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SR221916 TRAUSMONT Hosp ^{No.} ~~UNEP~~ THREE

In the all-enveloping turmoil of global war, where whole fleets and armies are used in thrust and riposte, the role of a single unit can be but a minute part of the whole, a single cog in the function of the master machine.

Such, in the broad picture of world War II, was the part played by the U.S. Navy's Special Augmented Hospital Number three, a field service unit under the command of Comdr. C.N. Caldwell(MC)USNR.

There are no shining medals to pin on the chests of men in the unit no heroics nor epics of valor for their records.

And yet, in the sober, uncolored weighing of values; in the salvage of lives and limbs; the reclamation of war's human wreckage, the work of SAI #3 and the contribution of its members can find reward.

Special Augmented Hospital Number Three came into being late in a worldwide struggle. Its existence was planned and its personnel trained while the major attention of Allied military strategy still was focused on Europe, where Nazi Germany awaited the impact of the Second Front.

In the Pacific the far-flung perimeter of oceanic defenses which Japan had welded about her stolen empire was crumbling before island-hopping thrusts of United States Army, Navy and Marine Corps forces. Sharp, power-tipped spearheads were hacking away coral bastions to open breaches for a final assault against the Mikado's homeland.

But as this campaign marched closer to the front door of Nippon; as Guadalcanal, Pelelieu, Saipan, Guam fell before Marine divisions who were backed up by Navy beach parties, fighting forces found themselves facing battle on larger land areas.

With attacks on the Philippine Archipelago, the coast of China and Japan itself lying ahead, there was an obvious need for "ships of the train" that could follow the Leathernecks amphibiously inland, bringing

them, far from shore, food and ammunition and ministrations which the Navy hitherto could supply in its natural element only.

It was out of this need, foreseen in the secrecy-cloaked machinations of Washington's joint command, that the seed of SAH-3 and its companion units grew.

That seed became a complete field hospital, equipped for mobile, advance base work, one of eight created by the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery for duty in progressive phases of the Pacific Ocean war.

With an assigned capacity of 400 beds, fated to swell in size as the requirements of battle dictated, the unit was designed to bring naval hospital facilities including internal medicine, X-ray, surgery, dental, laboratory and psychiatric services directly to the arena of action; to the side of combat forces removed beyond convenient reach of hospital ships and base hospitals in the rear.

It was realized immediately that such a unit must be a separate command, complete in every detail, with special training and equipment and differing in important ways from other navy advance base commands.

It must be a "Special" group - a hospital crew augmented by the addition of an unusual diversity of naval rates and technicians.

The complement decided upon included, besides 180 enlisted personnel of the Hospital Corps, the following "supernumeraries" : 1 Chief Commissary Steward and 12 ship's cooks; 2 bakers, 2 steward's, 2 officers' cooks and 12 steward's mates; 1 mail specialist, 1 boatswain's mate, 2 coxswains, 23 seaman, 2 carpenters's mates, 2 shipfitters, 1 machinist's mate, 2 motor machinist's mates; 1 electrician's mate, 2 firemen, 1 yeoman and 1 storekeeper.

Thus, on paper, long before it was to appear in action, Special Augmented Hospital Number Three was blueprinted.

Early in July, 1944, BuMed and the Bureau of Naval Personnel began assigning men from the fleet and from Stateside shore stations to the

command of SA133. They were ordered to the U.S.N. Advance Base Personnel Depot, San Bruno, California, for further training and transfer.

Virtually all of them were long out of training camps, with a year or more of active service on their records. Some had tasted island warfare in preliminary South Pacific campaigns.

In a six-week training program that at times smacked of the rigid discipline of boot camp and at others produced the ruggedness of combat conditioning, the group of individuals was forged into a single body.

September saw SA133 transferred to the Training and Distribution Center at Shoemaker, California for further preparation before embarkation to overseas duty.

