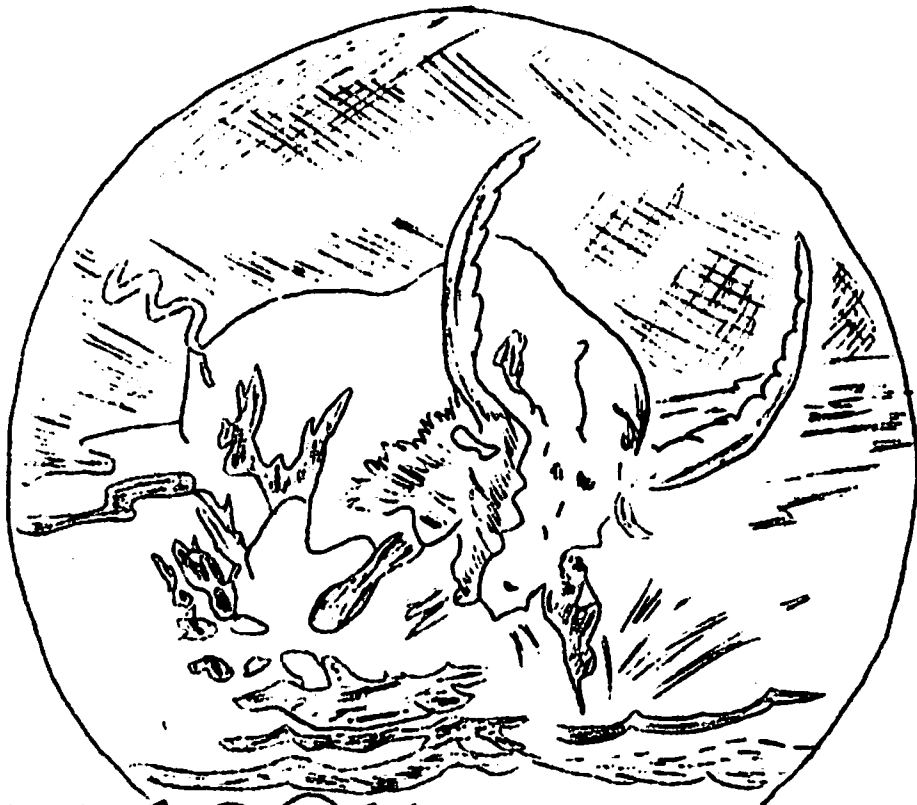


WATER BUFFALO

SUNDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 1945



VICTORY-EDITION

VOLUME II

NUMBER 11

T H E

826

Just one week after Pearl Harbor, at Camp Roberts, California, the 826 Tank Destroyer Battalion was born. After two years training over the sandy seas of Texas and California's Mojave Desert, a spell of garrison life at Fort Lewis, Washington, and realistic maneuvers over central Oregon's high, dry plateau, this hard-hitting, highly mobile artillery entrained for Fort Ord, for conversion into beachheading amphibians. On 18 April 1944, the TDs became the 826th Amphibian Tractor Battalion.

Four months later, the amphibians were bound "down under" on the Dutch transport "Boschfontein". Another month later, after stops at Milne and Oro Bays and Hollandia, New Guinea, the 826 debarked to set up camp on Los Negros, Admiralty Islands.

Only 48 hours after landing on Los Negros, the battalion received the startling greeting "get ready for a combat mission." Company A drew the assignment. The days and nights of toil and sweat under the worst climatic conditions will long be remembered by the men who gave their all and "produced the goods" by readiness date. Both men and equipment were new for this game, but on 3 October, just 19 days later, the Water Buffalo men were ready for action and enroute to invade the Philippines.

20 October 1944, D-Day on Leyte and a day history was made, found elements of the 826th Amphibian Tractor Battalion landing on the hostile beach with the assault troops of the First Cavalry Division. The primary mission was carried out superbly at a cost of one slight injury. The rainy season gave cause for the continuous use of amtracs, which proved a vital factor in the campaign.

