OKINAWA

1945

written by: former-

U.S. MARINES

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS:

Fred Addison Co. A, 1st Armored Amphib. BN.

George E. Berteletti F/2/22/6

Raymond P. Gillespie K/3/22/6

James S. White G/3/29/6

Ken Long I/3/29/6

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FOREWARD

Very little has been written about the Battle for Okinawa. It was a unique battle in that it was fought during a time period that was bracketed by the victory achieved in Europe, during April of 1945 and the dropping of the atomic bomb in August of that same year, and both were events that rightfully captured the attention of the American people.

The Battle was unique in another way. Okinawa, was the last battle fought during a world war and although history will have to determine whether or not this latter statement holds up, it is significant.

To record the "grass roots" experiences of the guys who took part in this battle is the purpose of these monographs and additional volumes will be printed as other articles are sent in. Each contributing author will receive a copy of the volume containing his article.

It is hoped the topics will include experiences of the men from all the units of the III Amphibious Corps, (listed in the back of this monograph) and that eventually the volumes can be placed in libraries across the country to serve as a record of this historic struggle; for future generations to read, question and ponder.

K.J.L.

PREVIOUS VOLUMES

If previous volumes of OKINAWA-1945, are desired, they may be obtained by sending a check or money order in the amount of $17.50, for printing and mailing to: Kenneth J. Long
11311 Fairlake Dr.
Delton, MI 49046

Volume 1, OKINAWA-1945

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KEN LONG

The Adventure

CHAPTER 1

1943:

In May or early June, two high school buddies and myself drove to Kalamazoo, in my 1935 Chevrolet coupe (with rumble seat) to enlist in the U.S.M.C.. With me were Elwood Beech and Rodger Cowles. I had turned 17 years old in February. I believe they were 3-4 months older. We must have had to have our parents written permission to enlist but I do not recall getting this now. Shortly after signing up at the recruitment depot we each received an official letter from the Marine Corps, containing orders directing us to Detroit on 6-25-43. A voucher for train travel on the Michigan Central RR was enclosed. Written and physical testing was conducted there and those found fit were sworn in. Beech was found to be color blind, was rejected by the Corps and that same day joined the Navy. Cowles and I, and about forty others were sworn into the Corps. We returned home to await the call to active duty. The exams and enlistment ceremony were performed in the Federal Building. My serial number was #544231. A Marine's serial number is one that he never forgets.

Cowles was called to active duty about 3-4 weeks prior to me. Age may have been the reason for this. In any case, I got my orders and departed Battle Creek on 9-17-43. I had been in the 12th grade, in high school about 2 weeks when I left. I do not remember from which of the two local train stations that I departed from. I believe it was from the Grand Trunk Western and not the Michigan Central. Although both stations still exist they have been renovated and are no longer train stations. I also do not remember if it was a troop train we were on or if it also contained civilians. I believe it was the latter. The engine was a steam engine, At that time not too many people travelled by plane, especially enlisted men.

It was quite an adventure riding the trains(s) to the West coast. I had been on a train once before; on a trip to Washington, D.C. as a 13 year old kid, Now I was a 17

year old kid who would soon became a man. We spent hours in the switching yard in Chicago before starting the long haul west. There are two events on the trip that I still remember. The first was of me trying to shave in the lurching, swaying, bouncing rail car. I hadn't as yet had many years of practice and on one particularly bad lurch I about cut my top lip off. It took about forty sheets of toilet paper to finally stem the flow of blood. The other event was pulling into the train station at Albuquerque, New Mexico. We all got off and had lunch in the station, which had a "Fred Harvey's " Restaurant". These were famous in the west on the train routes. The waitresses were called "Harvey's Girls" and it was quite a thing to be one. They were all young, attractive girls, wearing fresh clean uniforms. They had to follow strict standards of conduct, at least while on duty. There were also Indians sitting in the sun outside the building, selling blankets, jewelry, pottery and such. Hey, this was real adventure to hick kids, like most of us were. We had also detrained in Kansas City for about two hours, earlier on the trip, and spent this time walking up and down some of the streets. This MUST have been a troop train, as I do not remember ever paying for any meals. We had pullman cars on the train, as I slept in a top bunk after a porter "made them up" in the evening. I can remember looking out of the train window, in California, and seeing a long rambling building with a sign on it saying "MOTEL", I had never heard of the word before. We didn't have motels yet in the mid-west. They were probably invented in California. All I had ever seen were "TOURIST CABINS". These were several small, individual, one-room buildings. They lacked toilets (you utilized a common one in another building) and had wash bowls and a pitcher of water in each cabin. Of course, I had never stayed in one of these either. These Californians were sure progressive.

CHAPTER 2

Boot Camp:

It took us four days to arrive at the Recruit Depot in San Diego. I've no idea where we got off the train, whether it was in San Diego, Los Angeles or where. It WAS night time and we boarded U.S.M.C. buses , arriving at the Boot Camp about 1:00 AM. It was quite chilly. The reception wasn't chilly, it was horrifyingly freezing! As soon as the buses stopped, N.C.O.'s (non-commissioned officers) greeted us with shouts, orders and blunt insults. It was the beginning of the fast transfer of civilian kids of all degrees of back grounds and intelligences into instantly, unquestioning, obedient robots. It was terrifying, funny, embarrassing, exhausting and exactly what is needed for the necessary transformation of nerds, football heros, scholars, minor criminals (maybe), farmers, soda jerkers, taxi drivers, sheepherders, school kids, zootsuiters and hillbillies into a MARINE. THERE WERE NO BLACKS, as at that time the Marine Corps did not accept them. By the last months of the war they were processed into labor battalions for unloading ships, trucks and working in warehouses and such. But I digress. After alighting from the bus a rough formation into ranks was finally achieved by use of curses and threats. Roll call was taken and we immediately learned how to answer when our name was called. Everyone, but us, was addressed as "SIR" and woe to those who were slow to remember.

After the roll call we were run into a building and ordered to "strip, NOW boy and get into that damn shower!" "NOW you dumb son of a bitch" or some other equally polite request. The water was ice cold and as soon as we were soaked, head included, we were ordered out, standing there wet and naked we were then deloused (I doubt if any of us had lice). Guys wielding big farm-type insect sprayers pumped 2-3 quarts of insecticide onto each of us as we stood there quivering; with our arms up in the air so that our armpits could get it. Crotches were another target by these sadistic

sharpshooters. Pulling our dirty clothes onto our wet bodies we then were told to grab our belongings (usually a cardboard suitcase or a cloth bag containing our few things), put into ranks and run 3-4 blocks to a group of small huts. There we were again threatened, insulted and given some basic instructions for about 5 minutes. Men were quickly assigned hut numbers and advised "get in there". No talking, no lights, no smoking and you damn well better get to sleep because you're damn well going to need it!" No words were more truly spoken. There were no mattresses on the cots, just wire springs. We each had two new blankets on the cot, I'm sure we all probably had appalling thoughts about the prospect of what was to come before we dropped off to sleep.

We went everywhere while in ranks or formation; either marching or in doubletime. Everything possible was done to remove our former identities and personalities; to turn us into one single unquestioning, instantaneously reacting body. It was very successful. About our third day we DID get thin mattress pads for our cots, to lay on top of the springs. I *think* we were issued clean sheets weekly. I do not remember if we had pillows or not.

SOME REMEMBRANCES OF Boot camp:

Our first clothing and "gear" (equipment) issue was approximately two days after our arrival. That very same day ALL civilian clothing and belongings except razor, comb and tooth brush either had to be sent back home, given to the Salvation Army (into bins) or thrown into garbage bins.

Very close attention was given to the fitting of our boots. We were issued two pair of these. They were about 6" high above the ankles anyway. They were rough textured, non-finished leather and probably very good quality. They would have to be, to keep our feet healthy after the abuse they would receive. Much time in the evenings

was spent rubbing brown shoe polish into the rough leather of one of the pair of shoes to smooth it, try to shine them and change them into "parade shoes"; We'd put polish on, spit on it and rub it in with a damp rag. Then buff and brush the hell out of it, repeating the process over and over again. It wasn't because we wanted to but because our ass was mud if super-human results were not obtained. Incidently, this type of boot was the ONLY kind most of us were ever issued until just about a week prior to our discharge after the war. We were going to be cannon-fodder; no sense issuing dress shoes to us.

Besides the boots our clothing issue was:

- about six pairs of cotton socks;
- maybe four each of "skivvy" shirts and shorts (boxer shorts and T shirts);
- three pair of "dungarees" (green twill cloth trousers and jackets);
- two dungaree caps;
- 3 pair of khaki trousers and shirts;
- khaki ties and garrison caps (ties are "Field scarfs"), any garrison cap was commonly referred to by a quite vulgar name).
- 2 pair of canvas leggings;
- a heavy canvas "sea bag" for holding your worldly belongings;
- a poncho and 2-3 heavy woven belts with brass buckles.

All clothing, when issued, had about twenty small tags stapled to each piece. They told lot number, inspector, etc.

Besides this clothing we got a pith helmet, like those worn in the tropics, cartridge belt, first aid kit, canteen, backpack and a haversack. These items, except for the helmet, were referred to in the Corps as "782 Gear".

Everything had to be stowed into our sea bags,in a particular order and VERY

neatly. We had no furniture, shelves, ledges, tables, etc. We did have rifle racks in each hut. All items of our former life, except razors and tooth brushes, were GONE. Nothing else was allowed, unless it had been issued. During boot camp there would be surprise sea-bag inspections and woe be the one whose bag contents weren't clean, neat, folded in prescribed manner and in the exact location dictated.

About our second day after arrival we were run over to the "barbers". I think these were civilians but they were caught up in the sadism also. There were about 5 barber chairs and the entire platoon (59 men) had their hair cut in approx. 10 minutes. Gone were the curls, fetlocks, sideburns and all hair over 1/8" long. Remaining were unfamiliar lumps, knobs, scars (old and new) and hideous head shapes. We wanted to laugh or cry. Some of us probably did both. But the "DI's" (drill instructors) were everywhere. Any infraction (and EVERYTHING WAS AN INFRACTION) and you'd immediately get smashed across the pith helmet with a swagger stick and then commence some type of punishment. Each platoon had a DI usually a corporal or sergeant, with one or two assistants. My platoon number was #799.

Reveille was announced by bugle call over loudspeakers about 5:45 each morning. It was extremely loud and not many seconds after it ceased you had better be fully dressed in ranks and at attention for roll call. No looking around,no horseplay, no shuffling of feet. AT FULL ATTENTION, RAM ROD STRAIGHT, EACH MAN IN HIS ASSIGNED SPOT!! As the DI barked out the names, each man answered loudly "HERE SIR." When dismissed from roll call a mad dash was made for the "head" (toilets and lavatories) for calls of nature, showering, and teeth brushing. Moustaches were forbidden. When quickly finished with these chores we'd be back at the huts, making up our "sacks," hurriedly sweeping the floor, dusting window ledges and bed frames, seabags in their prescribed spots and men out side the hut picking up broom straws or anything else foreign. The sand would be raked also, in a prescribed pattern. There was just enough time to accomplish this if everyone worked at breakneck speed. Each

man then stood by the foot of his "sack", ready to execute whatever the next whim or detail might be commanded. If the DI stood out in the company street and shouted "FALL IN" we'd immediately rush out, fall into ranks in the position of attention and if not inspected be marched to the parade ground. If instead, the DI entered your hut the first man seeing him shouted "ATTENTION" and you immediately assumed the position. He'd closely inspect each man's appearance, checked the housekeeping inside the hut and see if the sacks were made up to his liking. The blankets on the sack had to be tight across the bed, with perfectly squared corners with the blanket tucks absolutely perfect. About 10% of the men could get chewed out for something, even if the imagination had to be used to find a fault. Those that were chewed out were given punishment (often the entire men in the hut); sometimes to be performed right then, sometimes later in the day. for instance, if the DI thought that a man might not be shaved closely enough he might order the man to crawl under his bunk and dry shave himself (no water nor lather). This , of course, added cuts and scrapes to those incurred a short time before in the head.

Dozens of platoons would march in cadence being called by the DI to the black-topped parade ground. An officer standing upon a platform would call out the exercises and hundreds of men would perform them in unison, to the accompaniment of music being played through a loudspeaker. Each man had his rifle in his hands and this formed part of the exercises. For push ups rifles were hurriedly stacked. It was an enjoyable thing, unless you did something opposite of the exercises being called out; such as putting your rifle straight over your head when it actually should have been straight out in front of your chest in a horizontal position. One of the pieces of music played was "Oh what a beautiful morning, Oh what a beautiful day," from the musical play Oklahoma. It was quite a sight; a few hundred men all keeping time to the music and the sequence being called out. This lasted perhaps 30 minutes. Woe be he who dropped a rifle or made a miscue. The DI's had a thousand eyes and punishment would

be surely exacted later in the day upon that man or often the whole platoon.

The punishment might be to doubletime up and down the company street for an hour with a full sea-bag upon your shoulder while the rest of the platoon had free time before sack time in the evening. Or it might be orders to "holystone" the deck of the hut. The floor was always referred to as the deck because of the Marines early tradition of serving on sailing ships where the decks were of wooden boards. Holystoning the decks was also a fine old handed-down tradition. To holystone it everything would have to be moved out into the street, EVERYTHING. Pails of water were then thrown onto the deck, followed by a pail or two of sand. Sand was readily available because the base was built on the shore of the ocean and the huts were surrounded by sand. Then with a brick in each hand and on your hands and knees you would scour the deck by rubbing the sand across the wet boards with the bricks. Finally, all the sand was swept out of the hut and pails of water would again be thrown onto the deck and this also swept out. Every speck of sand had better be swept out.! Bunks, seabags and rifle racks then were brought back in and everything aligned perfectly. The area outside the hut then was raked and a minute inspection made, both of the exterior and the interior. No broom bristles nor anything foreign must be left. The DI would eventually inspect it and invariably find something not to his liking so that further torture could probably be expected. All of this, of course, was part of the daylight to dark, exhausting regime that we were following. There was never enough time, we were always on the run.

The reader must understand that NOTHING could be done by the recruits unless they were ordered to do it. No one ever requested permission. The DI was studiously avoided. He was GOD and vengeance was his alone. Most everyone smoked cigarettes in those days (not me) but this was never done unless permission, "the smoking lamp was lit," was given the whole platoon. When the cigarette was finished it was "field-stripped." This meant that the paper was peeled off and the tobacco

scattered. The paper was then wadded up into the smallest piece possible. If then discarded, it must never be discovered by the DI or more punishment could surely be expected. The purpose for this cigarette discipline was to avoid littering and unsightliness. More importantly it was so that when in the jungles later the enemy would have less evidence upon which to base his estimation of our presence, in what numbers, how recent, etc. It worked! Marines ALWAYS field stripped their cigarettes, no matter where they were. Cigarettes also were never smoked inside the huts.

About our 5th-6th day in boot camp we were issued rifles. We were marched to the armory. Entering it in a single line we approached a long desk which had some NCO's seated at it. Each man would state his name and serial number as he stood in front of the man with a ledger. He would then be handed a brand new Garand M-1 semi-automatic .30 cal. gas and recoil operated rifle. He would then read off the serial number out loud, it would be entered in the ledger, another Marine double checked the number on the rifle and the recipient would then sign for it. It had been previously cleaned of the cosmoline (grease) that it had been shipped with. Your rifle's serial number was also one that you very quickly memorized as you would often be queried as to it. At this time we were also issued a new bayonet and scabbard and a can each of oil and cleaning solvent. The cleaning equipment itself was stored inside the end plate in the stock of each rifle.

Everywhere we went, except to chow, we carried our rifles. They had better be hospital clean also as a couple of times each day they would be inspected by the DI. You had better know its serial number, exact weight, official name and purpose of each and every part of it internally and externally. Be expected to rapidly "strip it" (disassemble), mix the parts up and then as rapidly put it all together again. After a short while, this could be done blindfolded. As a perverse punishment it wasn't unusual that a Marine had to sleep with it, beneath the blankets. As we were told, "you've got no

mamma, no wife, no girlfriend, Your rifle is your best friend and your woman. Take better care of it than any of these would receive." This advice was snarled out, sneered, spit-out in quite vulgar and obscene terms. We BELIEVED!

I never heard of anyone arguing nor disagreeing with nor challenging a DI. All of us would have liked to have beaten the living hell out of him, or his assistants. Many could have done so.but the punishment and harassment that would surely be exacted whether you won or lost the fight, made you clench your jaws tight and take the abuse.

Every day was an exhausting one, from sun up 'til after dark. There were no trips to the PX, no phone calls, no movies, no gum nor candy ("pogy-bait"). The term pogy-bait came from the days of sailing ships also, we learned. The ships were often at sea for months, even years, at a time. There were young (10-12-14 year old) cabin boys or apprentice seaman aboard. Gifts of candy or sweets were offered these youngsters in exchange for submitting to anal intercourse, "poging" by the old tars. Hence the term"pogy-bait"

We never left our own company street nor the head area unless we were in formation and led by the DI calling cadence. Close order drill was practiced long and tediously. Sweat soaked us as we went through the various drills. From the initial bumping into one another because of ignorance and inexperience we developed into fifty-nine men reacting as one to each order given. "ATTENTION!; FORWARD MARCH; WHAUN-HUP-THREEP- FOE; TO THE REAR, MARCH; RIGHT FLANK MARCH; LEFT FLANK, MARCH; WHAUN-HUP-THREEP-FOE, PLATOON HALT!; RIGHT FACE; FORWARD MARCH. Hour after hour, broken up into instructional sessions on military courtesy, discipline, identifying various officer ranks in the Marine Corps & Navy, bayonet drill, obstacle course, practice in judo and hand to hand combat, knife and club fighting, sanitation, first aid, Marine tradition and dozens of other things.

The "manual of arms" was learned and practiced repeatedly while at attention, both stationary or while marching. While marching only three movements are used, right shoulder-ARMS, left shoulder-ARMS or port-ARMS. These are used to alleviate fatigue and to prevent the shoulders from becoming overly sore from the rifle riding on one place too long. While at attention and in a stationary position a whole series of manouevers are performed, including rifle salutes, PRESENT-ARMS (a real formal honor to an individual or a formation), and for an inspection of the rifle, among others.

One morning about five of us were assigned "head duty" for about two hours, after chow was completed, This was a long building full of urinals, stools (no stalls), wash basins, mirrors and showers. Now, in 1993, I'd guess that this was for two platoon's (approx. 115-120 men) utilization. I don't recall having this duty in boot camp other times, though I may well have. Anyway, I'll never forget this time because most of the toilet bowls were plugged up and full of paper and diarrhea-type feces. The floor was also wet and filthy from the overflowed toilets. There were no rubber gloves. We used plungers to unplug them inside and out. I still remember gagging on that job. Needless to say the place was spotless, sinks, walls, floors and all when we had finished, A bit more care than usual was spent washing our hands and arms and cleaning fingernails before reporting back to the rest of the platoon that morning.

Platoons had slightly staggered times at which to arrive at the mess halls. We marched there and then were given the command FALL OUT. At this, we merged into a single line at the mess hall door, We could talk but no horse play was allowed. The DI remained with us as we waited in the hot sun to enter. Occasionally one of us would get a little boisterous. Punishment might be delayed until later or might be administered on the spot. One that was favored was for the offender to face the wall, at attention, one long pace away from the wall. He then would fall forward, still at attention, until his forehead made contact with the wall. He then stiffly maintained this position until

ordered back into line. This might be as long as 15- 20 minutes. It is a bit tiring, to say the least. There had better be no giggles nor comments from he nor the rest of the platoon. Double-timing in place or doing push-ups until collapsing also might be directed at the offender, or the entire platoon.

The food in boot camp generally was pretty good. After all, we were heathy growing young guys working like hell and we had tremendous appetites. Upon entering the mess hall you'd pick up a metal tray. This had five or six recesses pounded into it. As the chow line, cafeteria style moved along you indicated with a nod which food you wanted. Of course, you were likely to get a double helping of something horrible, that you knew would gag you, as not. The mess men delighted in putting your fruit cocktail in with your green beans or a slab of ice cream in with the hot potatoes and gravy. Of course, you didn't do much to signal your disapproval as the DI, watching his platoon being fed, would mete out more punishment later on. worse yet, you could bank on the same pimply-faced messboy repeating his form of revenge for his lot in life each day from then on. He, after all, probably just got out of boot camp a month previous and had gotten HIS DI's recommendation to perform this valuable service to the Corps because of his screw ups while in boot camp. He'd get to slop food out, mop the kitchen, peel potatoes, etc. for 3-4 months before he was shipped out to jungleland, thankful as hell to get away form garbage, insults and hard hot work.

You could have all the food you wanted, except dessert on your trip through the line BUT you had damn well better eat all that you took. If not, some DI would meet you and your tray and order you to eat that blob of fat or gristle or lump of butter before you stacked your tray in the pile of empties near the exit.

I had forgotten to mention this but about our 2nd or 3rd day in camp the platoon was marched over to the PX and we made the purchases dictated by the DI. Nothing

more, nothing less. We paid for them as well. These items were:

10 quart metal pail, a big wooden stiff-bristled scrub brush, one large bar of Fels Naptha laundry soap, two greenish-brown bath towels and a couple of bars of facial soap, tooth brush if needed. This was the first and last time we were in the PX while in boot camp.

One day, while getting all hot and sweaty in the sand, I looked out over the bay in time to see two fighter planes collide in the air. One pilot managed to parachute out. Both planes, plus one pilot, disappeared beneath the waves.

About every three days or so, when the usual day's activities were completed, we would be marched off to the laundry area. In our right hands would be the 10 quart pail, scrub brush, laundry soap and our dirty laundry inside the pail. The laundry area consisted of many long scrub tables with cold water faucets above the tables about every eight feet or so. We scrubbed our skivvies, socks and dungarees using the brush and bar of yellow soap. The deck was concrete, sloped so the water would drain away. As with all our duties, only a brief time was allotted so you worked at maximum speed to complete the task. We'd scrub thoroughly, rinse and wring (by hand, of course) every possible drop of water from the clothes.

For the first few laundry days, before hanging the clothes to dry, there was laundry inspection. Throwing brush, soap and clothes back into the pail we'd hurriedly form up into open ranks, at attention, in a nearby open area. The DI would approach each man in ranks. As he was inspecting the man prior to you, you would hold up your skivvy shorts and socks in your hands which were extended straight out in front of you. The DI would studiously inspect the interior rear region of the shorts. If any stains were observed, imagined or otherwise, here or on the socks, the guilty Marine would be

ordered to stand there and chew the stained area until it was no longer present. We learned quickly to devote a lot of soap and elbow grease to these critical areas! When inspection was finished the clothes would be hung on laundry wires strung between poles behind the scrub tables. Dry laundry would be retrieved the next day, folded and stowed in the seabag.

Every item of clothing was stencilled, black ink, with the man's name. Shortly after the clothing issue three different size stencils would be provided each man. Last name first and then first as in "Addison Fred". Stencil brushes and cans of ink, plus items already marked as examples were provided in one hut. The correct size stencil, such as the small one, for inside caps and shoes, to the largest one, for marking your seabag and blankets, had to be used. Also, there was a precise location and manner for the identification. No deviations! I assume marking the clothing was to discourage "borrowing" and, more importantly, to aid in identifying injured men or corpses.

Rifle Range:

About the beginning of our fifth week in Boot Camp we were loaded into trucks with our rifles and all worldly possessions. We were trucked up onto the hills a few miles from Dago to Camp Matthews. This was the Corps rifle range for recruits. I have since read that this was also where the west coast Marines' sharpest riflemen practiced for regional and national championships for many years. The area consisted of hills and canyons, favorable as back stops for the millions of rounds of ammo expended through the rifles. All the roads and trails leading from the huts, mess halls and miscellaneous administration buildings were unpaved. We slept in huts again; but now the whole emphasis was on marksmanship. Each day we were marched out onto the ranges, returning at noon for chow and then right back out.

Every Marine, no matter what job he might end up with later on the Corps,

becomes very competent with the rifle. Our issue of rifle was the Garand, MI 30 calibre, semi-automatic. For the first week we learned (and practiced by the hour) the different positions for firing: prone, sitting, kneeling and off hand. This latter is the standing position. There are exact prescribed methods for each of these positions. You practiced those positions and no others. The leather rifle sling was always used. This helps steady the rifle for increased accuracy and ensures that after the recoil of each shot the rifle will reposition itself with the sights right back very close to the target. While half of the platoon took the firing position the other half would slam the bolt back each time the trigger was squeezed. This was for 'dry firing', when no ammo was used. Slamming the bolt back would simulate actual recoil as if ammo was fired. The man slamming the bolt back wrapped his hand in rags to lessen injuring his hand. Gunnery coaches would patrol the firing line, assuring that each man assumed the correct position, that the leather rifle sling was properly positioned and taut, trigger squeezing (not jerking) was used and that the partner was operating the bolt correctly. This was fatiguing and the end of the long day was always welcomed.

The second week on the range, live ammo was used. Much attention was given to the use of the sights, making adjustments for range (distance) and allowances for the wind, if any. Distances fired were 200-300 and 500 yards. Each man had to zero in his rifle for each of these ranges. This is done by adjustment of the rear sight. After each 'zeroing in' shot the Marine marked in his score book conditions such as distance, windage (sight adjustment made latterly right or left from zero on the rear sight) and elevation. The windage and elevation are recorded in the score book as the clicks, or marks, on the adjustable rear sight required to hit the bullseye. A change in distance (200-300 or 500 yards) always called for an elevation change on the rear sight. Normally, once a rifle was zeroed in no windage adjustment is needed unless firing on the 500 yard range. As each shot is fired the position of the front sight on the bullseye, at the instant of firing, is marked in the scorebook. The target is then lowered and a

round black disc mounted on a peg and inserted into the bullet hole. The target is then raised again and the Marine, observing the disc, knows exactly where the bullet struck. The spot is marked on a target in his score book. If the hit was not in the bullseye center, then an adjustment, either or both on windage and elevation, is made on the rifle's rear sight. If the bullet missed all three circles on the target a red flag (Maggie's Drawers) was waved. This caused much laughter to the embarrassed shooter. Another shot is squeezed off and the procedure is repeated. This is done until consecutive shots can be put into the bullseye. This zeroing in is done while in the prone position, as this is the most steady position. This information, ie., windage and elevation clicks on rear sight, plus distance, weather conditions, are entered into your scorebook. The rifle will always put you into the bullseye from that point on, assuming that the front sight hasn't bent (unlikely) and the correct clicks are used for elevation and windage and proper trigger squeeze is used. Of course, the object is to put all shots into the centre of the bullseye. This is a very, very rare occurrence and one that would ensure fame and a cushy job, at least for a while.

When each man in the platoon had zeroed his rifle for each of the distances, firing single shots, practice would commence using rapid fire for each of the four positions on both the 200 and 300 yard ranges. Each magazine, or clip, held 8 rounds. As each shot was fired another round automatically is positioned in the chamber after the empty casing was ejected, again automatically. The rifle would fire as fast as the trigger was squeezed. After the eighth round was fired the empty clip would eject and the bolt remain open, awaiting the insertion of another clip. At this writing, 49 years later, I think we paced ourselves to fire two clips (16 rounds) in 60 seconds. The targets would again be marked and scores tabulated. This is very serious stuff in the U.S.M.C. and everyone, not only the shooter, is very desirous of achieving high scores. On the 500 yard range only the prone position was used.

After considerable practice of live firing and the resultant sore arms that the 'kick' or recoil of the rifle caused, "Record Day" finally arrived. Three classifications are possible when firing has taken place on Record Day. These are, from lower to highest classification, MARKSMAN, SHARPSHOOTER and EXPERT. I no longer remember what a perfect score (rare) is, nor the score to fit each of the classifications. I fired SHARPSHOOTER. The score and the classification are entered into a man's permanent records; and in my case I also got $2.00 per month extra pay from then on. This was in the days when $50.00 a month was a private's pay.

While at the range, each day the rifles were fired they were thoroughly cleaned before we were dismissed at the end of the day. The cleaning was done at the armory. The rifles were 'stripped down' (disassembled) and while the muzzles were immersed in big tubs of hot soapy water a rifle rod with a patch of flannel cloth on the end was run through the barrel from the chamber end. A patch was run through a few times and then a clean patch was put on and this was repeated. Finally, a brass wire brush was screwed onto the end of the rifle rod and run through a few times to remove pieces of lead fouling. Switching back to the patches, the inside of the barrel was again cleaned. Clean patches and clear hot water were used to remove any remaining soap. Finally, with the barrel out of the water, dry patches were run through and then a patch saturated in solvent. The disassembled bolt and other internal parts were wiped clean with rags damp with solvent. A tooth brush was always part of the gear used to help get into the recesses and hard to get at places. The entire rifle was always meticulously cleaned. A small amount of grease would be applied to the appropriate components. When assembled, the exterior would be lightly oiled by being wiped with an oiled cloth. This whole procedure would probably take fifteen minutes.

During our stay at Camp Matthews each platoon also had to serve its tour of duty in the butts. I think it was for a half day, two different times. As stated earlier, there

were three different distances fired but there were several of these locations, called ranges, at the camp. At each range, whether 200 - 300 or 500 yard distances, there was a long, straight, narrow trench about nine feet deep. The length of the trench might well be six hundred feet long. These were the butts, or the target area. Inside this trench there were vertical wooden frameworks, one for each target. . I think there were about 100 targets down the length of the trench. There was one Marine in the butts for each shooter on the firing line. The wooden frameworks are designed so that the target can be raised vertically up out of the butts, to be fired at by the men on the firing line. The target and wooden framework raises up and down, similar to a garage door, aided by a counter-weight and a Marine's muscle. All of the mechanism is inside the trench. The Marines 'working the butts' fasten a paper target upon the part of the framework that will be raised above ground. The paper target has a black round bullseye in the middle and two, each larger than the other, rings or circles surrounding it.

Once the men working the butts are into the trench, Marines that were going to be doing the firing advanced to the firing line upon command. Loud speakers were used and range officers were along the line to ensure safety. Nothing was done unless the orders to do so were received. At this point the rifles were not yet loaded, and each man was standing, facing the butts, looking at a sign that corresponded to the number on a peg by his feet. Upon command "LOCK AND LOAD" a double check was made that the rifle's safety was on and the clip was then inserted into the rifle. The range officer now asked the shooters, "READY ON THE LEFT?", "READY ON THE RIGHT?". If for some reason a shooter wasn't ready (seldom) he had better yell out, "NOT READY ON NUMBER -!". If all were ready the range officer called out, "READY ON THE FIRING LINE". At this command the rifles were unlocked, safeties off. In the butts a red disc on a pole was raised from the trench and waved in a long arc. Five seconds after this the command was given in the butts for "TARGETS UP". At this command each man in the butts raised his target, all in unison. The range officer then commanded

"COMMENCE FIRING". At this, men on the firing line dropped into position and blasted away. It was not unheard of for a shooter to expend his total barrage at a target not his own because of excitement or because of not taking time to double check his target's number after dropping into position. This, of course, was cause for great embarrassment as well as great derision by his buddies later on in the day.

At the termination of the allotted time (sixty seconds, I believe) the command was "CEASE FIRING". In the butts it was then "TARGETS DOWN". Each target was lowered and a black disc inserted into each bullet hole, the target was again raised so that the shooters could see their results. The shooter DI's and gunnery sergeants all recorded the scores. While this was going on the shooter picked up all the empty cartridges (brass) in his immediate area and deposited them in a barrel nearby. The recording of the hits took a brief time and the targets were ordered down again. A paint brush dipped into a bucket of paste was then brushed over a square white paper patch. This stuck onto the target over the bullet hole. When all holes were covered the target was ready for the next round of firing.

Working on the butts while the firing took place was rough. The noise of the bullets striking the paper targets was horrendous. Approximately 1400-1600 rounds per minute hitting four feet above hurts the eardrums, even though we had cotton wadded into our ears. It's a lot of noise.

Patching targets took place at top speed because much firing took place on record day. Of course, firing was done on days other than record day and target work was also performed for that too. Work at the rifle range was taken very seriously; there was no clowning around.

A day or so after record day at the range we were trucked back to the Recruit

Depot. We were still "Boots" but now had only about one more week of it. We were issued our "greens", the wool dress uniform used off base and by office types, except in the summer months. With this clothing we received two pair of wool trousers (no rear pockets), wool blouse, wool garrison cap, a flannel shirt, a heavy wool overcoat and a wide, heavy black leather belt with a large brass buckle. Dark brown dress shoes (Oxfords) were normally issued in peace time or if office-type work was going to be your next assignment. As discussed previously, none of us were issued Oxfords. All trousers, any uniform, were cuffless. All trousers, except dungarees, lacked rear pockets. The reason for this was the elimination of unsightly bulges from billfolds, handkerchiefs, combs, etc. Care was now taken to get us as good a fit as possible from the rack. Chalk marks were made for tailoring adjustments if needed, while we were trying on the trousers and blouse. They were removed, tagged with our name and left for alterations and pressing, after the removal of the multitude of tiny tags stapled to them. It seems like these clothes were picked up by us from the tailor shop about three days later.

In any case, about as soon as we got the "greens" back we were assigned 24 hours of guard duty. Guard duty at the base was a very formal affair and we had been getting training and instruction on this for some time. I know that I had at least two 4 hour shifts on duty, possibly three, being relieved by other members of the platoon. One of my assignments was inside the main gate, another was around some warehouse buildings in the middle of the night. We wore our "greens" and carried our rifle (no ammo). On a formal guard detail (we weren't as formal overseas) there was a strict procedure to follow when you were relieving a detail and when you yourself were being relieved. It was also very, very fatiguing, especially in daylight hours when people were out and about and your every move could be under observation, as it was in boot camp. I remember walking the guard post area in the middle of the night. I was so damn tired that I fell asleep while walking, walked right into a wall and dropped my rifle with a hell

of a clatter. I real fast-like picked it up, composed myself and resumed walking while looking out of the corner of my eye to if the officer-of-the day or anyone else had seen me. I was sure glad when that night was over.

Two other items were issued each Marine mid-way through Boot Camp. On was a permanent, encased in plastic identification card (ID) with photo, name, serial number, height, weight and color of hair and eyes. The other was two identical identification tags "dog tags". These were oval in shape, stainless steel, with a hole in each to which a cord was attached to be worn around the neck. Stamped into the metal was your name, serial number, branch of service, blood type and a letter, such as "P" for Protestant, denoting religion. The card I still have; the tags I left hanging - forgot them, on the bunk of the ship returning us to the States when we came back after the war. I wish I had them.

Each Saturday at the Recruit Depot there was a huge parade and review on the Parade Ground. I think the main reason was for the graduation, or completion, of a platoon's 'boot' training. There might be 3 - 5 platoons graduating each week. Any given platoon during boot camp would attend about four of these parades with the final one being his own platoon's graduation. These were very formal events, with quite critical individual or personal inspection as well as the platoon inspection. Music was provided by the bands and hundreds of men in marching formation were paraded before the reviewing stands. We wore our "greens" as the uniform for our final parade; maybe also for the next to the last. After our big day and parade we then sat for the official platoon photo. We paid for these and they were delivered about a week later at our new "home". We weren't "Boots" any longer. Suddenly, we felt a great deal of pride in our drill instructors. This was strange as up to a few hours previously they had rated very low in our thoughts.

As I remember it I think that we were issued liberty passes for that night, allowing us to leave the base for the first time, all on our own. I believe four or five of us wandered around downtown San Diego for a few hours. We just gawked at people, stores, traffic and things like that - like a typical "Boot". We were still unmistakably "Boots" and it was obvious to anyone who might possibly have noticed us. We didn't drink alcohol and even if we did most of us were too young to enter a saloon or bar anyway. I think we had to be back in the base by 2:00 a.m. but, by golly, we at least had been OUT!

The primary, but very important, stage of our military career had ended. We would soon split up. I had been promoted to Private First Class (PFC) upon graduation. I don't know why, only about six or seven of us were. Maybe my grasp of things, maybe the score on the rifle range, maybe because of my IQ, or lack thereof, (we had all been given tests), maybe because my name started with an "A". In any case, it meant a few more dollars per month pay and I was grateful for it.

I believe that we had our first payday early in the afternoon the day of our graduation ceremonies. This too was an impressive ceremony to us. Up to now we had never drawn any money; there had been no need of any as we never went anywhere to spend any. At pay call the platoon formed a single line and we filed into a building. There was a long desk with an officer, a couple of high-ranking NCO's and our DI. One at a time we approached the desk, saluted the officer, and stated what we earlier had been instructed. "PFC Addison, Fred, #544231, Sir." The bills and change were counted out as it was handed to us. We signed our name, acknowledging receipt of the money, stepped back a step, saluted the officer and marched out. We were rich! It was $50.00 a month X two months, minus our deductions. Most of us had signed up the first week to have money taken out to buy savings bonds (war bonds, as they were referred to.) Probably most of us continued that the total time we were in the Corps. I did. I no

longer remember the amount deducted nor the total worth by the time of my discharge from the Corps; it couldn't have been a fortune although at the time it seemed so. A brand new "Chevy" cost about $1,200.00 in the summer of 1946. I believe that I had that much, or close to it, or maybe more.

Chapter 3

The Monday morning, after our Saturday graduation, perhaps 75% of the platoon was loaded into trucks, with all our gear, and transported about 20 miles up into the hills northeast of "Dago" to our next "home". This was Camp Elliott on Kearny Mesa, which was mainly an infantry training base. This was about mid-November and it was raining that day. We were directed to huts and unloaded our gear in them. We would remain in these quarters for about two weeks. After dumping our gear in the huts we were marched to a large auditorium and instructed that we were in the infantry now but could choose, within limits, certain branches of the infantry. Teams of training personnel would explain their own particular branch, what they did and demonstrate their weapons.

Scouts and Snipers came out in camouflage clothing and painted faces, with scopes on their rifles, and told us their story. Then mortar platoons, both 60mm and 81mm, showed their weapons and explained their missions; followed by 37mm anti-tank platoons, combat-intelligence, riflemen, heavy (water-cooled) and then light (air-cooled) machine gunners. I was struck by the light machine guns (.30 cal.). I didn't want to wrestle anti-tank guns around, and the 81mm mortars and heavy machine guns looked like too much weight to carry. The light machine guns appealed to me. After the demonstrations and explanations I signed up for that branch and was assigned to the 1st Platoon, Company C. There were two platoons of light machine gunners, and 36 to 37 men per platoon.

The next two months were hard, but enjoyable. Discipline was strict but did not include the insulting, demeaning hazing that Boot Camp provided. We worked terribly hard, long marches with full gear and the machine guns. We crawled through the scrub and sage brush, learned all the various uses of the guns, dug fox-holes and defences constantly, ran, practiced hand-to-hand combat, ate many meals out in the field, and, above all, we learned that machine gun like the back of our hand. Each platoon had

about 9 guns, or a gun every four men. One man carried the gun, one the tripod and two men carried boxes of ammo and provided security for the gunner. These two were ready and prepared to take over the gun as we alternated chores and were proficient in all of them. In practice, the man with the tripod would run ahead with it and upon falling to the ground, open the legs of it and roll to the left side. The man carrying the gun would run up and set the gun into the tripod. Immediately following that one of the ammo carriers would run up with his two metal boxes of ammo and set them down at the left side of the gun. He would then run to a position where he could lie and provide security to the gunner. The assistant gunner, or tripod man, opened the ammo box, grabbed the end of the 250 round fabric ammo belt and fed it into the gun. The gunner closed the lid of the gun's receiver and yanked the gun's bolt back all the way and then released it. The bolt shot forward, placing a round in the chamber and the gun was now ready for action.

We had turned in our M-1 (Garand) rifles upon commencing machine gun training as they were too heavy and long if you were carrying a machine gun or its gear. We were instead issued .30 calibre carbines. These were smaller, much lighter and very efficient. I kept this weapon the rest of my time in the Corps, with occasional supplements. Upon receiving the carbine we also turned in our cartridge belts (which were mainly for the M-1 rifles) and instead were issued a web pistol belt and two ammo pouches, each containing two metal ammo magazines. Each magazine had a fifteen round capacity and was reusable, whereas the "clips" holding the M-1's ammo flew out of the rifle's receiver after the last round was fired and were expendable.

We stayed in the huts about two weeks until large, two-storey barracks were available to us. I remember that it was freezing cold some nights and we slept with our clothes on, with our ponchos and overcoats on top of our "sacks", as well. Yet in the daytime (unless it was raining) we wore only our dungarees. If raining, we still went out

in the field but donned our ponchos. We always wore either our helmet-liners, or the liners plus the steel helmet, while in the field. And, of course, the canvas leggings which Marines always wore in the field.

On Thanksgiving Day, 1943 I caught the bus and went into town alone. I possibly had an overnight pass, if so, I never once stayed overnight in town. Anyway, I thought I'd really 'put on the dog' and have dinner in a restaurant. I went into something like a dimestore diner (very cheap) and ordered my Thanksgiving Dinner. Remember, I probably hadn't been out of boot camp more than a week or ten days, my haircut was still about 1/2" long, shaved up the side and yelled "BOOT" to the general populace. I was chewing away on mashed potatoes and gravy and a turkey wing when I halfway noticed three or four civilians circling the place, looking for an available place to sit down. I was alone at a table for four. I heard a sweet voice saying, "Marine, if you don't mind, why don't you come back to my table and let those folks have yours?". What the hell. At that time I was still partially civilized yet. So I picked up my plates and stuff and moved back. I think that up to now I had had two dates in my life. The charmer who had invited me back was OLD, at least 25! She had red hair and was fairly attractive. With her taking all the lead we got through names, hometowns and such. She told me that she worked at the airplane plant in town, shared an apartment with another girl who worked a shift other than hers. In other words, she was lonely. All she did was work. We were finishing up our meal about this time. She said, "Hey, lets go to a dance." Well, I had never even seen a dance, let alone knowing how to go about it. So I gruffly replied "Naw, I don't want to dance." She brightened up in a minute and suggested that we go to a night club and have a drink or two. Hell, I was 17 and looked it. I couldn't get into a night club if I'd wanted to. I was too embarrassed to tell her I couldn't dance or couldn't buy booze. She then had a great idea, only I quickly wondered how to do that also. She wanted to buy a bottle of liquor and go up to her apartment and listen to records and stuff. By this time we were out on the sidewalk

talking. Of course, having no social graces or even any brains I mumbled something about having to shove off and go back to camp. For the next two to three years I remembered that conversation with deep regret. She must have remembered it with complete puzzlement, wondering if I was "funny" or she had lost all her charm in the bomber plant.

We progressed to the point where we did much firing with the machine guns, both daytime and nighttime. It was quite a sight at night to see the tracers (every fourth round) going from the gun's muzzle to the targets, especially if shooting long range. Once in awhile we'd fire so much that the end of the barrel would get so hot a cigarette could be lit off it. Getting a barrel that hot wasn't the thing to do because it could cause the gun to 'lock up' or freeze and it could not be fired again until it cooled down or another barrel put in. We also, individually, formally "fired-for-record" on the range. I fired "EXPERT" with the machine gun. We also did some firing with our carbines, as well as lobbed a few grenades one day. I do not remember if we fired the carbines "for record" or not.

On some of our night exercises the platoon leader (a 2nd Lieutenant) would arrange for us to go to a messhall for a sandwich and coffee. This would be 10:30 - midnight. I remember coming through the galley (kitchen) one of these times and messmen were breaking eggs, as rapidly as they could, into a huge stainless-steel mixer. It was probably about 50 gallon capacity and perhaps steam-jacketed. In any case, I saw some green, rotten eggs going into the kettle as well as many eggshells. Some shells would be retrieved, the rest served up when the eggs were cooked as scrambled eggs the next morning.

Once or twice while up at Camp Elliott I went over to the "slop chute" (beer parlor) that we had in our area, on base. Remember, I didn't drink but I probably had a beer or two there. I went with buddies. It was the damndest place that I'd ever seen. It was

noisy, rowdy and interesting to observe. Of course, there were no women there, no officers and damn few rules. For urinals, in the middle of the big room the cement floor sloped from two directions and terminated in a shallow gutter about 6" deep and 18" wide. This gutter ran the whole length of the room. It also had a slight pitch to it, running to one end of the room and then into a drain leading who knows where. Anyway, when the call hit you to relieve yourself you merely walked out to the middle of the room, hauled it out and let 'er go. I presume some working party the next morning hosed the trough down and put some disinfectant in it.

One day while two platoons of machine gunners were marching down the street, returning to barracks after being out in the field, I spotted Roger Cowles, the fella that I had enlisted with. I got his attention and gave him my barrack's number. He came over that night and we had an interesting time catching up on the past few months. He either was in, or had just finished, a shoe repair training course. He never did get overseas while in the Marines. We went out on liberty together at least once. Neither I, nor any of my fellow machine-gunners, ever had a furlough or leave to go home. In fact, I had probably only two 48 hour passes while at Camp Elliott and always returned to camp instead of staying in town. There was no reason to stay in town. It would have been expensive to begin with (hotel and meals) plus I really preferred "home" in the barracks. I got to town (San Diego) about six or seven different times. On one trip I did what many of us did; went to a photo studio and had my photo taken wearing a U.S.M.C. "dress blue" jacket and cap. This was supplied by the studio for the occasion. I sent the photo home to the folks. I still have it. I believe that I phoned home once or twice while at Camp Elliott. Phone use then was not nearly as commonplace as it is now.

One of my close buddies, John Martino of Indiana, went up to Hollywood a couple of times. He was a first generation American from Italian folks. Friends of his parents lived up there. They were communists and I believe he said Russian. In any case, they

treated him royally with a lot of company over and food and drinks. He invited me along but I never went. After we went overseas John went to "I" Company, 22nd Marines and was killed.

With us machine gunners there were two Papago Indian boys (my age) from a reservation west of Tucson, Arizona. They were sort of shy and quiet but excellent Marines. I'll refer to them later, in Chapter 6. We also had an Apache-Mexican named Rube Arvizu. He was fun-loving and totally different in behaviour from the Papagoes. He was also three to four years older. I'll refer to him again also near the end of this chapter and in Chapter 9.

I don't remember getting any work details or KP while at Elliott. I did take my turn, usually a half day at a time, a couple of times to wash barracks windows, clean the heads and to make sure that everything was shipshape for the daily "walk thru" of one of the "non-coms" (NCO's).

Midway through the training at Camp Elliott I had written Dad and asked him to get me a good quality fighting knife. In due time it arrived. It had been made from the tip-end of an old sword, had a wooden hilt and looked pretty efficient. The overall length was 12 1/4"; the blade was 7 1/2". I suspect that it had been made in the machine shop at Kellogg's. I didn't know it until after the war but Dad had four knives made; I'm sure all volunteered by his co-workers at Kellogg's. I still have the one that he sent me and which I carried into combat. Luckily, I never had to use it for its intended purpose although I did have it in hand a couple of times. Just prior to completion of the training at Elliott we were issued the famous K-BAR fighting knife, with leather sheath.

I don't remember any parades at Elliott but I'll never forget catching guard duty one night. This was near the end of our training, probably early January 1944. I was taken,

by jeep, out to hell and gone into the boondocks. I've no idea now what I could possibly have been guarding out there, except maybe a dirt trail and a long, high fence that ran forever. There were no buildings nor anything of value. It was cold and I had my overcoat on. It was also moonlight, after midnight, and the coyotes were howling. I had a loaded magazine in my carbine, nothing in the chamber. About 0200 - 0300 hours a jeep, with its lights out, came slowly up the trail towards me. When it got about 80' away it stopped and two figures got out and started towards me. In the best tradition of the Corps I challenged them, "HALT, WHO GOES THERE?" No answer, and they continued towards me. Again I challenged. Again no response. Now, I knew they probably weren't saboteurs and probably were the Officer-of-the Day and the Sergeant-of-the-Guard. But, they did not answer my challenge and were still advancing. I knew my next move was very serious and was going to get me in trouble no matter what I did, or didn't do. So, I did it! I pulled back the cocking lever on the carbine and a round went into the chamber. I took aim on the lead one and with a shaking voice, I told them again, "HALT AND IDENTIFY YOURSELF OR YOU'RE GOING DOWN!" Well, that really got their attention and identities came tumbling out as they played a flashlight on their faces. Of course, it was the OD and Sgt. of the Guard and they were as excited as I was. They chewed me out for putting a round into the chamber and I wanted to know why in hell they hadn't responded to the challenge. Maybe it was some stupid test of theirs. It was stupid as I would have shot them both in another second.

When I was relieved of guard duty two to three hours later I was summoned into the office of a pretty high-ranking officer (for me). While I stood at attention he asked me what had gone on out there. I told him of my repeated challenges that were ignored. He said that he understood that I had put a round into the chamber with the announcement that I would shoot. I replied, "Yes sir." He then asked me if I really would have shot. I said, "Yes sir." I think that he had the slightest of smiles on his face as he dismissed me (or maybe that's what one scared Marine hoped).

Co. A, 1st Armored Amphib. BN., Fred Addison - August 1993

We finished our machine gun training about January 14th or 15th and were moved into barracks a mile or so away. We were now the 41st Replacement Battalion and would be shipped out very soon. Across the street from our barracks was a brig. There were perhaps 40 cells, one for each Marine. They had wooden floors but all four walls were of heavy fencing wire. Each cell had a door, which was padlocked if the prisoner was inside, which was usually only from about 1730 - 0600 hours. The yard was dirt with wooden walkways. After dark many floodlights kept the area lit up and each cell's occupant could easily be observed. There were many guards with clubs and loaded rifles. I'm sure no one tried to escape. Every day the prisoners marched out, under guard, to work details. They wore a big letter "P" painted on the back of their dungaree jacket and on the back of each leg of their pants. They were not treated friendly by the guards. After all, they were in there for really serious stuff, like insubordination, overstaying leave for half a day, asleep on guard duty, bad stuff. When returning to the brig from work details or chow, they approached a couple of guards with clubs, at the gate. They were in a column of threes and halted just outside the gate. Upon command three at a time would approach, undo their pants and stick their arms straight out. Supposedly any hidden weapons, such as a messkit fork, would fall to the ground. Sometimes their pants did also. I think the only dinnerware they were allowed at chow was a spoon and this they showed to the guard as they stood at attention. The guards would often rap them across the belt line with the club to make anything hidden there fall. They were not treated kindly. Sometimes I'd see a prisoner holystoning his deck in the middle of the night. It got pretty darn cold at night up there in the hills in December and January and I never did see any prisoners who appeared overdressed. I think that a Marine Corp brig would do a lot to straighten up most of our present day young incorrigibles.

During the week or so that we were in this new location we were making preparations for going overseas. The only thing we would carry aboard the ship would

be a light pack containing a couple of changes of clothes and toilet articles. We would also have one blanket outside the pack and we'd carry our personal weapons and pistol belts with its 782 gear. Our seabags containing the rest of our gear would be loaded into the ship's hold before we boarded.

When we fell out for our final reveille roll call on embarkation day, Private Rube Arvizu, our Apache buddy, didn't answer to his name. Someone said that he was up in his bunk. We heard later in the day that Rube had gone into "Dago" the night before. He liked to go into the bars and cantinas in the areas where we avoided. He had gotten into a little fight and had a knife put between his ribs. He had lost a lot of blood and went to sick bay instead of boarding the ship with us. (see Chapter IX for more on Rube).

A convoy of trucks took us to the docks at "Dago". There were about 1,250 of us in the 41st Replacement Battalion. I went in the advance trucks because I had gotten stuck with permanent guard duty for the entire trip to the South Pacific. It could have been worse; I could have gotten mess duty.

CHAPTER IV
TO THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC, January 1944

As stated earlier, we (the guard duty detail) arrived at the docks about noon on January 22, 1944. We boarded a decrepit old merchant marine (not U.S. Navy) ship, the S.S. President Tyler. It had probably been quite a vessel once, but it turned out to be the greasiest, most crowded tub that I would ever sail on. It was a cargo ship with vast holds (where the troops slept) and large derricks for moving cargo into and out of the holds. Huge greasy electric motors that moved the derricks were also on the top-side.

We were shown down into the bowels of this tub and told to pick a sack and stow our gear on it. Someone then led us on a tour of where our guard posts were to be, dropping one of us off at each station. There were probably 8 to 10 posts in all. On guard duty we wore helmet liners, dungaree uniforms, pistol belts, M.P. armband and carried a heavy wooden billy club about 2 1/2 inches in diameter and 26 inches long. More on this exciting responsibility later.

The troop holds were very crowded (everything, everywhere was very crowded). The bunks were stacked four high. They were canvas stretched onto metal tubular frames. I chose a bottom bunk. This could be, and was, both a blessing or a real poor choice as I'll explain in a minute or two. As I didn't have to be on guard duty until about midnight, I and my buddies watched the loading of the troops onto the ship. The ship got underway after evening chow. I reported for guard duty in due time and the post that night was near the bow of the ship but way down in the depths of it. I don't remember what in hell I was supposed to be guarding down there but all I remember now is a bunch of corridors. The ship was churning through the ocean and the bow was bucking a bit. The diesels were throbbing away and after a couple of hours ole

landlubber Addison turned green and got horribly seasick. I couldn't leave my post, I couldn't puke on the floor (until later) so I took off my helmet liner and commenced to fill it. After hours, it seemed, of retching and finally dry heaves, I flopped out onto the floor and that's where the Sergeant of the Guard found me. Well, that's a court martial offence (sleeping on guard duty) but after chewing me out he could see that I was in deplorable shape. He sent a temporary relief for me so I could empty my helmet, wash it and replace it onto my head. I then reported back to my post and finished my watch.

I, and most everyone else, was sick for three days. Everywhere we went we had to wear a bulky, filthy, greasy life jacket. We slept in our clothes and life jackets during the period of *mal de mer.* Remember the four-high bunks? Well, if you had the top one there was a hugh diameter steam pipe about 12 inches above your head and body. If you got too close it would get you. But, it had advantages being up there. Remember, everyone was sick for three days. The guy on the bottom bunk got the puke from everyone above him. Also, guys going up to bunks #2, #3 and #4 were likely to step on the guys in the lowers as they ascended to their little nest above. Some guys just tried to sleep up on the decks, sitting up against a bulkhead or something. Cleanup details were busy trying to keep the sleeping areas mopped up. The galley (messhall) during the sea-sickness period was horrible. Well, it was horrible all of the time but especially then. The food left a lot to be desired at any time and the mess trays were always greasy. I can remember the trays sliding around on the mess table because of the pitching of the ship. Every once in a while someone got up and ran outside to puke over the rail. Sometimes they couldn't make it and puked right in their tray or on the deck of the galley.

The sea-sickness passed and we settled into a boring routine. Everyone that could was always topside. Guys played cards, groups of them talked, other groups sang and there were the endless chow lines. A couple of hours before chow the long,

snaking lines of troops would start forming up on deck. We all had bouts of the "shits", usually the whole shipload of us at once. The heads (toilets) were crude wooden affairs erected up on deck. They were similar to the old-fashioned outhouses except not as fancy. There were about fifty of these in a row, all cosily side-by-side as it is in the military. Sea water constantly ran in the trough beneath the crappers, flushing the excrement over the ship's side into the sea. A pump must have kept this flush water flowing. I can remember one bad night when 1,250 men all had to go at the same time, into fifty or so crappers! Guys had their asses hanging over the rail of the ship, a few filled their pants, took them off and flung them over the side.

The days progressed and we got into warmer climes. Any water that we got for laundry, washing or showers was from the sea. No fresh water. Salt water showers cool you off but soap didn't co-operate with the salty water and you could never feel clean, just sticky. Laundry was a disaster so we didn't change clothes too often. Some guys tied their dungarees onto ropes and threw them off the stern (the "fan-tail") of the ship, letting them drag behind in the wake and turbulence from the ship's propeller. After about twelve hours of this they would haul them aboard (if they hadn't come loose and been lost at sea) and lay them on greasy motors or on the ship's rail to dry. We had a very limited supply of fresh water in the "scuttlebutts" (drinking fountains) aboard ship, for drinking purposes only, at designated times each day. Marines would line up awaiting the magic hour and drink long and deep when the flow was turned on. This was it. No other fresh water was to be had except for "other personnel aboard". Will explain this in a moment. The fresh water was obtained from evaporation aboard the ship which converted salt water to fresh. These always seemed to be malfunctioning or there just wasn't a sufficient number of them. I can remember taking a huge draught of water sometimes and swallowing only to discover that it was now salt water and not fresh. The evaporation had screwed up again! One of my guard posts was in "officer country", below decks and in the area where the officers had state rooms or cabins. A

freshwater "scuttlebutt" there was reserved for officers only and always had fresh water. The whole area was off-limits to enlisted men but the brave and the bold managed to discover it somehow. My job, and the other guards, was to protect it for officers only. If we got caught letting the troops partake it was "WALK THE PLANK" type of punishment for us. I can remember swinging the club one night at four or five diehards who wouldn't take "NO". (Didn't hit 'em, just showed my "steadfastness to Duty, God and Country"). The occasional one who came alone in the dead of night would be allowed to slake his craving if no one was around. Of course, I filled my canteen and belly at each guard detail. This was decidedly no pleasure cruise! I was on many ships after this but the S.S. President Tyler was the worst.

After about two weeks aboard the ship they opened up its ship's store for us. This was the only ship where I ever saw this done. It was like a mini-PX. We would line up outside and they would pass your purchases out a window to you. Items on sale were cigarettes, a limited supply of candy and a few other items. The lines were long to get these things. After all, what else was there to do? The store would be open approximately two hours maybe three times per week. One time they had chocolate bars and after we had eaten two or three of them we discovered they had worms in them. I think that this prompted the diarrhea to reappear in a few hours.

The ship ran a zig-zag course all the time and at night "blackout" was strictly observed. No lighting of matches on deck and any cigarettes had to be hidden under your jacket or poncho. We had no other ships with us. Garbage from the galley was thrown off the fantail, but only after dark, and early into the darkness. This was so that no Japanese submarines could surface, spot our garbage and then determine our course. Likewise, absolutely nothing was to be thrown overboard by the troops at anytime.

As we got into the Southwest Pacific, the steel decks got hot from the sun. We shed our dungaree jackets (but not the ever-present life jackets) in order to get suntans. It was beautiful to see the flying fish sail out of the water and glide incredible distances. At night the waters in the wake and at the bow were phosphorescent and the billions of stars in the dark sky were amazing to see.

We crossed the equator on February 2nd and observed the time-honoured naval tradition of the "Ancient Order of the Deep". This ceremony occurs to initiate first-time crossers of the equator from the lowly status of pollywogs to that of esteemed shellbacks. This fun (?) and foolishness lasted all morning with we pollywogs being subjected to paddlings with wide thin paddles, getting big patches clipped out of our hair, being smeared with foul-smelling stuff, wearing just our skivvy shorts, "walking the plank" while blindfolded and tumbling into a big vat of seawater, made to kiss "King Neptune's" fat belly (which was smeared with grease) and numerous other "fun" things such as having some bitter, sour liquid squirted into our mouths. We were later issued our official certification cards that stated we were now, indeed, members of the Ancient Order. I still have mine, along with one issued when we crossed the 180th meridian on February 9th. The 180th meridian is the International Date Line and we, at that moment, gained 24 hours because it was now February 10th instead of February 9th.

We had absolutely no idea of where we were nor where we were going, but by now (1993), looking at a map of the Southwest Pacific, I figure that we went southwest from San Diego. We probably went just to the east of Tahiti and (still going southwest) we turned to the west when we were south of it. When we crossed the 180th meridian we must have been also just south of the Fiji Islands. We pulled into port at Noumea, New Caledonia on February 12th. Noumea is the capital city of this French colonial island, which is about 750 miles east of Australia. I didn't know any of this then, but New Caledonia had a population of approximately 76,000. More than half were (and

are) Melanesians, about one third European, mostly French. It was discovered by Captain James Cook in 1774. The Japanese had not tried to occupy it but would have been quite close by, to the north.

We docked at Noumea and stayed here six days while loading and unloading of cargo took place. No troops were allowed ashore. I assume officers were but I do not remember this detail. Noumea had infamous whorehouses there, catering to long lines of "horny" servicemen. This too I read about in later years.

February 13th was my 18th birthday and we were still at Noumea. I got a wonderful birthday present from one of the civilian crew members, a middle-aged Chinese gentleman who was often in the area of my guard post by the scuttlebutt. Of course, he didn't know it was my birthday but in the middle of the night, and no one else was around, he brought me the most delicious big meat sandwich that I think I'd ever had. He left a small basket with a lid on it adjacent to the scuttlebutt so that I could hide the sandwich in between bites. He told me that if anyone questioned me about the basket to tell them that it was his. He spoke very little English.

When we departed Noumea we went north, passing the New Hebrides Islands one and a half days later. We came in quite close to one of the islands, of which there are twelve principal ones. It was beautifully green and lush. We saw no signs of civilization as we passed the island. The New Hebrides are approximately 1,000 miles northeast of Queensland, Australia and N.N.E. of New Caledonia. The islands had a population of approximately 58,000 at that time, mostly Melanesians, and comprised about 5,700 square miles. It was here that bungee jumping originated, to relieve the boredom probably, by the natives. They would fasten a vine to their ankles and dive out of the top of a tall tree, hopefully coming up short by about two to three feet of the ground (and a broken neck). As we left the New Hebrides we picked up a seven ship

convoy, the first company we'd had on the high seas since leaving home. We continued zig-zagging, now in a N.W. direction, through the Coral Sea, as I've since discovered.

CHAPTER V

GUADALCANAL - INITIAL WEEKS

On February 22nd, thirty-one days after hauling anchor at San Diego, we pulled up next to another lush green island. Any island would have looked beautiful to us; we were so tired of being on that hot, dirty, crowded, greasy President Tyler that we would have swam to shore if allowed to! It was Guadalcanal, as we had been informed a day earlier, approximately 1,230 miles east northeast of the N.E. tip of Australia.

Guadalcanal and Tulagi had been the first landings on Japanese held territory since the war had started, and were done by the U.S.M.C. on August 7, 1942. The Army joined in a few months later. The island was declared "secured" in February 1943. The Japanese army had taken the islands shortly after Pearl Harbor. The troops had a really rough time in the swamps and jungle with much illness, malaria and other tropical diseases. They were also very "green" at jungle fighting at that time. The fighting see-sawed back and forth, with naval shelling and bombardments onto the troops from both adversaries. Approximately 33,000 Japanese were killed, a big share of these by disease and wounds that needed medical treatment that wasn't there a lot of the time. About 10,000 Japanese managed to get off the island to fight later in more of the Solomon Islands, of which Guadalcanal was one. The U.S. dead were 1,979 and approximately 6,000 wounded.

Anyway, the "scramble nets" were thrown over the sides of the ship. The nets are made of heavy rope and extend down to a couple of feet above the water line. The whole thing is like many connected squares, each square being about 18" X 18". We went over the side, onto the nets, with our packs and weapons on our backs and helmets on our heads. Perhaps 50 men at a time can be on the nets. The object, as we'd practiced at Camp Elliott, is to ALWAYS use the vertical part of the net to hang onto with the hands as you descend and the horizontal part to stand on. Failure to do this will probably mean someone above you will step onto your hands if you grasp the horizontals. This could result in broken fingers or wrists. Down we went, jumping the last 3-4 feet into the Higgins boats awaiting us. This would be the only time, in many disembarkations, that I would depart a ship in this manner. Oh, but we were sure GLAD to be going ashore!

We were put ashore on a sandy beach in an area known as Tassaforonga. This is on the north coast towards the west end of the island. There was nothing here but sandy beach, which then turned to thousands of coconut trees as we went inland a hundred yards or so. High hills were in the background, with dense jungle between the coconut grove and the hills. The troops stayed in the units that they trained in at Camp Elliott, dispersing into the trees as the men came ashore. By early evening, we were all ashore and instructed to put up two-man shelters using our shelter-halves from our packs. Scattered clumps of small "tents" were soon erected, each about 3½ feet high, maybe 4 feet wide and 6½ feet long. Two men, each attaching his

shelter-half to the other's, completes this "tent." The area under the trees had some small brush and much grass, about 12-14 inches high. My close buddy, Bill Aydelotte from Oakland, California, and I teamed up and by darkness we had crawled inside for sleep. The "galley" tents weren't to be set up for 3-4 days yet so we had partaken of our K-ration already. Areas had been designated and marked for the "heads." We had refilled our canteens and so were ready for the night. Of course, you always slept in your clothes unless you had a camp. It was hotter than hell and what with swatting mosquitoes and trying to move 3-4 coconuts out from under us that were impeding sleep, we got through the night. Arising at day break, we discovered that the "coconuts" we had been moving around in the night were skulls. There had been fighting here about 12 months previously and this was a small part of the results.

About noon that second day, we formed up into columns of three and started moving east along a narrow (one track) dusty road. A real strange thing happened on the march. The sun was shining brightly, dust was thick in the air from our feet and suddenly we walked into a solid wall of rain. In about 3 minutes the road was mud, and just as suddenly we walked out of the rain into bright sunshine and the dusty road again; which hadn't received a drop of the rain. This was observed many times in the Tropics and it never ceased to amaze me. After a couple of miles, still paralleling the beach, we came to an area where I would stay the next five weeks. We slept in shelter halves for about a week and then tents were procured from supply units further up the island. We were closer to the jungle here and although the island was "officially" secured a year earlier, there were stories of Jap "holdouts" (not untrue) that would come out of the jungle to steal clothes, food, whatever. Even, as the rumors had it, slit a throat now and then. So, for the first few nights those who had sentry duty had "itchy fingers" and the jungle's silence was broken by shots every now and then. I never caught this guard duty, as I'd just finished my share of it aboard ship. No sentries ever produced a body those first few nights, but I'll bet they scared the hell out of a lot of wild pigs that were rooting around in the jungle. As with most Marine replacement battalions, I've since found out, ours was put onto eight hour shifts to work around the clock unloading supply ships until men were absorbed into units. Trucks picked up the "volunteers" and hauled them east about 5 miles to Kokumbona. This was a natural harbor area. Kokumbona consisted of one or two crude docks and perhaps 8-10 buildings. It had been a supply post, with perhaps a missionary and someone connected to getting copra (dried coconut meat) onto the ships before the war. Lever Brothers (soap) conducted business here before the japanese arrived early in 1942. The matanikau River flowed into the sea here also. I didn't get this hard duty either. Fate spared me for a more glamorous role.

I was assigned "mess duty," or KP as known in the Army. I believe that I had this for about a month, all through March. This was pretty good duty, not too hard work and allowed me quite a bit of free time. There was no real galley, or mess hall. A big tent had been erected with tarpaulins stretched between some trees for added protection from the rain or sun. This was where the "cooking" took

place. There serving area consisted of a "table" (crude planks on supports) where the pots could be set to service the chow lines. This was on the beach about 60-100 yards up from the water and was under the open sky. I suppose that the battalion had 5-6 of these. The food wasn't gourmet but was probably better than that which the troops had aboard the ship. Re-constituted dehydrated julienne-style potatoes or dehydrated powdered mashed potatoes, powdered eggs, canned Spam, canned stew, canned vegetables, canned tomato and grapefruit juice were a mainstay of our diet. Actually, this was pretty much our diet for the balance of our overseas duty except for combat areas and while on land maneuvers. There were some variations, of course, such as later on we had fresh baked bread and sometimes fresh (or frozen) beef and lamb. But I'm wandering off the subject, MY MESS DUTY.

Mess duty here consisted of filling about six large (clean) garbage cans with water. The cans were supported about 1½ feet off the ground level, with propane gas burners beneath them. I really don't remember what kind of fuel was used, but it was probably propane. The cans of water were used to wash our mess-kits after eating chow. The water would be at or close to the boiling point. Soap would be in the first one with a couple of cloth swabs fastened to a stick for washing the mess kit. The soap was shaved off bars of yellow Fels-Naptha with a knife. Next in line was a rinse can, followed usually by a second rinse. This was standard procedure everywhere. Anyway, after chow, these had to be dumped after the water had cooled and then refilled ready for the next meal. The cooking pots had to be washed and the area policed up. One of the choice jobs was to slash an opening in both ends of the juice cans (approx. 1 gallon size) and then flatten them with a sledge hammer. This was done down by the water's edge and the cans were then pitched into more garbage cans, finally being razzled aboard a low-sided barge along with any cans of garbage we had. The barge then went out about 4-5 miles and the stuff was dumped overboard. The cans sank and fish probably ate the rest. Of course, there was no plastic in those days so that wasn't a problem like it is today. I usually got the job of slashing and smashing the cans, never the "sea-duty."

One day, while dressed in shorts (cut-off old dungarees) and "boon-dockers" (boots), as was the custom, I heard someone call me. It was one of our sergeants, standing with a "doggie" (Army) captain. I ran up, saluted and stood at attention. I was a real impressive Marine. Half-naked and completely covered with tomato juice from zealously smashing cans. I sure was "spit and polish." Anyway, the captain asked me if I had a sister that was an Army nurse out here in the Pacific. I replied in the affirmative, with a "Sir" added. He then introduced himself as a friend of hers, having met her on Fiji. This was Cap. Joe Christ, whom I was to see again in about 2-2½ months. As we were never allowed to say where we were, he had discovered this by investigating as to the whereabouts of the 41st Replacement Battalion.

Hardworking young men have tremendous appetites. We were no exception. We were all "chow hounds." One day while the troops were having their chow slopped into their mess kits, a dissatisfied Marine bitched to the mess man ladling out one of the items about the

inadequacy of his portion. The mess man, Pvt. Frank Yelverton, a short-tempered friend of mine, leaped over the serving line and "decked" the complainant. Frank "took no sh--" from anyone!

When we moved into our six-man pyramidal tents, we were reunited with our sea bags. About the first or second day the whole battalion had orders to dress in summer uniform (Khakis), form up and assemble on the beach in ranks. We marched down to the beach (open area) and, after the usual reporting in as to "A" Co. all present and accounted for, "B" Co., etc., etc., I had another shock. My name was called out and I was ordered "front and center!" Christ, I knew that I hadn't earned the Congressional medal of Honor yet. What in hell was this all about? As I was marching to the front of the whole battalion, a pimply-faced jerk of a 2nd Lieutenant snarled out something about "I'd be a brig rat now." As I was at attention in front of the C.O., I was asked a question or two. I have no idea what the question was. I never had a clue what in hell was going on. Evidently they were in doubt also. I was ordered back into ranks and the formation was dismissed. Later that afternoon, I found out that Sergeant Thomas Edington had stolen an officer's .45 pistol and had directed suspicion onto me. He was found out, broken in rank and sent to the brig. Of course, I was never formally accused and so no apology, and even any mention, was ever made of this. I saw the former sergeant go by on the back of a garbage truck, with a guard plus big yellow "P's" painted on his back, a couple of days later while I was scrubbing clothes in the river. I gave him "the finger." He, while we were aboard ship earlier, snearingly made some comment that he "sure didn't want to have to go into combat with BOOTS like us." He had <u>never</u> seen any combat, had had duty in Cuba or some such place for 2-3 years. <u>I hope</u> that he did have to go into combat. There sure was an excellent chance. Brig-rats usually had that destination.

I don't remember showers, nor laundry facilities, in this first camp. We may have built them and I've forgotten it. If we had them, the showers would have consisted of an elevated 55 gallon gas drum, filled with water and with 3-4 pipes with on-off valves on them. "Laundry facilities" would have consisted of some planks upon which to scrub our clothes with our pail (of water) plus the scrub brush and yellow soap. When it rained, which we had no shortage of, we'd peel off our clothes (if off duty), stand out in the "company street" and lather up right then and there. Usually my buddies and I would walk about ¼ mile and bathe and do our laundry in a beautiful, clean, clear river (the SEGILAV, I believe) which ran down out of the hills and emptied into the ocean. The river was shallow, about 50 feet wide, a sandy bottom and with a fair current. A few convenient logs were at the water's edge. The bark was off of the logs, the surface was smooth and they made a perfect board upon which to lay your laundry while scrubbing it. When the laundry was finished, we'd lay it over brushes to dry and then often swim or wade the river down into the ocean. A Jap troop transport/cargo ship (the KINUGAWA MARU) was beached there. In desperation, and under attack, this ship and a couple more west of it were run ashore when attempting to resupply the Japs with more troops in November 1942.

Brightly colored small fish could be seen in the river and larger

ones around the ship. I thought it would be great to be able to fish for them and wrote home for some hooks and line. In those days it was linen line, nylon nor monofilament not having been invented yet. In due time it arrived, but by that time I had been re-assigned and never did use it, although there were opportunities.

This was a beautiful beach and area for swimming. I never thought very much (I should have) about sharks and barracuda. There are many around the Solomons and I've since read of not uncommon shark attacks, and many deaths, in pre-war times. I never saw any nor heard any stories of guys seeing them while swimming. I would say we were very lucky, as we did a lot of swimming here and in other island areas. There were coral reefs in this Tassaforonga area and when you swam around the coral you had to wear your boots. The coral is razor sharp and the wounds easily become infected. One time someone had a pair of diving goggles. I'll never forget how utterly beautiful it was under water around the reef. It was like a huge flower garden, and with hundreds of different colors, shapes and sizes of fish swimming about. I only had access to the goggles that one time. It must be remembered in our present time, in 1993, that back then no one had ever heard of scuba diving, air tanks, or snorkles. Even goggles were uncommon. Wearing 4-5 pounds of boots made swimming a bit arduous also. Many sea shells were collected in the shallow waters in this area. I got some but really wasn't hooked on collecting shells. Some of them were likely valuable. "CAT'S EYES" were desired by all. Remember, this was a wild, semi-civilized spot and tourists and beach-combers were non-existent prior to the war. I don't imagine it's hot on the tour list even today. I didn't have to fight on Guadalcanal; and if a person can be near the beaches and away from the terrible jungle and swamps it can be a lovely spot. I know that those who did do the fighting there, with the disease, malaria, lack of food and equipment, horrific mosquitoes and the heat and humidity in the jungle and swamps, would only shake their heads and think I was insane. But, I was lucky. I spent 10 months total on the 'Canal (two different trips) and it was my favorite spot. Our camps were always near the beach, we weren't dodging bullets, usually we could keep reasonably clean and although we spent much time in the jungle, we knew that we'd sooner or later get back into our beach camp.

While still in the replacement battalion, which was part of the 1st Marine Amphibious Corps, those that were on the work parties unloading ships very soon got into the favorite marine sport. This was often for necessity, or for a "better standard of living" or just because all other military branches had a greater supply of anything you might name. This usually included food stuffs and/or comfort-providing material. So, we often "borrowed" things. It was a game. Three of the machine-gunners got caught putting a can of grapefruit juice aside for each of them. The Army, by this time, was getting a little sick of our group's resourcefulness. They were turned over to our officers who gave them a "deck court-martial." This was three days on "piss and punk" (bread and water), spent in the brig. About every hour all night long the guards would roust them out of their sacks for "piss call." This was for harassment purposes only, but sure cuts into a man's needed sleep. This is often standard procedure at night in the

brig. Pfc. Leland DeLauer, of Oakland, California, was on of these desperadoes. He was one of the men who ended up in the First Armored Amphib. Bn. with me.

