

74th BATTALION
IN REVIEW
1943-1944



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*All manuscript and pictures appearing in this book have been approved
by CINCPAC for publication.*



Dedication

United States Marine Division
Who fell in action on Tarawa
November 20-24, 1943

So here let them rest
On their sun scoured atoll
The wind for their watcher
The waves for their shroud
When palms & pandanas
Shall whisper forever
A requiem fitting for
Heroes so proud....

Major U.S.M.C.



COMMENDATIONS

HEADQUARTERS
ISLAND COMMANDER, BETIO
TARAWA ATOLL, GILBERT ISLANDS

21 February, 1944

EGBG:/alm/A-14
P15/00/MM
Serial 300-44

From: Island Commander, BETIO
Officers and Men of 74th Naval
Construction Battalion.

To :
Subj. Commendation.

1. As you look about you at this base today and then recall its aspect just three (3) months ago when you came ashore, surely a feeling of inward satisfaction must come over you.
2. This satisfaction is entirely justified. A well constructed air strip enables our planes to take off and land on ground formerly marked with deep taro pits, neatly laid out camps stand where fallen trees tangled with bomb craters and repair shops, administration buildings and other working units cover anti-tank traps and shell holes. Many Japanese block houses and shelter revetments have been remodeled and put to useful purposes.
3. These are the creation of your labor and will always be considered an achievement of the 74th Seabees. In this connection, it is wise to be ever mindful of the equally meritorious work accomplished by many of you with clerical duties as well as other units on this base whose labors are of a nature which do not permit them to display any similar physical results.
4. At this time of your imminent departure, the writer desires to express pride in your attainments, thanks for your efforts and best wishes, to you in your future assignments.

/s/ ERL C. B. GOULD,
Captain, USNR.

CENTRAL PACIFIC FORCE
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIRCRAFT, CENTRAL PACIFIC FORCE

24 February, 1944

P15/FF12/11-Erd
Serial 262

From: Commander Task Force FIFTY-SEVEN.
To : Commanding Officer, 74th Naval
Construction Battalion

Subj: Commendations.

Encl: (A) Atoll Commander, TARAWA ltr serial
318 of February 16, 1944.

1. The enclosed commendation is forwarded with pleasure. The accomplishments of your battalion at Tarawa under most difficult conditions are conspicuous contributions to the success of the Central Pacific Campaign. Its unflagging efforts and devotion to duty are deeply appreciated.
2. You are directed to place a copy of this letter and enclosure in the service record of each enlisted man considered by you to merit it.
3. You will forward to the Chief of Naval Personnel a copy of this letter and enclosure for each officer considered by you to merit it.
4. The Chief of Naval Personnel is requested to place a copy of this letter and enclosure in the official records of Commander F. G. Elliott, CEC, USNR, and of the officers of the 74th Construction Battalion designated by him.

/s/ J. H. HOOVER,
Admiral, USN.

ATOLL COMMANDER, TARAWA

16 February, 1944

JRT:jte
Serial 318

From: Atoll Commander, TARAWA.
To : Commander Task Force FIFTY-SEVEN.

Subj. Commander F. G. ELLIOTT, CEC, USNR, and
74th Naval Construction Battalion,
Commendation of.

1. On departure of the 74th Naval Construction Battalion, it is recommended that the following commendation be made to the subject officer and battalion:

It is desired to commend you and the 74th Naval Construction Battalion for the excellent and expeditious manner in which you developed Hawkins Field under the most trying conditions, including burial of over 3,000 dead and while subjected to almost nightly bombing by the Japanese. The Battalion came ashore in the early morning of the 24th of November. Approximately 15 hours later on the 25th of November, two fighters landed on the field. At 1425 on the same date, or 17 hours later, 43 planes of Squadron VF-1 landed and operated therefrom continuously thereafter. On 30 November, 6 PVs of VB-137 landed and started search operations. On 1 December, the remainder of the squadron arrived, were set up and operated. On the 27th day after landing, or 21 December, 12 B-24s were staged through the field.

You thus accomplished in 27 days what the Base Development Plan called for on D plus 45. You and the 74th Naval Construction Battalion deserve great credit for this outstanding piece of work.

/s/ J. R. TATE,
Captain, USN.

The men AT THE HELM



LT. COMDR. HERBERT N. JONES
Executive Officer



LT. COMDR. PHILIP F. AUER
Present Officer in Charge



COMDR. FREMONT G. ELLIOTT
Former Officer in Charge





"A" COMPANY

CH. W. OFF. R. F. SANGUIGNI CH. W. OFF. J. B. LONG
 LT. (J.G.) W. W. DAEHN
 LT. E. R. SAMMONS LT. (J.G.) W. O. COLLINS



STAFF

Back Row: LT. C. R. PARKS, LT. W. A. NORTON, LT. L. O. RUPE, ENS. T. H. BARRETT,
 ENS. H. G. PACKARD, LT. (J.G.) C. C. RICH,
Front Row: LT. COMDR. P. F. AUER, LT. COMDR. H. N. JONES.



"B" COMPANY

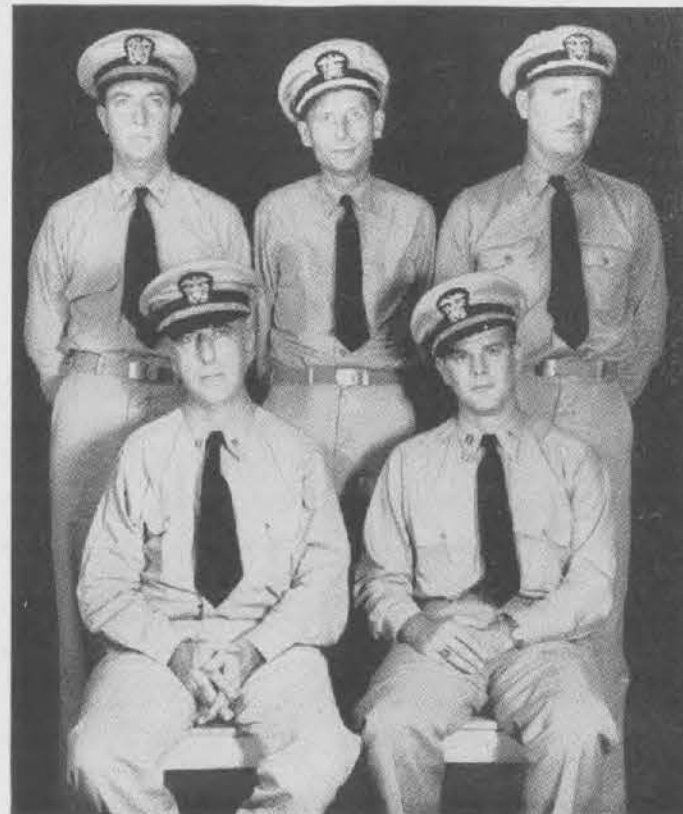
ENS. J. E. NELSON CH. W. OFF. J. VACI
 LT. (J.G.) J. E. DELANEY
 LT. (J.G.) C. C. CLARK LT. W. L. KARRER



"C" COMPANY

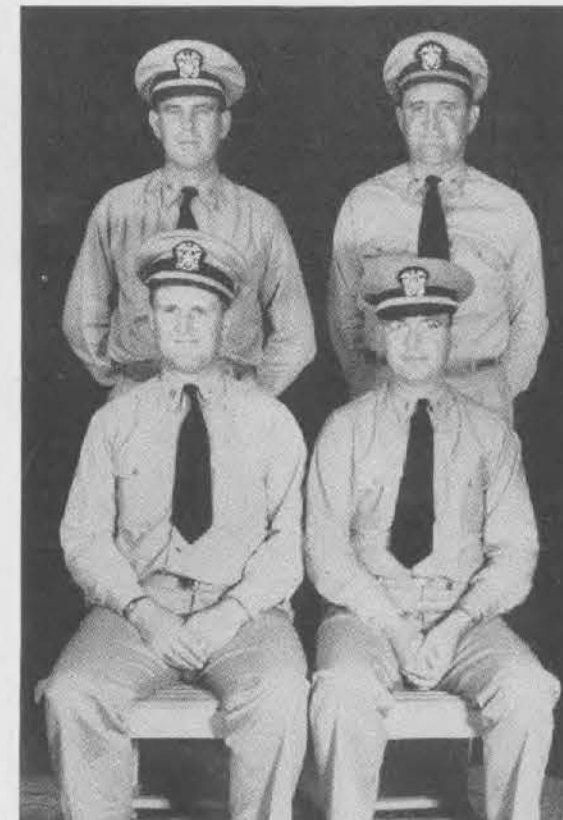
Back Row:
 LT. (J.G.) R. C. DESS
 CH. W. OFF. J. C. CARTER
 CH. W. OFF. R. H. BULLOCH

Front Row:
 LT. C. R. ROSS
 LT. N. C. KAMUF



"HDQS." COMPANY

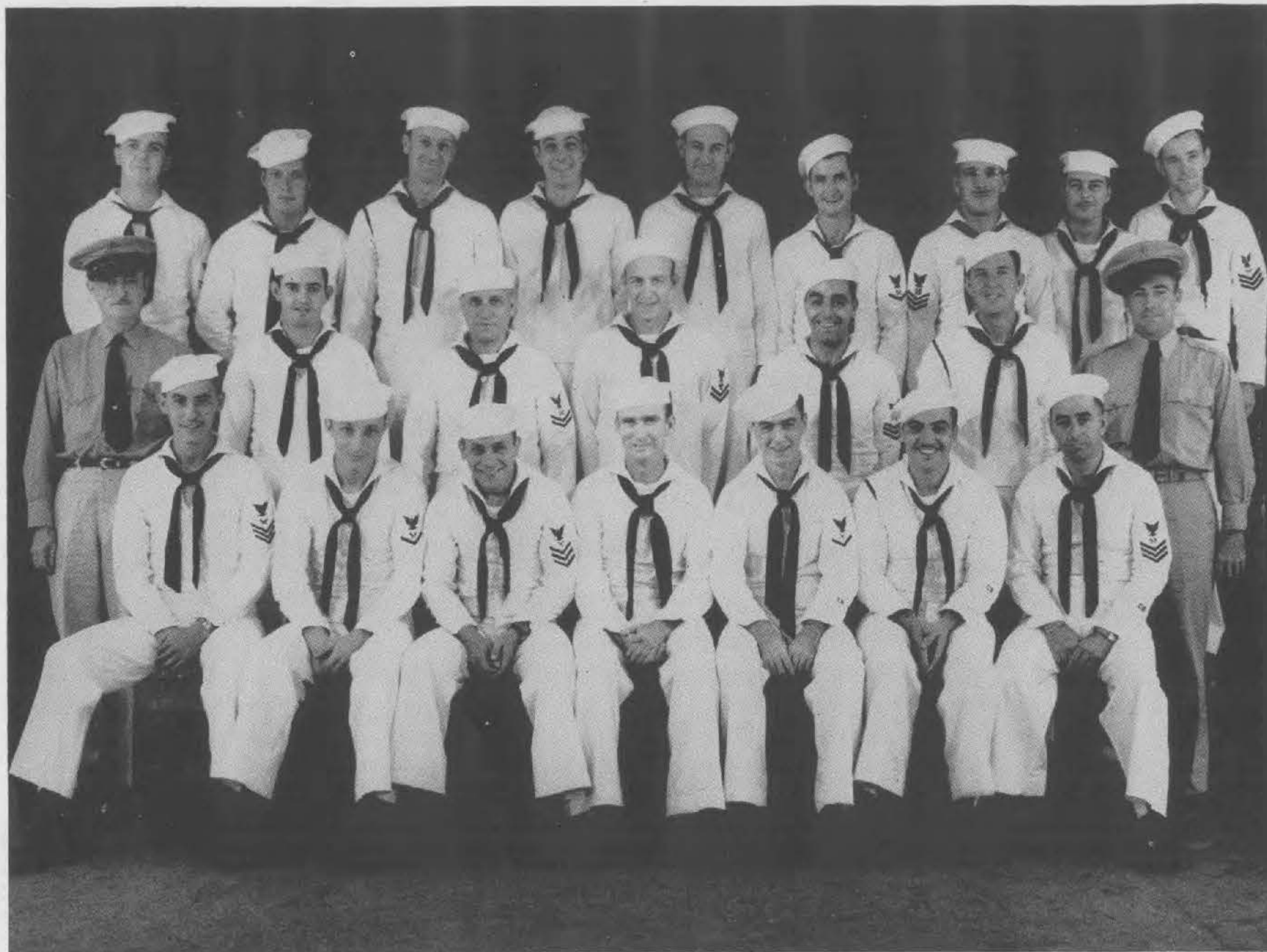
CH. W. OFF. C. A. BEEDE
 LT. R. W. GRAHAM LT. (J.G.) W. A. DOYLE



"D" COMPANY

Back Row:
 CH. W. OFF. G. W. MCKAY
 CH. W. OFF. J. J. DeGROVE

Front Row:
 LT. D. B. PARRY
 LT. (J.G.) R. L. EDWARDS



74TH NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION 1943-44



BOOT CAMP

The majority of us asked for this service. In the fall of 1942 and during the following winter we enlisted at our recruiting stations. Many of us had jobs contributing to the war effort and deferred classifications with our draft boards. Not a few were over age, a large proportion married. We chose the Seabees because we felt this branch of the service would give each of us the best opportunity to use our skills in line of duty.

None of us wanted the war, but it had to be won. We had a stake in the victory, and so we enlisted.

In March of 1943 they began to call us. By the middle of the month most of us had traveled, from every state in the union, to Williamsburg, Virginia. At Camp Peary we were placed in barracks and subjected to many indignities. Naked, we were stamped with numbers, sent our familiar clothes home, and put on dungarees. We found out that a shot—in the Navy—goes in the arm, not the mouth. We arose in the dark and went forth into the Arctic chill of Virginia to do push-ups before breakfast. We learned discipline, and the Manual of Arms.

"Boots, boots, marching up and down again!" We tramped by the hour and learned Infantry Drill the painful way, stood guard duty, caught K.P. Some of us went to school and studied first aid, tank erection, small arms, or the "magic box of the Seabees"—pontoons.

But mainly what we established was the comradeship of the barracks, the warm friendly refuge of our substitute for home—a retreat among our kind against the continual demands of Authority.

Habits became as uniform as our clothes and boot haircuts. Freedom to act as individuals went out the window, replaced by a common response to orders. The platoon, not the man, became the unit. In the disciplined life the unit must be a predictable source of capable and interacting manpower.

Late in April came the long-awaited burst of freedom. We were given Boot Leave, 62 hours to visit home, if it were within reach; and if not, Richmond, Washington, New York. We were in Navy uniform and at

HEADQUARTERS CO. + PLATOON 1

FRONT ROW

Alexander, D. R.
Cranford, J. B.
Roberts, C. E.
DeWitt, W. D.
McNally, H. P.
Gravinese, P.
Stewart, R.

SECOND ROW

Morris, L. B.
Heath, D. R.
Morrill, C. H.
Sutton, J. P.
Draga, G. R.
Willis, C. H.
Bilbro, W. A.

THIRD ROW

Morriarity, W. W.
Bolin, J. A.
Preedy, W. R.
Radigan, E. M.
Cobb, E. W.
Slusser, J. A.
Munn, L. L.
Osgood, W. B.
Biddle, H. E.



HEADQUARTERS CO. + PLATOON 2

FRONT ROW

Burg, J. V.
 Benson, E. W.
 Lehmann, L. A.
 Cox, B. H.
 Van Osdol, R. W.
 Baur, A.
 Hogue, C. L.

SECOND ROW

Ferguson, S. W.
 Oriola, S.
 Matthias, P. H.
 Foote, D. W.
 Jones, A. S.
 Morano, P. V.
 Howell, C. C.

THIRD ROW

Carstens, R. H., Jr.
 Adams, J. A.
 St. Martin, J. E.
 Fazzini, T. A.
 Jones, W. T.
 Pollack, M.
 Spates, F. J.
 Libes, N. I.

large. Not sailors, but Seabees. The public hardly knew the difference—then.

Returning, we packed and moved to the B-6 area, where for the first time the men of the 74th were placed together all at once. We met our officers and chiefs. On 4 May 1943, for each of us an historic moment, the 74th Construction Battalion was officially formed and commissioned.

ADVANCED TRAINING

Arriving at Camp Endicott, Davisville, Rhode Island, on 5 May, we plunged into new routines. The company structures outlined at Camp Peary were coordinated and have remained much the same ever since. While some friendships carried over from Boot Camp, most were born in C area, Camp Endicott, in those two-deckers with the oiled floors. Many of these relationships will last into civilian life.

Here we first tasted the delights of regular liberty, made Boston or New York on a 36, and otherwise took our evenings in Providence as they came, at whatever pleasure we desired.

At the first dress parade we held, the battalion colors were presented by the Camp Commander; the ceremony was short and impressive. Later, a review and inspection was ordered for the visit of the British Ambassador and his party. Again the 74th turned out in good military form.

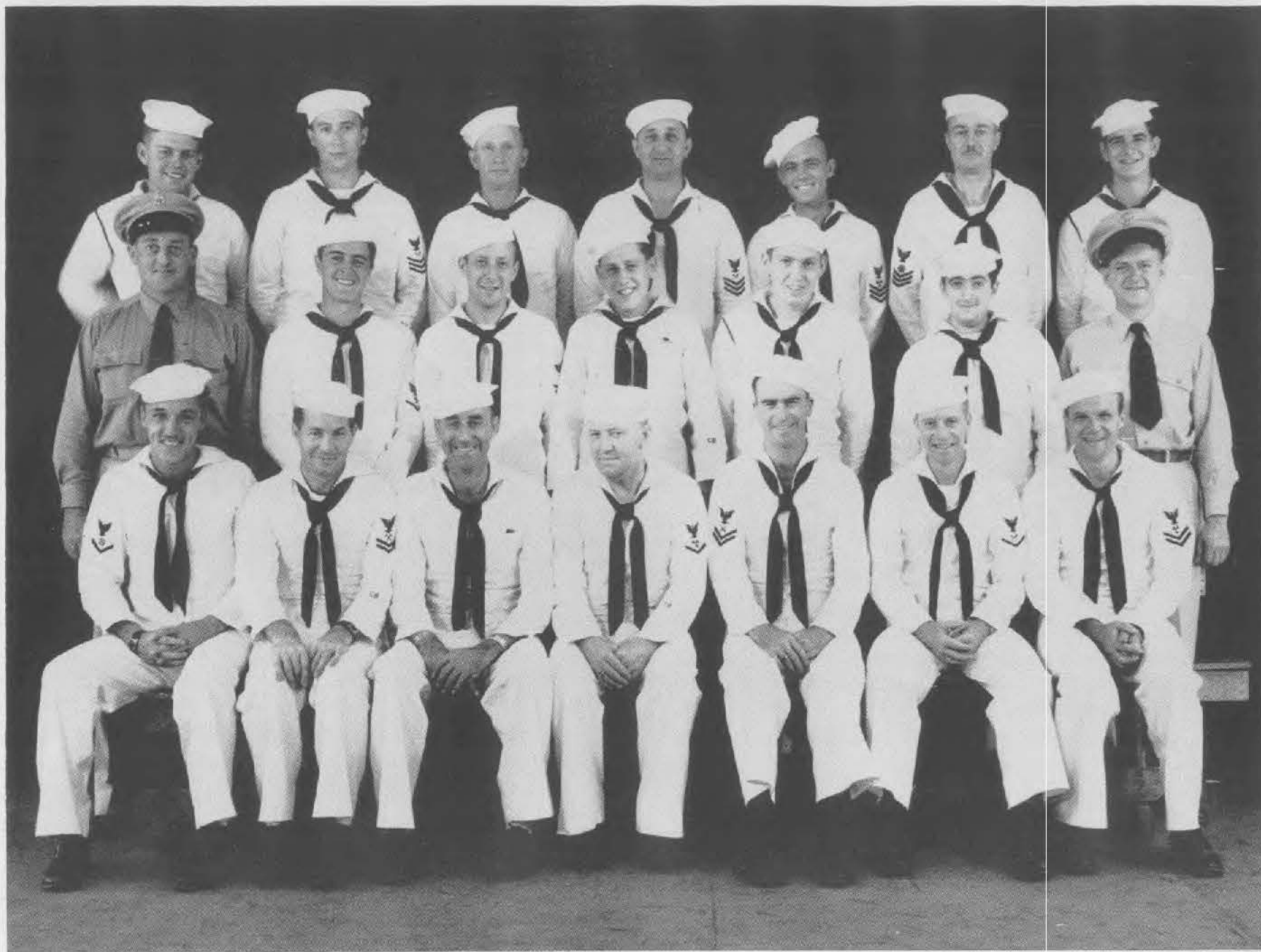
Technical training continued. We learned new skills or practised old ones, all designed to make us more useful in the work of a battalion in the field. We learned to handle the U. S. Carbine, to dry-fire it, to take down and assemble its parts, and at Sun Valley to shoot it. Bull's-eyes and "Maggie's drawers" foretold our abilities here. We were the first battalion to use the carbine for our marksmanship record on the range.

There were other records. The commando course, that gauge of age or laziness, challenged everyone to prodigious effort. (Who knows if that one still stands?) Extended order brought us contact with Nature in the rough and with the teachings of Marines and the Marine Handbook. For complexity, Charlie Chaplin's folding chair had nothing on the regulation field pack. We variously absorbed the intricacies of Judo, machete handling, hasty field fortifications, more first aid, and repeat doses of military courtesy.

A battalion paper, the Bee Hive, was founded and produced at first on a bi-weekly basis; since that time it has bloomed as the work permitted. Its columns have been open to everyone, as a publication "by and for the men." It has always been cleared for mailing home, to provide a regular news channel and a link.

At Endicott we learned the personalities of our officers and chiefs; we knew which ones to ask for a special liberty. And we found out about one another—who was the goldbricker and who the drudge, the apple polisher, the "key man." Here the first ratings were announced, belated acknowledgments of some recruiters' promises.

May and June passed quickly, and we took shape as a boy grows out of adolescence. This was a formative period, yet already we had a degree of maturity and privilege. There was beer, movies, Sundays off. But what



HEADQUARTERS CO. + PLATOON 4

FRONT ROW

Lambretch, J. G.
 Miller, R. E.
 Edgar, J. E.
 Christensen, J. B.
 Hanley, J. L.
 Craddock, C. R.
 Thomas, T. S.

SECOND ROW

Schoenlein, O. F.
 Miller, R. D.
 Reybold, J. A.
 Miller, F. E., Jr.
 Howell, R. D.
 Keller, H. H.
 Cunnane, D. J.

THIRD ROW

Williamson, G. L.
 Lorentz, B. J.
 Schiebel, O. H.
 St. Onge, R. J.
 Merrifield, D. T.
 Houghton, S. G.
 Robert, A., Jr.

were great drawing cards. Grasping time by the forelock, not a few of us brought wives and families to nearby towns, extending a tenuous sort of home life.

Again we had military training, hikes, an overnight bivouac, rifle range practice, a commando course, and "new" methods under Marine supervision. On 28 August 1943 a review was ordered and Acorn 14 commissioned amid ceremony. The Acorn and Battalion Commanders read their orders. We moved from Camp Rousseau to the adjoining Acorn Training Area, Splinter City. Our Bee Hive, suppressed at Rousseau by station order "to save paper," was revived and rechristened "The Leading Edge," a name it retained for the next two issues.

Splinter City marked a great change. Our training was virtually ended, our real work begun. The balance of our supplies and equipment became available and we assembled it for loading. As items were palletized we stored them in LST warehouses, each the size and shape of an LST tank deck. Thousands of drums of gasoline were strapped rigidly on pallets and set aside in readiness.

Now many of us learned about the invasion vessel we would be using—from the old "green dragon," baptismal craft that so many battalions of our vintage practised on. The Taking of Point Mugu was a classic of invasion theory and a mighty jumble of experimentation and applied effort, with escaping pontoons, dunked officers, man-killing labor, and bawling confusion. But records were broken again, somehow; we made discoveries, and we earned the praise of our commanders.

On 24 September, with our equipment loaded on LSTs, the first wave embarked and we headed into a murky Pacific dusk. The remainder sailed in groups during the next two weeks. From here on, we were overseas veterans.

PEARL HARBOR

After the hurley-burley of Splinter City, ten days at sea was like a rest cure. The first night out, on the LSTs, was somewhat rough; many a land-lubber went through misery that night. But in a day or two, all but a few had established sea legs. We stood gun watch, head duty, and K. P. Nearly everyone was busy during the days, yet there was no real pressure. Most men thought we would go to Pearl Harbor for a short stay, but there were many opinions as to our destination after that one.

The LSTs put into that beautiful and historic port on 4 October, where less than two years ago many of the capital ships of our Navy had been sent to the bottom in the sneak attack. Here had occurred the event on account of which all of us were serving in the Seabees, and vivid evidence lay before our eyes—the hulk of the Oklahoma, then being raised from the harbor mud. We of the 74th felt at last in the thick of things, no longer sitting on the sidelines. We had become participants.

Assigned to a relatively undeveloped area, we were quartered with the station force and at a rifle range. We unloaded our supplies and equipment



HEADQUARTERS CO. + PLATOON 5

FRONT ROW

Castle, C. S.
Brown, R. H.
Aaron, H. W.
Holzmeister, I. F.
West, C. L.
Antonovitz, J.
Haws, J. B.

SECOND ROW

Pearsall, H. H. A.
Docherty, B. J.
Rincavage, A. J.
Clancy, J. J.
Schneiderman, G.
Ball, V. E.
Staton, V. E.

THIRD ROW

Burke, M. F., Jr.
Szabo, L. S.
Auleta, H. H.
Leis, G. J.
Crawford, B., Jr.
Parrish, H. E.
Eikenberry, C. J.

FOURTH ROW

Barcnas, P. F.
Karacostantis, C.
Susz, E. S.
Klayman, A. W.

and stacked them in a dump reclaimed from the boondocks by our own bulldozers. We built roads, blasted trenches in solid rock for water lines, and started the first barracks and warehouses of what was to become a far-flung city.

Our draftsmen were busy with Acorn and Battalion officers mapping islands and enemy fortifications. Reconnaissance photos were studied. Scale models were built. The name and location of this objective, known to a very few, was a tightly guarded secret.

By the 29th of the month the LSTs assigned to our first echelon had been loaded with priority materiel. The list of men to go was chosen, revised, and trimmed; the final selectees went aboard. Few who went would have traded places with anyone who was left ashore. On the morning of the 30th this echelon put out to sea in the company of a great invasion fleet containing vessels of every description.

Two weeks later a second group embarked, taking with them additional quantities of equipment and supplies, on cargo ships. On 2 December the remaining men went aboard a freighter and sailed the following day.

Thus the entire battalion, in three waves, took passage for Tarawa.

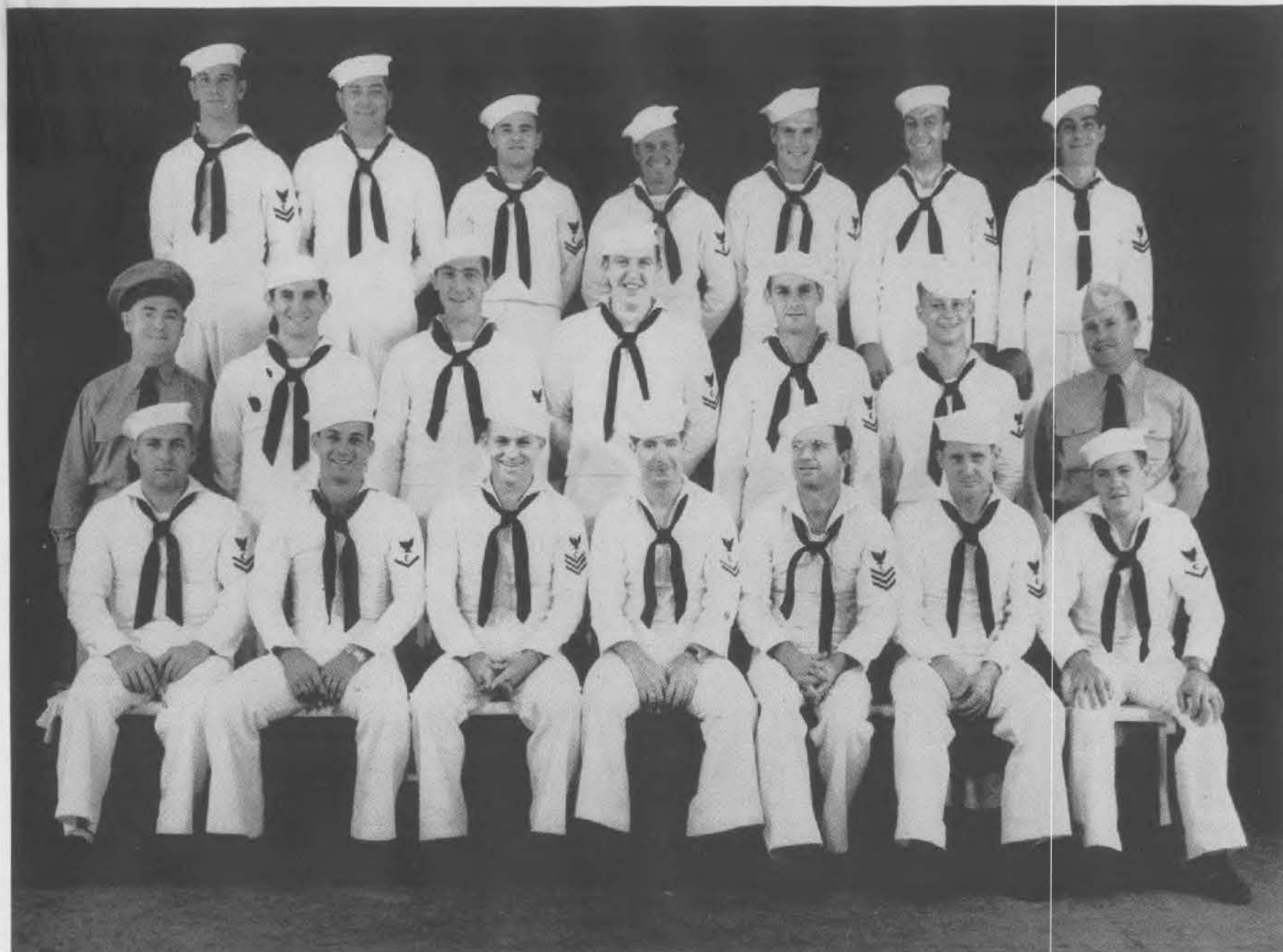
INVASION

The convoy with the LSTs lay over at Funa Futi in the Ellice Islands for several days. On the night of 13 November, "Sewing-Machine Charlie" came over (presumably from Tarawa) and dropped a number of bombs near the air strip. For our men this was the first taste of danger—their first participation in an Act of War. Some thought it would bring them a combat star for their theatre ribbon, but they were wrong.

As all the world remembers, the Marines went in on Betio 20 November 1943. Two of our LSTs entered the lagoon that afternoon to discharge their deck-loaded LCTs. It was not until three days later that the island was declared secured; Tuesday afternoon, the 23rd, our men began unloading the LSTs at the edge of the reef, and some stood guard duty ashore that night.

Meanwhile the cargo ships carrying the second wave had circled with a convoy many miles to the southeast, where lay the carriers whose planes had been bombing the atoll. These cargo vessels entered the lagoon on the morning of the 24th and anchored off Betio. All men took up their assigned duties immediately.

The assault troops of the Marines were evacuated and their places taken by a defense battalion of the Marine Corps. We shared the ensuing months with them on the island. Marines and Seabees ate in each others' mess halls, wore each others' clothing, and existed on the friendliest basis. Besides operating the anti-aircraft batteries, the Marines set up aircraft detection units and their own communications, providing an effective military defense of Betio while the Seabees' work went forward. This work will be described in the text following under separate headings according to the type of work done and the detail which accomplished it.



HEADQUARTERS CO. + PLATOON 6

FRONT ROW

McNee, W. J.
 Martin, P. F.
 Willhite, G. B.
 Russell, R. L.
 Drott, E. A.
 Ellis, D. G.
 Hand, P. J.

SECOND ROW

Fox, F.
 Konias, G.
 Dearborn, L. E.
 Sayce, R. A.
 Roberts, C. L.
 Kane, R. F.
 Smith, W. C.

THIRD ROW

Simpson, H. D.
 Watt, R. G.
 D'Onofrio, E.
 Hicks, M.
 Abney, R. E.
 Waterman, V. H.
 Chankalian, D. R.

At this point it is appropriate to relate some of the difficulties that faced the battalion personnel. It must be kept in mind that Betio, an island of only 285 acres, was a mass of ruins and strewn with unburied dead. Not a single tree remained undamaged and most of the palms were beheaded. Huge piles of partly burned and decaying food lay where the Japs had maintained supply dumps. Flies and mosquitoes multiplied in inconceivable quantity and infested the entire island area. Live Japs remained in hiding for some days and constituted, especially at night, a menace to security. Furthermore, many of us were aware of our exposed position in the Pacific. Tarawa had been the curtain-raiser of the Central Pacific campaign and was within easy flying distance of such enemy-held bastions as Nauru, Kusaie, and the Marshall Island fields of Jaluit, Mille, and Maloelap. It seemed possible that even a concerted assault by the Japanese fleet might take place; or failing that, a submarine attack by night.

Most of the American and enemy dead were properly buried by the end of the second week and sufficient area cleared of debris to speed the construction of an air base. But another threat to our safety and peace of mind supplanted that of the Jap snipers, almost as soon as they had been dealt with. On 3 December just as dusk a group of enemy bombers flew over Betio and dropped their bomb patterns squarely on the runway area. From that date through 17 January, raids occurred every two or three nights, sometimes on successive nights. On 23-24 December, four separate raids occurred and no one slept for more than an hour or two.* Besides these

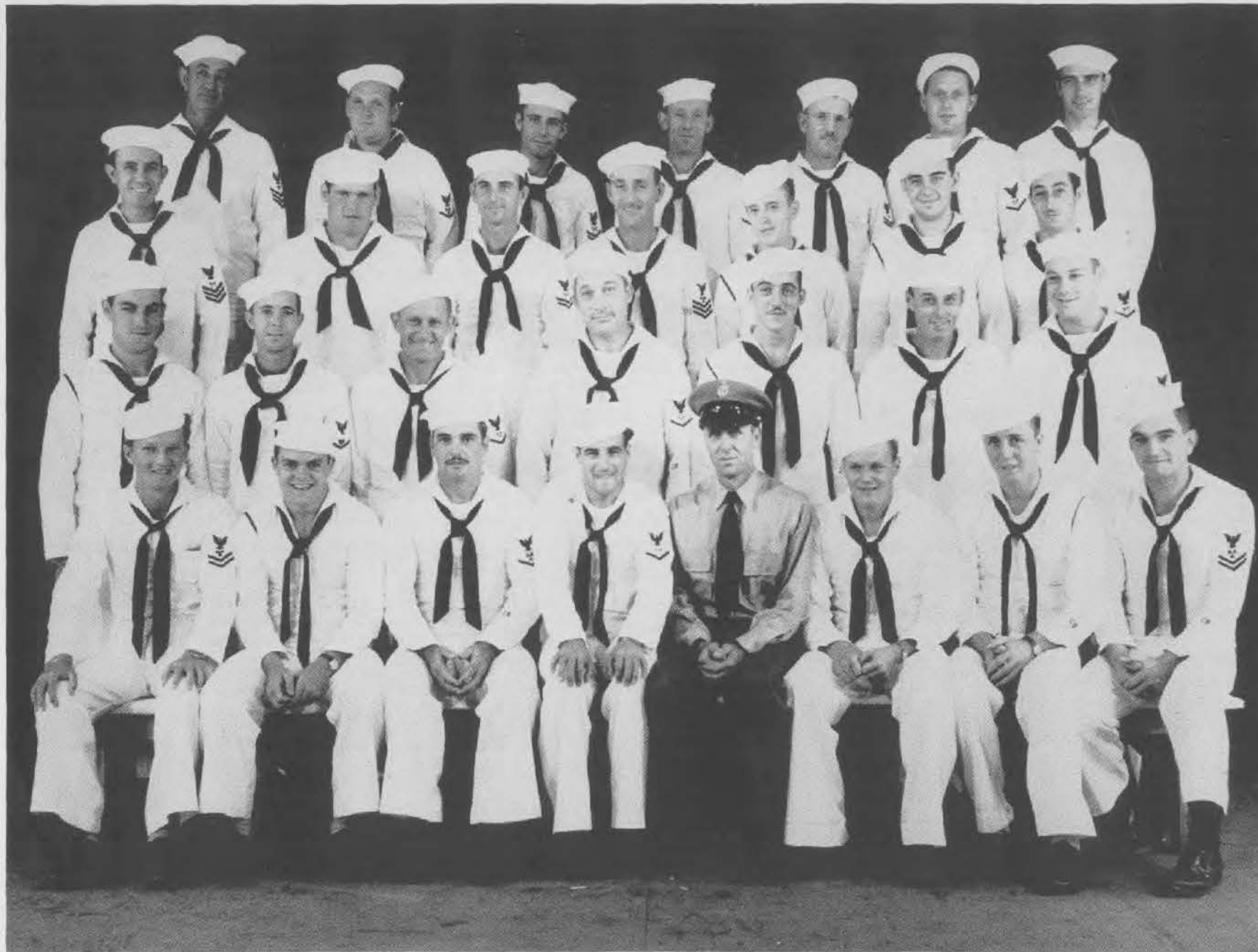
*Had we added a day on crossing the International Date-line, as is customary, instead of keeping to the old calendar these raids would have fallen on our Christmas Eve and Christmas morning. Undoubtedly the Japs timed their attacks accordingly, in the belief we had done so, to spoil our sacred occasion.

actual raids there were many false alarms, an even greater number; so that hardly a night went by during that period when we enjoyed an uninterrupted rest.

The intensive phase of the battalion's work lasted until somewhat after the period of bombings. During this time all men worked twelve hours a day, seven days a week. Christmas and New Years day were no exceptions. Night crews were more fortunate than those on during the day, for the raids and alerts came mainly when they were at work. Day men lost their sleep, however.

Battalion Morale was maintained at a good level considering the dangers and burdens of life, the absence of any recreational facilities, and the deprivations we underwent. Lack of sleep was probably hardest to take. Food began with K-rations and progressed very slowly toward the level of good Navy diet. Quarters gradually improved—from foxholes to shacks, the lucky ones provided with tarpaulins but others covered with galvanized, corrugated iron, most of the sections being riddled. Sudden, violent showers inundated these shanties and flooded under the tents that replaced them. But finally we had ordered tent areas with platforms and screening which were both weatherproof and secure from insects.

Clothes would not wash clean in salt or brackish water, even with special soap, and time for washing had to be squeezed somehow from a schedule



COMPANY A + PLATOON 1

FRONT ROW

Benoit, D. A.
 Tisbert, A. J., Jr.
 Blough, E. W.
 Tilleson, A. R.
 Rule, J. D.
 Beber, J. M.
 Christner, D. C.

SECOND ROW

Benoit, E. A.
 Barefoot, O. J., Sr.
 Friedenbach, A. E.
 Capellino, C.
 Bailey, G. F.
 Walker, J. E.
 Fry, W. J.

THIRD ROW

Harrison, P. C.
 Barnes, H. P.
 Huggins, S. C.
 Sperry, J. H.
 Bellar, J. L.
 Barnhard, R. W.
 Amato, J.

FOURTH ROW

Frizzell, H. W.
 Berry, T. L.
 Barrentine, W. L.
 Carr, S. T.
 Boswell, T. W.
 Beasley, F. W.
 Hueser, M. J.

already overloaded; usually it came in twilight or after dark. Showers were a memory. Men took off their clothes and went out into the rain with a bar of soap. But baths were to come eventually, and other improvements, which will be seen in this account of the work itself.

MAPPING AND SURVEYING

Our surveying parties necessarily preceded the construction gangs in every phase of our operations. They laid out the work to be done and mapped the progress of the jobs. Often these parties worked under the most trying conditions, especially at the start where hazards remaining from the battle lay in the path of the landing strip extension.

When the airfield and taxiways had been surveyed, a party went to map the nearby islands and locate installations on them. Other groups located and set guides for camp areas, gun positions, warehouses, and every type of construction to be undertaken. Detailed maps were made of Betio, Bairiki, and Eita.* These involved the hardest sort of labor and privations,

*Censorship does not permit the use of the more familiar code names for any of our islands. Native names will be used throughout, and reference to the maps will identify those mentioned.

particularly on Eita where dense jungle and clouds of dengue-carrying mosquitoes obstructed the work. Here the men lived in the shelter of an abandoned native hut, sleeping on the ground and sharing provisions with a Marine unit. Fever struck down all but two of this party before the survey had been completed.

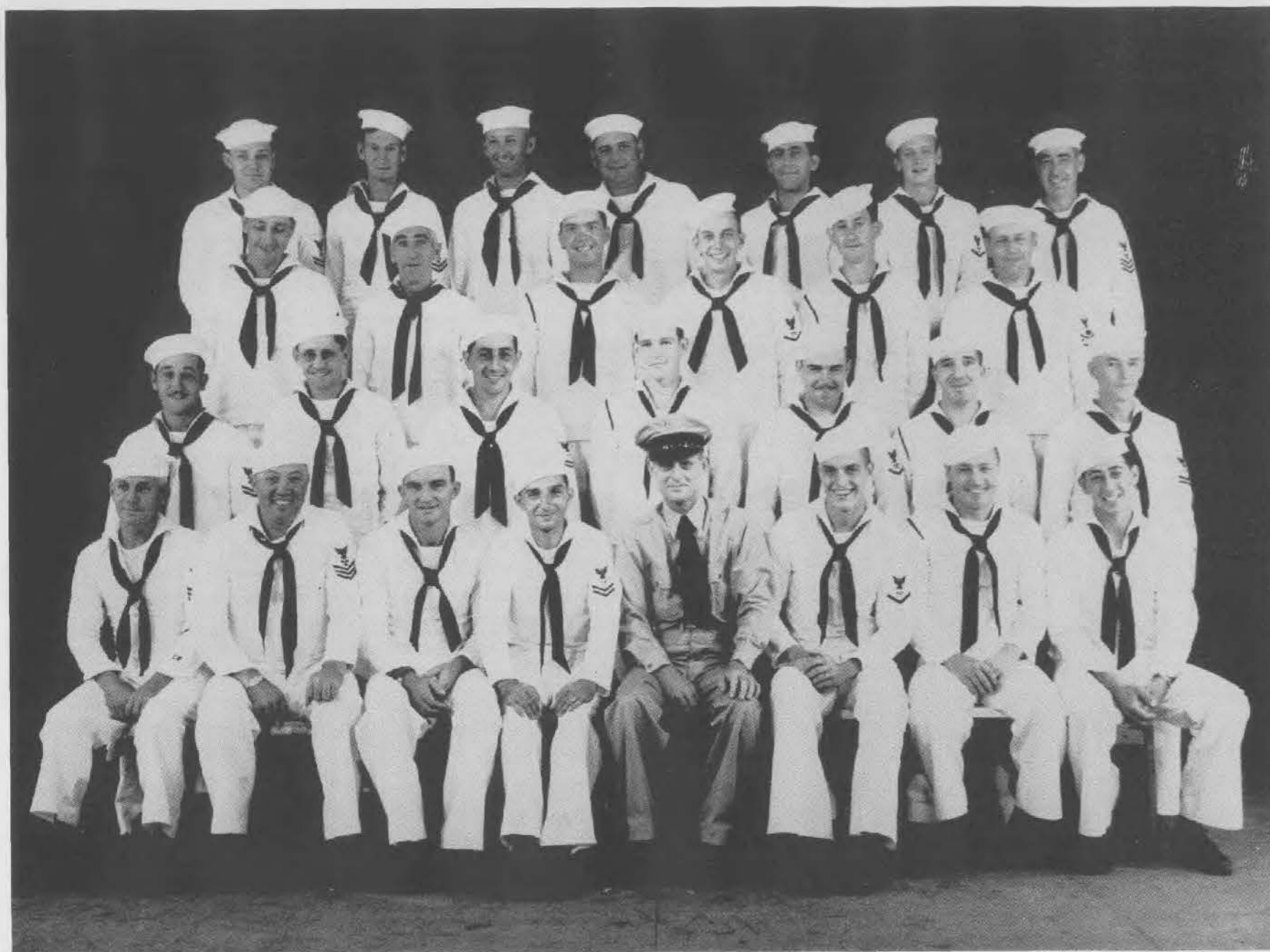
Coral placed on the air strip, taxiways, and hardstands averaged a 12-inch depth; over three million square feet of area was covered. Road building involved the surfacing of more than half a million square feet additionally, and other surfaced areas brought the total to better than four million. The actual haulage was estimated at about 150,000 cubic yards and was handled both by truck and by carryall. Most hauls were less than a mile, though only a few locations on the reef provided a suitable source.

Three-quarters of this job was on a twenty-four-hour basis. Survey crews established grades and limits, checked the completed work, and provided data for draftsmen, who day by day made up the job progress maps. Photographs of all phases of the work were made, many of which have been included in this story. Photographic coverage involved subject matter of much human interest, in addition to the work itself.

HEAVY EQUIPMENT

The first thing ashore, as in any Seabee operation, was the bulldozer; and its first job was to blade up enough coral to make a ramp on which other rolling stock could move from ship to reef. From this point on, our heavy equipment went into almost continuous action.

We had great quantities and variety: 56 tractors of all sizes; 17 cranes of various types, with such accessories as shovel booms, dragline fairleads, pile driving leads, buckets, spare cables, etc.; 14 carryalls—also called pans, or scrapers; 5 motor graders; 4 rollers; 2 rooters; 2 rock crushers; 2 con-



COMPANY A + PLATOON 2

FRONT ROW

Palmer, H. L.
 Scrimiger, W. L.
 Ebrite, J. A.
 Colucci, J. J.
 Burke, C. G.
 Hines, R. E., Jr.
 Noci, I. G.
 Finkel, M.

SECOND ROW

Della Pietro, P. F.
 Barry, C. R.
 Medori, G. R.
 Eller, T. R. E.
 Eaton, W. S.
 Goldstraw, C., Jr.
 Daniels, W. E.

THIRD ROW

Johnson, R.
 Hoban, R. A.
 Coyle, J. L.
 Pikka, W. E.
 Drumright, R. E.
 Hewson, W. E.

FOURTH ROW

Cloer, C. C.
 Fowler, W. C.
 Johnson, H. A.
 Simmank, E. A.
 Orsini, T.
 Henry, D. S.
 Durant, J. J.

crete mixers; a well driller; a ditcher; 5 portable air compressors; 4 portable welding machines, etc.

With these items we could accomplish in weeks what the Japs—who had little or none of such equipment—would have taken months or even years to turn out by hand. For instance, a carryall holding sixteen yards might move as much coral as three hundred laborers with wheelbarrows, and replace many pick and shovel men by scraping it up in one operation. Ordinarily, with three shifts, three operators and one carryall would do the work of at least a thousand coolies. A large bulldozer would, in a few quick passes, get rid of trees, stumps, rubbish, or earthworks that otherwise would require the all-day efforts of a sizable group of men.

This heavy equipment meant more than a saving of human effort, however. Its greatest value was in saving time, for every minute counted desperately. The need to capture Betio was the need for an airfield in that part of the Pacific. Betio had the nucleus of such a field in the existing Jap air strip, which had been purposely spared as much as possible during the bombardment and assault. But it was not long enough for our heavy bombers.

The number one priority job, therefore, was the completion by our men of this projected landing strip. All other Seabee work was subordinate. It took our bulldozers a scant fifteen hours to fill and grade the holes in this strip so fighter planes could land. The work of extending the length on the west began immediately thereafter.

Betio was to serve as an unsinkable carrier, the strip its flight deck. Bulldozer operators set about leveling the ground in preparation for surfacing. The terrain was a mass of tank traps, fuel and ammunition dumps, and burrows; its whole surface was dotted with tree stumps and hillocks, deeply trenched passageways, and scattered wreckage. The stumps had to be rooted out and hauled away, the ground filled in. All fill was puddled. The coral surfacing was brought by carryall and truck, leveled by graders, watered, and rolled. In 24 days the job was completed sufficiently for B24s (Liberators) to land. This was eighteen days ahead of schedule.

By this time the concrete with which the Japanese had surfaced their old flight strip had deteriorated under the weight of our heavier planes to a point where entire resurfacing was necessary. Graders equipped with scarifiers tore up one-half of the area, the other half remaining in use. Fresh coral was laid in place of the concrete. When one side was finished, the other was begun. Then taxiways and new hardstands were undertaken.

The credit for a fine record must be shared between the operators and the maintenance men, for with the equipment working the clock around, each piece had to be lubricated and fueled in the field; once a day it was thoroughly greased and oiled. Differentials, transmissions, transfer cases, crank cases, and all sorts of bearings—all moving parts received attention. Such units as were working the tides, exposed therefore to the corrosive effect of salt water, were gone over at least twice every day. Every operator was assigned an oiler to maintain his unit. Thus breakdowns were minimized.



COMPANY A + PLATOON 3

FRONT ROW

Lowery, R. W.
Hughes, P. C.
Affannato, A.
Rasmussen, R. E.
Koolick, H.
Martinell, O. J.
Humphrey, E. D.

SECOND ROW

Minkle, W. J.
Makin, G. A.
Kotchen, J. G.
Kane, H. P.
Kochanski, M. W.
Johnson, E. E.
Lentz, H. K.
Card, N. M.

THIRD ROW

Liegierski, J. J.
Courtney, J. F.
Kane, F. I.
Leis, J. P.
Hady, H. D.
Lewis, J. W.
Bach, E. J.

FOURTH ROW

Johnson, G. M.
Landis, N. A.
Leonard, C. J.
Weiss, J. R.
Logue, J. R.
Kline, W. E.
Jenkins, W. N.
Lassey, J. D.

Some damage resulted from enemy action, however. Road grader tires were sprayed with shrapnel in a bombing raid. A tractor was blown to bits by a land mine on the reef, the operator being saved by his discretion; suspecting the presence of mines, he put the machine in low gear and followed it some distance behind. During a raid one tractor operator hitched his unit to a plane and dragged it from the proximity of burning gasoline drums. There was always risk in these raids, for a man might be working at some distance from shelter and by the time he had secured his machine the bombers could be almost overhead; or if working by himself the noise of his engine might drown out the sound of the siren and he might not even realize an alert was on.

On 26 November, while clearing ground for the first Seabee galley, a tractor operator flushed a Jap from beneath fallen palms and other debris; the Jap fled and was attended to by Marines. In mid-December one of the men was shot at and narrowly missed; a dozer operator working nearby was commandeered to level the dugout from which the shot had apparently been fired. When he completed his pass, fresh blood was found on his dozer blade.

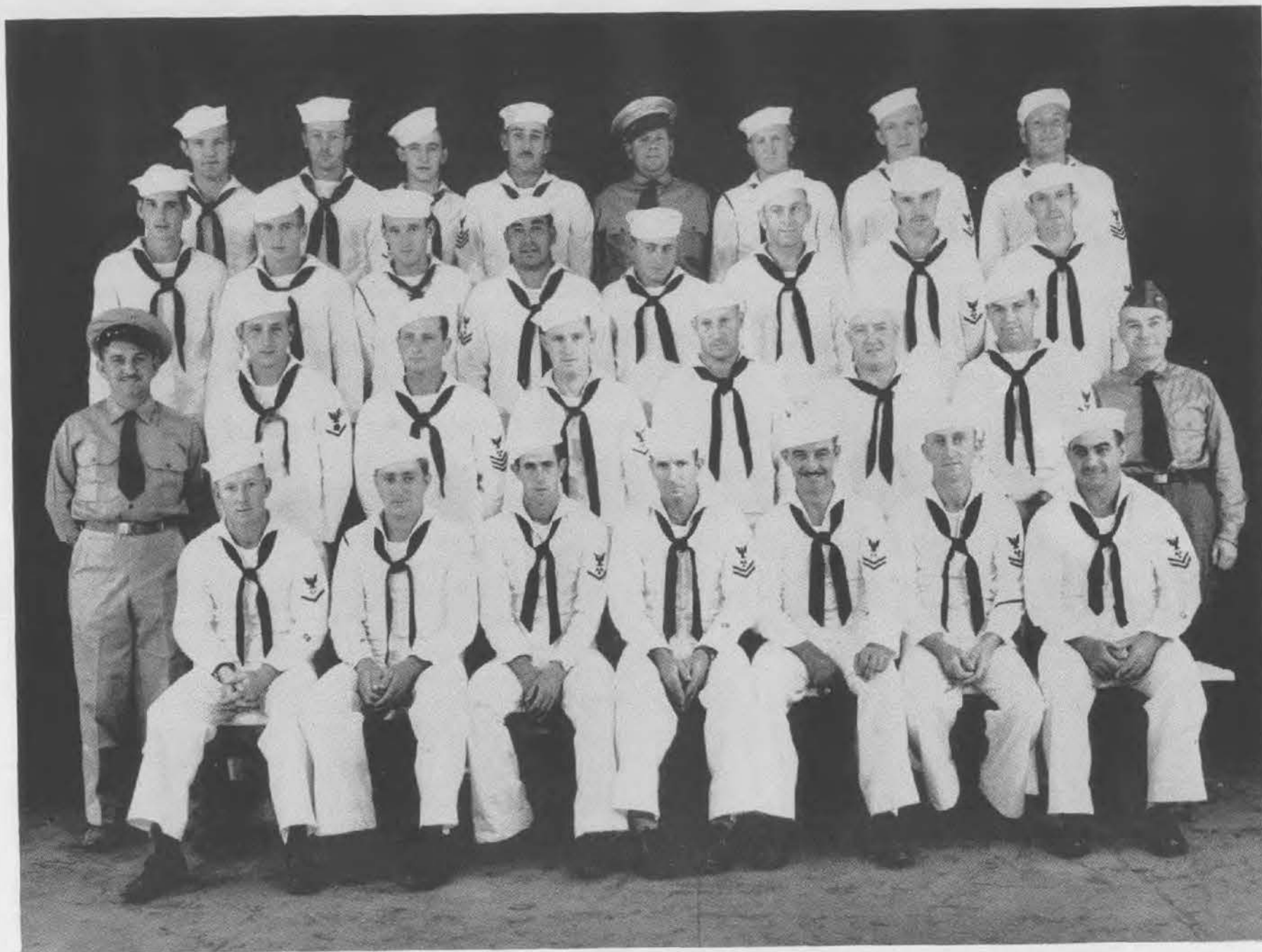
Besides operators and oilers in the field, two crews of maintenance men worked in shops set up to repair equipment. Soon after landing we took over some well-worn equipment from a Marine contingent, and this demanded thorough overhauling. A temporary shop, which served until the two permanent ones were finished, had been rigged up by the mechanics themselves. Here the Marine equipment was put in shape. The permanent shops contained all necessary tools and accessories for large repairs. Portable welding machines, hydraulic presses, mobile air compressors, electric and acetylene generators, drills, and grinders were among the items at hand. A parts room stocked essential replacements.

Twenty-three 600-gallon trucks came ashore with us, and these went all over the island daily as needed, filling the hundreds of fast-draining gasoline or diesel fuel tanks on motorized equipment. Chiefs and a dispatcher went from job to job maintaining production and shifting units wherever need occurred. The demand was heavy, yet every important assignment was handled on schedule, or sooner.

TRANSPORTATION

Most of the battalion's trucks and similar vehicles reached Betio loaded on the LSTs and cargo ships of the first and second waves. They were unloaded as quickly as possible and put into operation. Altogether, with the Acorn's equipment, there were about 300 units of all types, of which the battalion took over the operation of 65 jeeps, 4 seeps, 36 dumps, 35 cargoes, and a few cargo carryalls. Later additional vehicles were taken over from Marine Corps groups leaving the island.

Two garages were set up at opposite ends of the air strip to speed repairs and overhaul. These shops worked day and night, seven days a week. The only interruptions were those caused by enemy air attack or alerts that failed to develop. Every piece of transport equipment on Betio was serv-



COMPANY A + PLATOON 4

FRONT ROW

Outlaw, T.
Mucerino, S. T.
Payton, L.
Craig, J. T.
Beyers, A. R.
Ankiewicz, S. S.
Margarita, S.

SECOND ROW

McCarthy, H. C.
Pearson, G. N.
Young, W. E.
Wheeler, G. K.
Hansen, D. L.
Lynam, T. E.
Poppleton, W. A.
Morris, M. J.

