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NARRATIVE

The METEOR anchored off Saipan on 27 July 1944. Four (4) days later a small detachment was ordered ashore consisting of Lieutenant Charles H. Sewall, A-V(S), USNR, and ten (10) men. The function of this detachment was to operate the recently captured Ushi Field (now called North Field) at the north end of Tinian for Army transport planes flying ammunition and food in from Saipan and evacuating wounded to Saipan. A number of Army cubs also operated from the field in connection with artillery spotting work. The detachment landed at 0800 on 31 July 1944 and reported to Captain Halloran, 6th Naval Construction Brigade, which was also stationed at North Field. The condition of the field was remarkably good considering the heavy bombing it had received, for the 121st Naval Construction Battalion had immediately ⁸⁻¹⁻⁴⁴ ~~begin~~ filling in bomb craters and removing shrapnel on 27 July 1944 when they landed. However the parking areas were in bad condition. During the afternoon of the 31st of July 1944, Lieutenant Commander Purnell was also ordered ashore by Island Command who designated him as Air Base Commander until relieved by Commander A. P. Linscott of ACORN-35 five days later. This small detachment operated a rude tower equipped with improvised course balls and wind sock, and with a radio duck, until the regular ACORN tower crew relieved them on 18 Aug. 1944. In spite of hazardous conditions there were no crashes and surprisingly few obstacles which were not overcome.

This first detachment to land on Tinian had some contact with the Japanese snipers still remaining at the north end of the island, particularly just before

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- 1 See Appendix, Encl. 35 - Temporary duty orders from CO CASU-44 to Lt. Sewall and men in his charge of 7-30-44.
2 See Appendix, Encl. 36 - Garrison Force Operations Order 1-44.
37 - Orders from Commanding General IsCom to Lt. Cdr. Purnell of 8-5-44.