

ORGANIZATION HISTORY

632d TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

The first day of 1943 found the Battalion camped in the Strathpine-Petrie Area, approximately 18 miles from Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, with the personnel strength of 36 officers, 1 Warrant Officer Junior Grade, and 730 enlisted men. This figure remained the same until January 12th, on which date the Battalion moved back to the same area as formerly occupied in Camp Cable, Queensland. The area was reorganized, and the training program continued. On January 14th, 3 enlisted men per company were ordered to Special Duty with the 32d Infantry Division to form, along with other units of the Division, a Division Demonstration Team. On January 22d, the Battalion travelled to Tweed Heads, New South Wales, approximately 62 miles, where it occupied a bivouac area within the race track in Wood Heads. While in this area, 44 enlisted men and 3 officers from the 32d Infantry Division Casual Company were attached to the Battalion for rations and quarters. The period from January 22d to January 29th, on which date the Battalion returned to Camp Cable, was spent in training in the morning, which included beach defenses, and physical exercises on the beach during the afternoon, which included swimming instructions for all men unable to swim. On January 28th, all personnel received a dental classification by the Battalion Dentist. On January 30th, Battalion personnel attended a demonstration of Australian weapons by Australian Army personnel at the Division Assembly Area, the Division Outdoor Theater given the name of Cable Bowl. During the month, Battalion personnel constructed a Battalion Open-Aire Theater, which amounted to a clearance of trees and brush and the arrangement of tree trunks which were then used for seats. This was to be used in the future for showing of training films with also some feature full-length movies through the courtesy of the 32d Infantry Division Special Services Section and the Motion Picture Industry. The strength as of January 31st was 36 officers, 1 Warrant Officer Junior Grade, and 745 enlisted men; net loss for month was 5 men. On January 18th, 25th, and February 1st, all officers and enlisted men of the Battalion received a series of three typhus inoculations.

The month of February was highlighted with the approval by the Division Commander of officers' leaves and furloughs for enlisted men, this being the first authorization for leaves and furloughs since the Battalion arrived in Australia on 14 May 1942. The first group of officers (10%) left on February 9th, and the enlisted men (10%) left on February 5th. Before the month was completed, three groups of officers and enlisted men had obtained seven day leaves and furloughs, and the future looked bright for the remainder of the officers and enlisted men to get future leaves and furloughs, so as to enable all personnel of the Battalion who had been overseas for six months or longer to have a leave or furlough. One dampening incident occurred on February 6th, when the Battalion, along with the entire Division, was confined by the Division Surgeon because of the prevalence of German Measles. This confinement was lifted on February 12th. On February 7th, seven enlisted men from the Battalion were placed on Detached Service with Headquarters, Sixth Army, Camp Columbia, Queensland, by order of the Division Commander. On February 13th, fifty-five enlisted men, replacements for the 128th Infantry Medical Detachment, were attached to the Battalion for rations, quarters, and administration; while on February 25th, an additional 8 enlisted men were added, making a total of 63 enlisted men. These replacements indicated that possibly the Battalion would also be receiving replacements shortly.

On February 15th, when 33 enlisted men were assigned to the Battalion by Division Headquarters. These replacements were recent arrivals from the United States, arriving in Australia during the past month. These men were then assigned to companies within the Battalion on February 22d. Two night compass-road marches for training were held from 1900L hours to 2200L hours on February 11th and 18th, distance travelled approximately seven miles. On the night of February 26th, all Battalion personnel witnessed the showing of Training Films on Security and Handling of Military Information; in addition was shown a full-length feature film, "Footlight Serenade". The Battalion Open-Air Theater proved a success, and all men were enthralled. The training for the month included all companies participating in going through the combat range, in which live ammunition was used. This combat range had been laid out and constructed by personnel of the Battalion Communications Company. The strength of the Battalion as of February 28th was 36 officers, 1 Warrant Officer Junior Grade, and 772 enlisted men; gains for the month being 38 and losses 11.

