CALIFORNIA MILITARY DEPARTMENT HISTORICAL PROGRAM North Highlands Annex, Joint Forces Headquarters 3900 Roseville Road North Highlands, California 95660

Batteries F and H, 251st Coast Artillery Regiment (Anti-Aircraft) and 251st Antiaircraft Artillery Group, 1940-1945 CPT Richard H. Bordon Collection

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Compiled by CPT Richard H Bordon 29 March 2003. Scanned 5 July 2020

Nathaniel T. Robertson Regimental Historian 1741 Bancroft St San Diego, Ca. 92102-1223

Dear Sir

Here is to the best in my memory of my time with the 251st Regiment mainly Batteries "H" and "F". This has taken longer than I had hoped. I was making this more or less to keep in the house for my grand children to see. My wife Lorene thought we should make a copy for each of our two children. After meeting you I decided to make one copy for you. My younger brother's grandson who has enlisted in the 40th division, 160th Infantry C.N.G. saw what I was making, insisted that I make one for him. He has been to and returned from Kuwait and is now studying for O.C.S. I don't think he can make it like I did.

The five copies are finished now and I am getting ready to send them out. I want to thank you for the for the Aerial Photo of Camp Malakole. Other than what the Engineers started, I was, with my survey crew, involved in every building that you see in the photo. My Daughter who is an assistant principal and a real good writer offered to write this for me but I said "NO", this is how I talk and that is the way that I want it. I had Don Carner one of the members of Battery "F", proof read "The Day That Shall Live I in Infamy" And to record what he was doing at that time. He did such an excellent job I am trying to get more of the same from other members. I hope that this book will be usefull to you. You have my permission to use any part that is usefull without giving credit and my permission

Sincerely

Richard H. Borden

throw out any part that you want to.

March 29, 2003



251st Coast Artillery (Anti-Aircraft) Regiment Camp Malakole ~ Circa 1940/41 Barbers Point, Honolulu, Island of Oahu, Territory of Hawaii



I did my best to mark the aerial of Camp Malakole. I could locate the 2nd Battalion but not Hq. Battery.

The main entrance to camp passed in front of Regimental Headquarters and through to the gun park. What I labeled as the gun park is also the firing line for AA target practice against sleeve targets that are pulled by an aircraft. Cross course and O course. There were 2 steel towers that the safety officers could see out over the ocean and the whole camp. The camp was an old target range that the Hawaiian Dept used, we even had some Marine Infantry come in to fire B.A.Rs. at targets. Those using the range must have gone back to their base at night as the camp had no facilities.

I am almost sure that the straight line on the right side is the Railroad used by sugar people to haul the harvested sugarcane to the mill. It was narrow gauge and they laid portable track into the fields. In Fiji they had mine gauge and used Oxen as switch engines.

The top of the picture I am pretty sure was the motor pool.

Rich Borden.

3/29/03

ONE MAN'S STORY

This is a story more about a regiment as seen by one man and about the men and officers that he served with. It is written for the next generation of the family.

First as a 21\$ a month private who joined to get a years training in California serving in Battery 'H'. When you are one of the men, you soon know everyone in that Battery. You will remember them as long as you live. There was an old Army expression that is something like this. An order comes out that So and So is transferred in grade to the Battery next door or across the World. Underneath in invisible words it states "All debts and friendships are hereby canceled". There are so many that you remember but never see again. Then again there are the ones who attend reunions or you meet on the street or out shopping. There are those that you were on duty with and those that did favors for you. From Battery "H" are Tony and Johnny Iantorno who I was in the same pyramidal tent with clear back in Ventura. They are still working on reunions and The Pearl Harbor Survivors Association. Many of my pictures and much of the information came from them.

Every thing changes when you become a Commissioned Officer. My time in peace time (20 days) was that you don't live or eat with the men of your Battery. When war came, every thing changed. A Platoon Officer lived with his platoon (this was early when a platoon was in one location.) In early 1942 we changed to 2 platoons each with 4 gun sections, each with a 37 mm cannon a director a 300 watt generator and a 50 caliber AA machine gun and a platoon headquarters. At this time we didn't have Jeeps so I walked to my 4 gun sections every day.

AS a Commissioned Officer you don't get to know every man, just the gun sergeants and the corporals and a few of the crew, you do miss not being one of the men.

I had been with Battery "F" from being a corporal with an MO arm band, 2nd LT., 1st Lt. and Captain I could name so many of the best of men Don Carner who gave me many pictures and information, and the many more that gave loyalty to their Commanding Officers their Battery and their Country. I can remember the gun crews, Joe Jenny, Burch, Atkinson, Crabtree, Bryan, Anttilla, Sheehan, Yankee and the Platoon Staff Sgts. Neal Jansen and Al Comeaux, Battery Headquarters Whitt in supply, Watson and the cooks, Sterling in Ordnance, Edmonds and Roy Brown The Motor Pool, Thompson in Communications and his gang that we all worked with, Finch, Warden, Bressler who had a short wave radio and at night picked up The States and played late Music over the telephones to the air guards who manned a post at each gun section 24 hours a day, he also plugged my phone in every night too. Don't forget Richard Dowser who I knew since the 4th grade at Burnett Grammar School in Long Beach. We also were partners owning a horse named Veronica when we were at Saweni Beach in Fiji.

THE BORDEN FAMILY

A note about my brothers and sisters. There were 9 of us,5 girls and 4 boys. Numbers 1&2 were girls that were in their 30s when the war started. No. 3 was oldest brother Elton who was killed in an automobile accident in 1930 when he was 19 years old. No. 4 was brother David 3 years older than me, 24 in 1940. He was a bank teller and in 1941 quit his job and went to Canada and enlisted in the Canadian Air Force, became a Sergeant Pilot. They made him an instructor and wouldn't let him go to England. He quit and came back to the U. S. in 1942. He had to sign up for the draft, he was sent to the Infantry and after a struggle he was transferred to the Air Corps. Was a Sergeant Pilot, started flying B 26s towing sleeve targets. He became a pilot on the P61 Black Widow Night Fighter. NO. 5 was sister Lou Ella 2 years older than me. She was teaching school, joined the Air corps, worked in the photo lab at different bases here in the States. No. 6 That's me. No. 7 was Sister Aurora, Three years younger. Joined the Air Corps, did administrative work. No. 8 was brother Robert, 6 years younger, joined the Army, was trained as an M.P. was sent to England. Patrolled the country area. Married an English girl, Jean. After the war he brought her home. No.9 was sister Nina. 9 years younger, Too young to get into the war, but married a veteran. More about David and Aurora. About the time that I made rotation and was starting to get transportation home, David became a Flight Officer and when he was sailing over seas was commissioned Lieutenant. He was walking on the deck with the troops, when he recognized some one. He said "Don't I know you?" Here on the same ship sailing for Hollandia N.E.I. was our sister Aurora. At this time with me coming home, Robert in England, David and Aurora sailing out, 4 out of the 5 of us were overseas at the same time.

We all have wondered how our Mother stood up under all of this. Dad too but he also caused Mom a lot of worry in World War 1.

Two Humdred Fifty First Coast Artillery (A.A.)

Inducted into Federal service Sept.16, 1940 at Long Beach, California assigned to Battery "H'. Captain Vern J. Brustkern commanding.

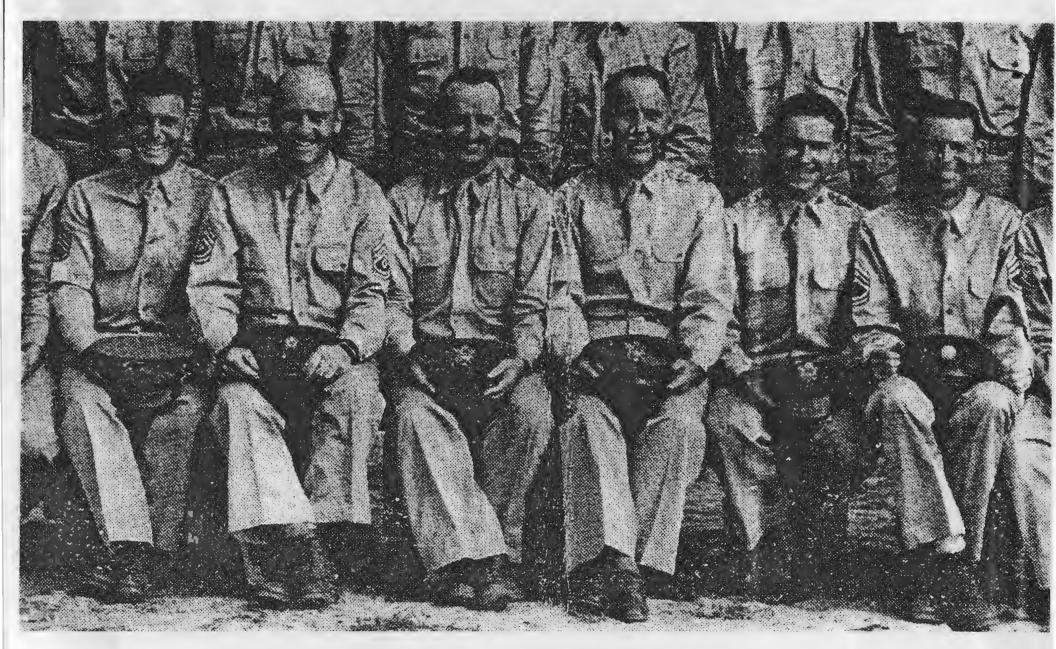
Moved to Ventura County Fair Grounds Sept. 20, 1940. Built camp, received new orders. Left Ventura Oct. 31, 1940 went to Los Angeles Harbor to board the SS Washington to sail to Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii. Arrived at Aloha Tower Nov. 5, 1940 and proceeded to Fort Shafter.

A few days later Battery 'H' moved to Camp Malakole to begin building barracks. (I was in charge of the survey crew and promoted to corporal).

By November, the camp was nearly complete. On Nov.17, 1941 I was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, Army of the United States, assigned to Battery 'F' as platoon officer 3rd platoon. Capt. Colin R. Ogden commanding.

Sometime in late October, the Hawaiian Department of the United States Army was placed on an alert, mainly to guard against the local Japanese sabotaging the military bases. All equipment was brought together; guards were doubled and tripled with another battery held in reserve. The same was done at the Air Corps bases. Saturday, Dec. 6, 1941, we had the usual review and then Saturday afternoon and Sunday was free time. Battery 'F' was not one of the two batteries on guard. We were free. First Lt. Jack Gillespie said "Borden, you are the duty officer for the weekend." Capt. Ogden's family was in Hawaii, Lt. Gillespie's mother and twin sister (married to a Navy Lt. J.G.) and 2nd Lt. Irwin Whitney's mother were all in town and they all but me went on pass to be with their families.





 $\frac{\text{BATTERY 'H' 251}^{\text{ST}} \text{ COAST ARTILLERY (AA) CAMP MALAKOLE T.H.}}{\text{CAPTAIN VERN J. BRUSTKERN-COMMANDING}} \\ 1^{\text{ST}} \text{ L.T. ORLO R. PEUGH} \\ 2^{\text{ND}} \text{ L.T. STANTON C. LONG} \\ \text{STAFF SGT. ART SHUNK, } 1^{\text{ST}} \text{ SGT. GERALD D. KINT, TECH. SGT. LISLE B. BORDWELL.} \\$





Captain Vern J. Brustkern
1st Lt. Orlo R. Peugh
2nd Lt. Stanton C. Long
FIRST SERGEANT

Kint, Gerald D.

TECHNICAL SERGEANT

Bordwell, Lisle B.

STAFF SERGEANT Shunk, Arthur H.

Allum, Ralph L.
Erikson, Richard W.
Hatfield, Harold R.
Iantorno, Sam J.
Linville, Robley O.
Mansager, Lorenz J.

Brinton, Howard M.
Brown, Forrest E.
Brown, Franklyn
Fossberg, Gaylord R.
Fox, Bernard P.
Kramer, Everett C.
Mann, Grant H.

Austin, Wendell C. Beer, Armen A. Bigler, Thurman P. Borden Richard H. unk, Arthur H.

SERGEANTS

McGrath, Howard L.

Mousel, Paul P.

Ryan, Charles F.

Shanahan, Frank M.

Short, William A.

Worley, Lester D. CORPORALS

Maze, James E.
Seymour, Robert L.
Smith, Donald M.
Swartz, Harry J.
Tennant, Don L.
Van Hook, Robert K.
Viney, Melvin L.

PRIVATES FIRST CLASS

Duker, Orlo F. Frohnhoefer, Albert Gallup, Richard G. Gillespie Tack R McKay, Arthur B.
Miller, Charles W.
Olden, Christian E.
Pemberton, Jack A.
Petrey, Colonel W.
Pizzatta, Joseph J.
Randolph, Harry E.
Robuck, Ferol G.

Anderson, George N. Barbriea, Manuel Battaglino, Edward I. Bloom, Emanuel M. Boman, Eugene U. Bustamante, William B. Byers, Robert L. Cape, Bernard A. Conley, Jack H. Cornier, Alfred J. Davis, George C. Douglass, Ned D. Duhamel, Gaston G. Ellwood, James W. Endsley, Jack T. Frazier, Chester W. Fulton, Robert L. Garstang, Paul S. Garstang, Richard F. Gillis, William G. Handerson Charles I

Scott, John K.
Standley, Earl W.
Stephens, Walter B.
Tuntland, John O.
White, Lloyd W.
Yorba, Edmund N.
Younger, Ernest A.

