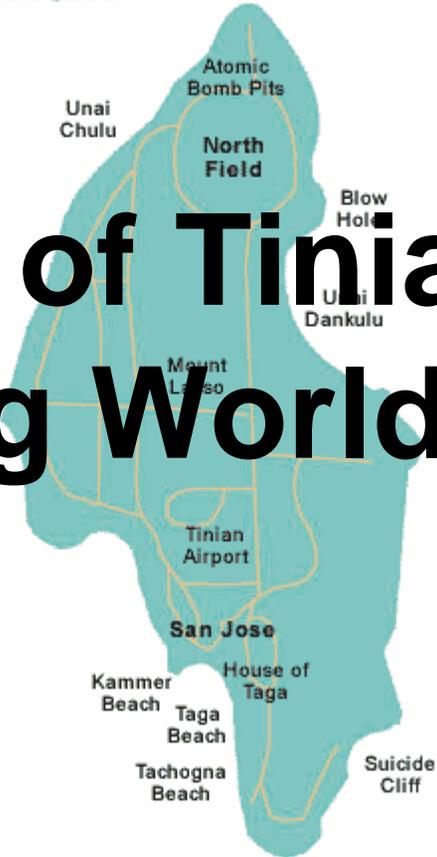


Tinian

The Use of Tinian Island During World War II



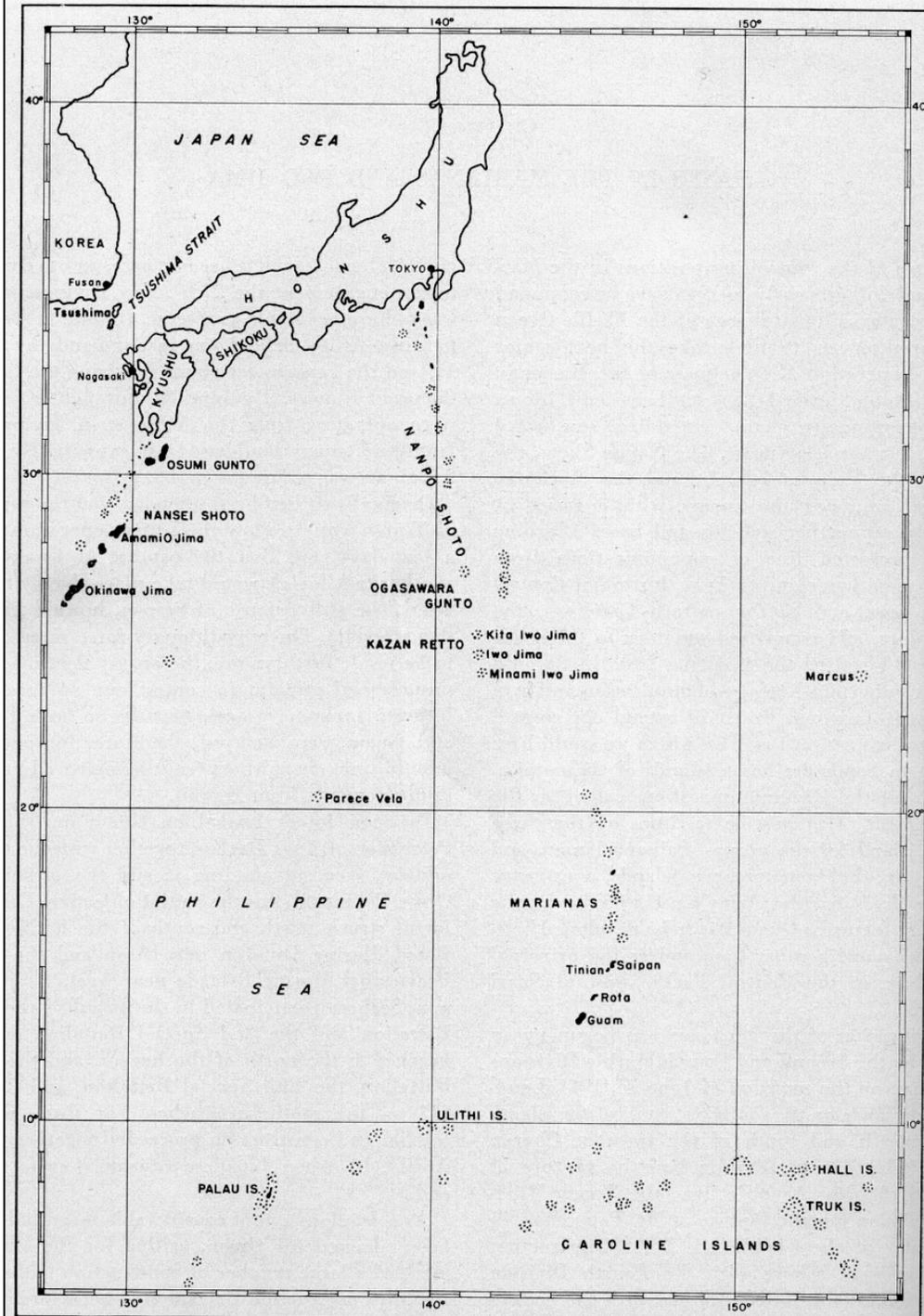
OUTLINE

- Background
- Assault on Tinian Island
- Seabee Construction and North Field
- Tinian and the Atomic Bombs
- Tinian Today

