




## FOREWORD

The publication of this book will complete the record of our battalion through its first major assignment. It was a most interesting and colorful assignment; one which placed us in the front row at one of the truly outstanding events of all history-the amphibious invasion of southern Italy.

Our part in that invasion was not that of spectators. The field of battle was not con fined to the beaches. It raged over a large part of the central Mediterranean area, and included the sky above our camp.

The pictures are accurate, the account is true; no important action has been overlooked. Such incidents as are not covered will provide opportunities for the typically colorful Sea Bee imagination. Doubtless the stories will improve with age.

Let the 54th be proud of the service it has rendered to our country. Let us use our experiences as a background to assist us in future assignments. Let us do our duty as Americans; having regard for the duties of other branches of the American team. Let us face the future with courage, with confidence, with the knowledge that we are right, with the belief that we will win.

Comdr. W. L. Rinehart

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This book has been prepared in order to provide you a concise and pictorial record of a portion of your Naval career in the 54th U. S. N. C. Battalion.

The period of time covered is from the 21st of November 1942 to the 18th of December 1943. This takes you from the time of leaving the recruiting office, through boot camp, advanced base training, our overseas duty in Africa, and the trip home to the United States

The policy of the editorial staff has been to keep the book as impersonal as possible. The Battalion is composed of many various groups of craftsmen all of whom have distinguished themselves in their many assignments. It was impossible to cover all of these achievements, so mention was made of none.

We feel that the book will prove invaluable pictorially and hope that it will serve to recall some of the amusing and trying incidents experienced during this period of your life.

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## Golz <br> Uhelan



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| Dornack, W. F. | Lloyd, R. D. | Smith, R. H. |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Echwald, F. E. | Madden, G. T. | Stevens, E. H. |
| Harris, H. A. | Ostrom, T. | Teters, W. A. |
| Heiberlien, S. H. | Pulley, H. N. | Tollber, F. A. |



COMPANY "D"

PLATOON \#l
Albert, R. J.
Bader, E.
Byars, F. D.
Casey, J. T.
Coates, J. H.
Cole, M. E.
Cook, B. C.
Crowell, G. L.
Dawson, M. L.

Gast, W. F.

Marugg, L. E. Wollever, H. L.
Dollar, E. D. McArthur, D. L. Young, W. J.
Gordon, C. B. Remy, K. H. Hemberger, J. T. Riemke, W. J. Klimback, E. F. Robinson, E. W. Langmaid, R. W. Salo, O. I.
Lang, B. C. Smith, C. J.
Lewis, O. H. Smith, F. E.
Liljeberg, L. E. Tauchmann, W. M.
Malcolm, L. A. Testall, G. W.
Mandt, C. F. Willis, J. L.

Padian, W. A.

PLATOON \#2
Atherstone, H. E. Hadley, R. W. Bergman, S.
Boatwright, C. L. Heaton, R. W.
Bishop, J. R.
Chappell, J. E. Damitio, H. A.
Deever, A. R.
Draper, T. A.
Fairchild, E. M.
Fleming, W. F.
Garman, E. C.
Gibbens, H. N.

Pesce, E. J.
Petranek, C. F. Pietz, H. L. Rankin, E. H. Reyhill, S. W. $\begin{array}{ll}\text { Hope, E. Y. } & \text { Reyhill, S. W. } \\ \text { Kiser, E. P. } & \text { Sherwin, L. O. } \\ \text { Klevesahl, W, R. Vaughn, C. }\end{array}$ Klevesahl, W. R. Vaughn, C. Le Franco, J. Wiggins, J. S. Moser, W. E. Williams, K. C. Muench, H. C. Williams, R. C. Nielsen, J. P. Woods, E. V. Parks, R. D.


## COMPANY "D"

PLATOON \#3
Acosta, S. T. Clair, W. H.
Anderson, H. A. Connely, G. E.
Arnold, G. Galusha, F. D.
Arnold, W. J. Gibson, R. C.
Azevedo, E. J. Grube, H.
Bacon, M. C. Hendryx, E. A.
Badgley, H. C. Jacobson, E. P.
Baker, M. F. Jokerst, L. J.
Barker, J. C. Kerr, J. P.
Barr, G. R.
Brant, L. W.
Bous, T. J.
Brown, J. C.

Mockbee, E. H.
Payne, E. F.
Powell, E.
Rossi, L. J.
Smith, H. H.
Taylor, J. E.
Trewhella, A. R.
Vicuna, A. C.
Willis, J. E.
Kirkpatrick, J. E. Williams, W. E.
McGinnis, J. E. York, J. H., Jr.
Mickey, R. L.
Middleton, T. H.

PLATOON \#4
Bacon, N. H.
Bowman, J. R.
Bray, P. F.
Carlotto, J.
Coleman, C. B.
Crow, C. P.
Curti, J. M.
Evans, A.
Franklin, F. E.
Gilio, T. A.
Gilmour, J. M.
Glenn, M. W.
Grantz, L. R.
Griffith, G. P.
Guldager, M.
Herrero, J. E.
Hixson, D. S.
Keith, L. B.
Kendall, J. L.
Loustalet, R. L.
McCulloch, C. E.
McGraw, M. A.
Neel, C. A.
Nielsen, Ǹ. C. Overall, J. D. Querback, L. M.

Ramirez, J.
Richards, O. A.
Robinson, R. H. Salsa, F. A., Jr. Schwanz, H. C. St. John, R. J. Taasevigen, J. G. Testall, D. T. W. Urry, E. J. Watts, M. C. Williams, J. W.


COMPANY "D"

PLATOON \#5
Bowen, J. P.
Davis, R. E.
Erickson, L. J.
Evans, E. A.
Ferda, G.
Jones, G. H.
Key, R. W.
Loper, L. L.
Melton, C. G.
Miller, J. W., Jr.
Morstatt, A. E.

Nutt, G. A.
Randlet, F.
Ransburg, J. A.
Rips, C. H.
Stockton, C. F.
Straumford, J. F.
Rodarte, D. C. Thomas, R. G. Rol, H. Tolar, J. I.
Sanders, E. E. Tracey, D. J.
Schuler, C. L. Wardle, T. E.
Young, L. A.

PLATOON \#6
Allen, C. 0.
Begley, L. W.
Brown, C. J.
Camerlo, M.
Cattone, A.
Condra, E. L.
Erickson, R. H.
Flanigan, C. F.
Graue, G. H.
Graves, D. E.
Hayden, A. E.

Taylor, E. A., Jr.
$\begin{array}{ll}\text { James, B. R. } & \text { Taylor, E. A. } \\ \text { Kaplan, M. } & \text { Walters, D. }\end{array}$
Kramer, K. W. Ware, R. P.
Manos, P. N. Warner, H. A.
Markovich, M. J. Weaver, J. B.
Moulton, H. A. Weiburg, H. H.
Robinson, C. T. West, J. B.
Schindler, A. R. White, J. W.
Severini, R. W. Whitehead, E. L.

## MEN PARTICIPATING IN SICILIAN AND ITALIAN INVASIONS

Argenta, J.
Bray, P. F.
Capps, D. J.
Capstick, M.
Clymer, W. H.
Danielson, J. R.
Dudnick, H.
Hamant, H. B.
Hardy, F. R.
Henson, W.

Hester, N. C.
Hill, A. S.
Hooter, W. F. Hunt, W. F.
Ingram, J. W.
Jones, C. R.
King, P. T.
McInerney, E. L.
Metz, P.
Morrissey, J.

Parisi, B. V.
Petty, W. L.
Prickett, J. H.
Riley, A. J. (W/O)
Stewart, A. G.
Stewart, F. C.
Tauchmann, W. M.
Walling, R. F.
Wilson, A. E.
Wilson, J. L.


Recipients of the Purple Heart
Akin, H. J.
Golden, D. L.
Allen, C. O. Graue, G. E.
Arnold, G. Harnit, R. D.
Beeseley, C. D.
Berry, C. T.
Bowman, F. R.
Byars, F. B.
pstick, M. L. Hulstrom, H. J
Fitzgerald, M. D. Jacobson, E. P.
Gertz, P. A.
Kaplan, M. W.

Bray, F. Lee, A. L.
Evans, E. A. Jones, G. H.
Glenn, M. W. St. John, R. J.
Griffith, G. P. Young, L. A.


## NORTH AFRICA

North Africa today presents a picture of contrasts. Each successive civilization from the days of the Roman Empire to the present French rule has left its mark imprinted upon the architecture and customs of the country. A land inhabited by the people of half a dozen races living together in harmony, yet each retaining its own religion, each following its own traditions handed from generation to generation. Here one sees the modern machine of the present, working by the side of the primitive. Aeroplanes take off from modern airports with concrete runways and buildings, while close by, the native tills his field with plodding oxen and wooden plow. Automobiles travel down hard-surfaced highways passing camel caravans enroute to the native towns. Everywhere, mingling of the old and the new is apparent.

Typical of North African cities is the old native quarter enclosed by the original, massive stone walls. This section has remained unchanged. Here are found tiny open shops lining the narrow, tortuous alley-ways. These form a fitting background for the native artisans who have changed little from their ancient customs and habits.

Outside the ramparts of the native towns the European
sections have been built. These modern cities display such a riot of color, costumes and races as to be almost overwhelming. Common on the streets are Frenchmen clad in shorts and sport shirts with bare feet thrust into sandals; Arabs with their baggy pantaloons and short jackets topped by the traditional red fez; sleek Jews in flowing, striped kimonos wearing socks and oxford shoes. French, Jewish and Italian women wearing modern European dress; Arabiar women completely draped in white, wearing the traditional veil with only eyes, hands and sandalled feet exposed. Children are everywhere.

The street is a jumble of transportation, street cars with clanging bells, the elaborate horse-drawn carriages of the Europeans contrasting with the clumsy, high-wheeled cart of the Arab. Bicycles propelled by young and old alike add to the confusion. Intermixing with all is the Arab donkey, beast of burden dating back to Biblical times, still carrying his fantastic loads.

The whole display of past and present, traditional and modern, presents a brilliant and unforgettable picture which represents North Africa.


Arab Tilling with Oxen Near
Tent City Bizerte

## GUARD POST



Lowly guard post you're my throne, For 'tis here, and here alone That my rule is quite the thing And I reign a royal King.
To you I come and day by day
Plod the lonely hours away
Gazing blankly while I think
Of seamen toiling at the sink.
Lonely guard post would you hear
Why to me you are so dear
Then to you I reveal my plans
You keep me away from pots and pans.
The Seaman Guard


## SOMEWHERE IN BIZERTE

Somewhere in Bizerte the sun is like a curse,
And every day is followed by another slightly worse, Where the brick red dust blows thicker

Than the shifting desert sands
Where the American dreams and wishes for fairer greener lands.

Somewhere in Bizerte, where women are never seen Where the sky is always cloudy and the grass is never green, Where the jackals nightly howling rob a man of sleep Where there isn't any whiskey and the beer is never cheap.

Somewhere in Bizerte where the mail is always late Where Christmas cards in April are considered up to date.
Where we never have a pay day and never have a cent But we never miss the money cause we'd never get it spent.

Somewhere in Bizerte where the snakes and lizards play
Where a thousand musty flies replace the one you slay. Oh! Take me back to Washington, a place that I think swell For this God-forsaken outpost is a substitute for Hell.
H. C. Badgley


## BATIALION

 ${ }^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$SORRX

## $1 \mathrm{~N}^{\circ \mathrm{O}}$

## AN LST ODYSSEY

After three months of training we were at last ready for the rip to Island "X." We had shivered in the cold winds at 3radford; waded in the knee-deep mud at Peary and cursed he sub-zero temperature of Endicott. Now we were on our way. Half the Battalion was to leave first, and our last night n camp was spent in speculation. Where were we going? How were we going? Would we ever be together again? Serious questions and yet it was a happy night.
At last came the great day. We stumbled out at four A.M. o eat a hurried breakfast and then rushed back to crowd sighty pounds into a sixty-pound pack. Loaded aboard a train, four to a seat, with the baggage piled in the odd corners, we raveled to a great supply depot. Here we unloaded and lined ap along a warehouse to be mustered, and counted off into groups. One group went one way, another group went a different way, and before we knew it our group was on trucks headed for our ship. Then came "ye old scuttlebutt," we're going by air! We're going on a submarine! We're not going at all! Good old scuttlebutt; so dependable. Here we were mustered again (to make sure no one had dropped off for a beer) and after a short wait of two hours we were given permission to board our ship. What a ship! Slab-sided, square-ended, and flat-bottomed. Looked like a glorified garbage scow with guns. By inquiring of the ship's crew we learned that this little number was called an L.S.T. We also heard that the English had attempted to sail these little cuties across the Atlantic and had given up in disgust. Looked as if our names might go down in history; well, go down anyway. Along the bulkheads
of the first deck were shelves of canvas stretched tight over iron frames. These, we learned, were the Navy's idea of a boxspring mattress and were commonly called bunks. Picking out one of these nice soft beds, we spread our blankets and after a period of wishful thinking dropped off to sleep. Upon arising the next morning we found ourselves at sea, in more ways than one. Our destination was still unknown, and as fog cut the visibility down to a few feet we were even unable to tell what direction we were sailing. The day was spent in acquainting ourselves with our new surroundings and speculating as to the minute we would see our first submarine. Toward evening a breeze sprung up which eliminated the fog and coyly revealed the fact that there was no land to be seen. This breeze developed into a young wind and was our constant companion throughout the trip. By the end of the second day the ship was wallowing from side to side like a dowager. Supper that evening was a quiet affair, and many of the boys needed only a glance at the current meat balls and spaghetti to satisfy their hunger. The leeward rail proved to be the popular hangout for the next few days.
Nobody knew where we were going but it was expected that it would take us about four weeks. To those of the queasy midriff this was welcome news. Watches were set up, guns manned, and lookouts scanned the horizon twenty-four hours a day. Water was limited to drinking purposes only. Whiskers grew and flourished in wild profusion. Food was served in quantity but somehow lacked the quality of home cooking. Our friend, the wind, was our constant companion and so we


went lurching and lumbering from wave to wave, day after day. After some days of traveling, the engine gang decided that what few water faucets were in operation needed oiling, so they ran diesel oil through the fresh-water pipes. This caused some disruption, but it was discovered that if two pints of water were filtered through one roll of toilet paper the re-
sulting liquid made a passable beverage. At last a light was sighted blinking its welcome from a foreign shore and we realized how Columbus must have felt at the end of his cruise. After playing hide and seek with the other boats for the remainder of the night we dropped anchor in the harbor at Gibraltar.