PRIVATES

Kirkpatrick, Harold R. Knowles, Paul H. Leach, Virgil B. Lindeboom, George S. Lopes, Edward I. Mallette, Gavin S. Markham, Bill Martin, Lester L. McCaul, Bernard C. McDonald, Patrick J. McDougall, Albert L. McDougall, Mathew D. McFeren, Edward Messner, Robert E. Phillips, Weldon C. F. Reade, Nathan L. Smith, Gerald A. Studer, William C. Thayer, Percy R. Thompson, Harold V. Tucker Frnest H



BATTERY "H" 251st COAST ARTILLERY (AA)

CAMP MALAKOLE, T. H.

CHARLE RECEEDED.

Christmas Dinner Menu • 1940

Chilled Honeydew Melons

Iced Table Celery

Queen Olives

Chicken Noodles en Cream, Royale

Roast Maryland Turkey, Cranberry Sauce

Gelery Dressing

Giblet Gravy ...

Roast Loin of Pork, Apple Sauce

Natural Gravy

Gelery Dressing

Snowflaked Potatoes

Candied Sweet Potatoes

Corn on the Cob

Creamed Peas

Cauliflower

String Beans

Combination Salad

White Bread .

Butter

Jam

Coconut Cake

Mincemeat Pie

Jello

Plum Pudding, Hard Sauce

Ice Gream

Assorted Nuts

Mixed Candies

Oranges

Apples

Bananas

Coffee

Apple Cider

Iced Tea

SURVEY CREW. FIRST LT. ORLO PEUGH, A CIVIL ENGINEER, SAID TO ME "YOU ARE GOING TO BE THE CAMP SURVEYOR". I SAID, "I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT." AND HE SAID, "YOU WILL WHEN YOU GET THROUGH."

HE TOOK ME TO THE THIRD ENGINEERS WHO HAD STARTED THE CAMP. THEY GAVE ME A TRANSIT, A 100 FOOT STEEL CHAIN (TAPE), A DUMPY LEVEL, A STADIA ROD AND A PLUMB BOB. THEY LEFT CAMP THAT DAY. THEY SENT ME THREE MEN TO MAKE A CREW. SEE PICTURE. PRIVATE FIRST CLASS RICH BORDEN - BATTERY H, SGT. FROM FIRST BATTALION, SGT. PAUL MONSEL - BATTERY H, CORP. GLEN ARBOGAST - BATTERY F. WE LAID OUT THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE BUILDINGS. AFTER THE PIERS WERE POURED WITH CONCRETE WE SHOT THE ELEVATIONS OF EACH PIER FOR THE SAW MILL CREW TO CUT THE PIER BLOCKS. (92 PIERS PER BUILDING.) WE ALSO SHOT ELEVATIONS FOR THE SEWERS, WATER LINES, STREETS, ETC.



FLOOD AT MALAKOLE - 9 INCH RAIN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NICHT. WE WERE IN A TENT CAMP ON THE LOWEST GROUND. THE WATER CAME UP IN THE BOTTOM OF THE CANVAS COTS. AT DAY BREAK WE WADED OUT TO THE ROAD AND FOUND THE KITCHEN SUBMERGED, WE WADED IN, GOT THE STOVES OUT AND SET UP ON THE ROAD. WE BROUGHT OUT THE FOOD AND THE COOKS FOUND ENOUGH WOOD TO COOK BREAKFAST. NO MORE RAIN.





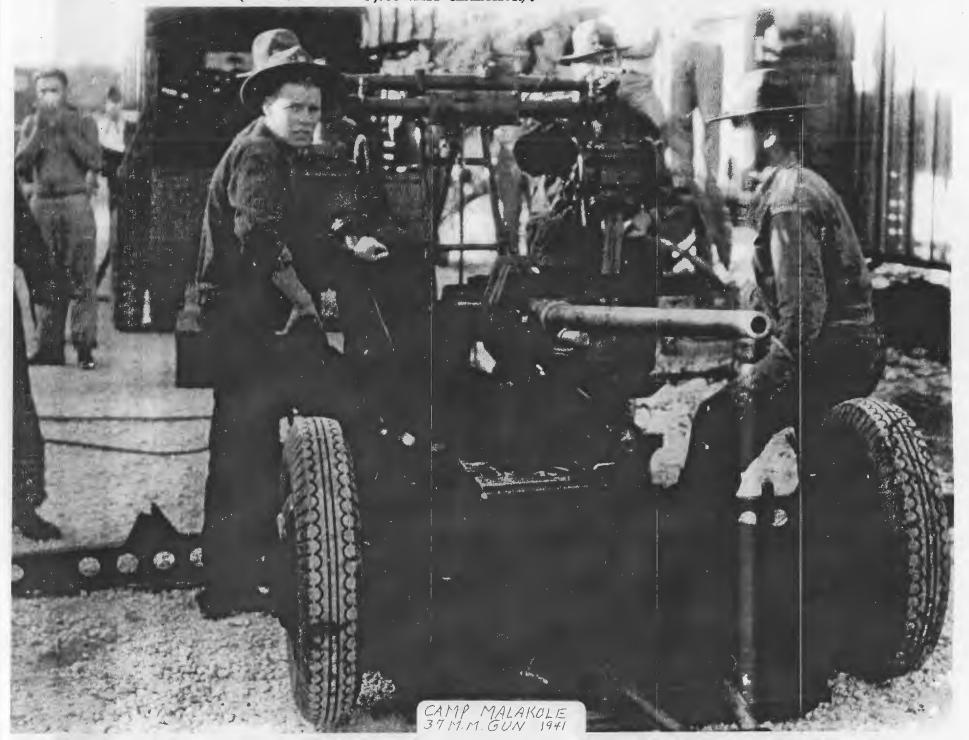




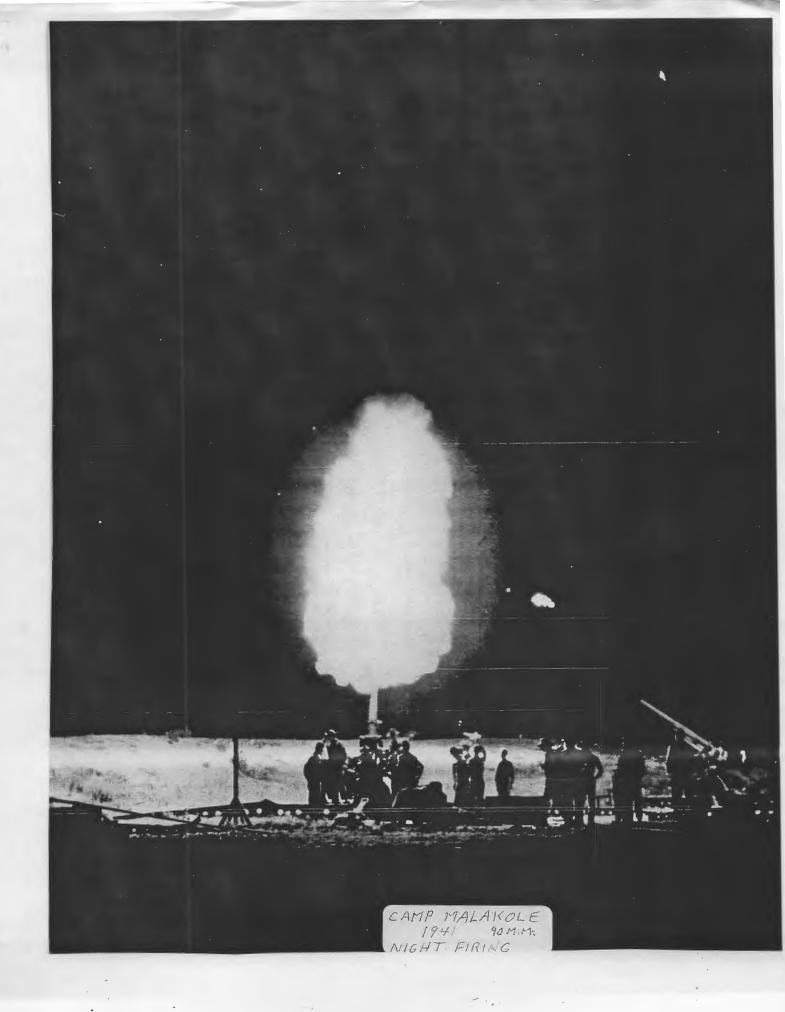
CORP. CABE BRINION WITH WITH THE SCRAMBLE BOX. THES IS CONNECTED TO THE 2 37 MM CANNON PICTURED BELOW. THE SCRAMBLE BOX HAD A PLACE TO PUT IN THE ESTIMATED SPEED OF THE TARGET AND THE ESTIMATED DISTANCE. THIS IS CONNECTED TO THE SIGHTS ON THE GUN, WHICH GAVE THE SUPER ELEVATION AND THE LEAD. TWO OF THE MEN ON THE GUN HAD WHEELS THAT THEY TURNED, ONE FOR UP AND DOWN AND ONE FOR HORIZONTAL, USING THE SIGHTS.



WE LATER RECEIVED 37 MM AND LATER 40 MM CANNONS THAT HAD ELECTRIC DIRECTORS AND DRIVEN BY OIL GEAR MOTORS POWERED BY ELECTRIC MOTORS (EACH GUN HAD A 3,000 WATT GENERATOR).









Battery 'F' 251st Coast Artillery (A.A.) Captain Colin R. Ogden Commanding 1st Lt. John J. Gillespie Executive Officer



Captain Colin R. Ogden, Commanding Officer 1st Lt. Julian A. Phillipson, Executive Officer 1st Lt. Harold F. Thienhaus 2nd Lt. John J. Gillespie TECHNICAL SERGEANTS

Doran, Frank M. First Sergeant

STAFF SERGEANT

Argue, Anson J. Arnold, James R. Bailey, Paul E. Becconsall, Eric Brown, Claire P.

Arbogast, Glenn L. Bolton, Jack M. Burch, Walter J. Caldwell, William H. Dowser, Harry W. Haynes, Myron E. Parlin, Howard E.

Bailey, Jack B. Ballou, Vincent E. Beanblossom, Harold E. Bressler, Clyde C.

Masters, Don C. SERGEANTS

> Bryan, John C. Comeaux, Albert E. Hopkins, Charles H. Northcutt, William O.

Crouse, Charles C.

CORPORALS

Ruch, George E. Rasmussen, Warren D. Swisher, Hilburn F. Thompson, Eugene E. Wilkin, Claud G. Willis, William W.

PRIVATES FIRST CLASS

Lawliss, John S. Marshall, Jack E. Mershon, Hoyt D. Patino, Jack

- Whitt, Alexander F.

Anderson, Dave E. Andrus, Robert M. Anttila, Mauri Y. Armstrong, James E. Atkinson, John F. Blackwell, Henry C. Blood, Marston A. Brewer, Frank A. Brown, Clyde C. Brown, Lowell A. Purke, Stanley J. Carlberg, William E. Crabtree, Hobart L. Creach, William R. Curley, John M. d'Agay, Gabriel M. DeLong, Weldon O. Dowser, Richard E. Dreger, Andrew, Jr. Duvall, Robert E. Dyess, L. R. Edmonds, William H. T. Finch, Edward F. Giffin, Edward C. Gilbert, Jess D.

Williams, Virgil J.

PRIVATES Janzen, Neal P. Jenny, Joseph A. Karaly, Philip Ketchum, Oakley H. Kimmons, Don C. Landis, Benjamin R. Magruder, Charles A. Meylink, George W. Montgomery, Quintin R. Morning, Curtis E. McDonald, Jack F. Nichols, Perry M. Oliver, Glen W. Oudkirk, Donald W. Pike, Dexter C. Piper, Donald D. Reep, William S. Sawrey, James A. Scott, Albert N. Sehorn, William A. Sheehan, James W. Shorb, David L. Shuck, Francis M. Simmons, Richard B. Simpson, John G.



Nov. 1941

BATTERY "F," 251st COAST ARTILLERY (AA) • CAMP MALAKOLE, T. H.

Captain Colin R. Ogden, Commanding
1st Lt. John J. Gillespie
1st Lt. Julian A. Phillipson
2nd Lt. Richard H. Borden
2nd Lt. Irwin R. Whitney

FIRST SERGEANT
Charles C. Crouse

TECHNICAL SERGEANT
Don C. Masters

MESS SERGEANT Claire P. Brown

SERGEANTS

Glenn L. Arbogast, Jr.