The other companies of the Battalion were not to be out done by the initial combat troops of the unit.

While Company A was engaged in their conflict with the Japanese in the Leyte campaign, Headquarters and B Companies were preparing for another invasion. These companies had moved from Los Negros to Aitape, New Guinea, where they were assigned to the 43d Division, a part of the Sixth Army's task force scheduled for the biggest strike against the enemy in the Pacific.

From amid the greatest armada of sea power ever to assemble for an invasion came the Water Buffalos of the 826 Amphibian Tractor Battalion loaded with assault troops to land on the beaches at Lingayen Gulf on 9 January 1945. Meeting negligible resistance on the beach, the amtracs on the right flank proceeded inland approximately eight miles before encountering an enemy strong point. The others, after unloading their assault troops, took on the vital but unglamorous job of unloading supply ships, in which job they were frequently harried by enemy mortars.

Eighteen days later, Company A arrived at Luzon. The Battalion was now in full strength for the first time since early October 1944. This concentration was short lived, however, for the "826" was assigned numerous missions which included guarding roads and bridges against sabotage and enemy attack, finishing off the Japanese left behind by our fast moving infantry. 826ers accounted for nearly a hundred Nipponese who joined their ancestors. From February to July the Battalion was spread across the neck of Luzon before regrouping once again near San Fabian.

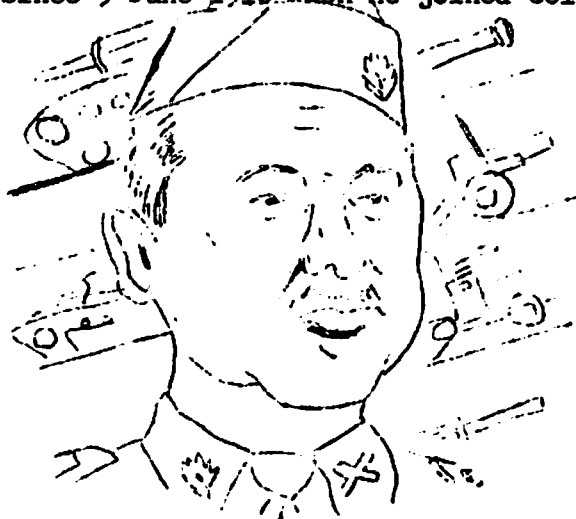
Plans for the invasion of Japan were under way and the "826" was to play an intricate part. The necessities of readiness were being accomplished when victory in Japan was announced.

THE COMMAND

The COs

Original commander of the newly organized 826 Tank Destroyer Battalion was 50 year old Colonel John M. Sanderson, a graduate of the Field Artillery School and the holder of a Bachelorship of Science in Chemistry from Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Colonel Sanderson left the Battalion after its first eight months and turned over his command to its new and present CO at Iron Mountain in California's Mojave Desert.

Lt. Col Thurston T. Houghton, Battalion commander for the last three years, has been associated with Army since 9 June 1916 when he joined Col-



LT. COL. T.T. HOUGHTON

orado's National Guard unit, the 148th Field Artillery. His unit was shortly called to active duty and the young NCO spent 17 months overseas in France and Germany in World War I. Upon his return from France, "T.T." maintained his Army connection as a member of the National Guard unit, the 168th Field Artillery, where he was commissioned on 4 May 1923.

In 1940 the 168th FA was converted

to "longtoms" (155mm) and when called up, Captain Houghton was CO of the 2d Battalion. An Artillery man to his fingertips, Col. Houghton rose rapidly and on 21 August 1942 assumed command of the 826th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

The Staff

EXECs: Handsome Texan Major Kay Halsell II, an original 826er, joined the staff as Battalion Executive after a tour of duty as Company A's CO in 1942. Upon his recent transfer to I Corps, Major Isaac W. Tuckett became Executive Officer.

S-1: Popular and purposeful Lieutenant Dickson F. Detzler recently moved up to Personnel Officer from platoon leader in Company A.