The green hills of Spanish Morocco were a pleasing sight to our sea-weary eyes. Upon going ashore we found that the town clung to the steep hill and that considerable action was necessary. The population was a strange mixture of Spanish and English, and for the first time we bumped into an unknown language. However, entertainment of sorts was available and we enjoyed ourselves to the full extent of the possibilities. We also discovered that it was possible to send word home of our safe arrival and so counted our time ashore as well spent. Early in the morning of the fourth day the engines were again started and we were off once more to our unknown destination.

After the waves of the broad Atlantic, the quiet swell of the Mediterranean was welcome. We sailed along watching the North African coastline while dolphins and porpoises played in schools around our bow. Scuttlebutt was again flying thick and fast and we were going to at least five different places. At last, one rainy evening we turned into a harbor and dropped anchor. Word made the rounds that we had arrived at Island " X " commonly known as Arzew. The next morning we moved into the dock and unloaded to find the men of the Second Echelon waiting for us.


## ON OUR WAY

Good-bye to A.B.D. We of the Second Echelon were finally underway to Island "X." Packs, rifles, seabags, crates and lockers-what a mass of personal equipment. Despite the confusion and hustling, everyone of the Second Echelon was very happy to be finally underway. This is what we had been waiting for-Island " X " and a job to do. No one minded the six inches of snow; we were leaving the cold New England weather behind now.

Rumors and scuttlebutt galore; we were bound for California, Gulfport, Seattle, or back to Norfolk? Despite all the hopes and logical arguments, we finally debarked from our train well after dark some place in New Jersey.

Here began the long and tedious job of loading aboard the transport. What a shock to go down, down, down into the hold. Finding there tier after tier of tightly lined bunks reaching from the floor up and up to the ceiling, until the sight made you dizzy. All of our equipment must someway hang from these same bunks. We all thought of the old slaverunners and immediately developed a kindred feeling for the darkies of olden times. Everyone was dog-tired and piled into the bunks; fully dressed; packs, equipment and all.

The following morning, after the shock of being awakened in the middle of the night to be herded through the chow line, we began to take stock.

Our ship was a large freighter temporarily converted into a troop carrier and we found ourselves aboard along with 2500 soldiers and the ship's crew of about 500 . During the night we had pulled out and the convoy had formed. We were underway and everyone was a little queasy with the roll of the huge ground swells.

The convoy was very large with its freighters, liners and escort vessels and we experienced the thrill of realizing that
our group was an actual part of a huge organized overseas unit. We quickly learned that this was no pleasure cruise and that just as in camp there was an ironbound routine to follow. Gun watches, clean-up details, guard duty, and ship repair groups made it clear that we were to work for our passage to our unknown destination. Here, too, we found the incessant waiting in line and began to realize that lines, lines, lines would constantly be with us throughout our Naval careers.

After the first few days everyone began to feel better. The ground swells were left behind and we were becoming old salts. Appetites were returning only to grow sharper with a trip through the chow line, as the food served was of very poor quality. This led to the establishment of hot bread hijackers and midnight lunches, where aromatic hot bread and jam were wolfed down in huge mouthfuls. None of us will ever forget the exciting dash along the dark decks with a red hot loaf of bread clutched next to a very thin scivy shirt, leaving a telltale aromatic odor from one end of the ship to the other.

We were in the Gulf Stream now, with winter left behind. Next appeared in our midst the old time salts with calculations of longitude and latitude. We were headed for Bermuda, South America, Africa and India. Some even plotted our course so that we would end in the middle of the Sahara Desert. Through it all the convoy continued zigging and zagging on its way with little regard for the compiled statistics.

Everyone's nerves began to show the strain of many days' confinement, with the ever-present danger of submarine attack. Diversion was supplied by our first introduction to anti-aircraft fire as the various ships unlimbered their guns and held practice sessions.


Dog-eared magazines were at a premium. We began to feel as though we had lived aboard ship always and that any other life had just been a very pleasant dream. The lack of proper bathing and washing facilities began to make itself felt and we became more and more unkempt. This was rather a rude shock, as we had never realized that a ship could be'such a dirty place.

However, the farther south we went the nicer the weather, and soon we were experiencing some very beautiful moonlight nights. It was pleasant to stand at the rail watching the reflection on the waves with the white trail of sparkling phosphorescence rolling out from the side of the ship. How nice it would be to be on a pleasure cruise in better times so that our wives or sweethearts could enjoy such quiet beauty.

We did have a few submarine scares; however, each man is always armored with the thought deep in his heart that "This will never happen to me."

After many days of speculation and very heated arguments we were issued handbooks, explaining how we were to conduct ourselves in North Africa. So this was, after all, to be our destination.

Shortly after, we had our first glimpse of land; the thrill of seeing two continents at the same time. Everyone felt himself a bit of an explorer. On the left, we were told, was Spain and on the right was Spanish Morocco. How rugged and mountainous the countries appeared; entirely different from what we had pictured in our minds.

Due to the exigencies of war we did not go through the Straits of Gibraltar until after dark. Thus we were deprived of any clear view of the famous landmark. However, we did see the lights of the large city of Tangier in North Africa.

Strange it was indeed after being accustomed to the blackedout coastal cities of our own United States.

The next morning we awoke to find our convoy in the care of tiny British Corvettes. Indeed it appeared as though we had been left to the care of the two Chaplains and the Swiss Navy. All day we followed the coast line of North Africa. The convoy pulled into the harbor of Oran late in the afternoon.

What a wonderful feeling; we had arrived safely. Here was Africa, that strange continent. What a spectacular setting for a harbor. The docks were located at the foot of very steep hills with sharp cliffs breaking down to the water on both sides. Over there on the left could be seen the colorful Arab section peeking over the brow of the cliff. Directly ahead, following the winding road, could be seen some of the modern French section terraced up the steep hillside and progressing over the top to the main city beyond. On the right the harbor was framed by a sheer cliff crowned by an old chapel which appeared to have grown from the very rock itself.

Near at hand, the channel weaved back and forth between half sunken hulls. Here and there just a smokestack would indicate the ship beneath. There in the dry dock is an old submarine hull, a huge hole blown in her side. Thus we had our first views of the destructive power of modern warfare.

The ship's railing was packed solid while we docked, and here we introduced ourselves to the ragged Arab beggars and children. This meeting was accomplished by the simple act of tossing cigarettes and candy over the side and watching the mad scramble. We will always remember the cry that was to follow us all over Africa: "Cigarette, Joe."



Change your francs for greenbacks! We're on the move! Even though they were gold seal invasion notes it seemed good to be carrying American money again.

Official word was posted. We were to pack all equipment and ready ourselves for a major move. What an outburst of scuttlebutt, speculation and wishful thinking. Immediately bets were placed. Two to one we were on our way home. England, Italy and even India came in for their share of the gamblers' attention although the odds were considerably different.
The only drawback-the Battalion was to be split with Company "C" and a pontoon detachment left at Bizerte. The parting of friends is not pleasant although in the Navy it is a daly occurrence.
The mad scramble was on. Pack this, take that to the hangar to be left with Company "C." Discard those souvenirs even despite the Navy bulletin to the contrary. We were really camping out now, with the galley cut down to the minimum and our cots and beds already loaded aboard ship.
Again we were split into two groups with each section scheduled for a different ship.
At last, we were ready with packs, rifles and seabags. Each man looking like a one-man moving van. Why did we have to pack our sheepskins? That wait all morning down at the docks was really cold and did we get hungry.
Our ship was anchored out in Lake Bizerte near Ferryville so we were loaded aboard L.C.I.'s for the first step of our journey. Our quarters we found to be in the two forward
holds. These had been lined with bunks and provided with a small galley to facilitate the removal of prisoners from the war zone. How tired we were going to become of this setup before we finally reached our destination.

Early the following morning we steamed slowly through the Lake, followed down the canal and anchored in the outer harbor. The wind was blowing a gale but despite the weather we crowded the deck and lined the railings, each of us looking upon familiar landmarks for the last time. Other freighters and tankers anchored near us, until towards evening we had a goodly collection of ships. Soon after dark there was a bustle of activity and the ships began pulling out and forming into convoy. One thing, we were headed westward! Life aboard ship soon settled down to routine. Watches were set up, gun crews manned their weapons, kitchen police and mess cooks went to work.

Due to the cramped conditions of the galley, meals were limited to two a day. In a public speech one of the chief commissary stewards promised all hands two big meals. One of these we ate on Thanksgiving Day; the other is yet to come.

Axis bombers had a habit of making things hot for convoys in the Mediterranean so a sharp lookout was kept at all times. Large flying boats were constantly circling back and forth on submarine patrol. Tiny corvettes and destroyers formed a protective screen entirely around the group.

We followed the coast line of North Africa very closely and as we progressed ships came out from all of the principal harbors to join the convoy. The trip from Bizerte to Gibraltar took a week and by this time the convoy with its circling planes and dashing corvettes made an impressive sight.

Passing through the Straits of Gibraltar the convoy maneuvered into long columns in order to thread through the mine fields. Although the straits are only some ten or twelve miles in length it took three hours to complete the passage.


The frowning ramparts of "The Rock" were partially shrouded in clouds with just the very peak exposed. On the opposite side could be seen the hazy outlines of the mountainous coast of Africa. As we progressed farther "The Rock" and Africa fell to the background and we followed the coast of Spain for a few miles. Here, the cointry was mountainous also, with the bare rolling hills coming right down to the water. Our last sight of land for many days was to be "Tarifa Light" on Point Europa in Spain.

Shortly after heading into the open sea, interest was added when we passed a large eastbound convoy heading into the Mediterranean. We were all thankful that our convoy was, for the present, headed in the right direction.

The difference between the waves and swells of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean at once became apparent. Much to our chagrin we learned that the L.S.T.'s weren't the only boats that could roll. The ship shook a mean rudder in her own right. The rail birds took their positions and the chow line was noticeably shorter for the next few days.

No less than seven dogs had joined our company. These friendly little beasts infested our two crowded holds and soon the air was predominately doggy. This we couldn't have, so they were caged in a locker on deck, where their time was spent in alternate howling and yapping.

Our daily routine by this time was well established. We had four wash basins available with one fresh-water tap for 500 men. This meant that the lavatory was in constant use twentyfour hours a day. There were regular shifts getting up all night long in order to shave. After meals the mess hall was cleaned and immediately became a replica of an old-time gambling hall with games of chance of all description in progress. Usually, shortly before sundown, everyone went "top side" for a breath of fresh air and a last cigarette before the order "darken ship." The stretch from four-thirty dinner until breakfast in the morning became quite an ordeal and soon we were enjoying cold lunches served about nine o'clock at night.

The days passed into a week and the first week into the second since we had left "The Rock." Three weeks since we had loaded aboard at Bizerte. Could the ocean be this large? Anyway, we were headed in the right direction, but let's quit dragging the anchor!

Speaking of dragging the anchor, towards the end of the second week from "The Rock," we hit a four-day storm and everyone wished that we were where we could drop anchor. The steering apparatus of the ship broke and we wallowed around every which way, reaping the full benefit of the stormtossed waves. Cooking was impossible and "K" rations became the order of the day. Sleeping also became quite an
ordeal and many a pipe frame was almost pinched in two by frantic Seabees endeavoring to ride her out.

The steering gear was repaired and the storm gradually lessened and we started making headway again. By this time it became evident that we would reach some port in the States. Spirits soared and many were the plans laid for the invasion of our homeland.

The weather had become much colder and we were nearing our last few days aboard ship. A number of ships left the convoy headed for other ports. Eagerly we scanned the sky for the sight of a coastal patrol plane. Finally we saw her, a huge Catalina flying boat, keeping her eternal vigilance over American waters.


The next morning buoys and channel-markers dotted the water, and during the afternoon a dark blot on the horizon grew to be the entrance to a U. S. harbor. All hands lined the railings as we slowly moved up the harbor and had our first glimpse of $U$. S. soil in many months.

Feverish last-minute packing and what a scramble on deck. Everyone wanted to get ashore, but fast. This was the end of our voyage after practically a month aboard ship. Boy, were we happy. We were home. Shouldering our packs we filed slowly down the gangway amid the flashing light of the newspaper reporters.

Red Cross workers were on hand with candy, doughnuts, coffee and milk. Milk for the first time in nearly a year!

A train was waiting on the siding and we were soon on our way to Camp Endicott at Davisville, Rhode Island.

## SUPPLY

Americans like things concise and to the point. They have said that this is a tough war. They have said that it is a war of supply. Cryptic statements, perhaps, but we of the " S " division have come to regard them as true.

Our battalion in Africa was but one of thousands of units. Our work with its attendant supply function was but a very small part of the effort necessary to free Africa of the Axis powers. Our problems of supply, although a small part of the whole, were such as to teach us that a war demands as much or more in materials as it does in men. They were problems that taught us that supplies are an intricate part of that war and that success depends directly upon the prompt delivery of these supplies.

The " S " division is charged with and responsible for the following functions: Supply and Procurement, Purchasing, Commissary, Finance and Accounting. Commissary includes clothing and the ship's store as well as the handling of the food. The supply section handles supply and procurement along with the purchasing, while the disbursing section takes care of the commissary, finance and accounting.