Henry C. Blackwell

Jack M. Bolton

Walter J. Burch

Albert E. Comeaux

Robert C. Ebermayer

William H. T. Edmonds

Charles H. Hopkins
Berry M. Hayes
Howard E. Parlin
Warren D. Rasmussen
Dallas E. Sterling
Hilburn F. Swisher
Woodrow W. Watkins

CORPORALS

Mauri Y. Anttilla Harold E. Beanblossom William C. Graves
Myron E. Haynes

Carl J. Glenn
('harles O. Harvey
Richard C. Hill
Samuel C. Hurd
Howard L. Ivey
Joseph A. Jenny
Benjamin R. Landis
George W. Meylink
('harles M. Runyon

James E. Armstrong John F. Atkinson Frank A. Brewer Stanley J. Burke John M. Curley William R. Creach Andrew Dreger, Jr. J. R. Dyess Edward H. Ferree Edward F. Finch Philip Karaly Don C. Kimmons Edwin R. Lam Walter E. La Valley Albert J. LaPrise Elmer Lawton George W. Lee

James A. Sawrey
William A. Sehorn
Richard B. Simmons
Edward J. Saffron
Harold B. Silberman
William W. Willis
Alexander F. Whitt
Robert E. Duvall

PRIVATES

Kenneth E. McGregory Mathew J. McKenzie Harry C. McKown John T. McQuaid Charles R. McQueen Perry M. Nichols Dexter C. Pike, Jr. William S. Reep Sidney Schecter Robert V. Schmutzler John V. Sciarrillo, Jr. Peter J. Sorrento, Jr. George Stahl George Stanavitch Charles S. Stinner Leonard W. Stults John J. Szczeck



This is the second holiday season during which many of us will be separated from homes and families. It is doubly important that we meet the season's joyous tradition with the courage which will reflect credit on our regiment and its duty in the Hawaiian Department. With this thought uppermost in mind I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Colonel, Coast Artillery Commanding

lapt. C-R. Ogden

The Christmas dinner that never took place. The pictures were taken in early November 1941. The menu and printing were done after Nov. 20. All things and our lives changed after December 7th 1941.

BATTERY "F," 251ST COAST ARTILLERY (AA) CAMP MALAKOLE, T. H.

CHRISTMAS DINNER • 1941

Vegetable Soup Crackers

Celery Hearts

Olives

Roast Turkey

Celery Dressing

Giblet Gravy

Candied Sweet Potatoes

Creamed Cauliflower

Waldorf Salad

Bread

Butter

Pumpkin Pie

Mincemeat Pie

Fruit Cake

Apples

Oranges Candies

Nuts

Coffee

Lemonade

Cigars

Cigarettes

Mess Officer: 1st Lt. John J. Gillespie Mess Sergeant: Woodrow W. Watkins Cooks: Pfc. Collette, 1st Cook; Pfc. Gilbert, 1st Cook; Pfc. Hurd, 2nd Cook; Pvt. McDonald, 2nd Cook; Pvt. Warren, 2nd Cook; Pfc. Jenny, Baker



251st Coast Artillery (Anti-Aircraft) Regiment Camp Malakole ~ Circa 1940/41 Barbers Point, Honolulu, Island of Oahu, Territory of Hawaii



HOW DID I EVER GET HERE

My full name is Richard Abbott Howe Borden. The middle names come from my Mothers side of the family. Direct descendants

of Lt. John Abbott and Capt. Perley Howe of the 4th Regiment, Light Horse, From Vermont, During the Revolutionary War 1776.

My fathers grandfather, Archibald Borden was a Confederate soldier from 1861 to 1865. The only battle of the Civil War fought in Arkansas was fought on his farm in Prairie Grove Arkansas. Dads father was a child at this time, Their home was burnt down. My father Archibald David Borden was born in Downey Calif. In 1860. He was raised on farms. What is now Lakewood, he caught the L.A.-Salt Lake R.R. steam train to Los Angeles to the only High School in the area. He joined the National Guard, The 7th California Volunteers, in Long Beach, some time around 1900. He went with them to the San Francisco earth quake in 1906, then in 1916 to the Mexican border while Pancho Villa was making raids across the border. There always was a silver loving cup on our mantel (I have it now) that has printed on it

To Captain A. D. Borden From the Boys Of Co. H 1916 Border Service

In 1918 the 7th was Federalized as the 160th Infantry 40th Division. They went to.. Camp Kearney in San Diego to train, then to England and then to France. Not long after arriving in France, on Aug. 15, 1918, the Red Cross notified him that a son had been delivered to his wife at Sea Side Hospital in Long Beach. That was me, Richard, his 6th child.

In November when the war ended, Dad stayed with the Army of Occupation, he was promoted to Major. I was a year old when I first met my Father. The family tell that I knew him from his photographs in uniform but when he dressed in civies I would not have anything to do with him,

Long Beach always looked after it's own. When Dad's father became too old to farm the city hired him as a mounted policeman, he patrolled the outskirts of town. On Sunday morning in 1912 he and Grandma were coming home from church, noticed a window was open in the downstairs bed room, some one was ransacking the house, when Grandpa went in to see what was going on the burglar shot him with his own pistol, ran out the front door crossed the street and was never seen or found.

When Dad came home from France, he had 6 children and no job. The City of Long Beach found a position as a Cement Inspector on road construction and sidewalks. He later took a civil service exam. In 1922 he went to work at the U.S. Veterans Bureau in down town Los Angeles. In 1927 he was promoted as regional manager of Southern Calif. and 2 counties of Nevada. In 1935 he was transferred to Arizona and in 1936 to Colorado.

While we were in Colorado I attended the University of Colorado in Boulder as an Engineering student. I was very interested in current events going on in the world. Germany, France and especially Spain with the Communists backing one side and Hitler and Mussolini backing the other.

About the end of the spring quarter one of my professors who was a WW 1 vet told me that you are required to attend an assembly this afternoon. I told him that I don't attend these things. He told me that he is taking me. I cannot understand why because when it started there were 3 people on the platform. Two of them were noted for being back from fighting for the communist in Spain one was a college age Japanese woman.

They said we are handing out this package of petitions for you to send, one to Pres. Roosevelt, one to your Representative and one to each of your Senators.

After I read one of them, I guess I can remember what they said. The petitions said "Dear Mr. President, We understand that you don't like war and we want you to know that we don't like war either. We want you to understand that if you get us into the war we are not going to fight.

That stood me up. I was about half way back in the auditorium and I yelled "Just a minute, you adolescent pinks are trying to get us to say that we wont fight for our country, you wont fight even if we are invaded. You can take these petitions and shove them". I threw the whole package up in the air and walked out, got in my car and drove home to Denver. The Associated Press said that an unidentified heckler tried to break up the meeting. I told my Father that something should be done about this. He said "There is hardly a day goes by that I don't meet some Damn fool, you just have to get used to it."

On Monday I went back to back to school, my friends ran over to me and said "We are sure glad to see you alive." I asked "What is this all about." We thought we would never see you alive, they searched the whole campus trying to find you or asking who you are." I asked "What about now'. They thought that by now it is all settled. I never did leave my back open.

School was soon out, I Got a summer job and when Sept. came, the war was looking worse, the Denver paper said that the Long Beach National Guard, and others, Are being called up for a year of training. I hated to go back to school, I wanted to go home to Calif. That 3 months at Ventura Fair Grounds and 9 months at March Field to train for a possible war sounded good to me. I wrote to the L. B. National Guard. I received a telegram saying to report to Battery H Monday Sept. Ninth at 7;30 P.M. Capt. V.J.Brustkern.

These lines tell how some of us became Commissioned Officers. In making the moves from Calif. to Hawaii to Camp Malakole then concentrating on building a camp, all of our time and the leadership lost track of something.

A letter came from Washington saying to submit the list of the names of the men you have been training to be candidates to be commissioned as officers. No one could recall having seen any correspondence. They went through all correspondence clear back to Ventura and found the letter that told them to start a training qualified personnel to become officers. In shock, they came up with a plan to give a test based on the 10 series. The 10 series was a study that enlisted men studied for months, even years to be commissioned as a 2nd Lt.

They gave 50 or 60 men orders to report to one of the mess halls at 1:30 PM for the next 10 days. We were never told that this was a test for a commission. After a few weeks I was told to go to Regimental Headquarters for an interview.

The interview was before 4 or 5 officers, The only one that I recognized was a West Pointer that was from our regiment, the others were from the Hawaiian Dept. There wasn't much questioning, the biggest question was "How do you like the Army?" I said "I like the Army fine". They looked at each other and smiled, nodded their heads and said "We are recommending you for a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant." There was only about 15 of us that were recommended out of the 50 or 60 that took the test.

The Batteries were low on commissioned officers, we had received draftees to fill out the ranks but no commissioned officers. The line Batteries were down to 2 or 3 per battery but should have 6. To help out the over worked battery officers all of the recommended officers were appointed as Maneuver Officers. Each wore an armband that had a big MO on it. You still wore your enlisted mans uniform with your rank still on your sleeve. You rated a Yes Sir but not a salute.

I was assigned to Battery 'F', Capt. Colin R. Ogden commanding 1st Lt. Jack Gillespie Executive Officer. The3 platoons were commanded by Sergeants. I was given the 3rd platoon. We soon got another MO, I.R. Whitney who went to the 1st platoon, leaving the 2rd platoon with Tech Sergeant Don Masters in command.

On the 17th day of November, about 5 minutes before noon I met Lt. Gillespie and he said, "Go to Regimental Headquarters, Col. Sherman wants to see you". I said "It is lunch time so I will wait until 1 o'clock. He said "No, go now", he took me to Reg. Hqs. and were told that the Col. Had gone to his quarters' Gillespie took me there and no Col., he said sit here and wait for him,. About 5 min. later the Col. came. He sat by me and said "Borden, you have got to make your decision". I thought maybe I should talk things over with some of my buddies, so I said "Why don't you go ahead and eat lunch and I will come back at 1 o'clock." The Col. Said "No, we will discuss the advantages and the disadvantages". After a long conversation, he told me that my commission had arrived from Washington. I told him that I would accept the commission. He took me by the arm and we went to Reg. Hqtrs, the Col. Asked "Where is the adjutant"? He was told that he wasn't back from lunch. The Col said, "Get him". The Adjutant rushed in, Col. Sherman took my right arm and raised it up and said "Swear this man in". This is one way that you become a 2nd Lieutenant. The hard way.

By the way. One of the advantages discussed was that I had a discharge dated Nov. 19th to go to the Constructing Quartermaster as a civilian surveyor. Their were plenty of surveyors in Honolulu but the Major said that they were all Japanese and he needed me to work in the secret areas. Col. Sherman convinced me that a Commissioned Officer was much better than a civil service employee. I had also tried to get employment with some of the private contractors in Honolulu but they didn't need me. If I had gotten to work with one of them I could have wound up on one of the outer islands like Wake or even the Philippines.

LT. JACK GILSEPIE. BACK IN POLY HIGH SCHOOL, HE WAS A FRIEND OF MY BROTHERS, ELTON, DAVID AND JACK ATKINS. WHEN I WAS A PRIVATE AND CORPORAL HE WAS FRIENDLY TO ME. ON NOVEMBER 17, 1941, I WAS COMMISSIONED AS A 2ND LT. I WAS ASSIGNED TO BATTERY 'F'AN AUTOMATIC ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS BATTERY. CAPT. COLIN R OGDEN COMMANDING AND 1ST LT. JACK GILESPIE EXECUTIVE OFFICER. AS I NEVER HAD BASIC TRAINING OR BEEN TO AN OFFICERS SCHOOL I WAS PRETTY GREEN. JACK TOOK ME UNDER HIS WING AND TAUGHT ME A LOT. ON DECEMBER 6 JACK TOLD ME I WAS TO BE THE DUTY OFFICER FOR THE WEEKEND. JACK'S MOTHER AND TWIN SISTER WERE IN HONOLULU AND CAPT. OGDEN'S WIFE AND TWO DAUGHTERS WERE THERE ALSO.





I REMEMBER DECEMBER 7, 1941

On Thursday, December 4th, I was told I had been made a gun corporal. Several of us had weekend passes, so, when Saturday came, we caught the truck into Honolulu with the intention of returning Sunday night, meanwhile celebrating my extra stripe.

We unloaded off the truck at the Army & Navy YMCA but did not go inside to reserve ourselves a cot for the night. Afterward, as we started roaming around town, we noted that there were more servicemen in town then we had ever seen before, expecially Navy. Their whites were everywhere and they were lined up for blocks at the motels on Hotel and Canel streets.

The Princess Theater was showing Charley Chaplin in the "Great Dictator" and we thought we would catch their 10.00 p.m. show. When we got there, they were going to show a premiere of another show. We told ourselves that we would see it Sunday. Going back to the "Y", we found out all the cots were taken. We checked at two or three other places and they were full, too. Midnight, we caught the trucks back to camp with the intention of returning Sunday morning.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1941

I was lying on my cot trying to decide if I wanted to eat in our mess hall or wait till I got to Honolulu. Sam Hurd, one of our 1st cooks came into our barracks (closest to the mess hall) and shouted "Last call for breakfast". I asked Sam what they were having and he told me pancakes. I told him to save me a couple and I would be right there. I hesitated moving right then.

