Cotter, (CEC), USN. Without this support success would not have been possible. May I offer to all my sincere and hearty congratulations on a enviable record and on a mission well done. My affiliations with the men of the 6th Brigade will always be held as one of the highlights of my experiences.



P. J. HALLORAN
Commodore, CEC, USN
Brigade Commander

TASK ON TINIAN

by H. F. Mertens



They sat around a conference table in Washington --- or it may have been Cairo or Teheran --- and they studied the maps and the charts.

"From here," somebody said, "we can reach the heart of Japan. With air bases here, we can break the back of Japan's war industries, we can take the war to the people who started it.

Then he added thoughtfully: "With bases here - we can shorten the war."

His finger pointed at a cluster of tiny islands 15 hundred miles from Tokyo---the Marianas. And he particularly indicated three of those islands: Guam, Saipan---and Tinian.

Guam, the largest, had been wrested from us by Japan in the early days of the war. Saipan had long been a key island for Japan in both a military and a commercial way. From it, Japan controlled vast areas of her ill-gotten South Seas empire.

But for us, Tinian was to play the greatest part, greater than either of the others, as an air base for dealing immediate death and destruction to the Japanese home islands, where it would hurt most.

And that is why, several months after the decision was made, the Seabees came to Tinian.

On the morning of July 24, 1944, United States Marines hit the beaches of Tinian under a terrific aerial and naval bombardment, and with the Marines were Seabees of specially trained assault patrols.

Seabees started their task on Tinian early. In the first three days of the attack on the island, 15 hundred Seabees stormed ashore. Later, this number grew to a peak of 15 thousand.

From the very beginning, the job of transforming this island of cane fields and banana trees---and Jap pillboxes---into the mightiest American military air base has been an all-Seabee job. All major construction, from start to finish, has been accomplished by Seabees of the Sixth U. S. Naval Construction Brigade, commanded by a veteran career man of the Navy's Civil Engineer Corps---Commodore Paul J. Halloran.

The principal Seabee task on Tinian was to build super airfields for those super airplanes, the B29's---a lot of fields, in a hurry.

The plateaus and gentle hills of the tiny island (38 square miles) made it a "natural" for an air base. Writing in the December 23, 1944, issue of the Saturday Evening Post, John Bishop wound up his story on the Battle of Tinian by describing this island as "the finest potential

air base in the Central Pacific."

Two days before Mr. Bishop's words appeared, Seabees already had transformed the "potential" into reality in a big way. On December 21, three giant B29 Superforts swept down from a clear blue Pacific sky and landed on the first completed 8,500-foot runway---the first of many such strips and the first of many such planes to make their appearance here. That initial Superfort strip was completed with typical Seabee speed---11 full days ahead of schedule.

Though it was the first "super" strip, that was not the first landing strip completed by Seabees on Tinian. At 7 a.m. on July 27, 1944, three days after the first assault waves hit the island, orders came from Saipan to repair the just-captured Jap airfield at Ushi Point for the evacuation of wounded. A sudden storm prevented the removal of casualties by sea as planned. The field then was so full of bomb craters a Piper Cub could not have landed there. With only eight trucks, nine bulldozers and two tandem rollers, augmented by hastily repaired Jap equipment, the Seabees had the field ready for the first plane less than 24 hours after the repair order was given. Three hundred wounded men were removed by C-47 transport planes that first day. Evacuation by air continued until August 19.

The first "all-American" runway built on the island was started September 25 and put into use after only 45 days and nights of around-the-clock operations. Six thousand feet long, it involved the moving of a million cubic yards of coral and was built primarily for Navy patrol bombers and fighter planes.

At this writing, one year after the first American troops set foot on Tinian, the island's development as an airport strains your imagination---even when you see it. It is larger than Mayor LaGuardia's proposed Idlewild field on Long Island, which Fortune magazine (issue of April, 1945) says will be the "biggest airport in the world" in 1947. The little Flower will have to expand his plans, or else turn a couple of hundred Seabees loose on the project, if he wants to make good the claim---because Tinian's facilities now surpass Idlewild's expectations of two years in the future.

Tinian's airport is split into two parts, known simply and undramatically as North Field and West Field. One section alone exceeds Idlewild. Together they more than double the Long Island dream.

Look at these comparisons:

	<u>Length of runways and taxiways</u>	<u>Width of runways</u>
<u>Idlewild</u>	14.5 mi.	300 ft.
<u>Tinian North</u>	19.9 mi.	500 ft.
<u>Tinian West</u>	19.2 mi.	425 ft. to 500 ft.

Taxiways of the New York and Tinian fields are the same width---100 feet.

Theoretically, planes will be able to land and take off at the Idlewild field at the rate of 360 and hour---six every minute. On the same theoretical basis, planes can land and take off at Tinian at the rate of 480 an hour---eight every minute.

The Seabees had to blast, haul, shove around and pack down a lot of coral to build strips of such gigantic size. Almost overnight they mowed down hills that happened to be in the way, and carved young "grand canyons"---coral pits---all over the island. Dull booms reverberated constantly as coral was blasted in more than a score of quarries and on the airdrome site itself. Tinian coral, hard but porous, required the placing of dynamite charges close together. The quake-and-quiver boys on wagon drills and jack hammers drilled as many as 12,000 holes to place that many charges of dynamite for a single blast.

Cuts on the airstrip sites required the moving of 3,827,800 cubic yards of coral. Fills required another 8,087,400 cubic yards. The total---11,915,200 cubic yards of coral---is equal in volume to more than three Boulder Dams.

If used for road building, the coral would be the equivalent of a two-lane finished earth highway from New York City to Cleveland, Ohio.

Asphalt surfacing (6,790,000 square yards) is enough to pave a highway from Boston, Massachusetts to Washington, D. C.

In Camp Churo, where they are interned, the island's Japanese civilians got an idea of what was going on. The speed with which the Seabees changed the face of the island amazed them, so great was the contrast to Japanese construction methods, which relied more on slow hand labor than on machines.

Even some of the Tokyo-bred Jap civilians, whose stubborn insistence that the Nipponese would re-take Tinian hung on a long time, finally admitted the Americans would keep the island and, maybe, win the war. "Big scoops" they gave as the reason for the American superiority, meaning the giant carry-alls, the fleet of trucks, the bulldozers, the power shovels, and all the other Seabee con-

struction equipment.

At the peak of the construction, "big scoops" in use included 450 trucks, 55 power shovels, 50 power graders, 125 giant carry-alls or "pans," 150 tractors and bulldozers, 75 wagon drills, 12 well-drilling rigs and 120 air-compressors.

Though it seemed an amazing amount of equipment to Japanese eyes, it really was not enough. To get the job done, and done on time, the Seabees had to make every truck, every bulldozer, work to the limit of its capacity---and beyond. Marston mats were used to build truck sides higher, so they would hold more coral. Machine shops were set up alongside the runways, to make repairs immediately. Tire men battled the most persistent cause of breakdowns---tire trouble, caused by the jagged coral, which cut heavy duty treads to shreds. As a preventive measure, they rigged a device consisting of an endless steel cable to knock out rocks caught between dual tires, without stopping the truck.