On March 1st, a change of command was effected when Major-General William H. Gill assumed command of the 32d Infantry Division. This incident affected the Battalion inasmuch as the Battalion is attached to the 32d Infantry Division. On March 4th, the 63 enlisted men (2 of which were then sick in the 155th Station Hospital, APO 923) were detached from the Battalion to join their unit as the 128th Infantry had returned from their rest area. On March 6th all Battalion personnel attended an address by the new Commanding General of the Division at Cable Bowl. On March 8th, a new training program was initiated with general basic training for all personnel under program laid out by Training Directive No. 1, Headquarters I Corps; this included all arms instruction and firing commencing the last week of the month. On March 11th, the Battalion Communications Officer with four enlisted men were transferred to the 1st Signal Detachment, 158th Combat Team. While on March 15th, the Battalion Personnel Officer was transferred to Headquarters 32d Infantry Division, the Adjutant assuming also the duties of the Personnel Officer until April 1st, at which time officer replacements were received. On the evening of March 17th, a Training Film on "Identification of Aircraft" was shown plus a feature movie, "Flying Tigers", in the Battalion Theater. On March 3rd, the strength of the Battalion was increased with the addition of 29 replacements which were assigned to companies immediately. Other replacements during the month included five men on the 7th, fourteen men on the 12th, eight men on the 15th, one man on the 27th, and two men on the thirtieth. Strength of the Battalion as of March 31st was 34 Officers, 1 Warrant Officer Junior Grade, and 820 enlisted men; loss of 2 officers during the month and loss of 10 enlisted men with gains of 39 enlisted men.

On April 1st, the Battalion officer personnel was brought up to T/O strength when five Second Lieutenants, recent graduates of the Southwest-Pacific Area Officers' Candidate School, were assigned to the Battalion. On April 3th, these officers were assigned to duties in Headquarters Company. On April 2d, the first contingent of Battalion personnel to attend an Officers' Candidate School in the Southwest-Pacific Area were sent to the school, six men being transferred to the school at Camp Columbia. Effective the 2d, the Battalion was attached to the 32d Infantry Division Artillery for supervision of training, supply and discipline; also on the 2d, a program was begun for improvement of Battalion Area and rehabilitation of the organization areas, including construction of company streets.

From April 21st to 10th, firing of all arms was conducted, including .45 cal Automatic, M1903 Rifle, .30 cal and .50 cal Machine guns, .75 cal sub-machine guns, and 57mm guns. On April 10th and 17th, Battalion tests were conducted on the basic training completed during the previous four to six weeks, with favorable results. On April 20th, the companies competed in landscape firing, with Headquarters Company garnering the highest average score and also having the riding squad with the highest average score. On April 25th, Battalion personnel attended Protestant and Catholic Easter Sunday church services at the Division Theater Area, services having been coordinated by the Division Chaplain's Office for all personnel of the Division. Officers' leaves and enlisted men's furloughs continued during the month of April. Strength of the Battalion as of April 30th was 39 officers, 1 warrant officer Junior Grade, and 790 enlisted men; gain of 5 officers and loss of 20 enlisted men.

On May 3rd, the Battalion strength was increased with the addition of a first lieutenant who was immediately assigned as Acting Adjutant. On May 9th, training progress in the firing companies began to take a trend toward tank destroyer tactics, the training progress including various field problems both day and night. On May 29th, the Division published the order specifying the change in uniform from cottons to woolens, with all cottons being cleaned and neatly packed away in barracks bags. Also on this date, the advance detail consisting of 3 enlisted men of Company "O", Cargo Company for the 126th Infantry B.C., Shore Party, departed from Camp Sable enroute for Amphibious Training at Camp Munanda, near Newcastle, New South Wales. Other changes in officer personnel for the month were the loss of one Captain transferred to the 42d General Hospital, A.U. 923, on the 12th, and the addition of one Captain assigned to the Battalion on the 23rd. The month of May marked the conclusion of leaves and furloughs, all eligible personnel having received a leave or furlough. Strength of the Battalion as of May 31st was 40 officers, 1 warrant officer Junior grade, and 793 enlisted men; gain of 1 officer and increase of 3 enlisted men.