Furnished with temporary gear at Camp Parks, Seabee base which is a part of Shoemaker activities, the unit, in two groups, sampled life in the rough on week-long treks and bivouacs up the rugged slopes of Mount Diablo. The men, with several of their officers, lived in tents, ate out of mess kits, maintained perimeter guards and learned practical field sanitation, infiltration tactics and battlefront behavior.

It was neither as tough nor as intensive as training given combat infantry or Marine Corps personnel, but it was a thorough introduction to conditions which the men were to face later when they became a part of the expeditionary campaign against Japan.

In succeeding weeks at Shoemaker, the unit rounded out its knowledge and skill in other phases of practical warfare. All members took training in rifle fire, chemical warfare and tent construction and maintenance, while special groups were dispatched to the Navy's Tropical Diseases School at Treasure Island to receive instruction in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases peculiar to tropical jungles and Oriental areas.

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In a two-fold program of training and service, groups were detached for additional temporary duty in naval hospitals at Shoemaker, Oakland and San Francisco. These men, with several officers, were used to relieve personnel shortages in those hospitals.

Except for immunization inoculations and issuing of gear, SAIH 3 was considered ready for its assigned task, prepared not only to install hospital facilities close behind battle lines, but to defend itself against enemy sniper activity, infiltration, parachute troop raids and breakthrough.

It was acquainted in all but practice with the latest medical and surgical techniques as brought back from Pacific-Asiatic theaters of actions.

Commissioning, official birth of the organization as a complete, separate command, was on March 10, 1945.

Immaculate with traditional "spit and polish", Special Augmented Hospital Number Three was paraded before the Administration Building at Shoemaker. Groups of corpsmen and doctors who had been "farmed out" to nearby naval hospitals were returned for the occasion.

Commodore O.M. Forster, Commandant of Shoemaker Activities, was in the role of commissioning officer. At exact 1000 he officially invested Comdr. Caldwell with command of the unit. The rites were simple but completely formal.

Comdr. E.F. Merrill (MC) USNR, the Executive officer, set the first watch and SAIH 3 marched away to await embarkation for a battlefield that was more than 6,000 miles away.

It was on this day that the log of the unit was begun, and on the first page of that log is listed the entire complement, enlisted and commissioned, of the command. Lt. Comdr. (later Commander) W. J. Young (MC) USNR, was the first Medical Officer of the Day, with Chief Pharmacist Albine Edien, who later became Commissary Officer, as his assistant.

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Sixteen days later, on orders which read "temporary duty", Lt.(jg) John L. Blizzard (MC) USN and Chief Pharmacist's Mate Wayn W. Wells entrained for Port Huene, California. It was to be arranged the transportation of the major portion of the unit's equipment and supplies to its final destination.

April brought more travel orders. With the exception of Comdr. Caldwell Comdr. Merrill, Lt. Comdr. W.F. Fitzpatrick Jr. (MC)USN, Lt. Charles H. Shifflette and Chief Pharmacist (later Ensign) Walter R. Cox, all officers were transferred April 12 to "Navy 3030, Care Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, California."

Leaving on this "first echelon" were Comdr. (later Captain) L.T. Miller (MC)USNR; Comdr. E.W. Thurston (MC)USNR; Lt. Comdr. Young; Lt. Comdr. (later Comdr.) A.S. Arkush (MC)USNR; Lt. Comdr. Morris Weintraub (MC)USNR; Lt. Comdr. C.R. Reed (MC)USNR; Lieut. (later Lt. Comdr.) W.T. Edwards (MC)USNR; Lieut. (later Lt. Comdr.) B.M. Blanton (MC)USN; Lieut. (later Lt. Comdr.) Stoddard (MC)USNR; Lieut. T.S. Carnicelli (MC)USNR; Lieut. Gerard Martarano (MC)USNR; Lieut. E. O. Goldstein (MC)USNR; Lt. (jg) H.C. Fett, Jr. (MC)USNR; Lieut. H.M. Yeakey (DC)USNR; Lieut. J.K. Morrison (DC)USNR and Chief Pharm. Edion. All were "plank owners" in Special Augmented Hospital Three. Lieut. (later Lt. Comdr.) P.M. Ryan, attached after commissioning, also was included in the group of departure officers.