The problems involved in the performance of these functions were many. They were not always easy. The fact that our battalion had been split into six separate detachments and scattered up and down the coast from Nemours to Cherchell presented additional and unique difficulties in the procurement, control and accountability of supplies. Yet the efficiency of a battalion depends largely upon a continued flow of materials to the men when and where they are required
and war is not tolerant of delay. A thousand skilled Seabees can do a lot to stock piles and can do it in a hurry; to keep them supplied required some hustling. We hustled. Navy sources of supply in the early months of the campaign were practically non-existent so sometimes it was a prolonged harangue with a Frenchman who spoke with machine-gun rapidity but decided to sell his cement with snail-like slowness. Again it was a case of persuading a harassed and busy army colonel that we needed fifty feet of pipe in Tenes more than the Army needed it in Bone. We usually broke about even on a deal like that. We had requests for everything and some of these requests, based apparently on the supposition that we were just across the street from Naval Supply Dept., Norfolk, approached, if they didn't quite attain, the status of the proverbial inquiry for the fur-lined bathtub. It can be said, however, and with the utmost sincerity, that the ingenuity, skill and perseverance displayed by the men in improvising and getting a difficult job done time and again with only makeshift materials at hand was in keeping with the highest traditions already established in this war by the Seabees the world over and entirely worthy of their motto"Can Do."
Difficulties were also encountered in obtaining commissary and ship's store supplies. During the first few months in Africa our rations came entirely from the Army, supplemented on occasion with fresh vegetables and fruit purchased from native sources. The procurement of fresh meat was the greatest problem and eventually, in order to give

tired palates some relief from the terrible monotony of canned luncheon meat and stew (it had other names, too), Arab beef was purchased and slaughtered by our own butchers under the supervision of an Army Major of the Veterinary Corps. Men who saw similarities between the States and Africa in many things couldn't, in good conscience, see the slightest similarity between our U. S. beef and those tired African oxen. It made good hamburger though and it helped. As the campaign progressed and reached its climax with the fall of Bizerte, Navy supplies from the States began to come in. What a welcome that first supply ship had with its cargo of fresh meat, fruit, and eggs. The Seabees did pretty well with the inner man from then on. We had our gripes, plenty of 'em, but it is said that they are to be expected; nor did we particularly worry about them. We felt better after seeing our combat troops with their "C" rations and how our paratroopers, boarding invasion ships for Italy, reacted to a few fresh oranges and potatoes our unloading crews threw to them.

We were fortunate in maintaining a fairly stable stock in the Ship's Store. Cigarettes were rationed to a pack a day at first but as our stock gradually accumulated we were able to sell each man a carton a week. Candy was more difficult, and while chocolate was cut off during the summer months in favor of a less perishable variety, it came back fairly strong in the fall upon arrival of shipments from the States in response to our requisitions. The Chaplain's hunger for cigars, and a very decided craving among a few of the mates for Copenhagen, gave us a little trouble several times. The profits of our store amounted to $\$ 4,063.24$ which amount was cred-
ited to the appropriation, Ship Store Profits, Navy, and held available for expenditure upon the order of the officer in charge of the welfare, amusement, and entertainment of the crew. Several purchases were made from this source, including a piano, Christmas cards, and an experiment in Tunisian beer. The bulk of it, however, is still available and will probably be applied to defray, in part, the cost of this book.

We were green as to the many aspects of our job when we boarded the ship on that cold, bitter day of February, 1943. A few days later, on that heaving L.S.T. somewhere on the Atlantic, many of us were green in quite another sense. Ten months of Africa, however, taught us much about our jobs and upon embarkation for home even the trips to the rails were less frequent.
At the beginning it was largely a question of how to best beg, borrow or "acquire" needed materials and sometimes in the process the " C " in " CB " came to denote connivance rather than construction. Eventually, however, more than one Army and Navy unit in the area came to refer to our camp as that "Seabee Country Club." Many were the British Tommies and American Doughboys who dropped in on us for a meal or a cold lemonade. Many were the occasions upon which it was said that our construction men had built the finest galley in Africa and that our cooks and bakers were worthy of it.

That, in brief, was the job of the Supply Section of the "S" Division and we like to think that we got it done. The caliber, diligence and morale of the enlisted men of the Supply Section were excellent and the Supply Officer feels not the slightest hesitation in giving to those men the highest praise in the Navy-"WELL DONE".


## DISBURSING

The 54th Battalion's familiar sign, "Disbursing Office," was first raised December 1, 1942, in Camp Bradford. It was there that the now famous "Battle of Bradford" was fought, meaning sufferance of colds, cat-fever, shortage of oil to keep the huts warm, and even upon occasion total lack of electric lights. Nevertheless, the mountain-high piles of insurance applications, family allowance and MAQ applications were waded through and before the battalion was out of boot our first payday was held on December 20th, being a token payment of $\$ 20$ to $\$ 80$ to each man.
On March 24 we held the first payday in Africa, giving each man 1,000 francs which, at the rate of exchange prevailing at that time, amounted to $\$ 20$. American eurrency could not be used, on orders of the Army Finance, even though the natives were willing to pay a premium to secure American dollars. This payday was a memorable one from the point of watching the men inspect their first seen francs questioningly and even skeptically. The next lesson learned was that a thousand francs had lasting power, as there was little to buy except wine at ten to fifteen francs per glass. The opposite illusion of the value of this new form of currency
was realized when thousand franc notes were tossed into the card games which soon reached a new high.

The procedure in securing new francs was comparatively simple. An Exchange check for Cash-Foreign Currency was drawn, formal approval secured from the local American Consul, then cashed at the Banque of Algeria. Here a $\$ 50,000$ check would realize two million, five hundred thousand francs, in notes ranging in denomination from five, twenty, fifty, one hundred, and five hundred to one thousand francs.

By this time, too, our battalion had split into groups of a company each, located as far west as Nemours, on the border of French Morocco, and east as far as Cherchell. As a result, with the consent of our Officer-in-Charge, it was decided that one payday a month would be held. This plan worked satisfactorily until our return to the States. The men were able to draw sufficient funds for a month's needs which in hundreds of cases amounted to approximately $\$ 10$ to $\$ 20$ each. This then gave us the necessary time to make the circuit which at times included the above-mentioned Nemours base, Beni Saf, Oran, Arzew, Mostaganem, Port-aux-Poules, Tenes and Cherchell.


Later, as our various units began to purchase from local concerns, we had added to our duties the paying of bills. We came to Africa knowing no French but the duties compelled the acquisition of a smattering. It is interesting, though, how deals can be completed and exchanges of the coin of the realm made by the ever useful sign language. Our attempts even ran to Arabic. However, in most of the banks one of its personnel would know a few words of English; yet we found quite essential a speaking knowledge of the French numbers up to twenty, and with this knowledge we could also pay the Arab merchants, most of whom could speak French and Spanish as fluently as Arabic.

After arrival at Bizerte we assumed further and additional duties by taking over the accounts of the 1005th Detachment, of some 200 men. At other times we were requested to pay units of the 1006th Detachment and once, 250 men of the 70th Battalion.

In November we learned of orders directing us homeward and there ensued in the next two days one of the most hectic periods of our experience. We spent two nights converting $\$ 30,000$ in francs to Gold Seal, then selling a local Disbursing Officer an another naval unit on the good-neighbor idea of accepting them on a transfer. We finally completed this requirement thirty minutes before boarding ship. During the two preceding days our storekeepers closed out approximately 500 accounts, of those men who were to remain behind. As a result, we packed our personal belongings at dinner time and then returned to the hangar offices at Bizerte and worked all night. At eleven-thirty the next day, we climbed the ladder of a naval supply ship, homeward bound. We had no regret for leaving a country scarred by the marks of hard battles, which will always be remembered in American history, because of those of our fellow members who there made the supreme sacrifice.


## SHIPS SERVICE

You say you belong to the 54th Battalion? YES! I knowThat's "The country club of North Africa!"

One of the main reasons for such a description of our camp was our battalion's ships service department. We could rightly boast that our battalion was provided with all of the essentials of our home communities. Post Office, Laundry, Barber Shop, Cobbler Shop, and Tailor Shop all grouped under the heading of ships service to provide for our comfort.

Each battalion has men skilled in these trades who in turn are provided with the proper, efficient tools and machinery to maintain these services.

Any mail today? The most important question in any service man's mind. The most cussed and discussed department in the whole Navy. I hear they have 100 sacks of mail for us -they say all of our mail has gone to South America-they are going to start flying all of our mail direct-I heard that the
mail ship was torpedoed-many hours did we spend in speculation and anticipation. When all was said and done, we finally received the longed-for letters although at times they were months late.

The largest accumulated pile of mail was the one that greeted us when we returned from our thirty-day leave after coming home from Africa. There were 600 bags containing Xmas packages and greetings which had gone to Africa and followed us back again. There were also about three months' communications from home sealed in over 150,000 first class letters.

The battalion sent $\$ 400,000.00$ home in money orders. Of this amount $\$ 18,300$ was sent home on one payday. From the statistics, those at home at least have been appreciative as the battalion receives an average of 2,000 pieces of mail daily while sending out only 1,000 .

When we first arrived in Africa clean clothes immediately became a problem. Many were the intricate deals made with the French washerwomen. Don't let anyone tell you that the French can't drive a sharp bargain. As soon as our equipment arrived the battalion laundry was set up and we were saved the necessity of having to support the entire French population of North Africa. Seeing the British washing their clothes in the muddly little stream below our camp in Bizerte made each and everyone of us thankful for our own complete laundry set-up.

Razor blades, chewing gum, pocket combs, practically every item but a set of false teeth was made available to the purchaser. For one memorable period while in Arzew we were able to obtain beer.

Thus we even had our version of the corner drug store to complete the picture of our community.

To top the picture of making Joe Seabee sartorially resplendent we had our own two-chair barber shop. Although some few of our members had no need to call for a haircut, the majority of the battalion benefited very greatly in appearance by utilizing this service. As all barber shops should be, it was strictly for men; there was no beauty parlor in connection. One thing, we did lack the ever-present Police Gazette.

Forming another portion of our civic center was the cobbler shop. Here many pairs of shoes were repaired and kept
in good condition thereby saving many dollars for both the men and the government. The machinery in the shop served the dual purpose of accomplishing work in shoe repair and also affording a means for the men to work on souvenirs in their spare time.

To complete the list of our ship's service we had available a tailor shop. Here it was that those G.I. "too smalls" and "too bigs" were altered to fit. Many men were also saved considerable embarrassment by handy patches installed in the right places. Finish work was also done on dress uniforms which included pressing and trimming.

With all these services available our camp was rightly called "the country club of North Africa."

A small percentage of the money collected from these shops went to defray the expense of maintaining them, while the bulk of the revenue was placed in the battalion's welfare fund.

The ship's store, although a separate unit operated by the supply department, really was the most important part of our civic center. As is the case in civilian life we were strictly under the ration system.

At first cigarettes were rationed to a pack a day. Later on, however, we were able to obtain a carton a week. Due to the climatic conditions, candy bars were always scarce. This shortage was supplemented by life-savers and hard candies. May we never see another box of "Charms" again!



## NORTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE

North African architecture covers a great span of time, dating from the days of Carthage and the Roman Empire through the development of Europe and America. Many North African cities were important centers of civilization long before the discovery of America, and wars between many nations have been waged for the rule of its shores.
Each nation, although falling from power, has left its mark upon the architecture of the country. Thus we find today records of many civilizations standing side by side. The combination of classical Byzantine, Moorish and modern buildings, with occasional minarets and Mosque domes breaking the skyline, forms a very interesting pattern work and affords a good study in the development of the country.


It is customary in the cities that the French or European section be separate from the Arabian. The original native city, usually referred to as the "Kasbah" or "Castle," was walled in before the Europeans came. The Europeans built their cities close by and sometimes surrounding the native city, as in Tunis. The European cities were also walled, so cases of one walled city within another occurs.

The construction of the buildings is uniformly regulated by the climatic conditions and materials native to the country, which accounts for the thick masonry walls and tile roofs being standard.


The commercial architecture naturally embraces man different types of structures. The buildings vary in style fror modern stores and apartment houses of straightforward $d t$ sign to very ornate compositions down through the Frenc Renaissance and Moorish styles to the native Arabian style The buildings generally are of two or three stories, with th ground floor composed of shops and stores, while the uppe floors are devoted to living quarters in the form of apartments


These apartments have overhanging balconies, French doors facing the street, and narrow light courts on the interior of the building to supply light and air to the inside rooms. The balconies all have ornamental iron railings, varying in design to suit the architecture of the building. Shutters of wood are used on both door and window openings. Story heights are higher than our standards. The ground floors average sixteen feet and the upper floors about fourteen feet in height. The use of tall, narrow openings for doors and windows gives a general gloomy appearance to the interiors. Modern sanitary conveniences and heating systems are lacking.


Access to the upper floors is by a central staircase. There are no fire escapes. The living quarters are decorated with wallpaper in most cases. Windows are typical European casement type swinging in to allow operation of shutters.

The domestic architecture appears in as many styles as the commercial buildings. All residences, regardless of style, front the street, with a small enclosed garden court. The garden enclosures are usually made by a low stone or concrete wall topped with ornamental iron fences. The tendency is to secure maximum privacy.

The majority of houses are two stories high with flat concrete or pitched tile roofs. Native stone and hollow tile masonry walls are covered with stucco. The interior walls are plastered and papered. The floors are square tile six to eight inches square with conventional designs. The ceilings are high with narrow door and window openings closed with wooden shutters.

At the Karouba Naval Air Base are several reinforced concrete hangars of notable size and construction. These hangars have a clear floor space of 180 by 198 feet. The reinforced concrete arch beams that carry a dead load of the six-inch concrete roof are spaced on twenty-foot centers and carry a load of 168 tons per truss over a clear span of 214 feet. The buildings show remarkable ability in handling concrete and masonry construction.

Although lacking in many materials of construction and modern conveniences, the architecture and living quarters are admirably suited to the climate and country.