We began to hear many explosions and getting up and going to the door on the east side of our barrack, we could see a lot of black smoke and many more explosions. Hearing machinegun fire, we went outside the barracks and two Japanese Zeros were attacking our camp. You could see the big orange rising sun on the underside of the wings and on the fuslage of the plane. Crouse our 1st Sgt.came running by shouting "we're at war". He seemed to be happy about it. Teasley and I went back inside our barracks and came out with loaded rifles. Another Jap plane came and was making a pass south to north. Teasley shot at him. I just looked at him, his big round face with a big grin on it. PFC Marston Blood was in charge of our ordinance. He had locked himself inside and would not open the door. Someone thought maybe he had a girl inside. I took my rifle back to the barracks and George Meylink and I went back to the ordinance located at the front of the 3rd barracks. We got inside and dragged out a 50cal mount, set it up, then went back and brought out the 50cal machinegun to mount on it. As we were trying to mount the gun, an officer (unknown to us) came running by and told us to bring the gun and follow him out to the "Algerobies". We hesitated and he yelled again to come on. George and I ended up south of camp with a gun, no mount, no ammuniion. We left the gun with Don Kimmons who had a 30cal machinegun mounted on a small infantry tripod. Somewhere in this time period, we heard Paul Warden play "Call to Arms" on his bugle.

After getting back to the barracks, we saw a BIG airplane come in from the ocean, just south of camp. I slapped my forehead and asked what they were sending in against us. We had never seen a B-17 before. Fort Barrett, northeast of our camp, opened fired on it and the plane turned back out to sea north of us.

Our trucks showed up and we mounted our 30 cal and 50cals machineguns up in the trucks and hooked our two 37mm AAA AW guns on the rear of two of them. We got out of camp approximately 9:30 - 9:40 a.m. We were on the highway headed for Pearl Harbor when the second wave of the Japanese attack hit. I think there were one or two Japanese planes that fired short brusts at us on the road.

Back at camp, Donald Oudkirk, a former member of our battery was hit while sitting on the pot. Another man was seriously injured and he claimed that Lt. Lyman saved his life.

Our CP was set up in Aeia. As I had not been assigned a gun, I remained with communications. I strung wire to our 37mm guns, one located at the submarine base and the other on the small peninsula between the middle lock and the east lock. We did not have anyone stationed at the Aiea Recreation area. All the service men there were sailors and marines, most of them had been pulled out of the harbor water after either being blown off or had to jump off their ships. They were a nervous bunch of men having just experienced the danger they had been in.

That night around 10:00 p.m., I was stringing a second wire to the sub base. We had just crossed the main highway when we heard two Navy planes attempting to land on Ford Island. They had turned on their landing lights but had overshot the runway so they turned them off and were turning around to make another attempt to land. Some navy gunner open fired on them, then all hell broke loose. I was watching the firing from our 37mm from the sub base and saw one of their rounds hit one plane. Meantime, we just stood frozen because of all the shrapnel we could hear sizzling down around us. We were lucky that we were not hit by any of it. I was at the same spot the next day and seeing the size of the some of the shrapnel made chills run up and down me. Of course, some of it was from the morning of the 7th. After the firing stopped, we continued stringing this 2nd line. As we approched the Aeia Recreation area, this being one of those dark nights, no moon, I heard the call to halt and about forty clicks from the safety locks on weapons. I identified myself and advanced to be recognized. The next day around 1:00 p.m. when passing this area again, someone inside asked when was the last time we ate. I told him not since Saturday afternoon. They brought us wrapped sandwiches and cold drinks. They were good.

Tuesdsay, December 9th, we loaded our gear back on to the trucks and crossed over to Ford Island on the ferry. I was assigned a 50cal machinegun squad and our first position was near the damaged Raleigh and the sunken Utah. I can remember the following men being there with me. George Meylink, Bill Reep, Eddie Finch, Roy Brown, Bob Schmuzler. Eddie found some Navy plywood and 2 x 4's and we built a small building for our sleeping quarters. Later the navy missed this matheial.

In January, my squad moved over to Hanger #6 and we dug our gun position in at the water's edge. We also constructed a large dugout for our ammunition and used it for playing cards at night. There was a small attached building to Hanger #6 and we had our quarters in it upstairs. We entered from inside the hanger. Al Comeaux was our Platoon Sgt, and he stayed with us here. One day a Naval Officer came by and told us we were to stand inspection every day.

The best food I ever had while in the Army was the food we had at the Marine Barracks on Ford Island. We had many choices and it tasted very good. I often wondered why the Navy had better food than the Army but never found out. Our Mess Sgt. at this time was the worst one our battery ever had. I do not blame our cooks as they did as he told them. I could go on and on about this, but enough said already.

Don Carner

The Day That Shall Live In Infamy! F.D.R.

Sunday Morning, December 7, 1941 at 7:55 A. M., I was going out the door of the junior officers quarters heading for breakfast (the officers mess closed at 8:00 A.M.). Going out the door I heard explosions and I looked over at Pearl Harbor (about 7 or 8 miles away) and I could see planes in the air, explosions and smoke. I ran to the senior officer's quarters and yelled "something is wrong at Pearl Harbor, there are airplanes above and explosions." A voice said, "Come get my field glasses and see if you can identify anything," Just then one of the planes that had dropped his bombs flew over our camp about 50 feet above the ground. I could see the pilot and a red ball on the side of the plane. I yelled, "The Japs are attacking, I am going to my Battery."

I ran to Battery 'F', when going by the mess hall I could see most of the men were in there. Running inside First Sergeant Crouse said, "What is going on?" I said, "WAR, the Japs are attacking, let's roll." He said, "Lt. Do you want to roll?" I said, "Yes." Sgt. Crouse yelled, "Let's roll." Everyone jumped up and started to get the equipment ready.

The Motor Sgt. Bill Edmonds asked, "Shall I get the trucks?" I said, "Yes." A few minutes later he came back and said, "They would give me only 3 trucks." I said, "How do we roll with 3 trucks?" (It takes 19 trucks to roll the battery). Bill said, "Lt., do you want the trucks?" My answer was, "Yes." He yelled, "All drivers follow me." He came back with the trucks. (Months later, I asked him, how he managed to get the trucks? He told me "Never mind, I got the trucks, didn't I?" I feel now that he went to the Regimental Motor Pool and he probably said, "The officer ordered me to get the trucks, now get out of my way.")

The ordnance Sgt. Said, "We do not have any ammunition." He had about 15 rounds of rifle ammunition in a one-gallon tomato can. One of the men came over to me and asked, "Do you think there could be some ammo at the target range?" I replied, "Let's go." He and another man and I ran to the range where there were 3 tents and a guard with a rifle. I asked, "Is there any ammo in the tents?" He replied, "It is full of it." I asked, "May we have some?" His reply was, "Help yourselves." I grabbed a case of 50 caliber and the two men each grabbed two cases. (I wish that I could remember who they were). We ran back to where the trucks were loading, a Jap plane that had dropped his bomb and was heading back to his carrier, strafed the camp, no one was hit.

Now we have our machine guns loaded and mounted on our trucks we are ready to roll. We are the only battery that is loaded and rolling out. As we passed by Regimental Headquarters—there was a Major standing with his arm held up for us to stop. My first thought was you sure are in trouble; we never had any orders or even heard the sound of the alert horn. The Major looked us over and I could see that he didn't know me but he did recognize Sgt. Crouse. The Major asked, "Is this battery 'F'? and I replied, "Yes sir". He said, "Go to alternate positions," I said "What's that," I think that he turned pale wondering how he could explain to us.

While we were stopped, the Platoon Sergeants came up and said, "Hey, we know where they are." So I asked, "Is it all right to go"? He waved us on. It would have been impossible to get to our regular positions on Ford Island, if the ferry boat was running we would have had some rough sailing through all of the bombing and exploding ships. We were lucky that the Major was there to send us to the alternate positions. My Third Platoon's positions were on the Waipio Peninsula all by ourselves, a sugar cane field, no telephone, a portable radio but radio silence. The First Platoon was at the Navy Aiea Recreation Center, the Second Platoon was near the power plant, Section one of the 3rd platoon was by a dock with a sheet metal building on it. We were the only people around. The next day civilian scientist came to check on any damage to this facility. It was a Degaussing facility, a place to demagnetize a whole ship for protection against magnetic mines. He said that the building was full of batteries and if they bombed the building we would have all been wiped out.

I was driving to the 2nd section of our platoon, which was at the far end of the peninsula, when about half way there I came upon a Battle Ship, it's nose jammed onto the shore. This was the Battle Ship Nevada. It was the only battle ship that had enough steam up to cast off and try to get out of the harbor. We heard that one of the 2 man Jap subs that snuck into the harbor hit the Nevada with 2 torpedoes, They said the Captain thought that if he tried to get out of the harbor he might sink in the entrance and the harbor would be sealed off for a long time, so he elected to beach her.

We were at these alternate positions for a couple of days and then we moved to our regular positions at the Naval Air Station on Ford Island. This is the island in the center of Pearl Harbor, the battle ships are tied up on the east side and the aircraft carriers on the west side. By the grace of God the carriers were not in the harbor on December 7th.

While we were loading our trucks at Malakole a flight of about five 4 motor bombers came over us from the North. They were very low and flying erratically. They were painted dark brown unlike any planes that we had at Hickam Field. The B 17s that we were used to had aluminum color, a small tail, no tail gunner and no gun turrets. These planes had a very tall tail, a tail gunner and had gun turrets on the sides and belly. Some one yelled "Stuckas" (a German single engine dive bomber). I had seen a picture of these planes in a magazine, not an army aircraft identification manual. I yelled, "B 17ts, hold your fire". They were gone before anyone got off a shot. These B 17s had been sent to Hawaii to arrive at this time. To save weight for the long flight they had no guns and no ammunition on board. We have all heard the story about the radar operators that were practicing with their new radar on their own time. They picked up a flight coming in and reported to their headquarters. The Lt. on duty said that "yes it is a flight of B 17s coming in from the States". We really never heard how they made out finding a place to land or how many had been shot down. The airfields were all under attack and on fire. I have always wondered how many made a safe landing.









SGT. HENRY C. BLACKWELL SOUTH GATE, CALIF.

SGT. WARREN D. RASMUSSEN COMPTON, CALIF.

CPL. CLYDE C. BROWN LONG BEACH, CALIF.

MEMBERS OF BATTERY 'F" 251ST COAST ARTILLERY (AA), CAMP MALAKOLE, T.H.

THEY HAD A LOVE OF FLYING AND WHEN THEY COULD GET A PASS THEY WOULD RENT A COUPLE OF PIPER CUBS AT JOHN RODGERS AIRPORT (NOW HONOLULU 'X'). THEY WERE LICENSED PILOTS AND WOULD PRACTICE FLYING OUT OVER THE WATER. ON SUNDAY DEC. 7, 1941 THEY WENT ON PASS, RENTED THEIR AIRPLANES, WENT OUT OVER THE WATER JUST WHEN THE JAPANESE WERE COMING IN TO ATTACK THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS. THEY SHOT THE PIPER CUBS DOWN. WE LATER LEARNED THAT A CIVILIAN OBSERVED THIS FROM THE SHORE. WE WERE NEVER NOTIFIED OF WRECKAGE OR ANY OF THEIR BODIES BEING RECOVERED. THESE THREE MEN ARE CONSIDERED TO BE THE FIRST AMERICAN CASUALTIES OF WORLD WAR II.

This page is only to explain some of the actions that we took on December 7th. First I would like to explain my position. I had been a 2nd Lieutenant for 20 days, since Nov. 17th. Before that I was a corporal, not a squad leader but on special duty as the survey crew chief for the construction of Camp Malakole. I never had basic training or had I attended any officer training school. A person that is commissioned this way direct from the enlisted rank is known as a Mustang.

The Hawaiian Dept. had very strict rules, When we went on maneuvers we knew that we were going but never knew the time. When the order came, they blew a big horn on the water tank, the bugler sounded the call to arms, then every one dropped whatever they were doing and started loading to roll to our assigned positions. Because we were Mobile Anti-aircraft Artillery we took every thing including the kitchen. When we arrived at our positions the trucks were unloaded and sent to an ordinance depot for ammunition. Being maneuvers they got a slip showing that they had been there. All this was timed to see how long it took to get into position for action.

Being the duty officer, you can see the position that I got myself into. At one point while we were loading I looked up the street I could see one of the gun batteries was assembling, so I ran up there, the Captain was an older man and he and the 1st sergeant were lining up the troops and calling the roll. The Captain would not speak to me so I ran back to my room to get my helmet, gas mask and my 45. My roommate was still in bed. I think he was the duty officer for battery 'E', He said "What is going on"? I said "WAR" and he said "you are kidding" I told him "We are rolling and you can stay in bed". As I started out the door I could see he had one foot on the floor.

When I got back to "F", the trucks were getting lined up, I got in the lead car with 1st Sergeant Crouse and Dick Hill driving, gave the signal and we started rolling. Not at any time did I hear the horn sound or a bugler sound the call to arms.

When we got near Pearl City Sgt. Crouse said this is where the 3rd platoon turns off. I told him that I would go with my platoon, the sergeants are with the 1st and 2nd platoons and you can take the battery headquarters. Surely Captain Ogden and Lt. Gillespie will meet you there. I have never heard to this day when they got there.