THIRD ROW

Bonds, V. L.
Mills, R. L.
Miller, W. R.
Ozomick, J. J.
Rockhill, R. D., Jr.
Prall, G. A.
Mann, W. R.
Borden, W. J.

FOURTH ROW

Luckay, W. N.
Holmes, B.
Loy, J. A.
Goodell, R. W.
Johnson, A. E.
Oliver, W. E.
Nordstrom, R. F.
Moats, D. J.

iced, and if need be repaired, in these two garages. Two men working in the tire shop made all tire and tube repairs during the rehabilitation of the island.

During the first weeks especially, the abuse of equipment was unavoidable and the wear and tear ran high. Trucks operated hub-deep in salt water, which attacked their working parts. The cargoes worked the reef whenever the tide level permitted, to unload supplies and materials that came ashore in an unending stream. The dumps worked around the clock hauling fresh coral fill and surfacing for the strip; dripping loads that carried water and silt into every crevice of the machinery.

Repairs were often miracles of improvisation, for spare parts were almost non-existent. The maintaining units, such as grease trucks, refuelers, recons, weapon carriers, bomb service trucks, etc., fared better; but all were in constant service.

With night and day shifts each twelve hours long, there were some ninety Seabee drivers on the muster, plus others from the Acorn. Added to these, the maintenance men brought the total working for Transportation to about 160. This number was reduced somewhat by the end of January when the great pressure we worked under subsided to a degree; and the various shops then had opportunity to undertake major overhauls and postponable jobs. All vehicles had been kept in running order, and when we left Betio every piece not actually destroyed by bombs was operational.

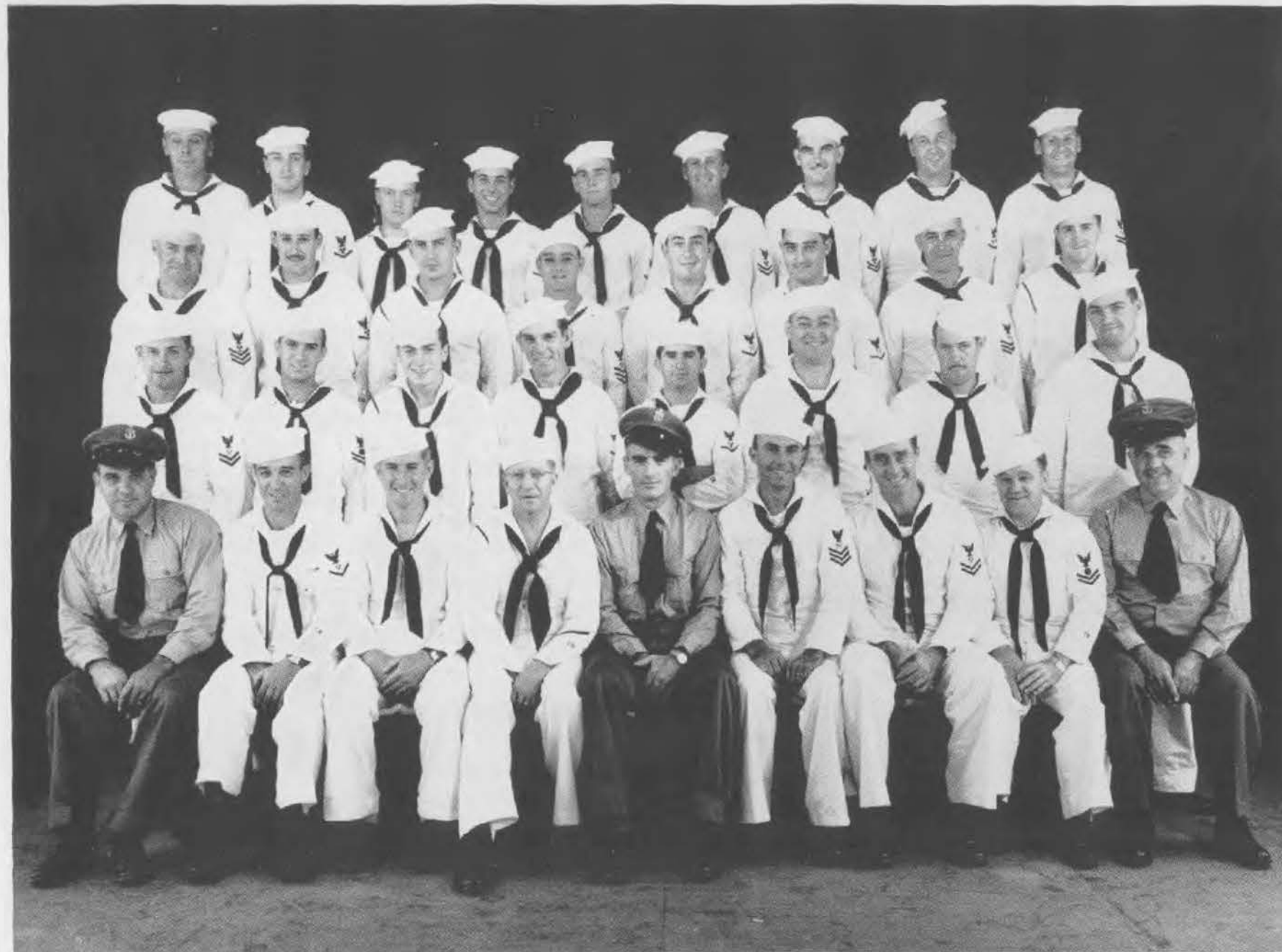
To offset the bomb damage, parts from scrapped equipment were salvaged and built up; Jap rolling stock was repaired and put into service. In the end we had some right-hand drive trucks and passenger cars, plus half a dozen motorcycles with delivery bodies, all working for us and bequeathed by the island's late occupants. We made sprinklers out of patched-up Jap refuelers, and others from cargoes with pontoons mounted on them, and perforated pipe astern.

Two crews kept the equipment lubricated. They worked in grease pits of their own construction which also served as foxholes during night alerts. Jeeps were greased once a week and trucks as needed, with special attention to those that worked in water. Shop records were kept meticulously, parts were rationed from limited replacement stocks, and one dispatcher handled all the demands for our trucks and jeeps as priority of request indicated, throughout the day. A night dispatcher relieved him, and CPOs kept the trucks under the shovel moving. It was a busy detail and in spite of constant demand for transport all bona fide needs were eventually filled.

UNLOADING AND SUPPLY

Stevedore work can be expedited where there are deep-water docks, warehouses, and modern labor saving devices. But at Tarawa all ships except LSTs had to remain far out in the lagoon and their contents brought ashore in light draft boats or on barges. LSTs and LCTs could fetch to the edge of the reef, but unloading was practicable there only at the low stages of the tide.

Half a dozen crews from the battalion lived aboard AKs, C-3s, etc., for



COMPANY A + PLATOON 5

FRONT ROW

Hebert, R. E.
 Briggs, H. J.
 Bellny, S. A.
 Stahler, W. D.
 Hackett, T. M.
 Close, R. E.
 Kealy, J. R.
 Rollinson, A.
 Smith, C. W.

SECOND ROW

McDowell, A. A.
 Welch, C. W.
 Tingey, J. W.
 Shaughnessy, J. H.
 Vitale, N. J.
 Rinehart, J. L.
 Misfeldt, R. A.
 Tucker, S. A.

THIRD ROW

White, E. C.
 Stoklas, J. J.
 Welling, E. G.
 Kane, D. F.
 Weber, C. J.
 Harman, S. A.
 Mougnot, M. O.
 Valentine, F. S.

FOURTH ROW

Witt, C. M.
 St. Onge, E. A.
 Wilson, W. J.
 Young, J. E.
 Stevens, C. W.
 Whitten, R. A.
 Smith, K. R.
 Ruth, E.
 Haubach, F. F.

much of the time we were at Tarawa; their job was to rush the cargoes from holds to whatever lightering vessels lay alongside. These might be LCVPs, LCMs, LCTs, or even LSTs; pontoon barges were also used. It was hard, continuous work but was mitigated by stable, relatively high living standards. Food, drinking water (cooled), and quarters were good, and unrestricted.

At the other end of the supply line things were quite different. The tides controlled working hours ashore, and living conditions were catch-as-catch-can. On the reef edge it was six hours on and six off, for half the time the water was too deep for trucks and cranes to work in. Similarly, at the base of the dock, half the time the water was too shallow for tank lighters to negotiate the tricky channel. So they worked the dock at high tide, the reef at low.

When the tide was at mid-stage the cranes walked out from the dock to the reef, if it were ebbing—walked in if it were flowing. In the night time especially, with floodlights gleaming from their peaks, they resembled huge waddling prehistoric monsters.

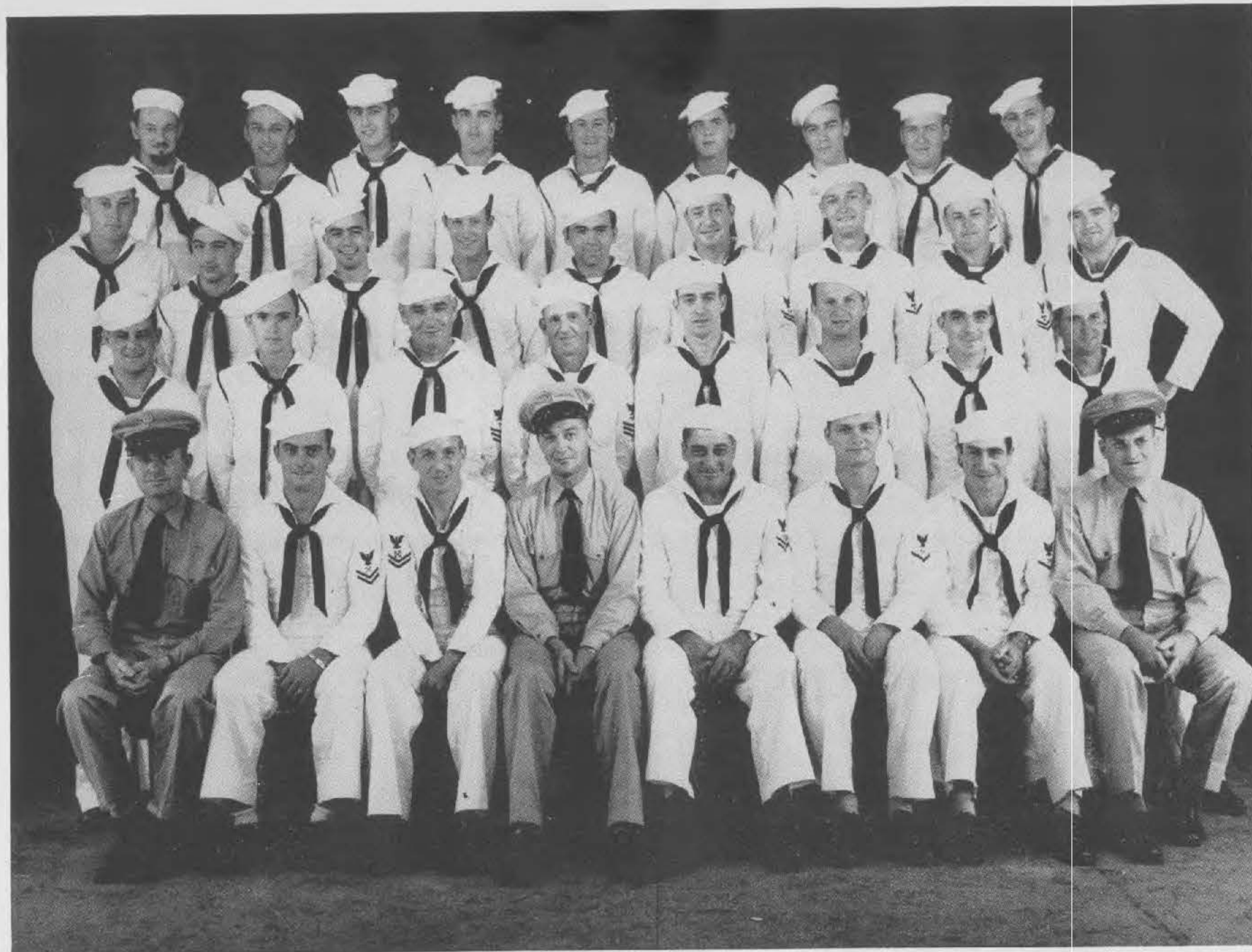
The work required expert stevedore knowledge, yet not many of the men had rigging experience; they learned fast. They caught meals and sleep in between times and dodged into the nearest shelters when the sirens wailed. One shelter was a former Jap machine gun nest covering the old dock at its base; here the crews often took refuge. One night a bomb explosion demolished it, but fortunately none of the men was in it at the time.

Boat crews noticing the turn of the tide would implore the unloading crews to hurry, cajoling them and even offering bribes. For if they were not unloaded and able to scramble away in time they might be stranded and exposed to a night raid without power to move; these boat crews were required to remain with their craft, regardless, and little shelter could be had on them from any explosion. The likelihood of a near miss was always higher inshore.

With certain difficult cargoes, as cement in paper bags, native labor was assigned to help the regular crews. This was dirty, back-breaking work; slings and nets tended to break open the lowermost bags and spill cement on sweating bodies. Bombs and gasoline were easier, but handling them had psychological disadvantages. Sometimes food or beverages mysteriously developed breakage, and a tariff was exacted that no one begrudged.

The most difficult freight was radio equipment, which came clumsy, heavy, and desperately fragile. With minimum facilities for handling the larger cases, the practice was to use two cranes, for the booms had to be well lowered to reach out, and five or six tons at that angle would be too much for just one. The teamwork of the crane operators was magnificent to watch as they acted together, delicately shifting a load and booming up with great caution until finally they had it high enough for one to take the full weight. Each cargo had its special problems, yet the flow of supplies was never delayed for long. The human element, at least, withstood all conditions.

Once transferred from lighter to truck, the supplies were then hauled



COMPANY A + PLATOON 6

FRONT ROW

Nichols, E. A.
Moss, W. A.
Beatty, K. S.
Balstra, P. J.
Kaulbach, T. J.
Sibley, R. W.
Filomena, N.
Walter, H. B

SECOND ROW

Petrucci, P. A., Jr.
Kahn, F. R., Jr.
Johnson, E. E.
Cole, C. I.
Hallinan, T. J.
Mraz, E. E.
Ruehl, N. E.
McCrary, C. M.

THIRD ROW

Sendrowski, C. A.
Sabotti, D. R.
Senecal, O. E.
Larsen, R. L.
Post, L. F.
Cornwell, W. F., Sr.
Benedict, J. G.
Blanton, E. F.
McNeff, J. W.

FOURTH ROW

Peterson, W. G.
Prah, S. C.
Brower, R. E.
Runnfeldt, G. T.
Schlemmer, W. L.
Siehl, A. B.
Seaton, E. M.
Jacobson, J. M.
Rafalow, P.

to their proper dumps. In the first days on Betio this unloading work had top priority. The supply men worked 12-hour shifts or longer, segregating and storing the truckloads of P1 material. After an area had been cleared of the usual bodies and debris, a 50-foot tent was erected to protect perishables and the first supply dumps were designated. At this stage the entire island personnel drew their G.I. equipment from this source.

Five natives assisted our four-man detail and proved to be capable, willing workers; but their habit of standing at attention and saluting every passerby had to be discouraged. Handling beer was this department's biggest headache—but not in the literal sense.

COMMUNICATIONS

Thirty minutes after the locations were selected for the Command Post and the Battalion Commander's headquarters, telephone service was established between them. This line was strung between the old chapel, our headquarters, and the open-air structure which first served as a Command Post, some 300 feet away.

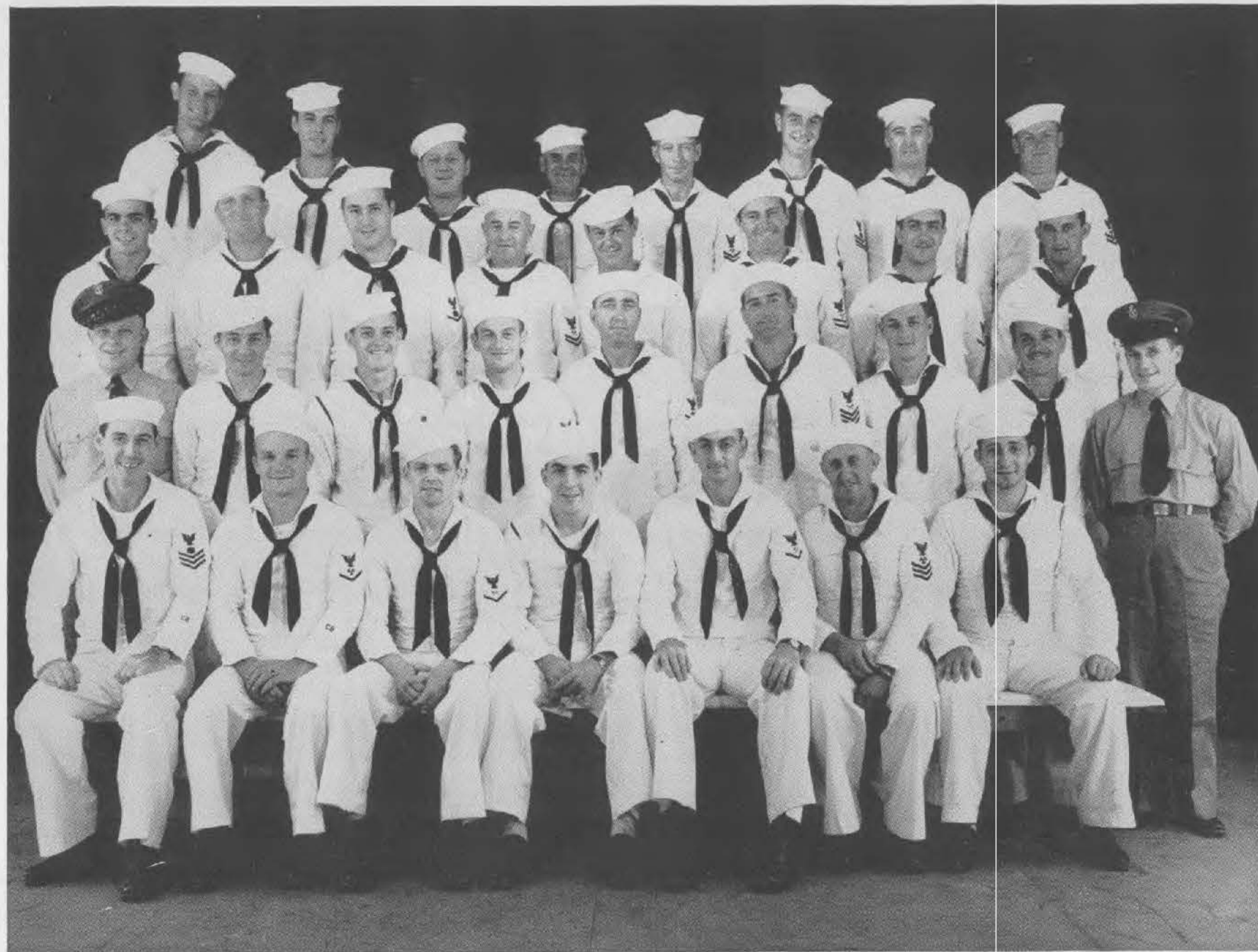
A Marine Corps switchboard was secured and set up in the communications tent, and this served as an exchange until the more permanent quarters were available in the big blockhouse near Co. B area. The next lines were strung to the operations tent along the landing strip; then the three radio trucks were connected to the exchange. During this latter operation snipers concealed in a dugout opened fire on the communications headquarters. This called for some action by Marines and Seabees; charges of TNT, hand grenades, and a bulldozer brought the excitement to an end within an hour, and work was resumed. Miraculously no one was hurt but the Japs.

Within a few days all the principal points on the island were hooked into the exchange. We took over a system which the Marines had laid out; but a bombing raid destroyed many of the trunk lines before the men could acquaint themselves with all of them. However, before the all-clear sounded, our men had traced each line, made the necessary repairs, and restored normal service to the gun batteries, spotting centers, and Command Posts.

The first lines were strung between shattered palms, up which the men shinnied with difficulty and discomfort. Since all lines were above ground, they were vulnerable to shrapnel throughout their lengths. Every night that Betio was bombed our communications were knocked out; but in most cases repairs were made before the all-clear. Underground cable was finally laid, and trouble-shooting became easier.

The original Marine Corps switchboard which served so well at first was replaced soon by a more commodious installation consisting of two 50-drop boards to which some ninety phones were connected. Calls, which averaged 1400-1600 per day, were handled by a crew of operators around the clock.

Our men also laid the first underwater cable, to the flagship in the harbor, and relaid the original marine cable to Bairiki and Buota which had



COMPANY B + PLATOON 1

FRONT ROW

Dragoo, W. C.
 Hempfling, J.
 Birney, R. C.
 Bugni, A. E.
 Collins, J. P.
 Bolton, J. T.
 Faicchio, N.

SECOND ROW

Olsen, O. A.
 Henderson, J. B.
 Bellar, J. R.
 Randall, P. F.
 Bullion, B. T.
 Jones, W. B.
 Boris, J. G.
 Houghton, J. H.
 Fieldhouse, E. J.

THIRD ROW

Buturain, G., Jr.
 Sweeney, J. M.
 Egloff, J.
 Anderson, L. A.
 Walters, W. E.
 Wilson, K. J.
 Mattie, J.
 Richards, R. E.

FOURTH ROW

Rives, C. E.
 Acker, E. A.
 Hapl, J. C.
 Mumaw, M.
 Conners, G.
 McGovern, T. A.
 Parker, M. D.
 Fitzgerald, M.

succumbed to the ravages of tide and storm. The exchange on Bairiki was revamped with a 50-drop board and efficient service to Betio established. The underground Command Post was equipped with an elaborate telephone system.

It has been conclusively demonstrated that a lineman with the most modern climbing devices is no match for a nimble, tough-footed native boy. We know, because we tried it. In an actual contest the native boy reached the top, gathered twelve coconuts, and descended before our champ had progressed half way.

POWER AND LIGHT

The first American generators on Betio were three portable lighting units which served to illuminate the unloading operations at various points. The servicing of these units at night was somewhat risky because we could not always avoid disclosing the generator's position to enemy snipers, or— even more hazardous—to already jittery men of our own battalion.

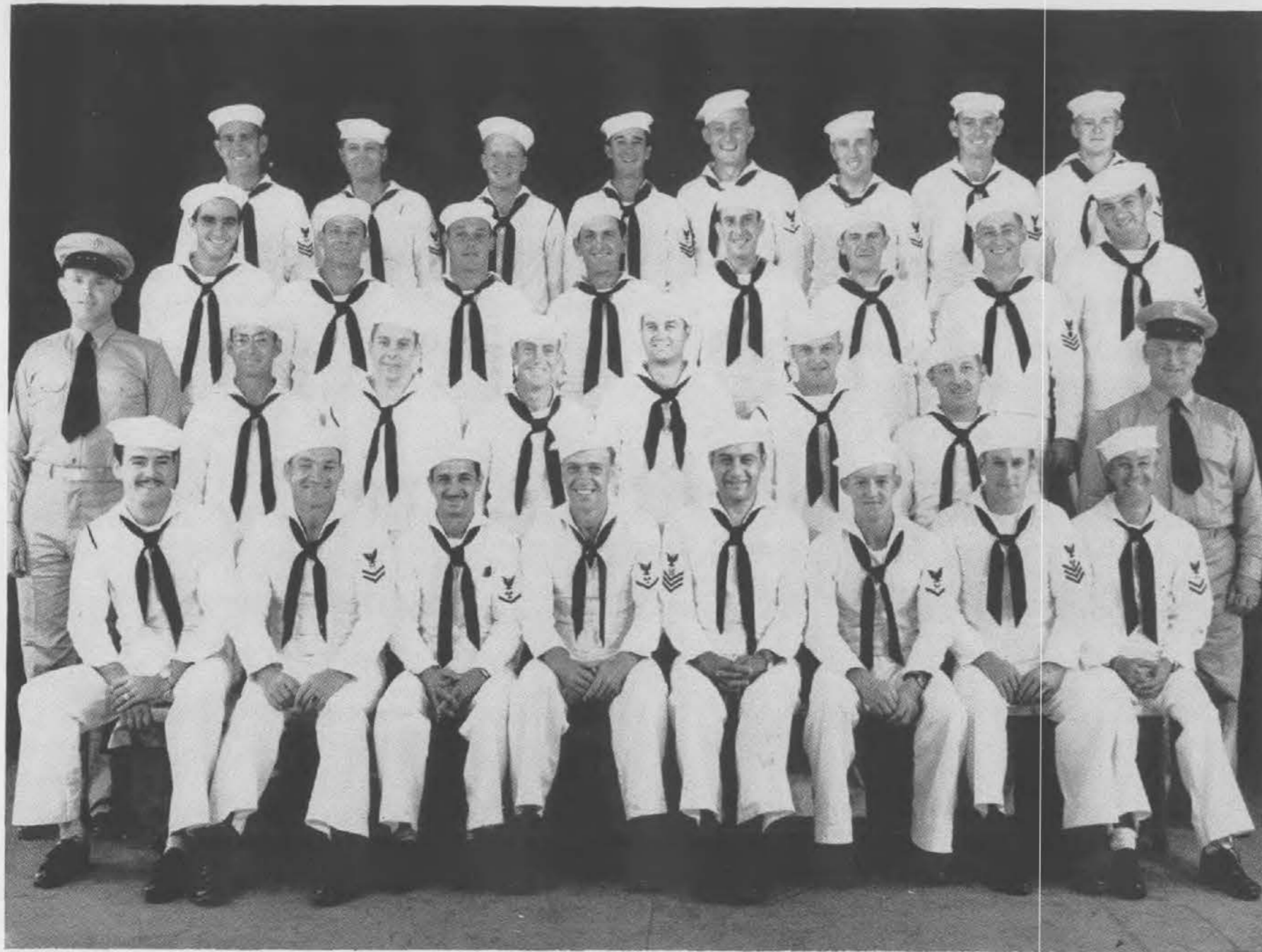
The first repair job consisted of overhauling without any proper tools a captured 1 KW generator. Not long before this unit was put in service a 50 KW generator was landed and set up behind the Command Post, sheltered by a log revetment. The power it provided served the Command Post, control tower, radio, and signal lights until the first air raid, when the generator was knocked out by a bomb. However, service was resumed two hours later.

A second generator, of 75 KW, was badly damaged in unloading but we set it up next to the carpenter shop and made a new control panel out of Jap parts. This unit also served the mess hall and several shops, warehouses, and tent offices.

Considerable evidence was noted in the Jap powerhouses of damage done to their own equipment, apparently when they realized they might not hold the island. High voltage insulators were broken off; instruments, dials, and meters were smashed; and all adjusting valves, etc., on their diesel engines were damaged to such an extent that major overhauls and parts replacements would have been necessary to make them operable. Inasmuch as these prime movers were of an early and clumsy design, and as we had sufficient power sources of our own, this was not attempted.

Installation and repair work was particularly difficult during the early stages of the game due to lack of proper tools and parts. Many improvisations were resorted to. The main power plants on Betio were five large Caterpillar units; these provided for all our current needs except those of the searchlight and gun-pointing devices, which carried their own individual generators.

The Japs had placed their main plant in a blockhouse in the headquarters area. We subsequently cleaned this out and used it for an operating room and shelter for sick bay patients. The task of dismantling machinery and switch panels fell to our power and light crews, who were able to salvage much useful material. Booby traps had been discovered and it was their



COMPANY B + PLATOON 2

FRONT ROW

Ramirez, A.
McGahey, G. F.
DeVivo, L.
Anderson, W.
Bennett, H. A.
Clemens, B. J.
McCorkle, A. C.
Bowren, L.

SECOND ROW

Root, G. G.
Grisam, P. W.
Loe, H. E.
Hunner, W. W.
Colwell, C. F.
Collins, R. C.
Ashworth, A.
Harrier, P.

THIRD ROW

Gibson, B. O.
Brooks, H. W.
Hicks, J. R.
Risko, J.
Carr, A. B.
Reynolds, J. S.
Prucha, F.
Cullinane, S.

FOURTH ROW

Phipps, J. H.
Altman, N.
Dirst, A. R.
Black, N. H.
Kineard, A.
Barrett, W. H.
Coder, W. M.
Carlson, E. W.

first job to remove these with the assistance of the regular bomb-disposal men. Other risks were incurred in digging post holes, a process that uncovered land mines and unexploded shells.

The setup on Bairiki consisted of two 50 KW and three 15 KW generators, providing power for a radio station, communications, and a camp area. The seven-man electrician's detail not only built the radio station itself, but also installed and maintained the equipment within it.

A story is told of one electrician who was greatly annoyed by an air raid alarm that interrupted his sleep. He placed a beer bottle on a stump, shook his fist in the direction from which the planes were expected, and shouted "Now, you dirty so-and-so's, let's see you hit that!" When the raid was over and he crawled from his foxhole, he found the bottle intact; but his tent a few yards off had been completely demolished.

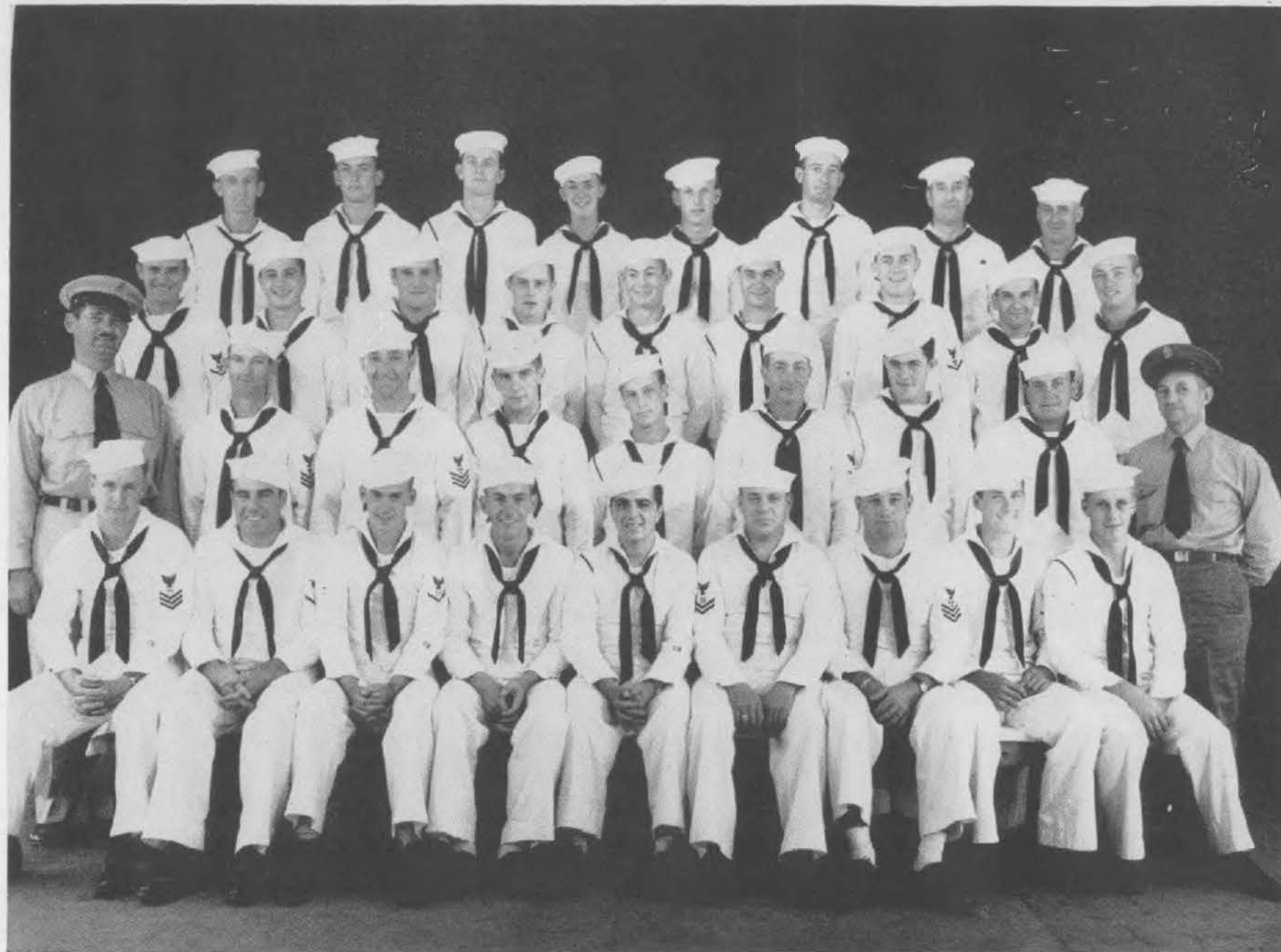
SANITATION

While the air strip was the most urgent project on Betio, it was equally important that the men's health be maintained and their working efficiency kept unimpaired. The greatest menace, when enemy opposition ceased, lay in the scattered dead. Along the beaches and inside the Japanese fortifications, half hidden under piles of brush or half buried in craters and dugouts, the bodies were encountered everywhere. Marine and Jap were often found so close together that one might believe they died simultaneously in hand-to-hand struggle.

The danger increased with the passage of each sweltering day. The Marine dead were left undisturbed until their Chaplain could identify them and record the locations of burial; there were in three large cemeteries, many smaller ones, and a few solitary graves at more remote points. The Japanese dead were buried in shell craters and other handy excavations as rapidly as the details assigned to this work could accomplish their task.

Groups of Gilbertese natives formerly resident on Betio but sent away by the Japs before the battle were brought back and pressed into this service. They were paid at a rate specified by the British Commissioner and worked under our supervision. Seabees found unassigned or not busy at their proper work were promptly added to these burial crews. In a week's time most of the enemy dead lying in the open were put underground. The larger dugouts and pillboxes which did not constitute such immediate threats to general health were sealed until a time when the crews might get around to them and do an effective cleaning job on each.

From the time we arrived on Betio and for some weeks afterward, flies and mosquitoes bred in countless numbers and molested the personnel unceasingly. Who does not recall the frantic waving of hands over mess gear to discourage the insects? The thought of breeding places in the enemy



COMPANY B + PLATOON 3

FRONT ROW

Thornton, M. V.
 Rocray, A.
 Fluskey, T. J.
 O'Neil, G. H.
 Dipolito, E. M.
 Leo, J. P.
 Murrell, C. J.
 Haymaker, L. L.
 Hannula, P. B.

SECOND ROW

Brodsky, S. M.
 Lemley, J. H.
 Hargey, R. E.
 Flaherty, R. H.
 Kaplan, A.
 Jones, R. E.
 Phillips, W. A.
 Brown, W. C.
 Dean, D. W.

THIRD ROW

McDowell, J. S.
 Ferrara, A.
 Taylor, F. P.
 Henry, J. E.
 Hicks, L. F.
 Carroll, J. S.
 Hodges, R. S.
 Gaydos, A. C.
 VanDeveer, P.

FOURTH ROW

Lightle, J. B.
 Hoedel, G. R.
 Liles, G. E.
 Earl, J.
 Gerrick, A. J.
 Liebensperger, R. B.
 Edgar, J.
 Story, F. C.

corpses everywhere, coupled with their voracious attitude toward our food and persons, was revolting.

By day the flies cursed us, and at night the mosquitoes would not let us sleep. Both were potential carriers of disease: dysentery, and the tropical fevers like malaria, dengue, and filariasis—which in its later stages becomes elephantiasis or "moo-moo" and is characterized by huge swellings of glands and tissue.

The sanitation detail began immediately to order the construction of proper toilets and condemn the remaining Japanese facilities, which were dangerous. They supervised the building of several hundred fly traps, distributed them about the camps, and kept them regularly emptied and baited. The building of these traps, as well as the formulating of many sanitation techniques and devices, was pioneer work; and the success of the 74th Battalion and Acorn men led to wide adoption of standards which were worked out originally on Betio.

Aerosol "bombs" were given out among the men. Heads were sprayed with insecticide and other likely breeding spots treated. All receptacles such as tin cans, coconut hulls, sheet iron, bellied canvas, etc., were disposed of or overturned; no place where water might collect from the regular rain showers was overlooked. Wells, holes, and dumps were filled. Garbage and the remnants of Jap food stores were buried or thrown into the sea.

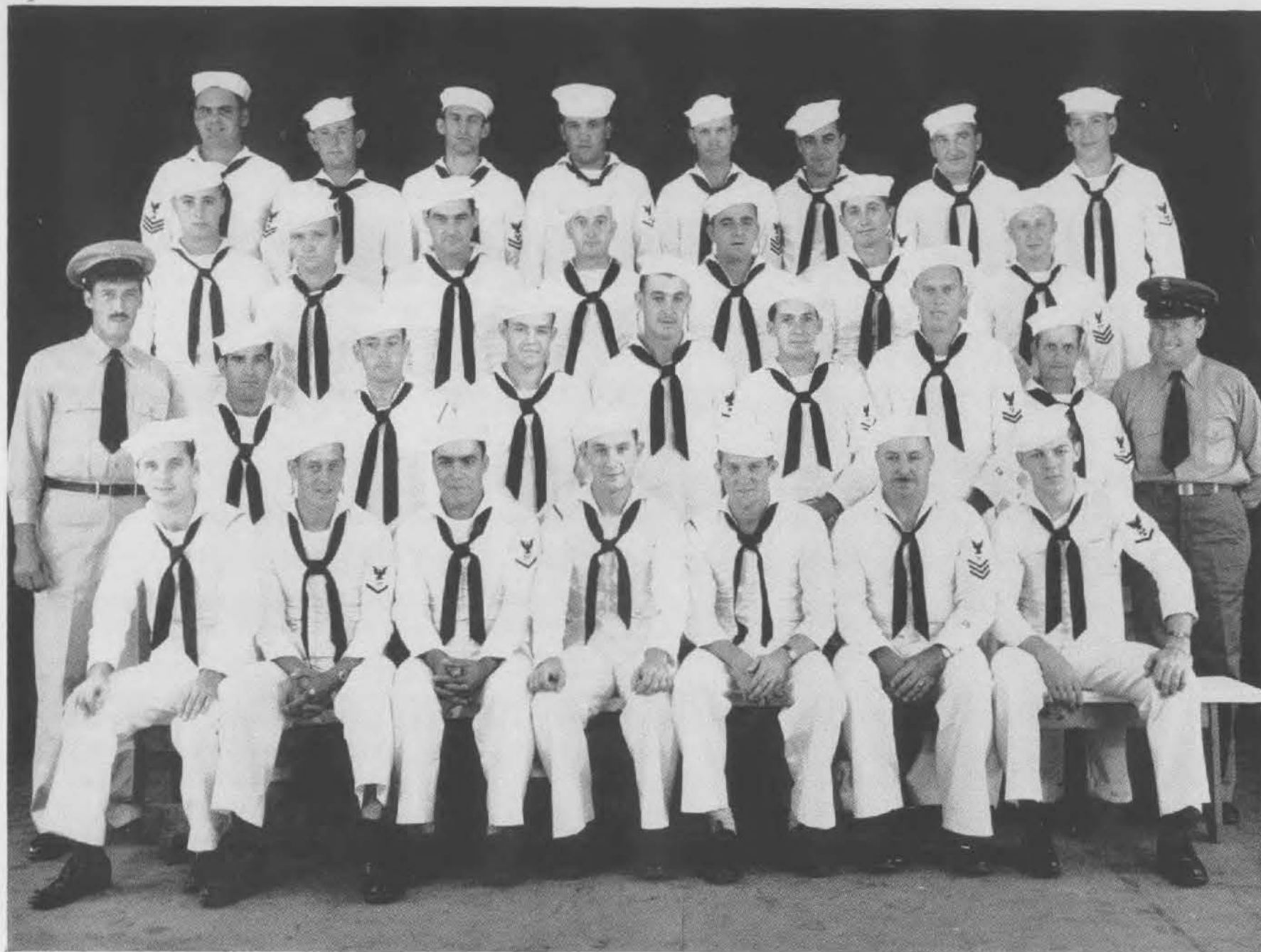
In the course of time the fly population began to thin out. Eventually these pests almost completely disappeared, as did the mosquitoes, by virtue of this unrelenting battle. But the fight went on as long as we occupied Betio, since nowhere is it ever entirely won. Due to the effective measures of the sanitation men, supervised by the medical department, no serious epidemic condition arose.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

Corpsmen were among the first ashore on 23 November. They took part in the preliminary work of burials, digging latrines, cleaning up the hospital area, and setting up the sick bay. A 16 by 16 tent served this purpose for a month and a half. Three days after landing, the first major surgery—an appendectomy—was performed. It took just seventeen minutes, with the smell of death in the tent and the threat of an air raid, and it was a complete success.

Sick bay handled an average of two thousand men a week at sick call. The cases were mainly dysentery and minor cuts and abrasions. There was some dengue fever in a mild form, but fortunately no malaria or filariasis. Six corpsmen and two doctors handled the work.

Many natives, sometimes nearly two hundred at once, turned up at sick call, often bringing an interpreter or a British-trained native dresser (first-



COMPANY B + PLATOON 4

FRONT ROW

Keegan, E. A.
Johnson, F. H.
Jimenez, F. H.
Hurley, F. K.
Kearney, W. J.
Bennett, W. J.
Jagiello, F. A.

SECOND ROW

Chick, W. E.
Tomlinson, G.
Carney, J.
Roof, N. H.
Hancharick, M.
Collins, W. J.
Honea, L. L.
Kline, W. E.
Pesch, O. F.

THIRD ROW

Gilbert, J. P.
Weatherford, L. K.
Gongaware, J.
Lockhart, W. J.
Conlan, W. F.
Bitter, R. A.
Spencer, J. E.

FOURTH ROW

Sitton, B.
Kirk, O. C.
Meszaros, J.
Verardo, J.
Carlson, F. A.
Keszey, W.
Meyers, W.
Snyder, D. L.

aid man). Medical supplies, consisting of the bare essentials, were greatly augmented by Japanese supplies found in the dugouts; these ran to bandages, quinine, iodine, and anti-V.D. remedies. The bandages and iodine in particular were utilized. All were marked in Jap characters and some also in Latin, which facilitated identification. One Jap prisoner was treated with iodine from this source and readily submitted to treatment when shown the label in his own language.

The dental office was set up in another tent at this time and handled all cases requiring immediate treatment. Late in the second month the hospital area was moved next to a former Jap generator room enclosed in thick, heavily reinforced concrete, which was used as an air raid shelter during the bombings. The hospital itself consisted of two 50 by 16 buildings, a Quonset hut, and two 16 by 16 tents.

Occupational accidents were very few; the men worked with care and used safety precautions. Surgery was performed in the converted generator room lest an alert interrupt the progress of an operation. This shelter was used on many occasions both as a surgery and as a safe retreat for patients, staff, and other personnel living at hand. Walking patients were seated and stretcher cases placed in racks along the wall before others were allowed inside. Wards were cleared rapidly and without incident in every alert.

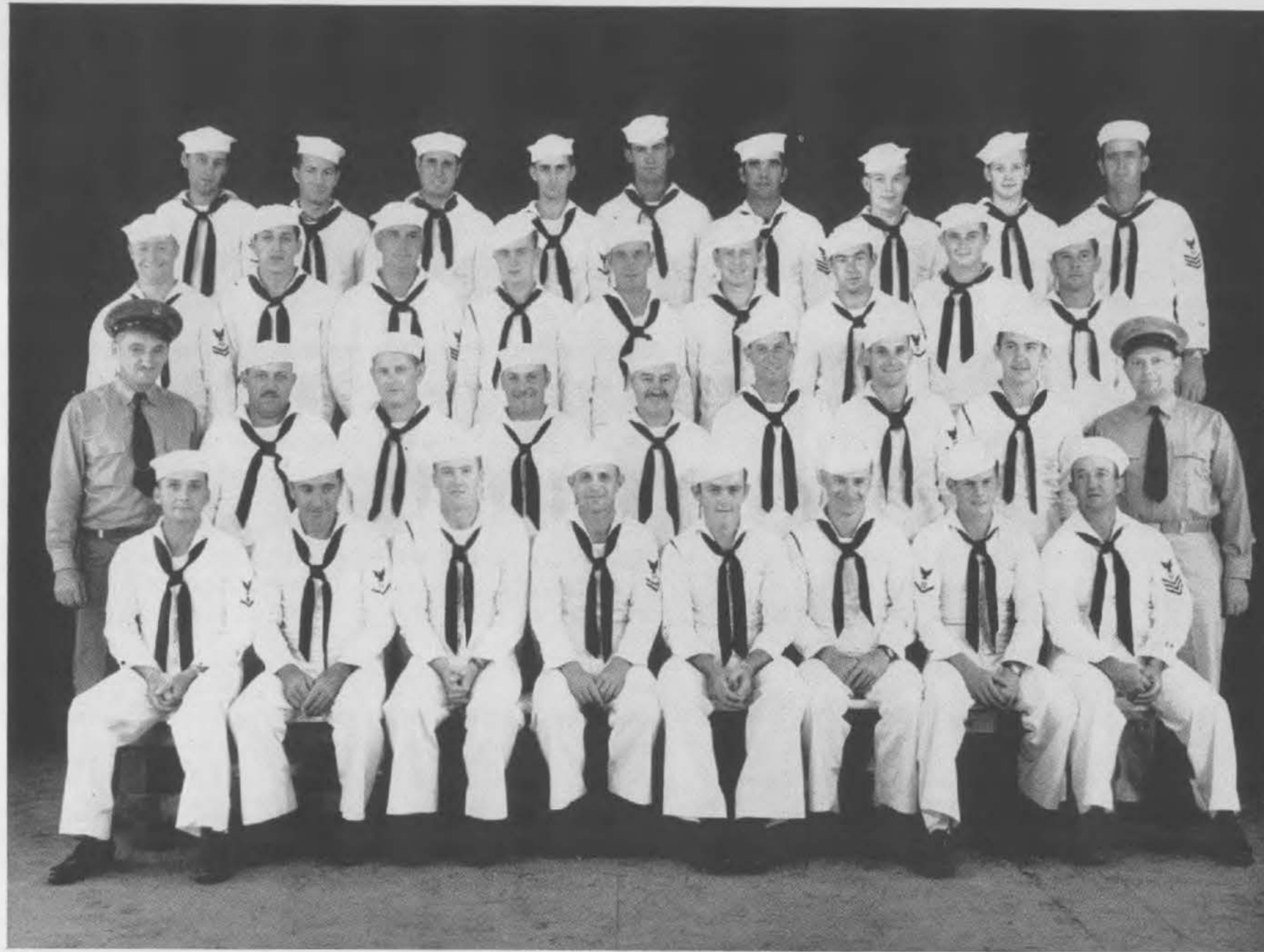
CAMP CONSTRUCTION

One of the largest and busiest divisions of battalion work was Camp Construction. The men in this category were divided into many details, each under a CPO or first class Petty Officer. Carpenter, metalsmith, and plumbing shops and tool rooms came under this division.

The job of building living quarters and making life in them more comfortable was endless. The drafting room provided general and detailed drawings, the supply dumps materials. These were located and assembled at the site and the crews went to work. Sometimes changes in plans or priorities hampered the completion of a job but in the end Betio became an orderly network of installations.

The first quarters made livable was the shell-torn chapel which became the Commander's home and office. Around this building tents were set up for other officers, the sick bay and dental clinic, postoffice, tool room, etc. But this was a temporary area only, and work began shortly on the future Co. A camp further west. Here were built tent platforms, heads, a water tower, shower baths, work shops, storage buildings, and a galley.

Then our permanent headquarters and Co. B area were located and a similar but larger camp erected. This site had been the center of activity during the Japanese occupation for we found the remnants of a Shinto temple as well as the remains of tank, artillery, and communication facili-



COMPANY B + PLATOON 5

FRONT ROW

Urquhart, J. L.
 Martin, W. A.
 Nichols, R.
 Adkins, C.
 Kelly, J. E.
 Grabowski, W. J.
 Kline, R. F.
 Martin, G. W.

SECOND ROW

Fuchs, W.
 McBee, R. L.
 Mead, C. H.
 Michel, G. A.
 Buss, J.
 Clarke, E. P.
 Hornbeck, K. S.
 Koehler, H. F.
 Colpitts, A. K.

THIRD ROW

Alexander, W. E.
 Nardone, O.
 Rebele, T. H.
 Satrum, T. R.
 Kettlewood, V.
 Seals, R. J.
 Wallner, L. F.
 Kohl, R. C.
 Crandall, T. R.

FOURTH ROW

Maietta, D.
 Miller, R. E.
 Salardino, D.
 Harrell, B.
 Hogan, J. W.
 Sharp, J. H.
 Fuller, F.
 Koivisto, E. W.
 Harden, A. F.

ties, and countless undetermined ruins. The task of clearing off the area with bulldozers, trucks, and hard hand labor, followed by the camp construction itself, was completed in good time and the area occupied by Christmas. The other two companies, C and D, were located further east beyond the strip; they moved in about 1 January.

Another complete camp with galley, mess hall, water tower, tent platforms, etc., was built and turned over to an Army bombardment squadron. Huts, tents, and machine shops were provided for the three PV squadrons based on Betio. A handsome native-type hut complete with modern conveniences, including a private shower, was built for the Island Commander on top of an impregnable bomb shelter. Tents, heads, galleys, and mess halls were put up for Casu, Acorn, and Argus units; an officers' mess of great size to accommodate all commissioned personnel, with attached galley, opened up the latter part of January and a separate wine mess was provided about that same time.

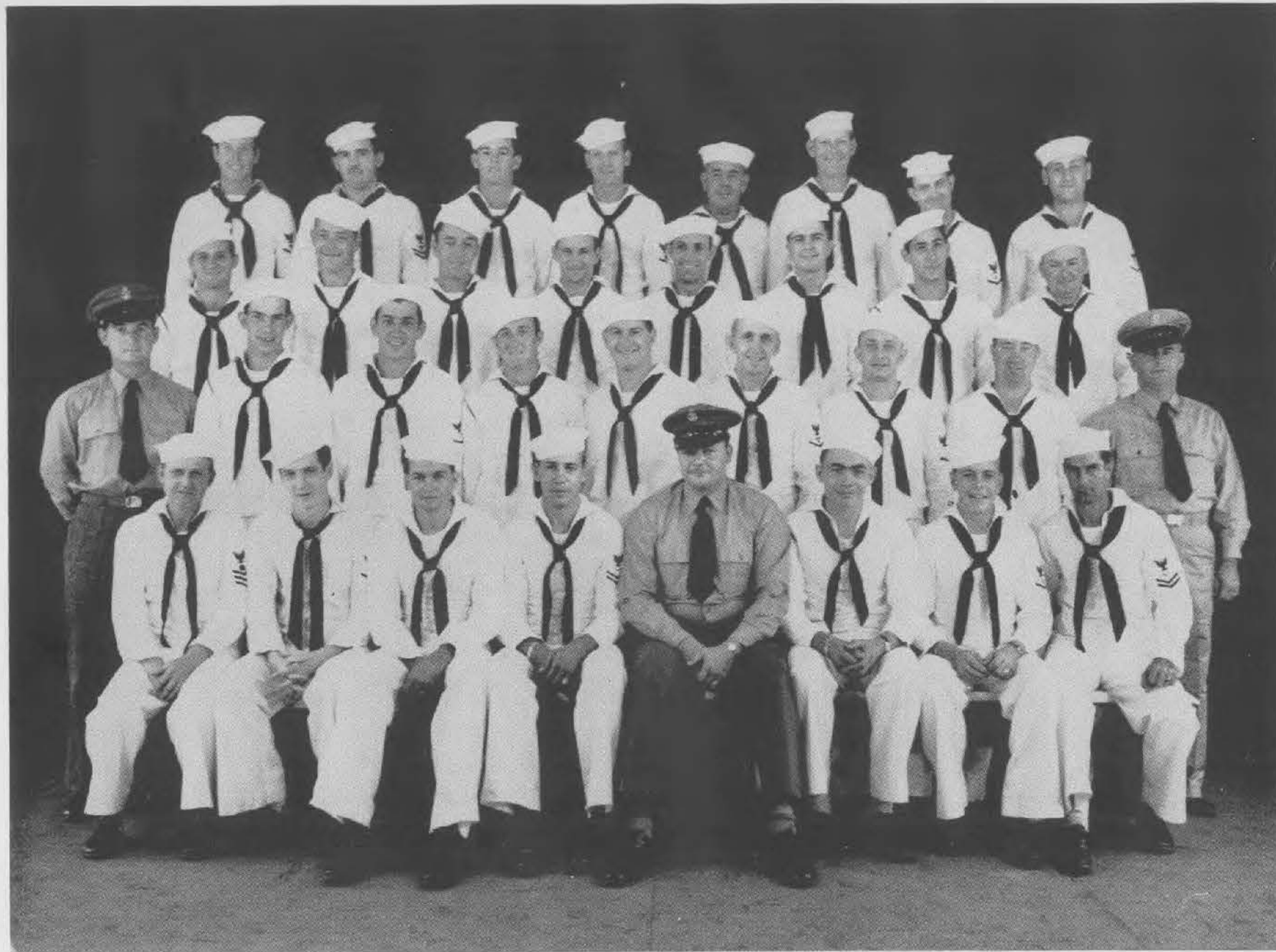
A Command Post made of several inter-connected steel magazines placed underground and covered with logs and sand was completed in February. Other construction included: signal, parachute-rigging, and water towers, warehouses, machine shops, a Fleet Postoffice, and miscellaneous structures of many kinds and sizes, on all parts of the island. The carpenter shop turned out furniture, fly traps, and special work of all kinds in addition to their regular milling for construction.

On Buota Island two mess halls with galleys, an office building, twelve heads, and a large tent were set up for units of the bombardment group stationed there. On Bairiki 100 prefabricated buildings, 28 Quonset huts, a hospital, and three magazines were built for the 7th Air Force and Defense Marines. A village of native-type huts was erected for Gen. Hale, with Gilbertese workmen weaving and attaching the palm frond thatch. Upon completion of their work here the men were treated to a dance by the natives, and farewells were exchanged as they left. "Gumbye," said the islanders, and the Seabees replied "Sockaboo!"

WATER DISTILLATION

The first still to be landed on Betio was set up and in full operation within two hours. Other units were conveniently placed and began producing as rapidly as they could be unloaded. The height of fresh water output was reached when thirteen stills on Betio and three on Bairiki delivered 30,000 gallons a day into the storage tanks and water trailers. These stills were tended by 33 men for an average of sixteen hours a day.

At first water was drawn from shell holes and bomb craters with the resulting distillate tasting strongly of foreign substances, even though it had been condensed from steam. Many of these crater sources were fouled with



COMPANY B + PLATOON 6

FRONT ROW

Jones, M. L.
 Foley, P. E.
 King, D. E.
 Carlson, R. C.
 Patten, R. W.
 Doose, R. C.
 Kim, J. J.
 Willis, H. M.

SECOND ROW

Anderson, J. L.
 Miller, E. W.
 Nosek, S.
 Flynn, T. J.
 Dettka, E. H.
 Ornberg, W.
 Lucas, R. G.
 Casey, M. F.
 Nicodemus, C. E.

THIRD ROW

Bugni, A. C.
 Fisk, H. W.
 Young, E. S.
 Parker, J. R.
 Checho, F.
 Kirdahy, J. T.
 DiGuigno, G. J.
 Gilbert, L. E.

FOURTH ROW

Gilbreath, J. R.
 Griffith, J. L.
 Price, R. R.
 Smith, W. H.
 Ferguson, M.
 Mattson, A. L.
 Wilson, R. W.
 Garstki, R. B.

enemy dead and refuse of all sorts; but as soon as possible the stills were connected to the shallow Jap wells which we uncovered everywhere. The water in them was brackish and unfit for any use until processed. Finally deep wells were drilled to furnish an abundance of salt water, which the stills were designed for, and from which a potable product was obtained.

During the first weeks of labor, the water purification men ate and slept beside their machines and due to their vigilance an ample supply of water was available from the beginning. The medical department tested our water supply daily and saw that the chlorine content was always up to standard, the bacteria count kept low.

Conservation rules were in force from the start and governed the use of fresh water. While there was never enough to waste, most legitimate needs were amply filled as soon as the system was in full swing, and thereafter.