Three days later all liberties and leaves for the remaining members of the unit expired.

On April 16, after an 0400 reveille, SAH#3 shoved off from Shoemaker. Five officers and 249 enlisted men, all with overseas gear, left in a long convoy of Navy buses and trucks.

A three-day stop at detention barracks on Treasure Island preceded embarkation, but on the morning of April 20, with fog writhing the tall buildings of San Francisco, the U.S. Day Star, with the hospital unit aboard, slipped beneath the Golden Gate Bridge into the Pacific Ocean.

The Day Star, fresh from reconditioning, shook herself down in a 31 hour run to Post Hueneme. There, while her troops were granted both shore and base liberty to ease the wait, she was loaded with thousands of tons of fighting gear.

Thursday, April 26, shortly after 2 p.m., the merchant transport eased away from the dock and headed westward.

Eight days later the anchor dropped in Pearl Harbor. More shore leave a last taste of peaceful pleasures was granted members of the unit and other groups aboard.

In the afternoon of May 12, under convoy for the first time, the Day Star slipped away from its Pearl Harbor moorings and left the Hawaiian Islands behind.

Long days dragged monotonously by as the convoy headed south and west. Eniwetok brought a one-day stopover. Ulithe, less than 100 miles away from the then-Japanese-occupied base of Yap, held the ship for four days of inactivities a larger convoy formed and in those four days members of the unit saw for the first time Uncle Sam's mightiest staging base in the Pacific that still was secret.

Until that time there had been a conspicuous lack of action and excitement. Gunners in their tubs levelled the sight of three and four-inch cannon and 20 mm rapid firers only on drift balloons and sleeve targets towed by friendly aircraft. Neither in the sea nor the air was there a hint of danger from the enemy.

But after leaving Ulithe on May 29, tension mounted rapidly. Grim destroyers and destroyer escorts tightended up the convoy, prodding merchantmen and transports to greater speed as the ships headed north towards home water of the Japanese.

First and only submarine alert of the voyage came on the forty-third day at sea. It came in the afternoon, while most of the personnel aboard the Day Star were lounging about in between-meals siests.

A hustling, charging destroyer escort off the starboard bow blinked out the rapid warning as sound contact was made. It made a single swift run, dropping depth charges into the sea, seeking to destroy possible lurking enemy submarines.

Briefly there was excitement, but calm returned within a short time without further evidence of undersea danger.

For four days the convoy steamed rapidly northward, but on the fifth day, under radio orders transmitted to the transports by blinker, the formation turned. Ships heeled as the zig-zag pattern of advance was reversed.

The air, it was learned, was "too hot" up ahead. Too many Japanese suicide pilots- the Divine Wind Special Attack Corps - were hurling their explosive-laden planes bodily against the sides and decks of American shipping.

At night the course changed again and engines that had throbbed almost lazily during the retreat pounded ahead with renewed vigor. It was apparent that the convoy was "moving in".

Dawn lifted land off the port bow, and for more than two hours all hands watched the slow progress of a hill shoreline as guns on heavy U.S. Warships standing close in lobbed huge projectiles into Japanese positions. The war had been reached in earnest.

While escorting men-of-war stood off in a watchful semi-circle, the Day Star and her sister transports cardfully threaded their way through minefields and submarine nets.

Troops who wrestled their gear topside in preparation for landing found themselves in a reef-locked harbor, in which other ships were moored while being unloaded. Some of these earlier arrivals showed ugly scars in the superstructures where they had been rammed by Kamikaze (suicide)planes.