Cathedral in Bizerte


CONCRETE HANGAR TYPE "A"


CONCRETE HANGAR TYPE "B"

# BATTALION 




During the last week of February and the first week of March, the 54th Naval Construction Battalion left the United States in two echelons. Each echelon consisted of two full companies abetted by cooks, bakers and engineers from Headquarters Company and so comprised that each could function as an independent unit.
The first echelon was loaded aboard L.S.T.'s (Landing Ships Tanks) at an East Coast Port. They were the first armed iorces to cross the Atlantic in amphibious landing craft. After a trip of thirty-three days, they arrived in Arzew, North Africa. Here they found the second echelon already ashore and impatiently awaiting their arrival.
This group had left New York on a troop transport and ifter a trip of fifteen days, arrived on "Island X" to find the country knee deep in mud. As all the battalion's supplies and building materials were aboard the L.S.T.'s there was little the second echelon could do except utilize the available materials and turn to salvage for the balance.
Upon the arrival of the first echelon and the supplies, a tent city was established some two miles from the town of Arzew. This camp was built on a gently sloping plain overlooking the rocky Mediterranean shore. As this was to be our home for the next few months everyone endeavored to make it as comfortable as possible. Tents were set up around a central service unit in such a manner that through streets were possible. This service unit comprised of the galley, mess tents, ships service, and siek bay. Although the first few days were confusing it wasn't long before our new home took shape. On the hill close by a large water tank was built. Evaporators were set up on the beach and water was piped through camp in a two-inch main. A large diesel generator was installed to furnish power for all tents. On the outskirts of camp, bulldozers leveled the ground and a 1,000 -inch rifle range was built. This range was used constantly by Army and Navy personnel alike. A salvage yard was established and all lumber from boxes and crates was saved for use around the area. A large recreation site was laid out and graded. Small French cottages along the beach were cleaned and repaired to serve as officers' quarters. When complete, this camp, backed by the high hills and looking out over the ever restless ocean, was well situated.

The town of Arzew with its city square and tree lined streets is located on the shore of a large bay some thirty miles east of the city of Oran. It was here that we first came in contact with the natives of North Africa. Never to be forgotten were our first meetings with the Arabs. Clad in rags, caked
with dirt, barefoot and to all appearances homeless, they roamed the streets and country-side begging cigarettes, candy and chewing gum. The surrounding country was hilly by nature and given over to the cultivation of grapes and grain.

While stationed at this camp we were able to visit some of the surrounding towns and villages. The largest of these was Oran; a city of about two hundred thousand people. Here we became acquainted with the metropolitan atmosphere of Africa's larger towns. Built on the bluffs overlooking the harbor, with its stone breakwaters and jetties, Oran presented many interesting and colorful contrasts to our "New World" minds. Among notable places of interest was the Cathedral and Castle built high on a rocky promontory affording an overall view of the city and harbor.

From the start it was apparent that our work would be closely connected with that of the Amphibious Force and that the battalion's main job would be to build and maintain bases for that branch of the service. Early in the month of April men were sent to seven different ports along the Algerian coast for this purpose. Company " C " went to Tenes and Cherchell while Company "D" furnished men for Mostaganem, Beni Saf, Nemours and Port aux Poules.
This left Company " $A$ " and Company " $B$ " to carry on the work of unloading supplies and building the amphibious base at Arzew. This base was the largest of its kind in Algeria and was built of quonset huts. Roads and streets were built and graded. Water and power lines run to all the necessary buildings. On a low hill near the main camp a hospital unit consisting of 19 quonset huts was built and the equipment installed. In the meanwhile, shipload after shipload of supplies arrived and the battalion furnished unloading crews twenty-four hours a day. These supplies were trucked to a supply depot near camp and placed under an armed guard. On the sandy beach of the harbor the pontoon crew set up their shop. Here were built all manner of pontoon assemblies. Long causeways for the L.S.T.'s to use on invasion work. Single and twin motor barges for hauling supplies. All were turned out as needed and in rapid succession. Due to the tremendous amount of shipping entering and leaving the harbor, it was found necessary to build concrete bollards along the breakwaters. This enabled more and larger ships to unload their cargo at one time. Near the dock area four large $40 \times 100$-foot quonset huts were built. These large buildings with their concrete floors were used as warehouses. A quonset hut laundry to serve all Naval personnel was built and put in operation to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Early in May, Tunis and Bizerte fell and Company "B" was sent ahead to take over these advanced posts. By the second week in June all the battalion had moved into the Tunisian area and the second phase of our overseas work was under way.

## BUILT ADVANCED AMPHIBIOUS BASE

## BASE \& HOSPITAL UNIT:

63 Barracks Quonsets
12 Galley Quonsets
10 Shower \& Lat. Quonsets
3 Misc. Quonsets
1 Recreation Quonset
1 Administration Quonset
26 Hospital Unit Quonsets
POWER SUPPLY:
Installed 4-50\& 75 KW Generators

## PONTOON WORK:

Built 250 ton Floating Drydock with Tender Barge \& Pontoon Bridge Strings For L.S.T.'s

## EQUIPMENT:

A Force of 74 men operated all trucks, cranes, and construction equipment. This Department included a welding department which proved to be extremely valuable.

## CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

The Battalion also maintained a stock pile of all base construction materials. This work required a force of 30 to 50 men depending upon the status of shipping.

## TENT CITY:

The work mentioned was in addition to erecting our own living quarters which consisted of mess tents, showers, heads and 200 barrack tents.


Tent City and Supply Depot, Arzew; Overlooking the Mediterranean: Mostaganem in the Distance.


Comdr. Davey at Comdr. Rinehart's Tent-Arzew.
Personnel Camp, Arzew. Quonset huts under construction.
Armored vehicles coming ashore on a pontoon causeway

Truck wrecked in first bombing at Arzew.
Hospital Unit, Arzew.

## BENI-SAF

Shortly after the 54th Battalion's arrival in North Africa half of Company "D" was sent to Beni Saf. This city proved to be a small place on the Algerian coast 80 miles west of Oran. Here we were to operate as an independent unit drawing our necessary supplies and building materials from the main supply depot at Arzew.

To facilitate moving men, material and equipment, our group was divided into two parties. One traveled overland by truck, the other by boat along the coast. For those of us who went by truck it was the first view of the colorful African countryside. Arabs, carts and animals of all sorts were continually catching our eyes. Small French children along the wayside would wave frantically, one hand giving us the "V" for Victory sign and the other extended for cigarettes and bon-bons. The route led us through one of the principal agricultural districts of the country. The rolling land was given over
 to great vineyards owned by French landlords and tilled by Arabian help. The beautiful homes of the French owners were quaintly off-set by the native quarters enclosed by an adobe wall. Ever uppermost in the minds of the natives was privacy. Even the cattle were enclosed with a high fence of cactus. This cactus, growing to a height of twelve to fifteen feet, and having broad, spiny leaves was an Arabian necessity. Not only was it used to protect homes and possessions but it furnished the base for a native brew and produced in the fall a fruit highly prized by all. Here and there, tucked away amidst olive groves, little white churches glimmered in the bright sunshine. The green hills covered by the blue sky and brightened by the white buildings made an interesting picture at all times as we traveled along.

The trip by boat to our first overseas assignment was a pleasant one. The day was warm with a light breeze and as we cruised along the coast we could see tiny villages perched on the steep hillsides. Porpoises played a continual game of tag at the bow or swam contentedly alongside. From time to time we caught sight of huge turtles some three feet in diameter, asleep on the surface. As we entered the gates of the harbor of Beni Saf our eyes were met by a picturesque view of an Arab village set upon a hill. Extending from the hill
were a large mine dump and tram tracks. These formed a sharp contrast with the picturesque Arab village. This mine, we learned, was one of the largest producers of manganese in the world and was busy furnishing ore to the Allies.

We landed and were taken by truck to a group of buildings along the beach which were to be our quarters. These buildings proved to be the summer homes of the well-to-do French of the district. Unfortunately this region had suffered a cloudburst a short time before and the beauty of the place was somewhat marred by debris.

Our job at this base was to rehabilitate the existing buildings and install the necessary equipment for an amphibious base. There was a considerable amount of concrete to pour and the entire electrical system had to be repaired. In the harbor, anchor buoys and markers were installed. One of our most memorable tasks was to dispose of a dead whale about sixteen feet long which washed up on the beach. We first tried to bury it but struck rock before the hole was deep enough. We then tried to tow it back out to sea but our boat leaked badly and the surf kept driving us ashore. At last Chief Laiblin volunteered to swim it out to sea. It was a sight to behold, the Chief on one end of the line and the dead whale on the other. The Chief proved to be a powerful swimmer and returned some time later minus the whale. He even managed to keep the overseas cap he was wearing dry.

The city of Beni Saf was built on a steep hill. As in most North African towns the city square or market place was the center of life within the town. Here the French and Arab tradesmen maintained their tiny open shops. On Sunday the farmers of the out-lying districts brought their wares to town for trade and barter. On these days the square was a wondrous sight. Yapping dogs, scampering children, rumbling carts formed an undertone to the shrill cries of the venders. Running from the hub, like the spokes of a wheel, were the narrow crooked streets of the town. Winding here and there on the steep hillside, first up then down, yet always passing the homes of the city.

We had a pleasant time among the hospitable people of Beni Saf. On Easter Sunday one of the well-to-do Arabs of the district gave us a barbecue. He herded some goats from the hills and onto a small flat where he killed, skinned and prepared them. By noon the goat ("LaCobra" they said) was taken from the spit. A tasty morsel entirely prepared for us by the natives. This was our finale as that same afternoon we returned to Arzew. However, Beni Saf will always live in our memory as a quiet happy little village where we came in close contact with the everyday native life of North Africa.

## BUILT ADVANCED AMPHIBIOUS BASE

1. Cleaned and concreted warehouse floor, $10,000 \mathrm{sq}$. ft .
2. Erected $40 \times 100 \mathrm{ft}$. Quonset for storage.
3. Repaired diesel tank and built sand bag wall around same.
4. Installed five $150 \mathrm{cu} . \mathrm{ft}$. refrigerator boxes.
5. Installed generator for lighting purposes.
6. Installed 7 bollards and 2 mooring buoys.

## MOSTAGANEM

Mostaganem, a large city with a population of about 50,000 , lies on the Mediterranean about thirty miles east of Arzew.

The dock facilities were already in use for the unloading of supplies and our orders called for the establishment of a Quonset camp and hospital unit. A small detachment of engineers was sent from Arzew to make a reconnaissance of the surrounding country and report on a suitable site for this new camp.

We left Arzew in two groups aboard L.C.M.'s for the trip across the bay. The trip proved to be exciting as well as interesting. When we were halfway across the bay we sighted a submarine surfacing. No one knew whether it was an enemy submarine or one of our own. Our relief was tremendous when the submarine turned out to be English and we found that it was returning to Mostaganem after a tour of duty.

Our two groups reached Mostaganem in the afternoon. Here we were quartered in a warehouse which had been taken over by large wharf rats. We contested the ownership to the best of our abilities. Fortunately after the first night we were quartered aboard some L.C.I.'s that were in the harbor for repairs.

After making a search for a suitable site, one was finally found at the edge of town on a high bluff some 200 feet above the port proper. The site consisted of two wheat fields. One on each side of the main highway. It was decided to construct the hospital unit and adjoining officers' quarters on the upper sidt of the highway. The galley and enlisted men's quarters were to be built on the lower side of the highway. Here the area was split in half by a deep gully some thirty feet wide.

We reported back to the main camp at Arzew where the plans were prepared for the base layout. About the middle of April two platoons from Company "D" under the direction of Lt. Anthony were moved to Mostaganem to start construction of the base.

When the two platoons of Company "D" arrived the Arabs were in the midst of harvesting the wheat and it was quite a problem trying to set up tents and a galley which were to serve as living quarters during construction.

The first job of the group was the erection of a large 15,000 gallon water storage tank. This was placed on the hill in back of the hospital group and pipe lines were run down to the waterfront, a drop of over 300 feet. At the same time a crew was set to work constructing a bridge across the gully in the lower area so that materials could be delivered to their proper
locations. By the time that these two jobs were completed the materials for the huts were arriving by two methods from the large supply depot at Arzew. Part of the supplies came overland by truck and the rest were shipped aboard L.C.T.'s.

A survey party came from Arzew and transferred the plans onto the ground and Quonset huts began to spring up as fast as they could be brought in.

A job that was not on the books was the construction of a huge 200 -step stairway leading from the camp to the bottom of the bluff. This also had to cross a railroad which was halfway down the side of the bluff. The reason for the stairway was to save time and distance in getting down to the port. If it were not used a person would have to travel two miles by road to reach his destination at the docks.

The Seabees also built Quonset huts and water tanks on the waterfront and installed several water purifiers to service the ship with fresh water.

The city of Mostaganem was situated on steep hills and had many winding narrow streets. Here were found buildings of modern design mingled indiscriminately among those of more traditional style. The main part or business section was on top of a hill and was the only level place to be found.

The main street lined with palm trees and flowers led from the city hall to the main town square. Here was located the Catholic Cathedral which from the outside did not make a very presentable appearance. However, once a person was inside, the atmosphere was entirely different. The Cathedral was very beautiful, decorated with hand carvings, statues and altars giving a person a very great sense of grandeur.

One side of the square was formed by the Grand Hotel and Cafe with its open air terrace while next to it was a large French theatre. This was being used by the U.S.O. and American Red Cross to stage various shows and programs for the American armed forces. The other sides of the square were lined with shops, stores and wine shops of all descriptions.

On the way from the square to the Seabee camp was located the main quarters of the French Colonial Troops. These barracks and buildings covered about six city blocks in area. Here were found the representatives of the various colorful regiments of the French Colonial Army.

The people of Mostaganem are of French and Spanish descent and were very friendly to the American soldiers and sailors. Altogether, Mostaganem was a very pleasant city, quite representative of North Africa.

## WORK DONE AT MOSTAGANEM

1. Erected 25 Barracks Quonsets.
2. Erected 11 Mess Quonsets.
3. Erected 4 Shower and Latrine Quonsets.
4. Erected 12 Officers quarters Quonsets.
5. Erected 9 Dispensary Quonsets.
6. Erected 2 Administration Quonsets.
7. Installed laundry. 1000 -man unit.
8. Installed 3 distilling units with tanks.
9. Installed 2 refrigerators and $250-\mathrm{kw}$ generator sets. Erected 7 Quonsets for storage and repair facilities.


Quonset Camp, Mostaganem
Hospital Unit, Mostaganem

## DORT AUX DOULES

On a wide, sandy expanse of beach fifteen miles east of Arzew, sat the tiny village of Port Aux Poules. Because of its sheltered location and the topographic features of the shore line this port made an ideal location for practice amphibious maneuvers. As these maneuvers were extensive and included both army and navy personnel, some installations were found necessary. Forty-six men and one officer of Company "D" were detailed to the job.