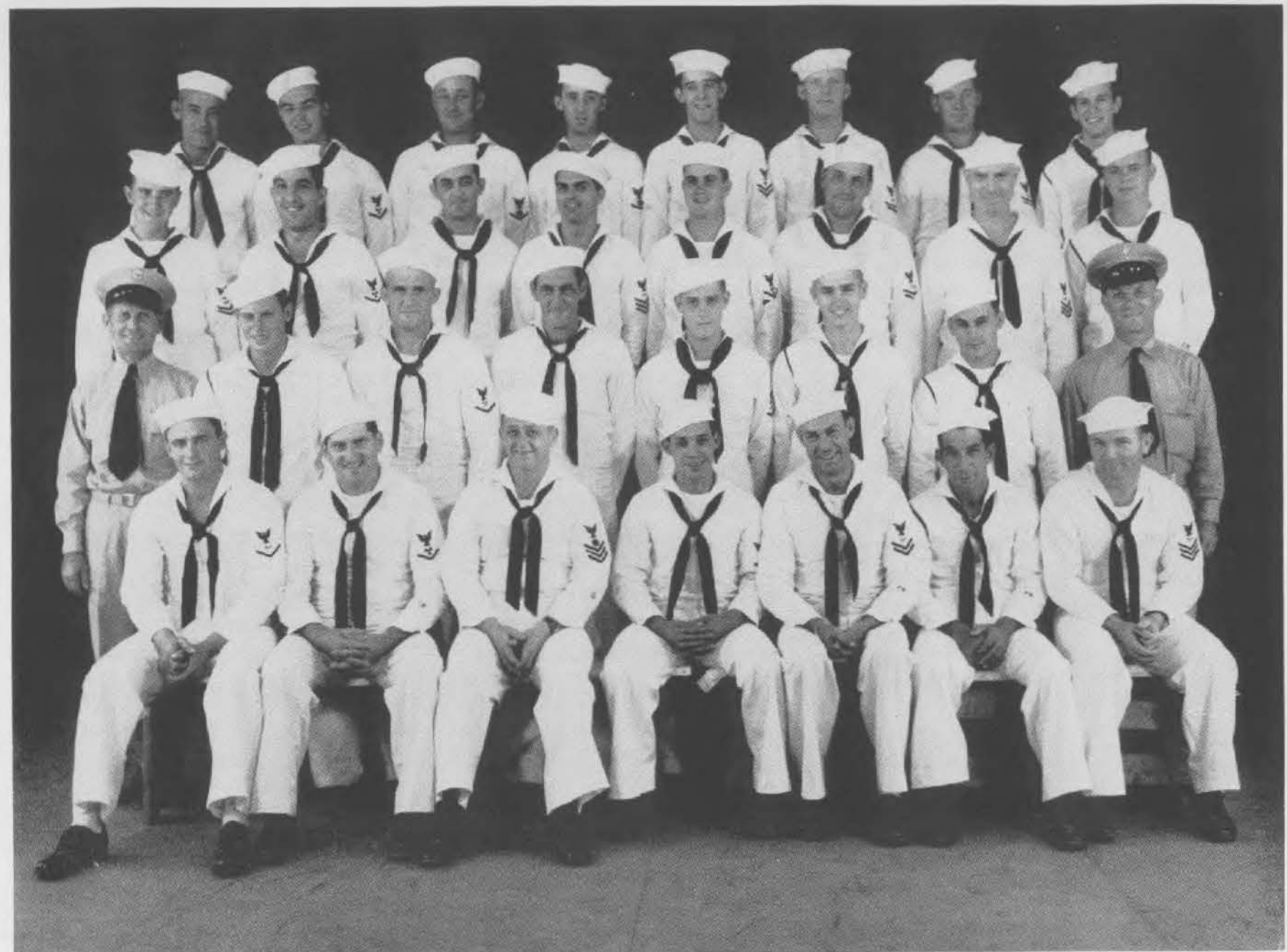
REFRIGERATION

By the third day following arrival, the refrigeration department had moved a freezing truck to the galley area and had cold beverages available there. From this time on, reefers were installed as fast as they could be brought ashore. When our second galley was ready for use refrigeration ceased to be a problem and cold drinking water was on tap for everyone.

At the ship's store a small unit kept the candy fresh, for this commodity was about the most popular item sold and otherwise turned into sticky masses in the heat. The galleys operated by the various Army and Marine Corps groups were provided with units, as were the officers' recreation and living quarters. In three weeks every urgent demand for refrigeration had been met and a start made on the permanent installations. Batteries of medium and large units at each of the galleys stood ready to receive the tons of Christmas turkey and fixings which were soon to arrive.

A refrigerated scuttlebutt for general use was pieced together out of Jap scrap and salvaged parts; the tank was made out of galvanized corrugated sheathing, beaten flat, and some of the tubing came from shell cases, cut and brazed. This unit was kept in repair and served the battalion wherever we went.

Soon after the first of the year, two 6800-foot reefers were ordered and construction begun. A supply ship bringing fresh meat, fruit, and vegetables was soon to arrive and these units were to receive our valuable share. Following the receipt of this food the island diet of the enlisted men reached and maintained a standard comparable to that found on large bases throughout the Navy. Food spoilage was largely eliminated by the use of these cold storage facilities.



COMPANY C + PLATOON 1

FRONT ROW

Sobel, S. W.
 Digris, J. F.
 Morgan, H. D.
 Madero, A. J.
 House, R. L.
 Buono, N. J.
 Beene, J. J.

SECOND ROW

Morrison, R. D.
 Leischner, R. A.
 Bishop, W. N.
 Trenholm, E.
 Dry, A.
 Konczyk, J. M.
 Soltis, J. P.
 Fulton, F. L.

THIRD ROW

Krause, M. A.
 Pinardi, R. A.
 Karel, L. E.
 Wickman, R. B.
 Stone, G. B.
 Benedetto, A.
 Griggs, E. W.
 Land, C. L.

FOURTH ROW

Read, R. D.
 Sperbeck, R. A.
 Griffin, J. A.
 Doyle, G. G.
 Fournier, R. P.
 Fookes, D. W.
 Harper, H. E.
 Lundgren, P. W.

WELL DRILLING

We were fortunate in having a crew of well-drillers with as much experience in this line of work as any other battalion's. The five-man detail represented 96 years of actual field work, or an average of 19 years per man. On the other hand, none of them had ever worked in coral or knew anything about drilling through this type of ground.

On Betio a total of 28 wells were put down, six for supplying the stills with salt water, 18 to furnish water for sprinkling the landing strip, and four for fire protection at the tank farm. These wells were all about 125 feet deep and the casings were six inches in diameter, with five notable exceptions: in the absence of regular casing, Jap oxygen bottles seven inches in diameter were utilized by burning off the ends with a torch and welding the sections together; these were sunk in the ground and made an effective casing.

During the night of 23-24 December the drilling rig was damaged by bomb fragments. But the crew made repairs and soon had it operational again.

TANK FARMS

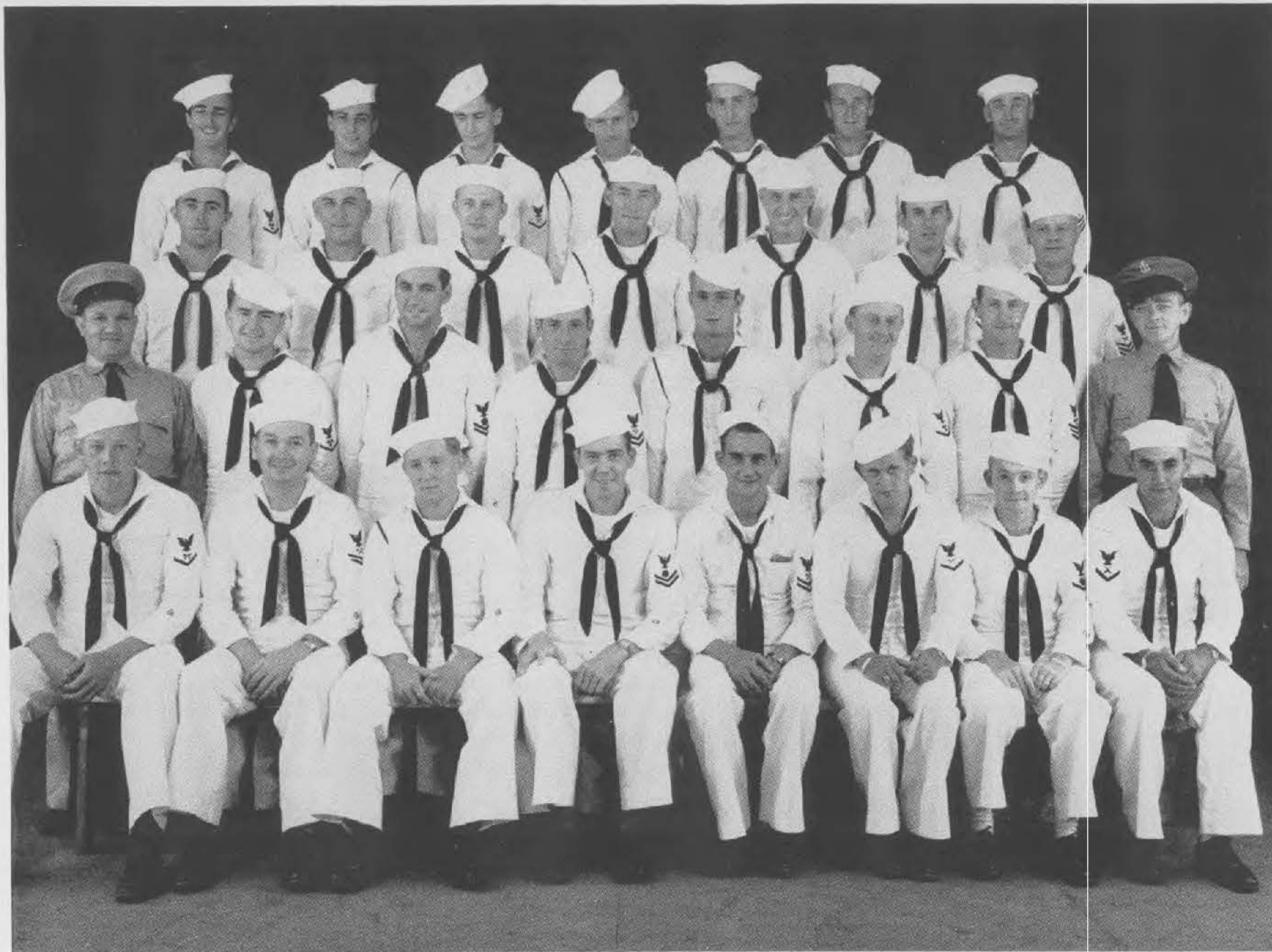
Storage facilities for aviation gasoline had one of the highest priorities of all our jobs. The tank farm crews distinguished themselves for speed and earned the reputation of being the "tank-a-day" men.

Excavations for the tanks were dug in one of the bloodiest areas of the battlefield with the usual disagreeable and hazardous experiences. Tanks were assembled and tested as fast as the material was brought ashore. Four and a half miles of connecting pipeline was laid underground and a sea line was extended beyond the reef. While hauling out this sea line a tractor was destroyed by one of the enemy land mines remaining after the battle.

The numerous raids and alerts harassed the night crews, but no casualties or damage of consequence were suffered. During the course of construction, improvisations were resorted to, such as the manufacture of missing staves from captured material.

DOCKS AND WHARVES

In the battle for Betio the old Jap dock took a severe mauling from bullets and grenades used to dislodge snipers concealed beneath it. Intended originally for foot traffic and small two-wheeled carts, it was inadequate and dangerous for heavier vehicles. We patched it sufficiently for jeeps to use in safety but trucks could be driven only to the end of the solid base. The seaward end, battered by Japanese defensive fire, was so treacherous that a visiting Admiral fell flat on his face negotiating it.



COMPANY C + PLATOON 2

FRONT ROW

McCombs, N. R.
Sullivan, T. F.
McHugh, F. J.
Townsend, C. M.
Poppke, J.
Hansen, D. L.
Campbell, P. R.
Kropilak, B.

SECOND ROW

Cardullo, T. J.
Morris, J. W.
McCarthy, J. J.
McCarthy, G. A.
Martin, R. C.
Bak, J. F.
Pitts, W. C.
Batson, W. W.

THIRD ROW

Harris, J. A.
Hershey, K. V.
Lohrens, F. C.
White, C. A.
Birmingham, T. J.
Hammond, A. L.
Tacheny, A. J.

FOURTH ROW

DiFrenza, A.
Tortaro, J. J.
McIntire, B. A.
Payne, G. H.
McKinney, T. B.
Sherrill, W. R.
Calvert, R. R.

It was obvious that this dock could never be made substantial or large enough for our needs so a new one was projected, to be run out 2,000 feet from shore a few hundred yards east. This was to be a solid jetty 32 feet wide filled with coral. We had brought no materials that could be used for the sides of the dock so a structure was improvised from leftover Jap supplies.

Steel rails for use of the narrow-gauge railway the Japs had installed around the island lay piled in a dump—hundreds of tons of them. These were driven upright at intervals with a pile driver; the method was devised on the spot, there being nothing in the handbook to cover such a practice. For stability these rails were joined by Jap reinforcing rod—also found in great quantity—welded horizontally to them. The sidewalls of the jetty were fashioned of pierced plank, wire-tied to the rails and laid facing in-board. Behind these, to keep the coral fill from washing through the holes, a sheathing of Jap galvanized iron was applied. Coral was tightly packed between these walls; the fill was estimated at better than 14,000 cubic yards.

At the outer end an artificial coral island was piled up so LSTs and smaller craft could be nosed in to discharge their cargoes directly into trucks. This facility terminated the old method of driving over the reef at low tide, with its unavoidable destructive action of salt water and coral on the running gear. Unloading cranes were left at the point of use now, and worked straight through the tides without danger of being flooded. The dock made possible a considerable speeding-up of the whole unloading process.

During the progress of the work there was, especially at night, the constant danger of air raids. Welding arcs made a beacon for enemy aircraft that might slip in close before the warning system reacted. And as the structure lengthened, the distance to shelter correspondingly increased. As in the case of the heavy equipment operators, the noise of work tended to drown out any more distant sound; thus the alerting siren was not always heeded promptly. The 2,000-foot length of this shallow jetty afforded no protection, nor did the terminal island; and on several occasions the men went through a raid without cover of any sort. Fortunately there were no casualties, and the work progressed day and night without interruption until it was completed.

DIVING AND DEMOLITION

One of the smallest yet busiest details in our battalion was the six-man group that spent their time on the ocean floor, salvaging equipment, removing debris and obstacles to navigation, and assisting with the installation of underwater cables and pipelines. They were called upon to retrieve lost articles and to examine the hulls of ships. On one occasion they were sent down after the bodies of men in a bomber crew, the plane having crashed in the lagoon, and were singularly successful in this task.



COMPANY C + PLATOON 3

FRONT ROW

Mott, J. M.
Polesky, S. S.
Litzner, A. L.
Jacobson, M. E.
Viets, O. V.
Boyson, J. H.
Skala, H. A.
Mallery, J. K.

SECOND ROW

O'Connell, D. F.
Person, R. J.
Williams, W. B.
Jamison, H. M.
Daves, D. R.
Philpott, O. T.
Schrango, J. J.
Salsberry, F.

THIRD ROW

Howard, C. B.
Meyerson, L.
Cunningham, W.
McCarty, J. P.
Smith, K. R.
Meyers, M. A.
Nault, D. J.
Pedone, J. J.

FOURTH ROW

Manley, F. E.
West, L. M.
Moore, L. J.
Scott, W. E.
McNulty, J. R.
Schluck, M. E.
Stickler, F. G.
Yale, H. A.

In the course of salvage operations many articles of military value were turned over to the authorities, and many more of souvenir value only were circulated among the battalion. Ships of various sizes and types were either destroyed where they lay or floated to deep water and there sunk. The demolition crew cooperated with the divers in this work; these crews also drilled and blasted coral along the shore and in deep water to clear channels for navigation and for the construction of marginal wharves.

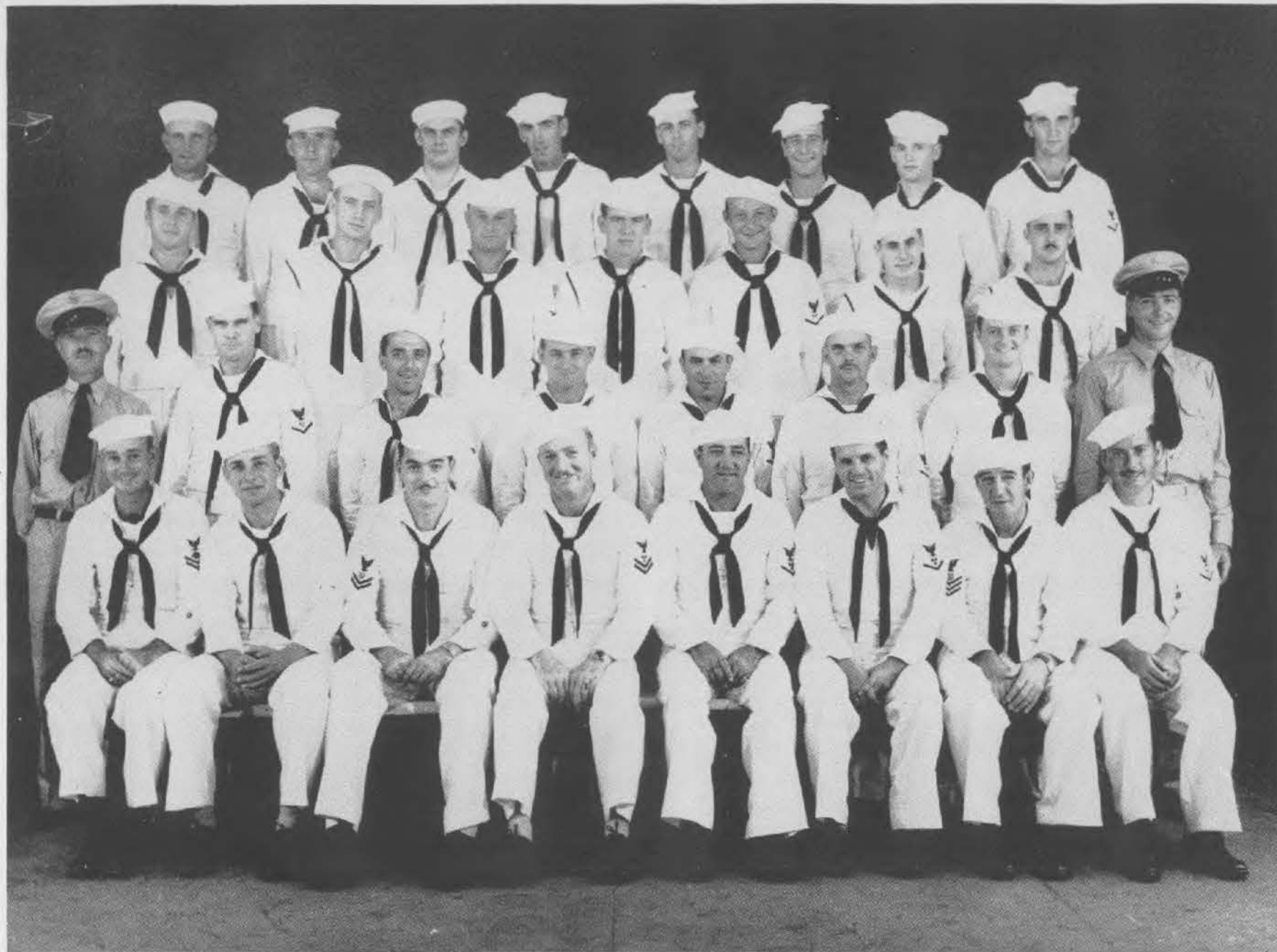
On several occasions these men were driven from the water by the presence of sharks feeding around the coral heads. The depth of water encountered in these dives averaged 30 to 40 feet and all of it was done with shallow-water equipment, even dives of considerably greater depth in which the men suffered much discomfort for lack of proper helmets and suits.

The demolition crew used 30 tons of explosives in their work, including six tons of captured enemy dynamite of inferior quality. On Betio considerable blasting away of heavy Jap concrete became necessary in order to make room for our own structures and areas. One typical building stood in the way of our air strip extension and had to be eliminated. The walls, more than two feet thick, contained a network of reinforcing rods some of which were $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter. Here a number of Marines used to take shelter during air raids, for it was well-suited to this purpose. The demolition men worked all day and set off many charges to destroy this building. That night an air strip crew came on duty after dark and failed to notice it was now but a heap of rubble. Then came a raid and bombs were dropped close at hand; after the all-clear the strip crew came out of another shelter, looked around, and saw the rubble. Assuming it was the result of a direct hit, they sounded a general alarm and began digging furiously for the "bodies" of the Marines who had always taken shelter there!

PONTOONS

Pontoon construction, though not high on our priority list, nevertheless made a valuable contribution to the success of our venture. The ordinary pontoon causeways used in connecting LSTs to the land in operations that came later, and launched with dramatic timing as the ship approached its point of grounding, would have been of no avail on Betio, where the several hundred yards depth of reef was not suited to such methods. But short spans of a few cells only were useful at first in getting heavy equipment onto the reef.

Pontoon barges built during our first weeks and operated by the men who helped assemble them ferried ashore many thousands of tons of ammunition and supplies. Other assemblies were built for various purposes such as garbage scows, lighters, and fuel tank barges. Crews who performed the heavy labor of putting these units together while standing on the



COMPANY C + PLATOON 4

FRONT ROW

Bowen, J. M.
Schoenfield, W.
Irvine, W. D.
Schwalbach, D. J.
Dexter, J. T.
Wall, G. E.
Fritz, F. W.
Short, F. J.

SECOND ROW

Manwell, C. A.
Morrow, M. J.
Ketcheson, O. F.
Pusakulich, B.
Rosnicki, S. J.
Heikkinen, J.
Ryan, R. L.
Messersmith, A. W.

THIRD ROW

Maki, R. W.
Russell, A. S.
Kruse, W. R.
Reisdorf, J. J.
Kristoff, F. J.
O'Neil, P. J.
LeGros, E. D.

FOURTH ROW

Clark, M. P.
Nonn, F. S.
Romanowski, W. K.
Hester, A. J.
Harris, K. M.
Kolander, P. J.
Shelton, R. E.
Sheppard, M. C.

scorching steel of their decks, sweating under the relentless equatorial sun of Tarawa, can testify to the arduous nature of this most grueling task.

MACHINE SHOP

All the major repairs to our equipment as well as those of nearly every other outfit on Betio were made in our portable machine shop. Parts that were missing or broken beyond repair were made or duplicated so that work could go on with the least delay. Flanges were turned out for the pipeline when it was found that this important item had not been shipped.

Special wrenches and other tools were made to carry on with certain jobs; rubber tracks from a damaged tank were fitted to a tractor; crane booms were straightened and rebuilt; one large crane, wrecked in unloading, was restored to service by rebuilding its main turntable bushings; the rather intricate teeth for a portable chain saw were duplicated, to keep these busy machines in operation; fire control positions were armor-plated to protect the men from flying shrapnel. These were but a few of the many odd jobs carried out by the machinists.

A great deal of latent talent came to light during the last weeks of our stay when amateur machinists of surprising skill and imagination besieged the shop to fashion souvenirs from Jap materials. Lathes, grinders, drill presses, chain falls, a forge, welding and brazing tools—every sort of useful repair equipment was at hand for whatever job, routine or otherwise, might challenge the skill and ingenuity of our men.

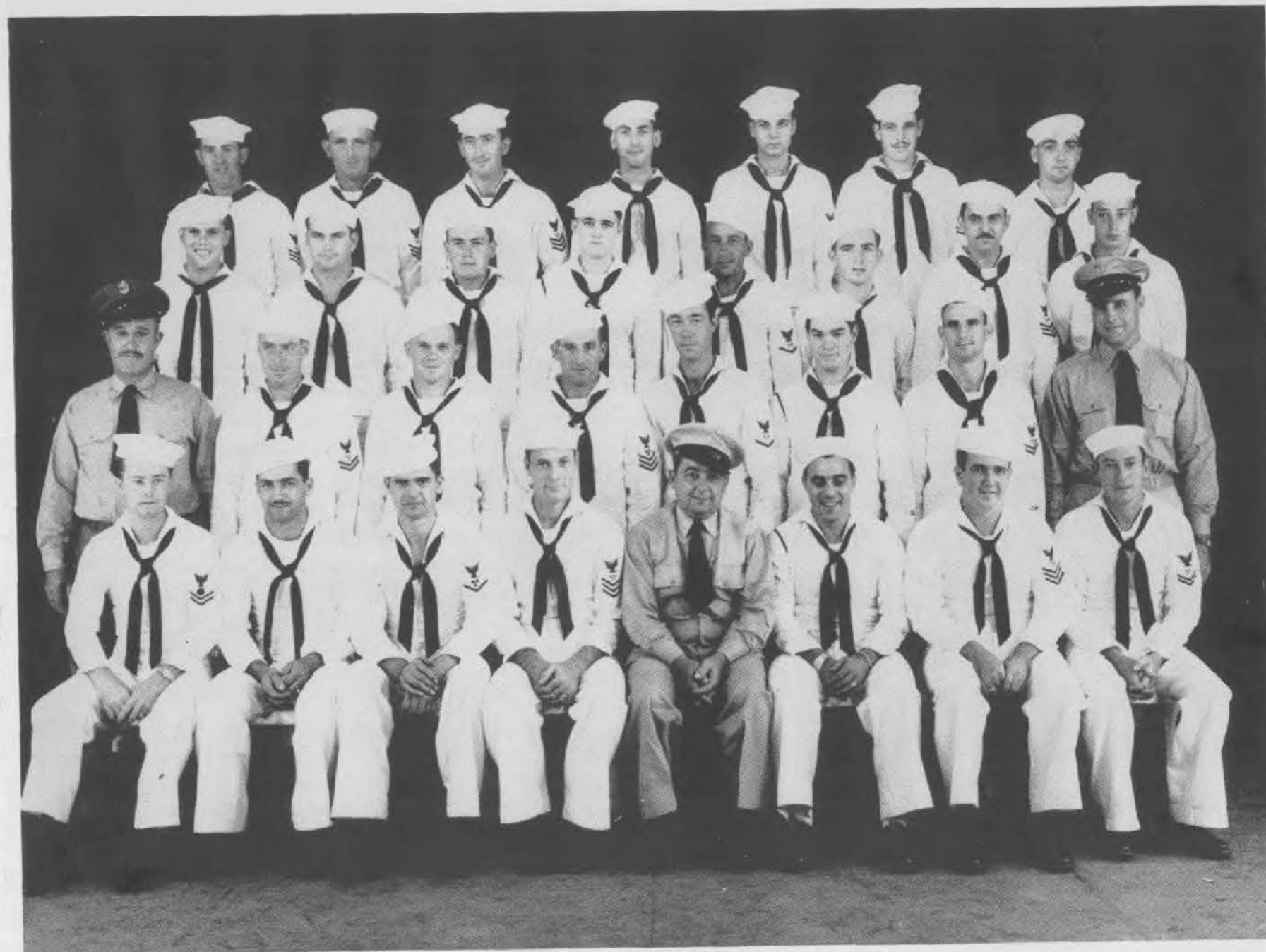
WELDING SHOP

A permanent welding shop was erected next to the east garage during the first week of construction. This enabled the men to work under shelter and handle all items that could be brought in. Portable arc-welding machines were used for this work, as well as for such jobs that could not be moved. For cutting steel plates and sections, mobile acetylene generators were provided and small two-wheeled buggies carrying oxygen bottles.

The dock welding was typical of the outside jobs; machines were hauled at low tide to the point of operations and work went on as long as the tides permitted. Another such project was at the garbage burning pit at the west end of Betio, where welded grates were furnished. A ramp, hinged to rise and fall with the tides, was fitted to a floating pontoon dock, entailing much welded work.

Riddled Jap gas trucks were hauled to the shop and patched to hold water, for use as sprinklers. A pipe-testing tank was built and line piping for the tank farm connection was tested here, length by length. Another prolonged phase of this crew's work was the welding of these flanges.

At night time, especially when it was cloudy, the atmosphere over the island would glow brightly from electric arcs at either shop or dock; this



COMPANY C + PLATOON 5

FRONT ROW

Carter, J. E.
Guglielmelli, W. H.
Pierce, M. R.
Hinchman, B. R.
Shelton, L. T.
Salzano, P. J.
Carpene, G. C.
Higgins, R. W.

SECOND ROW

Calbreath, T. J.
Dow, W.
Stoner, R. C.
Payne, C. H.
Gregory, J. W.
LaDuke, G. B.
Hornbeck, H. D.
Remling, E. M.

THIRD ROW

Mercer, J. C.
Dwyer, T. L.
Stermon, R. F.
Lairomatis, G. D.
Rowny, J. J.
Baldwin, E. N.
Wenger, S. N.
Speth, W. A.

FOURTH ROW

Finn, J. W.
Teers, C. F.
Glanville, S. M.
Albert, M.
McCarty, H. R.
Jaynes, J. A.
Porzelt, J. R.

landmark was visible for miles over the water, consequently everyone was on the alert for air raid warnings and blacked the place out immediately on signal. No serious accidents occurred among the welders and their safety record was remarkable considering the character of their work.

COOKS AND BAKERS

The longest and hungriest chow line in the memory of our culinary department lined up for breakfast on 26 November. Several thousand men, representing all the newly arrived units, passed through two hastily constructed serving lines. Our first meal on Betio, though simple and G.I., was a welcome change from K rations. The men who made it possible put in days and nights of heavy, tedious work.

When the galley area had been cleared, stores and equipment were unloaded, segregated, and guarded. Field kitchens were unpacked and assembled, gasoline and water procured; shelves, racks, and tables were built, all by the cooks and bakers. After each meal the galley crew disposed of the garbage and fought the clouds of flies that infested the area. This first little galley served its thousands of customers for two weeks and then was turned over for use as a ship's store since a more complete and roomier one was built nearby. This second galley became a supply depot when our permanent one was opened on Christmas day.

We had turkey on Christmas, with all the side dishes, and from then on our men were served quickly and well. But the cooks remember most vividly those first days when, at 0300, they gathered together to prepare breakfast, lit a lantern, and holding it high over their heads started down the road to the galley shouting lustily "Don't shoot—we're the cooks!" Meals were constantly interrupted by alerts; fires would be put out, food tucked away, crew ducking for cover—only to return and find the meal spoiled or most unsatisfactory.

POSTOFFICE

Word was passed, "Mail Call at 1600." That was the afternoon of 25 November, just 48 hours after our arrival. The group that gathered around the large tree near headquarters to receive their mail was not large, for most men were working until six o'clock. While their names were being called a burst of rifle fire sent everyone in the vicinity to the deck. Shots from snipers landed in the nearby communications tent, and so our first mail call was interrupted until a detail of Marines had blasted and dug from concealment three Japs who had straggled on the road to their Shinto heaven.

This first delivery consisted of eight sacks of 1st class matter. Everyone received mail—some more than others. A mate approached the clerk and made inquiry; the clerk asked, "Didn't you get your letter?" "Oh, yes," was the reply, "I got twenty-four but there's one missing."



COMPANY C + PLATOON 6

FRONT ROW

DePaul, R.
Gansert, E. K.
Matthews, D. J.
Sullivan, W. J.
Larkin, J. P.
LaRocca, J. R.
Avera, E. D.

SECOND ROW

Ross, D.
Kellan, L. T.
Brown, J.
Helgesen, E. M.
Frierson, R. E.
Shannon, G. E.
Barrett, E. J.
Duke, W. D.

THIRD ROW

Sebastian, E. F.
Paschal, J. E.
Hill, J. J.
Fawthrop, K.
Seccomb, N. J.
Smyth, R. J.
Sanders, W. R.

FOURTH ROW

Peele, J.
LaFond, R. H.
Schichko, N.
Loorz, C. W.

The original postoffice was located in a Jap tent across from the Command Post and served its purpose until the Fleet Postoffice was opened in January. Our two clerks handled all the mail for the island without assistance during the first hectic three weeks. Mail facilities had been given no priority and got little attention from anyone but the mail clerks, who toiled sixteen hours a day to make the mail calls possible. Soon Christmas mail began to arrive, on one occasion 800 bags of it! Volunteers from the office staff helped the clerks sort out the mountains of packages and distribute them.

This first postoffice was inadequate for its purpose. Mail bags were piled on the ground and during the frequent rains the men had to bail out with tin cans. There were no provisions for safeguarding money and stamps, and this required a 24-hour watch shared by the two clerks. But when the Fleet Postoffice opened they were relieved of much work. We then moved our own postal facilities to the headquarters area and set up a branch station. The more isolated details on other islands received their letters via the Guard Mail boats and their whereabouts were continually checked so that service could be maintained.

Whenever the mail was delayed for any reason, rumors arose that it was being held up pending a move. Such, however, was not the case at any time. Mail reached us until the day we sailed and was waiting for us at our destination when we arrived.

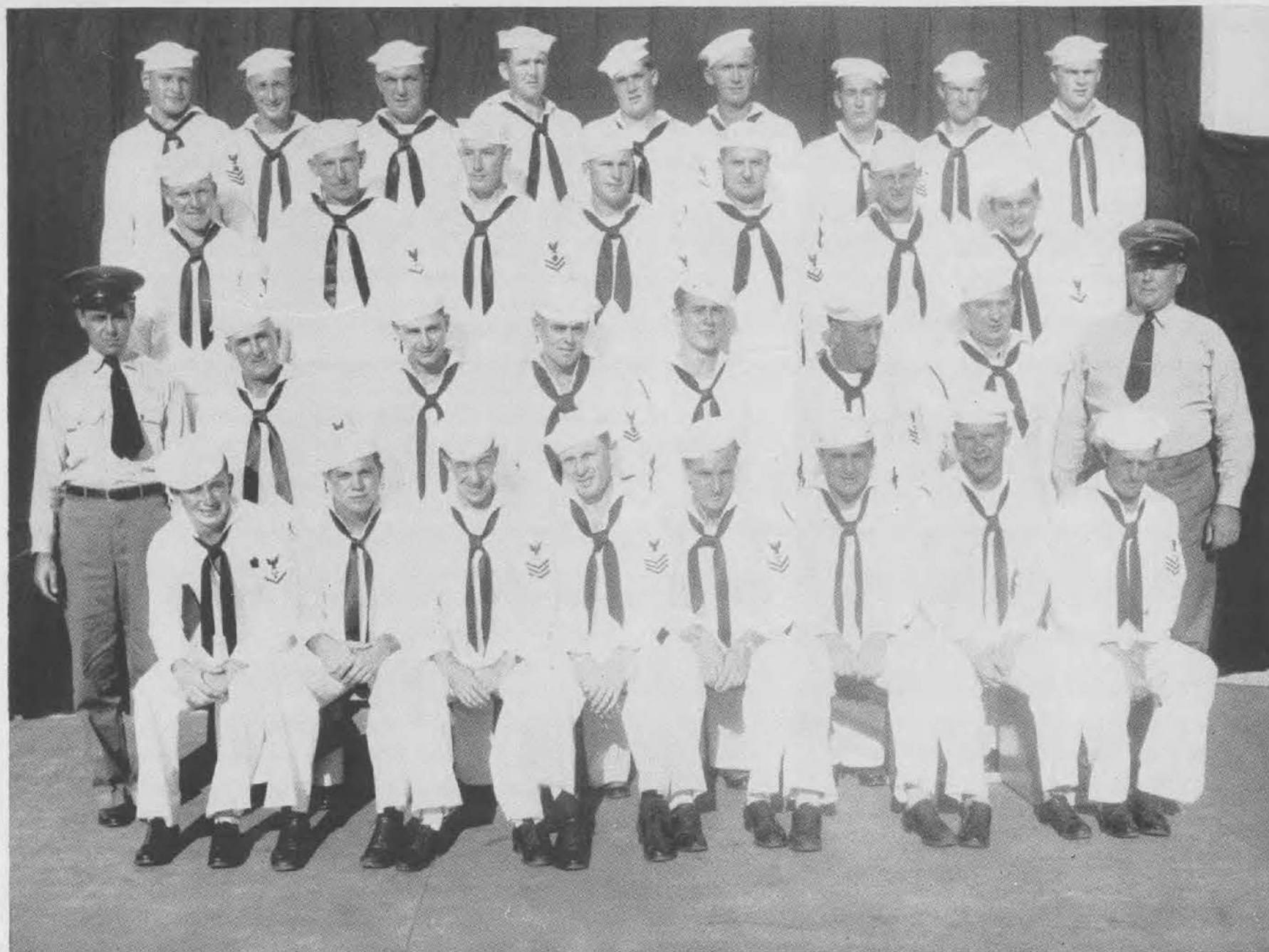
SHIP'S SERVICE

A ship's store was set up at the very start. Its place of business was a Jap dugout near the headquarters office and the merchandise for sale was the stock remaining from our shipboard stores, consisting largely of cigarettes, matches, soap, and razor blades. The stores conducted business six hours a day and was open to every group on Betio. The storekeepers slept and ate their K rations in nearby foxholes until the original galley tent was taken over and opened for business 10 December.

By this time our supplies had been unloaded and a complete stock of merchandise was on hand. The first day's business grossed \$3200 and from then on we enjoyed uninterrupted service for the duration of our stay. When a reefer was installed, the men were treated to "frozen" candy bars; beer and Coca Cola were handled, and a good portion of the beer consumed on the island was purchased at our store. On beer days sales averaged \$800 for this item alone.

Nine men worked in and around the establishment, assisted by two natives who acted as stock men and interpreters for Gilbertese customers. The natives bought hair oil, soap, candy, gum, etc., tendering British money for their purchases. The problem of exchange was largely solved by disposing of this coin to men who wanted it for souvenirs.

During air raids the storekeepers took the money box, usually containing



COMPANY D + PLATOON 1

FRONT ROW

McGann, W. F.
Graham, W. O.
Brodeur, N. J.
Hubbard, N. H.
Clark, J. M.
Lamark, J. J.
Vaheer, A. O.
Joiner, A. M.

SECOND ROW

Dicenzo, A.
Waite, O. D.
Zahorcko, V.
Hoskin, W. A.
Thomas, G. E.
McLay, T. F.
Long, L. L.
Miner, D. E.

THIRD ROW

Zeller, W.
Kozeski, F. S.
Randol, W. E.
Atkinson, W. F.
Zuccolo, B.
Vanderbeek, W. M.
Wernholm, A. R.

BACK ROW

Wangness, S. G.
Briggs, W. D.
Braun, H. H.
Martin, G. E.
Stutts, V. L.
Williams, T. V.
Ruuska, R. R.
Walsh, T.
Warmington, J. H.

several thousand dollars, into their shelter and upon returning to the emporium invariably found its stock shaken from the shelves by the reverberations of bombs and anti-aircraft fire. A barber shop was maintained separately, from the start. But we had no laundry, tailoring, or cobbler facilities. Even the officers had to do their own washing.

SIGN SHOP

One relatively small activity, but a busy one from the time the first man landed until the last one left, was the sign shop. Beginning in a jerry-built shack near the Command Post, the two or three men who handled this work turned out every sort of sign and lettering job needed on the island for Army, Navy, and Marine Corps use. Casu, Acorn, Argus, Flying and Seabee groups kept demanding signs for a thousand purposes. Eventually some very finished work was produced when facilities had been improved.

Among the jobs assigned was one that called for many hundreds of crosses to provide uniform markings on the island's graves. Another was the building, laying out, and lettering of a huge mapped plotting board for the permanent Command Post; this showed the whole Pacific area surrounding the Gilberts. Besides the thousands of signs made, there were also markers, plaques, memorials, charts, and maps. And almost anything requiring paint was brought to this shop for professional attention. As many as 150 signs were turned out in a single day.

RECREATION AND WELFARE

Comforts and play did not figure in the early schedules at Tarawa. However, the spiritual welfare of the men was not ignored. On Sundays both the Acorn (Protestant) and Seabee (Catholic) Chaplains held regular divine service, the former in a revetment right on the main air strip with the planes making violent interruption as they revved up. Nor was the Catholic mass much further removed; for this service a battered Japanese warehouse standing next to the taxiway had been shored up and remodeled inside to accommodate large congregations. Early and Sunday masses were said there from the beginning.

Natives came to the services, too, for there had been missionary work and well-established Christian adherence in these islands long before the Japanese came. These Gilbertese had been trained in choral singing and possessed a remarkable aptitude for harmony. We heard them on other occasions, as when the Island Commander held a Christmas Eve gathering on Betio to entertain the men with native songs and dancing. No women were permitted on the island while we were there but the Gilbertese are good dancers regardless of sex and have interesting dance forms of their own. The enlisted men reciprocated on this occasion with carols and general songs in lusty chorus. An imitation Christmas tree had been made of boards



COMPANY D + PLATOON 2

FRONT ROW

Abasolo, W.
Donovan, A. H.
Henry, R. L.
Denhard, A. F.
Cioffi, P. J.
Bing, H. B.
Coyle, J. L.

SECOND ROW

Oakley, J. E.
Bartenstein, J. M.
Wiegand, H. J.
White, R. F.
Dare, E. H.
Friedman, B.
Tate, C. S.
Nett, W. M.

THIRD ROW

Jarvis, W. E.
Bosco, J. P.
Delaney, W. M.
Roan, E. M.
Nechiporenko, E.
Soltis, J.
Dumas, J. H.

FOURTH ROW

Sawyer, R. C.
Van Hekken, M. J.
Olson, R. J.
Ryan, M.
Simmons, J. E.
Helwig, W. F.
Bost, C. H.
Leenig, H. H.

hung with red and green bunting and strung with lights—a breath of Christmas only, for everyone had his twelve hours or more of work to put in, seven days a week.

Late in January as priority jobs were finished, some recreational facilities were set up for the men. They went on a schedule designed to give each a day off in seven, and working hours were reduced to eight per day. Thus there was time for relaxation and enjoyment. Open-air moving pictures were presented nightly by the Acorn and other units; these were characterized by interruptions from noisy aircraft and alerts that did not materialize in raids, and by the distraction of searchlight practice that took place overhead.

The battalion Chaplain arranged a camp show with singing and musical acts put on by Seabees, for which the band resumed rehearsals; the mess hall was packed and refreshments followed.

Softball teams were organized and a twilight league formed, with teams representing our different companies. They met teams from Army and Marine Corps units and played intramural games. A library was set up in the Chaplain's hut where books and magazines could be read. Public address systems played recordings of popular music during off hours in the tent areas.

With a more leisurely schedule life again seemed civilized and we were no longer deprived of these outlets either for want of time or equipment. The Bee Hive came to life again, as an outgrowth of news bulletins posted on company notice boards. It was the first English language publication ever to appear on Betio. Four issues in all were published there.

MISCELLANEOUS

There were many routine details not mentioned in this account but whose work was vital to the good operation of the base. All through the construction period the men had to be paid, their records kept, and the affairs of the battalion maintained in good order. Clerical positions in the Personnel and Disbursing departments were of this sort. Captains of the Head and their minions performed a daily inglorious stint, as did those who manned the hose lines that kept the strip wet, the coxwains and deck hands who ran our one LCM and our garbage scow, and the Masters-at-arms who looked after such valuables as the pay cash. The censors should not be forgotten; theirs was a colorless and unrewarding duty.

Worthy of reference here are some of the pastimes the men went in for. One had a large and flourishing victory garden that reached the productive stage about the time we left. Others spent their off hours collecting sea shells, of which many beautiful and unusual kinds abounded in the shallow waters around Betio. Of cat's-eye and cowry they fashioned necklaces for the girls at home. But the most popular occupation of all was making souvenirs.



COMPANY D + PLATOON 3

FRONT ROW

Murray, R. S.
 Stroup, M. S.
 Riley, W. W.
 Gehrke, A. A.
 Malonson, F. E.
 Landis, H. S.

SECOND ROW

Elliott, C. F.
 Fike, B. K.
 Hanlon, F.
 Morgal, R. L.
 Mayle, W. T.
 Von Braunsberg, F.
 Brocato, J. B.

THIRD ROW

Hunner, P. P.
 Lebel, J. M.
 Harrison, P. J.
 Fantozzi, F.
 Tobin, E. D.
 Estes, R. W.
 Bradshaw, S. S.
 Marinoni, P.

FOURTH ROW

White, E. J.
 Wakevainen, J. T.
 Korzeniewski, S. V.
 Veal, R. L.
 Larson, J. M.
 Lawson, E. C.
 Anderson, R. F.
 Dawson, W. W.

Collecting them began when the first man landed and looked around. It has been said that the Souvenir Squad advanced fifty yards in front of the assault Marines. At any rate, the choicer items were few or non-existent when we took up the search. Jap flags and binoculars were conspicuously absent. Most Jap equipment was found considerably damaged. But good hauls were made in some of the dugouts where clothing, medical supplies, inscribed boxes, radio equipment, Jap money, ornaments, medals, designations of rank, etc., were found.

The souvenirs made by the men themselves, however, probably meant more to their families at home than anything else. Hundreds of bracelets were tooled out of aluminum from Jap planes and garnished with military insignia of the enemy. Watch bands were made from the same material for personal wear. Ash trays, belt buckles, pins, brooches, rings, foot lockers, etc., were produced almost by the ton. Jap shell cases, bullets, plane parts, and name plates with or without ideographic characters were prized and hoarded. Hardly a man lacked some collection, small or large, to send home when the time came to move.

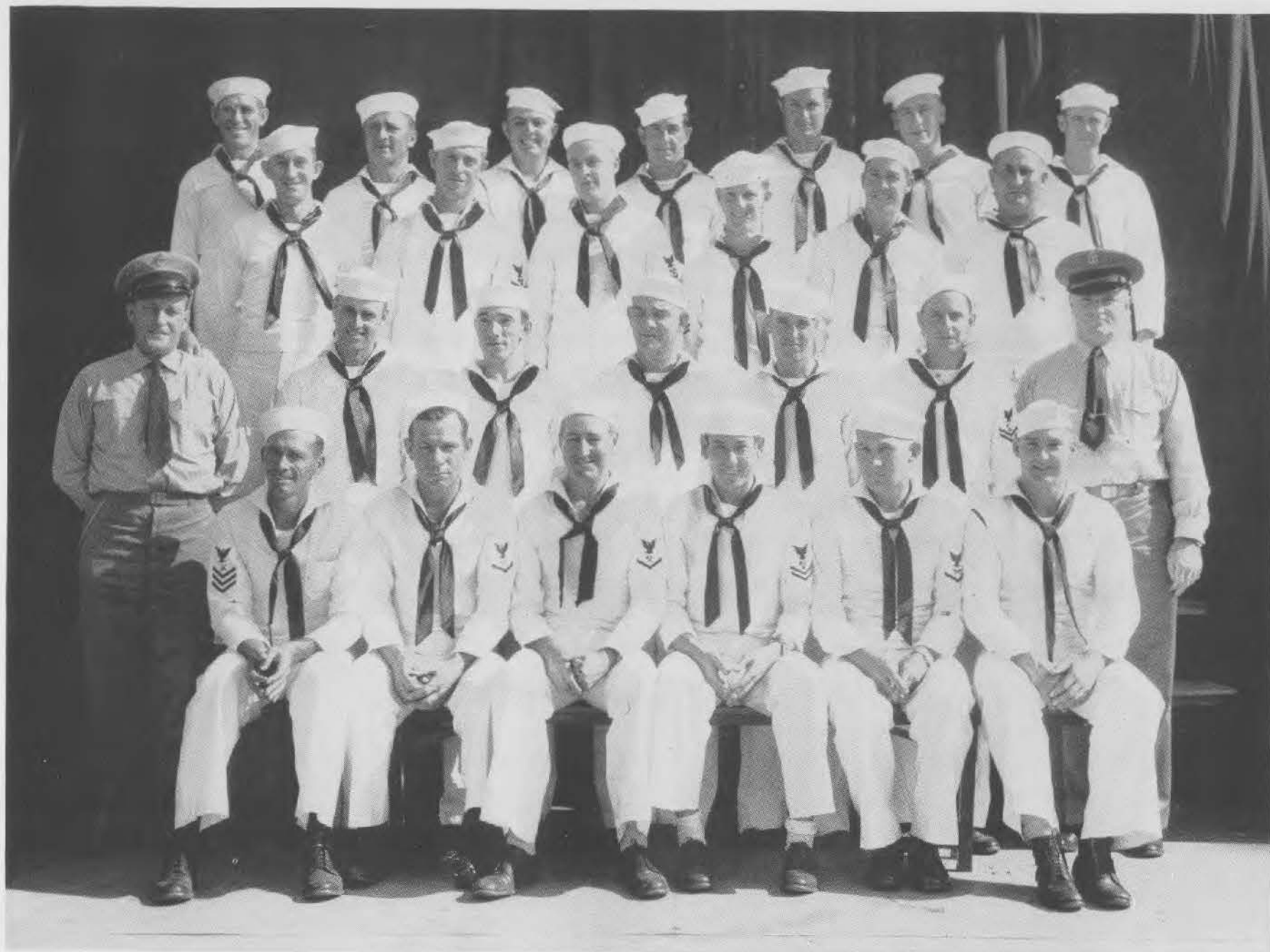
IN TRANSIT AGAIN

Two weeks before the battalion was secured a surveying party flew to Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. These men undertook several jobs including the layout of a large steel tower on E nubuj and the mapping of Kwajalein, Ebeye, E nubuj, and Gugegwe islands.

Groups began leaving Betio 28 February in LSTs; by the end of the following week all were on the way. Most of us felt we were leaving a kind of home—one we had occupied from the beginning and had built up around us. Betio was our island. Furthermore, in spite of hardships and deprivations at the start, a fairly comfortable existence had been achieved; but wherever we were going, no one knew what the score might be. Perhaps, as the French say, when that tattered island faded into the haze for good, some of us "left a little piece of himself behind."

The experience of the refrigeration detail during the voyage is worth relating. In the first place, their home-made scuttlebutt had been commandeered by individuals remaining at Tarawa, so it was necessary to kidnap the apparatus and sneak it aboard under cover of night. The coup proved successful, and we still have the device. Then five of our large reefers stuffed with meat, butter, and eggs were placed in the bow of an LCT which was being towed by a net tender—part of our strange inter-island convoy. The heavy seas encountered swamped the machines and necessitated constant vigilance to save their contents. The LCT also carried a distillation unit and the refrigeration men spent much of their time producing fresh water. They also stood watch at the helm.

A group of men on another vessel enjoyed an unexpected sightseeing tour around Kwajalein Atoll, anchoring overnight off E nubuj, then spending a few days at Gugegwe, and finally moving on to Roi where a grounded



COMPANY D + PLATOON 4

FRONT ROW

Sumner, G. E.
Piechoła, E.
Lucey, T.
Krammer, N. J.
Asbury, R. B.
Lynch, J. E.

SECOND ROW

Vaughn, P. E.
Evers, R. H.
Armer, H. F.
McGuire, M. J.
Snider, G. A.
Novinger, R. H.
Hocking, J. S.

THIRD ROW

Barwald, L. O.
Meeks, R. H.
Robinson, J. E.
Kohlasch, R. F.
Fuss, D. O.
Luken, L. R.

BACK ROW

Wimmer, J. A.
Frankoski, P.
Ebberts, G. M.
Spero, J. J.
Costner, E. S.
Greishaw, M. R.
Massey, G. C.

LST required assistance in getting off. The men on this ship had ample time to visit the recent battlefields on Roi and Namur and observe the ruined Japanese installations on the two islets. The voyage through the eastern half of the lagoon gave one a clear picture of the atoll's immense size in contrast to the tiny fringe of island-spotted reef around it.

Soon after the middle of March the battalion personnel had been distributed among the various islands where there were jobs for them to do and had set up quarters and facilities for subsistence.

THE WORK

Kwajalein differed from Tarawa in many respects. Here our work was to supplement that of the Army Aeronautical Engineers. The "Flying Castles" had already converted the air strip on Kwajalein Island to the uses of the 7th Air Force and were laying out the site of the Air Depot. Other Naval units were at work there, too. There was no dominating assignment with many contributing subordinate projects like those we had just completed.

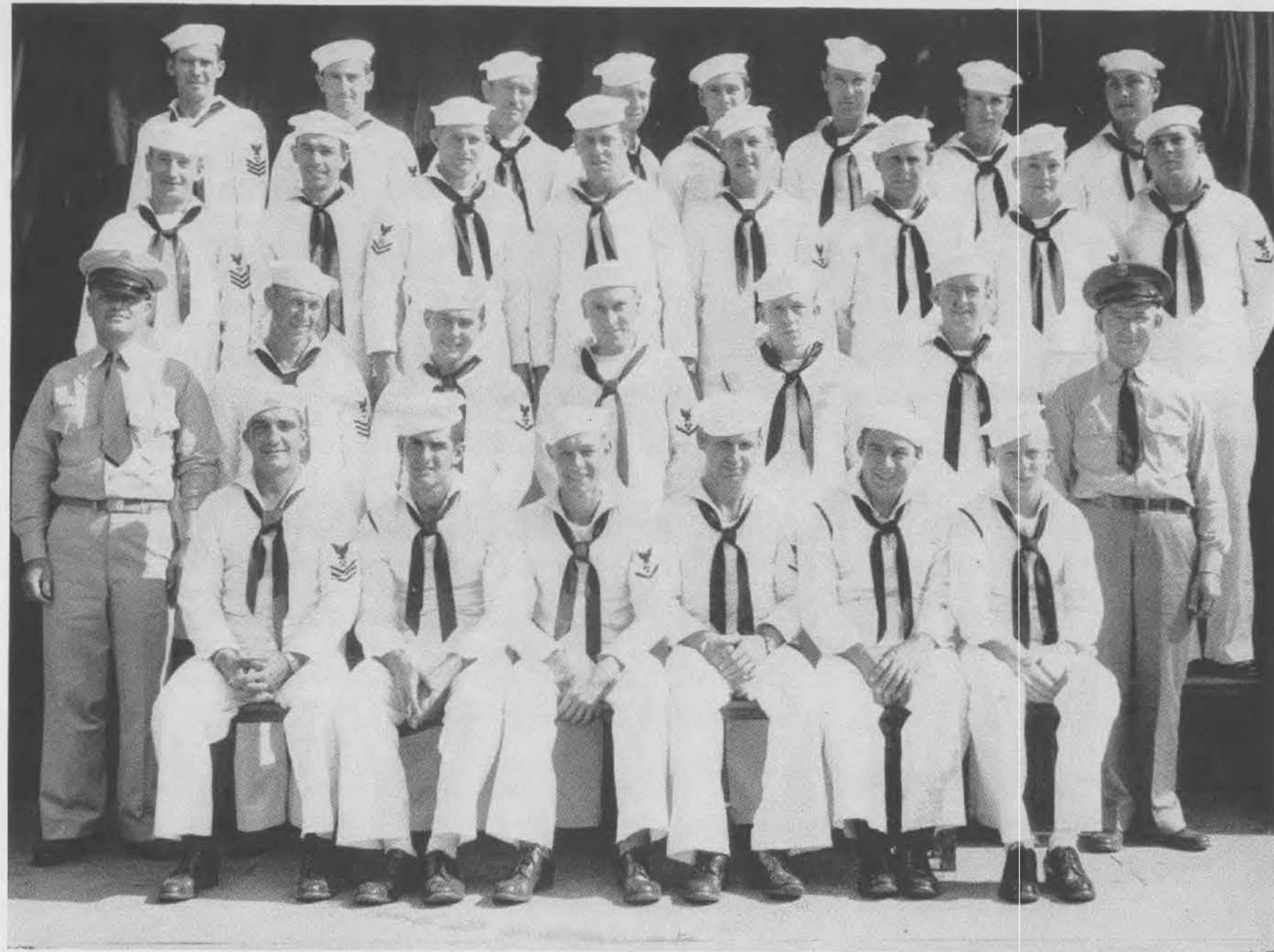
However, the battalion was staffed and equipped to do many specific, vital jobs needed on a dozen islands around the atoll. Relieved of the strain under which they had become used to working, and immediately given much more favorable living conditions, the men outdid themselves. Camps and buildings were erected on six islands; nearly every type of military structure was represented.

A detail was sent to Ewadack to set up a highly technical installation and a camp to go with it. Supposedly an uninhabited island and thickly wooded, Ewadack presented a forbidding appearance. Right away three skulking figures were seen vanishing into the brush; partly on this account a guard was established. The work went ahead, however, and a large area was cleared. The men were entirely on their own, acting as cooks, corpsmen, guards, mechanics, and builders. Three small Quonset huts and nine tents were erected, then a water tower, a lookout tower, a galley, and a complete water supply system. The men even laid out a baseball diamond. In nine days they turned this camp over to a Gropac unit, who reported not long afterward that they had flushed four Japs from ambush and packed them off to join their ancestors.