On June 1st, all personnel of the Battalion were issued the Asiatic-Pacific Theater Ribbon, and also an Australian Ribbon Coupon Book, 25 coupons per enlisted man and 75 coupons per officer. Also on the 1st, one officer and fifteen enlisted men of Company "C" departed by motor convoy with the 120th Field Artillery Battalion enroute to Camp Munanda, near Newcastle, New South Wales, the Amphibious Training Center. One warrant officer, Junior Grade, the Battalion Motor Officer, was transferred to the 114th Engineers Battalion on the 1st. The 2^d and 3^d of June were spent in preparation for movement of Company "C", one platoon of Reconnaissance Company, 42 enlisted men of Headquarters Company, and 6 men from the Medical Detachment, in addition to one Staff Officer, 2 officers from Headquarters Company, one officer from Company "A", 2 officers from Reconnaissance Company, and one officer from the Medical Detachment, and the Company "C" officers, for the Amphibious Training Center; the remainder of the Battalion continued on the regular schedule. On June 4th, this group departed by troop train from Camp Sable to Richmond to Newcastle, New South Wales, on June 5th, proceeding to Divonne area near Wilson's Bay, Camp Munanda, New South Wales. Amphibious training included instruction in handling of assault boats, working with landing crafts, use of landing nets on the Australian ship, MARS King V, unloading of boats and establishing of dumps, ammunition, rations, etc., on beach, handling of

plies, all the duties of a Cargadore Company for the 126th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party. This training period continued during the remainder of the month and extended into the following month. On June 10th, the Battalion was unattached from 32d Division Artillery for training, supply and discipline, and returned to complete control and supervision of Headquarters 32d Infantry Division. On June 18th, the Battalion was visited by the Commanding General, which included inspection of the Battalion Installations; while on the 23rd, an inspection of the Battalion was conducted by the Commanding General, I Corps, accompanied by the Division Commander and Assistant Division Commander, with satisfactory results. On June 18th, the Battalion received another honor when the Battalion Basketball Team was awarded the Championship of the Brisbane Area in a tournament conducted by the Base Section No. 3 Special Services Section, when the team defeated the runners-up, Chemical Warfare Team of Base Section No. 3 by the score of 84 to 29, at the Brisbane City Hall. On June 13th, the Battalion Dentist was transferred to the 112th Cavalry, APO 922. The third loss of officer personnel for the month occurred on the 24th with the transfer of one Captain to Headquarters 32d Infantry Division. On June 20th, a change in duty assignment of officers was made within the Battalion, the chief change being the assignment of a new Communications Officer. A Battalion Field Problem was conducted from June 30th to July 2d, with all personnel being returned to base camp on the night of the 30th for the purpose of witnessing the showing of the Intelligence Film "Heart of Kin" and also receiving the pay for the month; at the conclusion thereof, all personnel were returned to the field bivouac area. Strength of the Battalion as of June 30th was 38 officers and 787 enlisted men, a loss of two officers, one Warrant Officer Junior Grade, and 6 enlisted men for the month.

On July 2d, the Battalion officer personnel was increased with the addition of one officer who was immediately appointed Battalion Motor Officer. However, this gain of one officer was soon after supplanted with the first loss of an officer by death overseas and also was the first loss of an officer by death since the activation of the Battalion. The death of this officer who was the Battalion S-3 occurred on July 7th. On July 3rd, the second contingent of Battalion personnel accepted for Officers' Candidate Training was transferred to the Officers' Candidate School; this consisted of 10 men, of which 2 men were returned to the Battalion on August 12th having failed to pass the course. All members of the first contingent were successful in gaining the bars and commission of Second Lieutenant in the Army of the United States. On July 8th, all Battalion personnel attached to the 126th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party on Amphibious Training returned to duty at Camp Cable, having returned via Australian Army Convoy from Camp Bunanda to Stockton, a distance of 34 miles, then via ferry to Newcastle and train to Brisbane to Camp Cable; distance from Newcastle to Camp Cable being 484 miles. On July 2d, 3d, and 5th, and 6th, advance details of Company B and including several members of Headquarters Company and Reconnaissance Company attached, departed from Camp Cable enroute to the amphibious Training Center at Camp Bunanda, near Newcastle, New South Wales. Personnel of these groups in addition to the main body of Battalion personnel to follow shortly comprised the Cargadore Company for the 127th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party. The 5th and 6th of July were spent in preparation for movement of Company B, on platoon of Reconnaissance Company, 12 enlisted men of Headquarters Company, and 6 enlisted men from the Medical Detachment, in addition to one Staff Officer, 3 officers from Headquarters Company, 2 officers from Reconnaissance Company, and the Company B officers, for the Amphibious Training Center; the remainder of the Battalion continued on the regular schedule. On July 7th, this group departed