This crew traveled by truck from Arzew to their new home and were housed in French summer homes along the beach. A galley and mess hall was quickly set up and work was started on the various projects. The wind was constantly shifting the sand dunes and some difficulty was experienced in protecting the electrical equipment from this fine dust. Vari-
ous items necessary to training of amphibious landing groups were built. Fresh water was always a problem in North Africa and a large distilling unit complete with tanks and lines was installed. A diesel generator was set up to furnish power for the base. Quonset huts were built to shelter supplies and serve as repair shops for light equipment.

Although this base was of a minor importance in the sum total of work accomplished, it was an outstanding example of team work. Army and Navy personnel cooperated to their fullest extent on all jobs. Throughout the entire job the name Port aux Poules haunted us. Why this sandy stretch of beach should be called "The Port of Chickens" was beyond our comprehension.

1. Altered and repaired 43 villas for personnel quarters.
2. Built tents and double bunks for 300 enlisted men.
3. Built galley and mess halls for personnel.
4. Built shower and latrines for personnel.
5. Installed distilling unit with tanks.
6. Erected 2 Quonsets for small boat repair.
7. Timbered shipway for small boats.
8. Erected fuel tank for storage.
9. Built 100 ft . of wooden dock.


## NEMOURS

After traveling from Arzew to Beni Saf by L.C.T., one platoon of Company "D" was sent by truck to Nemours. This small village was located in the extreme northwest corner of Algeria and marked the extent of the Battalion's activities in that direction.

After their arrival, tents were set up on a concrete ramp near the waterfront to serve as living quarters. An old building was cleaned and repaired to be used as a mess hall and galley. Barb wire fences were built around the area and guards were posted. Ships loaded with the necessary materials for the construction of a small amphibious base arrived. As lumber was very scarce all boxes, crates and dunnage was carefully salvaged. Typical of Nemours, as of most North African towns, was the lack of fresh water. To remedy this condition a distillation unit capable of converting 5,000 gallons of sea water into fresh water every twenty-four hours was installed. Storage tanks were built, existing plumbing was disinfected, and all necessary new water lines were laid. To furnish power for the base, a diesel-driven generator was set up and power lines were strung. A large French residence was remodeled
and fitted with hospital equipment. Soon our efforts were rewarded with a smooth running and comfortable base from which to operate.

The town of Nemours was typical of all coastal North African towns. Built on the side of a steep, bare hill, it gave the impression of being constantly in danger of falling into the sea. With the exception of the main boulevard the streets ran helter skelter along the hillside, twisting up and down at will. The harbor was protected by breakwaters of concrete blocks. As this port had been a fishing center of some importance during peace times, facilities for the handling of fish and the drying of nets lined the docks. The surrounding country comprised of rolling bare hills totally lacking in native vegetation. On the plateaus, where the soil made farming possible, the ground was given over to the cultivation of wine grapes. The people were of a friendly nature and seemed glad of the Allied occupation of their country. We spent a busy month at Nemours and returned to Arzew by truck just in time to be on hand for the first air raid at that camp.

[^0]
## TENES

Shortly after our arrival in North Africa, Company "C" was designated to move eastward to Tenes and establish a base at that point. The trip over 130 miles of narrow, winding road through the strange African countryside proved to be a continuous unfolding panorama of colorful scenes. The route led along the irregular coast lime, for the most part following the water's edge. At other times the road wound high among the steep hills which rose directly out of the sea. Occasionally one could catch a glimpse of a jackal slinking about in the brush-choked gullies looking for strays from the Arab tended flocks. Deep valleys which cut the hills at irregular intervals were spanned by narrow arched bridges of unusual beauty.

The entire trip was traversed without accident and we arrived in plenty of time to sweep out an old French warehouse on the Quay of Port de Tenes and to cook the evening meal over an open fire before it got dark. Then, by the light of the jeep headlamps we made up our bunks for the night and posted guards for we were strangers in a strange land. However, it made us feel a little more at home to remember the huge road sign we had passed that day reading: "San Francisco City Limits." Evidently Los Angeles had been a little late with their incorporation papers.

All night the guards kept complaining of shadows on the gloom just beyond the limits of their post and when the cold, grey dawn swept down over the Mediterranean we found an advanced unit of the A.A.T.B. (Advanced Amphibious Training Base) waiting for us to build them a camp. On the side near the shore-line we discovered that the native French Algerian troops had posted guards to protect us from the Arabs. We learned that this protection was not for our lives but rather for our stores. These supplies the native Arabs valued far above any such monetary values that we had placed on our possessions. We were now in the land where the law of supply and demand was first enacted. A mystery to us, was where these apparently impoverished people got so many francs to offer for our belongings. However, the answer became apparent when we received our first laundry bills.

The first week was spent in erecting a tent city on the muni-
cipal playground. This housed all of "C" Company and the A.A.T.B. personnel until supplies arrived from Arzew so that a more permanent base could be built. The playground was located at the foot of a steep mountain and boasted of one of the finest white-sand beaches in Algeria. Close by was the Port De Tenes. A beautiful but entirely man-made port consisting of a long pier extending out from shore with the open sides protected by stone breakwaters. The entire port was dominated by a huge grain elevator which the Seabees promptly commandeered. Here was built a signal platform which was mannedday and night. Plans for the future buildings were quickly drawn and a survey party came from Arzew to transfer the plans onto the ground. Quonset huts began to spring up almost before the stakes were set. Power wires, city water pipes, distilled water pipes, salt water pipes, steam lines, telephone lines soon had the draftsman pleading for more and different colored pencils. The men continued to turn out work faster than it could be traced on the plan.

The city of Tenes was situated on the crest of a large hill overlooking the sea. The top of the hill was reached by a series of inclined walks and stair steps rising some 200 vertical feet. The wide paved streets flanked by lightcolored shop fronts lent a clean and clear-cut air to the city. Tenes was primarily a military town. Here, the French trained and maintained a large force of French Colonial troops. The city square and parade grounds were dominated by the huge barracks of native stone adjoining them.

Tenes did not have an air raid while the Seabees were there, however, the LCT 33 (Landing Craft Tanks) shot down a Junkers 88 Bomber shortly after leaving Tenes for Algiers. This bomber was one of Germany's largest and crashed into a hill-side only 15 miles from town thus enabling many of the men to view the remains and secure souvenirs. There were, however, no souvenirs to be found the evening an English manned Hudson Patrol Bomber exploded in mid-air directly off-shore from the Tenes Base. The exact cause of this explosion was never known. Crash boats immediately sped to the area but were only able to locate two of the crew and these men never regained consciousness.

After the base at Tenes was well started it was decided to build another some 107 kilometers ( 67 miles) eastward at the small town of Cherchell. The necessary men were loaded aboard trucks and driven to their destination over a narrow, winding, hard surfaced road. Here the country grew more broken and mountainous and the brush covered hills gave way to peaks of some size covered with a stunted pine growth.

Those of us that were named to represent Company "C" at this base were indeed fortunate. Cherchell proved to be a beautiful place that had not been greatly affected by the rigors of war. The city was clean, the people neatly dressed and a general air of well being predominated the town. The

## APRIL AND MAY

Built Advanced Amphibious Base.

1. Erected 27 Barracks Quonsets.
2. Erected 9 Galley and Mess Quonsets.
3. Erected $\mathbf{3}$ Head and Shower Quonsets.
4. Erected 2 Laundry Quonsets.


Quonset Camp at Tenes-City in Background
Port of Cherchell (Below)

stores and shops still had a fair supply of merchandise and everyone seemed to be living a normal, happy life.

In the days of the Roman Empire, Cherchell had been a great center of power and was, after the fall of Carthage, the leading Roman city of Africa. Many objects of art from these days had been collected and placed in a park over-looking the harbor. On the outskirts of town were the ruins of a Roman amphitheatre as well as those of an open air theatre. In the harbor, waves could be seen breaking over an old Roman breakwater. It was indeed interesting to come in contact with the site of a one time great Roman capitol and it was with regret we left when our work was finished.
5. Erected 1 Recreation Quonset.
6. Altered cottages for 25 bed dispensary.
7. Altered villas and erected 3 Quonsets for officers' quarters.
8. Installed distilling unit with fresh and salt water tanks.
9. Altered building for machine shop.


Port of Tenes (Above)
Quonset Camp, Cherchell (Below)


## BIZERTE

Indicating how closely our Battalion's activities were coordinated with those of our actual fighting forces is the fact hat Company " B " arrived in the Tunis-Bizerte area while "mopping up" was still being done by the army. This group eft Arzew aboard L.S.T.'s and L.C.I.'s (Landing Craft Inantry) along with an advance unit of amphibious replacenent men. As both bases were in need of construction men, he company divided into two parties. Those that were nomirated to serve at Bizerte spent their first day loading prisoners or shipment out of the combat area. Divers and salvage crews mmediately started clearing the channel into the inner haror and checking it for under-water mines. This work was nade doubly hazardous by the enemy action taking place in he adjacent hills. On the day after their arrival small boats were running into the inner harbor and the Navy personnel was quartered in barracks at La Pecherie. This had been, inder French control, a submarine station, and had been used is a naval operating base for each successive nation. Litter from French, German, and Italian forces covered the floors of the buildings and the surrounding yards. Cleaning crews et to work at once to make the place sanitary and livable. A nachine shop was set up near the waterfront and mechanics tarted to rebuild and overhaul all damaged equipment. Numerous German and Italian cars, trucks, and motors were n this manner put to work for the Allied cause. Evaporators were set up and started the job of converting sea water into fresh water for us on the base. Large diesel generators furaished power until the French system could be put back in order. In the meanwhile the waterfront had been cleared and arger ships could take advantage of the inland harbor. Large aumbers of L.S.T.'s and L.C.I.'s unloaded supplies, equipment, and the rest of the 54th Battalion began to arrive and the work assumed new proportions.
The harbor at Bizerte is unique. By constructing a channel some five miles long the French were able to utilize a large inland lake. This made it possible for large ships to unload heir cargo at Ferryville, a city of about 10,000 population, wenty miles inland from Bizerte. The open or sea end of the Channel was well protected by stone and concrete breakwaters. Along this estuary the French importers and exporters had their warehouses. Foundries, grain elevators and gasoline storage tanks were all accessible to water-borne ransportation.
Four miles from Bizerte along the channel was the small own of La Pecherie. Here the French had established a subnarine base. Large barracks and administration buildings ad been built as well as an elaborate system for the storage f munitions. Large concrete air-raid shelters gave protection from air attack. Along the water front many narrow finger piers had been built, each complete with facilities to refuel and re-water small ships. The grounds within the confining walls of the base had been beautifully landscaped. Although
this base had been somewhat disrupted by sabotage and bombings, no serious damage had been done and it was quickly taken over by our Navy for an operating base.

Farther along the channel, near its junction with the lake, was the French Naval Air Base of Karouba. On a large flat piece of land enclosed by high stone walls, large hangars of both steel and concrete had been built. A wide strip along the waterfront was surfaced with crushed stone and oiled. This air station with its large hangars for storage and its hard surfaced beach was made to order for a supply depot. Here L.S.T.'s could be unloaded, overhauled, refueled and rewatered with a minimum of effort. Barracks and office buildings to house staff and personnel left little to be desired. It was here that the Navy's Amphibious group set up their work shops.

The bulk of the Battalion arrived in Bizerte from Arzew and Tenes at different times. The trip was made on L.S.T.'s and although the convoy was never under attack, enemy planes bombed coastal cities within our view. Those men that arrived first were quartered with Company " $B$ " at La Pecherie. Seeing the necessity for establishing our own camp, a site was chosen in an olive grove about a mile inland from Karouba. All available men went to work with a will erecting a tent city. A Quonset hut galley was built and plumbers and electricians quickly installed the equipment. Carpenters built tent floors while crews of men put up the tents and staked them down. Everyone was in a hurry to move as "Adolf's Boys" had found La Pecherie an interesting place and our nights were broken by frequent and hurried trips to the air-raid shelters. When this camp was nearing completion and anticipation running high, orders came to abandon the location and move to a point some four miles farther on"Ours not to reason Why."


The new camp site was located at the foot of a range of hills and was reached by a narrow, rough, dirt road. Here among the olive trees and Arabs our new camp was built. Tents were set up under the trees to make them as inconspicuous from the air as possible. Galley and mess halls were built in the open and camouflaged. The Arab families who resided in the area were asked to move. Roads were built through the camp area and oiled with the waste oil from the sabotaged tanks at La Pecherie. A rifle range was built on a nearby hill and used by both Army and Navy personnel. One of the outstanding features of the camp was its outdoor theatre. Men of all the armed forces, French, English, Canadian, and American, filled the seats and stood in crowds around the screen at all pictures. The ice cream mixer, which the Seabees built from odds and ends, was in action whenever the necessary materials were on hand. This camp became famous for its good food and hospitality and was called the "Navy's Country Club" by the other branches of the armed forces. Visitors by the hundreds dropped around for a dish of ice cream or to attend the outdoor picture show. Later, when time permitted, a large wooden recreation hall was built and the theatre was moved inside.

The country surrounding Bizerte was broken by high rocky hills rising from the plain. The low-lands or plains were given over to the raising of grain and grapes. In some areas shallow wells furnish water for irrigation and here the French raise all kinds of garden truck.

The Arabs of Bizerte were a cleaner, more intelligent and industrious people than those of Arzew. Each family seemed to have a small plot of ground for their own use. This they tilled with oxen and planted by hand. The harvest was a community affair with each family helping until all the grain was under cover. Even the small children were busy and herds of cattle and goats under their care were always in sight on the rocky hills.