Captured Jap material was utilized on Kwajalein as it had been on Betio. A good deal of stored cement was found and used in construction, as were tons of reinforcing steel, though much of the latter was unfit and had to be discarded. Huge piles of coal briquets of poor quality, for which no use could be found, were also hauled off and dumped in the sea.

Our power and light company installed and maintained branch plants on five different islands. An average of 75 men were employed with a total of 28 diesel fueled generators on the lines. Our camps and buildings were of course wired by our own electrical gangs.

The refrigeration crew provided equipment on several islands. They



COMPANY D + PLATOON 5

FRONT ROW

Ziccardi, M. J.
Fortunato, J.
Laufer, E. F.
Kowalski, S. H.
Mazzaferrri, J.
McCormack, O. C.

SECOND ROW

Johnson, E. J.
Budd, F. S.
Rafalowski, S. R.
Purinton, K. C.
Haroski, J. P.
McGlew, H. D.
Hauseman, T. K.

THIRD ROW

Woody, T. J.
Cook, W. R.
Chute, D. D.
Leaders, W. A.
Metrick, M.
Wesley, C. F.
Brown, M.
Cosenzo, V. L.

BACK ROW

Helmer, C. M.
Cargill, J. E.
Trollinger, P. M.
Haley, D. E.
Baker, L. E.
Wicker, E. F.
Tucker, T.
Cortez, E.

found there was not a single drop of cooled water on Ebeye so in fairly short order made four scuttlebutts for galley and general use of the naval units stationed there. On Gugegwe they turned out an 8-gallon ice cream freezer, mostly of scrapped Jap material. Servicing the various units consumed much time and energy.

Dock work around Kwajalein Atoll comprised five large projects. The most interesting of these was perhaps the 250-foot (wide) dock built for the boat pool on Kwajalein Island; this dock extended 150 feet out into the water and was fifteen feet high. It was built without interference to the Boat Pool operations, the LCMs and LCVPs using the old ruined Jap pier until the new one was half finished, then transferring. Two demolished Jap warehouses provided debris for fill, together with all sorts of scrap material, a total of over 20,000 cubic yards.

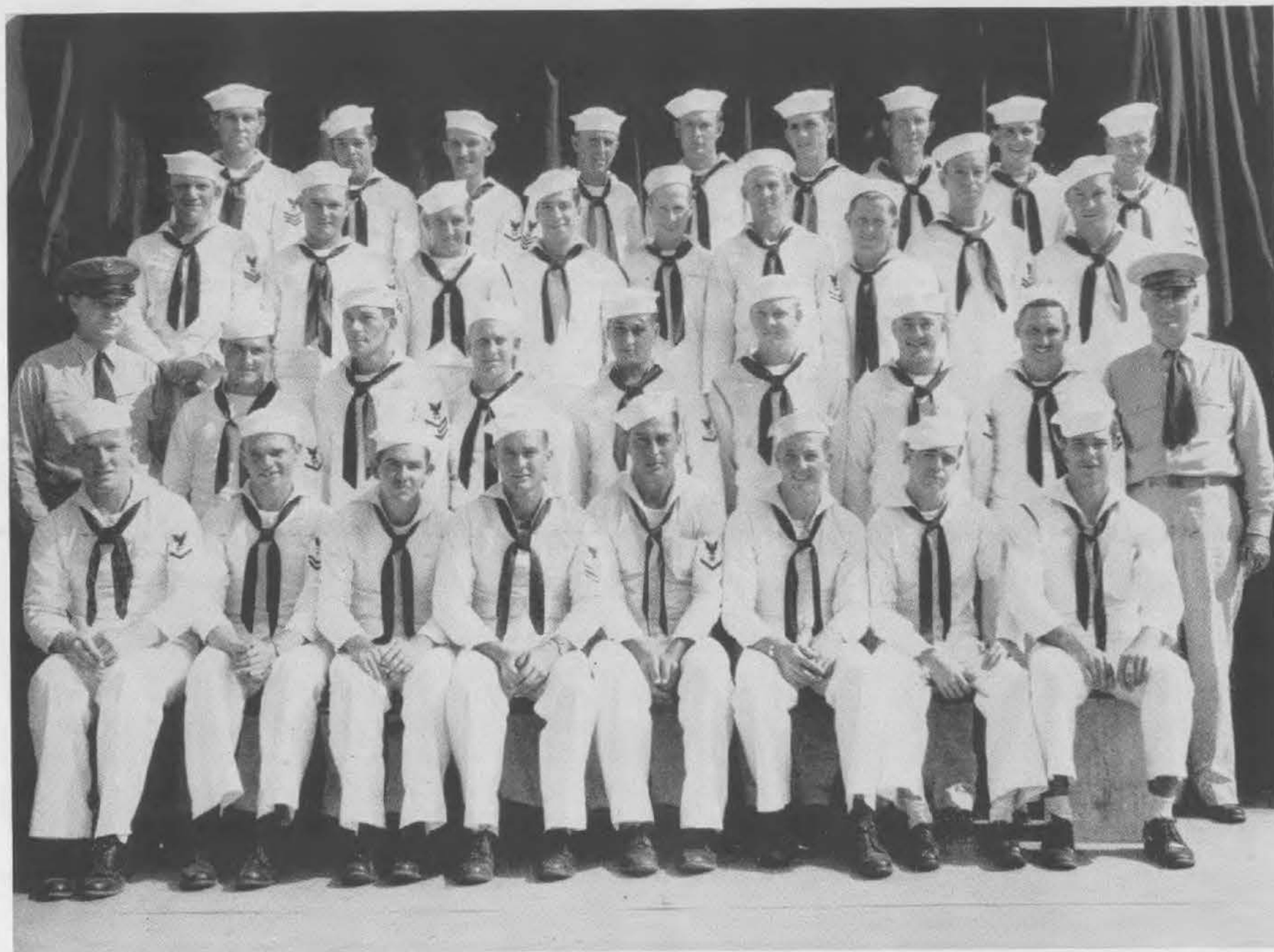
A solid crib contained this fill and was made from 60,000 lineal feet of cocoanut logs doweled with Jap pins and bolts. Jap winches were used for hoisting and placing materials, and axle-and-wheel assemblies from the narrow-gauge rolling stock found on the island made weights to sink the cribs evenly into position.

An officers' mess about 20 by 40 feet had to be moved at one stage of the work and this was done with tables fully set for luncheon; skids were run under it, a bulldozer hitched up, and the structure moved 200 yards without disturbing a dish or spilling a glass of water.

Two dock jobs were undertaken on Gugegwe. The first of these was to repair and make serviceable a small ship ways that might have been used by the enemy for work on one-man submarines. This was found in good condition; the breakwalls running into the lagoon were intact and most of the ramp and railway undamaged. But heaps of debris had to be cleared from around the structure and a sunken ship removed from the foot of the railway, which stretched far out under water. A new dock to handle the unloading of small craft was built of concrete blocks cast in place to secure a floating pontoon section. Considerable difficulty was encountered in setting these blocks without caissons, due to the undercutting action of the sea; but the work was finally accomplished.

The main Jap dock on Kwajalein Island was an impressive and useful facility. Partly demolished by shell fire during the battle, rebuilding at the lagoon end and patching throughout the length became necessary in order to derive full use of it. To take this dock the Army had had to knock out pillboxes set along it at regular intervals and had used heavy concentrations of artillery. The very considerable damage at these points, as well as along the lagoon face, were repaired entirely with reinforced concrete.

The fifth project, on another island, called for a wharf to accommodate small boats. Again concrete was indicated, and the blocks were in this instance cast ashore, which necessitated most skilful rigging to place them accurately.



COMPANY D + PLATOON 6

FRONT ROW

Thomas, J. L.
Shonley, I. T.
Maynard, C. E.
Hannah, O. C.
Johnson, W. J.
Thir, G. G.
Markel, E. L.
McMillin, J. I.

SECOND ROW

Marquess, E. P.
Wilkinson, W. C.
Yonney, P. F.
Simons, W. E.
Markarian, M. M.
Tamblyn, J. J.
Wasiesky, T.
Chainao, W. E.
Pelletier, E. J.

THIRD ROW

McSherry, H. E.
Timmerman, R. G.
Specht, R. F.
Nardo, A. T.
Luedtke, A. J.
Webb, E. J.
Maxwell, F. S.
Patterson, B. P.
Sieger, O. B.

BACK ROW

Sidwell, W.
Maier, C. W.
Eident, W. R.
Campbell, C.
Russell, S. R.
Moulesong, R. E.
Strickland, W. R.
Thompson, J. R.
Syrjanen, C. M.

An incident of general interest took place on Kwajalein Island when a request was received for anchor chain. A ship in the harbor had dropped her equipment in deep water and it could not be recovered. In this emergency a wide-spread search was instituted and the dock crew reported finding a $\frac{7}{8}$ " chain of U. S. manufacture and undetermined length buried in debris being used for fill. Hitching a bulldozer to the exposed portion, 200 fathoms was pulled from the mass, all in excellent condition; but with this chain came other legacies from the Japs: several truck chassis of various makes, Ford V-8 motors in almost new condition, old anchors, and a miscellany of equipment, much of which was put to appropriate use.

The ship which had been sunk in battle off the end of the marine railway on Gugegwe was blown up by the diving and demolition crews. To accomplish this, the largest charge of explosive they ever used in one blast was set off; it consisted of 4,000 pounds of nitromon, assisted by a 350-pound mine discovered nearby. The ship was completely demolished in place.

These two crews were constantly busy on similar work off nearly every island at the southern end of the atoll. Many schooners and small wrecks dotted the reef edge, as well as dangerous coral heads, and these threats to navigation were systematically dynamited. Some derelicts being too large for demolition where they lay were raised, towed out to sea, and sunk. More than thirty hulks were thus disposed of at Kwajalein.

Shallow water diving as a form of recreation was instituted on Gugegwe when the rush of work subsided. About 350 dives of this sort were made. Thus, quite a percentage of the battalion had a chance to experience the thrill of exploring the ocean floor. Many tried it repeatedly.

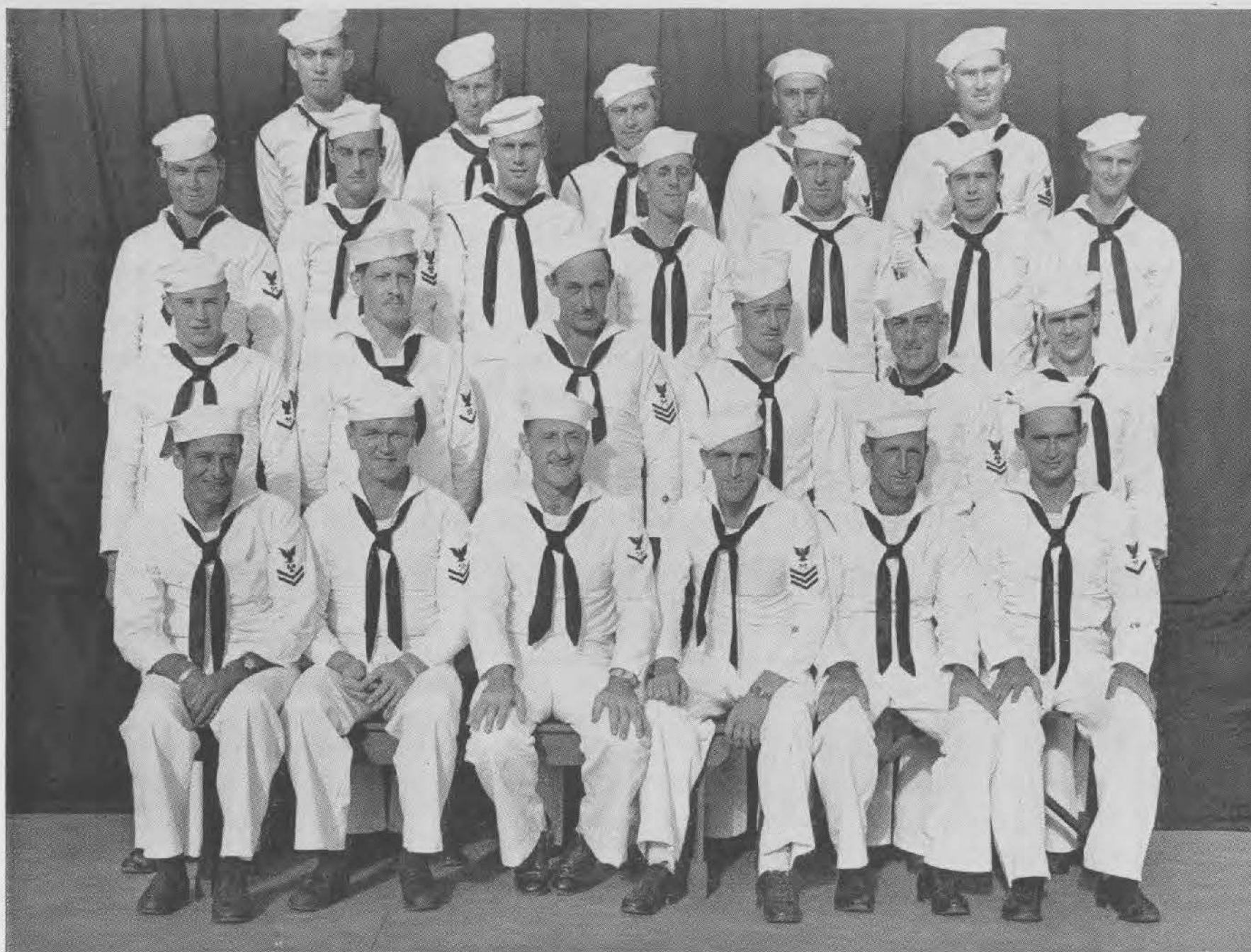
Pontoon men built many large tank and cargo barges at Kwajalein. They also constructed a floating drydock. These were put into service for other organizations. All told, some 2,800 pontoon cells were assembled.

A crew of ironworkers was assigned a difficult job on Enubuj. Here there had been two skeleton steel towers 227 feet high, erected by the Japanese. During the battle one of them had been destroyed, while the other still stood—on three legs. The first fifty feet of the fourth leg had been shot away. Our crew was assigned to save this damaged tower, which they did by using repair sections cut from parts of its demolished mate.

In addition to replacing the missing leg, these men made and inserted 150 braces, struts, and laterals which had been shot away. All parts were fitted and installed on Enubuj Island, using improvised methods, and the job was completed in thirty days.

On another island a complicated 15-ton signal tower was erected to carry a large searchlight and serve as a lookout and signal station. This tower was designed and built in our machine shop on Kwajalein Island, transported in sections, and reassembled in place. The ironworkers built and maintained their own camps on both islands.

The tank-a-day schedule set at Tarawa was maintained on Kwajalein.



MISCELLANEOUS MEN WHO WERE UNABLE TO APPEAR IN PLATOON AND COMPANY PICTURES

FRONT ROW

Wenz, F. M., Co. C
 Finnerty, T. J., Co. A
 Goldblum, H., Co. A
 Coutinho, N. F., Co. A
 Glass, S. M., Co. A
 Fortgang, D., Co. H

SECOND ROW

Ness, M. D., Co. C
 Clarke, J. J., Co. H
 Wilt, E. W., Co. A
 Redfield, G. L., Co. A
 Fennell, D. F., Co. D
 McMullen, W. J., Co. D

THIRD ROW

McGowan, F., Co. C
 Gessner, J. E., Co. A
 McCombs, J. D., Co. D
 Loucks, O. L., Co. D
 Hartig, W. E., Co. C
 McGuire, K., Co. C
 Maddox, A. H., Co. C

FOURTH ROW

Connors, G. W., Co. B
 Wessell, J. F., Co. D
 McGee, J. W., Co. D
 Bertogli, L., Co. C
 Hindricks, W., Co. C

Two large tank farms were erected; assisting our crew on the first of these were seventeen Army sergeants, who picked up some new tricks for future use with their units.

Half a dozen large tanks were assembled on barges. With each was included a bundle of wiping rags; the men were constantly badgered by natives eagerly bargaining for the more highly-colored of these cloth bits. Presumably they were used in making garments or household linen.

Miles of coral surfacing for roads was placed by the heavy equipment and transportation detail, on several islands. The highways were also straightened and leveled, for the Japs seem to like narrow, twisting lanes in preference to direct access routes. These drivers and operators also paved many areas with coral around buildings and through camp sites.

Foxholes were never essential at Kwajalein, fortunately, although they were provided from the start and were occupied on several occasions when the alert sounded. Instead of being spread all over and either freshly dug by hand or converted from existing Jap earthworks, we borrowed a mechanical ditcher on Kwajalein Island and laid out a pattern of trenches through the camp site, around which the tents were subsequently pitched.

Recreational facilities were not as limited as previously. Most of the groups had access to one or more moving picture shows; nearly every Army unit had its own, and the Marines were always hospitable to our men. Softball diamonds were laid out in quantity and nearly every man in the battalion played on a team. Beer was more plentiful. We operated a fine store and barbershop. Generally speaking, all the activities recounted in the story of Betio were revived or elaborated on the islands of Kwajalein.

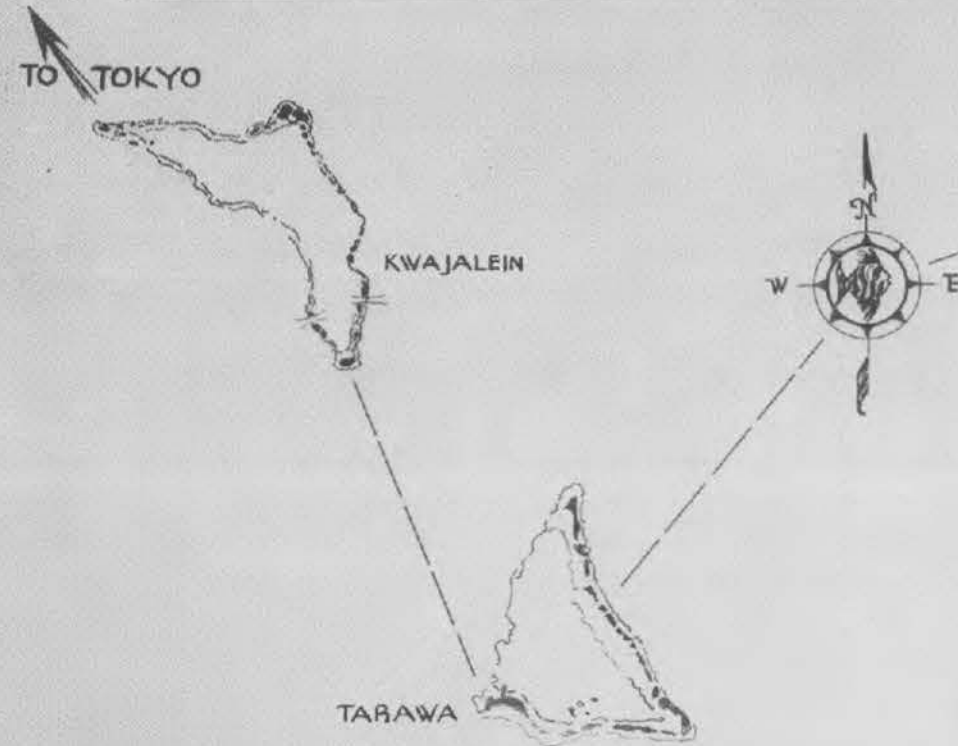
BACK TO CIVILIZATION

By June most assignments were completed and everyone played softball while waiting for transportation back. We returned in groups, the earlier ones by ships and some of the last by plane. In October we were all together once more under the command of a new Officer-in-Charge; with liberty, daily papers, radio, and all the long-foregone prerequisites of rear area living, even though the prospect remained unknown, things were looking up.

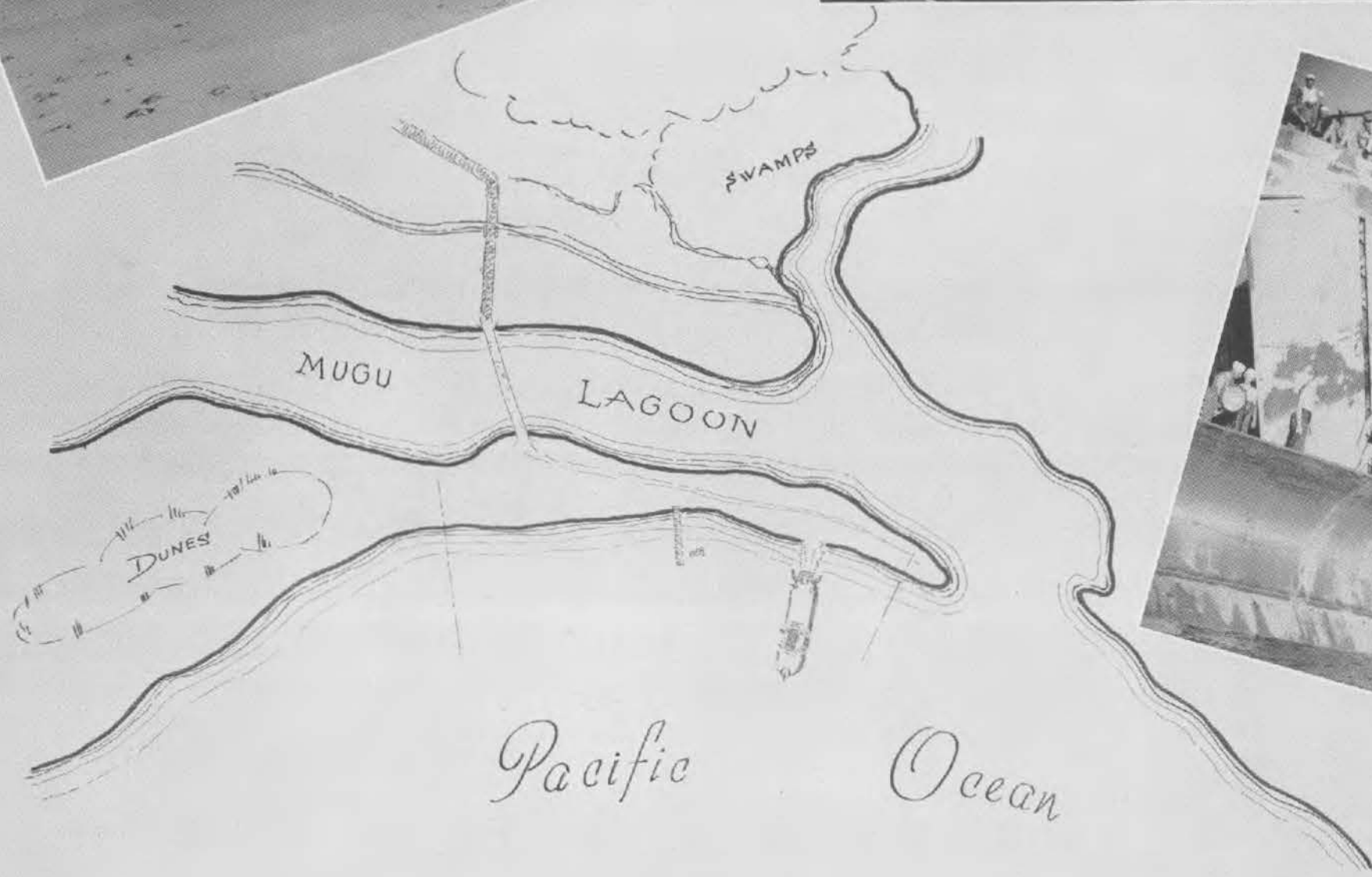
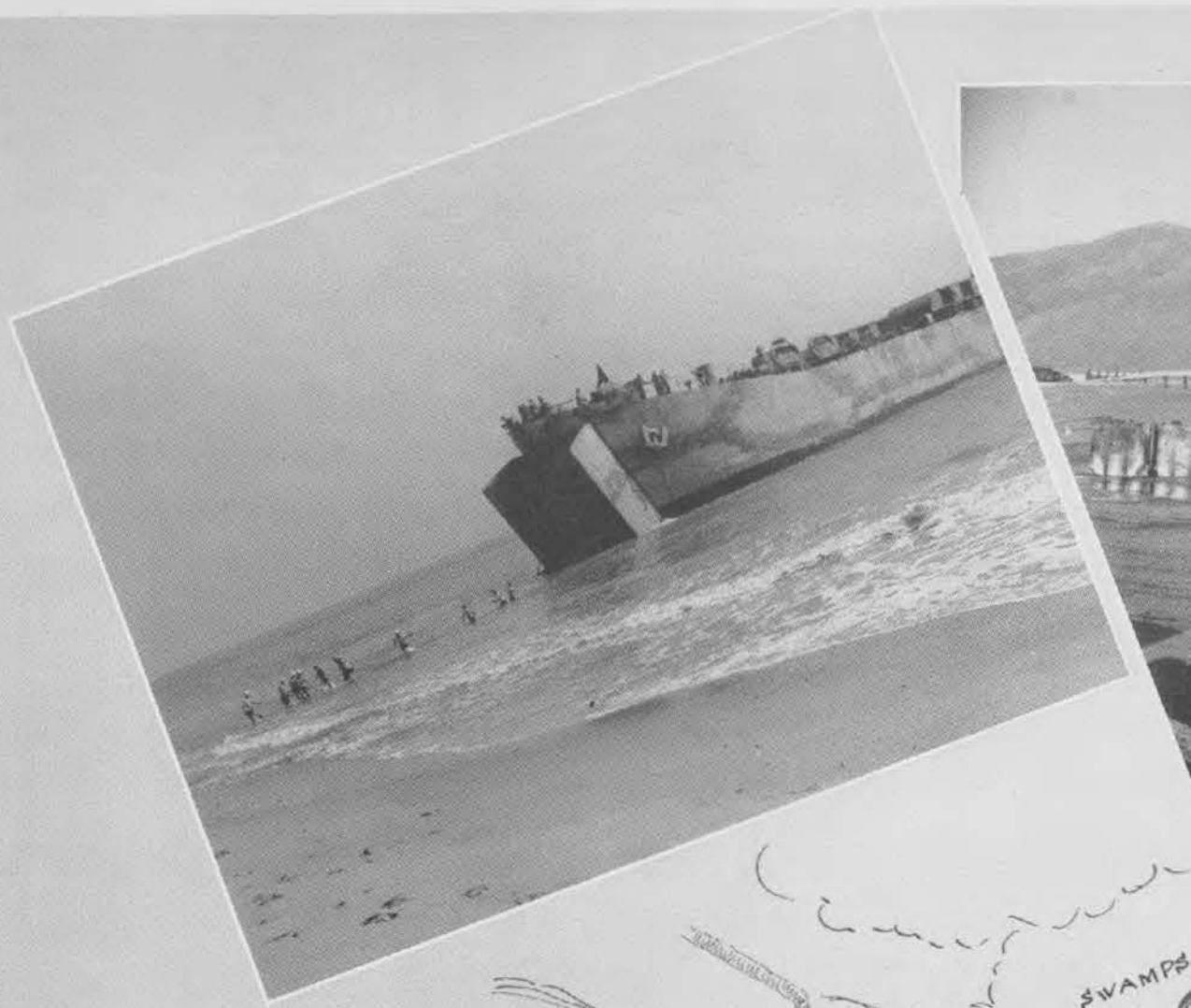
For the first time, the Bee Hive came out regularly once a week. We opened a ship's store to rival or surpass most of the city's establishments and we had a beer garden where, at the end of every afternoon men might simultaneously enjoy the company of their friends and unlimited quantities of brew. The menus in the mess hall were fabulous. We waxed fat and as reasonably happy as men could, away from home.

Here we still are. The scuttlebutt continues, the wagers pile up. "Home by Easter" rouses the usual question, "Which Easter?" For Easter we will probably substitute Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Christmas, as time passes, unless and until we find ourselves headed for the coast of California. May the day come soon!

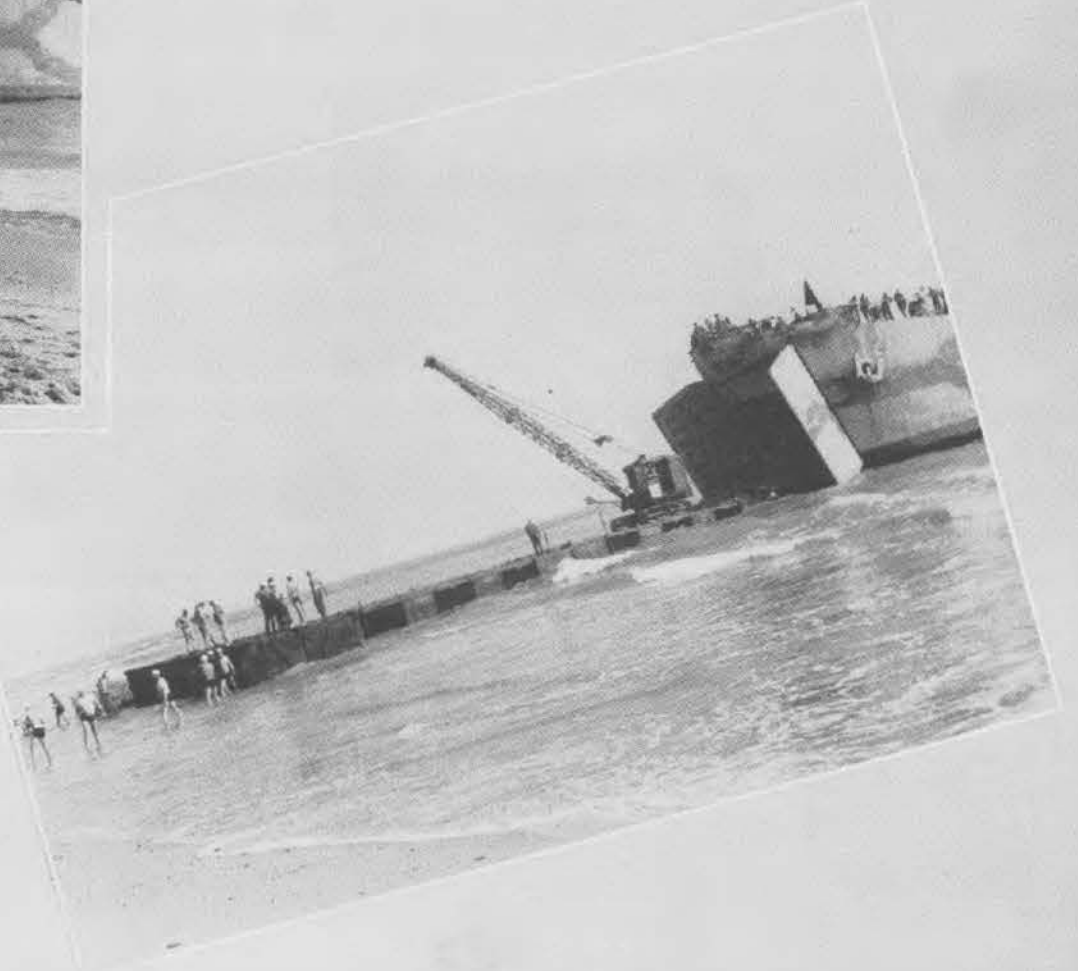
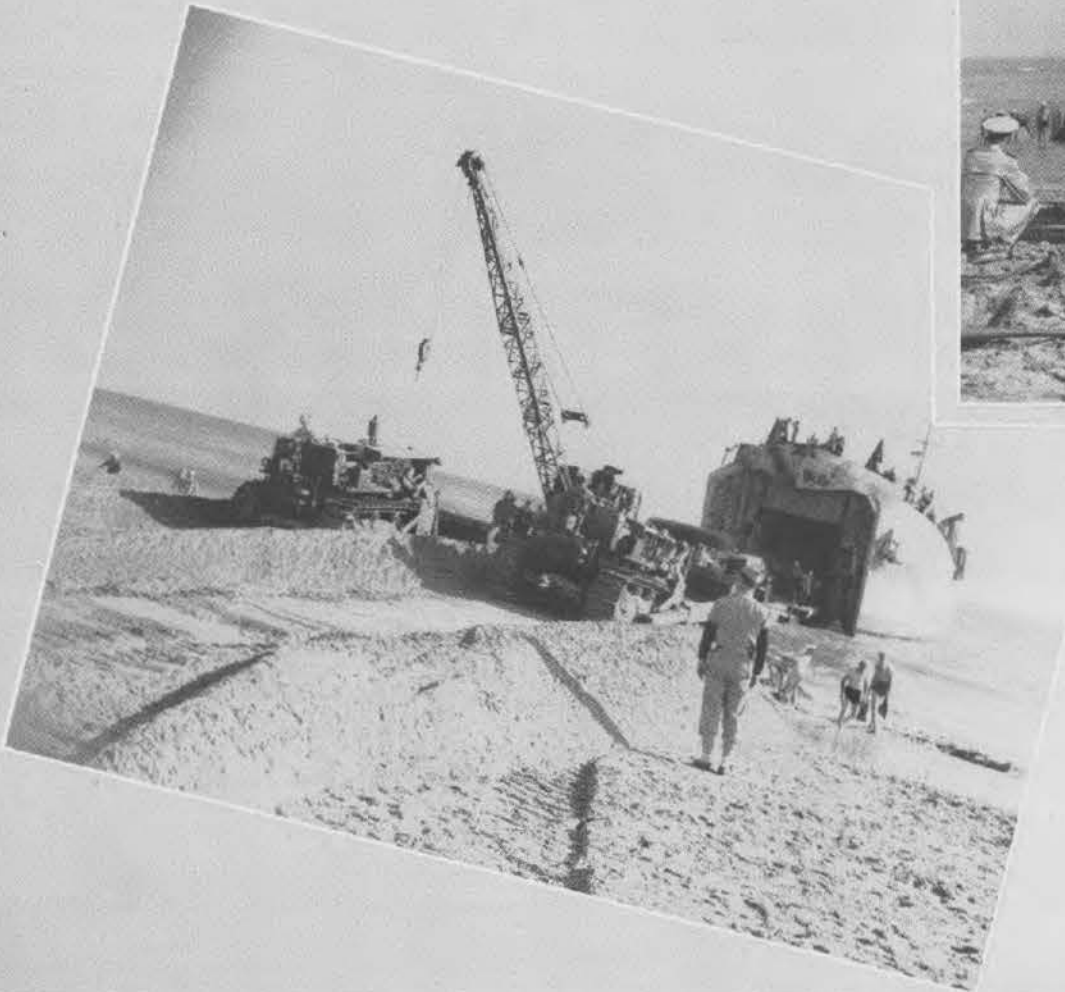
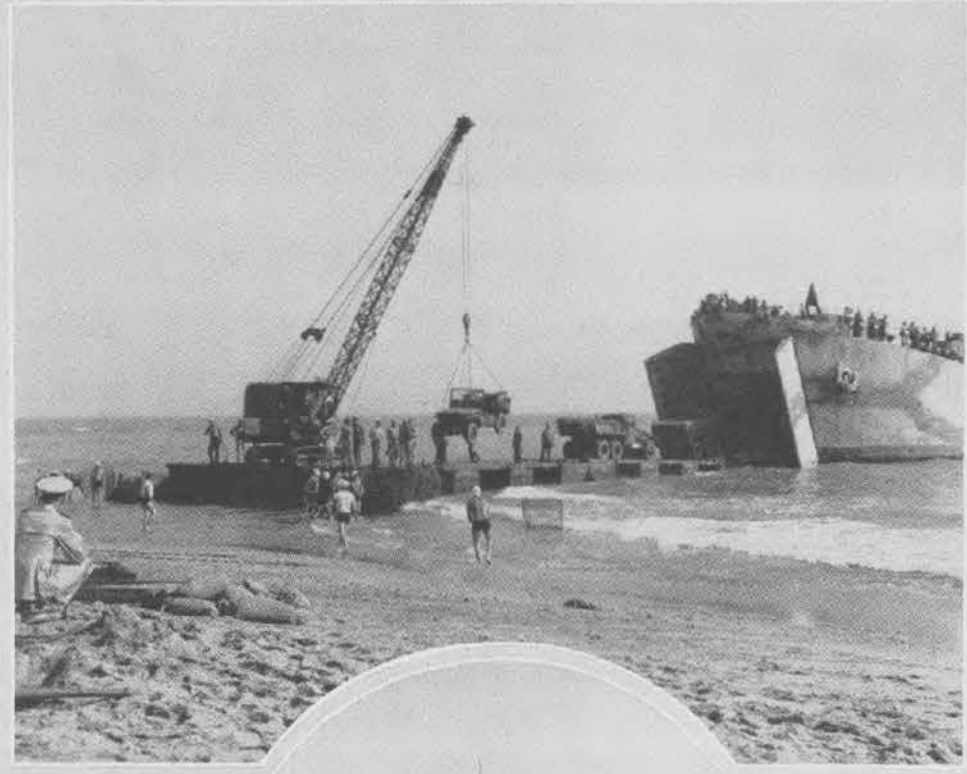
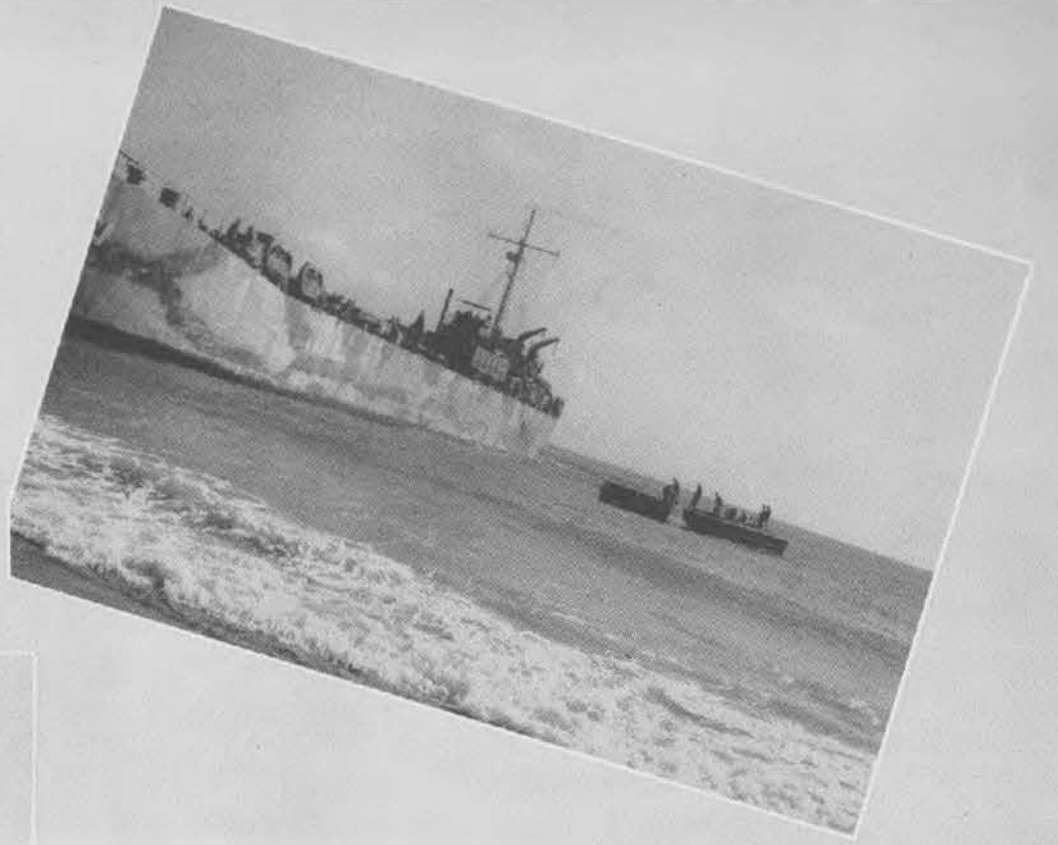
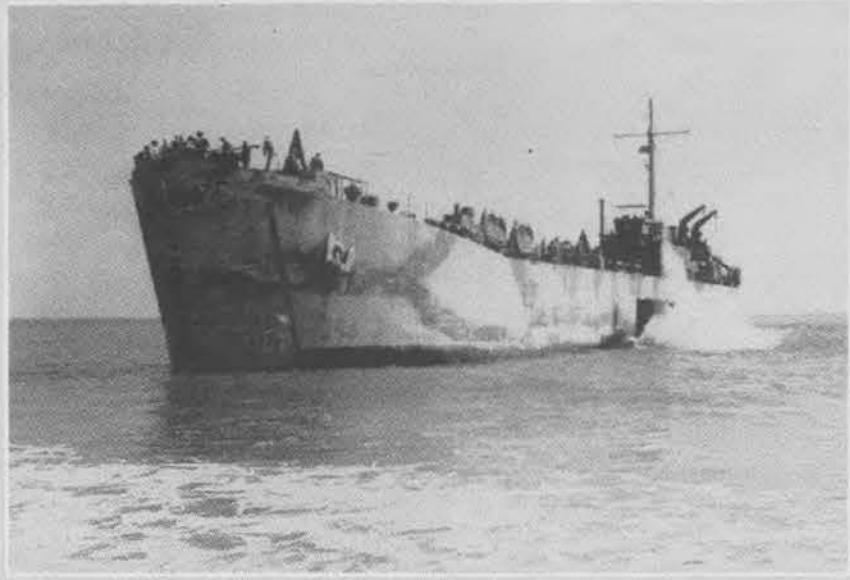
74th BATTALION IS BORN

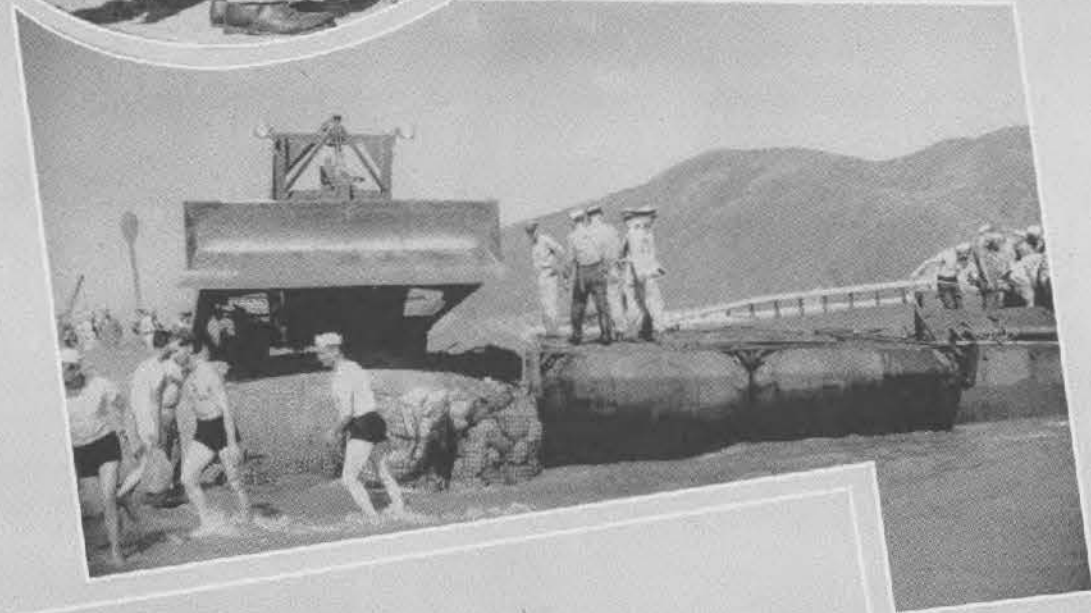


RECEIVED COLORS
at Camp Endicott



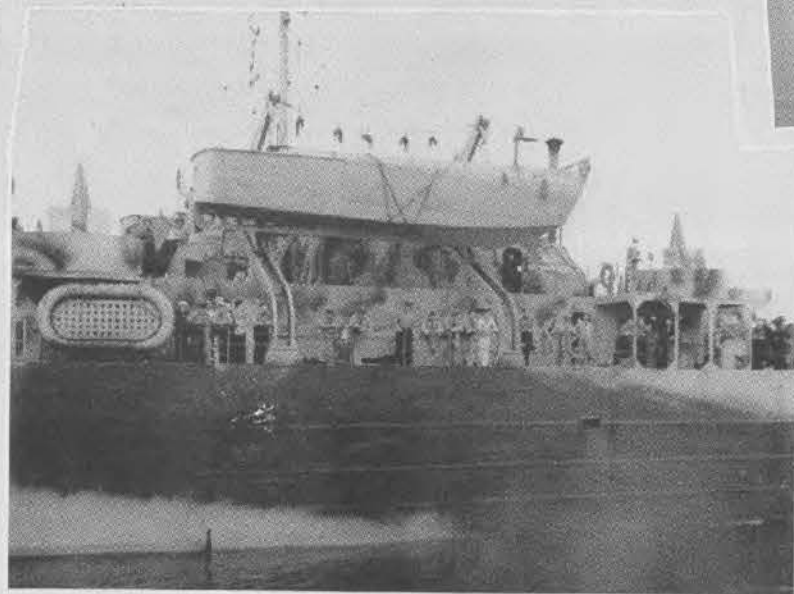
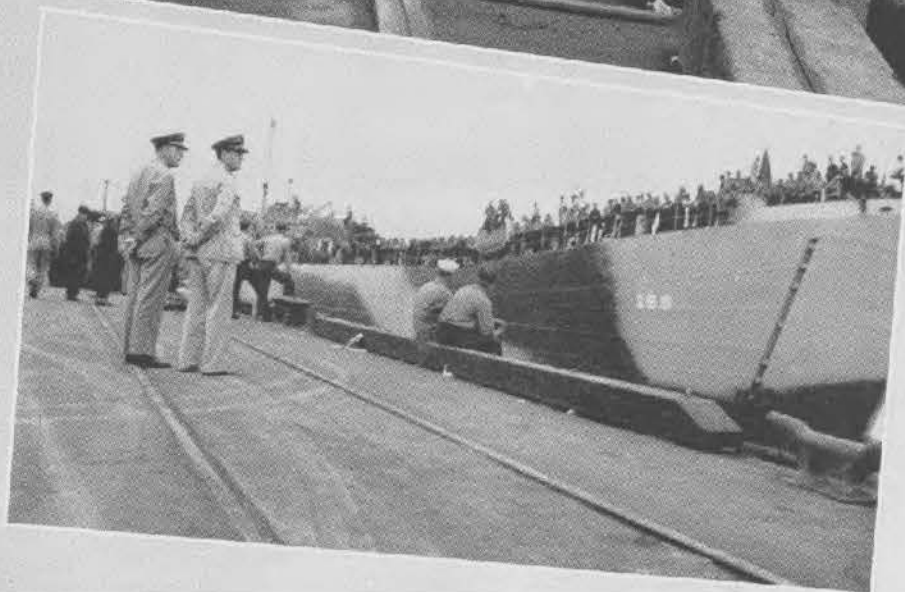
Mugu Landings..



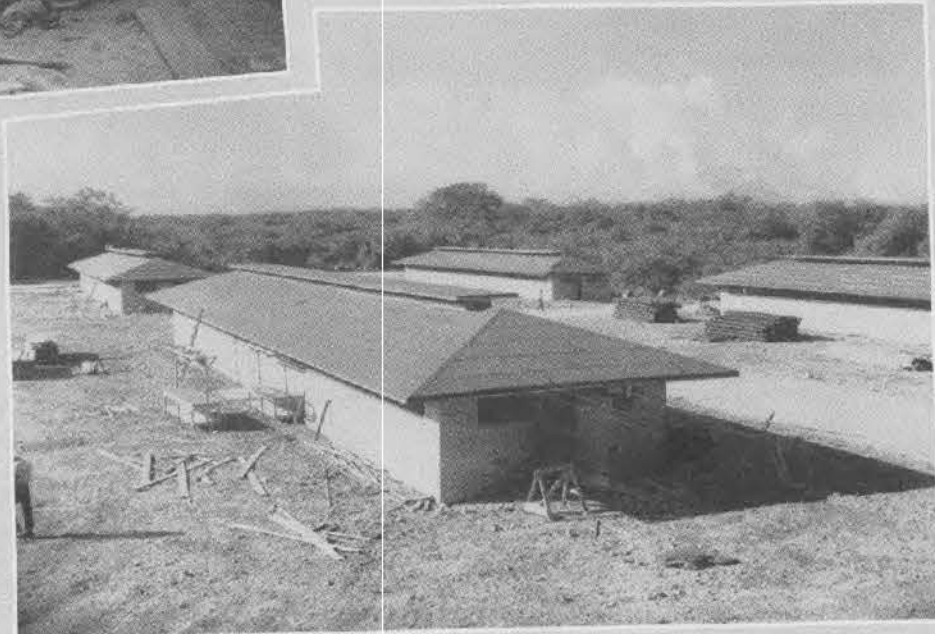
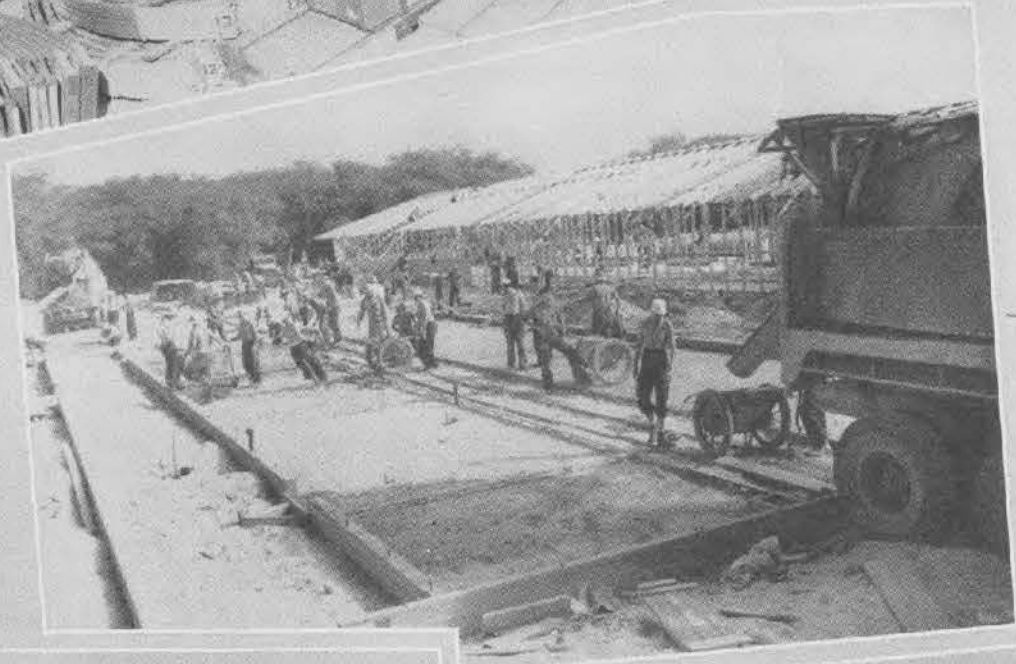
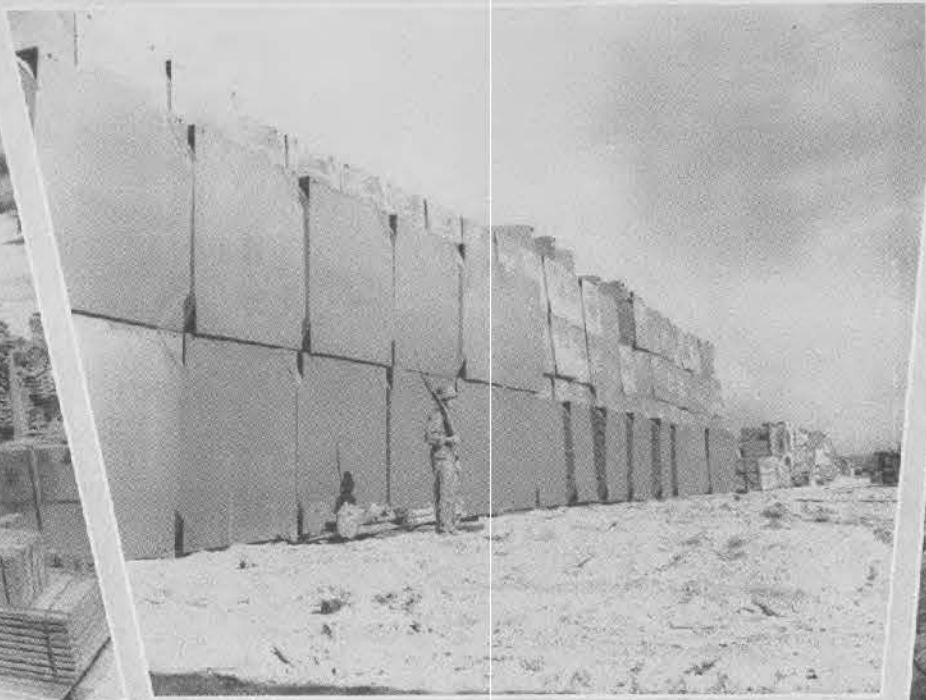


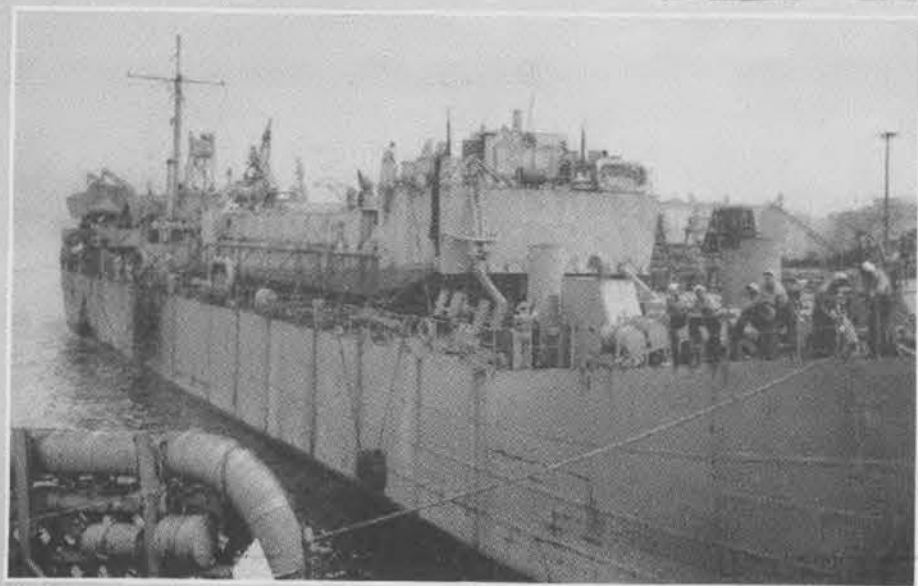
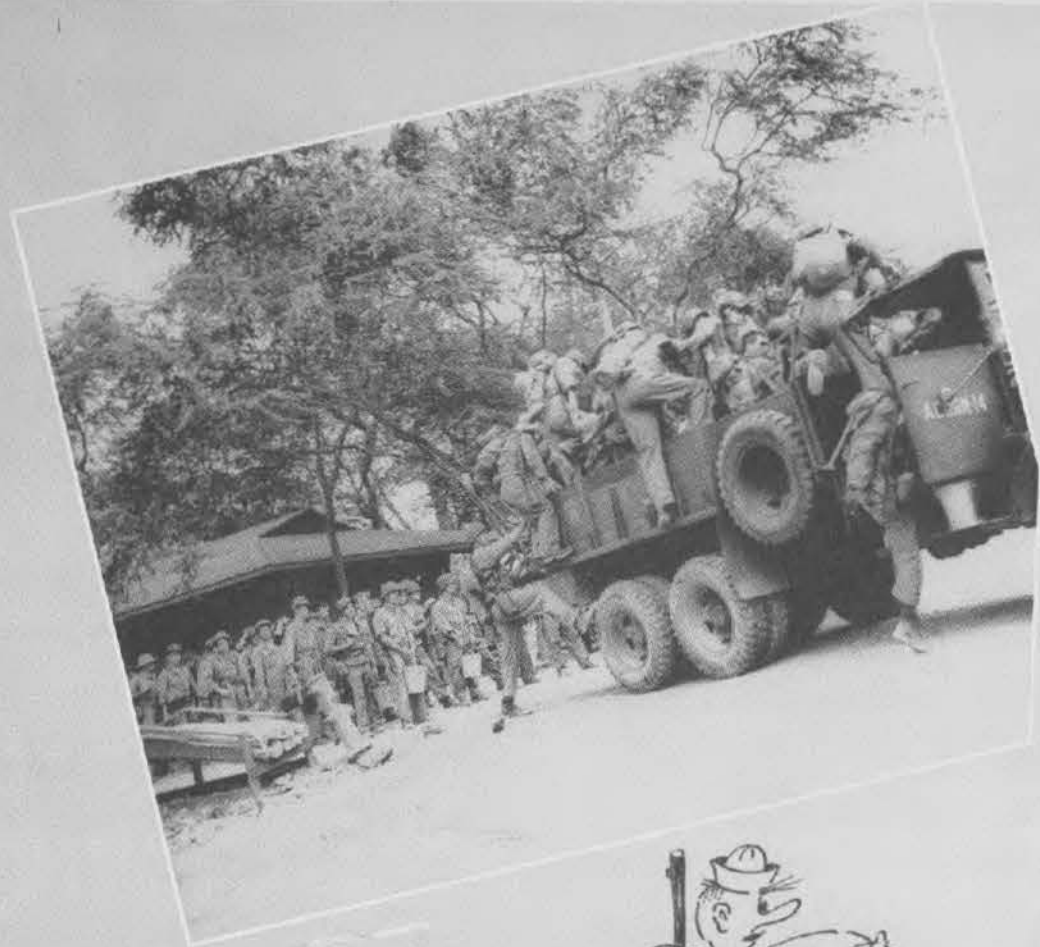