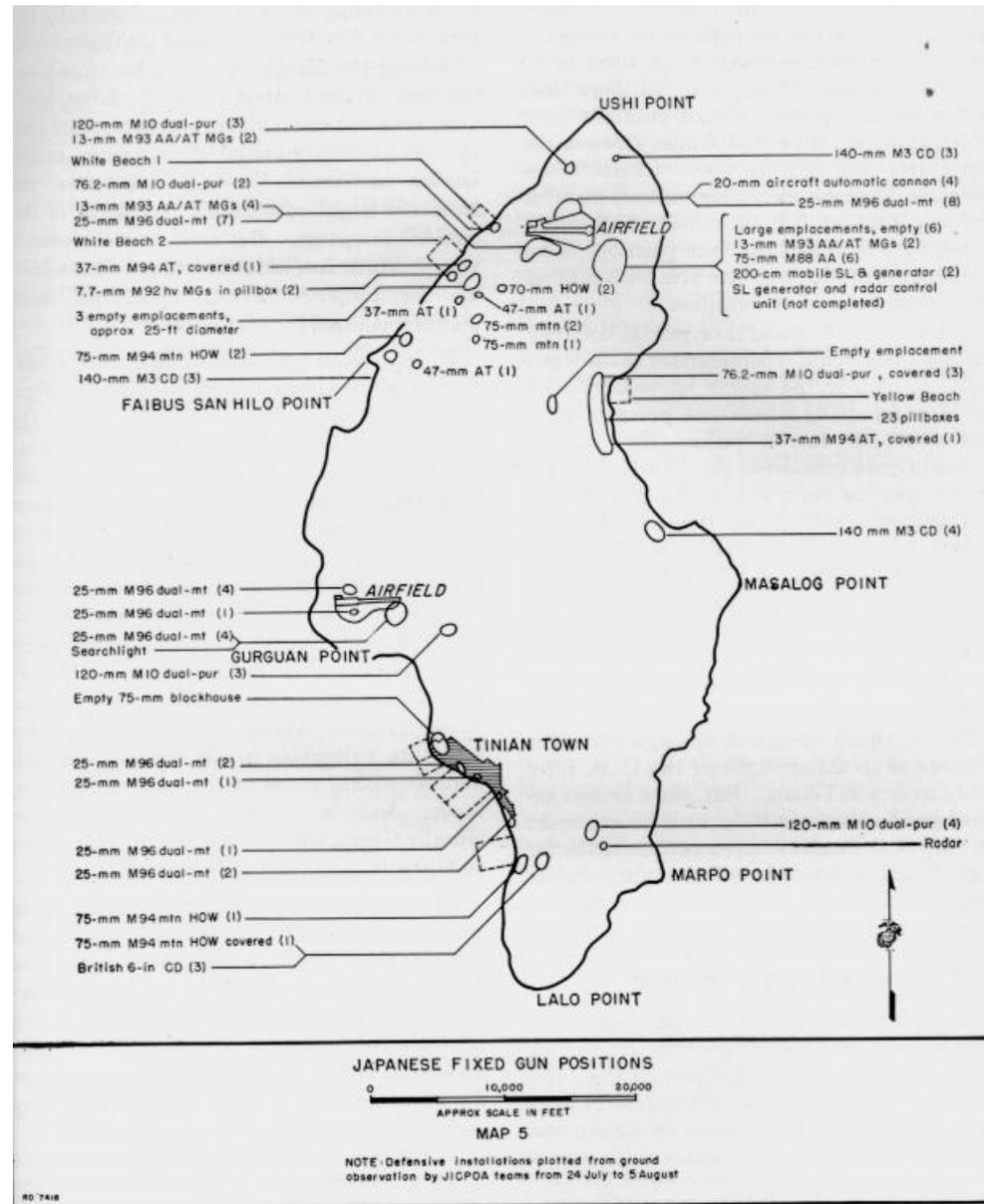
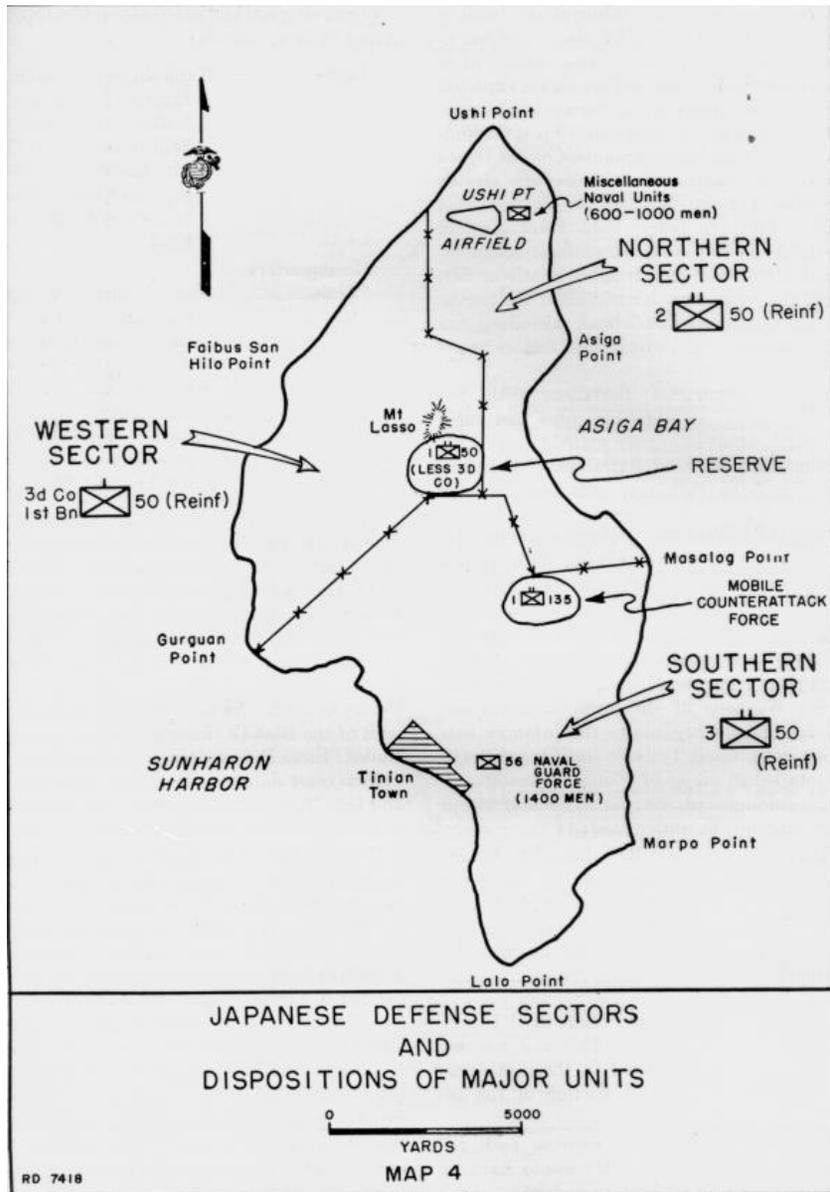