Almost before the thunder of the anchor chain ceased, as the hook
at the end of the anchor chain
the all-

bit into a coral bottom, air alert bells yammered through the ship. Radar equipment had detected the presence of enemy planes above the low clouds. The alert lasted a bare 20 minutes, but shortly after the all-clear sounded another alarm was heard. This time it was no false warning.

Down out of the laden clouds, the red ball of Japan on its wings, a single plane sliced through the mist in a lightning thrust at the shipping.

Every gun on every craft in the bay belched fire and steel. Tracer sizzled around and through the plunging bomber.

It was over in split seconds. Out of control, its pilot riddled, the Kamikaze churned into water off the starboard side of the Day Star within full sight of the entire unit.

SALF³ was at Okinawa.

Memories of their first day in the Ryukyus Islands will live long and poignantly in the hearts of every man in the unit. It was a 24-hour period of mud and rain, misery, chills and weariness. Not until the following day were they able to rest. Most of them tasted no food from the time of the noon meal aboard their transport until noon of the next day.

A large landing craft transported the men and their gear from the Day Star to pontoon docks at Brown Beach, major Buckner Bay landing site for Naval forces.

While motor transportation was being arranged, the men huddled for almost five hours in a cold drizzle of rain, scrunching down under ponchos and leaning into the shelter of a dockside shack.

It was 8:00 p.m. before a group of army trucks worried their way through the slick gumbo of beach roads to begin hauling the unit to its campsite and final destination.

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It was noon of the following day before the last truckload of enlisted personnel dragged themselves into sitting ward tents which had been put up by Seabee units working on the hospital compound.

In the interim, separated during a blackout on a maze of interlocking roads, the trucks and their human cargo blundered far and wide over the southern end of Ikinawa, unable in the blackness of the night to find the location of their camp.

In the near distance, eerie flares marked the front lines, where some of the bitterest fighting of the Pacific campaign still was progressing. To those lines one of the trucks ground its way before dim, mud-smeared soldiers, emerging profanely from roadside gloom, warned the driver to about face.

Another vehicle, wheels churning through hub-deep mud, crossed the island, emerging into the out skirts of the shambled ruins of Naha, capital of the island, nearly 20 miles from its objective.

Corpsmen in still another six-wheeled transport twice heard sniper bullets ping overhead as their driver, comically lost, labored over unmarked roads.

Intermittent rain soaked through protective foul weather gear to make the ride more nightmarish.

The most fortunate members of the unit reached the campsite, a distance of about seven miles from the docks, at 1:00 a.m., nearly five hours after boarding the trucks, but it was noon before the last truckload reached the vicinity of the village of Miyazote, where SAMP#3 was to set up operations.

After their unscheduled, nocturnal tour, however, the men found comparative comfort awaiting them. On hand to greet them were officers who had left Shoemaker before them, arriving on Okinawa May 23.

Lt. Blizzard and Chief Wells had come ashore May 29 and within two days were going ahead with actual construction of the hospital.

Chief source of physical comfort was completed but unoccupied ward tents of Special Augmented Hospital Number Six, a sister unit which was to work side by side with Unit Three and which had crossed the Pacific several weeks earlier. These ward tents and a completed chow hall, constructed by the 79th U.S. Naval Construction Battalion, provided shelter and hot chow for the weary, drooped personnel.

That night, although without bunks, SAE#3 slept well, bedded down on muddy wooden decks in the ward tents pending erection of permanent quarters.

The "digging in" process began Monday, June 4.

Dr. Fitzpatrick, as Security Officer, established security guards. Men armed with carbines were detailed to patrol the area during the day, while at night, due to frequent appearances of enemy snipers who drifted over the island often sneaking through front line combat zones, perimeter outposts were manned to protect the safety of the sleeping crew.

Torrential rains which made virtually impassable bogs out of roads and highways prevented the relief of guards who had been posted at one beachhead dump of hospital supplies, but Dr. Stoddard, on foot, managed to reach the dump to take charge of the men.

