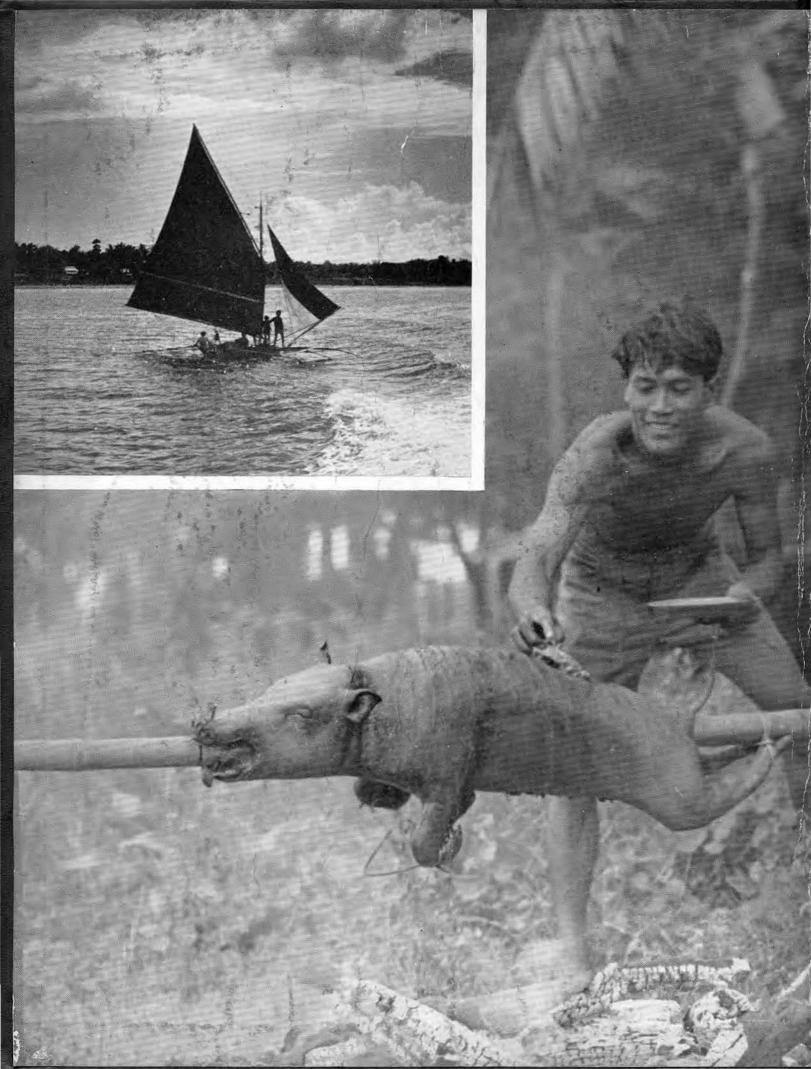
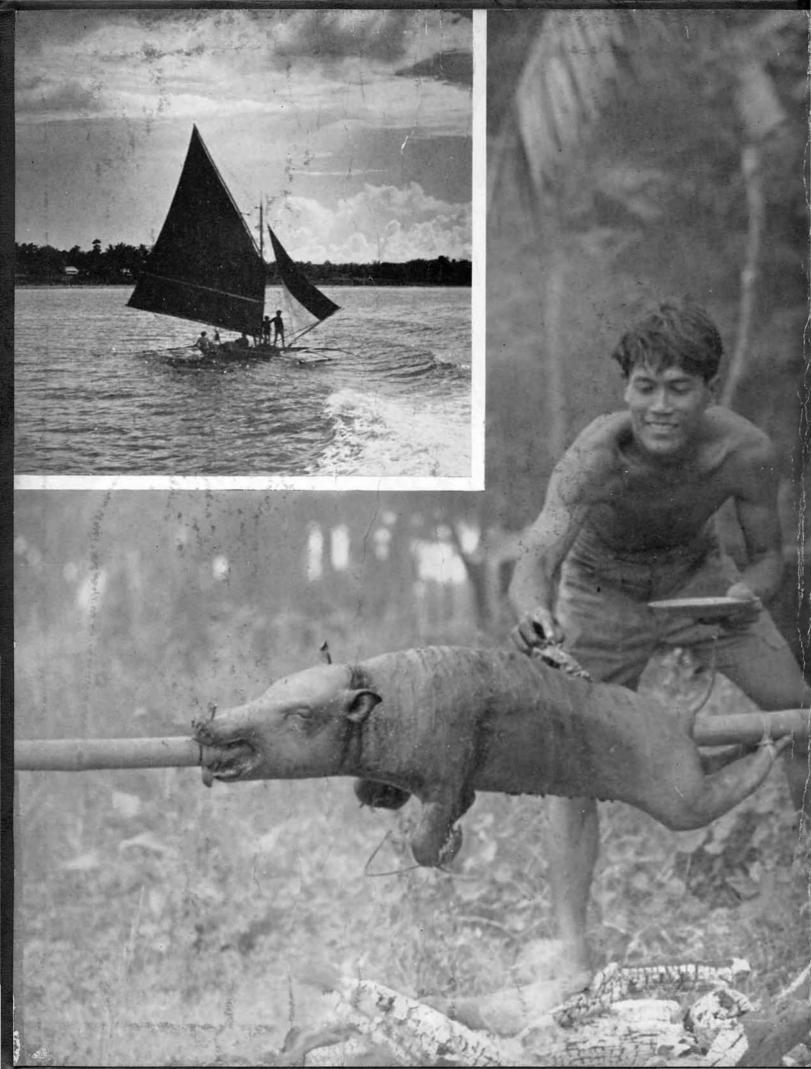
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ACORN FIFTY-ONE

UNITED STATES NAVY JANUARY 19, 1945 – OCTOBER 5, 1945

WHAT AN ACORN IS

Foremost among the many pitfalls which beset our path in recording the history of Acorn 51 was the problem of correctly defining our unit and its specific role in connection with the operations of the Navy. We have all had the experience of attempting to explain the naval meaning of the word "Acorn" to our families and friends, realizing all too well that beyond the vague conjectures about a code word or symbol, the term probably had made little sense to them previously and explained nothing in terms of a naval activity. By way of an introduction to this informal chronicle of Acorn 51 it is advisable that we prefix a simple working definition of the unit and its primary function in World War II.



Fundamentally, the Acorn is a type of Advanced Base, with certain basic functions which are peculiar to itself alone. It is a self-sustaining unit, packaged and equipped to follow landing forces ashore for the express purpose of establishing an advance airfield within the shortest possible time. The unit's allowance items, covering all the necessary components for equipping a complete small scale airbase, are shipped in carefully designed and thoroughly waterproofed overseas crates. Officers and men are trained as units in the various specialized divisions and are assigned as units to an Acorn for further training together prior to shipping overseas. Upon arrival at its desination, a unit is prepared to support itself absolutely independently; the list of supplies includes everything from shoelaces to ten-ton tractors and giant salvage cranes.

The specific duties of an Acorn are to utilize the trained personnel of which it is composed in maintaining the runways, hangars, and all other allied airfield facilities in operating condition. The Acorn operates the control tower, field lighting, aerological unit, transportation pool, communica-

tions and medical facilities. It also must provide berthing and messing accommodations both for itself and for transient aircraft squadrons, which may arrive on very short notice.

In the early stages of its operation, following the initial landing, the Acorn is operated in close conjunction with a Naval Construction Battalion, familiarly known as the "Seabees". The Seabee unit builds the airstrips, docks, roads, and also sets up the buildings which replace the tents pitched by the Acorn the first day ashore. Once past this construction stage the Acorn is firmly established and the need for the Seabee group is ended.