S-2: Longtime staff officer, able, quiet Captain William L. Enderud became Intelligence Officer upon the conversion of the Battalion to Amphibians after holding down the S-1 position in the Tank Destroyers.

S-3: Tall, military Captain Melvin P. Adams, who as Company A Commander was the first to lead an 826 unit into combat, just last month took over as Operations Officer from energetic, bluff Major Tuckett. Captain Adams' predecessor set a fast efficient S-3 standard when he undertook to quickly transform his highly trained TD men into beachheading amphibians.

S-4: Big and hearty Captain Thomas A. Gerow, former line officer in TD Company C became Supply Officer in 1943. He plans, postwar, to supply the world with Sturgis propaganda.

Lieutenant Edwin A. Nara, and WOJG Harry W. Pearson respectively handle the Battalion's elaborate communications and motor sections.

(Continued on Page 8)

FOR THEIR COUNTRY

THEY GAVE THEIR LIVES

Technician Fifth Grade Lorenzo D. Bedenbaugh, drowned, Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, P.I. 23 January 1945.

Technician Fifth Grade Thomas C. Gallagher, killed by enemy bomb fragments, Leyte, P.I. 5 November 1944.

Private George B. Harris, killed by enemy fire, Luzon, P.I. 9 January 1945.

Technician Fifth Grade Ernest W. Katona, killed by enemy fire, Luzon, P.I. 9 January 1945.

Sergeant Wilbur C. Kidd, killed by enemy rifle fire while on patrol on Luzon, P.I. 6 June 1945.

Technician Fifth Grade Pete E. Muller, drowned in line of duty near Lapez, Samar, P.I. 18 November 1944.

Technician Fifth Grade Harold H. Otis, drowned in line of duty near Lapez, Samar, P.I. 18 November 1944.

Private Causy A. Petrucci, killed by enemy fire, Luzon, P.I. 9 January 1945.

Technician Fourth Grade Dennison E. Tracy, drowned in line of duty, Lapez, Samar, P.I. 18 November 1944.

PURPLE HEARTS

First Lieutenant Grant E. Archambeau, wounded while on patrol on Luzon, P.I. 10 March 1945.

Corporal William F. Blevins, wounded while on patrol on Luzon, P.I. 10 March 1945.

Corporal Morris J. Butler, wounded on patrol on Luzon, P.I. 10 March 1945.

Technician Fourth Grade Fred M. Ferreira, sustained injuries, Leyte, P.I. 20 October 1944.

Sergeant William E. Fields, sustained injuries, Leyte, P.I. 27 October 1944.

Technician Fifth Grade John V. Hupf, sustained injuries, Luzon, P.I. 13 January 1945.

Technician Fifth Grade Lloyd L. Kruger, wounded while on patrol, Luzon, P.I. 24 March 1945.

Corporal Raymond L. Lewis, wounded by enemy bomb fragments, Leyte, P.I. 24 October 1944.

Staff Sergeant George L. Siegel, wounded while on patrol, Luzon, P.I. 17 March 1945.

Sergeant Edward A. Sullivan, wounded by enemy fire, Luzon, P.I. 9 January 1945.

Corporal Clifford I. Strassburg, sustained injuries, Luzon, P.I. 13 January 1945.

Technician Fifth Grade Garr E. Webb, wounded while on patrol, Luzon, P.I. 12 March 1945.

BRONZE STARS

Technician Fifth Grade William C. Carter, for heroic action against the enemy 9 January 1945, Luzon, P.I. Hit by enemy fire while driving an LVT Mk IV, he continued to move his vehicle off the road and get under cover. While under enemy fire, he gave first aid to a wounded sergeant and, with the help of others, removed the wounded from his vehicle.

Sergeant Edward A. Sullivan, for heroic action against the enemy on 9 January 1945, Luzon, P.I. While in command of an LVT Mk IV, he came under intense enemy fire which killed his driver and assistant driver and wounded himself. He immediately warned the other vehicles and tried to move his vehicle out of fire before seeking aid for himself.

