

July 1945
Monthly report

THIRTY-FIRST U. S. NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION
c/o Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, California.

ITEM NO. 8

AUG 1 1945

TECHNICAL COMMENTS

1. During the construction of a memorial which the men of this battalion erected in tribute to the men of the Fifth Marine Division, many problems of a technical nature were encountered which are considered of sufficient interest to warrant mention under this item.

2. The idea of some sort of memorial was proposed by Chief Motor Machinist's Mate Lester A. Bent and received the approval of the Officer-in-Charge in view of the close and cordial relationship existing between the officers and men of the Fifth Marine Division and those of this battalion.

3. An open competition was declared and the two best sketches were selected by the Officer-in-Charge and sent to the Command-in-General for final selection. These sketches were submitted by Chief Carpenter's Mate Jack B. Fraser and Carpenter's Mate First Class Arthur G. Anderson. The one chosen was that submitted by Chief Carpenter's Mate Fraser and consisted of a small monument in the form of a truncated quadrangular pyramid with two bronze plaques, one containing the inscription and the other a replica of the flag raising, which was an achievement of the Fifth Marine Division. This monument was to be set in the center of a Japanese circular gun emplacement and both were to be cut from native stone.

4. In view of the elaborate work involved in the making of the bronze plaques and since the native stone, so called, is in reality a consolidated volcanic ash and disintegrates easily, it was decided to use precast concrete instead.

5. Having received permission of the Island Commander to erect the monument in the Fifth Marine Division Cemetery and since the only areas available therein were on either end of the stone paved walk extending laterally in both directions from the flag pole, it was decided to erect circular ornamental concrete benches at the opposite end of walk in order to achieve architectural balance.

6. No difficulties were encountered in the concrete work, although precise curves and moldings were required in the forms and a highly polished surface on the finished concrete. The results were excellent. The bronze work on the other hand presented many difficulties due to the lack of materials and facilities.