A week or two after this, one of the ships must have had a lot of fancy (to us) clothing. One item that appealed to the work parties was very good quality field jackets ("Doggie" stuff again). Soon everyone in our battalion had one or two of them. A day later, the word ran like wild fire through the unit that MP's were going to swarm through our tents and give us a "shakedown." About 900 Marines grabbed up the contraband and ran off into the jungle, getting rid of it. Some dug holes and buried it. Some tents were searched. I never heard of any arrests. I left my jacket in the jungle.

Several times we'd load up our pieces and hike into the bush. It was terribly rough going in a lot of places. Vines with thorns about an inch long that just would hardly let you get through and about impossible to backtrack. Thickets of bamboo so close together you couldn't get through. One day we saw an iguana which at the time seemed like 5 feet long. We carried machetes also and whacked away at the thick vines, brush and trees. In some areas, we found lots of fox holes, debris and skeletons of Japs. In one of these areas, a jungled slope of a ridge, it was extremely humid, silent (not even birds), oppressive and with a strange odor. It was dank and dark at noontime. What a horrible place to die. On one very steep ridge, I found a wooden case 3/4 full of U.S. hand grenades. They looked pretty fresh for having spent a year there in the weather. I was more inclined to think that some unit 3-4 months earlier had left them there. But then, that did not sound like something the Corps would do.

About two minutes in the jungle and your clothes were soaking wet with sweat. We always carried enough water (canteens), but I had to see how good tasting the water was from a source I'd read about. This was from the inside of bamboo trees. Bamboo grows terrifically fast in the jungle and there's always a lot of moisture. I cut very easily, three or four slashes with a machete, a tree with a trunk about 5" diameter. I then cut about a 4' section out of it. Holding it horizontal, I cut a big "V" into one of the sections. Yes, it was full of water, nice cool, clean tasting water. Just like a long green canteen, but not as easy to carry.

Card games were often in progress. I got caught up in this for a brief spell. After about one day of play I had lost the $10-$15 that I had. Pay day was close and with this new stake in my pocket, I re-entered the games. About three days later, the month's pay was in someone else's pocket. I then sold the wrist watch my dad had given me and this afforded perhaps another day's "fun." Now, really desperate, I figured out a scheme to get some money, re-enter the battle and recoup all my losses. I took in laundry. For about three days I lugged clothing down to the river, scrubbed it impeccably clean, spread it on bushes to dry, folded it neatly and returned it to its rightful owners. With ignorant enthusiasm, I now was really going to win big. Well, I didn't. I was soon broke again and completely cured of Marine Corps poker playing.

Right from our first few days on the 'Canal, and probably the whole tour of overseas duty, we were issued each day a small yellow

pill. This was ATABRINE and was to prevent malaria. It was bitter tasting and after a couple of weeks of using these the skin took on a slight yellowish tint. But we knew it's value, didn't want malaria and so there was no reluctance in swallowing them. Besides, it was also "an order" to swallow them. Two or three big gulps of water was a definite assist because they were so bitter that you didn't want them sticking in your throat.

Our drinking water was also always "doctored" in order to kill bacteria. In some areas, our water was merely sucked out of a river by a tank truck. I assume that wells must have been drilled in some places also. But always a chemical was added for purification. This gave an iodine taste to the water. In some areas, we doctored our own by dropping a HALAZONE pill into our full canteen. We always carried Halizone in our packs if the area we were in necessitated self-treatment of the water. In camp areas, every company had a large, water-proofed fabric bag called a "LISTER BAG." They were perhaps 30 gallon capacity. These were hung from a thick limb of a convenient tree or were suspended from a large wooden tripod. The bags had 3-4 dispensers built into their rounded bottom. The dispensere had a push button that would allow filling of canteens, which were always our own personal supply of drinking water.

Looking west from the Tassaforonga beach, you can see Savo Island and to the North the Florida Islands, including Tulagi. This whole sea area, the Coral Sea, had become known as "IRON BOTTOM BAY," for the very many Japanese and American ships sunk there. We never saw many other troops nor were aware of other camps down in our west end of the island. I was soon to get a tour.

CHAPTER VI

The 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion and Guam

At roll call the morning of April 1, 1944, I and a few others were told to report to the company headquarters tent, with all our gear, immediately after chow. This we did and as ranking man (alphabetically) I was handed a packet of orders and records and we boarded a truck. I've always thought that there were 8-10 of us but in preparation for this writing, I can only come up with five names and faces, including my own. Besides myself, there were:

Pfc. Wm. Aydelotte
Pfc. Leland DeLauer
Pfc. Robert Allison
Pvt. George Christopulos

Note: In the initial assault on the beaches of Guam, DeLauer was wounded and Allison and Christopulos were killed. We were all machine gunners.

The ride to our new destination was revealing to me. We headed east and passed many camps along the way. As I hadn't done any traveling on the island I just didn't realize there were as many troops there as it was apparent. Remember, this was a good sized island, about 86 miles long and 24 miles wide, laid out in east-west direction length-wise. The only way you'd know it was an island was if you got up in a plane high enough to see all of it. And most of it was occupied. We passed Henderson field, the possession of which was bitterly fought over early in the campaign. We must have gone 40 miles or so skirting the northern coast, although it was difficult to know this a great deal of the time. We crossed a fairly good sized plain of elephant grass, into a narrow strip of jungle near the beach and arrived at our new home. The truck had pulled up near some rows of tents and we dismounted. A big, reddish-blond haired 1st Sgt. approached and I reported in. This was Bill Buttery of "A" Co. Aydelotte, Allison and myself were assigned to "A" Co., DeLauer to "B" and Christopulos to "D."

Our new outfit was the 1st Armored Amphibian Bn., 1st Marine Amphibious Corps. We had no idea what this meant, nor really what kind of an outfit it was. They had led the invasion of Roi-Namur islands (connected by a causeway) in the Kwajalein atoll in the Marshall Islands on Feb. 1. There were about 3,400 Japs on Roi-Namur before the invasion. There were Navy aviation or base defense troops. The 23rd Regt. assaulted Roi and had secured the island by night fall, with approx. 86 casualties. The 24th Regt. attacked Namur and by noon the following day this, too, was declared secured. Between the two islands the Marines had 195 killed and 545 wounded. A huge explosion on Namur, when a satchel charge was thrown into a block house full of torpedo warheads, caused 120 of these casualties. Both of these islands, combined, were just over two miles long. These, like most

atolls in the Marshalls, aren't more than 20' above sea level, if that. Other Marines and Army secured the remaining islands of Kwajalein atoll. This was the 1st Armored's first invasion. They had left the U.S. on Jan. 6, 1944, a couple of weeks ahead of us. The outfit consisted of a Headquarters and Service Company plus "A," "B," "C," and "D" Companies. There were roughly 820 men in all.

The battalion landed on the 'Canal Feb 23, the day after I had. They moved into a strip of jungle perhaps 300 yds. inland from a sandy beach in the TETERE area. They had made great progress, clearing jungle, digging drainage, erecting a battalion mess-hall and each company had two company streets for its three platoons. That is, one platoon's tent entrances/exits faced its own street. The other two platoons shared a common street. The streets were dirt, of course; raked fresh each a.m. Many tall trees provided shade (not too much as you wanted as few mosquitoes as possible).

In "A" Co., because of a slight hill, each row of tents were on a higher grade than the others. Each company's lister bag hung down near the company headquarter's tent. Starting on the east was the H & S Co. area, then running in an east-west line were the other four companies, with "D" at the west end. There was plenty of elbow room separating each company from the others. The battalion mess-hall was behind, or south of, H & S Co. We replacements joined in time that we were able to share in the work, damn hard work it was, too. In fact, the total time we were overseas, and in particular on the 'Canal, there were work parties every day except Sundays. These were exclusive of training, which constantly went on in one form or another, guard detail and mess duty. Because of the heat, we started our tasks early in the a.m. and a lot of the time were able to secure by early afternoon. We then did laundry, cleaned weapons or gear, swam. wrote letters, played volley ball or soft ball, etc.

Part of our work was building latrines (heads), hoisting barrels or big containers up about 10' high onto coconut log supports to make showers, built big recreation, quarter master and training tents. We also erected a large movie screen (out in the open) with many rows of horizontal coconut logs for seats and a boxing ring. This kept us lean, mean and in excellent physical condition. Try taking an axe to a tall coconut tree with approx. 20" to 24" dia. base. Chain saws had not yet been invented. These trees were straight and extremely tough because of their dense fibrous content. They were also very heavy. We would cut them to length depending on their ultimate usage, load them onto an amphibious tank, tie them down and take them back to where they were to be used. Work crews there would continue the project. For instance, our tents were the standard 6-men pyramidal type. To increase the tents' effective protective range (from rain) and, more importantly, to allow any cooling breezes to circulate, the side flaps around the whole tent were securely tied up to horizontal coconut logs about 3' to 3½' off the ground. These were called, by us, strong-backs and the total company areas were made much more comfortable, and roomier, by this procedure. Each company had a staggered time in which to enter, eat and exit the mess-hall. This allowed for the one mess-hall to be used by the whole battalion. No one rushed you out after the meal but we all respected the fact that

others would soon be coming in. Besides, it was always nice to go crap out on your sack before work commenced again. Rank was recognized in the chow lines. Sergeants and then corporals could get in a chow line ahead of PFC's or privates if they so desired. That is no problem and I never heard anyone bitch about it. In fact, to use a modern current term, we were just about always "HAPPY CAMPERS." We had discipline. Work crews kept the camp very neat and orderly and our morale was always pretty high. There was no rotation system to send you back to the States nor to any other civilization. Of course, rumors always were started just to see how far they would carry; such as "after such and such I hear we're going to Australia for a break." We knew it was a farce but sometimes believed just a wee bit. Not very much though.

I guess it's about time to mention what kind of an outfit the 1st Armored was. I mean, what were we for? As the outfit's name suggests, we were a floating vehicle. They floated because the vehicle's construction was that the sides consisted of permanent, built-in pontoons. This wasn't apparent from looking at them but there was space, maybe 3', between the outer and inner walls. This space was divided into several, maybe about five, compartments separated vertically, the length of the vehicle. Officially, they were LANDING VEHICLE, TRACKED (A1), or LVT (A-1). The (A-1) meant armored, first model. These were different from LVT's, which are very similar but are used to transport infantry from the ships to the beaches on an invasion. We didn't transport infantry, we preceded it ashore. Our difference also was that we had a turret of a light tank mounted on the LVT, plus a 37 MM anti-tank cannon, a 30 cal. machine gun in the turret, a 30 cal. machine gun by the radio man who sat in front on the right hand side of the driver and two 30 cal. machine guns behind the turret. These latter two were such that the gunner of each stood on a low metal platform and was out in the open from the lower ribs up. There was a port side and a starboard (left and right) gunner. I was the port side gunner on tank number A-10. "A" was for "A" Co. and #10 showed that it was in the second platoon. There were five squads per platoon, each squad with a tank. Three platoons per company X 5 tanks = 15 tanks/company plus three command tanks. Four companies X 18 tanks = 72 + 3 out of H & S Co., which were for the battalion's command.

Although our primary mission was to precede infantry ashore, blasting any observed targets plus laying down fire hopefully to keep the Japs' heads down, our secondary mission was to act as land tanks if need be until they could get ashore. We supported front-line infantry in night defensive positions, guarded against counter attacks from sea and occasionally leap-frogged ahead, with troops, to secure a point ahead of the advance. We were versatile and this was to change much more so in the fall of 1944.

Our training then consisted of practicing different types of formations in approaching a beach, to utilize the terrain and provide maximum fire power and the least target (ourselves) possible. This latter was a hope, not a fact. In order to cover unforseen circumstances, we did cross-training also; so that any of us could step in another's position with a half-way degree of confidence and

skill. We had firing exercises, both with the cannon and the machine guns and while on the water and also ashore. Much maneuvering was also performed in the jungle on a platoon or company size scale. In a tank, water and rations can be carried as well as our packs. Generally speaking, you could remain less wet and live a bit more comfortably than the infantry men. But then, everyone could. In the jungle, we always kept our pant legs in our socks, or wore leggings, and had our sleeves rolled down and collars up, to try and reduce the amount of mosquito bites received. If they were too numerous, we would wear mosquito nets over our helmets, or caps, with the lower part tied around the neck. This was a last resort; as we didn't like to wear them because they were so hot. We also had a stinky, oily mosquito repellent that we could put on the skin and clothing next to the skin. In camp, at 5:00 or 6:00 p.m., we also took the precautions except for the head net and repellent. This was S.O.P. (standard operating procedure) the total time overseas; both by order and because we believed in it. At night, in camp, we also each had a large mosquito net that was tied to a framework that fit over our canvas and wood cots. The bottom part of all four sides/ends of the net was tucked under our mattress pads so that insects could not get to us. This also kept the harmless geckos (small lizards) from running over your body and face and scaring the hell out of you. The mosquito nets also kept centipedes, snakes, and other neighbors from sleeping with you. We liked the geckos, and there were lots of them, because they ate insects and mosquitoes as well as being entertaining to observe in the daytime inside the tents.

The crew that I joined upon my arrival to the 1st Armored consisted of Corp. Larry Good--tank commander, Pfc. Bill Carroll--driver, Pfc. Bob Pierce--radioman/machine gunner, Pfc. Earl Gray--starboard side machine gunner, and myself--port side machine gunner. When we made the assault on Guam, we also had Sgt. Elmer Morris as our cannoneer and Corp. Dan Montgomery as ammo-passer down in the guts of the tank. I do not remember these latter two men as living in our tent and they didn't attend our daily activities. Montgomery worked in the maintenance shack, I believe, and Morris was an armorer.

About the second week that I was in the 1st Armored one of the crew in the tent obtained some "raisin-jack." This was a potent, foul tasting and smelling drink that was always secretly being made by someone--someplace. Of course, it was against rules and regulations to do so; but I believe it was overlooked sometimes if it didn't get out of hand and the officers and higher ranking NCO's could avoid making an issue of it. Although called raisin-jack, it was actually made out of anything that could be "obtained" (means stolen) such as raisins, fruit cocktail, canned peaches, pears, pineapple, ANYTHING. The masters of it made stills and crude condensers but the run-of-the-mill operator just put the fruit in a wooden water keg (usually "borrowed" from a life raft on a ship), added water and allowed it to ferment. In a week or so, when it was bubbling merrily away and the fruit flies were thick around it, the liquid would be drained off and declared rare vintage. Anyway, one night the brew was brought out and we started drinking it. This was my first time. It wasn't long

before we were giddy, especially me. Laughing and giggling, we were having a great time. Bill Carroll and Larry Good reveled in my antics. I did also. I managed to break down about three of the mosquito bars on surrounding cots by my lurching and stumbling around. The next morning, I had a head the size of a beach ball! I also noticed that my canteen cup had turned black on the inside by the lethal stuff.

The Marine Corps had no bars, taverns, or slop-chutes in the Pacific that I ever heard of. I don't know about the other services. There were also no cities, towns or civilian facilities. If one was on New Caledonia, Australia, New Zealand, the Fijis, or Hawaii there were civilian people and the things that go with cities. There were a few Marines in these places at one time or another. The vast majority of us never saw such things and lived a different life. It was not an unpleasant life part of the time, for most of us as we were very young and didn't know any better. Most of us, in our outfit at least never set foot inside a U.S.O. club even. I know they had at least one on the 'Canal, but no other places that we were. It's a tribute to our C.O. and the other officers that we were kept occupied and in our leisure times had recreational things to do, if desired. Often, it was just enough to take a shower and lie in our skivies on our cots listening to beautiful music. Because of radios in all our tanks, plus spares, we had radios hooked up and fastened to trees along the company streets about every third or fourth tent. There was an Army broadcasting station on the island and besides news there was some of the most beautiful music played. The music was current plus the old favorites. I wish that I were able to get some of this on the radio today. Some of my favorites were SWEET AND LOVELY, INDIAN LOVE CALL and BEGIN THE BEGUINE. As I remember, the radios were turned on, controlled by a central location in H & S Co. area probably, at noon times, after normal work hours and up until "taps" at night. I don't know the broadcasting hours of the station; probably ran from perhaps 0700 to 2200 hours.

Early in May, 1944, word was passed about an upcoming operation. "Word" means only that we were told there was going to be one, nothing more about it; and that we would begin intensified training and preparation. One day, "A" had 6-8 empty gas drums (55 gal.) anchored out in the small bay in the ocean in front of our camp. The three platoons, one at a time, were to drive their tanks from the beach into the water and then have machine gun practice while under full speed which was probably about 6 MPH. The tracks on our tanks were raised higher than land tank tracks, and were "cupped" so that they "grasped" water (similar to a swimmers cupped hands). This is what caused the vehicles to move. One tank at a time would have a go at it. When A-10 (mine) was signaled to proceed and to commence firing (always sea-ward) we took off. I liked firing anyway and was really pouring them at the target. I caught a glimpse at the platoon command tank, where the company exec. officer Lt. Joe Garfield was standing outside the turret on the deck. He was smiling, so I thought, and made a waving motion with his hand and arm. I naively must have thought he was approving of my accurate marksmanship, or at least the whole tank's (3 guns) marksmanship. I waved happily back and poured a few

more bursts into the now sinking barrel. The next thing I knew, his tank was alongside mine and he leaped onto it. Standing on the deck he "chewed my ass" pretty thoroughly. Of course, I was trying to stand at attention in my machine gunner's well. The tank had stopped but the waves made this a bit difficult. My face was about level to his crotch, and no . . . . . he wasn't, and hadn't been, smiling at me. He had given the arm and hand signal to "cease fire," instead of waving "good job, Addison." I likely knew this signal better than he, because of my infantry training at Camp Elliott, but hadn't tumbled to what he was actually trying to convey to me. His "smiling" was probably a grimace because of sun in his eyes. Needless to say, I was ashamed and crestfallen for a day or two. I had only been in the outfit about 6-7 weeks, so was "a new kid on the block."

From May 14-20, we went on maneuvers with the 22nd and 4th Marine Regiments at the west end of the 'Canal at Tassaforonga. We were bivouacked down there in the jungle. From the 14th to the 22nd we made at least three ship-to-shore landings. On the 25th we had our final maneuvers, which consisted of naval shelling of the beaches, air bombardment and our tanks firing away as we approached the beaches. This was in the Cape Esperance area, 3-5 miles west of Tassaforonga. We were assigned LST #78 (Landing Ship Tank). We probably boarded this on May 23rd. LST's are 328' long. They have a 6' draft when fully boarded. Speed = 9 knots/hour. LST's have a square bow which can open up, being hinged at the bottom. The top part is lowered, huge chains and motors, so that it then acts as a ramp when lowered a couple of feet into the sea or onto a beach. Tanks, trucks, vehicles which are stored below decks (like a ferry) can then be driven off. In our case, the ramp is lowered ½-1½ miles off shore and we drive the amphib. tanks right down the ramp into the water and churn away. We went north, across "Iron Bottom Bay" or the "SLOT" as it was more commonly referred, to the island of Tulagi, still a part of the British Solomon Islands, on May 26th. The ships, there were many, stayed here until May 31st. The company remained aboard ship, except for working parties taking on supplies. I do think that we were taken ashore onto Tulagi to see a move (outdoor screen of course) one night.

While we were anchored in the bay over at Tulagi, which is an island and part of the Florida chain, Army Capt. Joe Christ again showed up. Remember, he had visited me while I was smashing tomato juice cans my first month on the 'Canal. Anyway, on May 29th he came aboard my LST and had gotten permission from the company C.O. for me to visit his island overnight, if I wanted to. I sure did. I buckled on my canteen belt, canteen and knife and threw toilet gear into a pack and we were off. The Floridas run parallel to Guadalcanal. We left Tulagi and went to the west in a Higgins boat, skirting the coastline. There was the Capt. and two enlisted men. They had gone to Tulagi to pick up supplies. He must have gotten the name of my new outfit (1st Armored) from Jean in a letter and asked around as to where we were. Would have taken a bit of sleuthing to do this. The Higgins boat was quite fast. In 60-90 minutes we arrived at Joe's island. I'll spell it as it sounded, may be wrong. OLEVUGA. I've never seen it on a map. It must have been too small for the maps that I've looked for it to be listed. Anyway, it was a beautiful little

place. It had a nice coral sand beach and wonderfully clear and deep water between Olevuga and the main island which seemed to be about 350-400 yards distance. The land ascended from the beach up to a height of perhaps 250-300 feet. There the coastal artillery guns were located facing towards Guadalcanal, across the "slot" to the south. There were many trees, plus banana and papaya plants. It was a small military outfit and very informal. It must have been good duty, swimming and fishing and going "asiatic" (funny in the head) as time droned on.

Joe took me to a small native village very close by. As we approached it, on foot, I could see the girls and women slipping into the bush as was their custom. I was introduced to "Chief Willy," the head man. He spoke a small amount of English. He was a very friendly fella, very black and with worn down teeth from chewing betel nut. They all chewed betel nut out in the Solomons, women included. It grows wild on small palm trees and produces a stimulant effect. I don't know why the natives, or "gooks" as we referred to them among ourselves, needed a stimulant because it never appeared to us that they did anything. While chewing it they look like they have a mouth bleed, all bloody and oozing out the corners of their lips. Actually, I had always thought of it as a narcotic instead of a stimulant, but defer to what the "World Books" say. Willy and most of the few men that I saw were wearing cut-off army fatigue pants, as shorts. Like most of the "gooks," some had earrings in their ears. The earrings were likely to be a large safety pin, a plug of wood or a bottle cap on a piece of wire. Once in a while you'd see a man with a hole in his nose and a bone or similarly exotic piece of jewelry stuck in it. The men had carved wooden combs with which they all seemed to comb their thick bushy hair straight up so that they looked a foot and a half taller than they actually were. They then stuck the comb in it and carried it there. Their hair was often an orange-red or yellowish color. I had heard, while there, that they dyed it with clay but have recently read that it is some sort of deviation from the norm, genetically, that many in that area have.

At the edge of the village, on the beach, was the most beautiful little church that you could imagine. The approach or walk leading to it was of snow white, crushed coral rock as was the floor inside the church. It was palm thatch roofed and sided, the sides not coming all the way to the ground in order to allow cooling breezes and air circulation. The altar and pews were of dark wood, possibly teak or mahogany, very skillfully constructed. It was possibly Anglican because of the British influence in the Solomons before the war. Outside, by the walkway, was a post with a very old brass or bronze ship's bell mounted on it. I read the inscription and the ship's name and date but have long since forgotten them. The date was in the 1800's and the ship would have been a sailing vessel; probably ship-wrecked in the area. If so, the crew were possibly put in the stew pot because these people had been cannibals. I've read that in the 1920's there was still a human feast now and then.

Chief Willy's son was with us and also spoke a tiny bit of English. He looked about 20-22 years old. He asked if I'd like to go out into the strait in his canoe with him. It was a dugout, made from

a single log and about 10' long. It was also extremely tippy. While out on the water, Willy (that was the son's name also) pointed down into the water and told me that there was a huge clam down there, with a big pearl in it, and one day he was going to get it. I don't know how true this story was but I sure believed it.

I had dinner in the mess hall with the troops and Capt. Joe, as well as breakfast the next morning. Mid-morning we got back into the Higgins boat and I was returned to my LST. I also brought two large bunches of small and very green bananas that Chief Willy had presented to me. Joe had taken 3-4 photos of us on the island which he later sent me. I have them yet. I was very glad that I had had the opportunity to go down to Olevuga.

On May 31st anchors were hauled and the ships started on what was going to be a long trip, time wise as well as distance. We got the official word then on our destination. The island of Saipan in the Marianas was to be hit on June 15. Guam, also in the Marianas, was scheduled for June 18. The schedule for Guam was going to be altered a bit, but we didn't know that for some time yet. These islands are in the Southern Marianas, which are in the western part of the Central Pacific, north of the equator. They are also approx. 1020 miles north of Guadalcanal, 450 south of Iwo Jima (which we had never heard of at the time) and 250 miles north of the Carolines. Although in the Central Pacific Ocean area, the Marianas are also in the Philippine Sea, the Philippines being to the N.W. about 1200-1300 miles. After Saipan was secured the same force was to invade Tinian, about 2½ miles off Saipan's southern coast. The Japanese had been on Saipan and Tinian since World War I. Saipan is about 12 miles long X 5½ miles wide. Forty-six square miles of area held about 19,000 civilians. These two islands are about 85 miles north of Guam. Guam had been a U.S. protectorate since 1898 when it was taken from Spain during the Spanish-American War. It wasn't much more than a fueling stop for ships on the long haul to the Orient for many years. The Japs invaded it on Dec. 10, 1941, and the small Marine garrison there surrendered it the first day after a token fight with a Jap force of 5,900 men. The Marines numbered about 146.

The native people of the Marianas are Chamorros, descendants of the original Micronesians. The Chamorros are intermingled with other races, primarily Philippino and Spanish. The people of Guam prefer the name of GUAMANIAN. Guam is the largest island, about 35 miles long and 4-10 miles wide. Lengthwise it runs S.S.W. to N.N.E. and contains approx. 212 sq. miles. The Marianas are part of the Pacific area known as Micronesia.

Our convoys and task force heading for the Marianas were the largest in the Pacific to that date. There were two divisions of Army, three divisions of the U.S.M.C. and a reinforced Marine brigade. There were 127,521 troops, 2/3 of whom were marine Corps.

It did not take very long for many of us to decide that we did not want to sleep below decks. We were in the tropics and the combination of steel ship and deck, the hot sun and crowded quarters convinced me about the second day that I was sleeping topside. This I made a habit of doing on most of the LST's and LSM's the rest of the war.

Because we were a tank outfit, most of us took along our wooden and canvas (camp) cots. We were lucky in this respect. We could stow them inside our tanks hollow pontoons by removing a steel plate inside the tank on each pontoon and shoving them inside. This kept them out of the way when we were going into combat because the interior of a tank loaded for combat doesn't have any spare room for anything. Of course, when on land and in combat areas we slept in foxholes, not on cots. So we put our cots topside and got shelter from the blazing sun by hanging our shelter halves from anything available, such as the ship's railing.

On June 6th we arrived at, and anchored inside, Kwajalein Atoll of the Marshall Islands. An atoll is a ring of coral islands.- Picture a very long oval, 65 miles in length and 18 miles at it's widest point. The perimeter of this long oval, about 190 miles, is made up of many small islands, about ninety. The total atoll area is about 840 square miles; of which only about six square miles is land area. Kwajalein atoll is the world's largest. Kwajalein Island, of this atoll, is the largest island. All are made up of coral sand and are only a few feet above sea level. The perimeter of an atoll is coral reef. This connects most of the islands one to another. There are usually, not always, more than one deep water access through the reef into the huge lagoon inside the perimeter. Coconut and bread fruit trees plus banana plants, plus a little jungle, grow on the largest islands. The rest have only low shrubs or just mostly sand. Fish are plentiful in and around an atoll. The bananas that I had gotten on Olevuga and stored inside the tank to ripen were all eaten up by now.

On June 6th we also got word of the Allied invasion of the coast of France.

I had had three guard details on the way up to Kwajalein. I have no idea now what I was guarding, unless it was our company's tanks and contents from other troops aboard our LST. Maybe it was watch for Jap planes or subs (??). Of course, we did laundry, cleaned weapons, had a couple of talks by officers regarding details of our landing and lazed around. I worked all night (9 hrs.) on June 8th loading supplies onto a transport in the anchorage. We had been taking on fuel, water and supplies on our ship also, as did each ship in the convoys. The troops that had been aboard our ship from the 'Canal got off and "F" Co. of the 22nd Marines boarded. We listened to "Tokyo Rose" on the radio that evening. She was playing real nice U.S. music interspersed with comments about 4-F's at home with our wives or girl friends (that left me out).

About 3:00 p.m. on the 9th, the ships for our convoy left the atoll, formed up and we headed west for the Marianas. On the 12th I thought that I heard some gunfire over the horizon but wasn't sure of this. June 13th got news over the ship's radio that a large carrier task force had raised hell at Saipan, Guam, Tinian and Rota on the 10th. Had another 8 hrs. of guard duty.

June 15, 1944: Today the Northern Group of our task force hit Saipan. The Marines of the 2nd and 4th Divisions went ashore on the southern part of the west coast. The 29th Marines had only one battalion for Saipan and it went ashore in the afternoon. The Marines

were the V Amphibious Corps. We were the III Amphibious Corps. The 27th Army Div. was also assigned to Saipan. I think, but am not sure, that they landed on the second or third day.

The men ashore were locked in with a very tough foe, in greater strength and more prepared than we had thought. The Japanese were always a tough army, tenacious, determined, stubborn, fanatical. Our casualties were high, 2,000 on the first day alone. On the 15th, the rumor on our ship was that a Jap torpedo launched by a sub passed under our bow. I never saw it. Right at evening chow the convoy was attacked by five planes. Two of them tried to get our destroyer that was with us. Their bombs were near misses. They all then strafed the convoy, which was strung out in two long lines as I remember. The planes weren't reluctant to come in low, making 3-4 passes. It was incomprehensible to us that those planes could fly through all of that firing and not get hit! The destroyer got one. On one of the passes a plane was raking the whole convoy, lengthwise. As he approached our ship, and I could see his guns flashing, I dove under the bow 40 mm. gun mount. It was painfully noisy under there so I hurriedly crawled out just in time to see him hit the water right beside the ship. Everybody on deck was cussing, laughing, cheering like maniacs. We had never seen Japanese planes before. We would see too many in the next twelve months. We were issued personal weapon ammo today. I drew 195 rounds of M-1 Carbine, and eight grenades. We've been belting machine gun ammo while we've been on the ship. A belt holds 250 rounds, which fits into a metal ammo box. I've got 4500 rounds, 18 boxes, for my MG. Every fourth round is a "tracer."

June 16th: We were designated "floating reserve" for Saipan, because of the rough going ashore. We appeared to be sailing back and forth in an east-west direction. We of the Southern Group scheduled to hit Guam on June 18 now wonder whether it will still come off. Each ship's flag at half-mast today for a sailor killed in the air raid yesterday.

June 17th: In the afternoon we were notified that "D-Day" for us had been postponed, now to the 19th. Also, that the Japanese Imperial Navy was coming down from Luzon (in the Philippines) to reinforce their troops and to hunt out our convoys. We headed for the Tinian area to keep out of the way. Two Jap planes came in on the convoy about 10 miles to our starboard. They bombed an LCI and strafed the convoy. One plane got hit, burst into flames and appeared to go about 2 miles before it blew up. The second plane was also "splashed." We were notified that there were about 50 Jap planes about 50 miles away. They did not come to our convoy.

June 18th: Still cruising back and forth about 75-150 miles east of Saipan. "D-Day" indefinite now. A Jap bomber appeared, looked us over and left. Probably a reconnaissance plane.

June 19-20: The Japanese Navy was spear headed by their remaining carrier-air striking power. Our planes ran into them and the "Battle of the Philippine Sea" commenced. This was later known as the "Great Turkey Shoot." 402 Jap planes were shot down. Our planes also sank one carrier and two oilers plus damaging 4 carriers, a battleship and an oiler. Submarines sank two carriers. Quite likely many more Jap planes went into the sea because of the loss of their

carriers and the resultant no place to set down on. I don't know how far from our convoy all this was taking place. We never saw the bulk of this action nor heard the firing. It could have been 40 or 400 miles away. Had two air raid alarms on the 19th, no planes appeared. We joined two other convoys on the 20th. We were about 150 ships strong now (a guess at the time) and heading W.N.W. D-Day again postponed.

June 21st: During the night we separated from the other two convoys and were again on our own, sailing back and forth east of Guam. Got more intelligence about Guam today, some of which later turned out not to be too intelligent.

June 24th: The ship cut off our supply of fresh water for washing and shaving, to conserve it.

June 25th: The troops on Saipan have control of the two air strips now. Was announced that we were going to go back to the Marshalls, Eniwetok Atoll this time. I had 8 hours of 40 mm. gun watch. Running low on food. Seems like we had bitter, green-hued marmalade and pancakes about every second meal now.

June 28th: About 20 miles off the coast of Saipan at daybreak. Headed the opposite way during the day.

July 1st: Were informed yesterday that we're once again going to Eniwetok. Also, when the Guam operation was finished, we were to go back to the 'Canal. This was a disappointment to me at the time. Were about 3 miles off the coast (Saipan) today, thought we were going to land.

The marines on Saipan were street fighting in the town of Garapan, the island's capital. About ½ of the island had now been taken, at high cost to both sides. I didn't know about it until a couple of months later but a civilian friend of mine, from the neighborhood, was killed on Saipan. He was a driver for one of the amphib. tanks of the 2nd Armored Amphib. Bn., Pfc. Wm. Harriman. He also was the husband of Nina Mercer, a girl from the neighborhood as well. I hadn't even known that he was in the Corps. He entered after I did. I also didn't even know that there was a 2nd Armored Amphib. Bn. We had never heard of it. Before we hit Guam our company C.O., Capt. Lillie, told us that they had lost 64 out of 76 of their tanks there.

I had another 8 hours of gun watch.

July 4th: To celebrate the holiday, all ships in the convoy, together, fired off their guns, shot up flares, smoke and star-shells. Corp. Willy Germain and I have spent much time leaning on the ship's rail and talking about hunting, fishing, camping trips, etc. We played a game, each in turn whistling a song and the other trying to guess it. Willy, at our reunions now, doesn't remember any of this. Full moon.

July 5th, 1944: Arrived at Eniwetok in the morning. There were hundreds of ships here. The LST lowered its ramp so that we could swim. Some of us were diving and doing "cannon-balls" from the side of the bow. As far as I can remember we never had a life-guard posted, nor anyone with a rifle on look out for sharks any time that we swam. Anyway, it was a welcome diversion and a lot of fun. The 4th Amphib. Tractor Bn. had mail call. We didn't. It had been a month earlier when we last had mail call at Kwajalein.

Eniwetok Atoll, of the Marshall Island group also, is N.W. of Kwajalein. Eniwetok Atoll consists of 40 small sand islands, 2¼ sq. miles of land, TOTAL. The Marshalls, with its several atolls, consists of about 1150 sandy islets. Total population was about 13,000 people scattered over a very large area. I never saw any natives but I was only on three or four of the smaller Marshall Islands. The Japanese had controlled the Marshalls since WWI, even though they weren't legally Japanese possessions. Only a very few islands in the Marshalls had fresh water. There were no rivers nor streams. Rain water was collected by the natives.

On July 6 the Task Force Commander relayed the message that we all had a rest and relaxation coming. We would all have our turn at a beer party ashore. "F" Co. of the 22nd, on our ship, was to go ashore on the 6th, the balance of us on the 7th. When the three Higgins boats arrived for "F" Co., every Marine on the ship scrambled into them. There were about 800 Marines (a guess) and as many Swabbies on this little island. There were some trees and quite a bit of brush to get under, out of the sun. The navy had beer and food. We had diddley. We spent 10 hrs. on that oven. Most of us didn't even have canteens with water. Some Navy beer and food got stolen and a couple of fights occurred. We swam and slept in the shade and bitched. Some beer party we had.

July 9: Had mail call yesterday (1 letter) and also got four today. The first letter was two months old, the latest 3½ weeks. Had an all-day working party ashore on Parry Island. We brought back 42 cases of beer for the ship. We were told that tomorrow each Marine gets 3 bottles and the Navy 8. That seems very fair. I have no entry in the loose log that I sometimes kept whether or not we did in fact get this beer issue. I guess that means that we didn't.

July 13, 1944: Saipan was declared "secure" on the 10th. Of course, a few thousand more Japs would be killed over the next few months, diehards to the very end. Near the end of the campaign, hundreds and hundreds of civilians committed suicide or were killed by soldiers. At Marpi Point, at the N.W. end of the island, parents strangled their children or threw them off the cliff onto the coral rocks below and then dove off themselves. Many would gather into a group and then set off explosives, blowing themselves to pieces. They were terrified by the stories that they had been told of how we would treat them if captured. Also, the centuries-old codes of the Japanese probably had a lot to do with it also. We heard some of the story of the Marpi Point affair at the time, but only after the war did the whole grisly tale come out.

The tank commanders all congregated on another ship and much info. was revealed; some of which is that we are to go inland with the infantry about 1000 yds. This added to the huge 2nd Armored tank losses on Saipan, as our armor plating is a tad thin, being on the turret only. Also, not that we needed a reminder, but we're not to take any prisoners. Very few Japs surrender anyway. You can't watch prisoners and strike ahead at the same time. We're to hit Guam on July 21.

We are swimming in the middle of the huge lagoon every day, from the ship.

July 15: The convoy left Eniwetok today, on our way to Guam at last. Everyone in good spirits and glad to be on our way. We're "gung-ho" (eager--ready for anything).

Saipan was declared "secured" on July 10. Tinian not invaded yet. Losses on Saipan, as of years later, were 16,525 casualties, of which 12,935 were Marines. There were 3,143 KIA, 355 missing (as of 7-12-44), 13,208 WIA. 2nd and 4th Marine Divisions had 2,363 KIA. There were 23,811 known Japanese dead, 1,810 prisoners (unheard of number) and 14,735 civilians in stockades. A few thousand Jap soldiers were still loose, active and dangerous.

We were told that 1000 planes a day for the 3 days preceding our invasion were to bomb and strafe the landing beach areas.

July 18, 1944: Pancakes and marmalade for breakfasts yet. Pfc. Bob Pierce, from my crew, cut my hair. Scissors used were from a 35¢ sewing kit. Of course, there never were any barber shops nor designated barbers the total time overseas. We took turns cutting one another's hair. Some were more skilled than others. No problem, we weren't going to the opera. Daubed green paint on knife sheath, pack, canteen cover, etc., as camouflage. Cleaned M.G., tripod, carbine again.

July 19: Convoy going slow. About 300 mi. from Guam. Washed socks and a towel. Card games occur every day and night. Some run continuously. Pretty soon the players are narrowed down to just 5-6 men, and then down to a couple. One of the 22nd Marines aboard has over $1,700 in winnings. (Back in 1944 that was one hell of a lot of money.)

We troops going up to Guam (III Amphib. Corps) consisted of two groups. All of us were the Southern Group, of the two groups hitting the Marianas (the Northern Group hit Saipan and would be going on to Tinian shortly). Of the Southern Group (Guam) we had a Northern Landing Force and a Southern Landing Force. This was Naval Task Force #53. The Northern Landing Force consisted of the 3rd Marine Div., part of III Amphib. Corps. Artillery, plus small attached groups, of which "C" and "D" companies of the 1st Armored were part. This force was to hit the west coast of Guam between Adelup Point and Asan Point, an area about 1200 yds. in length and about 2 miles west of Agana, the island's capitol.

My force, the Southern Landing Force, consisted of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, two battalions of III Amphib. Corps Artillery, plus the 77th Army Division in floating reserve. The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was made up of the 4th and 22nd Marine Regiments plus the attached U.S.M.C. units. "A" and "B" companies of the 1st Armored were attached to, and part of, the Brigade. The Southern Landing Force was also to hit the west coast of Guam, about 8-10 miles south southwest of the 3rd Div. landing. This was south of the Orote Peninsula. In both landing areas the Marines were the assault forces.

July 20, 1944: Time passed fast this day. I had 8 hrs. of guard duty. I then washed clothes, cleaned my M.G. and cleaned and greased the large pivot pin of my M.G. shield so that it would traverse easily. The shield, of perhaps ¼" thick steel plate, and approx. 3' X 2½' in size mounts so that the gun is between two steel plates. There

was ample space between the twin plates (perhaps 8" to 10") so that the gunner has good vision. The shield was just in front of the machine gunner, and at a slant to deflect small shrapnel, M.G. and small arms fire.

The Navy let us have fresh water for showers late in the day. I attended church services, as did most men. Could see Naval gun fire (flashes) on the horizon after dark. This was directed towards the island. We are to have reville at 0430 in the morning.

The next entry in the small diary that I kept while in preparation for an operation and while in combat was on July 24. Diaries were forbidden, as were cameras, because of possible aid that a diary might give the enemy if they were to get possession of it. I think that perhaps there were quite a few men who clandestinely kept a loose log of events anyway.

The landing areas of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade were as follows: The beaches were Yellow #1 on the left (north), Yellow #2, White #1 and then White #2 on the extreme right (south). The total length of all four adjacent beaches was 900 to 1000 yds. The small village of AGAT, which was demolished prior to the landing, was about 300 to 400 yds. to the left of Yellow #1. The right flank of Yellow #2 included GAAN POINT. The right flank of White #2 was slightly to the north of a small island, YONA, close to the mainland. The 22nd Marines (1st and 2nd Bns.) had the Yellow beaches, as did "A" Co.--1st Armored. The 4th Marines had the White beaches and our "B" Co. was to lead them in. "A" Co.--1st Armored--1st platoon had the left flank of Yellow #1. The 2nd platoon (mine) was to straddle Yellow #1 and #2. The 2nd platoon had 5 tanks, 1st and 3rd had 6 each. The 3rd platoon had the middle and south flank of Yellow #2. Tank #18 was the Company Command Tank with Co. C.O. Capt. Lillie aboard, as starboard machine gunner. Tank #A-11 was the 2nd platoon command tank, with Plt. Leader Wiley Loughmiller as tank commander. This was to my immediate right side as we approached the beach.

The following episodes are from my memory, entries in my diary, data gleaned from the U.S.M.C. book "The Recapture of Guam" and from the report of "A" Co. Gunnery Sergeant Danny Maynard.

By 0430 hrs. on the 21st of July we were up and packing the final things (toilet articles) into our pack and rolling and attaching blanket rolls. A hurried breakfast was gulped down, aided by hot "joe" (coffee). (I never did have one of those "steak and eggs" breakfasts that I've read about many times that were always served to the troops prior to assaulting an island). Gear was stowed into the tanks and we then went topside to see the fire works.

Around Guam the Navy had 20 aircraft carriers, 6 battleships (wagons), 9 cruisers and 57 destroyers ("cans"). On the AM of D-Day 4 wagons, 3 cruisers and 4 cans had been allotted to close-in support of the northern landing. We had 2 wagons, 3 cruisers and 3 cans with us of the southern landing force.

Hundreds of tons of shells were exploding on the beach and onto the foothills behind it. Planes were bombing and strafing also, at designated times when the ships ceased their fire. No Jap planes nor ships were in opposition. Prior to D-DAY, I have since read, 16 of our carrier-based planes had been shot down over Guam in the immediate weeks prior to our assault.

At 0700 we went down into the tank deck of the LST and started the engines of the tanks to warm them up and to make sure (once again) that all was in readiness. Each crew was aboard its own tank. Gas exhaust fumes were thick, even though the ship's exhaust fans were running and the bow door was open. The LST's had been stationary in the water for the past 1½-2 hrs., all in their assigned positions.

Orders came to disembark at 0730 hrs. The tanks clattered across the deck, down the ramp and into the sea. We were a mile or so off shore at this point. The skies were clear and the sea calm. Hastily moving away from the ramp area the tanks moved slowly between the ships and the shore. The tanks formed into their positions as we inched toward the reef. The LST's were now disgorging infantry-laden tractors (LVT's) and they too formed up behind us. The Navy had small boats moving just ahead of us, as guide boats, to guide us towards our correct spots. There was probably one of these for each platoon. Also just ahead of us were 6-8 LCI(G)'s laden with rocket launchers. We were scheduled to hit the beach at 0830.

At the appropriate time, our floating armada increased speed, straightened lines and the LCI(G)'s started firing their rockets off. They rose in sharp angles and hit the beaches. We now headed at full speed towards the line of departure. About here was when the naval gunfire lifted from the beach area and moved inland a short distance. The LCI(G)'s stayed with us, firing away, until close to the reef. They then sat there, adding their fire to that we tankers now began to pour ashore. We were to fire at any targets presenting themselves, and lacking that, to fire away at the beach area anyway, hoping to keep the Japs' heads down. My tank hit the reef with one track only (port side) and it threw us sideways with a heck of a jolt. That may have saved our lives because although I was not aware of it right then, that was when emplaced Jap 75 and 37 mm. artillery pieces started blasting our tanks out of the water. Hitting the reef threw us starboard and I think that when we straightened up we were now on the starboard side of A-11. I truthfully never saw the muzzle flashes of these guns (most of us never did) because they were so skillfully dug into coral rock and concrete emplacements. Only a small gun slit, or port, could have been apparent; all the rest of the gun and its crew were dug back into the coral with cement and rock completely covering it. Vegetation was on and all around the pill boxes. Two such emplacements were on Gaan Point, about 100 yds. or so to A-10's right. As I was the port side gunner, I didn't even look over onto that side of the tank > Earl Gray, the starboard M.G. operator didn't see them and I have never talked to anyone who did. There were numerous, strongly built pill boxes along the beach. In any case, they and guns on the north side of us did a hellish piece of work that morning. Mortar shells were exploding around us, and I could see machine gun bullets hitting the water. I didn't look much right or left, only straight ahead. That was a good thing, as if I had I probably would have messed my skivies. Several tanks had already been hit, on both sides of me. I did look up in time to see A-18, which

10-10-93 TOUR 17TH REUNION, IN SAN DIEGO THIS WEEK, GRAY ELATED THAT HE HAD SEEN FLASHES BUT THOUGHT THEY WERE EXPLODING SHELLS FROM OUR SIDE.

had just been hit. Someone in the starboard machine-gun well had bandages out and it looked like three feet of toilet paper streaming in the breeze. The company C.O. Capt. Owen Lillie had been acting as machine gunner in the starboard machine gun well and had been mortally wounded. The radio operator was killed. The two men in the 37 mm. gun turret suffered concussion from the blast. The tank continued on to the beach. It had moved into its position on my immediate left prior to being hit, to replace tank A-11 (Lt. Loughmiller's) which had also just been hit. A-11 had the two machine gunners killed, the driver, 37mm. gunner and the ammo passer were wounded. The platoon leader, who was acting as Tank commander and 37 mm. loader, was also wounded. A-11 was abandoned on the reef. A-12, the next tank to A-10's right, had likewise been hit. The radio operator and driver with both killed and the ammo. passer wounded. This tank also was abandoned on the reef.

My tank kept moving, ignorant of this carnage. Just before we left the water, I glanced backwards and saw tanks and tractors disabled and some burning. Gaan Point was now about 60-70 yds. to our right. Willie Germaine, driver of A-13, said he drove across Gaan Point. I was spraying coconut treetops with M.G. fire in case snipers were up there. There was a surprising amount of jungle left standing after all that shelling. Just as we left the beach and entered the jungle I was jolted almost out of the tank. I don't know if we had hit a downed coconut tree log or if it was a mortar explosion. I hit my left thumb somewhere on the M.G. and cut it wide open. We continued inland, shooting and looking. We crossed a narrow dirt road which ran parallel to the beach and after about 20 yds. the rear end of the port side tank track dropped into a tank trap, or a slit trench for infantry. In any case, we couldn't go forward nor back. The 37 mm. gun was pointed up into the air, facing inland and the front of the tank was just about nosed into a very steep hill covered with brush. The hill was about 20' high. I looked around and I could not see any other tanks, nor worse yet, any marines! We hastily checked to see if everyone was OK. We were and quickly decided that we couldn't sit there in an out-of-action tank. I told everyone to come back to my gunner's well and I'd cover them as they abandoned tank. Gray didn't have a good vision of them as his side of the tank was canted up quite a bit. The crew quickly exited the tank and jumped down into another nearby slit trench. I grabbed my carbine and slung it over my shoulder, took out my knife and cut the belt of M.G. ammo. so that I had perhaps 40 rounds remaining in the belt (still loaded into the gun) and reached down and got a full box of ammo. which I pitched over the side to the ground below. I was now ready to also "haul ass." Cradling the M.G. in my arms, I jumped down. I had my finger on the trigger and when I hit the ground the shock of it caused me to squeeze the trigger. About 5-6 rounds hit right in front of the slit trench containing my buddies. I was mortified, but this was no time to make explanations. They thought it was Jap M.G. fire, as mortars and bullets were dropping and zipping. I never had the guts, until one of our reunions, to tell Bob Pierce and Bill Carroll the truth. I'm not sure yet if they believe me, or if they even remember the event. Dan Montgomery carried boxes of ammo. for me as we both

crawled to the top of that steep hill and I set up my M.G. We still couldn't see any Marines, nor vehicles, anywhere. I wasn't sure if anyone else even got ashore. About that time, two large mortar rounds exploded a few feet away and it rolled Dan and I halfway down the hill. We crawled back up and got behind the gun again. About that time, Dan said he'd been hit in the arm. I had been just nicked in the hand by a ricochet also. I got his first aid kit off of his belt but then we couldn't find any blood. It must have been a spent round that hit him in the crook of the arm. I saw movement behind us, running to the north in the jungle. I recognized Pvt. Frank Harris, one of the Papago Indian boys that I had taken M.G. training in the States with and came overseas with. I yelled out "Chief," a common name for Indians at that time and meaning no disrespect from us. Frank had a M.G. on his shoulder. He looked my way couldn't see me and kept on going to the left. I didn't know it then, but his fellow Papago, Pfc. Robert Allison, had been instantly killed (Tank A-) out on the reef. Harris was in the 22nd Marines and was the first Marine, other than my crew, that I had seen yet. This seemed like a half hour after hitting the beach. Later in the day we found out that A-2, A-5, A-7, A-11, A-12, A-14 and A-18 had all been hit. The book "The Recapture of Guam" by Major O.R. Lodge, U.S.M.C. related that 24 Amphtracks were lost while crossing the reef. Seventy-five bodies on Yellow Beach #2 alone also were reported by "The Recapture of Guam." While Montgomery and I had the M.G. on the crest of the hill we heard a Jap tank between us and Agat for a couple of minutes. We were later told a Marine stopped it with a bazooka.

Anyway, those damn Jap guns on Gaan Point continued to fire away and hitting tractors of infantry. According to 22nd Marine reporting, it was one of their land tanks that finally silenced it, by coming up behind the emplacement and shooting directly into it. That day when we had a chance to talk, we understood that it was infantry that finally found it and closed it down. It must have been shooting away at least an hour after we had passed it if a land tank silenced it. It was really hidden. I never did see many infantry that morning. Snipers were hitting some men, at least 2-3 in "A" Co. I talked to one of our runners about noon and he related how he was carrying a message and while running down a trail, heading south, his legs were knocked right out from under him. When he checked his damage, he found a silver dollar in his dungaree pant's pocket had been hit and bent. Other than a good scare and a bruised thigh, he was OK and continued on with his task. I have long ago forgotten this man's name and whenever I mention it at our reunions no one seems to know this story. At about 0930-1000 hours that morning, I and two other men (they must have been of our crew, probably Bob Pierce and Earl Gray) explored to our north about a hundred yards or so along the dirt road. We wanted to see who, or what, was happening. We soon came across an infantry man lying in the road. He had just been shot a few minutes previous and told us to watch out; that he thought the shot came from in front of him and to the right. This would have been the northern edge of the steep hill that I had a M.G. on earlier. The marine had been shot in the upper leg, the bullet also going through the stock of his rifle. We asked him if he was OK. Did he want a shot of

morphine? He said no morphine, just hand him his rifle. We looked for the sniper but didn't spot him. On the reverse side of this hill we found a small storage room dug into the hill. It was full of bags of rice. They were smoldering and we assumed the infantry had heaved grenades in; although we still didn't spot any of the 22nd in front of us.

Reports that I now read say that the 1st Bn. of the 22nd wheeled north and headed for Agat, which was full of snipers and also inland for a few hundred yds. The 2nd Bn. (Yellow Beach #2) was held up about 500 yds. inland by strong points which their tanks got to about 1100 hrs.

The 3rd Div. and "C" and "D" companies of the 1st Armored had a rough landing also; as did "B" Co. to our immediate south. But we knew nothing of others' problems (we never did). This was just as well. Part of the 3rd Bn. 22nd (Reserves) came ashore approx. 1030 hrs., the balance not until the afternoon.

About 1100-1200 hrs. some others, of 1st Armored, joined us near our tank. They had brought some of our dead with them, including Capt. Lillie. One of the men gathered there was our corpsman, a Petty Officer, whose name I long ago forgot. We ate some K-rations. The sniper and mortar fire into our area had now ceased and we could talk. One of the stories related was told me by Bill Aydelotte of A- . He said that when they got ashore he also set up his machine gun. He saw 6-7 men run out of a cave and into the jungle. He said that he had plenty of time to fire but was so surprised that he just looked at them before he realized that they were Japs. In frustration, he said that he then turned his gun onto a water buffalo grazing nearby and shot it dead.

As I remember it, about 1300 hrs. our remaining "A" Co. tanks, including A-10, went down the road to the south. I now think that this may have been 4th Marine territory. We put up defensive positions inland from the beach a few hundred yards. Towards evening, bodies of three of our buddies were brought to us by someone in the company. I helped to wrap them in their blankets and ponchos and we buried them there. I believe Pfc. D. Petersen was one of these. I don't remember the others. It would be a temporary burial spot. This was where the beach hit higher ground, just over a bank.

Prior to darkness, Montgomery and I dug a double fox hole a couple of hundred feet inland from the tanks. The company was establishing a "back-up" line there for the infantry, who were about 1/3 mile inland in the foothills of Mt. Alifan, to our east. We again set up a M.G. and were well prepared for the night. Needless to say we had little sleep that night. Spasmodic firing went on and flares went up once in a while. It seems that it was about 0200 or so when we started hearing shouting and noise up on the hill. We could hear bottles clanking (I swear it) and bamboo sticks being hit together. The noise increased, a bugle sounded and suddenly shooting broke out in a hell of a din up there. Tracers were going in all directions and explosions were everywhere. We got prepared for anything, as it was a banzai attack that was occurring. Flares kept it lit up. Our fox hole was in a field that had grass about 3' high in it, no shrubs nor trees. About 10 minutes after all hell had broken loose up above us,

we could see someone running towards us. As we didn't know friend from foe at that point, Montgomery jumped up with a bayonet on the end of his M-1 and challenged the figure just as he got to our hole. It was a Marine who said the Japs had broken through. He was wounded fairly badly and wanted to know where the aid station was. (He probably also wanted to get away from that confusion.) We told him we didn't know where the station was but it would be behind us somewhere, down by the beach. He jumped up again and took off for the beach. Some Japs slipped by us but we didn't see them. The noise died down until dawn. Unloading of a few Army troops and some supplies went on in the night. At dawn we had fires going so that we could have hot water to mix with our coffee powder, and to heat our ration cans of "scrambled eggs" or whatever. Soon firing opened up amongst us. A "nambu" (Jap light machine gun) was one of the guns firing. It was the Japs (remnants of the banzai) who had slipped through us in the night. They were soon dispatched by those nearest them. None of our group was hit.

I don't remember now what happened on July 22 or 23. In any case, we weren't in any action ("A" Co.), although I'm sure we had beach defense duties. The action had moved about ½ mi. into the hills east of us by the end of the 22nd and the north end of the lines had moved through Agat. I think that we got put on working parties on the night of the 22nd or 23rd, maybe both. I can remember being out in the sea in a DVKW, a wheeled vehicle that was propelled by a propeller while in the water and by conventional motor and wheels while ashore. It had quite a bit of room inside to haul material or troops. It could probably go 10 MPH in the water and as fast as a regular vehicle on the road. I think we must have been hauling "cloverleafs" of artillery shells from a ship to the beach. When our work ceased in the middle of the night, one of my adventurous buddies decided we'd take a DVKW for a trial run. That night had been the first time any of us had ever been in one of these things but they figured out how to get it going and we headed out into the water. It was not long before a couple of search lights came on us and we were "challenged" as to who we were and what we were doing. We then "decided" that we would take it back to shore and catch some sleep.

During these two days, 22nd and 23rd, there was an artillery battery sharing the field with us. They were 105 (mm) howitzers and were aimed north beyond Agat. One day, I was walking across the field about 200' in front of them when they touched them off. My Gosh, I thought the blast, concussion and noise would take me off the field!

On July 24th, the 22nd Marines, 1st Bn., requested our help. They were getting held up by several dug-in pillboxes, plus mortar emplacements, on the cliffs over the sea on the south shore of the Orote Peninsula. Japs were also dropping grenades off the heights onto them and had several M.G.'s up there also. Our outfit was to go at them from the sea, firing away and keeping them busy so the 22nd could move in on them. Six tanks were capable of being able to be sea worthy and mechanically OK. They were A-3, A-9, A-13, A-15, A-16 and A-17. My tank, A-10, had some sort of mechanical problem. I have always wondered if indeed it had. We had taken a piece of shrapnel near the engine, in the back end of the tank; but I had not thought it

hurt anything. The tanks departed from Agat and were soon to experience hell. They made four lateral passes of the targeted cliffs and drew fire from every gun and manner of fire power up there. A-17 was sunk, A-13 took a direct hit on the turret and all of the rest were so riddled with shrapnel and bullet holes that they could hardly limp back into Agat without sinking. All did return but A-17. The acting company C.O. and a platoon leader were wounded and several men killed, besides many wounded. Another Marine (I think Bob Pierce) and I were asked to "clean up" the insides of one tank. It was about two hours after they had returned from the ill-fated mission. We went in with buckets of water and rags. I remember mopping up gore and blood out of the radio man's area. The interior of a tank is very hot in the tropics; the sweet, sickly smell stuck with me for a long time. This was the finale to "A" Co. action for that campaign, as far as tanks went.

July 27, 1944: We're in a bivouac area about 3/4 mile south of Agat. We received artillery fire last night but no casualties. My partner and I slept pretty comfortably in our hole. Got my first bath and change of clothes yesterday since being on the island. There was a big shell hole in the field behind us, full of water. We just waded in, got wet, crawled out, soaped up and dove back in to rinse off. It must have been contagious as some of the local Chamorro ladies came down after we had left the hole. They peeled off their clothes and also cleaned up, amid a lot of giggling from them and whistling from us. The one pair of binoculars we had on the remaining tanks were rapidly passed back and forth among us.

July 30: Moved our bivouac area to about one mile north of Agat yesterday. We're on the east side of the dirt road (Old Agat Road), opposite of Dadi Beach. Can't see the beach, it's perhaps 1/3 of a mile west of us. We're in the jungle, right on the edge of a swamp. Again, we're for back-up. Last night, on my turn on watch, I thought the mosquitoes would carry me away. It was terribly hot and humid and I had to wear my head net. I kept "seeing things" in the swamp. There are a lot of mines and booby traps around. The front line is now up on the end of the peninsula (for the 22nd), about 1.8 miles W.N.W. of us.

Aug. 6, 1944: Washed clothes, aired blankets and straightened up fox hole area and the crude covering we've built over it out of shelter halves, tin and boards. Have been to Piti and Agana twice, A.W.O.L., looking around and souvenir hunting. We got out onto the Old Agat Road (dirt) and waited for a "six-by" truck to come along and hitch a ride. I don't remember who I went with the second time, but the first time Paul Dotur and I took the trip. We went through Agana, where the road split. One road went west (I'm looking at a map while I'm writing this 49 years later) and the left branch ran W.N.W. The truck took the left branch, heading for the front lines about 3 miles ahead. We went about two miles and got off the truck. It was heavily forested here, with a vertical cliff on our right side. We were about 1/3 of the way down in a valley. There were caves in the cliff and we entered one, cautiously. The ceiling was perhaps 10' high, the room about 15' wide and 30' deep. There were no Japs there, dead or alive. It must have been a command post or something similar. There were

papers and clothing and crude desks scattered all over. The floor was covered with stuff. We were poking through it when we heard something just outside the cave. We looked at one another and quickly drew the 45's that we had holstered on our hips, and unsheathed the K-bars. I know that we both desperately wished that we had brought our carbines along as well. Cocking the 45's, we approached the entrance, very quietly. Again we heard something move. Pfc. Dotur stepped outside, ready to do bodily harm. Our enemy was a huge toad that took a hop every once in a while. We both heaved big sighs of relief, and from that moment on Paul's nickname in "A" Co. was "TOAD" Dotur.

Paul must have had misgivings about any further snooping or he wanted to look elsewhere; I don't remember which. We split up and I continued to look over the debris on the cave floor. I spotted a Jap pistol holster and thought that I had hit the jackpot! I looked it over carefully, making sure there were no wires or anything connected to it. I didn't want to get blown to hell with a possible booby trap. It was OK, so I picked it up and was very disappointed to find the pistol missing from it. I then started a thorough search for the pistol. As I moved through the cave, carefully turning papers and clothes over with my K-bar, I looked down at my right foot. It was planted right next to a big, black, ugly mine! The mine was wired or tied to two boards, about 1½" X 2" X 18" in size and in the form of a cross. I about vomited. That was too close for me. I exited the cave, hiked to the road and started walking back towards Agana. I soon got a ride, which took me a couple of miles past Agana. The truck was going to turn here so I got off. While I was waiting for another truck, two Chamorros came out of the jungle. It was a man and woman, both about 18-24 years old. The man noticed the two pistol holsters I was wearing, as I had fastened the Jap one to my belt also. He told me that he knew where some Japs were and that if I let him use one of the pistols we'd go get them. I didn't like that suggestion one darn bit, for many obvious reasons. The girl had men's clothing on but it was very noticeable that she was indeed a girl. She was very voluptuous and about the top four buttons of her shirt were open. She was smiling so sweetly while I was telling her companion that I wasn't interested in taking a Japanese platoon on while armed with a pistol and a K-bar knife.

The next foray, for souvenirs, three of us again went past Agana but took the right fork in the road at Agana this time. We came to a pretty nice looking home, although somewhat damaged, with a field of pineapples growing next to it. We entered the house, checking it out for Japs. No one was in it. There was a display case in the corner of one room. It had a glass door in it and contained several catholic religious items, such as the Virgin Mary figure and so on. No, we didn't steal them. We then left the house and were examining the pineapples in the field. None of us had ever seen them growing before. As we were looking them over, two or three rifles started shooting at us. Leaving valor behind, we took off running in zig-zag fashion as fast as we could. We ran through the field, down a slope and into high grass (way over our heads). It was very thick. Suddenly, a couple of us stepped into algae-covered water right up to our necks. Crawling out, we again plunged through the grass, or cane,

finally coming out on the opposite side of where we had entered. We came to another dirt road after a while and were lucky to have a truck come along. We didn't really know where we were but told him we wanted Agana and that we really were headed for the Agat area. This latter one was also his destination. That completed my exploring on Guam.

One of my memories of Guam also was the large amounts of big toads on the island. At the time it seems like someone mentioned that they had brought a lot onto the island in years previous to get rid of snakes. As I think about it now, that doesn't make much sense, as the snakes would have eaten the toads. We never saw any snakes there; but in the past year or so I have read (Smithsonian magazine) that the island is now overrun with very venomous, long green snakes that they feel were introduced to the island after the war, by coming in in cargo from New Guinea. With no natural enemies, they rapidly reproduced and are now a serious hazard. There are hundreds of snake bite cases each year. I'm sure glad that they entered the island AFTER the war.

Aug. 7: We moved again, just south of Agat. We joined "C" and "D" companies who also were there. We were to stay here until August 12. My notes indicate that I felt that the "old man" (battalion C.O., who was now about 27-28 years old) must have liked swamps because we were now living in a rice paddy.

Organized resistance ended on Aug. 10, D-Day + 20.

While we were busy on Guam, Tinian was invaded on July 24. The 4th Division came over on LST's from Saipan, with one Bn. of the 2nd Div. The next day, the balance of the 2nd landed. There were approx. 9,000 Japs on the island, including naval shore troops. When it was all over, on Aug. 1, there were 6,050 Japanese dead, plus what they themselves buried and 255 prisoners. The Marines had 328 KIA, 1,571 wounded and 24 missing. So, with Saipan, Tinian and now Guam secured, the Marianas Campaign ended. It was, and is, the largest amphibious assault ever launched by the Marine Corps. Capture of these three islands, about 1,270 miles from Tokyo, made possible 29,000 missions on Japan proper by the then new Boeing B-29 Super-Fortress. These planes carried a 10-ton bomb load.

On August 12, we boarded LST #341, destination unknown to us enlisted men. We left our tank behind. My notes do not indicate if they were all left behind or not. "A" Co. suffered 13 out of 18 tanks hit by shell fire on July 21 and 24. 1st Armored casualties for the campaign were 8 officers and 89 enlisted men. KIA were 2 officers and 25 enlisted plus 4 who later died of wounds.

Guam counted for 9,111 U.S. casualties, of which 1,919 were KIA. Of these 9,111, Army personnel were 2,200. The Japanese suffered 17,300 dead and 485 prisoners. Many more Japanese would be killed in the following months, on the island.

CHAPTER VII

NEW TANKS, NEW MEN, NEW MISSION, RENEWED TRAINING ON GUADALCANAL.

After leaving Guam, we returned to our camp on the 'Canal. Others in the outfit say that we made a two-three day stop at Eniwetok. I don't remember this. When we arrived back at the 'Canal on Aug. 27, we had a lot of work parties going on in order to get the camp back in ship shape again. We had been gone 15 weeks. The small rear-echelon we had left behind had been further depleted, with some of our folks joining the 3rd Armored Amphib. Bn. which was being readied but not yet bloodied.

We soon fell back into the familiar routine of hard work, either with training or work parties. We soon received new tanks, LVT(A-4)'s. These had a 75 mm. pack howitzer on them, instead of the 37 mm. cannon. There was also a 50 cal. machine gun in the turret, which was open instead of the closeable ones on the LVT(A-1)'s. My memory, which isn't all too good on some things now, tells me that the radio man still had a 30 cal. M.G. which was still fired from his position inside the tank. A short "spec sheet" in a book I have about the Okinawa Campaign says that the tanks had <u>two</u> 50 calibers. Actually, they referred to them as .5 mm. Brownings. I do know that we had a 30 cal. in each tank up on Okinawa later on.

With the new tanks we received we had a lot more to learn. Most of us ended up with different crew members also. We had quite a few casualties up on Guam, plus some of the guys had been overseas once before. A few of these went home. One of them was my previous tank commander, Cpl. Larry Good, who had spent time fighting on Guadalcanal. Our beach assault, plus close proximity to those 105 howitzers (ours) firing over us day and night for a few days on Guam rattled Larry's nerves to the point that he was sent back to the States. In any case, Bob Pierce and I now had new buddies in a tank newly designated A-10, the same number as the one we previously had. Our driver was Pvt. Eddie Dement. Pfc. Harry Broderick was the tank commander. Pfc. Joe Campbell was the 75 mm. gunner, Pvt. Hank Pelzar the ammo passer and I was the third man in the turret as cannon loader. Bob was, of course, the radio man. We had a six-man crew, whereas on the LVT(A-1) model tanks it was seven men. A new and additional mission for our tanks was now that we had the 75's on them we could learn and gain experience in firing as conventional artillery once ashore and when requested. That meant learning about aiming stakes, powder bags, fire direction centers and a host of other strange things. We were to fill the gap on an assault until regular artillery got ashore (often many hours) and to be additional artillery fire power when requested. We spent a lot of time crashing through the jungle, finding a clearing, setting up a "battery" consisting of four tanks (out of the five of a platoon), all guns aligning on the aiming stake, establishing the target range, determining the number of powder bags to use (there were four in each brass shell casing), and determining the setting to be put on to the gun sight. At first these

NOTE: 10-17-93

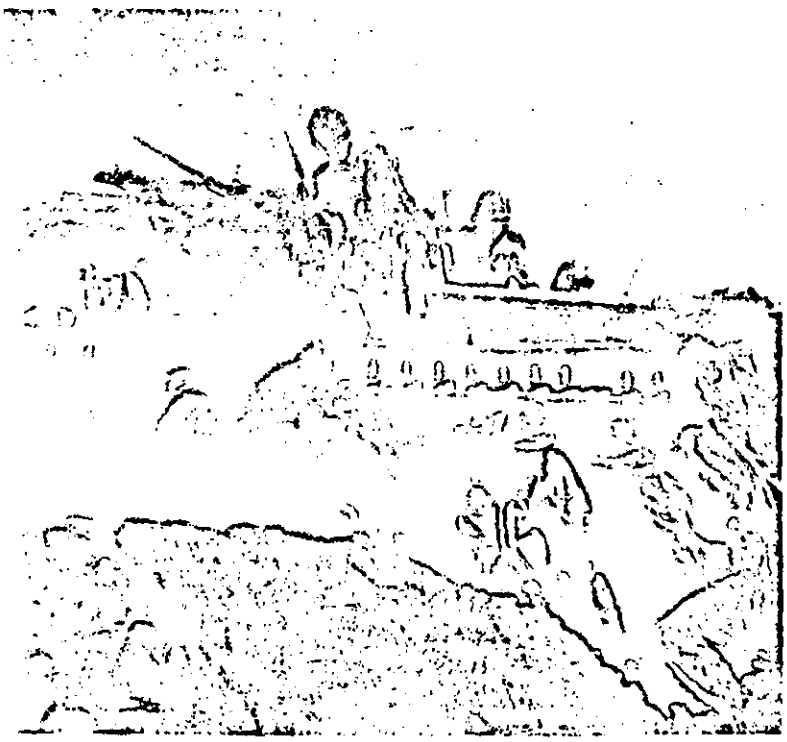
NARRATIVE STILL BEING WRITTEN & WILL BE SUPPLIED WHEN FINISHED.

Getting the job done with un-artillery

by LGen Louis Metzger, USMC (Ret.)

When the last great battle of World War II ended, the armored amphibian battalion had proved its worth.

Cast of Characters
CG, 6th Marine Division—MGen(Gen) Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr.
First C.O. 15th Marines—Col(BGen) Wilburt S. "Big Foot" Brown
Second C.O. 15th Marines—Col(LGen) Robert B. Luckey
G-3, 6th Marine Division—LtCol(LGen) Victor H. Krulak
C.O. 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion—Maj(LGen) Louis B. Metzger



It all happened a long time ago during World War II. One of the smaller units of the Marine Corps was an armored amphibian battalion equipped with a hermaphrodite vehicle; the result of combining the tracked amphibian cargo carrier with the turret of a light tank. As originally conceived, these units were to fill the gap of fire on the beach between the time the naval gunfire lifted until the first assault infantry came ashore. (With "20/20" hindsight, what a difference they would have made at Tarawa, but at that time, the first unit was just forming.)

A 26-year-old major, with a total of four years service in the Marine Corps commanded the battalion. His officers were, for the most part, young college men, with a sprinkling of warrant and temporary officers in the maintenance and supply fields. What they lacked in experience they made up in enthusiasm, intelligence and a burning desire to serve their country. The enlisted men were the finest. Through a fluke, the adjutant of the amphibious corps had sent twice the number of men needed to fill out the battalion. The battalion commander, hereafter known as "the major," seized upon the opportunity to hand-

pick his men. He carefully interviewed each man in the draft and selected only those who had worked as truck drivers, bartenders, lumberjacks or other demanding jobs. A college boy could get in if he was motivated and convincing enough.

Once the battalion was raised to authorized strength, the remainder of the draft was returned to the corps headquarters, to the screams of anger and complaints of the adjutant. However, since he had made the initial mistake, he was careful not to let the news of his error leak.

After six months of struggle with untried and inadequate equipment, incomplete equipment allowances, engines which had to be rebuilt, inadequate tactical doctrine and assorted other problems which appeared to descend upon this particular battalion, it was finally trained, equipped and ready. Its first action came at Roi and Namur in the Marshall Islands. Then after a period of additional training on Guadalcanal, the battalion was next committed to combat in the Mariana Islands landing in the first wave at Guam. In addition to a determined enemy who attempted to stop the landing on the beach with direct-fire guns, artillery and mortar fire blanketing the landing areas, there was also a profusion of mines and obstacles. One of the admirals commanding amphibious shipping distinguished himself by suggesting that the armored amphibian crews stand up in their vehicles, harpoon the obstacles, then back their vehicles down pulling the obstacles out of the landing lanes. Fortunately, sounder minds prevailed.

The battle for Guam was a tough one. The armored amphibians performed well in a variety of missions from leading the amphibious assault (with the resulting heavy casualties) and leading tanks across the reef to reinforcing the front line infantry in night defensive positions, beach defense, amphibious patrols to the southern end of the island and, most unlikely, defending the island headquarters when it finally moved ashore. Despite all of this activity, it was obvious the unit was not fully employed.

Upon returning to the base camp on Guadalcanal, a great step forward became possible. The old LVTA1's with their 37mm gun turret and five .30 caliber machine guns were exchanged for LVTA4's, which still carried only 20-gauge metal as armor protection, but which bore, in a reasonably heavily armored mount, a 75mm howitzer. (For those who might be interested, as the officers and men of the battalion were, a .30 caliber bullet will whistle easily through 20-gauge metal.)

Experienced and bloodied by the fighting in two major engagements, the battalion undertook steps to correct some of the glaring deficiencies in their armored steeds. "Pin-on" armor was added to the bow and sides of the vehicle's hull. It became standard procedure to sandbag the area just below the turret or mount. An armor plate projection or shield was then used to extend the top of the mount so that the crewmen's heads had some protection. Someone in Headquarters, Marine Corps must have been reading the casualty reports, because suits of aircraft flak armor arrived, sufficient in number to equip all crew members. No longer, it was hoped, would fire from enemy small arms, mortars and direct-fire guns be able to easily penetrate the vehicles' skin. The risk of mines and larger caliber direct-fire weapons had to be accepted.

For those who were not there, or have forgotten, if there was a rotation policy in World War II, it was not evident to the Marines in the combat units. Overseas tours of 25, 30 and even 36 months were usual. With few exceptions, vacancies occurred only through casualities. Unfortunately, all too often these casualities did occur in the furious fighting of island warfare. For those who survived, there was no leave, no "R & R" or even the sight of civilization. There existed only the shock of battle followed by return to rudimentary base camps on isolated islands like Guadalcanal where a warm beer or an old 16mm movie was considered recreation. Heat on those islands was unimaginable. At midday, one could get a severe burn from just touching the metal of an armored vehicle. The crews inside the vehicles came close to being roasted, but tough and young, they managed. Coconut crabs swarmed out at night, and the mosquitoes carried malaria.