The same rains, which made a watery, slimy gumbo of every piece of open ground, kept the men continually wet during their first weeks ashore. It was little use hanging clothes to "dry", since completion of the process left the garments almost as wet when taken down as when they were hung up.

The men worked wet, ate wet and slept wet.

In all this moisture, however, water for drinking had to be hauled in tank trailers, with armed guards aboard every truck. Supply trucks, when road conditions permitted their operation, also carried guards.

Working alongside the Seabees, corpsmen, cooks, bakers all rates represented on the hospital roster put their strength into the draining of roads and the clearing of sites for the erection of ward, personnel, treatment, administration and storage tents.

Drs. Morrison, Fett, Yeakey, Stoddard, headed six and eight man patrols through native villages kept constantly under surveillance because fugitive Nipponese snipers, mingling with Okinawa natives, were an unending danger. There was no way of accurately judging temper of the natives, many of whom were frightened into collaboration with the enemy by fear of the Jap soldier.

Demonstration the need for caution was the discovery of L.L.Burrows S2/c who became suspicious of three native women he encountered on the road rimming the hospital compound.

Concealed in baskets which the Okinawan females carried, Burrows found hand grenades, cans of TNT and a quantity of .45 ca liber ammunition.

It was two corpsmen, F.T.Richard, PH3/c and G.J.Mitchell, MA1/c who drew first enemy blood. Patrolling an adjacent village the morning of June 16, they heard suspicious noises in the straw-thatched attic of a native hut.

Prodding with and voicing frequent challenges produced only aillant whispers from the attic.

Finally, after firing eight shots into the hut with their carbines, Richard and Mitchell flushed three cowering Japanese soldiers from the interior. A search through the attic brought to light a fourth, concealed behind boxes, with a mortal wound through his abdomen. He died just after being turned over with his comrades to the Military Police.

Shortly after the island was secured on June 22, G.E. Livengood, BM/c and a group of outpost guards had the narrowest escape from enemy action encountered by any members of the crew.

Shooting by the guards attracted Livengood after midnight of June 24 to an outpost on the southeastern perimeter of the compound. There he learned sentries had trapped a lurking fox in a patch of sugar cane.

Lights of Livengood's jeep revealed the Jap, just as the sniper lifted a hand grenade to his teeth to jerk out the safety pin.

Leaping to the ground, Livengood and his companions opened fire with carbines and sub-machine guns as the grenade fuze sputtered. Their bullets mowed down the Jap just as the grenade exploded, tearing him apart as the guards flattened themselves to the ground for safety.

Pieces of shrapnel from the grenade whistled inches over their heads as they dropped.

Later during the campaign other Japs, and occasionally a truant native away from assigned enclosures after dark, were captured, killed or wounded by the hospital guards.

Meanwhile the business of getting ready for operation was going ahead. A variety of tasks, from cement mixing to the digging of heads, occupied the crew.

Doctors, with hands more used to the delicate manipulation of a scalpel than the roughness of picks and shovels, plunged in beside the men to supervise the spreading of coral, the levelling of ground and raising of tents.

It was a far cry from sea duty or Stateside service.

Water was scarce, and each man was rationed to helmetful daily for bathing. Complete breakdowns in the water supply line meant K rations and cold chow in the mess hall.

Virtually every night the air above pulsed to the thrum of enemy bombers, the rumbling crump of ack-ack and the shrill whine of air raid sirens.

But occasional swimming parties, inaugurated June 23 after Comdr. Thurston and Lt. Fett discovered an excellent beach on the bay several miles away, served to relieve tension for the men, and tri-weekly movies in the mess hall provided another diversion.

Two weeks of fine weather, unexpected in what was believed to be the height of the rainy season, allowed rapid progress in construction. Showers were rigged, ward tents with frames and decks went up; another

galley and another chow hall was built. The construction scheduled was met day after day.