While stationed at the base the battalion was attached to the amphibious forces. A large concrete hangar at the Air Base of Karouba was taken over to serve as a base of operations. Here, in small rooms along the side, were set up the administrative offices of the Command, Personnel, Disbursing and Supply. Other rooms were set up to house plumbing, saint and electrical shops. At the rear of the hangar a comslete wood working shop was installed, while the front porion was used to store supplies. Directly in back of this hangar, n a separate building, the transportation office set up their taff and machine shop. On an adjacent vacant lot all the rattalion's construction equipment and rolling stock was rarked. These two buildings were the Seabees "Hub of the Jniverse" and from them emanated not only the orders on
the job but the equipment ana materials as well. Existing buildings at La Pecherie and Karouba were renovated and the electrical and water systems repaired. Galley and mess halls as well as additional living quarters for amphibious and small boat crews were built. L.S.T.'s and L.C.I.'s were unloaded and repaired, refueled and made seaworthy. A connecting road between LaPecherie and Karouba was built along the water front. Considerable work was done to further both the invasion of Sicily and Italy and the 54th Battalion's men accompanied each invasion. On the railroad siding crews of men worked day and night unloading the supplies that came overland and trucking them to a central supply depot. At Ferryville the L.C.T. fleet set up a repair base and replacement center. For this group the Seabees built a galley and mess halls, two large 100 by 40 Quonset huts as well as a number of smaller Quonset huts for office and living quarters. These were busy days and everyone worked hard and long. By fall, however, after the invasions, everything was running smoothly and the work resolved itself into the repair of damaged boats and the maintenance of the base.
JUNE, JULY, AUG., SEPT., \& OCT.
General clean-up. Rebuilding \& Maintenance. Karouba \& La Pecherie Naval Base.

1. General repairs on buildings.
2. Plumbing.
3. Salvage work.
4. Dredging.
5. Road construction.
6. Engineering, surveying and drafting.
7. Erected 50 Quonsets.
8. Loaded or unloaded approximately 200 ships and 150 R.R. cars.
9. Electrical installations.
10. Sorting and maintaining cargo dump.
11. Refueled approximately 250 ships.
12. Built and operated drydocks.
13. Carpenter work.
14. Welding, construction and repair.
15. Installation and operation of nine distilling units.
16. Erection of steel tanks.
17. Ship repairs.
18. Operation of heavy equipment.
19. Painting of approximately 150 boats, 1 hospital and 1 building.
20. Built pontoon ramps for L.S.T.'s.
21. Rigging.
22. Mechanical repairs of equipment.
23. Built flotilla base at Ferryville. 80 tents with floors. Galley \& mess buildings. Showers and latrines, 2 generator houses.
24. Built Sea-Bee camp. 140 tents with floors. Galley \& mess halls. Wash rooms. Showers, latrines, laiundry, recreation hall, rifle range, hobby shop, basketball court, baseball diamond \& boxing ring. Installed electric lights in all tents.


Tent City at Bizerte in Right Background - British Troops in Fore-ground.


Docks at Karouba


End of Channel and Entrance
to Lake Bizerte


Repairing Lines at Karouba


Damaged Landing Craft




Refueling L.S.T.'s, Karouba
Wrecked German Plane in Field Outside Karouba


Main Area, Tent City. Galley in Foreground.
90-Man Head, Karouba



Arab Village Behind Tent City
Stacking Oil Barrels Karouba


Arab Village Behind Tent City
Stacking Oil Barrels Karouba

Building a 10,000-bbl. Tank, Karouba
Sidewall Erection on $10,000-\mathrm{bbl}$. Tank, Karouba



Lineman at Work, Karouba
Repair Work Aboard an L.S.T., Karouba
Removing an Unexploded 1100 lb. Bomb


Crane Loading Chain, Karouba
German Prisoners Removing Track Preparatory to Sea-Bees Taking Over Job. Bizerte By-pass Road.


Building a $3,000-$ bbl. Tank Barge at Karouba. Barge Was Used to Haul Gasoline to Sicily.

Repair Work Aboard an L.S.T., Karouba
Erecting a 10,000-bbl. Tank, Karouba


Movies at Tent City
Moving a Quonset Hut, Karouba
Refueling an L.S.T., Karouba


Rifle Range, Tent City
Unloading Pontoons from an L.S.T., Karouba
Arabs Working on Bizerte By-Pass Road


Military Training, Tent City, Bizerte
Washing Gear in Scullery
Stove Crew Using Wrecked Axis Equipment to Build Stoves


Pay Line at Tent City
Ye Olde Honey Wagon
Post Office at Tent City


Awaiting Movement to Ship Bound for U.S.A.-La Pecherie
(Same Below)


## LA GOULETTE

On May 9, 1943, three platoons of Company "B" loaded gear and equipment aboard L.S.T. 385 for the trip from Arzew to our new base. These were the last days of Axis power in North Africa and nerves were keyed to a high pitch. Gun crews manned the turret twenty-four hours a day. Lookouts on deck and bridge scanned the horizon and cast watchful eyes skyward. "General Quarters" was sounded many times on the alarm system but luckily the danger was always slight or non-existent. After a four-day trip we sailed into the harbor of our new base with the sound of the big guns on Cape Bon in our ears.

This Base turned out to be La Goullette, a small town built on a narrow strip of land separating the Mediterranean from the large shallow Lake de Tunis. The French had constructed a channel through the lake so that the inland city of Tunis could be served by waterborne transportation. La Goullette acted as a port of entry and clearing house for all shipping in the district. The city itself was pleasant, with wide paved streets, large buildings, and tree shaded walks. Large docks, machine shops, and naval installations made this city a key point in the closing battle for North Africa.

Axis forces were making a desperate attempt to stop the Allies in this sector and we arrived only two hours after La Goullette had fallen. Many booby traps and signs of a recent hurried exit were all that was left of Adolf's "Supermen." Crews of divers and salvage men went to work at once to clear the harbor. An attempt had been made by the Axis to block the channel by sinking boats across it. All ships on the water front had been scuttled at their moorings. Mines and delayed action bombs were numerous.

Our first night ashore was spent in an old French Zouave barracks. What a night! The place was full of educated bed bugs. When it was too crowded for them to crawl up the legs of the cots, they climbed up the walls and volplaned from the ceiling. Everyone was up in plenty of time for breakfast. The next day we moved into the town of La Goullette

proper. Half of the detachment took over an Italian school building while the others moved into a villa formerly occupied by an Italian banker. This was quite a place, with tiled floors, tiled bath, a radio and even Grandpa's picture on the wall.

There was much to be done and everyone went to work with a will. Crews built galley and mess halls. The water system was checked and repaired. Diesel generators were set up to furnish power and light. Large portable refrigerators were installed and put into operation. Small cottages that had formerly housed German officers were.cleaned and renovated for use by our officers. A small dry dock was cleared, cleaned, repaired and placed in use. Water tanks were built and salt water evaporators started converting sea water to fresh water for domestic use. On the water-front crews were unloading supplies and trucking them to a supply base. Salvage crews cleaned the beach of all broken and damaged equipment. A machine shop was set up and all usable cars and trucks were repaired. In a short time our efforts were rewarded with a smooth running and efficient base ready for any emergency.

The Germans had informed the natives that the Americans were very bad people and it was some time before many natives were in evidence. However, as soon as they learned that we didn't eat little babies or push small ducks in the water, they began coming from the hills and cactus patches. Everywhere we went we were followed by the plea for bon bons, chewing gum, cigarettes for Papa, soap and tooth paste; they would take anything.

The country surrounding La Goullette was broken by high hills that arose steeply from the plain. Grain, grapes and olives were the chief agricultural products. The large fields and vineyards were tilled by Arab workmen and owned by French landlords. Here for the first time in Africa we saw tractors in use. On the waste land and hills herds of cattle and goats grazed, tended by Arab children. Where water was available from shallow wells, irrigation allowed the growth of garden truck. The method of getting this water onto the land was centuries old. A skin bucket was fastened to a soft fiber rope which in turn ran through a pulley on the wellhead. When pulled from the well by oxen or camels the bucket was tripped into a stone trough and the water ran out into the ditches. Pumps were unheard of. At the oldest well in the district the continual wear of the rope against a marble slab had cut grooves to a depth of ten inches in the solid stone.

About three miles from La Goullette lay the old city of Carthage, now called Salambo. Here were to be found many ruins of a fallen empire. Still visible was the old harbor with its enclosing breakwaters and stone piers. On a nearby hill broken walls and tiled floors marked the site of a one time residential district. Large marble columns flanking a raised stage and terraced seats marked the location of an open air theatre. At the top of the hill overlooking the bay and surrounding country was a Cathedral. Although neglected after the fall of Carthage it was restored to order in 1812 and was said to be the finest in North Africa. Some distance from the old city were the remains of a Roman amphitheatre. Underground cells of solid rock left no doubt as to where prisoners and wild animals had been held while awaiting a day of sports. Both these theatres had been used by the Axis as ammunition dumps.

Near La Goullette are the three towns of Sidi-Bou-Said, Le Kram and La Marsa. Sidi-Bou-Said, which was built on the highest hill in the region, was inhabited by the better class

of Arabs, which we found to be very pro-German. From the crest of this high hill, looking out over the sparkling blue bay one could see the rugged outline of Cape Bon extending into the Mediterranean toward Italy. Below lay the Lake of Tunis and the ruins of a bygone race. Squares of greens and browns dotted by the gleaming white of the buildings lent color to the scene. It was on the crest of this hill that the Seabees built and maintained a signal tower to ward off unexpected attacks by the enemy.

Le Kram and La Marsa were located on the Mediterranean and served as a summer resort for the city of Tunis. The long white sandy beach with cottages and the warm surf made these towns popular during the hot months. The Bey of Tunis, or head man of the Arabs in Tunisia, maintained two complete summer homes in this area.

We spent four busy, happy months at this base and then returned to Battalion Headquarters at Bizerte, the home of "Dirty Gertie."



## CITY OF TUNIS

Tunis, a thriving metropolis, is situated along the shores of Lake de Tunis. The city forms a connecting link between the ancient site of Carthage and rugged, mountainous Cape Bon. Progressing from the waterfront Tunis has been built upon the surrounding hillsides. From the Palace of the Bey of Tunis, an excellent view is obtained. In the foreground are seen the vaulted roofs covering the Medina and its narrow, twisting streets. Domes and minarets of the mosques and holy places burst from this hodgepodge forming a truly picturesque setting.

In the distance is the European section. Its modern buildings and apartment houses contrasting sharply with the ancient native buildings in the foreground. The two, native and modern, are set off by an excellent view of the Lake framed by the terraces of Carthage on one side and the cliffs and mountains of Cape Bon on the other.

The city offers never-ending contrasts. Along the wide Avenue de France, with its central tree shaded park, are
found modern stores, shops and theatres. Here also is a place to lounge. Tables are set on the terraces of the many cafes opening directly onto the street.

The Medina, or native section, in sharp contrast to the Modern or European section, consists of narrow winding streets. Many are in deep shadow but here and there a bright shaft of sunlight falls on a native craftsman plying his trade in front of a single stall shop. Here is encountered the real feeling of the mystic East. Veiled Arabian women hurry by with never so much as a sideways glance. Bearded men lounge in convenient spots giving the impression that they are reading your innermost thoughts. From behind the heavy walls can be heard occasional laughter and noises of family life, forever shut off to the Westerner.

This, then, is Tunis. A huge metropolis embodying two distinct developments in the history of North Africa. The traditional and the modern living distinctly, but mingling in the pursuit of everyday living.


Cathedral on Avenue de France


SOME TRIP

A BOOT

ALL I ASK



YOU'RE IN THE NAVY NOW:

THE STATES SURE ARE BIG

TURKEY 'N EVERYTHING

A PATRIOT WITHOUT HAIR

IS TO MEET UP WITH THAT BARBER AGAIN!

EAR SENATOR
THEY CAN'T
0 THIS TO ME

OD MAKES TREES
THE FUNNIEST PLACES

RADFORD CROUP


OH FOR A COAT

WE WANT OIL

A SODA PILL
WILL BE GOOD FOR THAT HEAD

THE VIRGINIA GIGGLES

DRILL, DRILL
HOP TWO BREE FOUR YOUR LEFT

NEVER VOLUNTEER ANYTHING AGAIN!

THIS WAR IS GETTING DANGEROUS!

EYES OFF THE DECK


DON'T FORGET THE WITHDRAw

OH-FOR MY NICE
QUIET LITTLE
SHIPYARD

YO PLACE THE
STRAP AROUND
YO LEFT WRIST

Can They eat so much?

FIRST LIBERTY


CHANK GOD MY WIFI SEE ME NOW.

M'm - BOY
BEER AND WHAT A STEAK

ARCING: I DREAMED F YOU LAST NIGHT

ATTALION IS FORMED JEW BUNKMATES

OW MEN
AWARE OF WOMEN ND STAY AWAY FROM HIES

SO THIS IS
PEARY
SOME MUD!


ALSO SEVERAL OTHER T

AFTER BOOT CAMP WE CAN LIVE THROUGH ANYTHING.

BOY IF I COULD
JUST FIND A WOMAN TO BEWARE OF.

IT'S WHERE THOSE LS ARE THAT WE E TO BEWARE OF

SOME NEW YEAR'S SPREAD

AT LAST WE HAVE A INCE TO DO SOME WORK.

E TO DAVISVILLE AND 3 DAY LEAVES ALL IN FLASH OF AN EYE.

S DOESN'T LOOK LIKE NEME TO ME.

BOY WILL I KNOCK THEM OVER IN THIS UNIFORM.

20 BELOW IN NEW ENGLAND. WHY DON'T THEY FIGHT JUST IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMERTIME?
you mean we ARE GOING TO SEA IN THAT?

WELL NEVER MAKE IT.
lM FINE. HOW'RE YOU FEELING?

A SHORT BREATHING SPELL.


HOPE THEY SEND US OUT PRETTY SOON.

HURRAY!
WE ARE LEAVING AT LAST.
JUST LET ME AT THEM.

I SURE WISH WE WOULD GET THERE.

THIS OCEAN IS ALMOST AS BIG AS TEXAS.

WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN YOU MISS THE SHIP?

I NEVER KNEW THAT ANYTHING COULD PITCH AND ROLL IN SO MANY DIRECTIONS at the same time.

OH BOY GOOD OLD LAND

## LOOK

THERE'S A WOMAN

BOY
LEAD ME TO THAT BAR


I NEVER THOUGI THAT WE WOULI MAKE IT

WHAT KIND OF MONEY DO THEY HERE ANYWAY?

HIS IS SUPPOSED b BE A HOT POT-KEEP YOUR ES PEELED MATE

HE FIRST
HEL ON ARRIVES BOND.

So THIS IS ISLAND X?

IOK-FRESH VEGETABLES. DG DO YOU TALK THESE ARABS.

HEY DON'T NEED ANY IP BUT I DOIE DIRTY ROBBERS.