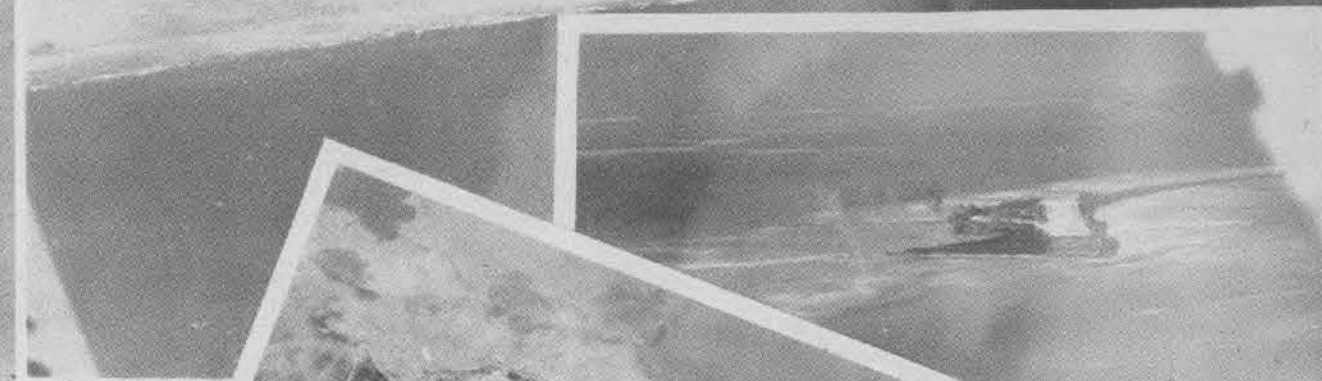


MOSAIC OF
BITITU (BETIO) ISLAND

TARAWA ATOLL, GILBERT ISLANDS
FROM SORTIES V-391, 7th AF & CV16-603

SCALE IN FEET
0 500 1000

PREPARED BY
JOINT INTELLIGENCE CENTER PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS



OBSERVATION TOWER
mH09.5-11.4

OBSERVATION TOWER
mH12.1-25.5

OBSERVATION TOWER
mH06.7-27.7

OBSERVATION TOWER
mH09.6-30.5

RADIO MASTS
mC97.0-40.5

AGGREGATE PLANT
mC95.7-41.6

OBSERVATION TOWER
mC93.5-43.5

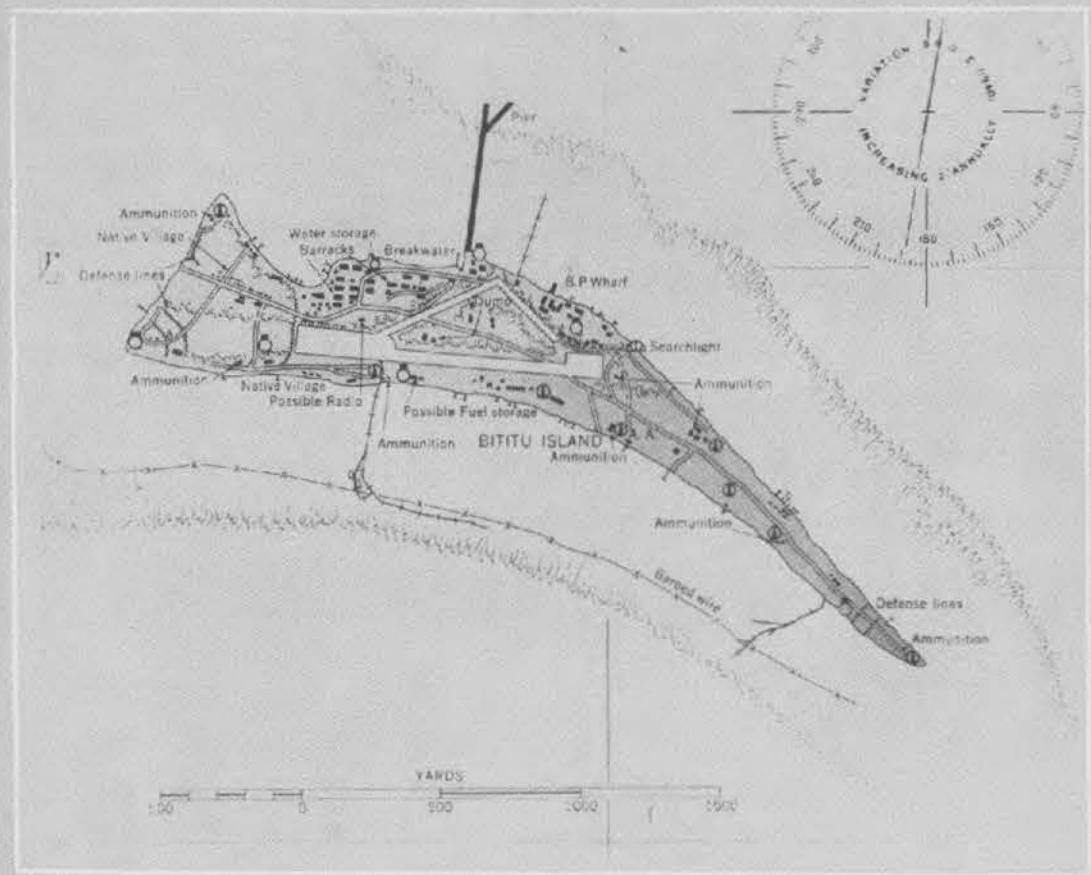
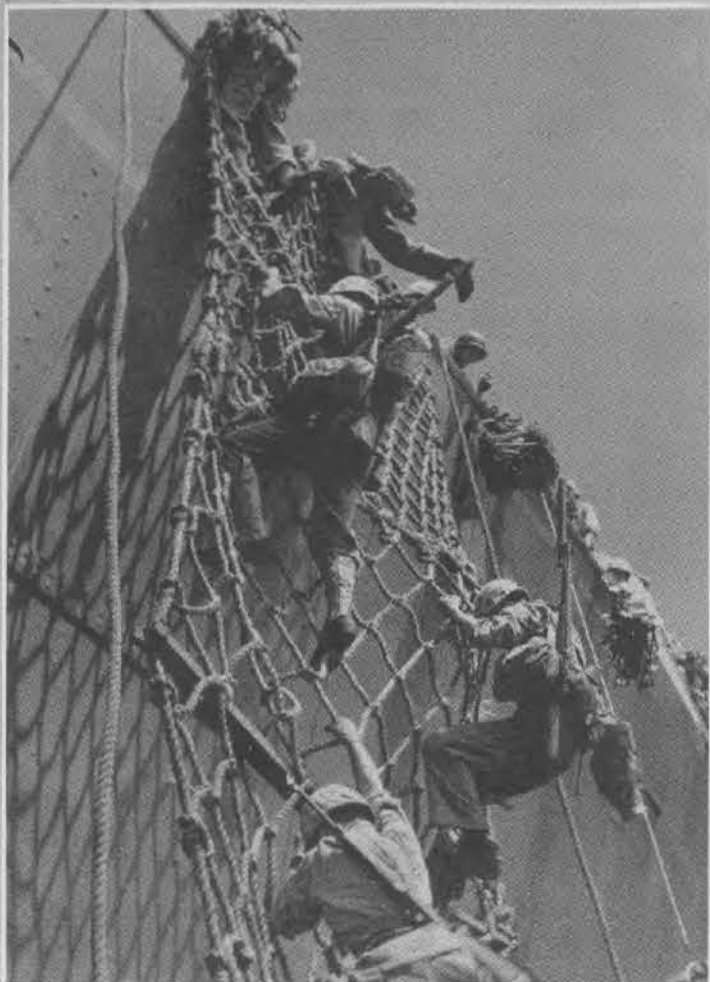
S.W. POINT

EAST POINT









TARAWA



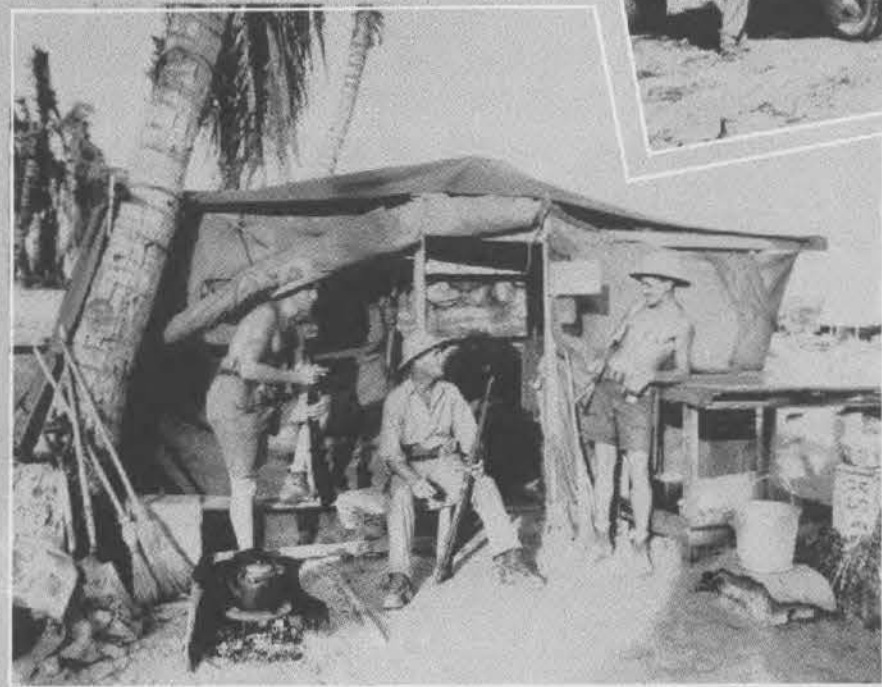
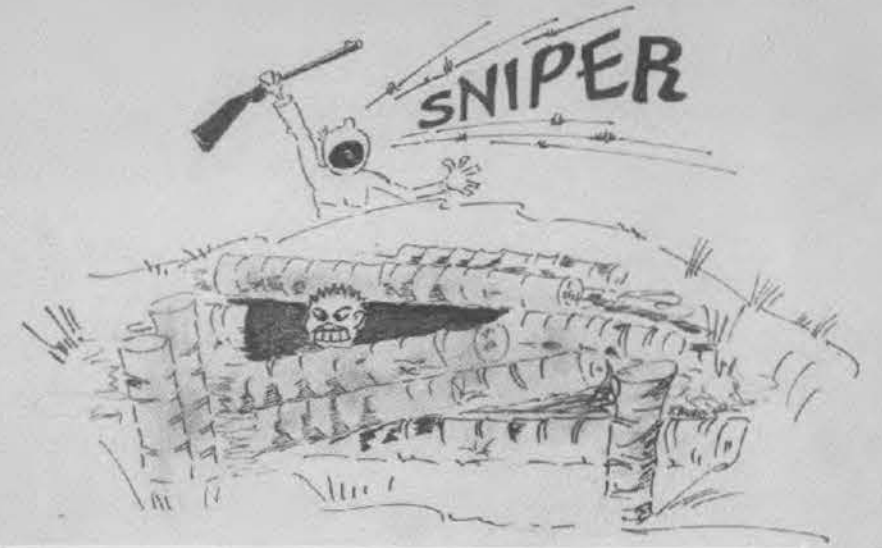
TARAWA



HAARI KARI
↓

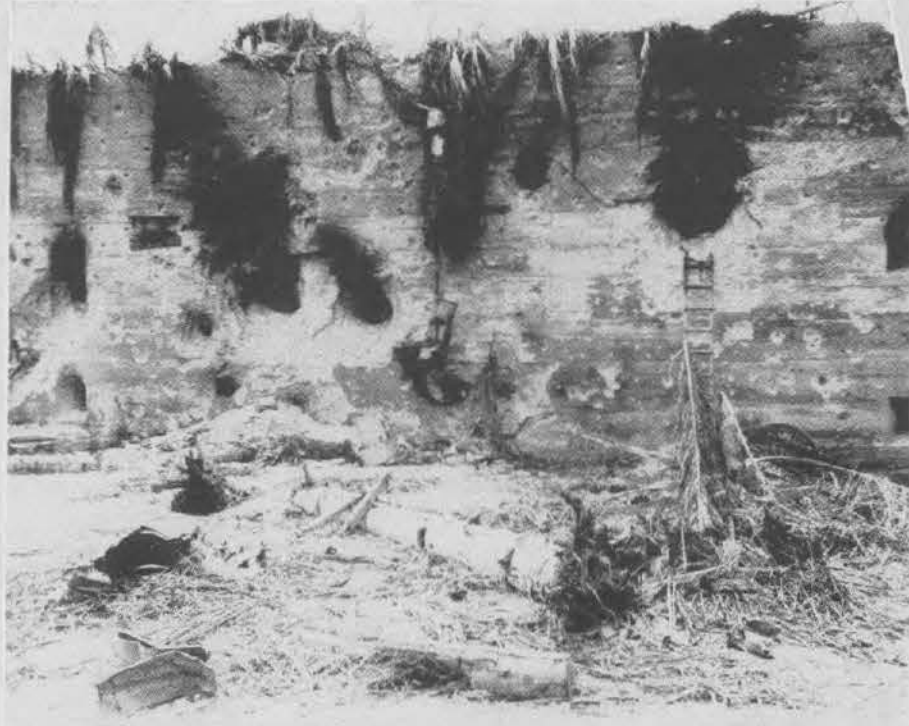






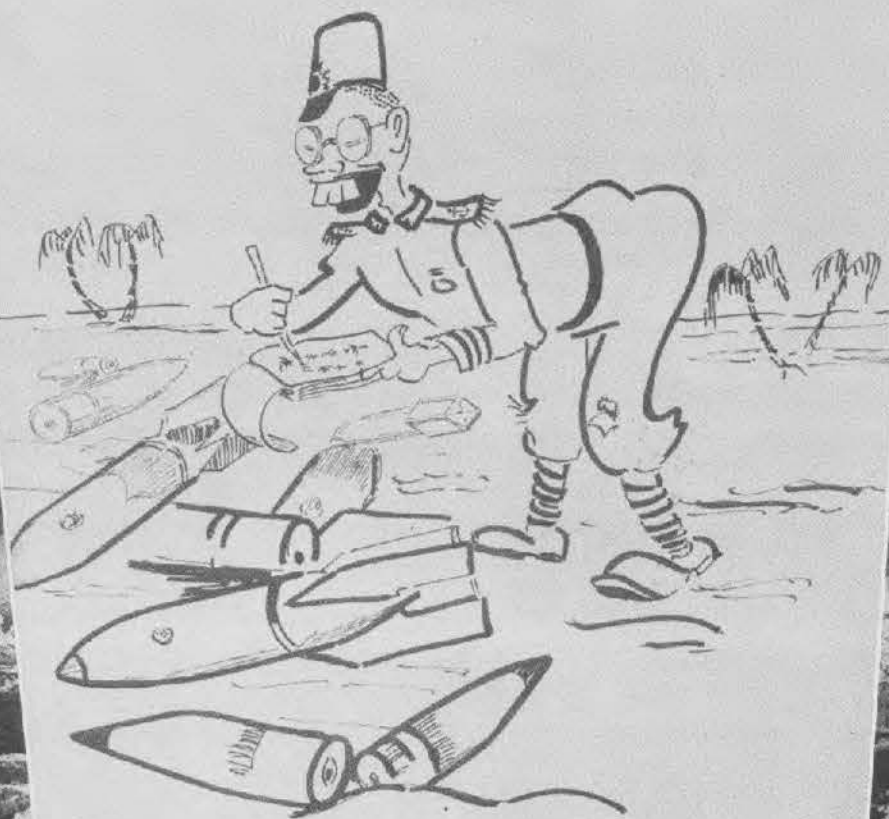
JAP

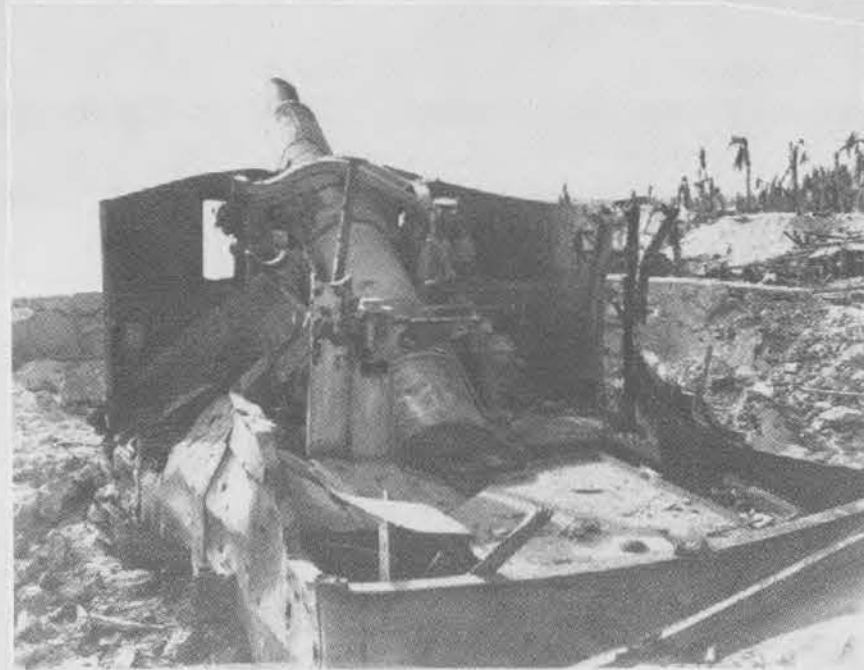
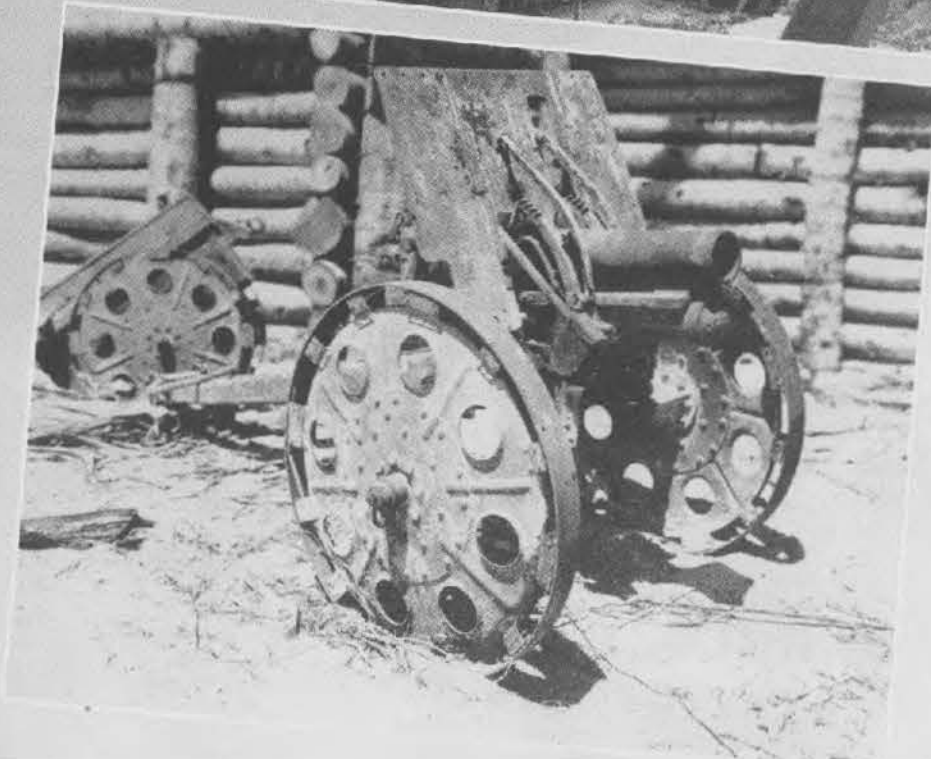
COMMAND POST →



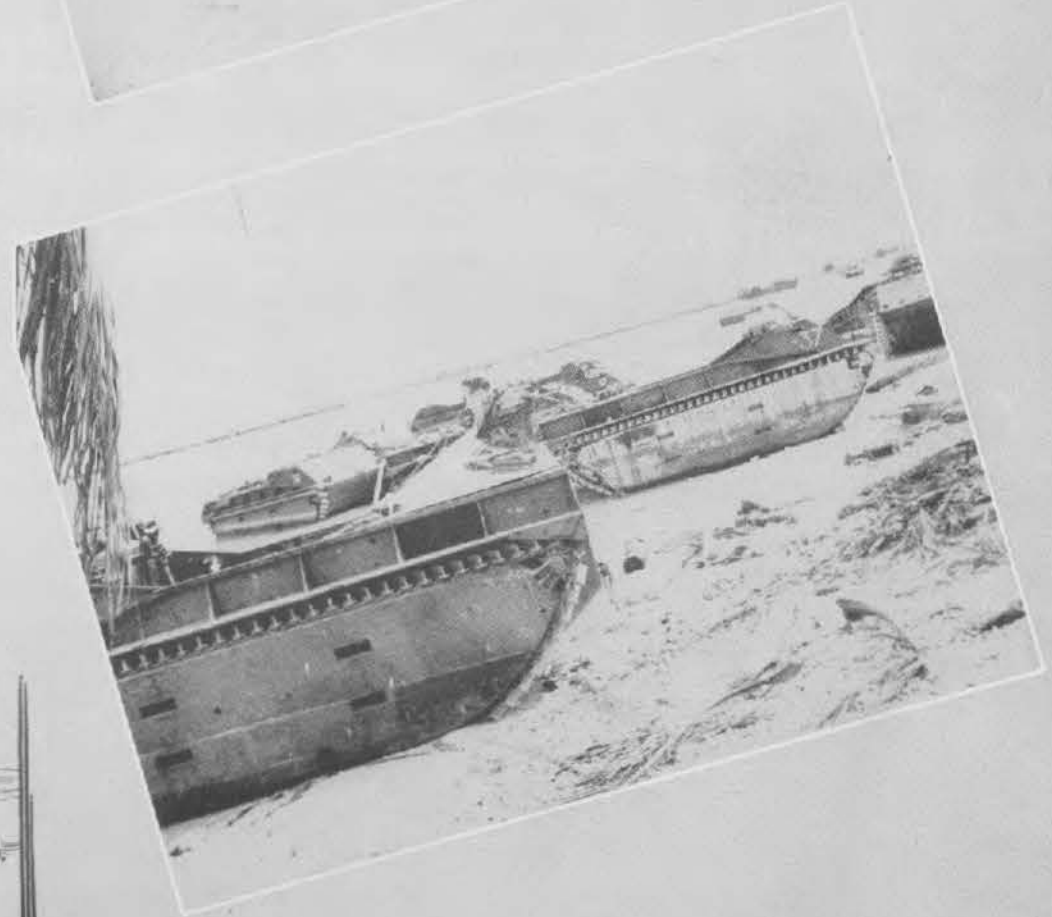
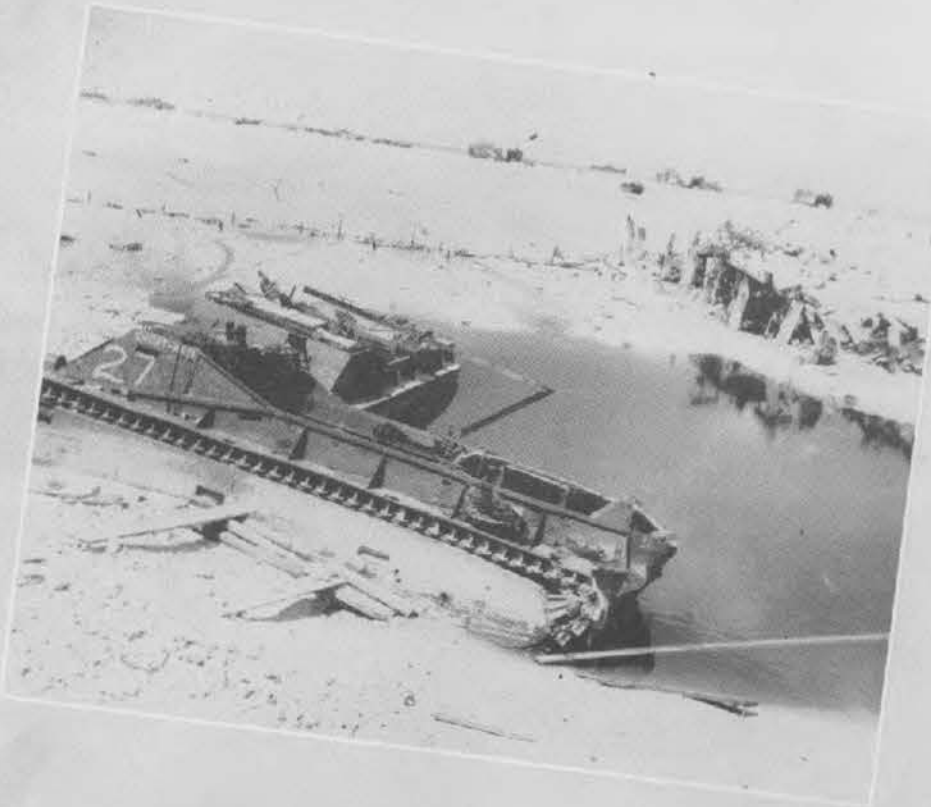


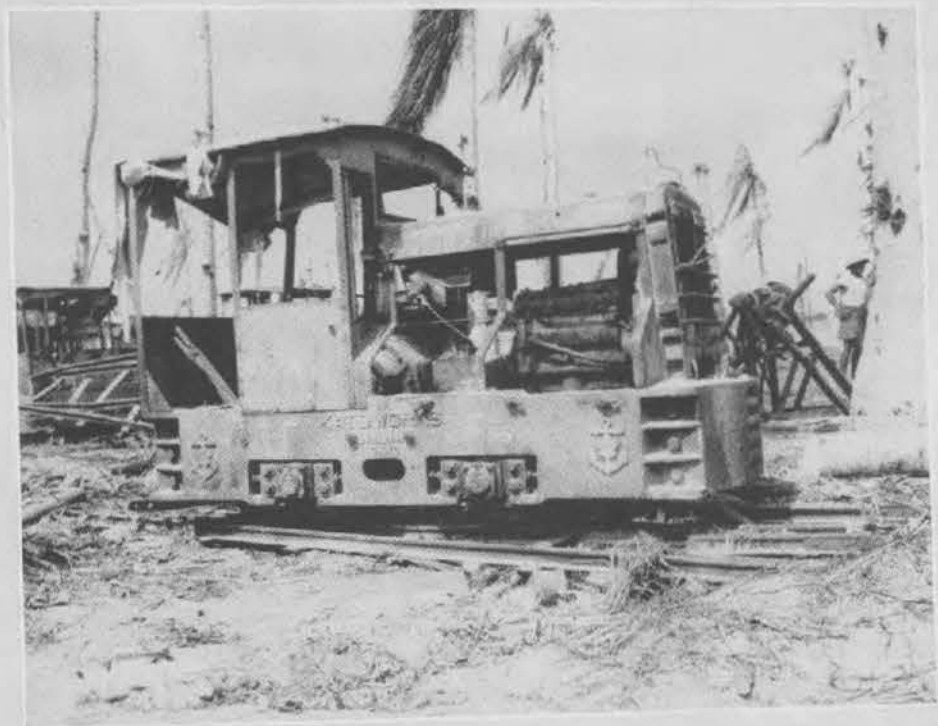
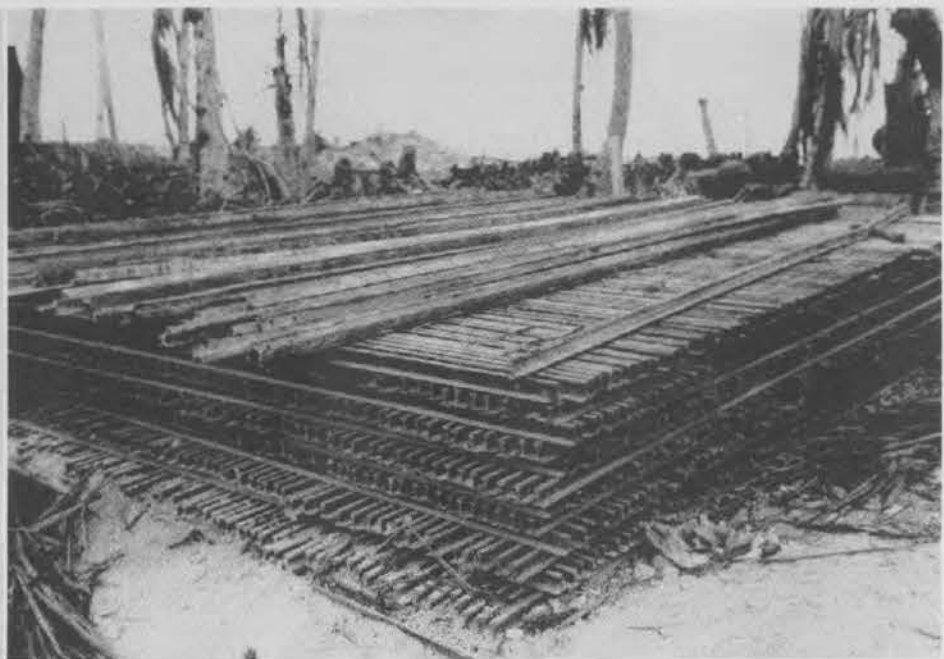
JAP ZEKE





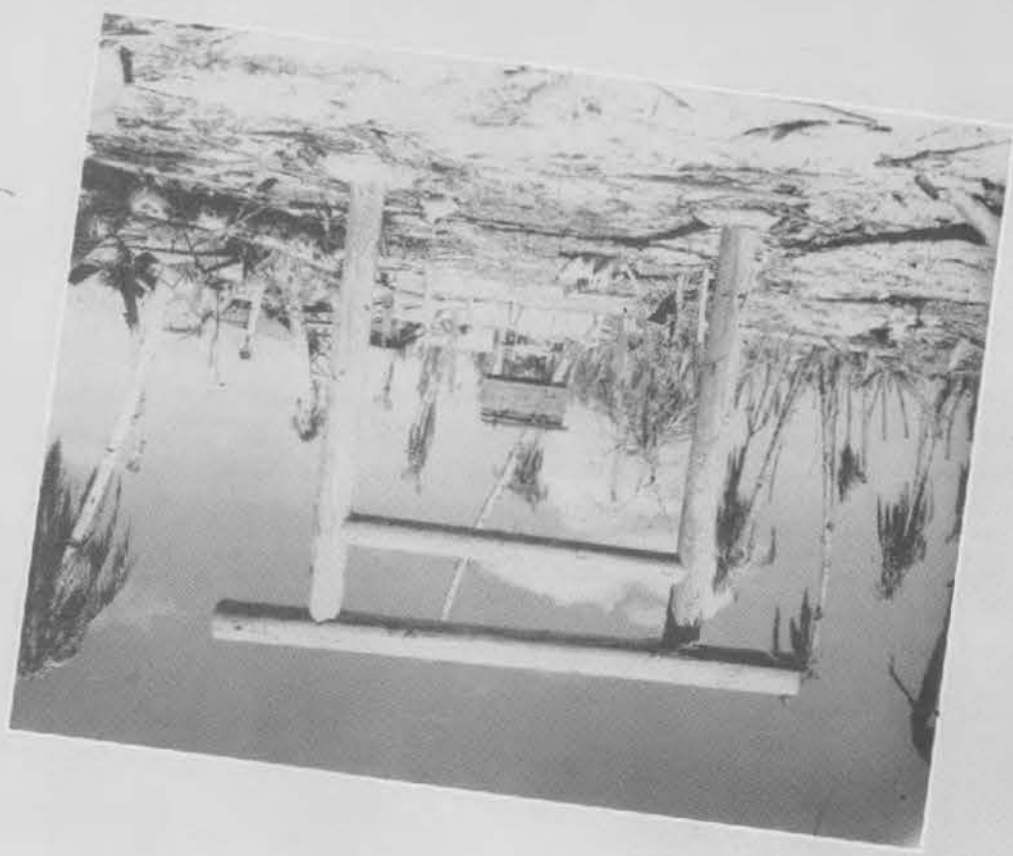








JAP SHRINE



JAP RADAR



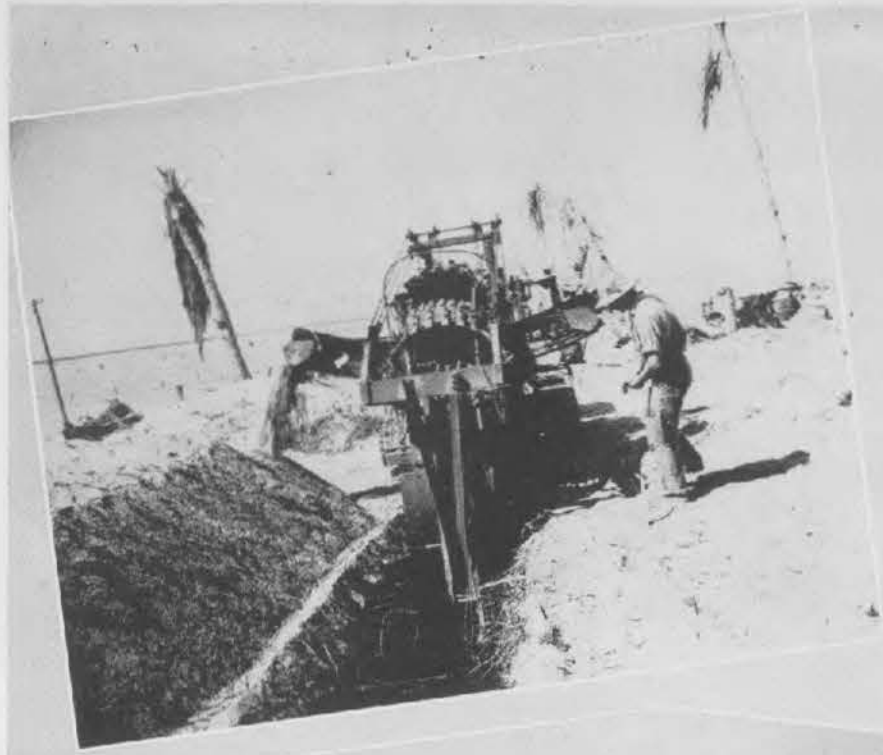


JAPANESE ADMIRAL
SHUBASAKI



OLD JAP PIER





TARAWA

TARAWA



JAP BOMBING



JAP WATER TRUCK



TARAWA



JAP PLANES



TARAWA



JAP GUN



JAP TANK

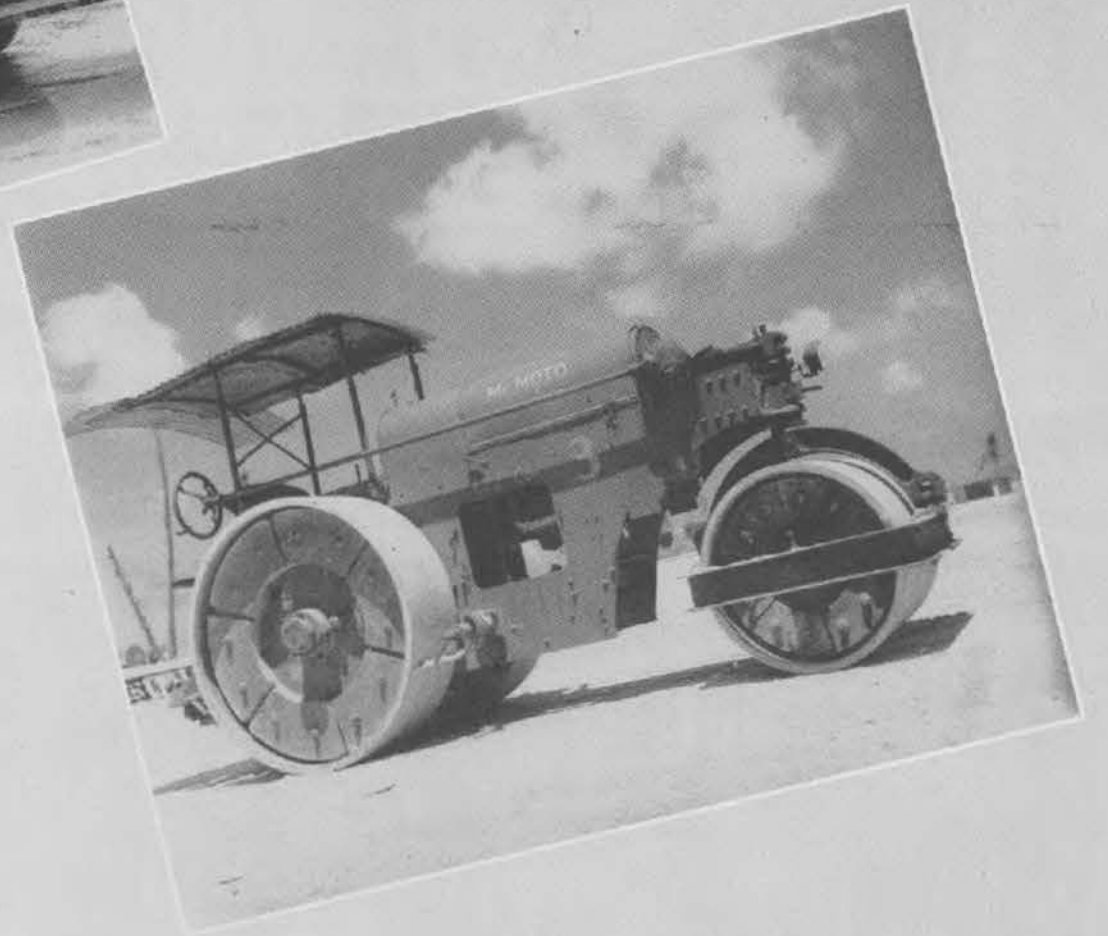


AIR RAID

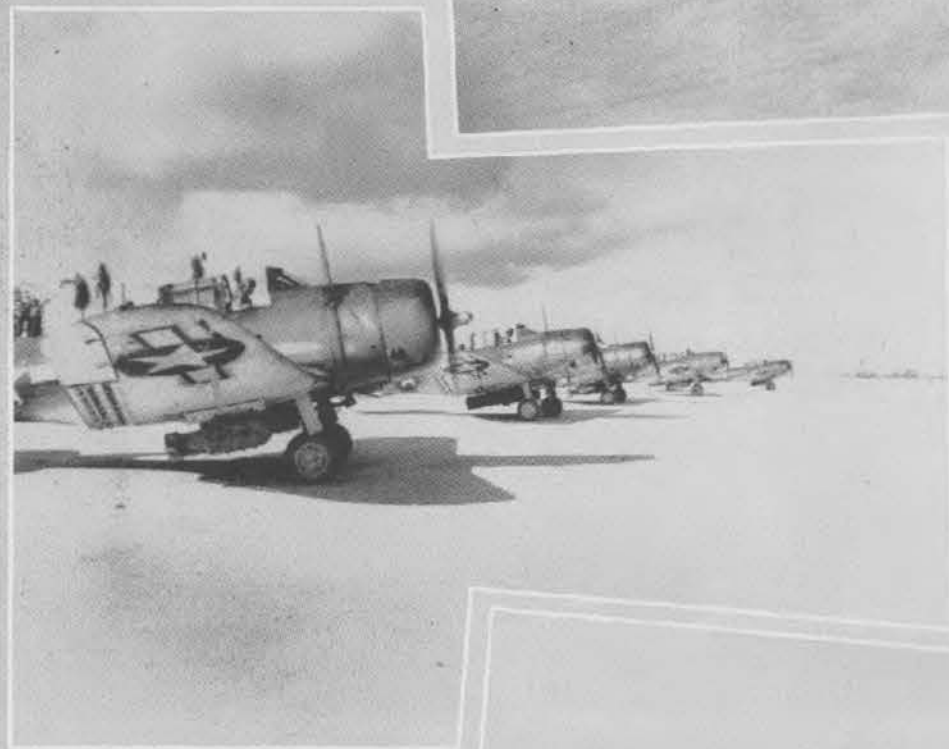








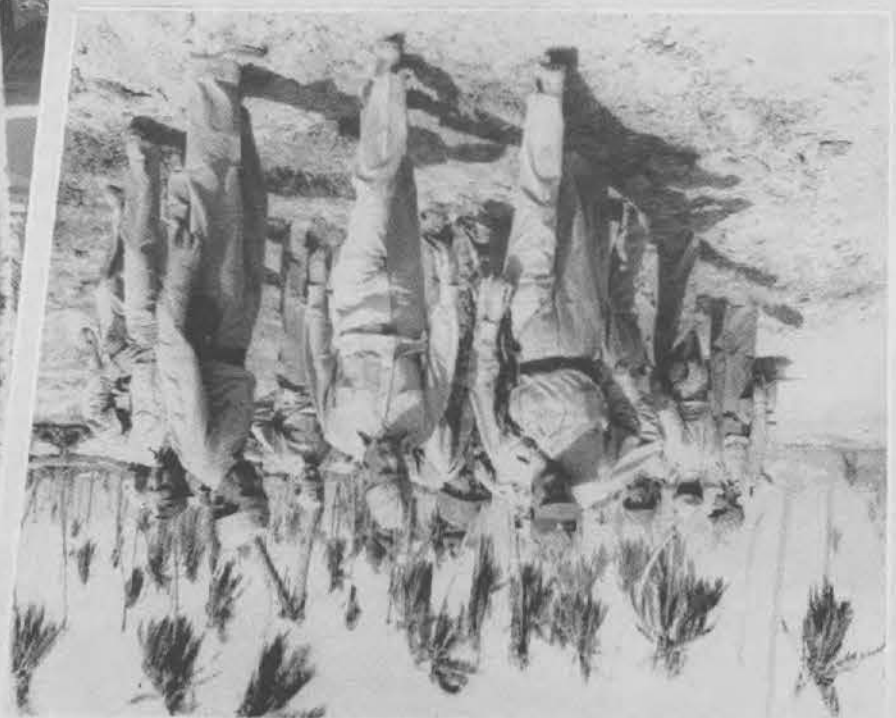
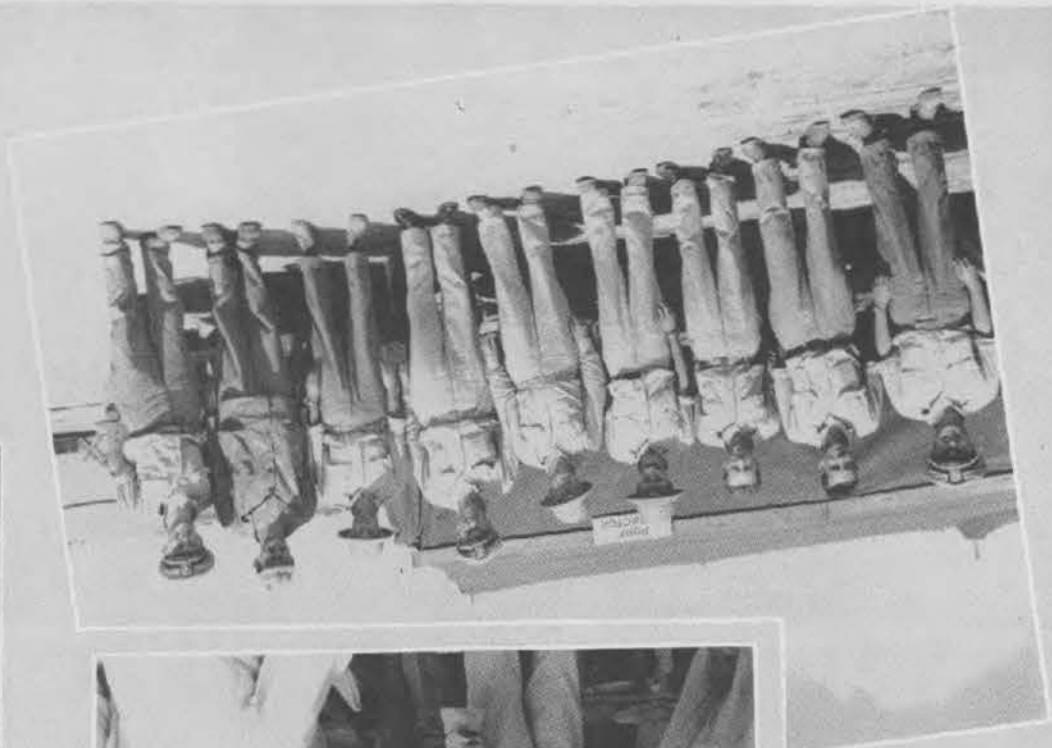


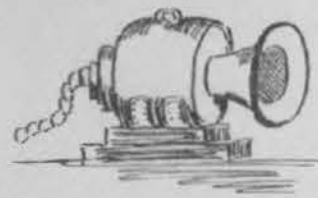





CONTROL
TOWER₂



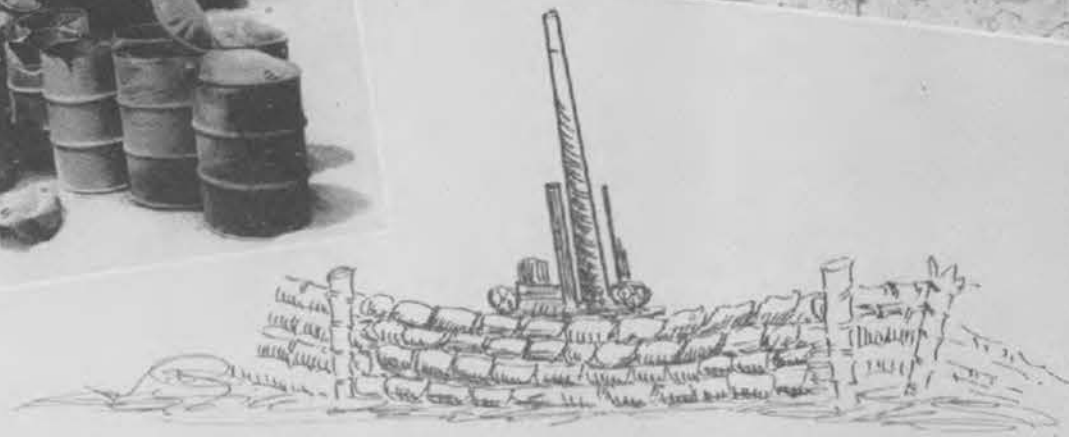




AIR RAID

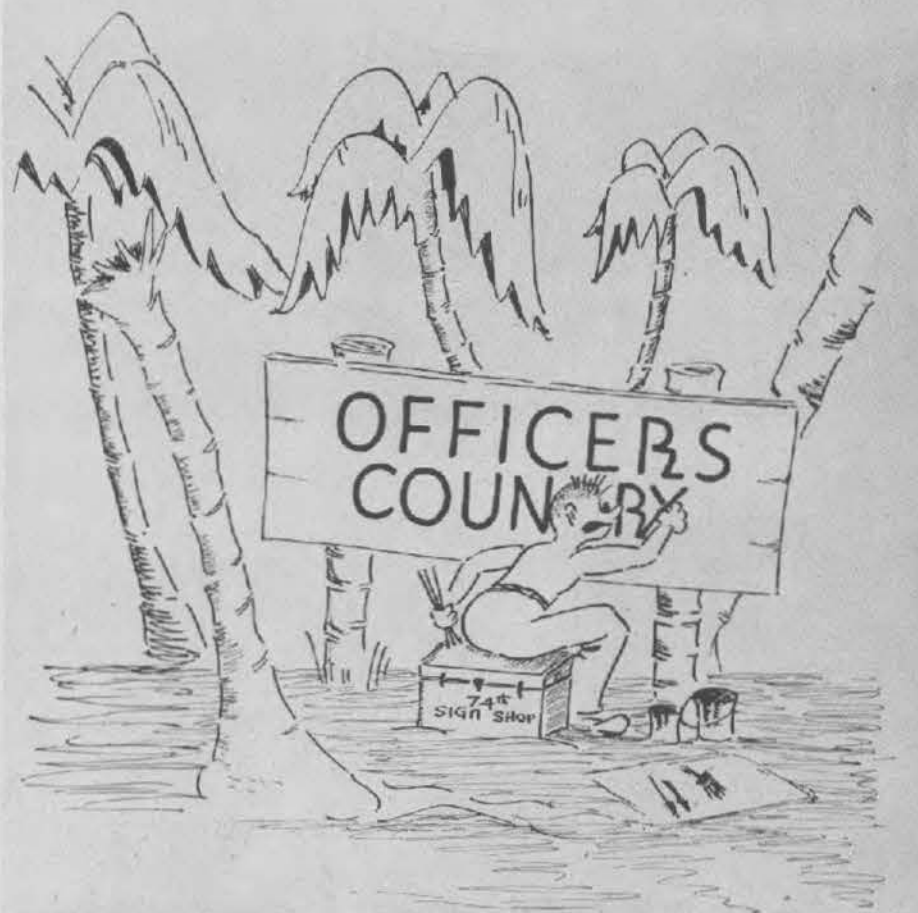
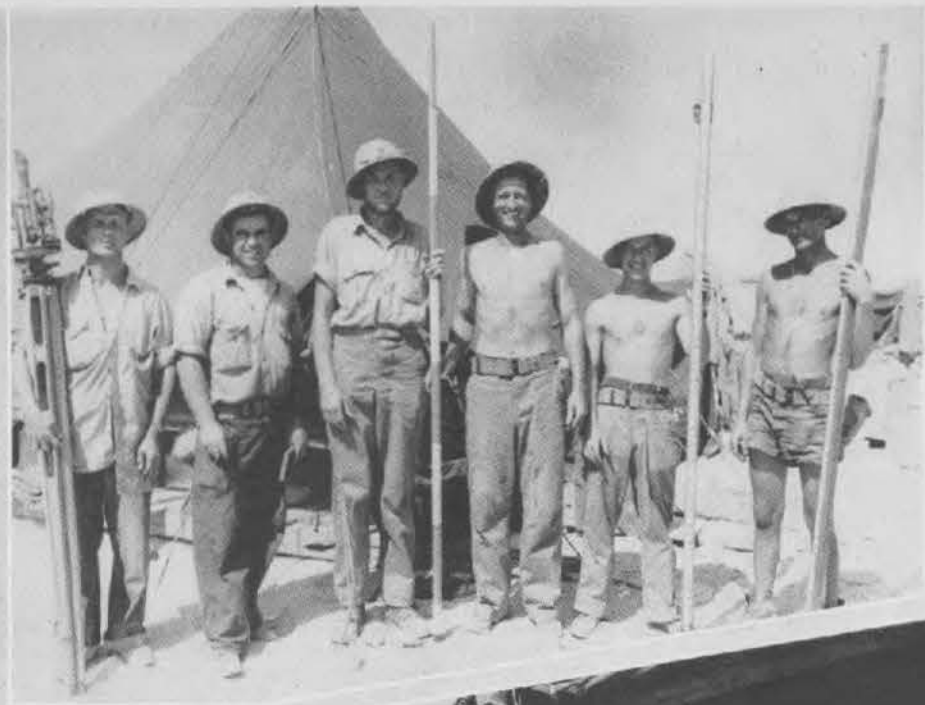