For all of this there was an advantage. Once a battalion was trained and in the field, it was not weakened by the constant drain of rotation. It became a closely knit team. Standing procedure became second nature. Every man could perform all the duties of other crew members, and boredom was fought off by allowing changes in duties. Before the days of Pentagon micromanagement and at the end of long lines of communication, a battalion commander really commanded his unit. If a truck driver wanted to be a gunner or a barber a crew member or a crew member a mechanic, it took

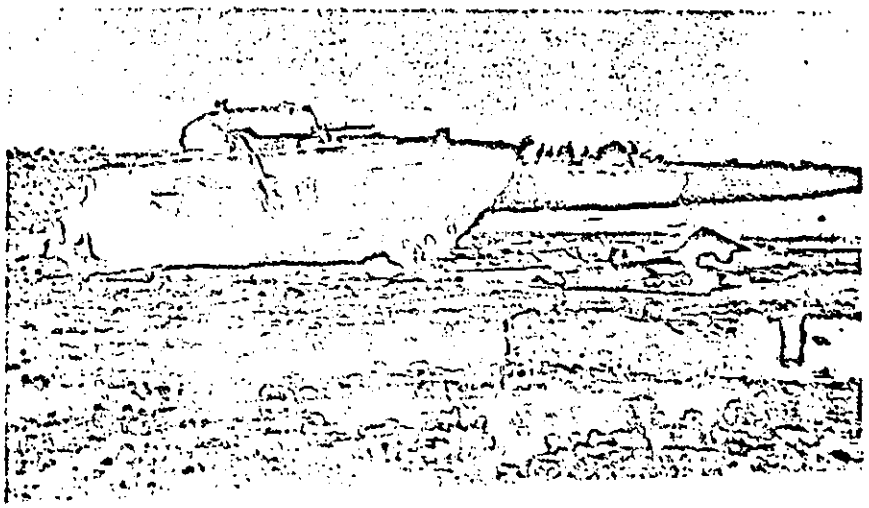
only an authorization for the change by the company or battalion commander. MOS's and assignments were not audited by super clerks or computers. The paramount — the only — criterion was ability to carry out successfully combat assignments. As a corollary, military discipline was accepted, and the complexities of the current military justice system were not imposed upon a commander. As a result, courts-martial hardly ever occurred. Commanding officer's punishment was as unique as reduction of the already sparse beer ration or an additional tour of mess duty. Punishments could be typed on a slip of paper and kept in a service record book with the understanding that after six months good behavior, the slip would be torn up and a man's record would be clean.

Given the year from its activation in August 1943 to the time the battalion came off Guam in August 1944, and adding only combat replacements, the standard of training was excellent. Because of the heat, the battalion training schedule commenced early in the morning and secured by 1100. The men were then free to swim, play softball or volleyball or to work on equipment. It was possible to scrounge rubber life rafts from the Army Air Corps. Soon the lagoon in front of the camp was a sea of Marines, stark naked or in skivvies, floating about or attempting to sail their rafts. Larger life rafts were also "liberated." A popular sport was to float some 10 miles from the inland ranges to the sea down the Balasuma River, whose swift current carried the intrepid raftsmen through some of the most beautiful jungle in the world. Night training was stessed and, although an armored unit, infantry training was routinely given. Everyone took training seriously. All knew that ahead lay further desperate battles, and that the road to survival lay in well-trained individuals and units. NCO's had developed their skills. Officers had been combat tested and not found wanting.

To replace a company commander who had been killed at Guam and other casualties, the battalion received some lateral transfers from other units and replacements from the States. One of the drafts contained a number of general courts-martial prisoners, who were returned to active duty on probation. Surprisingly they fitted in and soon were assimilated into the battalion with no difficulty.

With an experienced and well-trained battalion, a reasonably developed camp and new howitzer-equipped vehicles, the stage was set for the next development. The major, like many of his Basic School classmates, had entered the Marine Corps from an Army ROTC unit and, as fate (or luck) would have it, an artillery unit. He had observed the length of time it took for artillery to be landed, to establish firing positions and then to be registered. In those prehelicopter days, it was frequently late on D-Day before artillery support was available to attacking infantry. There was also the desire to employ more fully the armored amphibians after the beach assault phase. It appeared the 75mm pack howitzers could be usefully employed in the indirect-fire role and still handle the ancillary missions, such a beach defense and amphibious patrols. The 75 tubes the armored amphibian battalion could add to the division's artillery would just about double the weight of artillery metal available to the division.

The requirement for the employment of armored amphibians in the indirect-fire role was clear. The problem remained to develop the techniques and equally important, how to sell the concept. The latter was a complex problem,



Last LVT(A) was destroyed on Okinawa by a Japanese "horned" mine.

because too often the senior officers appeared reluctant to accept new concepts. Also, the artillery fraternity, the so-called "cannon cockers," resented any implication that just "run of the mine" Marines could do anything as complex as perform the artillery role. A notable exception was the division G-3.

It was a relatively simple task to organize each of the four line armored amphibian companies into three firing batteries, one from each five-vehicle platoon. It was imperative that normal organization be maintained, because the primary beach assault role could not be degraded. Fire direction centers (FDC) were developed from each of the company command vehicles plus the three battalion command vehicles. Then each platoon headquarters was trained to a level so it could function as a substitute fire direction center if the company headquarters suffered heavy casualities during the beach assault, not a remote possibility. The result was 12 firing batteries consisting of five to six tubes each (six if the three command vehicles from the company headquarters were added to the batteries), with five primary FDC's and 12 alternate FDC's.

All this was posssible because of the support rendered by the division artillery regimental commander. He was one of the characters of the Marine Corps, a smart, capable, and rough-hewn gentlemen. He allocated officers and NCO's to train the FDC personnel and provided plotting equipment for the FDC's. Mutual plans were also developed for survey by the artillery regiment survey section and control by the regular artillery forward observers. Initially, the battalion considered using the armored amphibian platoon leaders as forward observers, but that idea was discarded. The officers were needed with their platoons during the beach assault and to supervise the establishment of the firing batteries. Also, they would only duplicate the artillery FO's already with the infantry battalions. It was decided, however, to provide limited training as FO's to the battalion officers, and, in fact, later in combat the decision proved wise. Finally, plans for tying in the armored amphibians with the regular artillery fire control net after the artillery was ashore and functioning were tested.

As all this planning, testing, training and development was going on, the artillery regiment commander was transferred to another division, and a new regimental C.O. was assigned. Fortunately, he, too, supported the concept, so the project went forward.

Even though the armored amphibian battalion was experienced and well-trained, other training had to be continued along with the indirect-fire project. Driving, communication, direct-fire, machine guns and small arms and infantry tactics were included in the training schedules. The back-breaking maintenance problems of the lumbering metal beasts, which were constantly exposed to salt water, were always present. So was the modification program, which would provide additional armored protection for the crews.

With the full support of division G-3 and new artillery regiment C.O., training progressed, first with one firing battery (platoon), then a three-platoon company and finally with the entire battalion. There seemed to be an unlimited supply of ammunition, because the battalion's 75mm howitzers were the only weapons of that caliber in active use, a fact that would later have great significance in the battle for Okinawa.

With each passing day the performance became more polished. Soon staff officers from the division, which the armored amphibian battalion was supporting, began to observe the fir-

A modification program accomplished in the field provided more armored protection for crews.

ings. Reports filtered back to the division commander that maybe those armored amphibian fellows had something. The major was informed that the division C.G. was coming to observe the firing on a certain date in early 1945. He decided to employ only one company of three firing platoons in the demonstration. The normal firing range was a undulating jungle meadow of kunai grass large enough for an artillery range. Throughout the area, clumps of trees, rocks and large bushes provided excellent targets. The kunai grass was three to four feet high and there was no suitable observation post, so a tower had to be built. About 20 feet high, the tower had a platform, which could hold seven or eight men, plus the necessary communication equipment for the forward observers. It was reached by a single ladder, wide enough for just one man at a time.

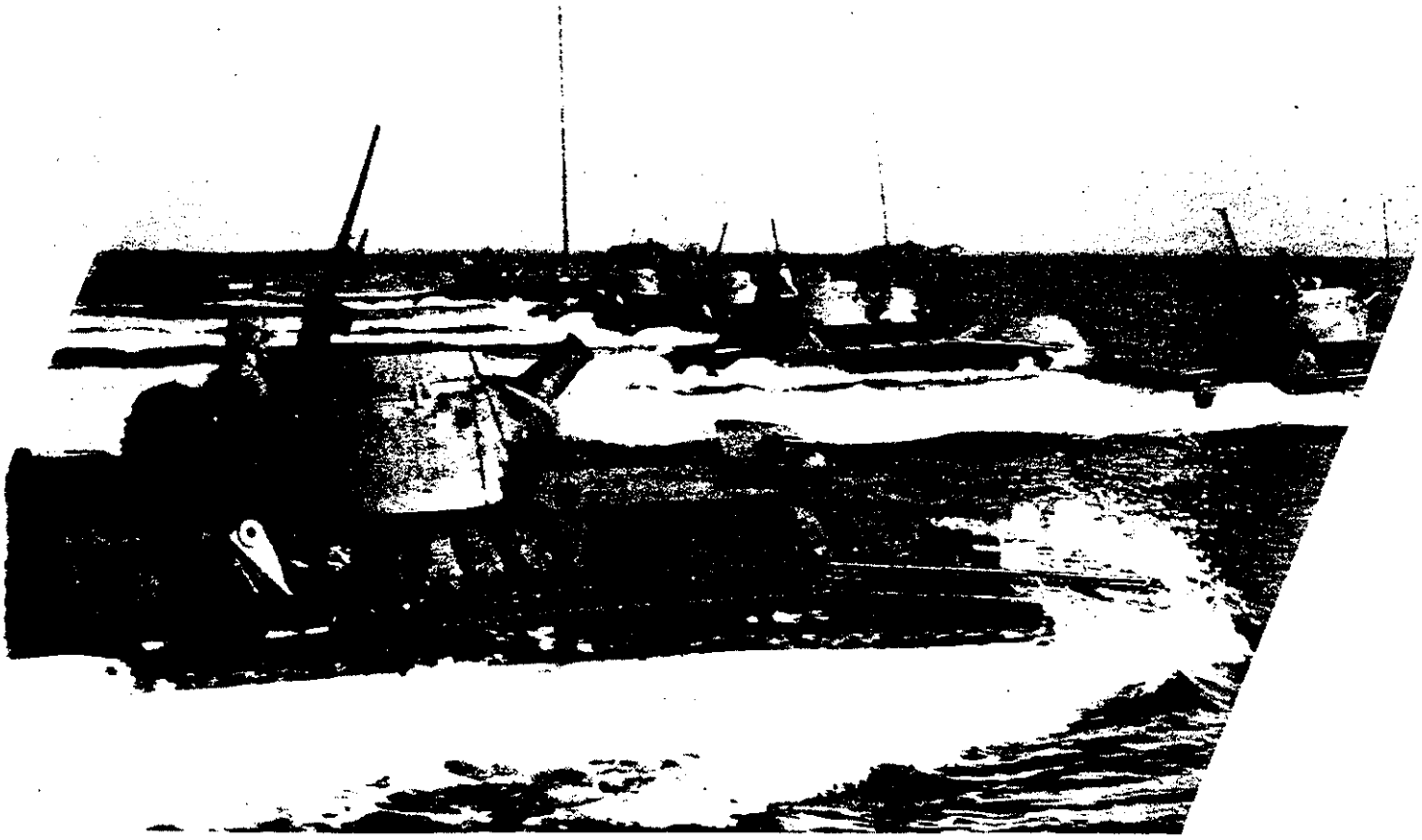
The morning of the demonstration shoot dawned hot and clear. The commanding general, artillery C.O., G-3 and a gaggle of aides and assistants arrived on schedule, flying down from the northern end of Guadalcanal where the division headquarters was located. The general, arty regt C.O., G-3 and the major climbed the observation tower and joined the artillery forward observers who were to control the shoot. Firing began. A series of preselected targets were demolished as the forward observers shifted the fire from preregistered points. Everything went like a dream, almost too smoothly. The major was filled with joy at the performance of his command, and as the shoot drew to a close, was congratulating himself.

Then the division commander became suspicious that what he was seeing was a canned demonstration rather than a realistic test of the ability of armored amphibians to fire indirect fire. Everything was too perfect. He pointed to a single bush some 150 yards in front of the tower and said, "Hit that." The artillery FO called the shift to the fire direction center. Nothing happened. The silence was deafening, the wait interminable. Finally, the radio crackled. Up from the fire direction center boomed the words: "Below safe elevation." At that point, the arty regt C.O. exercised his expertise and issued the order: "Safe to fire." Within seconds the three howitzers — one from each platoon — which were being used to register, coughed at the edge of the jungle behind the observation tower. The report, "On the way," came through. Howitzer shells travel at a much slower speed than gun shells, yet these could be heard approaching all too rapidly. To the major, the approaching shells had the sound of doom. He had heard enough "incoming" to know all was not well. The first shell landed just 100 yards in front of the tower, and the other two were still in the air. The major practically pushed the general down the ladder. The remainder of the Marines simply jumped off the tower. About this time the second shell impacted 75 yards in front of the tower and the third, not long after, 50 yards. All three were in direct line between the tower and the target. There were no casualties. There wasn't much to be said, and little was. The division C.G. did congratulate the major on a good shoot, but was heard to grumble that he didn't want the armored amphibians shooting too close to his men. It was a bad day.

Given the alternatives of no artillery support until late on D-Day or allowing the armored amphibians to shoot indirect fire didn't seem to be a difficult choice. They shot. On 1 April 1945, the division landed on Okinawa on the left flank of the assault, led by the armored amphibians. By the time the infantry had pushed far enough inland to call for indirect artillery fire, the LVT's were in position and registered. They maintained their on-call indirect fire until the artillery was ashore and ready to assume the mission.

On several occasions, the unique characteristics of armored amphibians allowed them to provide fire support, which otherwise might not be available. On Motobu Peninsula during the battle for Mount Yaetake, an infantry unit found the enemy between it and the supporting artillery. Because of the mountainous terrain, the artillery was masked and could not fire in support, nor could it displace forward, because bridges had been destroyed. Naval gunfire was not available, because the waters surrounding Motobu Peninsula had been mined. No problem for the armored amphibians. They simply swam to the required position, climbed ashore, registered and commenced fire missions. Later in the assault on the Naha-Shuri-Yonaburu line, the availability of 105mm ammunition became limited. No wonder. The volume of fire was tremendous. Fortunately, 75mm howitzer ammunition was plentiful, and so it was used in profusion to pound the enemy.

When the last great battle of World War II ended, the armored amphibian battalion had proved its worth. In addition to the assault, beach defense and water borne flank assault direct-fire missions, it had fired over 19,000 rounds of indirect fire — not bad for unartillery.



BOB, I'M PRETTY SURE THIS IS MY TANK I WAS IN 1-A-10.

1 = 1ST. ARMORED
A = "A" CO.
10 = TANK NUMBER.

FA

FIRST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE

2 August 1944

From : The Commanding General

To : The Commanding Officer, 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion, (Detachment H&S Company, Companies A&B).

Via : The Comman ding General III Amphibious Corps.

Subject: Appreciation of Service.

1. Upon detachment from the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, I wish to express to the officers and men of the First Armored Amphibian Battalion, my sincere appreciation of their excellent performance of duty while serving under my command.

2. The conspicuous action of the crews of the armored LVT's leading the assault waves while crossing the reef under heavy fire from concealed enemy emplacements made possible the establishment of the initial beach-head ashor. Proceeding inland, the Armored Amphibians assisted the assualt elements in their advance to the regimental objective, and continued in the support of the infantry until the arrival of the land tanks. During subsequent days, units of your command aided materially in the cleaning out of pockets of resistance along the Crote Peninsula.

3. The conduct of the personnel of Companies A and B, under your leadership, during the current operation was in keeping with the highest standards and traditions of the Marine Corps.

/s/ Lemuel C. Shephard, Jr.
Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps

HEADQUARTERS , III AMPHIBIOUS CORPS,
IN THE FIELD

From: The Commanding General.

To : The Commanding Officer, 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion, Detachment H&S, Companies A & B.

Subject: Appreciation of Service.

1. Forwarded with pleasure and congratulations.

2. The Commanding Officer, 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion, (Detachment H&S Company, Companies A a nd B) is directed to place a copy of this letter in the service record book of each enlisted man, and to attach a copy to the next fitness report of himself and each of his officers.

/s/ Roy S. Geiger,
Major Genersl, U. S. Marine Corps

和＝此のビラを持つて居る者は戰ひを止めた者です。

THE BEARER HAS CEASED RESISTANCE TREAT HIM IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW. TAKE HIM TO THE NEAREST COMMANDING OFFICER.

C-IN-C AMERICAN FORCES

SUCKER BAIT

TRANSLATION OF TEXT

LIFE SAVING LEAFLET

1. The American Forces will aid all who follow the instructions given in this leaflet.
2. Good treatment—food, clothing, tobacco, medical treatment, etc., will be accorded in conformity with International Law.

HOW TO USE THIS LEAFLET

1. Come slowly toward the American line with your hands raised high above your head, and carry only this leaflet.
2. Come one by one. Do not come in groups.
3. Men must wear only pants or loin cloths. Sufficient clothing will be provided. Women and children may come dressed as they are.
4. Do not approach American lines at night.
5. This leaflet may be used by anyone—Japanese, Korean, Soldier, Civilians, etc.
6. Those who do not have leaflets may advance to the American line if they follow instructions as if they had a leaflet.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

WASHINGTON

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION to the

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION, REINFORCED

consisting of: The Sixth Marine Division; First Marine War Dog Platoon; Fifth Provisional Rocket Detachment; Third Platoon, First Bomb Disposal Company; Marine Observation Squadron Six; Sixth Joint Assault Signal Company; First Armored Amphibian Battalion; Fourth Amphibian Tractor Battalion; Ninth Amphibian Tractor Battalion; First Section, Second Platoon, First Bomb Disposal Company; 708th Amphibian Tank Battalion, U. S. Army; Third Armored Amphibian Battalion (less 4 platoons); 91st Chemical Mortar Company (Separate), U. S. Army; First Platoon, Company B, 713th Armored Flame-Thrower Battalion, U. S. Army,

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For extraordinary heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces during the assault and capture of Okinawa, April 1 to June 21, 1945. Seizing Yontan Airfield in its initial operation, the SIXTH Marine Division, Reinforced, smashed through organized resistance to capture Ishikawa Isthmus, the town of Nago and heavily fortified Motobu Peninsula in 13 days. Later committed to the southern front, units of the Division withstood overwhelming artillery and mortar barrages, repulsed furious counterattacks and staunchly pushed over the rocky terrain to reduce almost impregnable defenses and capture Sugar Loaf Hill. Turning southeast, they took the capital city of Naha and executed surprise shore-to-shore landings on Oruku Peninsula, securing the area with its prized Naha Airfield and Harbor after nine days of fierce fighting. Reentering the lines in the south, SIXTH Division Marines sought out enemy forces entrenched in a series of rocky ridges extending to the southern tip of the island, advancing relentlessly and rendering decisive support until the last remnants of enemy opposition were exterminated and the island secured. By their valor and tenacity, the officers and men of the SIXTH Marine Division, Reinforced contributed materially to the conquest of Okinawa, and their gallantry in overcoming a fanatic enemy in the face of extraordinary danger and difficulty adds new luster to Marine Corps history, and to the traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President,

James Forrestal

Secretary of the Navy

A-3758

A-Bombs Averted U.S. Invasion Of Japan 36 Yrs. Ago

TOKYO (AP) — A subject rarely broached in the annual memorials for the victims of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is whether it hastened an end to World War II and thus saved millions of other lives.

In the summer of 1945, as the top-secret Manhattan Project in the United States was about to test-fire its atomic device, U.S. and Japanese military planners were girding for what promised to be one of the bloodiest clashes in the history of warfare — the invasion of Japan.

In a plan code named Operation Downfall, the Americans were to send more than one million Army soldiers and Marines to invade Kyushu, southernmost of Japan's main islands. That effort, known as Olympic and set for November, 1945, was to provide a staging area for the second and crucial phase, Coronet — the invasion of the main island of Honshu in early 1946.

The Japanese militarists were still reeling from the disastrous loss in June of Okinawa, where 100,000 Japanese troops and about as many civilians perished. But they resisted tentative peace moves from within the government, and went ahead with their own strategic plan — Operation Ketsugo (Decision), a suicidal defense of Kyushu in which several million poorly armed troops and civilian militia would "fight to the bitter end."

War Minister Korechika Anami insisted that any peace moves should only follow a battle on the beaches in which he expected the Americans' will to fight would be weakened by enormous losses. He reasoned that Japan then could negotiate a surrender on more favorable terms, with guarantees that the imperial system be preserved.

OPERATION KETSUGO CALLED for Japan to give up much of Manchuria to the Soviet Union, which had pledged to declare war against Japan after Germany's surrender, while the Japanese forces concentrated on demolishing the U.S. landing forces on the beaches of Kyushu and Honshu.

To achieve this, the Japanese generals amassed a force of 2.3 million Imperial Army troops, supported by 4 million civilian employees of the military, a special garrison force of 250,000 and 28 million civilian militia aged 15 to 60, male and female. The last were to be armed and trained with muzzle-loading rifles, bamboo sticks cut into spears and bows and arrows.

Between 5,000 and 10,000 planes, mostly trainers, had been marshaled for kamikaze suicide attacks, and 600 suicide boats were set to hurtle human bombs against the invasion fleet.

U.S. Secretary of War Henry Stimson, voicing caution about the invasion, predicted it would "cast the die of last-ditch resistance ... and tend to produce a fusion of race solidity and antipathy which has no analogy in the case of Germany."

Historians have estimated that an Allied victory in a "Battle of Japan" could have been gained only at the cost of up to a million American and perhaps 5 million Japanese lives. According to one biographer, the U.S. commander, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, expected that as many as 100,000 U.S. personnel would be killed just in fighting on the Kanto plain around Tokyo.

Whether the atomic attacks on Hiroshima Aug. 6, and Nagasaki three days later saved the two sides from such carnage is open to question. Stimson said: "This deliberate, premeditated destruction was our least abhorrent alternative....It stopped the fire raids, and the strangling blockade; it ended the ghastly specter of a clash of great land armies."

SOME HISTORIANS ARGUE, though, that the decision to use atomic weapons to bring Japan to its knees was unnecessary against an enemy already on its back.

The once-great Imperial Navy had been cut to pieces. Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya and others of Japan's largely wooden cities had been wasted by firebomb raids. In Tokyo alone, 34 square miles had been leveled, with more than 130,000 people killed in firestorms triggered by bombs on March 9-10, 1945. Fuel and basic materials were nearly exhausted; widespread starvation was a threat.

Despite official opposition in Tokyo to the Allies' July, 1945, Potsdam Declaration, which demanded Japan's unconditional surrender, secret peace feelers had already been sent out through Swedish and Swiss contacts.

Emperor Hirohito, revered then as a deity, had taken the unprecedented step of sending an envoy to Moscow to ask the Soviets to intercede with the Americans. The Soviets, preparing to enter the war against Japan — in violation of a treaty between the two nations — rebuffed the effort.

Numerous Japanese officials would recall later that the Soviet Union's declaration of war on Aug. 8 was more of a shock to Tokyo's war leaders than the attack on Hiroshima because the immensity of the devastation was not immediately grasped.

Having received what they thought was a flat rejection of the Potsdam Declaration and with no idea whether Japan was close to capitulation, U.S. strategists dropped the bomb on Nagasaki the next day. Six days later Hirohito announced surrender in a radio message, saying: "The war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage."

While Stimson and a few other senior U.S. officials agonized over the moral implications of the atomic bombs, President Harry S. Truman later said, according to American author John Toland, that he had not. He saw it, Toland said, as "another weapon in the arsenal of righteousness."

The war is over

Soldier emerges after 30 years in jungle

MANILA (AP) — Lieut. Hiroo Onoda, a Second World War Japanese army holdout for nearly 30 years after the conflict ended, emerged from the Philippines jungles Sunday. He told Japanese correspondents he had not come out before because "I had not received the order."

Onoda, who turned 52 Sunday, met with searchers briefly and then returned to his hideout to retrieve his Samurai sword. In a formal act of surrender, he presented the sword to Maj.-Gen. Jose Rancudo, commander of the Philippines air force.

Officials said they expect Onoda to be flown today to Manila.

"I am sorry I have disturbed you for so long a time," he told his elder brother, Toshiro, 62, who was part of the serach party.

The Philippines news agency PNA said Toshiro placed his hands on his long-lost brother's shoulders and told him: "You did well."

"Well done, brother," echoed Onoda's younger brother, Toshio, when he heard Onoda had gone back for his sword. "He is coming out of the jungle in the way he was supposed to."

Japanese news reports quoted Onoda as saying he had intended to stay in the jungle the rest of his life. He said the hardest thing for him to endure was losing his friends. A number of them were killed in skirmishes with Filipino forces. Has last order was to keep up guerrilla warfare.

The straggler's parents, in their 80s, burst into tears when told their son had been found. "We have been waiting for this day for 30 years," said Tanajiro Onoda, the soldier's father.

"I feel like I am dreaming, I feel like I am dreaming," the 86-year-old man murmured over and over. "That's all I can say at this moment."

Onoda's mother, Tamai, said: "I've been preparing Hiroo's meal every single day though he wasn't here . . . I'd better bring him a lot of sweets because he liked them so much."

The Japanese embassy said Onoda had been an intelligence officer during the war. His former commanding officer, Maj. Yoshimi Taniguchi, and a Japanese student, Norio Suzuki, were among the searchers. Suzuki said he had spoken to the straggler Feb. 20 while visiting the island.

Several searches for Onoda had been conducted over the years, beginning in 1954, and twice he was declared dead. The last search, in 1972-73, was prompted by a clash with Filipino troops. One straggler was killed. His companion, believed to be Onoda, escaped.

In January, 1972, another straggler, Sgt. Shoichi Yokoi, was found in the jungles of Guam after hiding out for 28 years.

Japanese officials have estimated that hundreds if not thousands of Second World War soldiers may be hiding in the jungles of Southeast Asia—either from ignorance of the war's end or out of blind loyalty to a military code that taught them death was preferable to surrender.

'AN'S FUKUDA IN TOKYO

FEB. 7, 1972

The Last Soldier

On the tiny (209 sq. mi.) Pacific island of Guam, two fishermen last week pounced on a ragged, furtive little man whom they had spotted tending a fish trap in the Talofofo River, and turned him over to the police for questioning. To his incredulous interrogators, the man announced that he was Shoichi Yokoi, 56, a sergeant in the 38th Infantry Regiment of the old Japanese Imperial Army. He had been hiding out in the jungles of Guam since U.S. forces recaptured the island during a month-long siege in the summer of 1944. From a leaflet that he found one day, Yokoi had known for 20 years that the war was over. But he had refused to surrender, he said, because "we Japanese soldiers were told to prefer death to the disgrace of getting captured alive."

Despite his incredible ordeal, Yokoi proved to be in remarkably good health. While resting in a Guam hospital, he told reporters about his experience as a modern-day Robinson Crusoe. "At first," he said, "there were ten of us, lying low and dodging the enemy." One by one, the others died or gave themselves up, and for the past eight years Yokoi had to fend for himself. He kept time by marking a "calendar" tree at each full moon. Food in the jungle was plentiful, and he survived on a diet of mangoes, nuts, crabs, prawns, snails, rats, eels, pigeons and wild hog. A tailor before he was drafted in 1941, Yokoi had kept a pair of scissors, with which he trimmed his hair and cut cloth that he made from tree-bark fibers for clothes. His home was a subterranean cave in the jungle with a floor of soft leaves, and lit by a coconut-oil lamp that he had made.

Yokoi was quite bewildered by his sudden return to civilization. He knew vaguely what jets were—"those strange planes whose wings are all swept back"—but he had not known that the emperor whom he had served so faithfully was now a mere mortal instead of a god. One of Yokoi's first questions to reporters was on a political matter: "Tell me one thing quick: Is Roosevelt dead?" The ex-sergeant burst into tears when told that his mother had died.

FEB. 7, 1972

SANKEI SHIMBUN

EX-SERGEANT SHOICHI YOKOI
Waking from a dream.

Yokoi became an instant hero in Japan, and he will be given a triumphal welcome this week in Tokyo, and later in his hometown of Nagoya, where there is a tombstone bearing his name in a graveyard. The Japanese government offered Yokoi a $320 cash token of sympathy—his accrued back pay amounts to only about $129—and chartered a jet to fly him home. Thousands of Japanese citizens have come forward with gifts, ranging from job proposals to electric blankets and a lifetime pass to a hotel's bath. All in all, Yokoi may find modern life as much of an ordeal as existence in the jungle. "It's all like a dream, and I'm afraid of waking up from it," he said. "Once back home, I want to climb a tall mountain and meditate there alone for a long, long time."

Real Marines Don't Practice Diplomacy

By JAMES P. STERBA

First, a confession:

My initial encounter with real U.S. Marines had nothing to do with President Reagan's beloved jarheads: North, McFarlane, Regan, Walters and Shultz. It happened in early July 1969, at Vandegrift Combat Base in I Corps, 12 miles south of the DMZ and 11 miles east of the remains of Khesanh.

I was a young pencil-jockey for a well-known local Manhattan newspaper. And after hanging around with the grunts and their pet rats, soaking up war stories and trying to get "orientated," as they said at the briefings, I wrote a story in which a Marine was quoted as saying:

"Worrying about dying is how guys get killed out here."

That quote has bothered me ever since. So I'm coming clean. I hereby admit that that Marine didn't say that. My editors put those words in his mouth and censored what he really said. Which was:

"Look, I can abso-(bleeping)-lutely guarantee you that every sorry (bleeper) who starts worrying out here about gettin' greased sure as (bleep) is going to get his (bleeping bleep) blown away."

See, this newspaper does it too. It's a media conspiracy. It probably started during the celluloid World War II that John Wayne, Ronald Reagan and William Bendix fought when the Pacific, like much else, was black and white. Ever since, the movies, TV, radio, magazines and newspapers have been cleaning up Marinespeak like so many Don Regans with shovels scurrying behind the elephants.

The problem is that this has gone on so long that some Americans, even in high places, actually seem to believe that Marines say "darn" and "heck" and "gosh" and "stuff," as in, "then, the stuff hit the fan."

This wouldn't matter much except that the Marine Corps itself has come to embrace censored Marinespeak as its official language to the point where it prissily revoked its endorsement of Clint Eastwood's new movie, "Heartbreak Ridge," on the ground that our hero, Gunnery Sgt. Tom Highway, is a garbage mouth.

Gimme a break! We aren't talking here about a few good men (who don't say bleep). Those are the poster ladies.

The Marines I used to know were about as ruthlessly bullheaded and foulmouthed a collection of juvenile delinquents and intellectual malcontents as could be assembled without cages, whips and chairs. And they were proud of it. They took perverse pride in eating terrible food and getting along with terrible, broken-down equipment (the helicopters that broke down during the 1980 Iranian hostage-rescue debacle belonged to the Marines).

These Marines, of course, were the ones to be with when you found yourself in "deep serious." Trouble was they stumbled into it constantly, whether they wanted to or not. And if you wondered aloud why they didn't build bunkers or dig foxholes or otherwise afford themselves of elementary forms of self-protection, they'd tell you fervently, "Marines never, ever dig in." (They didn't at Khesanh and they didn't in Beirut.) Digging in was evidence that they might stay somewhere for a while, which, according to creed, Marines never do. They move forward, especially when somebody is shooting at them. It was the candy-(bleeped) Army, they'd tell you, that stopped to think, to call in artillery or wait for air support, not Marines. Marines charged—no doubts, no qualms, no questions asked.

Times have changed. Somebody has obviously forgotten what Marines are for. They've gone dainty on us. They've managed to convince people in high places that they talk nice and behave properly enough to alter their job descriptions. They've been getting jobs as striped-pants diplomats and even emissaries in the whispery world of covert networking. They're passing themselves off as silver-tongued smoothies. They've convinced people they're subtle.

Among the Marines I knew, an act of subtlety was a Marine F-4 Phantom pilot flying 300 feet above the deck in a mountain-fringed valley and dropping his entire load of napalm right down the throat of a Viet Cong gunner and waving to the cheering grunts on the ground as he passed. Whoosh. That's Marine subtle.

But these new-fangled Marines, who have managed to smooth-talk their way into becoming all the president's men, supposedly do dainty things like deliver cakes to ayatollahs to show sincerity and sensitivity. The Marines I knew didn't deliver baked goods, unless of course the frosting hid an enormous slab of an exploding putty called C-4.

Real Marines can be wonderfully charming and engaging. A few of them are nice guys. But you certainly don't want them in your basement practicing their "can-dos" or involved in delicate military missions, let alone diplomatic ones.

What real Marines do best is perform a basic wartime task. They assault enemy beaches and die for their country in whatever numbers are required to accomplish this unfortunately necessary task. It's time once again to let Marines be Marines.

One shivers to imagine the reaction of Lt. Gen. Lewis Burwell "Chesty" Puller, the Marine's Marine, to the doings of Oliver North, Bud McFarlane, Don Regan, George Shultz and Vernon Walters. Imagine his ghost confronting these guys.

"Foreign policy?" he'd ask. "You sorry sons-a-(bleeps) never learn. The Marines have only one foreign policy—find the bastards, then pile on."

Mr. Sterba is a senior special writer for the Journal in New York.

WALL ST. JOURNAL - 12-16-86

were all "dry runs," but eventually we started using ammo when we had established familiarity with the procedures. The fifth tank in the platoon was the platoon's fire-direction-center (FDC). We also used all five tanks in the platoon as a battery, with a total of 15 guns to fire and the FDC being one of the three company command tanks. We could even use all 18 guns (tanks) in a company with a battalion command tank as FDC. We practiced and we fired using all sorts of combinations. Read "Getting the Job Done With Un-Artillery" in these papers for an interesting explanation of our new responsibilities.

I was one of the ones picked for our platoon, and also company, FDC. This was in the days before electronic calculators or computers. We used slide rules and became quite good, and fast, in their use. There was personal stress in this as one didn't always want to be the last battery in the company to report the necessary changes in range (elevation) and in movement of the shells laterally to the right or left. The forward observer is a person in a position to pick the targets, observe the strike of the artillery shells and then call back necessary corrections to put those shells on top of the target. He would phone back "up 200 yds," or "left 75 yds," etc. The FDC would then convert that yardage, or distance, into "clicks" on the gun sights. Each gun in the battery would require identical information; that is when the FDC passed the word to the battery "up 5 clicks" each gunner would adjust his gun so that its elevation moved higher by 5 clicks. Each "click" or movement of the sight by the gunner's fingers could be felt, thus the term "click." As the distance of the target from the gun increased, a greater number of "clicks" was needed to hit the target, as the shell had to be shot higher into the sky. Then, also, as there were four powder bags (gun powder sewn into white cloth bags) in each shell's brass casing, this, too, had to be taken into account as four bags of powder would propel the shell a lot farther, and faster, than one bag. If the target was over a hill or several hills, the shall had to be shot high enough so that it went over the hill instead of hitting it. In our outfit, as I remember it, an officer in the FDC determined the powder charge. Each gun sight in the battery was aimed at the same aiming stake. The FDC called out to the tanks an adjustment to the guns by battery powered phone. The sight would be adjusted, the gun moving with it, and usually one round, by one gun only, fired to observe the accuracy of the new adjustment (unless it was a minor adjustment). If the strike of the shell was OK, then the battery of guns was ready to commence firing when ordered. Each gun sight would then be readjusted back to the aiming stake, without moving the guns correspondingly. The shells we had were smoke (for observation or screening purposes), high explosive (HE) and canister. Canister was like <u>big</u> buckshot when fired. This was for direct fire, to mow down concentrations of enemy in fairly close quarters to the gun. Fortunately, our tank never had occasion to use canister.

For a while, we got some fresh vegetables that were grown on the 'Canal. I can remember sweet corn and watermelons. I don't know who tended the gardens, but I can imagine ideal growing conditions.

I haven't mentioned it previously, but there were mountains on the 'Canal that were 7600-8000 feet in elevation. I have never read

of any military men going up into these heights, only into the foothills. I assume that some tribes may have been somewhat higher than the foothills.

We didn't swim as much at the beach in front of our camp as we had done at Tassafaronga. The reason for this was that there wasn't the coral reef here and the ocean often swept in with waves that churned up the sand. We did swim here, however, especially when the sea was calm. Every once in a while a truck load of us would go to the east approximately three miles and along a narrow dirt road. Our destination would be the BALESUMA river. I don't remember now how far inland from the ocean the spot that we swam was; but the river was great. It was darker and deeper than the Segilau where I used to swim and do laundry at Tassafaronga. The water was cool and clean, with jungle on both sides of it's banks. There was a high bank on the side that we approached it from after leaving the truck. A thick rope had been fastened to a limb of a tree overhanging the river and we'd swing out over the water and then drop 8 to 10 feet into the river. It was fun. We never knew it at the time, but I've since read that there were crocodiles, and pythons, on the 'Canal. The crocs were the type that could go from fresh to salt water and vice versa. I've never talked to anyone who ever saw any of these reptiles. Thank God I never did or I'd probably never have gone into the water.

One of the things we joked about but sure didn't want was the "MUMU." This was filariasis, caused by mosquitoes bearing a parasitic larval worm (although I don't believe we Marines at the time knew what caused it). We just knew we didn't want it. As the female worms and eggs settle in the lympth tubes they block the flow of lympth. Horrible swelling of organs then develops. This stage is called elephantiasis. We called it ELEPHANTITIS in our ignorance. But we didn't want it! The testicles quite commonly were the organ that got large. I mean BIG! I had a photo (maybe faked) of a native whose balls were so large he had to push them around in a wheel-barrow. I got the photo from an Army Air Force photographer on the 'Canal in exchange for a Jap souvenir. I have read since that quite a few Marines contracted MUMU. I believe our outfit had 3 or 4. For treatment, they were shipped up to Washington state or Oregon to a military hospital. In the fall of 1944, we had a sergeant in "A" Co. who was "working on a survey." "Working on a survey" meant a discharge for medical (or mental) reasons. We all figured he was faking it (for the novelty) but he would sit around squeezing his balls, trying to make them swell. He would also look out into "the slot" and exclaim about seeing (non-existent) battle wagons and other ships out there. He, of course, was unsuccessful in his quest for a survey. I believe a few of today's "A" Co. veterans will remember this tale and the sergeant.

When I had first joined the 1st Armored I had gone hitchhiking and exploring one Saturday or Sunday and stumbled onto the Colonial government compound, either British or Australians representing the British. As I remember, this consisted of several small buildings and with natives on very formal British-like sentry duty. The natives were armed with rifles and were wearing lava-lavas, the wrap-around skirts they seemed to prefer. As I was looking around, I discovered that a truck was going to go to an area where the natives congregated,

possibly to trade things or maybe because the colonial officer wanted to have contact with them occasionally. In any case, several of we Americans, Army as well as Marines, climbed aboard the truck, at the Australian officer's invitation, and we were off. We ended up at a narrow river, in the jungle. There were perhaps sixty natives there, women as well as men. The women were in a group by themselves, with the men on the outside. I can remember a young maiden surrounded by the old shriveled up or pregnant other females. She seemed to be on the protected list. All of the women were bare-breasted. Trading commenced with the men. I don't remember what all they had to offer. I do know they had bunches of bananas and wooden carvings. I entered into negotiations with one man that had a quite skillfully carved war club. It was about three feet long, of a dense reddish-colored wood, and had many designs carved into it. I had a can of Prince Albert smoking tobacco that I had purchased at the compound with the thought of it being the thing to use for trade. I offered it and the gook said, "TWO DOLLA." That was the only thing he would consider. I believe the colonial officer must have observed our lack of successful barter as he came over and said something in pidgin to the fella with the club. The man came over and accepted my can of tobacco and handed me the club. I've sort of regretted that since because I don't believe the gook was happy over the deal. The club may also have been for the guy's personal protection. I carried that club in my seabag for a year or so until one day I had to lighten my load and tossed it aside. I wish I had kept it.

We all caught guard duty periodically. There were a couple of posts in the "tank park" where we had parked our 75-80 tanks. I don't remember ever having guard duty in the day time, although I assume we had it. But I had duty several times at night in the tank park. We didn't have to pace back and forth, but did have to be alert and no sleeping. It was kind of a spooky place at 0200 to 0400 hours. The metal in the tanks expanded in the heat of the day and contracted (sometimes) at night. It popped, groaned and made noises. Also, at the back end of the tank park was a swamp with a small stream wandering through it. This was GAVAGA CREEK, and it drifted into the lagoon down by "C" and "D" Co. before going into the ocean. At night, in the tank park, strange noises and sometimes big splashes in the swamp water would make the hair stand up on your neck. I don't know what critters caused these noises, but imaginations ran amuck sometimes. Sometimes it would rain so hard you would think it would drive you into the ground. Guadalcanal is 7 degrees south of the equator and among the wettest areas on earth. Annual rainfall runs 150 to 165 inches. The heaviest rains are from November to April. In the remaining months, the humidity is fairly low. Our helmets kept the head dry and the poncho half-way kept your torso dry (for a while), but from the mid-thigh down was disaster. I recall one night, while on guard duty down there, that a horrible scream came from the location of "C" or "D" co. The next day when I was asking about it, I was told that a guy was stung by a scorpion or centipede. Very painful, but usually not fatal. It also was the reason we ALWAYS shook our boots out in the morning before putting our feet into them. Another tank park story is about the guy on guard duty in the middle

of the night who was practicing his "quick draw" with the pistol. He ended up shooting and shattering his knee. This wasn't an "A" Co. man so I didn't know him.

Conditions improved to the point where we even could get a ration of a couple of cans of beer and Coca Cola per week. I don't know now if we had to buy this or if it was gratis. We had two men in our platoon who, for religious reasons, did not drink alcohol. These were Earl Gray, a mormon from Utah and Cecil Harp from Kansas. They were absolutely the best friends of every man in the company. They were good men and friends to all as we all wanted to trade our cans of Coke so that we had 6 to 10 cans apiece. Usually we would bury it in the dirt under our sacks. Some of the brands were ACME, PABST, BUDWEISER, MILLER, GRAIN BELT and GRIESEDIEK ("greasy dick" was the common name). This latter was a St. Louis beer. Supposedly all of our beer was "3.2" (3.2% alcohol). The "old salts" (anyone with more time in the Corps than you) sneered at "3.2 beer;" but I noticed that they got just as drunk just as quickly as everyone else. Three or four cans of warm beer seemed to do that to all of us. Sometimes a guy would put a can each for he and his buddies into a pail and turn a CO_2 fire extinguisher at it. This cooled the beer when the foamy "snow" hit the cans. I didn't like this though, as we drank from the cans and an "after-taste" from the chemicals remained on the can even if wiped with a cloth.

My mentioning of the fire extinguishers reminds me of a thought I always had when we refueled the tanks. We refueled in the tank park after being out in the boondocks with them. We'd man-handle a 55-gallon drum of gas up next to the tank, put a hose into the drum and a funnel into the gas tank fill opening on the tank's deck, behind the turret. With a hand-operated pump we would then pump gas into the funnel leading to the vehicle's gas tank. One man would turn the crank, another would hold the hose into the funnel and a third crew member always had to stand by, alertly, on top of the tank with a fire extinguisher in his hand, ready for action. I always thought that if there was a spark or a fire there would be an immediate explosion and we would all be blown to kingdom-come before the extinguisher could be triggered.

One morning when we pulled off and shook the tarp that was over the turret of our tank in the tank park, a small (20 to 26 inch) snake came sailing through the air. It was promptly dispatched. We didn't know good from bad and had an aversion to reptiles. Fortunately, we saw very few of them. Also, I can still see one of nature's oddities that I observed one bright sunny day. On one of our excursions into the jungle there were some small, shallow pools of water. These were no more than a foot deep and 12 foot by 6 foot. As I approached them, small fish, like minnows, <u>RAN</u> from the water's edge (<u>on land</u>) and into the water! These pools were rain water and perhaps 40 feet from a tiny stream. Another time, near sunset, a couple of guys down on the beach knocked a huge bat out of the sky with a long bamboo pole. It's body was about the size of a squirrel, but without the weight.

At the S.E. edge of our camp at Tetere was a huge field of kunai grass. We called it elephant grass for some reason, maybe because of

its height, which was about 7 feet. One of our tasks after the trip to the Marianas was to convert a part of this field to a baseball diamond. The field was level, dry and hundreds of acres in size. Each day for weeks a work party would descend on it with machetes to cut the grass. After it dried, piles of it would be set afire to get rid of it. Rakes, hoes and shovels then went to work to remove humps and rocks and to smooth it. Eventually it was finished and several games played there. We had some pretty good ball players; at least one who played "triple-A" semi-pro ball after the war. This was Pfc. Bill Aydelotte who played on a team with Billy Martin when Martin was starting out. Martin was also a Marine. I played in 2 or 3 games on the 'Canal, but really preferred swimming.

One day we had a formal battalion parade in the field. It was another of those bright and hot days. General L. Sheperd of the 6th Marine Div. handed out Purple Hearts and other decorations after a long period of we troops standing at attention. I can recall a couple of men passing out in ranks near me. Corp. Geo. Bell of Tank A-6, "A" Co., 2nd Platoon (mine) received the Silver Star medal for his activity on the reef on our initial assault at Guam.

My "diary" relates the festivities for Christmas, 1944:

Sat. Dec. 23, 1944 "We've been saving our beer since the last of Oct. Besides our small ration, we've been buying it from the Army, down the island, when we could. About 1400 hrs. we started punching holes into the beer cans with our K-bars. By 1800 hrs. the company was a madhouse. Besides the beer, some are drinking raisin-jack and New Zealand Whiskey (Guadalcanal distilled back in the bush). This latter sells for $40 to $45 per quart (whiskey probably sold for $3.50/qt. in the U.S. at that time). An unusual number of friendly (albeit damaging) fights occurred and everyone having a great time. I crawled up on the side of Sgt. L.Q. Henderson's tent and passed out, sleeping part of the night there. Someone in the next tent started screaming in his sleep and woke me up. This fella does this every once in a while. L.Q. and Kruger helped me into my sack in the wee hours."

Sun. Dec. 24, 1944 "After last night, four of us still have 80 cans of beer left. Drank 3 beers each before (evening) chow. About this time our "gunny" (Gunnery Sgt. Dan Maynard) was K.O.ed over in "B" Co., or so the "word" said. Beer drinking resumed after chow and by the time the movie started we were feeling great. We had some crude "coke highs" (high balls). We left the movie because the major (Warga) was getting slightly annoyed at all the noise and laughing going on. We went down to my tent. Soon the company C.O. (Capt. Joe Garfield) stumbled by, in worse shape than we. He was normally pretty "GI." We invited him in and I thought I'd never stop laughing at the antics and conversation going on. I don't know who else was with me besides Bill Aydelotte and Pfc. Lee DeLauer ("B" Co.) but we were having fun. About midnight I was showing these two how to do the breast stroke in the drainage ditch that ran down the length of our company street. The ditch had about 6 inches of water, puke, beer cans and a foot of mud at the bottom. Soon all three of us were "swimming" the ditch. We then went to the "Tops" tent (1st Sgt. Buttery) and sang him a few carols. Our new Plt. Leader was Lt.

Charles Spilman (fresh from the Peleliu operation). He and some of the platoon swiped four cooked turkeys from the galley. We got some of this. L.Q. Henderson cut his nose eating beans out of a can. My tank commander Cpl. Harry Broderick got me out of Henderson's and Aydelotte's tent about 0300, assisted me to our tent and dumped me into my sack. By that time, things were pretty quiet except for a couple of guys in "Stud" (Sgt. Odis A.) Guthrie's tent arguing about where to hang their Christmas stocking."

Jan. 6, 1945 "A notice on the bulletin board today. Promotions. Among others in the battalion, Broderick, Campbell, Pierce and myself of tank A-10 were promoted to Corporal, effective November 29, 1944."

Jan. 24, 1945 "The word is out, another invasion eminent. We've had a training session on enemy civilians and what to expect from them and our behavior towards them. Talks on a couple of kinds of poisonous snakes, typhus, cholera, etc. Have received seven inoculations in past couple of days."

The "shots" received were for some pretty exotic stuff, cholera being one of these. Got a small-pox vaccination also. There was no inoculation "gun" back then. Platoons were scheduled to be at sick bay at a certain time. We'd line up in single file and a "pecker-checker" on either side of you, once you entered the tent, would plunge the needles into your arms. You would then exit on the opposite end of the tent and report back to your first aid training, work party, or whatever was going on for you.

We felt that we were fairly competent as an artillery outfit by now. This was a secondary mission for us, leading the first-wave assault troops ashore still being the primary one.

Jan. 25, 1945 "We're getting itchy to be on our way now. The food is pretty poor currently for some reason. As usual, rumors are plentiful about our destination; some being the China coast, Java, Borneo, Formosa (now called TAIWAN) or the Kuril Islands."

About this time, "A" Co. conducted some infantry-type games. We spent some time pulling the lead out of old .30 cal. ammo. and then replacing it with soap or wax. We then split into two groups, with one group heading off into the jungle to set up an ambush. The second group came along about an hour later. I was in the "defense group." Actually, we were short on tactics but long on enthusiasm. We were in the rain forest; the jungle floor was level (no ridges or heights). A couple of "defenders" got up into huge trees; another guy and I dug a "spider trap," a vertical foxhole, each. We pulled a little vegetation over the top and waited. After a while, the "attackers" approached in a skirmish line. I could see Capt. Garfield sneaking along with them. When they were about to us, we slipped the camouflage aside and started firing. We had our carbines. I gave "Joe" (Garfield) a face full of soap and we figured we had "wiped out" about ten of them. But, of course, they wanted to play the game longer so it was difficult to convince them, especially the Capt., that they were indeed out of the game. Actually, as I think of it, it was a dangerous game. That soap or wax could put out eyes or chip teeth. It killed a day anyway and gave us some laughs. Of course, your clothes are soaking wet from perspiration when you're in the boondocks like that, so you have more laundry to take care of if you

return to camp that day. Longer stays in the bush, when you sleep there (in your clothes, of course), meant that you didn't change very frequently.

We got "jungle rot" or the "Crud" frequently even if we weren't in the jungle, like later on up on Saipan. Jungle rot is itchy, usually wet, open sores that are in the armpits and groin and also often on the chest. It may last a week or even months under the right conditions. Daily bathing helped, but wasn't necessarily a preventative. If you were going to get it, you got it; and often a large portion of the troops had it. We liberally applied foot powder in the armpits and crotch if we didn't have it and got "blue ointment" liquid applied to it daily if we were afflicted.

Periodically we would have a nocturnal invasion of land crabs. I suspect it must have happened two to four times per year. It sure wasn't constantly, or even monthly. I suspect that these things lived in the sea and periodically left it in order to reproduce. It always occurred in the night. The crab's body was about the size of a saucer, 3½ to 5 inches high, with 6 to 8 legs attached. They were a tan color and hard shelled, somewhat resembling a Maryland blue crab except for color and size. They seemed to always be heading inland, making us think they dug holes or nests or something ashore. It seems that they got as far as the tank park at least, and maybe beyond that into the swamp or jungle. The first episode of them that we had was on a moonlit night. We heard them crawling in the company street in front of the tents, in the tents, and under our fart sacks. There were hundreds of them. We didn't know what they were going to do; were even a little suspicious and wary of them. So, like a good Marine would, we attacked them first. Using boots, rifle butts, and other weapons, we smashed them. I used my aforementioned war club. They just kept coming, like a banzai attack. The next morning when the dawn broke, the ground was covered with them. After chow, the work parties started accumulating them for burial. The sun got hotter and hotter. Soon the stench of these decaying creatures would "gag a maggot," as the saying goes. We remembered that smell; declared a truce, and after that they went on their nocturnal journeys unmolested. I ran across a professor in later years who taught on Guam for a while for the military. He said they were delicious eating. I never saw them on Guam, but I can't believe he was talking about the same creatures. If so, it's another case of us surrounded by great delicacies and being ignorant of the fact.

Feb. 13, 1945 "My second birthday overseas today. My sister Jean has let me know, by letter, that she is going to try and see me soon."

In the last week of February, 1945, we boarded LST's and departed for the Cape Esperance/Tassafaronga area for maneuvers. Made several ship-to-shore landings plus jungle crashing with the tanks. We did this for about 8 to 9 days, spending several nights in the jungle. Our "A" Co. sleep-walker, Pfc. Robt. Schwaniger, did it again; wandering off into the jungle and waking up a wee bit lost. We made our final beach assault the morning of March 6; went inland and set up as artillery, utilizing forward observers, fire direction centers and the complete course.

At about 1000 hours on this day, a runner caught up with me in the bush. He told me that 1st Sgt. Buttery had driven down from our camp on Tetere Beach (about a 50 mile trip) to advise me that my sister, 1st Lt. Jean Addison of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, was on the island to visit me. I got Lt. Spilman's permission to go to the company command tent to see 1st Sgt. Buttery and also company C.O. Capt. Joe Garfield for the O.K. to go see her. This was the final day for our maneuvers anyway. In order to get to the company headquarters, I had to run through a stretch of jungle, wade a river, go through another piece of jungle and locate the area and tent. This I did, getting the OK to leave the area with the 1st Sgt. But first, I had to travel back again to my tank and tell Lt. Spilman the details and that I had the C.O.'s OK. So I made that trip three separate times (about 5 miles total) before I settled into the jeep for the ride up to the 137th Station Hospital where Jean was staying during her visit. I carried my pack out with me, with fresh clothes and toilet articles. The jeep dumped me off at the hospital, which, if I remember correctly, was between Koli Point and Henderson Field. This was about 45 miles from our maneuver area, and our camp was approximately 15 miles further east yet. I must have asked someone the right questions at the hospital area because after a few minutes, Jean approached a dirty, sweaty Marine dressed in dirty, sweaty dungarees, steel helmet, leggings, pistol belt with pistol, canteen, ammo. pouches, first aid pouch and combat knife. Oh, yeah, I have forgotten. I also hadn't shaved in a couple of days. I don't think Jean was sure if I was her brother or not. We hadn't seen each other for 3½ years or so. In a couple of hours, the Sgt. returned (he had planned this) and we went to a nice, but shallow, river for swimming and a crude picnic. I also cleaned up and shaved here. I think the Sgt. must have provided the stuff because I could not have gotten together anything other than K-rations. There were some natives, both sexes, upstream of us. They were also bathing, nude of course. My moral sensibilities at that time prompted me to shout and gesture at them to get the hell out of the river (THEIR river) as we had a lady present. Rightly so, they completely ignored us. I can remember that I noticed some plants on the shore, about 5 to 6 feet tall with what looked like tiny red peppers on them. I tasted one and I was correct. They were peppers and extremely hot, too. Jean had a camera and the Sgt. took a photo of she and I in the river. I still have it, plus one she took of me when she first saw me. After the trip to the river, we let Jean off at the hospital and I (and Buttery) went back to camp. The next morning I got the OK, right after roll call, to visit Jean for the day. I must have gotten a ride, maybe from one of the 1st Armored's trucks, down to the 137th Station Hospital. Anyway, I could make conversation a bit better that day. Had a few friendly, but serious on my part (and probably Jean's also), arguments about the merits of the Army. I didn't think too much of them. Jean, of course, defended them. I, like most Marines, despised Gen. "Dug-out Doug" MacArthur as an egotistical and posturing ass. I was also brain-washed that there was nobody like a Marine. I haven't changed this view too much over the years but do concede there were a few pretty darn good Army outfits also. Our methods were just different.

I had my noon chow in the enlisted men's mess hall and stayed until about 1600 hours, hitch-hiking back to camp.

Mar. 8, 1945 We loaded the tanks for combat. Put in one unit (125 rounds) of 75 mm ammo. and our .30 and .50 caliber M.G. ammo. Jean showed up after noon chow, causing quite a stir in the camp. This was because we weren't overly modest. There were usually naked men taking "whore baths" or dressed just in skivvy shorts on the way to the showers or the head most any time. The word was hollered up and down the company area that a woman was in camp and to cover up. (Fifty years later, at our battalion reunions, one or two of the guys mention this episode) Jean visited with Corp. Geo. Bell in "A" Co. Headquarters tent while I was getting permission and then cleaned up to go with her to the hospital area. I had dinner with her in the Officer's Mess, for which she told me years later she was reprimanded for. I also attended a movie with her and a "second looey;" getting to sit in a folding chair instead of on a coconut log like the common folk. I stayed with her until about 2130 hours. We said our farewells. She was flying back to New Caledonia early the next morning and she knew we were leaving for another battle within days. She had an Army jeep take me back to Tetere beach.

CHAPTER VIII

OKINAWA

Diary entry: Fri. Mar. 9, 1945 We'll probably pull stakes Sat. or Sun. Had a big drunk in camp. Just our way of saying "so long and good luck" to each other.

Sat. Mar. 10, 1945 The camp and the guys are really beat up this a.m. Tents torn down, cans and bottles all over the place, black eyes, bruised noses and cracked lips, etc. Everybody happy as hell though. We cleaned up the camp then boarded LSM's (Landing Ship Medium) with our tanks at noon. The LSM's were up in shallow water on our beach. The swabbies just stared at us. Some of them had been through our camp earlier in the morning. We looked pretty rough, half hung over and some pretty well banged up. Each LSM took on a platoon, 5 tanks, plus their crews. We then sailed over to Tulagi, across the "Slot."

Sun. Mar. 11, 1945 We stayed in Purvis Bay (at Tulagi) today. Around noon I spotted LST #752 among the many ships riding at anchor. I had my buddy Bob Pierce (radio man) who was skilled at semaphore to signal it with the flags and see if Elwood Beach was aboard. You may remember that he was one of the two other guys that I enlisted with, except he was color blind and rejected by the USMC. We had kept in touch and I knew his ship's number. Yes, he was aboard and about 1145 hours he came over in a small boat, climbed aboard and stayed for about 7 hours. We had a good visit. Last night we were told of our destination. It's Okinawa.

Mon. Mar. 12, 1945 We had never heard of this place before, but found it was about 350 miles to Japan, 845 miles to Tokyo, 450 to either Shangai or Formosa and 540 to Korea. It's considered part of Japan, having been controlled by it for a very long time (the year 1609). In the past, China also conquered it, with these two countries plus Korea taking turns kicking each other out and ruling. Okinawa is the largest island of the Ryukyu Islands, or the Loo Choos as they were called a long time ago.

Invasion is scheduled for April 1, Easter Sunday. Also, the anniversary date of my joining the 1st Armored. As usual, they tell us that this will be the biggest and the best planned operation in the Pacific to date. "A" Co. is hitting RED BEACHES #2 and #3. As usual, we are the first wave, after which "A" Co. sets up as artillery as soon as possible. We left Tulagi at noon.

Tue. Mar. 13, 1945 Got more dope today. There's so many details, feints and parts to the operation that I can't begin to list them. Two Marine divisions (1st and 6th) and two Army divisions (7th and 96th) are the assault waves. The 2nd Marine Div. and four (error, there were two) Army divisions are reserves. The southern part of the island is all that is being hit initially (wrong, it was the mid-section). Okinawa is 67 miles long and 3 to 15 miles wide, 475 square miles. It lies in the NE-SW direction. The capital and chief port is NAHA, pop. 66,500. Early Chinese records show that people lived in the NANSEI SHOTO (Japanese for south western islands) as

early as 650 AD. There are 116 islands in the Nansei Shoto, stretching from Formosa (Now called TAIWAN, since the early 1950's) to Japan. We're told there are many possible diseases here, besides the poisonous snakes.

Wed. Mar. 14, 1945 We've learned that our "A" Co. is leading the 1st Bn., 4th Marines (regiment) in, about 1 mile N.W. of the town of Sohe and immediately west of YON-TAN air field. The air field is about 3/4 of a mile from the beach. This is the East China Sea. We'll be within bombing range of 500 Jap air fields so expect to get an abundance of "visits" from them.

Thu. Mar. 15, 1945 Cleaned .50 and .30 cal. machine guns, the 75 mm "tommy gun" (Thompson sub-machine gun, .45 cal.), and our rifles and pistols. Just the opposite of Guam, we are now being told to bring in a prisoner if we get a chance! I just can't see it myself, let someone else. Orders are to leave civilians alone unless they show the least bit of resistance.

Sun. Mar. 18, 1945 Still on the move towards our staging area, which is some island near Yap. These LSM's rock constantly, and I do mean rock. Had a real short church service in the evening. "L-DAY is two weeks from today.

Wed. Mar. 21, 1945 About noon, we pulled into the atoll here, of which the main island is Ulithi. It is in the western Carolines. The islands are the same as the Marshalls. There's some of the British fleet up here. They'll be moving into the Formosa area when our Navy vacates it.

Ulithi Atoll has 183 square miles of lagoon inside the surrounding reefs. The total land area is less than two square miles. As mentioned earlier, Ulithi Atoll is at the western end of the Carolines, a group of more than 930 islands. The island group stretches over 2,000 miles, but the combined land area is only 462 square miles. They are part of Micronesia. The Carolines have five groups of fairly large islands, of which three are Truk, Yap and Palau. There are also 32 atolls, of which Ulithi is one. Japan had them since WWI. The Carolines lie between the Marshalls and the Philippines. Guam is about 375 miles northeast. The U.S. had captured Peleliu (one of the Palau islands) in September, October and November, 1944, making it possible for us to be in the area.

Thu. Mar. 22, 1945 Still at Ulithi. Saw LST #752 again. Beach (Elwood) didn't come over. He either must be busy or can't locate our ship, although I can see his. Had communion by a British chaplin from HMS INDOMITABLE, which we boarded. Father Redmond, a Marine, held catholic services about (our LSM) and a gang of us guys talked with him after the service. (Father Redmond was a legend among the Marines and was very well thought of by all.)

Fri. Mar. 23, 1945 Still no Beach over to see me. I can't get a Higgin's boat myself or I'd go over to him. We played records in the conning tower at night for a few hours. Last night the harbor had an air raid alert and blackout. Cleaned pistol again. The British left for the Formosa area about noon.

Sat. Mar. 24, 1945 Got mail aboard today. Got a letter from Mom

and Dad. Having pretty good time for being aboard ship. We have fresh water in the basins all of the time and fresh water showers at night, which is very uncommon when troops are aboard.

Sun. Mar. 25, 1945 We're on the way! Hot damn! We're not to take any U.S. currency onto the island so we have to send it home. I bought $6.00 worth of occupation money, although I can't see what the hell I'll spend it on. (Very true, it turned out that I brought it all home. Maybe AFTER the war there were places it could be spent.)

Mon. Mar. 26, 1945 The sea is rougher up this way than I have seen it since a few days out of "Dago;" and rain . . . . . it rains constantly. Ulithi has 120 inches of rainfall per year and the only fresh water the natives get is what they can catch when it rains.

Tue. Mar. 27, 1945 Still rough as hell. (We didn't know it at the time, but I have found out in recent years that we were on the fringes of a typhoon that went through the area.) Everyone either in the advance agonies of mal-der-mer or just plain feeling lousy. I'm one of the latter. Am eating very light, maybe two sandwiches a day. Expecting air raids from now on.

I think it was at this time that Earl Gray was so sea sick that he was being fed with an IV in sick bay. One of our swabbie buddies that we had "adopted" also was so bad that we peeled potatoes for him in his usual spot on deck, near the stern. (Real potatoes were a treat for us as ours were always dehydrated ones.) A lot of us slept top side, and it was wet and ROUGH. I thought it was going to pitch us overboard sometimes. Remember, these were quite small craft; 203 feet long by 34 feet in width and only went about 12 knots per hour (about 14 mph).

Wed. Mar. 28, 1945 I guess it must be naturally rough sea and bad weather in these parts. I (and all the others) will be damn glad to get off of this scow. Must be only about 600 miles from Okinawa now. Our Navy and Air Force have been giving it, Formosa, Japan, and the East China Sea plenty of calling cards. Got all the ammo. ready today and sort of squared away in general in the tanks.

NANSEI SHOTO. **Nansei** means south western. **Shoto** means large group of islands, or archipelago. The RYUKYU islands also is the same as Nansei Shoto. The word **Jima** or **Shima** means just one island, such as IWO JIMA or OKINAWA SHIMA. Okinawa's northern part of the island is quite different from the southern, from which it is separated by a narrow part of the island, about two miles wide. The north is rough and mountainous (1650' max.), with rocky soil and jagged, rugged peaks and ridges, heavily wooded. The southern part of the island is low rolling country with hills that are rarely more than 500' above sea level. Most of the island's people lived in the southern part. Small towns and villages dotted the countryside. Okinawa's road network was fair to non-existent, although some decent ones, single land and unpaved, existed in the Naha area. Naha was the capital and chief port, with a pre-war population of approximately 65,000. The island's civilian population was about 440,000, mostly all partial to the Japanese through long-time occupation, culture, or just plain fear.

The Okinawans spoke a dialect of their own but Japanese was taught in their schools. Practically all Okinawans could read and write. There were five daily newspapers (before the invasion) in Naha, plus electricity there and in other cities.

Okinawa produced liquor and lacquer, as well as sugar, sweet potatoes, rice, and fish. The climate supposedly was tropical but it sure wasn't as hot as the 'Canal, Guam, or other places that we were used to. It is subject to heavy rain fall, 50 to 120 inches annually, and also several typhoons a year. There were bamboo, coniferous trees, palm trees (in the south), plus other types of vegetation on the island. As was, and probably still is, common in Asia, "night soil" is the method of fertilization in their garden plots. This works well but is just a tad unhealthy, especially if you're an occidental and your body hasn't developed the resistance to the various diseases caused by it. Night soil is a polite way of referring to human feces and urine, which is zealously collected, stored and then ladled out over the cabbages, carrots, sweet potatoes and such. This refers to the rural folk; I don't know what happened in Naha and the towns. I can say that they did not, and still don't have toilets that look like what you assume are the same worldwide. In the 1980's, the cities in Asia that cater to western tourists would have our type of toilets in the hotels that we would stay in but be prepared for a-cultural shock if you go to rural or areas not used to seeing foreigners.

Thu. Mar. 29, 1945 We're leaving everything behind on the ship except ammo., two water cans per tank, camouflage netting and artillery gear, packs and weapons. Packed up sea-bags (to leave behind) and got squared away in general. Today was the first day that the sun has been out since we left Ulithi. Estimated Jap troops (on the island) as of March 26 are 70,000; 6,500 in 6th Marine Div. zone of action around Yontan airfield. Radio Tokyo is beating its gums (slang for excessive talk) about the "cruel, inhuman, barbaric air raids on Japan" (by the U.S.). They also said that the civilians on Okinawa were preparing to defend their island to the last man, woman and child. T.S. . . . . for them. (T.S. meant tough shit, slang for tough luck.)

We with the Northern Tractor Flotilla didn't know this as we saw none of it, yet, but between March 26th and 31st six U.S. ships, including Admiral Spruance's flagship (the battle wagon INDIANAPOLIS) were hit by Jap suicide planes. Near misses damaged ten other vessels. Floating mines sank two ships and a torpedo boat damaged another.

From the book "OKINAWA, TOUCHSTONE TO VICTORY" by B.M. Frank: "The Joint Chiefs of Staff had assembled one of the greatest naval armadas in history for Operation Iceberg (Ryukus campaign). This surface force would transport to the very threshold of Japan 182,000 assault troops--75,000 more than were landed on D-DAY at Normandy. In Spruance's 5th fleet were more than 40 carriers, 18 battleships, 200 destroyers and hundreds of other assorted ships of the line, transports, submarines, mine-sweepers, gunboats, landing ships and

craft, and various auxiliary and repair vessels. Assigned to Task Force 51 (Joint Expeditionary Force) alone were 1,213 ships. All told, before the island was secured, about 548,000 Army, Navy, and Marine Corps personnel, together with 318 combatant vessels and 1,139 auxiliary vessels exclusive of personnel landing craft of all types were involved in the Okinawa operation.

Fri. Mar. 30, 1945 Rough seas and very cold today; so cold tnat O.D. jackets were worn. Rained most of the day. Listened to Jap music (U.S. music, broadcast from a Japanese station) and commentators beating their chops on what the (U.S.) Army Air Force is doing to them. They know that this task force is out here but don't seem able to do much about it.

The Japanese radio commentators knew a great deal about our operation. They even listed a long list of units involved in the assault, telling us how sad it was going to be as we surely would be killed, leaving sorrowing widows, mothers and girlfriends at home.

Sat. Mar. 31, 1945 The South China sea is very calm today, the sun is shining, not many clouds in the sky and pretty much like a May day back home. The tanks are all gassed up and we're raring to go. Drew personal ammo. and grenades. Reville at 0400 hours tomorrow. At first I felt pessimistic about this operation but now I'm thinking that our battalion will have it pretty easy. We got the word that after we leave Okinawa our camp will be on Saipan. We hear that the civilians (Okinawans) are going to fight us. It will be slaughter for them if they try it.

Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945, "L-DAY" arrived bright, sunny and clear. We were up very early, in the darkness, and had our baked beans and hard-boiled eggs for breakfast. We then all went topside to watch the fire works. The island lay in front of us and the sea was full of battle ships, cruisers, destroyers, LST's, LSM's and assorted other ships. The island was taking a hell of a pounding. There were 10 wagons, 9 cruisers, 23 destroyers and almost 200 gunsnips sitting off the 8 mile long stretch of beach targeted for the landing; 564 carrier-based planes were in the sky, over the area. I didn't count this stuff, have read it since the 1970's.

One episode on L-DAY sticks with me. There was an observation plane, a float plane, that had probably been launched from a cruiser that was very near us. It had been over the island, probably directing shell fire for ships' guns. There were a lot of planes in the air, but as this one came back over the ships; some nervous sailors on an LST erred in identification and started firing at it. Soon several nearby LST's were filling the sky with anti-aircraft fire. Our LSM didn't, as we told the sailors it was <u>our</u> plane. We were screaming and swearing at the ships doing the firing. Of course, they couldn't miss this slow moving plane and it came down, crashing into the sea a few hundred yards from us. No one got out of the plane and it sank. We were sick at what we had just seen.

Soon it was time for us to start the engines and prepare to leave

the ship. The LSM's bow opened up and we were on our way. We were 1-3/4 to 2 miles out at sea yet. When all was in readiness, we ceased our circling and started for the beaches. Soon our tanks were in front of everyone else and we commenced firing. As our platoon leader, Lt. Charles (Speed) Spilman had chosen A-10 as his command tank a few weeks previous, I had moved out of the turret and was serving as ammo. passer. This allowed room for "Speed" to be up in the turret. I had a hatch open so that I could catch a glimpse every once in a while of what was going on. I was also throwing the empty brass shell casings (from the 75) over the side as they were ejected from the gun. I didn't want to be stumbling over them. I could see little splashes in the water around us a few times. I wasn't sure if it was M.G. fire we were receiving or empty M.G. casings from our planes overhead, which were strafing the beach area. Looking toward the shore as we got closer, I could see a stone and cement sea wall on the shore, stretching the length of our landing area. I could also see that there was no way to proceed inland EXCEPT through one narrow opening in the sea wall. I don't remember if this had been caused by a bomb, or if it was so the natives could get down to the sea at this point. In any case, I could immediately visualize every Jap gun on the island concentrated on that one narrow opening! It was at this point that I suddenly got very afraid, manifested by an uncontrollable urge to urinate about every 30 seconds. From the guts of the tank, I would hand up a shell, Joe (Campbell) and Harry (Broderick) would load it, fire and eject the brass casing. The hot empty casing would clatter down to my area. I'd hand up another shell, pick up an empty brass casing, piss into it and heave it out the opened hatch into the sea. I just knew that we'd be blown to pieces in another few minutes when we would have to be the first vehicle through that sea wall opening. Well, we went through it and all was well. This was approximately 0830 hours. I couldn't believe our good fortune. We hurriedly got clear of that area and started up a long incline. The other tanks came through and, thank God, the riflemen of the 4th Marines. We all were looking quizzically at one another as we advanced up the slope, meeting no opposition. There were just a few, scattered, small trees on the hillside as I remember it, and grass. Most military books that I've read of that morning speak of only a small amount of scattered enemy M.G. and mortar fire. I don't think that I saw any while going up the hill. What a wonderful April Fools Day that was! There were more than 16,000 combat troops ashore in the first hour.

While we were making this landing, the 2nd Marine Division was pulling off a great deceptive feint at the southeastern end of the island in the Minatoga area. The feint was accompanied by the traditional naval shelling and air bombardment and strafing. Seven waves of assault troops were unloaded from ships and headed for the beaches. Japanese suicide planes hit the transport Hinsdale and LST #884 as troops were getting into the landing craft. Fifty-three Marines were killed and wounded. Four waves crossed the line of departure before they all turned around, returned to the ships and reboarded. This maneuver was repeated the morning of April 2nd, also. This had to have kept the Japanese guessing as to what our

intents really were. The U.S. didn't know it at the time, but the Japs had chosen to concentrate the majority of their troops just south of where our landings took place. They had heavily fortified the southern part of the island with heavy gun emplacements, machine guns, thousands of caves (natural and man-made), trenches, supplies, aid stations, communication stations and so on.

In our zone of action on L-DAY, my outfit advanced up onto Yontan air field, reaching this about 1000 to 1030 hours. I don't believe A-10 had any targets to fire on after going through the sea wall. The infantry was going forward like crazy, but cautiously, too. That afternoon, my platoon was sent back, just back over the crest of the hill overlooking the sea. I believe that we may have set up as an artillery battery, in case we were needed for fire support that night. We weren't. We attempted to dig fox-holes, but it was all coral rock and we couldn't get any deeper than 4 or 5 inches. In the late afternoon, some Jap planes streaked in between the sea (and our ships) and us. They were after the ships and also strafed the beach area. The Navy started shooting at them and as we were on a higher elevation than the planes we found ourselves in the Navy's line of fire. Their shell fire was hitting all around us. As soon as that excitement died down, we wasted no time in trying to dig deeper into the ground. We only got another 3 to 5 inches, but sure put some sandbags around every fox-hole. I can remember that it was cold as hell that night. We had no other excitement that night, but at daybreak, more Jap planes streaked in and the Navy let us have it again. Suicide planes crashed into four ships offshore.

The Army, to our south, also captured Kadena airfield about the same time as Yontan was taken. Both air fields were taken with only scattered resistance. By nightfall of that first day, 60,000 men were ashore, including the reserve regiments of both corps. The two corps mentioned with the III Amphib. Corps (Marines) and the XXIV Corps (Army). The beach head was 8 miles wide and approximately 2¼ miles deep.

"A" Co. moved north on the second day. I don't remember anything about this day except that near nightfall I decided that the safest place to be for the night was inside one of the elaborate tombs that were on hillsides. I don't know if it was because of rain or protection from our Navy's shooting or that it sure beat digging holes. About three others from the squad, and I, moved into the tomb. It was about 6 feet high, maybe 12 feet wide and went back into the hill perhaps 16 feet. It was carved into the rock and had a flat, level floor. We cautiously searched it for snakes before we relaxed. At the far end of the cave was a raised alcove, with several elaborate pottery jars. Some of these were as much as 30 inches tall, and some as small as 14 inches. They had painted, glazed designs. I don't remember now if there were symbols or writing on any of them or not. I would imagine that some could be valuable collector's items. I thought that maybe the family jewels were hidden in them or a cache of gold coins. I crawled back there and removed the lid from one of the richest looking ones. God, what a surprise! The jar was full of bones, including a skull. I checked a few others, with the same results.

Like most orientals, the Okinawans revered their ancestors. A good custom. They believe he dwells after death as he did in life, and nearly every family has a funeral vault. These large whitewashed vaults receive loving attention. The burial customs required that the body be placed in a sitting position in a box and deposited in the tomb. (I never saw any "bodies" in the tombs, except Jap soldiers that were killed while fighting from inside them.) After three years, the bodies are removed, any meat or tissue that hasn't rotted away is cleaned off, the remains are purified in alcohol and the bones then deposited into one of these jars and put back into the tomb. This last paragraph was taken just about word by word from a small 4"x5½" pamphlet (about Okinawa) that was distributed to each of us soon after our destination was announced aboard ship. I think most of the troops treated the jars with respect, but a hell of a lot of the tombs were sure destroyed.