Day and night the endless stream of trucks shuffled at high speed between coral pits and runways on special "haul roads," guarded by bronzed Seabees wearing the "SP" arm bands of Shore Patrol authority. And woe to the man, no matter what his rate or rank, who turned on to a haul road when he didn't belong there.

One morning two Negro members of an Army port battalion, driving a truck for another purpose, inadvertently turned on to a haul road from an out of the way lane. They tried to turn off when they discovered their error, but to the SP's a truck was a truck, and they belligerently waved the objecting soldiers back into line. The entire morning, until all the drivers stopped for noon show, they unwillingly hauled coral for the Seabees!

Even Jap snipers along dark stretches of road failed to halt the coral-hauling. Only air raids, when the whole island blacked out, temporarily stopped the steady stream of trucks.

But it was more than quantities of equipment and more than hard labor, night and day, around the clock, in good weather and foul, that built Tinian. It was fighting spirit, if you want to call it that, a high determination to get the job done---fast. Here was one project for which every man knew there was an immediate, urgent need. The sooner it was finished, the sooner the silver sky giants would be dropping bombs on Tokyo, on Yokohama, on all the places where it would hurt Japan most. And the sooner Japan could be hurt hard, the faster Hirohito's backyard could be burned and blasted, the sooner the imperial Japanese war lords might "catch" on that they're whipped---and the sooner Seabees and everybody else could go home.

From the time the first B-29 landed on the first strip, a strong feeling of kinship developed between the grizzled old Seabees, the earthborne builders, and the eager young Army fliers, the air-borne warriors. Seabees "sponsored" the gleaming

goliaths of the air and "adopted" their crews. Every Seabee outfit on the island had its insignia on a "CB-29." Crews ate and practically lived with the rugged, genial builders. Acquaintances ripened into genuine friendship.

At the commissioning of each strip as many Seabees as possible were included in the first take off, a privilege cherished by all who so positively contributed to making the base a reality.

When the planes headed toward Japan, Seabees watched them roar down the runways and "sweated out" each mission. When a "CB-29" was reported missing, they still lingered at the airport, refusing to believe bad news, hoping against hope that in some way "our boys" would be found.

From Guadalcanal on west through the Pacific, Seabees have been "blood brothers" of the Marines, with whom they shared the invasion of island after island. And here on Tinian, Seabees became "kinfolk" of the Army, too. Cooperation between the services on this island has been a living, human reality.

B-29's were flying from Tinian long before existence of the base was officially announced. Then, the announcement came at the time of the bloody Iwo invasion and did not create much of a public stir. Even now, the phrase in the communique, "Marianas based," still seems to mean only Saipan and Guam to many readers and to some State-side editors. But the Seabee-built base on Tinian, the biggest airport in the world, is by far the most important springboard for the devastating air blitz which already has wiped out city after city on the Japanese homeland.

When you build a airdrome of the magnitude of Tinian's, you have to do more than level off a few million yards of coral for landing fields. You have to build everything else that goes with the landing fields, too.

Bomb dumps, for instance---to store the lethal stuff the B-29's drop on Japan. Seabees built facilities for storing many thousands tons of trouble for Tokyo.

And tank farms---to store the juice that runs the planes. Seabees built gasoline and oil storage tanks to hold millions of gallons, and the pipe lines required for transferring the fuel from one area to another.

At the airfields themselves, 942 separate structures were built---control towers, gun towers, quonset huts, warehouses. In addition, living quarters for thousands of garrison and air corps personnel were erected---plus chapels, galleys, mess halls, heads, and all the other buildings military camps require.

Hospitals for both the Army and Navy, with a capacity of 7,000 beds, were built.

Seabees dug 39 wells, now producing 1,400,000 gallons of fresh water daily. A sewage system with 50 miles of pipes now is under construction.

Seventy miles of coral roads, 20 feet wide, have

been constructed, of which 15 miles consist of dual-strip, four-lane super highways. The main roads are getting an asphalt top. (New Yorkers have an easy time finding their way around Tinian. Commodore Halloran named all the roads after the streets of Manhattan).

To provide surfacing for the runways and roads, Seabees built two asphalt plants, with a capacity of 3,400 tons a day.

One battalion salvaged battle-damaged Japanese generating equipment to put together a 700-kilowatt power plant to supply electric power for several units on the island. An all-island plant of 6,000 kilowatt capacity is to be erected.

Seabees on Tinian were among the first Americans to bump into the problem which will grow as we get closer to Tokyo---that of caring for large numbers of enemy civilians. Arriving on the island during the assault phase, three days before the first civil affairs officer, a Seabee detachment provided the first food and shelter for captured Japanese and Korean civilians and helped set up Camp Churo, now housing over 11,000 men, women, and children.

The largest single job outside the actual airfield construction, a major project which required as much steel as 10 destroyers, is still clothed in military secrecy.

As the most important work was finished, the Seabees turned their bulldozers and skill to making the island "civilized." Fifty theaters now show nightly movies or stage performances. "Play ball!" rings from a score of diamonds. Volley ball and basketball courts abound, some of them lighted for night games. Bronzed men play on a dozen or more tennis courts, and swim at four supervised bathing beaches. There are five boxing rings, and several small but completely equipped gymnasiums for individual exercise. And there are nine "hobby lobby" shops, equipped with lathes, drills and other tools; for a good many Seabees, like the proverbial postman, make their work their play.

Along with the world's largest airport, the Seabees thus brought to Tinian the unmistakable marks of American civilization.

Ask any Seabee what outfit he's in and he'll give you the number of his battalion. This is the basic unit of Seabee organization. Frequently a single battalion is the only construction outfit on an island. Battalion officers and men often acquire a strong and healthy feeling of independence and pride in their own outfits.

The higher echelons, regiments and brigades, are fluid organizations, created as the need arises to coordinate the work of several battalions. The 15 thousand Seabees who swarmed to Tinian by the end of December were members of 12 Construction Battalions, one Special (Stevadore) Battalion, and one dredging detachment.

To co-ordinate the efforts of all these separate units, to keep everybody's eye on the main goal, was the job of Commodore Halloran and his staff.

To break down the administrative function further, first one Construction Regiment was established---the 29th, with Commander Marvin Y. Neely as officer in charge. Then another regiment, the 30th, was set up, with Commander Jonathan P. Falconer as officer in charge. Later, a third regiment, the 49th, was established, with Commander Thomas H. Jones as officer in charge.

For years after the war, at veterans' meetings and impromptu bar-room "conventions," the Seabees who were on Tinian will argue long and loud about which outfit did what. In fact, the arguments already have started.

The truth is that all battalions and all units did everything. In all its multifarious phases, the Seabee task on Tinian was handled by the Commodore and his administrative staff as one big job. Equipment of all the units was pooled. Men of all units, too, were considered as being one body of highly skilled American craftsmen. Equipment and men were thrown into whatever phase of the job they were needed most---much as a combat commander throws tanks, guns and men into the line.