A troop train from Camp Cable to Brisbane to Newcastle, New South Wales, on July 8th, proceeding to bivouac area near Nelson's Bay, Camp Runanda, New South Wales. Amphibious Training included instruction in handling of assault boats, working with landing crafts, use of landing nets, on the Australian Ship, HMAS Westralia, unloading of boats and establishing of dumps, ammunition, rations, etc., on beaches, handling of supplies, all the duties of a Cargo Company for the 127th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party. This training period continued during the remainder of the month and extended into the following month. On July 9th, changes were made in the Battalion Officer Personnel with the reassignment of Battalion and Company officers. From July 16th to 18th, all members of the Battalion who had been members of the 126th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party were awarded forty-eight hour passes as per Division order. On July 19th, 20th, and 21st, a total of one officer (Battalion Motor Officer) and 15 enlisted men from the Battalion were placed on Detached Service with the 5205d Provisional Truck Battalion, a new unit composed of Division personnel. On the 22nd, a new Battalion Motor Officer was appointed. From July 26th to 28th, a Battalion field exercise was held which included all personnel (less rear echelon personnel who remained at base camp). During the exercise, a mock air attack by four U.S. B-28's was coordinated in the training with no casualties suffered. On the last day of this exercise, this group of personnel witnessed a demonstration of the use and landing of Amphibious Quarter-Ton Vehicles in water. Strength of the Battalion as of July 31st was 38 officers and 775 enlisted men, a loss of 14 enlisted men for the month.

On August 2d, one enlisted man of the Battalion was transferred to Air Corps for Flight Cadet Training in the United States, this being the first case of this nature. This soldier was the envy of the entire Battalion at being fortunate enough to go back to the United States for this training. From August 2d to August 5th, advance details composed of personnel from Headquarters Company, Company B, Reconnaissance Company, and Medical Detachment, members of 127th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party, returned from the Amphibious Training Center to duty at Camp Cable; on the 6th, the main body returned. This group returned via the same route as Company B in month of July, and was also awarded forty-eight hour passes for members of the 127th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party. On August 3d, 7th, and 8th, advance details of Company A and including several members of Headquarters Company and Reconnaissance Company attached, departed from Camp Cable enroute to the Amphibious Training Center at Camp Runanda, near Newcastle, New South Wales. Personnel of these groups in addition to the main body of Battalion personnel to follow shortly comprised the Cargo Company for the 128th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party. The 7th and 8th of August were spent in preparation for movement of Company A, one platoon of Reconnaissance Company, 20 enlisted men of Headquarters Company, and 6 enlisted men from the Medical Detachment, in addition to one Staff Officer, 2 officers from Headquarters Company, 3 officers from Reconnaissance Company, one officer from the Medical Detachment, and the Company A officers, for the Amphibious Training Center; the remainder of the Battalion continued on the regular schedule. On August 9th, this group departed by troop train from Camp Cable to Brisbane to Newcastle, New South Wales, on August 10th, proceeding to bivouac area near Nelson's Bay, Camp Runanda, New South Wales. Amphibious Training included instruction in handling of assault boats, working the landing crafts, use of landing nets on the Australian Ship HMAS Westralia and anchors, unloading of boats and establishing of dumps, ammunition, rations,