Staff Sergeant J.D. Williams, for heroic action against the enemy on 9 January 1945, Luzon, P.I. While in command of five LVTs Mk IV, his detachment came under enemy machine gun and antitank fire. He promptly dispersed the infantrymen he carried, cleared his vehicles off the road and set up defensive fire.

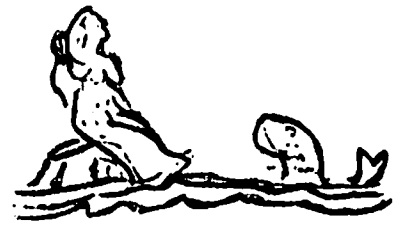
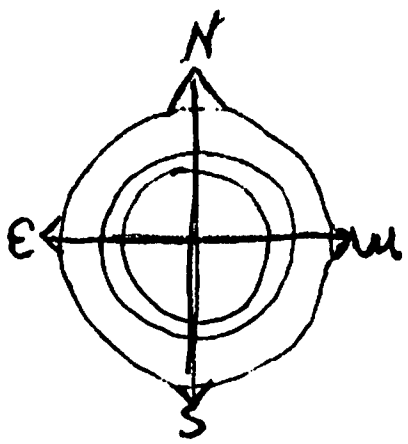
CHRONOLOGICAL

DATE & STATION	EVENTS	ASSIGNMENTS
<u>15 December 41</u> Camp Roberts California	826th Tank Destroyer Battalion activated from G and Hq Batteries of 30th and 40th FA; AA and AT platoons of 30th and 40th FA; and detachments from 74th, 75th and 76th FA Battalions. Lt. Col. JOHN M. SANDERSON, Commanding.	III Corps, and the Fourth Army; Western Defense Command
<u>18 December 41</u> Camp Roberts California	Battalion organized under the new T/O. Unit includes Hq Company, three gun companies and a Reconnaissance Company	
<u>19 March 1942</u> March Field California	Assigned to guard duty at March Field. Occasionally alerted when enemy planes reported on coast. 96 recruits join.	The Fourth Army; South California Sector, WDC
<u>25 May 1942</u> Fort Ord	Camp established at East Garrison, 11-day stay for rest and preparation for move to Tank Destroyer Center.	VII Corps, and Fourth Army, WDC
<u>6 June 1942</u> Camp Hood Texas	Arrived Copperus Cove, Texas, to begin training in TD tactics and firing. Tent camp established.	Tank Destroyer Command
<u>31 July 1942</u> Freda, Calif.	Arrived at Desert Training Center and encamped at Iron Mountain, 10 miles SW at Freda for desert maneuvering.	VII Corps, Desert Training Center
<u>21 August 1942</u> Freda, Calif.	Lt. Col. THURSTON T. HOUGHTON assumes command.	
<u>17 October 42</u> Camp Young California	Arrived Camp Young for garrison training, firing, leaves and furloughs. Nearest town: Indio.	Desert Training Center
<u>December 1942</u> Camp Young California	Twenty 2d Lts. assigned and reported for duty from Camp Hood, Texas, Lts. Foster, Foley, Lee and Detzler among them.	3d Tank Group, Desert Training Center
<u>January 1943</u> Camp Young California	More than 400 enlisted replacements arrive from Pennsylvania and Virginia for basic training.	
<u>5 March 1943</u> Camp Ibis California	Battalion, less recruit Provisional Training Company C arrives at Camp Ibis, 15 miles west of Needles, California at conclusion of spring desert maneuvers maintenance and rest. Company C rejoins Battalion here, 3 days later.	4th Armored Division
<u>17 April 1943</u> Fort Lewis Washington	Arrived at Fort Lewis after entraining at Goffs, California on 12 and 13 April. Moved into excellent quarters at North Fort after being under canvas for a year. Began training with new M10 destroyer which replaced half-tracked vehicles.	IV Corps, and 8th Hq Special Troops
<u>28 July 1943</u> Yakima, Wash.	Arrived at Artillery Firing Center, 6 miles NNE of Yakima for tactical problems and firing of 3-inch SPMs.	