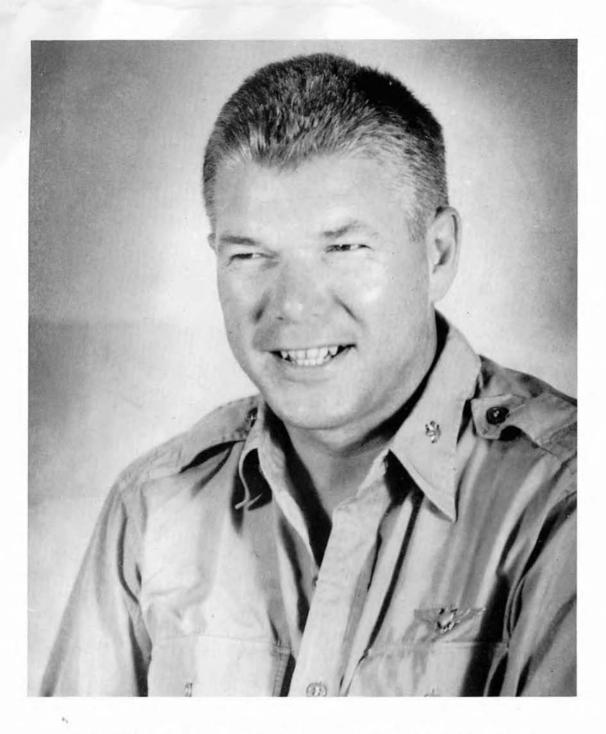


Meanwhile, the Acorn is carrying out its function as an operating airfield, often utilizing temporary runways, or those converted from captured enemy airstrips. The actual maintenance, repair and servicing of the planes will now be handled by a CASU—Combat Aircraft Service Unit—which may have landed with the Acorn, or may have arrived after the strip has been completed. The CASU readies new planes for delivery to carriers or land based combat duty and handles service jobs which would tie up carrier operation if attempted on shipboard. In short the CASU is the key support of all flight operation servicing.

Thus we see that the Acorn unit, plus the Seabees and the CASUs form a team whose sole purpose is to provide a speedy, efficient, airfield management and whose end product is more naval planes in the air than would be possible through carrier operation alone. In short, the history of the Acorn is the history of a "stationary carrier".

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Acorn 51 was a "Happy Ship". This salty old term is the Navy's best description of that rare union of officers and men, courteously and capably welded together for a common purpose, that made our outfit one of which to be very proud. It is with such a feeling of pride that I preface this history, and extend to each and every one of the officers and men who served so well under my command, my deepest gratitude and my sincerest wishes for a long and happy cruise on the tranquil waters of peace . . .

Jack Stewant

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EDITORIAL STAFF

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CHARTER MEMBERS

COMMISSIONING

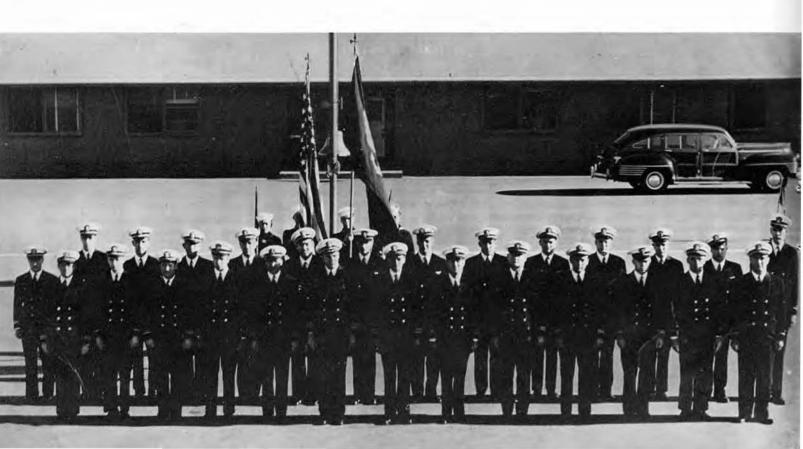
ACORN ASSEMBLY AND TRAINING DETACHMENT

Early in January, 1945, the first official steps were undertaken in preparation for the commissioning of Acorn Fifty-One. Officers and men destined to become "charter members" of the organization commenced arriving under orders to report to Acorn Assembly and Training Detachment, Camp Bedilion, Port Hueneme, California. Our executive-officer-to-be, Lt. Comdr. E. E. Tullis, headed the list of arriving officers, while Randolph Gleason, Y1/c, had the honor of being the first enlisted man to report aboard.

Camp Bedilion, scene of our approaching commissioning exercises, occupied approximately a half square mile within the sprawling naval establishment of Port Hueneme. Situated adjacent to the small land-locked harbor, this Acorn training center was completely dwarfed by the surrounding miles of crated piles of equipment, railroads, four-lane connecting roads, and crammed warehouses. Inland, toward the city of Oxnard, and forming an outer boundary of the Hueneme area, lay the large Seabee staging center known as Camp Rousseau, made up of spaced rows of Quonset huts, administration buildings, mess halls, and barracks.

In every corner of the establishment one could see evidence of preparation on a scale sufficient to send out men and equipment by the shipload. Here one saw the very latest devices for materials handling, from the smallest fork lift trucks to the largest of mobile cranes, all hard at work moving goods to the waiting ships. After threading this maze of activity and entering the wireenclosed confines of Camp Bedilion proper, one noticed the businesslike appearance of the administration building, the wide sun-baked parade ground, familiarly known as the "grinder", and the orderly rows of barracks laid out parallel to the nearby shoreline of the Pacific Ocean.

Here on Friday, January 19th, 1945, following two weeks of intensive assembly procedure, Acorn Fifty-One was duly commissioned as an organized naval activity. Promptly at 1000, Troop Comman-



der E. E. Tullis, with the assistance of Company Commanders Lt. (j.g.) Stuart Roy and Lt. (j.g.) Robert Warren, formed the companies in parade order. Four platoons headed respectively by Ensigns S. H. Barrell, F. R. Schondelmayer, G. Skakel, and H. L. Snyder, swung smartly across the parade ground and took stations for muster. With a final report of "All men present or accounted for, sir," by our Adjutant, Lt. H. P. Davis, the ceremony began.

A short stirring invocation was offered by the Camp Bedilion Chaplain, following which Captain M. B. Gurney, USN, delivered his commissioning address. At the conclusion, Commander John R.



Stewart, USNR, stepped forward and published his orders, thus commissioning our Acorn. The ceremonies were closed by Capt. Gurney who presented National and Regimental Colors to Comdr. Stewart. The Acorn companies then re-formed in parade order and passed in review with the newly received colors in the van.

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The same day, at 1700, the officers held a very successful commissioning party in the Wardroom of the Camp Bedilion BOQ, and on Febraury 9th, the enlisted men held a celebration on a larger scale at the American Legion Club in Ventura, California.



POINT MUGU-TENT AREA

On February 9th, our Acorn moved from Camp Bedilion, Port Hueneme, Cal. to Camp Mugu, Tent Area, nine miles south on the main road between Oxnard and Los Angeles. Camp life was somewhat inactive because of limited facilities, and daily routine was confined primarily to the task of maintaining a ship-shape camp. Training work progressed in the meanwhile, with officers and men attending scheduled instruction courses at Port Hueneme, working out practice problems involving Advanced Base operations, such as stevedoring, camp sanitation, gas drills, water distillation, field galley work, tent pitching, pack rolling and similar field activities.

In addition to routine administrative duties, our skipper, Comdr. J. R. Stewart, USNR, and our exec., Lt. Comdr. E. E. Tullis, USNR, together with the various departmental officers, devoted long hours of practice work planning an advance base set-up on a theoretical island site; detailed studies were made at this time of all equipment and material according to the catalogued allowance for the various Acorn components, in order that each officer might become thoroughly familiar with his own responsibilities in the assembly, shipment and final installation of the unit. In a sense, this period at Mugu was a continuation of the initial organization and assembly period which had been going on ever since the unit had been assigned an identification number. It was a period of growth and in some cases a shuffling of personnel and components.





It was during this period that the final large draft of officers and men arrived. This draft, a C-I Communications Unit, under the supervision of Lieut. A. E. Shinholser, USNR, increased the personnel by a total of seven officers and forty-two men. Lt. (j.g.) Robert B. Holmes, USNR, reported aboard at the same time to assume his duties with the Ordance Department.

To most of us, Mugu will be remembered as a time of heavy morning fogs and damp clammy nights which made us appreciate an extra blanket, even in Sunny California. It will be remembered as a place of dusty roadways, exposed plumbing, muddy walks, dreary marshlands; of spilled stove oil, blaring loudspeakers and scarce transportation. It brings to mind trips to Oxnard, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles and Hollywood. To some of us it brings memories of another sort: of separation from homes and loved ones, of anxious days scrambling to find rooms or apartments, of tedious delays on long distance calls, of struggles with overworked ration boards, of travelling with children and of packing and unpacking households; but, underlying all of these difficulties was the rewarding realization that in spite of them, we were still in the "States."