We kept moving north, trailing the infantry. We were inland, not on the coast, most of the time. It was all rural setting, very picturesque, mostly rolling hills as I remember it today. One day, about the second, I saw crows and green-necked mallard drakes. I hadn't seen these since leaving the U.S. and it reminded me of home. One evening, we were dug in in the sand of a beach. In the middle of the night I felt grains of sand trickle down on me as I lay on my back in the fox-hole. I rolled my eyeballs around trying to see what had disturbed the edge of the hole. A couple of minutes later, a guy let out a scream and there was a commotion. Evidently, it had been a snake and it crawled across him. He didn't get bitten but slept in his tank for the next few nights. It was probably near this area that we were going up the coastline and came to a small village. What I remember about it was the people had been building a couple of small ships (or big boats). They were built with squared-off timbers, with peg and dowel construction just like 200 years ago. I really admired the construction as we passed by it. There were few civilians about, as I recall, in most places we were at this time.

We had moved away from the landing area so didn't witness that on April 6-7 there were 355 suicide (kamikaze) plane attacks on the armada of ships anchored off the beaches there. We did see Jap planes overhead frequently. They weren't interested in us, only the ships.

April 10, diary entry Only four casualties in our entire battalion so far. Can't figure out where the Japs have gone. We ("A" Co.) have only fired about four concentrations of artillery so far because the infantry is moving so fast that they're soon out of range of our guns. We've been in about ten different bivouac areas so far. Right now we're in the village of YABU, in the rugged northern part of the island. Have also been in TOYA, NAGO and a couple of other flea holes. Gardens are as neat and cute as hell. Going on a patrol tomorrow. (Yabu was about 27 miles north of our original landing area.)

April 11, diary entry (expanded upon) Started out on the patrol about 0800, our objective being sea-borne reconnaissance along the shoreline of the Motobu Peninsula. This was up around the village of MANNA (spelled Manana in my diary). It is the front lines of the 29th

Reg. The sea was very rough and everyone got soaked and bitter cold. (Just the second platoon was making this trip.) I even got damn sea sick and puked up all of my joe and atabrine. About seven miles up we pulled onto the beach and rolled into what was once a fair sized town, for these parts. The 29th had just moved up a few hours before and we were going to set up in the center of town to fire supporting artillery fire for them. We "laid the battery" (putting out aiming stakes and firing a round or two to establish our reference point). We then strung up our camouflage nettings over our five tanks. This done, we had just started to relax when incoming artillery rounds fell all around us. The Japs ALREADY had us pin-pointed! Engines started and we hauled ass just around a steep hill a hundred yards away. Sgt. Otis Guthrie's tank drove right out from under his netting; dragging it along with him and getting it all chewed up in the tank tracks. God, I was embarrassed as the riflemen grinned at us. They had been so glad to see us pull up into their midst. We hung around for a while while a decision was being made as to the next move. The Jap guns couldn't be located so it turned out to be us waving bye-bye to the tired 29th as we re-entered the water and returned to the bivouac area at Yabu about 1740 hours.

April 13, diary entry Have been told that the war in Europe was over. This went uncorrected for two days before it was found to be very false. Also got the word that President Roosevelt died and Vice-President Truman, of Missouri, was sworn in as president. It's too bad the old boy couldn't have lasted to see the end of the war. He was a great man and one who will always be in history. Tokyo is happy as hell over it and the "Zero Hour" (radio program) which they dedicate to us is telling us how much better off we are.

I don't remember if it was while we were in the Yabu area, or later on further north, but Pvt. Eddie Dement, our driver, got a nice looking Jap horse. It was a saddle horse, but I don't think Eddie had the saddle. The Jap officers had horses. Our infantrymen got several of them and used them to help haul heavy gear, mortars and such while moving up the roads. Anyway, he was riding that horse all over the area. At this time we had dug a big fox-hole, for probably four of us. We had a tin roof over it, some sides and about a foot of rice straw in the bottom of the hole. The shack was because of the rain and it was also chilly at night. It wasn't long before all of us were being eaten alive by fleas. It wasn't just we shack dwellers. Everyone in the area was infested. We cursed Eddie and told him to get rid of that damn horse. Every man also was issued a can of flea powder. It contained DDT, probably a big dose of it. We had never heard of DDT until then. DDT has been outlawed for 20 years or so now because of the damage to human and animal life. It sure got rid of fleas, though, as we diligently powdered our armpits, crotches, chests and clothes.

As always, from dusk to dawn, each squad had at least two men at a time on watch in a foxhole. We split the night up, probably into 3 hour watches each team, or pair of men. One night "Crazy Joe" (the "A" Co. men reading this will know of whom I write) had had a few belts of whatever he drank and came crawling suddenly into one of the

foxhole huts. He snarled, "Wake up you %*!#!. What if I were a Jape?" (He called Japs "Japes" for some reason only he knew.) One of the men inside, looking over his leveled and cocked .45 replied, "I'd blow your god-damned head off, SIR!"

Diary entry, April 15-16 (Been doing) Some artillery firing, and company or platoon patrols. Have got the word that we're not going to go back to Saipan when this campaign is finished but will probably stay here. Just laying around and taking it easy and getting caught up on laundry, etc.

Diary entry, April 17 Have been doing quite a bit of harassing fire. The whole battalion and the 15th Marines (Artillery Regiment) are still in and on the edge of Yabu. About all the Japs left up here on the northern part of the island are here on the Motobu Peninsula. The bulk of the Japs are about 1-3/4 miles north of us, up in the mountains. There are supposedly 1,000 of them plus artillery, mortars, etc. We've had a few rounds from them lately but they've been high. They are surrounded and have been shelled and bombed for five days now. We can see our shell bursts from our position here.

On April 14, two battalions of the 4th Marines and 3rd Bn. of the 29th began a determined effort to take Yae Take. This was finally accomplished about April 18th when I/29th took the northern and greater portion of it. The shell bursts (ours) mentioned above probably were onto Yae Take, the highest mountain and the strongest fortified one in the north. At Yabu we were south of it. When we had gone, by sea, up to Manna to assist the 29th Marines there we were north of it. On April 19th organized Japanese resistance ended in the north; meaning that hundreds were still holed up and making small sneak attacks, mainly at night.

It was also some time between the 10th and 16th that some of "A" Co. was along the coast up there and we discovered a big cave right at the water's edge. The area was heavily forested (evergreens) and extremely rough and rocky terrain right down to and around the cave. We got out of the tanks to see what was in the cave. It contained some suicide boats. The Japs called them "KAITENS." They were about the size of a Chris Craft (about 18' in length), wooden, sleek-looking and loaded with explosives (or a torpedo) with an impact detonator. Thinking back on it now I wonder why we didn't back off and blast them with the 75's or set fire to them. We didn't though. I hope they weren't used later on against our ships. Maybe they had holes chopped into them and I've since forgotten it. Suicide boats will be mentioned later on, also.

Depending on what book is read, numbers for Jap planes on the attack on Okinawa differ. One book cites 392 planes on April 12 and 13, both kamikaze and escorting fighters and bombers. Over 1,900 kamikaze (suicide) missions alone were flown during the campaign; 14.7% of them were effective. A third mass raid of 498 aircraft (196 of which were suiciders) hit Okinawa the 15th and 16th of April.

Diary entry, April 21 We changed positions again yesterday. It's about the 15th time since we've been here. Firing is all over

for us up here on the peninsula. We got a report from the 6th Div. headquarters that the 15th Marines and our artillery has accounted for about 1,200 Nips. Personally, I think its a lot of bull. "Doggies" (Army) are lined up three divisions abreast down north of Naha, and as usual, can't move ahead. (Actually, the Army had a line across the width of the island, perhaps 3½ miles north of Naha on the west coast.) They're in the same place now as since "L"+3. The Marines would have had the damn place secured by now. We'll be going down there yet to secure it for them. Heard that the swabbies and Army A.A. (anti-aircraft fire) have knocked down 45 U.S. planes. I have seen them get two of our own.

It didn't take me long after writing the above ignorant tirade against the Army that I discovered that things were a hell of a lot tougher in the Army's zone than in ours. The Marines would soon have their shot at it and run into the same jig-saw that the Army had been experiencing.

On April 16, the 77th Army Div. landed on Ie Shima, a small island about 3 miles off the N.W. tip of the Motobu Pn. It turned out to be quite heavily fortified, with about 7,000 Japs on it. It was finally "secured" on the 21st. It was on the island that the famous war correspondent/columnist Ernie Pyle was killed by a Jap machine gunner while on his way to the front in a jeep. He had spent most of his time covering the Italian campaign with the Army and had just arrived in the Pacific to see what the island war was like.

Diary entry, April 23, 1945 Coming up here (I don't remember now where "here" was.) from TOYA the LST we were on fired for about two minutes at a Corsair that was patrolling the area. Luckily, they couldn't hit it. An air raid was going on at the time over by Ie Shima and we were watching the Jap bombs hit.

Regarding the April 23 entry above, I don't know when it was we were on the LST. I made the entry on the 23rd. I could have been on April 20. I did not write down the ship's number, but it had the words "THE SUN-SETTER" painted on the bridge along with 3-4 Jap flags signifying that it had shot them down. We had really poor rapport with this ship. We were dirty and would have liked a shower. They would let us have salt water only in the showers or in the sinks. The fresh-water scuttle-butts were turned off so we couldn't refill canteens. They were a swaggering, arrogant bunch of "deck-apes." Our moment arrived, though, when battle stations were sounded and they all ran off to shoot at our own Corsair. They also remained at battle stations because of the air raid 1½-2 miles off the port side. In any case, in their absence our guys literally stole them blind. The chain and lock securing a big heavy wire closure to their bakery was cut and dozens of loaves of fresh bread taken. Guys entered ward-rooms and sleeping quarters, taking officers' binoculars, leather jackets, blankets, cans of food, etc. This was all stowed in our tanks and 30-45 minutes later when we left the ship it went with us. Our revenge for our poor treatment was short-lived, however. A couple of hours later the word was passed down that the ship had given the

alarm, to a high level of command, and we had only a very short time to put everything in a big pile, no questions asked. If we held out, there would be court-martials for our actions. I was innocent, except for a couple of loaves of bread. Anyway, the pile grew and grew.

I don't know if any other 1st Armored companies other than "A" had been aboard the LST or not. I think now that we must have been in the area of the village BISE, but I don't know. I don't recollect what we were there for or what we did. Apparently it never amounted to much as I never recorded anything in my diary. I do remember that our officers, who must have secretly been a little proud of our thievery, filled a lister bag 3/4 full of the ever-present canned grapefruit juice plus water and then added quite a liberal dosage of alcohol of some kind to it. We had a fun evening.

Diary entry, April 25-26 Been taking it easy. Catching up on my correspondence. Still in same location.

Diary entry, April 27-28 Been going swimming in the sea. Can't bathe in the fresh water, it's polluted, even the wells that we normally use. We've been having air raids the last 3 nights. No damage to us, although I guess they've dropped a few bombs.

The 4th mass kamikaze raid of the month took place on 27-28 April when 115 suicide pilots attacked shipping and radar picket ships. These picket ships were stationed on the outer fringes of the area (except the south) to give warning of approaching hostile planes. Their warning would give our planes time to get up into the air and intercept them, away from the shipping and anchorages, hopefully.

Diary entry, April 29-30 6th Div. (to which we're attached) have put out an order that there will be no more free love on Okinawa. I guess some of the guys have been looking the gals up. Anyway, orders are strictly against it. Penalties: DEATH, D.D. (dishonorable discharge), General court martial for even thinking about it. Haven't seen them knock down a Jap plane yet (up here). Keep us awake half of the night lately with A.A. fire (anti-aircraft fire).

I can still recall the swim in the ocean up in the north end of Motobu. Did it once. It was a sunny day. The beach was sand, but for only a few feet inland from the water. The water was very deep very soon and dark blue. I don't know if it was a strong current out to sea or what but I had a rough time getting back to shore and was tired out when I made it. Also, the word on "fraternizing" came from the Colonel (Metzger) himself, in one of his formal-informal-like formations like he occasionally had back on the 'Canal. There had been some rapes occurring, it seems, by some troops on the peninsula. The colonel was very explicit that none of us had better participate in such behavior. I had heard of none of this happening and, actually, we hadn't seen too many civilians yet. I had seen enough, though, to know that there were some very attractive ladies on the island. I have read, this year, that a unit of the 29th Marines actually had established a brothel on the peninsula and had it staffed with several nice-looking and willing ladies. Evidently the girls were not unhappy with the idea of free enterprise and I would imagine had plenty of

willing Marines who were only too happy to contribute to their business.

It was also up in the north somewhere that A-10's crew had a fire going one morning, perhaps about 0730 hours, and were heating water in our canteen cups so that we could enjoy a hot drink of SANKA or coffee. This was made from individual packets that came in each man's K-ration. Just add hot water and you had a drink of what you might believe was coffee. There must have been other tank crews around but I can not see them in my remembrances. Anyway, it was a chilly morning, enough so that we all had field jackets on. An Okinawan woman in a heavy kimono came up to the fire. We had a communication problem right off the bat, but what really added to our anxiety was one leg that looked like the Mumu. It was swollen up like the trunk of a tree. She seemed to walk OK, but we didn't like that leg! The poor thing was probably half starved or wanted a hot drink. In any case, we tried to shoo her away (afraid of that leg). Finally, "Speed" Spilman (Plt. Leader) put a bayonet onto a rifle and prodded her, all the time gesturing to get the hell out of here. She finally left. I don't remember if we gave her any rations or not. Probably not.

Diary entry, May 4 The whole battalion onto LST's and came south to another bivouac area. (I don't remember what day this occurred.) Front lines about 4 miles in front of us and flank lines 2 miles over. 1st Marine Div. on right flank and two doggie (Army) in the center and left flank. Doggies aren't moving a damn inch. (Actually, we would discover that the Marines wouldn't have just a "walk" through, either.)

I believe that the area the 1st Armored moved into approx. May 2-3 was just north of the Machinato airfield, on the west side of the island. The whole Marine III Amphib. Corps was now committed to the southern end of the island. The 2nd Div. was back on Saipan, still on reserve status however. The Army 27th Div. was moved up to the north to mop up and get a rest. The Japs launched their fifth mass kamikaze (air) attack at dusk on May 3. This was with 159 planes. At dawn on May 4 their attacks resumed, plus another at dusk again. This 24 hour effort managed to sink 1 destroyer and damage 2 more, sink an LSM, damage 3 mine layers, 1 mine sweeper, 2 LCS's, 1 cruiser and 1 carrier. 91 sailors were killed, 280 wounded and 283 missing.

In the evening of May 3rd, the Japs attempted a counter-landing from the sea behind the Marine lines. They had put in from Naha. They were spotted and a company of the 1st Armored (not "A") started shooting at those on the beach and also barges out in the water. More sea-borne attempts were made south of here, in the KUWAN area, where the 1st Marines also annihilated them. Before dawn on May 4, they tried again further north and again their boats were sunk and troops that had gotten ashore were finally killed. Some units of the 1st Armored also took part in this.

Diary entry, May 6 Did nothing but lay around our assigned area. Saw a few air raids, two kamikaze planes shot to pieces just

before they were to hit their objectives (ships).

It may have been about this time that most of our tank crew was sleeping in a big bomb crater, or hole caused by some type of explosion. This was on the side of a hill, about 1/3 mile up from the beach. It had been raining for 3-4 days and we were always wet. We had draped a large tarp on some poles over the hole and tried to sleep in there. The ground was also pretty damp, even in there. There was a hell of an odor of decomposing flesh, but we hadn't found any body parts. There were a couple of rats in the hole and we could hear them chewing on something one night. Ever so often they'd run across us as we tried to sleep. We were afraid they would try eating live bodies (ours) as well as dead ones. After a few hours of that, Hank Pelzar had enough and fired off a couple of rounds from his pistol at them. We were more frightened of Hank than we were of the rats after that.

I didn't make a diary entry of this but one day each of our 2nd Platoon crews got a big chunk of raw beef. In the back of my mind it was when the war in Europe ended. This date was May 8. It would have been May 9 for we people over the International Date Line. I'm not sure why we got the meat. Maybe the ship's freezer went kaplooey and instead of throwing the contents over the side of the ship they gave it to us. In any case, we had about 8 lbs. of beef, on a stick, and were cooking it over a fire. We were parked along a sea wall at the time.

Also about this time I was watching one of our "spotter" planes, a piper cub type of thing. He was over a cape just north of Naha, circling around up there. Jap fire hit him and he came down in the water in Naha Harbor, out from the city about ½ mile. He got out of the plane and one of our small navy boats raced in to retrieve him. They got him and scooted back out of there.

Diary entry, May 9-10 Each company has been rotating turns going up the beach (to the south) to the front lines and using the tanks and men for beach defense to guard against sea-borne counter-attacks, paratroopers, or break-throughs in the lines by Japs. "A" Co. goes tomorrow (the 13th is tomorrow).

Diary entry, May 13 "A" Co. replaced "B" today for beach defense and moved further south. We are about 5 miles from bivouac area and about ½ mile south of Machinato air strip. My tank is right up against the sea wall at the mouth of the ASA KAWA (Asa River). The Japs have tried counter landings here. Hope they try tonight.

I believe it was at this location on the north bank of the Asa Kawa that Speed Spilman and myself decided we were going to have something hot to eat, and different. We had had enough of heating up K-ration, "C" ration, or the new 10-in-One that we had started getting now and then. Between the ridge north of the river and the river itself was a cultivated patch of ground. This lay east of a North-South dirt road. The field had been cultivated by shell fire also, but there were lots of small cabbages, carrots and sweet potatoes in it. To hell with the thought that human s--- had been lovingly ladled onto each plant. We went out and started gathering

edibles. This was a signal for the Jap observers over by Shuri heights to the east or southeast of us to protest this unauthorized requisition. They promptly started dropping mortar rounds into the garden. We alternately ducked and ran, flopped down and ran. Well, I did at least. Speed, however, had just taken a whore bath and had put on clean skivvies and dungarees. He wasn't about to get them all muddy again, so he just ran like hell, doing fancy dodging all the while. He, after all, had been a pretty sharp football player, at the University of Oklahoma, I believe it was. Anyway, we cut up our vegetables into a helmet, added a can of corn beef and a little water and soon had it simmering.

Late that same afternoon (13th), the Japs again figured that we had too much activity going on between the road and the sea wall, so they dropped some more mortars, plus a few rounds of artillery, at us. Our H&S Co. had run a radio jeep up into our area, on the road, probably to see just which outfits were where. Anyway, there was an odd-built, big, red-headed corporal or sergeant named Rudy Lieberman (I think that is the correct name.) who was in the bracketed area. I can still see him running (and he wasn't used to it) like hell trying to get to the jeep and get the hell back behind the shelter of the ridge. Unsympathetic Gyrines were laughing and shouting encouragement from the safety of their fox holes.

The area we were now in, on the 13th, the 22nd Marines had moved into on the 9th. "K" Co. had gone across the river on the 9th at this spot and, with difficulty, had obtained the top of a ridge just south of the river. They were pushed off and, with difficulty, made it back onto the north side of the river again. I believe "G" Co. of the 22nd experienced the same thing along the river to the east. The engineers of the 22nd put a Bailey Bridge across the river the night of the 9th and in the wee hours of the 10th. "I" and "K" companies crossed it. "I" Co. angled off to the left (S.S.E.) and "K" Co. went south and S.S.W. They crossed the bridge on the double, taking several casualties from rifle and M.G. fire while still on it. Also, still in the dark, two Jap suicide men ran out onto the bridge with satchel charges and blew it and themselves to pieces.

The remnants of "K" Co. finally had to recross the Asa Kawa to the north side again. "I" Co. was badly mangled but I believe they stayed south. Incidentally, many of my machine gunner buddies from Camp Elliott had been assigned to these two companies and I felt close to the outfits. The Bailey Bridge was rebuilt the night of the 10th-11th and "K" Co. went back across again, along with some tanks, in the early daylight hours. So, it was into this area that we moved, about 40 hours later, while the 22nd was about 1 mile south of us, on the ridges from the sea eastward a short distance.

About 9:00 p.m. on the 13th, two or three Jap 77's, probably again from the Shuri area or Wana Ridge to the north of it, opened up on us. This time it lasted about a half hour. They didn't have to adjust for range, they had it! Bob Pierce and I had the first watch; the rest of the crew were in their 2-man fox holes. The explosions ripped the camouflage netting from the tank and were landing in the fox holes area plus on top of the sea wall. Bob and I had been on the tank when it started and immediately jumped down behind the sea wall.

We figured that they would hit the tank for sure and we didn't want to be in or on it. We didn't stop to think that if the tank was hit the likelihood of all the ammo inside, or the gasoline, would probably blow us to hell anyway. So, we crouched down on the coral in a few inches of water looking seaward as I had deducted that the artillery was a diversion to take our minds off looking for a sea-borne stab at us. I had a knife in one hand and my .45 in the other, having vacated the tank too fast for picking up more substantial weapons. I doubt if Bob had any weapon. Our radio men were a breed apart. He was soon back inside the tank, diddling with the radio's control knobs and speaking to someone in that calm, controlled manner they all had. "DO YOU READ ME? A-10 CALLING . . . . ." etc. We did pick up rifles and grenades to better handle the unforseen. We also all made voice contact with one another of the crew. Speed gave us a fright because he never answered up at first. One shell had hit on the edge of his hole; however, he had vacated it for what he (correctly) thought would be a better one. Many shells also landed in the sea behind the platoon and in the field in front of us. After that night, Speed tried to sleep inside the tank for a week or so, but that was impossible. It's too hot, too hard, and too cramped for sleep.

The Japs repeated their salutation about three more times during the night. Oh yes, I forgot to mention that while "The Beak" (Bob Pierce) was away from the radio once, another tank tried calling us by radio or phone. I got on the radio and, not in "The Beak's" calm manner, told them that the damn Japs were dropping them right on top of us. Of course this was a stupid thing to say in case the Japs were monitoring the radio frequency or had tapped into our phone wires. And I was pointedly told that the next day by the company C.O. When daylight came, we all started digging much deeper and more elaborate fox holes. The Beak and I made a beautiful one, adding sand bags and several embellishments. About 1000 hours the word came that we were moving forward again. Damn! It never failed. All the hard work for naught.

When we moved we went south, ending up against the sea wall just north of YUKINO-SAKI (Yukino Cape). This was the cape, or point of land, just north of Naha. This was on the 14th. The 3rd Plt. was about 300 yards south of us. The coast was quite rough, with big jagged rocks and low but steep craggy hills rising up a short distance from the sea wall. Just before dusk, a small squad of us, maybe six men, including The Beak, ran phone lines from our platoon up to the 3rd Bn. 22nd Marines observation point (OP). This was up on top of a very steep hill, perhaps a cliff, overlooking Naha. The purpose of the tie-in was for our mutual protection. We could provide back-up for them including indirect artillery fire if called upon, and they could fire flares up for us if requested at night. The OP was in a big shell hole right on the edge of the cliff, looking south. There was a huge pair of Jap binoculars, on a tripod, at the edge of the hole. I looked through them and could see "I" Co.-22nd dug in on the south side of the ASATO GAWA (river) that ran in a westerly direction out into Naha Harbor. The river was on the north side of Naha. "L" Co. also was on the river's edge west of "I" Co. If I had known where to look, I could have easily observed Sugar Loaf about 1-1/3 miles

straight east of us. While up there, the Japs threw a couple of mortar rounds onto the cliff top. The Beak hastily connected the phone lines and we departed. Just as we got back to the 3rd Plt. area, we heard the scream of incoming artillery. I dove into a hole on top of Gunny Maynard, who was on top of someone else. When we "wire men" returned to our platoon, Speed was extremely glad to see us and told us so.

<u>Diary entry, May 15</u> When we hit the hole for the night last night it was raining and we had received a few rounds of what we thought was 8" naval gun fire. (This was from the hills on the east side of Naha.) Pierce and I had the 11:30-2:30 watch. It was still sprinkling lightly. About 2400 hours the 3rd Plt. opened up with everything they had. At 0300, Aydelotte (in Tank A-) heard someone in the wire. We had strung phone wire out in front of us on the land side. We had tin cans containing small stones hung on it. When someone bumped into the wire, the cans would rattle. As we had phone hook-ups between the platoon's tanks, we could talk to one another. About 10 minutes later, a flare went up and I saw a Jap crouched over and running like hell for the face of a cliff. I was too surprised to open up (shoot) and asked "Nazi" (Sgt. Kramer Bohnenberger) if he had seen him. (Nazi was in a different tank yet than Aydelotte's.) He had, so I told him I was going to open up with the tommy gun if I saw him again. Soon I saw him move and opened up with 12 rounds from the tommy gun, but I must have missed by a mile. (I never again chose a tommy gun.) This alerted the rest of the platoon, which spotted more on the reef and opened up. This kept up for about an hour, but hit nothing. I guess the Japs kept from getting hit by hitting the deck and crawling along crevices in the coral. Dawn came and we found out that the 3rd Plt. had killed eight, obtaining a nice samurai sword and a pistol. Received some more artillery fire at dawn, which made the 3rd Plt. withdraw around a bend and out of the line of fire.

About noon, four of the 2nd Plt. tanks pulled into close position and fired about 3 hours at Naha. We used charge #3 and fired approximately 425 round at a range of 2900 yards. (I was computing for the guns, in the FDC.) We fired on cliffs, caves, etc. The F.O. reported back that we had got some Japs. 2nd Bn., 4th Marines, moved up and dug in along the cliff about 100 yards to our rear. They are going on the lines tomorrow, I guess.

<u>Diary entry, May 16</u> All was quiet last night except for an air-raid and the 4th Marines. The 4th shot 5 Nips behind us. This happened on my 0230-0600 watch. Pierce and I watched two Nip planes sail around in the beams of the search lights for about half an hour. Never did see them get hit. They dropped some bombs down by Yontan airfield. Got some more artillery fire at dawn. Big stuff! At noon was relieved by "D" Co. and went back to Bn. bivouac area.

<u>Diary entry, May 17</u> We cleaned all .30 and .50 cal. M.G.'s, the 75 and personal pieces. Radio reports say 21,000 U.S. and 47,000 Jap casualties, so far, here on the island. Death ratio: 11 to 1 in our favor. The 6th Div. was mentioned as extra heavy casualties, one company had only two men left. I wonder if it were "L" or "I?" Doggies are holding up 6th Div. advance because they won't move ahead,

thus the Marines left flank is left exposed.

The unkind comments about the Army, I now realize, were unwarranted. The Army 7th-77th and 96th Divisions fought the good fight long, hard and with plenty of casualties. The 27th I still hold in contempt. The Army divisions were on the east side and east of center while moving down the island. The Marines were in the center and on the west side. As my outfit was always on the west side close to the water, those outfits that were in my vicinity are naturally the ones I comment on the most.

Many horrific battles occurred on Okinawa; but all agree that in terms of casualties, length of time and utter terror for all involved, friend and foe alike, the fight for Sugar Loaf outdid them all. No, our outfit wasn't involved but we were close. I thus cannot begin to describe the hell of it. Most of what I know I have read. To get a feel for it, from the safety of your armchair I must recommend the books "TENNOZAN" by Geo. Feifer and "GOOD-BYE DARKNESS" by Wm. Manchester. I have friends who <u>did</u> fight on Sugar Loaf and to them I plead please don't think badly of comments and quotations made by one who cannot possibly realize how THEY lived it. The following data is derived from TENNOZAN.

The battle for Sugar Loaf began on May 12 and lasted for eight days. Even after the eighth day deaths were occurring on it. Sugar Loaf wasn't big, only about 60 feet in height and about 300 yards or so in frontage, but it had scores of gun emplacements, M.G.'s, mortar emplacements, fox-holes and was riddled with caves inter-connected to one another. Worse yet, the other surrounding hills were likewise and all could put unbelievable cross-fire from one to another. "G" Co. of the 22nd started out initially after it. Before it was finally taken, the 22nd, the 29th and even the 4th Marines each had their stab at it. I think I read that it was taken 11 times, with the Japs retaking it back every time except the final.

Sugar Loaf cost more dead and wounded than any other single Pacific battle, on Iwo Jima or elsewhere. Nearly 3,000 Marines were killed and seriously wounded, roughly the same as on all of Tarawa and more than the Army at Casino and up to 50% more than the worst battle for a single position on Iwo Jima. An additional 1,289 men were lost to sickness and combat exhaustion. This was all in an area roughly the size of six football fields.

The 6th Div. artillery fired 92,650 shells in the Sugar Loaf engagement. May 17, "I" Co.-22nd sent 245 men onto Sugar Loaf and ended up with only 3 left fit to fight at the end of the day. On that day, the 29th bore the brunt as the 22nd was just too exhausted and depleted to attack. It could only hold its positions. Before they had gone up the hill, three battle wagons had moved in close and fired salvo after salvo of their heavy guns. Wave after wave of planes strafed and bombed the hill and surrounding ones. When it ceased and the riflemen started up the hill, every hole, cave, gun emplacement had Japs in them waiting to kill the advancing Marines. This is a lesson too soon forgotten. It's easy to believe the air forces and/or the Navy with its huge guns eliminate the need for ground troops. The fanatical, skillful and stubborn Japanese should have

proven that to the U.S. for scores of years to come, but our own propaganda paints a deceptive picture and true reality is forgotten. A skillful enemy in caves and tunnels will emerge to fight. Over 14,000,000 TONS of bombs alone were dropped on Jap positions by mid-May, without significantly denting the heart of the Japanese defense.

One day while the 8-9 day Sugar Loaf battle was see-sawing back and forth, a whole bunch of "green" replacement troops came along the sea wall, from the north, into our area. We got talking to them, as they dropped their packs and crapped out on the ground near us to rest and await orders. Most were just out of Boot Camp and were pretty bewildered. I had to walk away from them and go behind the tank so that they would not see the tears in my eyes. We knew where they were going and had a pretty good idea that a good share of them wouldn't be alive two days hence.

Diary entry, May 21-24 Moved back down to the ocean for beach defense. Stayed in one position for 3 days. The 29th Marines on beach with us on 23rd-24th. They were just relieved for a rest after getting hell shot out of them up on Sugar Loaf.

Diary entry, May 30 Got back (into bivouac area) two days ago from more beach defense. This time we were about 1,200 yards from the center of Naha (still north of it). Rained all of the time we were there. I've never been so damn wet before in my life. (Starting May 19, 18 inches of rain fell in 9 days.) The 2nd Plt. got credit for (destroying) a Nip small boat loaded with explosives which we shot up one night. We got the word that we'll be going to Saipan between June 1-4. Will be real glad for that.

The boat mentioned above had a real silent motor. I could not hear it at first; and it was just about impossible to discern in the darkness. One of the platoon wanted to take a shot at it to see if it was what he though it was. I didn't agree but he did anyway. At his shooting, the boat's motor opened up full throttle and really started to move. One of our machine guns, plus several rifles, started firing then. They must have hit the explosives because it blew up with a terrific blast and concussion. It more than likely was heading for the biggest concentration of ships in order to ram into one.

On May 24 the single surviving bomber, of eight to start the mission, made it into Yontan airfield. There it belly landed on a runway and the crew and a dozen commandos leapt out and with demolition charges strapped around their waists destroyed or damaged 27 planes, 2 fuel dumps and ammo piles before they were all killed.

I believe it was also about this time frame when we had so much rain that I got so sick. For about four days I primarily laid on the top-side deck (behind the turret) of our tank, beneath a tarp. I was cold, ached all over and had terrific headaches. Of course, we weren't eating much anyway and I had even less of that. One day Speed said I ought to walk a few hundred yards down the beach to an aid station that was there. This I did. The corpsman said that I probably had dengue fever. He gave me a few APC's (like acetaminophen) and I shuffled back to my place at the back of the tank

again. The rainy period at this time was so bad that nothing on wheels or tracks moved. It was difficult even to walk because of mud. Food and munitions had to be air dropped in many areas because no other means was possible.

Between May 21-28, I saw two more Jap planes downed. Probably saw a lot more than that but I jotted these down in the diary. One evening, just at dark, there was a hell of a "CRACK!" a few yards away from us. We were in between and behind big jagged coral or limestone boulders, inland from the sea a hundred yards or so. We could see Naha to our left front. Soon after, we received another one. We surmised that it was a 47 mm. high velocity gun. There was no traditional screaming of the incoming shell; it was just there suddenly with that loud, sharp crack. We were told to count the seconds between the gun's flash (we could see the flash) and the explosion. The gun was in the heights southeast of the city's center. All told it fired about 6-7 times at us. There was hardly any time at all between the flash and the crack. We reported the timed interval and soon our artillery blasted its source. It fired no more that night. We didn't counter fire because of the location that our tanks were in. While in this location, I put a couple of grenades out on trip wires. The location I put them in was the logical way I would have come towards us if I were a Jap sneaking up. It was a narrow draw or passageway between the boulders and rocks and at high tide would have about a foot of water. I had them out for 2-3 nights. One morning when I got out of my fox hole I looked about 50 feet to my right and there were 10-12 Marines there. Most were sleeping. I walked over and asked them where in hell had they come from and what outfit were they? They were a reconnaissance platoon and had been in Naha all night. The city had not been entered by Marines yet, except for these guys. I sure didn't envy them their jobs, prowling around IN that place full of Japs. I also wondered how they got past my trip wire without setting off my grenades. I checked the grenades soon after. The wire was OK. The recon. platoon must have taken another route. I put the safety pins back into the grenades and collected them. I sure didn't want to kill our own people.

It was while we were in this area that one day I looked up on a small solitary cliff, a separate spire from the rest. I could see a niche in the face of the cliff, facing Naha and it's harbor. There was something in the niche. I climbed up to it and removed a small (about 20 inches tall) burial jar. It was very primitive and yes, there were very old bone fragments in it. I've always wondered how many hundred years old it was. I replaced it back in the niche.

There were a lot of dead Japs in this location, both in and out of the water. At high tide one kept beating his head against the tank's side. I was cleaning a M.G. up on the tank deck one morning and maggots were in the gun and all over the deck. We sat there with them, eating the morning's ration. I am probably wrong, but I don't think we had a hot meal the whole time we were on the island except for 6-7 days in a couple of our bivouac areas. Any other hot meals we had were the result of building a fire and heating a can of something over it. Any of my buddies that may read this, let me know their

impressions on this.

On the 27th of the month I was again in an O.P. overlooking Naha and saw the 22nd making a drive through part of the city.

Diary entry, June 2 The 3rd Plt. got (means killed) 3 Japs dressed in civilian clothing at daybreak on the 31st. I got up at daybreak and there they were about 300 yards out in the water. When a couple of shots were fired, one stood up and held his hands up as though to surrender; but when the machine guns answered him back, he never tried it again. Boarded LST #1014 today.

Diary entry, June 3 A typhoon (somewhere close) is delaying us (from leaving for Saipan). Stayed out from Yontan today. I'm sleeping topside, on the deck.

Diary entry, June 4 Pulled out for Saipan this evening. Expect to meet typhoon so the skipper moved all of us guys below that were sacking out topside. No more Okinawa! No more empty guts, wet clothes, wet fox holes, mosquitoes, snails, flies, rations for a while. Had EGGS today--fresh ones! Also steak, onions, celery, cake--HELL! these damn swabbies don't even know there's a war on. (At least until the kamikazes come over again.)

Diary entry, June 12 Well, we're a long ways from Saipan! On the 5th we pulled back to the beach about 2 miles south of Yontan and the whole battalion got off the ships. It seems that we really had boarded for the purpose of hitting some island 100 miles north of Okinawa with the 2nd Div. but the operation was called off and now we're back with the 6th. (I have recently read that this island was Kikai Jima and was scheduled for July.) Got some beer off the ship and "A" Co. got pretty well lit up. (The beer we obtained was from the LST's skipper. His crew had broken into the beer locker, on the tank deck, and stolen several cases. When it was discovered, they pointed the finger at us. Actually, they beat us to it. Anyway, their skipper was so pissed off that he gave, or sold, several cases to our C.O. Capt. Joe Garfield. This was doled out to us once we got settled in on the beach. Each man got about 5-6 cans and A-10's crew huddled under a tarp drinking theirs in a driving rain.) About 10 of us, in our ponchos, went stumbling across rice paddies, wading creeks, etc. to get to a doggie movie that we could see off in the distance quite a ways. (We couldn't believe that a movie would be showing, but we were in a "safe zone.") We set off an Army unit's trip flares and when challenged (by the Army guards) told them to go to hell. (After all, we were armed also.) We lurched back to our own area about 2200 hours, just one solid mass of mud and crap, but we really had us a time.

Diary entry, June 15 On the 7th, "A" Co. moved into Naha and moved out the evening of the 8th into beach defense positions along the sea wall right by the Naha airfield. On the way from Naha to the new position, "Raider" Dettman's (Cpl. Russell Dettman from St. Louis) tank hit a big Jap "kettle mine," blowing the turret right off the tank, also blowing all of the crew about 15 feet into the air. Good ole Raider died a few minutes later and the other 6 men were taken away to a field hospital. I don't know how bad they were hurt, but a couple of them looked pretty bad.

We had spent about 24 hours in Naha. The city was a mess, totally demolished. It must have been a pretty scenic place at one time. Before the invasion had even started, back on October 16, huge U.S. air raids had destroyed 90% of the city. Since then it had taken tremendous more pounding. Our stay there, after driving through parts of it, must have been in a suburb in the southwestern part of the city. Our platoon was parked around some houses, some of which were still intact. Raider Dettman and I had drawn water from a well and scrubbed some clothes, hanging them on bushes to dry. That day he told me that he had a funny feeling and thought that he was going to get hurt bad or die. He was married and perhaps a couple of years older than me. He was the driver of the tank.

When we had left Naha and headed out to our new position for beach defense we had gone along the beach in a westerly direction and then S.S.W. This was at the northern end of the Oroku Pn. I believe the tide had been ebbing for some time as we drove in a single line, partly in water and partly in wet sand. There must have been 4-5 tanks ahead of A-10 and Raider was following one or two tanks behind us but had diverted a little off to the port side. He was carried up to the sea wall area where he died. One of the wounded men from his tank was Gunny Sgt. Maynard who received his <u>third</u> wound in less than 11 months, the other two occurred on Guam. Pfc. Ralph Hauth was another of the wounded. I cannot remember the rest.

We dug our fox holes in at the north edge of the airfield, where the earth sloped steeply up to start forming the sea wall. There were several intact Japanese planes, on the field about 200 yards south of us, including some fighters. They must have been badly damaged, though, or pilots would have taken off in them. I ran out onto the field the second day (the 4th Marines were fighting just off the S.E. edge of the field) and climbed up into a fighter there. The M.G.'s had been removed from it. I sat in the cockpit envisioning taking off and soaring around. That night, for 15-20 minutes, a Jap plane circled around the field, very low. We wanted to shoot the M.G.'s at it but the word was "No, don't fire at all. You'll give our position away." Hell, I figured every Jap on that end of the island could already see us in the day time anyway, but we held fire. We figured that he was looking for Jap signals, in order to drop communications from Tokyo or some crucial thing needed. Some of the Jap artillery shells were starting to become duds (not exploding) so maybe they needed new detonators. So we guessed. In any case, the plane wasn't over 250-350 feet in the air at times.

About our 2nd or 3rd night in this position there was suddenly a huge flash of fire out at sea. Many seconds later the concussion reached us and it was so great that anyone standing was just about blown over. One of our ships had been reached by a kamikaze or by suicide boat. We checked the water the next morning and found debris. I think we even found a life buoy or something with the ship's name on it. We did not find any bodies or body parts in the small stretch of water's edge that we searched.

It was while we were in this area that I spotted a body floating a hundred yards or so out in the sea. I checked it out with

binoculars and figured it was Jap. I thought just maybe he had been a pilot whose plane had been downed. Also, MAYBE he was wearing a pistol or a sword. I would get it. The water was pretty rough, and a yellow color. I waded out to meet him. I had to feel my way carefully to avoid getting upset by the waves. I finally reached him and made a cursory exam that provided no booty. He had either entered the water already dead or had jettisoned any surplus gear in order to survive.

We left the airfield after about 3 days and went south perhaps 5 miles. It was a bright sunny day. We dug in on a very steep ridge, like a spine, between rice fields on either side. I think we stayed here one night. About June 17-18 "A" Co. went by water to the southern outskirts of Itoman. As we approached the beach, our tank passed a Jap treading water. Normally we would have shot him, but Speed told us not to. He was to be collected for interrogation by someone. A tank to our port side fished him in with a boat hook. The tanks stopped at the water's edge for 20 minutes or so until it was decided where we were going to position ourselves. Up above the high water line lay two dead women, possibly a mother-daughter pair. Someone had pulled down the black pantaloon-like trousers they were wearing. More than likely some cruddy Marines had raped them and then killed them. Maybe not. The women could have been shooting or throwing grenades. If so, rape wouldn't have been quite as heinous a crime to commit. But what disgusted me was what one of "A" Company's men did. He jumped down from his tank and went over to them. They were lying on their back. He took his K-bar knife and cut a patch of pubic hair from each, making some pretty crude comments. He put these in his pocket. This guy was a rugged pollack, a replacement we got just prior to leaving the 'Canal. We didn't know it for many years, but at one of our post-war reunions (in the 80's) our battalion C.O. distributed a publication he had previously written about the outfit, "Getting the Job Done With Un-Artillery." In that he referred to the outfit getting replacements before Okinawa, several of which had just been released from the brig. The pubic-hair collector was likely one of them.

We eventually pulled up into our defensive positions. While others were putting up camouflage and so on, Bob Pierce and I started to run phone wire. I don't remember now to whom we were hooking up. We ran 300-400 yards and Bob then tried calling back, to see if all was OK. It was a dead line so we back tracked, along the sea wall. We found the line cut, some distance from a group of men. Bob repaired this and we went out again. A few minutes later we tried phoning again. Again it was dead. We found the cut this time where the 6-7 men, in kimonos, were standing and smoking. We figured they were probably Jap soldiers. They were of the age, and sullen looking. While Bob repaired, I made menacing movements with my carbine while cussing them out royally. I was ready to drop them if they even blinked. They did not bother the wire again.

Late in the afternoon we sent a patrol out into our immediate neighborhood. I was one of the patrol. Many houses had not been destroyed. Some weren't even badly damaged. I entered one pretty nice home, with sliding rice-paper partitions and a beautiful wooden

floor. A nice-looking teen-age girl was standing in one corner. She was softly crying and had no clothes covering her from the waist down. She was also bleeding from the vagina. I didn't pay too much attention to the poor kid as I could only think that any second some Jap with a razor sharp sword was going to try and sever my head. I checked behind several partitions and cautiously left. I didn't know if she was menstruating (which I doubted) or if another horny Marine had been there, or a Jap. There were many civilians now heading north, away from the fighting in this place. Most were women, old men and young kids. We kept our eye on them. We did not bother them, now nor later, nor did we provide any water or rations which I now know they sorely needed.

For a few weeks now we had been killing Japs, mostly in the water, at night. The word had been passed, I think, that certain units were to go to the rugged north country and regroup there for guerrilla warfare. In any case, a flare would go up and we'd see them or daylight would catch them still out in the water and in our view. Many were killed in this manner, usually alone or in groups of less than 8-9. Quite a few of the soldiers had small pipes in their clothing or packs and what I, at least, thought was opium or cocaine. Once a Jap doctor or corpsman was killed. He had a small metal medical kit, with scalpels, hypodermic needles, white powder (cocaine?) and other miscellaneous stuff. In the Itoman area, "A" Co. was killing about an average of 21 Japanese a day, or mostly night.

On June 18, the 10th Army commander, Lt. Gen. Simon Buckner (3 star) was killed while standing behind two large boulders on a ridge. He was watching eastward at the 8th Marines (2nd Div.) who had been pulled from their reserve status on Saipan just previously to help spearhead the final drive to the south. A Jap 47 mm. anti-tank gun, the only one left of a dozen, fired 5 rounds after its crew had observed some high-ranking enemy officers standing on the ridge. One round hit one of the boulders and pieces of rock and shrapnel killed the general. He was the highest ranked U.S. general to be killed in battle in the entire war, anywhere. The C.O. of the 22nd Marines, Co. Harold Roberts, had warned Buckner against going up to this spot but was ignored. Shortly after this warning, the Colonel was killed at another location. Okinawa was the final battle for several generals. On June 19, one day after Buckner's death, Brig. Gen. C. Easley, assistant commander of the Army's 96th Div., was shot between the eyes by a M.G. The overall Japanese commander, Gen. Ushijima, and Gen. I. Cho committed seppuku (harakiri), or suicide, in a headquarter's cave at the south end of the island on June 22 after a small feast including saki and scotch. They were extremely talented and skilled officers. For June 19, the X Corps (U.S.) reported an estimated 2,000 Japanese killed that day, 3,000 on the 20th, and 4,000 on the 21st. Admiral Ota, five of his senior officers and hundreds of his badly wounded or sick men committed suicide also on June 11 or 12 in a huge cave complex in the Naha area. All of these, and thousands more, considered themselves as samurai and could consider no nobler a death, other than to be killed in combat.

We had left Itoman, going south, and were on the flat land immediately north of Mezado Ridge when Gen. Buckner was killed while up on top of it. We were parked behind the sea wall. The island's main north-south road, a single lane dirt track, was about 100 feet east of, and parallel to, the sea wall at this point. A fairly large rice paddy was on the opposite side of the road. The western end of the ridge ended at the road. In our area, the north side of the ridge was very steep, just about a cliff, and had some large caves in it. I'm sure that, as usual, there were large and small caves dug into the ridge (like all of them). In the back of my mind there was a narrow-gauge railroad track that ran east from where my tank was parked up to and parallel to the ridge, right along the base of it. A few hundred yards from us, up the track, was a spring or well.

On Bob's and my 1130-0230 watch, on the 21st, I happened to glance behind me and about 30 feet away were 3 Japs. I gave the word and opened up with my carbine, shooting tracers. The one I was sighted in on dropped on my second shot. Another was dropped about 10 feet from the first and finished himself off with a grenade. The tank just south of us had also started shooting when we did. When the Beak's and my watch ended, we crawled into our wide but shallow fox hole, which had a tarp draped over it, and immediately fell asleep. Somewhat later, we were jolted awake by a M.G. firing a few feet away. We rolled and grabbed weapons. Tracers were about 3 feet high, 3 feet in front of us and shooting towards the road. Bob and I couldn't see the targets, possibly because Harry (Broderick) and Eddie (Dement) had already put them down. It had been another 3-4 Japs sneaking up, probably hoping to ultimately make it north. Bob and I resumed our sleep. At very first light in the a.m., "pubic hair collector" scooted out to collect any good booty that may have been on the Japs, whether he shot them or not. I think that he obtained something desirable. I was not about to protest too greatly his doing this because, frankly, I was afraid of him. I figured that he just might shoot me then and there, or wait for an opportune time when no one would detect it was he. One of the dead Japs was wearing U.S.M.C. boots and had a U.S. razor in his pack. About noon that day, two other guys and I took clean clothes, towel and soap and headed up the R.R. track towards the spring. We were going to take a much needed bath. Between the road and the ridge, we came upon a wounded Jap, holding a grenade in his hand. He was in fairly bad shape and lying across the trail. We figured he was one of the first three from the night before. We were eyeballing him, and about to give the coup de grace when a young lieutenant came running up and asked us not to shoot him. When we demanded why not, he identified himself as being an intelligence officer and wanted to question him. He then spoke to him in Japanese. We protested, but didn't feel brash enough to go against this young second looey. We left him still talking to the Jap, who still had the grenade in his fist. I think it was still that same day when Eddie Dement shot one who had swam up to our tank.

On the morning of the 23rd, the second platoon took a patrol out into the area surrounding us, as infiltrators, snipers and whatever abounded. I noticed rice plants, about 3 feet high in a paddy, were bent. Someone had walked through here. I started following the

trail. Suddenly, about 6 feet away, a Jap popped up yelling something in Japanese. I just about fell over backwards it startled me so; but I managed to drop him with one or two shots from my carbine. The rice plants started moving so I shot again. Another Jap raised his head and Stud Guthrie, who had been tracking with me, shot him. The groaning continued and suddenly there was a puff of smoke. Grenade! We hit the deck, or water, as the field was flooded, the grenade exploded about 8 feet away. It had not been meant for us. The wounded soldier had held it up against his throat. This poor bastard had a "thousand stitch belt" around his waist next to his skin. I took it, plus a big wad of money he had. There had been three Nips. Thousand stitch belts were a novelty to us. I never heard of anyone else that got one, but they may have. I understand that they weren't uncommon and many Jap. military had them.

It seems that when a soldier is going to leave home, for war, female relatives and friends in his village make him this to wear in battle for good luck and safe return. It is made from soft, quilted-like cloth. Mine is perhaps 8 inches wide. Each female sews a knot, which collectively make up characters of the language. Thus a message, or talisman, for him. When the patrol was over and I could examine it, I found a small pocket, like a watch pocket, on the side next to his body. There was a packet in there, like a large tea bag, with some bulk to it. My romantic mind visioned that he had been in on "the rape of Nanking" and in the packet was a large ruby or pearl he had taken. I carefully cut it open and was just a trifle disappointed to find that within it was a small Buddha medal, some sand (probably from the beach near his home), fingernail clippings and a couple of coins. I have asked a couple of Japanese friends, here in the U.S., if they would translate the message on the belt, made up of "1,000 knots." They have reported basically the same thing, which was, "This warrior will be fortunate and have long life." (Not an accurate prediction.)

As I am writing this page, it is January 1, 1994. The events I'm writing about occurred 48-2/3 years ago. Some of the sequence of events are probably not in the proper time frame. Some things I recall (they were never really forgotten) as I'm walking, or in the middle of the night when I can't sleep. I had a quadruple coronary by-pass last Easter Sunday. It was Easter Sunday also when we went into Okinawa. I don't know if it's the operation that causes my insomnia or if it's because I have this "journal" on my mind. I often can't sleep and get up at 3:00 or 4:00 a.m. and write for a couple of hours until I get very tired. I started this writing 12 months ago. The 1st Armored has a reunion each year, for the past 17 years. I've attended all but about 4 of them. I find sometimes that my old comrades and I must have been in a different war. Some men don't even remember their tank numbers or the men in their own crew. Some remember things that I never heard of. I recall events that they look puzzled over. I guess this is understandable. We took turns on watch in our fox holes. They, or I, may have been asleep when an event happened. We all look at things differently and "see" the same thing differently. Our tanks were spaced, when parked, about 100-125 feet apart. What is in one crew's zone may not even be seen by the next crew, especially at night. Men in the same crew, or squad, don't see

the same thing. But, back to June, 1945.

The last few weeks of the campaign we saw many Japanese soldiers commit suicide. I recall a sugarcane field, on a hillside, somewhere between Machinato airfield and Itoman. It was north of where I was, about 500 yards distance, Marines had surrounded it and a flame thrower was in one end of the field. Shots were being fired, by both adversaries. As the flame thrower slowly walked through the cane, I could spot a puff of smoke and often a helmet would sail up in the air. It was the Japs holding a grenade up to their chest or throat and killing themselves. Twelve or fifteen must have ended it this way.

Another time, south of Itoman, another crew member and I walked in a rain storm to another platoon that was south of ours. This was daytime. It may have been Harry Broderick or Beak Pierce with me. We were huddled under a tarp, hung from a tank, visiting with some buddies when suddenly three Japs were seen running for some tanks about 100 feet away. They each had a big belt of explosives wrapped around their waists and were going to blow themselves and our tanks to hell and back. They were quickly shot before they could accomplish this. One did manage to blow pieces of himself all over the landscape just short of his objective.

Another night, one of the platoon's tanks was parked right beside the road. One of the crew was standing his watch by standing in the driver's or radioman's position inside the tank, with the hatch open. He suddenly saw 5-6 blurred shapes running down the road towards him. His story was that he was so surprised that he didn't even reach for a rifle. He emptied his pistol at them, missing them all, and slammed the hatch down tight over his head. This brought a lot of laughs when related the next morning.

I did not see this one, but fully believe it. Some of the "A" company men were observing the flood of civilians on the road heading north one day. There was an elderly man with a horribly gangrenous wound on his body. It was a big hole. He motioned, with signs, for one of the men to shoot him. The man did. It was an act of mercy, as the poor guy was obviously going to die, even if medical aid could have been obtained, which it more than likely couldn't.

Someone in the company had captured a Japanese "knee mortar" plus a good supply of shells for it. Most of the shells were flares. This was a good find, because we often couldn't get flares fired up for us as the infantry, of course, gave first priority to their own people. Jap flares were a bit smaller than ours, made a sputtering sound when descending, and gave off a yellowish duller light than U.S. ones. The parachute holding the flare was also made of silk. We welcomed flares shot up by friend or foe alike, as we were stationary at night and anybody's illumination aided us. Not so riflemen who often had night movements to make and to whom darkness is a friend, sometimes. Another "A" Co. man was delighted to pick up a 12 ga. shotgun, a "riot run," as well as many rounds of buckshot. This was a U.S., had been a Marine's who was now dead. It supposedly was against the Geneva Convention to use shotguns in war. If so, how stupid could you get? Does it make any difference what <u>type</u> of firearm kills you? Anyway, to the man possessing the shotgun (it was pump action and a

Winchester) it was comforting to know that at close range it was very deadly, as it would be hard to miss a man with it. A couple of others had picked up Japanese "Nambus." The Nambu was a light machine gun and very deadly. As I remember, it was fed by a magazine from the top. It had an unmistaken "voice" to it, high pitched and very rapid firing. It had a sound that all combat men that had heard it remembered. Because of that, the Marines who came into possession of one did not fire it at night, as all ears and heads would turn that way and he might get a few rounds of friendly mortar or rifle fire in his direction.

It was also while we were still next to Mezado Ridge that we sat on the tanks one afternoon watching a patrol sweep the field just a couple hundred yards in front of us. They suddenly got fired upon by several Japanese in fox holes, as well as grenades pitched at them. Fire was returned and in a few minutes the Japs were killed. The Japs had 4-5 women with them, who were also throwing grenades. The women were also killed, except for a couple. These the Marines proceeded to rape, right out in broad daylight. Speed asked me if I wanted to go over and get some poon-tang. That really wasn't my cup of tea. The women could have been nurses, volunteer workers, girlfriends or just fighting for their country. Those people sure were fighters. I do not know the fate of the females when passion had waned.

A few weeks earlier, farther north, there was a field hospital, or aid station, tent. There was also a landing strip near it, for the Piper Cubs, which had nothing to do with the hospital tent. Among other memories of it was the fact that while we were living in fox holes a few hundred yards south of it, several enterprising Marines had taken over 3-4 houses between us and the aid station. Better than that, they had 4-5 nice-looking young girls living with them. It was an ideal arrangement for all concerned. The girls did the laundry and provided material comfort. They in turn got food, soap, clean clothes and safety. I suspect, and hope, that they were treated kindly and with respect. The Marines were sure the subject of much envy for their resourcefulness. I don't remember what kind of outfit they were attached to but they made the best of the circumstances. They had a jeep, also.

Diary entry, June 28 They've just killed two Japs about 125 feet from us. They've been getting them here for the past week. I've seen a whole bunch of them kill themselves with grenades. Good Dope! Saves everybody trouble. All in all this company has run up a pretty good score. The company has killed 175-200 Japs here. Our 3rd Plt. had a man killed the other day, Corp. Richard Mussenbrock. (Mussenbrock was an avid souvenir hunter, having one or two swords, a pistol, a battle flag, etc. He was killed by his own men, by accident, while on a patrol.) We're all damn skinny and weak from not eating. I doubt if I'll ever have strength enough to work (once we leave here).

Diary entry, July 3 All of the battalion except 12 men per platoon pulled out for Saipan on LST's today. The rest of us are staying behind to bring up the rear, on a transport. Was up on top of the hill mentioned on page 100, where we're now bivouaced and heard

an explosion over in the field. Looked over and saw two Japs sneaking around some hedge at the edge of the field. Aydelotte and I grabbed some weapons and took after them. About 12 more guys came running up and we went over. One of the H&S Co. men (a swarthy Mexican-looking guy wearing shorts) came walking towards us, all covered in blood. One of the Japs had thrown a grenade at him, but he wasn't wounded seriously. We got over to the scene of action and I noticed the bushes moving. I told whoever it was to come out, no one did, so I opened up with my carbine. The rest of the boys poured in a load of lead. In about 5 minutes (after some of the other guys went after the other Jap), we moved up towards the bushes and I saw the Jap laying in water about 2 feet deep. He didn't appear conscious, but was moaning. I shot him through the neck to end any argument. We never did get the other one.

While standing in the water near the Jap, I suddenly thought that I had been shot, twice, in the upper thighs close to my crotch! I only had a pair of skivy shorts on and quickly looked there. No blood, but 3 or 4 large wasps were buzzing around, full of fight. God, it hurt. Probably my punishment for not putting that Jap on my back and trying to find a corpsman or an aid station, wherever the hell one may have been.

I think that we stayed on that steep ridge two nights. One of the nights Bob Schwaniger did another sleep walk. He was lucky he didn't break his neck, as the sides of the ridge were very steep. I didn't see him perform; Bill "Eyes" Aydelotte told me about it later. There were small man-made caves dug into this ridge also. I decided that I should see what was in there. The opening was only big enough to go into on hands and knees. I went in and after a few feet the tunnel made a right angle. I went along this and encountered more branches, one going down vertically. There was gear scattered along in here. I soon realized that I might be biting off more than I wanted to chew, so I vacated it. We weren't too far, I believe, from a massive tunnel-cave complete that held hundreds of people, head-quarters, hospitals, kitchens, lights, fresh air fans and exhaust fans, etc. There were several of these on southern Okinawa, one holding perhaps a thousand or more people. They were natural caves that had been embellished, with countless entries. Many of these were not discovered until months after the war.

Diary entry, July 6 Left the bivouac area last evening. Moved down to the outskirts of Naha. Couldn't board ship so bedded down beside the road for the night. LST pulled up to the shore this a.m. We loaded onto it (no tanks, they went with the first group a few days earlier) and it brought us out to the U.S.S. Admiral W.L. Capps, APA 121. It's a hell of a big ship; and there are about 3,000-4,000 Marines aboard that are all going to Saipan. The whole 8th Marine Reg. is aboard. (Probably not all.)

Diary entry, July 7 Pulled anchor at noon today and are on the way to Saipan. The chow is pretty damn good and, believe it or not, we can have all the fresh water we want.

Final reporting on Okinawa. The following are casualty figures, of which we knew very little at the time. I have gleaned these awesome totals from the book, "TENNOZAN," by Geo. Feifer in the past few months:

NAVY: 34 ships sunk, 368 ships and craft damaged. Our carriers lost 539 planes. Kamikazes badly damaged 13 carriers, 10 battle wagons, and 5 cruisers during the 3 months, not counting smaller craft. Of the ships sunk, these were mostly by kamikazes. A typhoon on June 5 did a lot of damage to ships, also.

Final toll of naval personnel over the course of the campaign would be 4,907 KIA and MIA and 4,824 WIA. This was far more than in any previous battle of the war, including Pearl harbor, where less than half that number died. Nearly 20% of the Navy's total casualties in the war, in all the seas, were inflicted off Okinawa.

GROUND FORCES: 7,613 were KIA and MIA, approximately 33,000 WIA. Of these, 3,440 were U.S.M.C. KIA and MIA, from the two divisions there plus the 8th Marines' three weeks at the battle's termination. The Marines had 15,478 WIA. The Army had four divisions in action. The 29th Marines alone had 83% casualties on the island. The X Army received 23 Medals of Honor. Of these, the 6th Marine Div. had 4 men who got one.

JAPANESE MILITARY: As best as can be determined, there were 91,000 of these killed. 10,755 prisoners were captured or surrendered. This was an astonishingly large number, as prior to this very few at all were ever captured or surrendered.

CIVILIANS: It is estimated that as many as 150,000 of these were killed. This wasn't always of our doing. The Japanese killed many and huge numbers committed suicide because the Japs had for years told them how badly they would be treated if captured. The poor people just didn't know what to believe. Many young boys, and girls, actively and freely went with the soldiers.

JAPANESE AIRCRAFT: 7,830 planes were destroyed in the three month campaign.

Personal Note: I think that the book "TENNOZAN" should be on the required reading list of every 12th grade in the U.S. It lays out, in vivid detail, the horrible details of ground combat, from both sides of the action. It also explains the culture and history of the island and how the Japanese mind worked. It sometimes does not paint a rosy picture of our behavior as well.

Another recommended book to read is "GOOD-BYE DARKNESS," by William Manchester, who fought there in the 29th Marines.

George E Berteletti
F/2/22/6

[The following letter was written to Harold Walters, F/2/22/6, by George Berteletti]

March 15, 1993

Hi Harold,

Thank you very much for sending me a copy of your autobiography. [the autobiography referred to is included in Volume #1, OKINAWA-1945] Your short message is very meaningful, I too wish for peace.

I enjoyed reading about your experiences and I can truly relate closely to most of them. With the exception of your initial entry into the front lines-(I had entered the lines in the early afternoon of May 15) I was involved close to you with some of the incidents and action.

A section of the village where you spent the first night and several more days and nights in the front lines before crossing the pontoon footbridge over the Asato Gawa (river) on May 23, is shown in the photo on p 129 of the book titled: History of the Sixth Marine Division.

As you look at the right edge of the photo, about an inch up from the bottom you can see a light area about an inch and one-half long and one-quarter of an inch wide, a chimney is still "standing" upright about a quarter of an inch in from the right edge. If you look closely (with a magnifying glass) at the top portion of the light are you will see five trees spread apart. Behind the trees there appears to be a darker area, could be land but the area is actually tidal water from the Asato Gawa.

The light area in front of the trees is actually part of the roadway that leads to the bridge that at one point in time spanned the Asato. The bridge had a broken span that fell into the river and is seen in the photo on p. 140. The five trees which you can barely see in the photo on p. 129 are clearly seen in the photo on p.140.

The upright chimney in the photo on p. 129 is seen in the p. 140 photo; it is located just below the first tree from the right edge of the photo.

The roadway (the white area in photo p. 129) that ends at the broken end of the bridge is clearly seen in p. 140 photo.

By this time you are probably wondering, how does he know this? Well Harold, on May 15 when I joined Fox Company, I came into this location with forty-nine replacements. The first night I "slept" in a long stone drainage ditch with other replacements. The following morning, three of us were assigned to the 2d Platoon and we were told to dig a three-man foxhole about fifty feet to the right of the bridge and about thirty feet from the Asato, near a 37mm anti-tank gun position. The other two Marines were Richard Wood and Charles "Red" Williams. (both got wounded farther south) The three of us went to China when the war ended. I was assigned a BAR a day later and that was my job until we left the island in July.

The three of us remained at that position for several more days until we crossed the roadway to prepare to attack Naha, over the pontoon footbridge. On the same day we were to cross the roadway, Fred McGowan was assigned to be my assistant BAR man.

I had looked at that bridge for five or six days. Its image is burned in my memory as-well-as the numerous bodies of dead Japanese soldiers and Okinawans that were rotting around us. One night, while the three of us were in the hole, the Japanese hit us with a heavy mortar barrage. I remember that cannon that fired those single rounds from Shuri at nighttime; those incoming rounds did make a loud swish and one very loud explosion. I guess they were good size shells. We were in a very bad position because the Japanese, across the river to our left, kept firing a machine gun into our area during the daytime. They may have seen the 37 mm gun position, but I have doubts because the gun was hidden behind the houses in the daytime and brought forward at night.

The same bridge as viewed from the left is shown in the top left photo on p. 141.

The pontoon footbridge that we used to cross the Asato is shown on p. 140. According to Fred McGowan, the Marines on the footbridge are from either the 1st or 3d Platoon of Fox Company. Could be!

I hope that the above information will help you to recall your earliest days on the front lines, especially where <u>we</u> were located.

I knew John Feeney, he was a very good Marine. Look at the bottom photo on p. 52. Feeney is the Marine holding the rifle. Tony Borgia, is the flamethrower man. Borgia was awarded the Navy Cross for his heroic action at the base of Hill 62 on Oroku Peninsula. (see p. 183) They have him as a member of Easy Company, 4th Marines, which is <u>incorrect.</u> Borgia was originally a member of Fox Company. He entered the front lines on May 26. (he is listed on the Muster Roll of Company "F" 22d Marines) I am number 3 on the list, he is number 5. As a flamethrower man, he must have been transferred to Weapons Company. I remember him very well, he was about 6'4" tall and good looking, a giant! The photo of Feeney and Borgia was taken on Oroku Peninsula at the base of Hill 62. Borgia, earlier in the day had been involved the Navy Cross action. Feeney got into the photo against the wishes of the photographer; we used to kid him a lot about that.

Hill 62 was the hill that you mentioned in your autobiography where the machine gunner fired 13 boxes of ammo. The name of the machine gunner was Albert Lawson who was a very good friend of Joe Horgan, Fred McGowan and myself. He got a big write up in the New Jersey newspaper. He kept the clipping in his wallet. I have this written in my memoirs.

Hill 62 was not too high but loaded with caves at the base. The 2d Platoon was the assault platoon. After a heavy artillery barrage we ran down a dirt read towards the base of the hill. Company A, 1st Battalion, 22 Marines was to give us cover fire from the right. What happened was that the Japanese were running

in front towards the caves. Company "A" machine gunners fired on them, then continued to fire on us. I was in the first squad, and we made it to the base safely but the Marines behind us got hit. When I looked back, I could see Marines falling down. I followed my Sergeant, George Wilkinson and Fire Team leader Robert Grenier up the hill. We didn't meet any Japanese. They had run into the big caves at the base of the hill. There was a Japanese bayonet course with dummies at the base. When we finally got to the top I ran forward of a tree line and jumped into a long shallow hole big enough for two men. Lawson and his gun crew set up their machine gun between two large trees about ten feet behind me to my left. The rest of the platoon were more or less behind me on the right and my left rear. We began firing at Japanese soldiers running in a clearing about 200-300 yards away; they were coming out of a rise and running towards another hill on the right front.

We were firing constantly. I ran out of ammunition twice and Sgt Wilkinson ran back both times to get M1 bandoleers of ammo for me and would throw them into my hole. I had to break apart the M1 clips and load the BAR magazines myself. I had been assigned a new assistant BAR man, who should not have been a Marine let alone an assistant BAR man. He was useless and found a place to hide whenever the shooting started. He was nowhere in sight. He told me later that he had been pinned down in the rear which was not true. I fired more than 700 rounds on that hill.

Lawson, fired continuously, as a matter of fact, his gun became so hot that he did not have to pull the trigger--all he was doing was loading the belt, close the top latch, cock the round into the chamber and the bullets would "cook off" by themselves. He told me this afterwards.

Later when the shooting was over I looked at the empty bullet casings where Lawson was and where I was and the ground was covered with brass.

Fred McGowan, who was near my hole told me later that he was shouting at me to keep my head down because he could see bullets hitting the dirt in front of my hole. I never heard him, but I finally realized that dirt was flying at me and hitting my face and I stayed down for a while, but Sgt Wilkinson kept shouting at me to keep firing. It was really bad.

Between Lawson's machine gun and my BAR so close together, I think the Japanese were concentrating on us. To this day I wonder why the Japanese didn't fire mortars at our positions, maybe they were out of ammo--God only knows.

What happened next was terrible. Another BAR man, Thomas Nasuta, a good friend and Marine, ran to my hole. I don't know if Sgt Wilkinson told him to or what. Between the two of us firing and Lawson firing we were really getting shot at. We both stopped firing and decided to run out of the hole to the trees behind us. I told Lawson that we were leaving and he fired to cover us. I got up and ran behind the trees, Nasuta ran low in front of the trees trying to get back to his old position near Sgt Wilkinson

and he got hit with a bullet in the right side of his chest and dropped. Sgt Wilkinson and another Marine pulled him back behind the trees. I crawled to where he was lying on the ground just in time to watch him take his last breath. He was 19 years old. It was a terrible emotional experience for me, and it still affects me to this day.

That banking on Hill 62 that you wrote about was perhaps 3-4 feet high, the tree line was about 49-50 feet behind it with the open area in front of the tree line where we had been firing. There was a huge shell hole in the flat area just before the banking. When we got orders to pull back from the tree line area so that our mortars could fire into the flat area and hill in front of us, we ran back behind the banking while the Lawson covered us. Then we fired from behind the banking to cover Lawson and his machine gun crew as they ran back. You mentioned that you had seen a radioman using a large back portable radio near the banking. I remember the portable radio very clearly because the radioman had removed it from his back and had set it on the ground a few feet behind the banking. When Lawson ran back with the machine gun, somebody else had the tripod, just as he reached the top edge of the banking, he tripped and the gun flew out of his hands and went barrel first into the radio damaging it to the extent that it was no longer operational. The radioman got angry and was shouting at Lawson. Lawson went into a rage, he was nobody to fool around with, and was just about to hit the radioman when somebody broke it up. The radioman was a very lucky person, believe me.

The following day Lawson, Fred McGowan, Sgt Wilkinson and my fire team leader, Robert Grenier, decided to go after Japanese in one of the caves. [an account is also given of this in Fred McGowan's write-up in Volume 1-OKINAWA-1945] They entered one of the big caves at the base of the hill. The Japanese were waiting for them. Grenier got shot in the leg, Wilkinson got hit in the head by shrapnel from a Japanese grenade, Lawson lost part of his thumb. McGowan was not hit. He and Lawson pulled Wilkinson and Grenier out of the cave.

You wrote about Donald Foreman the runner who was killed. (shot by another Marine). Foreman was shot by a Sgt who had entered the front lines in June, with a Cpl. Both of these Marines were assigned to be with me to gain experience. We were together in a three-man hole on Kuwanga Ridge on that night that Foreman got shot and killed. I was asleep in the hole which was actually nothing but piled up rocks in between two big boulders; it was all solid rock on that ridge. We were looking down in the small village below us during the daytime. In anycase, when the sergeant fired one shot which was next to my ear, I couldn't figure out which direction he was shooting until I saw him pointing his rifle towards the rear of our hole. I asked him what was going on? His exact words were,"I just saw a Jap". I asked him where? He stated, "back there". I told him not to shoot because Marines were back there. Just then he said, "There he

is!" and fired again. That's when I heard somebody shout "I'm hit!". Flares were popping all over the area. I told him to get out of the hole and get back there which he did. The Cpl and I remained in the hole. A few minutes later the sergeant came back and kept saying, "it was a Marine", over and over. We told him to shut up as nothing could be done. Foreman died during the night, it was June 18. The Muster Roll lists him as dying of multiple shrapnel wounds. What else could they put down? Killed by another Marine? Tragic consequences of war.

The Sgt, remained with the platoon and came to China. The Cpl was well liked and he too came to China. For years it was difficult to forgive the sergeant for what he did that night, but I have and God will be his judge as well as mine. Joe Horgan and Fred McGowan remember well what happened on that night.

I started writing a short letter of thanks and I ended up writing a book. I hope I haven't bored you to death.

George Berteletti
F/2/22/6

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

Raymond P. Gillespie K/3/22/6

Many changes began taking place as soon as we were settled on Guadalcanal. First we were no longer to be called the First Marine Provisional Brigade. The 29th Regiment had fought on Saipan and now they joined us here on Guadalcanal. Now with three Regiments, the 4th Regiment, the 22nd Regiment plus the 29th Regiment we formed the SIXTH MARINE DIVISION. Our commanding General having a division to command was promoted to Major General. (Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd) Our Assistant Division Commander was Brigadier General William T. Clement. Colonel Merlin F. Schneider remained on as commander of the 22nd Regiment, and the 3rd Battalion commander was Lt. Colonel Malcolm O. Donohoo. We had a change in company commanders and Captain Joseph P. Dockery took over (K) Company. Our Top was Gunnery Sergeant Eugene F. Rau who was one very good man. In the 2nd Platoon First Lieutenant Paul J. Dunfey became our command officer. Dunfey had done well for himself at Guam while acting as a forward observer for our Artillery. Later when we are fighting at Okinawa, Lieutenant Paul J. Dunfey will threaten me on two different occasions with a court-martial.

Sergeant's Tex Spearman, McGulligan and LaMont were sent back to the States. Now I know I have not shown too much kindness towards two of these three Sergeants, McGulligan and LaMont. I'm going to give just one instance which made us wonder. The Sergeant in question is LaMont. We have to go back to our beach-head on Guam and there are more than a few bullets flying around. Ogden, who we called Nanny Goat, because when he laughed he sounded like a goat, is on the beach at Guam laughing his head off. And we are firing and keeping our heads down and someone says, "Jesus Christ, Nanny what the hell you laughing at?" And Nanny Goat answers, "It's the Sergeant. You guys won't believe it, our goddam Sergeant forgot his rifle."

On Guadalcanal during the first few days of September I passed the Corporal exam and was promoted. In the last days of September and the first weeks of October we started filling in our ranks with new men. Most of our officers are new to (K) Company. Lieutenant Dunfey assigned me as squad leader of the second squad and much of our time was spent in the jungle and field-training the new men. One of the first clues that told us we were going to fight in cities and towns was the construction of buildings and houses along imaginary streets. We trained our units in street and house to house fighting. One of the new men in my squad was never going to make it so we busted him out of our platoon. He was happy and so were we. In the days of Captain Clark, if he wanted to get rid of a man he would have someone beat the hell out of him and then refuse to take him back when he was released from the hospital. Another of the men

was more than adamant about not wanting to be in a line company. His request for transfer was denied, then his request for transfer into the mess-hall was refused. One night he walked into Howard Arendt's tent and was talking about committing suicide. His conversation was interrupting their card game, so Ogden, (Nanny Goat) gave the despondent Marine his rifle and the guy went across the main road near the Jungle and shot himself. It was fortunate for him that the exertion of pulling the trigger forced the muzzle up and above his heart. The shot blew a hell of a hole in his left shoulder. In truth no one in the card game suspected he would follow through with his threat. A month after the incident I had to testify at the young man's court-martial.* (Sgt. Tex Spearman testified about this incident and it had to be before Ogden and Spearman shipped back to the states.)

THE MARIO PRIEST. Father Borendt was a priest in the 22nd Regiment during the Marshall and Guam campaigns. In nineteen forty or forty one, he was a prisoner of the Japanese and was subjected to severe beatings and degrading treatment. He was released through a trade of prisoners, when I don't know. We called him, "The Pistol Packing Padre," because he went into combat armed. He never wanted to be a prisoner again. After Guam and shortly after his little chapel was built, he cracked-up.**

Women, yes women from America were on Guadalcanal in the form of Nurses and USO workers. Our officers in the 3rd Battalion, had taken great pains that a special dinner be prepared for the ladies who accepted their invitation. On the day of the dinner a convoy of jeeps was dispatched to the hospital to pick up the ladies. When the convoy returned to the 3rd Battalion encampment, the main road was lined with enlisted men who gawked, cheered and hooted. The next morning a special formation was called and we enlisted men were reprimanded for our uncouth and distasteful behavior. Any future embarrassment of an officer would be dealt with severely.