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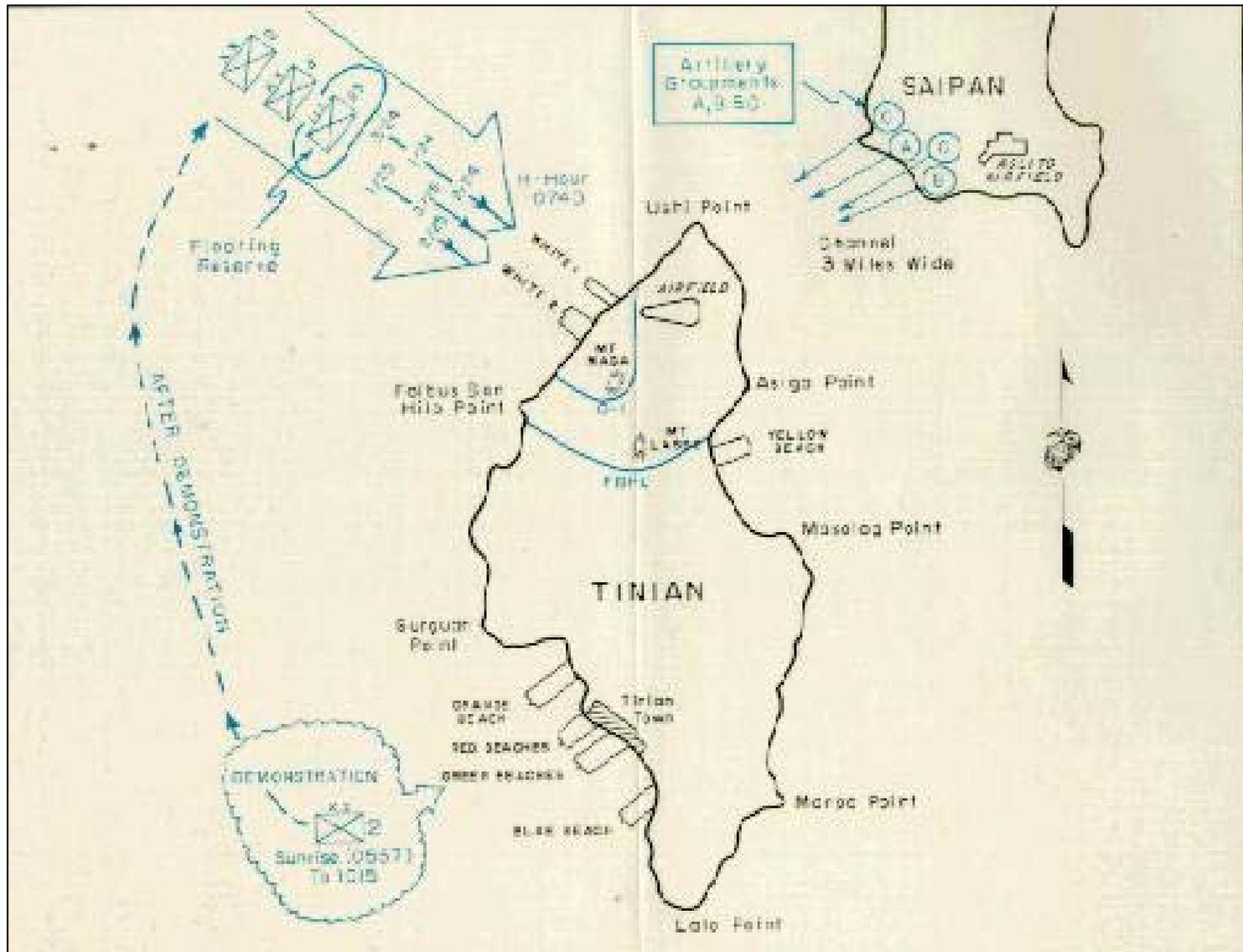
- Tinian and Saipan Islands had been Japanese stronghold since the end of WW I
- Ability to reach Japan with long-range B-29 bombers
- Saipan was attacked on 15 June 1944 and captured by mid-August 1944