LOOKS JUST LIKE THE TRAVEL FOLD SAY

WE THOUGHT YOU WERE LOST.

BOY HAVE WE HAD A TOUGH TIME

IE OFF FROM WORKRUSH AND IOT.

ENTY OF WORK R EVERYBODY IE CAMP SURE TAKING SHAPE.

THAT WAS THAT?

ME OUT OF HERE ERE'S MY HELMET?


I DIDN'T COME IN TO DO THIS KIND OF WORK. WHY DON THESE GUYS APPREC MY ABILITY?

Suse 15 , $\mathrm{NOU}_{5}^{2}$ $20 x+2 x^{2}$
$\mathrm{OH}-\mathrm{OH}$
FORGOT MY PANTS LOOK OUT-GET OUT OF MY WAY YOU GUYS.


ONE THING WE SURE GET A FULL VIEW OF THE AIR RAIDS

REMEMBER
WHEN THE 70TH CAME STORMING THRU

WHAT FANCY TOPS WE DEVISED


WHY DOES
EVERY PLANE HAVE TO FLY RIGHT OVER MY FOX HOLE

AND HOW
QUICKLY THEIR AREA SPROUTED FOX HOLES

WAR IS HELL BOYS-

WELL
MAYBE THEY WERE WORTH THE TROUBLE EXPENDED.

THOSE ARABS SURE ARE AM. BITIOUS ANY

WAY -

GO AGAIN
WHY
N'T THEY DO IS AT A TILIZED HOUR

ALIAN PRISONERS ME HAD THEIR BAGS L PACKED

ELL OLD MUSSEY IVE UP THE GOOSEY RE'S THE WAY I FELT OST OF THE TIME.


FLARES DOWN THIS IS AWFUL THEY CAN SEE ME PLAIN AS DAY

HAPPY - OF COUI THEY ARE. THEY ARE GOIN TO NEW YORK WHILE WE ARE ONLY GO TO ROME

THICKER THAN

## fleas And

VICE VERSA

WHAT A MIXTURE

SOME TOOK IT AND THE REST OF US WELL

WELL - WE
ARE TAKING CARE OF THEM ONE AT A TIME.


THEY CAN HAVE THE BLANK COUN

EVEN THE EN
THIS TO US


THIS TIME
IT WAS SICILY

THE
SCUTTLEBUTT FLEW THICK AND FAST.

GOOD NEWS WE'RE
STARTING IN ON ITALY

HAD SOME GOOD SWIMMING DURING INDIAN SUMMER.


WE FOUGHT ON ALL FRONTS.

30Y - FINALLY IADE FIRST Class SEAMAN

DID WE HAVE FUN ON HALLOWEEN

WE HAVE BEEN DARNED LUCKY AT THAT

THAT DANCE AT FERRYVILLE WAS ALL RIGHT TOO


THOSE ARABS BETTER SHOW SOME RESPECT NOW.

REMEMBER
THE SMOKE BOMBS IN
OFFICERS COUNTRY

WHEN YOU SEE HOW THE ARMY has to live FRENCH GIRLS

COMPLETE WITH MAMA:



## CITY OF BIZERTE

Bizerle 15 noted as one of the world's best harhors. The French, by dredging a canal some six miles long, wert able to connect a large inland lake with the Mediterrameav and so gain an anchorage entirely surrounded by land. Bounded on the north hy the ocean and on the east by the canal, Bizerte is traly a sity of the sea. Extensive naval installations along the cand and lake furnish a sleady payroll for the city. The long sandy bench extending westwued from the town affords ideal sites for summer homes.
Like all coastal towns of North Africa, Bizerte has heen byilt around the old native town. This aren of narrow doorways, crooked strets ind twisting alleys now forms the Kafbah of the city. Within this ancient village is the old original man-made harbor, still used by the Arab fishing boats. The cuntrast between the modern docks und cranes on the canal and in this shallow busin, erowded on three sides ly the native buildings and hounded on the fourth hy a high, thick stone wall, it awe-inepiring.

Bizerte during times of peace was a busy sity, renowned for its beauty. Wide paved streets and walks were shaded ly numerous trees. Light colored buildings of two and three Etories formad the downtown distriet. The grotmd floers were utilized for stores, shopa and offices while the apper storics were given over to modern apartments. A large heautifully landseaped eity square was flanked on three sides by a leading liotel, a massive eathedral and a beaulifal civic building. This acted as the hub of the city. Along the waterfront rung a swide, payed, palm lined, boulevard which affords an excelIent view of the harbor. On a low hill in back of the city were large three-story stone bacracks which housed military persomel. These buildings overlooking the city and harbor
dominated the scene because of their setting and bulk. The reaidential diatrict was a riot of color-Low, single story housen of bright stuceo were enclosed ly decorated fences and vulls. Many shadetrees, bright flowers, playing fountains and green lawns enhanced the guiet heanty of the city.

Today Bizerte is a mass of ruins due to Axis occupation of the city during the spring of 1943 . It was found necessary to subject Bizerte to attack by air power. Great portions of the city were reduced to rubble. Buildings staod windowlens and doorless. Walls had collapsed leaving the innermost seerets of the buildings exposed to view. Where direct hits had landed, nothing remained but tangled wreckage and beoken stone. The streets were pockmarked by bombs and filled with debris. Wuter and sewer lines were broken. Power and communication wires had been blasted. Even the parko and squares had suffered. Huge craters marked the swouth liwns. Trees lay up-rooted and concussion had torn the flowers and shrubbery. All important ingtallations along the waterfront hid heen struck by hombs or destroyed by Axis sabotage. Shipe lay aunk in the harloor. Large amlonding erance on the docks had heen blown from their foundations. This was the Bizerte as we found it after lue lattle for Norti Africa.

Upon Allied ocerpation of the town, erews went to work to make the city usable as a port of supply. Bulldozers shouldered aside the rubble in the streets. Engineers strung wire from any ayailable point. In the square a statue with upraisel arm leld aloft a handful of American pawer lines. Slowly life came bick to Bizerte. Trees put out new shoots Flowers bloomed again and lawns grew mattended. Beauy amid the uter desolation and wreckage of modern war:


I should like to tell a story Of a ship without a name. There are many others like her, But their numbers aren't the same.

Tis landing ships they call them 'Caus they run upon the beach, And drop their tanks and guns and trucks Where e'er there's need for cach.

Now this vesel I'm describing, Is by no means very amall,
But when it came to giving names They just numbered her that's all.

But I'm not ao good at atories, Oh, would that I could tell, Of amoke and fire and blood and guts, On the day that she eaught hell.

Oh God, 1 know not why I'm left, So many died that day, Upon that beach, along the shore Of blue Salerno Bay,

Twas a Netherlands destroyer, How well I now recall, That went in and laid a sereen of amoke, To hide the feet from all.

Then thru this scroen a vessel came
Aheading for the shore,
And on her bow III n'er forget, Those numerals that she bore.

The batterice from the hills rang out, The ahells tore through her mest, Her colora hit, her halyardes ang, But uhe was coming fast.

The leach wan green, in name, that's all, The sands were running red, The aky was filled with planes and shells, And Jerriea npitting lead.

She hit the beach and lurched up far, Amid those deafening roars, Her how stood high upon the sands, As she opened wide her doors.

The ramp was quickly lowered, And out the brave did pour, Though many fell when they were hit, The reat went on for more.

Two hundred yards beyond the surf, A wall ran low and long.
Twar here the German gunners lay, While mowing down our throng.

Tho vchicles came streaming out, Within them men of steel, The ahells were falling cloaer now, And some were seen to reel.

The batteriea numbering ten and eight Had missed with many shell, But now their target loomed up large, And they really rang the bell.

They tore her side with holes, And the bow was helehing flame, Her bridge wes laid in ruins The control room was the same.

The decks were strewn with wounded, Among them lay the dead, And down below they prayed to God, And eared for those who bled.

Finally came the word "withdraw," The cargo was ashore, This surcly was a mighty task, And they prayed an n'er before.
'Cause down below the waterline, The sea came pouring in, Through gaping holce that were not seen And made her hopes quite thin,

The engines roared, her serews churned up, But the bow moved not an inch. Though engineers had worked like mad, Destruction seerned a cinch.

And finally through the grace of God, Her bow began to sway, Twas then they knew of miracles, As she pulled out through the bay.

Though listing from her many wounds, Her colors atill on high, She headed back from whence ahe came, And the erew all heaved a aigh.

It was twenty minutes later That the Germane took the beach, With tiger tanks and eighty-eights, But the ship was out of reach.

She unloaded then her wounded
On a ahip that wore a cross,
The dead were buried later,
'Mid great sorrow o'er their loss,
The ship and erew were Yankee But the cargo put ashore, Were gallant British soldiers, And their fighting days are o'er.

Now they call her "Patehes."
${ }^{\text {'Cause there was so much to fix }}$
But, to all who suw that battle, She is known as throe, three, six.

## THE FIFTY-FOURTH


C. M. Vinson




Monastery of Thibar



Bombed Buildings in Bizerte
Pre-Invasion Scene at Dock in Karouba
Ice Cream Machine at Tent City - Bizerte


View Towards Sea in Bizerte
Municipal Building - Bizerte
Chow-Line at Tent City


Arab Boys at Camp Bizerte
Cathedral at Carthage
Homeward Bound
Prisoners of War at La Goullette



Italian Tank and Former Occupants



Camels Feeding Under Olive Trees at Tent City-Bizerte
Arab Boys Near Tent City-Bizerte
Typical Arab Kids in North Africa Catholic Church Near Port Lyautey


Arab at Home
Arabs Living Near Bizerte


## Arab Sisters

Chow Hall and Refrigerators
Tent City, Bizerte


Invasion Craft at Karouba Docks



French Catholic
Priest at Thibar



Old Port of Bizerte



Home Again

That Last
Minute Rush


The Big Moment of
Disembarking Led by
Comdr. Rinehart


Getting Ready to Disembark


Last Supper Aboard

If I should die before I wake
Please Lord my soul do take
Because the story I am about to tell
Is the confusing time I spent in Hell.
I will start from the day I signed the dotted line To me it was a great feeling and sublime The story the recruiting officer made me believe Made me feel like a bird dog waiting for the retrieve.

To me he said: We need men like you To help with the big job we have to do. Your rate for the first six weeks will be low After that the top you will go.

Now, he said, you just sign right here You will be back I am sure, in a year.
The time to me or the rest did not matter
It was the untruthful and unfaithful flatter.
The man is out of his place I know well He should be peddling snowballs in Hell He sold a bill of goods to a lot of good men
Who are going to remember him in the end.
Now we are on strange foreign land
Which is confusing to any normal man
Early to bed or early to rise
You can depend on a surprise.
I have never seen so many bosses
That figure profits but never losses.
Uncle Sam is footing the big bill
That they are running up with a thrill.
Now the first boss does it right
But the second boss takes great delight
In changing the job at midnight
To prevent a mighty big fight.
The third boss comes on in the morning While a new day is dawning
And says, this is wrong over here Fred
Let's move it over there under the shed.
After we have moved it a dozen times They finally make up their minds That the main man has made a slip We have to load it all back on the ship.

Oh! About the new higher rate-
I found that I was just too late;
I thought he told me it was construction
I mis-understood him, he said suction!

## Joseph Black Hughey, Sr.








## RECREATION

Due to the semi-permanent nature of the 54th Construction Battalion's base camps in Algeria and Tunisia it was possible to build and maintain recreational facilities not enjoyed hy other branches of the service. Both at Arzew and Bizerte a recreation hall was built which housed a library, tables for ping pong, a comununity radio and tables for games. Through the untiring efforts of Chaplain Nauss and Chief Echwald, a motion pieture machine was procured and operated in an ouldoor theatre. This necommodated over two thousand men at a time during the summer months. Later, due to the rainy season, the theatre was moved into the recreation hall and of necessity was limited to members of the 54th Battulion.

Boxing contributed much to relaxation throughout the summer months, All cards arranged for were well attended by the armed forcen on the area and a spirit of sportsmanship pevailed. Men responsible for the suceess of the various cards were Chaplain E. F. Nauss; Promoter "Tony" Talarico; Referee "Swance" Swanson. Amnouncers "Ed" Powell and John Feiger. Timekecper "Bill" Van Brenk; G. A. Schulenburg counting for the knock-downs. All houts were held at the Fleaville Arena, Bizerte, Tunisia. Fighters:

| "Kid" Rodarte | 150 lbs . |
| :---: | :---: |
| Guy Kelly | 150 lbs |
| H. M. McClellum | 145 lba |
| "Red" Wialliums | 200 lbs . |
| Sammy Acosta | 140 lss . |
| Eddie "Torpedo" Moneado | 140 lbm |
| Leo "Kid" Karp | 150 lbs |
| "Swede" Jolinson | 160 lbs |
| Jimmy Kelly | 120 lbs |
| Johnny Penn | 140 lbs . |
| "Moon" Mullins | 170 lss . |
| "Kid" Renfro | 145 |

"Kid" Rodarte
150 lbs.
Guy Kelly
. Mc:chur
Sammy Acosta
Eddie "Torpedo" Moneado
Leo "Kid" Karp
"Swede" Jolinson
Jimmy Kelly
"Moon" Mullins
"Kid" Renfro

150 lbs.
145 lha.
200 lbs. 140 lbs. 140 lbs. 150 lbs 160 lbs 120 lbs 140 lbs . 170 lbs. 145 lbs.