The event above was one of those petty conflicts that sometimes drove an unnecessary wedge between officers and enlisted men. I use it here to lead into my own personal evaluation of the officers I have known. Anyone who has read this far in this report already has recognized that Colonel Schneider, Major Cook, Captain Clark, Captain Davis, Captain Hedrick, Captain Watham, Lieutenant Rains and Lieutenant Sitter were more than just extraordinary men. Every one of them either died or were wounded on the line or in front of the line. In every military operations training manual, an officer's leadership and control position is located behind the line, not on the line or in front. You are surprised at Watham?

*Ref. Source: Memoirs Of Howard W, Arendt: Arendt, Spearman and Ogden were in the game. Ogden gave the rifle and bullet.
**Special Note: Mario Priests are a small sect established in the 1920s or 30s. They worshipped the Virgin Mary. Usually they were missionaries stationed overseas. Some were in China, Japan and southeast Asia before the war.

For those of you who have a copy of "The History Of The Sixth Marine Division," see page nine. The man with the big eyes in the lower left corner, is the first crack up I experienced. He was from the east, in his thirties, married with children. His crack was a

total seizure, with flaying arms, incoherent moans and sounds, with his tongue curled back.

Captain Watham, was a lieutenant commanding the second platoon and was one of those really nice human beings when I met him in 1942. I was not with him on Eniwetok Island when it happened. The horror to him of losing control, is beyond my comprehension. Trying to fight against total loss of control, checking it momentarily, then losing it all together. I remember him best in the school tent on Wallis Island. He was a classic instructor, relaxed leaning on the makeshift podium, smiling with his shy sheepish grin. Some of the other officers of K-Company, called him Tiger Watham. Bill Peedan's Diary mentions him during daily events. The best summation comes from that diary, what a hell of a nice guy Watham is. During World War Two I saw crack-ups, I never saw a phony crack-up. I did see the horror of their pain then, and see them yet in VA Hospitals. What a hell of a price.

The next subject comes from sobering thoughts written on page two of the letter printed on Page 77. Major Young addresses the subject in a very intellectual manner. Although as mentioned before the letter is a rough draft. If I were to retype the letter, I feel the value of his thought would be lost.

I have thought a lot about the concept of courage since my war days. I realize now that courage as it applies to any particular man can be a very difficult thing for someone else to truly evaluate for many reasons. A man can be extremely brave in battle but a moral coward in civilian life. Additionally, courage in any area can be an extremely tenuous and fickle thing. It comes and it goes. Additionally - a man can be courageous about one thing and a coward relating to another. And - in battle a man impelled by a selfish motive can sometimes so perform as to seem a hero and in truth to really be one. Some men can be brave when their feet are dry and then be cowards when they are wet. Some are heroes when they are rested and well fed but cowards when they are tired and hungry. Some are brave when in the presence of friends but cowards when alone - and vice versa.

I think that most people are prone to contrast bravery and cowardice as though there were nothing existing between the two concepts. But my war experience and observations since then convinces me that there is a tremendous "grey" area in between and that courage and cowardice can and, sometimes, does exist in the same men and in varying degrees at different times.

When I was sixteen and on Wallis Island only a few months, I had to relieve number four gun at 6:00AM one morning. I was alone, not too familiar with the jungle trails, and it was dark, about 0450hrs. I made a mistake in my choice of trails and ended up coming out of the jungle at the beach, overlooking the village of Vailala. I froze there held maybe by the beauty of the setting or a force that wanted me to hold and inhale the value of life. It was there, the sleeping villagers, the dawn, the lapping waves, the roar of the reef and me, alone, dressed in the garb of a warrior. Like you, I reflect on the thought, who are we, why give us beauty?

Ref. Source: Bill Peedan"s Diary.

Ref. Source: Letter to Mrs. Ormsby, 8 February, 1966 by Major Buenos A. W. Young.

There is something, maybe we could define it as a spark, or two minds that seem to reach out and meet. Some officers had the quality to touch a whole Platoon, Company, Battalion, Regiment or Division. I was there when this happened between two men, Captain Davis and PFC Nussbaum. Nussbaum and I were at the mess-hall on Wallis Island when Captain Davis struck up a conversation. It was Nussbaum's farm background that led the Captain to ask him about what should be done about our Garbage Pit. That is where we ended up, behind the mess-hall at the Garbage Pit. The two of them decided it should be moved. Davis became Nussbaum's mentor. Now here were two men whose backgrounds and goals were opposite in motivation before they met and after they met, they were naturals together. In training or in battle they were like two magnificent stallions whose presence enhanced the environment around them. This is what comradery is all about in the military, respectfully sharing the interests and concerns of the others for a common goal. In some cases it is shared just among and between the enlisted men and their officer in a platoon. In all honesty, to me this never happened in the 2nd Platoon, K-Company, 3rd Battalion, 22nd Marine Regiment during the battle at Okinawa. You will have to judge, maybe it was just me?

On Tuesday 5 December, 1944 myself, Squeaky and Simpson were informed that our two years were over and we would be sent back to the States. We turned our equipment in at the property tent and like others in the Regiment whose two years had been served, waited for our final orders to board a ship going home. Then the reverse order came on Friday 15 December. We should equip ourselves again as we would remain in the Regiment until after the next battle. During the ten day waiting period between the 5th & 15th of December, my older brother Paul, surprised me with a visit on Guadalcanal. Paul who was in the U.S. Navy Seabee's had moved from their Headquarters at New Zealand, when they had been transferred to the Russell Islands, West of Guadalcanal. He paid me another visit on Christmas Day 1944. On that visit I gave him my awards medals and Japanese Battle Flag, plus Arati-Kaji's Work Book Diary.

On Thursday 21 December, 1944 I qualified for Sergeant. The new make up of the Platoon was, we had a new Lieutenant and a new Platoon Sergeant , Tom Elsen was our Sergeant Guide, first squad Mike Tassick, second squad myself, and third squad Woodrow "Woody" Knight. The three of us were Corporals with the title of Acting Sergeant. We received the sergeant pay, but not the permanent rank. If you got shot, you were demoted, then they cut your pay.

My first fallout with the Lieutenant was when he assigned me a new man. He introduced him to me as a Brig-Rat. The man had been in the Corps for many years and had been put in prison and broken by court-martial from Staff Sergeant to Private. My reply was, "Hi Sarge, welcome aboard." He must have resented my cordial greeting. This is an assumption on my part.

The next event became a plus on my side and came about during the introduction of the new rifle grenade that was developed for the

(M1) Rifle. Before there had been a rifle grenade for the old Springfield (03) Rifle. The grenade is fired by using a gas cartridge. At least two companies were assembled plus our officers and some Battalion officers. An arms and ammunition officer explained how the grenade functioned and how the gas cartridge was used. Now comes the moment where someone has to fire the grenade from the (M1) Rifle and demonstrate it's effectiveness. At that point officer looked at officer and no volunteers came forward. Then the officers looked to the Top Kicks who in return looked to the Staff Sergeants and they looked to the Buck Sergeants who in return looked towards the Corporals. At that point, I became an appointed volunteer, by my Lieutenant and Platoon Sergeant.

To fire a grenade off of a rifle, you can not use the sight as you would with a bullet. The target was a rusty Japanese truck that had been abandoned on a trail about eighty yards, maybe less, from where I knelt on one knee. I raised the rifle about fifteen degrees above an imaginary line parallel from the ground and sighted across the center metal ring on the upper wood stock. (Do you know who was in heaven that day and smoking Havana Cigars with a bunch of deceased (K) Company Marines? You guessed it.) I hit the top of the cab of that goddam truck in it's center and the grenade blew a twelve inch diameter hole and everybody said, "Whooooo."

I'm setting the scenes up as an explanation trying to give the reader the story as it happened. So they can judge. I will admit and have been told this, I'm an arrogant Son Of A Bitch, at times. But this event I've written and rewritten ten times or more. Final try. (In the tent six men. I'm cleaning my rifle, lost within my own thoughts. Suddenly I know something is wrong, it is the Platoon Sergeant. It is a serious emotional scene way out of order. The other men in the tent are all new men, but one. They are bewildered. I slammed a clip in my rifle, and said. "Stop now---go sit on your goddam cot." I ordered the men out of the tent, then left myself and sat on the beach in front of the chapel, near the sunken Japanese ship. I was not knowledgeable enough to realize that from now on he was boxed in, and I was an adversary.

This is months back and Tom Elsen has a set of khakies folded under his mat on his cot, This is how we pressed clothing for inspection. The inspection day arrives and Tom is looking real good. From here on I'm quoting Tom. "Boy I was ready for that inspection as I stood in line for breakfast Spee." Remember that is what Tom called me. "Spee do you remember that dirty fat Mess Sergeant we had, you know the one with the greasy dirty ring around his neck. Well I'm standing in front of him when he says to me, "Now ain't you pretty." He then pours two ladles of hot syrup on my tray and with the other hand flops three pancakes into the center of the syrup. Hell I look down and my clothes are splattered with syrup. Spee don't you remember? I dropped the tray and hit that Son Of A Bitch. Knocked him right through the mess-hall wall. They dragged me straight to the Brig. No court-martial. Three days bread and water.

Ref. Source: The Memoirs Of Thomas F. Elsen:
Note: The incidend in the tent is handled this way just to let you know something happened.

PHOTOS OF K-COMPANY MARINES IN THE 2ND SQUAD, 2ND PLATOON.

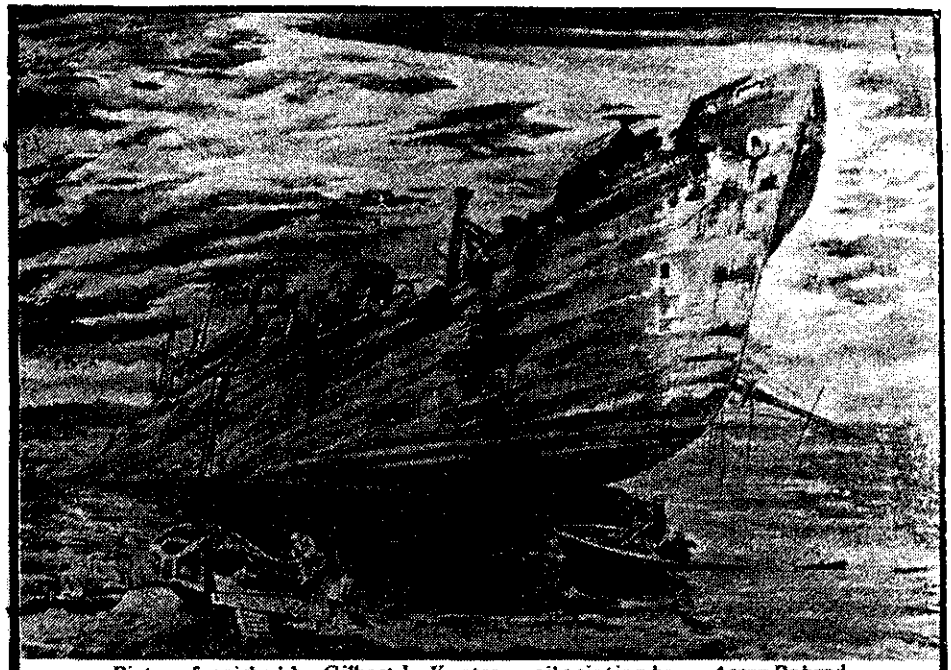
Shown on this page are photos of some Marines of the 2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon. The 2nd Squad was the largest in the Platoon. Ten of the men shown on this page were in my squad. There was one man in the squad that I did not have his picture. That man was Vlcheck. Kline, Knuckols, Coomer and I are on the next page. The last man in the squad will be shown with his picture on a special page, his name William Everett (KIA). Many of the photos were taken by my brother, Paul B. Gillespie who was stationed in the Russell Islands. Paul was a member of the (501st) SEA BEES, and he was able under some pretence to catch the mail boat coming to Guadalcanal. Members of Paul's Sea Bee outfit were allowed to keep Cameras, and their officers very seldom censored their outgoing mail. Rules in the 22nd Regiment were the opposite; today to me the rules were ironic as it would take one hell of a stupid spy who would expect to gather any intelligence from marines in a line company. The best kept secret in the 3rd Battalion, 22nd Regiment was which battalion officer was caught making it behind the Chapel, where the Corporal Of The Guard found the officer with a nurse from the Naval Hospital.

During the month of October, I was promoted to Corporal and took the Sergeant's exam and passed. During the month of December I was promoted to Sergeant, but this was a regimental promotion, which in truth gave no permanent credibility to your rank. If you were killed, shot or left the regiment you lost the rank. In the squad, six of us were from the north, the other ten were southern rebels in the true sense of the word. Five of the young rebels allowed Bava of Brooklyn to join their ranks. The six of them became self appointed honcho roosters, who flexed muscles or crowed over a conquest. Some conquests were partly true and others were never obtained. While writing this single paragraph, in my mind I've been musing over old reflections of Pvt. Harold G. English, "Peck's Bad Boy." The question came into my mind, who ever heard of or remembers those kids? Young English, his antics would be challenged by Bradford or Johnson or Robinson, then Stevens, Donnell and Bava would join in and challenge the manhood that would establish them as king of the hill. December 1944, I was still eighteen and had been overseas two years; although some of them were older, all of the roosters were very young to me. Johnson was the only rooster who was not in my squad. Two bullets ripped through Robinson's right leg, the third bullet damaged him so, that he ended up with a plastic face. Robinson suffered a great deal of pain during his civilian life. He married, had no children, a year after his wife passed away he put a pistol in his mouth and pulled the trigger. Donnell (KIA). Stevens began to lose his mind after Donnell was killed. Johnson (KIA). Bradford lost both legs. How does the rooster remain cock of the walk after he loses his legs? Bava (WIA). Arendt (WIA). Rankin (WIA). Others on this page, Tassick (WIA), Giglio (WIA), Nuckols (WIA), Chavis (KIA), and Richard's was (WIA). On the opposite page, Elsen twice (WIA), Coomer (KIA), Kline twice (WIA), Metcalf (WIA). Young twice (WIA). The man in my squad with no picture, Vlcheck (KIA). My reflections were on English, when the bullet hit him in the head, he fell and his last reflex was to draw his knees and legs up into the fetal position. Would English accept Heaven?

Standing: Sterl Johnson, Robert J.Bava, Howard W. Arendt
Kneeling: William F. Donnell, C.E. Stevens, Harold G. English

Samual O. Bradford, C.E. Stevens
William S. Rankin, Emmett Robinson

Standing: Mike Tassick, Frank Giglio, Native not known,
Howard Arendt, Fourth man not known, Jack Nuckols.
Kneeling: First man not known, Fred Chavis, Art Richard.



Picture furnished by Gilbert L. Kanter---oil painting by---Asron Bahrod
Japanese Transport Ship The (Kinug Awa Maru) Beached At Guadalcanal

Act. Sergeant
Woodrow U. Knight

"HELEN"

PURPLE HEART AWARDS
(Left to Right)---1st Lt. Buenos Young (S1)
Maj. Earl J. Cook, is presenting the awards.
Major Neuffer (S3)---2nd Lt. LaFalce (S2)

NUCKOLS

Col. Merlin F. Schneider is presenting
award medals after Guam. (Guadalcanal.)

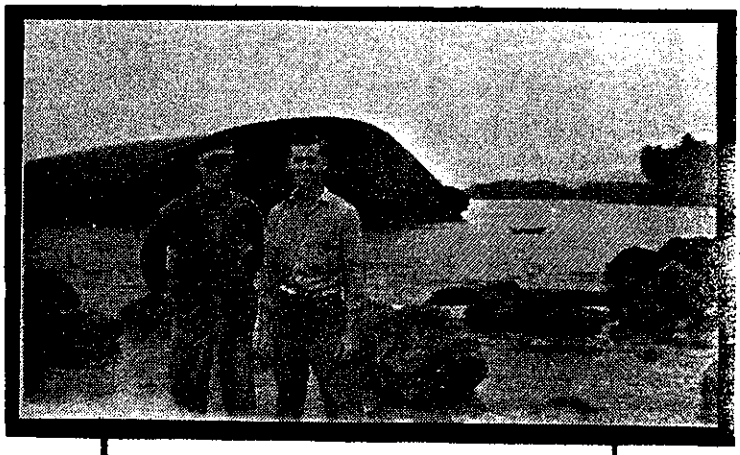
A SQUAD OF THE 3RD PLATOON K-COMPANY
Front Row Kneeling: Act. Sgt. E. N. Norton. Pugh. Leake. McDonough and Young.--Back Row Standing: Goff. Carey. Hefner, Abundis, Williams and Maulas. Photo furnished by Charles W. Pugh.

PHOTOS TAKEN ON GUADALCANAL 12/26/44

My brother, Paul B. Gillespie and myself on Guadalcanal. Paul was a member of the 501st SEA BEES. He was stationed on the Russell Islands west of Guadalcanal. We were not allowed to have a camera so the pictures he took, are invaluable for my personal collection about World War Two.

1st Lt. Buenos A. W. Young

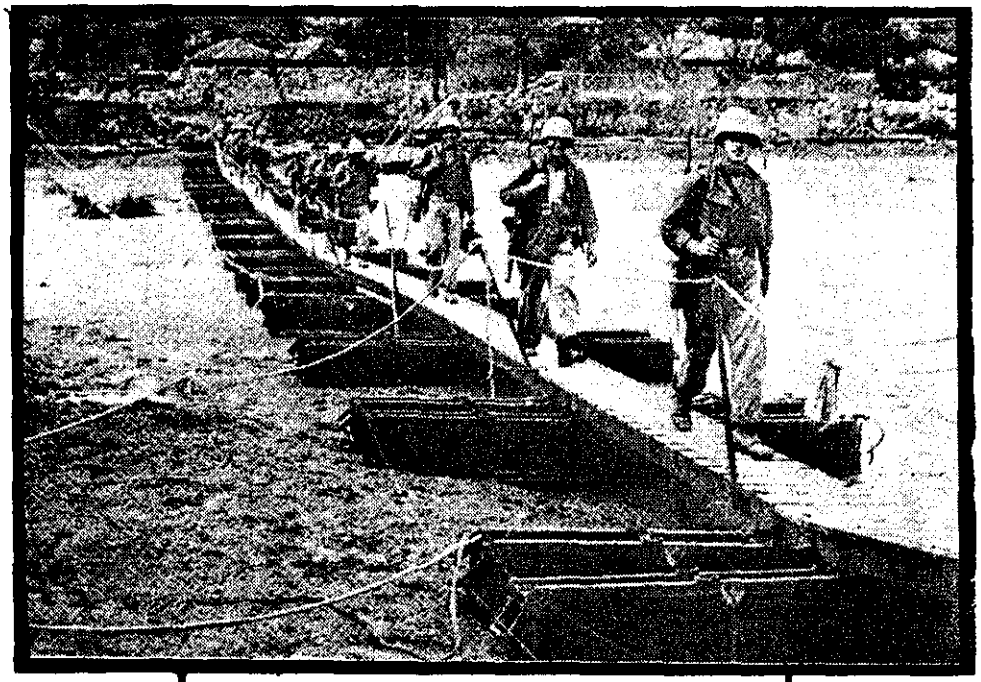
Standing: Tassick-Elsen-Coomer
Kneeling: Squeaky Kline-myself.



ACT. Sgt. Michael A.Tassick & Paul B. Gillespie

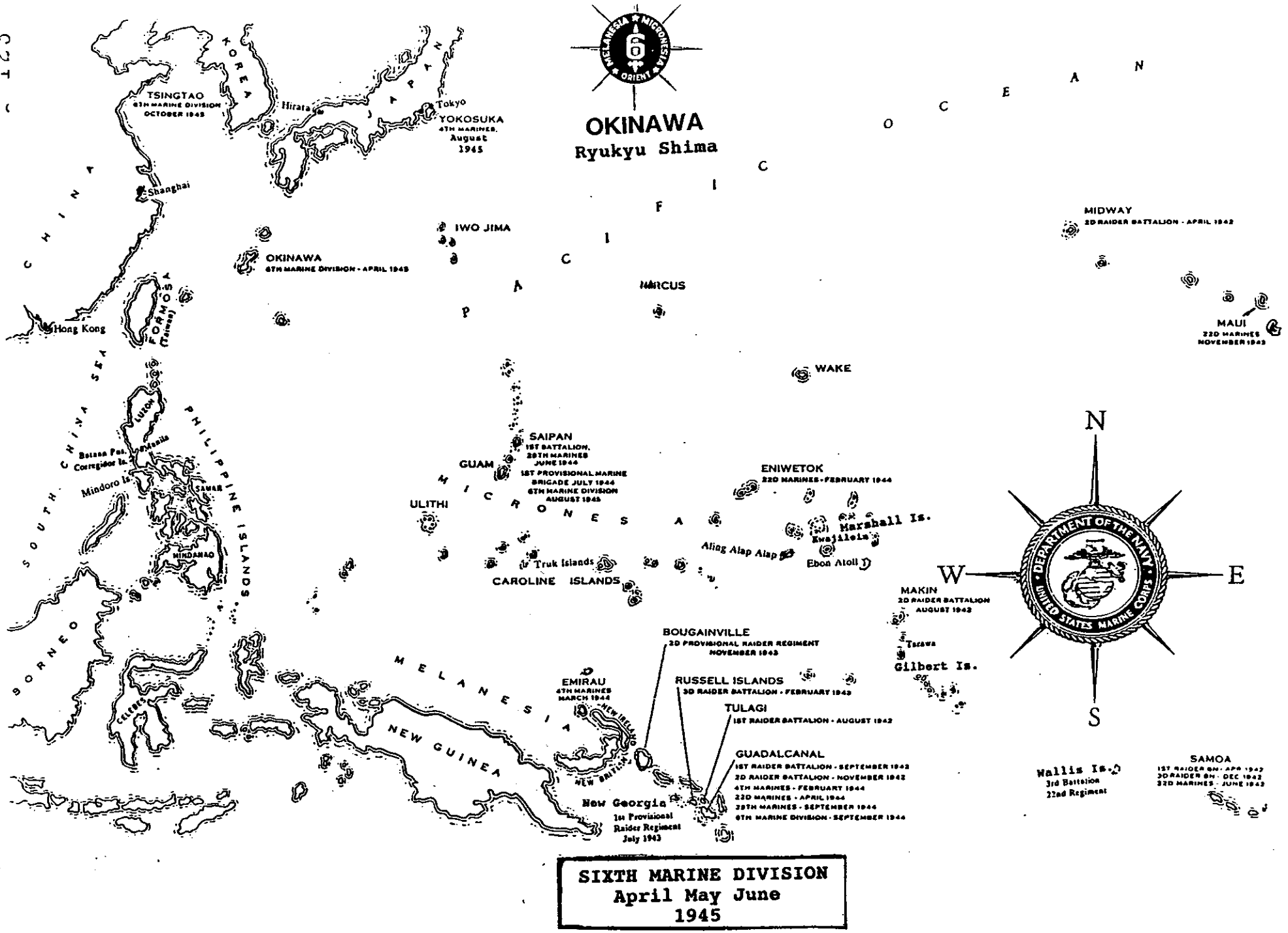
Standing: Cpl. Robert G. Squeaky Kline--Myself--Pvt Emmett Robinson
Kneeling: Cpl. Neal C. Metcalf--Pvt. William S. Rankin

MEMBERS OF THE K-COMPANY MACHINR-GUN AND MORTAR PLATOON



4th Platoon, Mortar Section, of K-Company
The first three men are named as follows.
SGT. E.L. Wemple, PFC A. Plevyak, PFC G.A. Stawicki

Photo furnished by
Sgt. John Davis



SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
April May June
1945

Helen, Tom Elsen girlfriend, wrote a "Dear John Letter" sometime before we sailed for Okinawa. We could say I admired Helen. Tom's wife Udene, knowing this, found this photo for me. I always told Tom, "hell Tom, the letter broke my heart more than yours."

Tuesday 13 March, 1945 our seabags were put into storage while we readied ourselves to leave Guadalcanal in the next few days. On that Tuesday each man was issued a case of beer after lunch. At formation we were told our last supper would consist of fried chicken. After supper I went to my tent and took two bottles out of my case of beer and left them on my cot. The other twenty two bottles I took to the Mess-Sergeant and made a deal for a pan of fried chicken that I would pick up after dark. A pan of fried chicken from the Mess-hall, is a pan 14"x26"x6"deep. I made this available to my squad as snacks while they partied that night. I drank both of my beers that night. Had a few pieces of chicken. For many years after the war, I never had a more memorable meal.

On Wednesday 14 March, 1945 embarked on board the USS Sumter. Thursday 15 March sailed from Guadalcanal, British Solomon Islands. Then 16 through 20 March at sea. On 21 March, 1945 arrived at Ulithi Atoll, Caroline Islands. We're at anchor 22 March. On 23 March, dis-embarked and K-Company embarked aboard LST-1320. We're at anchor 24 March. On 25 March sailed therefrom. From 26 through 31 March, at sea.

In the Bible, Revelations xvi 16, Armageddon is the last great battle between evil and good. Okinawa was K-Company's Armageddon, the 22nd Marine Regiment's Armageddon and the last great battle of World War Two, between evil and good. Ironically we were to make our assault beach-head on Easter Sunday, 1 April, 1945 and later I wrote in the poem "The Warriors."

Old warriors have hidden secrets
Of silent prayers shared with the Lord;
And mortal sins become regrets
For souls taken under the Sword.

The fleet entered the China Sea;
Our armada was observed by none
In darkness, Okinawa lies to our lee;
And this is our Armageddon.

It's Easter Sunday the day He rose.
Was this His plan since our birth,
That our death is what He chose
So the meek could inherit the earth?

For this South Pacific Campaign, the Armada gathered for the invasion of Okinawa was nearly twelve hundred ships. Because of the Japanese Suicide Kamikaze attacks launched against the United States Navy, the navy would suffer, in this battle, more men killed in action than the U.S. Army or the U.S. Marine Corps. We on the line never heard about those statistics of war; killed, wounded,

ships sunk, ships damaged, planes lost and other casualties. Those last two words in the previous sentence (other casualties) on Okinawa were Twenty Six Thousand Two Hundred Eleven Men. Hidden beneath that statistic (Other Casualties) are horror stories of men killed, maimed and others who yet today are hidden in VA-Hospitals with shattered brains.

How small and minute I am compared to the over Nine Million Americans who served during World War Two. My scope of sensibility was one narrow line that recorded within my conscious mind and unconscious mind a sliver of the war. While writing this historical record, I was looking at a picture on page eighteen of the, History Of The Sixth Marine Division and momentarily I was there, the smell of the debris and smoke, the smell of death, the fear and screams. If war could genetically develop a gene within the participants, that they passed on down to our new future generations, then the mentality of war would end.

It is now 8:00 AM, on Easter Morning 1945 and the 2nd Platoon is on an LVT and is racing towards Green Beach Two on Okinawa. Of the thousand's of men gathered to make the assault, nearly Thirteen Thousand will be killed in action, Twenty Seven Thousand will be wounded in action and Twenty Six Thousand called other casualties, will include, friendly kills, crack-ups and accidental injuries.*

The Japanese casualties will be over One Hundred Ten Thousand and Seventy killed. Only Seven Thousand Three Hundred Forty Three will surrender.** There is a tourist attraction on Okinawa today, with a monument, where Vice Admiral Minoru Ota committed suicide in his underground headquarters. With him on that Wednesday, 13 June, 1945 were four thousand young Japanese who also committed suicide in their adjacent underground bunkers.*** These Japanese suicides happened all across the Pacific Ocean and into China, Indonesia, Burma, Korea, Manchuria and at home in Japan. One of the most touching group suicides recorded, was relived in an American documentary called, "Return To Iwo Jima." Before the invasion of Iwo Jima a group of nearly Thirty Japanese High School Children, boys and girls, were taken to that Island. They were taken there to experience first hand the high morale of the Japanese Soldier. At that time the island was being bombed daily by our planes. After the marine invasion and defeat was certain for the Japanese, each child was given two hand grenades, one to throw at the enemy and the other to hold against their stomach. The children were herded in a small gully outside of their cave. The scene was reconstructed by a Japanese Doctor who was an eye witness. The children were crying and weeping, they were shaking and trembling. Then they did it. A few did not die, they were shot in the head. Later the Doctor and some of his staff surrendered. In Japan today the horror of the history of World War Two, is not taught in their schools. In most nations the final epitaph to war is erected to the glory of war.

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* Ref. Source: Okinawa The Last Battle: Page 489.

**Ref. Source: Okinawa The Last Battle: Page 489.

***Ref. Source: William Arendt, sent me a tourist brochure containing these facts.

War is not based on lives lost. Nor human values. Human lives in war are a number that is lost among the total of the ammunition, food, clothing, medical supplies, body bags, caskets, planes, trucks, ships, tanks and crosses that are needed to make up the statistics and logistics calculated by those who plan invasions.

Graves Registration: When we establish the beach-head and move inland a distance, they come ashore to tag and record the body count. After we move further inland and control a cemetery site, Graves Registration will be in business. How simple war becomes.

Japanese General Ushijima and his Chief Of Staff General Cho never expected American forces to land on the coral beaches below Yontan Airfield. Small arms fire killed two men in the 3rd Platoon. We moved inland and cleared our first objective. The small arms fire continued on our right but within moments we controlled our first objective, a small village. We moved towards our second objective and had it secured by 1400hrs. The first night we dug in beyond the main runway of Yontan Airfield, a Japanese Plane coming from Japan landed on our newly acquired airfield. The pilot could have gone down in history as the most surprised pilot of World War Two, but some marine shot him when he stepped down from his plane.

The first night in a Fox-hole is high tension for the young marines that had joined us on Guadalcanal. The terrain before us sloped downward and was covered with shrubs and early growth trees. There was a footpath that gave passage through the shrubs and the brilliant flares fired over head gave movement to the shrubs. The next event is best told in the poem "The Warriors."

Yontan Airfield fell by noon,
Then at dusk we lost our light;
Later shadows began to loom
And triggers were pulled from fright.

Out of darkness to our front,
A baby's cry turned into a scream
And sobbed, then stilled it's lungs
As dawn waited for eternity to beam.

She was strapped on her mother's back
Next to two little girls we slew;
Blood from the three crusted in cracks,
Ending the warm love the infant knew.

The baby lifted from the scene
To be cuddled and it's bottom wiped,
Then washed, from our canteens,
While marines cursed their might.

How do you tell yourself, you're sane
And what you do is what is right.
You and your comrades have no blame,
For killing that family last night.

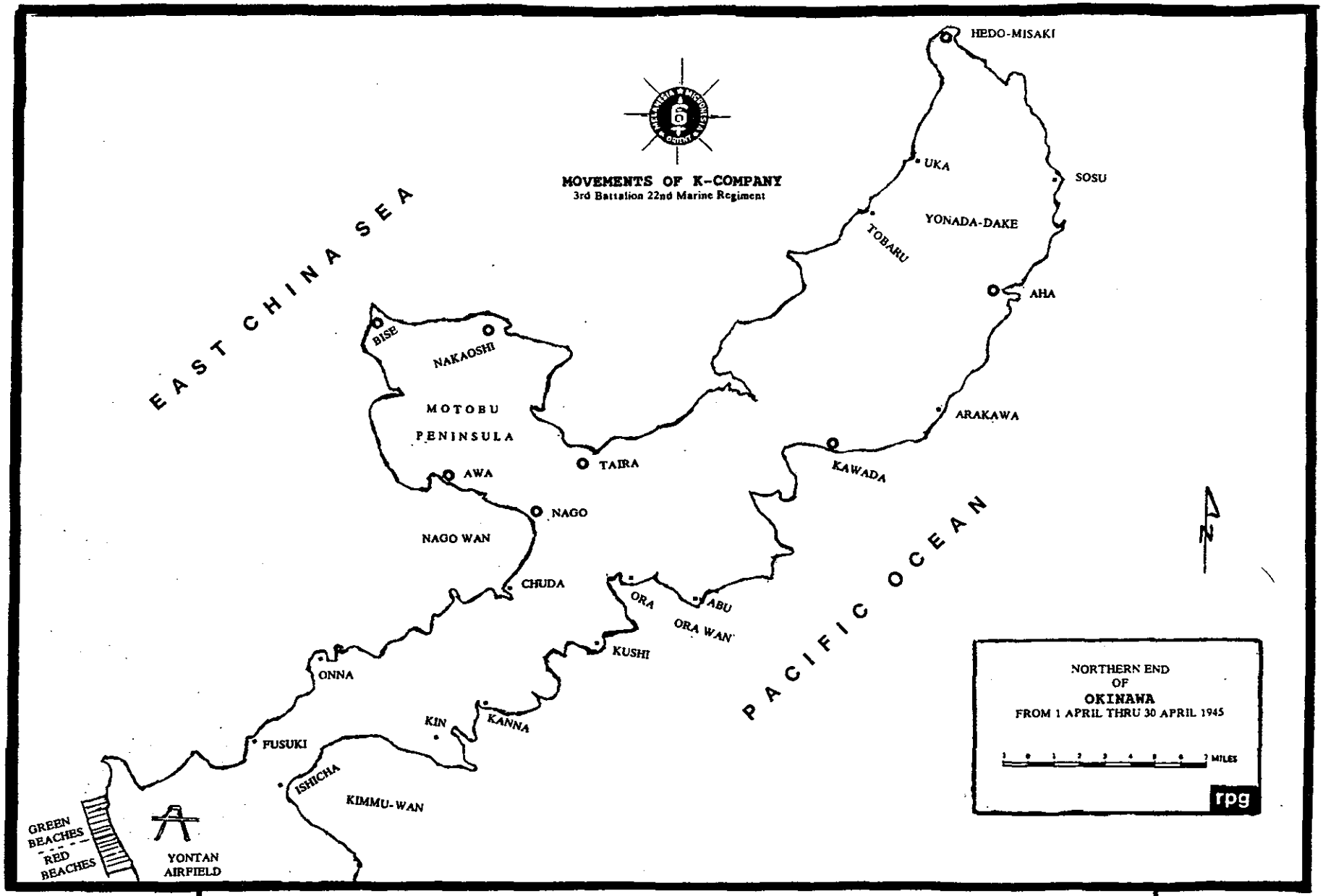
The shooters in the fox-hole in front of the path, was occupied by two new men and this made the incident more difficult. One of the shooters was a Swede from Minnesota and he sat on the side of his fox-hole in shock. Do words like, "Forget it happens" or "It's war" or "You'll forget it", truly give an answer? To the farm boy with the gentle heart from Minnesota, there were no magic words.

The left anchor for the Sixth Marine Division line was a point south of Yontan Airfield. Our right anchor point would be on the Pacific Ocean side of Okinawa at a place called Ishicha. Enemy resistance was so light that we made our way across the Island and by early morning of Tuesday 3 April, secured our right flank on the Pacific Ocean. The Sixth Marine Division's objective was to secure the northern two thirds of Okinawa. Our northern movement forward consisted of hit and run fire-fights.

The U. S. Army had landed on our right-flank and were to secure the lower third of Okinawa. Their major problem, they had ninety percent of the enemy facing them in the south and we had about ten percent or less facing us in the north. On Okinawa, Army Lt. General Simon B. Buckner was Commanding General of the Tenth Army and was respected by both Marine and Army troops. Later on General Buckner himself would be killed while he stood beneath an exploding Japanese shell on Okinawa, Monday 18 June, 1945 at 1315 hrs.

My first brush with death on Okinawa happened up in the hills. Our Platoon was out on patrol in enemy territory and we were moving on a trail at the crest of a hill. The hill's slopes were covered with tall grass and we were looking across shallow valleys to our right and left. The hill across the shallow valley to our right, had a small stand of trees and surprisingly a patrol of Japanese soldiers exited the woods and were walking on a trail parallel with our direction. They took no note of our presence. We waited until all of them cleared the woods then we began firing. The fire-fight was conducted as the enemy moved while they fought and so did we. The contest became one of stopping, then firing with care, then moving forward again then squeezing a couple more shots off. It was during one of these pauses when I hit one and wanted to make sure with one more shot. Very seldom are the scales balanced in war where you're in the open put into a setting of such equality. Not one man fell to the prone position to fire and we knew we were masters of this fire-fight. I made one mistake. No rear guard to protect our rear. All during the fire-fight we all were standing. Howard Arendt was to my right and to his right was Sam Bradford of Georgia. Howard had emptied his rifle clip and with his right hand was reaching across to retrieve a clip from the left side of his cartridge belt. This act directed his eye-sight towards the tall grass directly behind me. He saw smoke coming up from the grass about eight feet behind me and at the same time heard the click of the mis-fire of a rifle. Howard yelled, "Japs". By the time I turned around Howard and Sam Bradford had killed both Jap soldiers. Howard told me later

*Ref. Source: Memoirs Of Howard Arendt: Bill Rankin and Jack Nuckols also write about this incident.



REF. SOURCE: ANNEX (B) 22ND MARINES : FILE #66377: 17 JULY, 1945.

(1)-April landed on Green-2, reached 0-2 line. (2-3) April, reached Ishicha on the east coast. (5) April reached Chimu Town. (7) April, crossed island to Chuda, up west coast to Nago. (10) April moved to Mijia. (12) April moved onto Motobu Peninsula, up the coast to Awa. (15-16) April, moved to Hama and Hichi. (17) April, three day patrol on east coast. (18) April, north to Arakawa, moving towards Aha. (19) April, at Aha moved inland but had to return. (20) April, moved from Aha on LCI. (21-22) April, Little Girl Incident. (23 thru 26) K-Company patrolling. (27-28) April, In pursuit of 200-Japs. (29) April mopping-up.

that the Japanese mis-fire was aimed at me and if the one had not been smoking he would not have concentrated on the area. Later we were speaking with a reporter who had come up to our position and my two heros had articles written about them in their home-town papers. In reality it was a normal act. Also in reality there are thousands of acts which were never recorded in Africa, Italy, Europe, Burma and the South Pacific. In a way we knew each other so well and depended on each other so much, that another moment and another act and another hour and another act, became another day and another act, this was routine of life. They could save my life the next day or someone could unknowingly be saving their lives. The day is Saturday, 7 April, we've crossed the island and are at Chuda, we're on the west side of Okinawa south of Nago.

All events recorded here are not in sequence, because our fast movement back and forth across the northern part of Okinawa leaves shadows among my memory. By 8 April the 22nd and 29th Regiments had sealed Montobu Peninsula off, while the 4th Regiment secured the East Coast of Okinawa north to Ora Wan. (See map opposite Page 97.) The town of Nago had been shelled and bombed heavily. Our entry into the town of Nago met light resistance, but Nago affords the opportunity to stress the varied personalities within a Platoon and the devastating effects some of these personalities have on the civilian population. When America goes to war we always are portrayed as humane, merciful and good. The enemy is always cruel, brutal and on the side of evil. The occupation of foreign lands by the Japanese, has allowed history to document their cruelty and brutal behavior. Japan was just four generations out of a feudal society, where brutality was a way of life.

Socrates was an oral teacher and promoted the purity and spirit of knowledge in the mind and thought in the human species, but Plato and Aristotle recorded that Socrates said, "The rabble will always be with us." In the Marine Corps we had rabble and they pilfered everything in sight. Flynn would scrounge everywhere for Opium and Gold. In the town of Nago he came up with Silk Slippers and Kimonos. In his pack he had stashes of Opium and Opium Pipes. From dead bodies he would scavenge for coins. Okinawa was not a Island of Gold but there was some to be found. Early one morning I yelled at him because he was using the butt of his rifle to break the gold teeth out of an old dead woman's mouth. The poor old woman was not killed intentionally for the gold. Flynn was our demolition man and one of the best. In another town, he went into the bank and blew the safe. He was pissed off after finding nothing. Then he blew up the whole goddam bank. The owners apparently hid the cash under the floor and Japanese Yen floated down from above.* But back to Nago. During the night, the Japanese were moving out of their caves to our front and at the same time in the darkness, civilians were to our front trying to re-enter the town of Nago. Civilians that move about at night is one of the horrors of war. The irony of it is, they're scared, we're scared and the enemy is scared and civilians s u f f e r - - - - - a n d - - - - - d i e .

*Ref. Source; Memoirs Of Pvt. Jack E. Nuckols. Jack said it was Nago and the Bank, the town was Aha.

Civilians, civilians, civilians how they yell, scream, cry and die and this can go on and on all night. They are grandparent's, mother's, father's and children who are caught between two warring adversaries. During that same night the platoon was dug in on the outer street blocks of Nago. We dug in at the corners of a demolished city block. Above and to the front of a group of my men was a large cave, which we had not secured because of darkness. Sometimes the Japanese would use civilians as decoys or pawns to draw our fire while they gained a stronger fire power position. My position was the opposite corner to that of the men below the cave. When the civilians came out and in the darkness approached my men, they opened up and then discovered they were women and children. The painful wounds and fear of the civilians set off their screams and crying. Then one of the men on that corner began to break and kept firing in the direction of the screams, hoping to still the madness of it all. The Lieutenant yelled to me to cross over to the other corner and stop the firing. I announced my coming to the men at the other corner. When I arrived at their position he was sobbing to me, "They're just children, they're children." I took his (BAR) away from him and had him lie down hoping he would sleep. It was these nights that seemed not to have a dawn.

It is Friday 13 April, 1945 we are on Motobu Penisula at Awa, and word had been passed that President Roosevelt had died yesterday and an unknown to most of us, Harry S. Truman was now president.

This next event is near or before, 22 April, 1945. We are running daily patrols out of our bivouac camp seeking and destroying enemy positions. On this day, as a Platoon, we are on a trail between two hills and both hills have light shrub and tree growth. All of a sudden before us the trail opens into a wide valley. Coming from the rear of the valley and protruding into it's center is a small hill. A stream also comes from the rear of the valley, following along the right side of the small hill and curves around the hill, then reverses it's course and goes back towards the rear of the valley along the left side of the hill. In front of the stream and small hill are a few shrubs and trees. Among the trees and on the right side of the protruding hill, a small group of civilians and Japanese soldiers are mulling around. In total, not over fourteen civilians, plus five Japs. We have not been detected.

The Lieutenant told me to take my squad up the hill on the left of the valley and that he would take the 1st and 3rd squads up and along the hill on the right flank of the valley. The Platoon Sergeant followed along behind me and my squad. After positioning the squad on the hill on the left, I positioned two men to protect our rear. We can hear the civilian chatter, but can not see anyone. Shortly the other two squads open up and the yelling and screaming starts. Then two Jap soldiers came running in the stream. We kill both of them. The stream is red with blood now as the firing continues. It was then I saw her. I yelled, "Cease fire." It was a little girl clinging to the front of the hill. She was making her way towards our side of the small hill. She was across from me now. Sobbing, leaning against the hill, with her face in the dirt and

her body was shaking with every sob. I caught a glimpse of him out of the corner my eye as he came up to the line and prepared to fire. I yelled,"You Son Of A Bitch. Don't you dare you Prick--I'll take that goddam rifle away from you." It was the Platoon Sergeant and he ignored my warning. He fired and missed the little girl. She now turned around, still shaking her whole body was trembling, when his second round hit her and she fell.

We came down into the valley from our position and met the Lieutenant near the stream. I was belligerent as soon as I spoke to the Lieutenant, "That Son Of A Bitch, Just shot a little girl." The Lieutenant replied, "Keep your mouth shut Gillespie or you'll be court-martialed. "Bull-shit, I'm not here to kill children," I yelled back. At that I walked over to the Platoon Sergeant and pulled his knife out of it's scabbard and walked to the girl and cut her clothing from around the wound. The entry was just above and left of her groin. She was conscious and I would guess about seven years old. With my only bandage and sulfa powder I dressed her wound. Three women then came to me. As best I could I tried to assure them I would take care of her. "She'll be alright."

THE LITTLE GIRL
by Raymond P. Gillespie

Two days of war are recorded here,
Showing death, along with man's fear.
On Okinawa in the year of Forty-five,
You'll meet people both dead and alive.

The fire-fight was short and swift,
Taking place in a stream below a cliff.
A little girl took our quick surprise;
I ordered firing to cease and subside.

A higher ranking Sergeant took no heed
Of my order to leave the little girl be.
His first round missed, going astray;
His second shot, tore intestines away.

Complaining to the Lieutenant in command,
I got a tort reply and a sharp reprimand.
The platoon moved on, she was in my care;
Her chances slim, no better than fair.

On a path towards a road lying West,
I carried the child being gentle at best.
But very high on a hill and to my right,
Someone followed, well out of sight.

Was it enemy? Did compassion restrain
A warrior from putting lead in my brain?
Or were they parents or relatives above,
Following in fear, but driven by love.

Big brown eyes caught sight of my tear,
As I repeated, "You're alright dear."
My language she could not understand,
Near the road, she touched my hand.

There were no hospitals in Northern Okinawa. Only our doctors and corpsmen and no corpsman was with us on patrol. How do you comfort people who don't understand english. Again I said, "She'll be alright, I'll take care of her." The Lieutenant was already moving the platoon back towards the main road. Coomer had my rifle and he stayed with me. I picked the girl up and headed back towards the main road. I kept telling her, "You're all right dear." and I could see the fear in her dark eyes. When we were on the trail between the hills, we could feel and hear movement up on the hill to our right. I had Coomer move forward and told him to catch up to the platoon. I knew I was in trouble and did not want him to be part of my troubles. After awhile she became heavy and I went down on one knee to rest her weight against my leg. My right hand was free now and she reached over and touched my hand. Tears were already in my eyes and I repeated, "You're alright dear." When I reached the main road, Rankin had stopped a jeep. The Jeep was pulling a small trailer and Rankin jumped into the trailer and held the little girl until he deposited her at our Regimental Field Hospital. Everybody in the platoon was waiting for the hammer to fall on me.*

Back at our bivouac camp nothing was said, that night though small rocks were rolling down off the hill above us and shortly the Lieutenant yelled for me to check it out. So I did as told and checked it out, but first I had awaken Howard Arendt and told him to check it out. I don't think Howard truly woke up, because he looked out of our Poncho covered fox-hole and instantly laid down again and said, "What Japs?" and was sound asleep. So I checked it out. Being low man now on the pecking chain other little chores would be assigned.

About five to six men, none from my squad, wanted to go south and search for Souvenirs. The Lieutenant said they had to have a Sergeant with them and chose me. Two things are wrong, six or seven men are a target, not tourists. Second, knowing the leaders of this group, I know they're looking for Pussy, not Souvenirs. But as ordered I went. We went about a mile south, then they chose a trail that went up into the hills. About a half mile up the trail I became nervous and stopped. "Hold it," I told them, "there is a limit, no more talking. We will go another mile and if nothing is found, we go back." It was just that feeling, something was near us, or watching us, or in front of us. Sterl Johnson was one of the men, so he stayed in the front with me and after we moved forward he was the one who detected the movement to our front. He scouted forward and came back with the information that it was civilians in front of us hauling water in buckets. We caught up to them and checked them out. They took us to a cave, which was full of people, lice, fleas and a newborn baby. The water was needed to wash the baby and the dried afterbirth off the young mother. To my charges, the sight of the baby and bloody mother quelled all thoughts of romance. There were thirty two more in our party as we headed back to bivouac camp. The young mother came right out of Pearl Buck's, "The Good Earth." She walked all the way back to our bivouac.

Ref. Source:Memoirs Of William S. "Bill" Rankin: Bill vividly described the little girl and her wound.

The major resistance in the northern two thirds of Okinawa was on Montobu Peninsula. Our daily objectives became search and destroy patrols, where we were constantly chasing small groups of the enemy up one hill or down another, or the enemy was taking refuge among the civilians. At bivouac camp one morning (K) Company was ordered to seek out a reported two hundred Japanese soldiers, who were sighted near the heights of Yonaba Dake. (See Map.) Location at this time I am assuming, because no names of places were given, but I know on the second night out we were on the highest hill in northern Okinawa.

On previous patrols we were out for the day and back to our bivouac camp by night-fall. By dusk of the second day out we were just behind a group of Japanese soldiers near the peak of the hill when (K) Company stopped for the night. Everybody was hungry because we had not eaten for a day and a half. We sacked out along the trail that we had been following in pursuit of the enemy. Corporal Enright, from our Machine-gun Platoon, came forward and set up his gun at the head of our column. My squad was located about thirty feet from the head of the column and off to the left of the trail. Before sacking out, I told the men that Coomer and I would take the first watch and I would wake the next two men for the second watch. I also told them I would pass my wrist-watch to the second two men and they were to pass it on to the third two men. Coomer was on my left and Tony J. Vlchek of New York was on my right. What time it was or what woke me I don,t know. But I open my eyes and a Jap was above me. His left foot was to the right of my head and his right foot was to the right of Vlchek's head. The instinct that had awaken me had awaken Vlchek and he let out a blood curdling scream. For a split second the poor goddam Jap froze in time. The scream froze me, because by the time I grabbed my rifle the Jap was passing the front of the column. At that point Enright's Machine-gun squad opened up and the Jap was dead.

"Where's my watch?" that question became a mystery as no one had my watch. Later I slept. The next morning I found my watch underneath my right side. So who knows? I could have been the culprit. Also the next morning we found two or three dead Japs at the head of our column. It is possible that the whole company was asleep. Up and down hills all day. Most people live their whole life never truly knowing what tired is and how it brings on a depth of hopelessness. To be so tired, that your greatest desire is to lie down, sleep.

I think it was the next day that the Lieutenant told me I was a Piss-Poor Squad-Leader. Not for the incident of the previous night, but because no one had any food. No one had food, but blaming me relieved the guilt from him and the Platoon Sergeant. The term command by intimidation was the system the Lieutenant had adopted. Howard Arendt, it is not in his memoirs, reminded me that the Lieutenant had threatened Ol Squeaky Kline with a court-martial for having a dirty rifle. Bill Rankin, while visiting me with Nuckols and Arendt, said. "don't you remember he did the same thing with me and you stepped up to the Lieutenant and said, "He cleaned it this morning." We continued our fast march east in search of the enemy

and ended up on a road North of the village of Ahrakawa. The company moved north to Aha.. there waited for food and water to reach our position. From this point K-Company boarded a LCI (Landing Craft, Infantry) and sailed north to cut the Japanese off near Sosu, Okinawa. My best meal was sorting out scraps of pork-fat that we had taken out of the garbage can aboard the LCI.

All of K-Company waded ashore south of the village. A detachment was sent into the village and the rest of us followed a trail up into the hills. After we had gone about a mile into the hills, the Lieutenant had me and my squad check out a path that led off from the main trail to our left. As custom, if the path meandered or turned sharply, I would halt the squad and scout forward. It was on one of these scouting missions forward that I heard excited voices to my front. With the squad halted behind me, I crept forward following the path as it made a sharp ninety degree turn to the left. What I saw around the turn in the path was a very small clearing, with about twenty some civilians and three Jap soldiers.

My dilemma was how to take them and not hurt the civilians. While viewing the scene, the closest civilian was about seven feet from my position. But to make the ninety degree turn only one person could be on the path because the terrain on the right of the path fell off sharply. To the left of the path, the terrain made a sharp incline up towards a ridge. When I explained the setup to the squad, I told them I would rush in first and they should follow. I also told them the three Japs would be to our right as we entered the clearing. When I raced into the center of our prey, I jumped into the air and yelled "AH HOOO." All of them but one, every damm one of them but one, scrambled. The three Japs were not heros, they were the first to go. The last was a women who just walked away holding a child with each hand. If the finger had been a popular gesture in those days, I know she would have given it to me. If you want to get an Oriental's attention; don't jump up in the air and yell "AH HOOO." Cause it don't mean crap.

And the one person who did not run was an old wrinkled woman. She was sitting on the incline. I lit two cigarettes and gave her one. As I look back I sometimes wonder what her thoughts were. Was she thinking. (Hell I don't smoke, but maybe I better humor this stupid caucasian.) I also gave her some chocolate. Squeaky was verbal about the Japs getting away and said, "Goddam Japs got away, let"s shoot this goddam old bitch and get the hell out of here."

Squeaky in reality was one of my dearest friends. In combat he was a natural. From Rudyard Kipling's Barracks Room Ballads about Gunga Din, "You're a better man than I, Ol Gunga Din." I just humbly want to say, "You're a better man than I, Ol Squeaky Kline." The United States Army in battle at the Southern end of Okinawa has not moved more than eight miles since 1 April. And on 4 & 5 May, the Japanese Army will counter-attack and get behind our Army's line in a few areas. We in the 6th Marine Division, shortly we'll move south. The 27th Army Division moves north to our positions to garrison the northern end of Okinawa. On 6 & 7 May we move towards our destiny.

Our mission is to replace elements of the 1st Marine Division on the southern front, which would place us next to the China Sea. On 7 May we move in place behind the southern front. On 8 May, the 7th Regiment, of the 1st Marine Division pulls back. We move forward and take their place just north of the Asa Kawa River.

Not too much more happens on Tuesday 8 May. Except all of us are from time to time observing Japanese soldiers moving or scooting in and out of caves on the south side of the Asa Kawa River. We did have one Scout-sniper in the Platoon, I can't remember his name, who carried a Springfield-03 Rifle. A Jap across the river was playing cat and mouse in and out of his cave and our sniper was taking pot shots at him. Even games get boring on the line and our sniper lost interest and cleaned his rifle. To move on to 9 May; I have to take you back to Guadalcanal and introduce a Marine Private from Alabama.

Like many of our new men, the boy from Alabama joined the 2nd Platoon in October, 1944 and according to his own description of himself, he was a dude, a stud and lover. He also was one of the Roosters. He was married and had two mistresses. They were alive and well, because his wife and mistresses wrote him sizzling letters. Hell! Damn! I had no relationship. I could not believe how the boy from Alabama could attract one broad, let alone three sizzlers. But the Lord works in mysterious ways. So one Sunday the boy from Alabama wrote letters to his wife and harem. He left the letters unsealed on his bunk. You guessed it, the Roosters, they loved being no-count low marines. They switched the letters in all three envelopes. The Alabama boy licked and sealed his own sin, hell, fire and damnation up in those envelopes and mailed them off to Alabama. It took about four weeks before the heavy hot mail coming out of Alabama arrived at Guadalcanal. It was then the boy from Alabama came running into my tent and said, in his southern accent, "Lordy Lordy Sergeant, I don't know how, I don't know how I mixed those letters up." The three embittered women in Alabama were going to cut his so called privates off and ceremoniously chop choice parts into bits and pieces.

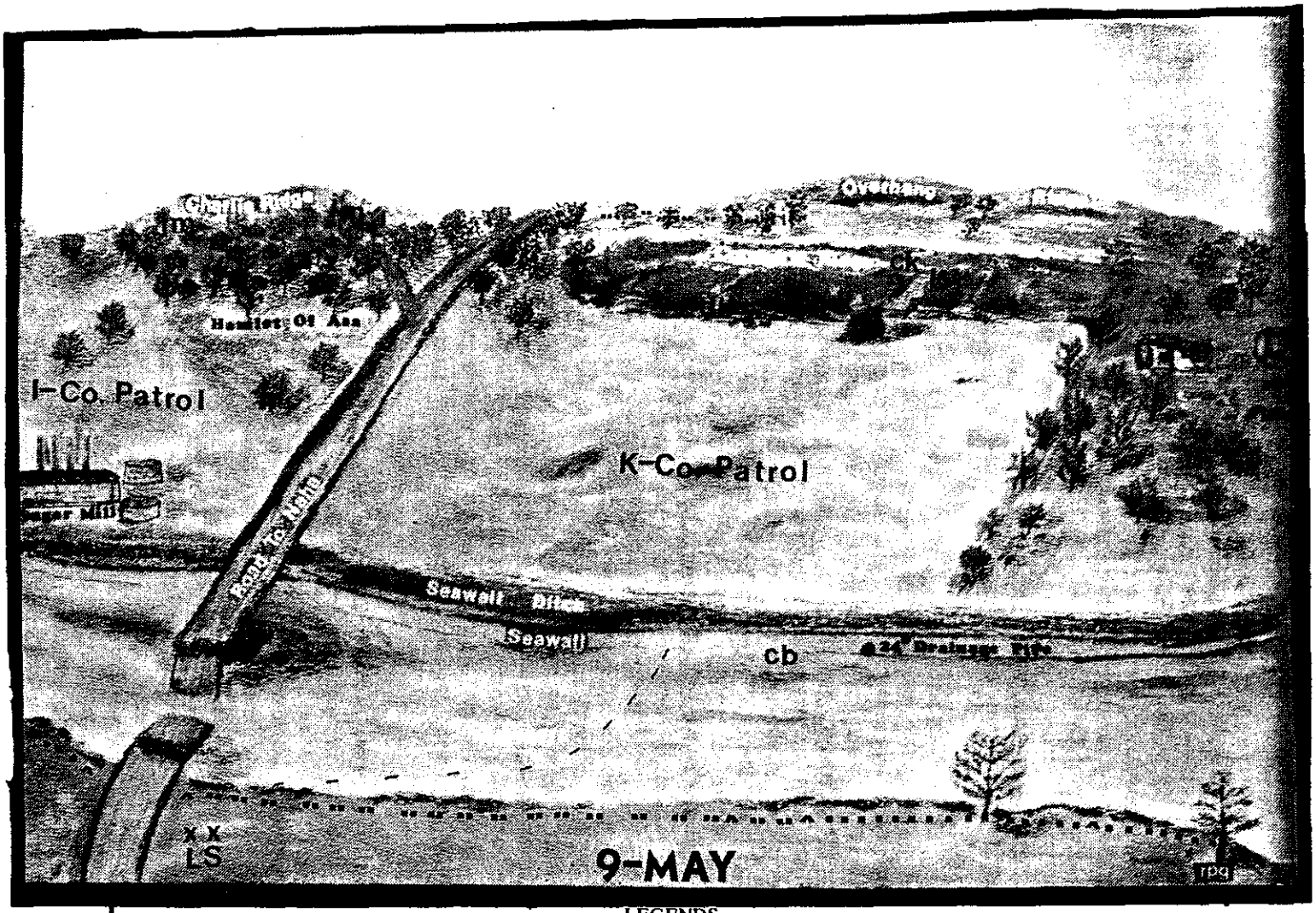
While I have you back at Guadalcanal for a moment, I have to tell you a story that Squeaky Kline won't let me forget. He can't remember nothing about the battles in the war. He reminded me about the time I won over $400.00 in a crap game. I gave $400.00 to him and told him not to give it back till I sent the money home. Then he says a few days later I wanted the money to gamble with. He refused to give it to me. Now I quote his letter. "Give me the damn money back or I'll beat the shit out you Squeaky." And his reply was, "I don't mind getting the shit kicked out me protecting my money. But I'll be damn if I'll do it for your money, You Son Of A Bitch." The way Squeaky talked, we'll have a hell of a time getting him into heaven. By the way, I lost the money, poker.

Back to the war. It is 1400 hrs, Tuesday 9 May 1944. General Shepard has decided to send patrols forward all along the line. Each battalion in each regiment will send platoon size patrols out

forward to probe the Japanese lines. The 2nd platoon of K-Company will be the patrol on the right flank. (See layout opposite page.) This patrol is the beginning of my Armageddon. At the end of the patrol, again I will be threatened with a court-martial. All the procedures I was taught will have lost there meaning. Everything was so contrary to what the original men of the company emphasized. Colonel Sitter, in the article in Leatherneck Magazine, tells a story about the rigid training we had on Wallis Island. What is emphasized in the story is that each man had the obligation and responsibility to know what was important at a given moment. Sitter was a Corporal at the time and Captain Clark for the last four hours had been leading the K-Company through the jungles while constantly changing direction. By his own admission, Sitter said, he was in the back of the company goofing off, when Captain Clark called him forward. Giving Sitter a compass, Clark said, "Now Corporal take us home." They did get back to the compound, but Sitter related every man in the company was pissed off. (Pissed Off, are my words.)

The tide was out and the Asa Kawa River was at low level when we waded across. On the south side of the river we hoisted ourselves up over the seawall. The Japanese did not fire at us as we spread out approaching the ridge to our front. When we arrived at the bottom of the ridge, we investigated the large cave opening. Dim lighting inside the cave revealed narrow gauge railroad tracks. The other cave openings, and there were three to my knowledge, were to high up to check from our present position. It was decided we would blow the large cave. Now the demolition charge was exceptional because it was especially prepared by Flynn days before and he was waiting for this opportunity. It was eight pounds of C-2, with 30-caliber cartridges taped on around the exterior. It was cylinder shaped, about ten inches long and six inches in diameter. I held the charge while Flynn inserted the detonator and he calculated the fuse length for about ten seconds. It was also he and I who placed the charge inside the cave. Again as we looked in the cave there was nothing. No sound. At the rear of the cave another passage way intersected on the right and another on the left. Those passage ways probably accounted for the dim lighting.

Orders were changed and we were told to climb to the crest of the ridge and form our line on the top. The top of the ridge was only sixty foot long at maximum and twenty foot wide at it's widest point. They hit us. Japanese fire was coming in from a ridge to our immediate front. The Lieutenant and Platoon Sergeant had not come onto the top of the ridge. At first I maintained my position near the center of the line, on the forward edge of the ridge. During the early part of the fire-fight, we heard excited Japanese voices below our position. Then on all fours I scooted to our right flank and found Tassick and a few of his squad firing at Jap troops near the China Sea. Reversing my direction, I moved to the left flank and the 3rd Squad. The men on that flank were concentrating on the ridge to our front, but they pointed out Japs on the right of the road to Naha, who were hedge hopping in our direction. I reversed my movement, I saw the Lieutenant's and Sergeant's heads only at



LEGENDS

(1)---Dash marks, 2nd Platoon's movement across the Asa Kawa River. (2) x Denotes location of cave where Flynn placed explosive. (3)•• Dots represent 2nd Platoon's position on top of Coomer's ridge. (4)▪▪ Square dots represent Japanese positions on the south side of river. (5)▪▪▪ Square dots on our side or north side of the Asa Kawa, represent our foxholes on 8 & 9 May. (6)^^^ Pointed dash marks on our side of the Asa Kawa, represent our machine-gun positions. (7) ck Represents where Coomer was killed. (8) db Represents body of Donnell. (9) ls Represents position of Lieutenant and Platoon Sergeant peeking over the ridge. (10) cb Represents point where Coomer's body was deposited. (11) LS Represents position of the Lieutenant and Platoon Sergeant when I gained the top of the river bank. (12) ★ Star represents approximate location of my foxhole overlooking the China Sea. (13) jm On Charlie Ridge the Japanese had heavy mortar and machine-gun positions.

the rear of the ridge. They were looking to the front, probably evaluating the situation. All of the men in the platoon were not on the front ridge line. A few were in the center of the top of the ridge. As I scooted towards the rear to report, I came upon Coomer. He was at the rear of the top of the ridge. In the prone position, his feet were hanging over the back of the ridge. When I was within a few feet of him he was very excited when he said, " Doc, I just got one." My answer I can't remember, but it must have been to the affirmative. I was now crawling over his legs when the thud like whomp sound resounded in my ears. The bullet went through Coomer's helmet. He was dead. My feet were still on his legs. (You can't leave a battle-field without guilt. My movements on the ridge have always told me that I brought the enemy's attention to his position.

MY ORIGINAL NOTES

Original notes about the war are over forty years old. With collected notes, my first attempt to write this story was in 1958-59. The title then was "Only The Strawberry Shortcake."The second attempt was in 1976. The title then was, "Spirit Spirit." Both attempts were put aside because I felt material for the complete story was lacking. With official documents and the donated material from the contributors, the reader now will at least have varied options in judging the validity of my perspective.

I only had to crawl another foot to report. It is to the best of my recollection I reported as follows. "We're going to need overhead fire protection to get back to the river." They're coming in on our right and left flanks. There are Jap voices below us, they seem to be outside behind the ridge." At that point a Japanese mortar hit behind us. It exploded between the ridge and the river. His decision came within a split second. "Get the men down and let's get the hell out of here." All of us made it to safety. Coomer's body was still up there. When we were down I was told Donnell was dead. At the same time, Flynn asked about blowing the cave. The Lieutenant said, "no we're going to run for the river." "But we can blow it," I said. Again he said, "No." Squeaky at that point yelled at me, "I'm not leaving Coomer's body here." The rest of the platoon was heading for the river. My total responsibility was to safeguard lives, but I did the opposite. (Squeaky Kline yelled at me because it was an emotional moment. What he is saying, "please not Coomer, I don't want his body left here." Squeaky never wavered when asked to work the flank or point. He was always there for me and the Corps."

When I made the decision to get Coomer's body, most of the platoon had taken off towards the river. Half of the men in my squad stayed with me. Howard Arendt, Clement Stevens and a third man volunteered to help Squeaky. The rest of the men I told to go for the river, as I went to check Donnell's body. He also was shot in the head and was dead. His body was in a shallow ditch that ran parallel to the ridge and ended at the standing rock. (Howard Arendt's version of this incident varies from mine, but only when he says I helped carry Coomer's body. I did not. I walked behind them with my attention on the ridge.)

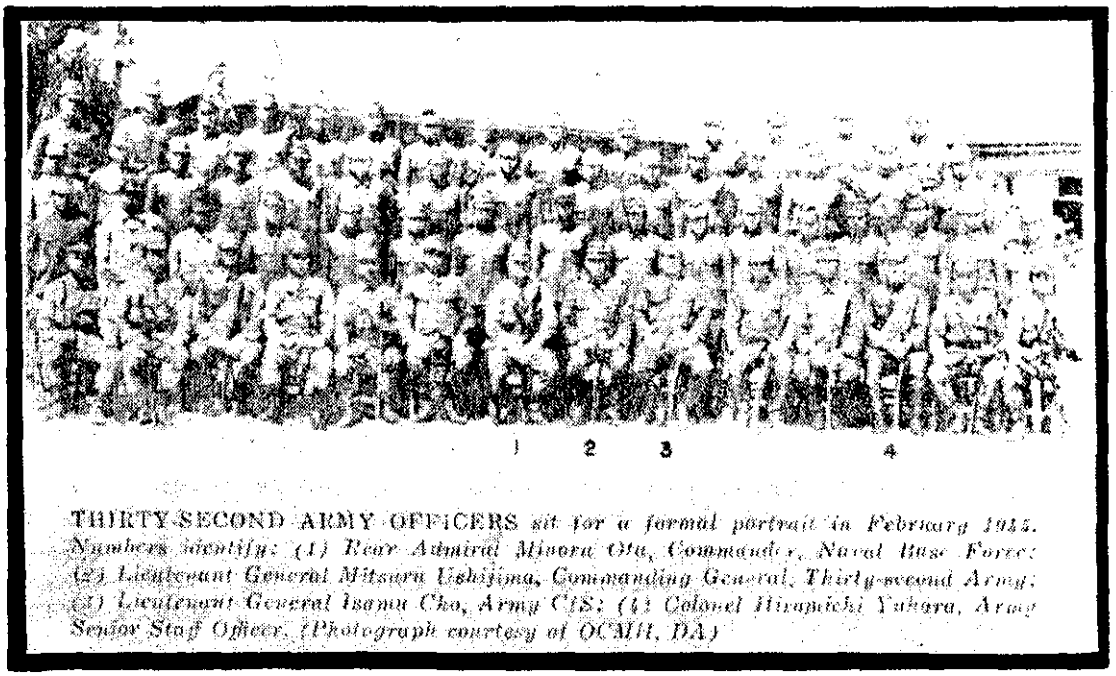
When we made it back to the seawall, the men lowered the body to the mud bottom below. Then we all jumped down and waded back across the river. I was the last to gain the top of the river bank and the Lieutenant and Sergeant were waiting for me. I was still approaching about ten feet away when he yelled, "Goddam you Gillespie, Stevens has been crying, laughing, crying and acting like a fool. You better control your men or I'm going to court-martial your ass." If everything were normal, what should have gone on, he should have debriefed me. In disblief. I said, "Yes Sir."

How the Lieutenant knew this, I don't know. There were about five or six men below on the ground to protect our rear. Elsen had been in charge of that detail. Judging the closeness of Donnell to the ridge, the shot that killed him had to come from the ridge.

I spoke with Stevens briefly. He was sitting alone at his foxhole and as was Squeaky. Two men dead and two men without foxhole buddies. You have to bring them together or select another route. I chose the other route. "I'll have Arendt go to Squeaky and I'll move in here with you." I then approached the more delicate subject. "Stevens, you've been through hell in this thing. "Battalion (CP) is over the road back there, right by that outcrop of coral rock." It will take but a few minutes, I'll explain it, they will send you back. It's just rest." I waited, his head was down in his hands, I knew he was holding back the tears. "No Sarge don't do that to me, I want to stay with the platoon." (The platoon is of female gender and establishes a unique self identity, complete with apron strings and mother's milk, she jealously demands a special loyalty of her own.) I went over and picked up my pack and my poncho. Words were not important. Arendt and Squeaky had done it before. It was near dusk, soon the Japanese shells would begin to come in.

Like Stevens young Donnell had been a Rooster. He had been a kid just fresh out of High School. His football career at school was his claim to fame. He was shy. In his wallet was the picture of his sweetheart. In his small hometown, Friday night football would now seek another robust boy and cheer him into glory. The young girl, whose picture was tucked away in a wallet nine thousand miles from home, she sometimes still weeps. Another generation will come and go, a newcomer will inquire of the hometown barber, "How many from town here perished in World War Two? And the barber will muse over the question and say, "Now let's see. Was it three or four? There were the Wonderly boys. Brothers you know, both boys killed. And there was the Evens boy, but he was a farm boy from outside town. Oh yes it was four, no maybe three. Strapping boy, now I know, can't remember his name. Hell of a football player though.

In Lindale, Texas there was a brood of Coomers. Ten in all. The oldest boy got sick and died one day. They were migrants in the depression years. Cotton pickers one and all. Worked the fields and lived in tents or in shotgun houses they'd rent. When picking season was done, here they'd come back, a riding on an old truck whose tires were bald. Sent one of the brood off to war. It was one of them older boys who couldn't read or write. He was never known as a scrapper or one to fight. He was backward, tall with blond sandy hair. Kind-a hunched at the shoulders, that's from pickin cotton you know. Those sun blotches on his face and the other thing his teeth were brown. Since the depression you don't see brown teeth around. His eyes were blue, pale I remember them well, when I'd see him on the line sittin, haunchin is what we would say. He could in that position, sit that position, sit there all day. Why is it now I remember the Coomer boy so well? If you would ask me I'd have to say, I haven't seen too many good men like him come my way. We remember our Presidents, with statues and pictures galore. The remembrance of Coomer, is a Purple Heart hidden in a drawer.



THIRTY-SECOND ARMY OFFICERS *sit for a formal portrait in February 1944. Numbers identify: (1) Rear Admiral Minora Ota, Commander, Naval Base Force; (2) Lieutenant General Mitsura Ushijima, Commanding General, Thirty-second Army; (3) Lieutenant General Isamu Cho, Army CIS; (4) Colonel Hiromichi Yahara, Army Senior Staff Officer. (Photograph courtesy of OCMH, DA)*

In March 1944, Lt. General Mitsura Ushijima and his Chief of Staff, Lt. General Isamu Cho began the preparations for the defense of Okinawa. The world knows little of the tactical genius and skill of these two commanders. Considering their means at hand, our own tacticians knew they had a tiger by it's tail. The situation on Okinawa was no different than our own Civil War. Every day we had to break their line and the amount of superior fire power we controlled, still left us with but one alternative. Kill them one by one. This was accomplished by the Divisions and Regiments of the United States Army on our left flank and the 1st Marine Division and 6th Marine Division anchoring the right flank. Across the line facing us, were the following Japanese Army units. We marines faced the Japanese 62nd Division and the 44th Independent Brigade. On our left were our own 77th Division and 7th Division of the United States Army. They faced Japanese forces of the 32nd Division which included the following regiments. The 32nd, 22nd, and the 80th Regiments. One might ask, so what's the problem? You have them out gunned and manned. Number one, they control the high ground. Two, they are skillfully and cleverly dug in and three, there are those two tactical geniuses standing at the top of Shuri Heights, mapping out our destiny.

Back on our line in the night hours of 9 May, Japanese shells started to come in including Meemie the Japanese Rocket. In the poem "The Warriors" after the shelling of 8 & 9 May, I wrote.

In the morning I did observe
Two pairs of legs disoriented and lost
Forming a half circle as in a curve
Who knew what was under their cross?

Ref. Source: Okinawa The Last Battle: by Appleman, Burns, Gugeler and Stevens
Ref. Source: Marine Corps History Of the Battle For Okinawa: "Forging Ahead."
Ref. Source: Conquest Of Okinawa: by Phillps D. Carlton, Major Marine Corps Headquarters
Ref. Source: Apendix 111 To Annex (B), Special Action Report, Headquarters 3rd Battalion, 22nd Marines.

Above Okinawa that night, another wave of Japanese Kamikaze planes were overhead. While we waited for just a brief moment of peaceful slumber to still our thoughts, many foreign sounds were coming from the area near Battalion Headquarters. If you sat up in your foxhole and looked towards the road, you could make out shadows moving towards the Asa Kawa River. But it was not until the thuds and pounding began that the word was whispered along the line. "We're building a bridge." How strange it is on the line, the whole surrounding area is being blown to hell, they're building a bridge on the river below and we're whispering. Then the whispering grapevine along the line contained a direct message to us. "We're moving out at 0300 hrs, bear full equipment."

Up on Shuri Heights, General Ushijima already knew about the bridge construction and he was developing his own counter action. There might have been a few moments sleep, but well before the appointed hour I was prepared to move out. One custom that had been developed was smoking at night. Lying down or sitting up, I would drape my poncho over my head to smoke. Smoking the one last cigarette or two under that poncho was a world away from the war. Thoughts under that poncho were sheltered from the Corps and enemy. Those few cubic feet you occupied on the planet were your's and your's alone. How simple our wants and needs, yet they were precious gems.

Two companies would cross the bridge simultaneously, I-Company on the left side of the bridge and K-Company on the right. We, once across, would flank right. I-Company would flank left and build their line up facing the Sugar Mill. (The Sugar Mill was not a structure but a pile of rubble.)

The first units to reach the south end of the bridge were commanded by Lieutenant Dowd of K-Company. There they were hit and a bullet took one of Dowd's eyes out and other Japanese bullets killed and wounded some of his men. But the order was move, move, move, move and the dead and wounded were side stepped as we made our way across and flanked to right down into the seawall ditch. Once spread out in the seawall ditch, the disturbed mist that had shrouded the area again fell, restricting our visibility. The enemy could be ten or fifteen feet to our front. The tide was in and Coomer's body was now afloat, bobbing gently against the seawall. And Donnell's body was up among the Japanese near the newly named Coomer's Ridge.

I-Company was given a mission to perform at 0400 hrs. A silent patrol was to move forward and reconnoiter the hamlet of Asa. The Japanese had two assigned missions at the same dark hour. One, a silent patrol was to move through the marine line by the Sugar Mill and cross the Asa Kawa into the positions of our battalion headquarters. At the appointed hour both patrols were afoot headed at each other, but leaders heeded the silent portion of their orders and the two patrols ignored the other as they passed each other moving on towards their mission.* Just a quirk of war.