This covers some of the minor things. There is one other item I would like to tell while we were on the Waipio Penninsula. Sunday afternoon we heard voices and looked down the road toward the point, There were five teenagers riding bicycles. We stopped them by every one pointing a rifle at them. We asked them what are you doing down here? They said they came down to see the damage. We loaded them and their bikes in the back of a ton and a half truck and I followed in my half ton pickup with a couple riflemen with me. My first thought was to take them to Battery Hq., then I thought, take them to the Navy, then I thought of explaining and the red tape etc, then I told the driver to take them to the police station at Waiphau (a small town not to far away). I went into the station and met the desk sergeant, a big native, told what I had and he asked what I wanted him to do with them. I told him that I didn't care but that he could do what ever he liked, but I thought that he should warn them to stay out of

that area. He came out and looked them over and said that he did not know them but he did recognize the families. I thanked him and we went back to our platoon.

It was time to go to battery headquarters. Going back through Pearl City I reached the main highway, there was not one car on the highway, I came to an intersection and I could see a small house fire up on the hill. There was a young Military Policeman standing in the road and waving me on. I stopped and asked if he needed help, he said no the rest of them were up on the hill fighting the fire and looking for a Jap. The Jap had a radio transmitter and had been giving directions to the bombers coming in. as soon as the attack was over, he ran out but set the house on fire. I have never heard any thing more about this. This house was across from Pearl Harbor and looked toward and in line with the row of Battle Ships.

When we left the alternate positions on the peninsula and went to Ford Island, the ferryboat was O.K. The slip on Ford Island was at the rear of the Battleship California. (See the picture in this section). Our battery strength was down to about 92 men. There were about 5000 Navy and Marine survivors off of the ships that made it to Ford Island. The Marine barracks on Ford Island had a large mess hall that normally fed most of the residents there. The barracks were completely blown apart with a direct hit. On the Luke Field side there was a new wood frame building under construction that was to be a mess hall. There was no kitchen equipment. The Admiral asked Capt. Ogden if he could get Army gasoline field ranges from the Quartermaster and have our cooks start feeding the 5000. Capt. Ogden got the ranges and the Admiral got the Navy cooks off of the California and the Marine cooks off of the West Virginia and the cooks from the three services starting feeding the 5000. The line outside was composed of Navy men and officers up to full Lieutenants and Marine men and officers up to Captain. The line never ended, the cooks served breakfast until it was lunchtime and then lunch until diner time. The Navy started sending men to new assignments and the line became shorter day by day. Soon the mess hall became a regular mess hall, the cook had regular shifts, the chief petty officers started a petty officers mess and invited the Army officers to join with them. The admiral must have heard about this because he said "No officer is going to sleep in a tent on his command, he made us move into the bachelor officers quarters and eat in the officers mess.

Our first platoon with a pair of 37 mm AA guns was near the Admirals Quarters and very close to the Arizona. The second platoon was over at Luke Field near where the carriers dock. My third platoon with 50 caliber AA machine guns had two positions, one at the sea plane base near the mouth of the harbor (see the picture of the PBY's). The second position was at the other end of the island, across the road from the Bachelor Officers Quarters and near the water.

Here we are, Battery 'F', Army with 4-37 mm AA guns and 6 or 8 AA machine guns all under strict control of Fighter command and the Anti-aircraft command. We had a telephone in the hands of the air guard, a radio at his side tuned to AA command. The Navy had driven pipes into the ground and had taken any machine guns they had in stock and all of the guns that they could strip off of the destroyed and damaged planes

and mounted them on the pipes. They were all set up with ammo belts and the rule was that the first man there is the gunner. On Ford Island there were 54 of these guns set up, none of them under control of the AA command. AA command works together with Fighter command to let the gunners know if there are any of our planes or fighters in the area but also to keep us informed if our radar has picked up any enemy planes and their location. We were lucky that the Japs didn't come back.

I hate to tell this sad story, but at dark Sunday night, three American Navy S.B.D. scout dive bombers (some times they say fighters) came to land at Ford Island N.A.S. They were from one of our carriers that with luck was out to sea during the attack. My guess is that we were still on radio silence and the carrier sent these planes into Ford Island for information. They were in a normal approach, a turn over the channel and landing from the north of the runway. Someone opened up with a machine gun with tracers and soon every one that was on a gun opened up and the sky was lit up so light that you could read a newspaper. One of the planes banked in front of Battery F, 1st platoon and they could see one of their 37 mm tracers go right into the plane. There were many survivors from the ships that made it to land, congratulated the gun crew. We were never told that they were our planes nor that they were enemy,

CHAPTER FIJI ISLANDS JUNE 1, 1942 - NOVEMBER 18, 1943

We were on FORD ISLAND until about May 15, 1942 when we received orders to stage to move to some place secret. We left Hawaii on May 23rd.

The policy set by the Government was that the war in Europe was to receive first priority and the troops in the Pacific would have to wait for any help but to hold out as long as they could to try to hold the Japs from advancing to fast. No attempt was made to reinforce or supply the forces in the Philippine Islands. They were to fight until they ran out of ammunition and then surrender. The Japs were brutal to those that were captured. This was when the Bataan Death March took place. Also women and nurses were brutalized and murdered. The Japs were not signatories to the international treaty that gave safety to medics, hospitals and ambulances. In the Pacific Theater our medics were armed and there were no woman nurses in the hospitals in the combat zones.

On May 23, 1942 we went to Honolulu Harbor and loaded on the Mor-Mac Star, a C-3 cargo ship, a Navy supply ship and 2 full size Navy Destroyers. We sailed out of the harbor and headed south. Rumor had it that we were headed to the Fiji Islands,

At one time we went on an alert, the Navy Destroyers raised their guns for action and our 37 mm guns that we had mounted on the deck were manned. The Destroyers had picked up a target on their radar to the west. The plane was visible way out and low flying north and never came near us. It came out later that this was a scout plane from the Japanese fleet that had left the battle of the Coral Sea and was headed to meet a Jap taskforce to attack Midway Island. I guess we were to small to threaten them and were going the wrong way.

Other than that, we had a nice trip and on June 1, 1942 we sailed into Suva Harbor the capital of the Fiji Islands. We remained on the ship overnight and the next morning we sailed for the other side of the island to the port of Lautoka, a dock for a sugar mill. A few miles away was the air base, Nadi Airdrome. A few New Zealand troops were there but they had no ammunition, we were willing to give them some of ours but our rifles take center fire and theirs take rim fire. The Air Corps beat us there with a squadron of P 39s.

Our job now is to unload the ship. Some of the natives were trained stevedores and could handle the cranes, others were laborers and with the troops available we had a good crew. The dock would take only one half of the ship so they unloaded the trucks and guns from #4 & #5 holds, then they moved the ship back to unload holds #s 1,2&3. This left #s 4 & 5 with a lot of supplies and rolls of barbed wire. I got the duty of unloading #5 hold. There was a small barge at the harbor and we were to unload onto the barge and when it was full I got the job with the ships Ensign to tow the barge with the motor launch to the beach, only at high tide. After it was unloaded and the next high tide came in, we toed it back to the ship. This was very time consuming, as there was another barge on the beach I asked a Capt. from regimental headquarters if we could try to float that barge and instead of taking them to the beach but to unload them on the quay tha leads out to the dock. He said he would find out. A few minutes later he said "Borden they said if you think you can do it, go ahead". I took 5 men with me, we rocked and pushed this barge until we got it afloat. It had an anchor on it so we thru it over the side and I sent one man back to the ship to tell them that we had the barge ready. When he got to the ship he was all out of breath and told them there was an officer and 5 men adrift.

Soon the motor launch showed up with a spot light on us and the First Mate of the ship. He said he heard that we were adrift at sea and he could be a hero if he came and rescued us. We all had a good laugh and he invited me to have steak and eggs with him. This was about one AM in the morning. He yelled down a shaft I guess to a kitchen and very soon we were eating steak and eggs.

We did a lot of hauling around the clock. We had our two holds unloaded by the time the front 3 holds were emptied.

We moved to the Airdrome and set up the AA defense. We had not completed our gun pits and battery 'F' was ordered to set up the AA defense at a PBY Seaplane base at Saweni Beach, about half way from Nadi Airdrome to Lautoka.

SS MORMAC STAR



Bula Jol"

J.J.

Saweni Beach was one of the most beautiful spots in all of the islands. The Navy was building a concrete ramp to pull the seaplanes onto land. Battery headquarters was there. The 1st platoon was around the bay to your left, my 3rd platoon was up the beach on the rail road track and up a cliff on this rock formation that had been eroded on the ocean side to straight rock cliffs, the 2nd platoon was on beyond us down the highway then across the swamp to a little island, they had to haul tons of dirt to build a road over the swamp. There was a small hill big enough to set up a 37 mm gun pit with their tents lower down. They were to far from Battery headquarters to come in to eat in the mess hall so all of their meals were hauled out to them.

The 3^{rd} platoon was issued 2-20 mm shipboard AA guns, all packed in cosmoline and no instructions. The third platoon was something else. We all pitched in, worked day and night, some assembled the guns and figured out how to shoot them, the rest of the platoon got a big air compressor and a jackhammer and worked day and night making two 16'x16' level spots on this rock. A few days later an order came from regiment to all personnel that no one is to make the troops work other than the regular schedule. Any way the 3^{rd} platoon had their guns in place and test fired before the other 3 batteries had their guns uncrated.

While with the 3rd platoon we had a good time with a good group of men. A couple of the men from New Jersey decided to get a couple of roosters and challenge the men from Jersey in the 1st platoon to rooster fights. The rest of us decided that we should have some hens too. We fed them breakfast food. The kitchen had plenty but never had any milk so we got all that we wanted. We also fed our horses the same. I haven't told you about our horses. Several of us bought horses from the natives. The natives didn't use the horses, they were running wild in the hills, so to make a fast buck they captured them and sort of trained them and then sold them to us Yank soldiers.

The rooster fights didn't pan out but the hens were great. We had boiled eggs at our gun position, the only fresh thing in years. Once in a while the natives would come by selling papayas at 10 cents and once in a while a whole stock of bananas for 50 cents.

One day I told the Sergeant that our latrine (out house to you) needed burning out. He said that they knew that but there was no diesel available. I told him that would use gasoline but I can not order anybody to do that so if you give me a couple of men I will handle it. We took a 5 gallon gas can and a one gal. Tin can. We lifted the seat off and I got the tin can full and set the 5 gal can way back. The position here was a ways back from our position where what we call chaparral and tall grass that the natives thatch their grass huts with. This procedure was going fine. I went back to get another gallon of gas and I looked down and the fire was coming right toward me. The gallon can had a hole in the bottom. We started stomping on the fire with our feet and were losing ground when two of our buddies from our platoon ran in with blankets in their hands and beat the fire out. This fire could have spread and maybe wiped out the nearby native village.

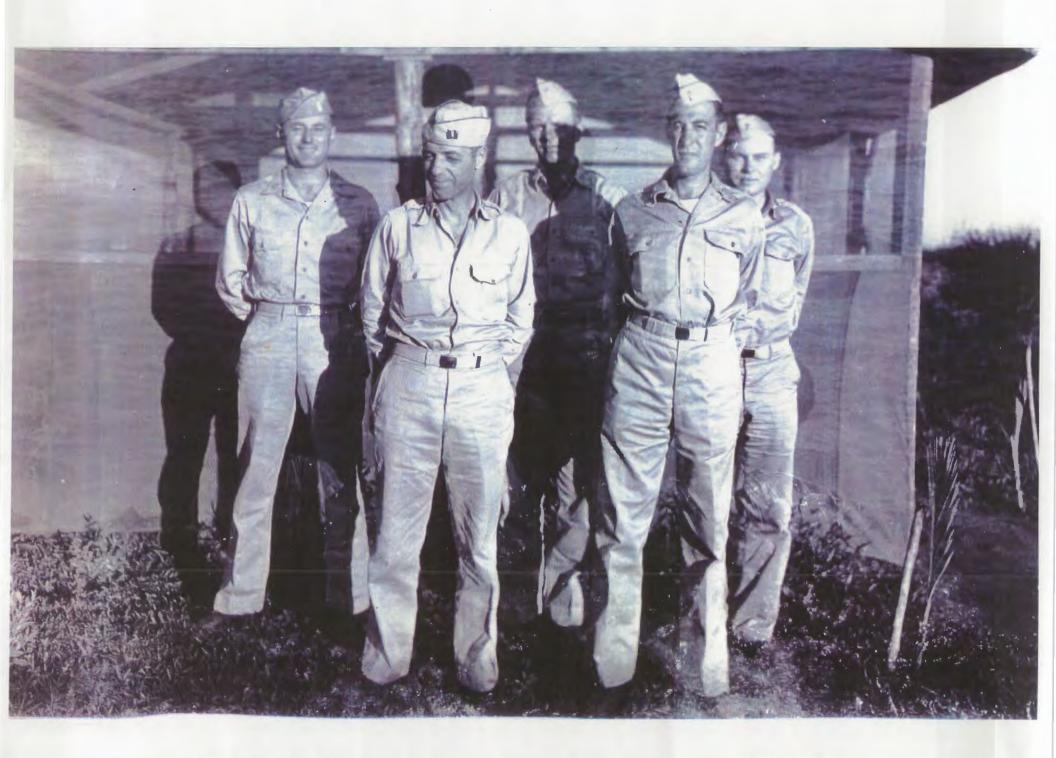
Our good buddies that happened to come by were sneaking out of camp to ride their horses and had their blankets to use in lieu of saddles. I sure thanked and never said a word about why they happened along when we were so desperate. There are people who would never have stopped, afraid that they would be in trouble for sneaking out.