Background

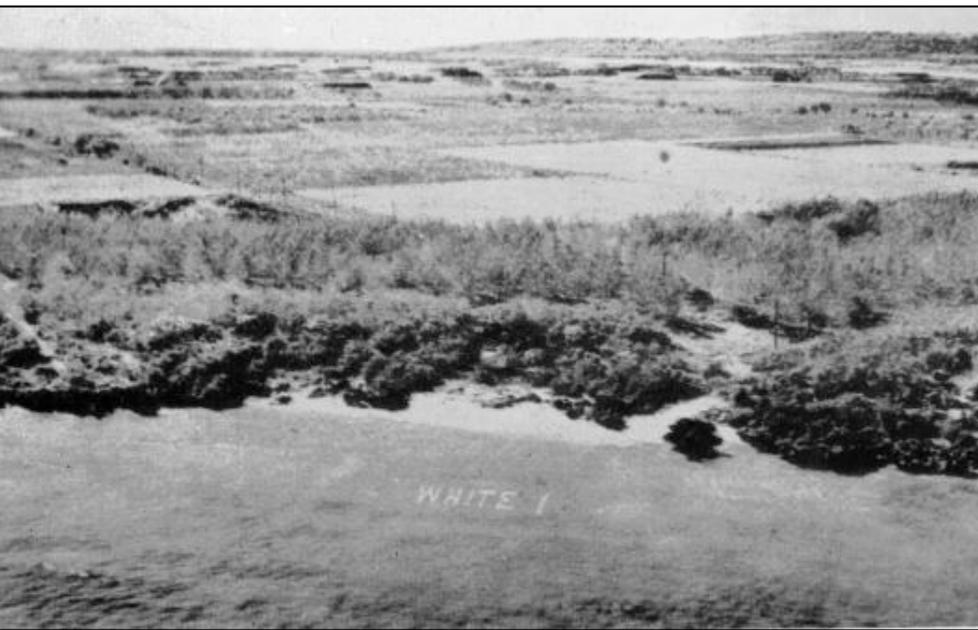


Assault on Tinian





"An Amtrac loaded with Marines, churns through the sea bound for beaches of Tinian Island" July 1944.