etc., on beaches, handling of supplies, all the duties of a Cargo Company for the 128th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party. This training period continued during the remainder of the month and extended into the following month. One officer and one enlisted man from Headquarters Company who had been members of the Cargo Company for the 127th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party remained on duty at the Amphibious Training Center for duty with the Cargo Company for the 128th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party. One officer from Reconnaissance Company who had been delegated to attend a Bomb Disposal School at Sydney, New South Wales, and also one enlisted man from Reconnaissance Company, for the period of July 12th to August 7th, joined the Cargo Company for the 128th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party on August 9th. During the entire Amphibious Training period covering all companies at Camp Funanda, one officer and one enlisted man from Reconnaissance Company remained on continuous duty at the Amphibious Training Center. The Battalion Commander was the Shore Party Commander for the 128th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party, and during his absence, the Battalion Executive Officer assumed command; the Battalion Commander also made two inspection tours of the Battalion Cargo Companies with the 126th and 127th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Parties. On August 3d, Battalion personnel having completed four months since last furlough and leave, and having completed the period of Amphibious Training at Camp Funanda, were granted second furloughs and leaves in Australia, with the usual 10% being authorized to be absent at one time. On August 4th the Battalion received a major change in weapons with the arrival of eighteen Tank Destroyers (M-7 Guns on M-10 Mounts) which were to supplant the 57mm guns; while on the 12th, another eighteen were received, making a total of thirty-six. The Battalion organizational distribution called for three fire companies to have twelve each. However, a change of orders was received, and twenty-four of the Destroyers were recalled, twelve being turned back on August 20th and another twelve on August 24th. This incident created a great disappointment to all Battalion personnel. After all preliminaries and instructions to Maintenance personnel had been accomplished, the twelve remaining Destroyers were then assigned to Company B. On August 9th, a First Lieutenant was assigned to the Battalion, and appointed Battalion Motor Officer shortly thereafter; this officer having had previous experience with Diesel Motors. On August 7th, one officer from the Battalion was transferred to the Fourth Replacement Depot in Sydney; while on the 9th, one officer was transferred to the Fifth Replacement Depot in Brisbane. The period from August 13th to 29th was devoted to further Amphibious Training, but at a different Training Center, this one being at Toorbul Point, Queensland, a distance of 88 miles from Camp Cable. Their training included Company B, and in addition another platoon composed of personnel from Headquarters Company, Company A, Company E, Reconnaissance Company, and the Medical Detachment, who had not received the Amphibious Training at Camp Funanda. Company C remained there for the entire period, while the other personnel was divided into two groups, each group being present for one week of this training. Personnel were transported to Toorbul Point by motor convoy, along with other Division unit groups. The basic duty of Company B and the "spare parts" platoon was to perform Shore Party functions in conjunction with the 121st Field Artillery Battalion. All personnel who were present for the entire two-week training period were awarded forty-eight hour passes on the last two days of the month. Officer personnel present for Amphibious Training at Toorbul Point consisted of Company B officers and two officers from Headquarters Company. From August 29th to September 10th, one officer from Headquarters Company was delegated to attend a Chemical Warfare School in Brisbane. Strength of the Battalion as of August 31st was 57 officers, net loss of one officer for the month, and 770 enlisted men, net loss of three enlisted men for the month.

From September 2d to 9th, two U.S. Civilians, General Motors Representatives, were attached to the Battalion for the purpose of instructing Company B personnel on the Tank Destroyers. On September 5th, the Battalion Dental Officer; however, also on this date, this gain in officer strength was off-set with the transfer of the Battalion Surgeon to the Fourth General Hospital in Melbourne. From September 5th to 14th, one officer and 49 enlisted men were placed on Detached Service with Headquarters Sixth Army for the purpose of fuzing ammunition. On September 8th, Company A and attached personnel from Headquarters Company, Reconnaissance Company, and the Medical Detachment, members of the 128th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party, returned from the Amphibious Training Center to duty at Camp Cable. This group returned via the same route as Company B in month of August, and was also awarded forty-eight hour passes for members of the 128th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party. This completed the Battalion's activities in Amphibious Training. On September 9th, all Battalion personnel were present at a Division formation at the Division Assembly Area, Cable Bowl, for visit and address by the wife of the Commander-in-Chief, accompanied by Lieutenant-General Elcholberger, Major-General Gill, Brigadier-General Myers, and Vice-Admiral Jones. On September 12th, a reassignment of officers was effected to fill position vacancies within the Battalion. On the 13th, the Battalion strength was increased and brought up to within one of T/O strength with the assignment of 59 replacements, who were immediately distributed to the companies. On the 17th, the Commanding General was present in the Battalion Area, his observations including progress of training and condition of the area. On the 18th, the Battalion Dental Officer conducted a dental survey for reclassification of all personnel. On the 21st, all personnel were formed in the Battalion Assembly Area for the reading of the Articles of War; in addition, the Battalion Surgeon gave a lecture on care of the foot and personal hygiene. On the 23d, the Battalion Officer personnel suffered another loss with the transfer of first Lieutenant to the 42d General Hospital in Brisbane. On this same date, all Battalion personnel received a stimulating dose of tetanus-Typhoid inoculation. On the 27th and 28th, all personnel armed with the M1903 Rifle fired the rifle course at Enoggera Range near Brisbane, Queensland; while on the 29th and 30th, sub-machine gun carriers fired their weapons in conjunction with Tank Destroyer Sections firing with 37mm gun, sub-caliber inserts. Officer's leaves and enlisted men's furloughs continued during the month of September. Strength of the Battalion as of September 30th was 37 officers and 825 enlisted men, net loss of one officer and net gain of 55 enlisted men for the month.