THERMAL - DESERT STOP



During the middle of March, we received orders to move to NAAF, Thermal, and so, on the thirteenth we boarded the train at Oxnard and began what seemed like the world's slowest train ride; a full morning reaching Los Angeles over approximately sixty miles of track. Because our train was a special and also an "extra", we took to a siding every time anything bigger than a handcar came along. Shortly before the train reached Los Angeles, box lunches appeared as if from nowhere, and by the time the special had completed its stopover in the L. A. station a few minutes later, the picnic boxes had disappeared. So had the station platform-due to a heavy precipitation of partly eaten egg sandwiches, the basic ingredients of which had been overly long away from the hens. Our arrival at Thermal Siding was uneventful except that it was late in the day and we were all nearly starved, nor were we prepared to buck



our way through a minor dust storm which welcomed us by transforming all dress blue uniforms into a grimy grey.

Duties at Thermal were assumed immediately upon arrival. Field facilities were taken over by our outfit under the advisory guidance of ship's company and in cooperation with CASU's 14 and 16. Air activity at the field consisted of flight schedules by Air Group 98 under the supervision of COM-FAIRWEST Representative Lt. Comdr. Clyde Thurman, USNR. Squadrons VF 98 and VTB 98 were engaged in refresher training with emphasis on rocket firing practice, low altitude bombing and simulated night carrier landings. Our personnel



found this last named activity slightly on the annoying side as each man felt assured that the planes were deliberately buzzing his particular barracks with premeditated intentions of ruining all attempts at sleeping.

Life at Termal was slightly complicated because of a very fluid state of affairs involving the transfer of the air field from the Army to the Navy. All during our stay, we were faced with the problem of obtaining Navy equipment to fill the gaps left when the Army moved out, taking almost all of their gear with them. For example, our galley was able to operate only by using plates and tableware borrowed from the Army, and our Medical Department narrowly averted being left with patients but no dispensary when some Army men arrived unannounced to gather up all the medical gear which had been temporarily abandoned.

THERMAL

Army food presented another problem which caused Lt. (j.g.) Charles S. Eaton all kinds of trouble, particularly in the Officer's Mess. Gradually even these barriers were leveled and by the end of our stay, the situation had shown much improvement.

The biggest nuisances in Thermal were the dust and the heat, both of which could be avoided with startling success by taking the short trip across the desert to Palm Springs. The six-inch layer of dust which lay over the desert in the vicinity of Thermal was of talcum powder consistency which aided it in sifting with phenomenal persistency through cracks and crevices in buildings and clothing. This dust, plus frequent high winds, in one case exceeding sixty miles an hour in velocity, made flying impossible on numerous occasions and at times even halted highway traffic. Tiny, but violent whirlwinds were a common hazard even on comparatively calm days, and woe betided him who ventured in the path of these driving swirls for he soon had great need of a shower and clean clothes.

On April 20th, we moved to Oxnard and thence to Camp Mugu Hut Area. We were ready and waiting to entrain in the early hours of the morning at the siding, but the train was several hours late. Another hot slow train ride ensued, but this one was a big improvement over the one coming in. There were fewer siding delays this time and the box lunches were veritable feasts, complete with cold drinks and fresh fruit. Of course the engine had to complicate matters by producing a serious breakdown late in the morning, necessitating a long dull wait in the hottest part of the desert while another locomotive was being sent out to haul us the rest of our way. We arrived in Mugu early in the evening, tired to death of railroads and very happy to be in a comparatively cool climate again.



THERMAL







POINT MUGU-HUT AREA









20 APRIL TO 31 MARCH



Our return to Point Mugu marked the beginning of final preparations for embarkation. We were quartered in the Quonset Hut Area this time and we soon found that we were more comfortable than we had been during our previous stay in the nearby Tent Area.

Unmistakable indications that we were "hot", and were about to be shipped out, became more and more apparent each day. Training work continued, with special emphasis on pack-rolling. Meanwhile, we were issued complete overseas outfits: rainclothes, field-green clothing, field-packs, sheath knives, gas masks, carbines, and a host of other things. The carbines were issued complete with a very greasy protective coating which had to be cleaned off by hand. This little task, undertaken during training trips to the Camp Rousseau range, provided a simple method of getting on intimate terms with the mysteries of the weapon. It also put lots of grease on closer terms with clean dungarees and shirts. During this period we found ourselves being inspected for "dog-tags", complete field outfits, and complete stencilling on our gear. We were growing "hotter".

Early in May, the first big clue to our departure date came to light. Three of our officers, Lt. (j.g.) L. N. Hindley, Lt. (j.g.) R. B. Holmes, and Ens. S. T. Hicks, were ordered to San Francisco to supervise the loading of our supplies and equipment aboard ships. The next clue came when all liberty was suspended and the entire Acorn was "secured". Then, on the 16th of May, the First Echelon of 19 officers and 207 men moved by truck to Port Huneme and climbed aboard the "SS Alcoa Patriot". Two weeks later, the Second Echelon of 13 officers and 320 men repeated the performance by going aboard the "SS Mormac Sea". We were on our way!

ON OUR WAY

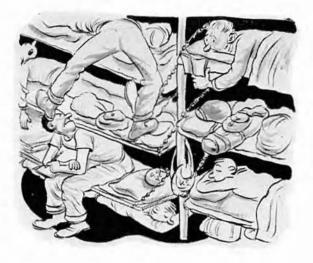


On this and the following pages, are a series of pictures showing the transoceanic voyage of a few hundred pilgrims called "The First Echelon of Acorn 51". The "Alcoa Patriot" is not to be confused with the "Mayflower", and the guy in the cartoon, instead of murmuring softly, "Whither steppest thou, Brother?" is probably growling, "Whyinhell doncha watch where ya plant yer cloppers!"

Due to the fact that the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts blessed us with but one camera and this was "commandeered" by the first echelon, no pictorial record could be made of echelon number two. But did this break the hearts of the number two boys? Hell no! We wouldn't trade in those last two weeks of liberty for all the bananas in Mactan!

Our second echelon got its orders on the thirtyfirst of May, and then things began to pop. We were lined along our ship's railing at Port Hueneme, exhausted by our respective loads of seabag, tent, pack, carbine, and the rest of the heavy cumbersome miscellany that motherly Captain Gurney deemed fit to load on the backs of sweating Acornsters. The tingling sense of excitement and adventure was such, however, that no one reflectively rubbed a sore shoulder or even permitted the mildest hint of displeasure to flit through his spinning mind.

Our ship was the "USS Mormac Sea", an Army transport, and our destination was TULE, a code meaning "Cebu". It was not until land had slipped under the evening horizon, however, that we discovered this meaning.





S. S. ALCOA PATRIOT

We were the second echelon of Acorn 51 and as such had enjoyed a period of 15 days. May sixteenth to the thirty-first, of as wild and desperate living as probably few men have known. We knew that our subtraction from the expensive but highly desirable company of American women was a matter of days, and we lived to the hilt (ably assisted by fortified spirits) with wives, sweethearts, or whatever experienced flirting could glean in the way of something attractively draped in skirts. It was during this period that the Avalon Ball Room in Santa Monica experienced a boom, the equal of which would be a dubious possibility.

But we were on our way out—and, of all things, on an "Army Transport"! Salty sailors that we were this was an almost unbearable blow to our pride. The AATD Band polished off their musicale with a rendition of Anchor's Aweigh. The gangplank was drawn up. Two puffinng little tugs nosed us into midstream. We watched everything in a sort of breathless desperation, clutching at the countless little incidents of embarkation, as if they were precious memories of a life we had loved, and were leaving . . .











We were under our own steam, with the harbor fastly slipping by. We strained our eyes for the last American girl we were to see. She turned out to be a beefy overall-clad dock worker, but her goodbye wave meant something to us. "Buy Bonds!" we shouted to the yard workers, and the cry caught on, (we couldn't resist being a little sarcastic), "Buy Bonds!" "Buy Bonds!" The harbor disappeared.