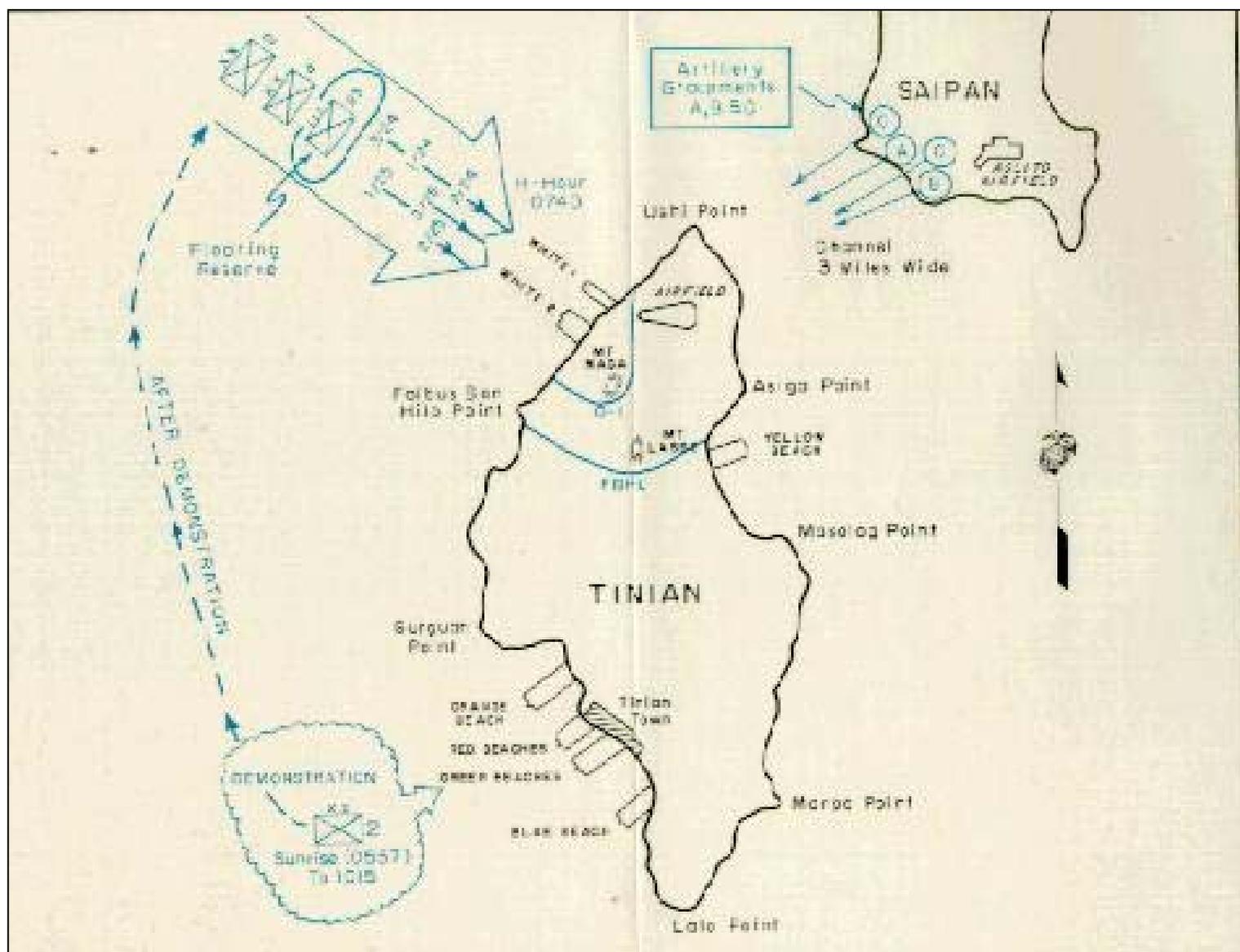
Two tiny landing beaches, White 1 and White 2, were used at Tinian to land two entire divisions. Each beach was slightly less than 200 feet wide!



**One of 10
“doodlebug” landing
ramps built by the
Seabees mounted on
an Amtrac**

**The SeaBees fashioned
these ramps from scrap
steel taken out of a
Japanese Sugar Mill on
Saipan. They allowed
Marine Amtracs to scale
the 8-foot high cliffs
along the White Beach
landing zone**





The Americans employed a deception landing off the coast of Tinian Town, holding Japanese forces there while the main landings occurred at White Beaches on the northwest side of Tinian. The deception force then proceeded north and landed at White Beach.

Construction of the World's Largest Air Bases on Tinian

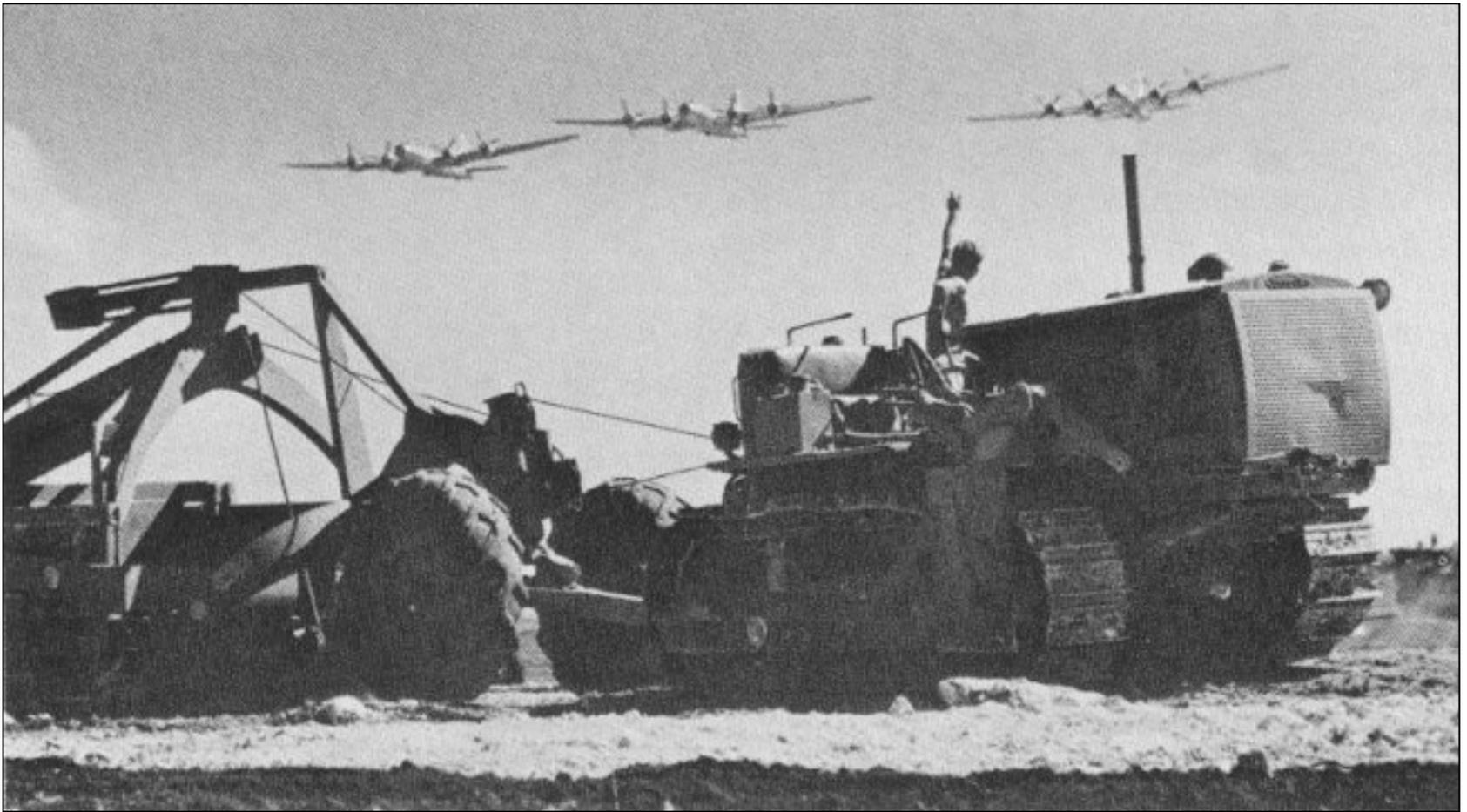
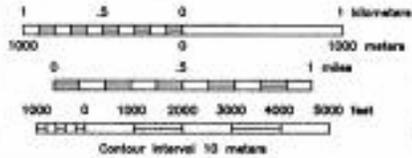