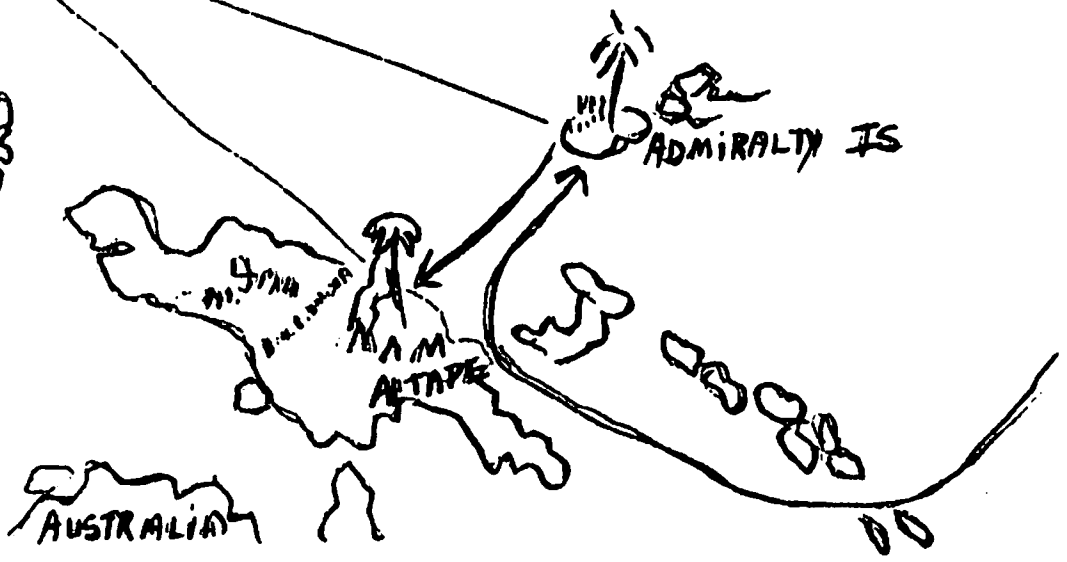
HISTORY OF 826

DATE & STATION	E V E N T S	ASSIGNMENTS
<u>18 August 1943</u> Hole In Ground Oregon	Arrived at Hole In The Ground after road march via scenic Hood River valley, The Dalles, Madras (overnight bivouac) and Bend. Tracked vehicles shipped under guard by rail. "Pup" tent camp established. Platoon and reconnaissance problems.	IV Corps, and 8th Hq Special Troops
<u>September 1943</u> Maneuver Area Oregon	Large scale maneuvers within area bounded by triangle Bend-Burns-Lakeview, Oregon.	
<u>21 October 43</u> La Fine, Ore.	End of maneuvers. Bivouac near La Fine for maintenance and rest. Showers most eagerly sought convenience.	
<u>26 October 43</u> Fort Lewis Washington	Arrived Fort Lewis after rail and road march from La Pine. Reoccupied same area as previous spring. Leaves & furloughs.	4th TD Group, Fourth Army and 8th Hq Sp Trs
<u>13 April 1944</u> Fort Ord California	Arrived at Fort Ord after day coach from Fort Lewis for reorganization. All vehicles turned in at Fort Lewis prior to departure.	13th Armored Group; 1st Hq Special Troops, III Corps
<u>18 April 1944</u> Fort Ord California	826th Tank Destroyer Battalion redesignated 826th Amphibian Tractor Battalion. Reorganized under new T/O. Amphibian training begins.	
<u>5 August 1944</u> Camp Stoneman California	Arrived at Camp Stoneman staging center. Prepared for overseas movement. Neighbors: POI WACs.	
<u>15 August 1944</u> San Francisco California	Boarded Dutch motorship "Boshfontein" at San Francisco Port of Embarkation for Somewhere in the Pacific.	"Top Secret"
<u>4 September 44</u>	Dropped anchor for week at Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea while cargo was being unloaded.	
<u>19 September 44</u> Los Negros Admiralties	Disembarked at Los Negros Island, the Admiralties. Tent camp established and tractors unloaded.	The Sixth Army
<u>20 October 44</u>	Company A carries spearheading elements of 7th Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division in Sixth Army's invasion of Leyte, P.I.	
<u>20 November 44</u> Aitape, British New Guinea	Hq and B Companies arrive at Aitape, British New Guinea for staging for new invasion.	