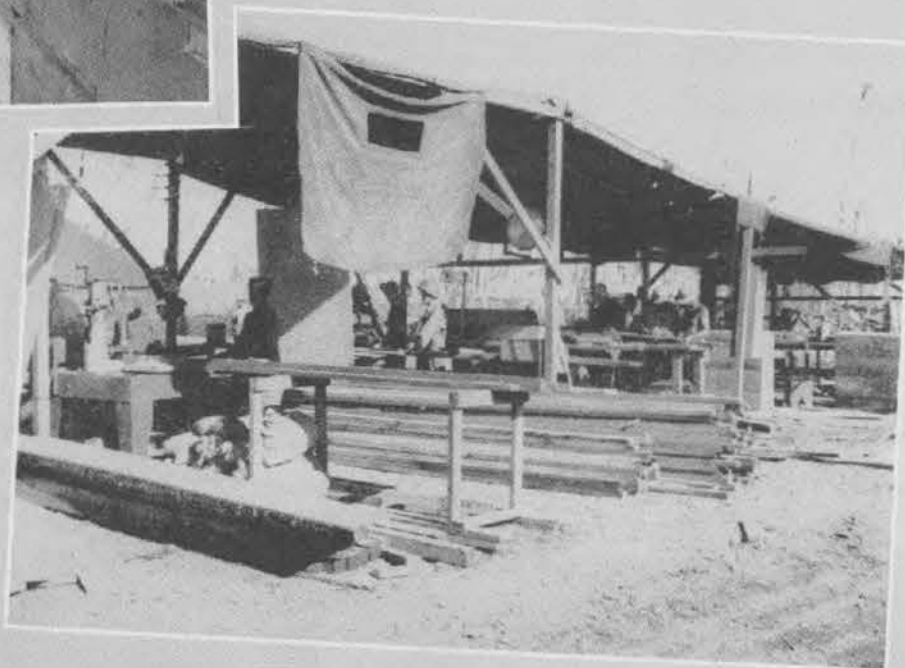
JAP LANDING CRAFT





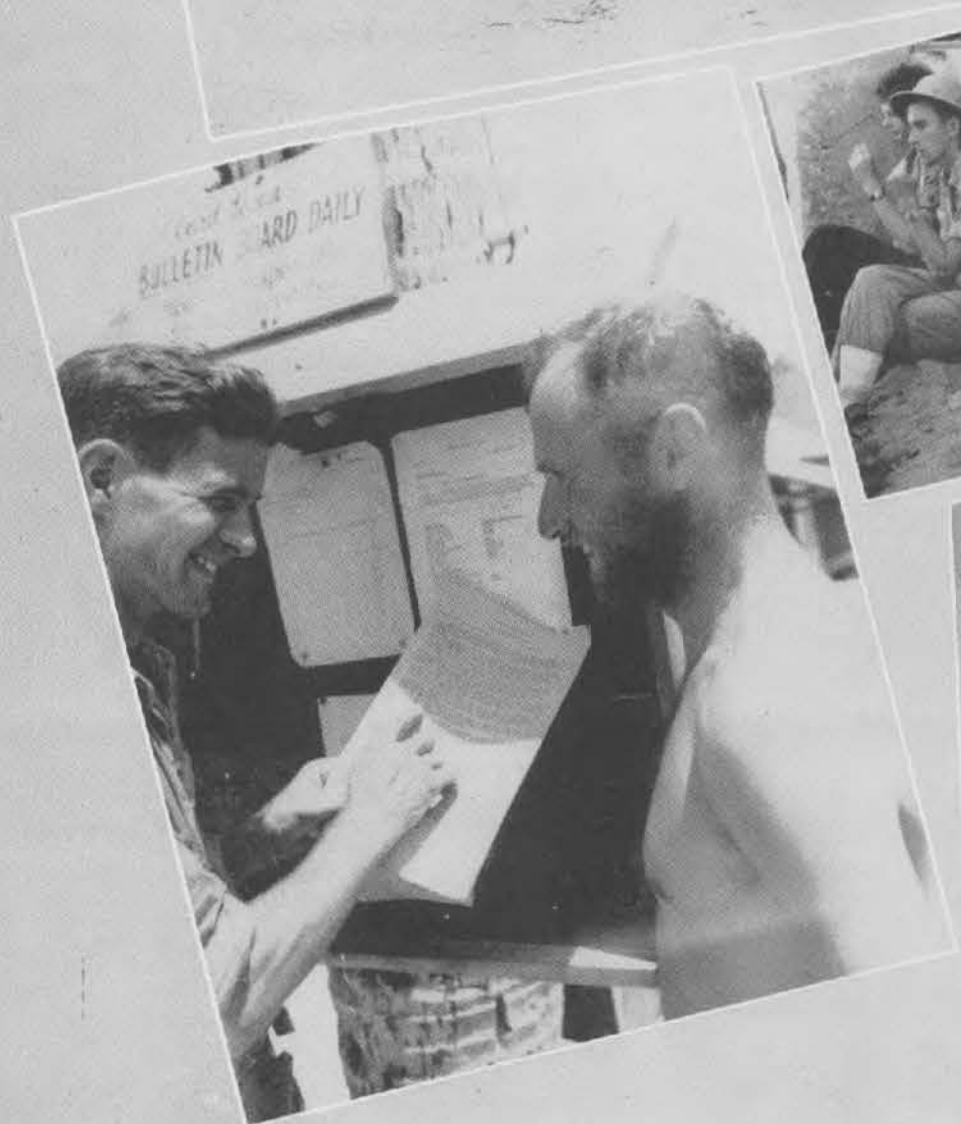






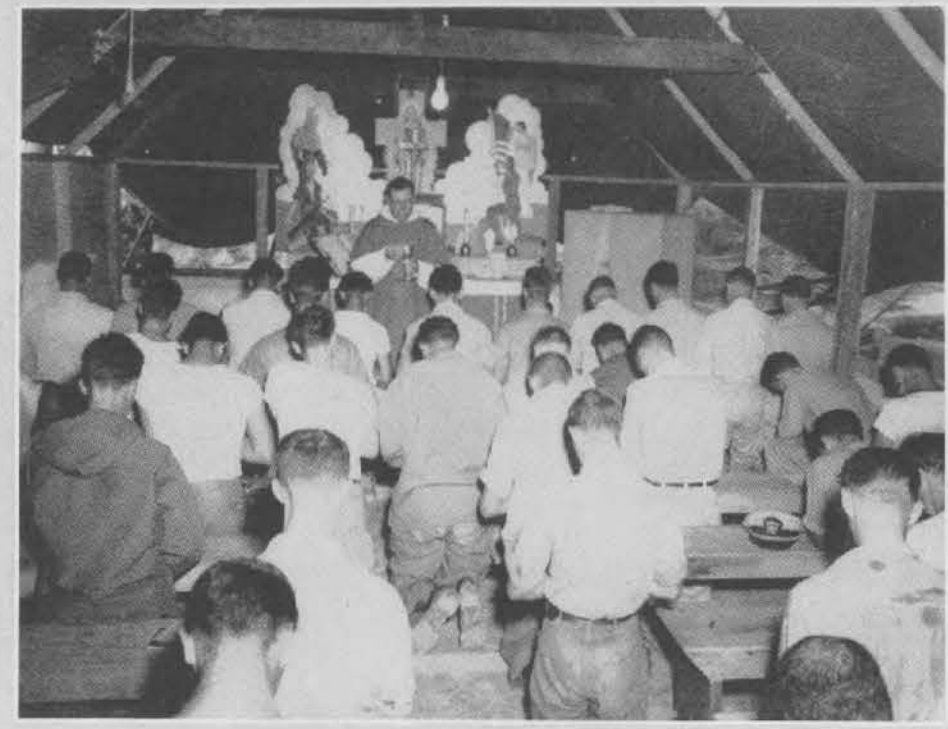


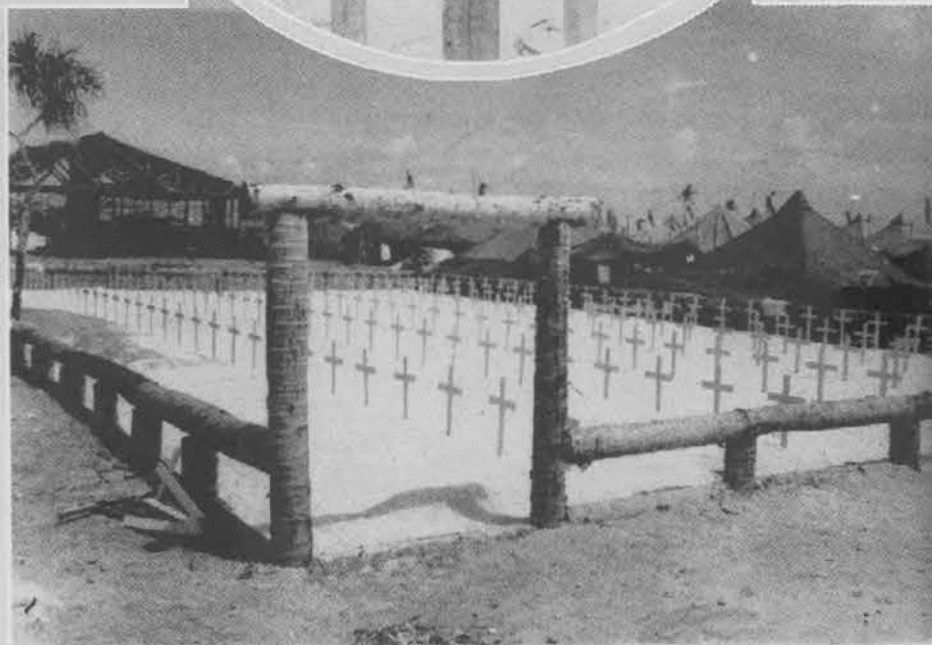
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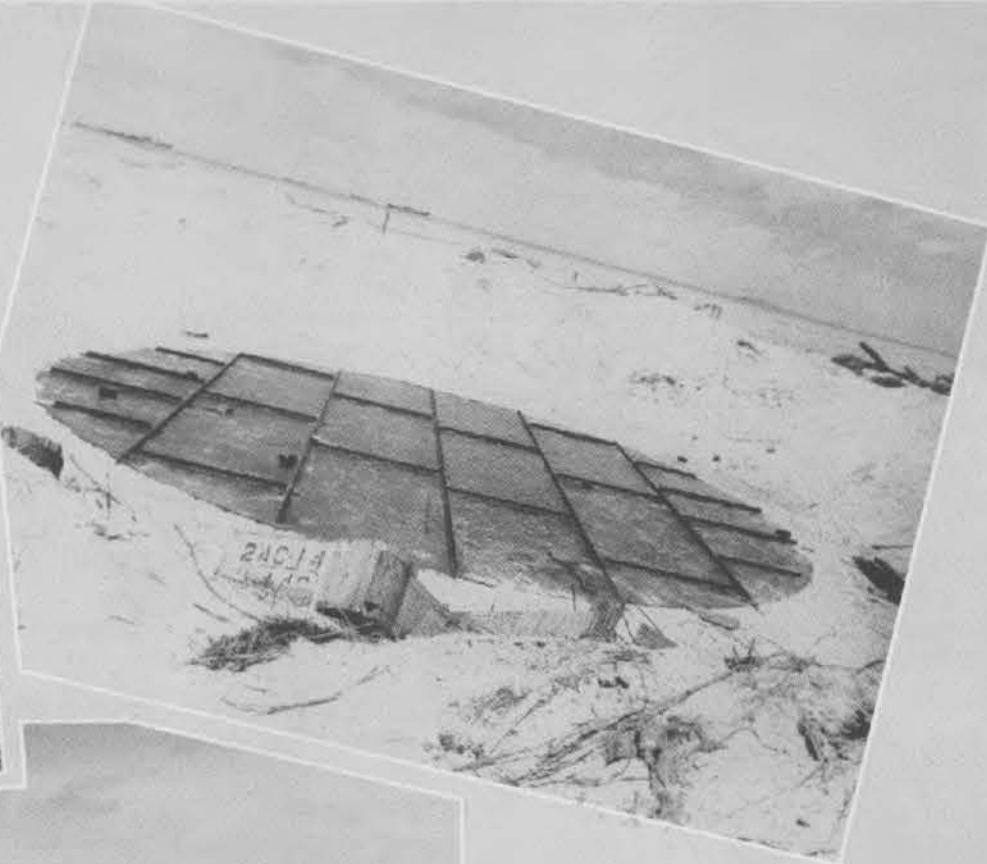


CENSORED

FIRST
MASS
ON
TABAWA

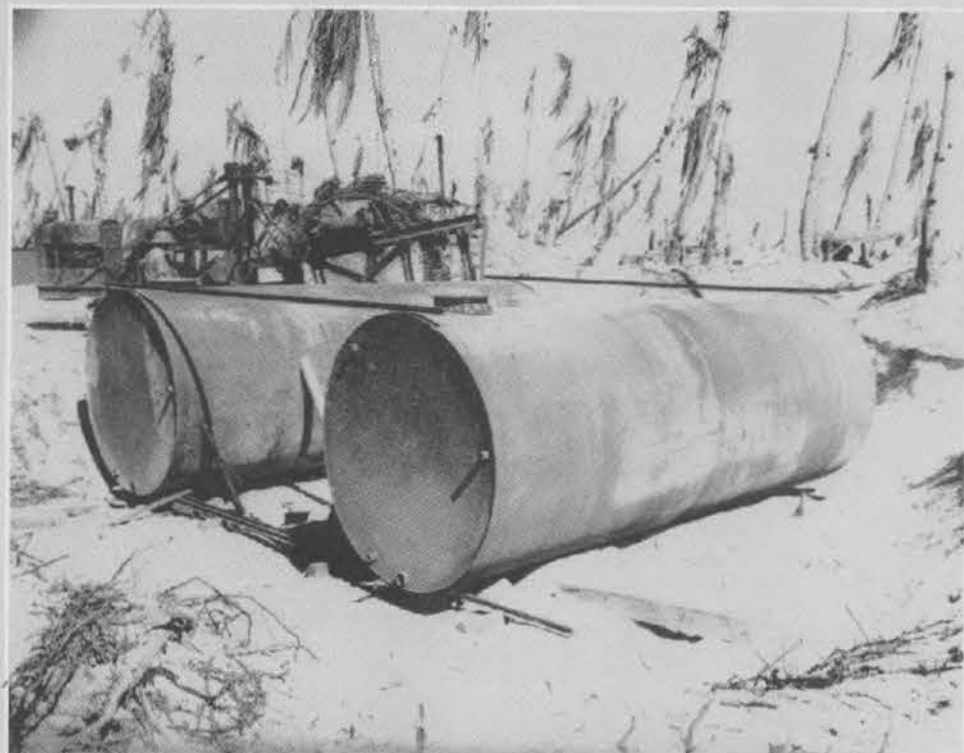


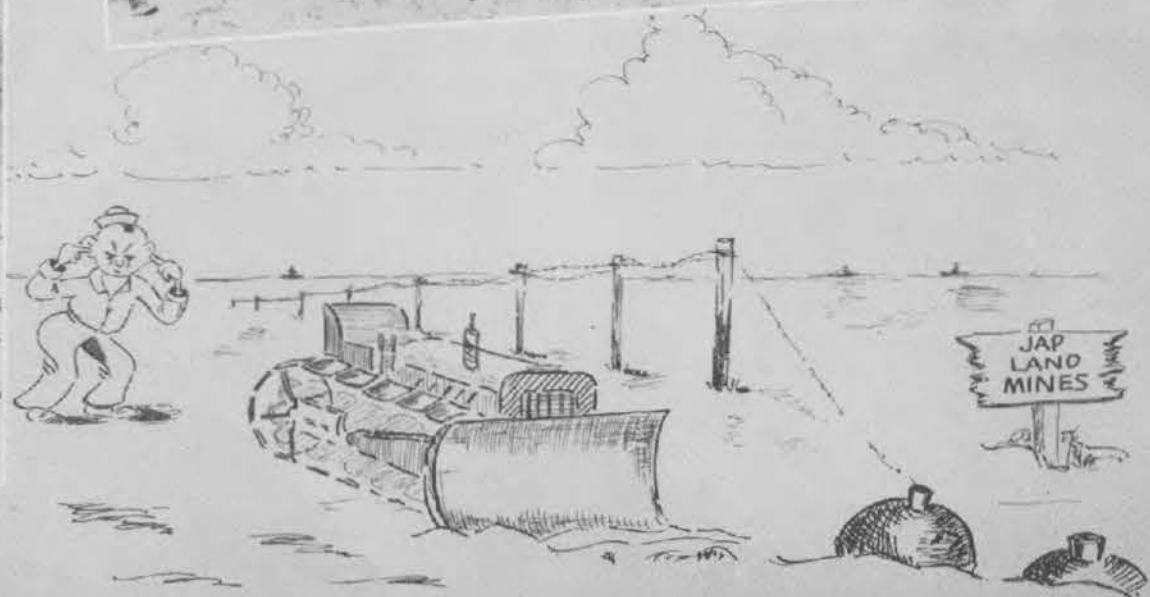


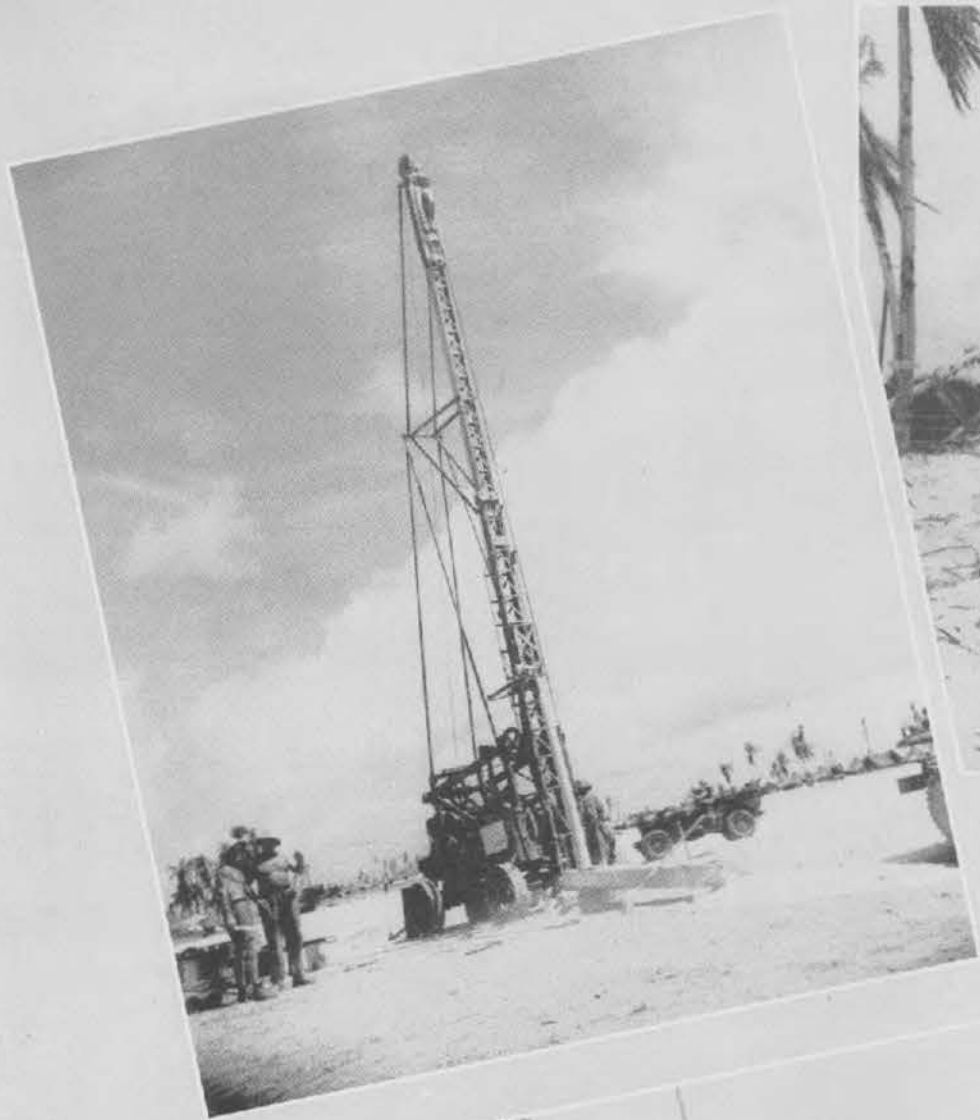


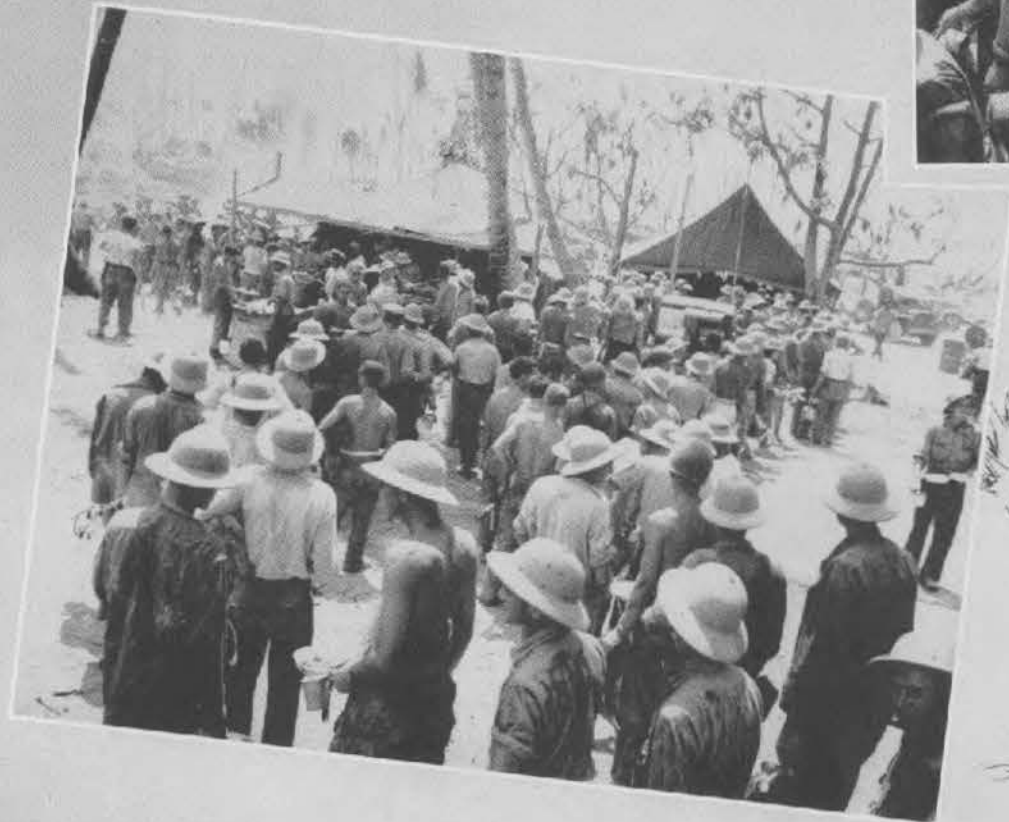
TANK FARM

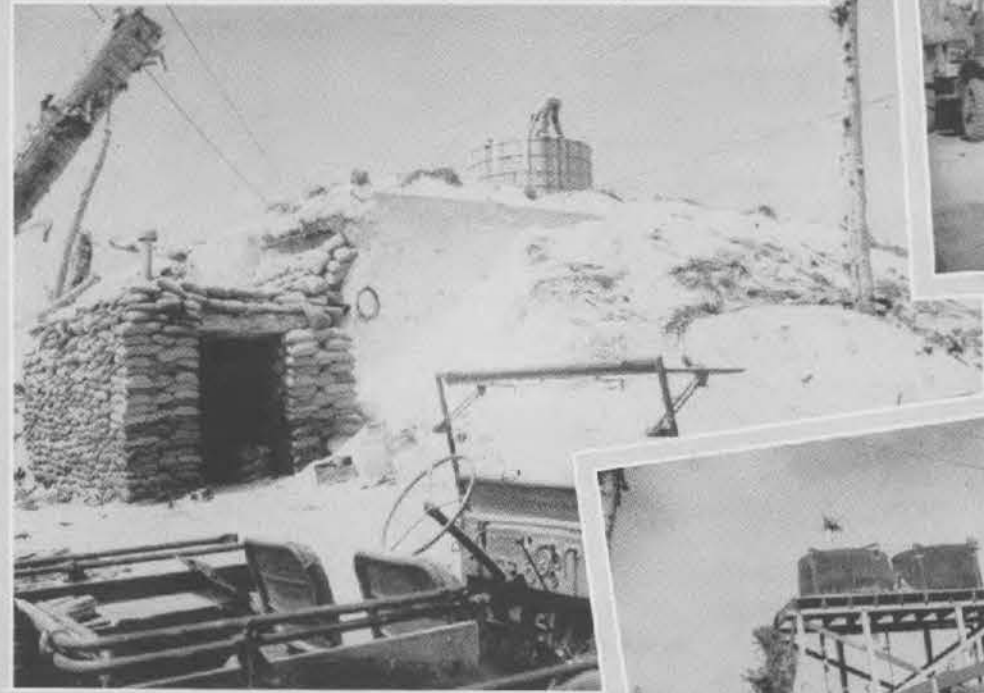


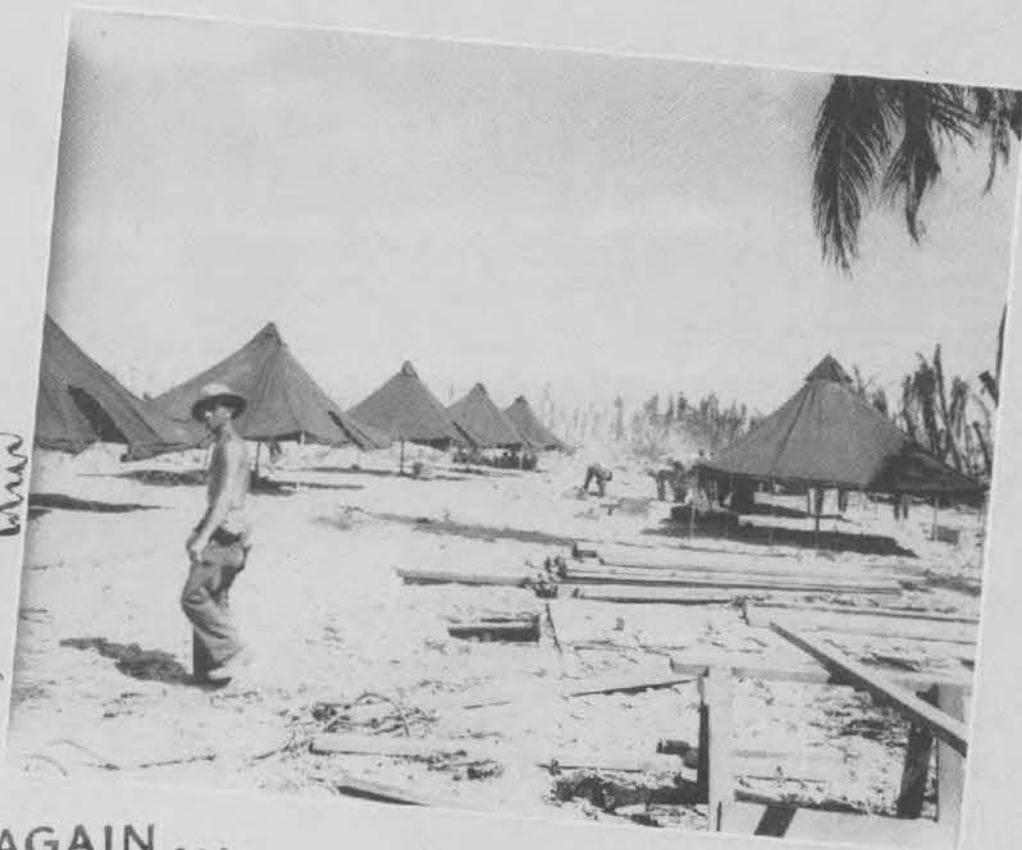
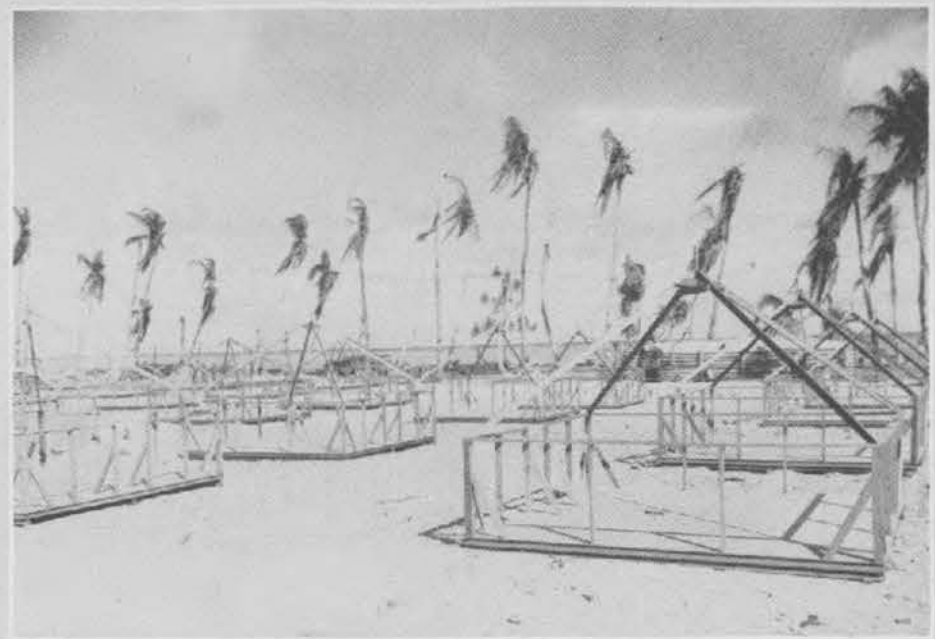










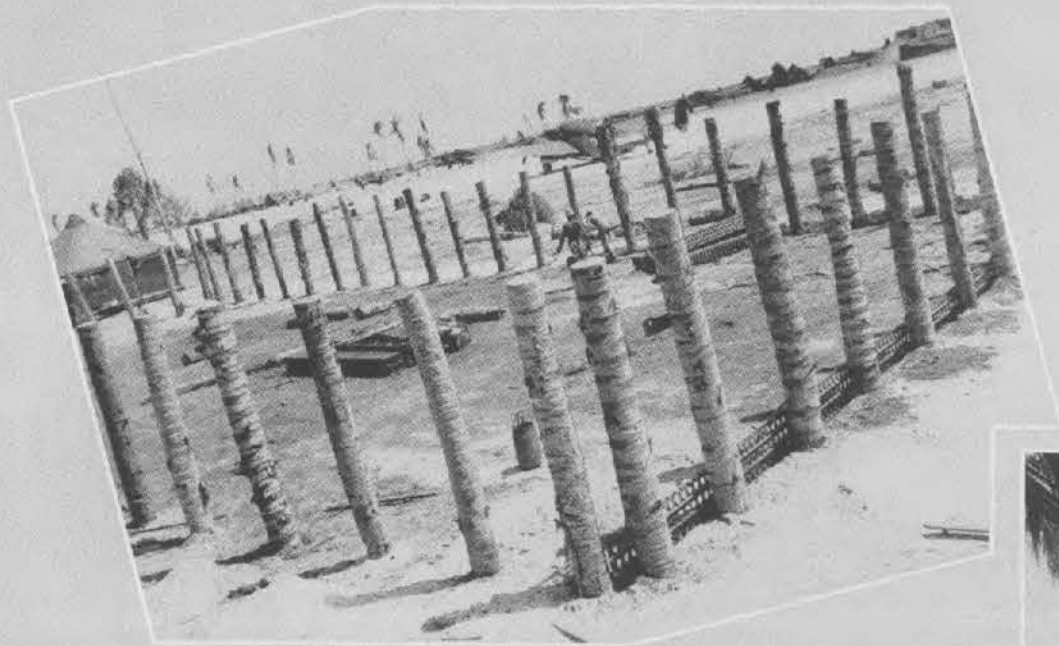


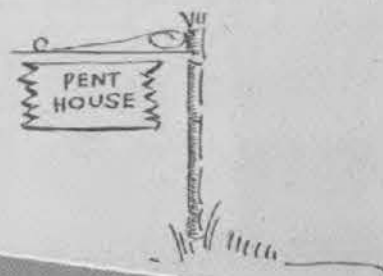
WHAT AGAIN



CAMP CONSTRUCTION

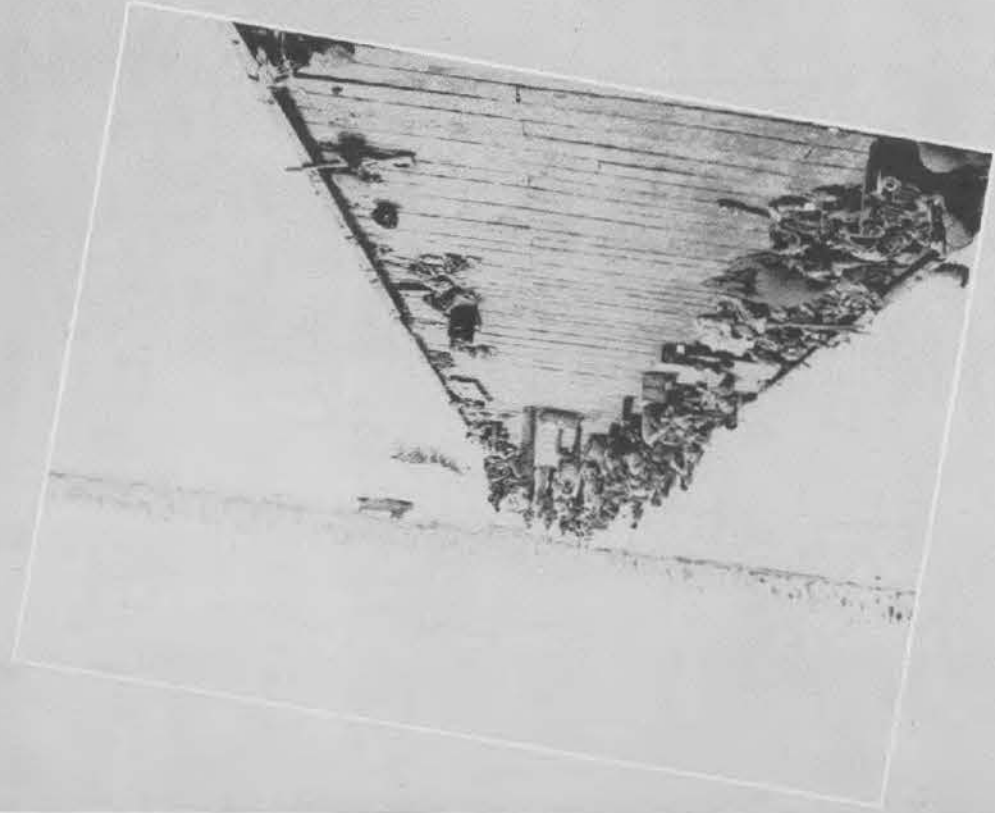
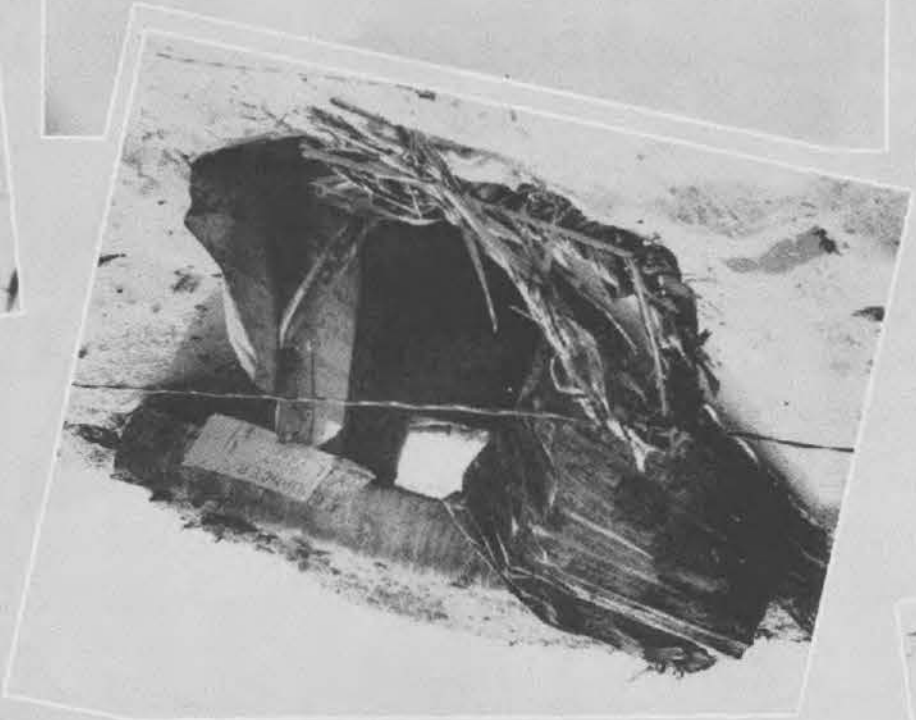


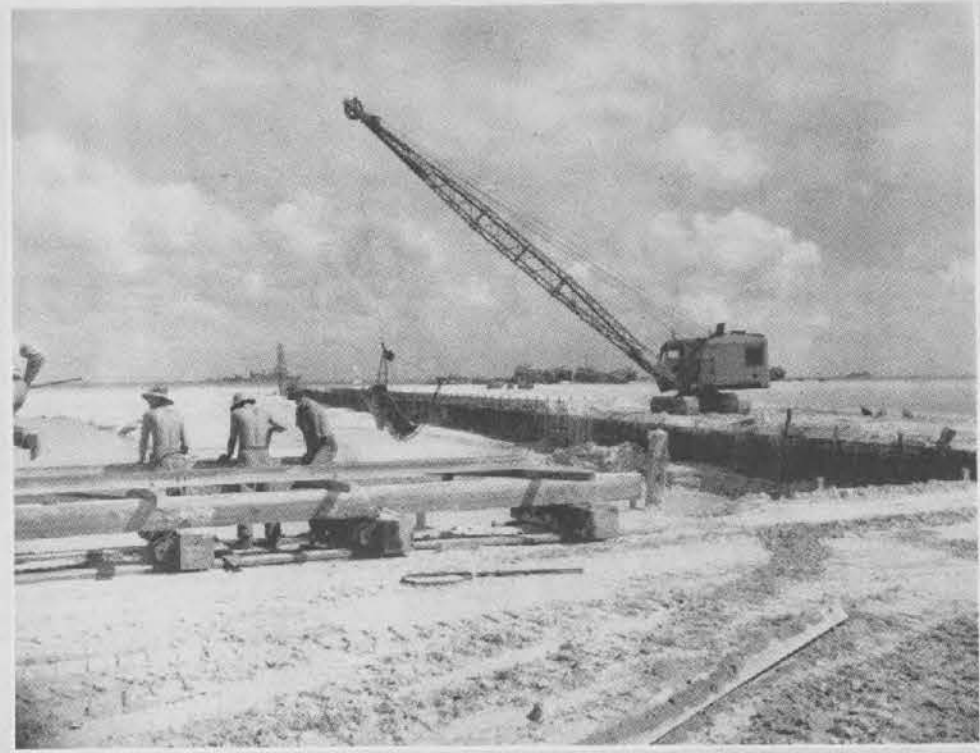


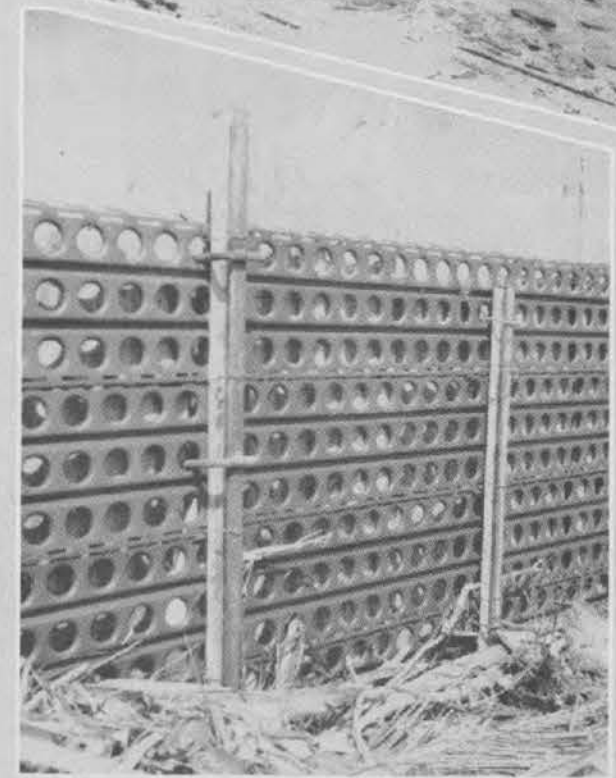




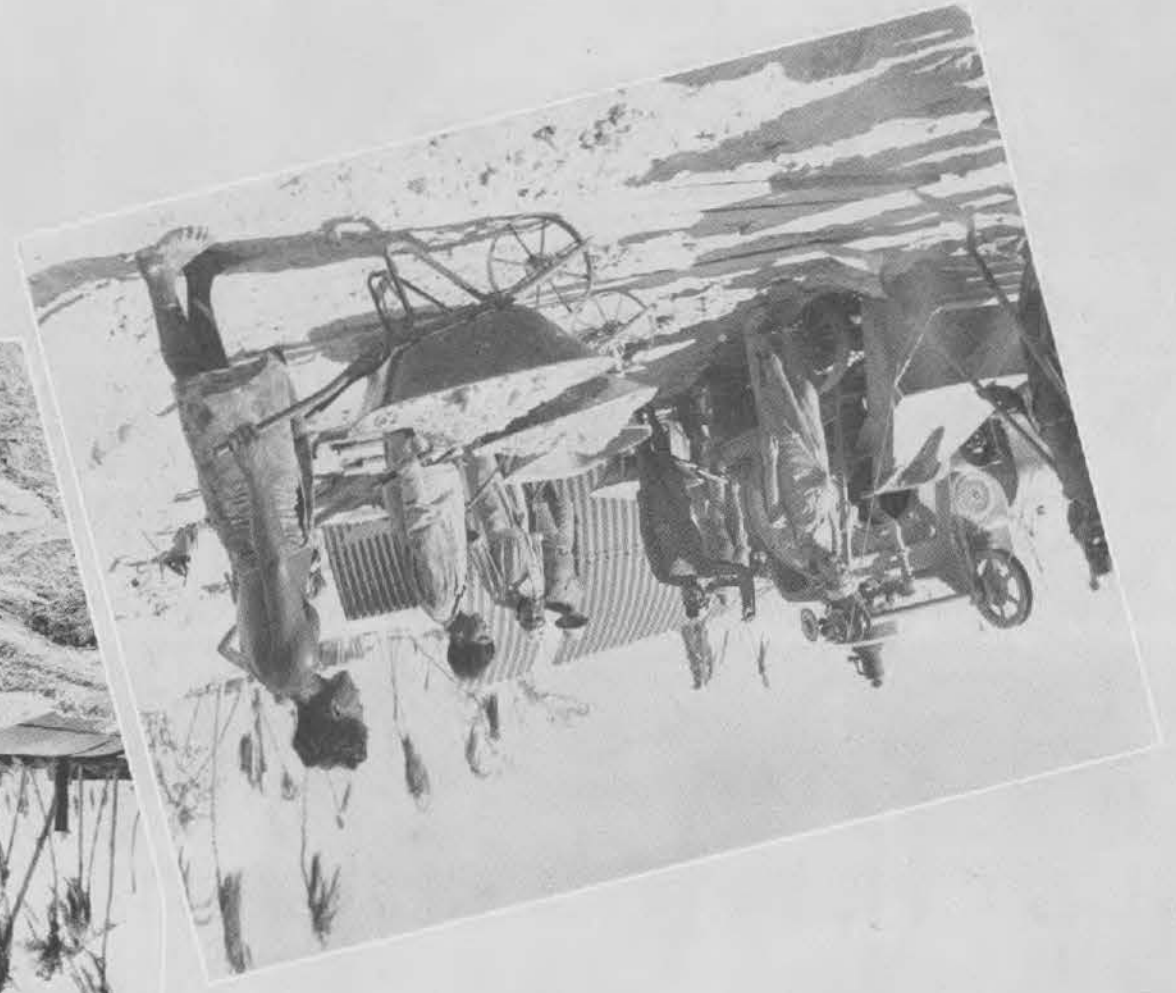
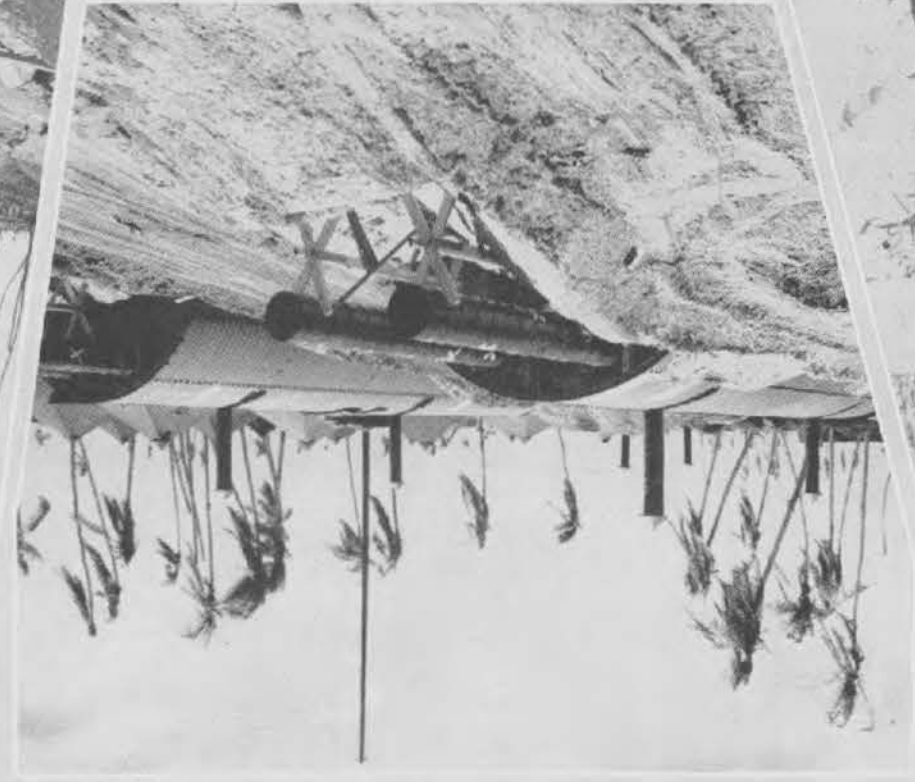
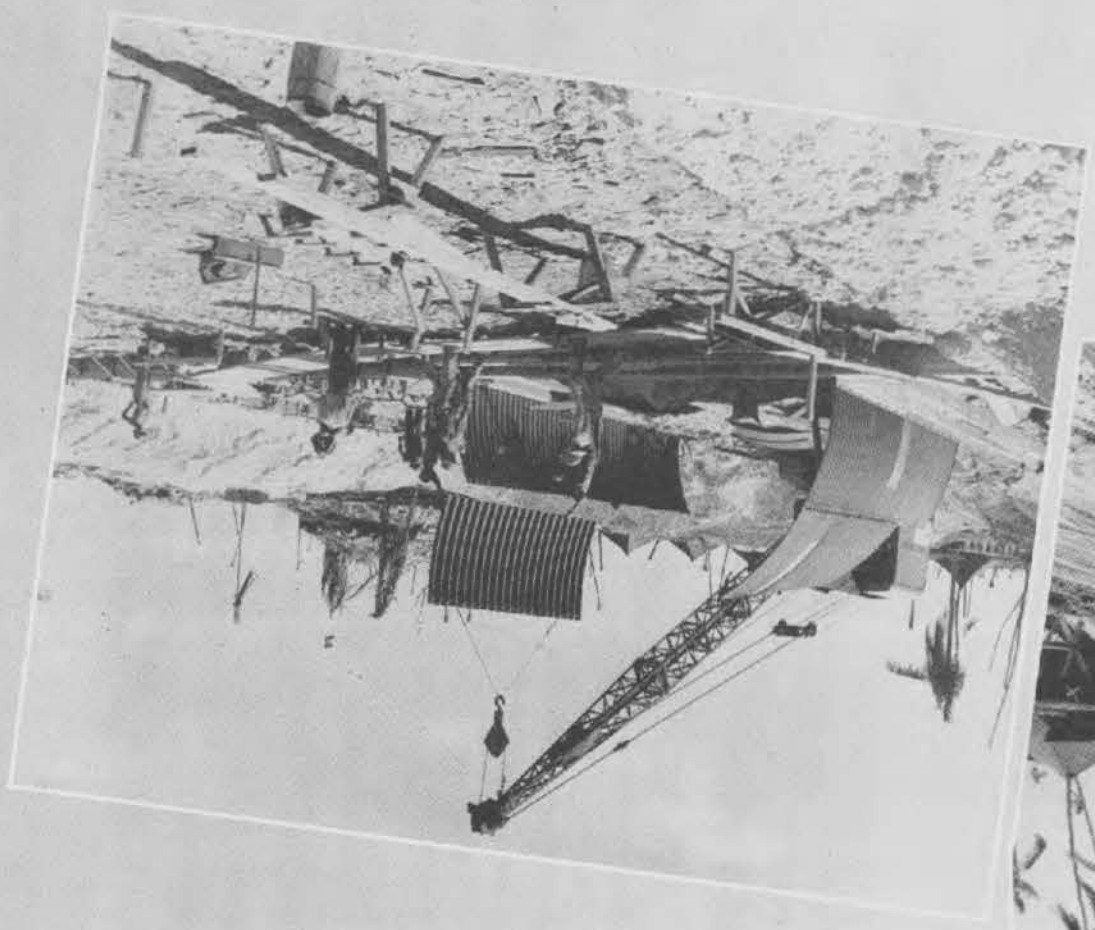
Native Labor





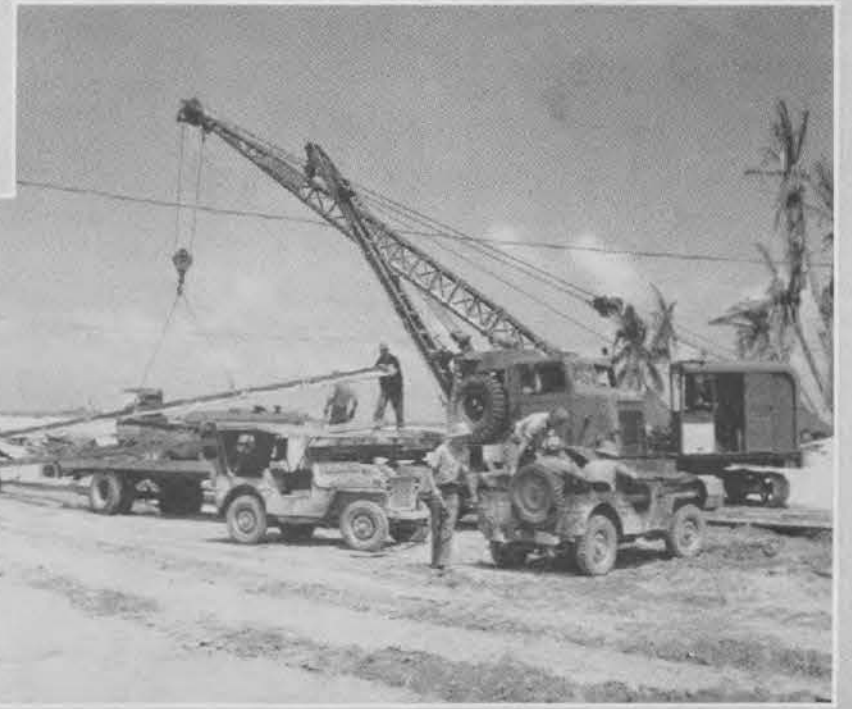
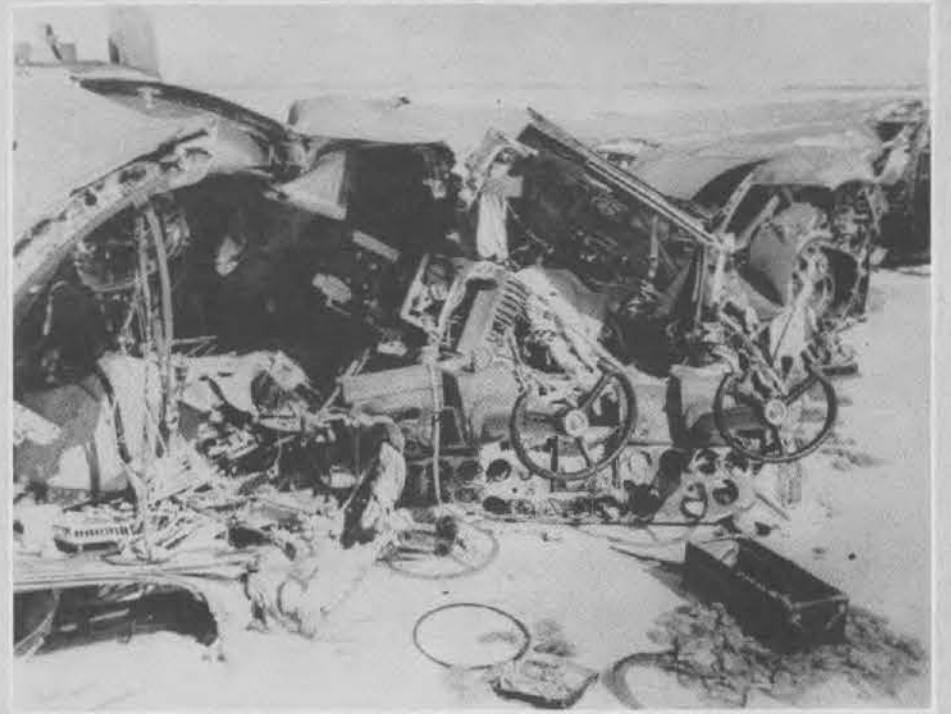