On October 1st, all Battalion personnel were present in the Battalion Theater Area for the showing of the Training Film on "Bomb disposal" and a lecture by the Bomb Disposal Officer, after which a Feature Film "Mr. Lucky" was shown. Also on the 1st, major changes were made with the Battalion in which the Battalion was broken up into the following categories: Company A placed on Special duty with the 128th Infantry R.C.T., Company B placed on Special duty with the 126th Infantry R.C.T., and Reconnaissance Company placed on Special duty with the 127th Infantry R.C.T., this leaving only Headquarters Company and Company C plus the Medical Detachment in the Battalion. However, this was cut down further when Headquarters Company personnel was distributed among the R.C.T. companies as follows: 23 enlisted men to Company A, 27 enlisted men to Company C, and 64 enlisted men to Reconnaissance Company.

After this distribution was made, Headquarters Company consisted of 37 enlisted men and 3 officers, however, this number of officers was further cut down when the Battalion Motor Officer was placed on Special Duty with Company B on October 4th, and on the 11th, when the Battalion Personnel Officer was transferred to the 155th Station Hospital, near Tambourine, Queensland. Officer personnel was distributed as follows: 2 Headquarters Company officers placed on Special Duty with Company A, 2 Staff Officers and 1 Headquarters Company officer placed on Special Duty with Company C, and 1 Staff officer and 1 Headquarters Company officer placed on Special Duty with Reconnaissance Company. The medical Detachment was also reduced somewhat when two aid-men were placed on Special Duty with each of the R.C.T. companies. On the 1st and 2d, personnel fired the .30 cal and .50 cal machine guns, also the .45 cal sub-machine guns, and Company B fired the 3-inch guns mounted on the Tank Destroyers. On the 2d the third contingent of Battalion personnel (consisting of 2 enlisted men this time) selected for Officers' Candidate School was transferred to the Southwest Pacific Area Officers' Candidate School at Camp Columbia, near Brisbane. From October 3d to 10th, all Battalion personnel were engaged in preparation for the imminent permanent change of station; in addition to this camp preparation, dock details for loading of the ship were furnished. On October 8th, one of the Headquarters Company officers placed on Special Duty with Company A was relieved of that Special Duty and placed on Special Duty with Company B. The week-end of October 9th - 10th was to be the last of the very popular recreational convoys to Brisbane and Coolangatta, Queensland, for the present occupation of Camp Cable. On the 11th, the Battalion received 41 "last minute" replacements prior to the evacuation of Camp Cable, this bringing the Battalion strength above T/O strength for the first time. Also on the 11th, prior to final departure of the remaining Battalion personnel, exclusive of the R.C.T. companies and attached personnel, those personnel hospitalized who would not be able to leave with the Battalion were transferred to the Detachment of Patients 153d Station Hospital, near Southport, Queensland, and the 105th General Hospital, near Gatton, Queensland. These transfers included one officer and 10 enlisted men. On the night of 11th, the Battalion, consisting of Headquarters Company, Company B, and Medical Detachment (less advance loading details already at the dock) departed from Camp Cable by troop train to Pinkenba Wharf in Brisbane. Loading of personnel began at 0245L and continued until 0405L on the U.S. Victory Ship, SSRP Warner. The Battalion Commander was the Commander of Troops aboard ship, personnel numbering 65 officers and 773 enlisted men, including the Battalion personnel; this shipment was known as Shipment 922. The ship pulled away from Pinkenba Wharf at 1027L, on the 12th in convoy. The first practice drill was called at 1147L, and anchor was dropped at 1505L. After 2 1/2 hours, the ship started again at 1732L. On the 13th, a training schedule was initiated for the troops during the periods of the day from 1000L to 1200L and from 1300L to 1500L. This program included instruction in care of equipment, cleaning and care of weapons, medical care necessary in the tropical jungles, and physical exercises. The Battalion Adjutant was the Ship's Adjutant and supervised the detail roster, mess situation, and sanitary measures needed to protect the men's health. A plane-spotting detail was organized aboard ship for lookouts in addition to the ship's crew. On October 13th, the Division Surgeon gave instructions on the use of atabrine in combating malaria, and on this date the Battalion personnel commenced to take one pill each day. On the 14th, land was sighted in the early morning and at 0946L, the ship stopped off at Gladstone, where four Australian Navy Men were transferred to small craft, and the trip was resumed immediately. Commencing the afternoon of the 14th, and on board ship a news bulletin was published, being composed from news picked