For Seabees, the battle was against the most relentless of all enemies---Time. To be sure, they fought the physical enemy, too: the first Seabees on the island felt the fury of Jap grenades and shellfire; nearly all knew the crack of bullets from snipers hidden in caves and cane fields, and the danger of death raining from the skies. But the biggest enemy was intangible---Time. Original deadlines were "impossible." Then these were shortened. Then the construction program was expanded---and dates for completion set still closer.

But the Seabees met---and beat---all the deadlines. The first B-29 landed less than five months after the first Seabees hit the island with the attacking Marines. The last Superfort strip was "christened"---by bombers roaring off to Japan---on May 5, this year. Along with the major deadlines, a thousand minor but important goals were reached on time---or ahead of time. A new camp for airmen had to be set up on 24 hours notice. A stretch of road had to be built overnight. New bomb revetments had to be prepared in a hurry, to handle the cargo of a ship coming into the harbor. So it went, with each day bringing new demands and resulting in new achievements.

With justified satisfaction, the Seabees have watched their great labors on Tinian pay off in a big way, as the mass Superfort raids on Japan have risen in ever-increasing tempo and fury. The Seabees have made the prophecies of the men around the conference table come true.

Planes flying from this base have broken the back of Japan's war industries. The bitterness of war has been taken to the very homes of the people who started it.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

As the task of the Seabees on Tinian neared completion, Commodore Halloran, with a skeleton staff consisting of Commander G. Gans, Commander J. Falconer, Commander T. Jones, Commander J. Beville and Lieutenant Commander E. Grable left for Pearl Harbor on 5 July, 1945, to plan for the next operation of the Brigade, which at that time had been assigned to it. Later, Commander T. J. White with the remaining officers of the Brigade Planning Staff followed. Subsequently, Commodore Halloran was designated as Commander of Naval Construction Troops for this proposed new operation, the scale and tempo of which gave promise of reaching record proportions. Commander Neely was given additional duty as Acting Officer-in-Charge of the Brigade, with Lieutenant W. Pinkerton, as Acting Executive Officer.

Meanwhile, the Seabees of the Sixth Brigade continued to do the job assigned them. On 15 August, 1945, after several anxious days of listening to the latest newscasts, the news for which we were all waiting was announced---The Rising Sun Had Set---THE JAPS HAD SURRENDERED! Though we all celebrated, each in his own individual way, we realized

that there was still a job to be done on Tinian and we continued our task---completing all of the assigned construction which provides full facilities for operations on the Island including the tremendous airfield installations, with the necessary fuel storages and ammunition dumps; a fine protected harbor with steel pile cellular breakwater; paved roads; water supply system; and a central electrical power installation.

Following the surrender of Japan, we were informed that the contemplated new operation for the Brigade was cancelled and that (other than the 38th Battalion which was assigned duty with the occupation forces) the Brigade, Regiments and Battalions, with all the assigned construction completed, as of September 25, 1945, were to prepare for inactivation.

For the officers and men of the Sixth U. S. Naval Construction Brigade and of the 29th, 30th, & 49th Regiments---the headquarters "family"---this booklet has been prepared as a personal souvenir, a reminder for the years to come of friends and events, and of the part each played in building the biggest airport in the world, in accomplishing the Seabee Task on Tinian.



THE END

Our Skipper, Commodore Paul J. Halloran, CEC, was the original Commanding Officer of the Sixth U. S. Naval Construction Brigade upon its activation. With him, he brought a record of an officer having thorough knowledge and practical experience as a construction engineer, and a long record of successful achievement in the Navy.

Commodore Halloran was born in Massachusetts, in 1898, subsequently all his primary education was had in New York schools. In 1919, he graduated from CE Thayer School of Engineering, at Dartmouth, with a B. S. degree. After his graduation, he held the following positions successively-structural draftsman for Westinghouse Church Kerr & Company; designer for Dwight P. Robinson; and Assistant Chief Designer and Field Superintendent for Standard Oil Company of New York.

In 1921, Commodore Halloran entered the Naval service as a Lieutenant (j.g.), CEC. Progressing through each rank, our Skipper climbed the ladder to Commodore, to which he was advanced on April 3, 1945.

His assignments in the Navy included duty as Public Works Officer at the following stations: Paris Island, South Carolina; Quantico, Virginia; Tutuila, Samoa, and, at Naval Operating Base Newport, Rhode Island. He was also Contract Superintendent at Great Lakes, Illinois, and, later, at the Norfolk Navy Yard, and in addition served in the Republic of Haiti as Department Engineer. In the Navy Yards at Charleston, South Carolina, and, later, at New York, he held the post of Project Superintendent. In 1943 to 1944, he was Officer-in-Charge of the closing out of all cost-plus-a-fixed-fee contracts, Bureau of Yards and Docks and accomplished this important task in record time.

Collateral with his duties as Brigade Commander, Commodore Halloran was Construction Officer on the Staff of Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith, U. S. M. C., during the assaults of Saipan and Tinian for which he received the Legion of Merit "for exceptionally meritorious conduct" and the Presidential Unit Citation. He later received the Gold Star in Lieu of Second Legion of Merit for his accomplishment of the Tinian construction.

Other honors received by Commodore Halloran are the Mason Medal, awarded him in 1943 by the American Concrete Institute for his outstanding contribution to concrete research; and the Haitian Presidential Citation, "Merite et Honneur, Grade de Chevalier", presented to him by the Republic of Haiti. He was also admitted to the Samoa Builders Guild (the agaitupu, Sa Tagaloa family as a Chief with the title "Asofausia"; this award was given for work on the Samoan library and his contribution to Samoan culture.



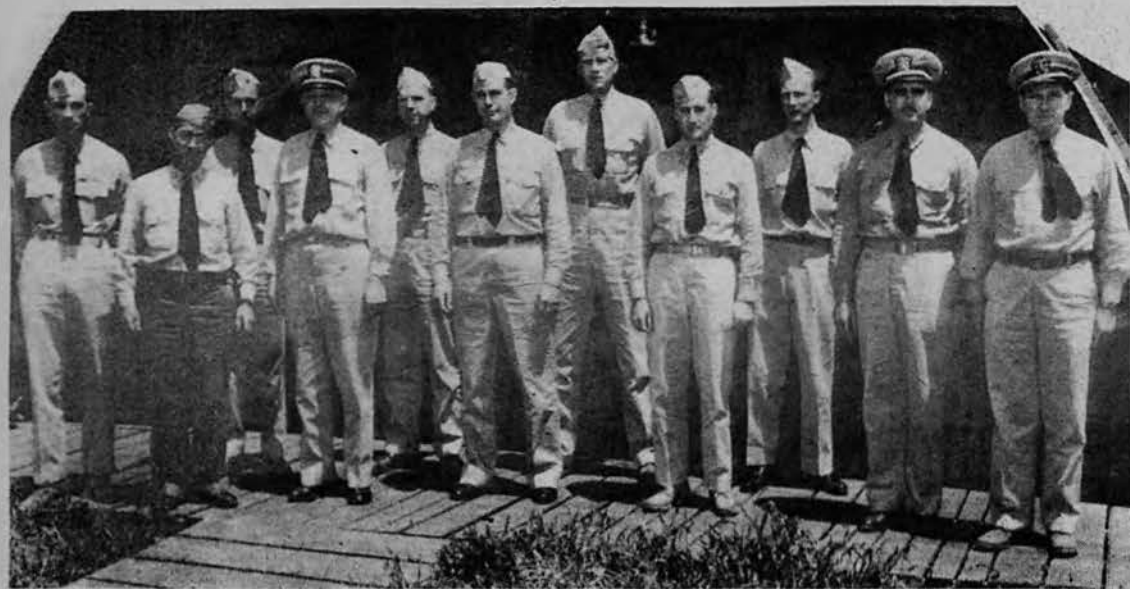
~ PAUL J. HALLORAN ~
COMMODORE C.E.C. U.S.N.