WATER FRONT
CONSTRUCTION





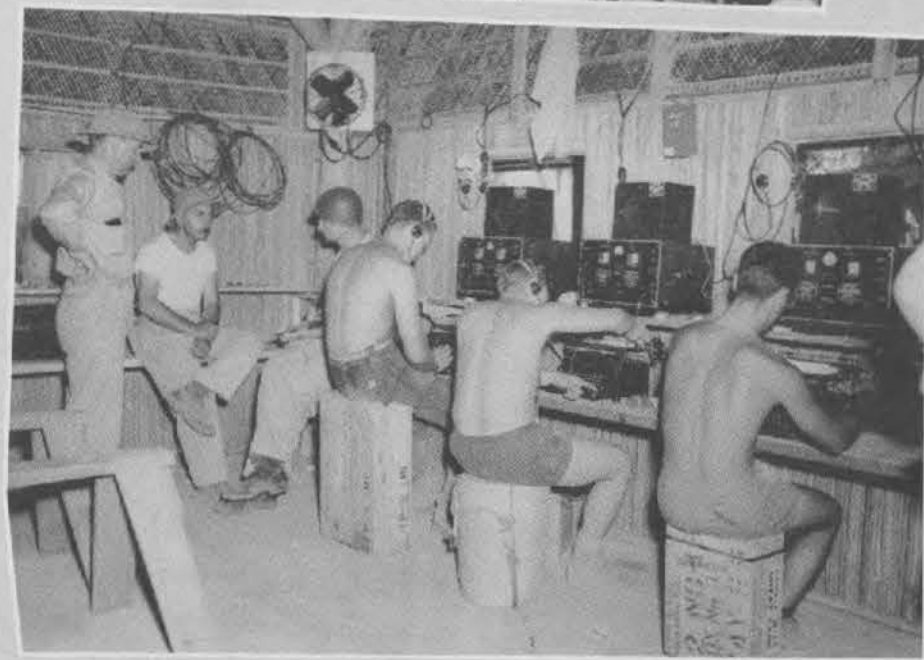






Bairiki

Bairiki





Native Life - Tarawa



BETIO
TARAWA ATOLL

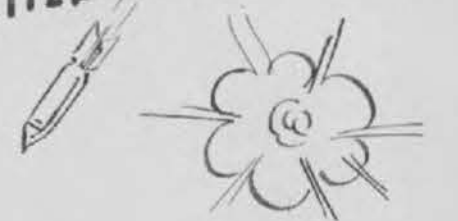
0 500 1000 1500 2000

SCALE IN FEET



Mullinix Field

Bomb Craters



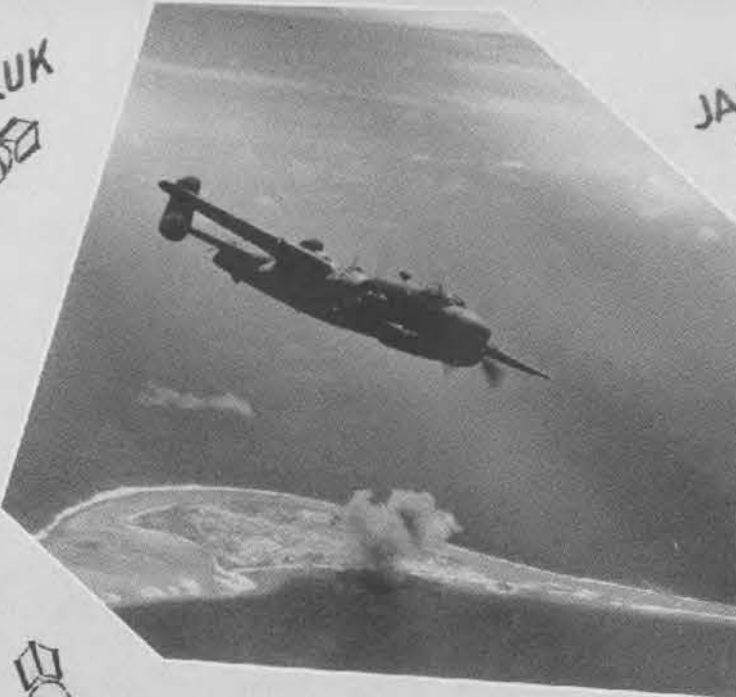








TRUK

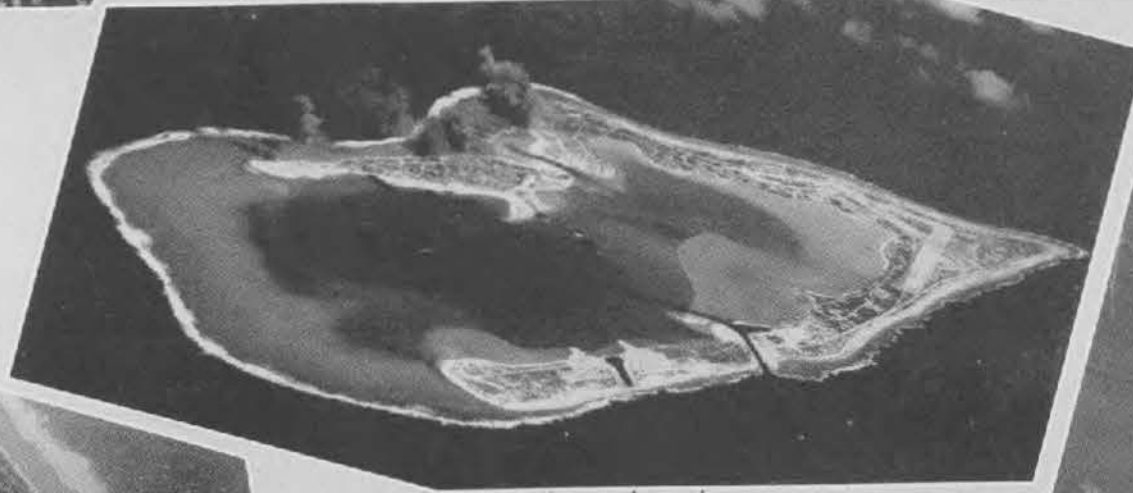


JALUIT

WAKE



MALOELAP



KWAJALEIN



TARGETS OF THE CENTRAL PACIFIC



GUAM



MILLE





JAP PRISONERS

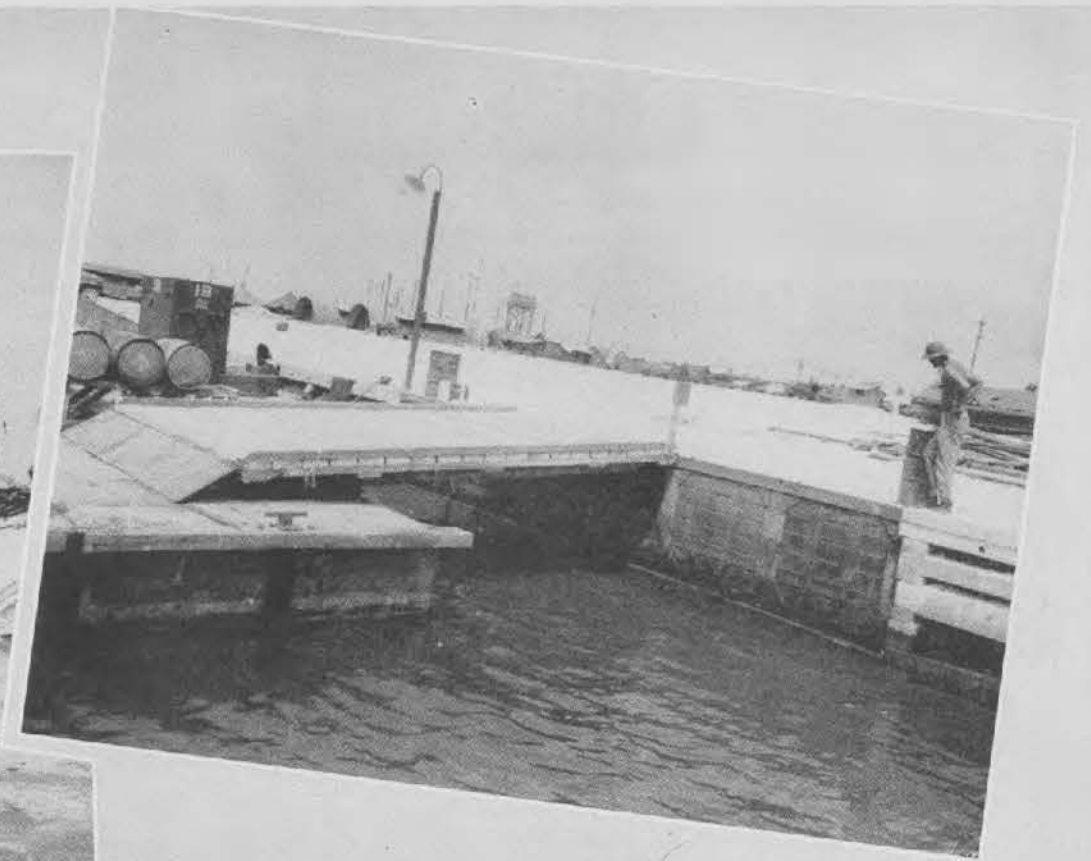


← HARU KARI



MARSHALLS

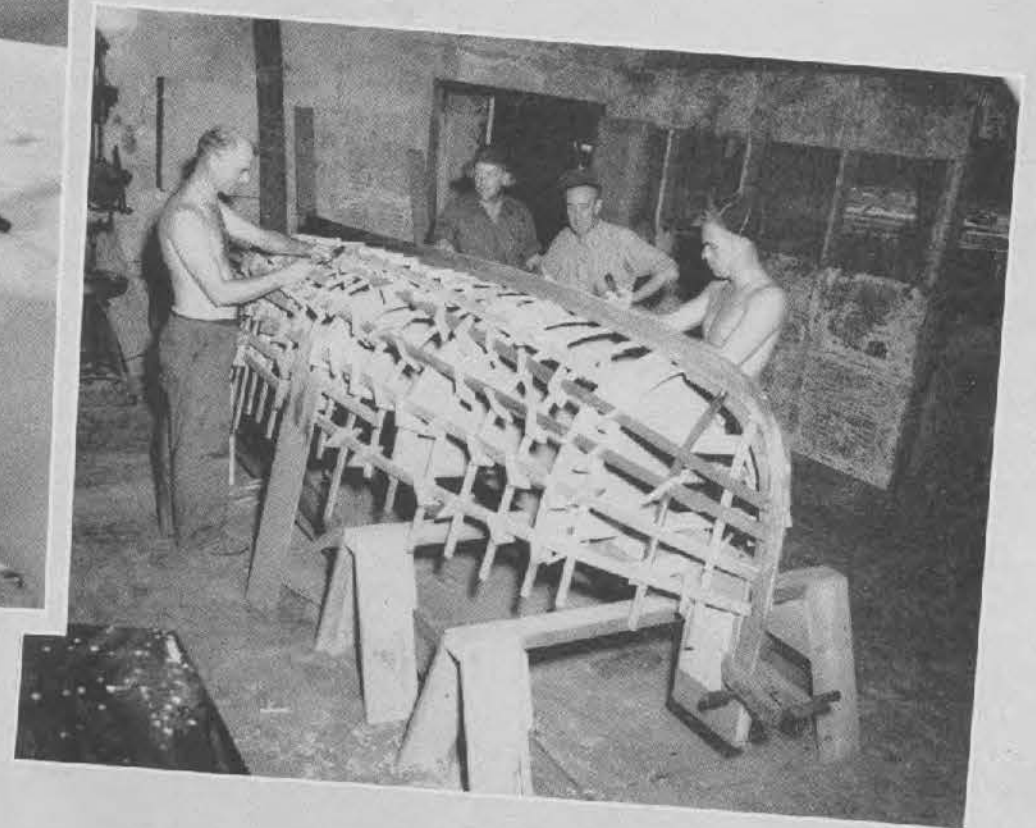


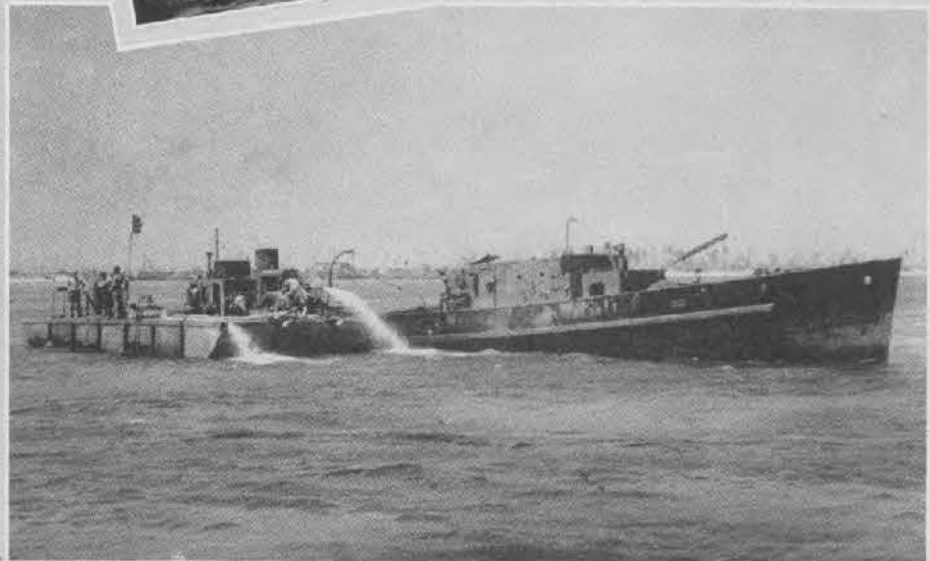
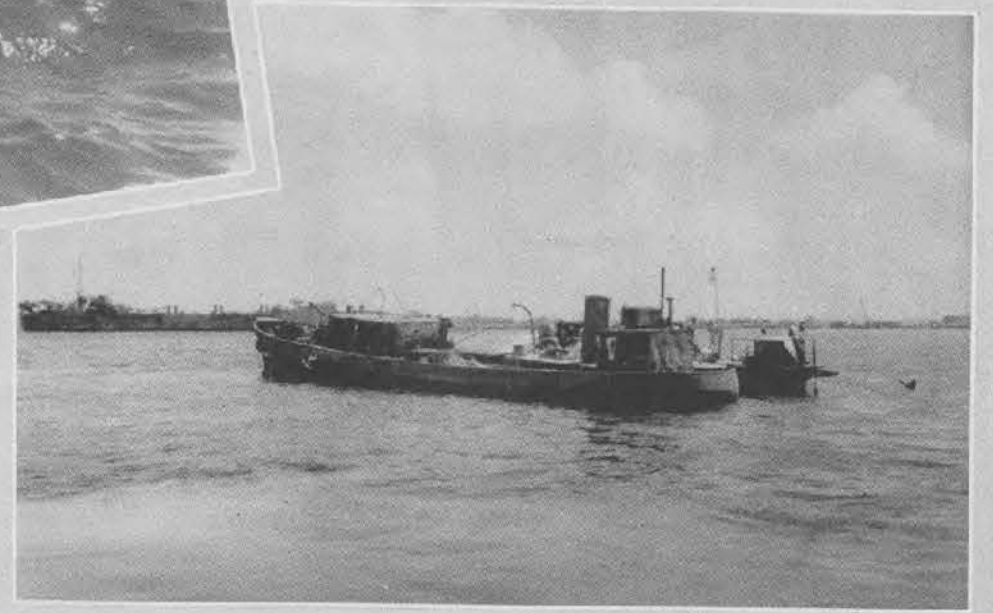
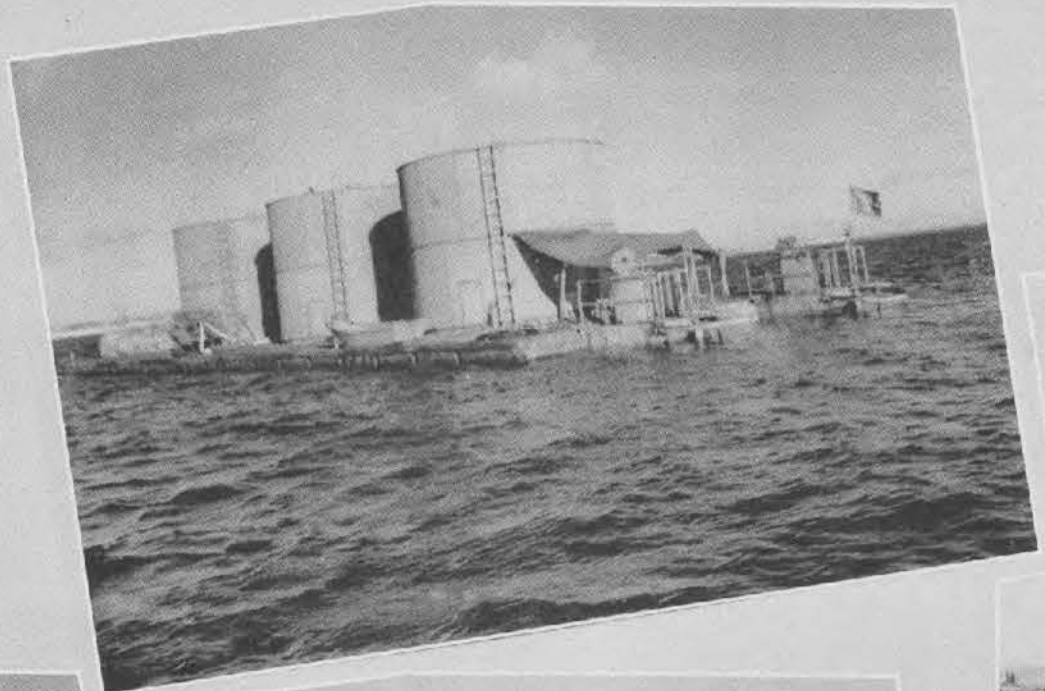
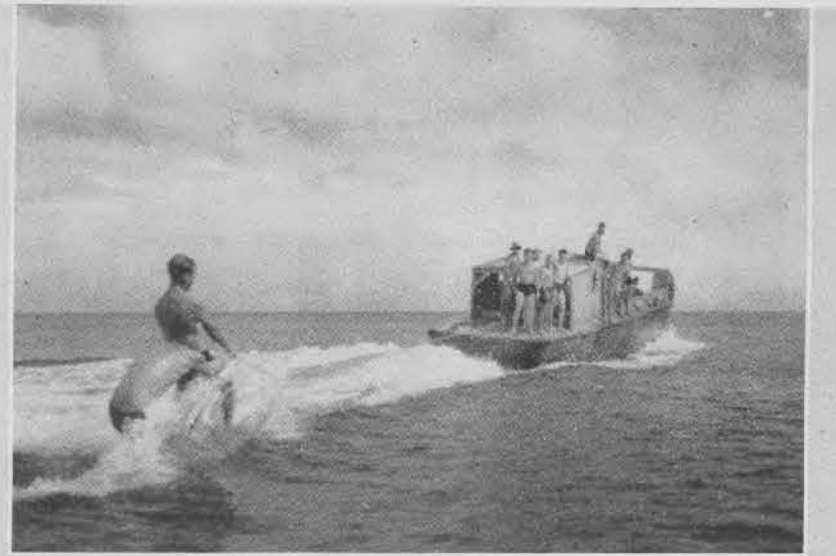


KWAJALEIN
Marshall Is.



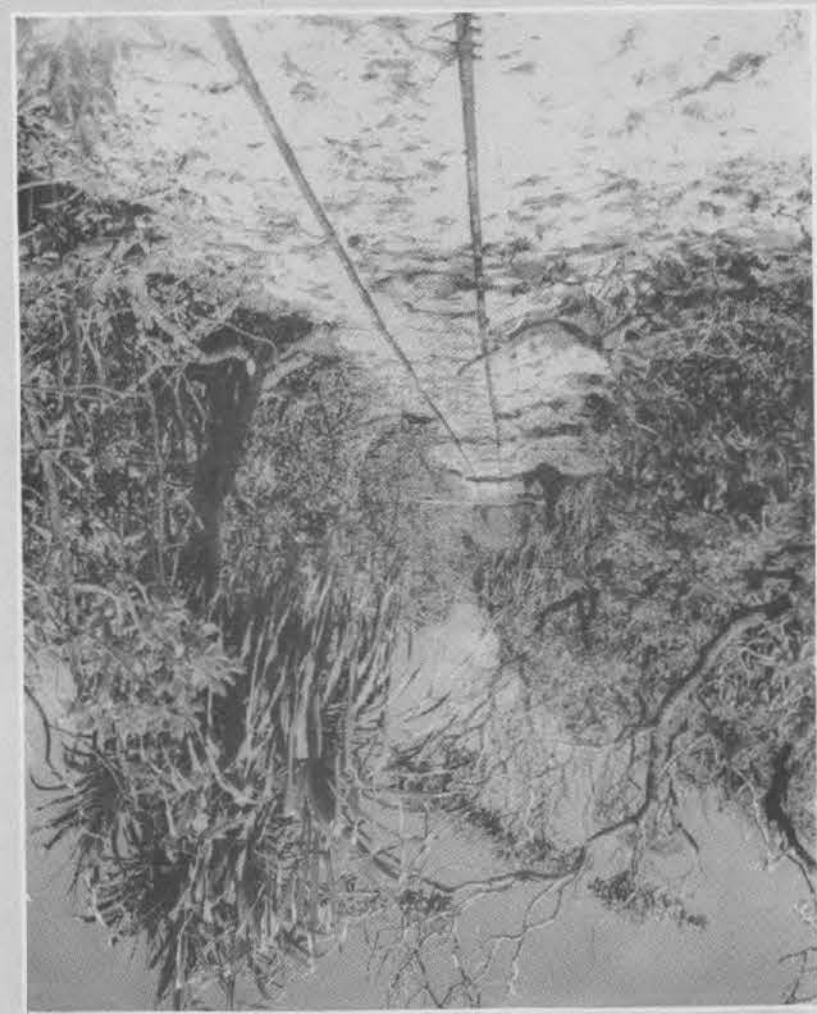
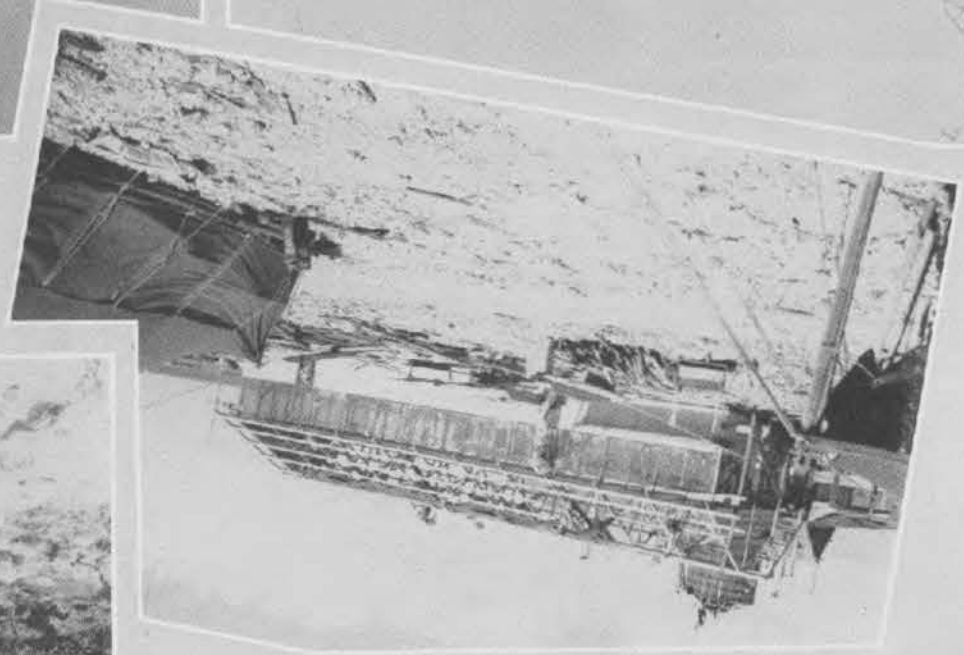
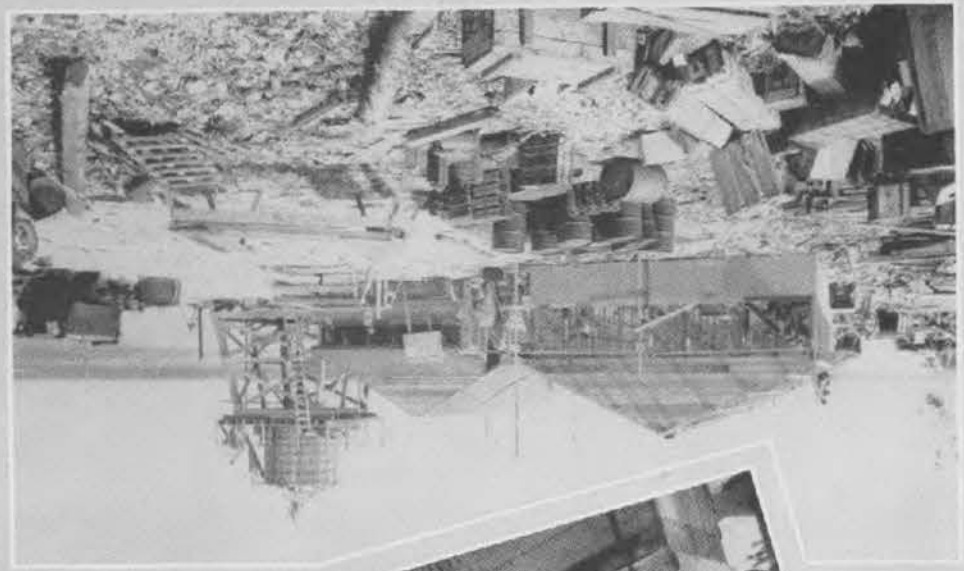
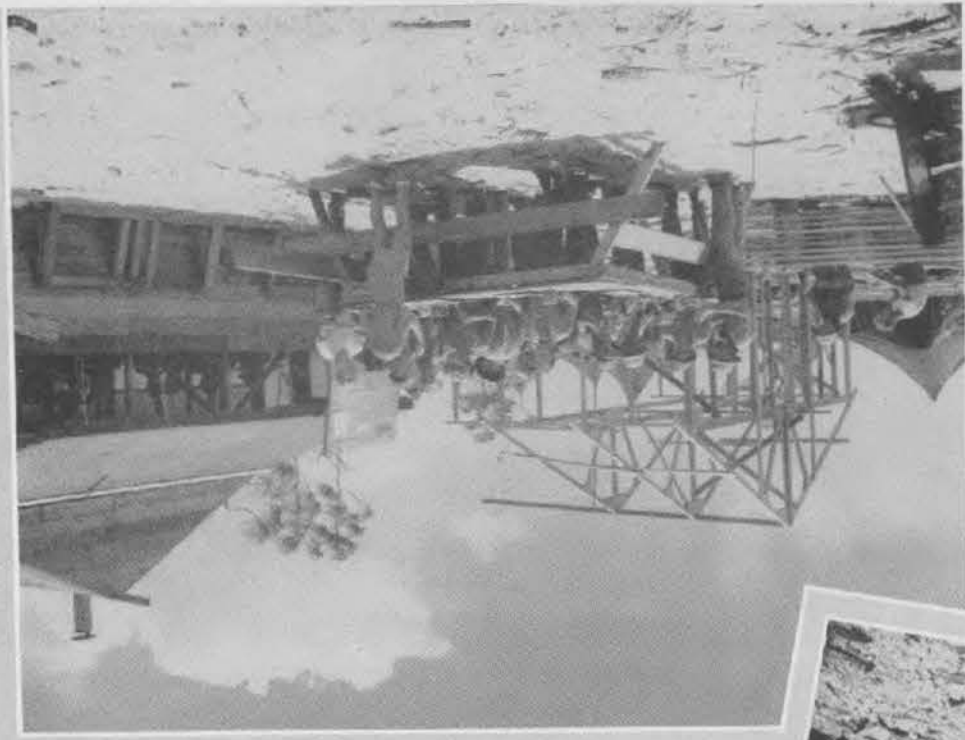
CB
Camp Area



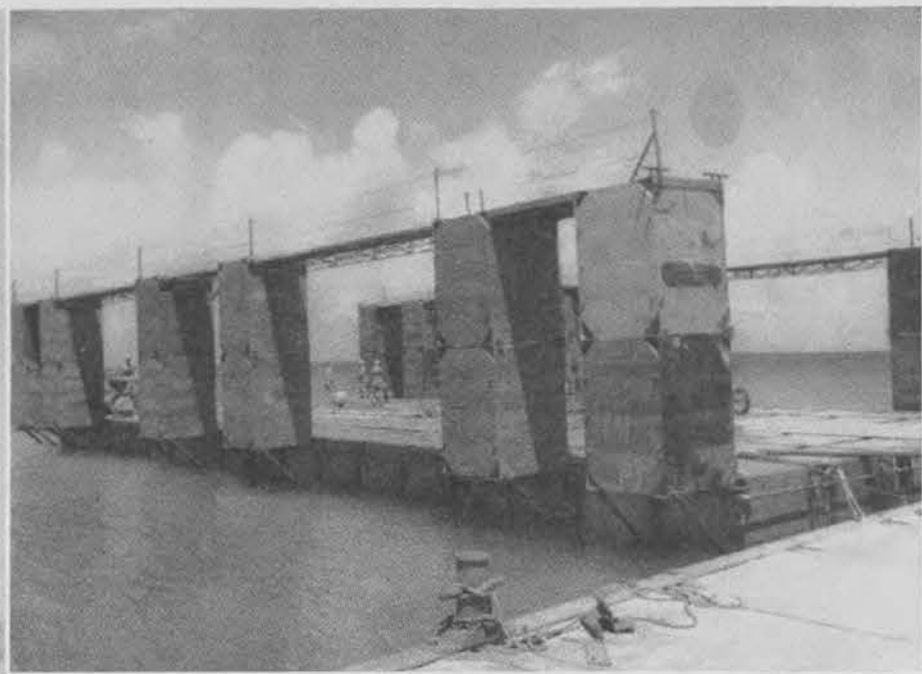


Guadalupe



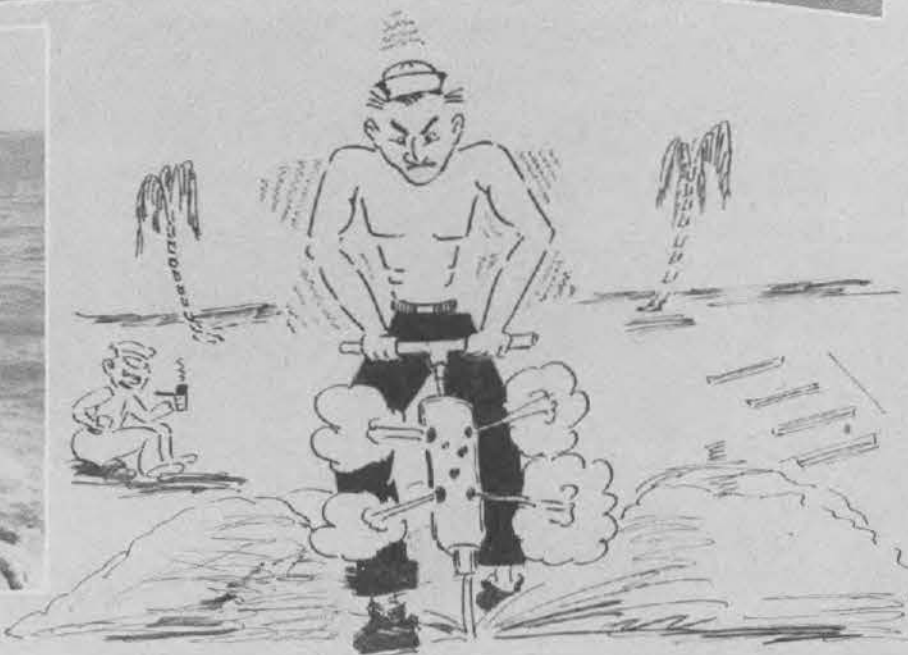
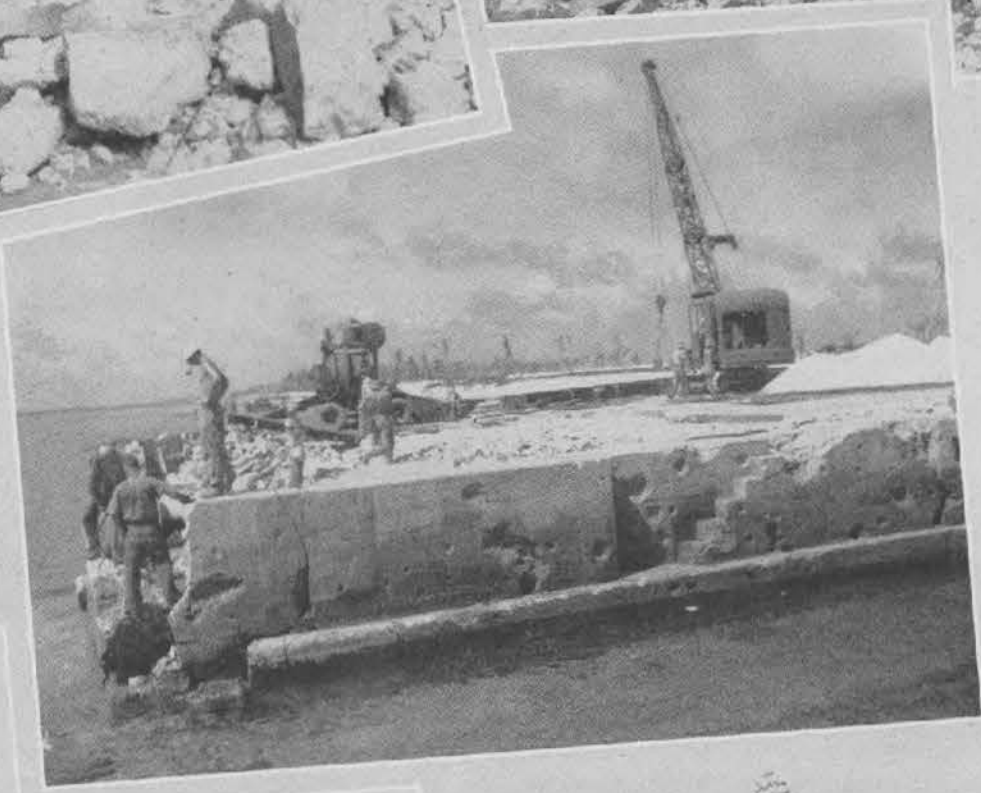


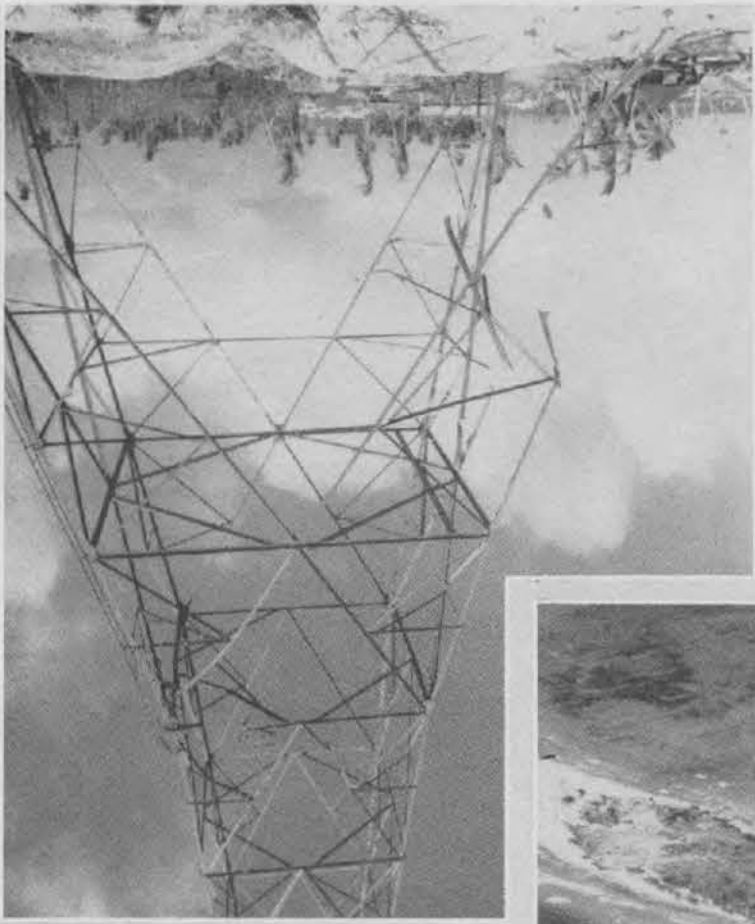




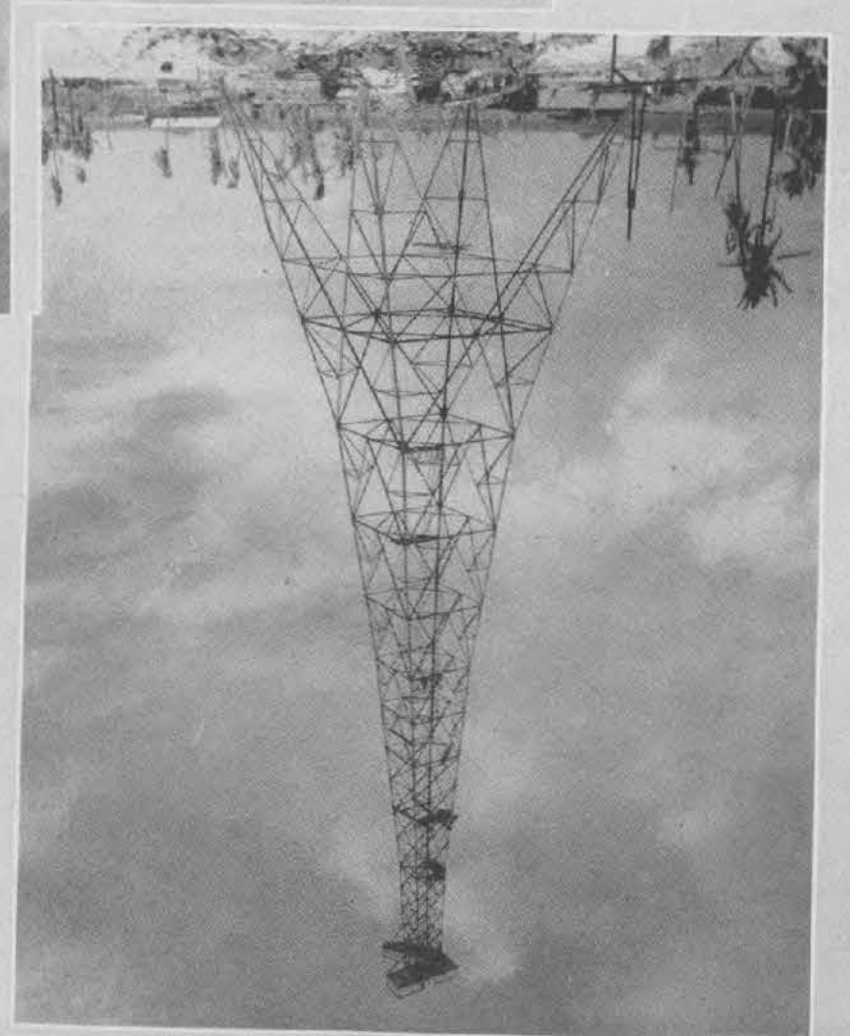
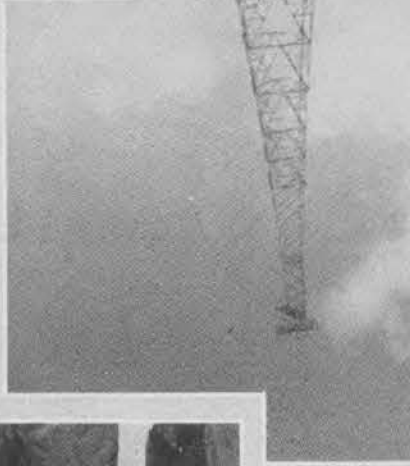
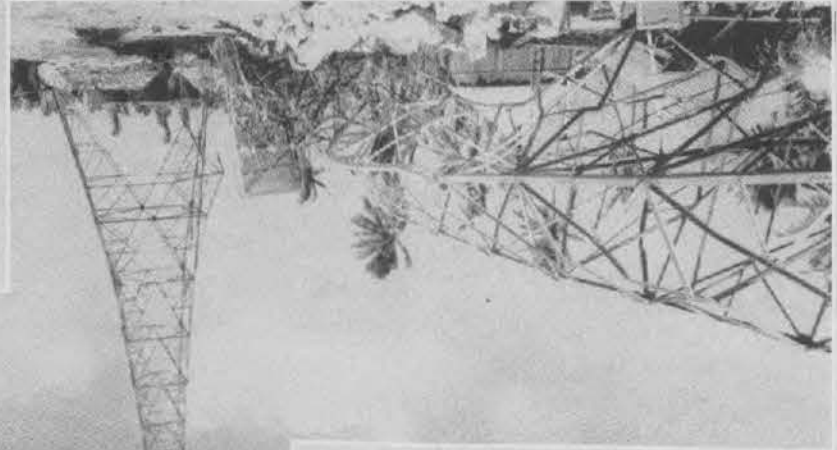
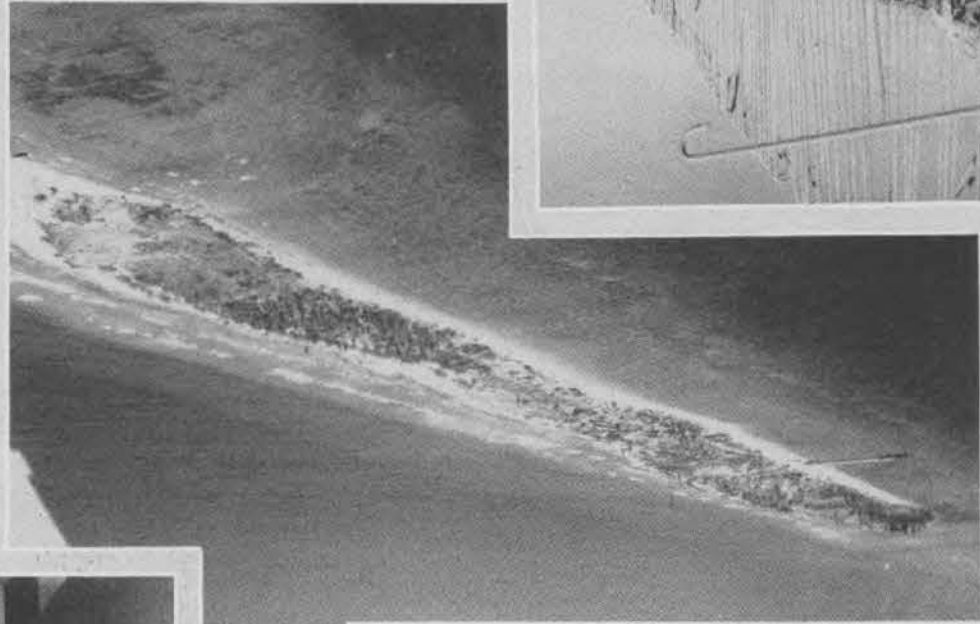
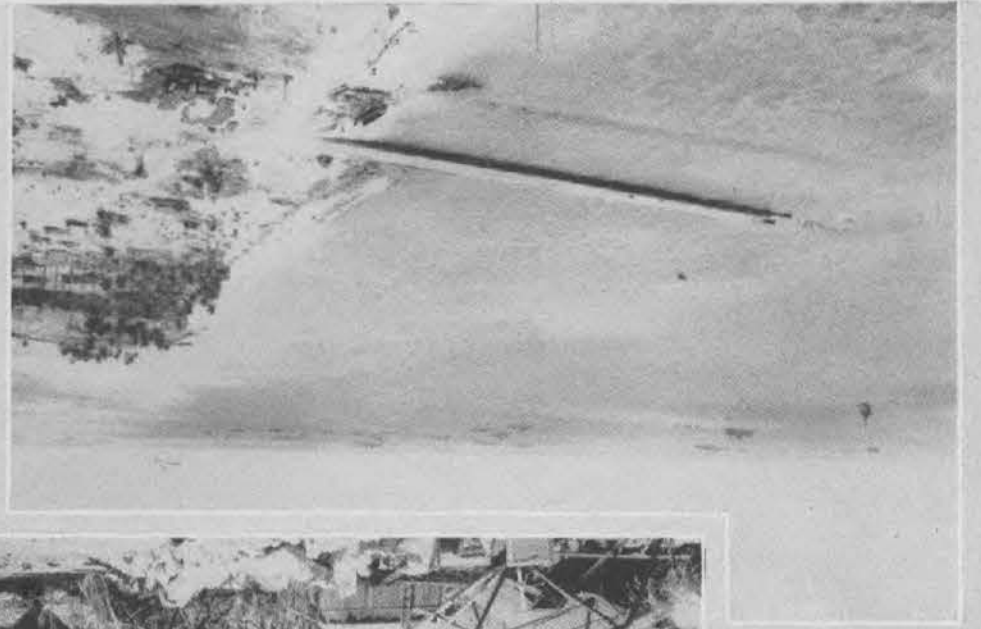
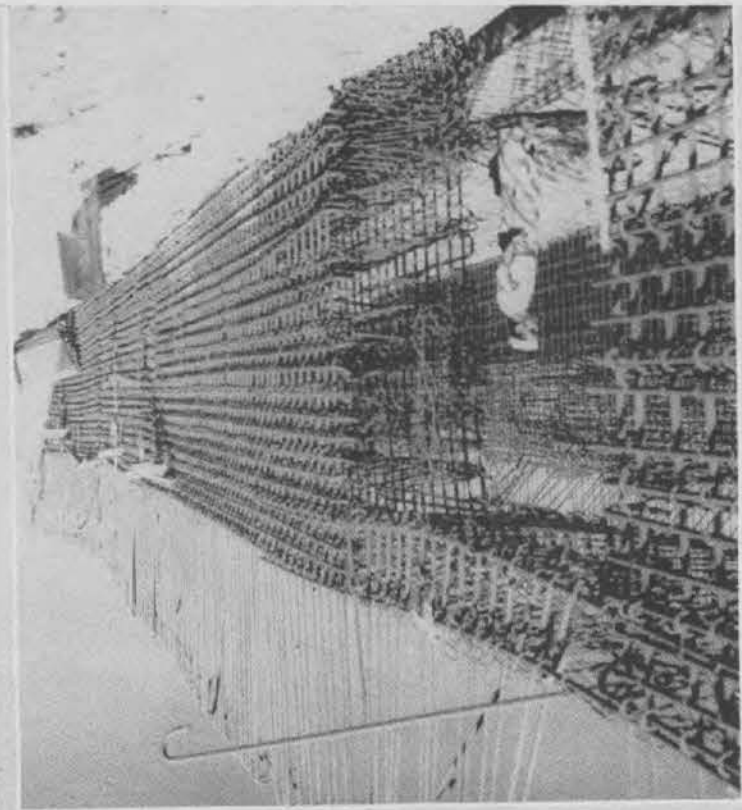
DRY DOCK
CONSTRUCTION

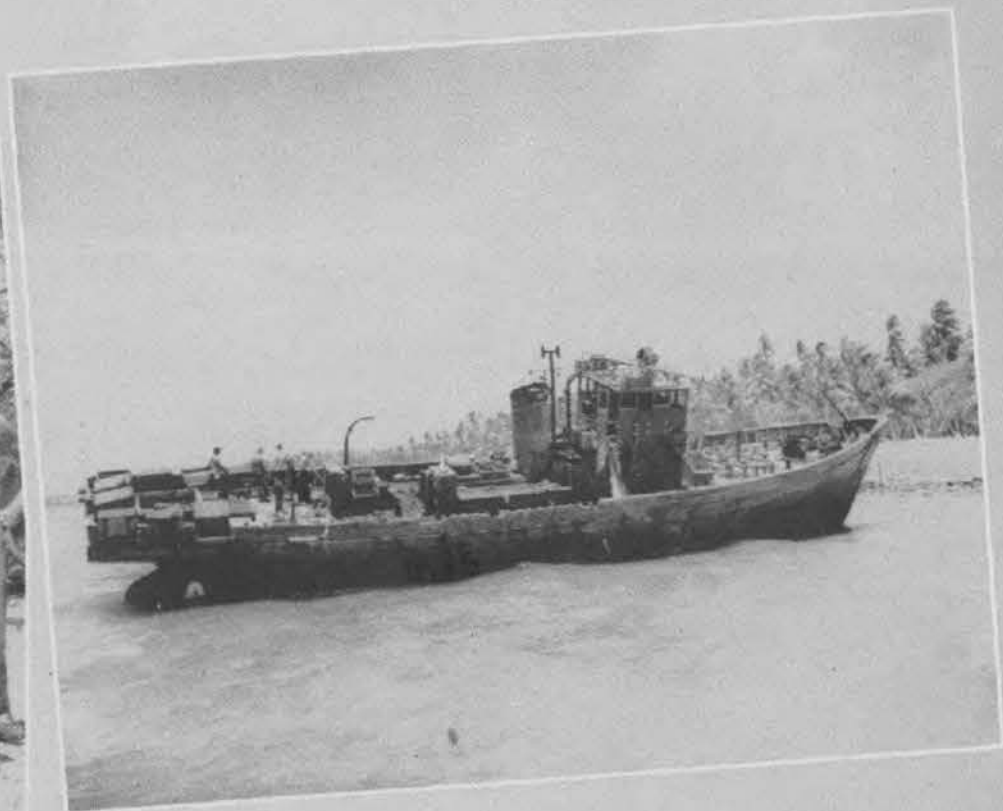
DUDS
JAP BOAT

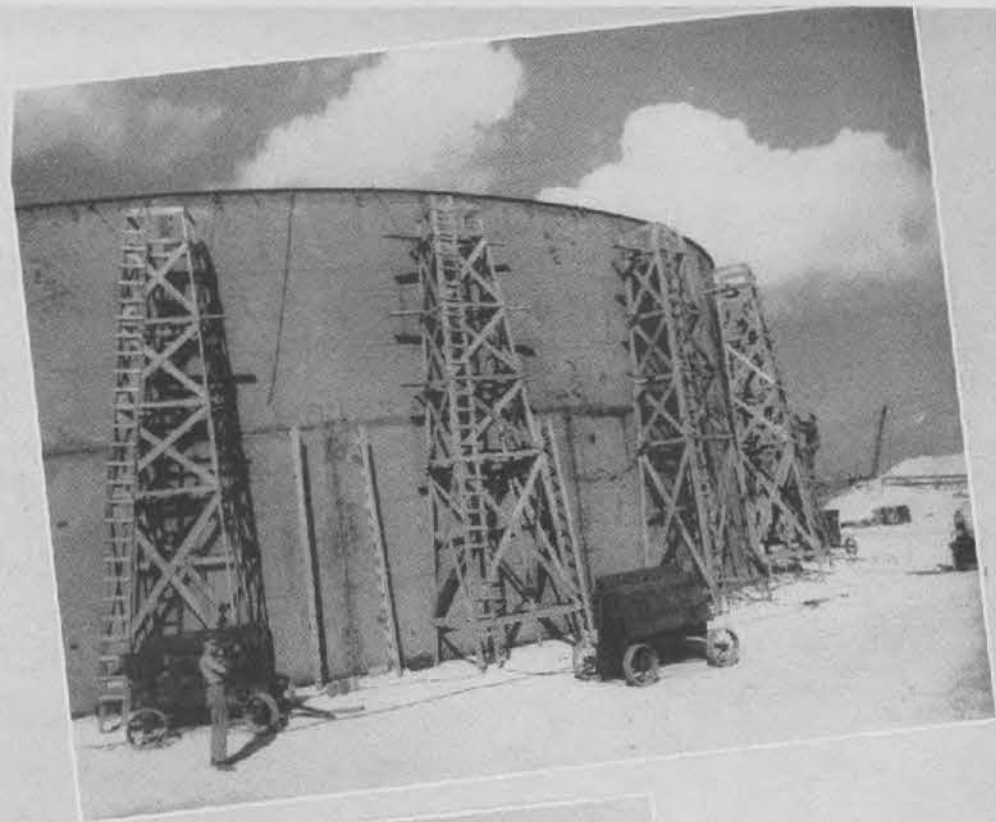
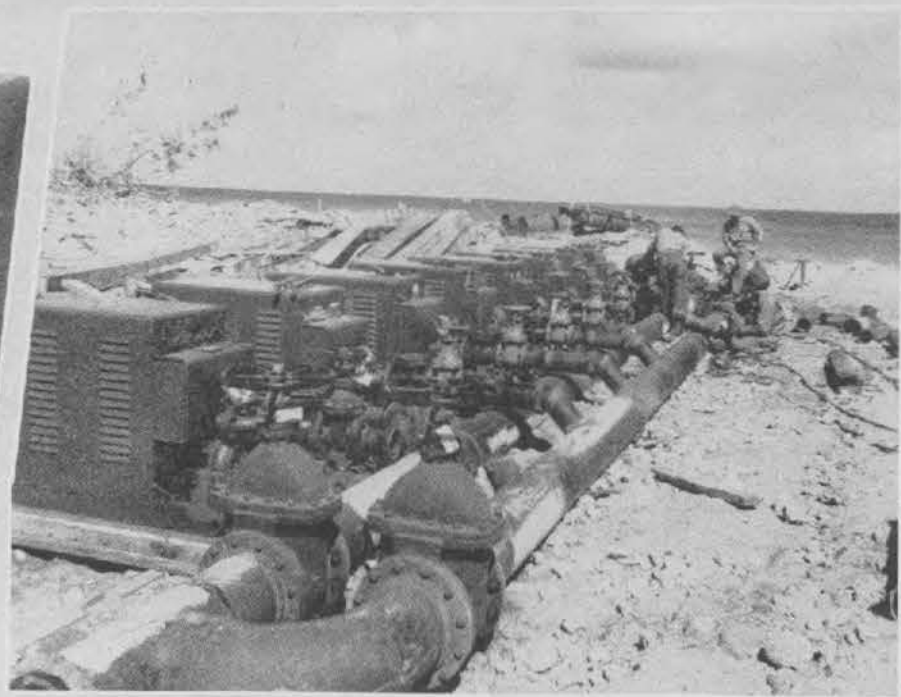
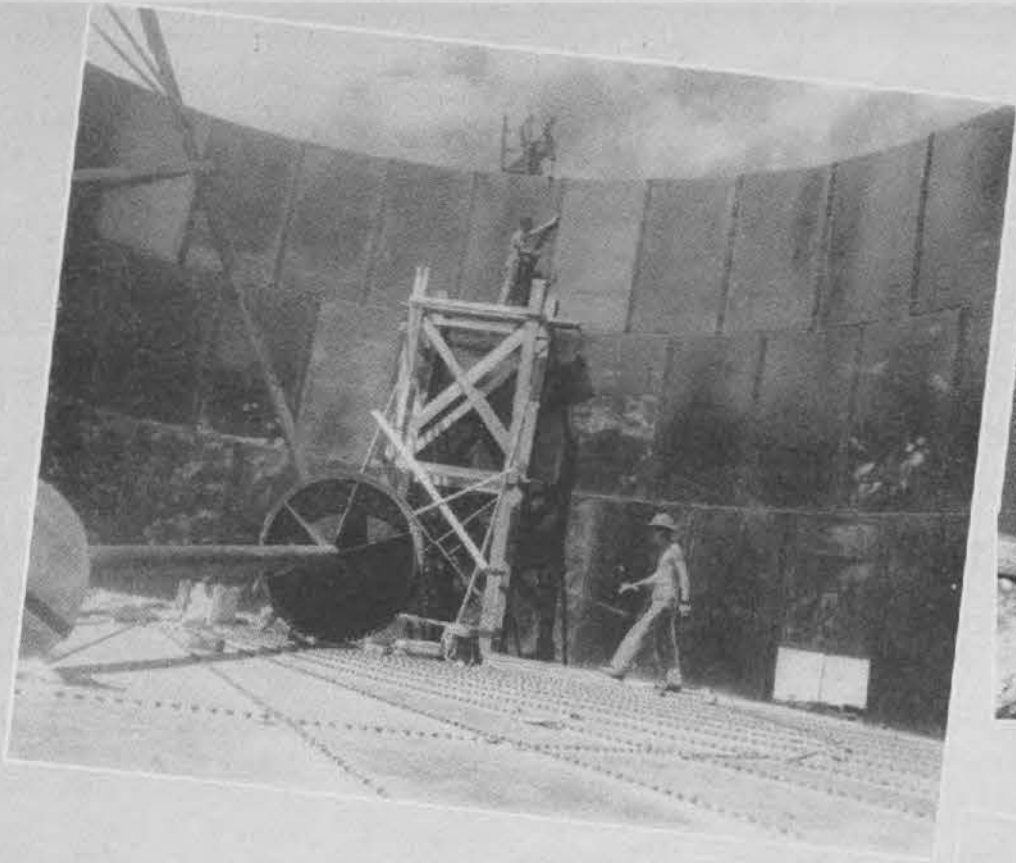




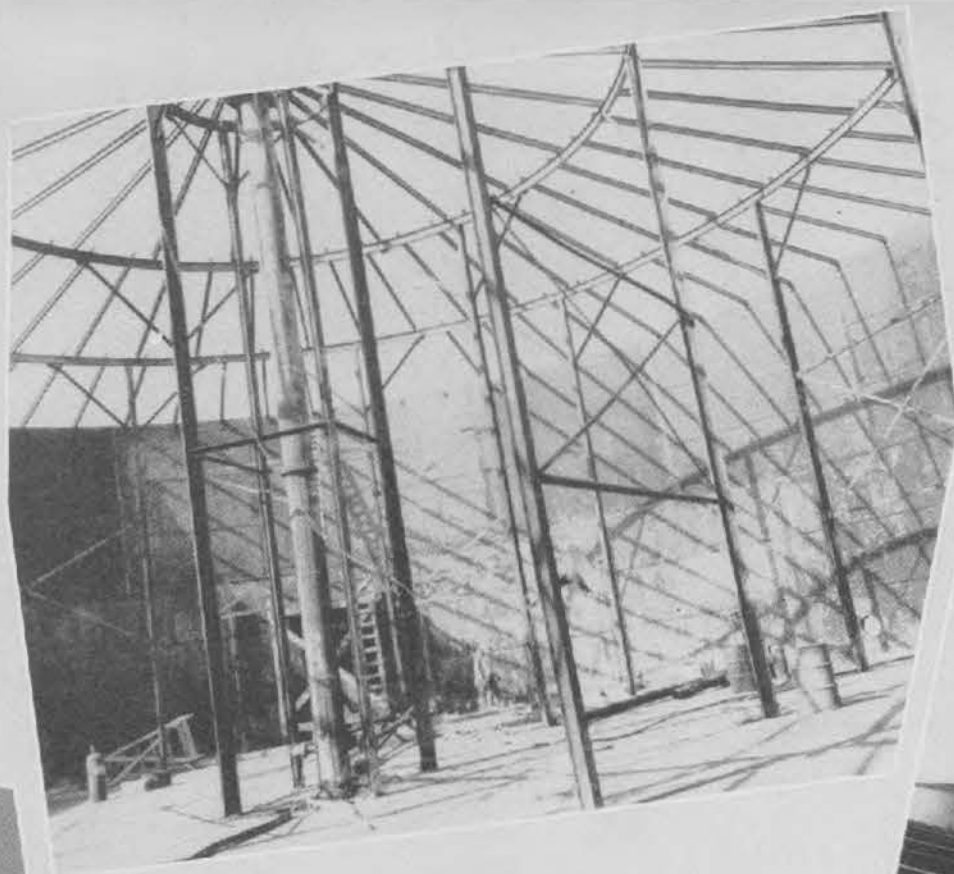
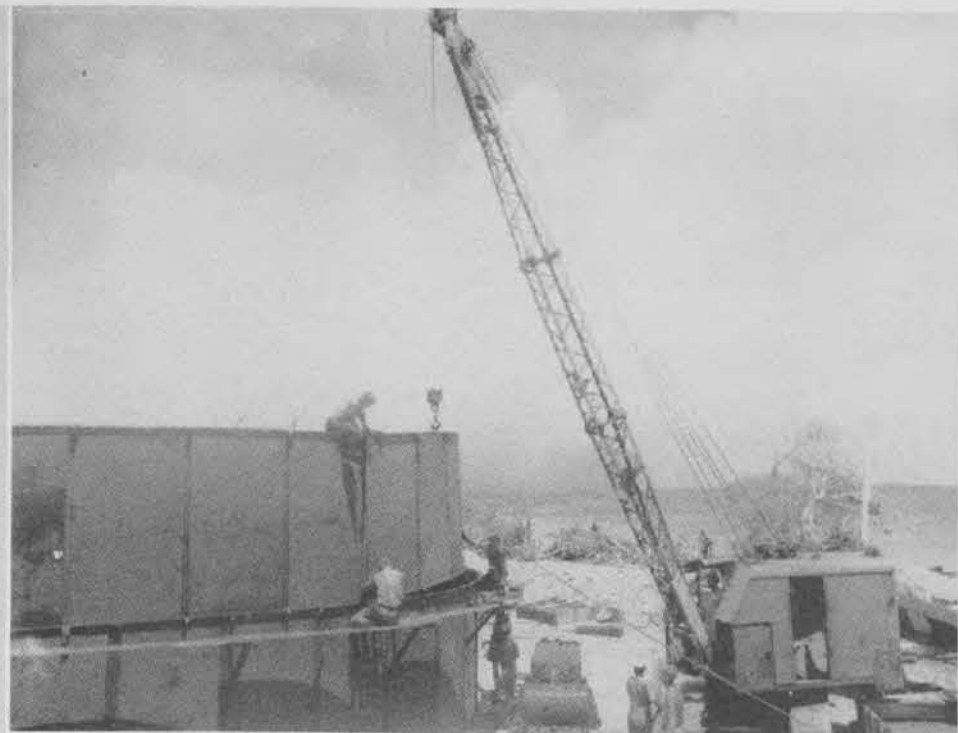
Gnubuj