Ref. Source; Two Patrols And Two Missions: See Conquest Of Okinawa and History Of The Battle For Okinawa. Note: The reference report given from our patrol of 9 May, two killed and twelve enemy killed. (Enemy positions unoccupied?)

Two, the second mission laid out by the Japanese was to destroy our bridge. That also was a successful mission. A suicide team of two Jap soldiers rushed onto our bridge out of the misty darkness and with a satchel of explosives, blew themselves, our bridge and our hopes of reinforcement units all to hell.

In the book "Conquest Of Okinawa" Major Carlton notes, A-I & K-Companies made it across the bridge. In the "History Of The Battle Of Okinawa--Section Forging Ahead" they note I & K-Companies alone crossed.

Word moved along the line that we would rush Coomer's ridge at 0800 hrs. Not the 1st and 3rd Platoons, just we in the 2nd Platoon. Common Sense And Reasoning is not an exclusive trait of command. We, the men on the line, are all ready questioning the order. Our machine-gun platoon is still south of the Asa Kawa. L-Company, stayed in reserve, and settled down in K-Companies foxholes south of the Asa Kawa. No support tanks made it across the bridge. One platoon of I-Company would attack towards the Hamlet of Asa and Charlie Ridge. The 2nd Platoon of K-Company on the right of the road to Naha would charge Coomer's Ridge. And General Ushijima was waiting up on Shurie Heights for the mist to lift. Then he could zero his artillery in on two lone marine companies now north of the Asa Kawa.

On the evening of 9 May, we in the 2nd Platoon had all ready reasoned the Japanese held up their fire and allowed our patrol to waltz across the river. The men of the 2nd Platoon also knew two men made up the reports going to command and the rest, including the Squad Leaders and Sergeant Guide, were not part of the process. We also knew Coomer's Ridge was a bee-hive.

In a situation like this I would maintain eye contact with Tom Elsen our Sergeant Guide. His signal would be the order go. Mike Tassick and the 1st Squad would be the first up and Tom next and my squad would go. Woody Knight, his 3rd Squad and the Platoon Sergeant and Lieutenant would follow. We are talking split second intervals and 0800 hrs was on us and we were off. The only thing out there were Jap machine-gun bullets. After fifty feet I was diving through the air for a large shell hole. "Oh Jesus Christ." I was talking to myself when I rolled over in the hole and saw Tom. Tom said, "Oh God Spee, we got dead and wounded out there. English is right in front of us and someone else is dead." It took over a minute before I had settled enough to peek towards the ridge. Those who made it were standing up near the ridge just to the right of the Standing Rock. But within a second or so, Japanese machine-gun bullets were plowing into the sod around our shell hole. While again cowering in the hole, Tom said, "It's three guns."

Combat requires systems and procedures, and from what I had observed while peeking over the rim of the shell hole told me I was the next procedure. The observations I nad made, I explained to Tom, "Tassick made it and most of his squad. Five or six of my guys made it. I saw only two bodies, so the rest are still in the seawall ditch. Another large shell hole is not too far in front of us. If I make it there, then the next dash is to the Standing Rock." Tom was very quiet until he looked at me and then said, "Don't go Spee." Those were the words of a friend, not the order of someone who outranked me. He and I knew part of my squad was up there and the first to go would be me. His responsibility was to

make contact with the platoon and verbally inform the Lieutenant of the situation. Spurts of Jap machine-gun fire were now going over our heads towards the seawall ditch. After a spurt finished, I was off and again dove into the next shell hole. My only risk was if they changed their concentration onto our shell hole. If not, then they had to mentally acknowledge my movement, slightly switch their line of fire and most important lower the mussel of their guns. And while they were pissing and moaning about missing me I was out again and past the Standing Rock. If "Kamikaze" means "Divine-Wind" then I must be Japanese, cause I beat those sons-a-bitches.

There is no sequence now to events and if they happened in this order. Tassick and I decided to throw a few grenades into the large cave where we had left the C-2 the day before. I think at that time we were using the four second grenade instead of the seven second grenade. We were safe in doing so because we were in a 20'X 20' blind spot to the Japs. The small caves shielding the Jap machine-guns were not visible to us because of the way sections of the Coomer's Ridge would project in and out. We threw the grenades and settled for two other measures. Tassick took two men towards the right to determine where the right flank Jap machine-gun was and one of the men was getting two rifle grenades out of my pack. While the rest of the men were just laying fire at the ridge near where they felt one of the Jap guns would be. I edged out beyond the standing rock and fired two grenades at what I thought was a cave opening. I missed on both shots.

In the meantime Tom Elsen must have been observing or calculating what we were doing because he came forward while I fired the rifle grenades. Plus six more men from the seawall ditch. Back at the seawall ditch Jap artillery had now zeroed in and the Lieutenant was hit very badly in the stomach. The Platoon Sergeant was hit in the arm. A few men were killed and others were wounded.

Tom decided Tassick should make an attempt for the right flank gun and my squad should go for the left flank gun. We on the left would use the shallow ditch where we had left Donnell's body. I chose two (BAR) men Nuckols and Vlchek. Like Nuckols, the other two men chosen were two other Kentuckians, Rankin and Robinson. We went into the ditch in this order. Rankin first man in, Nuckols, Robinson, Vlchek and then myself. In the ditch we made an attempt to scan the ridge, but Jap snipers had special observation slots for firing their rifles. Vlchek was killed right off and Robinson was shot twice in the leg. Nuckols and Rankin were pinned downed.

I yelled "Back out, out, out, out." We got out and found that Tassick had faced the same dilemma, but they did get one sniper and one man wounded. When we would look to our rear, we could see no activity near the bridge or at the seawall ditch. Tom decided we're going back. Tassick's squad first plus Rankin running while helping Robinson who was dragging his wounded leg. We remaining would blind fire at the ridge. More men were wounded going back and a bullet hit Robinson in the back of his neck. It exited through his upper front teeth and tore his upper lip away. Just five of us remained.

When my stupidity takes over it leaves no room for reason to intervene. I picked up a discarded (BAR) rifle. The men left would protect my dash. Just one of those rules, don't leave automatic weapons behind, and they expected me to be smart enough to consider, but don't get killed in the process. That added weight on my right side throwing my running gate off and I was a prime target for the Jap machine-gunner who had me in his sight. He hit me when I was about fifteen feet from the seawall ditch. I fell into a small shell hole and the Jap gunner continued to splatter me with dirt. The warm blood was oozing out onto my abdomen, when I saw a pair of marine boot shoes sticking out from a knoll to my front and left. The owner of the shoes was moaning, when I asked, "who are you?" It was Flynn. The Jap gunner was still trying to hit me, as my feet were out of the hole. After Flynn told me he was hit in the shoulder, I'm trying to be as polite as I can be, so I said, "YOU SON OF A BITCH STOP MOANING AND MOVE YOUR FUCKIN ASS FORWARD."
(Squeaky taught me all those good words. Squeaky's smart he knows how to get someone's attention."

When I got behind the knoll. Flynn had already gone over the small rise and down into the seawall ditch. But once behind the knoll, the panic that had stimulated my movement was gone and I could not move. I have a bronze star award that reads "After being severely wounded, Corporal Gillespie deployed men to extract the remainder of his squad. What they're talking about is I was talking to Tassick and others in the seawall ditch, directing them to throw smoke grenades, so the rest of the squad could get back. Arendt was wounded coming back but the other three made it. I write this because there seems to be confusion on who ordered the smoke. Rankin threw the grenades and when finished a Japanese shell exploded near him and he woke up four days later on a hospital ship. Did you see that Corporal on the award? Already I'm demoted and they cut my pay. "The Warriors."

Bullets spilled my guts to bleed
Cutting my gullet and spleen as toll;
Again bugs sopped blood to fill a need
As I dragged myself behind a knoll.

A Corpsman returned me to my home
As I was with the platoon again.
This was the only family I'd known,
It seems like, since time began.

Kline crawled to me to say goodbye,
Then others followed one at a time.
The word was out that I would die
And this was a high honor for my kind.

Elsen in an awkward way kissed my cheek,
Tassick held and kissed my hand.
There are no honors that man does seek
To equal that day in dirt and sand.

Of those gathered here many would die-
Kurth-Knight-Dean-just to name a few;
Chaves-Siroke-also said a last goodbye;
These again were warriors I knew.

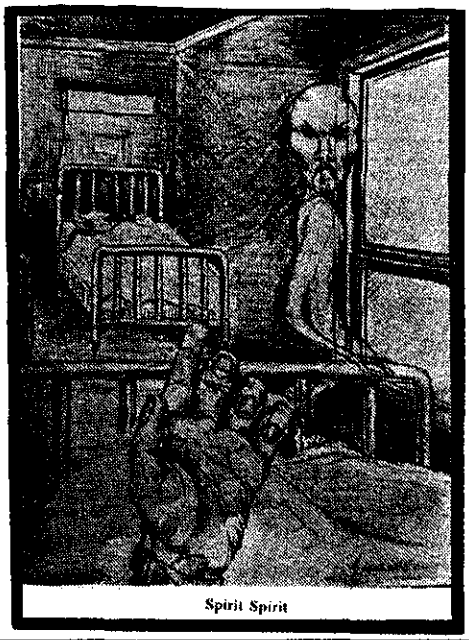
But God! Oh God! how young! young!
To be slaughtered and maimed in war;
These warriors were some mother's son
Who would not smile or weep no more.

Sections of the machine-gun platoon have come across, but their first attempt to set a gun in place, the number one gunner is killed. There are dead and wounded all along the seawall ditch. I'm evacuated through the drain pipe. I see Coomer's body in the water.

A TRIBUTE TO CORPSMEN-NURSES AND SPIRITS

The Corpsman who came out in front of the lines to get me, was named Gogg. I have contacted Howard Arendt's brother-in-law, former PHM 3/c Jerome A. Heitz, who served in E-Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Regiment, 2nd Marine Division. The 8th Marines relieved the 7th Marines on Okinawa, 16 June, 1945 near Mezado Ridge. Heitz was wounded on Okinawa. I wanted to hear from Heitz to remind me about the Corpsman's life in the Corps. That way I could lead into a story I want to tell you about the Corpsman who truly saved my life. I can't remember his name. It was the same Corpsman who treated me on Ebon Island when I was wounded the first time. It was my second move back to aid stations on Okinawa. I was on a stretcher and they were sorting out the wounded. Here they tagged you to send on to Field Hospitals or Hospital Ships. But they just moved my stretcher into a another line of stretchers. Still some what alert, I noticed a doctor who was talking to two Chaplains. They were standing right behind me. The Doctor pointed towards the line of stretchers I was in and the Chaplains started with the first stretcher to my right. They were giving last rights. The tears were swelling in my eyes as I tried to be brave, when a voice said to me, " Gillespie is that you?" It was the same Corpsman from Ebon Island. He examined my wound, went over and grabbed a Doctor and they both examined me. They filled out a tag, tied it to me and the doctor yelled, "get this man up to the Army Field Hospital #76." But that was not the end for the Corpsman and I. The Field Hospital was now overwhelmed with wounded. Under heavy sedation of morphine, I was awakened by someone shaking me. It is now dark outside, when my eyes adjust to the night light, it is the Corpsman again. He spoke and said, "Hold on, you're fourth in line." The doctor who operated on me was an Army Full Colonel. His name was Hayes and lived in Chicago. The Nurses who took care of me for eleven days, before I was flown to Guam, were all Army Nurses who had been in South Pacific nearly three years. AND NUSSBAUM, WHERE IN THE HELL WAS NUSSBAUM? HE MUST HAVE BEEN WITH ME EVERY MINUTE. IN JULY, AT THE HOSPITAL IN SAN FRANCISCO. FOR TWO DAYS, I HAD THIS VERY STRANGE FEELING SOMEONE WAS WITH ME.

In 1976 when I was writing this story and had named it "SPIRIT SPIRIT," I had the above sketch drawn by a young lady. The story started out this way.---"SPIRIT,SPIRIT? I KNOW YOU"RE THERE. TALK TO ME SPIRIT. DON"T SPIRITS TALK? YOU HAVE BEEN STALKING ME SPIRIT. WHY STALK ME SPIRIT? PLEASE SPIRIT TALK, NO, NO DON"T LEAVE.



Spirit Spirit

THE BATTLE CONTINUES WITH A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST FOR THE REAPER

By now K-Company has lost the Captain and two Lieutenants. In command now is 1st Lieutenant Reginald Fincke Jr. The men in the 3rd Platoon, in their writings mention him with devotion and respect. I took the sergeant's exam from Fincke, it was a hot day. When I faltered or hesitated with my answer, he would say,"You're better than that, just wait think and do it right." In battle he was all over the battle field with his scout-runner Kennedy. When on the move you might find him back at the machine-gun or the mortar platoon, assisting with the load they had to bear.* In the 2nd Platoon Tom Elsen took over for a few days. The war went on.

*Ref.Source: PFC Gilbert L."Gib" Kanter; In Gib's thoughtful words about the 3rd Platoon, he also still lives within the platoon.

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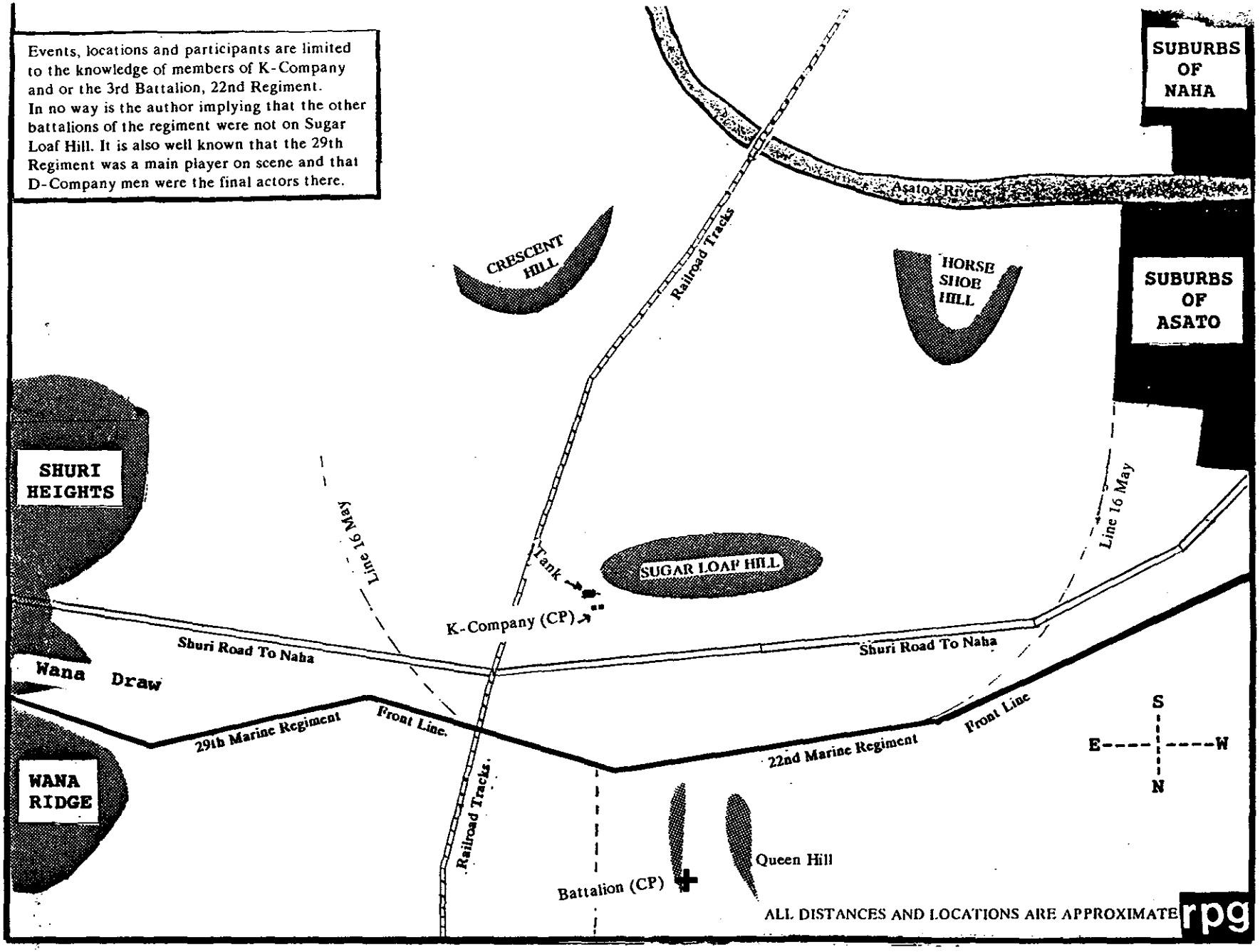
Others told stories about the seawall ditch. This material comes from Cpl. Charles W. "Pops" Pugh. Pugh is very descriptive. A young marine on the evening of 9 May and the morning hours of 10 May had been predicting he would be killed soon. The thoughts brought tears into the young marine's eyes. When Pugh crawled past the young marine's body it was emitting steam from a gaping wound caused by a Japanese mortar. Pugh then wrote. It reminded me of when I was a boy and would watch my Daddy slaughter hogs, the steam would roll off the bodies. Then Pugh tells about the dead marine bodies he crawled past, some he named and others he did not know. He paused at one point in the ditch after writing, the gray pallor of death mixed with yellow of atabrine would show on the faces. At that point during the pause, he took out a small copy of The New Testament that his mother had given him. He asked the gum chewing young marine lying next to him if he minded if he read aloud the 23rd Psalm. The marine did not answer. Pugh read the Psalm. Then he wrote," it helped me, I hope it helped him."

On the night of 10 May, and morning of 11 May, K-Company was posted on the Asa Kawa while a new bridge was built. In the morning hours of 11 May, tanks came forward to blast Coomer's ridge. Again loses were suffered. On the other side of (The Road To Naha) I-Company was still fighting to secure Charlies Ridge. Getting a little ahead on 12 May, 55-galllon drums of fuel were emptied into the caves of Coomer's Ridge and it was set afire.

On 12 & 13 May, the 22nd Marine Regiment fought their way into Asato. Moving East-Southeast the 22nd Regiment moved into place and were facing Sugar Loaf Hill on 14 May. Lt. Colonel H. C. Woodhouse, when he first saw this small hill in front of him, full of pits and crevices, he thought anything but ominous; he named it Sugar Loaf. To keep up with names, times, and places, some events are noted on maps or on a written page. I am ill equipped to relate the battle of Sugar Loaf. Because it's comparable to Appomattox or Gettysburg.



THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION'S DRIVE SOUTH

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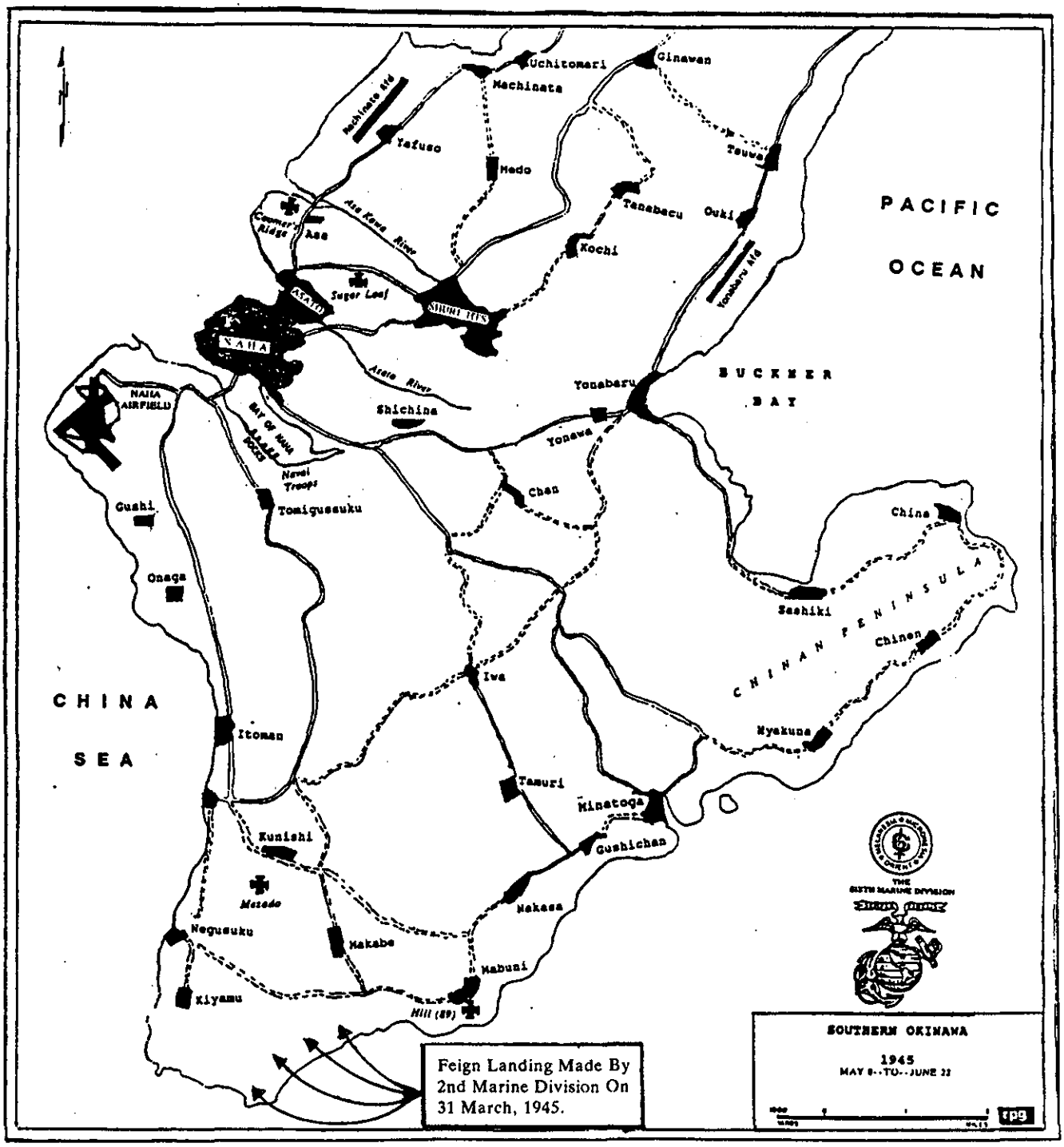
On the night of 10 May, and morning of 11 May, K-Company was posted on the Asa Kawa while a new bridge was built. In the morning hours of 11 May, tanks came forward to blast Coomer's ridge. Again loses were suffered. On the other side of (The Road To Naha) I-Company was still fighting to secure Charlie Ridge. Getting a little ahead on 12 May, 55-galllon drums of fuel were emptied into the caves of Coomer's Ridge and it was set afire.

On 12 & 13 May, the 22nd Marine Regiment fought their way into Asato. Moving East-Southeast the 22nd Regiment moved into place and were facing Sugar Loaf Hill on 14 May. Lt. Colonel H. C. Woodhouse, when he first saw this small hill in front of him, full of pits and crevices, he thought anything but ominous; he named it Sugar Loaf. To keep up with names, times, and places, some events are noted on maps or on a written page. I am ill equipped to relate the battle of Sugar Loaf. Because it's comparable to Appomattox or Gettysburg.

I do not mean to compare those two Civil War Battles to Sugar Loaf in number of lives lost. BUT I DO COMPARE THE BATTLES IN THE MAGNITUDE OF HORRORS WITNESSED. When does a situation arise when a Priest feels so inept, and his duty, obligation and his need to render aid to those in need of his calling, becomes so obstructed by the circumstances confronting him; that his life is without reason. It happened at Sugar Loaf Hill.The Priest went up on Sugar Loaf and administered to the dying and wounded. He carried wounded off and dead off. The Priest like anyone else on the hill was constantly under enemy fire. His hands, clothing and his Stole were soaked with blood. Men wept when he approached them.

When K-Company was on Sugar Loaf, Pugh and Kanter were in a foxhole together. Some Jap soldiers were as close as eight feet. It was another night of rifle and grenade warfare. Japanese shells came in off Shuri Heights into the K-Company (CP), killing the wounded who had been removed from the hill and were to be transported out. Kanter was shot through the throat and was lying on a stretcher at the (CP). He saw a Jap under an abandoned Marine Tank. But he could not talk and when he waved his arms and tried to point, those near him thought he was cracking. That night Lt. Fincke was up on Sugar Loaf, a Jap mortar ripped open both of his legs. It was raining, when the stretcher bearers were slipping in the mud and Fincke's body was dumped down the hill. Some say down the Jap side and others say on the marine side. Nuckols had been at the bottom and was bringing grenades up the hill. At the top he went from foxhole to foxhole and found most holes held dead marines. He found Dean, his best friend dead. Years later he named a son after Dean. Everett threw a Phosphorus grenade, the Japs through it back. The grenade exploded next to Everett. He begged Nuckols, "kill me, please kill me." At the bottom of the hill, John Winne was fighting the Japanese who were attaching the K-Company (CP). He was then wounded and later detected the Jap who shot him. The Jap was hiding inside the abandoned Marine Tank. It took seven days and eleven wins and ten loses before Sugar Loaf Hill was secured. On 16 & 17 May, K-Company was attacking Sugar Loaf from the west flank. This was 16 May, Squeaky's birthday, when he was wounded fighting behind the cover of some of our tanks. Tom Elsen was wounded on 17 May. The Roosters, not already dead or wounded, the rest were killed or wounded near Sugar Loaf. After 20 May, K-Company was across the Asato River. The following descriptive narration comes from PFC L.V. Mulhern and C.W. "Pops" Pugh.----Lt.Roe now commands K-Company. Pugh records, We were moving through an area where marines were killed two days before and there were many dead bodies all around. "I saw a marine sitting against a bank as if he were resting. He was quite dead. His skin had turned almost black and was drawn against his facial bone. His eyes and almost all the flesh around his eyes had been eaten away by maggots. He was still wearing his helmet."---Mulhern joined K-Company on Okinawa. He fought through the northern end, the Asa Kawa, Sugar Loaf and was wounded on 7 June. After a few days at the Field Hospital, he requested to be released and went back into the ranks of K-Company. What draws these men back to the Platoon? Okinawa was declared secure on 22 June, 1945. During my days in K-Company, over five hundred men went through the ranks. While on leave from the hospital in August 1945, I was at the Trianon Ballroom and felt very awkward and out of place. I saw a girl I knew from high school, she was with two other girls. I spoke and said, "hello." She looked at me and said, "you look like hell." They turned and left me standing. I left, walked towards downtown, then to the Cherry Street Bridge. I smoked a cigarette or two and then I wept.



THE CHANGING WINDS OF WAR

NOTE: MAJOR EARL J.COOK: Transferred from the 3rd Battalion to the 1st Battalion 22nd Marine Regiment, soon after the Guam campaign. He was the battalion executive officer on Okinawa. After the 1st Battalion command officer was hit, Major Cook, commanded the battalion until he was wounded on 17 June, 1945.

NOTE: COLONEL MERLIN F. SCHNEIDER: Was relieved of command on or about 16 or 17 May. He refused a command of another charge at Sugar Loaf hill until his men could reorganize and get a days rest and allow the new replacements to at least know the names of the men next to them. Colonel Roberts replaced Colonel Schneider. Colonel Roberts was killed on Hill 69, 18 June, 1945.

NOTE: LT. COLONEL C.W. SHISLER: At 1815 HRS 0 20 MAY, resumed command of the 3rd Battalion, 22nd Marine Regiment. What happened at his hearing over the Guam incident is not of record. (See Appendix 111 of Annex (B) Page 5.

NOTE: Hill #89, is right above the word Feign on the above map. Site of the HARI-KIRI deaths.

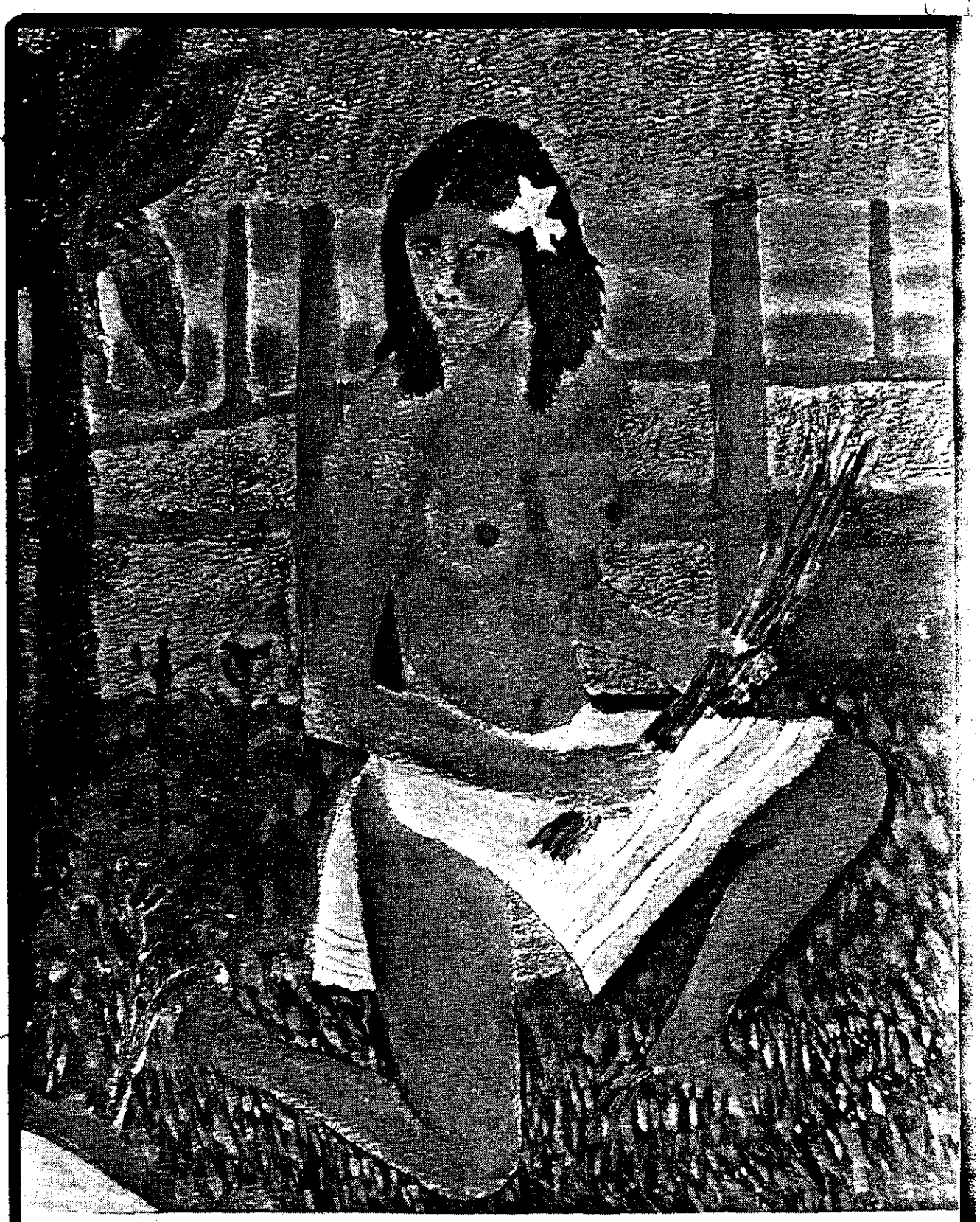
MAJOR EARL J. COOK

When Major Cook sent me this photo, it began to take on a special representation of the 22nd Regiment. As I worked my way through the photos used in the story, this photo I kept setting aside as I knew from the date it was taken, this photo would be the last one to represent the regiment. This photo was taken during the month of June, 1945 a few days before the battle for Okinawa ended. The Major is commanding his own battalion and as this photo shows he has a few staff with him, plus two Okinawan bearers. His quiet composure as he observes the hills before him, represents to me the history of the 22nd Regiment. He was in a sense the beginning of the regiment; having gone to Samoa in January, 1942 to make arrangements for the arrival of the 22nd Regiment months before it was formed. IN THIS PHOTO, HE THE WARRIOR, THE SILENT SENTINEL, REPRESENTS ALL OF THE LIVING AND DEAD WHO SERVED IN THE 22ND REGIMENT.

GENERALS USHIJIMA AND CHO CHOOSE HARA-KIRI

On the southeast shore of Okinawa is the village of Mubuni. Forty yards south of the village's limits the terrain begins to rise, here lies the infamous hill (89). At 1200hrs on 21 June, elements of the 32nd Army Regiment, reached the summit of Hill (89). On the inside of this hill the Japanese set off explosives sealing most entrances to their final command refuge. General Ushijima along with his chief of staff General Cho, sent their final radio communications to Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo. The two of them wrote letters that they hoped would someway reach Japan. Within the passageways and chambers concealing the command post below, the traditional honorable Samurai's rituals for death were prepared. The cooks prepared a meal to be served at midnight. After dining, farewell toasts were offered while consuming scotch whisky. General Ushijima was dressed in a full field dress uniform. His chief of staff General Cho, dressed in a white kimono. Members of the 32nd Regiment dug in on the top of Hill (89) could hear sounds and voices coming from the caves on the seaward side of the hill. For the final hour staff members would shout "long live the Emperor," then they would bow to the east within the passageways and chambers. When sounds were heard, soldiers of the 32nd would toss grenades down the cliff on the seaward side. The cliff fell two hundred thirty two feet to the sea. A quilt, covered with a white linen sheet had been placed on a ledge outside of a cave entrance. At 0400hrs the two Generals exited the cave to face west and the moonlit China Sea. They turned around to face east and their staff. They bowed to the east, in respect to Emperor Hirohito, the God Of The Sun. At 0410hrs two swords flashed in the moonlight as the Generals slashed their stomachs open.* When daylight filled the sky over Okinawa, the forces of the United States raised the Stars and Stripes. Okinawa was declared an American victory. The remaining remnants of the 22nd Marine Regiment were dug in between the villages of Kunishi and Negusuku on a hill named Mezado. There were some wounds and deaths yet to come.

*Ref. Source: Okinawa The Last Battle, Pages 470 & 471



From a watercolor by The Author

An Extremely Popular Graduate Of The (Cherry Patch)

A LETTER TO SQUEAKY

I mailed a copy of the picture above and the letter on the opposite page to Squeaky. What I failed to enclose in the envelope was my intention for the use of the picture and letter. I was printing them in the book as a point of humor. I received a apologetic letter from him. Squeaky, If she was on Wallis, hell I'd still be there.

June 17, 1992.

Robert G. Kline
451 Walters St.
Colton, Calif. 92324

Dear (Squeaky):

I have told you on the phone the great effort expended in locating you; it was your letter coming in the mail that made all the research for this record an extreme pleasure. Over the years I've had contact with Howard Arendt and Tom Elsen. During any one of our meetings or phone conversations your name is always one of our foremost topics of discussion. Everyone of my children have been indoctrinated with your name, along with Nussbaum, Coomer, Raynes, etc. Rankin and Nuckols, one of the people they first asked me about was you and if I had ever heard where you lived. But the important reason for this letter is to clarify your wrong conceptions as to my morality on Wallis Island. On the first and second page you wrote about remembering the Cherry Patch, the Burns & Philip store and the jetty where we would swim. In the same paragraph you mention and I quote. " Oh yes I also remember on Wallis one night you and some of the other guys went down to the village, for you know what. Do you remember Moo Moo Leg Lelie, the village call girl?" NO SQUEAKY I DO NOT REMEMBER MOO MOO LEG LELIE. I think you are confusing Lelie with ONE EYE ANNE. But if there was a Lelie and for sure I know there was a Anne; I categorically deny, the "you no what" in either case. Someone pointed ONE EYE ANNE out to me near the northern village of Tufano. Jesus Squeaky, that poor woman was double ugly. In her case Moo Moo would have been an improvement. But maybe the next paragraph will set things straight.

On pages (11) and (18) you will find a map of Wallis Island. If you look to the right side of the island near the village of Lano, you will find two dash marks denoted as Guard Tents. Under Cpl. Perky, this is where you, I, Nussbaum and others lived while we guarded the supply dump. Next I want you to concentrate on the girl on the opposite page. Close your eyes Squeaky; walk out of the tent and follow the path north. About seventy yards along that path you will come to a native Fallee. In that Fallee was a mother and her two daughters. They wore their hair Samoan style. One daughter was about sixteen, the other about nineteen. The older daughter Melielee, depicted by the picture on the opposite page; was a body to remember. It might help if I remind you; we had a conversation regarding the sisters. I asked you what you thought about the older sister? You said, "THE GOOK BITCH LOOKS A LITTLE SCABBY TO ME." And I replied, " SCABBY, SHE'S NOT SCABBY, MAYBE A LITTLE BRUISED, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT." When I first met her, all my hidden desires of the passion of life culminated at her navel, then they would rise to form forbidden thoughts and fantasies. To save my soul Squeaky, I can't understand how you could forget her navel. To me her navel was the most traumatic event I experienced in all of World War Two. The question still remains, was I a wee-bit permissive on Wallis Island? Like your mind, this is where my mind draws a blank. I can still see the colorful weaved mats on the ground, the gray, red and purple embers in the fire and I can inhale the sweet odor of the orchids in her hair, but then here again my memory fades. It took me six months to remember Metcalf's name, if I have any new flashes about Wallis Island, you will be the first to know. You'll have to admit Squeaky, scabs or not, she was built.

Sincerely;

Raymond P. Gillespie

Raymond P. Gillespie
340 S. Reynolds Rd. #248
Toledo, Ohio. 43615

REQUIEM FOR WARRIORS

by Raymond P. Gillespie

OH LORD MY GOD, OH LORD MY GOD
DIRECT THEIR WAY INTO THY SIGHT.
THEIR SOULS ARE THE BEST OF ME.
MY HONOR REFLECTS THEIR LIGHT.
THEY PROPEL ME UP FAR BEYOND
THE LESSER OF THE COMMON LOT.

OH LORD MY GOD, OH LORD MY GOD
THEIR WARRIOR BLOOD HAS BEEN LET
AND SEEPED INTO THE EARTHEN CRUST,
WHERE NO MONUMENT WILL STAND ERECT
TO REMIND THOSE WHO WANDER PAST,
THEY'RE IN THE CLOSET OF MY MEMORY.

OH LORD MY GOD, OH LORD MY GOD
FREE THEM OF SINS WE HAVE WROUGHT.
THE HORRORS OF BATTLES THEY FOUGHT.
YOUR GRACE PURIFIES THEIR SOULS.
THESE WARRIORS I'VE KNOWN WERE BUT A
MOMENT FROM THEIR MOTHER'S BREAST.

OH LORD MY GOD, OH LORD MY GOD
YOU HEARD THEIR HAUNTING CRY
ON THE SHORE, OUT OF SWAMPS;
ECHOING ON THE PLAIN NEATH THE RIDGE;
RISING TO THE APEX OF THE MOUNT,
IT DROPPED TO THE VALLEY BELOW.

OH LORD MY GOD, OH LORD MY GOD
DIRECT THEIR WAY INTO THY SIGHT.
THEIR SOULS ARE THE BEST OF ME.
MY HONOR REFLECTS THEIR LIGHT.
THEY PROPEL ME UP FAR BEYOND
THE LESSER OF THE COMMON LOT.

LORD I FEAR I'VE CAST YOU OUT
AND FORSAKEN THEE. WILL I NOT BE
ALLOWED TO GLIMPSE ON HEAVEN'S
PLATEAU WHERE HONORABLE WARRIORS GO?
OH LORD, I ASK, SEARCH MY SOUL FOR A
GLIMMER OF THEIR LIGHT? THEN JUDGE ME.

THE AUTHOR

ON THE POINT OF THE SPEAR

EXPERIENCES OF A MARINE RIFLEMAN
DURING THE BATTLE FOR THE ISLAND OF OKINAWA
IN APRIL, MAY AND JUNE OF 1945

BY

James S. White

Corporal, USMCR

G Company, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines

Sixth Marine Division

D E D I C A T E D T O :

Paul Louis Buckingham, Private, USMCR
28th Marines, Fifth Marine Division
Killed In Action on the Island of Iwo Jima; March 19, 1945

Loren Leroy Mitchell, Sergeant, USMCR
G Company, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines, Sixth Marine Division
Killed In Action on the Island of Okinawa; June 6, 1945

And to the men of the Sixth Marine Division ---

" ... and that's why our reunions are so important ... When the colors are presented on Saturday night and we stand at attention and pledge our allegiance, I always let my eyes look over the men of the Sixth. And at that moment I am seized with the realization that I am in the presence of true greatness. Nothing compares! Not relatives, not neighborhood friends, not important people, not wealthy people, not celebrities, no one. This group, this motley group of aging, portly, greying men once were warriors in the finest traditions of the United States Marine Corps .... And, if there is such a thing, in the finest traditions of war itself. To stand among them is to feel their spirit, their courage, their love. To know you are one of them is to experience an emotion that few men will ever know."

--- Richard A. Whitaker, Private First Class, USMCR
F Company, 2nd Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines
Sixth Marine Division

S E M P E R F I D E L I S

One Spring morning in 1952, just after daybreak, I was walking around the upper reaches of a pond located a few miles northwest of Duncan, Oklahoma. I was traveling over rough ground in an area near a canyon where bulldozer work had been started but not yet finished. Almost no wind was blowing. The air was cool. A light mist fell from a gray overcast sky. I was carrying a flyrod in my right hand and a fishing tackle box in my left, as I was moving to a pool on the other side of the pond where I hoped that my casting skill might irritate a big bluegill enough that he would attack my popping bug lure.

While picking my way over the torn ground, I detected the strong smell of a decomposing dead animal which I later saw was a large turtle. Instantly, I experienced a feeling, not exactly of fear, but more of alarm and alertness.

The combination of the weather, the kind of clothes I was wearing, my right hand being occupied by the flyrod as with a rifle, and my left hand by the fishing tackle box as with a box of machine gun ammunition; and picking my way over torn, muddy ground; had primed all of the receptors of my mind and body. All of the elements were present, of something I had experienced before. The spark was the sudden smell of death.

For a brief span of time, no more than a second or two, I had lost seven years. It was the year 1945 and I was back on the island of Okinawa.

One of my paternal great grandfathers, Judge James W. White, fought in the conflict called the Civil War. Known by some as The Southern Rebellion, my great grandfather probably called it The War Between the States, because he fought on the Confederate side. The family has little that tells us about his wartime service, except that we know it was relatively short lived. We do have a penciled note, written by his sergeant, testifying to the fact that he was shot in the thigh by a Union minie' bullet in a battle near the vicinity of Springfield, Missouri in late 1861. He returned after that to the Kansas City, Missouri area where he became one of the city fathers.

I am certain that my great grandfather had some stories to tell of his experiences in the war, and I'm sure that he told them. But the persons to whom he related his experiences are now gone. Since they were not committed to paper his experiences are lost forever.

To preserve some of my remembrances, I am writing this to tell of things that occurred while I was a rifleman in G Company, 3RD Battalion, 29TH Marines of the Sixth Marine Division during the battle for the island of Okinawa in 1945.

This all occurred 46 years ago. As someone gets older, he finds that he can sometimes remember minute details of events that occurred a long time ago better than something that happened last week, especially if those long ago events were tattooed into his memory by being life threatening or of an unusual nature. Many wartime experiences qualify on both counts. There may be errors in this account, but they are probably confined mostly to transpositions of dates and times when events took place.

Memory does have its limits. This is not a narrative, but more a series of anecdotes of things I remember. And, I remember less about the earlier days and events on Okinawa than I do about the later happenings. Maybe I became inured to the rigors and the dangers the longer I was exposed to them, and so, remember more.

Much rambling and extraneous information will be found here. So be it. I am writing this for myself. Anyone wanting to read it can either omit the ramblings or else struggle through them. A few people may find them of interest.

If any of my words sound bitter or smack of bellyaching, I very much regret that, for they are not meant that way. I hold no bitterness toward my country, toward the Marine Corps and most certainly none is felt toward any individual Marine. The Marines in G Company have only my love and admiration. The Marine Corps was a tough outfit and those were tough times. I can think of nothing that could have been done at that time to change things as they were, aside from allowing the war to continue forever, or surrendering to the Japanese. We knew no better way to do it. To say that war is unpleasant and that front line combat is not a recommended way of life is to underline with understatement.

My boondockers often contained the first Caucasian feet ever to tread on the soil of some areas of Okinawa. I was a front line Marine. A rifleman. The front line, from which there was nothing forward but enemy territory, was usually defined by our rifle muzzles and delineated with our blood. If armed forces can be likened to a spear, my company was usually on the tip of the spear point, the part of the spear closest to the enemy.

Some people look down upon men who were front line fighters. As a former Marine rifleman, I naturally cannot be numbered among the people who feel that way. Occasionally, in stories, a soldier or Marine, accused of some crime, is threatened with being sent to be a private in a rifle company, as if front line combat were some kind of punishment. A prolonged ordeal it might have been for us, but it wasn't a punishment. Our only transgression was volunteering to fight for our country. It certainly was not a privilege to do so, but it was an honor. Someone had to do it. We did do it.

Aircraft can bomb, strafe and rocket. Tanks can wheel and maneuver. Artillery can throw shells and missiles at an enemy. Sixteen inch naval guns can create great craters in the earth. But wars are not won by powerful weapons alone. Ultimately, to declare a battle won, men, traveling on two feet with weapons in their hands, must expose their bodies to the dangers of contact with the enemy and defeat that enemy. Those men, whether they be soldiers or Marines, are usually riflemen, for riflemen, the men on the ground, are the people who actually win wars.

No matter the size of his unit, regardless of the number of people alongside him, each man does this alone, fighting from within the fortress of his own skin.

Not everybody in the service in World War II was exposed to the dangers we faced in G Company on Okinawa; in fact, not many. After I got out I didn't think much about my military service. Most of my friends had spent more time in the service than I had. I was proud of being a Marine. I thought I had done my part, or at least all that my age gave me time to do (I went in at age 17), but not as much as most men had, because I didn't go in until 1944. Many of my friends had been called up in 1943.

I guess my background is limited also, consisting only of being in a wartime Marine rifle company. I was at Parris Island, Camp Lejeune and Camp Pendleton. I was never on the main base at any of those places except for eating my first meal in the Marine Corps at the main mess hall at Parris Island. So, I don't know what the rest of the Marine Corps was like and I have little experience with the other services other than time spent aboard ships and that was limited mainly to troopships.

But, as years passed and I learned of other people's wartime service, I became aware that we in G Company had some uncommon, if not unique, experiences. We had done what men in the armed services are supposed to do; participate in armed conflict, engage in combat, confront the enemy; in other words, fight. This in contrast to what many men had done in WW II, who lacked the same rare "opportunities" that we in G Company had.

Today, perhaps one in nineteen people are in contact with an enemy under front line conditions. In 1945, in the Marine Corps, the ratio was something like one in fourteen. That is, there were thirteen people supporting one person whose body was within rifle range, perhaps even grenade range, of the enemy.

We had good officers on Okinawa, competent and dedicated. Their job was dangerous and they became casualties much too quickly. They were not fearless, but they were courageous. There is a difference between the two. Fear is a *sine qua non* for courage. There is no bravery unless fear is present.

Some of the non-commissioned officers in the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the 29th Marines were unsuccessful officer candidates. Many of them had been promoted to the rank of corporal and transferred to the 29th Marines when the regiment was formed. Their bad luck was the result of someone else's good fortune. The number of Marine officer casualties in some of the later battles of the war and the consequent need for new officers had been less than predicted. Otherwise, some of those men who wore corporal's chevrons might have worn lieutenant's bars.

Due to the manner in which men were assigned to the various units in the 29th Marines, many of their names seemed to start with letters in the last sixth of the alphabet. There were seven Whites in G Company on Okinawa. Six of them were wounded in action during the battle and the seventh was injured. Another White, a rifleman in I Company, was also wounded.

Parts of northern Okinawa were hilly and wooded. There were streams that looked as though they could have had trout in them. That part of the island was pretty, even under the circumstances. The southern part of Okinawa, north and south of the city of Naha, was open rolling country, onto which had been randomly sprinkled large hills with sheer sides. I never thought that part of Okinawa was pretty, but perhaps I'm being unfair. Maybe the countryside in that area is pretty when it is not muddy, not marred by shell craters and not smelling of death.

Simply stated, the tactics we employed were to attack enemy strong points, usually hills, and try to occupy them. Once on a hill, a perimeter defense was set up and we dug individual fighting holes, called foxholes. From these positions a defense could be made should there be a counter attack by the Japanese. But the main purpose that the holes most usually served was for survival, to provide protection against the Japanese machine gun, mortar and artillery fire which usually blanketed a hill during and after an attack.

The valleys which surrounded the hills were dangerous places, traversed only when it was necessary, and then quickly. They were unoccupied during daylight hours. There was activity in the valleys by small bands from both sides at night.

Since we were usually attacking, we saw very few live Japanese. During the daylight hours they were concealed in caves which honeycombed the hills. Most of the dead Japanese I saw to the north of Naha were soldiers in the Japanese Army. South of Naha on Oroku Peninsula there were more naval personnel, misnamed Japanese Imperial Marines. Many of these were large men, some over six feet in height.

We were equipped with steel helmets with camouflaged cloth covers, haversack back packs, cartridge belts and leggings. And ponchos, it rained a lot during the "dry" season on Okinawa.

Our clothes consisted of utility (dungaree) jacket and trousers, made of a cotton twill of a gray-green color. Our underwear (skivvy) shirts and shorts were green. It was sometimes cold on Okinawa that time of year, so nearly every one of us had a wool sweatshirt and some people had a field jacket of some variety, carried in the pack when the weather was warm. Some men had managed to scrounge dark tan wool shirts.

On our feet were double-soled brown wool socks, and boondockers, high top shoes with rubber composition soles and with the smooth side of the leather on the inside. The clothes were usually ragged, always dirty, sometimes filthy.

And then there was the Entrenching Tool, Shovel; not exactly a weapon, but certainly a personal defense item. This was a short handled shovel whose formed sheet steel blade could be locked into three positions; extended, at a right angle to be used as a pick, and folded down against the handle. When folded, the entrenching tool fit in a shaped pouch fastened to the top flap of the haversack, with the short wooden handle hanging down the back. The tool could be easily reached while lying prone. We all became fast-draw experts with our entrenching tools and most of us had occasion to dig a foxhole while someone shot at us.

A foxhole was like a shallow grave, 12 to 18 inches deep, and with the dirt that came from it thrown up around its perimeter. An enhancement to a foxhole was a hole in one corner, a foot in diameter and a foot deep, into which an enemy grenade could be knocked or kicked if one came into the hole. And, if the bottom of the foxhole were slanted toward this smaller hole, rain water could be more easily bailed out of the hole using an empty can. The smaller hole was not always feasible, since it required a more erect stance to dig, more time than circumstances would usually allow and more additional effort than our weary bodies had left to give.

A steel helmet on the head made a good pillow. With the helmet, and enough exhaustion, it was possible to sleep in any position, even face down with the nose an inch from the ground. That is, if the water in the bottom of hole was not too deep. With enough loss of body heat and shivering, which probably resulted in some mechanical heat, rain water in a foxhole could approach body temperature, which sometimes made it feel almost comfortable until it was necessary to change positions.

We seldom, if ever, had hot food furnished to us on Okinawa by the Marine Corps. Some Marines shot goats, butchered them and cooked them over open fires. I tried some of the goat meat and didn't like it. On one occasion I did have a tasty dish. I provided it myself. It went like this:

The long length of the island of Okinawa lies on a roughly northeast-southwest axis. A third of the way southwest of the northern end of the island is Motubu peninsula, which juts out toward the west. On the south side of that peninsula, where it joins the main part of the island, is the village of Nago. Near Nago is a stream which drains the hills above the village. On April 1st, "Love Day", a sixteen inch shell landed in the mouth of this stream and the edge of the resulting crater dammed it up. Toward the end of April, I watched as a bulldozer cleared the mouth of the stream so water could once more flow. At low tide I walked on rocks in the stream and noticed some variety of crayfish in the water. Three of us gathered two one-gallon cans of them and I boiled them in sea water. When they were cooked, the other two men had no stomach for them. I gave one can to the first sergeant and ate the other can myself. Delicious.

The food we usually ate was called "C" rations. These came in two metal cans per meal; one heavy, one light.

The Light can contained such items as crackers, a drink mix (instant coffee, lemon powder, etc.), sugar, a three-pack of cigarettes (El-Cheapo brands such as "Fleetwood" or "Sensation") and a small supply of folded sheets of toilet paper. To keep it dry, I carried the toilet paper inside my helmet, above the suspension straps of the helmet liner.

The Heavy can contained a condensed stew that came in various flavors, such as Beans and Wieners, Ham and Eggs, Vegetable Stew with Meat, Pork and Beans, etc. These were invariably eaten cold, at "can" temperature.

Prior to the landing on Okinawa; while training in North Carolina, Banika in the Russell Islands and on Guadalcanal; C rations were of an earlier version with only three varieties of Heavy. These were Meat and Vegetable Hash, Meat and Vegetable Stew and Meat and Beans. The Meat and Beans was the only really edible variety of the old style Heavy. The "New" C's were a welcome change.

There was one Heavy variety in the new type C's that I usually passed up, and that was "Pork and Rice". We would sometimes take ground and dig holes in places near which lay the bodies of men who had been killed several days previously. When I opened a can of Pork and Rice and looked at the contents, I couldn't convince myself that the grains of rice were not moving. With hunks of gray meat nestled in a mass of white rice grains, the appearance was similar to that of the gray rotting flesh, abounding with writhing white maggots, of a human body torn by artillery fragments and exposed too long to the weather and the flies.

Maggots had no preference for either Japanese or Marine flesh. On those occasions when it was too dangerous to quickly recover the bodies of dead Marines, their bodies could reach the same state of maggot development as did the bodies of the Japanese.

Due to the primitive living conditions, the lack of sanitation and the irregularity of meals, my solid waste excretionary system either failed to function or it performed altogether too well. There didn't seem to be an in between. I was either bound up tight or loose as a goose.

I frequently had diarrhea. We all did. As a consequence, I lost quite a bit of weight. Paregoric was brought up to us for the diarrhea, but I never took any of it.

All of the water that we had was brought up to us in 5-gallon Jerry cans, whose designed use was for storing gasoline. The cans were most often lugged up by people for the last five hundred or thousand yards. There was sufficient water for drinking only. It was too precious to be used for washing or bathing. And, no one shaved on the front lines. A lesson had been learned by the time of the Okinawa campaign that the gasoline should be thoroughly cleansed from the cans before they were filled with water. The water only tasted of a purifying chlorine chemical.

We each had two canteens, carried in cloth canteen covers fastened to the cartridge belt so that they rode high on the buttocks. Some twenty years after my Marine Corps service I bought a cartridge belt and two canteens at a surplus store.

I adjusted the belt to fit my waist and attached the two canteen covers to it in the usual positions. When I put on the belt, something didn't feel right. I finally realized that my waist had grown and the canteens rode farther to the sides than my body remembered. I didn't know until then that buttocks had a memory.

A canteen cup was carried in one of the canteen covers. This was an aluminum vessel, about 4 inches high, with a folding handle. It had a kidney shaped top profile so that a canteen would fit inside it. The canteen cup was made in two designs. One version had a flared rim. It was the preferred kind. The other type had a rolled rim which seemed to store heat. When the liquid contents of the cup were luke warm, the rolled rim would still be hot enough to burn the lips.

I was not destined to be fortunate enough to be the permanent possessor of a canteen cup with a flared rim. I had one for a short period of a few days. I had salvaged it from the cartridge belt of a man who had been wounded and evacuated. The cup was made useless when a mortar fragment hit the canteen on my right side. The next cup I salvaged had a rolled rim.

Water for instant coffee was heated in the canteen cup, sometimes over fires which used the waxed cardboard cartons that some rations came in for fuel. But often the fuel we used was C2 explosive material. I had received two days of demolition training at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. And, as a boy, I enjoyed shooting firecrackers to celebrate the Fourth Of July. You usually don't fear something you know about or are familiar with, so I have never feared explosives. Some members of the company were assigned the job of using Satchel Charges (we called them pack charges) to blow up and collapse Japanese cave emplacements. Ed Maigarie was hurt while doing this by rock fragments from an explosion.

A Satchel Charge looked like a small back pack, with a cloth loop by which it could be carried suspended from a shoulder. It contained an earlier version of the explosive material which is today called by the French word: "Plastique". The official designation for that material is "Composition 4", or C4.

Back then, our satchel charges contained "Composition 2", or C2. C2 was a gray-tan malleable material, of a consistency slightly more grainy than children's modeling clay. The Satchel charge contained blocks of C2 wrapped in waxed paper. I don't recall the weight of a block, or how many were in a satchel, but I believe that the whole unit contained ten pounds of C2.

A chunk of C2 could be pinched off of a block and rolled into a worm about ten to twelve inches long. When lighted at one end the worm burned slowly, with a smoky flame. As the C2 burned, a canteen cup was moved to keep it above the flame until the water in the cup was heated. This was our only hot food. There was no danger of an explosion. Even the impact of a bullet would not cause C2 to explode. It could only be detonated by a blasting cap.

Cases of cigarettes were occasionally brought up and cartons distributed to each man who smoked, which was almost everyone. The cigarettes were usually good brands, such as "Lucky Strike", "Camel" and "Chesterfield". Nearly every one of us had at least

one carton of cigarettes in his pack. I had a carton of cigarettes mallorated when a rifle bullet went side to side through my pack, while the pack was on my back.

We were armed at the platoon level with Caliber .30 M1 rifles and Caliber .30 Browning Automatic Rifles, called by us the BAR (pronounced "Bee Ay Arr).

We also carried KA-BAR knives which were shaped like small Bowie knives and carried in a leather scabbard. The scabbard had a pocket which contained a small whetstone. Many of us had naked forearms where we had tested the knife edges, after sharpening them, by shaving the hair on our arms.

"KA-BAR" stands for "Killed A B'ar". Early in its history, the company which made the knives changed its name for advertising purposes after the receipt of a letter from a customer describing the use to which one of their knives had been put. Another company, Camillus, also made identical knives, but a real KA-BAR was preferred. Regardless of which company had made them, each knife was called by the generic name of KA-BAR.

Officers and some NCO's carried carbines, which fired a smaller (and much less powerful) .30 caliber cartridge.

Each platoon had a Bazooka rocket launcher and most of us carried (and cursed) a rocket for it.

We had three kinds of grenades; Fragmentation, White Phosphorous and Smoke of various colors. We never had enough Fragmentation Grenades. They were heavy to lug around, but very useful and we always ran out of them quickly when they were needed.

I was good with grenades in training. I could throw a practice grenade almost 50 yards and more often than not have it land where I intended. When I used them for real, I was usually too sick, weak and tired to throw a grenade as far as 20 yards.

Grenades were designed to be held with the safety lever, or "spoon", in the palm of the right hand. This oriented a ring, attached to a cotter pin that kept the grenade safe, so that the pin could be pulled out of its aligned holes with the left hand. This released the spoon so the grenade could arm itself when it left the hand as it was thrown. The pin was removed by separating the hands, pulling the elbows apart with arm and back muscles. It required some degree of exertion.

I once heard someone say that it takes seventeen pounds of pull to remove a cotter pin from a grenade and only fifteen pounds to break a tooth. I've never measured the tension required for removing a pin or the force to break a tooth, but removing a pin with the teeth seems like doing it the hard way. I've only seen it done that way in the movies.

When the safety lever is released after the pin has been pulled, the lever is lifted and thrown free of the grenade by the rotation of a spring-loaded striker, which travels through an arc and impacts on a primer. The exploding primer lights a fuse which is designed to burn for 4 to 5 seconds before igniting a detonator that fires an explosive charge in the body of the grenade, causing the body to burst and propel high velocity fragments in all directions.

Japanese grenades were designed a little differently. Instead of a safety lever and a spring-loaded striker, their grenades had a free floating firing pin which was made safe by a cotter pin.

To arm a Japanese grenade, the pin was pulled and the firing pin was pounded against something hard like a rock or even a helmet. From that point on the grenade functioned much like ours did. I don't know what the delay time was from when a Japanese grenade was armed until it detonated.

When a grenade was used in the conventional manner, the spoon was held in the palm of the hand as the grenade was thrown. The primer made a loud crack as it was hit by the striker shortly after the grenade left the throwing hand.

This helped the 'target' in two ways.

First, he knew that a grenade had been thrown and from where.

Secondly, It gave him the maximum amount of time to evade the grenade; or, if he had the guts and the inclination, to pick it up and throw it back.

Usually, we used a different technique. The grenade was grasped with the safety lever held by the fingers instead of the palm of the hand. This positioned the cotter pin so it could be removed less awkwardly and with less effort, by pushing the right hand down while pulling the ring up with the left hand.

Before throwing the grenade, the spoon was released by the fingers in a hole or behind cover. The noise of the striker was less audible to the 'target'. Then, a count to two or three before actually throwing the grenade gave no advance warning and little time to pick up or evade the grenade before it exploded. Many grenades thrown in this manner would burst while still in the air, making them even more effective.

I never knew of an occurrence when a live grenade was fumbled and dropped or when a fast fuse was encountered. If there were any, they were far outnumbered by casualties from grenades thrown in the conventional manner which were picked up by an enemy and thrown back. And a count of two or three, in the heat of battle, often took not much more than a second and a half.

Finger and wrist action is inhibited by having to hold the spoon in the palm of the hand. The grenade then tends to be tossed mainly with an arm and shoulder motion, similar to the traditional manner in which the English pitch a cricket ball.

Releasing the spoon before throwing a grenade allows it to be thrown in a manner that most American young men have spent a lifetime learning. The grenade can be thrown as when throwing a baseball or football, using finger and wrist action to achieve longer distance and greater accuracy.

Grenades are not capable of the terrific explosions often seen in war movies, where they raze small buildings and can propel a human body six feet into the air. They do not have that much explosive force. Their purpose is to wound by fragmentation. Any explosion capable of propelling a human body very far would break the body into chunks before doing so.

One rainy night on Oroku Peninsula, my foxhole was about twenty feet from another hole occupied by three members of my company. One man was wrapped in a poncho, asleep. The other two men were sitting in opposite corners of the hole.

A Japanese grenade sailed into the hole and came to rest on the poncho. The grenade exploded and wounded the thigh of the man under the poncho. A few small fragments went into his leg, some went completely through it, but he recovered completely and rejoined the company several months later. The other two men in the hole suffered only from hurt feelings and temporary hearing loss.

A normal grenade, U.S. or Japanese, would probably have killed all three occupants of the hole. The entire blast must have been directed upward.

A few men still had bayonets. A bayonet is like a short sword which can be fastened on the muzzle end of a rifle so the rifle can be used as a pike or lance. A bayonet is an anachronism from the days when muskets were single shot weapons which became spears after their black powder charges had been fired. I can conceive of situations when a rifle couldn't be fired, such as when a man was out of ammunition, or in the middle of a melee where there might be a danger of shooting one of his own people. But, in such an event, I had planned to try to use the rifle butt or get past an adversary's bayonet and use my KA-BAR. I firmly believe that rifles are for shooting.

In the Company there was a 60 Millimeter Mortar section and a .30 caliber Browning M1919A4 light machine gun platoon.

Caliber .30 rifle ammunition (the same cartridge as commercially loaded .30'06 Springfield ammunition) came in wooden boxes with an inside metal lining that opened like a big sardine can. Cartridges were packaged in eight-round clips in cloth bandoleers of six clips. The eight-round clip fit the magazine of the M1 rifle. A "round" is one cartridge -- one shot. The cartridge belt had ten flap-covered pockets, each of which held an eight-round clip, for a total of eighty rounds. Most of us usually also carried at least one bandoleer of six clips.

Not counting Tracer, caliber .30 ammunition was of two types. One type was called Ball, M2. Its bullet was made with a lead core and a pointed, copper plated steel jacket. The other type was called AP, M2 (Armor Piercing). Its bullet had a hard steel penetrator inside the copper plated steel jacket.

I believed then that the Ball ammo was more accurate. I know now that the AP, which had a heavier bullet with slightly less muzzle velocity, was probably just as accurate. With the exception of Tracer, all .30 caliber ammunition was designed to shoot to about the same point of impact at 600 yards.

Tracer rounds were sometimes loaded in belts of machine gun ammunition, usually about every fifth round. Tracer ammunition has a pellet of combustible material in the base of the bullet, which is ignited by the heat of firing and burns and glows for a second or two, allowing its path through the air to be visible. Tracer bullets lose weight as they burn, are not very accurate and are good mainly for starting grass fires. At longer ranges, where they would have the most utility, they follow a different trajectory than the conventional bullets that they are supposed to track.

I didn't witness this or even hear about it until some time after it happened. Mahlon E. Booth told me about it while we were in the same fire team after we got to Tsingtao, China. (Angelo Bozekas was the fire team leader, along with William Toner, Mahlon Booth and me.) Mahlon was wounded by a bullet that went fore and aft through his side. He couldn't even fall down after he was wounded because the bullet hit his cartridge belt and set off a primer or two. Cartridges started popping as the heat from one of them burning set off others. Mahlon stood there trying to protect his face. He didn't know it then and neither did anyone else, but this couldn't have caused him to be hurt by a bullet from one of those popping cartridges. He could have been burned by the burning powder, but a case would rupture before a bullet could be propelled from it.

I've heard of tests where cartridges were hung inside cardboard boxes with lighted candles under the primers to set them off. When the round exploded, nothing escaped from the box. Whether it was a .30 caliber round, a .22 cartridge or a shotgun shell, the case would rupture. Nothing penetrated the cardboard. Not primer, bullets, shot nor fragments from the burst case. Nothing. Ammunition must be in a firearm before projectiles can be projected.

By the time we landed on Oroku Peninsula I was shooting my rifle, of whichever kind I had at the time, nearly every day. I would shoot it to check the zero and to clean the barrel. In the rainy weather that we usually experienced, if a rifle wasn't shot or cleaned every day, the inside of the barrel would almost heal shut from corrosion. (I found out years later that this was caused by the type of primer that the Caliber .30 ammunition was loaded with.) Since we rarely saw live Japanese, I had few chances to shoot at them. Most of the ones I shot at were moving fast or were semi-hidden. Some were not.....

In a platoon at full strength, there were 9 BAR's; three per squad. I never have thought too highly of the BAR. Now that I know much more about shooting than I did while I was in the Marine Corps, that feeling is justified, or at least it is to me.

I believe that no fully automatic weapon should be hand held. Machine guns are fine when fired from a mount, such as a tripod. I know that M60 machine guns today are frequently fired from the hip, by shooters festooned with belts of cartridges. I've seen Rambo movies and I've seen Vietnam "Knockumentaries". I still believe that, in almost every case, more hits can be had with a semi-automatic rifle, whether by aimed fire from the shoulder, or, by fast, instinctively aimed fire from the hip, which can be surprisingly accurate.

The BAR had a fairly slow cyclic rate of fire. Most bipods had long since been discarded to save weight. While advancing, the BAR was sometimes carried upside down, with the sling over the left shoulder so the rifle could be used for "assault firing". This gave good accessibility to the magazine well, so magazines could be replaced quickly. It also put the operating slide on the right where it could be more easily used.

The BAR fired from an open bolt. Depressing the trigger allowed the bolt to go forward, strip a round from the magazine,

push the round into the chamber and fire it. Gas pressure from the firing would then open the bolt. If the trigger was still depressed it would repeat the cycle and fire another round. When the trigger was released while firing, the bolt stayed open and the chamber was empty. This prevented a round from "cooking off" after prolonged firing had heated the barrel. The operating slide was used to pull the bolt back and cock the weapon. Then the slide was pushed forward so that it wouldn't slam forward as the bolt was released by the trigger when the weapon was fired.

When the BAR was fired while suspended by the sling, the firing was not instinctive as it is when a rifle is fired from the hip, holding it in both hands. This was of little import when the shooting was for the purpose of spraying an area. But when a BAR was fired at a specific target, by the time the shooter had started shooting, adapted to the recoil, observed where he was hitting and made corrections, enough time would have elapsed that more hits could have been made in the same length of time with a semi-automatic M1 rifle. And, with far fewer rounds expended and while carrying much less weight. The BAR weighed about 19 pounds, the M1 about 10 pounds. The BAR did have a twenty round magazine as compared to the eight round en bloc clip of the M1 rifle. It needed it.

The first time that I was shot at personally (that is, someone was trying to kill me specifically, instead of just anyone in the group I was with) happened in April on the road toward Nago on the west coast of the island. A halt had been called and we all crapped out along the side of the road. "Crapped Out" must have the adverb "Out" as well as the verb, in order to give true meaning to the phrase. To crap out meant to take off the pack, unsling the rifle and sit or lie down on the ground. The use of the verb by itself gives a totally different meaning.

The seaward side of the road at that point overlooked a steep cliff that dropped to a narrow beach. The inland side of the road was a two or three foot high earthen bank. The top of the bank sloped upward gradually to a large hill. I sat, not on the road with my back to the bank, as most of the others did, but on a large flat rock on the edge of the bank. I had my rifle on my lap and my feet dangled over the edge of the rock as I gazed out at the sea.

There was a sudden Snap! -- a loud noise that was familiar. It took me several seconds to identify the noise and I almost delayed too long in getting off of the rock. The noise had been the sonic crack of a bullet going by me. The second Snap! was accompanied by a shower of dirt and followed by the noise of a ricocheting bullet traveling out to sea. The source of the bullet was not visible. I learned a valuable lesson. When crapped out, stay off of flat rocks.

A supersonic bullet (one traveling faster than the speed of sound) makes a loud Snap! or Crack! noise if it is close to you when it goes by. This is identical to the sonic boom made by a supersonic aircraft, but on a lesser scale. The noise is caused when the shock wave traveling outward from the bullet contacts the ear. Actually, there is a shock wave from both the point and the base of the bullet. Most of us have heard a supersonic

airplane make a double "Boom" sound. A bullet is so short that the two noises are almost simultaneous and sound like one noise.

Anyone who has ever pulled targets at a rifle range has heard the noise. It is not the bullet hitting the target material that makes the sound.

I have been in the butts at Camp Perry, Ohio (where the National High Power Rifle Championships are held) while thousand yard rifle matches were being fired. Some bullets that are fired with insufficient muzzle velocity lose enough velocity while traveling the 3000 foot distance that they are going slower than the speed of sound when they hit the target. A bullet traveling at subsonic velocity makes almost no sound when it hits a target. A hole magically appears in the target.

Bullets from a Japanese Nambu machine gun, when fired so that they came close by, made snapping noises at the rate of ten per second.

A bullet fired in a direction away from the listener, if heard from off to one side on a quiet day, makes a continuous "Whushing" sound as it travels away. A bullet fired near the listener from some distance away makes a Snap! noise as the bullet passes, followed by a Thump noise when the sound of the gun firing reaches the ear of the listener.

Before Okinawa, I had always heard that you never hear the sound of the bullet that hits you.

This is true.

The sound of an artillery shell rushing through the air is difficult to describe. It is a very distinctive sound that I can still hear in my "mind's ear" but my English is not sufficient for me to put it into words.

The noises made by some mortar shells that landed close to me did not always sound exactly like explosions. The blast noise was sometimes almost masked by a high pitched sound made by flying fragments.

The defensive line that ran across the island east and west, north of the city of Naha, was located in terrain which was nearly ideal for that purpose. Most Japanese firing positions were located in man made caves inside hills. The caves were connected by tunnels that meandered inside and between the hills which made up the in-depth defenses. Occupants of a firing position were often some distance back from a cave's opening to the outside. This reduced the noise made by the muzzle blast of the gun firing and also gave an added measure of protection. Should a cave entrance be destroyed by artillery fire or collapsed by the explosion of a satchel charge thrown into the cave from outside, the occupants would have a good chance for survival. They could then move back into the tunnel system, travel to another firing position and fight another day.

Many firing positions had small openings which were usually well camouflaged. This made them very difficult to detect even while the guns inside them were being fired, especially when they were masked by live vegetation. Live vegetation also seemed to

deaden the noise made by the gun. We sometimes received large volumes of machine gun fire but could neither see nor hear from where it was coming.

When a gun was located well back from a small opening, this combination allowed only a narrow field of fire. It was possible to move only a few feet to be completely out of the line of fire of a machine gun. But the move might be into a position which was in clear view of another gun. Firing positions were usually mutually supporting. Dead spots were possible, either from the nature of the terrain or because of the destruction of the firing positions covering them. Within dead spots it was possible to move around in almost perfect safety, but not for too long at a time. Dead spots were usually covered by artillery and mortar fire.

I have heard it said that the portion of Okinawa over which we fought while attacking the defensive line north of Naha in May had been a Japanese artillery range prior to the battle. That seemed as if it were true, although I'm sure it wasn't. But various locations on that line were well registered and zeroed for artillery fire. Japanese artillery was highly effective and deadly. Single rounds could have devastating effect.

A few days after we moved from the north end of Okinawa to the south and into the lines west of the First Marine Division, G Company occupied the forward slope of a large hill. (In this tract, a forward slope was the part of the hill that we occupied, the reverse slope was the side of the hill that the enemy could see.) The hill angled upward at about a twenty degree angle. Several of us had been ordered to go down to an LVT (we called them AMTRACS) at the base of the hill and carry mortar shells to near the crest where the company 60 Millimeter mortars were located. The shells weighed about three pounds apiece and were packaged in a "clover leaf" of six shells, with a wire carrying handle. I believe I was carrying twenty four shells, in addition to my rifle which was slung on my right shoulder.

About a third of the way down from the crest of the hill a relatively level dirt road had been cut into the slope and ran around the hill. The up hill side of the road had an embankment which was about two or three feet high. The men of one of the platoons, I don't know now which platoon, had just arrived on the hill and were strung out along the road, sitting with their backs to the embankment. A single shell came over the top of the hill, not from the direct front, but on an angle, and exploded on the corner of the cut, on the edge of the embankment. About a dozen Marines were hit, half of them were killed. One of the Whites lost a leg. I was walking up the hill, somewhere between 30 and 50 yards away from the place where the shell exploded and was hit in the right cheek by a piece of meat. I thought I'd been wounded at first until I saw what had hit me. I don't know what size shell it was, but it landed in the most optimum spot it could possibly have found to maximize its effectiveness.

Some time later, I buried a severed hand which was lying near my foxhole.

I was almost buried by a shell that caved in my foxhole one morning. My recollection of this occurrence is hazy. It happened to me but it didn't. I'm not sure today on which hill it took place. An artillery shell hit outside the left front of the hole that I was occupying by myself. All I can remember is afterward, after someone had pulled me out of the hole. I don't remember now who that was. My nose and mouth had dirt in them. I don't know if this was caused by my attempting to breathe while I was buried, or if it happened as I was being pulled out of the dirt. I didn't know until later, when my mouth felt funny, that several teeth had been chipped. This has affected my bite in later life. I was lying face down in the hole. My helmet, pack and cartridge belt probably afforded some protection. Outside of the chipped teeth and the concussion (being knocked out), and generally feeling "beat up", my only other injury was a sore left shoulder. I consider this as my first occasion of being wounded in action, but I received no medical treatment for it.