When our Skipper was advanced to Commodore, enlisted men as well as officers of his command celebrated the occasion at Brigade Headquarters and the Island Commander, Brigadier General Frederick V. H. Kimble, USA, pinned the coveted silver star on him.

Football, basketball and gymnastics, including a daily workout on his punching bag, are favorites of our Commander. Wood carving is his featured hobby and he is, also, much interested in the design and development of home craftsman power tools. He is a movie fan as well as an amateur cameraman and often he can be seen "shooting" some Seabee construction or some of the island's natural loveliness.

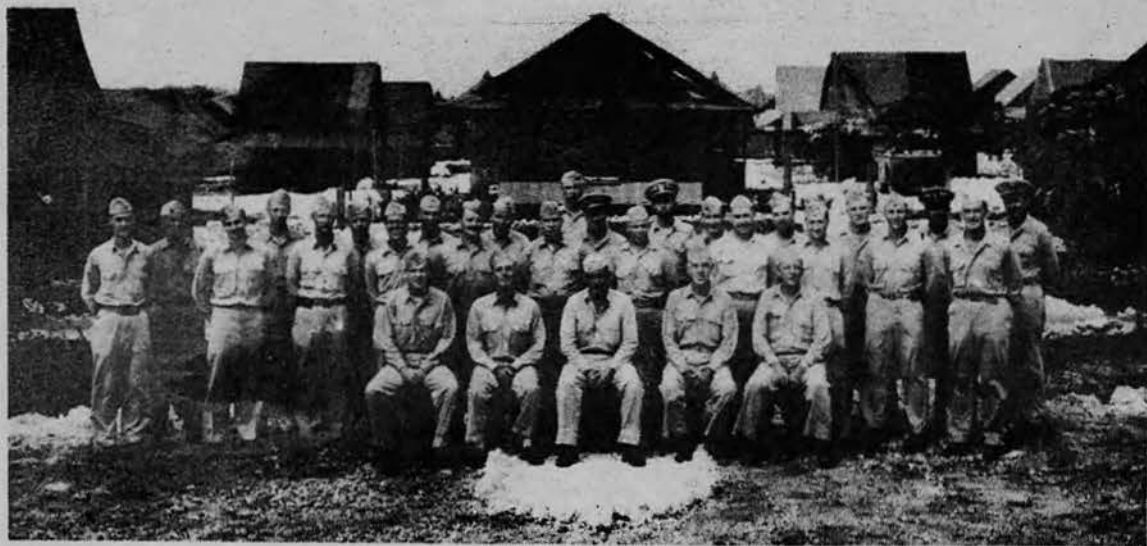
Commodore Halloran's wife, Catherine, his sons, Richard and David, aged 15 and 13 years respectively, and his 11 year old daughter, Joan, await his return at 25 Pell Street, Newport, Rhode Island.

The outstanding accomplishment of the extensive construction program at Tinian has been largely due to the forceful, capable leadership and experienced engineering guidance of the Commodore and marks the climax of the career, to date, of a successful Naval Civil Engineer Corps officer.



*BRIGADE
OFFICERS*

SIXTH BRIGADE PLANNING STAFF - OAHU

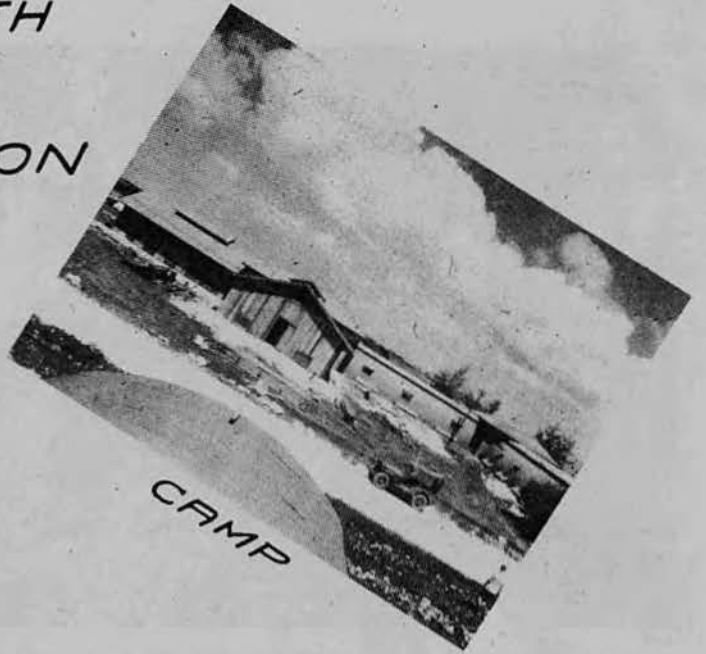


SIXTH BRIGADE STAFF - TINIAN, MARIANAS

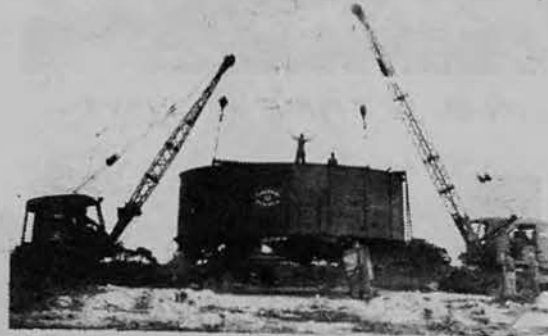
TWENTY-NINTH
REGIMENT
CONSTRUCTION



"BROADWAY"



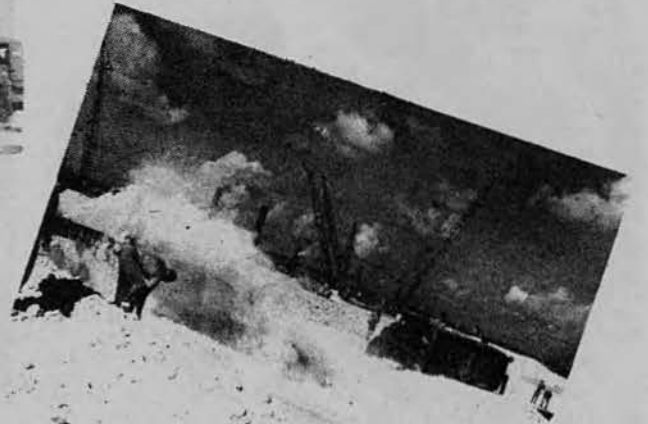
CAMP



TANK FARM



BOMB DUMP



TINIAN HARBOR

The 29th Naval Construction Regiment, as presently constituted, dates from 8 July, 1944, for the organization which was the original 29th Regiment is now the 6th Naval Construction Brigade. The reconstitution of the present Regiment became effective at a time when the newly formed 6th Brigade was enroute to Tinian. Commodore (then Captain) P. J. Halloran, CEC, USN, anticipated this change and, therefore, had selected Commander M. Y. Neely, CEC, USNR, to be Officer-in-Charge.