In a very few minutes we were out of sight of land, surrounded on all sides by water. This was a new sensation for most of us, and we kept the rails lined for many minutes. But it was getting late and dark, and we were exhausted by the excitement. And besides, we sorta wanted to be alone with our thoughts. Next morning the sea was still quite rough, a peculiarity of that part of the ocean just off the coast, and this time the rails were lined again, but good! "Whatsamatter, Son, weak stomach?" asked the Boatswain. "Hell no," replied the cookietosser, "I'm throwing as far as anybody else on this side!"

But we got our sea-legs in a day or so, and settled down to the daily routine of transport life, which grew less and less interesting by the day. Wrapped in bulgy lifejackets we climbed all over each other on the crowded decks, read books, played poker, or wrote letters that couldn't be mailed for a week.

Then we hit Pearl! First Diamond Head, then Molokai, then the fertile green cloud-haloed slop-



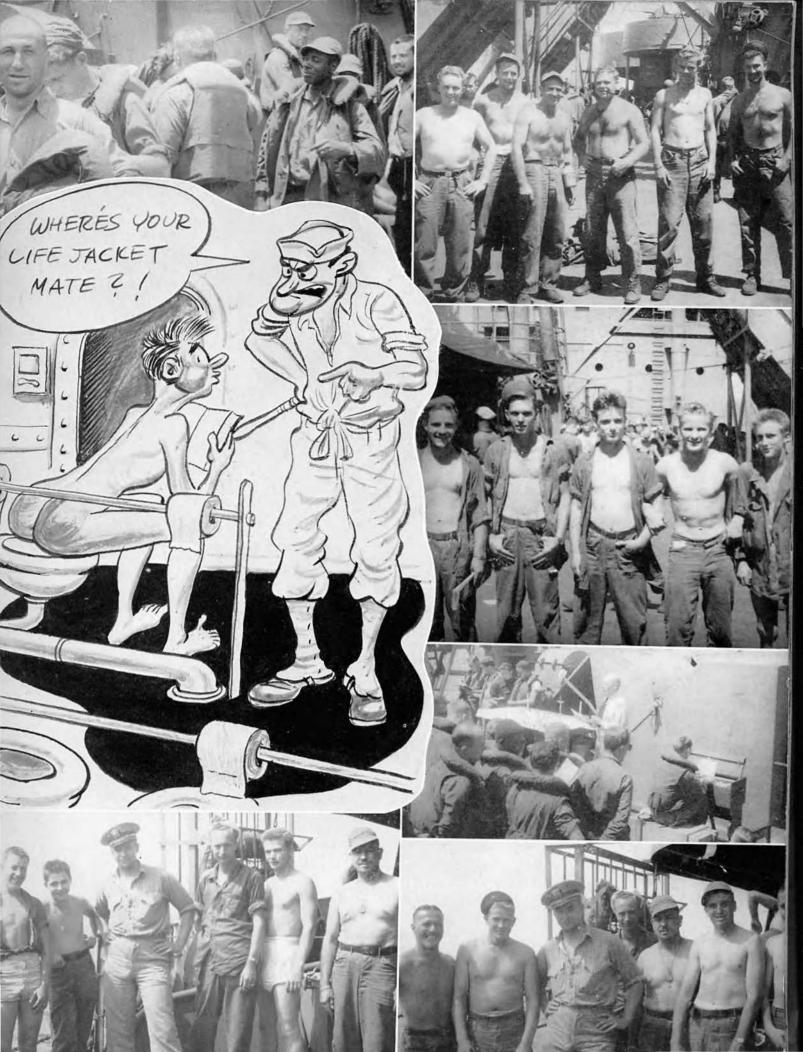


ing hills of Oahu. Land looked very good to us. After two days and nights of anchorage in the green waters of Pearl, we took off again. The weather was becoming progressively hotter. No one slept below decks anymore, but chose rather to lie under the swinging star-filled sky, watching the mast sway back and forth, dreaming in the pale moonlight of yesterday and tomorrow . . .

We stopped at Eniwetok and zigzagged from there in a small convoy, past the Japanese garrison of Truk, to Ulithi. Many planes passed overhead. We had gunnery practice. There was a submarine drill. Ulithi, with her countless friendly ships, was a most welcome sight. Then, impatient and eager, to the high seas again for our last lap. We landed on Mactan on June the thirty-first, where we met our pals in the first echelon, from whom we had been separated for more than a month. It was a very happy reunion, and there was much talking to be done—and many things to ask and tell. We found Mactan to be a green paradise, but there was work to be taken care of, and officers and men alike we threw ourselves into a variety of jobs that rarely had a thing to do with our classifications or rates. After these many days and nights of churning through the lonely Pacific, we somehow felt that we had at last come to a place where we could stop and rest, a place we could almost call our own. We never will forget that first friendly smiling, "Hello, Joe".





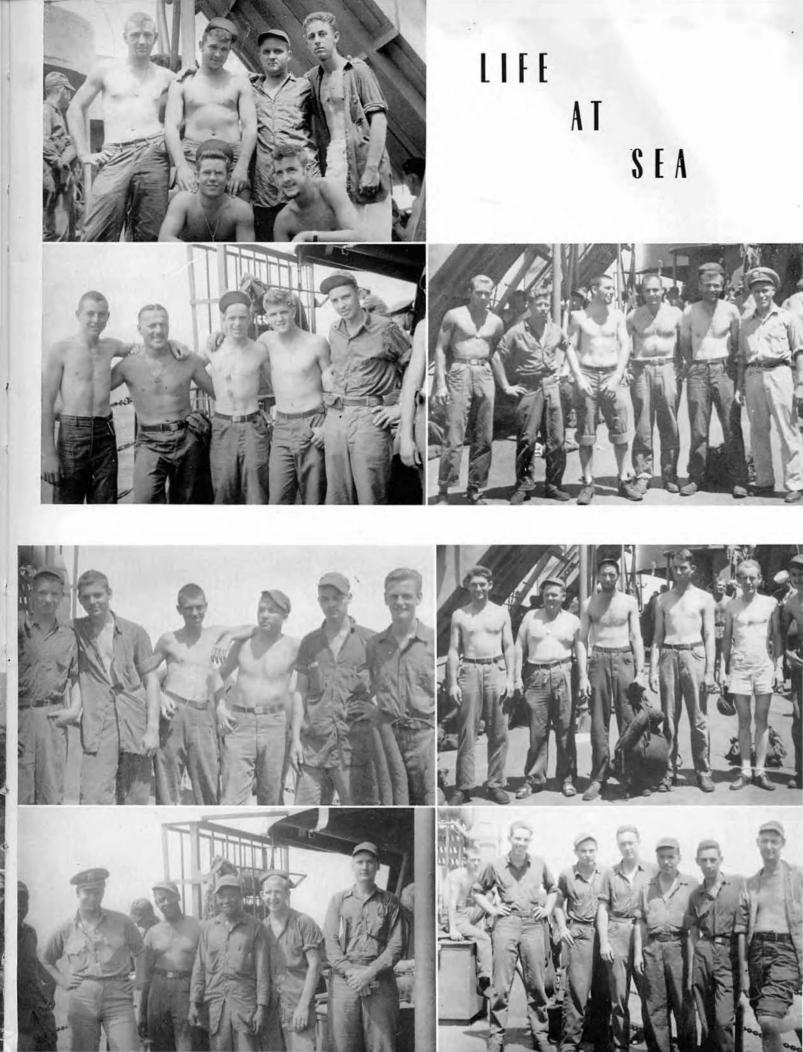




"OH WE SAIL THE OCEAN BLUE." Who wouldn't be blue, with a mess-plate like the one on the left?







YOU HAVE SEEN

TOO LATE JOE! THEY JUST TURNED THE FRESH WATER OFF!

The dashing and bearded officer shown on the far upper left is our astute editor Lt. (jg) Edward "The Wolf" Carey. He is Errol Flynn's only living rival.