CAPT, BAILEY B. SMITH, BATTERY 'F' C.O., LT. GILBERT, LT. LYNCH, LT. ALHISER, LT. BORDEN



NEW BATTERY COMMANDER 1 ST LT. RICH BORDEN GIVEN COMMAND LAST NIGHT.

C.Q. CPL PETE SORENTO, 1ST SGT. CLAIRE BROWN, PLATOON S/SGTS. AL COMEAUX AND NEAL JANTZEN, SGT. BRYAN AND NEW C.O.

TRIP TO BOUGAINVILLE

We were in the staging area at Red Hill in Fiji for a few days preparing to roll to the harbor at Lautoka. On November 18 1943 we boarded the Mor Mac Wren, a C-2 cargo ship. (The Captain of the ship was the 1st Mate on the Mor Mac Star that we came to Fiji on). We headed out, destination Guadalcsnal and later joined a large convoy. One night the ship became very quiet, no propeller churning the water, we were just sitting there dead in the water. The shaft to the propeller had a broken link. The ship carried spare links, and the ships crew made the repairs. In the morning when we went out on deck and looked around there was no convoy, they just kept on going and left us alone with one destroyer off in the distance. We were hoping that he was listening for submarines. We were about one days travel from Guadalcanal, the shaft was repaired and the next day, November 23rd we arrived at Guadalcanal.

We were in a staging camp called Tasafaronga, our troops were called on to help loading and unloading ships. We received some new equipment but not much because while we were there, the main ordinance depot at Hells Point blew up and kept exploding for several days.

When we started getting ready to load for Bougainville, we received orders to take field equipment only. That means, no barracks bags, no tents,(pup tents), no cots etc. An automatic weapons battery has a lot of rolling equipment. Trucks to pull 37 mm gun carriers, Communication trucks, Supply, Ordinance, Platoon hqs. Battery headquarters etc. When I saw how heavy the trucks were being loaded I thought I had better go to the docks and find out what we could load. I saw an old Chief Petty Officer and I asked him what the limit was on how much weight we could load our trucks. He mumbled something and I said that I didn't understand what he said. "I said 13 feet". He pointed at the LST and he said "I don't care how heavy your trucks are but the door on that LST is 13 feet high and if you load higher than that you wont get in".

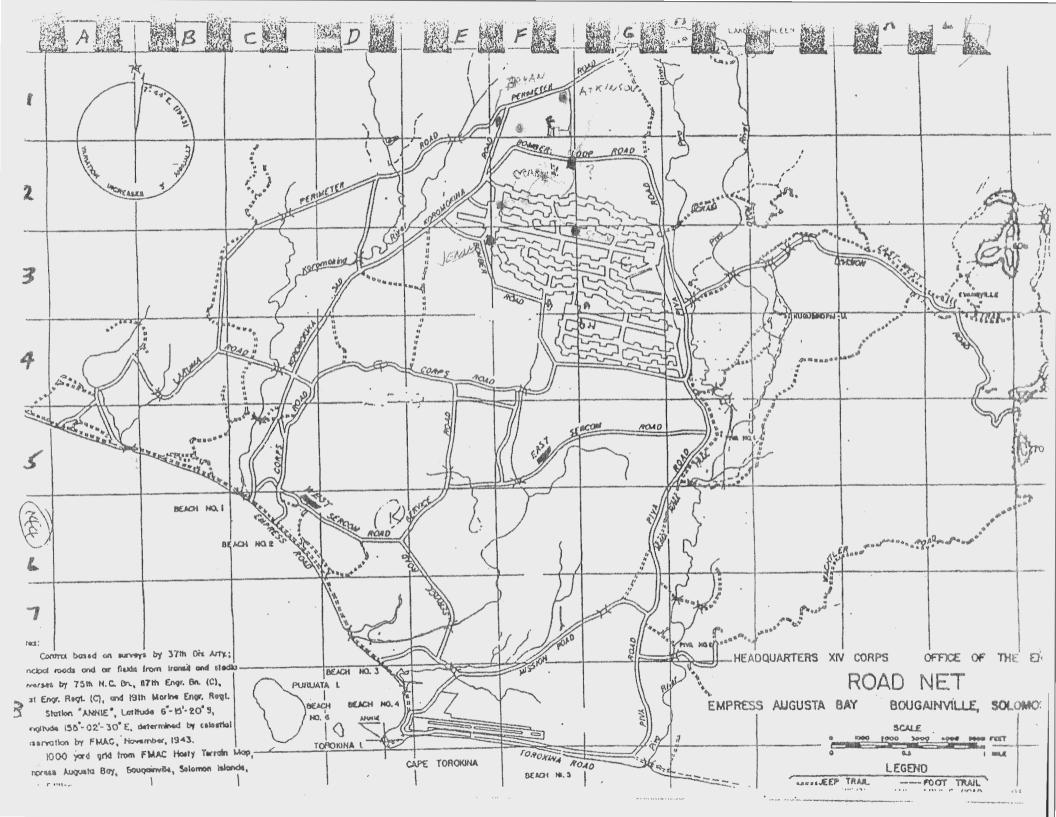
When I got back to the battery the men started to load every thing that they owned. The guns were covered with what looked like tents and every crevice had a cot or a barracks bag stuffed into it.

An LST is big enough to hold a whole Battery and all of its men and equipment. We set up 2 guns on the top deck to fire off of the sides. The ships crew was glad to see us as we really increased their fire power. We were lucky and got in without any attacks.

All of our trucks were on the lower deck, every thing we had was on wheels, trucks, trailers and gun carriers. The trucks had the spare tires mounted on the front wheels to make dual wheels on the front. Tire chains were put on to help in getting through the sand. We had a very smooth ride as the ocean was as smooth as it can be. We passed by several of the Solomon Island islands between Guadalcanal and Bougainvile some of which still had Japs and had been bypassed.

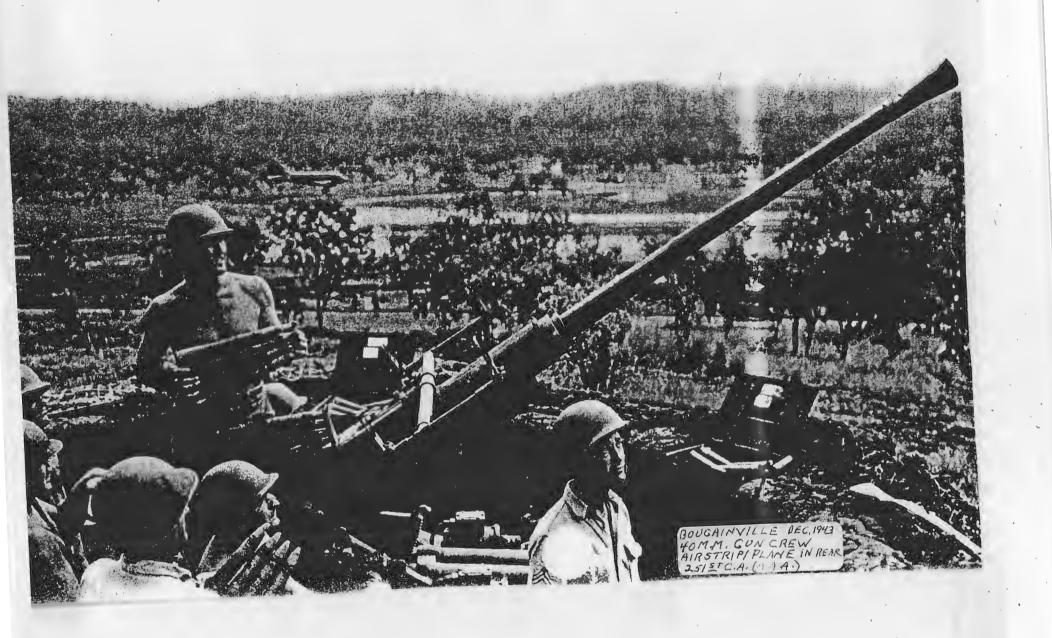
When we were approaching Bougainville they pointed the LST at the beach, put the motors on full speed ahead, when we were not too close they dropped the stern anchor and spooled out the cable, The stern anchor is used to pull the LST off of the beach when leaving. When the ship hit the beach, the momentum of the ship just carried it

on closer to the shore. When it stopped, the door dropped down and made a ramp. The water was a little deeper than hubcap high but we got off all right. The first 2 trucks each pulled a 37mm onto the shore and set them up for any action necessary so we could remove the guns we had setup on the deck. The skipper of the LST sure pushed us to get unloaded, he wanted to get off of the beach as he was a sitting duck for enemy planes. We were in luck as no enemy planes came at this time.











SGT. JIM YANKEE AND HIS GUN CREW - THIS WAS JUNGLE LIKE - IN NEXT PICTURE, THE AREA WAS CLEARED FOR FIRING AT ATTACKING PLANES. NOTE: THE FALLEN TREE ON THE LEFT.





Reinforcing the 37th Infantry Division
Each AA (AW) Battery sent two of their gun sections to
The front lines, 37 and 40 MM AA guns in pill boxes.
This picture is one of Battery 'F's Gun sections.
You see Don Carner and Yeager, the muzzle of their gun
To your left, about 50 feet through the jungle is the command
Post and the kitchen. This is the Rain Forrest on Bougainville,
HOT and HUMID.

HEADQUARTERS 251ST AAA GROUP A P O # 706

7 May 1944

Subject: Commendation.

To : Officers and Enlisted Men of 251st AAA Group.

l. To the officers and men that contributed to this successful mission, making possible these commendations, I express my appreciation of your untiring efforts to enable this organization to be ready to deliver the goods where and when needed. It is indeed gratifying to all concerned to know that the long periods of training and vigilant waiting have not been in vain. I am proud to command such a fine body of fighting men.

2. A copy of this lotter will be furnished down to each section.

Colonel, 251st AAA Group Commanding

APO #37, c/c Postmaster
San Francisco, Calif.

/mjk

21 April 1944.

.MG 330.13

SUBJECT: Lettor of Approciation.

TO : Commanding Officor, 251st AAA Group.

(THRU: Commanding General, XIV Corps, AFC 453).

- l. During the recent combat against Japanese forces on this island, elements of the 25lst AAA Group occupied and helped organize reserve positions in the sector of one of the regiments of the 37th Infantry Division during a critical period in the operations. By speedy and effective occupation of these positions, and by conducting patrols, they materially strengthened our position in this sector and belstered the merale of the entire force participating. The contribution you and your men thus made to the success of our operations was not inconsiderable.
- 2. It is with the greatest pleasure that I express my appreciation to you, and to all members of your command, for this splendid assistance and fine spirit of a poperation.

/s/ Robt. 3. Beightler /t/ ROBT. 3. EIGHTIZE Maror Marril, 14

BEACH PARTY

1st row: Crabtree, Karaly, Shuck, Sehorn, Blood, Carner, Saffron, Finch, Bolton, Brown.

2nd row: Comeaux, Ivey, Dowser, Burk, Brewer, Bressler, Hurd, E.J.
Thompson, Hopkins?, ?

Standing: ? , Stults, ? , Whitt, ? , Meylink, Reep, Yankee, Janzen, Brown, Borden, C.J. Glenn, ? , Jenny.

GOING HOME

1st row: ? , Hopkins, Whitt, Borden, Brown, Janzen, Walkins, Comeaux.

2nd row: Sterling, DeLong?, Yankee, Meylink, C.R. Glenn?, Saffron, Carner, Sykes, Brewer, Bryant, Bolton.

In Back: Birch behind right shoulder of Hurd, Finch? hid behind Hurd, Reep, ? , Shuck, Warden behind Bressler. May be Landris, behind Reep and Shuck. Was Ebermayer still with us on Bougainville? May be him behind Burch. Also unable to identify Hill, C.R. Glenn Jr., Willis, Lawless, Beanblossom Jenny, Crabtree, Haynes, Harvey, Runyon, Sawrey, Atkinson, Dreger, Sykes, Armstrong, Oliver, Parlin, Sheehan, Runyon, Simmons, Armstrong and Kimmons, if they were still in the Battery.

Lenahan was not a Calif. Guardmans, but he was back in the states when Crabtree, Warden and I arrived on Angel Island. He was an MP there.

Some in the picture may be those who were transferred into "F" from "E: like Reves.

Walter Burch joined the Long Beach Police Department after the war along with Roy Browm, George Meylink, Joe Jenny, Ernie Haynes. All except Brown transferred LAPD, CHP or the Sheriff Dept. Burch passed away several years back.

The picture with the "wagon wheel" was of a Japanese artillery unit position which was shot up by our artillery. There are several dead Japanese in the picture. This was on Bogainville.

Next time I see Meylink, I will have him look at the pictures.

The only location of one of Burch's gun positions I remember was at Sawini Beach. He was on the other side of the lagoon.



Hi'ya Skipper-----

I was going to wait until I reported to the assignment center before writing to you, but have some nice time on my hands so figured that I'd beat this missle out now. Guess you've heard all the preliminary dope. ... how we went to New Orleans, etc.