The original members of the Regimental Staff, and incidentally, who are still with us, are: Commander M. Y. Neely, our Skipper, Lieutenant Commander J. B. Barnwell, our Executive Officer, and Lieutenant J. J. Newman (of the Brigade) our Engineering Operations Officer. During the year we received Lieutenant J. Stubblebine, who was on our roster but was always on temporary duty with the Brigade as Supply Officer until he returned to the States for reassignment, Ensign A. Knutsen, who served as Assistant Operations Officer until he was recalled to his Battalion, and Lieutenant (j.g.) W. Westin and Chief Carpenter D. Brackney who were assigned to the Operations Department for a few months, but since have been reassigned. Recently, Lieutenant P. O'Donnell, Construction Operations Officer (on temporary duty with us) and Lieutenant (j.g.) G. Prothero, Preventative Maintenance Officer, reported aboard. The enlisted personnel (all on temporary duty) include L. Eberhard, CI, K. C. Streibig, CI, L. Williams, I3c, and E. Logan, I2c, who handle the paper work; P. Levy, CSF, who does the procuring and J. Seward, CCM, who works in Operations. H. Unland, E2C, and J. Sherman, CM2c, were assigned to us until recently.

Our first Regimental office was located on a spot which has since been transformed into the largest airfield in the world. We remained there but a short time and then piled our gear and records onto a truck and took off for our second location in the Old Island Command area. Here, Commander Neely, Lieutenant Commander Barnwell and Chief Streibig held down the fort during the days of field telephones, mosquitoes, flies, field rations, air raids, rains and terrific heat. Our third move was to the "little Jap house" where we both lived and worked; we rather enjoyed the privacy of the house, and the garden with the papaya and breadfruit trees, and were amused at the cows, goats, and pigs who always returned "home" to us after their day's activity. Commander Neely, who invariably would bump his head on the low partitions of the house, was the least reluctant to move to our present office in the Brigade area, where we have been situated for almost eight months.

The Regiment first assumed operational control in the field of its battalions on 3 August, 1944, at which time three battalions had landed, and during the following three months we added one full battalion and two special battalions (later merged into one). From the very first, our Regiment was assigned the lead in waterfront work, camp construction and public works, although we have also



been called upon to divert large portions of our heavy equipment and practically all of our dump trucks to the airfields. We constructed all temporary harbor facilities consisting of a cellular breakwater and marginal wharf and piers. Our battalions have constructed about 75 camps, 2 hospitals and are working on 5 more, have been responsible for all construction work to date for the Military Government Camp containing over 10,000 civilians, have dismantled five 200 foot radio towers for future use, and have provided skilled personnel for dismantling the old sugar mill. During the year we built storage for Avgas, Mogas, and Diesel fuel and laid over 25 miles of main pipe line. From the development of existing wells and drilling of new

ones, we have developed a water supply system of 1,500,000 gallons per day capacity. Our battalions also constructed the Naval Supply Depot, an oxygen plant, an acetylene plant, the Army Quartermaster Depot, a refrigerator plant, and Advance Base Construction Depot, the Spare Parts Depot, two bomb dumps, a mine assembly depot, a vulcanizing plant, a joint communications center, the VIR hoisting tower and the Army Airway Communication System. We also constructed 85 miles of primary roads, all of which have been coral surfaced.

Our Regiment has served a very definite purpose in scheduling and coordinating the construction work accomplished by the Seabees of our Battalions on Tinian.

The 30th Naval Construction Regiment was activated on 18 June 1944 with Commander P. J. Falconer CEC, USNR, as Officer in Charge. Since all air-drome construction work had been assigned to this Regiment during the planning of the Tinian operation, the title of "Airfield Construction" Regiment was unofficially tacked on for purpose of local liaison.

The first Regimental Headquarters was located in the 6th Brigade Area of the 67th Naval Construction Battalion Camp at the north end of the island. For the first few weeks Commander Falconer carried on alone until the arrival of Lt. Commander Grable, on about the 18th of August. The early days found the Regiment on a "Super-Streamlined" basis struggling alone in a crude field office consisting of a 16' x 16' tent with one desk, a simplified file system carried in the pockets of Commander Falconer and Lt. Commander Grable, and one yeoman, Dave Marden, who spent most of his time looping for the day when he would be assigned a typewriter. On the first of October the Regiment moved into its present office in the 6th Brigade Area near the Island Command Headquarters.

The staff was subsequently enlarged with additional officer and enlisted personnel on temporary duty assignments from either the Brigade or Battalions. The final roster included the following: Commander J. P. Falconer, Officer in Charge; Lieutenant Commander E. F. Grable, Executive Officer; Lieutenant J. H. McAuliffe, Jr., Operations Officer; and Ensigns R. D. Barry and E. T. Di Berto, Liaison Officer and Adjutant, respectively. The enlisted personnel was comprised of D. J. Marden, Y2c; L. R. Leyendecker, Y3c, and H. E. Overton, Mo/Mlc. O. G. Simpson, S1c, was on board until April, at which time he returned to the states for V-12 training.

The first Battalion of the Regiment to "hit the beach" was the 121st, which landed with the Marine assault-troops, and installed the landing ramps to help the flow of combat supplies and equipment. Ushi Field was repaired and the first fighter landed on 28 July. The 67th Naval Construction Battalion followed the initial assault parties immediately joining forces with the 121st Naval Construction Battalion in extending both ends of the Jap air strip to accommodate Navy heavy bombers.

In mid-August the 1st Separate Engineer Marine Battalion was operationally attached to the Regiment, and their efforts were directed to the reconditioning of West Field Four, a Jap strip here on Tinian. Work continued on surveys, airfields, roads, water facilities, sanitation, camps, hospitals, tank farms, pipe lines, tanker mooring, drainage and other construction items as assigned by the Brigade.

The 110th Naval Construction Battalion arrived from Eniwetok in September and was immediately put to work on the construction of the island's first revetted bomb dump. In the meantime it became imperative to move the Naval Aviation Units at Ushi Field from the Jap strip to West Field in

order that the B-29 program be started at the north end of the island. Approximately one million cubic yards of coral rock had to be moved in the building of an air strip six thousand feet long by four hundred feet wide at West Field to accomplish this transfer of Navy planes--all by 15 November 1944. At the same time the building forces of the Regiment were erecting a three hundred-quonset hut base consisting of quarters, warehouses, shops, mess halls, dispensaries and other types of structures. The Battalions were on a round-the-clock working schedule on a push which continued throughout the complete B-29 program, and never let up until the Battalions left the island.