So eagerly did the men of the hospital unit throw themselves into unfamiliar and back-breaking tasks that many of them won commendation for their work from Lieut. Thomas Dugger, in charge of construction. Several times, when high priority emergency construction called members of the 79th Battalion of the Hospital construction job, personnel of SAI#3 carried on the work and valuable time was saved.

Then a lumber shortage appeared, leaving none available for dacking in personnel tents, native villages, wrecked earlier in battles for the island, were scavenged and the timbers and planks incorporated in the hospital.

Health conditions were far better than early expectations. Malaria was at a minimum, so infrequent that it was found practical to eliminate the use of atabrine as a prophylactic. Dengue fever, encephalitis and a variety of exotic ailments which had been anticipated, failed to make their appearance.

Not a man was lost to either disease or hostile soldiers.

Although the enemy air raids were frequent, no damage to the hospital was sustained, beyond a few slits in tent canvas caused by falling flak.

First emergency call to action as a medical unit was received by the hospital July 5, when a huge ammunition dump near the Kadena airstrip, five miles away, caught fire and was destroyed in a 10 hours long series of explosions.

Fortunately, although prepared, SAI#3 was not required by army authorities to handle casualties.

It was on July 6, thirty three days after the first corpsman set foot on Okinawa, that the first patient was admitted for treatment. He was John Gariety, Pfc in the USMC and he was suffering from a gunshot wound in the foot.

Next day, 47 patients were admitted, and the regular routine of hospital operation began.

In the next 3 1/2 month period, during which Japan's capitulation occurred and the war formally came to a close, Special Augmented Hospital Number Three ministered to 3238 patients Surgery, busy night and day, saw thousands under the scalpels of operating room doctors.

Casualties from ships at sea, from bombers, from sniper activity and from accidents, injuries of all types were treated.

Deaths were few. Returns to full duty status were in the majority. Those requiring prolonged treatment or convalescence were evacuated, chiefly by air, on orders reading: "to fleet or base hospital, location unknown." Most of these went to Guam or directly to the United States.

Among problems encountered was the sudden influx, in one hectic night, of a total of 64 victims of methyl alcohol poisoning.

The August 10 announcement of Japan's willingness to abide by terms of the Potsdam surrender decree, touching off a wild, fire-streaked celebration in which the entire island and ships surrounding it erupted flame and steel from their guns, brought in another large group for emergency treatment.

So heavy was the daily influx of patients that the capacity of the hospital was raised to 500, and even at that figure arrangements were made to have additional cots in reserve for sudden emergencies of catastrophic scope.

Peak patient load was reached September 20, when the census touched 462. But besides accommodating far more patients than its original complement called for, the hospital took on another chore. With the help of SAIH#6 which was operating on the same compound, SAIH#3 housed and fed personnel from Special Augmented Hospitals Number Four and Seven, and Fleet Hospital 106, along with smaller portions of Fleet Hospitals 104 and 107. Members of other units were sent to the compound for housing while they awaited

execution of their orders and at all times the hospital kept its mess hall open for transients who required food.

It was from neither enemy action nor overcrowding, however, that SAIN/3 was to meet its most severe test, a test in which complete disaster hovered overhead on the wings of a typhoon.

First hint of what lay in store for the unit came early in July. Storm warnings were posted, but nothing approaching heavy winds appeared.

On August 1 the initial actual typhoon warning was received. "Condition Three" A state of preparation for high winds, was set up but again no dangerous atmospheric turbulence was experienced.

Realising the "false alarms" might not always be innocuous, administration of the hospital ordered a typhoon shelter prepared.

Wrecked houses in a nearby village were torn out. Heavy stanchions and rafters were constructed to support a roof made by spreading tarpaulins over a framework and anchoring them with sandbags. The shed covered an area 48 feet by 60 feet. It was later to prove its worth so forcibly another similar shelter was erected.

On September 16, "Condition Three" was followed quickly by "Condition Two" and then a final "Condition One" warning of the full effect of a typhoon to come.