Figure 3

NORTH FIELD TINIAN

Study Area



Saipan Channel

Puntan Tahgong (Ushi Point)

Atomic Bomb Pits
Japanese Command Post

Japanese Structures

509th Composite
Group Camp

Lake
Hagai

Runway One

Runway Two

Runway Three

Runway Four

Seabee
Camps

Apron

Apron

Apron

BTH Avenue

Broodway

Exclusive Military Use
Area (EMUA) Boundary

Four 8,500 foot runways were eventually constructed by the SeaBees at North Field on Tinian, in addition to two similar runways constructed at West Feld, a few miles southwest.



The four runways at North Field on Tinian comprised the largest single airport in world in mid-summer 1945. Hardstands for the 509th Composite Group's B-29s were along the circular taxiway at extreme left foreground

Aerial view of Tinian looking south. North Field is in foreground while West Field complex lies in background





**Taxiways and
hardstands
constructed by
the SeaBees for
B-29 bombers at
West and North
Fields, as well as
on Saipan
(shown here)**

**Japan was 1,500
to 1,700 miles
away, all over
water**



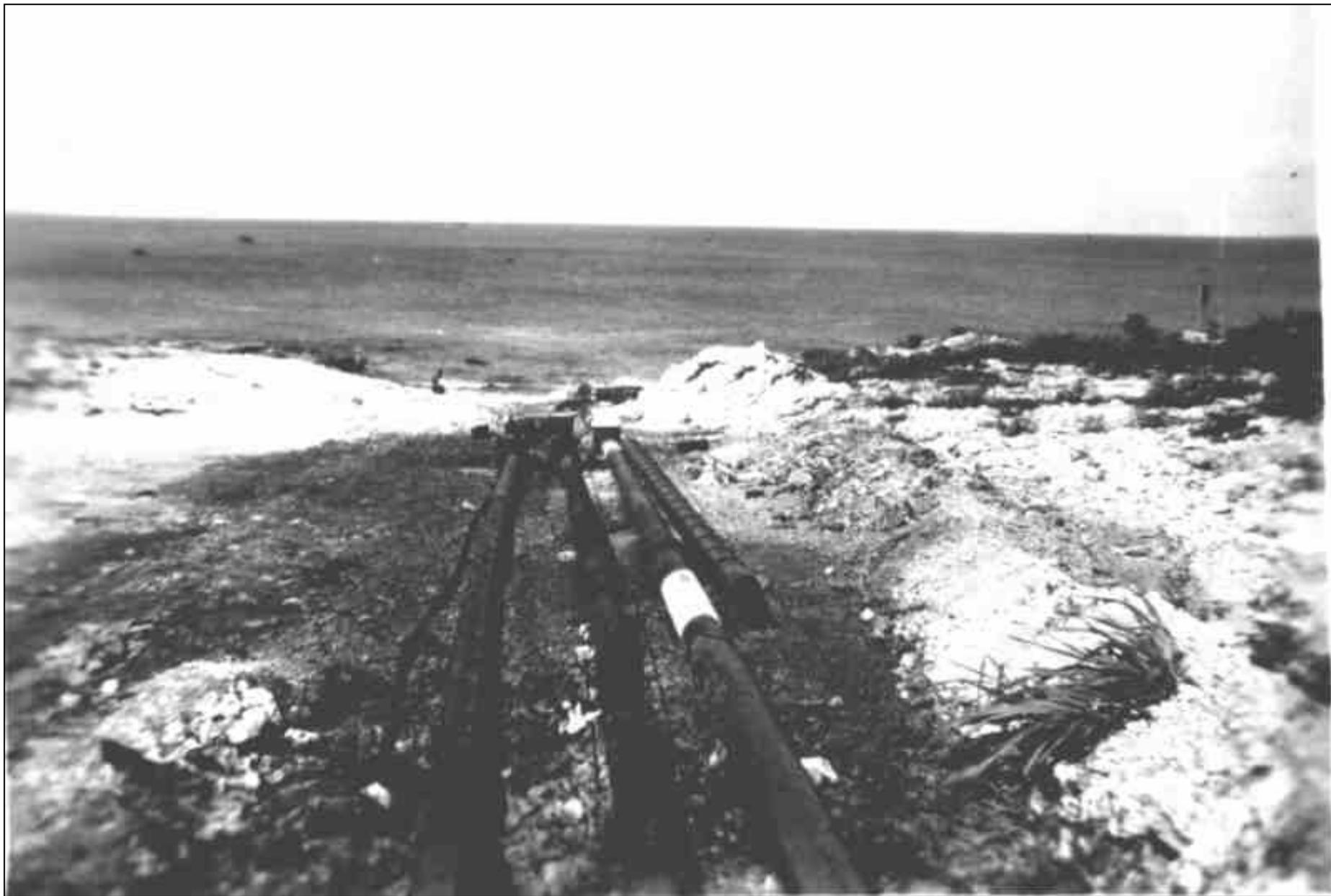
Hardstands and visiting aircraft ramp at North Field, with Quonset Huts, maintenance shed and barracks in background. Saipan lies across the channel in background.