The 13th and 135th Naval Construction Battalions arrived on Tinian on 24 October 1944 to further augment the forces engaged in the construction of what has been designated the mightiest airdrome the world has ever seen.

The B-29 program was set up in a series of phases, with each Battalion of the Regiment assigned a phase during which it served as the "lead" Battalion in coordinating the construction efforts and field reports of the other Naval Construction

Battalions engaged in the construction of the North Field Airdrome. In quick succession the deadline dates for the eighty-five hundred feet long air strips were met or bettered. Strip #1 with its taxiway and hardstands was completed nine days ahead of schedule, and the first B-29 landed on Tinian on 22 December 1944; on 14 January 1945, strip #3 was dedicated one day ahead of schedule; on 27 February, strip #2 was completed two days ahead of schedule; and finally, on 5 May, strip #4 received its first B-29, twenty-five days ahead of the deadline date.

Coral Pit #16, the largest single quarrying operation on Tinian provided over a million cubic yards of coral for the airdrome, from 25 November 1944 to 23 February 1945. The pit covered fifteen acres of ground and kept twelve large shovels steadily at work.

The Seabees of the 30th Naval Construction Regiment can lay claim to constructing the largest airdrome in the world, and feel proud that they have played a large part in making Tinian a springboard for the greatest force against the homeland of Japan.

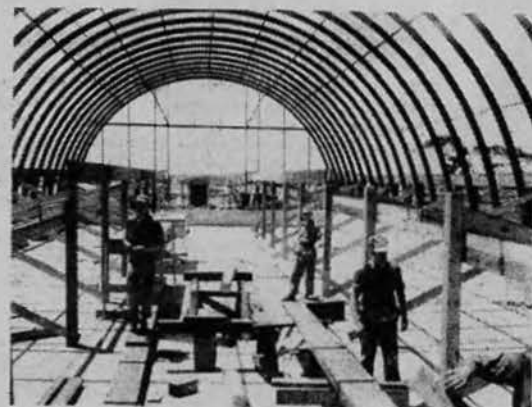


THIRTIETH
REGIMENT

~CONSTRUCTION~



CORAL PIT



QUONSET



"FLAK" TOWER



PREPARATION OF
SUB-GRADE



TAXIWAY CULVERT

Late in 1944 operational demands on the island of Tinian indicated the need for an increase in construction forces to meet the nearly impossible completion dates of all major projects. The Officer in Charge, 6th Naval Construction Brigade requested assignment of additional naval construction battalions to assist in the work. A number of battalions were assigned and arrived just before the new year. Arrival of more units necessitated additional administrative forces so a new regiment was formed to augment the 29th and 30th Naval Construction Regiments already active on the island.

The new regiment was designed to administer two of the battalions that had been working on the island for some time, 9th and 110th Battalions, and two of newly arrived units, 38th and 112th N.C. Battalions. Approval of this reorganization of the 6th Naval Construction Brigade was requested, but in the meantime the regiment went to work under the temporary title of 30th Regiment-Reinforced.

The 30th Regiment-Reinforced began its activities on 1 January 1945 under the direction of Commander Thomas H. Jones, CEC, USNR, formerly Officer in Charge of the 110th Construction Battalion, and was directly concerned with the construction of the West Field Very Long Range Airdrome. This project encompassed construction of two 550' by 8500' runways, 59,900 lineal feet of 100' taxiway, 210 hardstands, 4 harmonization stands, two 300' by 1930' service aprons, four warm-up aprons, five sub-service aprons, two complete engineering and service areas totaling 251 buildings, four camps for service personnel, permanent runway lighting, all of the incidental appurtenances for operation of a full wing of B-29's, and the widening of the existing Navy runway from 150' to 450'. The yardage handled amounted to 3,850,400 cubic yards.

Design and layout was being completed in the engineering office of the 110th Battalion at the time of inception of the regiment so it was possible to begin clearing and surveying on the same day the regiment was formed.

On 8 January 1945 Lieutenant (jg) Elberg J. Tate, CEC, USNR, Engineering Officer of the 110th Battalion reported to the new regiment on temporary duty orders to act as assistant to the Officer in Charge.

Actual full scale operations on the airfield project began on 1 February 1945, West Field #1 was completed and ready for operation on 25 March, and 20 April 1945 West Field #2, taxiways, and service aprons were completed.

Asphalt paving also became the responsibility of the regiment. The 110th Battalion finished erection of crushing and asphalt plant on 19 March 1945, and on 22 March 1945 paving operations began on North Field. Paving has continued throughout the life of the regiment on Tinian, but output was increased by the addition of another plant that went into operations on 30 June 1945.

2 March 1945 marks the official birthday of the 49th Construction Regiment for it was on that day that the arrival of a CinCPAC dispatch announced

the formation of the regiment and signified that it consist of the 9th, 38th, 110th, and 112th Construction Battalions. Ten days later on 12 March 1945 Commander Jones received orders detaching him from the 110th Battalion and designating him as Officer in Charge, 49th Naval Construction Regiment. One month later, on 12 April 1945 Lieutenant (jg) Tate received orders detaching him from the 110th Battalion and assigning him as a staff officer of the 49th Naval Construction Regiment. Lieutenant (jg) Harold E. Ulrich, preventive Maintenance Officer, reported aboard on 16 July 1945. The enlisted personnel, all on temporary duty, included John N. Bittner, CCM, Office Manager, and responsible for field records and quantities and progress reports, R. W. Yelm, SK1c, expediter and stock record clerk, H. W. Feather, Y1c, and William J. Mountz, Y2c, handled the paper work.

Construction demands in more forward areas began to eat on the structure of the regiment when the 9th Battalion was detached for a forward move on 25th of May to be assigned to the 39th Naval Construction Regiment. The 112th Battalion was detached for a similar reason on 5 July 1945.

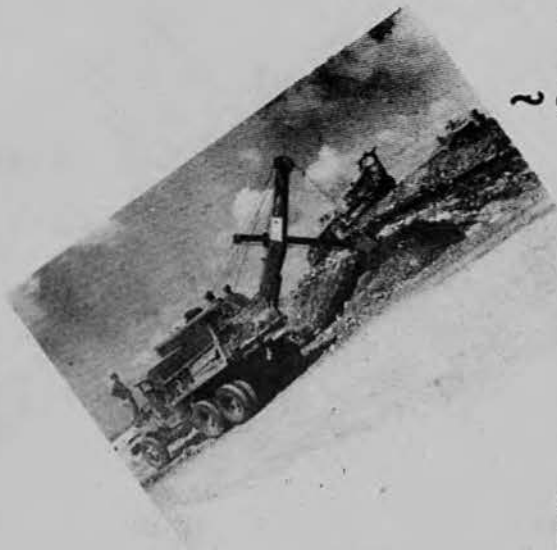
Commander Jones received orders for temporary duty in connection with operational planning of Commander Service Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet and departed for Pearl Harbor on 4 July 1945.