Well I've about 10 more days left of my "delay enroute." really had a nice time. Altho I was rather surprised at my reaction towards things. I had a million things in mind when I was back in Boogy ... I was going to do this, and I was going to do half a hundred other things. Now I'm rather amazed to find that most of those past desires seem a trifle strange and foolish. Guess the States are having a civilizing effect upon me. I've only had one bad reaction since getting home. One night (about the 3rd one I took a gal down to Earl Carrolls --- well they were having the usual boloney --- a bevy of beautiful girls, etc. One of the acts was a typical state-side patriotic phoney. These gals were parading all over hell with flags waving and singing at the top of their beautiful lungs about "the boys" etc. etc. Anyway I got so goddamned fed up and nervous that I couldn't sit still. I started to shake all over, and broke out in the damadest cold sweat. I could just see some of the boys sitting around in their tents -- cussing and wishing they could get home. Anyway the poor gal that was with me was really frightened ... she thought I had Malaria, and was ready to dash out for a doctor or a drink. I got outta there, and so far I haven't had a recurring attack; What a hell of a feeling.

Remember old Dawson? I hadn't been home 2 days, before he came down to Long Beach on a hunch. It really was a coincidence or something. He's got a 31 Ford, and were really running the gumph out of it.

Well how in hell is things down in the deep dank, stinking jungle? God, I'm glad to get out of that hole. This is so damned wonderful. When I look around me, and see the beautiful homes, lawns, flowers, women, etc. I feel like I'm one of the luckiest guys a goin to have hit that rotation. Speaking of women -- ye gods and rusty mess-kits: Theirs MILLIONS of 'em. There's hardly a young guy on the streets of Long Beach. Just gangs of women. Believe it or don't, I've had very little to do with the babes since I've peen home. I'm more or less devoting all of my time to one. She's really a nice little gel. She's keeping me in liquor --- and she gets pretty good stuff.
All I can get is Schenleys black label (Boy, and is that stuff rotgut!! Br-r-rack!!) and some Three Rivers. (same) I'm sorry, but I haven't guzzled any gin for you. I just can't drive myself to do it. I guess Fi ji really cured me of that devil-juice. However I did dedicate a bottle of Canadian Club to you. O.K? I'we beent trying to have a drink for all the mugs, and I believe I've Just about done it. Fact is, I don't believe that I've ever consumed quite so much hooch. I haven't spent one whole day sober yet --- and whats more I don't intend to! Whenever I think back on some of those islands, I pour another.

Haven't any idea as yet as to what kind of an outfit I'll wind up in.

There's a lotta talk about winding up in the infentry. That's the kind of conversation that I don't go for. On well, time will tell. I'll let you know when it happens.

Got a letter from Blackmun yesterday. He tells me Woody had a lung fold up on him. Boy thats pretty rugged. Hew are all the rest of the guys? Is Frank going to get my rate? How's old Petebson making out----to my mind, there is one guy who would make a damn good communication sgt. I say Ernie Haynes last sunday. He's still swesting it out here. Altho I understand that his outfit is just about ready to shove.

This is a rambly letter.... I thought I would have a lot to tell you, but its pretty much the same as ever. The cokes are really good and cold, and the hamburgers are just as good as ever. Some things are pretty hard to get, but the rationing seems to be letting up on a lot of stuff.

Well guess I'd better knock off for now. Write and give me all the battery dope. I never realized just how much I'd miss the old Btry. I never expect to find another like it.

Tell all the boys hello, and the joint is still standing, just waiting for the taking.







ON THE WAY HOME

This story is one that I have kept to myself but I would like to have it in writing. When on the way home on rotation from Bougainville our group left on 6 Landing Craft Infantry (L C I's) heading to Guadalcanal. The trip was a nice cruise except one night one of the lead crafts rudder stuck and made a 270 degree turn and hit the one following in the side. It was kind of scary as we were in waters that could have enemy patrols. It was late at night and dark but the other craft turned on their flood lights. Every one went on deck, the members of the crew got a mattress and jammed it into the hole and braced it with 2x4s. We then proceeded to Guadalcanal.

After what seemed like forever we boarded another C-2 freighter The Mor Mac Port. 878 men were returning home. About 150 Marines, some Navy doctors, and the rest were Army mostly from the 251st AA and the balance from the 37th Infantry Division.

I became acquainted with a 1st Lieutenant from the 37th. He had attended Officers Candidate School in Fiji and had been with them from Guadalcanal on up the Solomon chain clear to Bougainville. As I remember his name was John McKinney.

He said "I want you to meet a 1st Lt. named Smiley (this may have been a nickname). He was the toughest man that I ever met. He is also the nicest and kindest man that I ever met. He volunteered for every mission that came up. On Bougainville he volunteered to go on a submarine to land on the other side of the island to scout the Japs, then find his way back across the mountain range".

One evening Lt. Smiley was at Battalion Headquarters when a patrol radioed in that it had reached as far as it was supposed to go and was heading back. The Battalion Commander ordered them to proceed farther and to go around a small lake. Lt. Smiley yelled "You can not send them that far this late as it will be dark before they get back to our lines". The Battalion Commander said, "I said for them to go and that is it". Lt. Smiley said, "You can not do this", and I guess he threatened the C.O. as he placed him under arrest in quarters.

After it was dark, the patrol reached our lines. The Japs had followed them down. The place where they came through the lines was near a 90mm gun crew that was from our 251st AA Regiment. They were here up near the perimeter because they were where they could shoot into some caves that the Japs had up in the hills where they had some 3 inch artillery that they wheeled out when the pilots were taxiing out to go on a strike. These 3" could hit the runway and taxi strips and made it miserable for the pilots and plane crews and our 37mm whose positions were near the strip. The 90mm gun crew was commanded by Lt. George Bryan, my good friend that served with me in the2nd platoon of Battery 'F' 2nd Battalion of the 251st while we were in Fiji.

When the Infantry patrol got inside the perimeter and near the 90mm the Japs opened up with mortar fire. We lost some of the Infantry some of the 90mm gun crew and my friend George Bryan.

The next morning Lt. Smiley armed himself with a shotgun, took a jeep and drove to Battalion Headquarters. He asked, "Where is the Colonel?" He was told that he was out and would be back soon. Smiley said, "I will wait for him". The Colonel drove up in a jeep with the Battalion Dentist. Lt. Smiley said, "I told you that this would happen".

SOME OF THE FUNNY THINGS THAT I RECALL

ONE DAY MESS SGT. WOODY WATKINS SAID 'LOOK WHAT I HAVE HERE'.AS HE HELD WHAT LOOKED LIKE A ONE POUND COFFEE CAN. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN TO THE HARBOR AND WENT OUT ON A SHIP AND VISITED THE COOKS AND THEY GAVE HIM THIS CAN FULL OF DRIED YEAST. I ASKED 'WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH IT?'. HE SAID THAT IF I WOULD GIVE HIM AN EXTRA MAN FOR THE KITCHEN HE WOULD MAKE A BAKER OUT OF HIM AND HAVE HIM BAKE AT NIGHT. I TOLD HIM THAT IT SOUNDED GOOD TO ME BUT WHERE ARE YOU GETTING THE FLOUR? HE SAID 'COME OVER TO THE KITCHEN AND I WILL SHOW YOU'. HE GOT A TALL BURLAP BAG AND STARTED SHAKING IT. WEAVILS CAME TO THE TOP AND HE SAID WE CAN SCRAPE THE WEAVILS OFF AND USE IT TO BAKE BREAD. FIRST WE WILL HAVE THE MEDIC'S CONDEM THIS FLOUR AND WE CAN DRAW MORE FLOUR FROM THE QUARTERMASTER. I QUESTIONED HOW HE COULD GET BY USING THIS FLOUR AND WOODY SAID "ONLY YOU AND I KNOW ABOUT THE WEAVILS AND WE ARE NOT TELLING ANYONE".

THE FIRST THE COOK STAYED UP ALL NIGHT BAKING BREAD. THE LOAVES WERE ABOUT ONE INCH HIGH AND HARD AS A ROCK. THEY TASTED LIKE FRESH BAKED BREAD. I TOLD HIM THAT TONIGHT I WAS COMING TO THE KITCHEN AS I WANTED TO SEE HOW HE PREPARED THE DOUGH. HE DIDN'T LIKE THIS BUT I WENT TO THE KITCHEN AND SAID "LET'S GET STARTED".. HE SAID "O.K., FIRST WE HAVE TO GET A PAN OF WATER BOILING", I SAID "FOR WHAT?" HE REPLIED "TO DISOLVE THE YEAST", I TOLD HIM THAT "YOU DO NOT DISOLVE YEAST IN BOILING WATER", HE SAID"YOU HAVE TO", I TOLD HIM THAT I LEARNED ABOUT YEAST IN JUNIOR HIGH SCIENCE CLASS AND THAT YEAST IS A LIVING PLANT AND NEEDS, MOISTURE, WARMTH AND FOOD, 'WE WILL MAKE IT MY WAY TONIGHT. HE DISOLVED THE YEAST AND MIXED THE INGREDIANTS. (BY THE WAY, OUR BREAD PANS WERE 'SPAM' TINS SPLIT THE LONG WAY). WE ROLLED OUT THE LOAVES, PUT THEM IN THE BREAD PANS SET THEM UP TO RAISE AND WENT BACK TO OUR TENTS FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS. WHEN WE CAME BACK, THE BREAD HAD RAISED REAL NICE, WE LIT THE RANGES AND IT WASN'T LONG WE HAD REAL BREAD.

WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN IN THE FIELD FOR A LONG PERIOD YOU LIVE ON FIELD RATIONS. FIELD RATIONS CONSIST OF SPAM, SPAM, SPAM AND ONCE IN A WHILE CORNED BEEF, DEHYDRATED POTATOES, SOUR GRAPEFRUIT JUICE NO MILK NOT EVEN POWDERD AND NO BREAD.

A FEW DAYS LATER AS I WAS GOING TO LUNCH, I PASSED BY THE CHOW LINE I NOTICED A COUPLE OF YOUNG STRANGERS IN THE LINE, I ASKED, 'DO I KNOW YOU?' THEY SAID 'NO, BUT WE HEARD THAT YOU HAD BREAD AND WE HAVENT SEEN A SLICE OF BREAD FOR MANY MONTHS'. THESE WERE YOUNG MEN FROM THE 37TH INFANTRY DIVISION. I TOLD THEM WE WERE LIKE ALL OF THE OUTFITS, SHORT ON RATIONS BUT IF YOU DON'T TELL THE REST OF YOUR OUTFIT, COME ON IN AND GET A COUPLE OF SLICES OF BREAD AND BUTTER. THE LITTLE THINGS YOU MISS SO MUCH.

BUILDING A MESS HALL

IN THE FIELD YOU HAVE JUST THE EQUIPMENT THAT IS LISTED IN WHAT IS CALLED THE TABLE OF ORGANIZATION. KNOWN AS T.O. EQUIPMENT. THIS COVERS EVERY THING FROM CLOTHING TO ALL OF YOUR EQUIPMENT FROM TRUCKS TO KITCHEN EQUIPMENT TO RIFLES AND A.A. GUNS ETC. NOT LISTED ARE THE LITTLE THINGS LIKE LUMBER TO BUILD LATRINES AT EIGHT GUN POSITIONS, TWO PLATOON HEADQUARTERS AND AN EIGHT HOLER AT BATTERY HEADQUARTERS WITH A SHOWER AND WASH AND A PLACE TO WASH CLOTHES. WE ALSO HAD NOTHING FOR KITCHEN SHELVES AND TABLES WE USED GALLON CANS FROM THE KITCHEN TO KEEP THE TOILET PAPER OUT OF THE RAIN.

ON BOUGAINVILLE WE WERE LUCKY TO BE NEAR AN ARMY ENGINEER'S SAW MILL AND A NAVY C,B.'S SAW MILL. THEIR LOGGING CREWS COULD NOT LOG ENOUGH TREES TO KEEP THEM BUSY, SO THEY TOLD US THAT ANY LOGS THAT WE BROUHT TO THEM THEY WOULD GIVE US ONE HALF OF THE LUMBER THAT CAME OUT OF THE LOGS. (NO LOGS WITH SCHRAPENEL).

WE HAD PLENTY OF LOGS BECAUSE IN THIS RAIN FOREST JUNGLE WE HAD TO CLEAR OUT FOR CLEARANCE TO FIRE AT ENEMY AIRCRAFT. THESE WERE LARGE MAHOGANY TREES ABOUT FIVE FEET IN DIAMETER AND WE CUT THEM ABOUT TWELVE FEET LONG. WE WOULD CALL THE BATALLION MOTOR POOL FOR THEIR WRECKER TRUCK THAT HAD A SMALL CRANE ON IT. WE GOT THE LOG ON ONE OF OUR TRUCKS AND TOOK IT TO THE SAW MILL.