up by the ship's radio. Boat drills continued during the entire trip, one or two per day. At 1835L on the 15th, the ship entered Townsville Harbor after receiving instructions from shore and moved into position in the harbor at 1940L. Blackout was not observed while the ship was in the harbor. The troops were fortunate in being furnished music during the voyage, twice daily, by the 32d Division Red Arrow Band, also church services were held aboard ship daily. On the 20th, being still in Townsville Harbor, five days rations were brought aboard ship. On the morning of 22d, the ship moved into the inner harbor of Townsville proper for purpose of taking on load of fresh water. After the ship was docked, and while the water was being loaded, all personnel, less necessary details, were taken on a four-mile march through the outskirts of Townsville. In the afternoon of 22d, the ship left Townsville and again anchored in ship lane. On the 23d, the troop strength was lessened by one with the transfer of one enlisted man who was transferred to the 12th Station Hospital in Townsville. At 1848L on 24th, the ship weighed anchor and slowly moved to the outer bay, the voyage being officially resumed at that time. On the 27th the Battalion-Ship's Adjutant issued proper instructions on landing, and on the 28th, at 1846L, the ship arrived at Goodenough Island. The troops were disembarked at 1918L, with a detail of 323 men, representatives of all units aboard ship, remaining on board for unloading purposes, which continued for several days. Two groups of personnel of Company B were not included in the above voyage. One group of two officers and 45 enlisted men left Camp Cable and Brisbane on October 12th, aboard the SS Howell-Cobb, and after stops at Townsville Cairns, Milne Bay, the ship arrived at Goodenough Island at 1500L on the 26th, disembarking at 1830L. This group established the bivouac area assigned to the Battalion, clearing an area and laying out the organization areas, which was partially completed by the time the main body arrived on the 28th. The other group consisting of one officer and 12 enlisted men departed from Camp Cable and Brisbane on October 21st and arrived at Goodenough Island on November 5th, also making stops at Townsville, Cairns, and Milne Bay. In addition, one officer and one enlisted man from Headquarters Company on Special Duty with Company A travelled by air, leaving Camp Cable and Archer Field in Brisbane on October 16th and arrived at Goodenough Island on October 19th, also making stops at Townsville, Cairns, and Milne Bay. The period from October 29th to November 7th was spent in clearing out areas, setting up tents, installations, building roads, and digging of slit trenches and fox holes. Strength of the Battalion as of October 31st was 36 officers and 844 enlisted men, loss of one officer and gain of 19 enlisted men.

On November 2d, two enlisted men of the Medical Detachment were placed on Detached Service with the 4th Malarial Control Unit at Milne Bay, and on the 19th an order was received transferring these men to that unit; however, on the 27th, that order was revoked and the men were again placed back on Detached Service with that unit. Later this unit was attached to the 126th Infantry R.C.T. and then to the 107th Medical Battalion of the 32d Infantry Division. On November 4th, a Chaplain joined the Battalion, having been assigned per Division Special Order. Also on the 4th, the First Platoon of Company B was placed on Detached Service with U.S. Forces at Milne Bay, being Attached to Company C, Cargadore Company of the 126th Infantry R.C.T., for administrative purposes. Four more enlisted men of Company B joined this platoon at Milne Bay on the 15th, also accompanied by two enlisted men, casualties from Company C, being reassigned to Company C. On November 5th, the second increase of officer personnel was received with the assignment of a Captain, direct from the Tank Destroyer School at Camp Hood, Texas; this officer was

appointed Acting Battalion S-3 on November 8th. On November 6th, the Battalion Motor Officer was placed on Detached Service with U.S. Forces at Milne Bay for the purpose of servicing and supervising the loading and unloading of the Tank Destroyers to be shipped from Milne Bay to Goodenough Island, returning to Goodenough Island on November 25th. On November 8th a training schedule was instituted stressing jungle tactics and training in operation of the Tank Destroyers, also Communications schools were resumed with chief instructions concerning voice control and communications under combat conditions. Also on the 8th, Company A, attached to the 128th Infantry R.C.T., arrived on Goodenough Island. On November 19th, two officers of Headquarters Company who had been placed on Special Duty with Companies A and B were relieved of that Special Duty, and were appointed Acting Battalion S-2 and Battalion Communications Officer, while on the 20th two enlisted men of Headquarters Company who had been placed on Special Duty with Company A were relieved of that Special Duty. On the 21st, personnel were issued the M-1 Carbine .30 cal, replacing the M1903 Rifle as the chief individual arm. On the 26th of November and 4th of December, all personnel received Cholera Inoculations. On the last day of the month, the Commanding General was present in the Battalion Area; also on this date, a U.S. civilian, General Motors Representative, was attached to the Battalion to offer further instructions concerning the Tank Destroyers, remaining until December 5th. During the month of November, the Battalion was required to furnish numerous dock details for unloading boats as they came in periodically. Strength of the Battalion as of November 30th was 38 officers and 845 enlisted men, a gain of two officers and one enlisted man for the month.