On 5 July 1945 the 38th and 110th Battalions were temporarily assigned to the 29th Naval Construction Regiment until such time as the 49th Regiment again became operative. The staff of the 49th Regiment was loaned to the 29th Regiment for assistance in engineering and operational supervision.



FORTY-NINTH REGIMENT

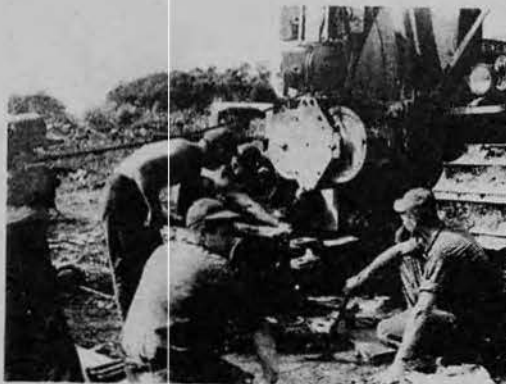
~ CONSTRUCTION ~



↑
*SUB-GRADING
FOR HARDSTANDS*



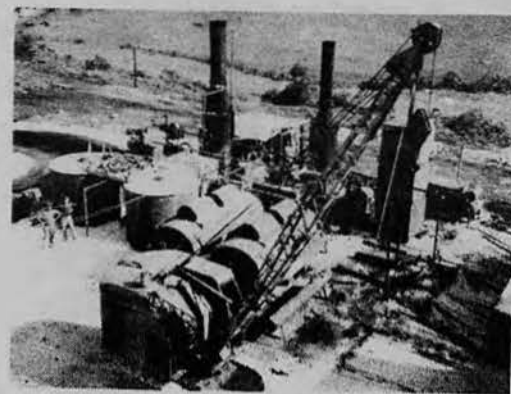
↑
*COATING
HARDSTANDS*



*REPAIRING HEAVY
EQUIPMENT*



PAVING NORTH FIELD



WEST ASPHALT PLANT



Commo. PAUL J. HALLORAN
O in C



Commo. GEORGE M GANS
Exec.



Commo. MARVIN Y. NEELY
O in C



Lt. Commo. JOSEPH R. BARNWELL
Exec.



Commo. JONATHAN P. FALCONER
O in C



Lt. Commo. EDWARD F. GRABLE
Exec.



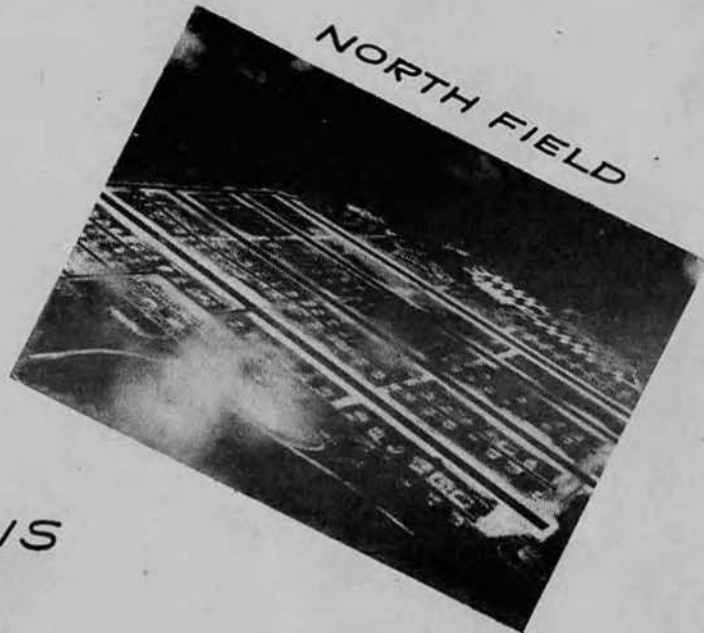
Commo. THOMAS H. JONES
O in C



Lt. Commo. ELBERT J. TATE
Exec.