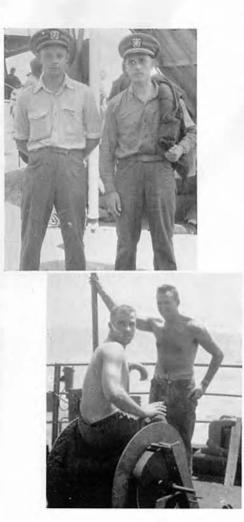


THEIR FACES

In spite of the fact that there were no reclining deck chairs, no shuffleboard games, and no stewards serving cool drinks, the boys still manage to look happy. Although the "Alcoa Patriot" could not be confused with the "Queen Mary", things could have been a lot worse.

The editors can't decide whether to call this page, "Saturday night is the loneliest night in the week", or "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead," or just forget about the whole thing.





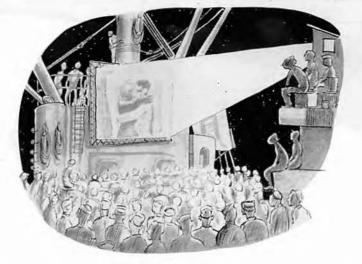
OFFICER'S COUNTRY S. S. ALCOA PATRIOT

These weird-looking fellows are our officers. Take off those ridiculous hats, shave off those equally-ridiculous beards, and you will discover that they're not such a bad bunch after all. Don't ask any embarrassing questions about the picture in the upper right hand corner. As nearly as we can make it out, Lt. Commander Tullis, our Executive Officer, is pouting 'cause no one will wight his wittle cigawette.











Wouldn't you like to read the minds of the fellas in this cartoon? Or wouldn't you? The center left shot shows one of our men improving his mind with a copy of "Forever Amber". On the upper right, we have: Chiefs Smith and Hendrickson. On the left, Mailman Addison, and on the lower right, General Fluff-off Upshaw, the lower left shows three yeomen, Bailey, Adams and Beach, who have just recovered from three weeks of seasickness and have come above-decks for a little air. Beach looks as if he hasn't quite recovered. On the right center photo you see a free haircut at sea.





Mactan Island



This is "Magellan's Tomb", a beautful white fountain-like memorial to the famous Fernando, built by the Filipinos in memory of the Spanish Explorer's death at the hand of a native chief named Lapu Lapu, whom the former had been pushing around quite a bit at the time. Directly behind this shrine is another impressive monument which is dedicated, with oriental irony, to the memory of Lapu Lapu. Scratched on the face of Magellan's Tomb by some Wisedup Nip (who was probably up to his ears in "Fine Old Scotch") is: "We, the Japs, conquered Mactan Is'and, on ... etc." Ah—the irony of it all!

On June 23rd the First Echelon debarked at Mactan Island just off the coast of Cebu, and near Cebu City, second largest metropolis of the Philippines. As the troopship "Alcoa Patriot" slowly threaded her way past the bombed, burned and sunken vessels which lined the channel and wharves of Cebu Harbor, the ship-weary Acorn members lined the rails and occupied every possible vantage point which afforded a view of the shore. On the port side lay the ruins of stricken Cebu, now a busy and rapidly expanding Army base nestled at the foot of a rugged mountain range. A few miles beyond, on the starboard, squatted the low-lying island of Mactan, our destination, palm-studded, with several frail and battered looking docks reaching feebly out from a coral-lined shore.

In every direction evidence could be seen of the hard pounding the area had received in the course of our own and Japanese bombardments. Blasted heaps of rubble, which had once been orderly concrete docks and warehouses, lay scattered along the waterfront; nearby, in the business district stood hollow shells of once stately buildings, whose gaping, tottering walls now supported only ribbons of rusty girders and dangling remains of flamedarkened roofing. At intervals among the shellpocked structures could be seen concrete foundations but lately unearthed by hard working gangs of military salvage workers and civilians. In the distance, among the smaller business buildings, lay large cleared areas completely ringed with barbed wire barriers, some filled with orderly arrays of Army rolling stock, supplies and equipment, others crammed with rows of tents.

Harbor navigation hazards were everywhere in evidence; rusty superstructures of sunken Japanese island freighters, tankers and an occasional larger vessel jutted menacingly out of the water, some lying close beside the docks, others scattered at random about the harbor with each bow headed in a different direction. One Jap tanker lay squarely along the channel adjoining the main dock area, her hull plates twisted and melted almost beyond recognition and her superstructure a torn sieve, riddled by shells and bomb fragments.

Along the shore adjoining the docks lay curled and crushed remains of what had once been large storage tanks, now rusty red skeletons filled with gaping round holes punched by the shells of some invading naval gun crew. A few feet away from a nearby wharf, a good-sized freighter, scuppers level with the water, sat solidly on the bottom, bombed and sunk as her slant-eyed crew tried to back her out into the stream.

On the opposite side of the channel, along the marshy Mactan shore, lay many more sunken Jap barges and snub-nosed little island steamers, all resting at unnatural angles on the bottom and filled with jagged gashes. Along the mud-flats many more broken hulls lay tilted into awkward positions on smashed remnants of marine railways, framed in the background by rusted and perforated oil tank hulks. Further along the edge of Mactan Island, houses and larger buildings loomed up through the cocoanut palms. Tangled girders of a wrecked American cocoanut oil refinery reared against the skyline, while close beside it stood an ancient and decrepit appearing concrete pier which bore more resemblance to a small-boat dock than a berth for ships the size of the "Alcoa Patriot". At best it would barely permit a standard Liberty ship to tie up, and then only by reason of careful control of truck traffic over two small lead-in ramps was it possible to work a maximum of four out of five holds.

Owing to lack of proper camp facilities, it was necessary for the echelon to continue living aboard the 'Alcoa Patriot'' until a sufficient quantity of rolling stock, supplies and camp equipment could be unloaded and a camp established. Our unloading was hindered by muddy, puddle-filled roads which grew steadily worse because of the constant churning by heavy trucks and drenchings by almost incessant tropical rains.

The fact that another unit, Acorn 48, under the leadership of Comdr. J. A. DeMetz, had been assigned to Mactan Island and had been shipped out on the same vessels, added all kinds of complications to the task of discharging cargo. In nearly every instance, the ships carried equipment for both Acorn 48 and 51, and to further confuse matters, the gear was well mixed up in the holds. Since both outfits had orders to function as separate units until some later date, it was necessary to carefully sort and segregate equipment as it was swung overside and into the waiting trucks. On a few rare occasions, minor friction of personnel was in evidence, occasioned in all probability by a pardonable spirit of pride and enthusiasm for one's own outfit as compared to that of those "other guys". These rather insignificant and childish controversies swiftly disappeared as soon as it became apparent that the resources of both Acorns

were being pooled almost in entirety for one specific purpose, namely, the establishment of a single Naval Air Base at Mactan Island. However, since integrity of personnel and camp locations was to be maintained for the time being, it became essential for both outfits to work more and more closely together in order to accomplish the basic job in hand; the speed with which teamwork did develop between the units gave conclusive proof that each was finding the other a pretty reasonable and cooperative neighbor.

Our camp site and dump area, located just beyond the camp of Acorn 48 on the water's edge two miles north of the ship dock, was hastily laid out under pressure of waiting truckloads of equipment. Despite the speedy erection, the camp assumed reasonably orderly proportions in very short order. Tents were hastily pitched and airstrip matting laid down over scrap lumber, making a fairly sturdy, albeit somewhat well ventilated, decking. In some unfortunate cases, due to haste, darkness, and fatigue, men put up tents in shallow ravines which to their great surprise and annoyance turned out to be raging little river beds whenever a heavy cloudburst came along.

The supply dump was a constant headache to all concerned. The stacks were laid out on soft ground, and the "roads" grew softer with each drop of almost steady rain. Six-wheel-drive trucks were grinding chassis deep through gummy quagmires trying to get down the dump passageways to the waiting caterpillar cranes, familiarly known as "cherry pickers". Fork trucks of the conventional solid tire type were helplessly bogged and even





Paradise of the Philippines



caterpillar fork lifts had trouble at times. In order to keep an index of our dump it was necessary to record the truck loads as they were put in the stacks, but time and again we were balked by the elements. One could hardly expect a drenched radio operator on a night shift work detail to keep perfect tally cards while standing nearly knee-deep in mud and trying to write on a rain-soaked paper with a pencil which was being jiggled by a cascade of rain water. That records could be kept at all under such conditions was a wonder, and their final percentage of correctness was little short of miraculous.

