

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Q. Did you have any trouble operating your various types on soft ground?

A. We didn't have any soft ground. The runways were beautiful runways, the actual hard surfaces is 300 feet wide and on each side of that there is a 100 foot rolled coral shoulder. In the pits we simply put a trough leading as far back as the tail wheel, and for each wheel we had a floor board with sort of a guide rail on it. In back of each wheel at rest we would put a sandbag or two. The board and troughs led to the rolled coral shoulders. The large plane bunkers, those that accommodated the B-17's or the PBV's had a rolled coral bottom.

DECLASSIFIED  
DOD DIR 5200.9

Q. Did you taxi the planes right out of the revetments?

A. Yes, sir, we'd turn up the engine and pull them right out.

Q. Did you have plenty of machine gun ammunition for training?

A. We had plenty of .30. We didn't have too much .50. There is plenty of it out there now. We received a little incendiary just prior to the Battle of Midway.

Q. Did you do any gunnery training?

A. Yes, we did gunnery and bombing training out over the reef. Every day. Some of the pilots only got out there, and planes too, on the 25th of May, SED-2's. The TBF's had only been there about two days.

Q. Were those TBF's manned by Navy pilots?

A. Yes, They had the bomb bays full of auxiliary tanks. They had to be taken out and the torpedoes, air lines and one thing and another arranged. The B-26's, I am certain, never had a torpedo aboard before we loaded them. We even found that the torpedo hoisting winch had not been mounted. We had to make some brackets to mount them. That was quite a task.

✓ TBF-1's  
VT-8, DET.

Q. Had they ever dropped any torpedoes - the Army?

A. I don't think so. They had made some practice runs, I believe, around Pearl Harbor. I think they were scheduled to drop the day before they came out, but they had to call it off.

Q. Do you have any reports as to the success of their attacks?

A. Well, only 50% of them got back to the field. They were heavily hit by Zeros. The only report they made was that, if the torpedo ran true when it dropped, they got a hit. They got out of there just as fast as they could, They had no actual knowledge