On December 6th, the Battalion Executive Officer on Special Duty with Company C, Cargadore Company for the 126th Infantry R.C.T., was placed on Detached Service with Headquarters ALAMO Force, A.P.O. 712; while on this same date, one officer from Headquarters Company was placed on detached Service with U.S. Forces, A.P.O. 323 and remained on that temporary duty until December 11th. On December 7th, all personnel were present in the Battalion Assembly Area for a Security Intelligence Lecture by a higher Headquarters Staff, chief stress being laid on pre-combat security measures. On the 9th, the Battalion Personnel Officer, who had been transferred to the Hospital when the Battalion moved from Camp Cable and Brisbane, having been discharged from the hospital, was reassigned to the Battalion and appointed Battalion Personnel Officer. On the 10th, the First Platoon of Company B, on Detached service with U.S. Forces at Milne Bay, returned to duty at Goodenough Island bringing Tank Destroyers with them. On the 13th, Company C, attached to 126th Infantry R.C.T., arrived on Goodenough Island from Milne Bay. On the 14th, the Battalion was alerted for a possible visit by the Commanding General, Southwest-Pacific Area, General MacArthur, who was in the Division area, but the General did not appear in the Battalion area. During the period that the Battalion was located on Goodenough Island, recreational activities consisted of moving pictures on four nights of the week, and effective December 13th, a Division Special Units Softball league was formed with the Battalion having two teams entered, one of which finished in second place. During the month, 11 enlisted men of Headquarters Company who had been placed on Special Duty with Company A, and 2 enlisted men of Headquarters Company who had been placed on Special Duty with Company C, were relieved of that Special Duty and returned to Headquarters Company for duty.

The last month of the year was marked with the first Air Raid Alerts encountered by the Battalion since its date of departure overseas on 22 April 1942, being alerted as follows; on December 14th from 0205L to 0245L, on December 20th from 0415L to 0613L, and on December 26th from 0335L to 0405L, however, no bombs were dropped near the Battalion Area. On December 26th, The Battalion was alerted for pending orders to move into or nearer a combat area, and final preparations were practically complete and in readiness. All personnel armed with the M-1 Carbine..30 cal fired that weapon during the month, and Headquarters Company personnel fired all weapons on the combat range. From December 23th through the 29th, Company B moved into field operation for firing of all weapons, primarily the 3-inch guns of the Tank Destroyers. On the 28th, the Chaplain assigned to the Battalion was placed on Special Duty with the 126th Infantry R.C.T. and on December 30th, Company C, attached to the 126th Infantry R.C.T., and the First Platoon of Company B, consisting of one officer and 49 enlisted men with four Tank Destroyers, also attached to the 126th Infantry R.C.T., departed from Goodenough Island enroute to unknown destination. On the last day of the year, the Battalion was assigned another Medical Officer bringing the T/O strength of the Medical Detachment up to strength in officers. Also on this date, the Battalion Adjutant was placed on Special Duty with the 126th Infantry R.C.T. Shore Party as Shore Party Executive Officer, the Battalion Personnel Officer being appointed Acting Adjutant. The year came to a close with the Battalion awaiting orders to evacuate the present bivouac area on Goodenough Island with the strength of 15 officers and 206 enlisted men, including personnel sick in hospital and those on Special Duty, with the exception of those on Special Duty with the Company's attached to Division R.C.T.'s. The strength of the Battalion as of December 31st was 39 officers and 842 enlisted men, a gain of one officer and loss of 3 enlisted men for the month. The net gain or loss of Battalion personnel for the year of 1943 consisted of a gain of two officers, a gain of 92 enlisted men, and the loss of one Warrant Officer, Junior Grade.

HUGH M. FANNING,
Lt. Col., F. A.,
Commanding.