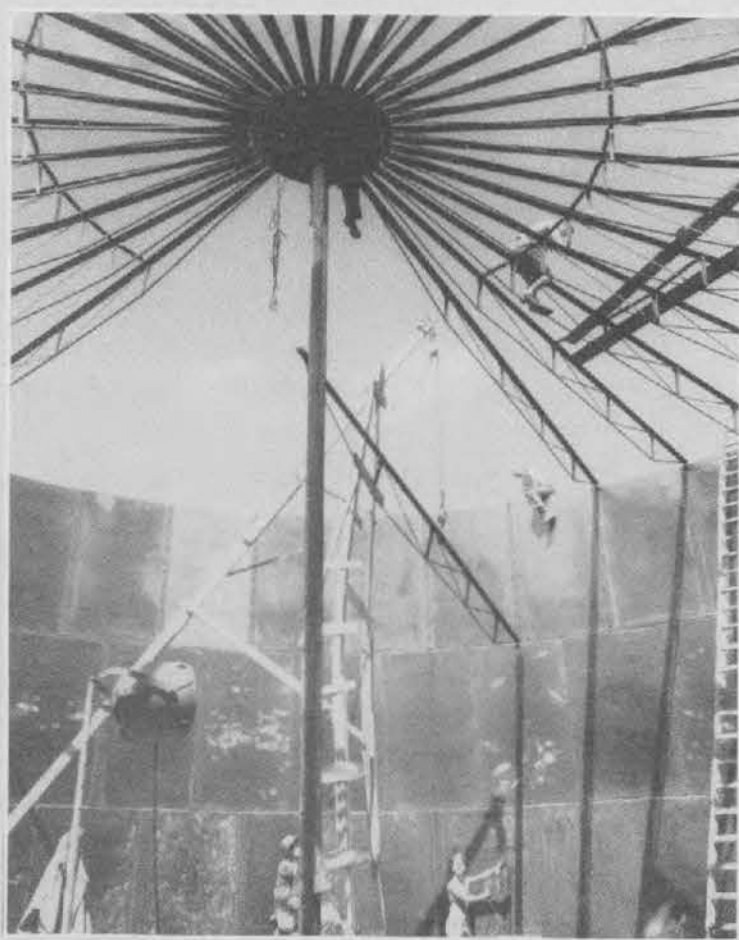
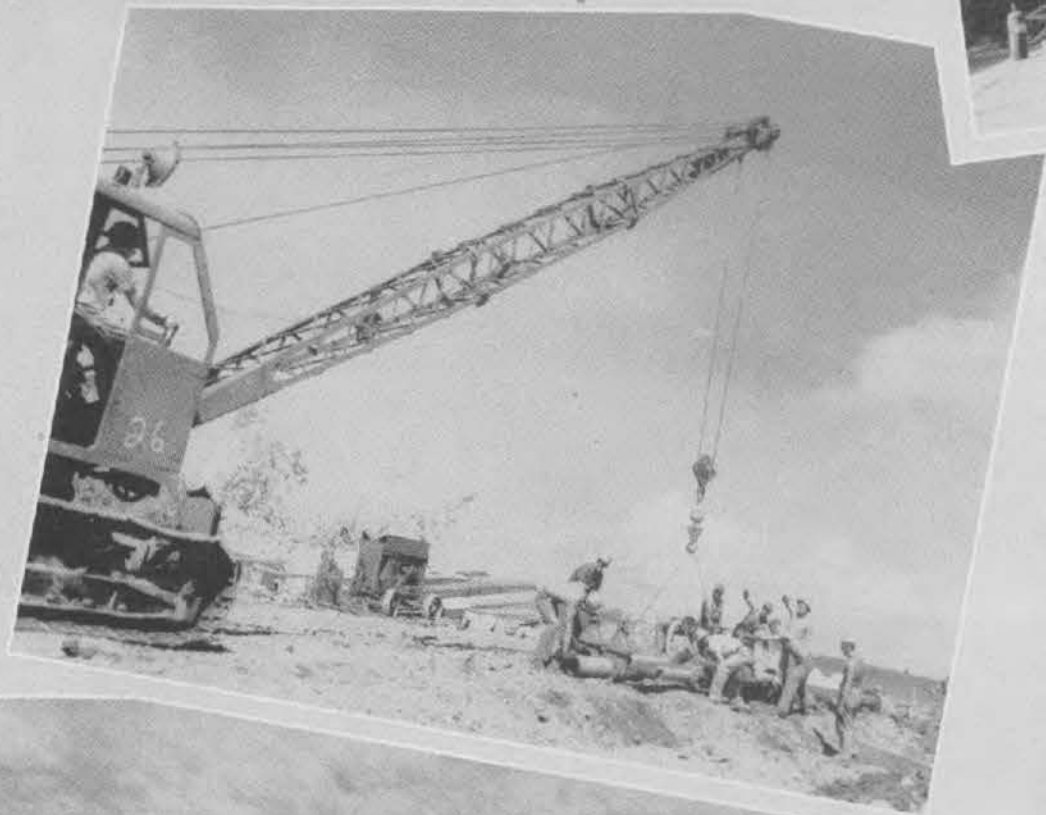




FLEET REFUELING
STATION

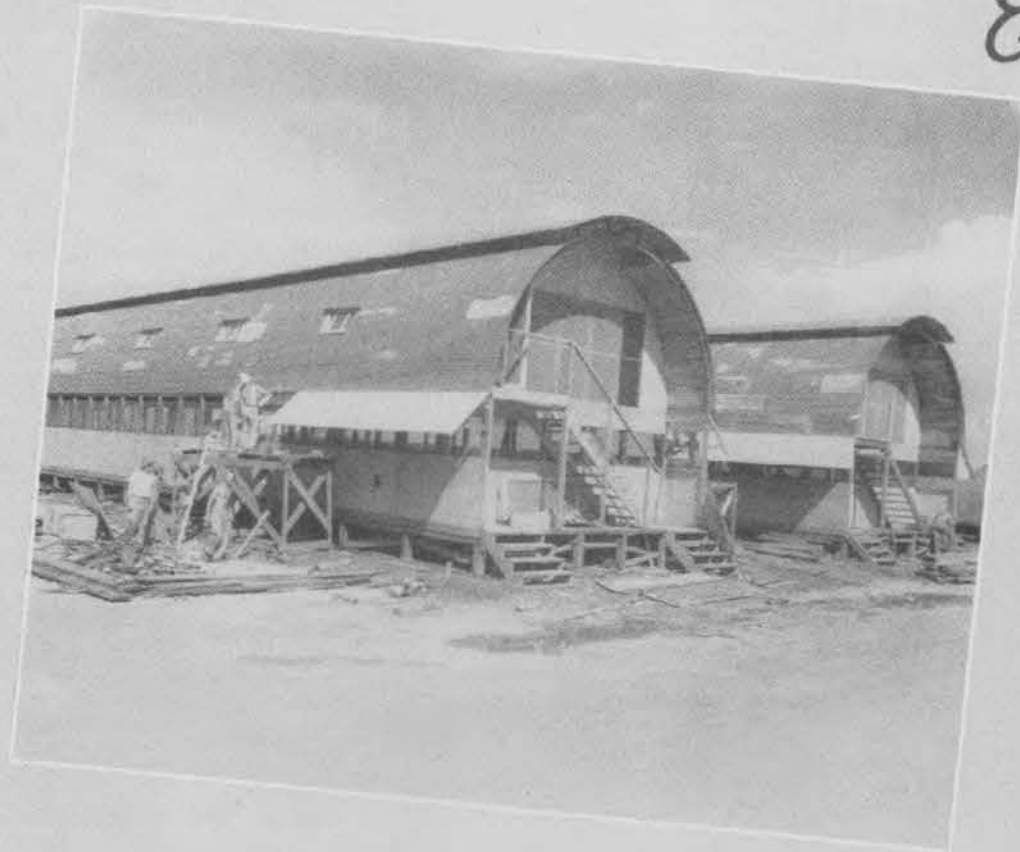


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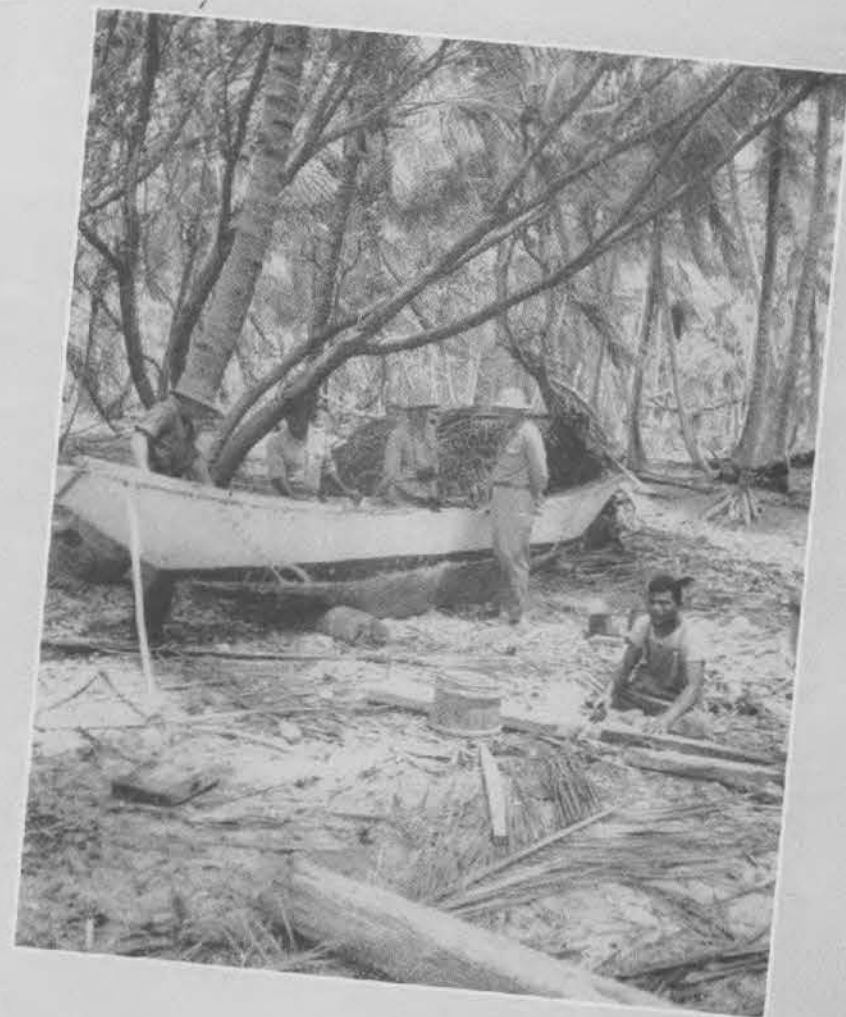




Ebeye



KWAJALEIN ATOLL
Native Life...



KWAJALEIN
BEFORE

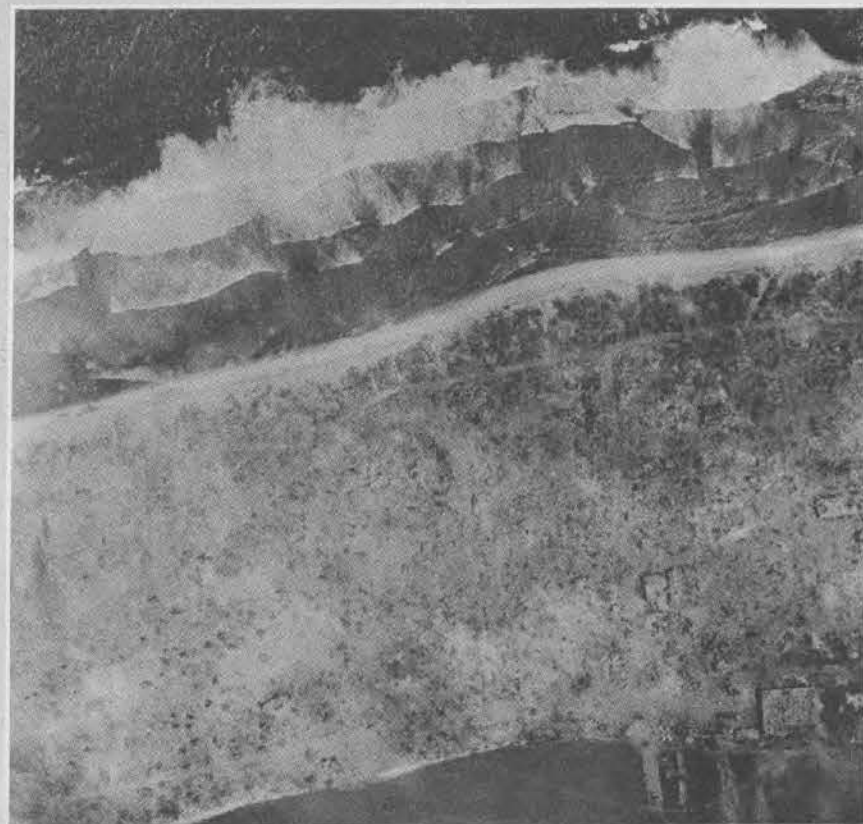


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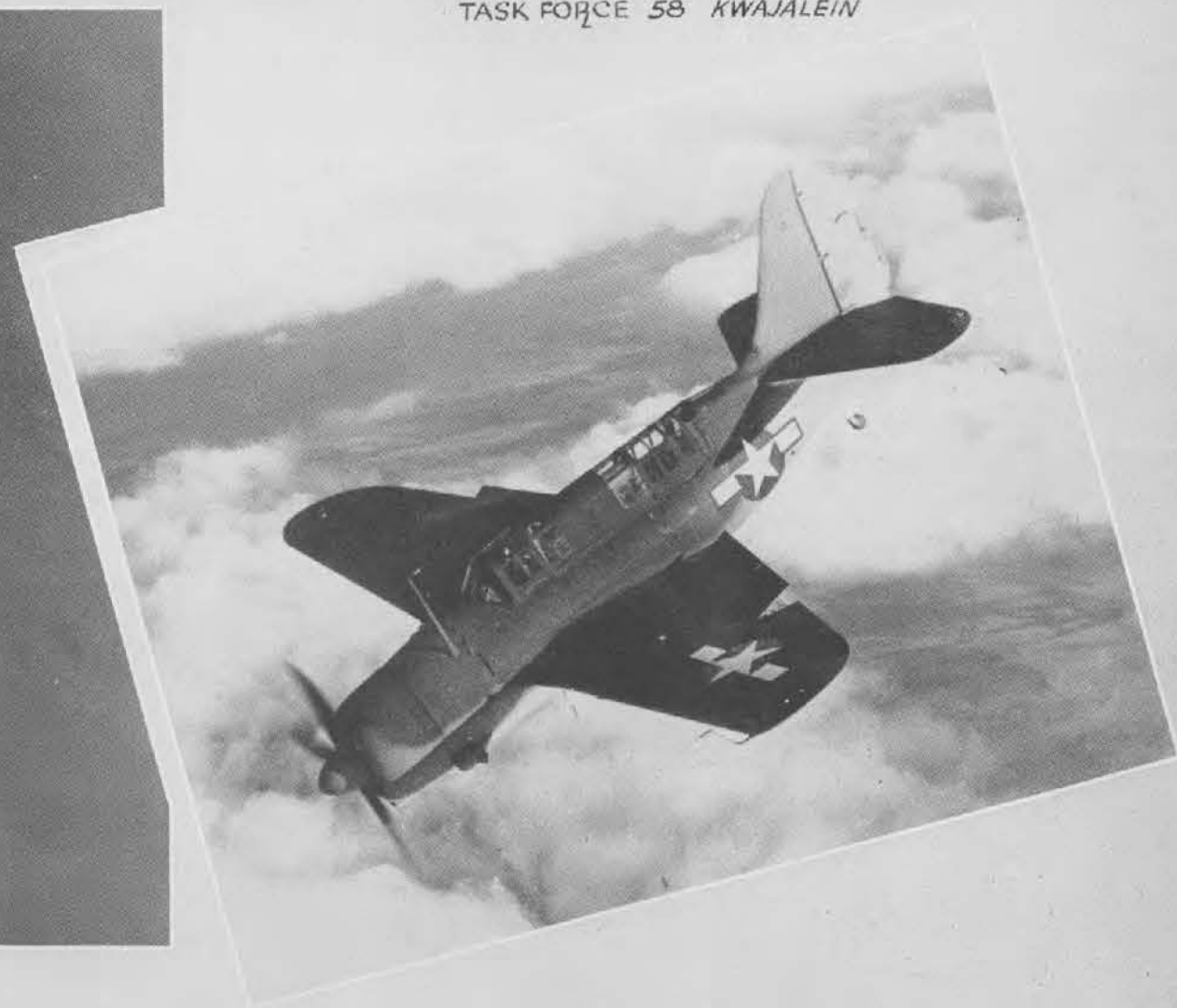


TASK FORCE '58' KWAJALEIN

AFTER

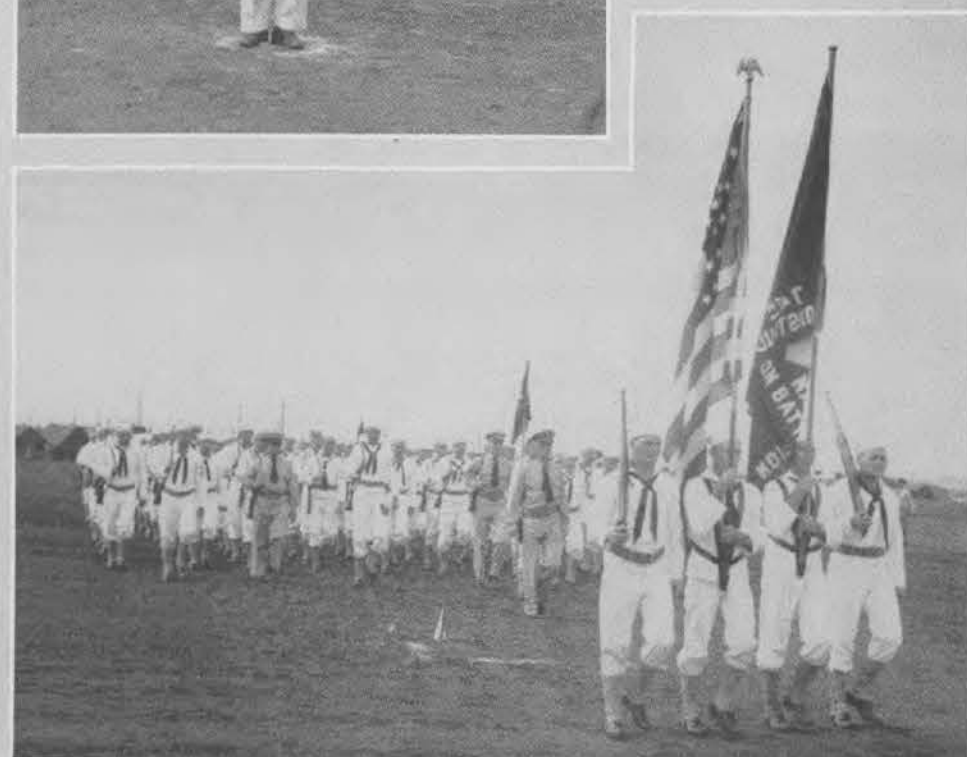
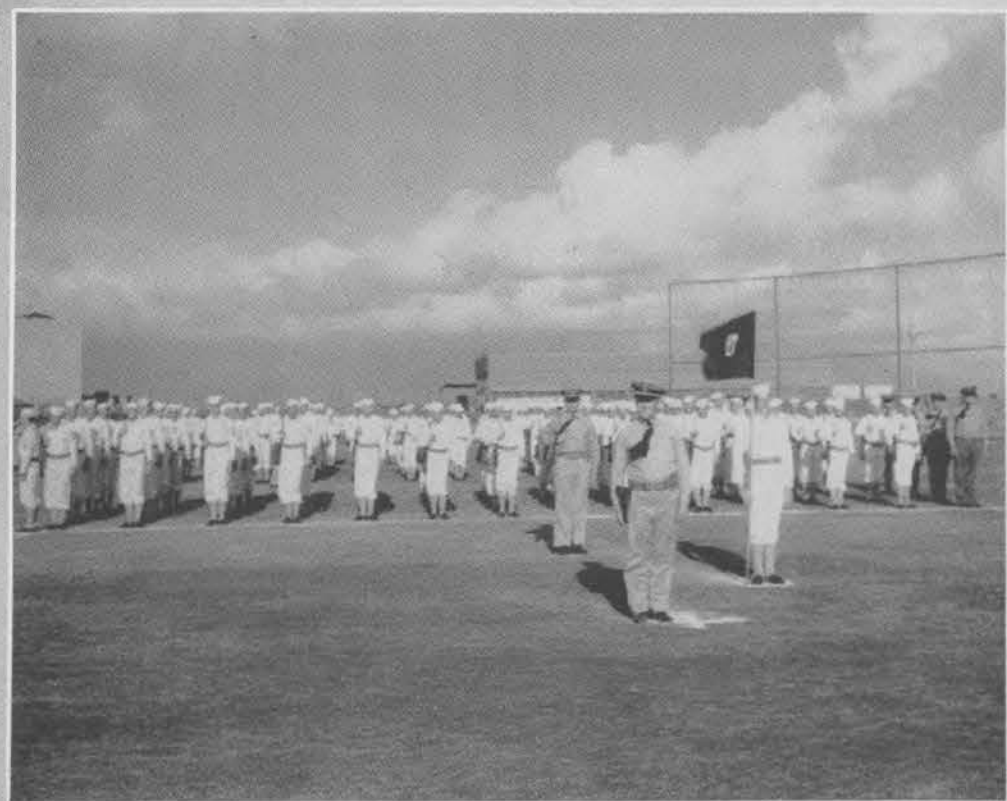
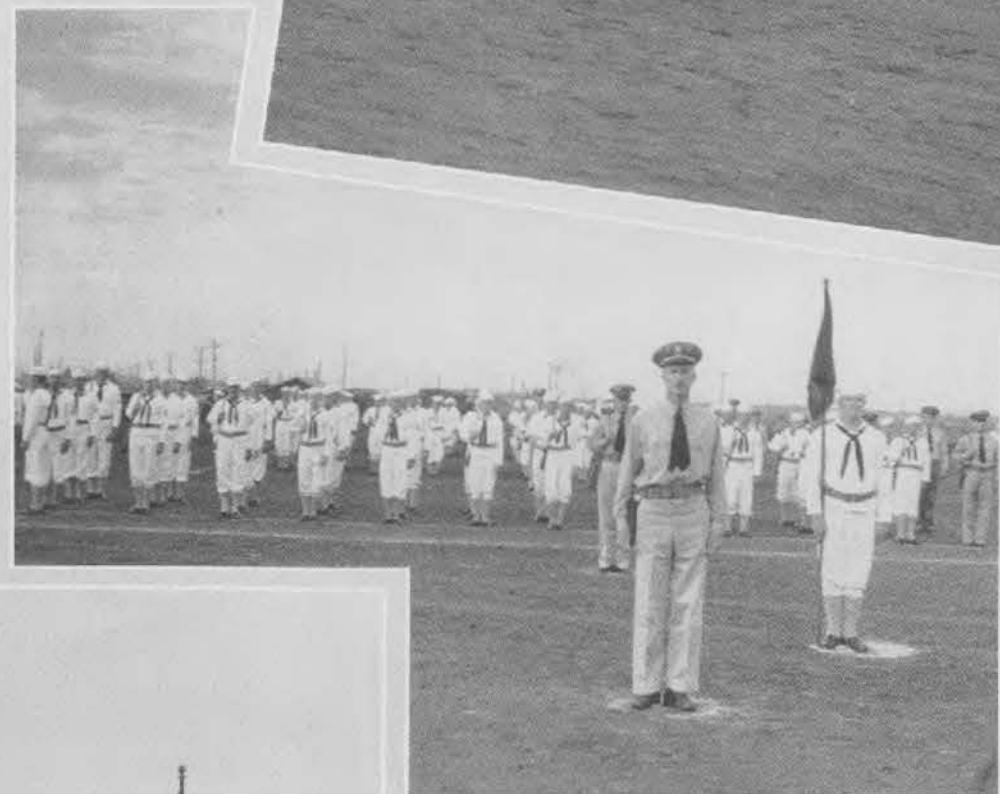


JAP SHIP



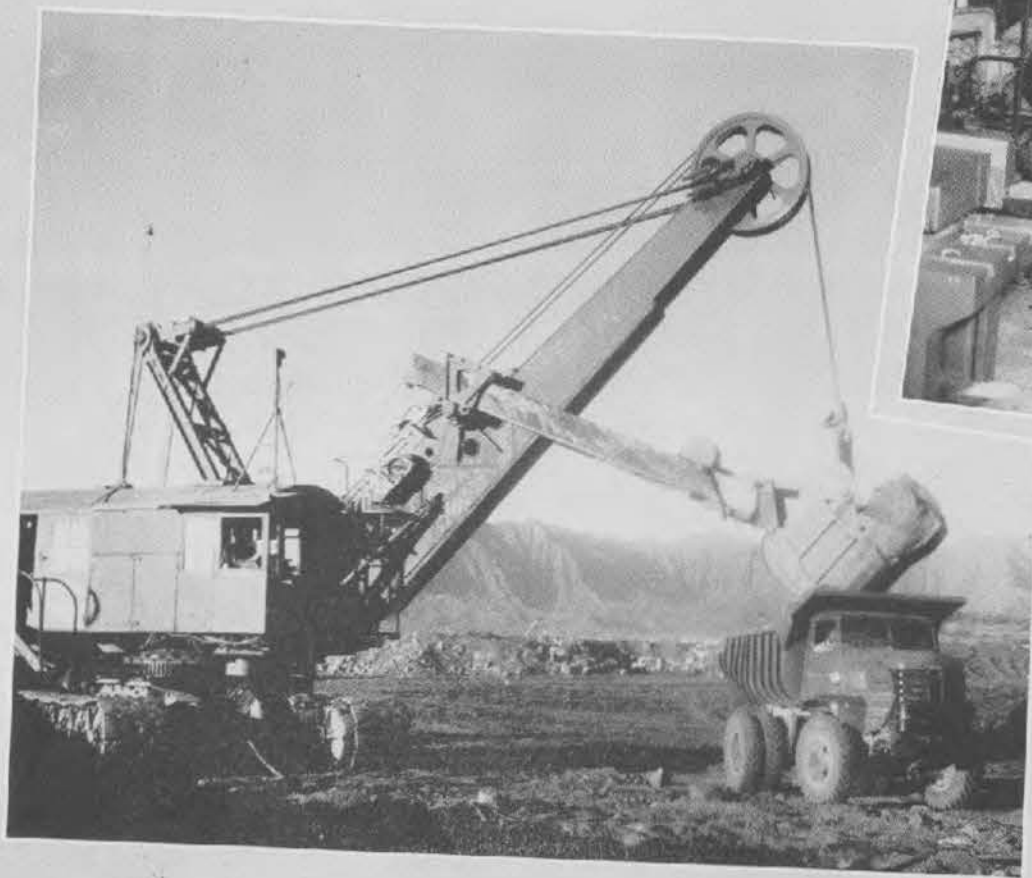


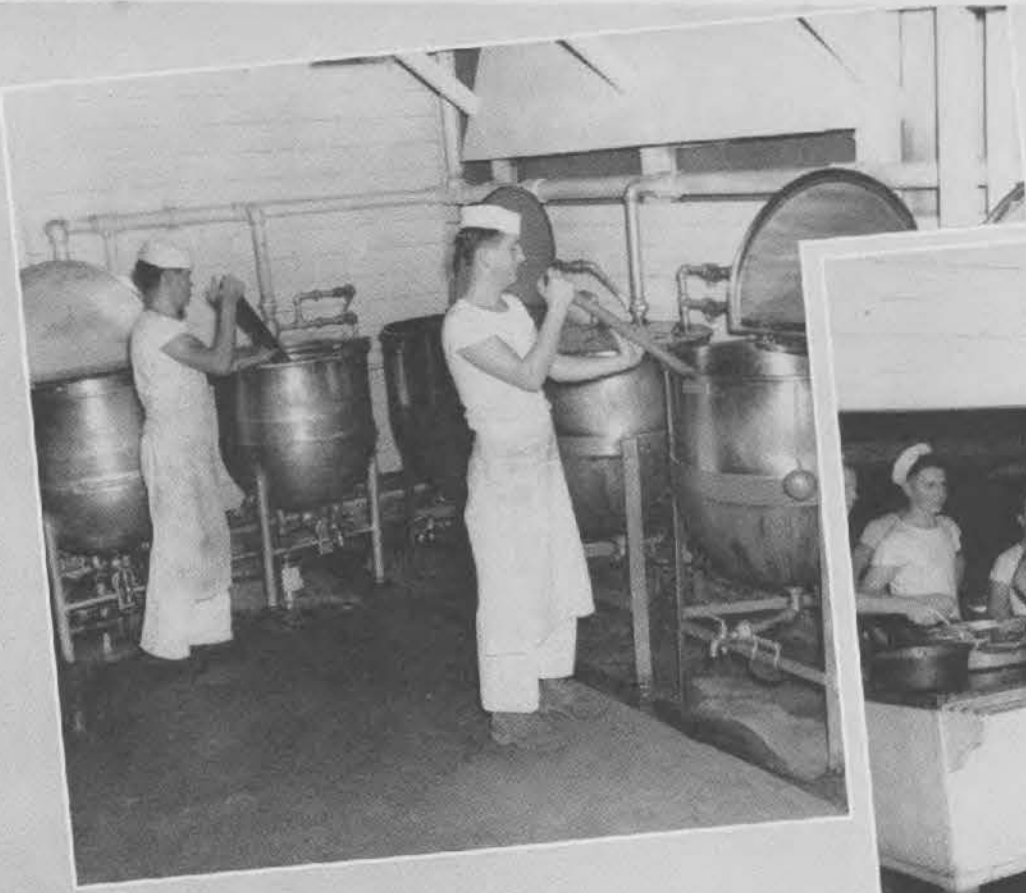


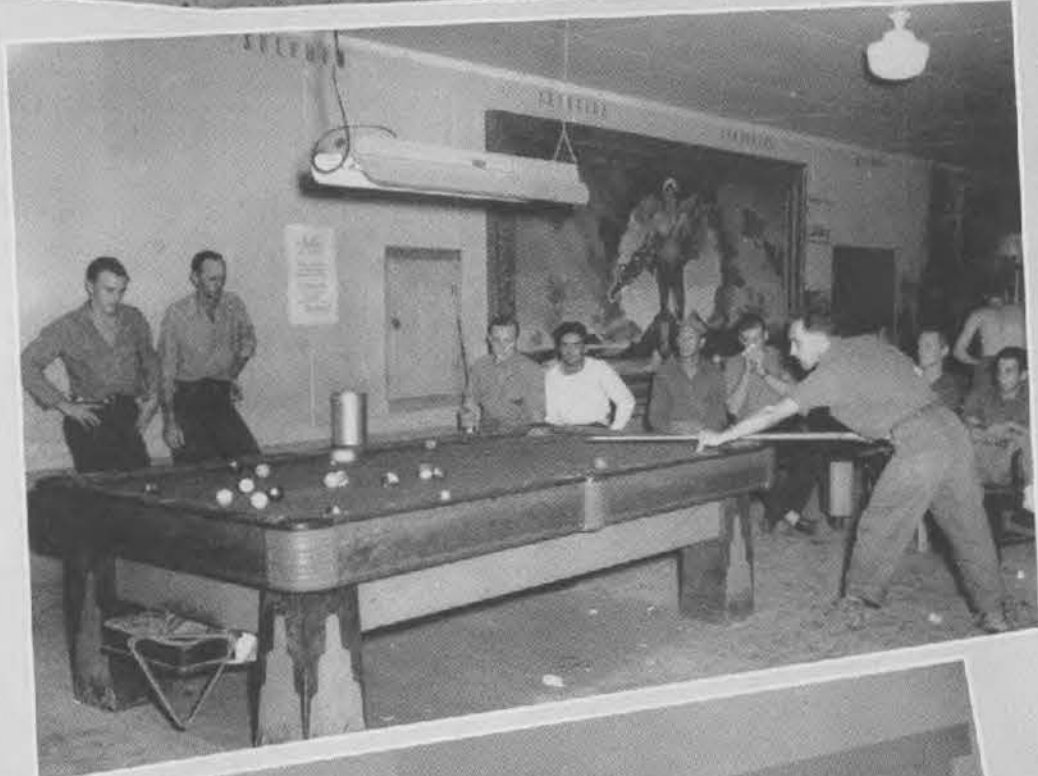




WORKING AT
MY TRADE, NUTS

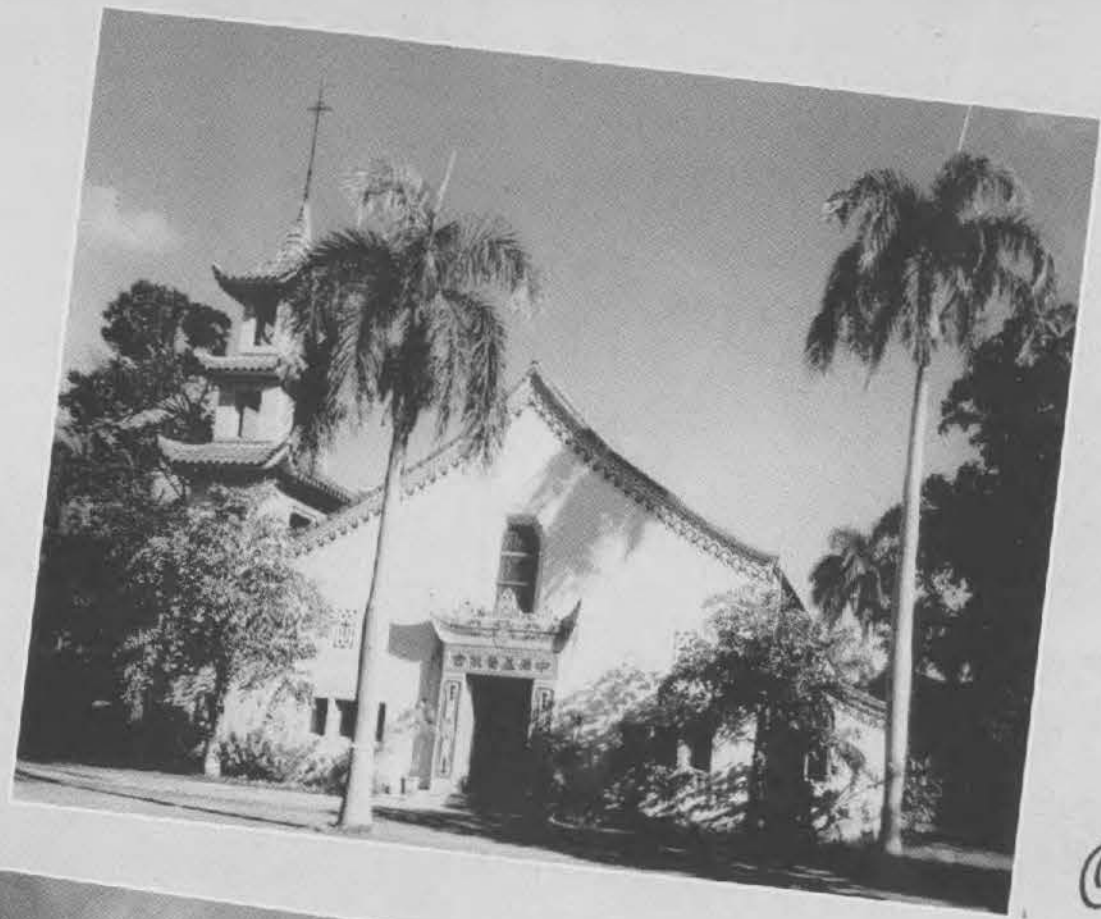




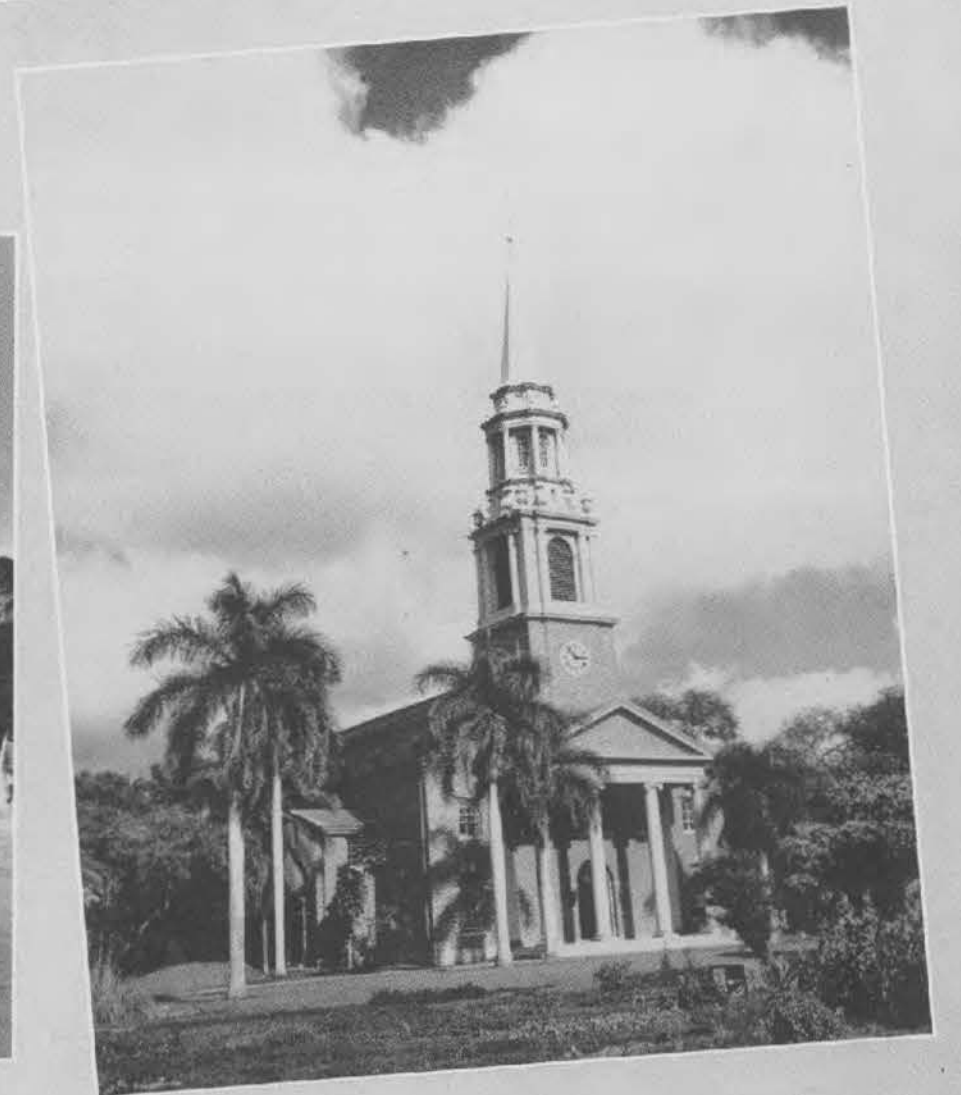
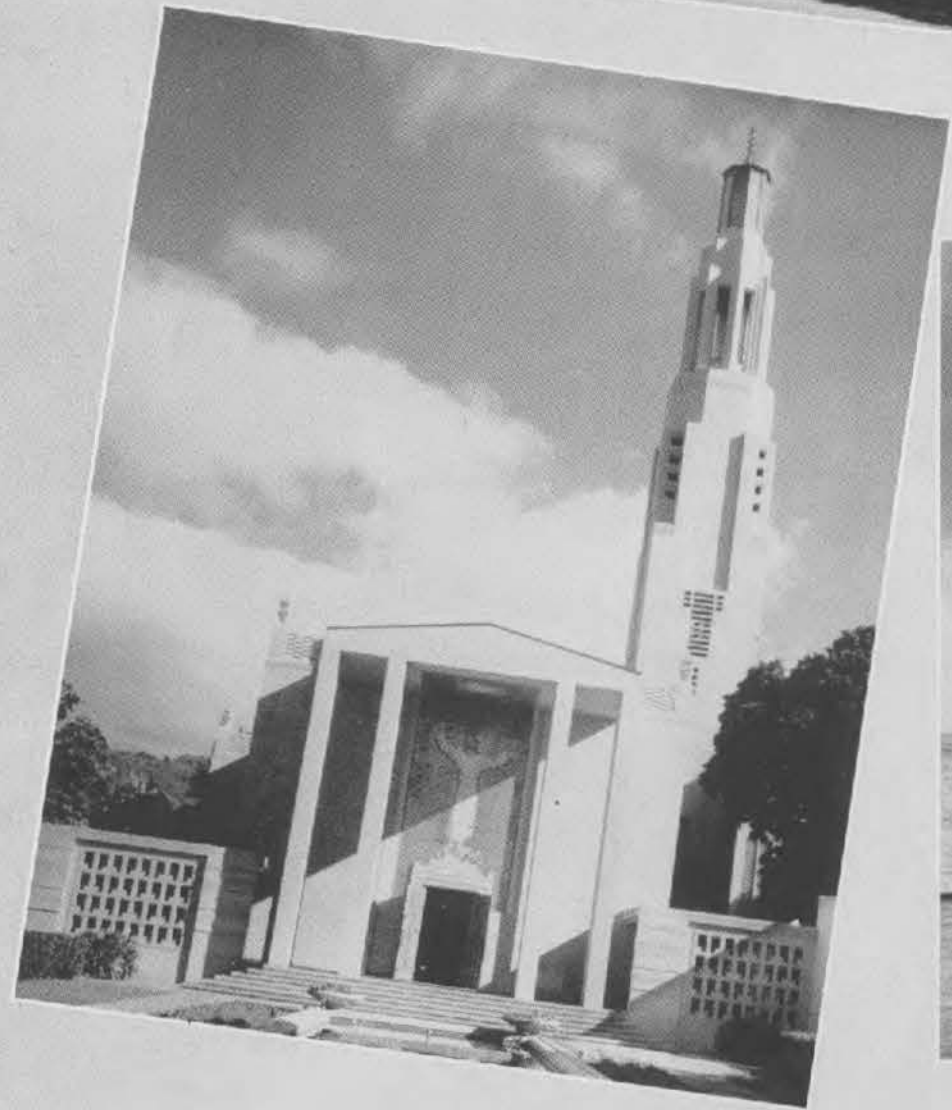


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Lt. R. O. BOLLENBACH, SC-USNR Kingfisher, Okla.
Lt. B. B. COWDEN, CEC-USNR 504 Ohio Ave., St. Cloud, Fla.
Lt. J. W. GIVENS, CEC-USNR 1448 N.E. 17th St., Oklahoma City, Okla.
Lt. Comdr. J. M. JABBOUR, MC-USNR 514 9th St., Brooklyn, N. Y.
Lt. A. H. LOWE, CEC-USNR 228 Harvard Road, San Mateo, Calif.
Lt. JACK SMITH, DC-USNR 2809 Maple Road, Waco, Texas
Lt. D. F. WORLEY, CEC-USNR 2208 Creston Road, Raleigh, N. C.

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AARON, HAROLD W.	1029 McKenley Street, Gary, Ind.	BARWALD, LAWRENCE O.	100 N. Hickery Street, Joliet, Ill.	BOWREN, LEO C.	74 Charles River Road, Watertown, Mass.
ABASOLO, WILLIAM	184-20 Galway Avenue, Hollis, N. Y.	BATSON, WILLIAM W.	1202 Laurens Rd., Greenville, S. C.	BOYSON, JOHN H.	Route No. 2, Fremont, Wis.
ABNEY, ROSCOE E.	605 Laffayette Avenue, St. Louis, Mo.	BAUR, ALFONS	716 Stepney Place, Inglewood, Calif.	BRADSHAW, SCOTT S.	3025 So. Trenton Street, Tulsa, Okla.
ACKER, EDWARD A.	Bedford Avenue, No. Bellmore-L. I., N. Y.	BEASLEY, FRED W.	6423 Crescent Place, Hammond, Ind.	BRANDENSTEIN, LOUIS V.	3817 Bates Street, Pittsburgh, Penna.
ADAMS, JAMES A.	3 Valley View Avenue, Woronoco, Mass.	BEATTY, KENNETH S.	359 Lagrave, Grand Rapids, Mich.	BRANN, HERBERT H.	837 So. Smith Avenue, St. Paul, Minn.
ADKINS, CUSTER	1047 Railroad Avenue, Hunnington, W. Va.	BEBER, JOSEPH M.	903 Hancock Street, Wakefield, Mich.	BRIGGS, HAROLD J.	1270 45th Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.
AFFANATO, ANTHONY	58 Dearbon Street, Medford, Mass.	BEENE, JESSE J.	3833-14th Street N. W., Washington, D. C.	BRIGGS, WADE D.	R.F.D. No. 1, Thomasville, N. C.
ALBERT, MILTON	194 Rodney Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.	BELLAR, JAMES L.	124 W. 4th Street, Leadville, Colo.	BROCATO, JOSEPH B.	213 So. Woodyear Street, Baltimore, Md.
ALEXANDER, DAVID R.	304 Beideman Avenue, Apt. 173, Camden, N. J.	BELLAR, JOHN R.	124 W. 4th Street, Leadville, Colo.	BRODEUR, NOEL J.	39 Manville Avenue, Manville, R. I.
ALEXANDER, WILLIAM E.	7 Thames Street, Groton, Conn.	BENEDETTO, ALFRED J.	700 Calif. Avenue, Avalon, Penna.	BRODSKY, SAMUEL M.	120 Mary Street, Gadsden, Ala.
ALTMAN, NORMAN	1446 Brunnell, Waycross, Ga.	BENEDICT, JOHN G.	434 Thompson Street, Flint, Mich.	BROOKS, HOMER W.	1368 Gaines Street, Jacksonville, Fla.
AMATO, JOSEPH	67 Cooper Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.	BENNETT, HARRY A.	435 Charlotte Street, Detroit, Mich.	BROWER, ROBERT E.	90 Charles Knout State Street, Veedersburg, Ind.
ANDERSON, JOSEPH L.	2510 No. 36th Avenue, Birmingham, Ala.	BENNETT, WARREN B.	504 N. Freeman St., Oceanside, Calif.	BROWN, ELMER J.	1239 16th St. N. W., Canton, Ohio
ANDERSON, LAWRENCE A.	984 Greentree R. Station No. 20, Pittsburgh, Penn.	BENOIT, DONALD H.	Exeter Street, Hampton, N. H.	BROWN, JOHN	19 Croton Avenue, Tarrytown, N. Y.
ANDERSON, ROY F.	119 Cecil St. S. E., Minneapolis, Minn.	BENOIT, EDWARD A.	324 Dawson Street, Saulte St. Marie, Mich.	BROWN, MARVIN	1514 N. 4th Street, Philadelphia, Penna.
ANDERSON, WILLIAM	100-13 39th Avenue, Corona, N. Y.	BENSON, ERNEST W.	1896 Boulevard Drive, Atlanta, Ga.	BROWN, ROBERT H.	2907 1/2 Albany, Houston, Texas
ANKIEWICZ, STANLEY S.	66 Penataquit Avenue, Bayshore, N. Y.	BERRY, THORNTON L.	Madison, Va.	BROWN, WESLEY C.	Coleman, Ga.
ANTONOVITZ, JOSEPH	184 Spruce Street, Lawrence, Mass.	BERTOGLI, LOUIS G.	20 1/2 Calif. St., Amesbury, Mass.	BUDD, FRED S.	429 N. 5th Street, Miami Beach, Fla.
ARMER, HENRY F.	Miller Road, E. Greenbush, N. Y.	BEYERS, ARTHUR R.	525 Hugh Street, Marquette, Mich.	BUGNI, ADOLPH C.	305 Putman Street, Wakefield, Mich.
ASBURY, ROBERT B.	6588 A. Jeanne Mance St., Montreal, Quebec, Canada	BICKUNAS, ANTHONY D.	59 Burnside Avenue, Cranford, N. J.	BUGNI, ARTHUR E.	108 E. Silver Street, Bessemer, Mich.
ASHWORTH, ARNOLD	223 Pleasant Street, Whitman, Mass.	BIDDLE, HARRY E.	3313 3rd Avenue, New York City	BULLION, BERT T.	Stephenstown, N. Y.
ATKINSON, WALTER F.	111 Dooley Street, Hawkinsville, Ga.	BILBRO, WILLIAM A.	221 N. James Street, Centralia, Ill.	BUONO, NICKOLAS J.	558 Driggers Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y.
AULETA, HERBERT H.	831 Quincy Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.	BING, HERBERT B.	819 E. 94th Street, Los Angeles, Calif.	BURG, JOSEPH V.	97 Cedarhurst Avenue, Cedarhurst, L. I., N. Y.
AVERA, EUGENE D.	1321 W. Stetson Avenue, Orlando, Fla.	BIRMINGHAM, THOMAS J.	766-52nd Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.	BURKE, CULLEN G.	405 6th Street, Sayre, Okla.
BACH, EDWARD J.	160 Main Street, Goshen, N. Y.	BIRNEY, ROBERT J.	2553 Salmon Street, Philadelphia, Penna.	BURKE, MARTIN F., JR.	855 N. Luramie, Chicago, Ill.
BAILEY, GORDON F.	1528 Porter Street, Detroit, Mich.	BISHOP, WILKIE N.	Box 3, Cedar Mountains, N. C.	BURNS, ROBERT S.	108 E. 56th Street, Seattle, Wash.
BAK, JOSEPH F.	89-4th Street, Passaic, N. J.	BITTER, ROY A.	Route No. 10, Box 190, Fresno, Calif.	BUSS, JOHN J.	2653 W. 36th Street, Brooklyn 24, N. Y.
BAKER, LEONARD E.	% "2" "G" Copeland, Alpine, Tenn.	BLACK, NORMAN H.	2213 3rd Avenue, Sacramento, Calif.	BUTURAIN, GEORGE, JR.	2119 15th S. W., Canton, Ohio
BALDWIN, EDWARD N.	603 N. 13th Street, Philadelphia, Penna.	BLACKBURN, THOMAS E., JR.	67 Atlanta, Atlanta, Ga.	CAIRNS, WILLIAM D.	58 Hoople Street, Chelsea, Mass.
BALL, VIRGIL E.	3212 Central Avenue, Parkersburg, W. Va.	BLANTON, EVERETTE F.	Shelby, N. C.	CALBREATH, THOMAS G.	1709 So. Aimsworth, Tacoma, Wash.
BALSTRA, PETER J.	100 Judson Street, Syracuse, N. Y.	BLOUGH, EARL W.	R.F.D. No. 4, Box No. 121, Johnstown, Penna.	CALVERT, ROLLIE J.	1909 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, Calif.
BANKS, CHARLES W.	497 Idora Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio	BOLIN, JAMES A.	Adams, Oregon	CAMPBELL, CLIFFORD	32 O'Neil Avenue, Bayshore, N. Y.
BARCENAS, PETER F.	1400 Maple Avenue, Los Angeles, Calif.	BOLTON, JAMES T.	Colbert, Ga.	CAMPBELL, PAUL R.	Claredon, Penna.
BAREFOOT, OSBORNE J., SR.	Ponce DeLeon, Florida	BOLTON, RAYMOND F.	815 Collins Street, Pittsburgh, Penna.	CAPELLINO, CHRISTOPHER	100 No. Salinas, Santa Barbara, Calif.
BARNHARD, RICHARD W.	6512 Hough Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio	BONDS, VIRGIL L.	404 Marian Street, Carbondale, Ill.	CARD, NORMAN M.	2923 So. 13th Street, Philadelphia, Penna.
BARNES, HORACE P.	Toccoa Falls Inst., Toccoa, Georgia	BORDEN, WALLACE J.	3416 Knox Street, Kalamazoo, Mich.	CARDULLO, THOMAS J.	15 Worcester Street, Cambridge, Mass.
BARRENTINE, WILLIE L.	407 E. North Street, Dotham, Ala.	BORIS, JOHN G.	Hazel Street, Zelienople, Penna.	CARGILL, JAMES E.	167 Russel St., E. Springfield, Mass.
BARRETT, EDWARD J.	257 Prospect Street, Norwood, Mass.	BOSCO, JOHN P.	77-18 19th Road, Jackson Heights, L. I.	CARLSON, EDWIN W.	2022 2nd Avenue, Rockford, Ill.
BARRETT, WILLIAM H.	11 Howard Street, Irvington, N. J.	BOST, CHARLIE H.	Route No. 1, Pine Hall, N. C.	CARLSON, FORREST A.	920 Vine Street, Peoria, Ill.
BARRY, CHARLES R.	606 St. Mary Street, New Orleans, La.	BOSWELL, THEODORE W.	Capital Heights, Maryland	CARLSON, RUSSELL C.	2122 W. 4th Street, Duluth, Minn.
BARTENSTEIN, JOHN M.	103-10 Metropolitan Ave., Forrest Hills, L. I.	BOWEN, JAMES M., JR.	2834 Second Avenue So., St. Petersburg, Fla.		

CARNEY, JOHN S.	265 Pindle Avenue, Englewood, N. J.	COX, BENJAMIN H.	R.F.D. No. 2, Carrolton, Ga.	DRAGA, GENO R.	21 Brompton Street, San Francisco, Calif.
CARPENE, GUISEPPE C.	129 Ridge Street, Pearl River, N. Y.	COYLE, JAMES L.	212 So. Loudon Avenue, Baltimore, Md.	DRAGGOO, WILLIAM C.	Box 737, Route No. 4, Seattle, Wash.
CARR, ARNOLD B.	69 Fairview Avenue, New York City	COYLE, WILBUR T.	5060 Bryant, Denver, Colo.	DROTT, EDWARD A.	P. O., Mathews, La.
CARR, SAMUEL T., JR.	Road No. 1, Sugar Grove, Penna.	CRADDOCK, CURTIS R.	Route No. 1, Greta, Va.	DRUMRIGHT, ROBERT E.	Box 16, Agoura, Calif.
CARROLL, JOHN S.	Morris City, Ill.	CRAIG, JOHN T.	Route No. 1, Leedy, Okla.	DRY, ARTHUR O.	Joplin, Ill.
CARSTENS, ROBERT H., JR.	3015 Denly Drive, Dallas, Texas	CRANDELL, THEODORE R.	247 W. Foothill Blvd., Monrovia, Calif.	DUKE, WERNER	122 22nd Lane, National City, Calif.
CARTER, JOHN E.	1608 New Orleans Avenue, Tampa, Fla.	CRANFORD, JAMES B.	124 Saluda Street, Chester, S. C.	DUMAS, JAMES H.	Box 1498a, Route No. 1, Miami, Fla.
CASEY, MICHAEL F.	72 Taylor Street, Waltham, Mass.	CRAWFORD, BERT, JR.	1008 So. Ohio Street, Kokomo, Ind.	DURANT, JOHN J.	Holyoke, Mass.
CASTLE, CHARLES S.	303 Beechfield Avenue, Baltimore, Md.	CREAMER, JAMES R.	Shadygrove Road R. F. D., Gaithersburg, Md.	DWYER, THOMAS L.	Alexander, N. D.
CHAINAO, WILLIAM E.	36 Amitoy Street, Cahoes, N. Y.	CRESTETTO, ALDO	P. O. No. 755, Lincoln, Calif.	EARL, JOHN	406 Ridgeview Drive, Dravosburg, Penna.
CHANDLER, JOHN W.	2950 Hardman Ct. S. W., Atlanta, Ga.	CRIMMINS, HERBERT J.	677 E. 42nd Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.	EATON, WILSON S.	83 Stevens Street, Oceanside, N.Y.
CHANKALIAN, DICKRAN R.	679 Lexington Avenue, New York City	CULLINANE, STEPHEN J.	617 W. 170th Street, New York City	EBBERTS, GILMORE M.	2121 Wilkins Avenue, Baltimore, Md.
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COLUCCI, JAMES J.	162 Ash Street, Saratoga, N. Y.	DEXTER, JOSEPH T.	17 Brinkerhoff Street, Jersey City, N. J.	FILBRY, HOWARD A.	317 E. 61st Street, Manhattan, N. Y.
COLWELL, CASSIUS F.	162 W. Clifford Street, Providence, R. I.	DENNISON, WILLIAM A., JR.	510 W. Main Street, Wytheville, Va.	FILOMENA, NICHOLAS A.	603 Saw Mill River Road, Ardsley, N. Y.
CONLAN, WILLIAM F., JR.	55 Stenben Street, Providence, R. I.	DI FRENZA, ALEXANDER	3866 Laconia Avenue, Bronx, N. Y.	FINKEL, MORRIS	200 W. 54th Street, New York City
CONNER, GEORGE W.	14513 So. Halsted Street, Harvey, Ill.	DI GUIGNO, GAETANO J.	1325 So. Fairhill Street, Philadelphia, Penna.	FINN, JAMES W.	127 Dana Avenue, Boston, Mass.
COOK, WILLIAM R.	Sumner, Mich.	DIGRIS, JOHN F.	451 Main Street, Holyoke, Mass.	FINNEGAN, THOMAS J.	47 E. Cottage Street, Roxbury, Mass.
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MARIONONI, PETER	15710 School Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio	MORRILL, CHANNING H.	29 Church Street, Williamantic, Conn.	PAGE, RODNEY E.	610 Fayetteville Road, Rockingham, N. C.
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