Quonset Hut administration complex at North Field





Canvas covered machine shop on Tinian



Fuel lines leading into the sea and across the channel to Saipan



Seabees stacking precast concrete pontoon blocks to fashion a water tower.

These pontoons measured 5 x 7 x 5 feet and could float in 1.5 feet of water.

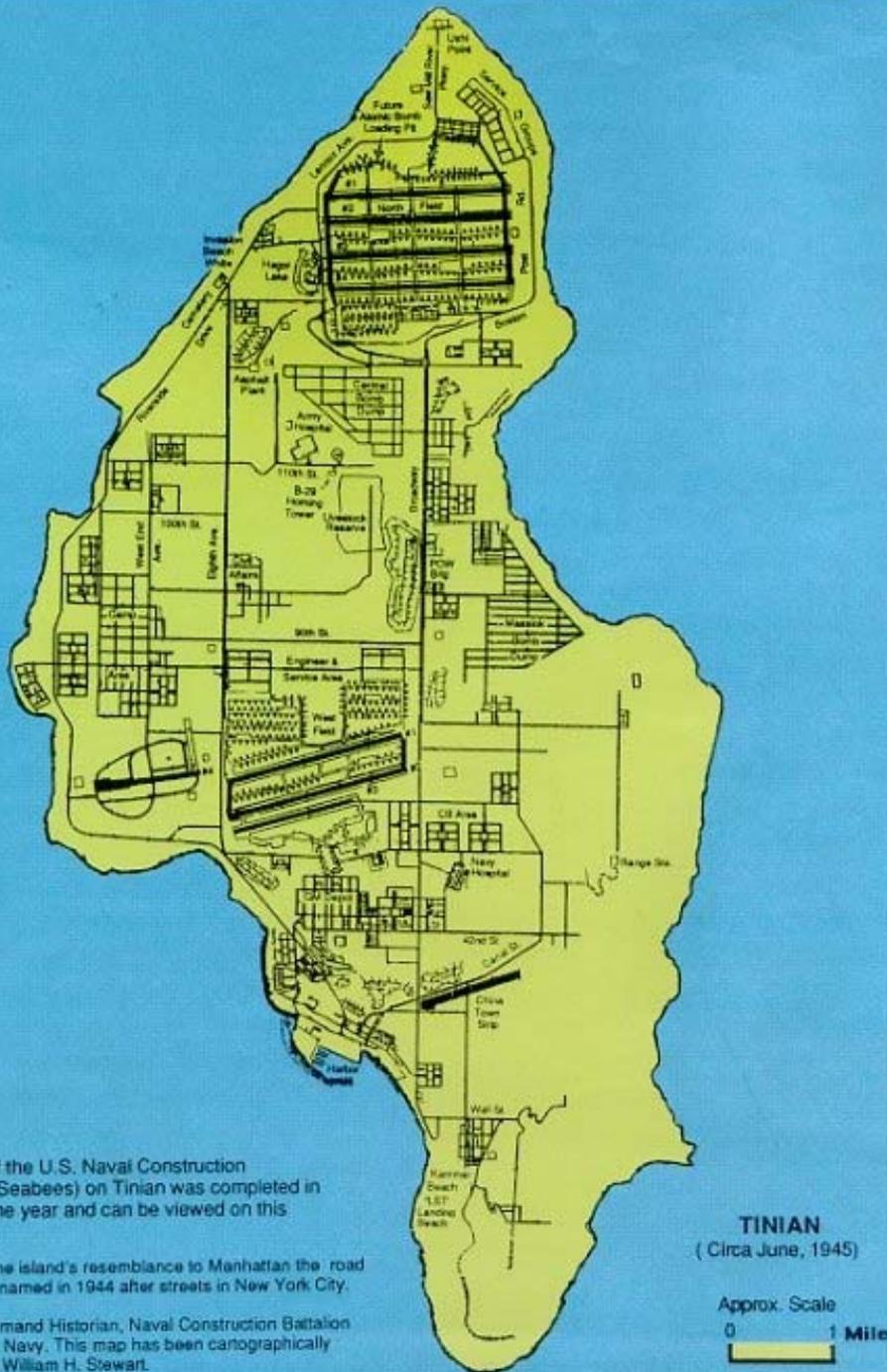
There were used for innumerable applications, from docks and lighters to floating dry docks and equipment towers.