For twelve hours during the afternoon and night winds which reached a velocity of 70 knots tore at canvas and wooden structures, bending frames like saplings, tossing all loose debris through the air and hurling heavy rains through thin protective coverings.

Patients were the first concern of the staff, with the bedridden moved by ambulance to a typhoon shelter. Ambulatory cases were transferred to wards which were in a position to receive the fullest protection from the terrain and from shrubbery. Sick officers were moved into quonset huts in the surgical area, with the overflow bunked in spare ambulances.

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All hands stood ready to lend aid to damage control parties and rescue personnel endangered by destruction of buildings.

Despite additional lashings, however, 12 personnel tents were destroyed in the storm. Two others were damaged and there was mild damage to medical supply tents.

But when a grey dawn broke, SAH #3 was in condition not only to look after itself, but to lend aid to less fortunate naval facilities. In six ambulances, six doctors and twelve corpsmen proceeded to beach establishments as rescue parties. Neither patients nor staff personnel suffered any injuries.

They were not to be so fortunate, however, during their succeeding, and final, association with typhoons.

Full preparation were made in securing the hospital against the elements when another gale was announced in the offing Sunday, October 7

By Monday evening the temper of the elements had risen and Condition one again was set. All hands once more turned to the task of moving seriously ill patients into the shelters, transporting others who could walk to wards which were considered to be the safest.

Personnel tents, strengthened with wood frames, after the first storm, were firmly secured with guy lines. Everything movable was lashed down as an additional safety measure. But by Tuesday morning, October 9, the wind still was increasing in violence.

And aerologists at adjacent army and navy bases issued ominous warnings of greater dangers to come. Wind force mounted to 65 knots and tents trembled perilously.

Ens. Cox, who as maintenance officer was in charge of structural preparations for breasting the gale, was put out of action early not, ironically, by storm injury, but by an acute appendix condition necessitating immediate surgery. While the operating room quonset hut rattled and quivered under the onslaught of the elements, Mr. Cox went under the knife.

Perhaps a glance at the log, maintained throughout a 16 hour period of chaotic meteorological turmoil by Dr. Weintraub as Medical Officer of the Day, would most graphically describe occurrences of the next hectic interval. The log read:

1225 - Personnel office crew ordered out of tent. Letter listing. Maintenance crew notified...1235 - Post office tent beginning to list... 1240 - all generators turned off....1335 - First S.O. Q. ward tent half down...shelter top off reefers...1405 - Garage tent breaking loose... 1410 - Admission tent broke loose. All records rescued and secured in O.O.D. office....1420 - Patients't shower tent broke loose, canvas torn.... 1430 - SAE#3 laundry broke loose...1440 - Two S.O. Q. tents blown down. ...X-ray and surgery quonset huts beginning to show damage...1550 - Overhead on Captain White's side of Dallas hut blown off...1555 - Post office completely down... loose telephone and power lines ordered cut since they obstruct roadways.

1510 - Two storehouse tents partly down, overhead of another torn off...movie screen blown down, injuring Chaplain...1545 - Fleet Hospital 107's Officers' Quarters down...Moses, A. Halc, laceration of right hand dressed....morgue blown down....ship's stern overhead off...Ward 301 blown completely off its deck...1610 - four officers' tents down...1615 - part of SAE#3 chow hall blown away....surgical quonset hut caving in...1630 -evening meal, partly hot, partly X rations...1710 - Condr. Young admitted DU(fractured ankle)...1806 -Evening colors.

"1830 to 2400: Reports steadily being received of further damage. All S.O.Q. ward tents down. All of officers' tents on hill except three blown down. Surgery tents too damaged for use...Dallas hut in operation room area dsrnaged. S.O. Q. Patients removed to ambulances. M.P. Patients secured in locked ward with Dr. Blanton in charge. All bed patients and as many ambulatory patients as could be accommodated satisfactorily secured in typhoon shelter. Additional blankets obtained. Overhead of dental Clinic damaged. P.& A. tents damaged. Some of S.O.Q. Patients secured in X-Ray

quonset hut. All men and officers notified of being on 24 hour duty status
Water main broken, main valve closed.