Other unpleasant but essential tasks were handled by the truck driving and stevedoring details. The bumps in the road were bad enough to discourage a driver at the very start, but the pleasure of plough-driving an open truck and bucking through terrific rain squalls with only a poncho for protection cannot be fully described. Nor was the work of loading cargo nets and slinging heavy





crates in a humid, stuffy hold to be considered light duty. It was a common sight to see Chiefs Smith, Kolb and Kinner stripped to the waist in the holds working like demons with their sweatsoaked crews.

There was one unloading job in particular which will never be forgotten by those stevedoring crews, namely a big stack of canned chlorinated lime which had Houdini-like powers when it came to escaping from the containers. Not only did the stuff eat its way out of the cans by chemical action, but it also generated very irritating fumes which made work in that hold nearly impossible. Ordinarily, this chemical is stowed in the dryest part of the ship, but thanks to some rather ill-advised cargo loading, the cans were stowed on top of a big crib full of



acetylene flasks, and since these flasks were prone to "sweat" in a warm humid atmosphere, the result was that the moisture penetrated the lime cans

and accelerated the corrosive action. The spilled lime ran down over the flasks, producing a nice messy coat of slippery goo which smeared the clothing and person of the crews as they manhandled the heavy containers. It promptly ruined clothing, gloves and exposed skin, making frequent pauses necessary in order to wash off the hot stuff and prevent burns.



There were other little obstacles which were met and overcome with great ingenuity by our hard working Acorn crews. Have you ever seen fifteen thousand pound anchors being unloaded from semitrailers using a crane whose best efforts would barely lift one fluke? Or, have you ever seen an



enormous pontoon sticking out over the back end of a dump truck and tilting it until the front wheels were off the ground? Have you ever seen a heavy fork truck creep out on a concrete ramp and suddenly drop like a plummet out of sight, with the operator barely jumping clear with only a gashed ankle? These and numerous other incidents helped make the early days on Niactan exciting and challenging.

Heavily outweighing all these disagreeable factors was the spirit and teamwork of the unit. Morale continued on a high plane and speedy improvements in living conditions made life increasingly enjoyable. Tents were re-pitched and floored more securely. Showers were set up to replace the "bucket system". A "main street" was established,

Here we begin to get an inkling of what sort of clothing our new neighbors wear. Until they are 12 or so, as you can see, they prance gaily about, clad in little more than warm smiles. The girl at the lower left is carrying a load of laundry on her head, as per custom. This explains why many of these people are so short. One of the pictures on this page shows a native girl in the act of bathing. I think the photographer was evil-minded!



complete with office tents for the Captain, for the OOD and mail clerks, for central files, personnel, security, and the MAA force. Near the waterfront a large recreation tent was erected to house the ship's store, library, game room, coffee shop, shoe shop, barber shop, and gear issue locker. Large storage refrigerators were assembled and smaller ice making machines set up, together with a tent full of ice cream freezing gear.

Our Acorn was extremely fortunate with regard to the food situation. Thanks to the efforts of our captain, Comdr. Stewart, an arrangement was made with Lt. Comdr. A. F. Seay of the 54th Naval Construction Battalion, whereby both officers and men of Acorn 51 were permitted the use of the Seabee messing facilities. This courtesy and hospitality was unanimously appreciated by our unit, for we were well acquainted with the fact that the Seabees turned out the best food in the Navy, a fact which we were immediately prepared to verify. Inasmuch as the 54th Battalion had preceded us ashore and had their complete camp facilities in perfect working order, the use of their dining equipment was a timely and fortunate windfall which permitted us to concentrate on other problems, not to mention the saving of a tremendous amount of time and work.

A temporary dispensary was established in a former native house located close to the main, camp area. Here, Doctors Knorr, Hallum and Weber struggled to cure a large number of intestinal maladies which were prevalent during the first few days ashore. The cause could not be definitely established with any degree of certainty but suspicion was cast on native fruit, native beverages, native drinking water, and also just plain exposure to tropic sunlight. About four weeks after the initial landing, our medical unit was transferred to CNAB, Mactan, and was consolidated with the facilities of the other units on the island in what was known as "ARU Dispensary".

Meanwhile, other departments were functioning at a fairly brisk pace. Operations officers Davis, Schondelmayer, Snyder, and Skakel were busy organizing their duties at the airstrip. This ex-Japanese field had been captured in the course of the American invasion of Cebu. Shortly after reaching the island, the abovementioned officers moved to quarters with the AATC group at the airfield.

Security activities, under the direction of Ens. E. V. Carey, provided much excitement for all concerned. Sentry duty consisted primarily in pro-



One half the world doesn't know how the other half lives. A Filipino fisherman's home.

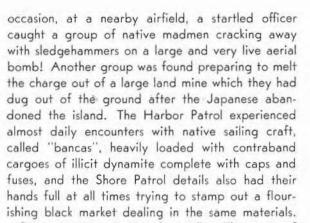
tecting the dump area from trespassing natives and others bent on pilferage. The former had been reduced to a sorry state of poverty during the Japanese occupation, and they could hardly be blamed if they failed to resist the lure of sprawling piles of valuable material spread across large areas of the island. Frequent night alarms, usually prefaced by the crack of warning carbine shots, were experienced as sentries came across prowlers near the outskirts of the supply dump. Since food, clothing, tools and dynamite were priceless commodities in the native markets, it was to be expected that the Filipinos would risk great odds to obtain these items, and it was highly probable that service personnel made pilferage attempts upon occasion in order to obtain the where-withal for bartering with the natives. Thanks to vigilant work on the part of the Security watches, losses were negligible.

Dynamite and explosives in the hands of the natives caused countless incidents, some of which ended in tragedy, but more often merely furnished amusing foundation for all kinds of anecdotes. It seems that the national pastime of the islanders was the sport of dynamiting fish on a mass production basis. A complete fish-blasting kit consisted of some sticks of dynamite, an outrigger canoe and a passive attitude toward life on this earth. In fact, the high percentage of dismembered natives merely seemed to add zest to the sport! To say the least, the methods of obtaining the explosives was primitive beyond conception. On one



Some permanent construction work on our Mactan camp area.

The national pastime overseas. Some of the boys playing baseball on our coral diamond.



Days on Mactan passed rapidly. The news of the progress against Japan grew steadily more encouraging. Then came the wonderful news of the first attacks with the new atomic bomb. Almost before we were able to realize what was happening, the news of Japan's surrender offer came through on the radio, and our camp was thrown into noisy jubilation.

The stirring rush which climaxed the long campaign against the Nipponese made our presence in the Pacific seem a bit superfluous, and our hearts were filled with speculation as to what would become of our unit in the shuffle of surrender neaotiations and personnel shifts. Meanwhile, our duties as an Acorn continued unabated. Early in September, our skipper became Commander of Naval Air Base, Mactan, succeeding Commander Robert Corley. Leadership of our Acorn was carried on by Lt. Comdr. C. T. McClure, our former Personnel Officer, who retained the post until the fifth of October, at which time, in guiet and tranquil fashion our unit was decommissioned and our personnel transferred over to ship's company, NAB Mactan Island.











CAMP SIGHTS

The photo in the upper left corner shows a few of the boys climbing aboard a truck. So what! The other two shots directly below show us mustering. Notice the military bearing. Gad, but boot camp did us a lotta good! On the right is mail call. Remember how we lived for that moment? At the lower left is a supply dump. Looks like hell now, doesn't it? It did then too. On the bottom we see the Officers' Country, the O.C. Cleanup Brigade, and the Shower and Shave Parlor. The lad on the right is not trying to swallow a sword—he's shaving. Oh Sweet Privacy, whither hast Thou flown?







LIFE IN THE TROPICS













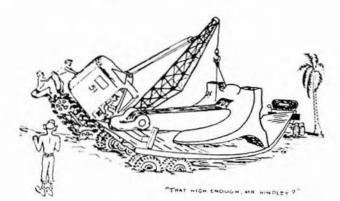




THE BATTLE OF







THE SUPPLY LINES

Here we see that lovable familiar old fella, the "Cherry Picker". What names we called it! What nasty insults we hurled its way. But deep down in our hearts, did we really mean all that we said? You can bet your sweet life that we did! If you study this page carefully you will notice that the only people doing any work at all are the Filipinos. Well that's the Navy for ya!