"Corny" Kinlock

225 lbs .
"Kid" Apodaca
145 lbs.
Bascball is ever dear to the hearts of Americans and the men of the 54th Batualion were not long in making up a team. In Arzew a total of twenty-three games were played. Out of these games the Batalion team was beaten only wice; once by the Navy Personnel team and once by an Army team. Both these defeats were avenged at later dates. At Bizerte the 70th Construction Battalion's Company "D" team hunded us our only defeat out of nine games. Men participating in this sport were:

| Babick | Evans | Webb |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Kamper | Mayo | Williamm |
| Buchignini | Rodarle | Mariama |
| George | Van Brenk | Malorich |
| Howard | Joyce | Holstrom |
| Mattz | Herrero | Ernst |
| Gilligan | Halgrick | Rasberry |
| Del Corto | Chiarucci | Terry |

Softhall games furnished fun for all during the long summer evenings. At Arzew a total of fourteen games were played. Seven with Navy personnel teams and seven with Army Ordnance teams. We won ten and lost four. At Bizerto a total of twenty-one games were played. Three with the Army's Eustern Base Section team and eighteen with Naval Base team. Out of thene games we lay claim to fifteen wins. Men participating in this sport were:

| Sweet | Azevedo | Lucchetti |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Wieliams | Joyce | Diaz |
| Urry | Hixon | Phillips |
| Simmons | Luedtre | MeCoy |
| Wiggins | Futhey |  |



Evans, Urry, Ware, Herrero Kendall, Acosta, Rodarte, Tracy

With the coming of fall and the winter season the sportsters turned to basketball. The Battalion team played six games at Karouba against Army and Navy teams all of which they won. Men on this team were:

| Evans | Acosta |
| :--- | :--- |
| Tracy | Rodarte |
| Herrero | Kendall |
| Ware | Urry |

## ENTERTAINMENT

During our stay in North Africa the camps were visited from time to time by troupes of entertainers. These programs did much to relieve the monotony of camp life. Each program was well attended and appreciated. Programs, dates, and places were:
April 27-Arzew, Algeria
Twenty French Algerian men and women. Acrobatics, singing, dancing, magic.
May 8-Arzew, Algeria
Army Infantry band concert in camp square.
May 10-Arzew, Algeria
Five French girls and two men. Singing, dancing and music. Sept. 29-Bizerte, Tunisia
357th Army Engineers orchestra concert.
Oct. 14-Bizerte, Tunisia
Six French girls and four men. Singing, dancing, acrobatics and magic.
Nov. 5-Bizerte, Tunisia
Five Americans. Singing, accordianist, cowboy music and magic.


Tracy, Hawkins, Langmaid


Chief Evans

Table tennis proved to be a popular indoor sport. Team matches with the 70th Construction Battalion and the Eastern Base Section drew large crowds. Honors on score were about even. A 54th Battalion tournament in the recreation hall was a popular event. Prizes were awarded to Chief Evans, the winner, and to James Armstrong, the runner up. The team representing the 54th in competitive matches were:
Chief Evans
J. H. Armstrong
A. L. Fieger
C. H. Rips

L. A. Fieger<br>W. J. Ernst

## HOBBY EXHIBIT

In their spare time many of the men found relaxation hrough the medium of hobbies. On Nov. 15 th in the recreaion hall at the Bizerte camp the men were invited to display heir arts. Prizes were awarded to the following:
S. W. Reyhill
H. D. Gochnour
P. N. Manos
W. E. Jalanivich
T. E. Wardle
H. P. Bain
R. F. Jenkins
G. C. Webb
J. C. Schultz
J. H. Angel
H. J. Akin

Brass work
Water colors
Knife display
Metal work
Brass vase
Ink sketch
Ink sketch
Ink sketch
Ink sketch
Photography
Photography



Bain, Jenkins, Gochnour, Schultz, Webb


## THE 386

'Twas four A.M. on a frosty morn
We were roused from our sleep
By some guy with a horn We hustled and bustled into chow 'Twas sausage and mush without any cow.

We shoulder our packs and equipment new Caught a southbound train down by the slough Traveled to Jersey, in the rain Then back we went to New York again.

They put us aboard a contraption Flat bottomed and broad, like a duck. The Navy called it a transport Oh God, grant us luck.
We sailed on the broad Atlantic
And Lord how she did buck; she rolled And twisted, shimnaied and shook Everyone doubted and some read the "Book."

I've sailed in square riggers, steamers and such Yes, I've been in many a fix.
But the greatest experience I've had in my life W as sailing on L.S.T. 386.

Now the L.S.T. as it's plain to see
W as never built to battle the sea.
She was far too limber for such a trek
'Twas lucky an L.G..T. was strapped to her deck.
She had no masts, no booms, nor a sail
In fact she looked like a gigantic whale.
With a large blunt nose, and a hull of tin
It's a wonder to me that she didn't cave in.
Her power plant was truly resplendent, Sir
And from the perfect arrangement of things You'd have thought that the guy who designed her Could at least have added some wings.

Twin screw she was, with a pair of rudders A performer you surely could tell By the gyrations and actions she offered When the juice went off for a spell.

Now I'm not condemning this Newport Spawn Nor picking her "rep" to pieces
For convinced we are, that after all We've only life time leases.
Her life I'm sure will be short as Hell For she was built for a purpose.
Yet the day will come when her work is done And war will bring not crimes or curses

Then we will look back through the years, And there will be tears for those we'll ne'er see And we'll remember the day that we sailed away, On our little, old L.S.T.
G. F. Laiblin

# IN <br> MEMORIAM 



## TAPS

The 2nd Army Corps Cemetery is located in Tunisia, approximately 15 miles southwest of the town of Mateur. The plot is situated in an open country of rolling hills. Appropriately enough, it marks the line of march of our troops during the wind-up of the African campaign.

The cemetery is bordered on one side by a stream screened by low, growing willows. Here is afforded a view of the surrounding countryside, which is not unlike the low rolling hills of our own western United States. During the spring and early summer these hills are profusely covered with wild flowers. Under the brilliant sunlight of the African summer the landscape turns brown and dry, while with the coming of the fall rains the hills are again clothed in a blanket of green.

The cemetery is under the constant care of the 2nd Army Corps.


Honor Guard


Pallbearers


## BATTALION MUSTER

1. AARON, R. M. 560 Vine St. El Centro, Calif.
2. ABRAHAM, W. R. Stewart, Nev.
3. ACOSTA, S. T. 2259 E. 16th St. Los Angeles, Calif.
4. ADAIR, G. C. Brentwood, Calif.
5. ADAMS, H. A. 403 4th St. San Rafael, Calif.
6. ADAMS, R. H. 941 N. Croft Ave. Los Angeles, Calif.
7. ADDIS, R. H. 1743 Summit Ave. Seattle, Wash.
8. AEGERTER, G. E. 6173 Briercrest Bellflower, Calif.
9. AKEY, J. J. c/o Petaluma Fire Dept. Petaluma, Calif.
10. AKIN, H. J. 530 S. Margaret St. Los Angeleś, Calif.
11. ALBERT, R. J. 2955 N. E. 52nd Ave. Portland, Ore.
12. ALLISON, A. F. 3420 W. 35th Ave. Denver, Colo.
13. ALLEN, C. 0. Greenville, Calif.
14. ALLEN, F. B. 909 Montana St. E1 Paso, Texas
15. ALLEN, W. H. 257 Elizabeth St. Pasadena, Calif.
16. AMMONS, M. Route South A Ponce De Leon, Fla.
17. ANDERSON, A. K. RFD 2, Box 52 Elma, Wash.
18. ANDERSON, E. W. Rt. 1, Box 1598 Bremerton, Wash.
19. ANDERSON, H. A. 935 1st St. Box 444 St. Maries, Ida.
20. ANDERSON, L. S.

121 W. 112th St.
Los Angeles, Calif.
21. ANDERSON, N. R.

Rt. 3, Box 919
Everett, Wash.
22. ANDERSON, W.E.

322 10th St. Bakersfield, Calif.
23. ANDREWS, F. M.

1228 North St.
Sacramento, Calif.
24. ANGEL, J. H.

931 S. Darlington
Tulsa, Okla.
25. ANGELL, F. C.

Box 655
Grand Coulee, Wash.
26. ANGLIN, W. S.

1102 S. Chapel St. Alhambra, Calif.
27. ANTHONY, R. Z. T.

Ripley, Tenn.
28. ANTTILA, Y. J. 2121 Fairfield St. Eureka, Calif.
29. APODACA, M. B. 6517 Newell St. Huntington Park, Calif.
30. ARENS, V. P.

Reedsport, Ore.
31. ARGENTA, J. G.

2117 5th St.
Berkeley, Calif.
32. ARMSTRONG, J. H.

1014 E. 5th Ave.
Spokane, W ash.
33. ARNOLD, C. F.

Route No. 5
Moscow, Ia.
34. ARNOLD, GEO.

1111 Second St.
West Salem, Ore.
35. ARNOLD, R. W.

523 Croften Ave.
Oakland, Calif.
36. ARNOLD, W. J.

1324 Gregory St.
San Diego, Calif.
37. ASLIN, L. E.

423 S. Main St.
Hope, Ark.
38. ATWOOD, CLYDE

1617 Thurber Place Burbank, Calif.
39. ATHERSTONE, H. E. Rt. 2, Box 96 Turlock, Calif.
40. ATHOS, F. W.

12861 Kagel Canyon St.
Pacoima, Calif.
41. AVALLON, E. A.

1026 Lindley St.
Bridgeport, Conn.
42. AVERY, F. F.

5318 E. 10th St.
Oakland, Calif.
43. AZEVEDO, E. J.

Box 47
Mission San Jose, Calif.
44. AZEVEDO, H. F. 414 10th St.
Antioch, Calif.

1. BACKMAYER, F. W.

162612 Minor Ave.
Seattle, Wash.
2. BACON, N. H.

214 S. Perdue
Claremore, Oklahoma
3. BACON, M. C.

RFD 2
Sunnyside, Wash.
4. BADER, E.

308 W. Spruce St.
Inglewood, Calif.
5. BADGLEY, H. C.

1044 256th St. Wilmington, Calif.
6. BAIN, H. P. 1142 Cragmont Ave. Berkeley, Calif.
7. BAIRD, H. M., Dr. Box 93A
Shelby, Miss.
8. BAKER, A: D. 815 S. Hudson St. Los Angeles, Calif.
9. BAKER, C. E. Ione, Ore.
10. BAKER, M. F. 475 Fisher Road Salem, Ore.
11. BAKER, R. F.

Rt. 2, Box 523 Gresham, Ore.
12. BALLARD, D. J.

2039 Griffith Park Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif.
13. BANCKE, B. L.

1585 N. W. 6th Ave. Camas, Wash.
14. BANIGAN, J. N.

Belle Faurche, S. Dak.
15. BANMAN, T.

209 S. Pickering Ave. Whittier, Calif.
16. BAQUE, H. E.

2526 Central Ave.
Great Falls, Mont.
17. BARBEE, E. V.

1615 E. Glenoakes Blvd.
E. Glendale, Calif.
18. BARCHECK, J. A.

Rt. 1, Box 588
Tigard, Ore,
19. BARDWELL, O. L.

321 N. Chestnut St.
McComb, Miss.
20. BARTLETT, A. H.

Box 1405
San Francisco, Calif.
21. BARNETT, W. H.

215 S. 4th Ave.
Yakima, Wash.
22. BARDER, J. C.

St. Ignatius, Mont.
23. BARR, G. R.

75 S. 15th St.
San Jose 12, Calif.
24. BARRERA, P. G.

949 W. Myrtle St.
San Antonio, Texas
25. BASCIANO, E. J.

531 Girard St.
San Francisco, Calif.
26. BASS, T. J.

912 Del Ave.
Alamogordo, New Mexico
27. BATTERMAN, C. W.

217 N. Delaware St.
Wenatchee, Wash.
28. BEACHILL, J. A.

450 W. 20th St.
New York, N. Y.
29. BEALS, H. A.

2444 Van Mess Ave., Apt. 5
San Francisco, Calif.
30. BEBOUT, C. J.

289 Accacia St.
San Francisco, Calif,
31. BEEKMAN, H. K.

3234 N. W. Wakeplace
Guelds Lake
Portland, Ore.
32. BEEM, J. R.

Box 333
Fillmore, Calif.
33. BEEM, L. A.

732 4th St.
Fillmore, Calif.
34. BEESLEY, C. D. 855 Athens Ave. Oakland, Calif.
35. BEGLEY, L. W. Box 374 Crain Valley, Mo.
36. BELICH, J.

1818 Williams St. Denver 6, Colo.
37. BELL, E. C. 1408 E. Spruce St. Yakima, Wash.
38. BENNETT, D. R.
c/o B. C. Peasley
Rt. No. 3, Box 380
San Jose, Calif.
39. BENNETT, J. E.

Box 369
Tremonton, Utah
40. BERG, L. E.

2930 Strand
Hermosa Beach, Calif.
41. BERG, H. C.

Rt. No. 3, Box 451
Kirkland, Wash.
42. BERGER, D. G. 305 Louisiana St. Vallejo, Calif.
43. BERGMAN, S.

3440 City Terrace Dr.
Los Angeles, Calif.
44. BERNHARDT, J. 213 Fir St. La Grande, Ore.
45. BERGREN, J. A. Box 433 Laramie, Wyo.
46. BERRY, C. T. 618 W. Kelso St. Inglewood, Calif.
47. BERRY, J. W. 3000 S. Grand Ave. Los Angeles, Calif.
48. BERRY, S. D. 1100 Jefferson Ave. Louisville, Colo.
49. BLANKENBILLER, C. 913 Glenway Santa Paula, Calif.
50. BILYEU, W. C. RFD 1, Box 291 Escondido, Calif.
51. BISHOP, C. 0. 124 W. Hillvale Knoxville 16, Tenn.
52. BISHOP, J. R. c/o C. M. Hines 734 N. 94th St. Seattle, Wash.
53. BIXBY, C. E.

163 14th St, N. E. Atlanta, Ga.
54. BLACKBURN, E. 1114 Cleveland Ave. South Bend, Ind.
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2. JACOBSON, E. P. 124 Illinois St. Sheridan, Wyo.
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12. JOHNSEN. J. A.

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16. JOHNSON, H. B.

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18. JOHNSON, S. S.

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Oak Grove, La.
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5 . YOUNG, W. J. 451 Cajon St. Redlands, Calif.

1. ZIEDEL, M. 85 Bartlett St. Somerville, 45, Mass.


## IA NRA <br> 1. 3

3 Sa Dinar ara know
 ABOUT THAT!


[^0]:    APRIL AND MAY
    Built Advanced Amphibious Base.

    1. Altered warehouse and built double bunks for enlisted men's barracks.
    2. Installed plumbing in hotel for officers' quarters.
    3. Installed distilling unit and fresh water system.
    4. Re-roofed and re-floored warehouse for enlisted men's mess.
    5. Installed 250 cu . ft. refrigerator.
    6. Erected Quonset for shower and latrine.