Our own artillery always had their guns located behind the front lines. So, when fired, shells would have to pass over Marine front line positions on their way to targets, which, it was hoped, would be in territory occupied by the Japanese. It wasn't called "Friendly Fire" as it is today when badly aimed artillery or mortar shells fired by our side hit too close for comfort. In those days our terminology was "Short Rounds".

Martin Field on Guadalcanal, the 29th Marines athletic field, drill field or whatever that multi-purpose clearing was, had been named for the first Marine from the regiment who had been killed in training by a short round. I knew several people in the regiment who had scars from mortar shell fragments they got in training. You didn't get a Purple Heart for that kind of wound. It was a rough go, but our mortar men had to learn their trade and it probably saved lives in the end.

The Japanese made a practice of firing a round or two at our positions at the same time that our artillery was firing. This would result in a shell exploding in our general area at the same time that we heard "outgoing" shells passing over our heads. When this first occurred, there were hurried attempts to communicate with the 15th Marines, calling on them to "raise your fire" or even to cease firing. After it was determined what the Japanese had done, we knew to stay in our foxholes and keep buttoned up whenever shells were passing overhead, regardless of whose artillery was firing.

The 15th Marines, which was the artillery regiment for the Sixth Marine Division, had forward observers (FOs) assigned to front line units. The function of these men, who were almost always officers, was to initiate artillery firing missions and to spot the locations where shells were hitting and call for aiming corrections so that the shells would come down onto the desired targets. An FO was equipped with binoculars and either a radio or a sound power telephone for communication. FO's did good work.

We also had FOs for the 60 MM mortars in our company, usually an NCO from the mortar section. I accompanied a corporal forward

of the front lines in May to give him some backup, while he spotted for our company mortars. It was estimated that some 50 Japanese were accounted for by our mortars that day.

Somewhere north of Charlie Hill was a large valley between two large hills. Forward of the front lines, in the middle of this valley was a small round hill with a flat place on the top of it. The flat area was about 25 feet in diameter. I was with a mixed bunch that went to this hill to accompany an FO who intended to use the location for observation and artillery spotting. We did a little dirt work to make an earthen wall between us and the Japanese, which made the top of the hill almost a large foxhole. A short time after he began to do some observing, the FO, who was a lieutenant from the 15th Marines, was hit in the head by a rifle bullet and killed instantly. After that happened we stayed on that hill for a while, but when we learned no one would be sent to replace the dead FO, we made our way back to the larger hill where the rest of G Company was located.

In early May, a Japanese 8 inch artillery piece was located in a cave about halfway up the north side of a large hill. The cave was protected by a large steel door. Periodically, the door would open and the gun would fire a round or two.

The gun was well registered and did much damage. Attempts to knock it out with artillery fire were unsuccessful. It was a very difficult target on which to make a direct hit. With the steel door closed, fragments from shells hitting near the location had little effect.

I don't remember the fate of that gun. I do remember seeing the hill from some distance away. It was a hazy day and I didn't have binoculars, so I couldn't see the door, much less the gun.

Sometime in May, I spent a short time in a foxhole at the edge of a large valley, through which ran a muddy road down which trucks periodically ran the gauntlet. It was after the rains had started and the ground was water soaked. Intermittent Japanese artillery shells landed near the road, several hundred yards from my hole. About a fourth to a third of the shells failed to explode when they hit the soggy ground. A dud shell had an interesting effect which a shell that did explode did not have. A second or two after a dud shell failed to explode when it hit the ground, I would feel a tremor in the ground in the bottom of the foxhole.

I don't think that it is an ethnic slur to state that the Japanese had an aptitude for using mortars.

Conventional guns with flat trajectories gain distance by elevating their muzzles. A mortar extends its range by depressing the muzzle. If a mortar were to be pointed exactly straight up, a shell fired from it (if there was no wind and the rotation of the earth were to have no effect on the path of the shell) could conceivably fall back down into the tube. To have the mortar shoot farther away, the tube must be angled down from the vertical. The Japanese seemed to have much skill in knowing exactly how much to depress the muzzle in order to hit something with the first shell they fired.

I helped carry W. W. White from a foxhole after he was wounded. A single mortar shell had landed in a hole where it had killed one Marine and wounded three others, including Red.

Many Japanese mortar positions were underground with only a small hole in the top, through which the mortar shells exited when they were fired from beneath the surface of the ground. These positions were very difficult to find.

Our side frequently fired salvos of rockets at area targets. The rockets were fired from 4X4 trucks which had three racks, each rack stacked with about a dozen rockets. The truck would be driven up and positioned facing a hill which was at a distance of a quarter to a half mile away. The three Marines on the truck would prepare and aim the rockets for firing. When they began firing, the bottom rocket in each column would fire, the stack would drop and each bottom rocket in turn would fire until all three racks were empty. All of the rockets would fire within a time period of 10 to 12 seconds. The rockets were not capable of very great accuracy, so the hill at which they were fired would be blanketed by explosions. Probably, very few Japanese were ever hit by the rockets, but the explosions would remove most of the vegetation from a hillside and expose any cave openings on it.

We would vacate the area or find deep cover when one of these trucks arrived. We knew what was coming. As the last rockets were dropping down into battery and firing, the driver of the truck would already be starting to move. The last man still on foot would run and jump on the truck and then hang on as it slewed around and headed for the rear.

Almost immediately, Japanese mortar shells would begin to drop on and around the spot that the truck had occupied while it was firing.

I saw a number of men immediately after they had been struck by enemy fire, but very few at the exact instant that they were hit.

About the Twelfth of May I was standing on top of a hill which overlooked a wide valley in the direction of Sugar Loaf Hill and the city of Naha. I was looking away from the direction of the Japanese toward a sergeant who was on his feet, watching some men as they prepared to dig foxholes. My eyes weren't focused on his back, but I was looking right at him when the bullet hit him. All of a sudden he began to fumble with the clothes around his beltline. He sat down, then leaned to one side and fell over. He died soon after that. A bullet, fired from long range, had hit his back, penetrated his body, was stopped when it hit his clothes and was burning the skin of his abdomen. The bullet had gone by me but I hadn't heard it. Probably it was traveling at subsonic velocity when it hit the sergeant. He was one of our better sergeants, a good man.

One day in the middle of May, two of us, I don't remember who the other man was, had just arrived at an embankment which was about three or four feet high. We were looking over it at the terrain beyond it when we heard a voice behind us. We both squatted down with our backs against the bank as we turned to see who it was. Standing there was a bandsman from the 29th Marines regimental band. Band members were stretcher bearers when the regiment was in combat. I remember that this man was a trumpet player. He asked us if we knew where any casualties were or maybe he asked where a specific wounded man was. One of us mentioned hearing of a wounded man over to his left. He turned his head to look in that direction.

I was looking directly up into his face at the instant a bullet hit him in the chin. His head didn't hardly wiggle as a hole suddenly appeared in his chin where the bullet went through it from right to left. He grabbed his chin and blood began running between his fingers and down his wrist. I said something to him, but he didn't reply. He took off running back to where he had come from. The Japanese rifleman who shot him was probably in the process of trying to shoot one of the two of us in the head when the arrival of the bandsman caused us to hunker down below the top of the bank and the bandsman was wounded instead of one of us being wounded or killed.

I saw another man at the instant that he was hit by a bullet. That incident will be described later.

The night skies north of Naha in the middle of May were often lit by parachute flares. They were put up in the sky by mortar and artillery fire.

Our company 60 Millimeter mortars were kept busy some nights when the noises of Japanese activity could be heard. I once overheard some of our mortarmen talking about the extreme distances they had shot the previous night in order to put flares over some people who were occupying a hill far out in front of the mortar position. The mortars were laid down at such an angle that they had to literally throw the shells down the tubes in order to get them to fire.

Destroyers and other Navy ships off the west coast of Okinawa in the East China Sea would shoot flares from 5 inch guns at intermittent time intervals. These flares remained in the air much longer than the ones shot from mortars. The larger flares from the ships were higher in the air when they exploded and deployed and they also were more stable. The smaller flares from the mortars were less stable and would swing back and forth under their parachutes. Flares could make the terrain under them almost as visible as in daylight. Since flares were point sources of light, the shadows those moving lights caused sometimes gave strange appearances to ordinary objects as the flares approached the ground.

A group of us were changing locations one coal black night and were in the middle of a treeless valley in what would have been called "No Man's Land" in World War I. Several times we were caught by flares. The recommended action to take when caught in the open by a flare is no action. Freeze and stay frozen. Each time a flare caught us it seemed like we stood there for thirty minutes before it either went out or reached the ground.

In late May, 1945, the Company was badly mauled on Half Moon hill north of Naha. Half Moon was one of three mutually supporting hills occupied by well emplaced Japanese. The other two hills were called Sugar Loaf and Horse Shoe. The action was called the battle for Sugar Loaf Hill. No one from G Company was ever actually on Sugar Loaf Hill, but a large number of G Company men were killed or wounded by machine gun fire coming directly from that hill or by mortar and shell fire directed from it.

Charlie Hill was the starting place for the assault on Half Moon. When the company was ordered to leave Half Moon it returned to Charlie Hill. Twenty men were left in the company out of some 240 who had landed with it and the dozen or so replacements who had joined it in April. Some men were strayed, had attached themselves to other companies, but most of the absent ones had been wounded or killed. All of the officers in the company, with the exception of one had been wounded. The remaining officer had cracked up. He kept crying and repeating that the day was his nineteenth birthday. G Company was commanded by a sergeant named Loren Mitchell.

I dug in on Charlie Hill with Francis West. Or, rather, West dug the hole while I stood watch as it grew dark. There was a chance that we might be counter-attacked.

The foxhole that I shared with West that night was one of the deepest that I ever inhabited. West had been hit through his helmet by a machine gun bullet fired from long range. I then and there lost any faith in a helmet's ability to protect against anything more powerful than a thrown rock. The bullet hit near the top of West's helmet and went through steel and plastic liner. The helmet did not deflect that bullet as much as one second of angle.

In many military units it is an unusual occurrence for someone to be wounded or killed. This was not so in G Company. Nearly everyone who survived was wounded at least once.

West was never wounded and never received a Purple Heart. He should have received something, because he spent every minute that it was possible to spend on the front lines.

Frank Ward was another Third Platoon man who was never hit. He had a young looking face and a dense, black beard.

Another member of the company who was never wounded (at least bad enough to warrant a Purple Heart), and spent every minute possible on the front lines, was H. Ross "Tennessee" Wilkerson. Tennessee did get a Bronze Star Medal. He modestly claims that the decoration was not warranted, but I don't believe that is true.

When the company pulled back from Charlie Hill, we went a short distance back of the front lines where we dug in. Near my hole was a dead Marine lying face down. He had been killed a short time before. He was in E Company of the Second Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines at the time he was killed. He had been hit from the front but his whole back had been blown out, exposing his intestines. Loren Mitchell asked me to cover him. The Marine's surname was stenciled on his pack. The name was familiar so I lifted him by raising his pack enough that I could see his face. In North Carolina, He and I had been shelter-half (pup-tent) mates. We had dug in together many times in training.

About 21 or 22 May the 3RD Battalion, 29TH Marines was relieved from the front lines and marched back about five miles to an area that we had left around May 1. It was near a sea wall on the west coast of the island.

The battalion was in a column of two's, with G Company at the head of the column. Although it was the entire battalion (composed of Companies G, H, and I), the column probably looked like a single company which had suffered a number of casualties. Most of us were carrying at least one BAR in addition to an M1 rifle. We were walking slowly, some of us limping. Our clothes were ragged. We were used up.

A major in a starched khaki shirt and shorts drove by. He throttled his jeep down to match our speed and asked who the company commander was. Loren Mitchell was in the lead of the column and I was a short distance behind him, so I was able to hear this. Sgt. Mitchell spoke up and said that he guessed that he was the company commander. The major asked what company this was. Loren told him that it wasn't a company, it was the whole 3RD Battalion. The Major looked back toward the rear of the column, then speeded up and drove away.

At the sea wall, We received replacements. Also, men who had previously been slightly wounded began to return from the hospital and those who had been with other companies also returned. The company strength was soon up considerably and continuing to grow. But, several more men went to the hospital. I had dug in with R. R. White. He visited the Battalion Aid Station and was sent to the hospital, although I didn't know it until later. Sgt. Mitchell went to the hospital with some mortar fragments in his ankle that he had received several days previously, which were beginning to fester.

The day after we got to the sea wall, Clyde Bower and I were assigned the job of returning to Half Moon to look for and gather up BAR's which had been abandoned when the company had left that hill. The fighting had moved south of there. Half Moon was now in Marine controlled territory.

I was feeling bad and had a fever. Clyde and I sat in the rain in the back of a 4X4 truck driven by two men from 3rd Battalion headquarters. They parked the truck on the south edge of the large valley that was bounded on the north by Charlie Hill and on the south by the rise that led to the Half Moon. The truck would not have survived more than ten seconds in that location just a few days before. It still was not perfectly safe there, just safer than it had been.

Clyde and I went up toward Half Moon to look for BAR's. We went near where the company had been just a few days before, the area of the the narrow gauge railroad tracks and up the hill.

We each found two or three BAR's and went back to put them in the truck. The truck was gone. We thought that we might have come back to the wrong place until I saw the tracks the truck had made when it turned around. They had left us there. Clyde threw the BAR in his right hand so that it stuck muzzle first in the mud. We dropped the rest of them in a pile and started walking back through the rain toward the sea wall. We only had to walk a couple of miles before we were able to catch a ride. The walk in the rain didn't help my fever much.

Clyde was in a different platoon than mine when he was wounded on Oroku Peninsula in June. He was climbing a steep hill when a Japanese shot down at him with a rifle. The bullet hit the top of his shoulder, toward the back, and came out just above his waist. He spent time in the Navy hospital on Guam and rejoined the company on Guam in late August.

Clyde and I frequently played chess together after we got to Tsingtao, China. He never did beat me. In fact, in all the time I was overseas, no one else did, either.

I was feeling bad after Clyde and I got back to the sea wall. I went to the Battalion Aid Station, but my temperature wasn't elevated enough for me to be sent to the hospital. The corpsman who examined me asked if I was dug in with someone. Since I didn't know that R. R. White had already gone to the hospital, I told him yes, but I really didn't understand the reason for the question. The corpsman gave me a handful of pills. Unbeknownst to me, some of them were sleeping pills. I awoke the next morning on my back in my foxhole, shivering like a dog defecating peach seeds. I was lying in cold water up to the level of my ears. It had rained hard that night. R. R. White and I had strung shelter-halves and ponchos over the hole, but water was pouring into it from the adjacent field, on its way toward the sea wall. I usually slept on my stomach. Had I slept with my face down that night I might have drowned.

I really felt bad. I went to the hospital with a high fever and swollen lymph glands in my neck, armpits and groin. A year or so later I saw my medical record and found that I had been diagnosed as having tonsillitis, even though my tonsils were removed when I was five years old. I suppose I was just suffering from general lack of maintenance. Compounded by a cold soak.

The 6th Marine Division Hospital was in tents, with cots and blankets. I slept a major portion of the 5 or 6 days I was in the hospital the first time. I slept in two hour stretches. Every three hours, 24 hours a day, I was given a massive injection of penicillin in one or the other of my buttocks.

The penicillin was ice cold so the afflicted area would throb and hurt for about an hour or so, and it took that long to get back to sleep.

We got hot food in the hospital. The cans of "C" rations were heated in hot water before the cans were opened.

One thing I missed by my stay in the hospital was a lot of rainy weather and mud. The island of Okinawa became one big quagmire.

When being discharged from the hospital, the procedure was to go first to 6th Marine Division Headquarters for processing. Most people also had a shave, a shower, a haircut and new clothes. I got the shave and one set of new clothes. There wasn't time for the shower or the haircut. We were not issued 782 equipment (Cartridge Belt, Canteens, Haversack Pack, Shelter Half, Poncho, Entrenching Tool, Etc.), but I had kept my helmet when I went to the hospital.

From the 6th Marine Division Headquarters, several Marines from other companies and Sgt. Mitchell and I from G Company rode a truck to the 29th Marines Regimental Headquarters. We were ushered in to see a Lieutenant Colonel. I think he might have been the regimental executive officer. The colonel told us to find some chow. Transportation back to our units would be arranged later. The building where the 29th Mar HQ was located had a huge room on the first floor. Sgt. Mitchell asked the colonel if we could stay inside the building that night. The colonel told us that he had already told us to find a place outside. It was raining and almost dark. We had no ponchos or shelter halves.

Near the big building someone had built a hut from some room divider panels that were found in most Okinawan houses. These dividers were just over 6 feet long (probably 2 meters) and about half that in width, made of framed thin plywood. The hut was about ten feet square and about three feet high.

The hut leaked and the ground inside it was muddy. We were used to mud. What we couldn't get used to were the hundreds of mosquitoes that inhabited the inside of the hut. A hand swished through the air inside the hut would touch dozens of them. The mosquitoes won and got to keep the hut. We spent the night squatting on our helmets under a narrow overhang of the building just barely out of the intermittent rain. It was a long, miserable night, with much mosquito slapping and little sleep.

By morning the rain had lessened. Loren and I got some chow. We went back to see the colonel to find out when we could get back to G Company. Marine Lieutenant Colonels have veins in their foreheads which distend when they shout at people. I don't know if you have to have those veins in order to get to be a Lt. Colonel or if you grow the veins after you have already become one. Majors also sometimes have those veins. The colonel told us that he would get us back to our company when he was Got Dam good and ready, and for us to get the Hell out of here. We did.

Outside, Loren looked at me and I looked at Loren.
He said, "What do you think?"
I said, "Let's go."
We left the 29th Marines Regimental Headquarters and started walking south to find our company which was probably on the front lines.
I suppose technically we went AWOL, but our intentions were good. We wanted to reduce that colonel's work load and at the same time get back to the front lines to improve our living conditions.
All that we possessed we were wearing. As I mentioned before we had no 782 gear. We also had no weapons.
I hadn't known until then how many people there were behind the front lines. The number of people in a battle is directly proportional to the distance from the enemy. The closer to the front the fewer the people. Front line foxholes can be very lonely places, especially if you are pinned down and can't raise up to look around without taking a chance of being badly hurt.

We hitched a ride on the back of a south-bound 6X6 truck with two Marines in the cab. The truck made several stops, picking up and delivering various items.
At one place where we stopped, the building was being used as a bakery. The two truck drivers went inside the bakery while Loren and I waited in the back of the truck. They came out of the bakery chewing large mouthfuls. They brought two large envelopes full of hot rolls and laid them in the back of the truck. The envelopes were waterproof and padded with some sort of insulation to keep the rolls warm. The envelopes were about 4 feet long and 2 feet wide and each had two layers of rolls inside.
At the next place we stopped, one of the people there sidled over, looked in the truck and spotted the rolls. He sounded off and immediately half a dozen people swarmed the truck, tore open one of the envelopes and helped themselves to several handfuls of rolls apiece.
Loren and I eyed each other. On the front lines we had, on one occasion only, received about one and a half rolls each with a little marmalade. The rest of the time we subsisted on "C" rations. Those rolls had been delicious and were the closest thing to hot chow we had seen on the front lines.
At the next stop, when the swarm again came for the rolls, Loren moved the envelopes to the front of the truck bed and announced that he would kick the head off the first man who tried to touch the rolls. Someone asked Loren who the Hell he thought he was. Loren answered that he was the man who was going to kick the head off the first person who reached for the rolls.
Soon after that the two Marines in the cab of the truck left us at a road junction. I never have had too much luck with Marine truck drivers.
We were about a mile from the northern outskirts of the city of Naha. It was a rainy, overcast day. The Fourth Marines had fought through this area a few days before. The terrain was open farmland, uncultivated that year because the farmers had moved north, away from the fighting. We could see for quite a distance in every direction. There was little vegetation other than new grass and we were the only humans around. Or so we thought.

Someone shot at us with a rifle. When a shot fired from some distance off goes close by, the bullet gets to the target before the noise made by the rifle firing. The snap of the bullet is heard first as its sonic crack hits the ear, followed by a distant thump from the sound of the rifle. It is usually difficult to determine exactly from what direction a shot has been fired. We hit the deck and waited a little while. When we rose up to look for the shooter, he shot at us again.

We scooted out of there and kept low until we found a covered route which allowed us to continue moving south.

On the northern outskirts of Naha we found a number of M1 rifles and picked out the two best looking ones. There were cartridge belts with ammunition for the rifles, and haversacks, all probably abandoned when the previous owner had been wounded or killed. We scavenged some of the packs for items of clothing to use for cloth with which to clean the two rifles. We even found a toothbrush. Marines did brush their teeth in those days, but the main use for a toothbrush was to keep a rifle clean and functioning.

We stood on a pile of rubble next to a stone wall which was of a convenient height to field strip and clean the two rifles. All of a sudden the rubble I was standing on gave way and I was ankle deep in the desiccated chest cavity of a long dead cadaver.

We couldn't clean the bores of the rifles, except by firing, but we cleaned the chambers, and brushed out and lubricated the rubbing parts with Lubriplate from the small containers in the buttplate recesses. The rifles cleaned up well enough that they both fired with no malfunctions. Both of us counted the rear sight elevation clicks down, memorized them, and then put them back on. We shot at some stones on a wall, from a distance of about a hundred yards, with enough success that we were confident that the rifles were probably zeroed well enough.

How we knew I don't remember, but we reckoned that we should go east from where we were to find G Company. There was a road and we started walking east on it. We began to go through wooded areas. No one shot at us. Maybe any by-passed Japanese in that area were out of the weather trying to keep dry.

There had been canteens on the cartridge belts that we had picked up and we had filled them from other canteens, so we had water, but no chow. A 6X6 truck passed us going east on the road we were following. The truck didn't stop for us. It may have been driven by the two Marines who had given us a ride before and they didn't want us to abuse any more of their friends.

The truck was carrying wooden cases of "C" rations. When it slowed for a deep, water-filled hole on the muddy road, I was able to catch up with it and pull off one of the cases of rations.

Some time later we encountered a group of Marines and asked one of them if he knew where G Company was. He pointed out another group a short distance away. We knew them. They were part of G Company. We were home.

The Company had not yet been back up on the front lines, but had been sending out a few patrols. We hadn't missed much while we were in the hospital, except some rainy weather.

We were both assigned to the third platoon; Loren as the platoon sergeant, I as a rifleman/runner.

As far as communications during an attack were concerned, we might as well have been fighting in World War I. The "Walky Talky" radios in use at that time, even when available, employed vacuum tube circuitry which used up batteries quickly and was often prone to failure from shock, wetness or fungus infection.
Runners were used to communicate between units. Young men who were fleet of foot and possessed of a reasonable level of intelligence (or a complete lack thereof) were employed to keep higher echelons informed of progress and to guide wire men and people carrying ammo, water, rations, etc. up to newly captured positions. After helping to attack a hill, after his unit had set up a perimeter defense, a runner would then have to find a safe way to get back to company headquarters with "The Scoop". Runners were also used to communicate with other companies and sometimes ranged all over a battlefield.
Once wire had been laid, Sound Power telephones were used and gave good service. The severity of the fighting in an area could often be gauged by the amount of communication wire left laying on it.

On June 4, 1945 the 4th Marines and the 29th Marines made a landing on Oroku peninsula, which is across the bay south of the city of Naha. We were ferried around to the west end of the peninsula in LVT's (Landing Vehicle, Tracked; a sort of bulldozer boat that could travel on land as well as water). We usually called them "AMTRACS" (Amphibious Tractors), but I know today that the official name was LVT. And, LVT requires fewer keystrokes on a word processor than AMTRAC.
There was a sea wall where we landed. The top of an LVT was less than half a foot below the top of the sea wall. I don't know if someone had established the time of the landings so that the tide would be right for this to happen. Or even if each LVT road at about the same level in the water regardless of load. It was probably just a fortuitous coincidence.
The landing ramp was in the rear of an LVT. The coxswain (pilot, driver ?) backed his LVT up so that the closed ramp was against the sea wall and held it there by revving the engine with the tracks turning in reverse. Long range fire from a machine gun was hitting the vicinity of the sea wall. The modus operandi for getting ashore was to stand facing the sea wall with your rifle held with both hands at port arms. Two men would then grab you by the elbows and the seat of the pants. As you bent your knees and then jumped, the two men added to your momentum to lift and toss you up and over the wall. You rolled over, got to your feet and vacated the area quickly. This procedure reduced exposure time to the machine gun fire. No one in our platoon was hit getting over the sea wall.

The Oroku beachhead was also exposed to fire from Japanese "Screaming Meemie" rockets which were launched from fixed wooden troughs. The rockets would scream like a banshee when they were first launched, becoming silent after the rocket fuel had burned out. Then they would coast until they impacted the ground and

exploded. I never saw one from close up, but they were over a foot in diameter and about five feet long. It was possible to spot them in flight. They looked like flying seabags. It was noticed that they repeatedly hit the same part of the sea wall area. That area, several hundred yards across, was roped off and very few casualties resulted from those unguided missiles.

On June 5, I had just returned to the platoon area from company headquarters when I saw the platoon leader being carried on a poncho. He had been shot through the neck and later died. I don't remember his name.

On June 6, the Third Platoon was moving up to attack a hill on Oroku Peninsula southwest of Naha. The platoon was walking southeast in single file next to a ridge which was northwest of the hill which was our objective. There was some shrubbery and a few trees, but no real cover between us and the Japanese. The new platoon leader was Lt. McNulty. I was immediately behind him, followed by the rest of the platoon. The platoon sergeant, Loren Mitchell, was at the rear of the file.

A Japanese 47 Millimeter dual purpose cannon (anti-aircraft or anti-personnel) fired at the platoon from some distance away. This gun normally fired three round bursts, shots being at about half second intervals.

Three shells hit near the front of the platoon. The farthest shell hit about 10 yards away, the closest about 10 feet from me.

Lt. McNulty was hit. The three men behind me went down. I was hit in the right thumb, the left forearm, the left knee and left hip. The fragment that hit my thumb was the biggest piece that hit me and caused me to drop my rifle. I quickly wrapped a handkerchief (really more of a rag) around my hurt thumb. The other three fragments were small and the wounds from them only about as bad as a shot from a big hypodermic needle. (The small piece in my forearm went all the way through, but it took five years to do it. It had migrated to the opposite side of my arm by the time I extracted it in April of 1950.)

When Sgt. Mitchell realized that the platoon leader was down, he ran up to the front of the file. I was still on my feet, so when he ran by me he said "Let's go, Whitey". I picked up my M1 and followed him across a road in an open valley about a hundred yards wide, to the base of the hill which we were attacking.

Sgt. Mitchell went straight up the hill and apparently went over its crest. I angled over to the right side of the hill. To the right of the hill, and at a lower elevation than where I stopped, was a small wood frame building, probably smaller than ten feet square. A Japanese Nambu machine gun, easily recognizable from its high rate of fire, began firing from inside the building toward the Marines behind me who were coming across the valley. I don't remember if the gun had shot at Loren and me when we crossed the valley. I couldn't see the gun or the Japs firing it, but I fired several clips from my M1 through the walls of the building and the firing from it stopped. This kept me occupied for a few minutes. One of the others who had arrived on the hill a short time later said that Loren Mitchell was dead.

I went to the top of the hill and looked over it. Intermittent machine gun fire came just over the top of the hill, but I was able to sneak quick peeks. About 100 feet from the crest and slightly down hill was a Lewis Gun on a bipod. The gun was resting on a ridge which came into the southeast side of the hill at a right angle. There were no Japanese, alive or dead, visible near the gun.

The body of Sgt. Mitchell was lying just past the crest. We found out when we recovered his body that the Japanese firing the Lewis Gun had hit Sgt. Mitchell several times in the chest.

Maybe the reason that Sgt. Mitchell went over the crest of the hill was that he saw the Japanese and went after them. Or, maybe he arrived at the top of the hill, was hit and fell over the crest. But, for whatever reason, he went over the top of the hill and was killed. Our country lost one of its stalwarts. The Marine Corps lost a hoss. I lost someone who was more than my sergeant. He was my friend. He was a friend to a lot of people.

The Lewis Gun was still there when we left that hill to attack another one.

About 200 yards to our front was a narrow gap between two hills. Periodically, Japanese would run past this gap. Gunny Quattrone told us to keep looking and shoot at them when they ran past it. This was very difficult to do because of machine gun and rifle fire that came over the top of the hill. I shot at some once, but I don't think I hit any of them.

Lt. Ruth became the platoon leader. He led an attack which caused the platoon to again be the target of that 47 Millimeter gun. The lieutenant had reached the top of a small embankment at the start of our advance and was about to start down it. I was at his side, slightly behind him, with my good sense turned off. I was going to follow wherever he went. The 47 Millimeter gun fired three shots which hit at the base of the embankment. The lieutenant backed up and we went down the side and around the embankment. This gave the 47 Millimeter gunner time to reload and shoot three more shells at us. None of the six shells hit anyone in the platoon and after a few more yards we were masked off from the gun by an intervening hill.

That afternoon, Lt. Ruth was hit in the head by a rifle bullet as we rounded a small hill.

Gunnery Sergeant John Quattrone took over as the Third Platoon commander. (Gunnery sergeants are called "Gunny" in the Marine Corps. In the Marine Corps at that time, gunnery sergeant was a much more exalted rank than it is today.) I believe that Gunny Quattrone was platoon leader number seven for the third platoon. That is, he was the seventh officially designated platoon leader. We had several others who acted as platoon leader for short periods after the regularly appointed one had been wounded or killed. And usually the man who took over was himself killed or wounded. Sgt. Mitchell was in this category. Gunny Quattrone was also wounded while acting as the third platoon leader.

About 500 or 600 yards northeast of one hill that our platoon assaulted, was a another hill which was about the same height as the one we were on. It had almost no vegetation, having been practically denuded by artillery fire. We called it Flat Top, although I have never seen that designation on any map. Maybe it looked to us as if it had a flat top as a result of all of the shelling that it had absorbed. The direction of the hill from us was at about a sixty degree angle from our front.

An FO, a lieutenant from the 15th Marines, was with the platoon. The FO spotted three Japanese with his binoculars, lying on top of Flat Top. He didn't think he would be able to hit them with the first shells fired if he were to call a fire mission, and they would be able to slip away before corrections could be made. We had no machine guns with the platoon.

Gunny Quattrone and I decided to try to hit them using BAR's. He and I were each carrying a carbine at the time so we each borrowed a BAR. With no bipods on the BAR's, we got into prone positions using loop slings. Just like on a rifle range except that the nineteen pound BAR was really heavy on my left hand. The BAR sights were not zeroed for that specific distance.

I knew a lot about shooting before I went to the rifle range for the three weeks of rifle training during Boot Camp. I was on a high school rifle team and belonged to a junior rifle club which was affiliated with the National Rifle Association. The junior program was run by a former World War I soldier, who had shot Springfield rifles a number of times at the National Rifle Matches at Camp Perry, Ohio. From that shooting experience, and the knowledge of how to zero a rifle that the old gentleman had given me, finding the zero of that BAR held few mysteries for me.

The Gunny and I each zeroed by firing at marks at the base of Flat Top. The impact area was out of the sight of the three Japanese and probably 40 feet below them. The FO spotted the bullet strikes for us with his binoculars. With the front side of Flat Top as steep as it was, we were able to fire at marks that were within a few yards of the same distance from us as the Japanese were.

The BAR had a leaf rear sight similar to a M1903A1 Springfield rifle, except that the sight was located on the back of the receiver, closer to the eye, not up on the barrel like the '03. A slide with a sight aperture in it could be moved up an down on the rear sight leaf and locked with a screw.

The lines on the sight leaf meant nothing to me, so I raised the slide up a small amount from where it was and used point of aim. My zeroing shots hit too low, about two feet low, according to the FO. I laid there doing mental gymnastics as to how much to raise the rear sight. I figured that I was about 4 or 5 minutes low. (A minute of angle subtends approximately an inch per 100 yards of distance, I.E. an inch at 100 yards, two inches at 200 yards, etc.)

From my experience in building model airplanes, I knew how much was a 64th of an inch. On an M1 rifle a 64th of an inch is about two clicks (minutes) of elevation. The distance between the front and rear sights on the BAR was about the same as that of an M1 rifle, so, I raised the rear sight what I thought was TWO 64ths and got lucky. My next burst was centered on the place I aimed at on the base of Flat Top.

I didn't know how the Gunny was doing, but he was an old time Regular Marine, and probably knew how to zero a BAR.

Two of the Japanese were lying within a foot of each other and another was lying a short distance from them to their right. They were not looking at us (according to the FO) and probably didn't know we existed. We were looking at them from almost straight to their left. They might have been able to hear us firing at that distance, but, if so, maybe they couldn't pick the sound of our firing out of the general noise level.

The Gunny and I couldn't see the Japanese, but several small bushes still remained on the top of Flat Top and they were easily visible references. The FO told us where to aim relative to one of the bushes. We both shot at the two Japanese on the right.

We fired together at a verbal signal from the FO, with him watching through his binoculars. I fired two three-round bursts. The trigger on that BAR was strange to me, so I couldn't get off two-round bursts. I don't remember how many times the Gunny fired. The FO told us to cease firing. Two of the Japanese had crawled away, but one of them was still lying there. There was no way to tell which of us had hit him.

The three Japanese were either officers, on the hill observing the situation first hand, so they could better control their troops; or they were spotting for artillery or mortar fire. In either case we probably saved a few Marine lives by driving them off of the top of Flat Top.

When I think about that occasion, I believe that if we had used M1 rifles we might have been able to hit all three of them. We surely could have zeroed more easily.

The sights on an M1 (And on an M14, which has the same type of sight) are the best non-optical sights, and the most easily and positively adjusted, of any military rifle ever made, including the current U. S. service rifle, the M16, which was a step backward.

With a BAR, the first round of a burst went where the weapon was aimed. The succeeding shots of the burst went wherever the recoil of the previous shot had caused the barrel to point. There was also a delay from the time the shot was squeezed off until the round fired. With bipods on the BARs, we could have done a little better, but probably not much. The bipods on that particular model of BAR clamped to the barrel. I now know that resting its barrel on something when firing it can make a rifle shoot erratically.

One pitch black, rainy night I was dug in with a new man. He complained that the BAR he was armed with kept malfunctioning. I asked him when was the last time he had cleaned it and he told me he didn't know how to field strip it so he could clean it. So, I cleaned it. Or, rather, I stripped it and put the pieces in my pockets, and we cleaned them and oiled them before I reassembled the BAR. We did this by feel, since it was raining and we worked under a poncho which made it too dark to see anything. Luckily, we didn't drop any parts into the mud on the bottom of the hole. The next morning that BAR operated like a sewing machine.

I'm not sure on just which hill this occurred, but it was on Oroku peninsula in early June. A wire on a pole on the very top of a large hill was suddenly severed by a machine gun bullet. I don't know whether it was a Marine bullet or a Japanese bullet that hit it. The wire fell down from the pole and began to rewind itself into three foot diameter coils, all the while coming down the hill at high speed. Several of us had to duck out of its path. The pole the wire was trying to reach was quite a distance away so a large quantity of wire was involved. I saw the wire when it finally came to rest. It was uninsulated copper, about 5/16 inches in diameter. A bullet had hit it dead center and had sliced right through it on a slight angle. If the sharp end of the wire had struck someone, at the velocity it was traveling and as heavy as the wire was, it might have done them some hurt.

Also on Oroku Peninsula, and again I'm not certain on which hill this happened, one of our 37 Millimeter guns wheeled up and started firing directly over the foxhole occupied by West and me. They sited the gun about 30 yards to our rear, firing at something to our front. We heard the first shot (it almost deafened us) and raised up enough to see behind us. One of the gunners on the 37 Millimeter gun noticed us and signaled us to get down. They kept firing for about a half dozen rounds and we stuck our fingers in our ears after the first shot. We were pretty peeved. West wanted to throw a grenade in their direction so they could hear some noise too, but I talked him out of it. We should have been warned so we could have vacated the hole. Also, we could have pointed out some targets for them. As it was, mortar rounds sent them scurrying.

The .30 caliber carbine was not then, nor is it now, one of my favorite rifles. While it is .30 caliber, it fires a short, underpowered cartridge with a light bullet which is not too lethal. The optimum maximum distance for a carbine lies somewhere between 100 and 200 yards. 300 yards is a long distance for a carbine.

Having said that, let me continue by stating that more Japanese were shot using carbines than with any other rifle. Most of the Japanese were shot at night using carbines equipped with a night sight.

The night sight was called a "Sniperscope". This was a device with an independent infrared light source and an infrared light detector. It was capable of being mounted on a carbine and projected an electronically intensified image onto a screen with a reticle (cross hair) for aiming.

The Sniperscope had a relative, called a "Snooperscope", which was used for observation at night. It had no provision for being mounted onto a rifle.

Both devices employed relatively fragile vacuum tubes. The Sniperscope could withstand the recoil of a carbine, but would not have held up too well on an M1 rifle.

The Japanese were usually very active at night. The infrared light source was not visible to human eyes. When the Japanese came out at night to work on their emplacements, many of them succumbed to shots from sniperscope equipped carbines.

I'm a rifleman. I liked the M1 and had little regard for a carbine. I wound up with a carbine anyway.

When Lt. McNulty had been wounded, and I had been hit in the right thumb by a fragment from the same 47 millimeter shell, the lieutenant was evacuated because the wound in his right arm made him unable to grasp his carbine. My hurt thumb made it hard for me to hold an M1 rifle with my right hand, as I frequently did while running. So, I asked the lieutenant for his carbine, which was lighter than an M1, and he gave it to me. It was loaded with a full 15 round magazine. There were two full magazines in a pouch on the butt and he gave me another couple of magazines which I carried in a pocket of my dungaree jacket.

A man with the title of "Corpsman" was regarded with great affection by all the Marines in the unit to which that man was assigned. The Marine Corps has no medical personnel. A Corpsman was a "Navy Hospital Corpsman", a sailor with a medical specialty who thought he had joined the Navy. Instead, he had been assigned to a Marine unit. Each rifle platoon had a corpsman assigned. He went wherever the platoon went.

A corpsman held the Navy rank of Hospital Apprentice if his rank was lower than petty officer and Pharmacist Mate if he was a petty officer. It was the corpsman's job to give first aid to Marines who had been wounded. All of them had been to Navy schools to learn their skills. Most of the instruction assumed that their work would be done aboard ship in a clean operating room. On the front lines, with the Marines, they had to work in unsanitary, often extremely hazardous conditions. It was a difficult job (to me a distasteful job) that they did extremely well. They saved the lives of countless Marines.

The corpsman who had bandaged my thumb had been wounded himself soon after that, and was replaced by another corpsman the next day. He was an older man who told me he had a son who was a Marine. He was nervous about being up on the front lines. We had just taken another hill and the new corpsman and I dug a foxhole together as dusk was approaching. At his suggestion we recited the Lord's Prayer together when night overtook us.

Our platoon was dug in on the forward slope of the hill. Usually, after I had completed my runner's chores, going back to company headquarters, bringing up wiremen et al, I didn't get the choicest of locations for a hole. The hole that the corpsman and I dug that evening, was on the platoon's left flank in a relatively exposed position. The setting sun behind us had probably made us hard to spot as we dug in. The hole overlooked a valley and a much larger hill that ran alongside the valley in the direction of the enemy. I Company occupied the forward slope (to them) of the hill across the valley from us. Japs held the reverse slope, but they hadn't been there the previous day. The Japanese made a habit of moving around at night, retreating here, moving up there.

Three of us had patrolled in that valley the day before. We had not used good judgement. We had walked up through the middle of the valley, way out in front of the platoon, in the open and in broad daylight until someone had shot at us, probably from the hill we were on now, but farther to the east. We couldn't see them but we shot in their general direction and then ran for

cover behind a low stone wall. That wall was on the edge of a small village that was now a strongly occupied enemy position. By the time we started back from the valley, a Nambu had picked us up, and maybe a couple of riflemen, but they couldn't have been any closer that 250 yards. We followed the wall and stayed in some trees as long as we could, but eventually we had to run for the cover of a ravine where the platoon was located. As I jumped into the ravine just ahead of bullets from the Nambu, my picture was taken in mid-leap by a Marine combat photographer. I never have seen that photo. Maybe taking my picture broke the man's camera.

After we had occupied the hill, I went back to company headquarters and brought three men back up to the hill with me. One of the three men was Captain Tomasello, the company commander. The route had several places where it was necessary to run across open spaces to places where there was cover. Part of the way ran through the ravine. While we were walking in the bottom of the ravine, the company commander climbed up the side of the ravine for a looksee. When I noticed him I yelled at him to get down from there. He came down with a sheepish look on his face. I hurried us along in the ravine and apologetically explained to the captain about the mortars and the Nambus that had the area pinpointed. It was the first and last time that I ever commanded a captain in combat.

After his visit to the hill, I accompanied the captain back to company headquarters so I could bring some wire men and some people with water and supplies back to the hill where the platoon was. On the way back we stopped in the ravine and watched several tanks in action. The tanks were in the valley slightly forward of the left flank of the hill occupied by the Third Platoon. The tanks were firing flamethrowers and machine guns toward the base of the hill to our left and toward the village with the stone wall where I had been the day before. The flamethrowers were mounted in the tubes (cannon barrels), so the tanks were unable to shoot artillery shells. The flamethrowers shot a thumb-sized stream of fire for nearly 100 yards. Where we were in the ravine was about 50 to 100 yards from the tanks. One of the tanks was hit by fire from the village and lost a track. Three men got out of it safely and ran to the ravine where we were. One of the men was an Army lieutenant. He wore his bars, his insignia of rank, something that no officer in our company would do. Insignia of rank could draw sniper fire. The lieutenant was peeved at losing his tank. As he passed us in the ravine he shot several squirts from his Reising grease (sub-machine) gun into the side of the ravine until the magazine was empty.

One man was awake at all times in each foxhole. That meant that only half a night's sleep was possible with two men in a hole. That much sleep was not usually actually had by each man, what with alarums and nocturnal activities by the Japanese and by us. I probably wouldn't have been able to remember when I had two hours of uninterrupted sleep. Probably in the hospital. I was exhausted. The new corpsman's nervousness allowed me to have more sleep that night than I ordinarily would have had.

Every time it was my watch, the corpsman would raise up and ask me if I could stay awake. Then he would usually take over the watch.

Sometime during the night, the corpsman shook me awake and whispered that he had heard a noise. There was a Jap out there and he was going to throw a grenade at him. We usually never fired our rifles at night, the muzzle flash would have revealed the location of the foxhole. We used only grenades and (should the need have arisen) KA-BAR knives. I was instantly awake then and watched him. He wiggled the pin out and immediately threw the grenade without first letting the spoon fly inside the hole and waiting a few seconds. The grenade snapped as it armed itself when he threw it. He then peered out into the darkness to watch it. I pulled him down into the hole just before it went off. Fragments from the grenade hit around our hole.

At just about dawn I was asleep when I heard the corpsman shoot twice with his carbine. He said he had shot at a Jap about 200 yards away on the other hill across the valley, and he was sure he had hit him. Several minutes later a mortar round came in and hit one of the "safer" locations on our hill, not as exposed as the hole that the corpsman and I shared. The word was passed for the corpsman and he left our hole to tend to some Marines who had been wounded by fragments from the mortar shell.

After the corpsman had left I was staring sleepily out across the valley when a bullet fired from the other hill struck the parapet of the hole and sprayed me with dirt. I hunkered down and the Japanese shot again and hit the inside of the back of the hole. I thought the corpsman had missed the Jap or there was another one there. I jumped out of the hole and ran to some shinnery and cut some branches. Then I ran back to the hole and stuck twigs and branches around the hole so that I could look around without being seen.

I Company made a sweep toward that area of the hill across the valley and I watched them. When they approached the location from where that Japanese had fired at me, I yelled over to them and warned them. Soon there was firing in that area. I found out later that one of the Japanese they killed there had already been wounded in the body and was bandaged. I believe that a carbine bullet fired by the corpsman had hit him but had not killed him.

Later that same day, I had just filled my canteens from a Jerry can and was going back to my hole. I walked near two Marines who were in a foxhole on a part of the hill which had a steep slope. They were sitting up, using the slope of the hill for a backrest, heads together, talking. A mortar shell hit and exploded between their heads. One of them was an older man (in his twenties) named Williams whom I had trained with in the states.

I was hit on the right cheek by a chunk of something that might have been brain tissue, in nearly the same spot where I had been hit by a piece of meat almost a month before. There was also a hole in my right canteen from a mortar shell fragment. If the fragment had gone through the canteen it would have missed my hip, but my hand had been on the canteen only seconds before.

On the 9th of June the three rifle platoons of G Company advanced quite a distance, maybe over 500 yards. Gunny Quattrone was still our platoon leader. The gunny had told us the day before that if we could go another 2000 yards the worst of the battle might be over for us. We were running out of hills to take and Japanese to take them away from.

We were running out of us, too. This was our 70th day on the island of Okinawa. A Marine rifle platoon in those days normally had 42 men. The Third Platoon had 19 men in it. Actually, there were 11 men from the Third Platoon, the corpsman, and 7 men and two machine guns from the Machine Gun Platoon.

We ran into some opposition and stopped at the bottom of the forward slope of a large hill. The First and Second Platoons stopped on the forward slope of a smaller hill a little ahead of us and to our right. A valley or gap ran between the two hills. Their hill had a more gradual forward slope. Ours had a steep forward slope and an almost vertical side next to the valley between the two hills.

When we reached the hill Gunny Quattrone wasn't with us. I later found out that he had wound up on the other hill with the First and Second Platoons.

Across the valley from us to our right, probably 75 yards away, and slightly behind us, was another small hill which overlooked the rear of the other two platoons.

Suddenly, a Japanese Nambu machine gun opened up on the First and Second platoons from a cave inside that hill. I could only see into the cave from an angle, but I started shooting with the carbine and fired about half a magazine. Then I borrowed a BAR and fired a magazine from it into the cave. I couldn't hit anyone directly, but I wanted to spray them with dirt from the impact of bullets on the inside wall of the cave. The Nambu quit firing. By then the men of the First and Second Platoons had opened up and some of them were in a position to fire directly at whoever was in the cave.

We had a Bazooka and two rockets for it, so I got the man carrying it to fire a round into the cave. The rocket hit inside the cave perfectly but failed to explode. I knew what had happened. The man had not armed the rocket before he fired it. We made sure that the next rocket was armed and we had a more experienced man shoot it. It exploded, but the man had shot it at the wrong cave. We were out of rockets for the bazooka.

One of our men came down from farther up the hill. It was one of the Whites, R. S. White. He had been hit with one bullet which went through his left pectoral muscle and the triceps muscle in his left arm. He said that two more men were up there.

I ran up the hill. It was almost straight up for about twenty feet to a Japanese trench which was two and a half or three feet wide and about three or four feet deep. The trench stopped abruptly on the right, so I followed it as it curved around the hill to the left.

I ran into a Marine sitting in the trench, unable to keep his eyes open after dirt or sand had been sprayed into his eyes by a

bullet that had missed him. We were getting fire from Flat Top which was now to our rear. I called down to the men below us to throw clods of dirt up in the air so we could locate them. Then I helped the half blinded man slide down the hill to them.

I looked back at Flat Top which was now about 400 or 500 yards behind us and to our left. There were Japanese shooting from caves and positions at the bottom of Flat Top or just this side of it. One Nambu machine gun was shooting at me, so I moved back and forth in the trench and took quick peeks. I could have shot at them except for two things. I didn't have a rifle, just that carbine, which would have been ineffective at that distance. And, there were tanks in the vicinity of the caves. If I had shot at the caves, the people in the tanks might have thought that I was a Japanese shooting at them from the trench and they might have shot at me. The tanks had 75 Millimeter cannon.

I moved left in the trench as it curved around the hill, going slowly, staying below the parapet of the trench and keeping the carbine at the ready. I had thought about what I would do if a grenade came in the trench with me and I wasn't decided whether I would vacate the trench or try to throw the grenade out. The trench abruptly ran out and became a path that continued around the hill at the same level as the floor of the trench. The path was about 40 or 50 yards long and ended at an embankment on the hill. On one side of the path was the hill, on the other side was a sheer drop. I had moved around the hill enough that the location was not visible from Flat Top.

From where the trench stopped I could see a Marine sitting with his back to the embankment that made a right angle with the end of the path. He raised his rifle when he saw me, then lowered it. I stepped out and started to go to him, but he yelled at me to get back. I stopped and immediately Nambu bullets sprayed all around my feet. I hurried back to the safety of the trench. Bullets from this same machine gun had wounded R. S. White and had sprayed dirt in the other man's eyes.

We held a shouted conversation for a while. He said that there was nothing that I could do to help him, that he would suck it up after awhile and make a try for the trench. He was sure he could make it with no trouble. He was out of the Nambu's field of fire most of the way back to the trench. I tried to get him to come to the trench while I was there, but he allowed as how I had stirred up the Nambu and he would wait awhile until things were quieter.

I went back around the trench to a point above where I thought the rest of the platoon was and called down to them to throw clods in the air so I could locate them. I slid down the hill and rejoined them. Gunny Quattrone was still not around. I thought something had happened to him. We were in a precarious position and without a platoon leader. We hadn't had anyone killed yet, but two more men had been wounded in addition to R. S. White.

I decided to go over to the other hill to see if there was an officer there who could give us a hint as to what to do. We were on the west side of our hill. The south side was very steep and ran alongside the valley that separated our hill from the hill where the other two platoons were.

A gully, about 3 or 4 feet wide and about a foot deep, ran next to the south side of our hill. It was partially filled with water. I told someone where I was going and stepped out into the gully. My plan was to follow the gully until I was close enough to run across the valley to the other hill. I edged along, keeping very close to the side of the hill. There was a dead Japanese "Imperial Marine" laying across the gully on his back. He was long dead and badly bloated.

After about 75 yards in the gully, I thought I was close enough to make a dash across the valley to the other hill. I got my courage up, then stepped up out of the gully. I was about to start running when I heard someone start screaming on the other hill. I found out later that the man who screamed had been shot through both elbows and the abdomen. I stopped and was just standing there, feet spread, in a semi-crouch, carbine in my right hand.

SMACK! I knew instantly what had happened to me. A single bullet had hit both of my legs below the knees. The immediate feeling was that of being struck with a club. I spun to my left and dived back toward the gully. I landed with my body from the waist down still outside the gully. The real pain started then. I felt like I had a charleyhorse cramp in the muscles of my right calf. Using my hands and elbows, I pulled myself along until my lower body and legs were in the gully. While I was doing this, two more bullets sprayed me with dirt.

I looked for the carbine. It was behind me, with the butt standing straight up and the barrel embedded in the mud of the gully. I thought about retrieving it. I remember thinking that the carbine would probably blow up if I tried to shoot it with the barrel clogged with mud. It would have been necessary to turn clear around in the gully to get to it. I was hurting too much to do that.

I began crawling in the mud of the gully, pulling myself along with my elbows, back to where the others in the platoon were.

Out of the corner of my eye I saw some one running toward me and turned to look at him. It was Gunny Quattrone coming from the hill that I had been trying to reach. He saw me and we made eye contact, but he kept on running past me. He was probably not aware that I had been hit. It was a good thing he didn't come to me. If he had stopped near me, outside the gully, he would have been another stationary target for the Japanese who had shot me. As it was, when he had gone twenty or thirty yards past me, I saw him get hit from back to front through his left side above his cartridge belt. He seemed to stumble, then he took off, running like a turpentined cat. That was the last time I saw him.

At a wide spot in the gully I stopped to rest. I rolled over, sat up and pulled my pant leg up out of the legging and rolled it up to get a look at my right leg. The pain was fierce. On the right side of my right calf was a half dollar sized hole, not exactly spurting blood, but bleeding heavily and rhythmically. I noticed what looked like bits of fresh hamburger on the inside of my pants leg.

I also noticed something that I had observed before when I had helped people who had been hit. Blood looked black on the gray-green dungaree material of my pants.

When I got to the body of the dead Japanese I couldn't crawl around it, so I crawled over it. I got fluid from it on my front. The water and mud in the gully helped wash most of it off me as I continued pulling myself along with my elbows.

I saw heads poking around the side of the hill for quick looks at me. They were getting fire from the Japanese who had shot me. Gunny Quattrone had been close to them when he was hit.

When I reached the place where the men in the platoon were, several of them quickly pulled me up out of the ditch to safety behind the hill.

The corpsman used a pressure bandage on my right leg, which didn't make it feel any better. I was thinking that he had used a rubber tourniquet, but he probably took it off after putting on the bandage. I bled a bunch. My left leg didn't bother me as much as the right. Maybe its pain was over-shadowed by the pain in my right leg.

Four of us were wounded. At least two of them were completely ambulatory. The man with the hurt eyes would need someone to guide him. I don't know how long we laid there. The other three laid there calmly, but no matter what position I tried, I could not get comfortable. I asked the corpsman for a shot of morphine, but he wouldn't give me one. He said with the blood I had lost, morphine might knock me out and the situation we were in I might have to walk out of there. I had news for him.

Finally, the word was passed that smoke would be used for cover so casualties could be carried out. They had been even harder hit on the other hill. I don't remember whether the smoke came from artillery shells or from smoke grenades.

Four people put me face down on a poncho and, encumbered by their rifles and other gear, they dragged me by a circuitous route, over hills and through ravines, back to Company Headquarters. My private parts became intimate with every snag and bump for what seemed like a thousand yards. I will always be grateful to those four tired, cussing Marines who dragged me out of there. I had helped to carry people out. Now, it was my turn to be carried.

The company was pulled back from those two hills. I heard that the next day, the 3rd Battalion was relieved from the front line by another battalion.

I was at Company Headquarters for another half hour. While I was there, Captain Tomasello, the company commander, was hit in the neck by a bullet.

Two men carried me on a stretcher to a road where there was a 4X4 truck rigged as an ambulance. I was loaded on the bottom rack and we started to the Sixth Marine Division Hospital. The road was rough and the trip seemed long. The hospital was now located in Naha, farther south than when I had been in it in May. I believe that a Bailey bridge had been erected across the bay south of Naha.

The man on the top rack died on the way.

At the hospital, they laid my stretcher on the floor. The stretcher was literally filled with blood. My blood. After a while, a corpsman cut my pants off and a doctor and a nurse rebandaged my legs. They washed and shaved the skin around the holes, then used sulfa powder in the wounds before they rebandaged them.

I was taken to a cot. I felt weak and terrible, probably from loss of blood. They stuck a needle in my arm and began giving me whole blood and I soon began to feel a lot better. There was always the danger of going into shock, which could be lethal. I don't know whether I had been in any danger of that happening to me.

In the middle of May I had been in a hole with a man who had been shot fore and aft through the chest. A corpsman had bandaged him and had given him a shot of morphine. Then the corpsman had left to attend to another casualty, leaving me in the hole with the man. The situation was hairy and the wounded man could not be evacuated. He was awake and alert. I asked him if he hurt much and he told me that he did not. A lot was going on outside our hole and I didn't watch the man constantly. When I looked back at him, after what seemed only a minute or two, his face was gray and he wasn't breathing. He had gone into shock and died.

Somewhere along the line, I was given a shot of morphine. It didn't seem to affect me much. I still hurt. The same regimen was started that had been followed when I was in the hospital the first time, about three weeks before. I was given a massive penicillin shot in the buttock every three hours.

I had been relieved when I realized that iodine would not be applied to the wounds. Tincture of Iodine had been my parents' treatment of choice for an open wound and it had always stung like fire. That can be illustrated as follows:

The first time that I was ever wounded in action was in the Fall of 1934. The place was a vacant lot located a half block from my home in Kansas City, Missouri. The lot had been covered with tall weeds which had been cut down with a scythe in late Summer. By Fall, the long stems had dried and the leaves had withered so that they could be easily stripped off of the stem. The end product was a light straight stick, six to eight feet long, composed of a hardened outer shell and a pithy core. Those sticks were ideal for use as javelins or as weapons in "Spear Fights".

The butt ends of the spears were slightly less than an inch in diameter and usually had been cut at an angle by the scythe. This resulted in a point that allowed them to stick in soft ground when they were thrown properly. We also used them in play battles, choosing up into teams or armies. When a soldier was hit by a thrown spear he was dead and out of action. The army with the last unhit soldier was the winner.

In those days, young boys frequently wore knickers, those ubiquitous pants with elastic cuffs that ended just below the

knees. The socks below the cuffs invariably drooped down around the shoe tops, leaving an expanse of bare and highly vulnerable flesh exposed to the elements. On one occasion I was hit by a spear which had split slightly when it had been cut by the scythe. This resulted in an inch long sharpened spur extending out beyond the rest of the point of the spear. The spur was driven into my shin, next to the bone. It broke off from the spear when I tried to pull it out of my leg. I ran home. My mother took one look. From the time I went in the front door until Doctor Mom had pulled the spur out of my leg with pliers and had finished sticking an iodine applicator into the hole, I don't believe a full minute had passed.

The morning after I arrived at the Sixth Marine Division Hospital, I was moved to another room in the building. It had been used as a classroom in which to teach sewing. On the walls were Singer Sewing Machine instructional charts. I don't remember whether the verbiage on them was in English or Japanese.

In the afternoon I was taken to an LST and my stretcher was laid down on the tank deck along with about fifty others. There were three naval officers looking down at us from the "balcony" deck that surrounded the tank deck. One of them came down and asked me how old I was. I told him, eighteen. I have always looked younger than I was, and especially so then, as skinny as I was. I probably should have told him that I was eighteen and a half.

On the afternoon of June 10, 1945, my service on Okinawa came to an end. My stretcher was hoisted by a crane up over the side of the U.S. Hospital Ship RELIEF. The sum total of my worldly goods was in a plastic pistol cover which I held in my right hand.

The pistol cover (a soft plastic envelope about 10 by 18 inches in size and olive drab in color) contained my wallet (devoid of money, we had received no pay since January, and then just fifteen dollars), a plastic cigarette case (which I still have), an unopened pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes and a small supply of matches. That and a pair of filthy skivvy shorts, which were cut off of me once I was in my rack on the hospital ship, were all the possessions that I owned. I was at the base line for the measurement of poverty, but at least I wasn't in debt.

Once I was in a ward aboard the RELIEF a very officious Navy nurse ordered a corpsman to give me a sponge bath and some pajama bottoms after my skivvy shorts were cut off me and carried away, probably on a stick. The nurse made some cutting remarks about personal hygiene. She probably didn't understand that if water had to be carried, and there was barely enough for drinking, then shaving and bathing were not feasible.

Front line service was not a nine to five proposition, or even dawn to dusk. The only roof over your head was your helmet. There were no hot showers at the end of a day's work. It was twenty four hours a day, seven days a week; sometimes for weeks at a time. In the mud.

My last haircut had been more than three months before. It had been nearly a shave job, so all of the hairs on my head were the same length. My hair looked like a fright wig. I hadn't shaved for three weeks and my beard was sparse, mainly a goatee and sideburns. I probably didn't look too personally hygienic.

I was lying face down, the only position in which I could be comfortable. This exposed the bottoms of my feet to view. The nurse came by later and ranted and raved about the condition of my feet. They were heavily calloused, had not been out of boondockers (even when I had been in the hospital before) or fully dry for a several months and were stained black by the chemicals used to tan the leather. The nurse ordered a corpsman to clean my feet. He tried, but failed. Some weeks later, a quarter inch thick layer of skin peeled off the heels and balls of both feet and they became as smooth and soft as a baby's.

Hospital ships, while under way, steamed with all lights blazing. At that time, all around the island of Okinawa, Japanese Kamikaze planes were diving into many Navy ships, sinking some, damaging others. I had heard that the COMFORT had been hit. I wondered what I would do if the RELIEF were to be hit and I had to abandon ship. Probably the side stroke.

Captain Tomasello, my company commander, came to see me. He had been shot through the neck, not exactly, but almost from side to side. It had probably been a 6.5 Millimeter round nosed bullet from a Nambu machine gun, and from some distance off. The bullet had evidently had time to "go to sleep" and didn't tumble after it hit his neck.

He had something like a bad pimple where the bullet exited, and a small lesion where it entered. The holes were not even bandaged. He was extremely lucky.

A note about bedpans. I am still a virgin. As of this date, I have never used a bedpan. I inveigled a corpsman into carrying me the twenty feet to the head (Navy for toilet) when I had to move my bowels that first day on the RELIEF, then carry me back to my rack. We used "Ducks", long necked stainless steel vessels, for urination.

On the morning of June 11, a white-haired Navy commander, age at least 60, came into the ward, followed by a corpsman carrying a chair.

The commander pointed to an open space on the deck. "Put it down there, son." Then he beckoned in my direction. "You, come here."

I looked at him. Then I realized that there was only a bulkhead behind me. He was talking to me.

"Come on over here," he said. "I want to dress your wounds. Come on, we haven't got all day."

And here I had thought that I was a cripple.

I swung my legs over the side of the rack, which was about four feet above the deck. I lowered my feet to the steel deck and supported myself on other racks as much as I could. The muscles in my right calf were drawn up so that I had to walk on my toes. I couldn't get my heel down. I hobbled over and sat in the

chair. The commander sat on a low stool in front of me.

The commander was very careless with his scissors as he cut the bandages from my legs. He stuck the pointed end of a scissors blade into the big hole in my right calf. I think he did it on purpose. With the bandage off, blood ran down my leg onto the commander's nice white deck.

"A little hemorrhage," said the commander. "A little hemorrhage is good for the wound, you know. Cleans it out." I didn't tell him that my right leg must have a really cleansed wound in it, as much as it had bled. He rebandaged my legs, using too much sulfa powder, which later worked out of the bandages and was like someone had been eating sugar cookies in my bed.

The commander had a good chair side manner. He was a talker. He kept up a running commentary as he worked. He asked me if I had lied about my age to enlist in the Marine Corps. When I told him I was 18, he made some comment about me being 18 in a few years. Thereafter, every time I would see him, he would say, "Yeah, you'll be 18 in a few years".

When he had finished bandaging my legs he told me to go back to my rack. When I had hobbled and hopped over to it, and a corpsman started to help me climb up into it, the commander said, "No. Don't help him. He has to do it himself."

This was 1945. Recovery treatment for injuries, wounds and surgery was beginning to be changed to that used almost universally today. It antedated civilian practices by quite a few years. Instead of complete bed rest and inactivity, with the need for a consequent lengthy recuperative period, hurt people were kept active. While they healed, they recuperated at the same time.

When I was back up in the rack, he said, "Hang your legs over the side. Does that hurt? Well, it's supposed to hurt. You've been shot. Do that every time you think of it. All day long. Hang them over as long as you can stand it. Now, I don't want you using a bedpan. Go to the head by yourself." There was a scale about thirty feet away from my rack. He pointed to it. "Go weigh yourself every day. Getting around will be the best thing for you."

That is how I know how much I weighed. I was eating like a horse and the chow on that hospital ship was great. I don't know how much I weighed when I first came aboard the RELIEF, but the first time I weighed, I was 128 pounds. The next day I weighed in at 132. The last time I weighed, just before debarking from the RELIEF, I was up to 136 pounds.

I was used to weighing about 150 pounds. The combination of poor or lack of chow, loss of sleep, diarrhea and stress had not gone unnoticed by my body.

The "cargo" on the hospital ship RELIEF for this trip was transported from Okinawa to the island of Saipan in the Marianas Islands group. We were taken to an Army hospital, but there were mostly Marines in my ward. The doctor in the ward was a Navy Lieutenant from Texas. There were Army nurses (female) and Army medical technicians (male) in the ward.

There was a Navy hospital on Guam, and another on Tinian. Both islands were also in the Marianas group, together with Saipan.

A hospital ship would go from Okinawa to either Guam, Tinian or Saipan, whichever island had the most hospital beds available at the time, regardless of whether the wounded men on board were soldiers, sailors or Marines.

Our ward was in a large Quonset type building, with probably forty beds. There was a public address system in each ward. Instead of reveille as a wake up call each morning, an orchestral version of "Out Of My Dreams" from the musical "Oklahoma!" came through the loudspeakers. The first morning that this took place I awoke, had an instant of disorientation followed by a moment of uneasiness, then I was overcome by a warm feeling, knowing that I was warm, dry, safe and in no danger. I have always had a real fondness for that song.

The only thing to disturb this feeling of well being was the soreness in each of my buttocks from the eight times daily injections of penicillin inflicted upon (or within) them.

This continued for a period of three weeks.

Outside of a shot or two of morphine on the night after I was hit, and anesthetics for surgery, I received no medication for pain. I had heard of wounded men in World War I developing addictions from the pain deadening drugs they received. I didn't ask for anything after a day or so, and I'm not sure they would have given me anything. The first few days were pretty rough but then the pain went away unless I would move wrong. The complete lack of any infection, due to the penicillin shots, probably eliminated most of the source of pain.

On the subject of injections, I gave shots on two occasions. Both times were spectacularly unsuccessful.

Across the aisle from me in the hospital ward was a Marine from my battalion. I can't recall his name, but his mother was the postmistress of Arthur, Iowa. He had three holes in the front of his abdomen caused by a single bullet. The bullet had pierced his right side, came out and immediately went back inside through the same hole and then exited his left side. He had no damage to any internal organs, just damaged abdominal muscles which caused him to walk around bent over like an old man with a back problem. For some reason he received his penicillin injections in his arms. I volunteered to give him his shot one day and the medic handed me the hypodermic. Army medics would come by each bed several times a day, pushing a cart full of medical paraphernalia.

I had watched Army medics and Navy corpsmen give shots. They invariably employed a technique for inserting the needle that resembled throwing a dart. They would grab the triceps muscle at the back of the arm and squeeze the flesh to give themselves a stationary target. Then they would insert the needle very briskly. I'd almost swear that the hypodermic left their fingers. I used this technique, but the young man was so skinny that the point of the needle went clear through his arm. Instead of withdrawing the needle and starting over, I withdrew only until the point of the needle was back inside his arm, then I changed directions and pushed it into his arm. The resulting cries of pain completely destroyed any credibility I might have had as a shot giver.

The only other injection that I gave was done prior to this, in May, 1945, on Okinawa. Two of us had helped a wounded man back to G Company headquarters where we put him in the charge of a corpsman. The corpsman was in a shell hole that had been enlarged by digging. He was completely occupied with a man who had cracked up. The man was crying and thrashing around. The wounded man we brought back needed the corpsman's attention much worse than the man with the combat fatigue. The corpsman told me to take care of the crying man -- to hold him down. We were afraid that if he climbed out of the hole that he might be hit by enemy fire.

The man was larger than I was. I had a hard time restraining him. The corpsman rummaged around in his bag and threw me a small cardboard box that contained a syrette, which was like a small metal toothpaste tube with an attached hypodermic needle and contained one dose of a morphine compound.

I held the man down while I removed the syrette from the box. There was a "tee" shaped wire inside the needle, which I pulled out. I then rolled up his sleeve and stuck the needle in his forearm, all the while wrestling with him. I couldn't squeeze the tube's content's into the man's arm and asked the corpsman what I was doing wrong.

The corpsman asked if I had pushed the "tee" shaped wire into the needle to puncture the tube. When I told him that I had not done this, he gave me a long suffering look and got another syrette which he administered himself. When the man quieted down where I did not have to restrain him, I picked up my rifle and slunk back to where I belonged.

In the bed to my right as I lay on my back in the hospital was a corporal from the 22nd Marines who had been overseas for three years but who was not yet 20 years old. He had a real talent. He could blow smoke rings which bounced off of the ceiling of the Quonset hut.

A single rifle bullet had done about as much damage to him as it was possible to do without being life threatening. He had been in mid-stride, left foot forward, when a Japanese had raised up and shot him. He had killed the Japanese and then hobbled back to an aid station.

The bullet had put a furrow in his right thigh. It had then penetrated his scrotum, missing the testes, and then partially circumcised him. It still wasn't finished. The bullet made a massive wound at the juncture of his left buttock and his left thigh as large as a man's hand. And, as a final insult, it amputated the first joint of his left little finger. I watched the first time that penicillin was squirted into that massive wound in his buttock and leg. I found other things to do on subsequent occasions.

Due to the severity of the wound to his buttock and thigh, his transportation to the hospital at Pearl Harbor had been planned, but he refused to go. He had a twin brother who was still with the 22nd Marines on Okinawa and he wouldn't go to Pearl until he had news of his brother. He would ask each new arrival in the ward if they were from the 22nd Marines. If they were, he would wring them out for news about his brother.

In the bed to my left was a sergeant from the 4th Marines who had a bullet in his right calf. His calf was swollen to about twice normal size and he would whimper like a baby when he would bump it in his sleep. The bullet had gone through the torsos of two other Marines who had been lying near him, killing both of them, before stopping in his leg.

I saw the bullet after it had been removed from the sergeant's calf after the infection had been reduced. It was about .30 caliber, colored red from being in his leg and its point was bent.

I remember that the rifling impressions on the bullet had a left hand twist, which meant that the bullet had to have been fired from a Lewis gun. This was a machine gun of British design, which fired .303 caliber ammunition and had left hand twist rifling. The gun might have been of Japanese manufacture. Or, the gun might have been captured when the British surrendered at Singapore. And, Lewis guns were exported to the Far East prior to WW II. All of the rest of the rifles and machine guns used by the Japanese had rifling with a right hand twist.

My legs had been hit by a bullet fired from a Japanese Model 99 Arisaka rifle, which was chambered for a Type 99, 7.7 Millimeter Japanese cartridge. I believe this is so, because that was the only kind of Japanese rifle I saw on Oroku Peninsula. Most (maybe all) of the machine guns I saw were 6.5 Millimeter. I was hit in both legs by a single bullet from a rifle and the scar seemed to be of 7.7 millimeter diameter.

The bullet loaded in that ammunition was a pointed, flat based projectile of about 184 grains weight and a muzzle velocity of around 2400 feet per second. I'm sure that the rifling was right hand twist although there was no way to check it out. The bullet didn't stop in my leg. I only slowed it down some.

The bullet entered my left leg about an inch below the bottom of the patella (kneecap), slightly to the left of center.

It hit at the juncture of the tibia (front bone) and the fibula (rear bone) and traveled between both bones, exiting at the right side of my left leg, just behind the tibia and about a half inch lower on the leg than the entry point. My medical record mentioned a "compound fracture of the left tibia". Entry and exit holes were approximately of bullet diameter.

My right leg was hit on its left side, about two and one-half inches below the bottom of the patella and slightly behind the center of the leg. The entry hole was of bullet diameter. Inside the right leg the sharp pointed bullet became ballistically unstable and tumbled. The exit hole was about half dollar size and opposite the entrance hole, slightly behind the center of the leg, a little lower than the entrance hole.

As far as I know, no bones were hit in my right leg. There was some nerve damage, however. My right foot and ankle were numb for a day or two. Then, for about five to ten years, the bottom of my right foot had areas with no feeling, eventually recovering completely. For several years my right foot could not feel heat or cold too well. The doctor in the hospital on Saipan tested me at least once to see if I was faking about the lack of feeling.

He caught me lying on my stomach and jabbed the small blade of a pen knife into the bottom of my foot and was triumphant when I yelped, but he had stuck the wrong foot. I don't know whether he ever tried the right foot without me knowing it.

Periodically, an army officer, usually a colonel, would come to the ward to decorate one or more of the soldiers with the Purple Heart medal, which is awarded for being wounded in action. We were all supposed to lie at attention while these ceremonies took place. This was an Army hospital. None of the Marines received a Purple Heart there.

I had surgery twice on the right leg; once with a complete anesthetic, once with a spinal block. Sodium Pentathol made me nauseous, but my leg hurt worse after the spinal block wore off.

I had always heard of old civil war veterans being able to predict bad weather from the reactions of their war wounds.

I didn't think this actually happened until it happened to me. My right leg would hurt clear up into my hip -- before a change in weather.

In 1975 I read of tests made on the mummy of Egyptian King Tutankhamen to determine his age at the time of his death. From the extent of the ossification (hardening into bone) of the upper parts of the bones in his lower legs it was determined that he was about 19 years of age when he died, since those regions of the bones had not completely ossified. Until then, I had often wondered how a bullet was able to go completely through my left leg, through what was almost solid bone, and yet do so little damage. I was eighteen years, six months and three days old at the time of the wounding. Had I been a few years older, and the bones in my leg harder and more brittle, the injury might have been much worse, maybe even to the extent of losing that leg at the knee.

For 37 years I had a bone chip (or something) which made my left knee feel uncomfortable unless I flexed it until it snapped every 20 minutes or so, even at night. Then, in 1982, something caused my left knee to swell. When the swelling went down, I did not need to flex the knee any more. The bone chip (or something) had either gone back into place or had migrated. Maybe someday I will find that I need to flex my big toe or my elbow every 20 minutes.

My left shin still has areas which are numb.

Prior to my time in the Marine Corps I was not aware that my great grandfather had been shot in the leg. I hereby certify that I was not trying to outdo him by being shot through both legs.

Through the wonders of modern science, as depicted on television and in moving pictures, small caliber bullets today are capable of knocking human bodies for incredible distances. In the movies, bullets fired from pistols and from small automatic weapons (which use pistol ammunition) cause human bodies to turn flips, to be slammed against walls and to stop

suddenly as though they had hit the end of the rope.

It was not always thus. Persons that I saw being hit by real bullets or actual shell fragments on Okinawa were not propelled sideways or backward or forward. Those hurt seriously enough fell vertically to earth immediately. Others remained standing but probably wanted to get down.

The most powerful of pistol bullets, near the muzzle of the gun that fires it, does not have as much energy or momentum as does a military rifle bullet after it has traveled more than 600 yards.

If anyone could have been knocked down or knocked sideways by a bullet, I should have been. I wasn't. I was still standing after being shot through both legs. I made an instinctive try for the gully I had just left. Bullets don't slam or knock, or even push very much. They make holes.

One example of a bullet not knocking or pushing is the occasion of President Kennedy's assassination. He was never shot from his front. Only two bullets hit him, both fired from behind him by the nut in the School Book Depository, notwithstanding all the arguments and the books written for profit that use tortuous logic to attempt to prove otherwise.

The second bullet to hit the president entered the back of his head and caused his head to be suddenly pushed backward, toward the direction of the bullet entry. It happened like this:

Bullets penetrating into a fluid filled, closed vessel create sudden hydraulic pressure inside the vessel. If the vessel ruptures, the jetting effect of the liquid ejected through the break will push the vessel in a direction opposite to the break. Anyone who has ever shot at a water filled container with a high power rifle has observed that the partial or complete bursting of the container will cause it to be propelled in almost any direction, even back toward the shooter. A container sitting on a flat bottom will often be forced straight up in the air, since a flat surface is not shaped properly to withstand internal pressure and will usually deflect and rupture before a curved surface.