"HE'S THREE GAMES BEHIND GOLDSMITH NOW! "









ACORN 51 OFFICERS



Executive Officer LT. COMDR. E. E. TULLIS



Personnel Officer LT. COMDR. C. T. McCLURE



Captain COMDR. J. R. STEWART



PERSONNEL

As you can readily see from the pictures below, it was no trouble at all to get the boys together for photographic purposes. However, it was quite a job getting the "operations gang" out of their sacks, otherwise things went along smoothly. The Shore Patrol occupy two spots due to the size of their organization. The upper center shot shows the special "pom pom" squad. These boys did most of their work at night.

SHORE PATROL DISPENSARY STEWARDS SHORE PATROL ELECTRICIANS STEWARDS PERSONNEL OPERATIONS MAINTENANCE



Departmental Organization









O. O. D.

OPERATIONS

SUPPLY

CENTRAL FILES

AEROLOGY

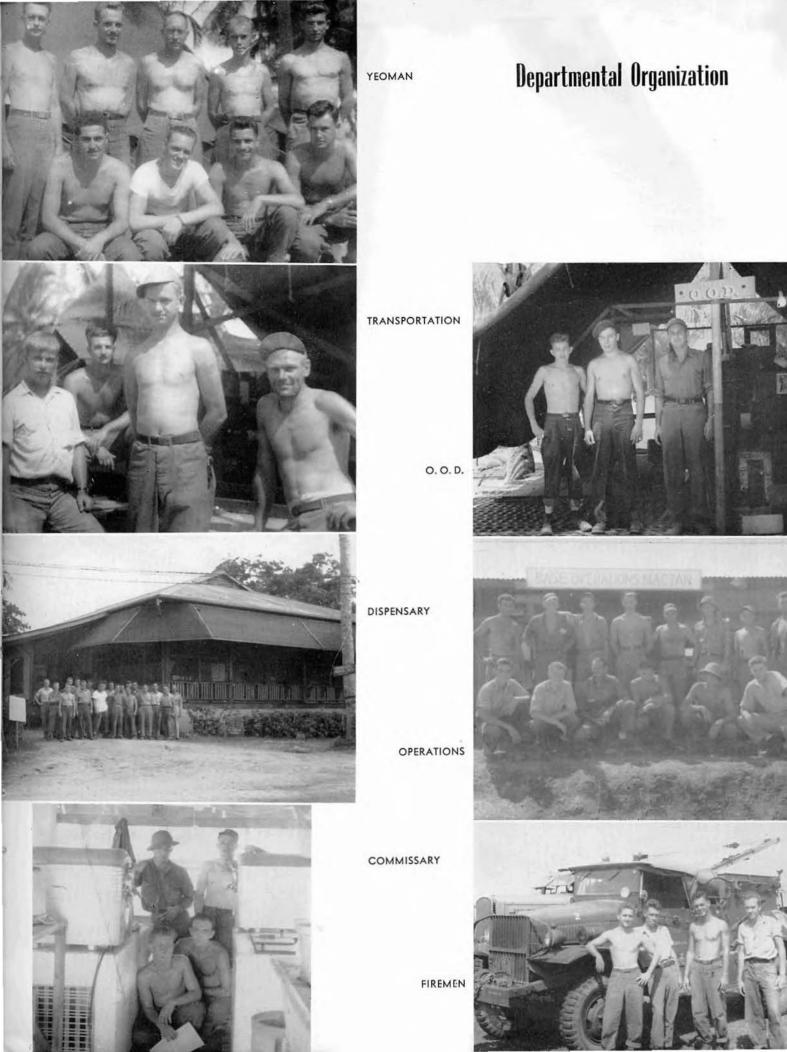


COMMUNICATIONS

M. A. A. FORCE

FIRE DEPT.

POST OFFICE





POST OFFICE

COBBLER SHOP

LIBRARY



POST OFFICE

COBBLER SHOP

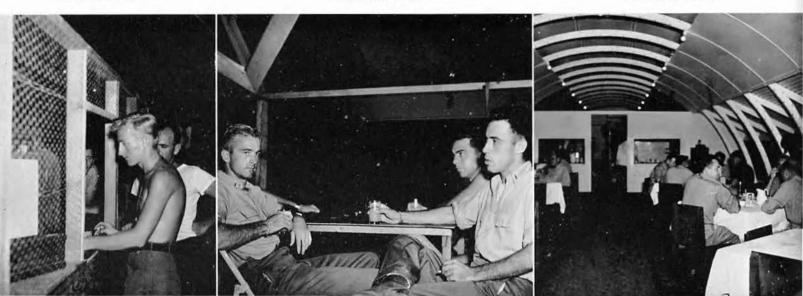
BEER RATION

SHIPS SERVICE

5

OFFICERS CLUB

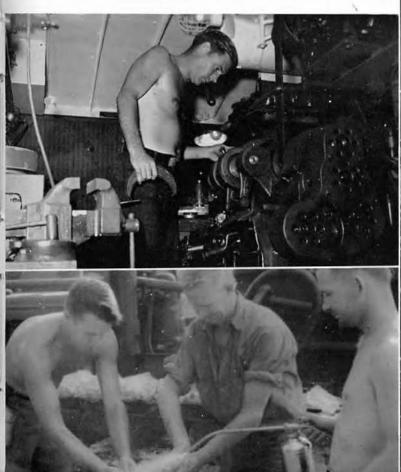
OFFICERS CLUB





T R A N S P O R T A T I O N

These photos were all taken while the Transportation boys were under the impression they'd get time-and-a-half for overtime. Wilson (upper left) even wrote his girl: "Having a wonderful time-and-a-half, wish you were here."





DISPENSARY



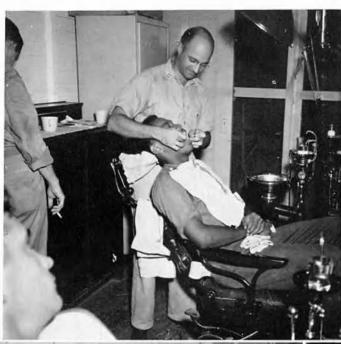
The first two photos show our medical department operating on a Filipino who was badly wounded by a Jap mine. There were several such casualties during the early days of our occupation, and our Sawbones really did a super job. Lower right shows Deason mixing a martini, and the left center shows Roth preparing to shave. The one below shows a cruel pharmacist mate roasting a helpless patient alive. In the center left Durdy and Johnson are seen scribbling nasty little notes to their congressmen.



M E D I C A L C E N T E R

Here we see our dentists removing molars in order to force confessions from the lips of suspects. When this didn't work the boys on the right whipped up a batch of buns and stoned the poor unfortunates into submission. In the lower right is the hospital office force, who were especially awakened for this photo.















USO SHOWS

Life in the tropics was not entirely without women. The USO sent us just enough of the Stateside stuff to keep us teased. Any resemblance between those characters below and women (or men) is purely imaginary. The culprit in the upper right figured he was in for a long show and swiped a string of hot dogs to sate his anticipated pangs of hunger. In the lower left we have a typical Southwest Pacific sailor, the kind whose alertness and smart military carriage did so much to strengthen our glorious reputation.









RECREATION



AIR STRIP

Acorn 51 controlled operations at the Airstrip on NAB, Mactain. If you study this page carefully you will find the "Follow Me" Jeep, which resembles a 1/4 ton jet-propelled zebra.







CEBU CITY

This beautiful modernistic structure was used as a garrison by the Japs, who burned it as they retreated. Across the granite facade is carved what is on the lips and in the hearts of every Filipino, "Let us love our Republic next to our God."









MANILA

These intricate tile-roofed structures grace a Chinese cemetery in the crumbling City of Manila. Here we see churches reduced to hollow hulks, anti-aircraft guns, squatted ironically amid tumbled crosses, and Chinese burial vaults, sacked by the Japs for the valuables buried with their owners as per Chinese custom. If the inhabitant of the shattered tomb on the lower right could talk, you can be sure he'd cry out, not only against the bestiality of the Japs, but against the inhumanity of war itself.

