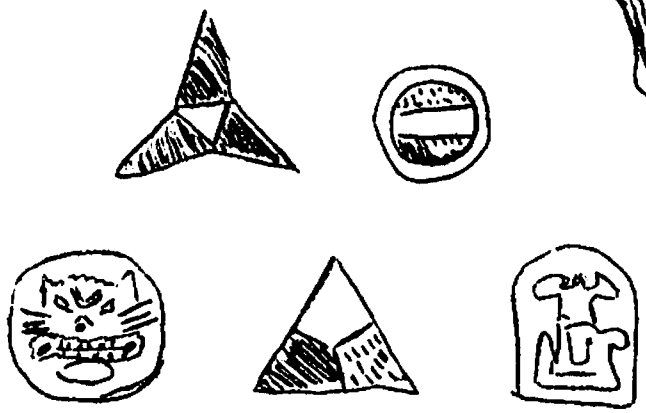
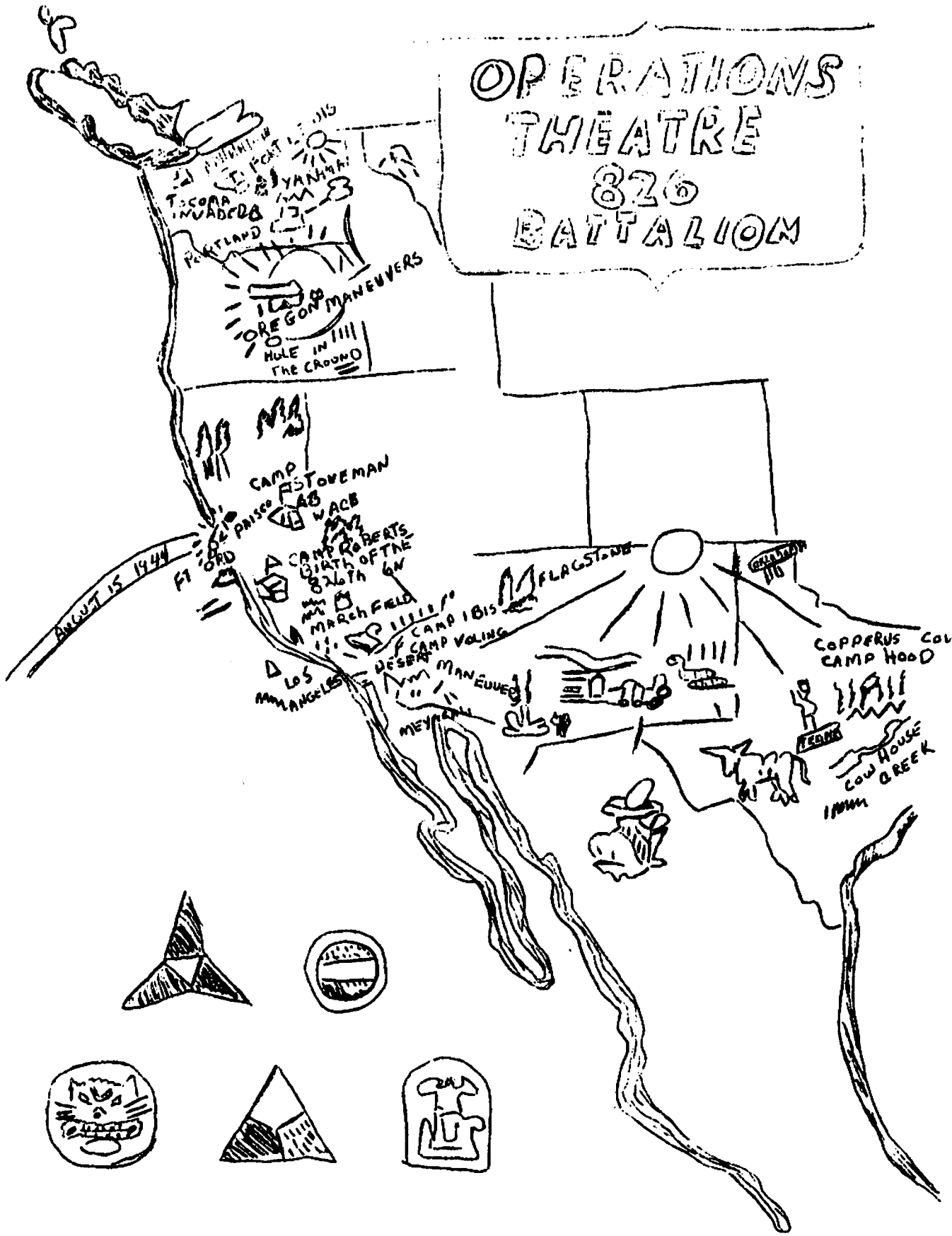
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HAWAIIAN ISLANDS