There was no place in the terse though graphic wording of the, however
for the dramatic struggle waged by both officers and men - many times
at the sacrifice of their own safety to save lives and property.

Nor was there room for enlargement of the picture presented when
gusts of wind ranging in velocity far above 100 knots hurled steel and
wood and canvas through the air, picking up 16x16 foot tents and tossed
them about like bits of paper, end over end onto other tents, injuring
some of the occupants, miraculously sparing others.

There was no opportunity on this occasion to go to the rescue of other
Navy forces. SAM³ battled for its very existence in the face of what was
reported to be "the worst typhoon in Okinawa's history."

Whether or not it was the worst, it wrecked and razed hospital struct-
ures until the fruit of months of labor was mere twisted, splintered,
tattered wreckage.

An official survey revealed the next morning when all hands were
mustered that seven men had been injured, three seriously. Fortunately,
and undoubtedly due to efforts of the corpsmen and doctors on duty, no
patients were on the list of casualties. Use of the sturdy typhoon shelters
and removal to best protected tents accounted for their safety.

In physical properties, the tally showed 20 of the 30 ward tents,
each of them 16 feet by 50 feet, blown away and the others loosened on
their moorings. Bedding and supplies for those destroyed was scattered
over adjacent ground and even into distant rice paddies.

The Personnel Office, Post Office, Property and Accounting and Storage
tents were weacked: laundry, chow hall, welfare, galley, surgery, ship's
store and other buildings destroyed or severely: all S.O.Q. ward tents
wiped off their hill as if by a giant hand: all but two officers' tents
smashed or ripped away: chief petty officers' quarters razed and at least
10 square personnel tents blown over.

Such was the picture that greeted the dawn of October 10. It was a discouraging picture, a picture of jumbled, desolate catastrophe.

Fortunately, however, foresight of the hospital administration in previously arranging for a five days' supply of K ration assured all hands of food.

The day was only a few hours old before reconstruction was under way. Every man in the unit not required for ward or necessary maintenance duties turned to on damage repair squads.

Debris was cleaned up and hauled away: sagging tents which had resisted to the last the shattering impact of the typhoon were straightened and strengthened; emergency crews began further exposure during the coming night

By 9:15 a.m. an emergency generator feeding power through hastily rigged lines was supplying electricity to galley and surgery, both of which had tarpaulins lashed over their gaping topside wounds.

No help was available from outside source, since all over the island the tempest had wrecked similar devastation.

However, immediate efforts at evacuation, aided by both Army and Navy resulted in a clearing of some patients. Others were discharged back to their units so that all available manpower could be utilized in the task of building again from the ruins.

Within less than a week the hospital was back virtually on a full-scale operational footing.

But the patient census tumbled daily to new lows as evacuation of virtually all bed patients continued. Hospital ships standing off shore took off many. Planes braved stormy skies to fly others to Guam.

Men who were eligible for discharge were removed from the island with increasing rapidity as the Navy indicated a willingness to transfer as rapidly as possible all unnecessary personnel.

Finally, two weeks after the typhoon, with their patient census down to nearly 100, word was received of the impending decommissioning of the

hospital as a separate command.

Special Augmented Hospital Number Six, a 200 bed unit, was to absorb its larger companion, merging all services under the command of Captain L.L. Adankiewicz (MC) USN, who had piloted the smaller unit through a similar history.

The decommissioning took place in brief ceremonies October 25, with Comdr. Caldwell relinquishing his command just 229 days after commissioning

Special Augmented Hospital Number Three had fulfilled its military destiny.

Although its name disappeared from the list of active facilities of the Navy, its identity remained, not only in the records of the Pacific War, but in the memory of every man who had served in the command.

THE END