MANILA

Here we see a group of buildings, looking for all the world like Grecian architecture, rotted by centuries of weather and decay. But such is not the case. There is something glorious in standing for ages, battered but unbroken. These buildings are babies in comparison, their once-proud granite heads bowed by the grinning savagery of "conquerors", leaning on the wind like mortally-wounded giants, their cracked pillars based firmly on nothing, their stairways, pock-marked waterfalls of dust, their lawns invaded by the indefatigable banana.



DOWNTOWN SECTION — MANILA—

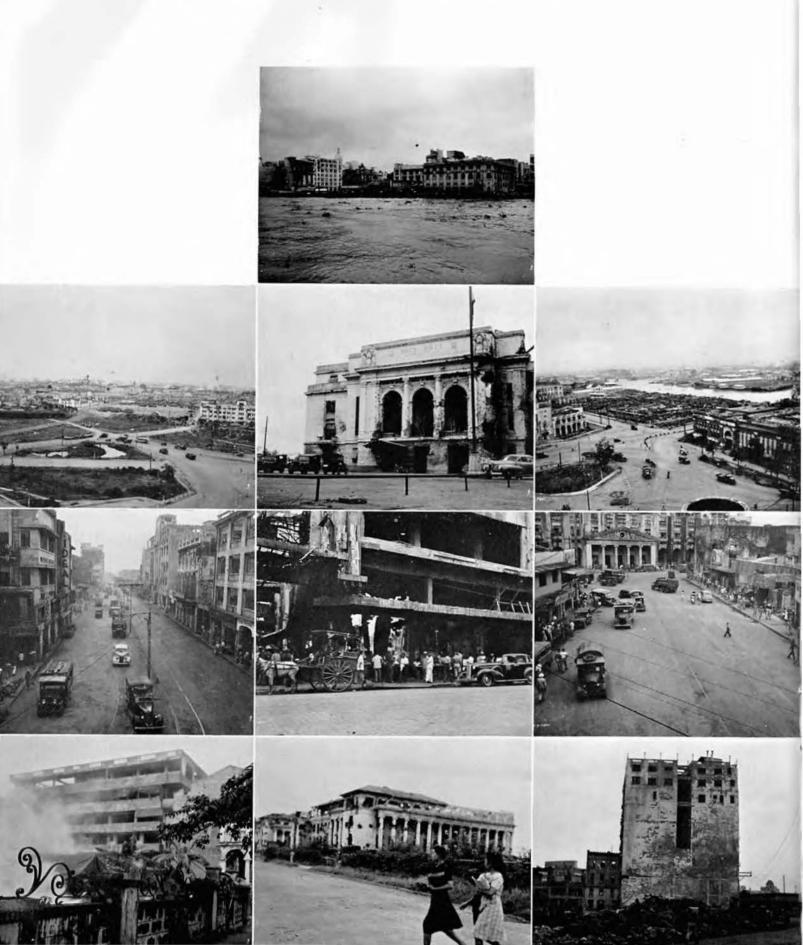
Here is the heart of Manila. In the top row we have two photos of comparatively undamaged school buildings, and the business district, seen from across the Pasig River. The building on the far left in this picture is the Bank of the Philippines. The building in the center, with its base blown away, was also a bank. The lower right shot was taken in the "Times Square" of Manila.







A CROSS SECTION OF MANILA



CHRONOLOGY

DATE	EVENT
19 JANUARY 1945	Acorn 51, Commissioned at Camp Bedilion, Port Hueneme, Cal. Comdr. J. R. Stewart, A(3)L, USNR, assumed command.
9 FEBRUARY 1945	Unit moved from Camp Bedilion to Point Mugu, Tent Area, Oxnard, Cal.
13 MARCH 1945	Acorn moved from Point Mugu to Thermal, NAAF, Thermal, Cal.
20 APRIL 1945	Acorn moved from Thermal to Point Mugu, Hut Area, Oxnard, Cal.
16 MAY 1945	First Echelon of 19 officers and 207 men departed for advance base destination aboard "SS Alcoa Patriot".
31 MAY 1945	Second Echelon of 13 officers and 320 men de- parted for advance base destination aboard "SS Mormac Sea".
23 JUNE 1945	First Echelon debarked at Mactan Island, Philip- pines.
29 JUNE 1945	Second Echelon debarked at Mactan Island, Philip- pines.
5 OCTOBER 1945	Acorn 51 decommissioned and converted into Naval Air Base, Mactan,

SHIP DATA

SS	ALCOA PATRIOT	Troops and supplies	First Echelon
SS	MORMAC SEA	Troops and supplies	Second Echelon
SS	GEORGE GERSHWIN	Supplies and Equipment	Lt. (j.g.) W. F. Enright
			Ens. A. F. Hudson
SS	FRANK SPRINGER	Supplies and Equipment	Ens. S. T. Hicks, Jr.
SS	FRANKLIN KING	Supplies and Equipment	Lt. (j.g.) R. B. Holmes

OFFICERS

LT. (J.G.) STUART H. BARRELL.	Buckingham, Va.
LT. (J.G.) LAWRENCE W. BERGLUND.	138 E. Pattison St., Ely, Minn.
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LIEUT. WILLIAM A. GEORGE	
LT. (J.G.) GEORGE M. GOLDSMITH.	
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LIEUT. ROBERT E. REGAN	
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LIEUT. ALBERT E. SHINHOLSER	
ENS. GEORGE A. SKAKEL, JR	
LIEUT. ROY F. SMITH	
ENS. H. LAWTON SNYDER.	
LT. (J.G.) ROBERT W. SNYDER	
ENS. CHARLES F. STEWART	Ponzer, N. C.
COMDR. JOHN R. STEWART	
LT. COMDR. EDWIN E. TULLIS.	
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LT. (J.G.) A. V. WEAVER	
LT. (J.G.) CHARLES E. WEBER	
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BROWNING, Arthur C., c/o W. T. Glenn, Manila, Ark.
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DUVALL, James W.
DTUBANULK, Lohn L. 91 Historieu, St., Namused Mass. DZIUBANIUK, John L., 91 Highview St., Norwood, Mass. ECKSTEIN, Robert E., 6042 Eucalyptus Lane, Los Angeles (42), Cal. EDGERTON, Jurney S., R.F.D. #1. Red Springs, N. C. EDWARDS, Benjamin D. EDWARDS, Remus A., 528 Maude Ave., Baltimore, Md. ELIAS, Louis, 1314 Grand Concourse, Bronx, N. Y. ELIAS, Louis, 1314 Grand Concourse, Bronx, N. Y. ERION, Walter E. ESTES, James E., 405 South Parkway, Chicago, III. FABIAN, Arthur B. FANELLI, Joseph V., Altamont Apts #1, Bend, Ore. FARRIS, Pete E. FENNEL, Henry C., 201 N. Main St. Abbeville, N. C. FERRARO, Alexander J. FERRELL, Carmel V., c/o Logan Banner Office, Logan, W. Va. FESSANT, William E., Jr., 624 E. 2nd St., Cameron, Mo. FIALA, Fred J., 5825 Cable Ave., Cleveland, Ohio. FLAHERTY, Daniel, 420 Marshall Ave., St. Paul, Minn. FLAHERIY, Daniel, 420 Marshall Ave., St. rout, Willin. FONTENOT, Tom F. FOSTER, Charles L. FRENCH, Roger E., 321 S. Poplar, Pana, III. FULTON, Paul, 275 Marsh St., Belmont, Mass. FURAY, Wallace, 10 Harbine Ave. Xenia, Ohio GAINES, William, 121 S. Maple St., Covington, Tenn. GALLIAN, Farris E., Jr., P.O. Box 1533, Bradshaw, W. Va. GAVA Tony, Charokea, Kans. GAVA, Tony, Cherokee, Kans. GAYNOR, Ray L., 245 Connecicut Ave., Highland Park, Mich. GETTER, Laurence R., 77 N. Main St., Bainbridge, N. Y. GIGUERE, Richard A., 105 MacArthur St., South St. Paul, Minn. Minn. GILES, Harold D. GILL, Leonard E., 1010 E. 19th St., Cheynne, Wyo. GILSTRAP, Jodie, R.I. Box 230, Daing Field, Texas GISOLDI, Cosimo F., 426 Morris Ave. Summit, N. J. GLEASON, Randolph E., Rt. #2, Roanoke, Va. GLOVER, Gerald D., Rt. #3, Greenbrier, Ark.

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