OPERATIONS THEATRE 826 BATTALION



CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY (CONTINUED)

DATE & STATION

E V E N T S

ASSIGNMENTS

9 January 1945

Battalion, less Company A (still on Leyte) carry spearheading elements of 103d, 169th and 172d Regiments, 43d Division onto beaches of Lingayen Gulf in Sixth Army's invasion of Luzon, P.I.

27 January 45

San Fabian
Luzon, P.I.

Company A rejoins Battalion at San Fabian, Pangasinan Province, Luzon, P.I. Both Companies A and B do bridge and road duty through central Luzon. The Sixth Army

1 July 1945

San Fabian
Luzon, P.I.

Battalion released from combat duty. Educational and recreational program goes into full swing.

1 August 1945

San Fabian
Luzon, P.I.

Battalion starts staging with 33d Division elements for new invasion. Equipment maintenance intensified.

August 1945

San Fabian
Luzon, P.I.

Japanese peace bids change invasion staging to occupation staging. Requisitions for cold weather clothing.

THE COMMAND (CONTINUED)

Commandants

Headquarters and Service Company Commander, Captain Kenneth N. Burke, joined the Battalion just before the 526th came overseas, singly supervises the multiple missions of his service company.

Company A Commandant, Lieutenant Victor Lee, former platoon leader, recently assumed command when Captain Adams moved up to the Staff.

Company B Commandant, Captain Walter C. Thomsen, formerly CO of the TD Bn Company B, led his men onto the beaches at Lingayen Gulf.

Medical Detachment's Captain Fredrick B. Klaas joined the 826 at Fort Ord in 1944 as Battalion Surgeon. He attained his captaincy last March.

First Graders

Battalion Sergeant Major George D. Newman earned his 1st Sgt in 1943 when he moved up from platoon sergeant in the TD Reconnaissance Company.

Headquarters and Service Company's Luther P. ("Red Rider") Fahringer has been a top kick since 1942.

Company A's Orval J. Whitmer has had his lozenge longest. Before his recent transfer he was Company B's top kick.

Company B's Heldon J. ("Oklahoma") Lasater, like Sergeants Newman and Fahringer, is a regular army man. He came to the 826 from horse artillery.

Medical Detachment's top kick, S Sgt Arnold J. Unsen, also doubles as a qualified medical technician.