WEST FIELD



NORTH FIELD

AERIAL VIEWS
of
C.B. CONSTRUCTION



TINIAN HARBOR



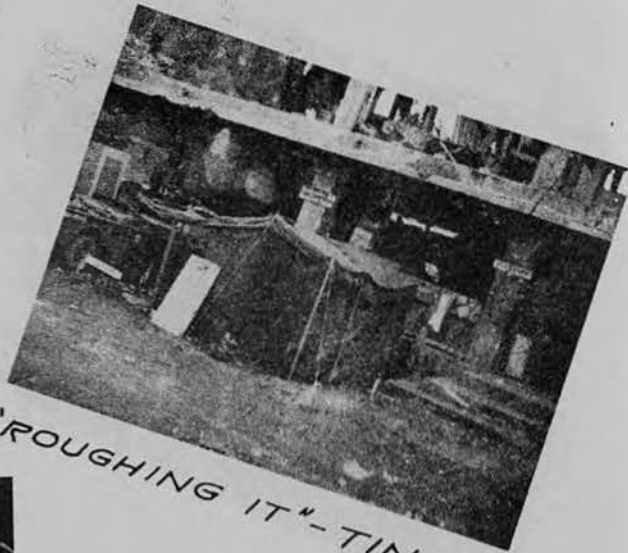
G-2 HOSPITAL

SIXTH BRIGADE

CAMP SITES



FIRST CAMP - SAIPAN



"ROUGHING IT" - TINIAN



AERIAL VIEW

TEMPORARY
QUARTERS



PRESENT CAMP



◆ TINIAN ◆

*AROUND
OUR AREA*





*BRIGADE
ENLISTED
PERSONNEL*





*REGIMENTAL
ENLISTED PERSONNEL*





COOKS

and

STEWARDS



*MEN AT
WORK*



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

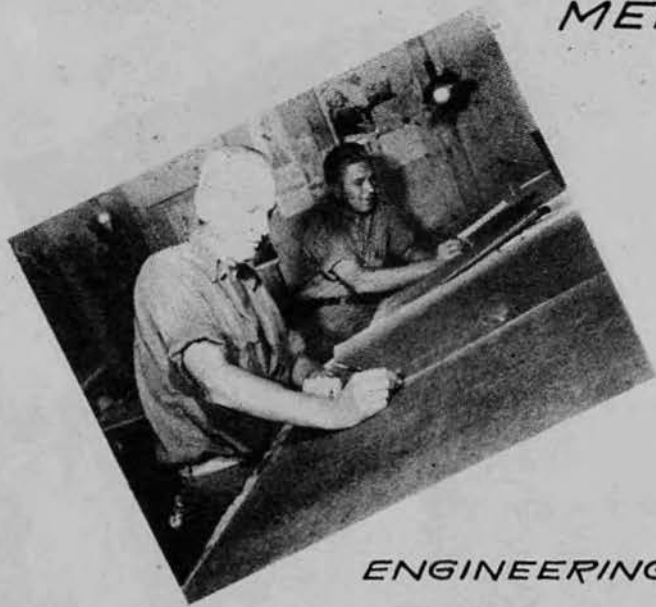


*RED CROSS
FIELD DIRECTOR*



*SWITCHBOARD
OPERATORS*

MEN AT WORK



ENGINEERING and DESIGN SECTIONS



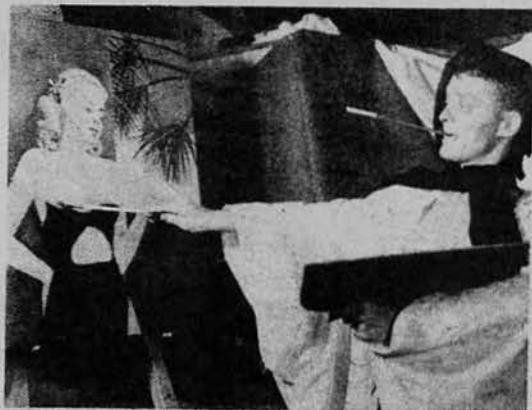
SUPPLY DEPARTMENT



OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

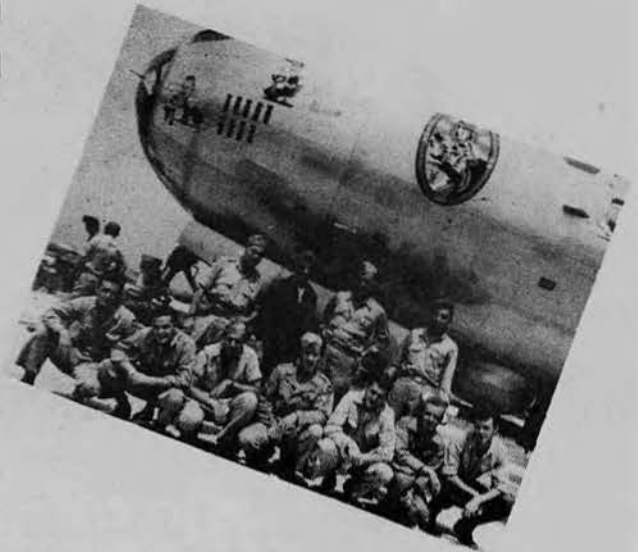
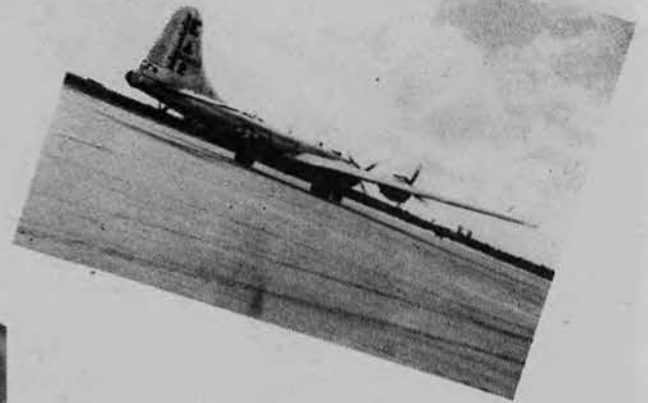


MEN AT WORK



BRIGADE-SPONSORED

B-29 & CREW



*OFFICERS
RECREATION*



SPORTS
and
RECREATION

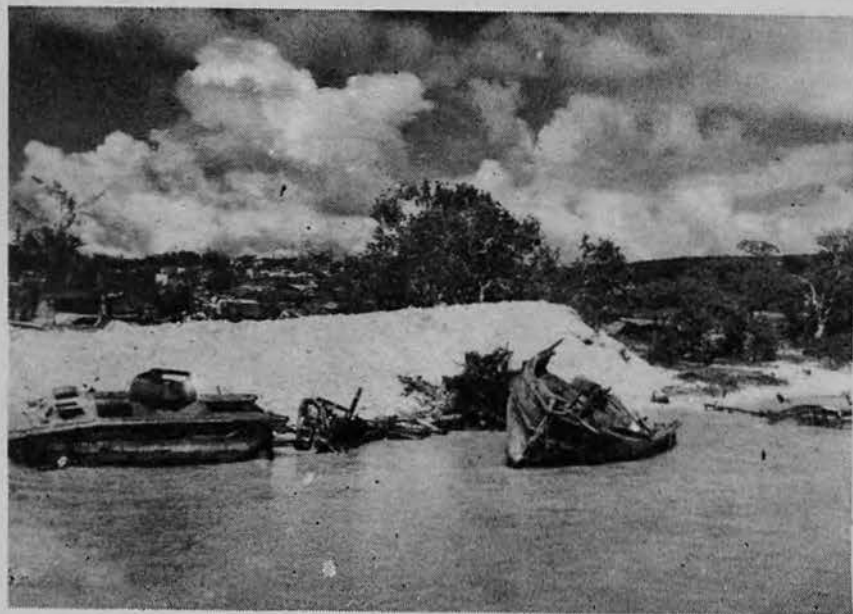




DEMOLISHED JAP SUGAR MILL



INVASION OF TINIAN



BEACH AFTER INVASION



NATIVES



(BEFORE INVASION)



(AFTER INVASION)

~ SCENIC VIEWS ~



DEMOLISHED TINIAN TOWN



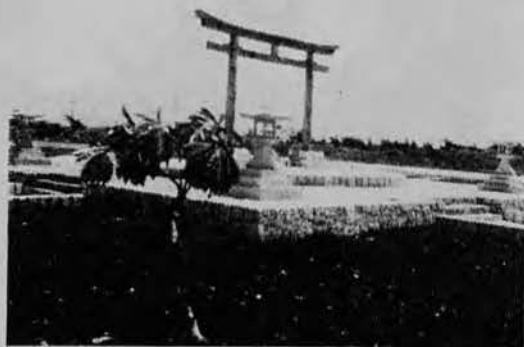
SHINTO MONUMENT



RUINS OF
PREHISTORIC TEMPLE



NEWLY-BUILT
SHINTO SHRINE





PERIWINKLE.

BANYAN TREE

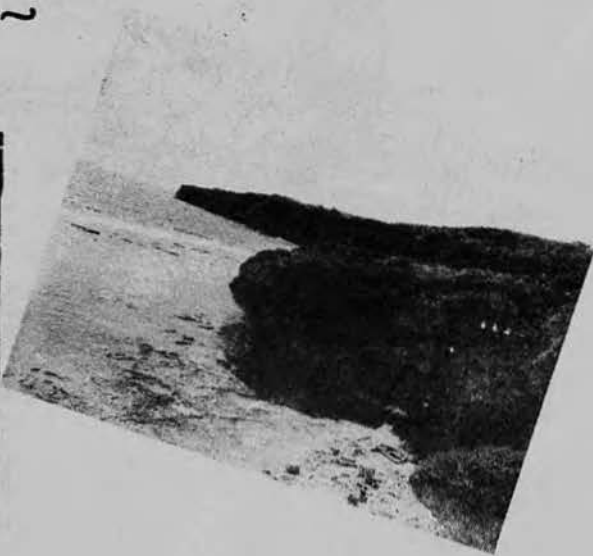


JAP SHRINES



(PRE-INVASION PHOTO)

~ SCENIC VIEWS ~



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