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Weeds and grass started to grow on some of them, which gave them the appearance, from the air, of a hummock of sand on which the vegetation had died.

To hide the doorways leading into them, we put up a framework with some chicken wire and threw brush on it. It all must have been effective against an attack coming in without previous reconnaissance, because not a bomb dropped among the dugouts. The power house, gas pumps and messhall could be seen and were obvious targets. The defense artillery positions were not attacked as they were using the same method of hiding their artillery and gun positions, plus camouflage nets until they had to throw them back to open fire.

There was a very deliberate attempt on the part of the Japs not to damage the runways. One bomb, about three or four hundred pounds, landed close to the runway, another small bomb landed in the runway but did little damage. Another three to five hundred pound bomb landed near the intersection of two runways but I really think these were bombing errors as they were near the part of the island that was most heavily attacked.

On the other island, Sand Island, they received between 35 and 40 bombs. The Japs attempted to strafe the field to a certain extent but, of course, nothing like they did at Pearl Harbor on the 7th of December. They had received a jolt from our fighters, and we had a considerable number of automatic small arms, on the ground.

We had, belonging to two squadrons, eight .50 cal. water-cooled ground anti-aircraft machine guns, the 20 mm that belonged to the defense battalion and the 37 mm and a number of .30 cal. aircraft free gun spares set up on improvised mounts - a gas drum with a plug or a hole properly centered in it so you could place the gun there. And there were one or two spare .50's mounted in the same way. Every Jap who tried to strafe the field got a warm reception.

One Zero fighter was shot down and hit the runway at a high rate of speed - he strewed Zero fighter for two to three hundred yards, part of it even flying off the island and into the lagoon. Another was shot down and landed in the lagoon. At the time I left all attempts to get it up had failed. The engine of the one that hit the runway was badly torn up, so we didn't get much information out of that.

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