



*A Jap Transport under observation on Guadalcanal*

We arrived at Point Cruz, Guadalcanal, in the evening of 20 December and stayed there for three days unloading most of the mail. This was our first good contact (and the best) with the Pacific Island natives. The Solomon Islanders were too lazy and unintelligent to work as stevedores so a labor battalion had been imported from the Gilbert-Ellice Islands to work the cargo on the ships. They had learned to operate winches and lifts but their greatest accomplishment was their skill at their version of football and their singing. Football to them was like volleyball to us, except that they played it with their feet with a ball of paper wrapped with twine to hold it together. Only their "Sargents" wore shoes and the rest of them had feet big enough to give them perfect control of the ball. Their singing and dancing always drew a

crowd at noontime. They sang their native Polynesian songs which had harmony, solos, counter-melodies and a lot of other musical qualities which this writer is not qualified to explain. At least, it wasn't the drum beating war chant that some of us expected.

It was at Guadalcanal that the ADMIRAL CAPPS began to feel that she really had a part in this war. As soon as the cargo was unloaded, the loading of passengers began. 355 of the passengers were casualties—unable to walk. Another 358 were ambulatory casualties, who were quartered in regular troop spaces. Those who saw the number of missing legs and arms and hard-aged eyes will never forget it. If we could take these men home quickly and safely we felt that we at least would have helped a little.



*Marine Cemetery on Guadalcanal*