WITH THE FIRST LUMBER WE STARTED BUILDING A KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM. THE BATALLION SENT US A LITTLE LUMBER TO BUILD AN OFFICER'S QUARTERS. WE USED THAT FOR THE MESS HALL TOO. (I WAS THE BAD GUY TO THE C.O. AT BATALLION HQS.). WE HAD NO NAILS SO I CALLED BATALLION SUPPLY. THE BATALLION C.O. SAID THAT THERE ARE NO NAILS ON THE ISLAND AND HE PROMISED THAT AS SOON AS ANY CAME IN HE WOULD GET US SOME. PAUL WARDEN, OUR BUGLER ALSO WORKED A SHIFT ON THE SWITCHBOARD CAME OVER AND SAID 'CAN I BORROW YOUR JEEP' AND I SAID 'NO', HE REPLIED 'YOU WANT NAILS DON'T YOU' SO I REPLIED 'HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO GET THEM', HIS REPLY WAS ABOUT FIFTEEN MINUTES, 'O K BE BACK IN FIFTTEN MINUTES'. THIS SURE SOUNDED LIKE A FAST TALK FOR A JOY RIDE TO ME, BUT HE DROVE UP ON TIME WITH A KEG OF 8d NAILS AND A KEG OF 16d NAILS. Í ASKED HOW HE COULD GET THEM, HE SAID 'I GOT THEM DIDN'T I?' IT WAS MY LUCK THAT HE WAS ON DUTY AND LISTEND TO ME TALKING TO THE BATALLION COMMANDER AND NO DOUBT HAD VISITED A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE CBS OR SOMEWHERE THAT HAD NAILS THERE.

WE BUILT (FOR THE JUNGLE) A BEAUTIFUL MESS HALL AND KITCHEN. ONE OF THE MEN FROM THE FIRST PLATOON CAME OVER TO ME AND TOLD ME THAT OUT BY THEIR GUN POSITION THE NAVY AIR SQUADRON WAS LEAVING TO GO BACK AND THEIR READY ROOM QUONSET HUT WOULD BE VACANT TONIGHT. IF YOU WILL GIVE ME A DETAIL WE COULD STRIP THE PLYWOOD OUT OF IT AND WE COULD MAKE TABLES FOR OUR MESS HALL AND SHELVES IN THE KITCHEN AND HAVE SOME FOR THE GUN SECTIONS. I HAD TO THINK HARD ABOUT THIS BUT IT WOULD BE A BIG RISK, I ASKED 'HOW MANY MEN WOULD IT TAKE?' HE REPLIED '3 OR 4', I ASKED 'HOW MUCH COULD 2 MEN DO' HE SAID 'WE COULD TRY'. THE BEST DETAIL THAT I COULD COME UP WITH WOULD HAVE TO BE HIM AND ME. THAT WAS AGREABLE TOHIM. WE GOT A TRUCK DRIVER AND WORKED

OUT A PLAN. AT DARK WE WILL DRIVE BY THE QUONSET HUT, NO LIGHTS, PUT IT IN LOW, LOW GEAR AND WE WILL ROLL OFF OF THE TRUCK AND AT TEN P.M. SHARP YOU COME BACK WITH NO LIGHTS ON. WE STARTED ON THE FLOOR WHICH HAD THREE QUARTER INCH 4'X 8' SHEETS OF PLYWOOD.

THEY CAME OUT REAL EASY, ALL BUT THE LAST ONE. WE STACKED THE PLYWOOD OUT FRONT AND IT WAS ONLY 9: 30 SO WE TOOK SOME OF THE MASONITE OFF OF THE WALLS. IF MY MEMORY HASENT SLIPPED TO FAR WE HAD 91 SHEETS OF PLYWOOD PLUS SOME MASONITE..AT 10: OO THE TRUCK ROLLED IN WITH SOME HELP TO LOAD IT ONTO THE TRUCK AND WE WERE ON THE WAY TO BATTERY 'F'. (A FEW DAYS LATER AN ORDER WAS SENT TO ALL MILITARY PERSONEL THAT ALL VACANT QUONSET HUTS ARE HEREBY DECLARED OFF LIMITS TO ALL MILITARY PERSONEL).

WE GOT OUR MESS HALL EQUIPED WITH PICNICK TABLES WITH BENCHES. THE SIDES WERE COVERED WITH CANVAS AND THE TOP SIDE OF THE CANVAS HAD PLASTIC SCREEN. WE GOT SAWDUST FROM THE SAWMILL AND PUT A SIX INCH LAYER ON THE DIRT. IN THIS WET JUNGLE IT PACKED DOWN SOLID. THEY SWEPT THE FLOOR WIYH A RAKE.

OUR BATALLION COMANDER LT. COL. CLIFFORD BYERS BORROWED A BULLDOZER FROM THE MARINES AND WE REALY OPENED UP THE JUNGLE AROUND BATTERY HOS.

SOMEONE AT 14TH CORPS HEADQUARTERS NEW WHAT WE WERE DOING AT OUR CAMP BUT MUST HAVE KEPT QUIET ABOUT IT BUT ONE DAY A CONVOY OF TRUCKS CAME DRIVING IN AND SAID HERE ARE YOUR WAR DOGS. THIS WAS A QUARTERMASTER WAR DOG PLATOON WITH A 1ST LT. 39 MEN AND 38 DOGS. ALL IN SHIPPING CRATES THAT SERVED AS KENNELS. WE CALLED BATALLION WHO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THEM, THEY FINALLY FOUND SOMEONE AT CORPS HQ. WHO SAID THE DOGS HAD JUST COME IN, THEY COULD'NT GIVE THEM TO ANY OF THE DIVISIONS SO WERE SENDING THEM TO ONE OF THE CORPS TROOPS. WE GOT THEM ASSIGNED TO BTRY. 'F' FOR RATIONS, QUARTERS AND ADMINISTRATION THEY WOULD BE DISPATCHED TO THE INFANTRY FROM HERE.

THEY MUST HAVE BEEN SENT TO BATTERY 'F' BECAUSE SOME ONE AT CORPS HEADQUARTERS KNEW ABOUT OUR BATTERY AREA OR WAS GETTING EVEN WITH US FOR OUR WAY OF PROCURING BUILDING MATERIAL.

THESE MEN OF THE WAR DOG PLATOON WERE IN THE QUARTERMASTER CORPS BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT PHYSICALY FIT FOR THE INFANTRY.NOW WITH THEIR DOG THEY WERE LEADING THE INFANTRY PATROOLS.

THESE DOGS WERE TRAINED TO BE VICIOUS. THEY KNEW ONLY ONE MASTER, ALL OTHERS WERE THE ENEMY INCLUDING THE MASTERS OF THE DOGS ON EACH SIDE OF HIM.

ONE OF THE MEN LED AN INFANYRY PATROL OUT BEYOND OUR LINES. THEY WERE ON A TRAIL WITH THE DOG ON A LEASH LEADING THE PATROL. THEY CAME TO A GULLY WHERE THE TRAIL DIPPED DOWN AND BACK UP THE OTHER SIDE. AS THE DOG AND LEADER CAME TO THE TOP THE JAP'S WITH A MACHINE GUN MOUNTED ACROSS THE GULLY, OPENED FIRE AND CUT DOWN THE DOG AND THE LEADER. THEY FELL DOWN INTO THE GULLY. WITH THE JAPS THERE, THEY RETURNED TO THEIR BASE, BUT THE NEXT DAY THEY RETURNED IN AN ATTEMPT TO RECOVER THE BODY. WHEN THE PATROL CAME TO THE GULLY THEY USED A 25 FOOT LEASH. AS SOON AS THE DOG REACHED THE TOP, HE WAS CUT DOWN BY THE MACHINE GUN.

SOLVING THE WATER PROBLEM

ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THAT THE ARMY HAD FOR FIELD DUTY WAS WATER. THEY ISSUED A BUNCH OF 5 GALLON JEEP CANS TO HAUL WATER TO WHEREVER THERE WERE MEN. A 'W' ON THE CAN MEANT WATER AND A 'G' MEANT GASOLINE. WITH 8 GUN SECTIONS, 2 PLATOON HEADQUARTERS AND BATTERY HEADQUARTERS GETTING WATER TO ALL OF THEM IN 5 GALLON CANS WAS A BIG PROBLEM. DRINKING WATER AND WASH WATER AND LAUNDRY WATER TO THE FIELD POSITIONS. AT BATTERY HEADOUARTERS WE HAD THE KITCHEN TO SUPPLY, DRINKING WATER FOR THE MEN AT HEADQUARTERS, AND WASH WATER AND SHOWERS. IT WAS AGAINST RULES BUT WE CUT THE TOPS OUT OF 54 GALLON GASOLINE BARRELS, LOADED ON A TWO AND A HALF TON TRUCK. DROVE TO A WATERING POINT FILLED THE BARRELS AND DELIVERED WATER TO ALL OF THE POSITIONS, BUCKETED THE WATER INTO THEIR BARRELS. AT BATTERY HQS THEY DELIVERD TO THE KITCHEN AND THEN TO THE SHOWERS. THE SHOWERS WERE BUILT ON TOP OF A PLATFORM MADE OUT OF SOME OF OUR LUMBER WITH ABOUT TEN BARRELS. THESE BARRELS HAD THE BOTTOMS CUT OUT AND LOADED WITH THE OPEN BOTTOMS LOOKING UP. UNDERNEATH, THE BARRELS WERE JOINED TOGETHER WITH SHOWER HEADS AT SOME OF THE FITTINGS. TO MY KNOWLEDGE THE ARMY NEVER ISSUED ONE SHOWER HEAD OR ONE PIECE OF PIPE OR FITTING. ALL OF THESE WERE ACCUMULATED A LITTLE BIT AT A TIME. SOME BOUGHT WITH OUR PERSONAL MONEY, WHILE WE WERE IN FIJI. SOME BUMMED FROM THE NAVY OR OFF OF THE MERCHANT SHIPS. THIS WATER HAD TO BE BUCKETED UP TO THE BARRELS ON TOP OF THE TOWER. I REMEMBER THE SIGN ON THE TOWER IN LARGE CRUDE LETTERS "TAKE IT EASY GREASY, THIS WATER HAS TO BE HAULED".

AT BOUGAINVILLE, WE WERE LOCATED ON THE BOMBER STRIP. WE COVERED ONE FOURTH OF THE FIELD. IN SUPPLING THE INNER CIRCLE POSITIONS, OUR TRUCKS WENT ALONG SIDE OF THE LANDING STRIP WHERE THE NAVY C.B.S HAD 2 – 500 GALLON 2 WHEEL WATER TRAILERS. THE MOTOR POOL MEN KEPT ASKING ME ABOUT GRABBING ONE OF THEM. I KEPT TELLING THEM THAT THERE ARE ONLY 2 OF THESE TRAILERS ON THE ISLAND AND HOW COULD YOU CONCEAL THEM? FINALLY I SAID "YOU GRAB A TRAILER AFTER DARK AND TOMMOROW MORNING A NEW WATER TRAILER PAINTED ARMY COLORS AND AN ARMY SERIAL NUMBER ON THE SIDE WILL ROLL OUT OF THE MOTOR POOL".

SURE ENOUGH, OUR NEW WATER TRAILER HAD ARRIVED. THEY STARTED DELIVERING WATER TO ALL POSITIONS. TWO DAYS LATER WHEN THEY WENT TO PICKUP WATER AT THE WATERING POINT, THERE WAS NOBODY THERE, THEY YELLED AND NO ONE SHOWED UP. THEY LOADED WITH WATER AND LOADED A NICE THREE QUARTER INCH WATER PUMP THAT WAS SITTING THERE. THE PUMP HAD A BRIGGS AND STRATTON GASOLINE MOTOR. THEY MOUNTED THE PUMP ON TOP OF THE TANK AND FROM THEN ON THE WATER WAS PUMPED INTO THE BARRELS AT ALL OF OUR POSITIONS.

AS A FOLLOW UP, WHEN THE WAR WAS OVER, I WAS AT FORT BLISS, EL PASO, TEXAS, WAITING TO GET OUT OF THE SERVICE, WHO SHOWED UP BUT THE CAPTAIN THAT TOOK OVER BATTERY 'F' WHEN WE LEFT ON ROTATION. HE TOOK THE BATTERY TO THE PHILIPINE ISLANDS. I ASKED IF HE TOOK OUR WATER TRAILER. HE TOLD ME THAT THE WATER TRAILER WAS TAKEN ALL OVER THE PHILIPINE ISLANDS.

When we were staging to leave Fiji to sail to Guadalcanal we were ordered for the kitchen to take no rations as they would be issued upon our arrival. When I told our Mess Sergeant Woody Watkins he said "I want a 2 and a half ton truck and a one ton trailer". "I am taking every thing that we own". I told him what the orders were and he said "Bull, I have been on these bivouacs before and we are taking everything". I wonder what they did to new battery commanders that had non – com section chiefs like this. (He got his truck and trailer).

When we arrived at Guadalcanal we staid on the ship until supper and Battery 'F' and some of the 1st battalion disembarked and set up camp(pup tents). The next morning the cooks had ranges set up and were making pancakes. About the time that we had our breakfast an Officer from the 1st Battalion came over and said that "their battery had no rations yet and could we feed them". Woody said "Yes". I felt sorry for the cooks and started flipping pancakes. Then another 1st Battalion Battery Showed up and we fed them too. There are times like this that you learn from the experience of a few bivouacs that you have to lookout for your outfit.