Map of Tinian Island showing generally layout of roads and airfield runways in June 1945.

North Field had four 8500 foot bomber runways

West Field had two 8500 foot bomber runways and a 5000 foot fighter runway.

Two auxiliary runways were graded west and south of West Field respectively



The work of the U.S. Naval Construction Battalions (Seabees) on Tinian was completed in less than one year and can be viewed on this map.

Because of the island's resemblance to Manhattan the road network was named in 1944 after streets in New York City.

Source: Command Historian, Naval Construction Battalion Center, U. S. Navy. This map has been cartographically enhanced by William H. Stewart.

The Atomic Bombs

The cruiser Indianapolis delivered the Little Boy atomic gun barrel and U-235 bullet Tinian on July 26th and was sunk by a Japanese submarine near midnight on July 29/30, with only 318 of the ship's 1,106 men surviving the ordeal



Photo # NH 73655 USS Indianapolis at Tinian a few days before she was lost



The Enola Gay was one of 15 specially configured B-29s built at Martin-Omaha for the 393rd Bomb Sqd of the 509th Group.

The Enola Gay flew a near flawless mission on August 6, 1945, laying its atomic bomb precisely on the primary target: the T-intersection of the Aioi Street Bridge in Hiroshima at 8:15 AM local time

The bomb was released from an altitude of 32,700 feet, detonating 1,740 feet above the ground, directly over the Shima Hospital

The photos at right show the Enola Gay on her return to Tinian on the afternoon of August 6th



Tinian Today



From this bomb pit, the first Atomic Bomb was loaded aboard the B-29 Enola Gay on August 6, 1945. Later that day, the bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. The pit was excavated for the 59th anniversary of the invasion of Tinian in mid-June 2004.



From this bomb pit, the second Atomic Bomb was loaded aboard the B-29 Bock's Car on August 9, 1945. Later that day, the bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of Nagasaki.



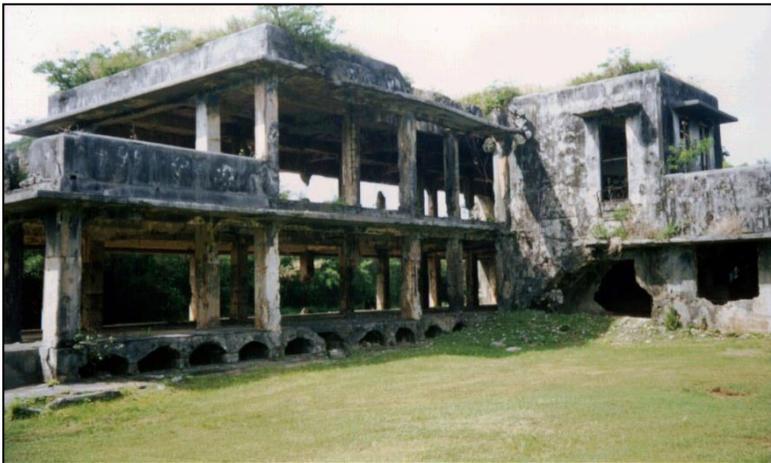
Site of the shack where the two atomic bombs were assembled on Tinian as it appears today



A Japanese Bunker on the Northwest side of the Island. The US invasion took place here after convincing the Japanese it would be on the other side of the Island.



A Japanese Naval Battery located on the west side of the Island from inside the cave that protected it.



Ruins of concrete headquarters at Tinian Town where 8,350 troops of the Japanese 56th Naval Guard Force were directed during the week long battle for Tinian Island.



Over North Field Tinian, Saipan Airport in the distance



The Tinian IBB Radio Station is owned by the Christian Science Monitor in Boston. Their Tinian facility has six 500 kW transmitters and two 250 kW transmitters, a 8 X 15 Matrix, and high/low antenna pairs for 333, 313, 295, 280 and 267 degrees. A midband antenna for 295 degrees makes the compliment 11 antennas supported between a total of 15 towers. North Field is in the background.

References

<http://www.seabee.navy.mil/>

<http://www.cnmi-guide.com/history/ww2/>

<http://40thbombgroup.org/tin2.html>