President Kennedy's skull acted as a pressure vessel when the bullet entered it. Brain tissue acted as a fluid or, at least, as a non-compressible semi-liquid. Internal pressure within his skull ruptured the area of the right temple. It could have been a hinged break, still attached at the rear. The bullet might even have exited in that area. The jetting effect resulting from ejection of brain tissue pushed his head backward, in the general direction of the place from where the shot was fired.

The Sixth Marine Division had three rifle regiments; The 4th Marines, the 22nd Marines and the 29th Marines. The division also had an artillery regiment, the 15th Marines.

Each rifle regiment had three battalions. Each battalion had three companies. Each company had three 42-man rifle platoons, composed of three 13-man squads, a platoon leader, a platoon sergeant and a platoon guide (sergeant). And, each squad had three fire teams, each with four men.

In addition, each of these units had ancillary units attached to them. I have already mentioned the mortar section and the machine gun platoon which were part of G Company.

Marine companies were large at that stage of the war, approaching a strength of 240 men. With replacements, who joined the company after the initial landing, perhaps nearly 300 men served in G Company on Okinawa. A member of G Company had a one-in-five chance of being killed. G Company, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines, 6th Marine Division had 60 men killed during the battle for Okinawa.

We never referred to our dead as "Stiffs" or "Corpses". We called them Marines. We never knew when we might become one of them.

Of the members of G Company who survived the battle for Okinawa, nearly every one had been wounded at least once.

This is being written in December of 1991. I have heard that the over half million troops in the Desert Storm campaign, in Kuwait and Iraq, had about 140 people killed in action and something over 400 wounded. G Company alone had almost half that many casualties on Okinawa.

The 6th Marine Division lost 1,740 men killed in action and almost 7,500 men wounded in action during the Okinawa battle.

Because of the high casualty rate, the fire team and even the squad hierarchy quickly broke down. Toward the end of the battle, the lowest unit structure in G Company was the platoon. And most platoons were little more than reinforced squads.

Rifle companies with severe attrition were not dismembered and the survivors sent to other units. Replacements and a constant trickle of returning casualties kept a company up to a minimum strength. Efforts were made so that a returning Marine rejoined the same company he had left when he was wounded. This retained the identity of the company and maintained its esprit de corps. Men who have shared hardship and who have survived danger together tend to form a bond, with each man more effective than a lone individual.

It was not Army policy to make sure that a soldier who had been wounded was returned to the same unit. This, I believe, was a mistake.

Some people might feel that the foregoing comments about bonding and esprit de corps are deserving of ridicule and derision. Those folks have my sympathy and understanding. They most certainly have never had the opportunity to serve in a Marine front line unit, or in a unit in any other branch of the service with a high state of training and good esprit de corps. They either are unaware that such a thing as esprit de corps exists or they were not so fortunate as to have belonged to such a "Band of Brothers". Their skepticism stems from either ignorance or bad luck, perhaps combined with a submerged envy.

One of my pet peeves is decorations for bravery. It has been said that men will risk their lives for a bit of colored cloth. In the Sixth Marine Division, not much colored cloth was given out. Very few Marines received decorations for valorous actions on Okinawa, when compared to the rate at which they are given today. There were five Medals Of Honor, 27 Navy Crosses, 130 Silver Stars and 540 Bronze Star Medals awarded. About 700 decorations for a Division whose members numbered 24,000.

In Grenada, the 5000 or so participants were awarded over 8000 medals. The U.S.Army awarded 812 Bronze Star Medals for Grenada. (However, of these, only 59 had the V device for Valor.) Over 3500 Combat Infantryman Badges were awarded.

A friend of mine was a combat engineer in an Army airborne division in Europe in WW II. He was wounded by a shell fragment in his back, spent time in a hospital and was awarded a Purple Heart Medal. Because he received the Purple Heart he was awarded a Combat Infantryman's Badge (CIB), although he was not in an infantry unit and had spent no time on the front lines. Several years ago, at a division reunion, because he had received the CIB, he was awarded a Bronze Star Medal with the V device.

A high school classmate and life long friend of mine, who was a rifleman in the 96th Infantry Division on both Leyte and Okinawa, also received the CIB for his war time service, and was given a Bronze Star a few years ago.

Since 1961 the Naval Services, including the Marine Corps, have awarded a Combat Action Ribbon (CAR) for persons who have served in a combat area. The sailor who spent time on a ship in the Persian Gulf received the same ribbon as the Marine who braved the mines and the machine gun emplacements while storming through the barbed wire entanglements on the way to Kuwait City. Marines weren't awarded a CAR for combat service in WW II and have never been eligible for the Army's CIB.

The Marine Corps didn't give out many medals in World War II (except for Purple Hearts, and we all seemed to get one of those), but every time you climbed out of your foxhole and went forward when the man said, "Let's go," you deserved a medal. The Air Force gives out Air Medals for every five (?) combat missions flown. Maybe they should have given us a "Ground Medal" for every so many times that we left our relatively safe holes and went out to face unknown dangers.

Participation in a battle earns the participant the right to wear a battle star on the appropriate service ribbon. The participation might only be of the warm body variety, the participant was "there". In addition, the Army awarded an arrowhead device for an amphibious landing. By Army logic I should have had two of those, one for the "landing" (after a somersault) on Oroku peninsula.

Members of the Sixth Marine Division did receive more that their fair share of one decoration, and that was the Purple Heart Medal. The division had almost 7500 recipients of this medal which is awarded to any person wounded in action while serving with the armed forces in combat action against an enemy of the United States.

As of this date the requirements for the Purple Heart have not been changed and in point of fact its place in the hierarchy of decorations was elevated in 1985 to a higher status than some medals it once ranked behind.

Another award was made to all Sixth Marine Division members. This was the Presidential Unit Citation which was awarded to the members of each unit attached to the division during the battle for Okinawa. Qualifications for this award to a unit correspond to those for the award of the Navy Cross to an individual.

It used to be that for a decoration to be awarded, outstanding deeds or actions must have been performed. Decorations have been cheapened. Bronze Star Medals are given today for good conduct. Medals are frequently given to people for just doing the job that was expected of them.

It may be that people are just braver today than they used to be, but I doubt it.

It just goes to show. As the old saying goes, "The Old Corps ain't what it used to be. And it never was."

I am not a recognized authority on fear in general, but I am an authority on my own fears. And, I am not ashamed to admit I had them. I was scared at times, but never scared stiff.

It might be said that I became a Marine out of fear.

I was graduated from high school in June of 1943 at the age of 16. I had the good fortune to be able to enroll in a university for a year. By then, all of my friends and most of my male high school classmates had entered the armed services. No one had any idea how long the war would last in 1943. I thought that I would ultimately have to be in the service, and if I waited until I was drafted I would have to go into the Army. The Selective Service System (the draft) didn't take men until they were 18 and then most of them went into the Army. I didn't want to be in the Navy and I was too young to go into the Army.

That left the Marine Corps. The more I thought about that, the better it sounded. The Marine Corps looked favorably on rifle marksmanship. I was on a rifle team in high school and was already a pretty good shot with a rifle. I had hunted with my father and brother. I was healthy and a pretty good athlete.

But there was another factor. Marines were volunteers. It could be argued that the average Marine was better trained, more highly motivated and probably more effective as a fighter than the average soldier. Marines took care of their wounded. If I went into the Marine Corps there was a good chance I would see some action and be in dangerous places, but that could also happen in the Army.

My logic went something like this:

Young men aren't generals, young men are privates. Privates frequently carry rifles and go to places where it is hairy. I was young and would probably carry a rifle. If I had to go someplace where it was hairy, would I want to be surrounded by people who had been drafted, or would I rather be among Marines.

In my foxhole on Okinawa I used to wonder what I was doing there and why me. Somewhere in the world there were young men my

age who did not get shot at every day, who ate nourishing food and had roofs over their heads -- even slept in beds all night long if they so desired. But I was not where they were. I had raised my right hand and had sworn to obey the orders of the officers appointed over me. Their orders had put me here. Being here meant that certain things were expected of me. There were things I must do, regardless of the consequences.

My dread of a particular weapon seemed to increase in direct proportion to its impersonality. I feared bullets, but not as much as mortar and artillery shells, especially air bursts. But, my all time candidate as an object of fear, loathing and dread was a land mine. I will always remember the man in my platoon who kicked something and lost a leg.

Fear during my entire stay on Okinawa was cyclic, both in incidence and degree.

There was always an underlying apprehension. The last thought before sleep and the first thing remembered upon awakening, was -- I am here and it is a dangerous place to be. We all could laugh and tell jokes when there was not any immediate danger, but there was always a gnawing feeling of uneasiness.

Uneasiness frequently escalated to alarm when the danger level suddenly increased, such as when a shell would explode nearby or the snap of a sniper's bullet was heard.

But the greatest instigator of fear, the most prolific producer of adrenalin, was an attack. When you were moving forward you were in the open. There was no way to carry a foxhole with you. No attack was the same as any other, but there would be a typical sequence of events at the start.

The word would be passed that we were moving out. We would begin to saddle up. Cartridge belts were usually left on, but they would be buckled on if they had been taken off and the canteens aligned on the buttocks. The pack would be struggled onto the shoulders. Bandoleers would be looped over the neck.

The rifle would be checked to ensure that a cartridge was in the chamber and that the action operated smoothly. The toothbrush would be taken from its usual place of residence, the pocket in the dungaree jacket -- the one over the heart with the letters "USMC" and a Marine emblem printed on it. A fast brushing of real or imagined dirt particles from the rifle's action would follow.

The attack would begin.

There were no immortal words to urge us onward, no waving of sabers or gallant cheers while we dug spurs into our horse's flanks and galloped forward. The platoon leader, usually in a normal voice, would say something monumental, such as, "Okay, let's go." The word would be passed and we would begin to climb out of our foxholes and follow him.

It is possible that there were men who wanted to get up out of a relatively safe foxhole and start moving in the direction of the enemy. I never met one of them. I would really not be doing it, but following the platoon leader was just something that had to be done.

All of us, as children, have had fears. I was raised in old houses. Old houses creak and make other strange unexplained

noises as the wind blows and the various component parts of the house expand from being heated or contract from being cooled. We sometimes hesitated to go up the stairs into the darkness or enter an empty room from whence strange noises had been heard. You might be harmed. That was fear of the unknown.

Then there was the fear of a school/neighborhood bully. By facing up to him when you encountered him you most likely would be harmed. This was fear of the known.

Now, combine those fears and magnify them by at least an order of magnitude. Be assured that there are bullies out there and know that you are going to keep moving forward until you do find them and they do try to do you harm. You just don't know when this will happen. That is how it felt at the beginning of an attack.

I believe that anyone who does not experience fear when going up against an armed enemy is not well. Someone who isn't scared while being subjected to artillery or mortar fire is either mentally out of balance or doesn't know what is causing all of the noise.

To know fear in the presence of danger is not to be cowardly. On the contrary, without the overcoming of fear there can be no bravery.

What follows may seem to refute the previous statements, but not really. I have never been a fatalist. I do not believe that every event is preordained. But I did make up my mind that whatever was going to happen was going to happen. This helped me to subvert my fears. The fears were there and I didn't ignore them. I just didn't let them take command and dictate my actions.

Being blessed with a reasonable amount of intelligence, I was sometimes able to assess the amount of danger in a particular situation. For example, if an open space, covered by a machine gun, had to be crossed while going back to company headquarters, knowing that the field of fire was narrow and that no Japanese was going to spend every waking second peering through the gun's sights with his finger on the trigger, made the perceived danger seem less. If you reduced the time within the gun's field of fire by running fast, the amount of risk was lessened. The excitement was there, the uncertainty and the fear, but it was manageable. I didn't court danger, but when it was necessary to put myself in harm's way I did what was necessary.

One of our platoon leaders had a little saying:

> When in danger, when in doubt;
> run in circles, scream and shout.

This was instruction in the negative; to be always remembered, but never followed.

Unlike many of my buddies, any fear of the dark that I might have had as a child disappeared during my Marine Corps service. Darkness can be your friend.

I began this narrative by telling about my great Grandfather. I'll end it with another of my relatives, a fine lady whom I loved very much. Louisa MaGill was my maternal grandmother.

I can remember hearing Grandmother MaGill, each time she made reference to someone having been in the first World War, saying something like --

"So and So" (relative, friend or acquaintance) "was in The War, but he never talks about it."

I've never known why she thought that "So and So" would not want to "talk about it", as if it were something too awful to discuss. Was it because she equated it with something unmentionable or disgraceful? I don't think so. I think her problem was that talking to her about war experiences would be like talking about traveling 60 miles per hour to someone who had never heard of an automobile.

Relating experiences about those activities which are the primary reason for the existence of armed forces makes some people nervous, even people who were in the armed forces but who were never lucky (or unlucky) enough to serve in a unit that came into actual contact with the enemy. It is acceptable for them to discuss how bad living conditions and similar things were ... "when I was in the Army". But, for men, who were "fortunate" enough to actually come into contact with an armed enemy, and to survive that contact, to talk about those experiences is, strangely, sometimes not acceptable.

Many people forget what the prime purpose of the military actually is. Military units are not part of a great social program, offering secure jobs with early retirement. Nor do they exist to provide opportunities for ambitious people who aspire to high military rank. The ultimate function of military units is to win wars. In the words of Rush Limbaugh: "Wars are won by killing people and breaking things." People who have done those things usually are not reticent to talk about their experiences, but only with someone who has an understanding ear and is capable of comprehending them.

When men who have been in combat get together, perhaps at the reunion of some military unit, the most horrible occurrences can be heard being calmly discussed. Those same experiences might not be understood and could even be disbelieved by someone without the background necessary to be capable of comprehending them. As far as discussing combat experiences, why not? One reason for not doing so would be for the reason just described; that the person to whom you are talking is unable to understand what is being told to him. Another reason might be that some adverse mental effects had been suffered from the wartime service. I believe that, unless there were symptoms beforehand, the stress of combat will not necessarily cause mental problems. The human mind and body are infinitely capable of healing and adapting.

Wartime experiences are part of life, no different than any other part, but perhaps a little rarer than playing football or belonging to a fraternity while attending college. And those subjects are not taboo.

Ernest Hemingway wrote a short story about two brothers who both went to France in The First World War. One brother was seriously wounded by shell fragments before he actually reached

the trenches. He spent a lengthy time in a hospital. When he returned to his home town he would "never talk about" his wartime experiences. He was regarded as a hero by the home town folks.

The other brother was also wounded, twice. He also took part in several battles and saw much combat. He spent time in the occupation forces in Germany and did not return to the home town until long after the war was over. This brother, because he would talk about his experiences, was held in lower regard by the townsfolk.

One of Louisa MaGill's heroes was President Harry Truman. There are those today who say that President Truman should not have ordered the use of atomic bombs against Japan. With the wisdom of hindsight those people say that Japan was already suing for peace. The recollection of history of these revisionists is convenient for supporting their contention, but it is inaccurate. It came to light after the end of the war that there were, in fact, some groups in Japan who were desirous of a surrender. But, the people who held the power in Japan, who actually made decisions, were definitely not suing for peace. The Japanese military had the same philosophy of "fight to the death" in the last year of the war during the battles for Saipan, Tinian, Guam, Pelelieu, Iwo Jima and Okinawa; that they had held from the beginning. All during the battle for Okinawa, which was the final one, it was my personal observation that the Japanese still subscribed to that philosophy.

Tactics had been changed, from all out efforts to stop the enemy on the beaches; to the use of in-depth defensive systems designed to increase the attrition of those invaders who were attempting to conquer Japanese island fortresses.

Due to these tactics, rates of battle casualties for Marine front line units had risen sharply over what they had been at the start of the war. The 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines had 969 battle casualties. The 29th Marine Regiment had an 81 per cent casualty rate on Okinawa. Of the 3,512 who landed on Okinawa on April 1, 1945; 2,821 fell during the battle. The 29th Marines, in the last battle of the war, had the highest casualty rate that had ever been experienced by a Marine regiment.

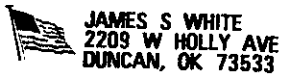
It is said that the casualties suffered in the latter battles of the war against the Japanese influenced the decision to use atomic bombs against Japan. The best military intelligence had estimated a million U.S. casualties and an even larger number of Japanese military and civilian casualties when the home islands were assaulted. The only large Japanese civilian population encountered during the war had been on the island of Saipan, where a large number of men, women and children had chosen suicide over surrender.

Without the benefit of hindsight, using the best information he had available to him at the time, President Truman decided to use atomic bombs against Japan to save American lives. Ordering the use of atomic bombs probably saved many Japanese lives as well. Conveniently forgotten by some critics is the fact that conventional air raids using incendiary bombs had caused greater numbers of casualties from huge fires, in some Japanese cities, than the total number of casualties caused by both atom bombs.

Concerning President Truman, I am in agreement with my Grandmother MaGill. I have always had a soft place in my heart for him. I might not always have been happy with his politics, but his decision to drop atomic bombs on Japan probably saved my life. This was a decision with which I totally agree and with which my children must agree. My regiment, the 29th Marines, was due to be in the first assault wave to land on the Japanese island of Honshu at an early date in 1946. Had President Truman not made that decision, I knew the date of my death.

Duncan, Oklahoma
December, 1991

S E M P E R F I D E L I S



"I" COMPANY
29TH MARINES

6TH MARINE DIV.

Compiled by:
Kenneth J. Long
I/3/29/6
(1993)

Putting this list together was extremely interesting and several names came back to mind of guys that I remembered from years ago. The job was tedious but I enjoyed every minute of it and I have seen the names so many times it seems as though I know each one personally. The quality of the Muster Rolls was not the greatest and the magnifying glass was needed many times and I am certain that mistakes still exist relating to dates, spelling etc., some from the poor quality of the Rolls but due also to my typographical errors.

The main source of information was "I" Company Muster Rolls for the months of April, May and June 1945, but extensive use was made of a roster of the original "I" Company, funished to me by Ken Aust, I/3/29/6, (3rd Platoon) and without it I would have had no access to the serial numbers for those Marines. Information contained in the section relating to "Awards" was taken from the History Of The Sixth Marine Division by Bevan G. Cass; First Edition, published in 1948.

The Muster Rolls contain information relating to types of wounds that were experienced (shrapnel, gun shot, burns, etc) however in the interest of brevity I have omitted these. In addition, the Rolls contain the location of where the wound was incurred and although I chose to omit these also, they tended to point out the vast number of parts we have to our anatomy. If anyone has a need for this information, I will be happy to furnish it to them.

Ken Aust, also furnished me with a picture and roster of the 3rd Platoon, and since I was curious as to the number of casualties inflicted on a Rifle Platoon, I did a little research and learned that of the 46 Marines in the picture, only 5 made it through the battle without being Killed, Wounded or Transferred. Their names are: Pvt Richard Butts, Pfc William Cunningham, Cpl Frank Kukuchka, Sgt Frank Lilly and Pfc Ivan Zahler.

Although it is difficult to uncover anything positive that results from war, being a part of a Company and Division that carried out it's assignments and responsibilities without blemish makes one puff-up with pride at being a part of it during the time of Battle.

Ken Long
I/3/29/6

Contents

Notes To The Enclosed Information

1. The above information was taken from the Company Muster Rolls for the months of April, May and June, 1945. Serial #s for the original "I" Company were obtained from the Roster of I Company furnished to me by Kenneth T Aust, I/3/29/6, (3rd Platoon).
2. Some of the Muster Rolls were difficult to read so there might be some mis-spellings etc. One entry was impossible to read on the April, Roll and was related to a Marine that died of wounds.
3. Replacements for the Original Company came from the following Replacement Drafts: April 19, joined from the 26th Repln Draft.
April 28, joined from the 26th Repln Draft.
April 29, joined from the 26th Repln Draft.
April 28, joined from the 33rd Replm Draft.
May 1, joined from the 26th and 33 Repln Dr.
May 16 & 17, from 46th Repln Draft
May 28, from the 57th Repln Draft
May 29, from the 63rd Repln Draft
June 11, from the 55th Repln Draft
June 16, from the 62nd Repln Draft
4. The following Marines returned to the Unit from CasBns about the 15th of June, 1945: Brew, Casey, Duck, Kelly, Killian, Knight, LaVoie, Luddecke, Miller (Moss), Nagano, Nokes, Richard, Shotwell, Stone (W), Thornton and White.
5. I Company, debarked from the USS Clay (APA 39) at Okinawa Shima, on April 1, 1945
6. I Compay, left Okinawa, aboard LST 229 on July 15, and arrived at Guam, on July 22, 1945.
7. There were 57 Marines from "I" Company killed in action during the Battle. I assume more died of wounds and were not listed on the Muster Rolls.
8. 193 Marines, from the Company, were wounded in action.
9. On April 1, the total strength of "I" Company was 252 officers and enlisted men. 218 Replacements were assigned between April 1 and July 1, 1945.
10. Several members of the Company were wounded two times: Fadden, Gay, Lally, Schaub, Sousa and Sucoff. Pvt Sousa was killed as a result of the second wound.
11. Pfc Stabinsky, was omitted from the Muster Roll for April, 1945 and may be the entry that I couldn't read. At any rate the History of the Sixth Marine Division by Bevan G. Cass, lists him as being KIA and so he is listed here.
11. No attempt was made to list the cases of "Battle Fatigue" as the records were not specific enough to make that determination. Judging from the numerous entries of "sick" however it is believed many cases ocurred.
12. Of the 252 Officers and enlisted Marines that started out with the original "I" Company, 53 made it through the battle without being "KIA", "WIA" or transferred.
13. 23 Marines received awards during the Battle; awards received were: NC = Navy Cross, SS = Silver Star, BS = Bronze Star, LC = Letter of Commendation.

Kenneth J Long-I/3/29/6
1993

Marines in I/3/29/6: April 1-June 30,1945

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SERIAL#	SPEC..#
4/1/45	Allen	John	E	Pfc	477478	607
	Anulewicz	Edmond	J	Cpl	505980	511
	Aust	Kenneth	T	Pfc	886671	745
	Avelin	Walter	J	Pvt	563865	745
	Baker	Abner		Cpl	339017	337
	Basile	Carmen	F	Pfc	951275	604
	Beck	Alexander	P	Pfc	805214	521
	Bellen	Harry	E	Pvt	826023	746
	Bennett	Jackson	W	Cpl	513812	737
	Berry	Alvin	F	Cpl	526164	737
		Richard	L	1st Sgt	241535	585
	Bertram	Harry	R, Jr	Pfc	550495	746
	Bledsoe	Joe	T	Pfc	847520	746
	Bobo	Chester	M	Pvt	947174	521
	Bordlemay	James	L	Pfc	951330	746
	Bouck	George	A, Jr	Cpl	353139	737
	Breaux	George	M	Pfc	369800	746
	Brienza	Joseph	J	Pfc	924141	521
	Brooks	Harvey	F	1st Lt	016758	1542
	Brown	Arthur	D	Pfc	847542	746
		James	V	Cpl	545073	533
	Bryson	Maurice	E	Pfc	530433	746
	Budday	Edgar	W	Pfc	511821	745
	Burr	Harry	L	Pfc	495356	604
	Butts	Richard	W	Pvt	556356	604
	Cardosi	Leonard	J	Pfc	511790	607
	Carson	George	D	Cpl	285897	737
	Casey	Julian	C	Pfc	837325	745
	Cherry	William	C	Pfc	519053	746
	Christopher	John	J	Pfc	530406	745
	Cipriano	Nicholas	A	Cpl	312735	737
	Clark	David	P	Pfc	888822	604
	Clayton	Carl	J	Sgt	359052	737
	Cleary	Edward	M	Pfc	541404	521
	Combs	Gilmer	M	Pvt	847280	521
	Cook	Carl Jr		Cpl	493026	600
	Cooper	Wade	H	Pfc	343762	745
	Corriea	Donald	C	Pfc	556542	675
	Cromling	William	E	Sgt	305503	614
	Crouse	Robert	C	Pvt	500279	604
	Cullem	Charles	A, Jr	Pvt	541363	746
	Cunningham	William	S, Jr	Pfc	556784	746
	Doerr	David	D	G\Sgt	264610	600
	Dubois	Joseph	G	Pfc	962611	675
		George	L	Pfc	826024	746
	Duck	Orman	H	Pfc	547641	746
	Elliott	Jack	L	Sgt	464017	737
	Estes	Charles	W	Pvt	328853	937
	Fadden	Joseph	T, Sr	Pfc	951278	746
	Farrell	Malcolm		Pfc	953298	604
	Finkbeiner	Edward	S	Pvt	966509	745
	Fisher	Francis	F	Pfc	951327	746
	Flournoy	Rufus	H	Pvt	821365	521
	Fodero	Frank	J	Sgt	482384	737
	Fowler	Murray	W	Pl/Sgt	256804	737
	Francoeur	Raymond	G	Cpl	446255	533
	Fulton	William	R	Pfc	554574	746

Marines in I/3/29/6: April 1-June 30,1945

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SERIAL#	SPEC..#
	Furbush	Allen	A	Cpl	470356	737
	Gallagher	Clayton	E	Pfc	944101	675
	Gardner	George	S	Pfc	921781	746
	Garland	Edgar	R	Pvt	484138	604
	Gay	William	L	Pfc	914418	745
	Genczy	Chester		Cpl	508107	737
	Goosmann	John	F	Sgt	237484	600
	Graves	Benton	R	Cpl	301159	600
	Greska	Frank	M	Pfc	953308	746
	Gunn	Chester		Pfc	932854	746
	Hamilton	Russell	E	Pfc	456746	745
	Hanslik	Harrison	F	Pfc	532556	675
	Harlow	Carl	W	Asst/Ck	940730	060
	Harrington	William	H	Cpl	505905	737
	Hartman	Leo	E	Pfc	548374	746
	Hayes	Willis	M	Pvt	976219	607
	Head	Joseph	C	Pfc	865320	604
	Heim	John	D	Pl/Sgt	285004	737
	Heller	Ralph	M	Cpl	375118	737
	Hermanies	John	H	Pfc	448229	675
	Hipp	Roy		Pvt	957262	746
	Hoehn	Edward	H	Pvt	949802	746
	Hogan	Joseph		Pfc	951292	604
	Holton	Robert	L	Pvt	558872	746
	Homom	Leo	F	Pvt	962605	604
	Hontz	Robert	M	1st Lt	026012	1542
	Hoover	James	L	Pvt	960390	745
	Horton	Edwin	L	Pvt	953893	604
	Hubbard	James	H	Pvt	920799	745
	Johnson	Richard	L	Pfc	554028	675
		Orus		Sgt	396067	614
		Jesse	N	Cpl	933847	533
		Eugene		Pl/Sgt	266209	533
	Joiner	James	H	Cpl	415134	737
	Jorgensen	Walter	E	Capt/CO	09588	1542
	Keaney	William	J	Pfc	285744	746
	Kearney	Francis	J	Pvt	951499	746
	Keaton	Jessie	F	Pvt	960180	746
	Keller	Clyde	W, Sr	Pfc	847510	746
	Kelly	Joseph	S	Pfc	530427	604
	Kemp	William	M	Pfc	956230	604
	Kemph	Walter	H	Fld/Ck	530150	060
	Killian	Claude	W	Sgt	297875	737
	Kiser	William	E	Asst/Ck	853579	060
	Knight	James	E, Jr	Pfc	898970	604
	Kukuchka	Frank	J	Cpl	320867	737
	La Cobee	Francis	H	Pfc	417446	607
	Lally	Francis	J	Pfc	550533	745
	LaVoie	Henry	E	Pfc	556526	746
	Leach	Gaylord	F	Cpl	953888	870
	Lee	William	S	Pl/Sgt	452077	737
	Lenahan	Thomas	A	Pfc	950770	745
	Lennon	John	E, Jr	Pvt	953218	745
	Lilly	Frank	D	Sgt	524413	737
	Long	Marvin	A	Pfc	519098	604
	Longerbeam	Granville	W	Pvt	947808	521
	Luddecke	Robert	W	Pfc	943965	745

Marines in I/3/29/6: April 1-June 30,1945

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SERIAL#	SPEC..#
	Mackin	Wayne	F	Pfc	944008	675
	Magdich	Frank		Pfc	370451	607
	Martin	Charles	J	Sgt	275558	737
	Mast	"R"	"K"	Pfc	941018	745
	Mc Kown	Charles	H	Pvt	554570	745
	Mc Quilliam	Charles	P	Pl/Sgt	282888	585
	McCool	Norman	L	Cpl	362244	600
	McCormick	Arch	R	Pfc	921740	521
	McCrea	William	E	Pvt	951591	521
	McKinney	William	H	Pvt	979961	746
	McMahon	Myron	I	Pvt	956919	746
	Menefee	James	P	Pfc	911500	745
	Meshurle	Frederick	M	Pvt	547638	604
	Miller	Richard	R	Cpl	477319	737
		Charles	J	Pfc	514436	746
		Paul	R	Pfc	942473	745
		Moss Jr		Cpl	312965	737
	Mohrman	Vernon	W	Pvt	948899	745
	Mollica	Donald	J	Pfc	843928	746
	Moneypenny	John	W	Pfc	368268	605
	Moore	John	W	Pvt	826464	746
	Mullett	Samuel	"A"	Pfc	910383	746
	Muncy	John	K	Pfc	888815	521
	Myers	James	H	Pfc	920825	521
	Nappi	Michael	L	Pvt	953336	746
	Newman	Melvin	O	Cpl	408184	737
	Nichols	Harold	L	Cpl	292706	737
	Niederer	Floyd	S	Cpl	803042	737
	O'Dell	Arnold	L	Pfc	802409	746
	O'Leary	John	A, Jr	Pvt	564843	675
	O'Malley	William	P	Cpl	806688	614
	Parker	Junior	E	FM 1st	871338	803
	Parsons	Robert	E	Pvt	946957	521
	Pates	Robert	J	Cpl	393317	737
	Patruno	Pasquale	J	Pfc	949394	604
	Patterson	Elmer		Pfc	935030	746
	Peralta	Anthony		FM/1st	836425	803
	Petuskey	William	G	Sgt	502292	737
	Player	James	D	Pfc	409634	607
	Pope	George	J	Pfc	949387	746
	Potter	Howard	H, Jr	Pvt	552881	604
	Potthress	Frank	L	Cpl	310613	600
	Presock	Thomas	J	Pfc	551199	607
	Presser	Martin		Sgt	270465	737
	Propst	John	L	2nd Lt	039233	1542
	Rapp	William	M	Cpl	508934	737
	Rexroad	William	H	Pfc	914722	607
	Richard	Russell	W	Pfc	900627	521
	Richardson	Harold	E	Pvt	957035	746
	Riggs	Lawrence	H	Cpl	403703	737
	Riley	Jack	H	Pvt	990804	746
	Rispoli	James	H	Pfc	844792	607
	Ross	Richard	W	Pvt	556544	746
	Rossi	John	P	Pfc	903361	746
	Russell	Herndon		Pfc	865324	607
	Ryan	Walter	T	Pfc	554011	746
	Sampson	Robert	W	Pfc	800667	746

Marines in I/3/29/6: April 1-June 30,1945

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SERIAL#	SPEC..#
	Santarpia	Frank	P	Pfc	844496	607
	Sardo	James	V	Pfc	845784	745
	Saylor	James	A	Pfc	937254	521
	Scarmozzino	Nicholas	A	Pfc	907152	607
	Schaub	Oscar	F	Pvt	954848	746
	Schinnerer	Don	A	Pfc	343071	607
	Schneider	Walter	A	Cpl	390813	737
	Schrock	James	K	Pvt	559482	746
	Schumacher	Edwin	A	Pvt	989064	746
	Scism	James	C	Pfc	815433	745
	Scott	Rex	M	Pvt	959555	746
	Segarra	Wilfred		Pfc	949392	607
	Shakeshaft	Donald	C	Pfc	396274	636
	Shaleen	Glondon	L	Pvt	975157	746
	Shankle	Grover	C	Pvt	847467	746
	Sharp	Hervey	C	Cpl	368545	737
	Shaughnessy	Edwin	P	Pfc	951594	604
	Sheer	Joseph	M	Sgt	838172	600
	Shinn	Ralph	C	Cpl	394062	533
	Shorts	Medford	M	Pvt	920945	521
	Simmons	Harry	D	Pvt	956604	746
		Lewis	M	Pfc	847529	745
	Simone	Dominick	J	Pfc	844977	521
	Sims	Eugene	B	Pfc	946979	745
	Sioss	Robert	A	Sgt	330091	737
	Slade	Donald		Pfc	949398	745
	Slezak	Frederick	S	MT/Sgt	296564	824
	Smith	Darrall	R	Pfc	514616	746
		Carleton	K	Pfc	853151	745
		Ambrose	A, Jr	Cpl	444065	737
	Snyder	Randall	E	Pvt	922613	604
	Soltys	Stanley		Asst/Ck	802378	060
	Sousa	Albert		Pvt	589782	604
	Souza	Albert		Pvt	989782	604
	Spano	Stephen	J	Pfc	541448	604
	Sparks	Lorenzo	D	Pfc	530409	746
	Spisak	Frank	P	Pvt	528399	604
	Spivey	Rufus	F, Jr	Pfc	955747	521
	Stabinsky	Bernard	A	Pfc	854970	?
	Stackhouse	Duff	T	Pfc	859210	604
	Stahler	William	C	Cpl	410979	737
	Steedly	Daniel	B, Sr	Pfc	957278	746
		Woodrow		Pfc	957271	746
	Stelmack	Joseph		Cpl	872092	600
	Stone	John	P	1st Lt	020217	1542
		William	J	Pfc	949144	746
	Stowell	Robert	W	Pvt	962769	607
	Stucker	Richard	O	Cpl	812746	737
	Suba	Charles Jr		Asst/Ck	867888	060
	Sucoff	Martin		Pfc	518386	745
	Sullivan	Wendell	M	Pfc	960539	746
		Lawrence	P	1st Lt	022272	1542
	Taylor	Hubert	E	Cpl	310493	505
		Harold	D	G/Sgt	245350	585
	Teal	Tommie	N	Cpl	508978	737
	Tellinghuisen	Gerald	A	Cpl	334062	675
	Thibeault	Charles	L	Pfc	310072	605

Marines in I/3/29/6: April 1-June 30,1945

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SERIAL#	SPEC..#
	Timanus	Edwin	C, II	Cpl	816137	600
	Tincher	Glenn		Pfc	333650	345
	Umstead	Archie	E	Cpl	895360	737
	Vail	Maurice	F	Pfc	547364	745
	Vellman	William	C	1st Lt	026155	1542
	Voelker	Paul	E	Pfc	551425	745
	Walenski	William		Cpl	331992	737
	Walsh	Raymond	G	Pvt	982612	604
	Walter	Richard	E, Jr	Pfc	854978	604
	Welch	Hubert	H	Cpl	813456	765
	Wells	Paul	R	Pfc	943186	746
	West	Paul	E	Pfc	907048	604
	Wexler	Samuel	D	Pvt	971934	745
	White	Eugene	L	Pfc	960173	746
	Wicka	Marcel	J	Cpl	224633	737
	Woodard	Richard	C	Pfc	526981	746
	Zacame	Bernard	A	Pvt	565070	604
	Zahler	Ivan	G	Pfc	495361	746
	Zuk	John Jr		Pfc	470399	604
4/19/45	Anderson	Joseph	J	Pfc	337980	522
	Best	Hydra	O	Pfc	470551	522
	Blevins	Edward	J	Pfc	505702	522
	Brew	William	A	Pfc	841835	604
	Frese	Paul	R	Pvt	813047	522
	Haynes	Vernon	M	Pfc	846452	522
	Hinkley	Warren	T	Pfc	853055	522
	Hutson	Jessie	H	Pvt	983557	746
	Johnson	Johnie		Sgt	265725	737
	Katavolos	Charles	G	Pvt	808289	522
	Marz	John	A	Pfc	902286	522
	McCarty	Harold	A	Pfc	518171	522
	Morgan	Wesley	R	Pfc	527245	522
	Morley	Jesse	C	Pfc	878895	707
	Myers	Robert	E	Pvt	968178	521
	Nagle	Glenn	F	Pvt	980908	521
	Nangano	Walter	G	Pvt	972839	521
	Nelson	Norman	D	Pvt	985171	521
		Paul	A	Pvt	986643	521
	Newitt	James	W	Pvt	563718	521
	Nichols	Hollis	R, Jr	Pvt	980909	521
	Nokes	Ralph	L	Pvt	829249	521
	Northcote	Charles	E	Pvt	985174	521
	Olson	Norman	D	Pvt	981071?	521
	Orange	Grayson	A	Pvt	978507	521
	Parker	Charles	C Jr	Pvt	990729	521
	Payne	York		Pvt	993739	521
	Peebles	James	R	Pvt	557502	521
	Pennimpede	Phillip		Pvt	972425	521
	Pepper	Ransford	B	Pvt	968213	521
	Perez	Augustin Jr		Pvt	561971	521
	Perkins	Albert		Pvt	950865	521
	Phillips	Fulton	F	Pvt	980903	521
	Polding	John	F	Pfc	845176	522
	Porter	Harlan	N	Pfc	546641	521
	Pryor	Billy		Pvt	993700	521
	Puckett	Thomas	L	Pvt	568119	521
	Richard	Philip	L	Pfc	470098	522

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SERIAL#	SPEC..#
	Rogers	Vernon		Pfc	871328	522
	Rutzler	William	H, Jr	Pfc	517360	521
	Shotwell	Samuel	D	Cpl	309148	737
	Sullivan	Edward	J, Jr	Cpl	437090	737
	Tardiff	Gerard	J	Cpl	484009	812
	Terry	Floyd	D	Cpl	295893	737
	Thornton	Clarke Jr		Cpl	543498	812
	Utley	Cecil	"R" Sr	Cpl	376861	566
	Whitney	Arnold	H	Pfc	853335	937
	Willoughby	Clarence	C	Sgt	281675	707
4/23/45	Mylod	Phillip	J	Capt/CO	013152	1542
4/24/45	Turner	Alfred	A	Sgt	289323	737
4/27/45	Melcher	Thomas	J	2nd Lt	041974	1542
4/28/45	Honis	Donald	J	Pvt	994282	604
	Hood	Warren	W, Sr	Pvt	968332	604
	Jones	Gerald	D	Pvt	987240	604
	Litts	Bartley	E	Pvt	972758	521
	Sports	Rupert	W	Pfc	544608	522
	Stradley	Horace	R	FM 1st	828991	803
4/29/45	Taylor	Eston	J	Pvt	960569	522
	Whatley	Earl	D	Pfc	891000	521
5/1/45	Carlson	Harold	E	Pvt	989453	745
	Davidson	William	H	Pvt	829204	521
	Diamond	Eugene	D	Cpl	361668	533
	Guzewich	Gerald	S	Cpl	292696	614
	Hoffman	Woodrow	B	Pvt	968005	521
	Kelty	Robert	P	1st Lt	030385	1542
	Kozlowski	Raymond	H	Sgt	354988	737
	Long	Kenneth	J	Pvt	553783	521
	McDowell	Nosh	J	Pvt	993357	604
	McMichael	John	R	Pfc	398459	607
	Norman	Eugene	C	Pvt	570727	745
	Peterson	Harold	B	Pvt	1002044	746
	Phelps	Leon	M	Cpl	305103	614
	Rigdon	James	E	Sgt	361760	929
	Stutte	James	H Jr	Pvt	512322	521
	Tremelay	Roland	A	Pvt	932484	604
	Tucker	Owen	H	Pvt	829408	521
	Turner	Lester	W	Pvt	984249	521
	White	William	F Jr	Pvt	568627	521
	Williams	Willie	B	Pvt	965547	521
		Ralph	L	Pvt	982760	521
5/2/45	Winchester	Jean		Pvt	998401	521
5/16/45	Balchunas	Francis	E	Pvt	550666	521
	Camarata	August	L	2nd Lt	040383	1542
	Kimick	Bernard		Pfc	356907	745
	Lewis	Robert	E	Pfc	311075	522
	Mattera	Vincent	J	Pfc	314422	522
	McCormick	James Jr		2nd Lt	041936	1542
	McCreery	William	H	Pfc	914964	521
	Pawl	Michael	W	Cpl	248012	344
	Pottenger	William	O	2nd lt	040528	1542
	Stockwell	Harry	E	Pfc	835691	929
	Vasiliou	William	C	Pfc	563617	521
5/17/45	Driscoll	Raymond	N	Pfc	803332	607
	Hiatt	George	E Jr	Pvt	986695	604
	Kelley	Wilfrid	H	Pfc	911431	929

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SERIAL#	SPEC..#
	Norman	James	A	Pvt	993744	745
	Novotny	Joseph	J Sr	Pvt	968218	745
	Obermann	Edward	F Jr	Pvt	977041	745
	Patton	Perry	A	Pfc	982913	745
	Pederson	Clarence	V	Pvt	996713	745
	Pegg	Virgil	V	Pvt	986985	745
	Permenter	Vernon	E Sr	Pvt	991565	746
	Perry	Rufus	S Jr	Pvt	100590	745
	Peterson	Wilson	W	Pfc	950869	521
	Pfotenhauer	Paul	E	Pvt	985399	745
	Phillips	Robert	W	Pvt	855498	745
	Platt	Harry	A	Pvt	991192	745
	Plucinski	Eugene	V	Pvt	1000585	745
	Sekula	Frank	F	Pvt	973800	745
	Smith	Marvin	G	Pvt	994369	745
		Grant	N Jr	Pvt	985378	745
		Francis	L	Pvt	996202	745
		Robert	F	Pvt	993797	745
	Snipes	Benjamin	R	Pvt	544804	745
	Soderholm	Leo	V	Pvt	994293	745
	Southerland	Needham	R Jr	Pvt	984456	745
	Sowers	Charles	L	Pvt	992986	745
	Spies	Phillip	W	Pvt	563961	745
	Spradlin	Jessie	L	Pvt	992646	745
	Sprout	Lyman	P	Pvt	569266	745
	Stabi	Joseph	T	Pvt	570751	745
	Stine	Cedric	W	Pvt	950509	745
	Stingel	Clarence	C	Pvt	985385	745
	Stone	Elton	"C"	Pvt	992208	745
	Storts	Albert	M	Pvt	986989	745
	Strange	James	E Jr	Pvt	544737	745
	Summerford	Major Jr		Pvt	544805	745
	Sykes	Floyd	E	Pvt	1004505	745
	Tallon	Joseph	A	Pvt	253170	745
	Townsend	John	B Jr	Pvt	984449	746
	Tuma	Howard	E	Pvt	569451	746
	Turnep	Charles Jr		Pvt	968354	746
	Van Hooser	Karl	A	Pvt	559791	746
	Van Rycheghem	Roger	R	Pvt	565881	746
	Vandeveer	Warren	L	Pvt	1002032	746
	Yeakle	Frank	M Jr	Pfc	401054	745
5/23/45	Dolci	Quinto		Pfc	360878	603
	Kempker	Raymond	J	Pvt	897092	636
	Pruett	Alvin	L	FM/Cpl	434476	803
5/27/45	Litrell	Anthony	R	Cpl	845432	405
	Trignano	Otto	V	FM 1st	924114	803
5/28/45	French	William	J	Cpl	912757	677
	Hathcock	Edward	J	Fld Ck	358807	824
	Olthoff	Dean	S	Pfc	480760	501
	Pranis	Robert	W	Pvt	549545	521
	Vojciechowski	Earl	T	Pvt	568527	604
	Watts	Robert	E	Pvt	555166	521
	Wilson	Kenneth	E	Pvt	561102	521
	Zoltanski	Eugene	P	Pvt	570802	521
5/29/45	Andrzejewski	George	V	Pfc	353759	937
	Austin	Byron	L Sr	Pfc	260262	373
	Ehrler	Walter	F	Pfc	971406	521

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SERIAL#	SPEC..#
	Gangwere	Paul	C	Pvt	935399	060
	Hammett	Charles	N	Pfc	941669	144
	Hart	Harry	O	Pfc	976211	521
	Hudoba	Joseph	F	Cpl	526430	056
	Leary	Warren	B	Pfc	926086	060
	Masek	Charles	A	Pfc	329367	060
	McCormack	Carl	L	Pvt	850079	800
	Merrigan	Donald	E	Pvt	337403	060
	Michel	Richard	A	Pfc	319864	060
	Miller	Ralph		Pfc	918530	521
	Moncrief	William	E Jr	Pvt	561820	432
	Porter	Charles	D	Pfc	496491	014
	Price	Paul	L	Pvt	822951	055
	Van Miert	John	J	Pfc	948526	060
	Wilson	Donald	B	Asst/Ck	813771	060
		Boyd	F Jr	Cpl	310482	521
	Zdon	Stanley		Pfc	904388	521
6/11/45	Hentz	William	C Jr	Pvt	550623	521
	McMullen	Francis	X	Cpl	844680	566
	Oleska	John	A	Pvt	323376	605
	Ryan	Thomas	B	2nd Lt	026110	1542
	Schroeder	Richard	L	Pvt	564224	521
	Scott	Emmet	M	Pvt	992812	521
	Serwatt	Donald	E	Pvt	950225	521
	Sexton	Henry	A	Pvt	553304	521
	Shirk	Eugene	A	Pvt	968498	521
	Shoemaker	John	C Jr	Pvt	993062	521
	Shukis	Bruno	J	Pvt	985627	521
	Siembida	John	S Jr	Pvt	571061	521
	Sigel	Harry	V	Pvt	564440	521
	Silvius	David	L	Pvt	996234	521
	Smith	John	H	Pvt	987480	521
		George	J Sr	Pvt	1002208	521
		Charles	A	Pvt	821374	521
	Snell	George	W	Pfc	553289	521
	Snyder	Robert	D	Pvt	973861	521
	Ware	Walter	W	Pvt	914342	405
	Zuba	Steven Jr		Asst/Ck	469569	060
	Zuber	Steven Jr		Asst/Ck	469569	060
6/16/45	Johnson	Vernon	W	Pve	921702	522
	Jordon	Maurice	H	Pvt	956163	522
	Justofin	Raymond	P	Pvt	953910	522
	Key	Joseph	H	Pvt	957429	522
	Kolodzi	Stanley	R	Pvt	971975	522
	Kremer	Milton	J	Pfc	919250	845
	Laubaugh	Harry		Pvt	966300	522
	Mackay	Wilbert	N	Pvt	563610	522
	Nelson	Lloyd	"B"	Pvt	1004859	521
	Neumann	Robert	F	Pvt	997345	521
	Newren	Karl	T	Pvt	548243	521
	Nordeen	Richard	G	Pvt	999107	521
	Novosad	Andrew	G	Pvt	548291	521
	Nugent	Charles	L	Pvt	979087	521
	O'Driscoll	Lynn	"c"	Pvt	566622	521
	Pappaspyros	Peter	J	Pvt	912816	522
	Runk	James	R	Pvt	939711	522
	Salsano	Nicholas	J	Pvt	966473	522

Marines in I/3/29/6: April 1-June 30,1945

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SERIAL#	SPEC..#
6/17/45	Kearney	Joseph	M	Pvt	453046	521
	Kreklau	Edward	H	Asst/Ck	471982	060
	Marciano	James	J	Fld/M	845150	803
	Perry	William	D	Pfc	935135	521
6/25/45	Redanz	Frederick	F	S/Sgt	299901	824
	Sowden	Harry	E	Pvt	968312	745

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	DATE KIA
4/1/45	Bennett	Jackson	W	Cpl	5/17/45
	Bryson	Maurice	E	Pfc	5/30/45
	Burr	Harry	L	Pfc	4/12/45
	Carson	George	D	Cpl	5/18/45
	Clayton	Carl	J	Sgt	4/12/45
	Doerr	David	D	G\Sgt	4/12/45
	Genczy	Chester		Cpl	4/12/45
	Greska	Frank	M	Pfc	4/12/45
	Horton	Edwin	L	Pvt	5/15/45
	Hubbard	James	H	Pvt	5/31/45
	Johnson	Orus		Sgt	4/12/45
	Joiner	James	H	Cpl	4/10/45
	Kemp	William	M	Pfc	4/16/45
	La Cobee	Francis	H	Pfc	4/12/45
	Lenahan	Thomas	A	Pfc	5/14/45
	Long	Marvin	A	Pfc	6/9/45
	Mc Kown	Charles	H	Pvt	4/12/45
	Moneypenny	John	W	Pfc	5/12/45
	O'Leary	John	A, Jr	Pvt	5/16/45
	O'Malley	William	P	Cpl	4/12/45
	Patterson	Elmer		Pfc	5/17/45
	Player	James	D	Pfc	5/16/45
	Propst	John	L	2nd Lt	4/16/45
	Richardson	Harold	E	Pvt	5/16/45
	Ross	Richard	W	Pvt	5/29/45
	Rossi	John	P	Pfc	5/14/45
	Sardo	James	V	Pfc	5/17/45
	Schrock	James	K	Pvt	5/18/45
	Schumacher	Edwin	A	Pvt	5/18/45
	Scott	Rex	M	Pvt	5/17/45
	Shakeshaft	Donald	C	Pfc	5/21/45
	Shaughnessy	Edwin	P	Pfc	5/18/45
	Sheer	Joseph	M	Sgt	6/11/45
	Shinn	Ralph	C	Cpl	5/16/45
	Smith	Darrall	R	Pfc	4/10/45
	Souza	Albert		Pvt	6/13/45
	Spano	Stephen	J	Pfc	4/12/45
	Stabinsky	Bernard	A	Pfc	4/12/45
	Stackhouse	Duff	T	Pfc	4/13/45
	Tellinghuisen	Gerald	A	Cpl	5/14/45
	Walter	Richard	E, Jr	Pfc	4/16/45
	Zacame	Bernard	A	Pvt	4/16/45
	Zuk	John Jr		Pfc	5/12/45
4/19/45	Haynes	Vernon	M	Pfc	5/17/45
	Hinkley	Warren	T	Pfc	5/31/45
	Myers	Robert	E	Pvt	5/18/45
	Tardiff	Gerard	J	Cpl	5/17/45
	Terry	Floyd	D	Cpl	5/14/45
4/28/45	Hood	Warren	W, Sr	Pvt	5/17/45
4/29/45	Whatley	Earl	D	Pfc	5/15/45
5/2/45	Winchester	Jean		Pvt	5/16/45
5/17/45	Perry	Rufus	S Jr	Pvt	5/25/45
	Sykes	Floyd	E	Pvt	6/10/45
5/23/45	Dolci	Quinto		Pfc	6/8/45
'28/45	French	William	J	Cpl	6/8/45
	Zoltanski	Eugene	P	Pvt	6/9/45
5/29/45	Wilson	Donald	B	Asst/Ck	6/11/45

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SPEC#	DATE WIA
4/1/45	Aust	Kenneth	T	Pfc	745	5/17/45
	Avelin	Walter	J	Pvt	745	5/17/45
	Baker	Abner		Cpl	337	4/12/45
	Bouck	George	A, Jr	Cpl	737	4/12/45
	Breaux	George	M	Pfc	746	5/15/45
	Brooks	Harvey	F	1st Lt	1542	5/15/45
	Brown	Arthur	D	Pfc	746	5/15/45
		James	V	Cpl	533	4/16/45
	Cardosi	Leonard	J	Pfc	607	5/16/45
	Casey	Julian	C	Pfc	745	5/16/45
	Cherry	William	C	Pfc	746	5/15/45
	Christopher	John	J	Pfc	745	4/12/45
	Cipriano	Nicholas	A	Cpl	737	4/16/45
	Cleary	Edward	M	Pfc	521	6/10/45
	Cook	Carl Jr		Cpl	600	5/12/45
	Cooper	Wade	H	Pfc	745	5/16/45
	Corriea	Donald	C	Pfc	675	4/12/45
	Cromling	William	E	Sgt	614	5/14/45
	Crouse	Robert	C	Pvt	604	5/14/45
	Cullem	Charles	A, Jr	Pvt	746	5/15/45
	Duck	Orman	H	Pfc	746	4/20/45
	Elliott	Jack	L	Sgt	737	5/16/45
	Estes	Charles	W	Pvt	937	4/12/45
	Fadden	Joseph	T, Sr	Pfc	746	6/11/45
	Farrell	Malcolm		Pfc	604	5/16/45
	Finkbeiner	Edward	S	Pvt	745	5/16/45
	Fodero	Frank	J	Sgt	737	4/12/45
	Fulton	William	R	Pfc	746	5/16/45
	Furbush	Allen	A	Cpl	737	4/12/45
	Gallagher	Clayton	E	Pfc	675	5/16/45
	Gay	William	L	Pfc	745	5/31/45
	Gunn	Chester		Pfc	746	5/16/45
	Hamilton	Russell	E	Pfc	745	4/16/45
	Hartman	Leo	E	Pfc	746	5/14/45
	Heim	John	D	Pl/Sgt	737	5/16/45
	Heller	Ralph	M	Cpl	737	5/14/45
	Hipp	Roy		Pvt	746	5/17/45
	Hoehn	Edward	H	Pvt	746	4/12/45
	Hogan	Joseph		Pfc	604	5/16/45
	Homom	Leo	F	Pvt	604	4/12/45
	Johnson	Jesse	N	Cpl	533	5/12/45
		Eugene		Pl/Sgt	533	6/14/45
	Kearney	Francis	J	Pvt	746	5/14/45
	Keaton	Jessie	F	Pvt	746	4/16/45
	Keller	Clyde	W, Sr	Pfc	746	5/17/45
	Killian	Claude	W	Sgt	737	4/12/45
	Knight	James	E, Jr	Pfc	604	4/16/45
	Lally	Francis	J	Pfc	745	4/12/45
	LaVoie	Henry	E	Pfc	746	5/13/45
	Leach	Gaylord	F	Cpl	870	4/17/45
	Lee	William	S	Pl/Sgt	737	6/8/45
	Longerbeam	Granville	W	Pvt	521	5/14/45
	Luddecke	Robert	W	Pfc	745	4/16/45
	Mackin	Wayne	F	Pfc	675	6/11/45
	Mast	"R"	"K"	Pfc	745	5/16/45
	Mc Quilliam	Charles	P	Pl/Sgt	585	4/12/45
	McCool	Norman	L	Cpl	600	5/16/45

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SPEC#	DATE WIA
	McCrea	William	E	Pvt	521	4/12/45
	McKinney	William	H	Pvt	746	4/12/45
	McMahon	Myron	I	Pvt	746	4/16/45
	Menefee	James	P	Pfc	745	4/12/45
	Miller	Paul	R	Pfc	745	5/14/45
		Charles	J	Pfc	746	5/15/45
		Moss Jr		Cpl	737	4/12/45
		Richard	R	Cpl	737	5/16/45
	Mohrman	Vernon	W	Pvt	745	5/15/45
	Mollica	Donald	J	Pfc	746	4/12/45
	Moore	John	W	Pvt	746	6/11/45
	Mullett	Samuel	"A"	Pfc	746	5/15/45
	Muncy	John	K	Pfc	521	5/15/45
	Myers	James	H	Pfc	521	5/16/45
	Nappi	Michael	L	Pvt	746	5/17/45
	Newman	Melvin	O	Cpl	737	5/31/45
	Nichols	Harold	L	Cpl	737	5/14/45
	Niederer	Floyd	S	Cpl	737	4/12/45
	O'Dell	Arnold	L	Pfc	746	5/14/45
	Pates	Robert	J	Cpl	737	4/12/45
	Patruno	Pasquale	J	Pfc	604	4/12/45
	Peralta	Anthony		FM/1st	803	4/9/45
	Pope	George	J	Pfc	746	4/12/45
	Presser	Martin		Sgt	737	5/16/45
	Rapp	William	M	Cpl	737	5/17/45
	Richard	Russell	W	Pfc	521	5/17/45
	Riley	Jack	H	Pvt	746	6/10/45
	Ross	Richard	W	Pvt	746	5/17/45
	Ryan	Walter	T	Pfc	746	4/12/45
	Sampson	Robert	W	Pfc	746	4/12/45
	Santarpia	Frank	P	Pfc	607	5/14/45
	Scarmozzino	Nicholas	A	Pfc	607	4/12/45
	Schaub	Oscar	F	Pvt	746	5/13/45
	Schinnerer	Don	A	Pfc	607	5/16/45
	Schneider	Walter	A	Cpl	737	4/12/45
	Scism	James	C	Pfc	745	4/12/45
	Shakeshaft	Donald	C	Pfc	636	5/15/45
	Shankle	Grover	C	Pvt	746	5/15/45
	Sharp	Hervey	C	Cpl	737	4/12/45
	Shorts	Medford	M	Pvt	521	5/16/45
	Simmons	Harry	D	Pvt	746	4/12/45
	Simone	Dominick	J	Pfc	521	5/14/45
	Sioss	Robert	A	Sgt	737	5/13/45
	Slade	Donald		Pfc	745	5/17/45
	Smith	Carleton	K	Pfc	745	5/29/45
		Ambrose	A, Jr	Cpl	737	6/9/45
	Snyder	Randall	E	Pvt	604	5/17/45
	Sousa	Albert		Pvt	604	4/7/45
	Souza	Albert		Pvt	604	4/7/45
	Sparks	Lorenzo	D	Pfc	746	5/14/45
	Stahler	William	C	Cpl	737	5/17/45
	Steedly	Woodrow		Pfc	746	5/14/45
		Daniel	B, Sr	Pfc	746	5/15/45
	Stucker	Richard	O	Cpl	737	5/14/45
	Sucoff	Martin		Pfc	745	4/12/45
	Sullivan	Lawrence	P	1st Lt	1542	5/13/45
		Wendell	M	Pfc	746	4/12/45

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SPEC#	DATE WIA
	Taylor	Harold	D	G/Sgt	585	6/8/45
	Tellinghuisen	Gerald	A	Cpl	675	5/14/45
	Thibeault	Charles	L	Pfc	605	5/19/45
	Timanus	Edwin	C, II	Cpl	600	5/17/45
	Umstead	Archie	E	Cpl	737	4/12/45
	Vail	Maurice	F	Pfc	745	5/16/45
	Voelker	Paul	E	Pfc	745	5/14/45
	Walsh	Raymond	G	Pvt	604	4/20/45
	White	Eugene	L	Pfc	746	4/12/45
	Wicka	Marcel	J	Cpl	737	5/14/45
	Woodard	Richard	C	Pfc	746	5/13/45
4/19/45	Anderson	Joseph	J	Pfc	522	5/19/45
	Blevins	Edward	J	Pfc	522	5/16/45
	Brew	William	A	Pfc	604	5/16/45
	Johnson	Johnie		Sgt	737	5/17/45
	McCarty	Harold	A	Pfc	522	6/11/45
	Morley	Jesse	C	Pfc	707	6/11/45
	Nangano	Walter	G	Pvt	521	5/14/45
	Nelson	Norman	D	Pvt	521	5/14/45
		Paul	A	Pvt	521	5/17/45
	Nichols	Hollis	R, Jr	Pvt	521	5/15/45
	Nokes	Ralph	L	Pvt	521	5/12/45
	Northcote	Charles	E	Pvt	521	5/17/45
	Parker	Charles	C Jr	Pvt	521	5/17/45
	Payne	York		Pvt	521	5/19/45
	Peebles	James	R	Pvt	521	5/14/45
	Perez	Augustin Jr		Pvt	521	5/13/45
	Phillips	Fulton	F	Pvt	521	5/16/45
	Polding	John	F	Pfc	522	5/15/45
	Rogers	Vernon		Pfc	522	5/14/45
	Rutzler	William	H, Jr	Pfc	521	5/17/45
	Shotwell	Samuel	D	Cpl	737	5/14/45
	Sullivan	Edward	J, Jr	Cpl	737	5/17/45
	Thornton	Clarke Jr		Cpl	812	5/14/45
	Utley	Cecil	"R" Sr	Cpl	566	5/19/45
	Willoughby	Clarence	C	Sgt	707	5/12/45
4/23/45	Mylod	Phillip	J	Capt/CO	1542	5/14/45
4/27/45	Melcher	Thomas	J	2nd Lt	1542	5/15/45
4/28/45	Honis	Donald	J	Pvt	604	5/16/45
	Sports	Rupert	W	Pfc	522	6/9/45
5/1/45	Carlson	Harold	E	Pvt	745	5/16/45
	Guzewich	Gerald	S	Cpl	614	6/16/45
	McDowell	Nosh	J	Pvt	604	5/17/45
	Norman	Eugene	C	Pvt	745	6/8/45
	Phelps	Leon	M	Cpl	614	6/15/45
	Tremelay	Roland	A	Pvt	604	5/29/45
5/16/45	Camarata	August	L	2nd Lt	1542	6/11/45
	Lewis	Robert	E	Pfc	522	5/17/45
	McCormick	James Jr		2nd Lt	1542	5/31/45
	Pawl	Michael	W	Cpl	344	6/1/45
	Stockwell	Harry	E	Pfc	929	5/19/45
	Vasiliou	William	C	Pfc	521	5/17/45
5/17/45	Norman	James	A	Pvt	745	6/8/45
	Novotny	Joseph	J Sr	Pvt	745	5/31/45
	Permenter	Vernon	E Sr	Pvt	746	6/1/45
	Pfotenhauer	Paul	E	Pvt	745	6/8/45
	Plucinski	Eugene	V	Pvt	745	6/1/45

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	SPEC#	DATE WIA
	Smith	Robert	F	Pvt	745	6/11/45
	Soderholm	Leo	V	Pvt	745	6/10/45
	Southerland	Needham	R Jr	Pvt	745	6/11/45
	Sowers	Charles	L	Pvt	745	5/29/45
	Spies	Phillip	W	Pvt	745	5/31/45
	Sprout	Lyman	P	Pvt	745	5/31/45
	Stabi	Joseph	T	Pvt	745	6/10/45
	Stine	Cedric	W	Pvt	745	6/10/45
	Summerford	Major Jr		Pvt	745	5/29/45
	Tuma	Howard	E	Pvt	746	5/28/45
	Van Hooser	Karl	A	Pvt	746	6/8/45
	Van Rycheghem	Roger	R	Pvt	746	5/30/45
5/23/45	Kempker	Raymond	J	Pvt	636	5/30/45
5/27/45	Litrell	Anthony	R	Cpl	405	6/11/45
5/28/45	Olthoff	Dean	S	Pfc	501	6/11/45
	Watts	Robert	E	Pvt	521	6/8/45
5/29/45	Austin	Byron	L Sr	Pfc	373	6/10/45
	Hudoba	Joseph	F	Cpl	056	6/8/45
	Leary	Warren	B	Pfc	060	6/11/45
	Merrigan	Donald	E	Pvt	060	6/8/45
	Michel	Richard	A	Pfc	060	6/10/45
	Miller	Ralph		Pfc	521	6/8/45

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	DATE TRNSF'D
1/1/45	Allen	John	E	Pfc	6/13/45
	Aust	Kenneth	T	Pfc	5/20/45
	Avelin	Walter	J	Pvt	5/20/45
	Baker	Abner		Cpl	4/13/45
	Basile	Carmen	F	Pfc	6/11/45
	Bellen	Harry	E	Pvt	5/14/45
	Berry	Alvin	F	Cpl	4/22/45
	Bordlemay	James	L	Pfc	5/18/45
	Breaux	George	M	Pfc	5/17/45
	Brienza	Joseph	J	Pfc	5/16/45
	Brooks	Harvey	F	1st Lt	5/25/45
	Brown	Arthur	D	Pfc	5/15/45
	Budday	Edgar	W	Pfc	5/20/45
	Casey	Julian	C	Pfc	5/18/45
	Cherry	William	C	Pfc	5/16/45
	Christopher	John	J	Pfc	4/13/45
	Cleary	Edward	M	Pfc	6/11/45
	Cook	Carl Jr		Cpl	5/15/45
	Cooper	Wade	H	Pfc	5/18/45
	Cromling	William	E	Sgt	5/15/45
	Crouse	Robert	C	Pvt	5/15/45
	Dubois	George	L	Pfc	4/12/45
	Duck	Orman	H	Pfc	4/22/45
	Elliott	Jack	L	Sgt	5/17/45
	Estes	Charles	W	Pvt	4/18/45
	Fadden	Joseph	T, Sr	Pfc	6/20/45
	Finkbeiner	Edward	S	Pvt	5/18/45
	Fisher	Francis	F	Pfc	5/4/45
	Fodero	Frank	J	Sgt	4/15/45
	Fulton	William	R	Pfc	5/24/45
	Gardner	George	S	Pfc	6/11/45
	Goosmann	John	F	Sgt	5/24/45
	Gunn	Chester		Pfc	5/18/45
	Hanslik	Harrison	F	Pfc	5/23/45
	Hartman	Leo	E	Pfc	5/14/45
	Heim	John	D	Pl/Sgt	5/22/45
	Heller	Ralph	M	Cpl	5/15/45
	Hermanies	John	H	Pfc	5/24/45
	Hoehn	Edward	H	Pvt	4/16/45
	Hogan	Joseph		Pfc	5/18/45
	Holton	Robert	L	Pvt	5/18/45
	Homom	Leo	F	Pvt	4/18/45
	Hontz	Robert	M	1st Lt	5/23/45
	Hoover	James	L	Pvt	6/17/45
	Johnson	Jesse	N	Cpl	5/13/45
	Jorgensen	Walter	E	Capt/CO	4/24/45
	Keaney	William	J	Pfc	5/29/45
	Kearney	Francis	J	Pvt	5/17/45
	Kelly	Joseph	S	Pfc	4/18/45
	Killian	Claude	W	Sgt	4/18/45
	Knight	James	E, Jr	Pfc	4/17/45
	Lally	Francis	J	Pfc	5/15/45
	LaVoie	Henry	E	Pfc	5/15/45
	Lee	William	S	Pl/Sgt	6/15/45
	Luddecke	Robert	W	Pfc	4/21/45
	Mc Quilliam	Charles	P	Pl/Sgt	4/18/45
	McCrea	William	E	Pvt	4/13/45

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	DATE TRNSF'D
	McMahon	Myron	I	Pvt	4/17/45
	Menefee	James	P	Pfc	5/21/45
	Miller	Paul	R	Pfc	5/14/45
		Richard	R	Cpl	5/29/45
		Moss Jr		Cpl	4/13/45
	Mohrman	Vernon	W	Pvt	5/17/45
	Mollica	Donald	J	Pfc	4/16/45
	Moore	John	W	Pvt	6/22/45
	Mullett	Samuel	"A"	Pfc	5/22/45
	Myers	James	H	Pfc	5/19/45
	Nappi	Michael	L	Pvt	5/19/45
	Nichols	Harold	L	Cpl	5/22/45
	Niederer	Floyd	S	Cpl	4/13/45
	Pates	Robert	J	Cpl	4/13/45
	Patruno	Pasquale	J	Pfc	4/13/45
	Peralta	Anthony		FM/1st	4/10/45
	Petuskey	William	G	Sgt	5/19/45
	Pope	George	J	Pfc	4/13/45
	Presser	Martin		Sgt	5/28/45
	Richard	Russell	W	Pfc	5/19/45
	Riggs	Lawrence	H	Cpl	6/3/45
	Riley	Jack	H	Pvt	6/11/45
	Ross	Richard	W	Pvt	5/29/45
	Russell	Herndon		Pfc	6/10/45
	Ryan	Walter	T	Pfc	4/18/45
	Sampson	Robert	W	Pfc	4/18/45
	Saylor	James	A	Pfc	4/13/45
	Scarmozzino	Nicholas	A	Pfc	4/13/45
	Schinnerer	Don	A	Pfc	5/19/45
	Scism	James	C	Pfc	4/18/45
	Shakeshaft	Donald	C	Pfc	5/21/45
	Shankle	Grover	C	Pvt	5/17/45
	Sharp	Hervey	C	Cpl	4/13/45
	Shorts	Medford	M	Pvt	5/24/45
	Simmons	Lewis	M	Pfc	6/5/45
		Harry	D	Pvt	4/13/45
	Simone	Dominick	J	Pfc	5/18/45
	Sims	Eugene	B	Pfc	6/1/45
	Sioss	Robert	A	Sgt	5/17/45
	Slade	Donald		Pfc	5/19/45
	Slezak	Frederick	S	MT/Sgt	6/25/45
	Smith	Ambrose	A, Jr	Cpl	6/9/45
		Carleton	K	Pfc	6/11/45
	Snyder	Randall	E	Pvt	5/18/45
	Sparks	Lorenzo	D	Pfc	5/14/45
	Spisak	Frank	P	Pvt	5/29/45
	Steedly	Woodrow		Pfc	5/17/45
		Daniel	B, Sr	Pfc	5/31/45
	Stone	William	J	Pfc	5/15/45
	Stucker	Richard	O	Cpl	5/24/45
	Sucoff	Martin		Pfc	5/28/45
	Sullivan	Lawrence	P	1st Lt	5/24/45
		Wendell	M	Pfc	4/18/45
	Taylor	Harold	D	G/Sgt	6/15/45
	Tellinghuisen	Gerald	A	Cpl	5/27/45
	Thibeault	Charles	L	Pfc	5/20/45
	Timanus	Edwin	C, II	Cpl	5/18/45

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	DATE TRNSF'D
	Umstead	Archie	E	Cpl	4/13/45
	Vail	Maurice	F	Pfc	5/24/45
	Voelker	Paul	E	Pfc	5/17/45
	Walenski	William		Cpl	5/31/45
	Walsh	Raymond	G	Pvt	4/22/45
	Wexler	Samuel	D	Pvt	6/11/45
	White	Eugene	L	Pfc	4/13/45
	Wicka	Marcel	J	Cpl	5/17/45
	Woodard	Richard	C	Pfc	5/16/45
4/19/45	Anderson	Joseph	J	Pfc	5/19/45
	Best	Hydra	O	Pfc	5/20/45
	Blevins	Edward	J	Pfc	6/11/45
	Brew	William	A	Pfc	5/19/45
	Katavolos	Charles	G	Pvt	6/6/45
	Marz	John	A	Pfc	5/31/45
	McCarty	Harold	A	Pfc	6/19/45
	Morley	Jesse	C	Pfc	6/14/45
	Nangano	Walter	G	Pvt	5/15/45
	Nelson	Norman	D	Pvt	5/16/45
		Paul	A	Pvt	5/18/45
	Newitt	James	W	Pvt	5/24/45
	Nichols	Hollis	R, Jr	Pvt	5/21/45
	Nokes	Ralph	L	Pvt	5/16/45
	Northcote	Charles	E	Pvt	5/20/45
	Payne	York		Pvt	5/19/45
	Peebles	James	R	Pvt	5/14/45
	Phillips	Fulton	F	Pvt	5/19/45
	Porter	Harlan	N	Pfc	6/7/45
	Richard	Philip	L	Pfc	6/17/45
	Rogers	Vernon		Pfc	5/20/45
	Shotwell	Samuel	D	Cpl	5/15/45
	Sullivan	Edward	J, Jr	Cpl	5/20/45
	Thornton	Clarke Jr		Cpl	5/14/45
	Utley	Cecil	"R" Sr	Cpl	5/21/45
	Whitney	Arnold	H	Pfc	5/19/45
	Willoughby	Clarence	C	Sgt	5/22/45
4/24/45	Turner	Alfred	A	Sgt	5/2/45
4/27/45	Melcher	Thomas	J	2nd Lt	5/16/45
4/28/45	Litts	Bartley	E	Pvt	5/4/45
	Sports	Rupert	W	Pfc	6/15/45
5/1/45	Carlson	Harold	E	Pvt	5/28/45
	McDowell	Nosh	J	Pvt	5/20/45
	Norman	Eugene	C	Pvt	6/15/45
	Phelps	Leon	M	Cpl	6/22/45
	Tremelay	Roland	A	Pvt	5/30/45
5/16/45	Kimick	Bernard		Pfc	5/31/45
	Lewis	Robert	E	Pfc	5/19/45
	Mattera	Vincent	J	Pfc	6/3/45
	Stockwell	Harry	E	Pfc	5/21/45
	Vasiliou	William	C	Pfc	5/18/45
5/17/45	Kelley	Wilfrid	H	Pfc	6/1/45
	Norman	James	A	Pvt	6/13/45
	Novotny	Joseph	J Sr	Pvt	6/15/45
	Pederson	Clarence	V	Pvt	6/7/45
	Permenter	Vernon	E Sr	Pvt	6/8/45
	Phillips	Robert	W	Pvt	6/1/45
	Platt	Harry	A	Pvt	6/7/45

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	DATE TRNSF'D
	Plucinski	Eugene	V	Pvt	6/5/45
	Southerland	Needham	R Jr	Pvt	6/21/45
	Sowers	Charles	L	Pvt	5/30/45
	Spies	Phillip	W	Pvt	6/2/45
	Sprout	Lyman	P	Pvt	6/1/45
	Stabi	Joseph	T	Pvt	6/18/45
	Stine	Cedric	W	Pvt	6/13/45
	Summerford	Major Jr		Pvt	5/30/45
	Tuma	Howard	E	Pvt	5/30/45
	Van Hooser	Karl	A	Pvt	6/9/45
	Yeakle	Frank	M Jr	Pfc	6/2/45
5/27/45	Litrell	Anthony	R	Cpl	6/12/45
5/28/45	Olthoff	Dean	S	Pfc	6/11/45
	Watts	Robert	E	Pvt	6/8/45
5/29/45	Austin	Byron	L Sr	Pfc	6/18/45
	Ehrler	Walter	F	Pfc	6/19/45
	Hart	Harry	O	Pfc	6/10/45
	Hudoba	Joseph	F	Cpl	6/15/45
	Leary	Warren	B	Pfc	6/24/45
	McCormack	Carl	L	Pvt	6/15/45
	Merrigan	Donald	E	Pvt	6/9/45
	Michel	Richard	A	Pfc	6/11/45
	Miller	Ralph		Pfc	6/8/45
6/11/45	Ware	Walter	W	Pvt	6/20/45
6/17/45	Perry	William	D	Pfc	6/18/45

I/3/29/6-Awards Received

JOINED	NAME LAST	FIRST	MI	RANK	AWARDS
4/1/45	Beck	Alexander	P	Pfc	BS
	Bledsoe	Joe	T	Pfc	BS
	Brooks	Harvey	F	1st Lt	BS
	Brown	James	V	Cpl	NC
	Cipriano	Nicholas	A	Cpl	LC
	Cunningham	William	S, Jr	Pfc	LC
	Doerr	David	D	G\Sgt	NC
	Fadden	Joseph	T, Sr	Pfc	BS
	Francoeur	Raymond	G	Cpl	BS
	Graves	Benton	R	Cpl	SS
	Joiner	James	H	Cpl	BS
	Lilly	Frank	D	Sgt	SS
	O'Leary	John	A, Jr	Pvt	SS
	Richardson	Harold	E	Pvt	NC
	Sheer	Joseph	M	Sgt	BS
	Spano	Stephen	J	Pfc	SS
	Stone	John	P	1st Lt	SS,BS
	Vellman	William	C	1st Lt	SS
4/23/45	Mylod	Phillip	J	Capt/CO	SS
5/1/45	Diamond	Eugene	D	Cpl	LC
	Guzewich	Gerald	S	Cpl	LC
	Long	Kenneth	J	Pvt	BS
5/16/45	Camarata	August	L	2nd Lt	SS